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URBAN SOLUTIONS

ISSUE 15 • JUL 2019



High Trust Cities

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Federico Gutiérrez
Desmond Lee

Opinion

Tommy Koh
Daniel L. Doctoroff

Essay

David Chan
Louisa-May Khoo

City Focus

Surabaya

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 ISSUE 15 • JUL 2019

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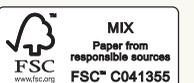
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Trust in Sustainable Cities

Distrust has been growing in urban communities in recent decades. Cities such as Chicago and Cali are recovering from past crimes and breakdowns in citizen-government relations. In places like Toronto and Barcelona, privacy concerns have grown due to the prominence of urban data and the rise of corporations that collect such data.

Connections between neighbours are the ties that bind society in times of crisis, but how are such bonds formed and nurtured? This issue of *Urban Solutions* explores the importance of trust in interactions between citizens and governments, and how urban communities can develop trust at multiple levels.

Behavioural scientist Professor David Chan tells us that public trust plays a critical role in any city because it is difficult to attract investors, pass legislation or manage crises in an environment where trust is low. Diplomat and international law expert Professor Tommy Koh explains how good governance, rule of law and a low level of corruption make a city trustworthy.

When trust is low, rebuilding it is key to urban regeneration, as several cities demonstrate. Medellín Mayor Federico Gutiérrez recounts how his city overcame a troubled past by bringing together stakeholders in a collaborative, long-term transformation process. In Surabaya, people-centric efforts to reduce corruption and boost liveability have transformed it into a thriving metropolis.

Singapore Minister Desmond Lee shares how city leaders can involve people and private institutions to strengthen social capital and trust. When community engagement is done right and trust is

present, says Louisa-May Khoo, conflict between civil society and government can be a creative opportunity.

Technological advancements and the growth of public urban data are already improving citizens' lives. But there are also privacy concerns: who should collect and manage such data, and how should it be used? Daniel L. Doctoroff of Sidewalk Labs argues that competing concerns can be reconciled by establishing clear governing principles. Meanwhile, the iChangeMyCity mobile app in Bangalore improves municipal service delivery and trust by enabling civic participation.

What does a city that bridges social and cultural differences look like? How do safe and inclusive public spaces strengthen community spirit and build a sense of ownership?

The Japanese concept of group reliance creates strong social responsibility, while cultural diversity is literally built into the streets of San Francisco's Castro District. In Singapore, public housing designs enhance ties between neighbours, and neighbourhood networks drive dementia-friendly communities.

Our main takeaway? Trust is fundamental to partnership, which is crucial for liveable and sustainable cities. We hope this issue inspires you to strengthen trust in your city. I wish you all an enjoyable read.

Khoo Teng Chye

Executive Director

Centre for Liveable Cities



Federico Gutiérrez,
Mayor of Medellín,
Colombia.



Federico Gutiérrez

Healing Wounds with Trust

Shedding its dark past associated with crime and drugs, the Colombian city of Medellín has worked hard to build a high trust society. Mayor **Federico Gutiérrez** shares with *Urban Solutions* how they have achieved this feat through a collaborative effort that unites stakeholders at the heart of the transformation.

At the World Cities Summit 2018, you said Medellín has progressed from a period of hope to a period defined by trust. How does this trust play out?

The history of our city is fascinating. There is no magic formula to explain what we had gone through. But there is a very important component to which we can attribute much of what we have achieved as a society—joint work between the public, private, academic sectors and citizenry. This teamwork involves weaving relationships and trusting each other to achieve common purposes.

Medellín has become a high trust city: a physical space in which the relations between citizens and institutions work because everyone contributes what they are responsible for and receive what they are entitled to.

**“That is how I rule:
with and for the people.”**

Every local government in Medellín has invested in areas with lower quality of life to improve connections and public spaces, and guarantee institutional presence in places that, for decades, were neglected.

We have begun a process to update the systematisation of our governance model. This new Medellín model, called Medellín Model 4.0, focuses on transforming urban spaces for the people and building a present and efficient State that listens to citizens and provides them with guarantees to build trust. That is how I rule: with and for the people.

So how does the city government work with other institutions to ensure trust?

Medellín's success has been driven by collaborations between good and successive governments and the private sectors, universities and civil society. For years, this alliance has consolidated and, I dare to say, today it is indestructible. Institutions are bigger than people and offer a clear common purpose that is met when everyone does what they are responsible for.

Since 2003, through the University, Enterprise and State Committee (CUEE when abbreviated in Spanish), the city has generated a dialogue and consensus space that promotes entrepreneurship, innovation and partnership for the economic and social progress of the territory. Eleven higher education institutions in the region participate in this committee alongside 21 companies, seven centres of technological development, the Mayor's Office and other key entities for development. This strategic alliance has facilitated and maintained the union of wills and knowledge among entrepreneurs, university managers, unions, and local and regional governments through dialogues, to improve productivity and competitiveness of companies.

Medellín is known for its inclusive transport system. How have efforts in this area built trust?

In Latin American countries, transportation is a great factor that generates social gaps. For instance,

because of rural-urban migration, our city had territories that were built without planning or institutional presence. These disconnected territories ended up becoming places full of poverty and violence.

Precisely because of that disconnection, the citizens who have less ended up being the ones who pay the most for public transport. They must take longer routes, which translates into more time and money.

One of our greatest challenges has been to reduce transportation costs and time, to create a more equitable city with a higher quality of life. This in turn reinforces the bonds of trust between people and institutions. Therefore, our transportation system has a social meaning: connecting territories to connect citizens with new opportunities.

We have an integrated transport system, unique in Colombia, which combines the Metro, Metrocable lines, trams and buses. Over the last 20 years, we have put it at the service of the people, overcoming topographical and social barriers. Our Metro Culture strategy has generated bonds of trust and respect between citizens and their public transport system.

In addition, we have set ourselves the goal of becoming the Latin American capital for electric mobility, to improve the well-being of our people. To promote sustainable means of transport, we are purchasing 64 new electric buses and we are determined that 100% of new vehicles entering the bus system must be electric. This year, we will have 200 new electric taxis to replace older ones.



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01 Metrocable lines form part of an integrated transport system that has overcome both topographical and social barriers.

02 Trams not only connect people to territories but also to new opportunities.

“The city centre is a neighbourhood that belongs to everyone in Medellín.”



01



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Medellín continues to work hard on infrastructure development projects to meet your population's growing needs. How does the government gain the people's support and trust for such projects?

I believe the most important thing is for the people to feel the presence of institutions. Infrastructure is a great tool to make this happen, but it must be charged with meaning. It is necessary to talk to people to understand their needs, so we can invest in work that impacts their daily lives. This is the only way to build trust.

Medellín's take on urbanism might as well be coined social urbanism because infrastructure does change lives. Transforming urban spaces affects interpersonal relationships—a park only makes sense when people hang out and sit on its benches.

Interventions from a sidewalk to a park or the Metrocable are always thought out around a community so they can contribute to the construction of the city. We have developed tools and initiatives for citizens to participate in creating a

more equitable and liveable city. We bring institutions to the people—our Mayor's office reaches out to the citizens and not the other way around.

Initiatives such as Imaginary Workshops gather the perspectives, visions and dreams of the citizens to drive interventions in the local environment. We ask them about their expectations and needs, and everything they say influences the Development Plan and the final product.

We also engage people in the renovation of the city centre, which is a neighbourhood that belongs to everyone in Medellín. With the input and participation of people who visit the area, we have created and improved public and green spaces for the citizens' enjoyment, such as green corridors and renovated historic sites of the city.

Another example is the Pact for Air Quality and the BreatheLife workshop. In just one year, we have involved local authorities to implement public policies that engage all stakeholders in improving air quality. This has transformed the adoption of low carbon emission technologies.

01 Car lanes along Paseo Bolívar have been pedestrianised to give both pedestrians and cyclists better access to surrounding commercial areas.

02 Greening efforts along Avenida Oriental, a major thoroughfare in Medellín.



01

In high trust cities, even vulnerable groups feel they are protected and respected by the society as equals. How does Medellín ensure this?

Cities worldwide have an important commitment to avoid any situation involving discrimination, insecurity or violation of people's fundamental rights. From the Mayor's office, we promote and undertake actions so that everyone in Medellín can exercise their rights without any distinction.

Therefore, we decided to join big initiatives such as the United Nations Safe Spaces for Women and Girls and the Latin American Network of Rainbow Cities to create real changes in our city and generate change in our region by working with other territories.

In Medellín, we have the Secretariat of Social Inclusion, Family and Human Rights. It works for the ethnic and diverse population. We have teachers, officials and leaders who are trained as agents against discrimination; an Afro-descendant Integration Centre; and a Centre for Sexual Diversity and Gender Identities. We offer training for teachers and officials and have undertaken campaigns to educate people on the value of diversity.

We also have a Secretariat for Women, which has made progress in terms of new policies for gender equality to pursue economic, political and social equality for women. Recently, we launched the Pact for Equity, which invites all sectors of the city to join an exercise of co-responsibility that is based on collaboration for cultural transformation.

01 A lone schoolgirl makes her way through Comuna 13. Once Medellín's most dangerous neighbourhood, Comuna 13 has undergone massive transformation and is now a safe and vibrant neighbourhood.

02 Mayor Gutiérrez visits children at the Buen Comienzo Gardens, a centre offering early childhood education and care.

“Our Mayor's office reaches out to the citizens and not the other way around.”

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We look ahead with pride, yet we don't forget our past.

It is very important for the government to work around these matters. However, values in a society should primarily be promoted at home. Therefore, we consider it important to invest in that. My wife Margarita leads a project called Weaving Homes, which brings workshops to people's homes to improve family relationships. These sessions talk about respect, love and tolerance as the basis of healthy coexistence.

Another type of trust Medellín has done well in is improving international trust in the city. How does Medellín reconcile the image of a high trust city with the city's dark past of crime and drugs?

Many people still have the same notion of Medellín from more than 20 years ago, and continue to display that version of our city in the news, movies and television series. But that is not our reality today. Medellín has transformed and even though there are still challenges ahead of us, it is safe to say that the violence that tainted our global image in the 80s and 90s is in the rearview mirror.

No city has suffered what Medellín went through. We need to tell our story, heal the wounds and get closure. We must give both victims and heroes the space they deserve.

As a society, we unite to carry our city forward. Today, we look ahead with pride, yet we don't forget our past. A very important project underway is called "Medellín embraces its history", which involves the demolition of the Monaco Building, the former residence of narco-terrorist Pablo Escobar. A memorial in honour of the victims of narco-terrorism is being built there as we speak. Thousands of people fought the Mafia or died innocently because of it: they are the true protagonists of the story. The memorial, named Inflexión, was designed by architects based on the citizens' inputs, gathered through public talks and imagination workshops.

This is just one of the actions to rebuild our history so the world understands what we suffered and sympathise with our pain, but also understands why our transformation is so valuable. We conduct a specialised history module in schools to educate our children on those dark times and prevent the Narcos television series from being the only narrative. We are also working on a memory tour for tourists, among other projects.

Many societies that have suffered the horrors of violence have done valuable work to recover their memories. We studied their experiences and will continue to learn from them.

What are some developments in social trust from other cities that have caught your attention?

In Medellín, we continue to learn from other cities around the world. Singapore is of great inspiration to us in terms of planning and developing inclusive cities.

Recently, we have been learning from cities such as Palermo (Italy) regarding the generation of a culture based on legality; from Seoul (South Korea) to develop a more intelligent and sustainable transport system; from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on learning and education; and the World Economic Forum with respect to technological adaptation and implementation. Not to mention, we have been working alongside C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group for climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, among others. **○**



INTERVIEW

Desmond Lee

Building a High Trust and Resilient City

Known for driving collaborations between the government and the community, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development **Desmond Lee** shares how city leaders can involve people and private institutions in efforts to strengthen social capital and trust.

What is a high trust city?

A high trust city is one where citizens can go about their daily lives knowing that if they are considerate to others, others will be considerate to them. A high trust city is also one where citizens trust the city's institutions to look out for them and care for them. A high trust city is one where social capital is strong, and where it's being built on day after day. In order to reach that stage, a city needs to look into three aspects of resilience. Because trust and resilience are interrelated.

First, you need to have social resilience. Society in and of itself, supported by the policies and programmes, is resilient in that there are opportunities for citizens to interact, to build trust with neighbours, with the community and with institutions.

You also need to have a sense of infrastructure resilience, in that the infrastructure meets the needs and

aspirations of people in their daily lives. Not just today, but tomorrow and in the future.

And lastly of course, a sense of climate resilience—that the city takes care of the future challenges that climate change can bring.

How can the government build up social resilience?

A city's resilience is put to the test when it is faced with unexpected challenges, for example, a natural disaster or terrorist attack. For instance, after the Christchurch terrorist attack, the way in which the city and the people of New Zealand responded showed remarkable resilience.

In Singapore, we never take for granted that trust exists or that people are prepared. We need to make sure we protect our people but also empower and enable them to be resilient.



Desmond Lee, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development.



01

The SG Secure movement actively empowers citizens to look out for risks and for each other, and equips them with the skillsets to respond during unexpected incidents. So putting in people’s minds that they should “run, hide and tell”. And when they encounter someone who’s wounded, they should “press, tie and tell”. These enable them to instinctively respond so that collectively, we are more resilient.

The SG Cares movement encourages communities to work together with social services and government agencies to care for the vulnerable in society, whether they are low-income citizens or those who had seen better times but are now facing tremendous difficulties because of crisis.

“Ensure that the city remains human scale, because ultimately cities are for the people.”

We also launched a ComLink (community link) initiative to support families in rental housing areas. It provides the platform for Social Service Agencies, civic and religious organisations and ordinary citizens to support families facing crises, in the hope that when they see light at the end of the tunnel, they can then become leaders of the community, and in turn help others as well. This is part of the whole drive to create social resilience in the community.

01 An SG Cares Community Network Session at Ang Mo Kio where participants from over 80 community partners and agencies gathered to discuss social service delivery.



02

The population today are more vocal and educated, and demand that governments see them as equals. What can governments do to involve and empower them?

City planning must be inclusive in various ways. It needs to ensure that the city remains human scale, because ultimately cities are for the people. Social needs should take front and centre when planning a city’s infrastructure and future. The process also needs to bring people on board, to give them opportunities to access and draft plans, and share their dreams and ideas—how they want their neighbourhoods, transport nodes, workplaces and parks to look like. These opportunities are absolutely critical, so people know they can actually make things happen. This brings trust to a different level altogether.

One way is to have conversation spaces, not just pertaining to people who are cut from the same cloth. Conversations like Our Singapore Conversation and SG Future brought Singaporeans from a cross section of society together in smaller settings to discuss their hopes for the future and how these can be achieved. We all look and speak the same but we have different interests and concerns, and are passionate about different causes. The constructive engagement of citizens through close-up platforms—whether it’s focus group discussions or working groups—allows the vocal population to get involved in the future of the city.

02 Rooftop on Oasis Terrace is a new generation neighbourhood centre that was developed after numerous engagement sessions with Punggol residents.



01

You have worked closely with civil society and citizen groups. How do these collaborations build trust between citizens and the government?

In the past, the government would have to engage different groups of people separately, in different rooms, so to speak, to explain our approach. That often involved speaking on behalf of causes, interests and concerns. I think it is important to bring trust to the next level by not just governing, but governing together with society—getting people more involved upfront so they understand the issues and can share their concerns. They can imbibe and understand the concerns of other Singaporeans, and internalise the challenges that the next generation will likely face. They too have a part to play in making some of the difficult decisions to keep this city resilient and future ready.

We find that the non-governmental organisations, voluntary welfare organisations and cause-based groups

all care about their causes and Singapore. It's a matter of working more closely with them. As we do things together, trust will grow. It has to be cultivated, nurtured and watched over, because trust is a fragile thing. When you work with people up close, they see the concerns you have and challenges you have to deal with, and they have an opportunity to grapple with these issues, even as they pursue the causes they feel passionately about.

For example, the idea for the Friends of the Park community came about one day as I was walking through the forest with National Parks Board CEO Kenneth Er. We were looking at the damage caused by some users of the forest, and started questioning, “How do we remedy this? How do we prevent it from happening again? How do we preserve the trust that the users of this space have in the government? How do we protect and enhance trust between different groups of users?” Because otherwise, there will be friction, suspicion and a lack of trust.

“Trust has to be cultivated, nurtured and watched over, because it is a fragile thing.”



02

01 Volunteers assemble dry provisions to distribute to needy seniors as part of the A Packet of Rice movement, an SG Cares initiative.

02 Minister Desmond Lee with members of the public at the launch of a turtle hatchery at Small Sister's Island.

Instead of the typical model where we call in contractors to repair the damage and just move on, we decided to form the Friends of the Park community. The community brings together different groups that may sometimes conflict with each other, and groups that have a different value proposition to the green spaces. We get them to work together with us to protect our nature reserves & areas and Park Connector Networks. They meet and understand each other, press palm-to-palm, and identify themselves collectively as Singaporeans instead of people with different interests.

How do you think we can maintain trust between citizens and non-government entities such as private corporations?

First, to ensure that the trust is not broken, you need appropriate regulations, particularly where it involves public health and safety. The government cannot obfuscate and abdicate its responsibility in that regard.

But regulation has to be sensible. It needs to enable institutions and organisations to act responsibly, and not stifle innovation that would ultimately benefit citizens.

Second, companies can and should come together, in the form of trade associations or professional bodies, to self-regulate. People can sometimes be very sceptical and cynical of self-regulation. But if done well, it creates a platform for people in the industry who care about high standards, trust, reputation and the impact that their products and services have on citizens to come together and uphold good standards.

This is particularly salient in industries and sectors where there isn't a direct impact on health and safety, and thus not as highly regulated by the government. Trade and industry associations can come together to set aspirational standards and goals, find ways to accredit and benchmark each other, and continually uphold trust with the users of their services and products.

Trust happens in two directions—vertically between institutions and citizenry, and laterally between citizens in day-to-day activities. How has the government helped to develop trust across Singapore's diverse communities?

In 1960, the People's Association (PA) was formed to bring people of different races, religions and interests together, and create opportunities for them to mix, interact and understand each other. All these build trust. This is important as fault lines in our society based on race, religion and other identifiers continue to exist. Unless we actively provide opportunities for people with different identities and interests to come together and forge a common identity, society will naturally stratify along the different indicators.

But beyond PA, there are many other ways to build trust horizontally amongst neighbours. You would see anecdotally, from time to time, neighbours getting into squabbles with each other. A home is meant to be a place you go to at the end of the day and spend quality time. Not a place you feel stressed going back to because you have a squabble with a neighbour. What we really want to avoid is neighbours having low trust with each other and using levers of institutions—the police or other government agencies—against each other.

So the spaces we provide in the housing estates create, passively, opportunities for people to mingle. But people ultimately have to seize these opportunities. You can have a common space but not do things together there. You can meet each other in the common spaces and yet not look up from the ground. You can meet a neighbour who has been living next to you for decades and yet not extend a hand of friendship. So whilst we can have the programming, infrastructure and spaces to enable people to interact, ultimately, each of us must want to build trust with the people around us—our neighbours, friends, community and institutions.



01



“Each of us must want to build trust with the people around us.”

Which developments in social trust from other cities have caught your attention?

The city of Medellín in Colombia has transformed in a few decades from a city notorious for crime into a shining example for many cities struggling with infrastructure, unemployment and crime. Medellín has taken ownership of its challenges and given its people opportunities to participate in city life in a constructive way.

For housing and infrastructure, it ensured opportunities for its people to engage in the design and construction of neighbourhood spaces, not on a grand scale but at the local, micro level. The city also gave the people opportunities to exhaust energies in a positive way, through sports, art and music.

This validates Singapore’s approach to building homes and communities as spaces that not only enable quality living in terms of infrastructure, but also has institutions and programmes in place to ensure people have the opportunity to mix, understand each other and work together to build trust. 

01



Tommy Koh

The Makings of a Trustworthy City

“Rule of law is one of the most precious achievements of humankind.”



Professor Tommy Koh is Singapore's Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rector of Tembusu College, Chairman of the Centre for International Law, and Special Advisor of the Institute of Policy Studies at the National University of Singapore. He was also Singapore's permanent representative to the United Nations and ambassador to the United States.

A high trust city, however elusive, can be measured and cultivated. Diplomat and international law expert Professor **Tommy Koh** shares why good governance, rule of law and a low level of corruption are key features of a trustworthy city.

Cities and countries share some characteristics with human beings. Some people are trustworthy, while others are not. Likewise, some cities and countries enjoy a good reputation for honesty and trustworthiness, but others have a bad reputation and are not trustworthy.

In this essay, I wish to assert three propositions. First, a high trust city enjoys good governance. Second, a high trust city upholds the rule of law. Third, a high trust city has a low level of corruption.

Good Governance and Trust

I think that there is a causal link between good governance and trust. What do I mean by good governance? I mean a ruler, government or local authority that is clean and competent, and not one that is corrupt or incompetent. I mean an authority that governs the city for the benefit of all of its citizens, and not only some. I mean an administration that delivers to its citizens security, health, education, housing, jobs, water and a liveable environment.

The citizens who enjoy good governance feel empowered. They feel that they live in a fair society. In a fair society, there is a high level of trust between the citizens, and between the citizens and those in authority.

The Rule of Law and Trust

The rule of law is one of the most precious achievements of humankind. It is as important within countries as it is between countries. In a city governed by the rule of law, no one is above the law, and everyone is subject to the law.

In such a city, citizens can feel safe in their homes. They can feel confident that the law will protect them, their properties and their rights. They know that neither the government nor a powerful person can violate their rights with impunity.

Trustworthiness is the result of good governance, the rule of law and low corruption.

They have confidence in their police force, public prosecutor and judges. In a city governed by the rule of law, a police officer will enforce the law strictly but impartially. Then, the public prosecutor will decide whether to prosecute, based upon the facts and the law.

In such a society, the judges are independent and will administer justice without fear or favour. As such, the citizens will have a high level of trust in persons in authority. Citizens, no matter how poor they are, will feel that they are protected by the law and that no one can trample upon their rights with impunity.

No Corruption and Trust

Corruption is a universal disease. It undermines integrity and trust. In a corrupt city, one has to pay a bribe for simple municipal services. In a corrupt city, there is no trust between citizens or between citizens and the authorities. In such a city, everyone is for sale. The policeman, the prosecutor, the judge and the politician are all for sale.

In an uncorrupt city, on the other hand, no one is for sale. Public servants do their duty and serve the citizens conscientiously. In an uncorrupt city, the citizens feel liberated. Consequently, there is a high level of trust between citizens, and between citizens and persons in authority.

The Ideal City

The ideal city is one that enjoys good governance, upholds the rule of law and is uncorrupt. Are there such cities on earth? My answer is yes. There are such cities in the different continents. At the moment, they are probably in the minority. Our ambition should be to make them the majority among cities.

The Honesty of Cities

In 2001, the *Reader's Digest* magazine decided to test honesty in cities around the world through a "lost wallet" test. In each city, 10 wallets containing the local equivalent of US\$10, a name card and a telephone number were deliberately dropped. The aim was to observe how many wallets were returned in each of the cities. The results were reported by Eric Felten in his article "Finders Keepers", published in April 2001.

The test was carried out in 14 Asian cities. The results were as follows:

CITY	WALLETS RETURNED (OUT OF 10)
1. Singapore	= 9
2. Incheon, South Korea	= 8
3. Trivandrum, India	= 8
4. Kamakura, Japan	= 7
5. Chiangmai, Thailand	= 6
6. Seoul, South Korea	= 6
7. Mumbai, India	= 5
8. Taipei, Taiwan	= 5
9. Bangkok, Thailand	= 5
10. Tainan, Taiwan	= 5
11. Kajang, Malaysia	= 5
12. Lapu Lapu, Philippines	= 4
13. Manila, Philippines	= 4
14. Hong Kong	= 3

This "lost wallet" test is a simple and unsophisticated way of gauging the relative honesty of cities. It is meaningful as a test of the honesty of people in different cities. Over time, cities develop their specific cultures. Some cultures put a higher premium on honesty than others.

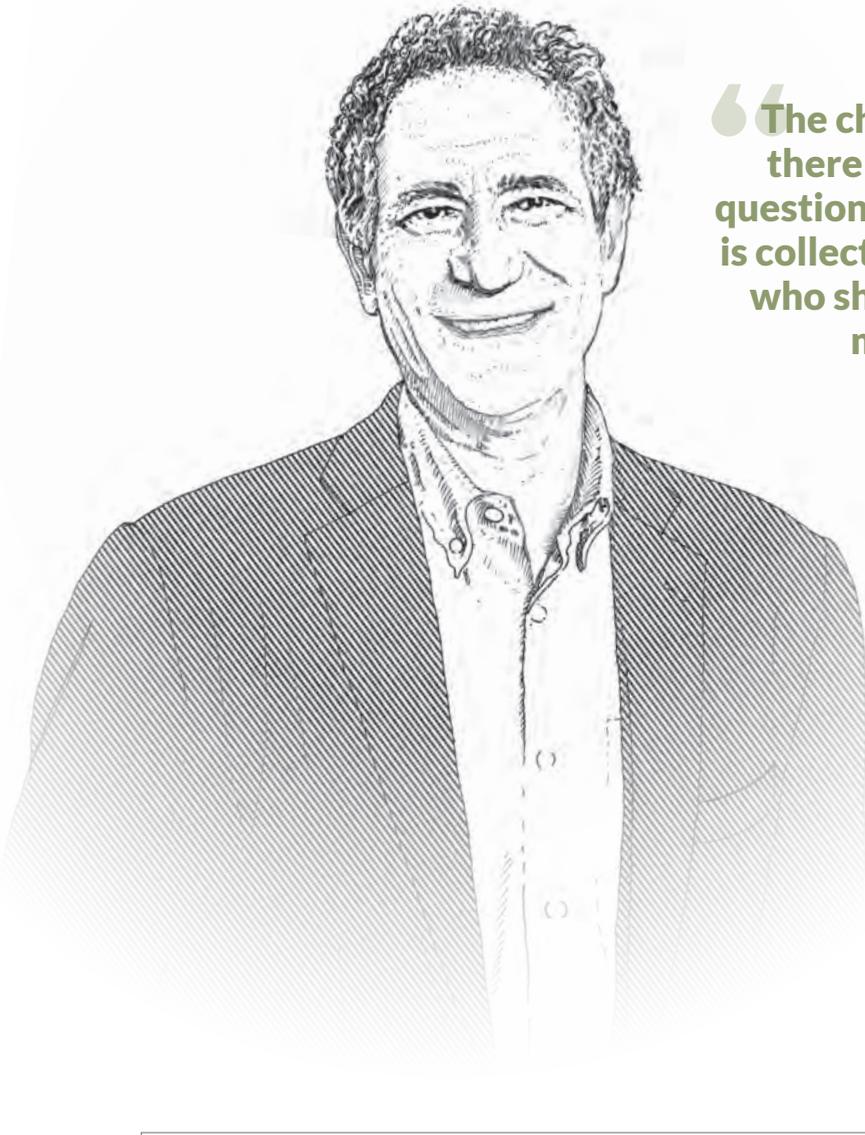
In the case of Singapore, I would argue that honesty has become a part of our DNA. Singapore is an example of a high trust city. Its trustworthiness is the result of good governance, the rule of law and low corruption. ●



OPINION

Daniel L. Doctoroff

Using Urban Data, Securing Public Trust



“The challenge is that there are legitimate questions about how data is collected and used, and who should control or manage it.”

