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Population Growth and Housing Affordability in Doha Metropolitan: Challenges and Opportunities

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Urban issues are increasingly considered on national policy programs. Cities are major contributors to national economies and play a key role as nodes in the global market. As with any urban area with an emerging history, the city of Doha has emerged as a commercial hub around a port, which has guided the emergence of housing agglomerations. Several types of houses were developed over the various stages of Doha's urbanization period since the 1950s. Doha metropolitan has evolved rapidly in the twentieth century due to the investment of oil and gas revenues which has resulted in massive inflows of migrants. During the last few decades, the phenomenal impact of the multicultural population on the housing market has suggested unique lifestyle-oriented preferences. The city has evolved rapidly in the twentieth century due to the investment of oil and gas revenues, which has resulted in massive population growth. Housing supply and demand have been challenged to satisfy the diverse market needs. Since the 1990s, the phenomenal impact of the increased population growth rates of the massive migrant flows on the housing market has instigated the need for a demand-driven supply of housing. In parallel, the socio-cultural diversities of the multi-cultural population require certain housing typologies to meet this diverse need. The rapid increase in land prices has led to the increase of residential rents and hindered the establishment of more affordable housing. Accordingly, housing affordability became one of the most important topics that presents an important topic both in the present and for the future. Tracing population growth rates in Doha reflects the rapid increase in certain periods of their massive inflows. During the period between 1990 and 1995, Doha has witnessed a considerable increase in population growth rates. This is followed by

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a steady increase until 2005 where another rapid increase has taken place. This was a result of Doha's participation in mega-sporting events, which has led to an increase in housing demand to accommodate the increasing population. In this paper, two methodological approaches to study housing dynamics and characteristics are used: an analysis of population trends and a survey of housing preferences. Statistical analysis of population trends provides a quantitative overview on the dynamics of the housing supply and demand. The survey of housing preferences is known to be related to cultural factors on how nationals and migrants are residing in the city, including their demography and lifestyle. It provides an overview of the current lifestyle clusters of current population. The paper aims to explore affordable housing opportunities with respect to supply and demand trends and the surveyed lifestyles in order to meet the diverse demographics of Doha's population. Conclusions are drawn to establish future guidelines and recommendations for housing growth and neighborhood planning in view of population demographics, governmental visions, and urban realities.