

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Affordable housing, public transport big parts of urban design

ACCESS to decent housing is recognised as a basic human right, as outlined in the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN outlined that decent housing does not only mean a place to stay, but it must be affordable, secure, in good location, habitable and accessible.

Bank Negara states that providing adequate and affordable housing is a shared responsibility.

More importantly, the central bank highlighted the need to reduce the cost of house components.

This would translate into lower house prices vis-à-vis the previous approach of addressing affordability via providing financing. To complement this, we should look into ways to reduce transportation cost.

With houses becoming unaffordable, especially in urban areas where economic opportunities are aplenty, some people are forced to settle down in fringe areas.

With limited economic opportunities, public transport and public services in fringe areas, travelling to urban areas for work becomes a big cost for the people.

Urban design is the macro process of outlining how city or town environments should be, in contrast with architecture.

Urban design looks into the whole concept of buildings, streets, parks and public space.

Its aim is to ensure a city's sustainability by having good accessibility, with each space interacting as a whole.

Two important components in urban design are inclusivity and sustainability.

It is mentioned in Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the UN to "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

To achieve this, 10 mechanisms were listed, on which two mechanisms mentioned affordable housing and public transport.



The authorities should ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing. FILE PIC

By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services. Slums must be upgraded too.

Provide access to sustainable transport systems for all, improve road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with attention given to the needs of those in vulnerable situations.

Planning can be used to allow

people to have better connectivity and accessibility.

Connectivity should be in a measurable index in terms of how people move from one point to another.

People who do not own a vehicle can stay anywhere in the township, gain access to public transport and go wherever they want.

For this, more buses should be

deployed, especially for areas not covered by the light rail transit and mass rail transit lines.

Negative perception of public transport can be improved via ensuring reliable bus services.

Bus lanes could be introduced to ensure buses avoid traffic.

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