Daniel L. Doctoroff is the founder and CEO of Sidewalk Labs, an Alphabet subsidiary focused on urban innovation. Previously, he was the President and CEO of financial media company Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding for the City of New York.

Public data is held, on the one hand, as a resource for improving people's lives and, on the other, as a threat to privacy and user trust. **Daniel L. Doctoroff**, founder and CEO of urban innovation organisation Sidewalk Labs, argues that these competing concerns can be reconciled by establishing clear governing principles.

One promise of urban technology is that it allows us to know so much about city life. What condition is our infrastructure in? How is energy being wasted? Are the city's facilities serving all of its people? Answers to these questions could significantly improve life for the people.

The challenge is that there are legitimate questions about how data is collected and used, and who should control or manage it.

Sidewalk Labs takes the challenge of responsible data use very seriously in our projects including Sidewalk Toronto, a joint effort with government redevelopment agency Waterfront Toronto to create a new kind of mixed use, people-centric community by combining urban design and digital technology. We believe appropriate processes for responsible data collection and use can be established, to benefit the community and protect individual privacy.

When collecting urban data, organisations must have a clear purpose for its use, and this must benefit the community at large.

We have three overarching concepts that may be useful to cities as they think about how to use data for the people's interests:

1. Recognise and handle urban data as a distinct category;
2. Set clear guidelines for the responsible use of urban data; and
3. Establish an Urban Data Trust to oversee and audit urban data.

Recognise and Handle Urban Data as a Distinct Category

First, we lack a definition of what urban data is and is not. Information you voluntarily share with your bank, information that your favorite app collects about you under its terms and conditions, and information the census gathers about you are all very different.

Thus, the term urban data must be defined as a distinct category. What distinguishes it is that such data is collected in physical or community spaces where it is difficult to obtain meaningful consent prior to collection and use. It also has the characteristics of a public asset—it should be collected and used to make urban life better, and managed in a way that earns and maintains public confidence. Lastly, urban data should not only include personally identifiable information, but also non-personal, aggregate or de-identified data due to the impact that such data could have on people and the community.

Set Clear Guidelines for Responsible Use

Second, because urban data is collected in the public realm, it must be handled in accordance with a community-established set of guidelines that apply equally to all entities that collect or use urban data. For our Toronto project, Sidewalk Labs is proposing guidelines covering various aspects of the process.

When collecting urban data, organisations must have a clear purpose for its use, and this must benefit the community at large. No one should be collecting data for the sake of it. Organisations should collect the minimum amount of data needed for that purpose, and use the least invasive technology available. They should also inform the public in a proactive and clear way of what is being collected and why. Sidewalk Labs has co-created a project called Digital Transparency in the Public Realm to aid a global conversation on this.

Other guidelines include making non-personal, de-identified or aggregated urban data publicly accessible by default and formatted according to open standards. Also, urban data should not be used to target advertising to individuals without their explicit consent. Sidewalk Labs has already committed that we would not sell personal information to third parties or use it for advertising purposes.

Establish an Urban Data Trust

Part of using urban data responsibly involves making sure that no single entity controls it. But who should be the steward of this valuable but sensitive asset?

For our Toronto project, Sidewalk Labs has proposed to create an independent entity called the Urban Data Trust to manage urban data activities. Managed by a board appointed by public officials, the trust would act similarly to internal review boards at academic institutions to ensure responsible practices.

The trust would have three main roles. First, it will review and approve Responsible Data Use Assessments (RDUA). Any entity seeking to collect or use urban data would first need to submit an RDUA, which would document how the effort complies with guidelines, the purpose of data use, what data would be used and how, legal compliance, and a risk analysis for data collection and use. To aid public awareness, the trust would publish summaries of RDUA for approved data activities along with a map of sensors collecting data.

Second, the trust would formalise and enforce urban data agreements with all entities whose RDUA are approved. These would be similar to commercial data licencing agreements, contractually binding the entity to follow through on its RDUA.

Third, the trust would audit urban data and its use to ensure that entities comply with their agreements. Logically, such audits would take place frequently, depending on the extent and sensitivity of the data in question.

The governance of the trust will need to evolve over time, and will be specific to a given city's political and cultural traditions. In cities with a strong civil society, the non-profit structure might be best; in cities with strong traditions of appointed or elected bodies handling technical issues, that could work; in some places, government may be the best choice. In any case, the trust must ensure that urban data is collected and used properly.

Ultimately, Sidewalk Labs believes every city will have to figure out their own guidelines and safeguards for responsible data use. Only then can cities realise the benefits of urban data while earning public confidence and minimising data-related risks. 

Cities for All

What Does a High Trust City Look Like?

Cities are hubs for diverse communities to build bonds of trust that bridge ethnic, social and cultural differences. In this photo essay, **Belinda Tan and Zou Jiayun** explore how trust can be forged through safe and inclusive spaces, which strengthen community spirit and build a sense of ownership among a city's people.



Tokyo, Japan

With a little help from my friends

In Japan, it is a common sight for children as young as six years old to take the public transport on their own. This phenomenon is thanks to the concept of group reliance—people trust the community to help in the event of an emergency. Students are taught both in school and at home that members of the community can be trusted. Children are also tasked to do chores, which encourages them to take responsibility for shared spaces and instils pride of ownership.



Pachuca, Mexico

A stroke of camaraderie

Once a dangerous neighbourhood that people shunned after dark due to its dark and shabby surroundings, Pachuca's Las Palmitas is now characterised by swirling rainbow murals spanning hundreds of houses, after the government-funded Pachuca Paints Itself project. The initial plan to cover all buildings with white paint to symbolise equality among residents evolved into a collaboration between local artists and volunteers to liven up the dull buildings with splashes of colour. This physical transformation raised community spirits and promoted greater interaction among residents in a safer and more liveable Las Palmitas.



Tel Aviv, Israel

Don't judge a book by its cover

Tel Aviv's open-concept Garden Library in Levinski Park has evolved from one that caters to migrant communities to a vibrant cultural and community centre for foreigners, refugees, migrants and Israeli residents alike. Apart from carrying 3,500 books in 16 languages to foster cultural exchange, the library also sponsors art and education programmes to equip residents with tools and skills to be more competitive in the job market. The library has become a support centre for underserved communities as it provides a sense of trust and community through a physical space that unites people from all walks of life over their love for books.



Amsterdam, Netherlands

Turning creativity into community

From 2016 to 2017, Lola Lik was a creative cultural hub housed in a former prison complex. Its bustling communal spaces such as cafés and workshops were designed to foster connections between inhabitants of the neighbouring refugee centre Wenckebachweg and Amsterdam's creative professionals. Lola Lik also supported refugees' integration into society by requiring potential incubator lessees to demonstrate their contributions to refugees and the surrounding neighbourhood.

San Francisco, USA

No rain on Castro District's parade

San Francisco's cultural diversity is built into its geography. As the famed epicentre for gay pride and activism in the 1960s and 1970s, and a global hub for LGBT issues, San Francisco's Castro District has 72% of its residents identifying as LGBT and a variety of infrastructure to accentuate its culture. Features include a rainbow crosswalk embedded with 20 bronze plaques to commemorate LGBT advocates. These features reinforce the sense of safety so Castro's residents, LGBT or otherwise, can think of their town as an inclusive safe haven that connects the community.



Singapore

Serving warm plates to unsung heroes

Come Makan With Me is an initiative where volunteers host foreign workers in their homes and share home-cooked meals with them to integrate them into Singapore's society. The initiative, supported by the Migrant Workers' Centre, encourages Singaporeans and their migrant peers to interact as equals and appreciate the companionship. It aims to create a more inclusive society in which migrant workers are recognised for their contributions to Singapore.



ESSAY

Public Trust

Why and How Public Trust Matters

To build high trust cities, governments need to better understand the relationships linking people, leaders and the cities they inhabit. Behavioural scientist Professor **David Chan** explains the psychology of public trust.

City planning in Singapore is admired by many for its efficiency and effectiveness in creating well-integrated infrastructures and urban solutions for diverse people. For many years, people in Singapore have experienced and enjoyed a liveable city and a harmonious society.

With rapid changes in technology, data, population composition and socio-political mindsets, the challenge is for Singapore, a city-state, to continue to thrive as both a global city and a cohesive country—an urban future where people will enjoy a sustained and sustainable good quality of life at the individual and community levels.

As is the case for other cities, a people-centric approach is critical to designing and implementing urban solutions that work effectively for Singapore.

The key in a people-centric approach is understanding how people think, feel and act in various contexts, so that city leaders, planners, developers, practitioners, allied professionals and communities can co-create a city that is highly liveable, inclusive, cohesive, sustainable and resilient for its individuals and communities.

In this regard, Singapore has been tapping on the behavioural sciences to help develop solutions that will enhance the quality of life for individuals and communities. One area that has received increasing attention is understanding the multifaceted nature of “public trust”, which Singapore city leaders now recognise as critical in policymaking and urban solutions.



Professor David Chan is the Director of the Behavioural Sciences Institute, Lee Kuan Yew Fellow and Professor of Psychology at the Singapore Management University.

Note: This essay is adapted from Chapter 2 of the book entitled Public Trust in Singapore, edited by David Chan and published in 2018 by World Scientific.

Left to right: The Kuang Chee Tng Temple, Moulmein Church of Christ and Sathya Sai Baba Centre stand side by side along Moulmein Road.

“It is really the trust perceptions that matter.”

Public trust has always been important for cities. Governments and city leaders care about trust because it is extremely difficult to attract investors and developers, start a business, pass legislation, implement an initiative or manage a crisis in an environment where trust is low.

Although leaders pay significant attention to the economics and politics of public trust, they often neglect its social-psychological dimensions.

It is important to contextualise trust in terms of the specific issue, the situation, the population and population segment, and the time period. A frequent problem in public discourse and internal deliberations is that public trust is talked about in the abstract without specifying the context.

We can contextualise the discussion of trust in terms of what I have called the 3Ms of trust matters: Trust is multi-level, trust is multi-dimensional, and trust is malleable.

Trust is Multi-Level

Trust is multi-level. It is important to recognise the different aspects of trust at different levels.

The individual level is fundamental because trust is a psychological construct and it is really the trust perceptions that matter. A trustee may be objectively trustworthy but if the trustor does not perceive the trustee as trustworthy, then there will still be low trust. The level of distrust affects how the trustor thinks, feels and acts, which in turn could lead to important individual and collective actions or reactions.

Trust can also occur at the team or group level. Do you trust your city leaders? When you answer this question, you are thinking of



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the city leaders as a team without necessarily thinking of any particular individual leader. But it may take just one individual leader in the team to behave in a certain way to increase or decrease your level of trust for the city leaders as a team.

At the team or group level, we can examine inter-team trust or inter-group trust. In Singapore, we often talk about social cohesion and harmony in terms of trust between groups, such as between different race groups or religious groups. The varieties of groups are important, and city leaders need to pay attention to other emergent group differences, such as trust between locals and foreigners, or between other emergent groups categorised according to variables like age or socio-economic class demographics. For example, when creating public spaces or amenities in Singapore, urban planners explicitly consider how this can be done in ways that will facilitate interactions among diverse groups of people living in Singapore.



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There is also public trust at the level of institutions and the government. When we talk about public trust in Singapore, we often refer to trust in the Singapore Government, and specific public institutions such as the enforcement agencies. Although this notion of public trust is clear in terms of the trustee, the issues are complex, such as which dimensions of trust are in question and how they are related. This brings us to the concept of multi-dimensionality, which is the second M of trust matters.

Trust is Multi-Dimensional

Trust is multi-dimensional, for both parties (the trustor and the trustee) in the trust relationship.

A citizen's propensity to trust their government depends on his or her beliefs, expectations and perceptions about the government. This subjectivity in the citizen is partly dependent on, but may sometimes be quite independent of, the government's objective trustworthiness. This is because not only the government's objective trustworthiness is sometimes not evident to

the citizen due to lack of access to relevant information, the citizen may have been misled to believe that some falsehoods or inaccuracies are factually true. This is particularly relevant in current times, with many describing the environment we live in as a “post-truth” world where falsehoods can be propagated rapidly and widely through cyberspace to severely and effectively erode public trust.

The issues involved, however, are not simple. Correcting false beliefs, for example, involves more than just calling out falsehoods as fake news and denouncing them. If citizens believe that what the government calls fake news is indeed the truth, then the more the government “attacks” the fake news without thinking through how to address citizens' beliefs, the more they would not trust the government, because they think the government is attacking the truth. The government therefore needs to work on how to effectively point out what or which part of the news is the falsehood and what the facts are. The news could be information or allegations about an infrastructure, an urban policy content or a smart nation initiative.

01 Attendees gather at Pink Dot SG to show their support for the LGBTQ community.

02 The young and old come together to partake in intergenerational activities.



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Trust also comes with the public having certain expectations, in terms of expecting what the government will or will not do. An example is the public's expectation to be consulted when designing or implementing certain policies. When this expectation is not met, it leads to negative emotions, perceptions or even retaliatory actions.

On the other side of the relationship is the trustee's trustworthiness as perceived by the trustor. There are three important dimensions of perceived trustworthiness—competence, integrity and benevolence.

In the case of city governments, trust in competence refers to the public's confidence in governing bodies to perform and solve problems affecting people's lives, such as those relating to infrastructure, public transport and the delivery of public services. It involves the ability to address issues affecting quality of life, and also the effectiveness in managing crises.

Trust in integrity has to do with the public's perception of the government's character, and involves issues of honesty,

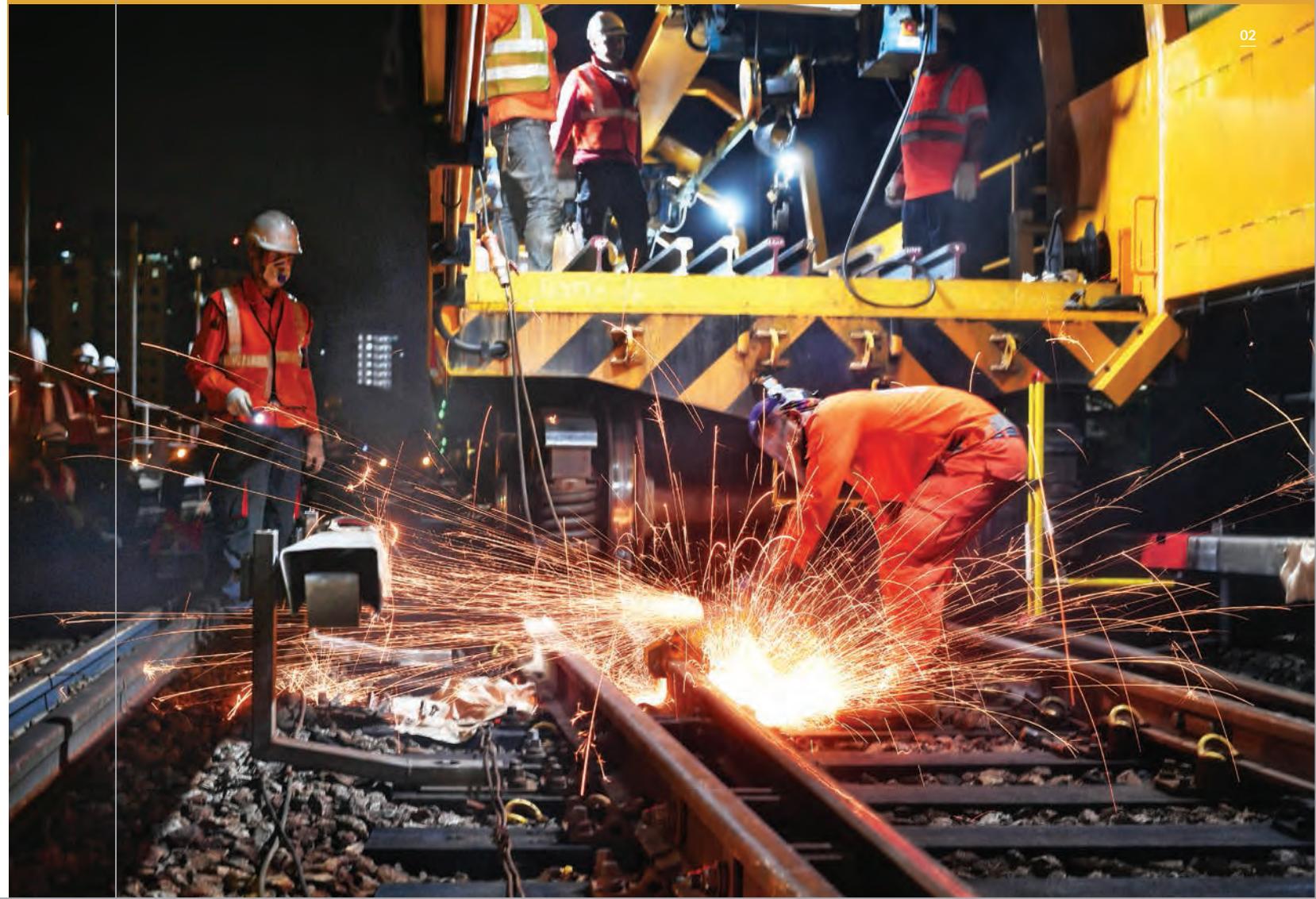
incorruptibility and impartiality. The focus here is on the integrity of public service officers and political leaders but it also involves the perception of how breaches of integrity are handled. In Singapore, the Government's vigorous action against those caught for corruption, regardless of who they are, may mitigate the erosion of trust due to integrity breaches to some extent and reinforce the Government's position on zero tolerance for such wrongdoings.

Trust in benevolence refers to the public's confidence that the government is authentic (it says what it means and means what it says) and has good intentions or motivations for undertaking a particular action or policy. Trust in benevolence increases when people believe that the intention of policy and government action is to serve their interests and is motivated by genuine concern for citizen well-being, as opposed to being influenced by vested private or partisan interests. It gets eroded when people think that policies are formulated by an elite disconnected from ground sentiments, is unable to empathise, or does not care enough for the less fortunate or ordinary folk.

01 Military personnel from the Singapore Armed Forces distributing N95 masks to the public during the 2013 Southeast Asian haze crisis.

02 Workers conduct repair works on the Mass Rapid Transit tracks during the night to ensure smooth commuter services during peak hours.

“Trust in benevolence will increase as people see evidence that the Government says what it means and means what it says.”



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Trust in benevolence is one of the hardest forms of trust to gain, and one that means a lot to the public but is often neglected by governments. Often, the problem may not be that the government is actually not sincere, but that it is not perceived as sincere because it has not paid adequate attention to the nature of its actions, engagement and communications.

In the case of the Singapore Government, there has been increasing emphasis on citizen well-being, social mobility, quality of public engagement efforts and humility and empathy in public service. There are also significant policy shifts in urban planning, housing, health and education, where the policy content is more explicitly focused on citizens' immediate concerns as well as their longer-term interests and both policy design and implementation were preceded by extensive consultation and engagement with the public. If these emphases and policy shifts are sustainable and translated into intended outcomes that benefit citizens, trust in benevolence will increase as people see evidence that the Government says what it means and means what it says.

Trust is Malleable

Trust is malleable, which simply means it can change. This may sound obvious, but many often fail to appreciate its implications.

Trust takes time to build, is easy to lose, and once lost it is difficult to restore. When we understand what this statement really means, we will find trust so precious and we will appreciate why we cannot take trust for granted. We will also realise that trust erosion is easy and trust repair is difficult. The point is not to lament on the fragility of trust but to understand what it means for trust building since trust can change.

The first step is to know that trust is dynamic and sensitive to the context. A trust level at

Trust takes time to build, is easy to lose, and once lost it is difficult to restore.

any one point in time must never be taken as fixed or a given. The level of trust can change gradually or abruptly, and it may increase or decrease depending on the prevailing factors that impact on trust, thereby producing a pattern or change trajectory over time.

The dynamic nature of trust is why it is very difficult to predict future levels of public trust based on historical trends. For example, you could have trusted the Government for the past 20 years, but if it does something now that really violates your values, you may stop trusting it.

Trust need not change gradually—it can move rapidly and abruptly depending on changes in context. Therefore, leaders need to be careful when making decisions and policies based on trends and projections. The overdependence on past trends is probably underestimated by many city leaders. Trust levels in previous years may give the leader some relevant context and data reference. But what happens in the next year depends a lot on what the leaders do this year, and what the people are perceiving about the leaders.

The limitation of using past trends of trust levels to predict current and future levels of trust must not be confused with the separate issue of changes in the people's lived experiences over time. The pattern of these changes is critical in influencing trust levels. When citizens go to vote at the ballot box or when they decide how to respond to city leaders on an issue, they do not care where Singapore stands in a global ranking of country trust levels. They care where their well-being stands today as compared to the past few years of their lives.



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It is the lived experiences that the people go through that will determine their trust levels and their reactions, in both attitudes and actions. So, it is intra-individual and intra-country/city changes in trust levels, and not inter-country/city ranking, that is most important for the politicians and city leaders to bear in mind.

In sum, trust is neither random nor predetermined; trust levels can be predicted to some extent and they can be enhanced. We need to go beyond the trust score at any one point in time and understand that trust is a process. That means understanding the science of trust and translating it to practice to deal with trust erosion, trust repair and trust development.

Evidence-Based Approach to Building Trust

To increase trust, the first step is to understand that trust is a psychological perception that is complex and critical. An evidence-based approach to trust is essential.

Findings and implications from behavioural sciences studies of the social-psychological processes involved in the trustor-trustee relationship are therefore critical to better understand public trust including how and why it changes, prevent its erosion and find ways to enhance it in society.

The practical purpose of studying public trust in a country or city is to increase trust between people and the government and between different groups within the community or society. There are two goals: increasing actual trustworthiness of trustees and increasing trustors' trust perceptions of trustees. Actual trustworthiness of trustees should logically lead to increased trustors' trust perceptions of trustees. However, the research literature has shown that trustors' trust perceptions are frequently misaligned with trustees' actual trustworthiness. Therefore, a research roadmap needs to assess and address both.

To understand trust, we need to appreciate its fragility and power. ○



ESSAY

Singapore's Community Engagement Journey

Making Trust a Planning Asset

When community engagement is done right, a conflict between the government and civil society, instead of being a destructive event, can be a creative opportunity for mutual support. For this to happen, trust between parties is paramount. **Louisa-May Khoo** shows how this has been consolidated over the years in Singapore.

Community engagement is an important theme in urban governance, and increasingly commonplace in the contemporary planning processes of many cities. It can take many forms: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, co-creating and empowering; with each moving up the scale of participation from weak to strong. In its weaker forms, engagement can be regarded as political propaganda, seen as mere tokenism and a tool towards securing acquiescence. In its stronger forms, community engagement can be a key ingredient of social capital, elevating the people's ownership of a

decision and their participation in its implementation.

However, the process can become protracted and can lead to outcomes that are less just, especially if they are "hijacked" by specific interest groups. The community engagement process hinges on a delicate and dynamic relationship between the state and civil society stakeholders, built upon trust and mutual respect. This essay tells the story of Singapore's journey in community engagement for urban planning, with lessons for other cities.



Louisa-May Khoo is an adjunct researcher with the Centre for Liveable Cities. She previously served as an urban planner with the Urban Redevelopment Authority and Ministry of National Development. Louisa is currently pursuing doctoral work on inclusive planning practices under the International Doctoral Fellowship award at the School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia.



A 1987 exhibition titled *Conserving Our Remarkable Past* was put up to familiarise the public with conservation schemes for Singapore's ethnic districts.



Community engagement process hinges on a delicate and dynamic relationship... built upon trust and mutual respect.

From Show-and-Tell to Dialogue

After Singapore gained independence in 1965, the state focused on addressing urgent development challenges such as housing provision and sanitation. This meant urban planning was regarded as scientific and technical, for which the expertise of bureaucrats and professionals was prided. Expediency of implementation was also a key consideration.

The idea of using community engagement as a means to build trust between people and the government only took off in the 1980s, after basic development needs had been addressed and economic growth took off. The quality of the urban landscape and the distinctiveness of Singapore's identity started assuming greater importance.

The stewardship of the country had also passed to a new generation of leaders, who brought with them a more consultative style of governance. In line with this changing socio-political climate, the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the nation's planning agency, led the way. For its Central Area Structure Plan, it held public consultations for feedback on its proposal to conserve seven areas in Singapore including ethnic districts such as Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam. An exhibition that displayed the detailed conservation plans was conducted in 1987. These initiatives were greeted with much media coverage and public excitement.

More extensive consultations with local stakeholders followed, with the formulation of Concept Plan 1991 and the crafting of 55 medium-term development guide plans

(DGPs). As local area plans, the DGPs were first exhibited as draft plans to solicit feedback from the public. These exhibitions were held in high-traffic commercial centres to maximise public outreach. Several public dialogues chaired by cabinet ministers were also held to show sincerity in the desire to engage the public and provide legitimacy to the process.

Hard Knocks: Tussles and Trade-offs

While these visionary plans were often welcomed, crystallising these plans into concrete development projects sharpened planning dilemmas and brought difficult decisions on trade-offs to the fore. Like newlyweds still ill-equipped to translate a shared vision of a meaningful home into reality, planning officials and stakeholders in the community engagement process

dealt with hard knocks that would hone the process moving forward. Trust—and the lack thereof—emerged as a key factor in skewing planning outcomes.

The old National Library, now a memory, was a reinforced low-rise structure with red brick walls that stood at Stamford Road. It has since made way for the Fort Canning Tunnel to alleviate through traffic to the downtown retail district of Orchard Road. There was a public outcry when plans for its demolition materialised in 1998. Former National Development Minister Mah Bow Tan recounted that the move was necessary.

