

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Singapore, showing a dense urban area with a river and a bridge. The image is split vertically by a dark grey bar that serves as a background for the title text.

# REINVENTING FRAMEWORKS FOR URBAN GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING

2023

**URBAN 20**

White Paper.

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# Reinventing Frameworks for Urban Governance and Planning

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White Paper



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# Contributors

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## U20 ADVISORS

### Hitesh Vaidya

Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), India

### Nilesh Prakash Rajadhyaksha

Programme Director - Urban Strategy Unit, NIUA, India

Head - U20 Technical Secretariat

### Kanak Tiwari

Programme Director - Urban Strategy Unit, NIUA, India

Head - U20 Technical Secretariat

## TASK FORCE MEMBERS

### Sarika Chakravarty (Convener)

Team Lead, UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Rejeet Mathews

Director, Integrated Urban Development, World Resources Institute (WRI), India

### Dr. N Sridharan

Director (Retd.), School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) Bhopal, Vijayawada and Addl. Director (Retd.), SPA New Delhi, India

### Dr. Sanjukta Bhaduri

Professor and HOD of Urban Planning, SPA, New Delhi, India

### Parul Agarwala

Country Programme Manager-India, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), India

### Dr. Teresa Kerber

Project Director "Sustainable Urban Development - Smart Cities II" (SUDSC II), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, India

### Yogita Lokhande

Technical Expert, GIZ GmbH, India

## Laura Valdés Cano

Head of Policy Secretariat General, World Association of the Major Metropolises, Spain

## Oscar Chamat

Research and Policy Officer, Metropolis, Spain

## Dr. Gaurav Bhatiani

Director, Energy and Environment, RTI International, India

## Dr. Saswat Bandhopadhyay

Prof., Urban Infrastructure Planning, Faculty of Planning, CEPT University, Ahmedabad., India

## Pashim Tewari

Technical Director, All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIIILSG), India

## Anusha Fatima

Head of Business Development and Urban Planner, AIIILSG, India

## Eric Hyubrechts

Manager of International Affairs, Directorate General, L'Institut Paris Region, France

## RESEARCH TEAM

### Shinjini Saha

Project Officer (Transport), UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Sarayu Madhiyazhagan

Project Officer (Nature-based Solutions), UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Varsha Singh

Knowledge Management and Communications Specialist, UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Pawan Sharma

Project Coordinator - PMU, UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Sugandh Verma

Young Fellow, UrbanShift Country Project, NIUA, India

### Anusha Mishra

Senior Associate, NIUA, India

### Nimisha Jha

Team Lead, U20 Unit, NIUA, India

## DESIGN TEAM

### Kaveri Bahure

Research Associate, Climate Centre for Cities, NIUA, India

### Kapil Kumar

Associate, Urban Strategy Unit, NIUA, India

# Abbreviations

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<b>CENA</b>	Capacity Enhancement Needs Assessment
<b>FAR</b>	Floor Area Ratio
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>LAMATA</b>	Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority
<b>NCR</b>	National Capital Region
<b>NCT</b>	National Capital Territory
<b>SDI</b>	Spatial Data Infrastructure
<b>SPV</b>	Special Purpose Vehicle
<b>TOD</b>	Transit-Oriented Development
<b>TSGP</b>	Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline



# 01/

# Challenges of emerging urbanisation patterns

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Urbanisation has seen unprecedented growth in the past few decades. While only 30% of the world's population lived in urban areas in 1950, today this figure has already surpassed 56% with almost 4.4 billion people residing in urban areas. This trend is projected to continue, and by 2050, the urban population is expected to more than double, with nearly 7 out of 10 individuals living in cities. Cities are driving economic value creation, generating more than 80% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (The World Bank, 2023). Cities are also significant in terms of their environmental footprint, occupying just 3% of land, but accounting for 60 to 80% of energy consumption and 75% of carbon emissions (United Nations, 2020). These facts necessitate the need to ensure sustainable and inclusive urban growth.

Urban population growth is resulting in two broad spatial trajectories: (i) densification within existing city boundaries, and (ii) urbanisation beyond existing city boundaries.

