FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

1st SEMESTER 2020

ASSIGNMENT 1

URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

UDP711S
Ms Nelao N. Puleinge would like to thank all students for submitting assignment one. The overall performance is good. Keep up the good work dear students!

**NOTE:** Students are encouraged to read and adhere to comments provided in assignment 1 to improve performance in assignment 2. Students need to use the Assignment Evaluation Form as guidelines when compiling an assignment.

**ASSIGNMENT 1**

How the role of change and technology can influence urban areas

Under the umbrella topic of Transitional living, this track of activities aims to facilitate a better understanding of the effects of the cumulative growth of contemporary urban technologies within the housing and planning sectors. The activities provide a platform for the sharing of perspectives and the generation of new knowledge, questioning the appropriate role of technological innovation within cities, their associated benefits and the many challenges that come with their implementation.
Throughout history emerging technologies have driven major shifts in the way cities and their societies have been planned and function. In the 19th Century, driven by new industrial processes, western cities shifted from medieval city structures to the industrial city model. Across Europe, walls were torn down and informal settlements were cleared to make way for the new infrastructure of factories, railways for transport and housing for newly arriving workers. In the 20th century, the arrival of the automobile demanded large scale readjustments in urban design, systems, and processes. This led to an era of central business districts, high rise towers blocks, sprawling suburbs and extensive ring roads and motorways; the basis for many of today’s urban challenges.

Today, we find ourselves again on the brink of a new urban transition. This transition, driven by the escalating growth in ICT innovations has been encompassed in discourses and concepts such as the ‘Smart City’ and the ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’. Such discourses promise progression through technology centred approaches to help fix many of urban society’s biggest challenges. Yet, the results of such an approach are widely disputed as to their effectiveness (see cases such as Masdar City and Songdo). The question remains then, how will new technologies effect the majority of the world’s existing and future cities? In what form will such technologies effect the way we as a collective society perceive and use the city? And who will benefit?

Indeed, technology has always shaped U.S. cities. For example, in the first part of this century the wave of new technologies included:

- Transportation technologies of automobiles and airplanes.
- Infrastructure technologies, including widespread diffusion of electricity, highways, and water systems.
- Mass production manufacturing technologies.
- Agricultural mechanization.

These new technologies drove the emergence of more dispersed cities and spurred growth in less developed regions. Air travel, long-distance communications, and truck transport began to recast regional relationships, allowing large-scale urban development to spread farther south and west. Arterial highways followed limited access parkways, and subsequent interstate highways tied metropolitan regions and finally the entire Nation together.
Widespread electrification allowed industry much greater locational freedom, stimulating much of southern and western industrialization. The development of air conditioning made living and working in hot southern and western climates more tolerable. Agricultural mechanization led to significant decreases in agricultural labour with concomitant migration from rural to urban areas.

Within metropolitan areas, cities were reshaped by the automobile. Streetcars created initial extensions from urban cores, but increased automobile use caused radical shifting of residential locations further from urban cores, leading to patterns of “bedroom suburbanization.” Steel-girded buildings, electric elevators, and telephone communications facilitated the construction of skyscraper office towers, intensifying use of central business districts.

**Main benefits of urban settlement and development on the maintenance of urban settlements**

Urban settlement creates proximity to basic social amenities required in life. It provides employment opportunities since many industries and white-collar jobs are found in urban settlements. It promotes cultural diversity between different people living and working in the urban settlements.

Hospitals, schools, libraries, and other social amenities are located close to one another in urban settlements.

This proximity improves accessibility as people can move easily from one location to the other. Easy accessibility to retail outlets improves business in urban settlement. A strong network of financial institutions, insurance companies and municipal councils improves commerce.

Movement in urban settlements is typically available due to presence of an elaborate transport system of taxis, buses, and trains. People and goods can be transported easily without incurring high transportation costs. Urban settlements are home to job opportunities in different industries and offices. Wages in urban settlements are higher than in rural areas, which attracts many people to towns.
Employment in urban settlements is complemented by affordable housing services in towns. Urban settlement attracts diversified groups looking for employment and social services. This diversity leads to exchange of cultural ideas and beliefs. It also leads to social developments in art, music, religion, politics, and fashion.

(Students should contextualise this discussion by providing relevant and practical examples)

**END OF FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER**