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MAKE CHERAS LOW CARBON HUB



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URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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KUALA Lumpur residents are familiar with Cheras, and its congestion is scary each morning, especially on working days.

The Mass Rapid Transit does not attract enough passengers.

Cheras residents submitted a petition protesting the overdevelopment in their area. They were concerned about the many condominiums being built around the area.

They questioned whether adequate social impact or traffic assessment studies had been done.

Cheras residents know better the suffering they endure. For non-Cheras residents, we feel the discomfort only when we pass through that stretch.

The authorities should rethink urban development for Cheras.

The irony is that this is happening at a time when Kuala Lumpur is implementing the city's low carbon blueprint.

This is part of the country's NetZero plan to comply with global efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

The country has also launched the nation's Smart City framework, helmed by the Housing and Local Government Ministry.

The framework talks about seven components, which include smart mobility and smart living.

Traffic congestion works against the aspirations of smart mobility, and high-density living with reduced open



The authorities should rethink their urban development strategy for Cheras in line with plans to implement a low carbon blueprint in Kuala Lumpur. PIC BY HAZREEN MOHAMAD

spaces contradicts the goals of smart living.

The other component of the framework is smart environment, which concerns waste.

Cities face challenges managing waste efficiently.

Related to smart living, the other concern that stood out during the pandemic was the strong correlation between the spread of infectious disease and high-density living.

As we are warned that the Covid-19 scare may not be the last, there is all

the more reason to move away from high-density living.

Urban planning experts have long called for a more reasonable population dispersal, rather than continue with population concentration, as is happening in Cheras.

The population of KL may have reached the tipping point.

We may want to consider dispersing the population to outside the Klang Valley and, at the same time, invest in public transport, especially rail.

This way, we would have a better chance of not only delivering the low carbon mandate but also move closer to meet the smart city criteria.

The Vision Valley project announced by the government may be a good target to start with.

Poorly managed urban development has come under scrutiny lately. The pandemic has hastened this interest.

The other driving force is the global push to NetZero, which the world needs to cool down global warming.

It is predicted that more than 70 per cent of the world population will soon live in cities. This makes cities hotspots for carbon emissions.

Tackling emissions in the urban metropolis is the smart way to reduce emissions. And overdevelopment will negate that.

UCSI University has initiated a research consortium on low carbon focusing on Cheras. The dream is to make Cheras a carbon hub.

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