- **Densification within existing urban boundaries** is due to a combination of natural growth and migration. If not anticipated through appropriate policy frameworks, much of this growth tends to be absorbed by cities in an organic, unplanned manner. Cities in developing economies, in particular, are vulnerable to the downside of such unplanned increases in urban densities - resulting in an increase in risks associated with morphological factors (emergence of slums/unplanned settlements, difficulty in assigning land for planned developments, etc.), socio-economic factors (defending the rights of existing communities to preserve affordable housing or local workplaces, etc.), and environmental factors (failure in protecting green spaces in dense areas, reduced urban resilience, etc.) that impact at different scales (Teller, 2021).
- **Spatial expansion beyond the administrative jurisdiction of cities** is dictated by economic factors (economic clusters and linkages) and land dynamics (differential land costs between the urbanised and peripheral areas, limited availability of developable land within cities, etc.). Cities are fast becoming part of larger

regional ecosystems with strong economic and resource interdependencies. New spatial patterns of urban growth such as economic corridors (Greater Mekong Sub-region, Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, Asian Highway, Grand Paris Expressway, etc.), mega-regions (National Capital Region of Delhi, Greater London, Tokyo, etc.) and conurbations (Paris - Amsterdam - Brussels - Munich, Seoul - Busan, London - Leeds - Manchester, etc.) are emerging as a result of these interdependencies.

Globally the rate of urban land expansion surpasses population growth by a significant margin - 1.2 million square kilometre of new urban built-up area is expected to be added to the world by 2030, with the consumption of urban land outpacing population growth by up to 50% (The World Bank, 2023). This expansion often comes at the expense of prime agricultural land, ecosystem services, and biodiversity. Apart from increased impacts on access to opportunities, productivity and quality of life, such unplanned spatial expansions result in compromised climate and disaster risk resilience. As cities expand peripherally, local agencies often struggle to provide essential services like water, sanitation, and electricity. Consequently, citizens tend to rely on informal service providers who may charge significantly higher costs, or may have to go without these services altogether. Research indicates that as cities sprawl outward and population densities decline, the costs of delivering public services increase. The associated investments required for new infrastructure and the social costs of their deficiency only continue to rise with increased urban expansions. Additionally, urban sprawl leads to more congestion, pollution, and longer commutes. Besides, urban expansions can result in shifting of economic activities to the outskirts or to nearby smaller towns due to availability of land at lower cost, business advantage due to agglomeration of economies, better connectivity, etc. This may result in blighted city cores with poor quality services, degradation in housing, businesses and public areas, and undermine the potential of existing cities to contribute to economic prosperity.

A study of the Delhi National Capital Region's (NCR) Economic Geography revealed that the Core National Capital Territory (NCT) has decentralised without the expected movement to a knowledge-based, high-wage economy, and informality persists despite higher infrastructure provision levels. Rapid urbanisation, peripheralisation of jobs, and migration tripled the region's per capita income and increased consumption levels. Declining poverty rates coexisted with increasing unemployment rates. This revealed that place-specific, dynamic, and targeted economic and infrastructure development strategies must be prioritised, including revitalisation of Core NCT (Mathews, 2023).

A third manifestation is in the form of emergence of new cities/ towns. This is largely driven by natural growth of rural settlements, primarily in the vicinity of larger cities and growth centres and as such this phenomenon is at least in a large part covered under the second spatial trajectory mentioned above.

To keep pace with the challenges of urban growth, the planning and governance systems of cities must evolve into proactive rather than reactive frameworks. Responding to the dynamics of urban change, will require frameworks that are 'enabling' and 'agile', providing opportunities for citizens, private sector, and others to innovate and participate more actively in the development process. Working at multiple scales will be critical. On the one hand, evolving planning and governance mechanisms at the macro level (mega regions/ metropolitan regions, conurbations, economic corridors, peri-urban sprawl, etc.) must ensure efficient multilateral governance and synchronised coordination amongst multiple spatial/ political jurisdictions to enable integrated planning with optimal use of resources and shared advantages. On the other, it will be equally important

to develop spatial, legal and financial frameworks required for facilitating local planning and urban regeneration for addressing issues of degraded built environments, disaster risks, and lack of proper housing and services within existing cities themselves. These have to be tackled by developing feasible models for implementing and financing the renewal of different areas in the city, creating opportunities for plugging in practices of placemaking, sustainable mobility, circular economy, green buildings, disaster preparedness, etc.

This White Paper on 'Reinventing Frameworks for Urban Governance and Planning' discusses the possible strategies/ tools for meeting emerging urban challenges under three broad heads:

- A. Adopting Strategic planning frameworks at multiple scales (section 2)**
- B. Creating innovative frameworks for planning and governance of multi-jurisdictional urban patterns (section 3)**
- C. Facilitating urban regeneration of existing areas (section 4)**

# 02/

# Adopting ‘Strategic’ planning approaches for addressing emerging urban challenges

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Long-term planning frameworks (typically 10 to 20 years) are often criticised for not being dynamic or enabling enough to accommodate changing contexts and needs, thereby rendering them irrelevant to emerging economic trends and demands of urban areas. Inflexible land regulations and density restrictions can result in segregated land use patterns, preventing the formation of agglomeration economies, encouraging automobile dependence, and resulting in urban sprawl and gentrification. Inflexible regulations may also result in unauthorised development since private developers may ignore or flout regulations to make their projects financially profitable. Besides, peri-urban areas, where the fastest urban growth is taking place, remain unaddressed in the current urban policy system. There is a need to shift the focus of urban planning frameworks from being restrictive and regulatory in nature to being more enabling and strategic.

