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On behalf of the NewCities Foundation, it is my great pleasure to present this e-book featuring written, photo and video highlights from the sixth edition of the NewCities Summit held in the greenfield city of Incheon Songdo, South Korea from June 7-9 2017.

New cities – greenfield cities – are in a unique position to build wellbeing and health into the heart of the city from the very beginning. There are few better backdrops than Songdo for this critical conversation on the future wellbeing of our cities and the people who live in them.

In its very design, Songdo is a world-class example of a sustainable city based on the principles of health and wellbeing. It boasts a wealth of new, green infrastructure, an extraordinary number of LEED-certified buildings, is home to leading international sustainability organizations and employs cutting-edge technological solutions to monitor safety and environmental conditions.

For years, we have talked about the smart city, but making a city more attractive and alleviating stressful environments has an enormous benefit to the health and intelligence of the city. Building cities of wellbeing is a goal we all can share. They are the kind of places in which people actually want to live. They help people better connect with the urban environment and with one another.

The NewCities Summit in Songdo proved to be a great platform to discuss these vitally important issues. We were honored to welcome 700 speakers, journalists and participants from 40 countries for inspired discussions that began in the plenary hall and continued through the workshop and round table sessions, the networking breaks and during the gala events.

The future wellbeing of our cities and of those who live in them is among the most critically important conversations of our time. We hope you draw inspiration from this e-book and we challenge you to explore new ways to rewire all our cities as places of wellbeing.

We also hope this e-book is a useful reference as you continue your work making our cities more inclusive, connected, healthy and vibrant places to live.

Sincerely,

John Rossant
Chairman
NewCities
Session Summaries & Videos

This e-book was authored by NewCities with help from Adrian Cook, Christina Dovolis and Natalie Kim.
Incheon Mayor Jeong-bok Yoo set the stage for the 2017 NewCities Summit welcoming attendees to Songdo and underlining that “innovation is a key word in Korean society.” Delving into South Korea’s history, Mayor Yoo explained how his country rapidly progressed from an agricultural economy to an industrial and smart economy.

Now at a turning point, South Korea is investing in its future by establishing Incheon, created as an impetus for further economic development. Incheon is attracting top global talent and connecting hubs from around the world. The city has four university campuses, which are home to 40 universities, further promoting knowledge exchanges and local growth. “All roads now lead to Incheon,” said Mayor Yoo.

In addition to creating optimal business conditions, Incheon is becoming a thriving tourist destination. Yoo noted that visitors enjoy Central Park, China Town, Songdo’s Global Culture Festival and the Incheon Pentaport Rock Festival. The city hosted the 2014 Asian Games and the 2015 Presidents’ Cup, attracting tourists and locals alike.

The coastal city, which is home to Korea’s first free economic zone, has grown to become Korea’s third most populous city and has opened its port to the outside world. All of this, paired with its ongoing, ambitious greenfield development, made it an exceptional backdrop to host the sixth edition of the NewCities Summit.

“The NewCities Summit is an opportunity to design the future of cities around the world,” Mayor Yoo concluded.
With the rapid growth of cities around the world, urban wellbeing is quickly becoming synonymous with global health and wellbeing. While cities offer the promise of improved economic opportunity and access to services, rapid urbanization has placed unbalanced pressure on the budgets and reach of city governments when it comes to delivering healthy, successful environments.

It is essential we start designing cities as ecosystems of wellbeing, but what does this imply and what defines a ‘healthy city’? Connectivity, efficiency, city consciousness, culture and green spaces were among the criteria listed by the panelists. Vera Baboun, Former Mayor of Bethlehem also called a healthy city one where “all citizens are visible,” adding inclusivity to the list of standards that make up a healthy city.

For Michel Mossessian, Founder and Design Principal of Mossessian Architecture, cities are made of two things: spaces and people. The conversation on urban wellbeing must focus on how the former can serve the latter.

What about the spatial techniques that can improve lives of citizens? “It’s all about open spaces,” says Ede Jorge Ijjasz-Vasquez, Senior Director of the Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice at the World Bank. “Open spaces are one of the most effective ways to avoid squalid and overcrowded urban streets,” he said.

In the context of Bethlehem, Mayor Baboun articulated the importance of development: “We may be global cities but we differ dramatically in our capacity to control development, and in our capacity to deliver development.”

This notion of control in development was also touched upon by Ijjasz-Vasquez who emphasized the consequences of urban sprawl on the environment in his closing remarks: “The trend of urban wellbeing should be used as a catalyst for cities to add a sense of urgency to sustainability. We have a small window of opportunity when it comes to preserving our planet.”

Panelists concluded that urban wellbeing extends beyond the needs of the individual citizen to include the needs of our planet and the wellbeing of future citizens.
Just as buildings, cars, and national governments have enforceable and measurable standards, so should cities. With the increasing standard of urban life as the ultimate goal, cities must be judged on the activities and investments that promote wellbeing.

When assessing criteria involved in wellbeing standards, Jonathan Ballon, Vice President & General Manager, Internet of Things at Intel commented that measurement and data are key and that "we cannot change what we do not measure." For Ballon, wellbeing criteria also vary from one city to another – they can differ based on a city’s particular environment or what data city officials decide to measure.

On the other hand, Josué Tanaka, Managing Director for Energy Efficiency and Climate Change at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development explained that the EBRD cooperates with cities to raise their wellbeing standards by helping them go green – from tackling local air quality concerns, traffic congestion to pressure on water resources. The EBRD is creating its own set of environmental indicators and uses 35 indicators to gather data.

Though notions of wellbeing go far beyond environment and climate measures, Tanaka reinforced that environmental indicators are an important focus when it comes to assessing urban wellbeing standards as climate change is challenging cities both to mitigate their impacts and adapt to changing conditions.

Session moderator Manisha Natarajan, Urban Development Editor on CNBC in New Dehli inquired about techniques to get citizens more involved when creating standards. Howard Bamsey, Executive Director, Green Climate Fund noted that “benchmarking is an important tool for measuring and improving citizen engagement.” As a city’s political will grows, Bamsey also discovered that a sense of positive competition often emerges, which helps further develop citizen voices.

For Vatsal Bhatt, Director of Cities and Neighborhood Developments at the U.S. Green Building Council, civic engagement is key and finding new ways to involve local citizens is crucial when developing new initiatives.
Around the globe, the last decade has seen an unprecedented mobilization from civil society to ensure more accountability and transparency from local governments. In this context, crowdsourcing and participatory budgeting have emerged as popular mechanisms allowing citizens to shape their surroundings.

