

## Unit 1 Building a better city

### WARM UP

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#### Reference answers

- **Being vibrant and dynamic:** bustling streets, various cultural events, crowds of people, skyscrapers
- **Diversity:** melting pots of cultures, diverse lifestyles
- **Opportunities:** career prospects, numerous industries, educational opportunities
- **Convenience:** public transportation systems, healthcare facilities, shopping centers, recreational spaces, cultural venues
- **Challenges:** traffic congestion, noise, fast-paced city life

### PRONUNCIATION

#### Script

Urbanization is when people move from rural areas to cities and towns. Multiple factors contribute to urbanization. For example, people seek the best opportunities to provide for themselves and their families, and urban environments are often the answer.

Urbanization opens the door for people to move to a place that gives them more employment choices and access to better schools and health care.

Sustainability is the key word when considering the future of urbanization. We should focus on creating cities that work for everyone. City planners should use renewable energy, water recycling, and green travel to people's benefit. Local governments need to be more mindful of their city planning, so their populations can thrive for the foreseeable future.

### LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND

#### NEWS REPORT 1

#### Script

As a place in the country where you can get away from the Colombian capital, Cajicá has been made a model of responsible waste management.

Begun nearly a decade ago, the city strove to improve its handling of waste. It now has a recycling rate of 30 percent and has reduced its amount of landfill by a quarter. Cajicá has been selected as a case study for a new postgraduate program on integrated waste management in Latin America and the Caribbean. The UN Environment Programme is promoting the program, along with eight universities from the countries of the above regions.

As in other locations around the world, a key to success has been the willingness of households to separate their waste before it is collected. That is a result of five years

of efforts to raise awareness, including public meetings and door-to-door visits across the city.

Now, about 350 tons of organic waste is collected per month for composting in specially supplied green buckets. The result is rich compost with lower levels of harmful elements that local residents use as an organic fertilizer for their vegetable beds.

### **Questions**

- 1 What do we learn about the city Cajic á from the news report?
- 2 What is the key to success in waste management?

### **Answers**

- 1 B    2 D

## **NEWS REPORT 2**

### **Script**

Xiongan New Area, also known as China’s “city of the future”, will celebrate the fifth anniversary of its establishment on Friday, with some key construction projects completed and more to break ground.

In 2017, China announced the establishment of the area, aiming to build it as a “green, intelligent, and livable” city to advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and relieve Beijing of functions non-essential to its role as the national capital.

After five years, Xiongan’s urban framework has been completed. At the end of 2020, the Beijing-Xiongan intercity railway opened to traffic. It has helped cut travel time from Beijing to Xiongan from 1.5 hours to about 50 minutes.

The ecological corridors in the central part of the New Area are currently under construction. Once completed, they will help improve the living environment, adjust the regional microclimate, and enrich residents’ leisure and recreational activities.

By 2035, the area will have developed into a highly advanced modern city that is green, intelligent, and livable, according to the official 2018-2035 master plan for Xiongan New Area.

### **Questions**

- 1 What is the news report mainly about?
- 2 What can be expected of Xiongan New Area by 2035?

### **Answers**

- 1 B    2 D

## NEWS REPORT 3

### Script

Dubai Municipality has announced that it will work with private sector companies and investors to create a futuristic, human-centered version of the city that benefits from opportunities thrown up by the metaverse.

The metaverse is a virtual reality space where users interact with computer-generated environments and other users.

“The metaverse today has become closer to reality than we could have imagined,” a Dubai official said. For example, with the metaverse, simulated time travel to historic moments, or immersive tours of landmark destinations would be made possible.

Such futuristic use cases would require portals in public spaces and city centers, he said, adding that governments and cities should invest in building this infrastructure as soon as possible.

Dubai Municipality will soon launch a program called One Human Reality Talks, aimed at bringing together companies and investors to develop and share this new reality.

“Cities benefit from integrating big data. With the help of the Internet of Things and artificial intelligence, city leaders will be able to build a digital infrastructure enabling us to access this world in a new way,” the official said.

### Questions

- 1 What has Dubai Municipality announced?
- 2 What should governments and cities do for futuristic use of the metaverse?
- 3 What does the program to be launched by Dubai Municipality aim to do?

