

# Plan Abu Dhabi 2030: Sustaining urban mobility

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**The Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC) is designing a development strategy which is integrating land use and transportation – a concern for urban planners - for the UAE capital through the implementation of a unique concept.**

The UPC is thinking ahead many years to decentralise population density currently centred in the north eastern part of Abu Dhabi Island, with a high density spine extending southwards along Airport Road.

"Abu Dhabi's population is projected to increase to three million by 2030. This will pose significant sustainability challenges in terms of mobility and transportation concerns. In 2008 with approximately one million residents, Abu Dhabi is centred in one area, posing immense challenges for commuters," said H.E. Falah Al Ahbabi, General Manager of the UPC.

"The remainder of Abu Dhabi Island is developed with palaces, villas, mosques, schools and other institutional and recreational activities while there are extensive low-density suburbs on the mainland."

By 2030, the UPC reckons the land use structure of the city will change dramatically to create a city which will function well with more than three times its current population.

"We are creating the Capital City District, with a population of 350,000 to 380,000 residents, which will form a second centre for Abu Dhabi, located on the mainland in the area that has been known up to now as Khalifa C," explained Al Ahbabi. "It will sit on an axis that is an extension of the Mussafah Bridge alignment. The new district will be at the centre of the mainland Emirati communities."

On Abu Dhabi Island, the city centre will be expanded north-eastwards to encompass Sowwah Island (the new Financial Centre), the redeveloped Mina Zayed port area, and parts of Reem Island. This will continue to be the financial and commercial heart of Abu Dhabi.

Meanwhile the Capital City District – the new location of the UAE Federal Government, embassies and some Emirate and Municipality government functions – will be appropriate for the seat of the National Government.

"As the capital of the UAE, Abu Dhabi is asserting its natural political leadership by promoting a visionary and forward thinking urban development strategy with its own dimension given to the term and based on influence rather than size. By developing the concept of 'Sustainable Urban Mobility', the UPC is promoting a concrete and influential example that demonstrates the consistency of our approach. It demonstrates our capability to cope with the contemporary urban living life-styles promoted in Plan Abu Dhabi 2030," said Al Ahbabi.

New transport infrastructure will be developed to connect the City Centre with the Capital City District. The existence of two centres will create an efficient movement system.

In single centred cities there is a great 'tidal flow' of commuting traffic into the centre in the morning that congests incoming routes while leaving outgoing routes half empty. Then the opposite happens for the evening commute. In a dual-centred city, there is nearly equal movement between the centres, so that street space and public transport are fully utilised in both directions at once.

Al Ahbabi clarifies: "By breaking the mould of a traditional 'City Planning' model, the UPC is promoting a new mindset through responsive urbanism concepts. Our role is to think and act ahead in order to deliver on our promise."

In 2030, Abu Dhabi will have a series of major centres of activity. In addition to the dominant City Centre and Capital City District, Abu Dhabi will have a series of major centres of activity.

The Abu Dhabi mainland will expand substantially with the redevelopment and expansion of Shahama-Bahia, Baniyas and Wathba, and with the development of new communities such as Al Falah and Shamkha.

New developments are meanwhile being planned and constructed at Raha Beach, and on Lulu, Saadiyat, Reem, Sowwah, Yas and Hdayriat Islands to give future residents the benefit of proximity to the sea. This also creates opportunities for water transport, ferries and water taxis between islands.