Involving citizens in decision-making is key to building a flourishing community and promoting empowerment, ownership, inclusion and pride in one’s city. Chris Gourlay, Founder of the civic crowdfunding platform Spacehive, said “crowdfunding allows for collaboration beyond what the state can do and beyond what tax dollars can accomplish. Everyone is in it together.” He also emphasized that we need to get the balance right between strategic leadership coming from the public sector and the involvement of the citizens.

Can these participatory approaches be formally included in the city planning process? Christopher Cabaldon, Mayor of West Sacramento says yes, but believes crowdsourcing should be focused on gathering abstract opinions from citizens rather than questioning them about mundane details related to municipal governance.

Mayor Cabaldon brought forward the idea of a “Tinder for cities” – a platform that would present citizens with images capturing different city scenarios that would enable them to choose their ideal city by swiping left or right. “Crowdsourcing should be outcome-focused,” he said.

Mizah Rahman, Co-founder and Director of Participate in Design, agreed with panelists that “crowdfunding makes participant engagement much easier and much more interesting,” but asserted her preference for a more qualitative approach.

Rahman’s non-profit design organization helps neighbourhoods and public institutions design community-owned spaces and solutions. She believes power still resides in talking directly to the people, speaking in favor of participant design that is all about creating with people and not just for people.

The panel also addressed other successful examples of crowd urbanism. Eve Picker, one of this year’s Global Urban Innovators, is the mastermind behind Small Change – a real estate equity crowdfunding portal to fund transformational real estate projects, helping communities identify and deliver high-impact urban development.

Small Change matches investors with developers who are raising funds for their real estate projects. The difference with other crowdfunding platforms is that people invest funds into real estate projects in return for equity. This is new terrain in the real estate space.

Picker recognized that crowdfunding is an alternative source of funding that is growing exponentially and said it would be a mistake not to seize the opportunity.
Technology is profoundly changing the way we think about urban health. Sensors and real-time data are allowing health professionals to pinpoint the needs of urbanites and the best locations to place critical services. Technology is also allowing us to create ecosystems of wellness and health, where physical exercise and disease prevention are designed into the built environment. What are the best examples of these ecosystems? How can different stakeholders cooperate to make urban healthcare work?

Beth Blauer, Executive Director at the Center for Government Excellence at John Hopkins University, opened the panel by noting that we need to embrace the new developments in data collection, especially in today’s context where municipal policies are increasingly informed by data.

Blauer asked panelist how cities are adapting to an evolving healthcare system, particularly in light of technological advances. Rémi Quirion, Chief Scientist for the Government of Québec observed that cities are having a difficult time gathering quality data. Though data greatly influences healthcare legislation, making sure that the data has been collected ethically and remains accessible is a great challenge.

"Trying to build a new city or a smart city without good spatial data is like industrializing a city without electricity," said Andy Wilson, Director of Strategic Business Development at Ordnance Survey International. In Wilson’s field, mapping and spatial data help generate and integrate information in a legible and holistic manner. He noted, however, that the government is reluctant to using mapping when it comes to healthcare.

In the new reality of fast-changing technology, Blauer raised the point that new skills will emerge in this 21st century. Kalpana Viswanath, Co-founder of Indian startup Safetipin and one of this year's Global Urban Innovators, believes we need more creative and innovative minds analyzing data. In her opinion, data is too politicized, biased and often doesn’t take into account marginalized communities. "How do we ensure that we are hearing the voices of people that are not traditionally heard?" she asked.

On the other hand, Wilson noted that technology systems and staffing are underfunded and not keeping pace with technological change. For him, the greatest challenges are "getting past the technological debt" and bridging the gap between public and private health centers.

One audience member asked if it is possible for the government to pool its resources to arrive at a common solution. The panel had mixed responses. Blauer noted that the government should have a network for best practices, rather than recreating a single solution. Viswanath replied that there is too much bad data in the world – available data does not necessarily mean reliable data.
Urban density and our close proximity to fellow residents within cities makes them hubs for interaction. The importance of these interactions cannot be underestimated as evidenced by the consequences of communities that fail to promote it. Studies show that social isolation can lead to health risks as significant as smoking, heart disease and obesity.

What are the social innovations that will offset isolation, disengagement and stress? To answer this, Lianne Dalziel, Mayor of Christchurch, New Zealand expressed that it is important to remember what is at the heart of social capital: the relationships between people that form a community. In every city, the goal should be to cultivate a culture of interaction.

The Group Director of Strategic Marketing for Bouygues Construction, François Pitti, explained that construction companies have traditionally looked at buildings and infrastructure projects themselves, but noted that building in today’s world should be people-centric. “We need to look at contributions from the citizens. What type of buildings are enablers for caring and for linking people together?” he said.

Senior Health Adviser in the Department of Ageing and Life Course at the World Health Organization, Alana Officer pointed out that as people age, social isolation only gets worse, a paradigm that urgently needs to change. Officer leads a global network of age-friendly cities and communities in 381 cities and 37 countries and looks to creative solutions to change this scenario. She shared the case of Deventer, Netherlands where students live in a nursing home rent-free. Officer sees hopeful opportunities for intergenerational solidarity with this kind of initiative.

Francis Pisani, journalist at the French newspaper Le Monde, who moderated the panel, brought forward the idea of “third spaces” which exist outside the boundaries of home and work. Panelists discussed how this space would be most used and, therefore, most effective if it were to be “co-created” by citizens and government. For Mayor Dalziel, city officials must allow their communities to explore how they want to use urban space. She mentions technology as a potential tool for co-creation but also warns about the divides it can create for generations who are not as tech savvy. “We must remember inclusivity is an integral factor in the decision-making process,” she says.

Pitti, on the other hand, expressed that social innovation is “taking small steps to increase the linkage between governance and the people.” This crucial link can help inspire healthy, social, and co-created cities.
Over the next 15 years, the number of urbanites in global cities is expected to rise by 1.5 billion people. There is a pressing need to increase the efficiency of urbanization while reducing the associated costs. What innovations have proven successful in doing so? What are the best practices in city growth management?

“What makes cities come alive is the people that inhabit them,” said Bernise Ang, Co-founder and Executive Director of Zeroth Labs.

A thriving city is also one in which citizen-focused services are driven by innovation and technology. Ajay Pandey, Managing Director and Group CEO of Gujarat International Finance Tech-City (GIFT City) spoke about such innovations in city services where he resides today: “GIFT City features India’s first district cooling system deployed at city-level and an automatic waste collection system.”

