The Ideal City

Sean J.
A Call for Something New

Our cities are plagued with a myriad of issues. Car dependency, unsustainability, and a lack of funding for mass transit and city services are all too common in the cities of today. These problems cannot stand.

Not only do they stifle development, they actively make our cities worse for future generations. Instead, I propose an “ideal city.” One run for, and by, the people. One that successfully deals with these problems and more.
The Features of an Ideal City

• I envision my city to be an egalitarian, sustainable utopia.

• Housing, mass transit, and reducing car dependency are at the top of my city’s priorities.

• Welcome to...
Anytown
First, the city has taken big steps to mitigate the effects of climate change. Historical neighborhoods (see top photo) have taken to installing solar panels to maintain the authentic façade, while some suburbs (see right) have completely converted to green housing.
Housing

- Each large-scale housing development must designate some units at or below an affordable level.

- Like Minneapolis, single-family zoning and parking minimums were eliminated recently to combat sprawl and car-dependency.

- This allows transit-oriented development to flourish.

- It’s because of this that Anytown experiences very little housing inequality.
Mass Transit: Overview
Sinking the Highway: Before

- When the city was much smaller, the local highway that acted as a border would routinely get congested.
- Traffic was almost always at a standstill, and the noise congestion angered residents.
- Not to mention the large industrial development in the bottom part of the picture that also attracted heavy traffic volumes.
Sinking the Highway: After

- However, the highway was soon rebuilt. The original trumpet interchange was replaced with a combination of a diverging diamond and a dogbone interchange.

- Now, the highway tunnels under the majority of the city, allowing for rich urban development on top, similar to Rochester, New York.
Urban Core

• The urban core was redeveloped into an eclectic mix of European-inspired and modern skyscrapers, thanks in part to transit-oriented development.

• With the urban core being heavily redeveloped, the area now brings in much more in tax income; not only that, but many of these buildings are ecologically sustainable.

• The train station in the center-right of the photo provides service to a city transit hub as well as local access to the suburbs across the water.
Mass Transit: Trains

- Speaking of trains, Anytown is full of them.
- Heavy and High-Speed Rail connect Anytown to other urban areas, while a commuter rail system connects it to the suburbs.
- The extensive train network provides transportation for thousands of residents each day, with service running until the late night.
- Not to mention that all of these trains are easily accessible for disabled residents who can’t easily travel.
Mass Transit: Buses

- The city transit authority also operates thirty-five efficient bus lines.

- The most congested corridors were recently converted to become Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines.
  - A center lane is available, but only for buses and for city service vehicles like fire trucks.
  - The center lane has a higher speed limit, and it automatically changes traffic lights as the bus arrives.

- The buses have an extremely high ridership owing to the effort the city places in ensuring quality and efficient service.
Bike Lanes and Walkability

• Though not necessarily a method of mass transit, Anytown boasts a comprehensive network of bike lanes that stretch the entire city.

• Cyclists are a top priority in the city. Segregated bike lanes usually coincide with BRT lines.

• A bike-share program encourages citizens to ride, ride, ride!

• Meanwhile, numerous sidewalks and green spaces provide access all around the city and discourage people from driving.
City Services: Healthcare

• Well-funded hospitals, which operate in conjunction with the universities, provide world-class, affordable healthcare to the citizens.

• The city provides a fair treatment to all citizens, encouraging good health.
City Services: Parks and Recreation

• Anytown places equal emphasis on its Parks and Rec. Department.

• Numerous parks encourage citizens to take a long, relaxing walk and escape the hustle and bustle of the city.

• A few stadiums around the city encourage good sportsmanship! Mass transit tickets are free on Game Days.
City Services: Renewable Energy and Trash

• Pictured in the top left is an oceanic thermal energy conversion plant. Thermal energy underwater is converted into a massive source of power for the city, and it’s all done completely cleanly.

• The bottom left is a solar power plant, on the site of the original industrial development near the city center.

• These new developments replace the old oil and coal power plants that used to power Anytown.

• Recycling is heavily promoted in an effort to reduce waste, especially plastic.
City Services: Education

- In Anytown, affordable education is granted to every citizen. High schools are well-funded and adequately accessed through mass transit, while Desmond University provides higher education to young adults.
Thank You for Reading!

To make Anytown, I used the 2015 video game Cities: Skylines. All pictures except the two in the first two slides are mine.