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The Future of Public Spaces

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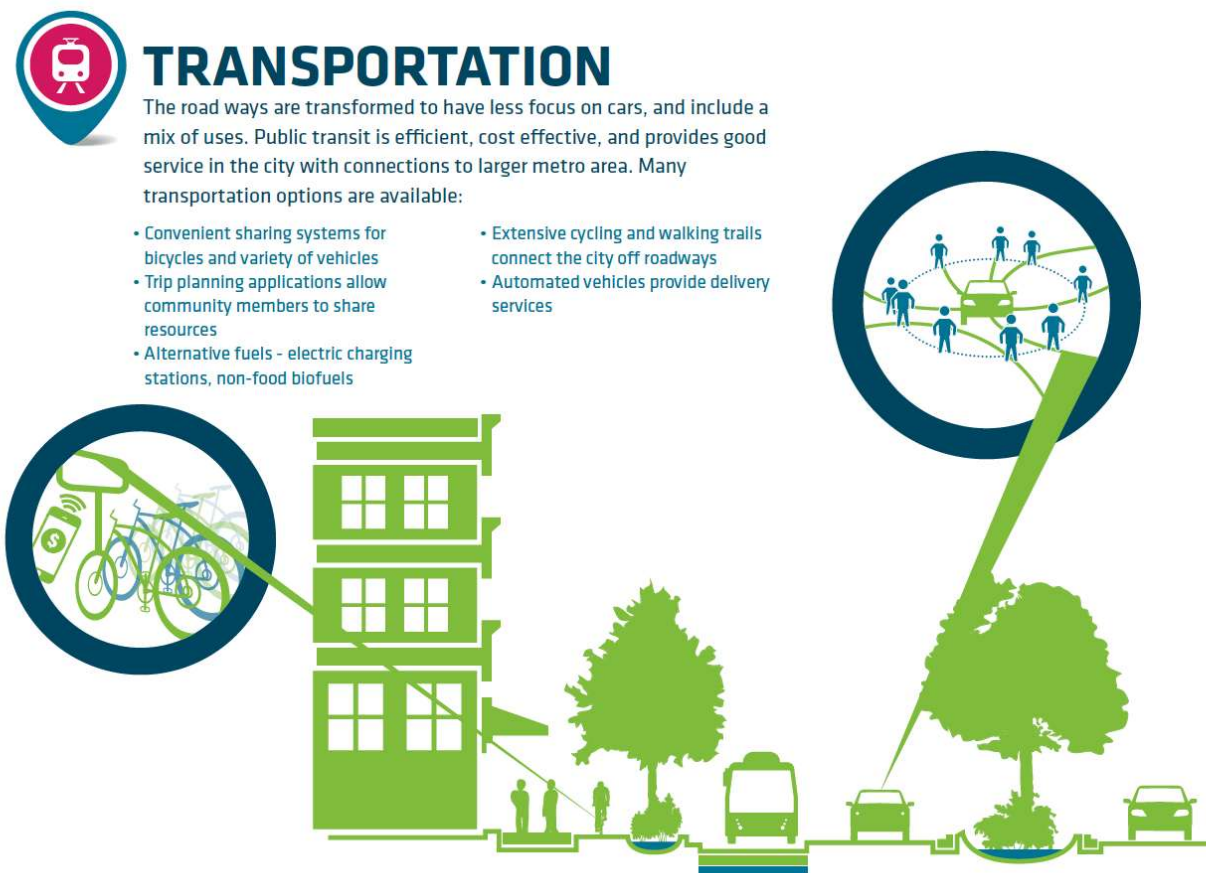
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The global pandemic has accelerated many important trends. One of the accelerating trends we are most excited about is the transformation of public spaces within our cityscapes.

There is no doubt that the global pandemic is changing how and when we use public spaces, particularly outdoor recreation, gathering areas and transit corridors. These are essential parts of our

community social infrastructure, and where people can connect, move and interact.

This transformation is an acceleration of trends that were already underway. Cities are undergoing a massive shift from the historic focus on car vehicle infrastructure, to a new orientation about people. The emergence of the 15-minute walkable city concept, the surge in multimodal transportation options, and an increased interest in outdoor pursuits; are all combining to reshape cities in favour of people.



This trend started in the 1970's, when Amsterdam residents purposely chose bikes over cars. And now it accelerates. Paris has launched plans to transform the Champs-Élysées – removing most of the cars. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90594546/paris-is-turning-its-iconic-street-into-pedestrian-gardens>. The City of Austin, Texas has released an \$8 billion plan to undo the car-centric city design and make it more people friendly. <https://revitalization.org/article/austin-texas-approves-revolutionary-8-billion-effort-to-undo-car-centric-planning-revitalizing-city-by-remaking-it-for-humans/#.YGn6k32GWxg.linkedin>

