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15-Minute City: Decomposing the New Urban Planning Eutopia

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Abstract

As cities are struggling to cope with the second wave of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the idea of 15-min cities seem to have sparked planners imagination and politicians willingness for providing us with a new urban planning eutopia. This paper explores the 15-min city concept as a structural and functional element for redesigning contemporary cities. Methodologically, a study of three case cities that have adopted this new model of city vision, is carried out. The analysis focus on understanding how the idea of 15-min cities fits the legacies of different cities as described by traditional planning principles in the context of three evaluation pillars: inclusion, safety and health. The paper argues that the 15-min city approach is not a radical new idea since it utilizes long established planning principles. Nevertheless, it uses these principles to achieve the bottom-up promotion of wellbeing while it proposes an alternative way to think about optimal resource allocation in a citywide scale. Hence, application of 15-min city implies a shift in the emphasis of planning from the accessibility of neighborhood to urban functions to the proximity of urban functions within neighborhoods, along with large systemic changes in resource allocation patterns and governance schemes citywide.

Keywords: 15-minute city, urban planning, COVID-19 pandemic, urban accessibility, resource allocation, urban g

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