Two Changing Cities

How population shifts reshape land, services, and daily life

GHW.3.4 "Give examples of and evaluate how the physical and human environments in different regions have changed over time due to significant population growth or decline."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one population change and one change to the physical environment in each city, circle an effect on residents in each city, and number one proposed response for each city.

When a City Grows or Shrinks

1. On some Detroit blocks, an empty house can stand beside a lived-in one. Detroit's population fell from about 1.85 million in 1950 to about 639,000 in 2020. Factory job losses, suburban growth, and other forces contributed to the decline. As residents left, some houses were demolished, leaving open lots where buildings once stood. Fewer residents meant a smaller tax base to help pay for roads and public services spread across a large city. Yet open land also created room for gardens and stormwater projects. Population loss reshaped both the built landscape and the choices facing people who stayed.

2. Phoenix shows a different pressure. Its population rose from about 107,000 in 1950 to about 1.6 million in 2020. Jobs, migration, and air conditioning helped the city grow in a hot, dry region. New neighborhoods and paved roads covered some open desert land. More pavement can hold heat, adding to dangerous summer temperatures. More households also increased demand for water, which must be managed carefully in a region with limited local rainfall. Growth expanded housing and economic opportunities, but it also increased the need for shade, reliable water supplies, and ways to limit heat.

3. City choices can change these outcomes, but no choice removes every cost. In Detroit, maintaining streets and pipes across sparsely populated blocks can be expensive per resident. Concentrating new housing near existing services could lower those costs, but people elsewhere may worry about losing support. In Phoenix, planting shade trees can cool sidewalks, but many trees need water and upkeep. Choosing drought-tolerant shade and protecting water supplies may reduce that trade-off. In both places, population change altered physical space and daily life. Evaluating a response means asking who benefits, what it costs, and whether it fits local conditions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Detroit's population decline change its built environment and make services harder to maintain?

2. How did Phoenix's growth change the land and affect summer conditions for residents?

3. Compare one pressure that population change placed on resources in Detroit with one it placed on resources in Phoenix.

4. Identify one proposed response in each city. What trade-off does the passage give for each?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a recommendation to a planning group that works in both cities. Choose one response for each city from the passage, explain how each addresses a change in the physical environment, and evaluate a trade-off for each. Then say which city you would address first and support your choice with a passage detail.

ANSWER KEY

Two Changing Cities

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one population change and one change to the physical environment in each city, circle an effect on residents in each city, and number one proposed response for each city. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Detroit's population decline change its built environment and make services harder to maintain?	**Some houses were demolished, leaving open lots. With fewer residents contributing to the tax base, paying for roads and services across the city became harder.**
2	How did Phoenix's growth change the land and affect summer conditions for residents?	**New neighborhoods and roads covered some open desert land. More pavement holds heat, adding to dangerous summer temperatures.**
3	Compare one pressure that population change placed on resources in Detroit with one it placed on resources in Phoenix.	**Detroit's smaller tax base made it harder to pay for roads and services spread across the city. Phoenix's growing number of households increased demand for water in a dry region.**
4	Identify one proposed response in each city. What trade-off does the passage give for each?	**Concentrating new housing near services in Detroit could lower costs, but people elsewhere may worry about losing support. Shade trees in Phoenix could cool sidewalks, but many need water and upkeep.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In Detroit, I would concentrate new housing near existing services. This could make it less costly to maintain streets and pipes across a city with many sparsely populated blocks. However, residents outside those areas may worry about losing support. In Phoenix, I would plant shade trees along sidewalks to reduce the heat held by pavement. The trees would need water and upkeep, so drought-tolerant choices matter. I would address Phoenix first because the passage says added heat contributes to dangerous summer temperatures. Detroit's service costs also need attention, but Phoenix's heat poses an immediate risk to residents.

Accept other passage-supported comparisons and priorities. The final recommendation should connect both responses to physical changes, evaluate a trade-off for each, and justify its priority with a passage detail.