### Answers

1 C    2 A    3 C

## LISTEN TO COMMUNICATE

### CONVERSATION 1

#### Script

**Host:** Today, we are joined by our special guest Sam Davis, who is an urban planner. Welcome, Sam.

**Sam:** Thanks. It’s great to be here.

**Host:** So, Sam, tell us what an urban planner does.

**Sam:** Well, basically urban planners or city planners make long- and short-term plans about the use of land in cities. They determine the best way to use a city’s land and resources.

**Host:** What are the main duties of urban planners?

**Sam:** City planners need to study their city's population and current use of land through surveys, field investigations, and other methods. They need to analyze the information, map land areas, project program costs, and predict trends.

**Host:** Quite a lot of responsibilities. If one wants to be an urban planner, what are the basic requirements?

**Sam:** A master's degree is the most common educational requirement for city planners. Master's degree programs in urban or regional planning, environmental planning, or urban design may all prepare students for careers as city planners.

**Host:** That's understandable. Any other requirements?

**Sam:** Analytical skills are crucial for city planners, as they must analyze data to help determine the best use of land within a city. City planners must also conduct research and write grant proposals, so good written communication skills are also important.

**Host:** All these make sense. Do you have any idea about the job outlook for city planners?

**Sam:** I have to say the job outlook is bright. The employment of urban or regional planners is expected to grow by about 11 percent in the coming decade.

**Host:** That's good news. Thanks again for coming to the show, Sam.

**Sam:** My pleasure.

### Questions

- 1 What do urban planners basically do?
- 2 What is the basic requirement for a city planner?
- 3 What does the man say about urban planners?
- 4 What are the speakers mainly talking about?

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### Answers

1 C    2 C    3 A    4 A

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### Answers

- 1 study their city's population
- 2 map land areas
- 3 determine the best use of land
- 4 good written communication skills

## CONVERSATION 2

### Script

**Jessy:** Mike, have you ever thought about the negatives of urbanization?

**Mike:** Not really, Jessy. Why do you ask?

**Jessy:** Well, I'm giving a presentation about urbanization in class next week. And I get to talk about the pros and cons of urbanization.

**Mike:** That's an interesting topic to talk about.

**Jessy:** Yes. We all know and care much about the benefits of urbanization, but we rarely think about the negative side.

**Mike:** That's true. So have you got any idea about what to say? I mean the negative side.

**Jessy:** Sure! I have done some research.

**Mike:** Will be glad to hear!

**Jessy:** The most obvious problem, as you can imagine, is overcrowding. With too many people moving from rural areas to urban areas, the cities and towns begin to experience overcrowding. It's at this point that the benefits of urbanization seem fewer.

**Mike:** Housing becomes an issue when cities experience overcrowding. As we can see, house prices in many major cities have been rising, which can be really difficult for people who have just moved to the city.

**Jessy:** You are right! Another effect is the rise in unemployment. It might be easy to find a position at first, but as the city becomes overcrowded, the competition is too stiff.

**Mike:** I know what you mean. As jobs become scarce and opportunities aren't as plentiful, some people may have difficulty making a living.

**Jessy:** Absolutely. And education and social services also become strained!

**Mike:** It seems many problems can arise with urbanization. What shall we do then?

**Jessy:** As with all risk management, the very first step is awareness. So it is necessary to highlight and discuss the challenge of the interconnected risks on a broader level to ensure adequate levels of public awareness.

**Mike:** That makes sense.

### Questions

- 1 What are the speakers mainly talking about?
- 2 What is the woman going to do?
- 3 What does the woman think is the most obvious problem?

4 What should we do about the problems of urbanization according to the woman?

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**Answers**

1 D    2 D    3 B    4 A

②

**Answers**

1 F    2 T    3 T    4 F    5 T

## **ACT-OUT**

### **Reference answers**

#### **Pros of urbanization**

- 1 Economic opportunities
- 2 Infrastructure development
- 3 Social and cultural diversity

#### **Cons of urbanization**

- 1 Overcrowding
- 2 Environmental challenges
- 3 Inequality and social issues

### **Conversation for reference**

**A:** Urbanization brings so many benefits to society, doesn't it?

**B:** Absolutely! One major advantage is the abundance of economic opportunities that cities offer. Urban areas are often centers of industry, commerce, and innovation, providing a wide range of job prospects.