“I think we did the right thing. At that time, the traffic engineers were really quite worried about the traffic in that area. It would have been very bad...but people probably do not

01 A Kampong Bugis Development Guide Plan consultation session in 1991, chaired by then Minister for National Development S. Dhanabalan.



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appreciate that, now that they're actually driving through the tunnel and everything is smooth," he told the Centre for Liveable Cities.

But Mah acknowledged that the process of public engagement could have been better managed. "One of the dilemmas that we faced [was] whether there was a solution that would have satisfied both the conservation ideal as well as the traffic requirement. I don't think there was, but maybe we could have articulated that a bit better," he said.

He added: "Part of the problem was that we did not start the engagement process early. We did not realise how sensitive or emotional the Library was to so many people."

Civil society is a major resource, not a stumbling block.

It is therefore crucial to start the engagement process early. Yet, this presumes that trust and rapport are already present to enable meaningful conversations. In its absence, a terse battle of words, often in public media, could degenerate an already tense situation into an adversarial stand-off, triggering the dissipation of trust in state-society relations.

01 Today, only fragments of the old National Library building remain.

02 The conserved Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve is home to diverse flora and fauna.



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When the government was looking into plans to permit fishing and boating activities in the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, members of the Nature Society (Singapore) were upset, said the society's former President Geh Min. They were concerned that these activities would destroy the reserve and turn it akin to a theme park, and sent angry letters to the press. This led to a "tussle" between Nature Society and the National Parks Board, the government agency in charge of parks and wetlands.

Although the issue was eventually resolved, Geh noted that advocacy groups at that time had to use the newspapers as the main interface of communication with the

government before the advent of social media. Government agencies had not been inclined to share development plans with civic groups, thus rapport was low.

Trust, therefore, is the cornerstone of effective engagement. As Former President of the Singapore Heritage Society Kevin Tan puts it: "You've got to learn to trust civil society actors; and civil society actors have to trust the government. What we really abhor is being made use of, to appear to have been consulted. It cannot be that you think you always know better and summarily rubbish our ideas."

“People know their neighbourhoods best and it is crucial to invoke their ideas... to achieve more equitable planning outcomes.”

He added: “Civil society is a major resource, not a stumbling block.”

A milestone in trust building between the state and civil society was the retention of the Chek Jawa intertidal flats on Pulau Ubin, an island off mainland Singapore, in 2001. The rich biodiversity of the intertidal flats, originally announced for reclamation, would have been destroyed if plans had proceeded. The government did an unusual U-turn after considering the proposals put forth by the Nature Society, the unique circumstances of Chek Jawa and public campaigns to save the area, and deferred the reclamation for as long as possible. This episode highlighted that the state-society partnership could be complementary rather than confrontational.

Building Capacity Towards More Effective Engagement

More recently, in 2011, the Rail Corridor project saw the URA engaging the public earlier in the planning process and ensuring the engagement reached as many people as possible. The project aims to reinvigorate the now disused railway, which used to transport goods and people between Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.

The process reflected a desire to involve the community to co-create proposals from a clean slate, rather than merely engaging them to obtain buy-in for a preconceived plan. More significantly, the oft-used dogmatic agenda of “optimising land use” was set aside for more purposive community driven objectives. This signalled a change in the way government officials viewed lay knowledge—they recognised that people know their neighbourhoods best and it is crucial to invoke their ideas and passion to achieve more equitable planning outcomes.

The extensive engagement process brought on board not just professional bodies and advocacy groups, but also students, seniors and residents living in the vicinity of the rail corridor. This was a learning experience for advocacy groups as well, as it enabled them to work closer with the community to address their concerns in a holistic manner. Thus, trust and rapport were established more broadly, not just between advocacy groups and state agencies. The engagement drove changes based on public feedback, such as the improvement of safety and connectivity of two steel truss bridges near the conserved Bukit Timah Railway Station and the Rail Mall.

01 Many people visited the rail corridor after it was made open to the public in 2011.





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Where the railway line had physically divided communities, the Rail Corridor now provides the opportunity to connect neighbourhoods and link communities into an inclusive community space.

In recent years, Singapore's engagement approach to planning has also broadened to involve building a more participatory local planning culture and cultivating a stronger sense of community ownership.

As part of the Draft Master Plan 2019 review, the URA conducted engagement efforts early to provide planners with sufficient time to fine-tune their plans and policies, and manage ground expectations. For example, a series of public exhibitions were held between 2017 and 2018 to solicit views from the general public on the development of new growth areas and housing precincts, as well as ideas for the rejuvenation of mature areas. The feedback received was useful for planners in their review of the plans for these areas.

The Draft Master Plan was then exhibited from March to June 2019. Social media efforts before and after the launch helped to spread key messages and sustain public interest, while guided tours organised for key stakeholders including grassroots leaders, agency partners, developers and residents extended outreach efforts to the local community.

Conflicts as a Productive Force for Change

The case for community engagement is clear—there is value when it is effectively carried out in both good and bad situations. Although the duration of decision making could be lengthened and implementation of proposals delayed, the collective process fosters a shared ownership towards the building of city and society.

Even so, community engagement should not replace the role of leadership and urban governance. In many cities, engagement processes can become mired in gridlock and lead to stalemate when difficult decisions are left in limbo. Worse, participation could lead to unjust outcomes when community interests are parochial and reflect the Not-in-my-Backyard (NIMBY) mentality.

The government has the duty to uphold the nation's interests, and safeguard the needs of varying sectors of the community. Meaningful engagement involves all parties being genuinely interested to take into account the different perspectives and extensive knowledge brought to the table, and the varying beliefs, aspirations and values of other stakeholders.

Potential conflict is inherent in engagement situations, and the planner serves crucial roles as an effective facilitator, empathetic listener and skillful negotiator. With trust and the earnest desire to foster a deliberative partnership, even conflicts can be a creative rather than destructive force to shape a more socially resilient society. 

- 01 Members of the public shared suggestions for the Rail Corridor at a workshop at Bukit Timah Community Centre in 2016.
- 02 The Draft Master Plan 2019 exhibition gave members of the public the chance to understand and give their feedback on urban development plans.



CITY FOCUS



Surabaya

Enabling and Engaging Citizens



Surabaya's mobile libraries increase citizens' access to books and educational materials.

In the past decades, Surabaya has transformed from an emerging town into a clean and green metropolis focusing on inclusive growth. **Alvin Chua** explores how Indonesia's second largest city built trust, reduced corruption and boosted liveability, education and economic growth through a range of people-centric efforts.

For Surabaya's three million residents, the integrated municipal reporting and management system known as Command Center 112 is more than a three-digit hotline to report traffic accidents, floods or other emergencies. It is a direct line to the heart of the city government, where various real-time monitoring platforms and resources come together to coordinate public services.

This example underlines Mayor Tri Rismaharini's citizen-centric approach towards urban liveability, economic development, education and equity. Under her lead, Surabaya focuses on public sector integrity and strengthening institutions and trust.

The city government's initiatives to promote inclusive growth and transparent public services have helped to engender trust between citizens and the public sector, while boosting liveability and socio-economic resilience of Indonesia's second largest city.

Inclusive growth and transparent public services have helped to engender trust.



Alvin Chua is a writer and researcher in the fields of sustainability, urbanism and heritage.

Going Digital for Transparency and Trust

At the forefront of Surabaya's efforts to build trust are digital platforms that provide transparency in interactions between the government and the private sector. Companies can apply for business licenses or permits to use public facilities through the Surabaya Single Window system, instead of having to go through a more lengthy paperwork process. The transparent process has also increased citizens' faith in the local economy.

The Government Resources Management System provides a cross-sectional view of public budgets and the implementation, procurement, monitoring and evaluation of services, ensuring accountability across these areas.

These efforts have reduced corruption in Surabaya's public sector while improving public services and city budgeting. In 2011, Indonesia's National Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK when abbreviated in Indonesian) ranked Surabaya first for its anti-corruption initiatives. The city also ranked second in the KPK's Public Sector Integrity Survey of 2013, and scored well on the KPK's assessment of citizens' access to information and transparency in procurement. These measures have also resulted in significant savings on the city's budget.



City officers who control traffic signals at Command Center 112 ensure smooth roads and help emergency services reach victims in a shorter time.



A mobile library in a park provides citizens with easy and casual access to information.



01

By shifting to digital systems, the city government cut its annual spending on paper costs from 29 billion rupiah (S\$2.76 million) to 9 billion rupiah (S\$857,000). “Our budget can be more efficient and the surplus budget that we save can be allocated for public service delivery,” added Mayor Rismaharini.

Beyond tapping technology, the Surabaya administration has also worked to gain the citizens’ trust by improving education, liveability and livelihoods.

Improving Education

To extend the reach of education and improve trust through a better-informed citizenry, Surabaya has sought to reform its formal education sector.

School fees up to the high school level have been waived to encourage children to stay in

school, while some *kampung* (Indonesian for ‘village’) communities have mandated evening study times. Some challenges remain, including the fact that some schools still charge miscellaneous fees that exclude the economically-disadvantaged, but the municipality is pushing for bureaucratic and legislative reforms to address these issues.

To enable citizens to access government services online, Surabaya has established over 40 Broadband Learning Centres that provide free internet and digital media lessons. More than 1,500 public libraries are spread throughout the city, including mobile ones in parks. These learning facilities equip citizens with digital skills, improve their economic prospects and help them interact with the government and society at large in more informed and meaningful ways.



02

Enhancing Liveability

Dealing with urban issues efficiently to run a sustainable, liveable city is a direct way for local governments to earn the citizens’ trust. This principle is well understood in Surabaya, which maintains a clean and green environment through parks, green spaces and high public cleanliness standards. Green spaces and better drainage infrastructure have helped to reduce the city’s flood-prone areas from around half of its land area to less than 3%.

Citizen participation is vital in sustaining the liveability of the city and its surroundings. Surabaya worked to provide infrastructure such as street lighting in *kampung* areas as a first step towards improving neighbourhood security and economic accessibility. The next step, said Mayor Rismaharini, was to invite the community to “manage their cleanliness in *kampungs*...together with informal leaders and public figures”. Involving citizens gives them a stake in the environment, strengthening trust and collaboration in local governance.

“Inclusive growth that benefits the citizens in turn reinforces the bonds of trust throughout society.”

While considering tram and other rail systems, the local government remains mindful of the need to ensure affordability of transportation. Surabaya’s bus service accepts plastic bottles for fares, to encourage the use of public transport, which is less polluting than private vehicles. This also helps to establish a culture of recycling and a sense of citizen ownership of the environment.

01 Residents going about their everyday activities in a *kampung* in Surabaya.

02 Citizens taking ownership of their environment by cleaning their *kampung*.

“Dealing with urban issues efficiently to run a sustainable, liveable city is a direct way for local governments to earn the citizens’ trust.”



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Creating Economic Growth and Opportunities

Inclusive growth that benefits the citizens in turn reinforces the bonds of trust throughout society. On the economic front, Surabaya has numerous initiatives to help citizens adapt their trades for the digital age, such as entrepreneurship programmes, retraining and skills initiatives and efforts to encourage the city’s digital services economy. These strengthen the citizens’ economic resilience and ensure they are not left behind in Surabaya’s growth story.

These programmes are centred on inclusive growth and the multiplier effect of strong communities. Mayor Rismaharini explained: “We provide training for housewives living in *kampungs* on cooking, sewing, making handicrafts and then helping them to sell their products. As their businesses grow bigger, they invite other housewives in their surroundings to work in the same business.”

The city’s entrepreneurship programmes are tailored to different segments of society—the Economic Heroes programme empowers women and their families, while the Young Warriors programme supports youths to build start-ups in their areas of interest. Budding businesses receive support to build e-commerce platforms and improve products, marketing and packaging.

Surabaya has also begun to establish urban farming and fishing as growth sectors, generating revenue of over US\$700,000 (S\$965,000) per month. Other programmes to promote economic benefits from recycling, waste management and organic waste composting have created jobs and strengthened the city’s environmental emphasis.

All in all, Surabaya’s blend of people-centric initiatives have earned it accolades, such as the 2018 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize Special Mention, for brewing trust and promoting inclusive growth.

- 01 Surabaya encourages recycling by allowing citizens to pay for bus rides with plastic bottles.
- 02 Shoemaking activity at Dolly Saiki Point, a former red-light district that has been converted to house local businesses focused on textiles and shoes. The government also offers classes to train women in relevant skills.
- 03 The community weighing their own waste at the local waste bank.



CASE STUDY

Medellín | University, Enterprise and State Committee

A Shared Vision for Transformation

What can non-government institutions do to promote innovation in their city when the government has its hands full with other pressing concerns? In Medellín, the academic and private sectors joined hands to set up a committee that unites stakeholders and coordinate development efforts, strengthening trust between citizens and the city.

The Challenge

In the 1980s, urban development in Medellín was disrupted due to violent crimes brought about by cartels and the armed forces. The capital of Colombia's Antioquia state was torn between drug traffickers who were trying to control strategic corridors, and economic and legal reforms proposed by the American government to combat the growing narcotic problem.

To make matters worse, the media portrayed the city as a source of violence, guns and crime—a perspective still sensationalised by the media industry today. State resources were stretched

as funds were channelled towards re-establishing security and safety within the city. Thus, Medellín's progress to a liveable and sustainable city was slowed down. Public trust in the government was low and many citizens had lost hope.