GIFT City is experimenting with new ways to attract citizens to a city and, in particular, a greenfield city. With the latest technological innovations, panelists addressed the threat of mechanizing jobs, products and services in a city. Yaron Schwarz is Founder and CEO of Tridom, an Israeli company seeking to incorporate robotics into cities. He acknowledges that there will be fewer human jobs in the future, but suggests this is not necessarily negative. Instead, this future of technological services will catalyze the shift from a model that looks at humans as productive creatures to creative creatures. “Urban innovation is made possible only by urban innovators,” he said.

When prompted about competition between cities, panelists agreed cities are competing most fiercely for human talent. This will trigger a cyclical process where urban innovation attracts urban innovators and urban innovators drive urban innovation.

The Chief Investment Officer of Amata Corporation, Lena Ng, said: “We need talent and competences at different levels. When we are developing a smart city, we are going into the unknown and the untested. This is why we require qualified professionals - talented workers will drive innovation. They are the people that will create sustainability in the whole value chain.”

The challenge for new cities is establishing this process and helping it gain momentum. The challenge for existing cities is how and where to jump into this cycle. The panel called upon both new and existing cities to look to their citizens first when faced with this great challenge.
By promoting interaction and defining a city's identity, the design of public space plays a pivotal role in city dwellers' quality of life. How do we activate urban space to create interactions? Can economic development and human-centered design go hand-in-hand?

Hiroo Ichikawa is the Executive Director of the Mori Memorial Foundation, an institution established to contribute to the steady and sustainable enhancement of the lives of citizens in Japan, promoting the formation of an attractive and nurturing urban environment. Speaking about his work on Tokyo’s public spaces, Ichikawa noted his human-centered design focuses on inclusivity and function. With Tokyo's aging population, Ichikawa hosts a variety of events each week to integrate older and younger populations.

Architect Minsuk Cho, Founder and Principal of Mass Studies, employs a similar approach to his work on public spaces in Seoul. South Korea’s population is also aging quickly and Cho strives to create new and accessible environments for Seoul’s residents.

Architect Michel Mossessian, Founder and Design Principal at Mossessian Architecture said: “Society is important for the way we shape spaces. The project process calls for cultural affinity.” In order to be resilient, he says a city needs to be inclusive. A city can diversify and prosper in different ways as it attracts different and diverse populations.

Inviting a range of different partners – architects, businesses, foundations, artists – to the table to create new spaces is also leading to the creation of inspired public spaces. Natalie Voland is President of Quo Vadis, a multi-disciplinary real estate developer specializing in retrofitting historically relevant buildings in Montréal. Voland explained how she works with artists to keep social entrepreneurship alive. She said that artists are typically pushed out of communities due to gentrification so she creates new economic opportunities to keep spaces inclusive and affordable for everyone.

Matias Echanove, Co-founder of Urbz, spoke about his work building homes in Mumbai. Echanove sees a lot of people-led solutions when it comes to built infrastructure. The Mumbai community features many entrepreneurs who know how to respond to their own housing needs, which demonstrates the importance of local involvement.

Urban Strategist Julia Suh led the conversation. She concluded the panel with the assertion that human-centered urban design, which blends local culture and public space, is key to creating a thriving and healthy city.
Decision-makers and builders from greenfield cities across several continents took to the stage together to discuss the future for the world’s newest cities. The panel, moderated by Caspar Herzberg, President of the Middle East & Africa Region for Schneider Electric and, recently, author of Smart Cities, Digital Nations, focused on how technological innovation is at the heart of each city.

The Regional CEO of Palava City, India, Shaishav Dharia, described his city as an extension of Mumbai. For Palava City, Dharia looks to the long-term: “My approach to designing a city is simple – I keep in mind that I have to run it for a long time.”

Karl Gheysen, former CEO of KTZE – Khorgos Gateway, introduced Khorgos, a greenfield city on the border of Kazakhstan and China, strategically located along the so-called New Silk Road as the city is a physical gateway between Asia and Europe. Khorgos will also be built on a foundation of digital connectivity, poised to become a “smart Eurasian city.”

Chan-Kun Han, CEO of POSCO Engineering and Construction – the development firm behind Songdo – called Incheon “the gate city of Korea.” Songdo became Incheon’s project and its smart future. After POSCO’s construction, the greatest challenge was how to encourage people to move to the city permanently. He explained how parks, entertainment facilities and, especially, educational facilities were built to attract people to Songdo.

While Egypt is known for some of the world’s most ancient structures, the greenfield city of Egypt New Capital is being built with the intention to relieve some of the pressure on Cairo, one of the fastest growing cities in the world. Ayman Ismail Soliman, Chairman of Egypt New Capital, said the city is being built out of necessity as it will also be home to some government facilities freeing up valuable space in the capital’s heritage buildings. Meanwhile, Cairo’s rich past is also of great value for Egypt New Capital, with the attraction of history giving the development a competitive edge against other new cities.

Preston Mendenhall is Head of Corporate Affairs at Rendeavour, the organization behind seven city-scale developments in Sub-Saharan Africa. “We view Africa as what Asia was 40 years ago,” Mendenhall said. With rapid urbanization, there is great demand for urban space across Africa. Meanwhile, there is also the opportunity to leapfrog technologies, as has been the case with mobile alternatives that allowed many to skip steps such as landline telephones or traditional banking.

There are a number of factors shaping today’s cities, yet Gheysen concluded the panel with the important reminder: “It is always about people. For all of the excitement around technological innovation and building smarter, the bottom line must be that cities are created for and by people.”
Cities are becoming more intelligent as new technologies produce ever more refined data, allowing us to map the needs of urbanites in real time. More than ever before, cities can understand and provide their citizens with the services they require. How can a city measure its efficiency, quality of life and security? Can the ‘smart city’ promote wellbeing?

Jong-Sung Hwang, Lead Researcher, Smart Cities and Government 3.0, National Information Agency of Korea noted that cities are putting an emphasis on data more than ever before, as governments try to redesign their approach to smart cities. As more and more data becomes available, we must not underestimate the importance of open data. “The first step is to provide as much free flowing data as possible,” he said.

The issue is not merely data accessibility, but data literacy. Parag Khanna, Managing Partner, Hybrid Reality Pte Ltd said there is no lack of data in the world – what is needed is a critical strategy when it comes to interpreting that data.

The Chief Technology Officer for Washington D.C., Archana Vemulapalli, said: “Cities that have traditionally been data producers have always dealt with structured data. But this data has become unstructured due to social media.” She claimed that individuals and cities are now both data producers and consumers, making data collection increasingly difficult as cities are not prepared for the high-tech and shared economy models.

On the other hand, Khalil Laaboudi, Senior Consultant with Smart and Sustainable Cities at Ericsson, said that having an abundance of data is a good thing as it helps policymakers design a better roadmap for smart cities.