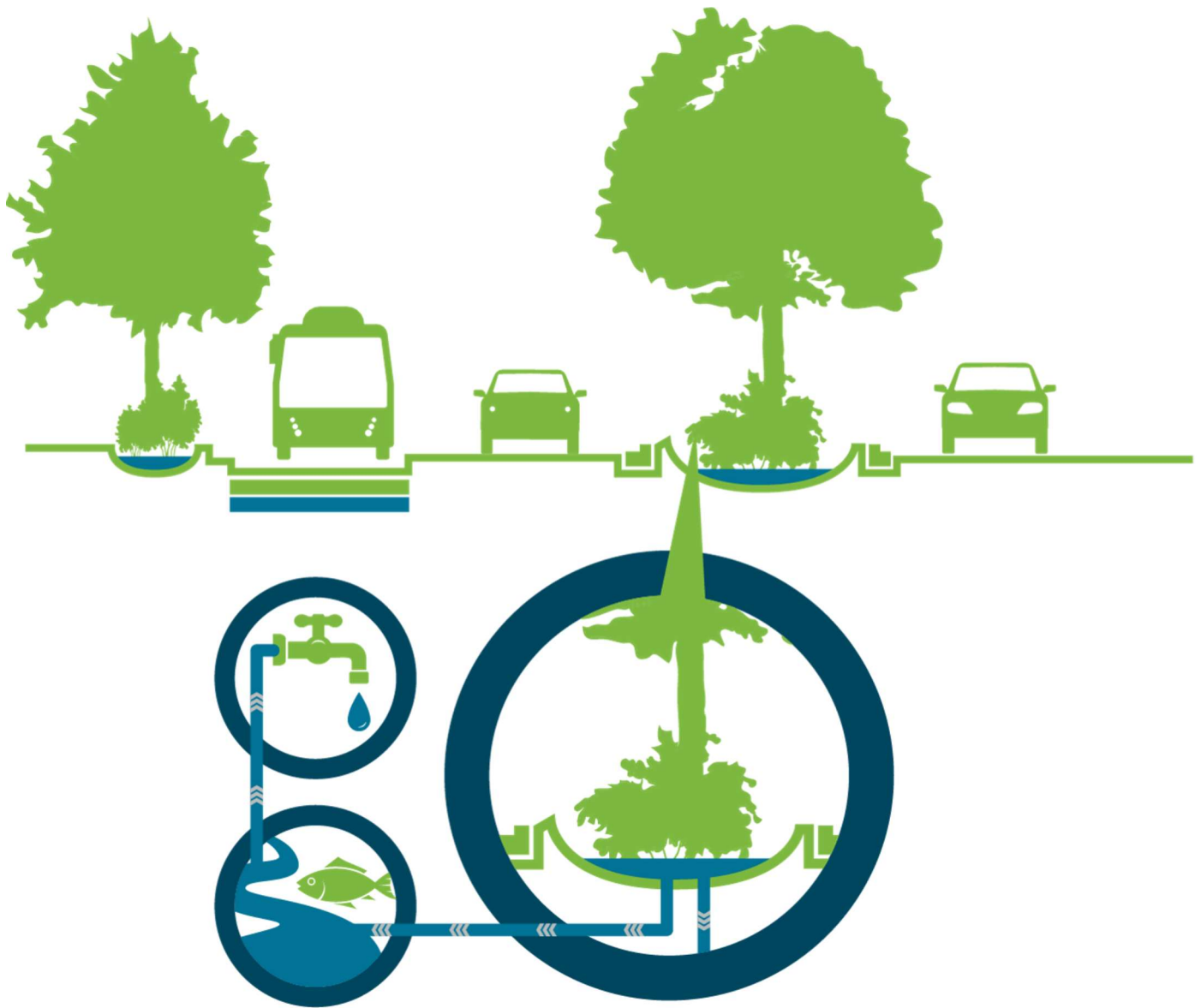
Public spaces are transforming into community oases



Source: Cities of the Future – Anticipating Trends and Possibilities, Future iQ (2015)

In addition, emerging thinking is starting to redefine traditional city parks, recreation fields and even transportation corridors. The emerging thinking sees these spaces as critical environmental and habitat areas, embedded within our urban landscape. They can serve vital functions for the mitigation of the impacts of climate change, critical areas for wildlife, and provide ecological diversity. Embedded in these mini ecosystems will be our more traditional recreation spaces and parks. In a nutshell, these changes are all about creating human-focused oases within our cities.

Cities are living ecosystems – where resources can be recycled, cleaned and reused



Source: Cities of the Future – Anticipating Trends and Possibilities, Future iQ (2015)

These trends also are starting to reimagine cities as part of a complete ecosystem, where resources can be recycled, cleaned and reused. Just imagine a future, where the city design and function actually make the environment cleaner and healthier.

With the current trends in urban planning, design research and city investment, maybe that future is closer than we think?

*NOTE: **Cities of the Future – Anticipating Trends and Possibilities** (2015) was produced by Future iQ and provides an in-depth look at emerging trends impacting cities and the communities within them. This publication was designed to anticipate what may be possible in cities as they explore the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.*



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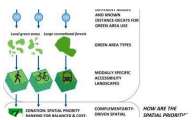
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