



ILLUSTRATION

THE LEE KUAN YEW WORLD CITY PRIZE 2020 SPECIAL MENTIONS

Cities on the Rebound

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From haphazard urban development to slow regeneration. From 1980s decline to a knowledge economy. From years of financial woes to innovation and good governance.

These are the transformative stories behind Antwerp, Boston and Lisbon, the 2020 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize Special Mentions, explored in this photo story.

ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Reversing Undesirable Conditions of the Past

The 2006 Strategic Spatial Plan helped reverse Antwerp's haphazard urban development, which arose due to the lack of strategic post-war city planning. Through strategic interventions to tackle issues such as climate change and housing affordability, formerly neglected areas such as Het Eilandje are transformed into lively neighbourhoods today.

Reactivating Disused Spaces

Developed with three civil society organisations and input from over 800 citizens, the former dilapidated port and urban void of Scheldt Quays was reintegrated as a vibrant part of Antwerp's city centre, with new parks and public spaces such as Droogdokkenpark. The new waterfront area now provides public access to River Scheldt and is future-proofed with raised flood protection walls.

Sections of the refurbished Scheldt Quay.
Image: Jordi Driesen / Unsplash

73

Blurring Boundaries

Designed as a highly participatory process, the ambitious Over the Ring project looks at the long-term covering of Antwerp's ring road to blur the hard boundaries between the inner and outer city, shift towards sustainable mobility and increase the number of green spaces. The appointment of an independent curator as a neutral party to oversee the project further signals the city's will to be open and work with citizens.

Over the Ring.
Image: Stadt Antwerpen

BOSTON, USA

Moving Things Forward

Shaped with the input of over 15,000 residents, Imagine Boston 2030 (launched in 2017) is Boston's first master plan in over 50 years. Its main goals: tackle key challenges such as the under-provision of affordable housing, increase active low-carbon transportation and boost Boston's flood resilience as a coastal city. The city developed a metrics dashboard on its website to track the progress of the master plan's five key goals, ensuring the continuity and transparency of its project.



Safeguarding Public Assets

Stretching from Dorchester to East Boston, the Boston Harborwalk is one of the city's most important waterfront revitalisation projects. The partnering with developers safeguards the continuous walkway as a public asset to be shared and enjoyed by all. To date, 61 km of the 76 km-long Harborwalk has been constructed to connect the city's neighbourhoods to the harbour, its nearby attractions and public transit.

Boston Harborwalk.
Image: Boston Planning and Development Agency



Establishing a Strong City Brand

Boston has successfully rebounded from industrial decline, thanks to the tenacity of its people that is complemented by a legacy of world-class hospitals and universities, fueling the city's reinvention as a knowledge economy. Local non-governmental organisations, companies and Bostonians alike are motivated to push for lasting positive changes in the city, while the government's willingness to engage its stakeholders has helped build long-term, win-win collaborations.

Casual gatherings on the rooftop of the Bruce C Bolling Municipal Building.
Image: Boston Planning and Development Agency

LISBON, PORTUGAL

Making a Strong Comeback

Lisbon is a historic city that has undergone dramatic rejuvenation in recent years, particularly in its revitalised waterfront areas. Although social tensions, infrastructural problems and financial difficulties had plagued the city over the years, they also provided the impetus for better governance and innovative ideas to do more with less. Today's Lisbon is marked by a new wave of energy throughout, ready to meet future challenges.

| Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology on the Lisbon waterfront.
Image: kudla / Shutterstock

Meeting Strategic Objectives

Faced with limited financial resources, Lisbon developed innovative schemes to partner with private-sector investors to meet the city's strategic objectives. For example, government incentives allowed developers to operate affordable homes for a growing population, while floor area bonuses for private landowners helped the city conserve its significant heritage and recover private parking spaces at prime locations, such as the landmark Praça do Comércio on the waterfront.

Praça do Comércio.
Image: Ingus Krukltis / Shutterstock

77

Doing More with Less

Partnering with local communities has helped Lisbon do more with less. The case in point is the city's Participatory Budget, which utilises 5% of the municipal budget for citizen-championed projects, thus maximising resources for matters close to the heart. An example is the once-stigmatised Mouraria neighbourhood (Moorish Quarter), which was given a makeover with placemaking efforts, transforming it into an attractive, diverse and safe district today.

The Mouraria (Moorish) Quarter
Image: Damien Woon