

## Urban planning

- ① Curitiba has a planned transportation system, which includes lanes on major streets devoted to a bus rapid transit system. The buses are long, split into three sections ( bi-articulated ), and stop at [designated](#), [elevated](#) tubes complete with disabled access. There is only one price no matter how far you travel and you pay at the bus stop.
  - ② The system, used by 85% of Curitiba's population, is the source of [inspiration](#) for the TransMilenio in Bogotá, Colombia; Metrovia in Guayaquil, Ecuador; Transmetro in Guatemala City, Guatemala; as well as the Orange Line of Los Angeles, U.S. State of California; and for a future transportation system in Panama City, Panama; Cebu City, Philippines; and the latest, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
  - ③ The city has also paid careful attention to preserving and caring for its green areas boasting 51.5 square metres (554 sq ft) of green space per inhabitant.
  - ④ In the 1940s and 1950s, Alfred Agache, cofounder of the French Society for Urban Studies, was hired to produce the first city plan. It emphasised a star of [boulevards](#), with public amenities downtown, an industrial district and [sanitation](#). It was followed when possible but was too expensive to complete.
  - ⑤ By the 1960s, Curitiba's population had ballooned to 430,000, and some residents feared that the growth in population threatened to drastically change the character of the city. In 1964, Mayor Ivo Arzua solicited proposals for urban design. [Architect](#) Jaime Lerner, who later became mayor, led a team from the Universidade Federal do Paraná that suggested strict controls on urban [sprawl](#), a reduction of traffic in the downtown area, [preservation](#) of Curitiba's Historic Sector, and a convenient and [affordable](#) public [transit](#) system.
  - ⑥ This plan, known as the Curitiba Master Plan, was adopted in 1968. Lerner closed XV de Novembro Street to vehicles because it had very high pedestrian traffic. The plan had a new road design to [minimise](#) traffic: the Trinary Road System. This uses two one-way streets moving in opposite directions which surround a smaller two-lane street where the express buses have their [exclusive](#) lane.
- Five of these roads form a star that [converges](#) on the city centre. Land farther from these roads is zoned for lower [density](#) developments, to reduce traffic away from the main roads. In a number of areas subject to floods, buildings were [condemned](#) and the land became parks.
- ⑦ Today, Curitiba is considered one of the best examples of urban planning worldwide. In June 1996, the chairman of the [Habitat](#) II Summit of mayors and urban planners in Istanbul praised Curitiba as "the most [innovative](#) city in the country."
  - ⑧ Curitiba was recently recommended by UNESCO as a model for the [reconstruction](#) of the cities of Afghanistan, after the U.S invaded in 2001.
  - ⑨ In the 1980s, the RIT ( Rede Integrada de Transporte, [Integrated](#) Transport Network ) was created, allowing transit between any point in the city by paying just one fare. At the same time, the city began a project called the "Faróis de Saber" ( Lighthouses of Knowledge ). These Lighthouses are free educational centers which include libraries, Internet access, and other cultural resources. Job training, social [welfare](#) and educational programs are [coordinated](#), and often supply labor to improve the city's [amenities](#) or services as well as education and income.
  - ⑩ Curitiba is referred to as the [ecological](#) capital of Brazil, with a network of 28 parks and [wooded](#) areas. In 1970, there was less than 1 square meter of green space per person; now there are 52 square meters for each person. Residents planted 1.5 million trees along city streets. Builders get tax breaks if their projects include green space. Flood waters [diverted](#) into new lakes in parks solved the problem

of dangerous flooding, while also protecting valley floors and [riverbanks](#), acting as a barrier to illegal [occupation](#) and providing [aesthetic](#) and [recreational](#) value to the thousands of people who use the city parks.

⑪ In 2007, the city was placed third in a list of "15 Green Cities" in the world, according to the U.S. magazine "Grist," after Reykjavik in Iceland and Portland, Oregon in the United States. As a result, according to one survey, 99% of Curitibaans are happy with their hometown. The "green exchange" employment program focuses on social [inclusion](#), benefiting both those in need and the environment. Low-income families living in shantytowns [unreachable](#) by truck bring their [trash](#) bags to neighbourhood centers where they exchange them for bus tickets and food. This means less city [litter](#) and less disease, less [garbage](#) dumped in sensitive areas such as rivers, and a better life for the [undernourished](#) poor. There's also a program for children where they can exchange [recyclable](#) garbage for school supplies, chocolate, toys, and tickets for shows.

⑫ Under the "garbage that's not garbage" program, 70% of the city's trash is recycled by its residents. Once a week, a truck collects paper, cardboard, metal, plastic and glass that has been sorted in the city's homes. The city's paper recycling alone saves the equivalent of 1,200 trees a day. As well as the environmental benefits, money raised from selling materials goes into social programs, and the city employs the homeless and recovering alcoholics in its garbage separation plant. Open University, created by the city, lets residents take courses in many subjects such as mechanics, hair styling and environmental protection for a small fee. Retired city buses are often used as mobile schools or offices. Downtown areas were transformed into [pedestrian](#) streets, including a 24-hour mall with shops, restaurants and cafes, and a street of flowers with gardens tended by street kids.

⑬ The "capacity building job line" was created to generate a better quality of life for people in the region surrounding a new economic development [axis](#) of Curitiba. Key initiatives include the South-Circular bus line, which links the southern and eastern regions of town; Entrepreneurial Sheds, business incubators designed to help small companies get established and [prosper](#); and the Crafts Lycée, which trains people for professions such as marketing and finance so that they can find employment in new companies that emerge from the business incubator. Specifically, the goal is to provide jobs and income for the unemployed among 400,000 people living in 15 [peripheral](#) towns, and to structure and develop the region according to integrated planning principles. About 15,000 new jobs have been generated so far and 15,000 more are expected.

⑭ There's a model [inexpensive](#), [speedy](#) transit service used by more than 2 million people a day. There are more car owners per capita than anywhere else in Brazil and the population has doubled since 1974, yet auto traffic has declined by 30%, and [atmospheric](#) pollution is the lowest in Brazil.

Source of text: [Wikipedia](#)

Source of word definitions: [OALD](#)

## Word definitions

**designated** - to say officially that somebody/something has a particular character or name

**elevated** - higher than the area around; above the level of the ground

**inspiration** - a person or thing that is the reason why somebody creates or does something

**boulevard** - a wide main road (often used in the name of streets)

**sanitation** - the equipment and systems that keep places clean, especially by removing human waste

**architect** - "a person whose job is designing buildings, etc.

**sprawl** - to spread in an untidy way; to cover a large area

**preservation** - the act of keeping something in its original state or in good condition

**affordable** - "cheap enough for most people to afford

**transit** - the system of buses, trains, etc. which people use to travel from one place to another

**minimise** - to reduce something, especially something bad, to the lowest possible level

**exclusive** - only to be used by one particular person or group; only given to one particular person or group

**converge** - to move towards a place from different directions and meet

**density** - the quality of being dense; the degree to which something is dense (dense = containing a lot of people, things, plants, etc. with little space between them)

**condemned** - to say officially that something is not safe enough to be used

**habitat** - the place where a particular type of animal or plant is normally found

**innovative** - introducing or using new ideas, ways of doing something, etc

**reconstruction** - the activity of building again something that has been damaged or destroyed

**integrated** - in which many different parts are closely connected and work successfully together

**welfare** - "practical or financial help that is provided, often by the government, for people or animals that need it

**coordinated** - to organize the different parts of an activity and the people involved in it so that it works well

**amenities** - a feature that makes a place pleasant, comfortable or easy to live in

**ecological** - connected with the relation of plants and living creatures to each other and to their environment

**wooded** - covered with trees

**diverted** - to make somebody/something change direction

**riverbanks** - the ground at the side of a river

**occupation** - the act of living in or using a building, room, piece of land, etc

**aesthetic** - concerned with beauty and art and the understanding of beautiful things

**recreational** - connected with activities that people do for enjoyment when they are not working

**inclusion** - the fact of including somebody/something; the fact of being included

**unreachable** - "that is not possible to reach

**trash** - things that you throw away because you no longer want or need them

**litter** - small pieces of rubbish/garbage such as paper, cans and bottles, that people have left lying in a public place

**garbage** - waste food, paper, etc. that you throw away (see dictionary entry for "trash")

**undernourished** - in bad health because of a lack of food or a lack of the right type of food

**recyclable** - able to be recycled

**pedestrian** - a person walking in the street and not travelling in a vehicle

**axis** - an imaginary line through the centre of an object, around which the object turns

**prosper** - to develop in a successful way; to be successful, especially in making money

**peripheral** - connected with the outer edge of a particular area

**inexpensive** - not costing a lot of money

**speedy** - moving or working very quickly

**atmospheric** - creating an exciting or emotional mood