



THE SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE: DEFINED AND EXPLAINED

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TODAY WE WILL DISCUSS:

1. What is the Definition of a Sustainable Lifestyle?
2. What is the Economic Context of a Sustainable Lifestyle?
3. What is the Social and Cultural Context of a Sustainable Lifestyle?
4. How is Re-urbanization part of the Movement Toward Sustainable Cities?
5. Why is Life Long Learning Important to Urban Sustainability?
6. Conclusions: Lifestyles and Sustainability

1. WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE?

- Sustainable urban systems must be designed to support to sustainable lifestyles.
- This is a way of life that sees material consumption as a means rather than as an end.
 - That attempts to ensure that the materials that are consumed have as little negative impact on the biosphere as possible.



1. WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- Definitions of “sustainable living” in the literature generally refer to using as few resources as possible, reducing carbon footprints, and reducing environmental damage.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE?

- Environmental advocates often focus on individual behavior and the need to develop lifestyles that consume less and do not damage ecosystems.
- On a worldwide basis with billions of people aspiring to higher levels of material consumption, individual reductions in consumption in the developed world will have little real impact.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- The nature of production and consumption is changing.
 - Much of the increases in GDP are in services, ideas, communication and non-material items.
 - Making food, clothing and shelter used to occupy most human labor, now they occupy very little of it.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

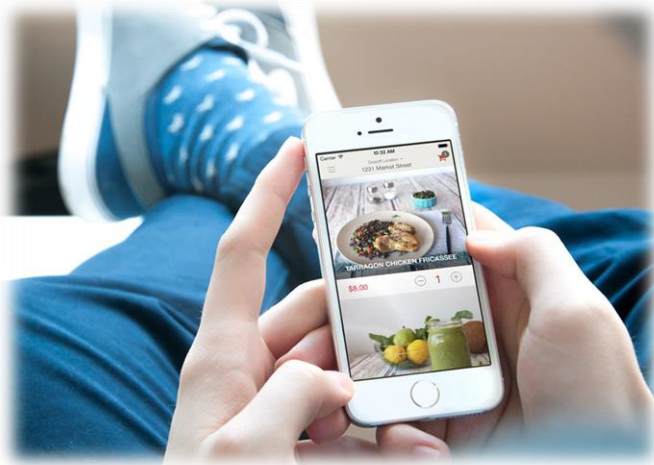
- The question to ask is what do we spend our time doing and what carries the most value in the modern world?
- For example:
 - We spend more and more of our time each day interacting with our social and professional network via cell phone, text or email and absorbing information we receive from the web.



- Annual expenditures for cellular phone services increased from \$608 per consumer unit in 2007 to \$963 in 2014 —an increase of 58.4 percent.

2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- The 21st century brain-based economy has changed the nature of production and consumption.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- We spend our time differently today than we did in the 20th century.
 - We spend money on different things: young people are spending more on rent, cell phones and personal services, and less on buying apparel.
 - Peer-to-peer markets, known as collaborative consumption, or more commonly “the sharing economy,” also show the different ways we consume and use goods and services.
 - Airbnb, Uber, Zipcar, Citibike- more to come.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- We also work at different jobs.
 - We are in a brain-based economy.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics:
 - Service-providing sectors are projected to capture 94.6 percent of all the jobs added between 2014 and 2024.
 - Of these 9.3 million new service sector jobs:
 - 3.8 million will be added to the healthcare and social assistance sector.
 - Manufacturing employment, between 2014 and 2024, is projected to decline at a 0.7 percent rate annually, a more moderate decline than the 1.6 percent rate experienced in the prior decade.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- The nature of work has also changed with the growth of the “gig economy.”
 - The proportion of American workers who work as independent contractors or freelancers has soared in the last decade.
 - The number of Americans using these alternate work arrangements rose 9.4 million from 2005 to 2015.
 - The percentage of workers in these arrangements was 15.8% in fall 2015, up 10.1% a decade earlier.



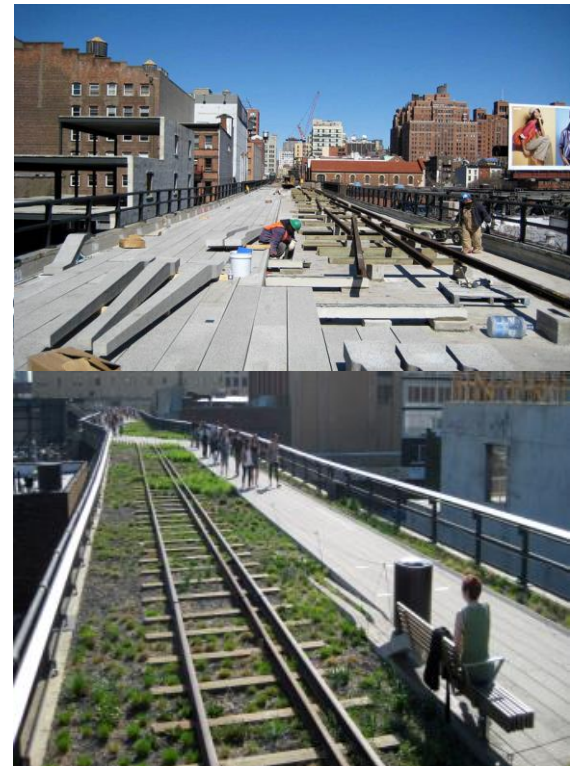
2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- You can see evidence of the changing economy in the physical changes on the West Side of Manhattan.
- The best example of this in New York is High Line Park.



2. WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- The High Line was a freight train that carried raw materials and manufactured goods from the West Side docks to nearby factories.
- The docks are gone, replaced by a beautiful park.
- The manufacturing firms are gone replaced by Google, media companies, fancy restaurants and even fancier apartments.
- Technology forced the change.
- The West Side docks could not accommodate containerized shipping and so the freight port moved across the river to New Jersey.
- The factories themselves sat on real estate that was too valuable for the old functions- Now we see Google and art galleries.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE?

- The environmental ethic is stronger in young people than in old people. Young people have grown up hearing about environmental issues, along with issues related to nutrition, physical fitness and public health.
- Between 1981 and 2014, the number of Americans who were dues-paying members of gyms quadrupled from about 13 million to more than 50 million
- People are paying more attention to their own wellbeing and to the state of the planet.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)



- Young people are bringing sustainability to the center of the policy agenda, and to the center of the management agenda in the organizations they work for.
- In the workplace it is not unusual to see staff asking for “greener” workplaces—toxic-free workplaces that are energy and water efficient.

3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- In a survey of millennial consumers, 75% said that it's important that a company gives back to society instead of just making a profit.
- Large companies like Apple and Walmart have been greening their operations in response.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- We are all more sensitive to human impact on the environment than we were a generation or two ago.
 - According to a 2014 Nielsen Global Survey, 55% of consumers worldwide are willing to pay more for goods and services from socially responsible companies.
 - 71% of individual investors are interested in sustainable investing.
 - Millennial investors are nearly twice as likely to invest in companies or funds that target social or environmental outcomes.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)



- The consumption of information and ideas has little negative impact on the environment.
- If we spend more of our time engaged in education, culture and entertainment, presumably we spend less time consuming, and possibly destroying, nature.

3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- We are already more removed from the natural world than America was in 1900 when 40 percent of us worked in agriculture.
- But we continue to add acreage to our local and national parks.
- NYC's sustainability plan sets a goal that all New Yorkers live within a ten minute walk of a park.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- Real estate values reflect the economic value of trees, water and sunlight.
- We still require the food, water and material comforts the planet provides.
 - We do not need to live in nature to know that we depend on it.



3. WHAT IS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE? (CONTINUED)

- The forces of modernity are powerful.
- The technologies of information, stimulation, and comfort are seductive and addictive.
- But so is the pull of place, family, friendship, loyalty and love.
- Humans are social and emotional creatures and we crave company and interaction.
- More than consumption patterns shape our values; people are not simply “consumers.”
 - These other values are the basis for a sustainable society supporting a renewable economy.



4. HOW IS RE-URBANIZATION PART OF THE MOVEMENT TOWARD SUSTAINABLE CITIES?

- Young American professionals and their familiars are increasingly choosing to live in the urban core.



4. HOW IS RE-URBANIZATION PART OF THE MOVEMENT TOWARD SUSTAINABLE CITIES? (CONTINUED)

- Since 2000 the number of young adults with a four-year degree living in big city neighborhoods within three miles of a city center has increased 37.3 percent.
- Their recreation often includes activities that consume few natural resources:
 - Viewing media, creating art, exercise, social engagement and outdoor activities.



4. HOW IS RE-URBANIZATION PART OF THE MOVEMENT TOWARD SUSTAINABLE CITIES? (CONTINUED)

- In the brain-based economy, an increasing portion of wealth comes from “software” rather than “hardware.”
 - People are moving to cities to work in these jobs.
- They are more reliant on mass transit.
- They live in smaller spaces.
- They pay more attention to recycling.



5. WHY IS LIFE LONG LEARNING IMPORTANT TO URBAN SUSTAINABILITY?

- The complex world we live in requires multiple forms of expertise, orientation and talent.
- In a world where manual labor provides fewer and fewer jobs, knowledge and learning are more important than ever.



5. WHY IS LIFE LONG LEARNING IMPORTANT TO URBAN SUSTAINABILITY? (CONTINUED)

- The transition to a renewable economy requires education at every level.
- In organizations all over America and all over the world, young people are pushing older people to develop and implement sustainable practices and organizations.
 - Many professionals are returning to school to learn about sustainability, and many aspiring professionals are focusing their undergraduate and graduate education on sustainability.



6. CONCLUSIONS: LIFESTYLES AND SUSTAINABILITY

- A lifestyle is what people do with their time: work, recreation, entertainment, travel, social life, family life, religious life, education/learning, hobbies, and so on.
 - It includes the geographic setting within which they undertake these activities.



6. CONCLUSIONS: LIFESTYLES AND SUSTAINABILITY (CONTINUED)

- Lifestyles have resource implications.
 - People in cities can move around and live in places that consume fewer resources.
- It is possible to have a dynamic, interesting exciting lifestyle without destroying the planet.
 - Given our population and ecosystem fragility this is best done in cities.