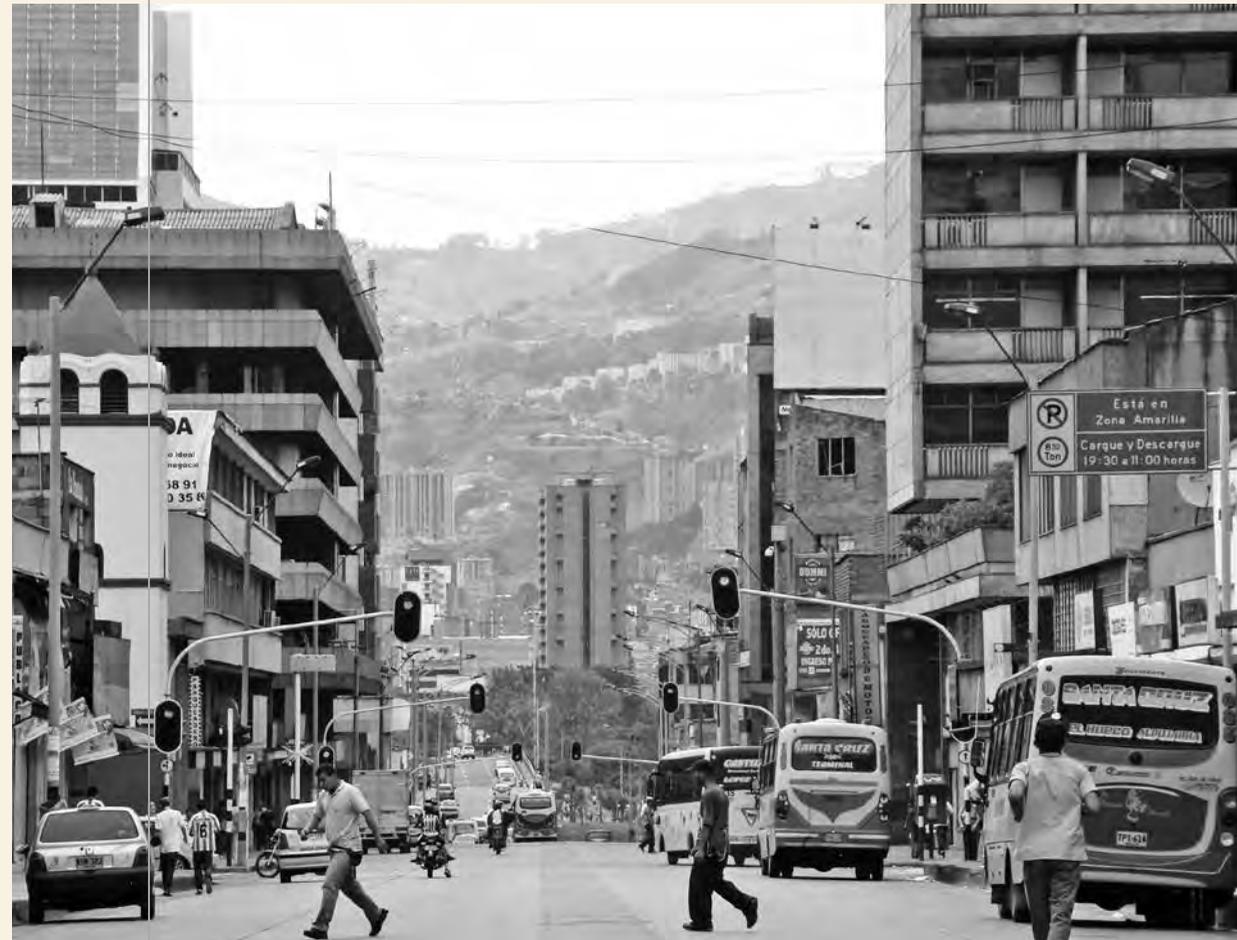
To improve the situation, a group of local academics and entrepreneurs came together to devise local solutions. This University, Enterprise and State Committee (CUEE when abbreviated in Spanish) aimed to inspire citizens towards a period of recovery by bringing together various sectors of society and providing a platform for their voices to be heard.



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Laura Victoria Suescún Ramírez is a journalist with a Masters in Science, Technology and Innovation Management from the University of Antioquia.

Juan Felipe Valencia Vallejo is an economist at the University of Antioquia.



Medellín's progress towards liveability was overshadowed by violence and narcotics.



The Solution

The Committee adopted a triple helix framework where scientific, economic and political systems work together to increase collaboration between stakeholders. Between the 1980s and early 2000s, different stakeholders promoted legislation and clearer channels of communication to formally establish the Committee in Medellín in 2003.

Most importantly, the Committee aimed to promote innovation and development by establishing a dialogue and agreement strategy, where stakeholders meet monthly to discuss ideas to improve the city. The Committee's executive members monitor progress and give strategic guidelines and suggestions to generate socio-economic growth based on science, technology and innovation.

This cooperation promotes creativity, entrepreneurship, research and innovation as essential strategies to improve productivity in key sectors of Medellín's economy. Besides boosting productivity in existing sectors, the process of integrating academic research with private sector interests generated new and better products and services to strengthen Medellín's industries.

The close working relationship has also led to a shared set of norms, beliefs and values for all members of the Committee, establishing a high level of trust among members and confidence in the Committee's mission.

Building on this, the University of Antioquia chairs the Committee to ensure technical knowledge from research is transferred to businesses and can in turn benefit citizens. The university acts as an interpreter and translator of scientific knowledge to



practical outcomes for businesses, and ensures the Committee's form and purpose are geared towards the citizens of Medellín.

The Committee's former President Luis Carlos Uribe Jaramillo notes that it "crystallises society's aspirations by getting universities to contribute through research, improving the competitiveness of companies, and contributing to socio-economic development and the well-being of society". This is crucial to reinforce trust between the citizens and the city.

“Transparency in the discussion promotes trust between the citizens, businesses and universities.”

01 The Committee convenes stakeholders ranging from city officials, research experts, local business leaders and citizens to discuss pressing urban issues.



01

The Committee incorporates the citizens' needs into long term proposals by opening the monthly discussions to all citizens. This encourages them to participate in dialogues ranging from economic development to social inclusion. Those who miss the sessions can access the information at the University of Antioquia. The transparency in the discussion promotes trust between the citizens, businesses and universities.

The state has also supported many of the Committee's initiatives. The Mayor's Office signed the Medellín Innovation Grand Pact to invest 1% of Antioquia's GDP in science, technology, and innovation activities, as part of a partnership with Ruta N, a corporation set up by the Committee to promote innovation and business.

Under this agreement, public agencies such as the Government of Antioquia and the Chamber of Commerce of Medellín collaborate with businesses and academia to drive growth and generate jobs for citizens.

Other collaborations include discussions between the Mayor of Medellín Federico Gutiérrez, the President of EAFIT University Juan Luis Mejía Arango and CUEE representatives to identify development pathways for Medellín to become more inclusive and equitable.

Despite these close partnerships with the state, the Committee remains an independent entity that is separate from the government. Hence, it does not respond to interests set out by political parties, which change regularly. This independence allows it to consider the citizens' long-term interests, build consensus among stakeholders and direct research and innovation to benefit them—thereby providing continuity in policy and planning. This has strengthened public confidence in the Committee in the long run.

“The Committee remains an independent entity that is separate from the government... thereby providing continuity in policy and planning.”



02

01 Members of Ruta N, Medellín's centre for innovation and business, attending a Committee meeting.

02 Ruta N collaborates with local universities and partners to conduct fairs on Medellín's services and institutions.



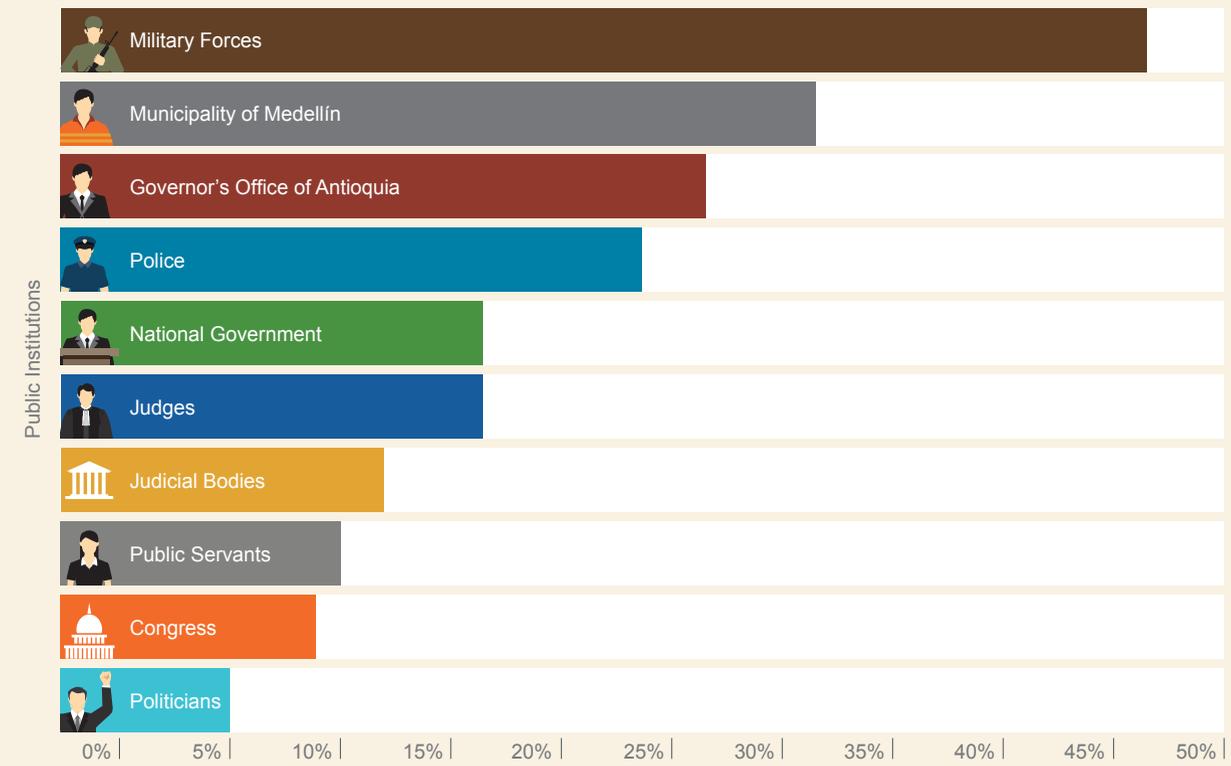
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Trust in Public Institutions

03



The Outcome

By bridging the gap between government, academia, businesses and citizens, the Committee helped to ensure that plans for Medellín were carried through in spite of upheavals and political changes. The coordinated approach ensured that resources are channelled wisely, thus increasing citizens' trust in the city. The Citizen Culture Survey showed that the Municipality of Medellín, which includes the Mayor's Office and members of CUEE, as one of the top three most reliable government institutions and national bodies.

Building on the foundation of credibility and trust it has established, the Committee is now entering its second phase. This Committee 2.0 focuses on socio-economic growth based on science, technology and innovation and has three working groups—developing human talents and resources, managing finance, and building platform systems to integrate science, technology and innovation companies. Initiatives include an Entrepreneurship Park to promote the incubation of technology-based companies, and a new institution called Tecnova to commercialise university technology and research.

The Committee's success is also testament to the importance of close collaboration between stakeholders, from the private to public sectors.

Beyond Medellín, the Committee is also promoting its model through pilot programmes in Oriente, Urabá, North and Bajo Cauca, so more cities can benefit. ○

01 & 02 The Flor de la Vida (Spanish for 'Flower of Life') system was implemented by Gaia Servicios Ambientales together with Ruta N. Collected rainwater is purified through activated carbon filters, ultrafiltration and ultraviolet light. It has the capacity to provide 1,200 litres of potable drinking water to the local community, sports teams and schools.

03 The local Citizen Culture Survey measured citizen confidence and trust in public institutions.



CASE STUDY

Singapore | Public Housing Estates

High Rise and High Trust

Originally built for functionality, Singapore's government-built high-rise housing estates have been strategically redesigned since the 1970s to enhance trust between residents and their sense of security. The guiding principle throughout this process is maintaining the precincts as fenceless, inclusive communities.

The Challenge

Singapore's major resettlement of villagers and squatters to high-rise flats built by the Housing and Development Board (HDB) in the early 1960s not only called for the physical relocation of its citizens, but also a behavioural and cultural shift from *kampung* (Malay for 'village') life and the protective code offered by the community's *gotong-royong* (Malay for 'teamwork') spirit, to modern high-density living.

