

## I. Economic Problems in Cities

- Urban poverty exists in MDCs + LDCs (especially in inner cities) regions just outside CBD
- 1/6 of world's population lives in Urban poverty. Most in LDCs

### A. Overcoming Poverty

- High Concentrations of low income people/residents can be referred to under class
- Where poverty is prevalent people may develop a culture of poverty, which is a way of living that reflects a lack of income and accumulated health
  - Shortage of housing may force someone to spend much of their income on housing which can lead to homelessness
  - Low income individuals often live far away from entry level jobs
  - Low income individual often will have trouble obtaining loans (mortgage, credit cards)

### B. Urban Decay

- Industry once thrived in inner cities of developed countries, but new tech has decreased the need for workers

- Brownfields: dilapidated buildings + polluted and contaminated sites
  - expensive to repair, devalues surrounding properties

- Housing has also changed in central cities (decay)

- Filtering: when a house changes from a single family home to rented units in a multifamily dwelling, then to abandoned

- Redlining: Banks refuse loans to those who want to purchase and improve properties in certain urban areas.

- Banks think this is too risky

- Red lines on a map.

- There are laws now that prevent this if based on racial discrimination

## C. Re-development

1. Urban Re-development: involves renovating a site within a city by removing the existing landscape and building from the ground up.

usually begins when the local government considers the area blighted

2. Eminent domain: laws that allow the government to seize land for public use after paying owners market value for the property

a) Can force low income families from their homes

## II. Social + Cultural Problems in Cities

### A. Housing

#### 1. LDC's

a) Low income families build homes from whatever materials are available

b) 3 major problems

i. poor quality

ii. insufficient availability

iii. unaffordability

C. Gentrification (can also occur in MDCs)

i. wealthier residents move in and making it unaffordable for existing residents.

ii. increase property value & taxes

### B. Government Support for housing

1. Fed gov. provides subsidies to help low income resident

2. Rent Control Policies

3. Scattered Site policies: public housing dispersed throughout the city

a) Kids had access to better schools.

## C. Homelessness

1. Condition of not having a permanent place to live
2. Without good public transit it can be difficult to find work

## D. Services

1. Shops and other services can struggle in Urban environments
  - a) If customers are low income: ~~to search and price~~ prices must be low.
2. The decay that affects housing spreads to the service sector

## E. Food Deserts

1. Access to food stores can be a problem in an Urban Environment.
  - a) Fresh Healthy food could be less available than fast food.
  - b) Urban areas that lack food stores are known as food deserts
    - i) Limited or no access to healthy food where residents have limited or no access to transportation.

## F. Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

1. Women are more numerous than men in large, central cities in North America
  - a) High number of households headed by females.
  - b) Concentrated where housing is most inexpensive.
2. Racial Segregation: people living in neighborhoods based on their ethnicity or race.
  - a) Often occurs involuntarily
  - b) Blockbusting: people of one ethnic group (middle class white) would be frightened into selling their homes at low prices when they heard a family of another group usually African American, or Hispanic was moving into the neighborhood.

c) Segregated neighborhoods can sometimes become ghettos

i) Areas of poverty occupied by a minority group as a result of immigration discrimination.

\* people often feel trapped b/c of social + political factors, lack of opportunity

d) Segregated housing can also result when people voluntarily choose to live near people of their own race or ethnicity

i) creating ethnic enclaves or urban colonies

ii) new residents can be close to religious institutions, family shops, speak same language

Ex: Chinatown, Little Italy

## G. Gentrification

1. Old innercity housing is purchased at low prices and renovated by investors or by new residents with higher incomes

2. Often near the CBD

3. New comers: Yuppies: Young urban professionals with high paying jobs, and empty nesters

3. Can create problems for existing residents

a) Rents + property taxes ↑

## H. Gated Communities

1. Walled or fenced neighborhoods with limited access and entry points

2. Growing in cities, trying to capture the life style that exists outside of the city while still being in the city.

### III. Political Issues in Cities

- \* concentrated populations with many needs + problems
- \* Local gov providing services for enormous populations
- \* Build + maintain perfect infrastructure

#### A. Public Transportation

1. Cars create lots of problems
  - a) Air pollution (local + global)
  - b) Congestion = people are slowed down
  - c) Give up valuable real estate for parking areas.
2. Government can ~~not~~ create a Public transportation system
  - a) Buses, Subways, Light rails, Trains
  - b) Success: NYC, San Francisco, D.C.
  - c) But few cities have extensive services.
    - i) Ridership is low
    - ii) Can cause fares to go up
3. Cities in Europe, Latin America, and Parts of Asia rely on public transport

#### B. Other infrastructure

1. Roads, bridges, parking lots, and signs
  2. Buildings: police stations, ~~bridges~~, fire stations, courthouses
  3. Collection for sewage + garbage
  4. Open spaces such as public parks + town squares.
  5. Entertainment venues: museums, theaters, and sports facilities.
- \* These things are very expensive = so not a lot is improved on = so many US urban environments are old + deteriorating
  - \* Garbage ~~disposal~~ disposal is a problem: poorer cities can handle the amounts so being can occur

\* Using public resources to build stadiums is very contended

## C. Informal Economy

1. Not taxed or regulated

2. Very important in LDC's (slums + squatter settlements)

\* around 50% of people in Latin America work in the informal economy

3. Shadow Economy: MDC's

a) lost tax revenue

b) no safety regulations for consumers or workers.

\* 10% of US economy

## B4. Crime

- concentrated in urban areas

## 5. Terrorism

- more likely targets

## IV. Environmental Problems in Cities

### A. Environmental Effects of Cities

1. Urban Canyons: streets lined with tall buildings can dead channel and intensify wind.

a) Also prevents natural sunlight from hitting the ground.

b) Surfaces are replaced with Asphalt/Concrete

i) Rainwater runoff can cause flooding

c. Urban Heat Islands: city is warmer than the surrounding area

### B. Cities and Wildlife

1. Cities destroy plant + animal habitats

a) Native animals such as deer, coyotes, skunks, chipmunks, bears and problems where cities have invaded or abated their natural habitats.

b) Urban wildlife: rats, raccoons, and pigeons can thrive in cities but can spread disease and be a nuisance.

c) Feral pets that have gone feral can upset the ecological balance.

## C. Pollution

1. Industrial + Human Waste

2. Air pollution due to automobiles

a) Rush Hour: commuting periods in early morning and a bit afternoon which people travel to and from work. Increases Pollution

## D. Urban Sprawl

1. Cities are expanding horizontally across the landscape, rapidly

a) in USA most common in Southeast + West

2. Availability of cars and the spread of the interstate system

3. Leapfrogging: when developers purchase land beyond the periphery of the cities build up

## V. Sustainability and the Future

\* long term viability of cities

### A. Greenbelts and Smart Growth

1. Greenbelts: areas of undeveloped land around urban area. (England)

2. Smart Growth

a) set of policies to preserve farmland and other open, undeveloped spaces near a city.

## B. New Urbanism

1. Ways to reduce sprawl, increase affordable housing, and creating vibrant, livable neighborhoods - which are highly walkable.
2. Mixed-use neighborhoods: clear separation between residential & commercial use
  - a) neighborhoods with a mix of homes & businesses
  - b) Homes would have a variety of sizes and price ranges
3. Two issues
  - a) existing zoning laws
  - b) Public opinion

## C. Urban Infill

1. Process of building up underused lands within a city.
2. Build up and not out

## D. Exurbanism

1. Counter-urbanization or deurbanization: moving away from cities
2. Many moving to exurbs: prosperous residential districts beyond the suburbs
  - a) Many people today can work from home
  - b) Affordability