## 2.1 Strategic approach to urban planning

In contrast to more traditional approaches to urban and regional planning, in particular, those embedded within a land-use regulation tradition, strategic planning is an integrated or holistic approach to spatial development with a strong focus on coordinating the spatial impacts of sectoral policies and institutional capacity building across sectors and stakeholders (Walsh, 2012). The strategic approach to urban planning sets developmental priorities, determines the direction of desired development, addresses dynamic needs through development of strategies, develops action plans with the engagement of all stakeholders, and secures financial outlays for the implementation of selected priority projects, which will have the most impact on long-term objectives. This approach helps the city to respond to ever changing contexts and can provide significant opportunities to move away from government-controlled systems to more flexible open market systems.

**Urban strategic planning entails a methodological shift and is not a substitute for the statutory spatial planning process and spatial plans prepared by governments at various levels.** For spatial plans to become strategic, they will need to go beyond regulation of land to incorporate strategies for aspects such as socio-economic development, environmental protection, ecological considerations, poverty alleviation in urban areas, the welfare of marginalised communities including individuals with disabilities, and the promotion of cultural, educational, and aesthetic aspects in the planning process. To address these aspects, the existing planning process should integrate inputs from multiple disciplines and also work at multiple scales such as regional, city, and local levels. It is essential to move towards a framework approach for development rather than rely on the current prescriptive mode of planning.

**To facilitate urban strategic planning, the role of the public sector should change from a provider to that of an enabler/ facilitator.** This will require comprehensive re-engineering of capacities and roles of planning functionaries, as well as a shift from a top-driven approach to one that enables innovation and engagement of stakeholders on the ground. Importantly, the focus will have to shift from over prescription and input specifications to key long-term objectives and outcomes. Planning agencies will also have to develop mechanisms for coordination with other relevant departments to ensure that spatial plans converge with other sector-specific plans and priorities of various agencies to achieve integration across aspects such as land management, building regulations, core network infrastructure, protection of ecosystem services, social schemes, etc. Failure to do so may lead to uncoordinated development, duplication of work, ineffective usage of resources and delay in planning and implementation.

In order to lend 'strategic-ness' to the process of urban planning, there is a need for urban planning to move from being a 'robust product' to a 'robust process' (Toutain & Gopiprasad, 2006). It is necessary to understand that planning is not merely an end of a process but a process by itself, which continues even after the plan is published. A robust feedback loop should be established that facilitates collation of data points, feedback from various stakeholders and analysis of impacts of various strategies/ policies that can inform the plan framework and keep it updated. Plans prepared at different levels could adopt a system of rolling plans by which they are evaluated and updated on an interim basis to stay relevant. Strategic plans prepared over shorter time horizons can also provide a mechanism for prioritising critical projects and interventions that will most

impact long-term priorities. Comprehensive and regular data collection and spatial mapping (using tools such as Geographic Information System (GIS) technology) to stay abreast of the changes on ground is also a key requirement for ensuring proper implementation, monitoring, and course correction. Karnataka, one of the states in India, has used GIS for planning its capital city - Bengaluru. This technology-driven system enables continuous and incremental updating of on-ground information, going beyond the traditional approach of mapping solely during the plan preparation phase. This provides a common reference platform for various types of plans, facilitates cross-sectoral analysis and supports the monitoring, evaluation, and management of plan implementation and services.

### Strategic urban development plans

The strategic plans of London (2023-2027 Strategic Plan City of London), Paris (2021-2025 Strategy Plan PARIS21), Auckland, Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Singapore, New York, and Barcelona are all examples of ways in which cities are trying to plot their future. The London Plan outlines the groundwork for the forthcoming two decades of urban development in the city to construct a metropolis which can entice individuals to reside in and invest in, despite a fiercely competitive global environment, and provide financial well-being to all.