While the HDB initially focused on functional design to house a large

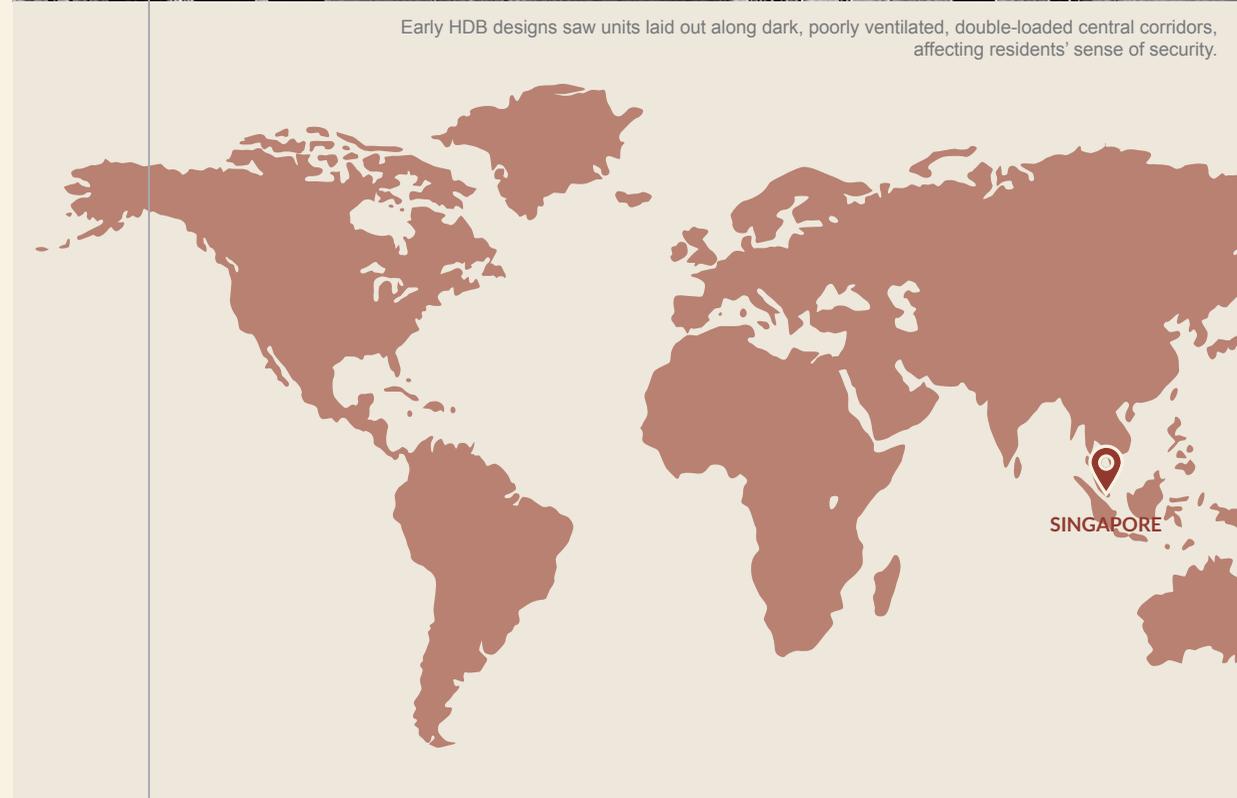
number of residents, it had to promptly deal with unintended consequences. Antisocial behaviour, like urinating in lifts and high-rise littering, became common then. Criminal elements were also apparent as some resettled slum dwellers with secret society affiliations committed snatch thefts, housebreaking, vandalism and molestation in lifts. These incidents, coupled with previously close-knit *kampung* communities now finding themselves living apart in high-rise blocks, heightened the citizens' sense of insecurity and distrust towards others.



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Early HDB designs saw units laid out along dark, poorly ventilated, double-loaded central corridors, affecting residents' sense of security.





01

The Solution

To address these concerns, Dr Liu Thai Ker, then Chief Executive Officer of HDB and Chief Planner of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), led a redesign of HDB estates in the early 1970s. The new design needed to enhance natural surveillance and build community and trust between neighbours.

Early HDB designs saw units laid out along dark, poorly ventilated double-loaded central corridors, affecting residents' moods and sense of security. This led to a design shift to open-concept long corridors along the facade of the blocks, which featured natural lighting and good ventilation.

However, some residents complained of strangers passing by their flat windows throughout the day. This prompted the HDB team to introduce segmented corridors with only six to eight units sharing a common stairway or lift. This redesign was scientifically supported by inputs from Dr Liu's sociologists that an individual would be comfortable living alongside and developing cordial relationships with at most seven neighbours. Residents could stop and interact at these "courtyards in the sky", building networks of trust.

01 & 02 Corridor designs over the decades have evolved from long facade corridors (top left) to segmented corridors (top right).



02

Residents could stop and interact at these 'courtyards in the sky', building networks of trust.

When introduced in the mid-1960s, void decks on the ground floor of public housing blocks were largely underutilised and devoid of activity. To inject more vibrancy into these spaces, HDB introduced amenities such as senior activity centres, childcare centres, pre-schools, 24-hour minimarts, coffee shops and strategically-placed tables and benches near the lift lobbies.

These amenities provide a regular stream of activities and eyes on the ground to discourage would-be criminals. Residents, storekeepers, customers and teachers who frequent these spaces would be able to recognise their neighbours, and serve as familiar faces that the community can trust and turn to for help.

As Dr Liu put it: "When you have a sense of familiarity, there is a sense of comfort, of safety. Anytime you see a strange face, you get alarmed. That also increases the level of security."

To create safe but inviting spaces, the HDB team employed unobtrusive measures such as landscaping and trees to mark entrances, exits and out-of-bound areas, in place of walls and fences. Better signage for wayfinding, estate maps with emergency contact numbers, and brightly lit corners and paths helped residents feel more comfortable and trusting in their surroundings.



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Additionally, carparks, playgrounds and recreational amenities were situated in spaces that provided a line of sight to surrounding flat windows. As such, residents on the ground and in flats could look out for one another. Covered walkways and staircase landings were also configured to improve their visibility in relation to neighbouring blocks.

A major source of concern in the early years of public housing was safety in lifts, as they were the scenes of robbery, molestation, urination and vandalism. Glass panels were introduced for new lifts and retrofitted to older lifts. The cost of the panels was outweighed by their benefit. Lift occupants now feel more secure, with passersby acting as deterrents to potential crimes.

Today, HDB continues to encourage relationship building and promote a sense of ownership at the town, neighbourhood and precinct levels through innovative designs and the provision of new community spaces and programmes that facilitate neighbourly interaction.

New community spaces introduced by HDB over the years include town squares, precinct pavilions, sky gardens, community living rooms in the void decks and 3Gen playgrounds, which foster inter-generational bonding by co-locating children's playgrounds with adult and elderly fitness stations. These are now important areas where neighbours build and strengthen their ties.



02

Residents who frequent these spaces would... serve as familiar faces that the community can trust and turn to for help.

In addition, HDB's community programmes such as the Friendly Faces, Lively Places Fund introduced in 2016 have been effective in promoting ground-up efforts by offering residents a maximum of S\$20,000 to organise

activities such as block parties or convert void deck spaces into community living rooms and workshop spaces.

All these efforts reduce the likelihood of a "Broken Windows" situation, where a neighbourhood in a state of disorder attracts would-be criminals, encouraging additional undesirable acts.

A void deck at Woodlands Drive 62 was converted into a community living room where dance and singing performances are held. Such ground-up efforts help to instil a sense of shared ownership over public spaces, while strengthening ties among residents.

01 Residents in Clementi West relaxing at their void deck. These spaces help residents recognise their neighbours whom they can turn to for help.

02 Landscaping around a housing estate's amenities and pathways offers clear lines of sight from the surrounding HDB blocks.

“The best defence against theft and robbery is to create a sense of community.”

The Outcome

Over the years, Singapore’s HDB estates have been planned, built and activated to strengthen communities and engender trust. “The best defence against theft and robbery is to create a sense of community,” said Dr Liu. “You improve safety because the neighbours are looking after your apartment when you are away.”

The interventions, many of which are subtle, have enabled estates to remain fenceless and open, rather than gated and exclusionary, even in the face of heightened societal and security concerns posed by changing population demographics and terrorist threats.

The maintenance and upkeep of the estate, as well as community programmes, remain critical in giving residents a shared sense of pride and ownership over their neighbourhoods.

In 2011, HDB introduced its Roadmap to Better Living to develop a new generation of public housing, with even greater focus to develop towns that are community-centric. HDB continues to improve on its designs with many new initiatives accumulated over the decades, to improve liveability and security, and elicit greater social inclusiveness and trust among residents. 

02



03



- 01 The Community Living Room is designed with seating areas for residents to mingle and chat. It is usually located near high-traffic areas such as letter boxes or lift lobbies.
- 02 Sky gardens and landscape decks provide additional green spaces for community activities such as gardening.
- 03 A void deck at Woodlands Drive 62 was converted into a community living room where dance and singing performances are held. Such ground-up efforts help to instil a sense of shared ownership over public spaces, while strengthening ties among residents.



CASE STUDY

Bangalore | iChangeMyCity

Civic Participation On-the-Go

In India, a mobile app is transforming municipal governance and enabling the people to call the authorities to account when they renege on citizens' trust in service delivery. This iChangeMyCity platform has given the people a collective voice of grievance and become a platform for them to drive solutions to neighbourhood problems.

The Challenge

Often heralded as the world's largest democracy, Indian cities have ironically faced difficulties in embedding citizen participation in governance, service delivery and city development. Municipal governance has remained weak, despite ambitious legislative interventions, most significantly the 74th Constitutional Amendment that formalised municipalities as the third level of government after state and central organisations. Executive power stays vested at the state level. While the democratic ideals of decentralised governance and citizen participation persist, less has been said about the nuts and bolts needed for urban citizenship to flourish.

This lack of municipal empowerment has left citizens largely unable to exercise their influence for better service delivery and distributional outcomes. Access to institutional mechanisms for redress is uneven and stratified by class, resulting in low trust between citizens and governments. Trust between the citizens themselves is similarly low due to divisions across class and socio-economic lines, thus affecting civil society's ability to solve civic issues effectively.



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Poor access to institutional mechanisms makes it difficult for citizens to report civic issues such as potholes.



Fixing civic issues with iChangeMyCity is as easy as 1-2-3

1

Post complaints on potholes, unattended garbage, bad roads and other civic issues in the neighbourhood.



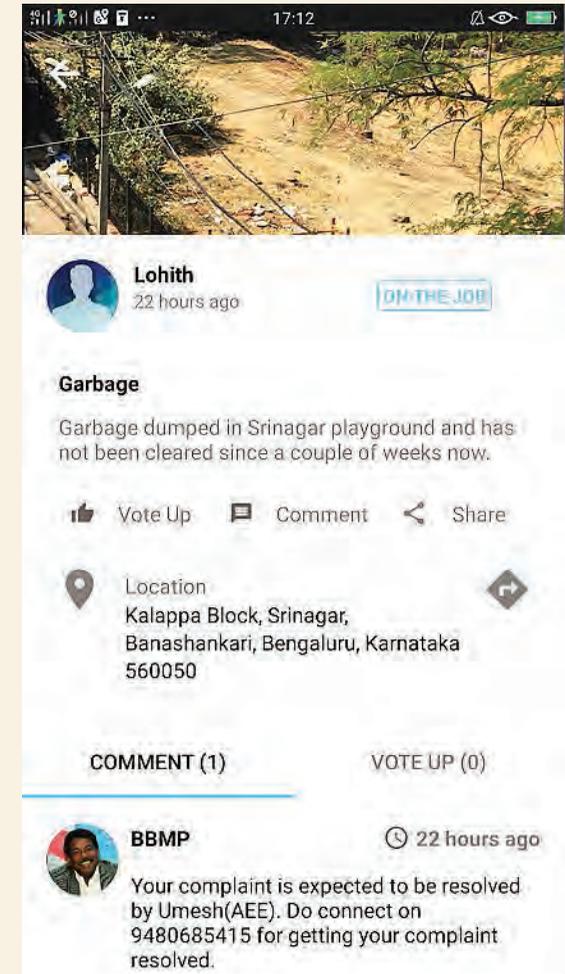
2

Upvotes prioritise complaints. The more the upvotes from friends and neighbours, the higher the priority.



3

Users interact with civic authorities and elected representatives to ensure complaints are resolved.



01

02

The Solution

Technology has helped to bridge this chasm between democratic ideals and the practice of city-making. Bangalore civic organisation Janaagraha's iChangeMyCity platform is credited with increasing citizen participation and eliciting institutional responses from city governments. The platform, initially implemented in Bangalore in 2013, provides an opportunity for citizens of various strata to exercise their right to the city by calling out service delivery failures and lending their voice to civic matters.

At the core of the platform is the iChangeMyCity mobile app that Janaagraha characterises as a "hyper-local social change network" that allows people to come together and change the city. The app allows citizens to report civic issues such as potholes and

unattended garbage, vote for complaints and interface with civic authorities to ensure institutional follow-ups.

The app's design is deliberately open and interactional. All complaints are available for public viewing instead of being privately fed to government authorities. Users are encouraged to interact, forming a network of citizens seeing each other as stakeholders in the city, and reinforcing cooperative networks of trust that engender active participation in resolving municipal problems.

The app does not operate in isolation. Instead, it forms the core node in a nexus of other platforms that build off each other to amplify citizens' voices. In addition to the app and its social media accounts on Twitter and

Facebook, iChangeMyCity expands its network of users with a web portal that also allows for posting of complaints.

The Bangalore version carries links to sub-sites that allow citizens to access news of civic participation; local data on city budgets, infrastructure and quality of life; and other platforms to give their feedback on the city budget or report traffic violations.

Citizen participation is not only confined to the digital realm, but can carry over to real life. Citizens have used the app to come

Users are encouraged to interact, forming a network of citizens seeing each other as stakeholders in the city.

together to resolve neighbourhood issues instead of relying on government intervention, thus building trust within the community.

