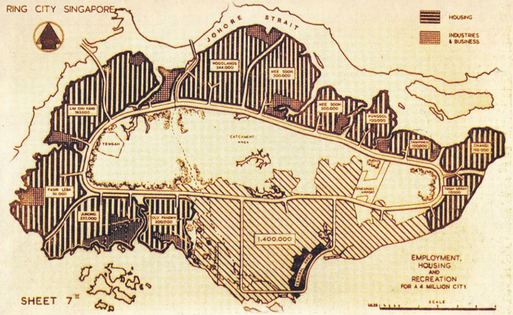
Past long-term plans

Singapore's reviews of its long-term land use plans, which have been undertaken every decade since 1991, have had a tangible impact on the nation's urban development. Here are the past plans and their highlights.

1963 'RING CITY SINGAPORE' PLAN

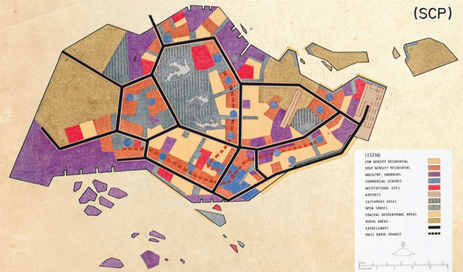
- Although not one of Singapore's four concept plans, the "ring city" plan heavily influenced the nation's subsequent long-term developments.
- The plan was developed with experts from the United Nations Development Programme, who had been invited by the Singapore Government to advise local agencies.
- It proposed a ring of self-sufficient towns around the central catchment area, with the towns connected by a road system.



CONCEPT PLAN 1971

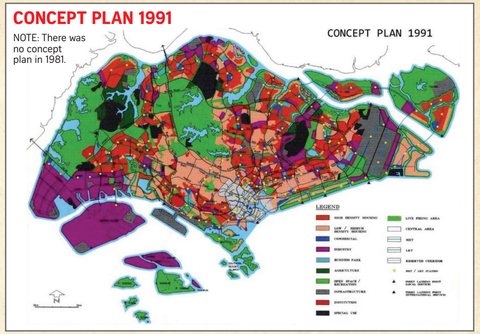
- The 1971 plan, built on the "ring city" plan, retained a ring around the central catchment area, along which new towns would be built.
- A southern development belt that spanned Jurong to Changi was planned, with new towns to be added along Singapore's southern coast.
- Marina Bay was conceptualised as Singapore's primary centre of employment.
- The plan also seeded the idea of an MRT network (right), which would begin with two lines bringing people in the towns to the city centre.
- One lasting idea from this plan was the relocation of Singapore's civilian airport, at Paya Lebar since 1955, to Changi. This removed noise pollution from areas like Katong and Geylang. The airport could also be expanded on reclaimed land as air traffic grew.

1971 CONCEPT PLAN STRUCTURE (SCP)



CONCEPT PLAN 1991

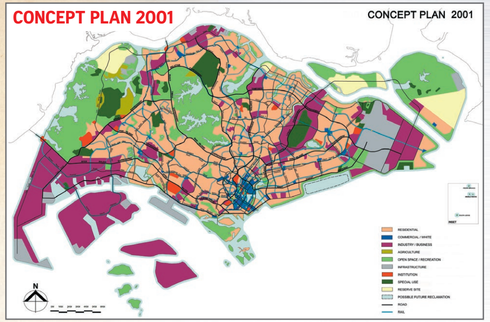
NOTE: There was no concept plan in 1981.



- With Singapore more modernised and basic issues like housing and employment addressed, planners were bolder.
- To minimise congestion downtown, regional centres were proposed in Jurong East, Woodlands and Tampines, providing employment, shopping and recreation.
- Seven islands to the south-west would be combined through reclamation to form Jurong Island. Today, it is a hub for Singapore's energy and chemicals industry (below).

- Greater emphasis was given to heritage and identity, with importance placed on the need to give Singapore "an Asian identity". Heritage districts like Kampong Glam (left) would have restored buildings and pedestrianised streets.
- Parks would be enhanced and green belts added to the city, while water bodies would be adapted for recreational use. A year later, Singapore's first park connector opened.

CONCEPT PLAN 2001

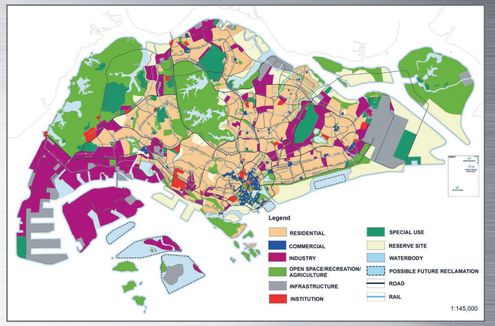


- Housing was a key focus, with proposals to develop more high-rise blocks with 30 storeys or more, and more homes closer to the city.
- The Pinnacle@Duxton, with seven 50-storey blocks, was completed in 2009 at the edge of the Central Business District (right).

- Singaporeans were invited to share their views on competing land uses of housing, parks and industries, as well as how to retain identity while planning for the future.
- The consultations brought renewed focus on built heritage and greenery, leading to two plans launched in 2002.
- The Parks and Waterbodies Plan would make Singapore a "tropical city in a garden" by improving streetscape greenery and creating more parks. Nature areas outside of nature reserves, like Sisters' Islands (below), were given planning status, with new developments near them scrutinised for environmental impact.
- The Identity Plan outlined the physical, architectural and cultural characteristics of certain nodes worth protecting. Places like Balestier and Joo Chiat were conserved with public support.
- White zones were introduced in subsequent master plans to allow for more mixed-use buildings that offered work, learning and play.

CONCEPT PLAN 2011

- This plan was followed by the release of a land use plan in 2013, and a parallel Population White Paper.
- It aimed to cater for a population range of 6.5 million to 6.9 million by 2030. The Greater Southern Waterfront was first mentioned.
- It also comprised plans for reclamation at Tuas Port, to consolidate Singapore's container port activities by the 2040s.
- The 6.9 million population figure drew protests, with concerns about job competition, too many foreigners, and overcrowding.
- In endorsing the White Paper in 2013, the Government emphasised that the population figures were a planning parameter and not a target.



2021 LONG-TERM PLAN REVIEW

- At the launch of a public consultation for this review, the Urban Redevelopment Authority said it would yield not just one plan but several options to deal with an "increasingly volatile, uncertain and fast-evolving environment".
- This will help future generations adapt and adjust to challenges.
- Adapting to climate change, preparing for future crises and providing for an ageing population are on the minds of planners.
- More developments like Kampung Admiralty (below), which integrates housing for the elderly with other amenities, may be on the cards.
- Future plans from this review could take into account the increasing trend of working remotely, the rise of e-commerce, as well as the push for decarbonisation.
- Singapore may also look at ways to increase food security and the local production of essential goods and services to buffer against future crises.

HOW DO LONG-TERM PLANS AND MASTER PLANS DIFFER?

LONG-TERM PLANS

Previously called concept plans, these plans provide broad directions for Singapore's urban development **over the next five decades.**

Reviewed **once every decade.**

Strategies of long-term plans are translated into

MASTER PLANS

Statutory plans guiding development **over the next 10 to 15 years.**

Reviewed **every five years.**

Show **permissible land uses** for various plots, and the density allowed for developments.

Source: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, URBAN PLANNING BY HENG CHYE KIANG AND YEO SU-JAN, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SINGAPORE, ST FILE
PHOTOS: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, ST FILE
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