As panel moderator Ludwig Siegele, Technology Editor at The Economist, opened the floor for questions, one participant asked whether cities should leverage data from large corporations such as Uber or Airbnb which have become powerful players in the data game in recent years. Khanna said we must use localized sharing apps, rather than giants, and gather data from as many different sources as possible. Vemulapalli agreed adding that government is still extremely powerful in its ability to advocate on behalf of broader needs of citizens.
What is a ubiquitous city? Is it simply an environment that connects citizens to services through technology? The Commissioner of the Incheon Free Economic Zone (IFEZ), Young-geun Lee, opened day two of the NewCities Summit revealing some of the best practices used in Songdo to build technology into the city’s DNA.

Songdo counts among the three regions that constitute the Incheon Free Economic Zone, along with Yeongjong and Cheongna. Located on South Korea’s west coast, and with ties across the globe, IFEZ is as Commissioner Lee puts it, “a huge dream that started with the ocean.” The city has attracted new industries such as biotech, medical services, global distribution industries, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE), service industries and tourism.

With many startups and services, IFEZ continues to grow as an international business zone. In addition to its business strengths, Lee explained that IFEZ offers a high quality of life for its residents. People from neighbouring Seoul, across Korea and from around the world are moving to Incheon to live, work and raise their families. The proximity to quality schools and universities, new apartments, green parks and high tech safety features also make IFEZ the perfect place for young professionals.

IFEZ’s cloud data center uses the city’s infrastructure to keep things running smoothly. The integrated CCTV control services keep citizens safe and prevent accidents. Lee hopes that IFEZ and Songdo will act as a model for future smart cities as they export this revolutionary concept across the globe.

“Songdo is an exciting city of the future made for all,” he said.
Songdo Becomes First to Earn LEED for Communities Pre-certification

Following his address, Commissioner Young-geun Lee was joined on stage by John Rossant, Chairman, NewCities and Vatsal Bhatt, Director of Cities and Neighborhood Developments at the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). USGBC announced that Songdo International Business District (IBD) is the first jurisdiction in the world to earn pre-certification for its LEED for Communities initiative.

While LEED certification has long been the gold standard for certification for buildings, the pilot certifications LEED for Cities and LEED for Communities look at entire communities, assessing sustainability, quality of life, education, prosperity, equity, public health and safety.

“This is great news to Incheon as it is the first ever LEED precertification given to the district including dozens of buildings in Songdo. ‘Go Green’ is one of our priorities for our people and the environment. This is a first and great step and will continue to encourage and promote ongoing efforts,” said Commissioner Lee.

This pre-certification provides cities and communities with a framework for recording, measuring and managing the performance of water consumption, energy use, human experience, waste and transportation through Green Business Certification Inc.’s (GBCI) new Arc performance platform.

John Rossant said: “For years, U.S. Green Building Council has been leading the way in promoting more environmentally focused development and its LEED initiative has led to healthier and greener buildings in cities around the world.”

“This recognition of Songdo and important step on the path to LEED for Communities certification acknowledges this exceptional greenfield city. We are delighted such recognition has come during the NewCities Summit focused on better, healthier cities,” he said.

Watch Video
“Entrepreneurship is as old as our species,” said Dayo Olopade, author of *The Bright Continent*, as she opened the discussion on how a startup community benefits the city as a whole and how to foster a culture of entrepreneurship within cities.

The panel collectively shifted the startup-focused conversation away from the well-known narrative of technology companies in Silicon Valley to more comprehensively define the notion of a startup: solving a problem.

Any feat of entrepreneurship is undeniably a great challenge. The President of N3N and Co-founder and Partner at Sparklabs, Jimmy Kim, said commitment to the cause is an incredibly important part of the equation: “It’s not about making billions of dollars, it is about how passionate you are about the problem you are trying to solve.”

Olopade said entrepreneurship is not only a great challenge, but also a great risk, suggesting an openness to failure and appetite for risk are integral to a supportive entrepreneurial environment. She added understanding the target audience is an important part of the equation: “Knowing your problem is knowing the people who have that problem,” she said. “When successful, this problem and solution cycle overturns benefits for each party involved.”

Ultimately, the customer benefits when their problem is solved, the entrepreneur benefits when their business succeeds, and the forum where this process takes place benefits from both. Thus, cities now compete to host entrepreneurs in hopes of reaping these rewards.

As CEO of the Global Innovation Fund, Alix Zwane brought a financial perspective to the conversation, highlighting not all city budgets are created equal. “Even if you don’t have the means to become a Songdo, you can still take responsibility for managing the negative externalities that increase with growth,” Zwane said.

“Governments can reduce congestion costs associated with growth to foster a culture that is conducive to startups,” she added. She also called for more public-private partnerships, in hopes this may help ignite more blended financial models, creating even greater opportunities in innovation and experimentation.

Kim, whose company had its start in Songdo, explored the benefits of starting a business in a greenfield city: “Entrepreneurs move to cities where they can get a reference and visibility. This is why Songdo was the perfect fit for us.” As a new city, Songdo also has the distinct advantage of being free from legacy issues some large cities may face. In many places, existing narratives, connections and problems may be obstacles for entrepreneurs.
Reducing CO2 emissions in urban transport is key to fighting climate change. Sixty percent of global transport emissions come from cities, while transport accounts for nearly 15% of global greenhouse emissions, a figure set to double by 2050 if nothing is done.

We see the worst cases of congestion and air pollution where mass transit systems are lacking or wholly nonexistent, forcing people to use personal vehicles, or informal, unregulated options over public options. How do we reimagine our transit systems to improve accessibility while reducing CO2 emissions?

Panel moderator John Rossant, Chairman at NewCities, began the discussion noting that the transportation industry is currently undergoing a massive revolution. With the rapid onset of ride-sharing apps, Rossant asked Uber’s Policy Lead for Asia and Head of Policy for Korea, Priscilla Baek, about her company’s role in fighting carbon emissions. Baek said Uber is working towards a more sustainable future by embracing shared mobility - the name of the game when it comes to a climate-friendly future.

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“When we think about the future of mobility, it’s all about shared mobility. We have a future where every ride can be a shared ride. Uber is trying to have fewer, fuller, and more fuel-efficient rides,” she said. Baek wants to use Uber’s mass network to connect people spatially, so people can move from personal car ownership to multiple transport modes.

Philipppe Yvin is the CEO for Société du Grand Paris, a development project designed to improve life for residents across the Paris metropolitan area. Rossant asked Yvin to address regional inequalities and how best to build a sustainable city. Yvin explained that the new transport system for Paris currently in production will be fully automated and add four new lines, doubling the existing metro. Yvin stressed the importance of public transportation, especially as cities face the effects of global warming and car congestions.