**A:** That's true. And it's not just the economy. Urbanization also leads to better infrastructure. Cities invest in building roads, bridges, and public transportation systems that improve the quality of life for residents.

**B:** Exactly! Having well-connected transportation systems and modern infrastructure makes life more convenient and helps people get around easily.

**A:** Another positive aspect of urbanization is the social and cultural diversity that cities bring to society.

**B:** Couldn't agree more. The diversity found in cities leads to a rich blend of cultures, traditions, and experiences. It's truly a melting pot of different perspectives and ideas.

**A:** Despite these advantages, urbanization does have its challenges. What do you think about the drawbacks?

**B:** Well, overcrowding has become a major issue as more people flock to cities in search of opportunities.

**A:** That's true. The increasing population makes it difficult for some people to find a satisfactory job. It can also lead to competitive markets for limited resources, like housing.

- B:** I completely agree. Another challenge associated with urbanization may be the impact on the environment. It's crucial to ensure that urban development is balanced with sustainable practices to address environmental problems.
- B:** Absolutely. Rapid urbanization can lead to pollution, increased energy consumption, and loss of green spaces. It's important for policymakers to prioritize sustainable practices and create a healthier and greener city.
- A:** Urbanization can also worsen inequality and social problems. While some people may enjoy the benefits of economic growth, others may experience poverty and limited access to resources.
- B:** You're right, that's a valid concern. It's really important to address these social issues by ensuring a fairer distribution of resources, providing better social services, and creating more opportunities for all residents.
- A:** That makes sense.

## LISTEN TO SHARE PASSAGE 1

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### Reference answers

1

- Yes, it's important for a city to promote its brand image. The brand image of a city can have significant economic, social, and cultural impacts. A strong brand image can attract businesses, investments, and tourists to the city. Additionally, a well-developed brand image can differentiate a city from others, highlighting its unique offerings, strengths, and attractions. Moreover, a strong brand image fosters a sense of pride, belonging, and identity among the city's residents.
- No, it is not always necessary for a city to promote its brand image. Some cities may have limited resources to allocate toward branding efforts. They may prioritize other pressing needs, such as infrastructure development or social welfare programs. In such cases, investing in brand promotion may not be seen as a priority. Additionally, some cities experience natural growth and attraction due to factors like geographical location or historical significance, without the need for branding efforts.

2 There are several possible ways to develop the brand image of a city.

- **Define the city's unique identity:** The first step is to identify what makes the city special and different from others. This involves understanding the city's history, culture, natural beauty, landmarks, or technological advancements.
- **Develop signature events:** Organize unique events or cultural celebrations that reflect the city's identity and appeal to both locals and visitors.
- **Enhance infrastructure and public spaces:** Invest in improving the city's infrastructure, including roads, parks, public facilities, and cultural venues.
- **Develop a strong online presence:** Optimize the city's website and social media channels to showcase its attractions, promote local businesses, and engage with residents and visitors.

## Script

People and products are brands. However, this concept applies to cities as well.

Since the early 2000s, many cities have recognized the importance of developing a brand image, increasing the potential to attract residents, improve business, and boost tourism. Within the last decade, many cities have made big moves to change their current brand to help stimulate investment and growth.

Similar to most mainstream marketing campaigns, branding a city requires plenty of thought and consideration. Unfortunately, many cities that attempt to brand do not carry out sufficient research. According to statistics, a very high number of branding campaigns fail. That said, there are some notable successes as well. For example, Glasgow with its “People Make Glasgow” campaign has been very effective.

The goals of a branding strategy can be diverse. For example, the objective can be to attract major investments into the city, or to change typical perceptions people have formed about the city. When embarking on a branding initiative, it is vital to know exactly what you are trying to achieve and the specific outcomes you are looking for from your branding strategy. A smart idea is to consider other cities that have managed to successfully achieve similar goals via a branding exercise and then use them as a standard for your activities.

It’s also worth noting that when branding a city, it’s almost impossible to express everything about a city’s brand within the bounds of a single word. This is because most cities are not only multidimensional, but they are also constantly changing and evolving.

## Questions

- 1 What is the speaker mainly talking about?
- 2 What do statistics tell us about branding a city?
- 3 What is vital in a branding initiative?