01 Citizens can improve their city by reporting civic issues or voting for complaints on the iChangeMyCity app.

02 Authorities update users on their complaints, as seen in this screenshot.

“Citizen participation is not only confined to the digital realm, but can carry over to real life.”



02

An active member of iChangeMyCity, Vimarsha Vishruth, created an event on the platform to gather the community to clear a garbage dump in his neighbourhood. This caught the attention of another active member, who mobilised other volunteers including a grassroots campaigning organisation Jhatkaa. The area was cleaned within a mere seven days after the event was created on the iChangeMyCity app, thanks to the collaboration of citizens and community organisations.

While the app's ease of access and transparency encourage citizen uptake, the authorities' participation is crucial in ensuring institutional responsiveness to citizen feedback and the platform's legitimacy.

Data from iChangeMyCity's website shows that Bangalore has higher rates of active participation and resolution of complaints than other cities such as Mumbai and Solapur. One key difference seems to be the active participation of municipal authorities. Bangalore's municipal corporation, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, participates actively on the platform by addressing complaints and providing status updates on complaint resolution. In contrast, the Municipal Corporation for Greater Mumbai has yet to come on-board despite the state government's support.



01

01 Beyond participating online, citizens also come together in real life, such as to submit budget inputs.

02 City Pulse, a sub-site under iChangeMyCity, showcases news of civic participation such as Mega Cleanathons, which sees the community cleaning and refurbishing public spaces.



The Outcome

By tapping mobile technology, iChangeMyCity has mobilised millions of users across India and encouraged civic participation. Data from Bangalore shows a complaint resolution rate of over 92%, which is impressive considering the millions of complaints logged. This shows that the municipal authorities are responsive to citizen feedback, improving trust between citizens and government.

Janaagraha has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Maharashtra state government to use iChangeMyCity as a grievance redressal platform. The central government has even enlisted Janaagraha's help to develop a similar app for its Swachh Bharat ('Clean India') campaign.

01 & 02 A garbage dump before (top) and after (bottom) a clean-up organised through iChangeMyCity.



The platform has also won several accolades including the 2013 Google Global Impact Award, the 2015 Manthan Award for South Asia and the 2015 Information Society Innovation Fund Asia Award.

Those looking to emulate iChangeMyCity's success would do well to consider it in relation

to a sphere of mutually enforcing networks and factors. To effectively enable citizen participation and foster trust, openness is key and feedback must be made public. Both the citizens and the authorities have to participate actively—on online and offline channels—to mutually reinforce the networks of trust and cooperation that engender collective action. **○**

03 Citizens take a pledge at the Bengaluru Civic Fest hosted by iChangeMyCity.



CASE STUDY

Singapore | Dementia-Friendly Communities

Not All Who Wander Are Lost

Living with dementia should not mean being confined to one's home. In Singapore's Dementia-Friendly Communities, residents, service providers and businesses form a support network that persons with dementia can trust, enabling them to go about their daily activities confidently in their neighbourhoods.

The Challenge

A city's quick metabolism, characterised by rapidly changing urban landscapes and lifestyles, is particularly challenging, disorienting and alienating for persons with dementia. The condition affects the brain and its ability to function, leading to symptoms such as memory failure, personality changes and a reduced ability to perform daily tasks such as navigating one's way.

Like many other cities, Singapore is ageing rapidly and will be home to over 900,000 seniors by 2030. Currently, about 1 in 10 persons aged 60 years and older has dementia. As age is a risk factor when it comes to dementia, the number of persons with dementia is expected to increase as Singapore's population ages.

Dementia day care centres and caregiver support programmes are already situated within neighbourhoods to provide relevant healthcare and social support. However, dementia patients, many of whom are living independently, still avoid leaving their homes for various reasons, the main one being fear. This fear could stem from the possibility of getting lost, not trusting those around to help or having trouble navigating traffic.

With a projected increase in persons with dementia and a focus on ageing-in-place, there lies much potential for Singapore to create environments where persons with dementia can feel safe, understood and included by their neighbours.



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The incidence of dementia is rising and cities can be particularly disorienting for persons with dementia.





01

The Solution

The Dementia-Friendly Singapore initiative was launched to raise awareness of dementia and empower individuals and businesses to better support persons with dementia and their caregivers. Under this initiative started by the Ministry of Health and the Agency for Integrated Care, several mature neighbourhoods were selected as Dementia-Friendly Communities (DFCs).

Measures were introduced so that residents are more aware of dementia, businesses and service staff are more respectful and helpful towards those in need, physical environments are safer and easier to navigate, and educational resources on dementia are readily available.

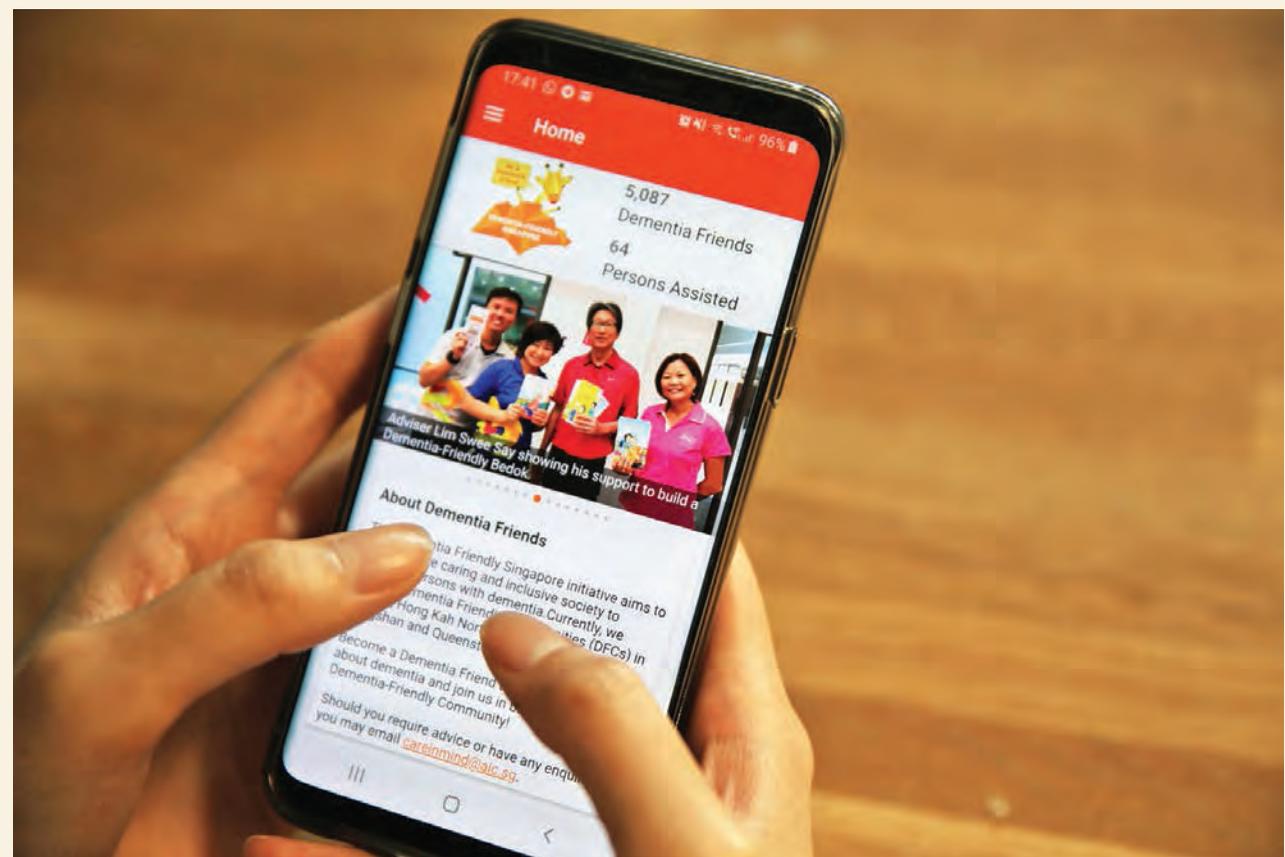
As a first step, volunteers and staff were deployed for outreach efforts to raise awareness of dementia. They approached

Multiple Go-To Points have been established as safe return points for persons with dementia.

individuals and businesses, taught them about common signs and symptoms of dementia, and how to communicate with persons with dementia. These individuals and organisations, from store owners to library staff and staff from public transport providers, come together to form a network of Dementia Friends. They serve as community lookouts who can spot and assist distressed persons with dementia in the neighbourhood.



02



03

01 Stickers are pasted at designated Go-To Points in DFCs.

02 Advertisements placed on public buses to raise awareness of dementia.

03 The Dementia Friends application links caregivers to Dementia Friends.



01 Volunteers explaining to neighbourhood shop owners about the signs of dementia and how to assist persons with dementia in their community.

Within each DFC, multiple Go-To Points have been established as safe return points for persons with dementia who may be lost or found wandering. These touchpoints are shops or facilities in the neighbourhood, such as pharmacies and community centres, which are familiar to persons with dementia and their caregivers.

Members of the public can bring seniors who are lost to these Go-To Points. Staff at the centre will offer assistance, such as calming the person down, and identifying and contacting their next-of-kin.

Furthermore, Go-To Points provide educational information on dementia for the general public, and resources for caregivers. For example, staff can connect caregivers to specialised outreach teams to provide them with additional support.

Given the urgency of locating and assisting lost persons with dementia, DFCs also leverage the reach and speed of technology. The Dementia Friends mobile application provides information and resources on how to support persons with dementia, and rallies the general public to support caregivers of those with dementia. It encourages members of the public to sign up as Dementia Friends and look out for missing persons with dementia.

Caregivers can use the app to seek help when their loved ones go missing, by uploading case reports with photographs of the missing persons and their last known locations. Registered Dementia Friends then receive alerts via the app to look out for those reported to be missing.

The Outcome

Since the 2016 launch of the DFC initiative, eight DFCs and over 200 Go-To Points have been established throughout Singapore. Seven more DFCs are in the works over the next three years.

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“Individuals and organisations, from store owners to library staff and staff from public transport providers, come together to form a network of Dementia Friends.”

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As of May 2019, the Dementia Friends app has gathered over 5,000 community volunteers and rallied the strength of the community to reunite over 80 persons with dementia with their loved ones.

One success was made possible by Dementia Friend Anthony Lim, who was out walking his dog when he spotted an elderly lady wandering around.

He tried to help her find her son's house, but without any success. He then received an alert from the Dementia Friends app with the same elderly lady's information and was able to immediately connect with the senior's family, successfully reuniting her with her son. What could otherwise have been a distressing ordeal for the senior and her family was thus circumvented.

Dementia-friendly community networks have also helped the police to locate missing persons. In Yishun DFC, police responded to a call of an elderly lady found in a void deck but were unable to identify her. Through the grassroots network, a neighbour identified the lady and alerted her daughter.

In bringing community stakeholders together, DFCs have helped to create safer communities where persons with dementia and their caregivers can trust their community to keep an active lookout for them. This trust empowers persons with dementia to go about their everyday lives more confidently, independently and with dignity. 

01 Police officers in Yishun DFC pledging their commitment to make the neighbourhood dementia-friendly.

02 Citizen Anthony Lim was able to reconnect an elderly lady with her family using the Dementia Friends application.

Temasek Foundation Leaders in Urban Governance Programme

25-29 November 2019



The Temasek Foundation Leaders in Urban Governance Programme (TFLUGP) is a 5-day mayoral and executive workshop targeted at international city leaders. TFLUGP is a practitioner-oriented programme to share knowledge of the guiding principles which contribute to high-density and high-liveability urban development and management. This programme is open to top office holders from Asian cities interested in learning from Singapore's urban development experience.

Through seminars, panel discussions, site visits, and dialogue sessions, the Programme will explore the following key themes:

- Integrated long-term planning
- Liveable high-density communities
- Governance & infrastructure
- Sustainable development
- Competitive economy



Participants from the 5th TFLUGP with Mr Desmond Lee (Second Minister for National Development).

What TFLUGP offers

- Mastery of the Singapore Liveability Framework, with best practices and insights in development strategies.
- Closed-door dialogues with past and present Permanent and Deputy Secretaries, and agency CEOs on current topics e.g. industrial infrastructure, urban redevelopment.
- Expert-mentored Action Plan for cities to implement over one year.
- Networking and Peer Learning with experts and participating city leaders.
- Site visits to experience urban solutions first-hand e.g. revitalising Singapore River, planning and managing Toa Payoh New Town.

Application

Cities are invited to nominate teams headed by a city leader (governor/mayor/municipal commissioner) together with two other senior officials responsible for urban planning, development and governance. Cities should submit a concept paper on a project related to a challenge they wish to implement over a year. Visit www.clc.gov.sg/Training/international.htm to apply.

Selection criteria

- Fluency in spoken and written English.
- Relevance of proposed project to making highly dense cities more liveable.

Programme fees

S\$13,500 (includes accommodation).

[Final fees will be confirmed closer to the programme.]

Sponsorship from Temasek Foundation is available. Eligibility criteria apply. See application form for details.

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CENTRE for Liveable Cities SINGAPORE

The Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) was set up in 2008 by the Ministry of National Development (MND) and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR). The CLC's mission is to distil, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities.

CLC's work spans four main areas — Research, Capability Development, Knowledge Platforms, and Advisory. Through these activities, CLC hopes to provide urban leaders and practitioners with the knowledge and support needed to make our cities better.

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