Emmanuel Vivant, CEO of RATP Dev Transdev Asia and Managing Director of Hong Kong Tramways had a similar vision for the future. He said: “The future of mobility will be personalized, autonomous and electrical.” As a public transportation expert, Vivant believes that governments need to prioritize transit when developing city plans.

“One solution is not going to provide everything. Different modes provide different things to different parts of society,” said William Chernicoff, Senior Manager of Global Research & Innovation at the Toyota Mobility Foundation. Chernicoff emphasized the need for multimodal transport adding that he would like to see an integrative and accessible model, especially for lower income and elderly communities.

Clean and Healthy Transport Systems

Speakers

Priscilla Baek, Policy Lead for Asia and Head of Policy for Korea, Uber
William Chernicoff, Senior Manager, Global Research & Innovation, Toyota Mobility Foundation
Emmanuel Vivant, CEO, RATP Dev Transdev Asia & Managing Director, Hong Kong Tramways
Philippe Yvin, Chief Executive Officer, Société du Grand Paris

Moderator

John Rossant, Chairman, NewCities

June 9
Plenary Panel

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City governments and public service providers must be able to efficiently meet the ever-changing needs of their citizens, whether it is a sudden, new phenomenon or a gradual trend. How can adaptability be built into traditional city services? Who is responsible for these services?

Panel moderator Arvind Satyam, Managing Director of Global Business Development at Smart+Connected Communities at Cisco, opened the discussion by sharing the Rockefeller Foundation’s definition for resilience: “the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, business, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience.”

The Mayor of Christchurch, New Zealand, Lianne Dalziel, shared the remarkable case of her own city. Christchurch experienced a severe earthquake, part of a series of quakes in 2010 and 2011, which took the lives of 185 people. “We emerged from what was a tragedy with far more flexible and resilient city services than we had before. With disaster also comes opportunity,” she said. Her pointed question to the panel and to the audience was how can we drive change without the need for disaster?

“Resilience starts with people. It really is a matter of policy, it’s a matter of design, it’s a matter of forecasting,” said Rahul Gupta, Principal of Capital Projects & Infrastructure at PwC. The panelists agreed that local communities are the driving source of resilience on any scale. To empower them is to increase city-wide resilience. Technology allows city administrators to empower citizens with information and knowledge, while it also allows citizens to provide administrators with instant feedback on city projects and services. As Dalziel mentioned, this two-way communication will make governance more challenging, but more worthwhile.

Devin de Vries, Co-founder of Cape Town-based WhereIsMyTransport, shared his insights on the countries he works with in Africa which tend to be “resource-rich but information-poor.” He is using technology to make an informal public transportation network accessible to the community. To gather this information, he turns to the community, using crowdsourcing methods to work towards “better frameworks around the democratizing of information.”

Founded in 2005, the city of Iskandar, Malaysia is building a special economic zone that will grow to become three times the size of Singapore. Khaidzir Abdul Rasip, Senior Vice President of the Urban Observatory at the Iskandar Regional Development Authority said: "Resilience needs to be thought of at the regional level. In order to be resilient, our city looks at the capacity of the whole region. We look at the thresholds and ceilings carried by the region.”
Cities account for two-thirds of global energy consumption and 70% of greenhouse gas emissions. As almost two-thirds of the world’s population is expected to live in cities by 2030, it is crucial to re-think how urban environments operate and place climate change at the heart of urban policies. How can cities measure their carbon footprint? What are the financing mechanisms for realizing low-carbon investments at the city level?

Philipp Bouteiller is CEO of Tegel Projekt GmbH, a subsidiary of the State of Berlin. He is currently working on a project to revitalize the soon-to-be-closed Tegel Airport, creating Berlin TXL, a research and industrial park to promote urban technologies in Germany and Europe. For Bouteiller, “the future is electric” and should focus on finding renewable energy sources and inventing new materials.

Joelle Chen, Regional Head of the Asia Pacific Network for the World Green Building Council, discussed green buildings and the steps cities can take to reduce their carbon emissions. Chen has created a series of benchmarks and certifications that will reduce waste and, eventually, help buildings operate with zero carbon emissions. “A new zero carbon building is a highly energy-efficient building with all its operational energy use from renewable energy, preferably on site to achieve new zero carbon emissions,” she said.

Panel moderator Chungha Cha, Co-founder and Chair at the Re-Imagining Cities Foundation spoke about the China-Europe smart city pilot zone. This zone will promote green buildings, sustainable infrastructure, smart government and smart citizens. Cha hopes to create a situation in which economic growth and unsustainable energy consumption no longer go hand-in-hand.

The Director of the East and North-East Asia Office for UNESCAP, Kilaparti Ramakrishna, talked about implementing United Nations (UN) initiatives in China, Mongolia, South Korea, North Korea, Russia and Japan. Ramakrishna stressed the impacts of climate change, urging city leaders to invest in green development. By taking concrete steps and following guidelines released by the UN, cities can move towards a low-carbon future.

Participants expressed concern regarding American President Donald Trump’s lack of support for climate change policies, both domestically and internationally. Ramakrishna said consensus is necessary as the world cannot achieve low-carbon goals without the United States. Bouteiller added we must stand up and educate our fellow citizens and, particularly, government in order to move forward on climate change.
When we think of urbanization, the world's great megacities are the first to jump to mind. Yet, it is second, third and fourth-tier cities that most of the new urban population calls home. The importance of these cities for their national economies cannot be overstated. Strong connections to larger cities and to global marketplace is necessary for these cities to meet their full potential and to successfully manage the weight of urbanization. How can these cities create better links to their national and regional economies? What challenges do these cities face in accessing global markets?

The panel narrowed the discussion on global connectivity to mid-sized cities, a realm often overshadowed by global metropolises, but one where connectivity plays an even larger role in each city's success. Olivier Biancarelli, Managing Director of the Decentralized Solutions for Cities & Territories at ENGIE, said: "If we look at demographic data, the urban population on Earth is around 4 billion and half of this population is living in mid-sized cities of around 500,000 people or below."

"This number represents a critical mass which allows investment in infrastructure and connectivity. These cities, nevertheless, have the same issues as bigger cities: from economic development, attractiveness to competition," he said.

Kandahar is the second-largest city in Afghanistan and represents a very compelling case of a city that suffers from instability and insecurity but, simultaneously, one with the potential to connect Asia and Europe via the New Silk Road project. Mayor Roshaan Wolusmal described his city as one where administration and citizens work closely together in forging this future of global connectivity.

Elizabeth Le Masson, Delegate for Economic Promotion and Job Creation at Aéroports de Paris, and Anthony Fernandes, Chief Executive Officer, AirAsia, led the conversation on connectivity by air. Both touched on the great potential of airports to create economic clusters, however, when next to a big city such as Paris, the importance of the connection to the cluster itself can be overlooked.

"People from Paris can fly all over the world but people living ten kilometres from the airport can only get there in a car. It's a paradox," Le Masson explained. With megacities like Paris already reaping the benefits of global connectivity, the focus must now shift to mid-sized cities where connectivity can make an even larger impact as higher volumes of the global population turns to mid-sized cities.

Fernandes seeks to bring cities together by adding them to his flight network creating a world that is connected by many points and not a few hubs. AirAsia's success suggests his focus on medium-sized cities may be the right track. "Things are moving in the right direction for connectivity," Fernandes affirmed.
Despite its positive impact on the global economy, urbanization has deepened endemic inequality, as well as spatial, social and economic exclusion. Empowering cities and their citizens is crucial to ensuring that urban environments of tomorrow provide better opportunities and improved living conditions for all.

“Inclusivity in cities is an issue that is timely but also timeless,” said Archana Vemulapalli, Chief Technology Officer in Washington D.C. at the opening of the panel.

What are the best examples of inclusive cities? Does technology have the potential to include the most marginalized in the decision-making process? Can cities become laboratories for necessary change?

Dr. Tunji John Asaolu is the Chairperson of the Committee on Social Affairs and Health at the African Union’s Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). He said: “When you talk about a city that is inclusive, you need to think about its institutions such as a good and sound education system.” He added, “you also need to think about access and affordability to basic amenities: an environment where the poor and the rich have equal access to water and electricity.”

Vemulapalli responded, offering differing definitions for inclusivity and diversity. “You may have diverse representation of groups in a city, but if you don’t create opportunities for inclusion, you end up with segregation and groups that are left out,” she said.

Eyal Feder is CEO of ZenCity, a tech startup that gathers data from social media, municipal platforms, and 311 telephone calls to provide city governments with real-time feedback and suggestions on city services. ZenCity was also selected by NewCities as one of this year’s Global Urban Innovators. “Inclusivity starts with listening to the needs of the people,” Feder said.

Dr. Asaolu added that it is technology that makes this possible. “There is no way to keep technology out of an inclusive city,” he said.

Vemulapalli concluded the panel, calling upon cities to adopt inclusion as one of their core values and putting forward that social exchange leads to collaboration, which leads to innovation. Ultimately, inclusivity is the foundation for success in the city.
Mobile devices and new technologies mean that an enormous range of services are now no further than simply reaching into our pocket. Efficiency and ease define the modern urbanite’s behavior and on-demand products rule the services sector, creating an entirely new generation of workers and new forms of work. How is technology altering the time and space needed to do day-to-day business? How important is the notion of community and trust?

Panel moderator Elaine Ramirez, Journalist at Forbes, opened the panel asking speakers to define the sharing economy. Taking a more critical approach, Greg Lindsay, Senior Fellow at NewCities, said: “The sharing economy is not about sharing services, but about sharing the workforce doing it.” While shared services allow for greater affordability and convenience for consumers, Lindsay suggests these can also lead to less desirable effects such as salaries lower than minimum wage.

Describing what qualifies as a successful startup in today’s cities, Derrick Ko, Co-founder of Spin and one of this year’s NewCities Global Urban Innovators, said: “Startups need to solve a societal need or want in order to be successful, regardless of how wacky the idea may seem.” Spin’s mission is to help people move around cities. Spin reimagines bikesharing by creating GPS-equipped smart bikes that can be unlocked via a mobile app and dropped off at any bike parking spot. Through a convenient, affordable, and environment-friendly mode of transport, Spin aims to reduce congestion and improve last mile transportation in cities.

For Samar Singla, Founder and CEO at Jugnoo, it is important to look at the very problem the startup is trying to solve while studying the economic status of the region. The India-based company is a ride and food delivery service working in rural areas of the county. For Singla, his company can help level the playing field: “Indians pay more for groceries in rural areas because distribution is a problem. It is a problem because the infrastructure is poor,” he said.

To conclude the panel, Lindsay warned that governments need to be better prepared for the sharing and on-demand economy as these industries are only going to get bigger. “Technologies will lessen the friction of on-demand services even more. But how on-demand does it get? Will Amazon know you better than you know yourself?” he said.
The master plan for Songdo International Business District (IBD) has set new standards in urban wellbeing and sustainability, both of which were at the heart of design process from the outset. In this keynote conversation, some of the leading minds behind Songdo came together to share their insights into the development of one of the world’s landmark greenfield cities.

Tom Murcott, President and CEO, Gale International Strategic Advisory Services, opened the conversation recalling a helicopter trip over the freshly reclaimed land that would soon become Songdo, part of a reconnaissance mission as Incheon was courting American companies to design the central business district.

The conversation then moved towards the human understanding of cities as Elie Gamburg, Director at Kohn Pedersen Fox, argued that, contrary to popular belief, cities are not an entirely natural creation process. Many neighbourhoods in old cities such as London are, in fact, planned areas. From these examples, he cited design details in Songdo that have lessons for existing cities, particularly for large open spaces. He added the walkability and quality of life are also important lessons for all urban developments.

Panel moderator Greg Lindsay, Senior Fellow at NewCities, asked speakers whether there can be a universal code for city building. Gamburg noted that Songdo is continuously a work in progress with much left to do. Ashok Raiji, Principal, Americas Property Business Leader at Arup agreed with this point noting that while Songdo is not a perfect city, the results remain astonishing.

Raiji detailed the original vision of the city’s design, revealing that the core concept was to have good design throughout the city with new ideas introduced over time. For example, when the design team became aware of water stress levels in Korea, water preservation became a central point of design, with 60% of rainfall now collected and reused.

When prompted on Cisco’s decision to take part in Songdo’s development, Wim Elfrink, President at WPE Ventures Digitized Solutions and a former Cisco executive, said that it was clear from the beginning that the project would be a return of investment after seven to ten years.

Songdo has been held as an example for other cities, and indeed is already inspiring design in other parts of the world. Murcott mentioned Meiji Lake, a new city in China that is based on Songdo’s design. However, Meiji Lake was conceived while simultaneously considering the specific conditions of the local environment. Raiji agreed with this approach, and said a “cookie-cutter” technique is not right, even if the steps taken in developing cities are almost identical.
Public spaces are the heart of a city, where human interactions, leisure, culture and the arts intersect. Animating those public spaces requires thinking, planning and collaboration. How can we unleash the social potential of a space? How can urban interaction become central to city planners’ strategies for shared spaces?