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### Answers

1 C    2 A    3 A

③

### Answers

1 T    2 T    3 F    4 T

## PASSAGE 2

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### Reference answers

1 Smart city technologies enable better management of utilities such as energy, water, and waste. Automated systems can monitor and optimize resource usage, leading to cost savings and a more sustainable approach to infrastructure management. Smart grids, for example, distribute electricity in a smarter way, reducing power outages and promoting energy efficiency.

2 Yes, there are several examples of smart devices.

- **Environmental monitoring:** Sensors and IoT devices are used throughout the city to monitor air quality, noise levels, temperature, humidity, and other environmental factors.
- **Public safety:** Cameras with advanced technology like facial recognition are set up in public areas. They help improve security, identify suspicious behavior, and make the community safer for residents.
- **Smart parking systems:** Sensors and mobile apps help drivers find available parking spaces, reducing congestion and enhancing convenience.
- **Intelligent public transportation:** Smart city technologies are used in public transportation systems. They provide real-time information on bus or subway schedules, optimize routes, monitor vehicle conditions, and ensure efficient and reliable transportation services.

## Script

More cities than ever before are investing in smart city technology and changing how cities operate. There are many benefits that come along with making a city “smart”. It gives the city more information and data to help drive decision-making, leading to tremendous benefits that positively influence the lives of everyone who lives and works there.

Public lighting is a common entry point for new smart services. Internet of Things technologies enable planners to use energy-efficient streetlights that detect human presence and consume energy only when needed. Combined with low-energy LED bulbs, these technologies can significantly reduce the electricity consumption from streetlights, which now accounts for between 20 percent and 50 percent of local government energy bills.

Efficient and greener waste management is a priority for many cities. Some of them are promoting smart garbage containers, equipped with sensors that alert collecting services when a container is full. There is nothing less attractive for a city than streets covered with litter. And it saves money for the city services as garbage can be collected more efficiently.

Localization data from smartphones helps cities better manage big public events like concerts or marathons. This is good for security and mobility as police forces and public traffic managers have a better view of the different flows and can take appropriate measures. For example, the Belgian city of Antwerp uses cellphone-based crowd monitoring techniques to secure popular events like the marathon or the Tall Ships Races.

## Questions

- 1 What do we learn about public lighting?
- 2 What is a priority for many cities?
- 3 What does the speaker say about localization data?

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**Answers**

1 A    2 C    3 D

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**Answers**

- 1 help drive decision-making
- 2 equipped with sensors
- 3 nothing less attractive; collected more efficiently
- 4 security and mobility; take appropriate measures

**PRESENTATION**

**Reference answers**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for joining me today. I will be sharing my ideas on smart cities.

So, why is it important to turn a city into a smart one? As our world becomes more interconnected and urbanized, it's crucial to use technology and data to create sustainable, efficient, and livable cities. Smart cities use advanced technologies and data-driven solutions to improve the lives of residents, manage resources effectively, and tackle urban challenges.

One notable example of a smart city is Singapore, often seen as a pioneer in smart city development. Through sensors and data analysis, Singapore manages traffic, monitors the environment, and optimizes energy usage. It's a city that is technologically advanced, environmentally conscious, and people-focused. Barcelona is another example with smart parking systems, efficient lighting and waste management.

In the future, smart cities will become even smarter, more connected, and sustainable. Picture a city where self-driving cars reduce traffic and emissions. Energy-efficient buildings will use renewable energy, such as solar panels and geothermal systems, reducing carbon footprints. Citizens will have real-time access to information through smart devices, allowing them to make informed decisions about transportation, energy usage, and urban planning, thereby actively engaging in their city's development.

In conclusion, we can create cities that are efficient, sustainable, and improve the well-being of citizens by embracing technology, data, and innovative solutions. As we move forward, let us continue to embrace and support the development of smart cities, shaping a future that is intelligent, connected, and prosperous for all.

Thank you.

**TALK ABOUT CHINA**

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**Reference answers**

**A:** Have you ever considered which Chinese city you find the most livable?

**B:** That's an interesting question. Personally, I think Shanghai is one of the most livable cities in China. It's a global financial hub with a vibrant cultural scene and a high quality of life. What about you?

**A:** Hangzhou has always fascinated me. Its natural beauty, historical significance, and modern development make it a city that I find very appealing.

