Lessons From Other Big Cities: How to Make Your City More Livable, Sustainable, and Equitable

By learning from the successes and failures of other big cities, we can make our own cities more livable, sustainable, and equitable. Here are some lessons we can learn from cities around the world.



The New Chicago Way: Lessons from Other Big Cities

by Craig S. Davis

★★★★★ 4.4 out of 5
Language : English
File size : 6022 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 287 pages



1. Prioritize public transportation.

One of the most important things cities can do to improve livability is to prioritize public transportation. This means investing in reliable, affordable, and accessible transit systems that make it easy for people to get around without a car. Cities that have made this a priority have seen a number of benefits, including reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, and increased economic development.

For example, Copenhagen has one of the most extensive and well-used public transportation systems in the world. The city has invested heavily in bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly streets, and public transportation, and as a result, more than half of all Copenhageners now commute by bike or public transit. This has led to a number of benefits, including reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, and increased economic development.

2. Make your city more walkable and bikeable.

Another important way to improve livability is to make your city more walkable and bikeable. This means creating safe and accessible infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks. Cities that have made this a priority have seen a number of benefits, including reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, and increased physical activity.

For example, Amsterdam is one of the most walkable and bikeable cities in the world. The city has a comprehensive network of bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly streets, and as a result, more than half of all trips in Amsterdam are made by bike or on foot. This has led to a number of benefits, including reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, and increased physical activity.

3. Create more green space.

Green space is essential for the health and well-being of city residents. It provides a place to relax, exercise, and socialize, and it can also help to improve air quality and reduce the urban heat island effect. Cities that have made a priority of creating more green space have seen a number of benefits, including improved public health, increased social cohesion, and reduced crime.

For example, New York City has one of the most extensive park systems in the world. The city has more than 1,700 parks, playgrounds, and green spaces, and as a result, New Yorkers have access to a wide range of opportunities for outdoor recreation and relaxation. This has led to a number of benefits, including improved public health, increased social cohesion, and reduced crime.

4. Invest in affordable housing.

Affordable housing is essential for creating a more equitable city. When people can afford to live in the city where they work, they are more likely to be able to participate in the city's economic and social life. Cities that have made a priority of investing in affordable housing have seen a number of benefits, including reduced poverty, increased economic mobility, and decreased crime.

For example, Vienna has one of the most successful affordable housing programs in the world. The city has a long history of investing in social housing, and as a result, more than half of all Viennese now live in subsidized housing. This has led to a number of benefits, including reduced poverty, increased economic mobility, and decreased crime.

5. Promote diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion are essential for creating a more livable and equitable city. When people from all walks of life feel welcome and included in the city, they are more likely to be able to participate in the city's economic and social life. Cities that have made a priority of promoting diversity and inclusion have seen a number of benefits, including increased economic growth, improved social cohesion, and reduced crime.

For example, Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world. The city is home to people from over 200 countries, and as a result, Toronto has a rich and vibrant cultural life. This has led to a number of benefits, including increased economic growth, improved social cohesion, and reduced crime.

By learning from the successes and failures of other big cities, we can make our own cities more livable, sustainable, and equitable. The lessons above are just a starting point, and there are many other ways to improve our cities. By working together, we can create cities that are better for everyone.



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