Panel moderator Manisha Natarajan, a news editor specializing in real estate and urban development at CNBC New Delhi, opened the panel with a question about how cities can make their public spaces more inclusive. Fleur Pellerin, Founder and Chairwoman of Korelya Capital and former French Minister of Culture, related her experience in France where “the segregation and geography of inclusion and exclusion is determined by the presence of schools. Now in France there is a geography of cities where privileged people live near good schools.” The path to avoid this situation, according to Pellerin, is for government to take a leading role in creating inclusive spaces.

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Vera Baboun, former Mayor of Bethlehem, agreed, suggesting public parks are vital to a city. “Parks are open spaces for everyone to attend. Parks are a place where you can move, play with freedom and liberty, and enjoy it,” she said. For Baboun, parks inspire cultural interaction and create socially diverse spaces.

Natarajan asked whether there were ways to encourage public spaces. Chan said cities must “make public spaces more interactive and interesting,” adding, “include exciting, interactive elements.” Pellerin shared this view, saying open spaces need “a conception of space and urban planning that encourages specific behaviors, like using fewer cars and more bicycles. There needs to be a better display of activities within a city.”

Drawing on another example, Vicky Chan, Founder of Avoid Obvious Architects, highlighted Heritage Fields in New York City as a successful public space. Inadequately maintained and ignored in the past, the city transformed the space to include a ballpark, green fields and extracurricular programs. Chan said Heritage Fields is now more accessible and desirable, noting people feel safe bringing their families.

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Organized by the African Union, this side event invited guests and panelists to partake in a collective discussion on the issues of clean water and affordable housing scarcity in African nations.

An introductory presentation highlighted the issues to be faced by Africa. The United Nations has projected that by 2050 Africa's population will have doubled and 560,000 houses must be built every year to match current and future demands as population grows. The presentation claimed that by pursuing the forward thinking and visionary pathway that Songdo has created, many improvements could be made in Africa. Panelists argued that many investors have gone to the continent in response to profitability and increased security in investment, not to help the poor with housing. Therefore, the issue cannot be framed as a need to create water and housing security, but instead as a much greater plan that encompasses these issues.

A participant in the event argued that it is impossible to create a single solution for the entirety of Africa as the issues faced by nations vary drastically. This guest also emphasized the issue of land accessibility, and argued that administrative efficiency, efficient registration for land and business licenses, stability, protection of investment are all imperative to maintaining a stable and predictable legal framework for businesses to thrive in.

Another issue brought up by a panelist was housing scarcity caused by unequal growth. The guest pointed towards examples such as Silicon Valley where housing has become too expensive for most families, leading to a lack of diversity. They mentioned strategies that include purchasing land in advance of urban development booms, to protect from gentrification and uncontrolled displacement of local populations. For cities such as Lagos, for example, land could be protected from future changes and used as affordable housing as demand grows.

A third participant mentioned that governments in many cases cannot afford to provide housing for all citizens. They argued that technology should respect local building culture and keep design and engineering simple and streamlined for the needs of the population. Cities are built over time and should not rush development, but rather grow to global standards on a relative timeline.

Another factor considered was the foundation for public-private collaboration. In many cases, there is no system in place for companies to collaborate and work with members of the community, making it difficult for companies to work with local knowledge. By improving frameworks for collaboration, companies will be more inclined to participate in cooperative projects.
Workshops

Workshops are interactive meetings during which Summit attendees from all backgrounds engage in intensive discussions on a particular subject related to urban wellbeing.
Hosted by Ericsson, this workshop addressed the emerging presence and application of fifth generation mobile network technology in cities worldwide.

Martijn Peeters, Global Head of Operations for Smart Cities, Smart Buildings, and Cross Industry IoT Solutions at Ericsson stressed that modern devices and the right connectivity are necessary to effectively gather data. While the transition from a 1G to a 4G wireless network has rapidly improved real-time communication, the move to 5G will support an entirely networked society in which data exchange and wireless communication between devices will become instantaneous.

Peeters believes this connectivity will enable further innovation across industries ranging from health to transportation to manufacturing. To ensure that 5G can accommodate the characteristics of various industries, it is imperative that data speed, mobility and reliability be constant. As an example, Ericsson presented a demonstration wherein a consistent data speed of 3.6 gigabytes per second through 5G connectivity allowed fully autonomous driving. High connectivity and low latency were crucial to the experiment as it enabled environmental sensors to be in continuous communication with the vehicle.

Workshop attendees brainstormed the potential applications of 5G connectivity to various industries. One group of participants pitched the idea of an app which could give you immediate recommendations based on your social media likes and interests. The app could also connect to the local currency allowing you to use local amenities, while also offering an instantaneous translation service.

Another group proposed installing 5G networks in parks and other public spaces for citizens to record criminal activity and report it to city officials, allowing for a direct response. A third group commented on low education levels in certain countries being due to limited Internet access, and proposed that enhanced e-learning and access to ICT tools through 5G connectivity could improve education.

There are also potential applications for security. One group of participants highlighted the challenge that we are generally blind to pending terrorist attacks and considered the impact of incorporating 5G connectivity into hardware that would automatically identify and respond to dangerous situations. Finally, a group considered the effects on public transportation, commenting that 5G connected sensors could collect traffic data throughout cities and incorporate this big data into rerouting bus services to higher demand areas, serving the city more efficiently.

In the lead up to its 2020 rollout, 5G connectivity will become more prevalent, allowing for more studies identifying further potential applications.
This workshop, hosted by 3M, delved into the details and complexities of building the new infrastructure necessary for the use of emerging transportation and automobile technologies.

Assuring safety and security on the roads is a central focus for 3M. The company’s Traffic Safety and Security Division is developing improvements to lane markings and license plate tracking to improve road safety and track division for improved rail security.

The current wave of technological improvements is also transforming cars as companies focus on building smarter models. These increasingly smart cars can be defined as connected automobiles, which incorporate collected data into their function and safety. 3M emphasizes that it will take many redundancies and backup systems, as well as an improvement in current road infrastructure, to ensure that these connected vehicles are effective and reliable.

Currently, 3M defines the automation level of vehicles at level 3 – conditional automation. While many companies believe that full automation (level 5) is attainable by 2020, 3M argues that the infrastructure is not in place, and industry challenges such as standardization, communication, safety and legislation prevent the technology from being adopted more quickly and more widely. These challenges cover issues such as the standardization of sensor use, the creation of accountability laws, the threat of hacking and cybersecurity and the cost of the technology. 3M is confident that the challenges may be overcome through connected infrastructure and connected roads. They have been developing various connected road technologies to improve infrastructure, road communication and connectivity.