**B:** Hangzhou is indeed a fantastic choice! What do you think contributes to its livability?

**A:** The city's natural landscapes, such as West Lake and the surrounding hills, create a picturesque environment that is perfect for relaxation and leisure activities.

**B:** That sounds wonderful! And what about the city's historical sites?

**A:** The historical sites, like the Lingyin Temple and the ancient streets, offer a sense of cultural heritage and charm.

**B:** That's fantastic!

**A:** And Hangzhou has also experienced significant modern development. The city boasts a well-planned urban layout and convenient amenities for its residents.

**B:** That's great to hear! Speaking of improvements, what suggestions do you have for making both Hangzhou and Shanghai even better places to live?

**A:** I think one area that could be improved is environmental sustainability.

**B:** That's a crucial aspect to consider. With rapid urbanization and increasing population density, it's important to prioritize initiatives that protect the environment.

**A:** Absolutely. Another aspect that could be improved is affordable housing options. As cities grow, it's important to ensure that residents have access to affordable and quality housing.

**B:** That's a great point.

**A:** Lastly, expanding public transportation networks can greatly enhance the livability of both cities. It would provide convenient transportation options for residents, reducing congestion and improving overall efficiency.

**B:** That's a great suggestion. By focusing on environmental sustainability, affordable housing, and public transportation, I think both Hangzhou and Shanghai can further improve their livability and create a more sustainable urban environment.

## **VIEW THE WORLD**

### **Script**

Today's a special day. You were born. Thirty years from now, you'll be an adult. What will life be like in 2050? Let's paint a picture together. You will probably live in a city like most people during this time. A city so smart that it feels like it was built all around you. In fact, everyone is an integral part of the city.

People don't only use up electricity, they also produce it to meet the city's needs. Your city will be able to adapt to all kinds of things – to your needs, to traffic flow, to the weather, all with the help of digitalization. Energy is valuable in your city. The

technologies at the grid edge will make sure of that. But it's not only your city that is energy-efficient and adaptable, buildings using up 40 percent of our global electricity will become a thing of the past. As interconnected as your city is, almost every building will have its own small power grid. You will move through this city seamlessly, effortlessly, emission free. And that's what your workplace will look like too, providing the ideal conditions to do your best work, whether you're at the office or working remotely. Even today technology is the backbone of change remarkably accelerated by the pandemic and it will be all the more tomorrow.

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#### Answers

- 1) use up electricity
- 2) traffic flow
- 3) help of digitalization
- 4) small power grid
- 5) emission free
- 6) the ideal conditions

②

#### Reference answers

It's fascinating to think about the changes we might witness in various aspects of urban living.

- **Energy:** Cities are likely to become increasingly sustainable and energy-efficient. Renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, may become more prevalent. Smart grids and advanced energy management systems may ensure efficient energy distribution and consumption. Moreover, technologies like energy storage could lead to greater energy independence and resilience.
- **Traffic:** Electric vehicles could become the norm, reducing air pollution. Autonomous vehicles may improve traffic flow, reduce accidents, and enable efficient use of road space. Additionally, the integration of ride-sharing platforms may lead to increased reliance on shared transportation.
- **Natural environment:** Efforts to mitigate climate change and preserve natural environments may lead to the integration of green spaces and sustainable infrastructure within cities. Urban planning may prioritize the incorporation of parks and gardens, promoting biodiversity and improving air quality.
- **Workplace:** Advancements in technology and the growing digital economy may significantly impact the workplace. Flexible work arrangements, remote work, and digital collaboration tools may become more common, reducing the need for traditional office spaces. The concept of co-working and shared workspaces could evolve further, fostering collaboration and networking among professionals from various industries.
- **Residence:** Future cities may see changes in residential areas to accommodate evolving needs and lifestyles. Sustainable and mixed-use communities could become more prevalent, integrating residential, commercial, and recreational spaces within proximity. Smarter homes equipped with IoT devices may enable seamless connectivity and automation, enhancing convenience, security, and energy efficiency.

- **Public services:** Technological advancements may revolutionize public services, making them more efficient, accessible, and citizen-centric. Smart city initiatives could enable better management of utilities, waste management, and public transportation systems. Enhanced connectivity and digital infrastructure may pave the way for advanced e-governance services, including digital identity, online civic engagement platforms, and personalized public service delivery.

