

A past future city
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A Past Future Vision Introduction The of the Future: A Design and Engineering Challenge was a competition hosted by the History Channel along with its sponsors Infiniti and IBM. The competition hosted in the cities of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles posed a challenge to teams of designers, engineers and architects to develop a vision of what their cities would look like a hundred years from now, with the capability of sustenance for centuries into the future (The City of the Future; A Design and Engineering Challenge).

A Past Future City Vision

The environmental crisis has caught the attention of the world and therefore it is not surprising that a common theme in the visions of future is addressing the challenges of growth and development of cities, without endangering the surrounding environment and employing sustainable natural resources. Built into these visions were attempts to address the issues of production of resources, its consumptions, and the threat of rising sea levels due to global warming (Ng, 2008).

The vision for Washington D. C. includes the use of the military forts surrounding the city that defended it in the past to bring life to the city in the future. Sinuous towers are envisaged on these forts to enable harvesting of wind, solar energy and rainwater and the production of food through the use of hydroponic farms. Food supply will be further augmented through communal farming on the greenway that will be created in the present avenues of the city (Ng, 2008).

Addressing transportation requirements in a unique way is seen in the vision for San Francisco, based on the use of Hydro-net consisting of walls made of

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carbon nanotubes. The underground Hydro-net is a network that transports individuals, vehicles, water and energy in the city. The Hydro-net also acts as a resource production system with hydrogen-producing algae farms, fog catchers to collect air moisture, and water extractors to collect fresh water from an aquifer below the city (Ng, 2008).

For Atlanta the vision includes the reintroduction of treated water from the old sewage system around the ground to produce a natural waterway that flows through city. The surrounding forests would be allowed to creep into the city reducing the city grid and creating new hybrid environments. The idea here is to restore the natural systems to offset the burden of the man-made infrastructure of the city (Ng, 2008).

While such a competition may result in what may appear as far fetched solutions for the development, they do provide ideas and solutions for the man made problems in the cities. An example of this can be seen in the city of Chicago implementing an idea from the previous competition in the form of the eco-boulevards (Ng, 2008).

Conclusion

The City of the Future: A Design and Engineering Challenge is a competition that throws up visions and ideas that could assist the cities of the world to develop in a sustainable manner.

Literary References

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