Digital information can be embedded in machine-readable signs that vehicles can interpret and respond to. Invisible to the naked eye, this information will not alter the appearance of traffic signage for drivers. Similarly, machine-readable pavement will be legible to vehicles in all weather conditions. Enhancing license plate readability will benefit homeland security, while dedicated short range communication tools will capture basic safety messages between vehicles and infrastructure in a hyper-connected, Internet of Things environment. Although this technology can improve vehicle infrastructure communication, it will remain vital for signs to indicate the driver must take control of the vehicle when entering construction zones or other less predictable circumstances.

While automated vehicles will slowly become more prevalent, it is imperative that infrastructure be improved, connectivity maintained and accountability laws considered.
Reinventing a City Through Design

Hosted by the World Design Organization (WDO), an international non-governmental organization with a mission to promote the profession of industrial design, this workshop assessed the means through which design can further the development of cities and create initiatives to engage citizens in urban development through design.

WDO works to create a world where design enhances economic, social, cultural and environmental quality of life. In the urban context, they ask how design can be used to further the development of cities through physical and intangible, collaborative and aligned projects.

Worldwide, multiple initiatives have promoted these types of projects. For one, the World Design Talks series of workshops confronted issues of local relevance, such as traffic congestion and sustainable consumption, designed to create lessons for global communities.

World Design Capital, a year-long program hosted in a different global city every two years engages communities through workshops and events to apply design to urban issues with the stated goal to improve quality of life. In 2014, the event was held in Cape Town, South Africa and included a workshop that focused on innovative solutions for a local piece of land that had become a magnet for criminal activity.

When attempting to reinvent a city by design, WDO recommends considering the following factors: strategy, inclusion, policy, connection, cooperation and technology. Participants also mentioned implementation and execution as important criteria to keep in mind to increase the likelihood of success after projects have been conceived.

Following from this observation, another participant highlighted the importance of testing, arguing that projects should be piloted on the small-scale before full-scale implementation. Other suggestions included applying feedback from previous initiatives, promoting sustainability and ensuring projects are fun - all measures to help guarantee long-term success.
Round Tables

Round tables are expert-level discussions with 10-15 selected participants who engage on one particular theme about urban wellbeing.
Better Mobility for Healthier Cities
This round table allowed participants to understand the main challenges cities face to improve mobility and the means to overcome them. It was hosted by Amit Pathare, Group Director of New Solutions & Director of the Cities Key Program, ENGIE.

Age-friendly: A Necessary Building Block for Urban Wellbeing
In this round table hosted by Alana Officer, Senior Health Adviser, World Health Organization, participants discussed the key drivers of change that will affect people’s ability to live long and healthy lives.

Natural Disaster Resilience for Urban Wellbeing
In this round table, participants discussed how efforts to enhance resilience also contribute to growth and wellbeing. It was hosted by Josef Konvitz, Former Head of Regulatory Policy and Urban Affairs at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The Shared City
Hosted by Neal Gorenflo, Executive Director and Co-founder of Shareable, this round table gathered various perspectives about amplifying cities as platforms for sharing. Attendees brainstormed about how urban areas can empower residents to meet their own needs through sharing and the commons.

Using IoT to Access the Urban Essentials
Hosted by Sameer Sharma, Global General Manager of Smart Cities IOT Solutions at Intel, this round table shed light on how cities can use technology to balance and prioritize citizens’ needs.

The Future of Personal and Collective Mobility
This round table featured group discussions about how to harness innovation in urban mobility to get the future we want for cities. The event was hosted by Jérôme Pourbaix, Director Regional Offices & Services at UITP.
NewCities was delighted to welcome leaders of 22 new cities to the launch of the Greenfield Cities Alliance (GCA). The Alliance was formally launched at the sixth edition of the NewCities Summit in Songdo, South Korea - the first greenfield city to host this annual event.

Designed to be a catalyst for new ideas, networking, resource development, and collaboration for new city leaders, GCA is the leading global network of large greenfield urban developments around the world.

The goal of this initiative is to create a setting to share best practices and generate strategies that fuel new cities’ growth into inclusive, connected, healthy and vibrant communities.

The Alliance is the first real effort to create a network for the leaders of these new urban realities and knowledge-sharing around complex challenges and opportunities that face public and private actors building at the city scale.

Learn More
NewCities Foundation’s Global Urban Innovators are eight of the world’s most innovative urban tech startups, leveraging technology to tackle the biggest challenges facing cities. We are excited to showcase the fantastic young companies we have selected that are transforming cities around the world through the power of technology!

Click to watch the highlights film for the Global Urban Innovators

Devin de Vries, Co-Founder, WhereIsMyTransport

WhereIsMyTransport provides an open platform for integrated transport data that provides users, developers and cities with a comprehensive look at formally and informally run public transportation options, particularly in emerging African cities.

Eyal Feder, CEO, ZenCity

An Artificial Intelligence-based analytics dashboard, ZenCity tracks social media, municipal platforms and 411 telephone lines to provide city governments with real-time, actionable insights about citizens and municipal services to improve citizen experience of the city.
Leveraging the Internet of Things and smart water meters, CityTaps partners with local utility companies to guarantee water access to households, including the urban poor, allowing users to use mobile money to pre-pay for water and secure access directly at home.

Small Change is a real estate equity crowdfunding portal to help fund transformational real estate projects, helping communities identify and deliver high-impact urban development.

Spin’s mission is to help people move around cities. Their first product reimagines bikeshare: Spin’s GPS-equipped smart bikes are unlocked via a mobile app, and can be dropped off at any bike parking spot.

Safetipin is a map-based mobile application that works to make cities safer, with a focus on women’s safety. The app collects and disseminates safety-related information to both users and city decision-makers on a large scale through crowdsourcing and geospatial analysis.
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#NewCitiesSummit  @newcitiesfound
NewCities is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to making cities more inclusive, connected, healthy and vibrant. Focusing on people, places and policies, we bring together a global network of public and private sector leaders and Urban Tech innovators to foster results-oriented collaboration. We also produce actionable research that can be implemented by decision-makers across sectors.

The NewCities Summit gathers top entrepreneurs, policymakers, corporate leaders, designers and thinkers to work together to improve life in cities. The sixth edition of the Summit took place in Incheon Songdo, South Korea from June 7–9, 2017 on the theme Thriving Cities: The Building Blocks of Urban Wellbeing. The new city of Incheon Songdo has been built with sustainability and wellbeing at its very core. This emerging Asian hub was a unique and dynamic backdrop for one of the most critically important conversations of our time: the future wellbeing of our cities and those who live in them.

NewCities was created in 2010 and is financed by its Members and Partners. To find out more about the Foundation and how to become a Member, please email us at contact@newcitiesfoundation.org.

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