## **FURTHER LISTENING**

### **NEWS REPORT**

#### **Script**

In 2013 the United Nations announced October 31 as World Cities Day. This was initiated in the Declaration of Shanghai on October 31, 2010, the closing day of the Shanghai World Expo. The Day is expected to promote the interest of the international community in global urbanization, push forward cooperation among countries in welcoming the opportunities and addressing the challenges of urbanization, and contribute to sustainable urban development around the world.

The general theme of World Cities Day is “Better City, Better Life”, while each year a different sub-theme is selected, to either promote the successes of urbanization, or address specific challenges resulting from urbanization.

This year, the theme of World Cities Day is “Adapting Cities for Climate Resilience”. The purpose is to raise people’s awareness of the effects that climate-related disasters, such as floods, droughts, rising sea levels, heat waves, and storms, have on cities. At least 130 port cities with a population of over a million are expected to be affected by coastal flooding. Thus, the Day will be observed with the aim of creating more sustainable, climate-resilient societies across the world.

#### **Questions**

- 1 What do we learn about World Cities Day from the news report?
- 2 What is the purpose of the theme for World Cities Day this year?

#### **Answers**

1 C     2 C

## **CONVERSATION**

### **Script**

**W:** Have you ever thought about living deep underwater?

**M:** Never. Sounds impossible.

**W:** It may sound impossible to you, but not to some scientists. With the development of technology, living in an underwater city is not as unlikely as it once was.

**M:** But why would anyone even consider living deep underwater?

**W:** Because of the ever-increasing global population. This is the reason why various experts have warned that we would eventually run out of space on land. Luckily for us, the ocean offers a possible alternative.

**M:** Are there any practical ideas so far?

**W:** There have been several underwater city concepts within the last decade, from the ocean spiral design to the floating underwater skyscraper. With the current technology, engineers can build an underwater community that could support up to 100 people. However, technological advances in certain areas are necessary to handle a higher population.

**M:** What are the main obstacles to living underwater?

**W:** Living underwater comes with a host of challenges, and the biggest one is the great pressure, which could do harm to the human body. The depth of the ocean puts an enormous amount of pressure on the body, which causes gases such as nitrogen to dissolve in the blood. So, if the diver swims to the surface, gas bubbles could form in the blood, which may be life-threatening.

**M:** Maybe there is also the issue of food.

**W:** Yes. Instead of getting food from the surface, people living underwater must figure out how to grow their food.

**M:** So building underwater cities may be one of the most complex projects humans have ever attempted to do.

**W:** Absolutely.

### **Questions**

- 1 What are the speakers mainly talking about?
- 2 Why would humans consider living underwater?
- 3 What have humans achieved in underwater city development?
- 4 What is the biggest obstacle to living underwater?

### **Answers**

1 B    2 C    3 B    4 B

### **PASSAGE**

#### **Script**

Modern cities are habitats for cars as much as people, devoting huge amounts of space to roads and parking. The expectation that people should be able to drive anywhere, encountering few or no traffic jams on the way and parking at their destination, led to a surge of construction in the 20th century. Urban freeways, commuter suburbs and the need for parking changed the shape of cities.

Now autonomous vehicles, or AVs, promise to transform them once again, opening up new possibilities and turning urban-planning debates upside down.

Start with congestion. A switch to shared robotaxis could increase vehicle occupancy rates, reducing the number of vehicles needed to move people around and easing congestion.

AVs could also make new kinds of suburbs possible, updating the 20th-century dream of garden cities. With AVs, all the land we've given to the automobile can be put back into landscape and ecological functions. By doing away with parking and using one-way, single-lane roads that loop through neighborhoods, the area of paved surface could be reduced by about 50 percent. That means more space for plants, more biodiversity and better water retention, reducing the risk of flooding in the urban center.

Looking back now, we can find that many of the problems associated with cars in the 20th century arose from a failure to price their use properly. With appropriate pricing, AVs should be able to avoid many of those problems, giving urban planners and policymakers a much wider range of choices about how cities and transport systems could be structured.

### **Questions**

- 1 What was the cause of the surge in construction in the 20th century?
- 2 What can shared robotaxis do according to the speaker?
- 3 What caused many problems with cars in the past century?

### **Answers**

- 1 B    2 B    3 C