

SINGAPORE'S DOWNTOWN – DYNAMIC, DELIGHTFUL, CONNECTED AND DIVERSE

Changing global trends are reshaping the way and spaces in which people live, work and play. To attract talent, business districts all over the world are racing to become attractive places that cater to the varied needs of modern lifestyles. Singapore's Downtown, comprising CBD and Marina Bay, is no exception.

In recent years, we have been moving away from a Downtown dominated by offices, to one which is more mixed-use and lively after office hours. The recent completion of several mixed-use developments in Tanjong Pagar is a significant step in its evolution. Downtown will continue to grow and feature a wider diversity of uses, including more residential and creative lifestyle options.

To achieve this, URA has proposed the following key strategies for the area.

1. A dynamic place to live and work

Injecting more homes in the area

There are opportunities to tap on the draw of Downtown living, amenities in the area, high transport connectivity, and the convenience that city living brings, to introduce more housing in the area. The injection of new housing options in Downtown will bring more homes to where jobs are, and cut down on commuting times for workers to and fro work.

With a larger live-in population, Downtown is set to become abuzz with activities and life after work hours, adding to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the city.

Creating urban neighbourhoods

CBD fringe areas such as Anson Road, Cecil Street and Tanjong Pagar provide a middle ground between the suburbs outside Downtown and the mostly commercial areas at Raffles Place, Robinson Road and Shenton Way. These areas already have a good number of amenities such as hawker centres, markets, community and social facilities and have the potential to transform into lively urban neighbourhoods.

Ample public spaces and pedestrian-friendly streets will function as attractive spaces conducive for community gatherings and interactions. In addition to these streets and squares, more seamless connections through developments lined with shops, eateries and amenities will make Downtown more walkable and delightful.

2. A delightful place to unwind

More public spaces will be provided in Downtown as spaces for respite, and as platforms for activities and programming. URA has been working with developers to provide public spaces within their developments, and some of these stakeholders have also organised activities and events to enliven the area. Past events include evening workout sessions, street ping pong, and lunchtime performances to delight the working crowd.

Some existing public spaces such as Raffles Place Park are already popular with the CBD crowd as a place to gather, take a break from work, and enjoy the open greenery. Agencies are engaging the stakeholders on more ideas for the programming and activation of the park.

3. A well-connected, car-lite Downtown

With Downtown becoming even more vibrant, getting in and around the area becomes increasingly important.

Besides the existing North-South, East-West, and Downtown MRT lines, Downtown will see new MRT stations from the upcoming Thomson-East Coast Line (TEL) and Circle Line 6 (CCL6). With the addition of the TEL Maxwell and Shenton Way stations and the CCL Prince Edward Road and Cantonment stations by 2021, all buildings in Downtown will be within a 10-minute walk to a rail station.

Agencies are also studying the possibility of transforming Robinson Road into a transit-priority corridor for public transport and active mobility. For example, more space can be given to buses, cycling paths and pedestrian walkways.

Active, convenient commuting within the city will become a reality by 2021 with an addition of more than 5 km of cycling paths to the existing 22 km network in the Central Area. Building owners are being encouraged to provide facilities such as bicycle parking, showers and lockers to make travelling to work—via active mobility—more conducive.

4. A city with diverse offerings

There are also opportunities to revitalise vacant State properties and land by introducing short-term uses, creating vibrant public spaces and plugging gaps in pedestrian links.

The availability of State land in strategic areas such as Marina Bay could also allow the insertion of unique lifestyle concepts that complement existing uses in the area, to bring about greater vibrancy. A shorter tenure provides for some flexibility and responsiveness to evolving needs.