Planning and planners in Middle Eastern cities. Background introduction: Middle Eastern cities like Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and Doha in Qatar are investing in high quality urban planning to shape their futures. With high growth projections, these cities and their planning ministries and councils are seeking sustainable solutions that offer a high degree of livability, mobility, and amenities to serve growth and attract new residents. Vibrant, walkable neighborhoods and streets, like those in many Western cities, are at the top of the list of priorities for the urban contexts of the Middle Eastern cities. Recognizing that to sustain a long-term economy, these nations will need to transition from fossil fuel-based resources to other industries, several Middle Eastern governments are investing in the development of exciting, world class districts devoted to arts and culture, education, medical services, sports and recreation, and destination resorts. With a strong depth of resources to support redevelopment of existing urban areas, as well as new development of whole communities, urban planners are in high demand and the opportunities are interesting and rewarding. Articles related: Government Initiatives and Plans: · Abu Dhabi Forges Ahead with Plans to Create a Cultural World Capital,Jonathan Nettler, http://www.planetizen.com/node/54013 (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. (read entire article) · World Class Souq to be Built in Abu Dhabi, Emily Cleland https://www.thenationalnews.com/uae/heritage/world-class-souq-to-be-built-in-abu-dhabi-1.411619#:~:text=The%20150%2C000%2Dsquare%2Dmetre%20venue,an%20open%2Dair%20performance%20space [thenationalnews.com]Links to an external site.. \*\*Bullet Points need to be included: 1) What are some of the common planning policies and initiatives Middle Eastern cities such as Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and Doha, Qatar are implementing? 2) What would be interesting to you related to working on planning projects in the Middle East? What opportunities and knowledge do you perceive planners could realize/gain? 3) What are some of the challenges Middle Eastern cities face as they strive to create sustainable plans for future growth? 4) What do you think Western-educated planners can offer to Middle Eastern cities and communities as they work to redevelop older areas and create new world-class districts?