

PATTERNS OF LAND USE IN CITIES



In many cities it is possible to identify zones with a particular type of **land use** – e.g. a residential zone. Often these zones have developed due to a combination of economic and social factors. In some cases planners may have tried to separate out some land uses. Geographers have put together models of land use to show how a 'typical' city is laid out. One of the most famous of these is the **concentric zone model**. This model is based on the idea that land values are highest in the centre of a town or city. This leads to high-rise, high-density buildings being found near the **Central Business District (CBD)**, with low-density, sparse developments on the edge of the town or city. Examples: London and Chicago.

Another urban model is the **sector model**. This is based on the circles on the concentric zone model, but adds sectors of similar land uses concentrated in parts of the city. Notice how some zones, e.g. the factories/industry zone, radiate out from the CBD. This is probably following the line of a main road or a railway. Example: cities growing in the era of rapid transportation systems technology, pre-WW2.

Multiple nuclei model. After World War 2, it was clear that many cities did not fit the traditional concentric zone or sector model. Cities of greater size were developing substantial suburban areas and some suburbs, having reached significant size, were functioning like smaller business districts. The model is based on the idea that people have greater movement due to increased car ownership. This model is suitable for the big and expanding cities like Houston and Los Angeles.