## 2.2 Key aspects to consider in Strategic Planning

- **Integration of Land use with Economic Strategy, Transport & Infrastructure Planning:** Departments/ agencies dealing with different sectors/ services tend to operate in silos, often setting their own independent priorities and developing uncoordinated projections of likely future demand (e.g. electricity demand may be projected without reference to the expected changes in built environment and real estate proposed by spatial plans). To maximise the chances of achieving the goals set by different departments, it is essential to establish a strong convergence between their strategies. Consequently, these strategies for different sectors should be developed with reference to spatial planning and work towards common timelines and objectives. This has enormous convergence benefits, e.g. linking economic strategies with transport investments (Metro Rail, Bus systems, etc.) and development regulations can have a direct impact on urban and economic development. Coordinating plan preparation and notification timelines across departments may be a possible method for ensuring coordination.
- **Linking spatial plans and investment plans:** Investment plans and spatial plans are typically prepared by different agencies with little or no interaction with one another. As a result, spatial plans are ill informed about the possible development funds available in its jurisdiction and the investment plans find it difficult to identify key areas for investments to ensure maximum outputs. A detailed capital investment plan focusing on priority projects and interventions for the short and medium terms (covering multiple sectors) should be prepared to support strategic plans, including potential funding sources from public and private sources.
- **Ensuring flexibility in policies, rules and regulations:** To ensure that the planning agencies have enough flexibility in their operation, planning legislations and policies should be formulated such that they do not become over-prescriptive or regulatory but remain 'enabling' and 'strategic' while covering the broad strategies and themes of the proposed plan. This ensures that plans remain 'agile' and capable of appropriately addressing the dynamic challenges of urbanisation effectively. Supporting rules and regulations should also be drafted on similar principles of flexibility while upholding minimum public outcomes. This allows local innovation, response to market demands and adaptation to local circumstances without the need for cumbersome legislative amendments.

- **Making plans, processes, and data accessible:** It is critical that planning documents are structured and presented in a simplified manner to ensure that the proposals for the city are understood by all stakeholders. Strategy documents that engage and communicate well with stakeholders will be more likely to receive support for on ground implementation. Equally important is to create a complementary set of easy to understand, transparent and efficient processes that support plan outreach and implementation. Making monitoring and implementation data accessible to stakeholders through appropriate dissemination frameworks can further improve transparency, trust and create a meaningful feedback loop that can enhance planning outcomes.
- **Continuous monitoring and evaluation process:** Urban development is a dynamic and complex process, and as such the importance of monitoring and evaluation of plan implementation and its impacts on ground cannot be undermined. Robust and continuous monitoring mechanisms (featuring regular collection of data points, analysis and provision of critical inputs for plan modification) can ensure that planning frameworks remain relevant and cognizant of changing urban needs and circumstances. Periodic evaluation also helps in assessing the impact of proposed strategies, and in drawing lessons for the future.

03/

# Enabling metropolitan governance - Creating frameworks for planning and governance of multi-jurisdictional urban patterns

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**M**etropolitan regions (made up of multiple administrative and political jurisdictions) are becoming an increasingly important planning and development scale (Andersson M. , 2015). Metropolitan regions play a vital role as the economic powerhouse in many countries. The productivity of these metropolitan regions is increasingly becoming a key determinant of national economic growth. It is noteworthy that the 600 largest cities worldwide contribute approximately 60 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Richard Dobbs, 2011). However, many of these do not have any comprehensive mechanisms for coordinated planning and governance. Designated metropolitan areas are also struggling with issues of fragmentation, inequity, unintended sprawl, and dysfunctional governance systems. Comprehensive strategies will be required to facilitate coordinated development, infrastructure planning and service delivery, dynamic economic growth, resolution of environmental issues, poverty alleviation, equity promotion, and resource-sharing. Such efforts go beyond the responsibilities of individual local governments and necessitate overarching arrangements at the metropolitan level. Other forms of multi-jurisdictional urbanisation such as conurbations, corridors, etc. are also emerging as discussed in Section 1, that require better coordination mechanisms to ensure better quality of life, environmentally responsible growth and higher economic productivity.

Inter-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration can result in pooling of resources and potential cost savings, in addition to boosting economic productivity. By integrating territorial

planning across different scales and coordinating various services, efficiency gains can be achieved, particularly through economies of scale. It is, for example, fairly common to establish a Metropolitan Transport Authority since the infrastructure investments and service network tend to cross one or more jurisdictional boundaries. The Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) is one such example of a Transport Authority, with other metropolitan-level coordination functions carried out by the regional government (Lagos State, Nigeria). The Authority has the overall responsibility for transport planning, policies, investments and coordination in the Lagos metropolitan area. The law grants LAMATA powers to levy and collect user charges for its services and other tariffs, fees and road taxes as authorised by the governor of the state.

International experience shows a great diversity of metropolitan governance models, particularly across Europe and North America (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2006) (Slack, 2007). In East Asia, China, Japan and South Korea have consolidated metropolitan governments for their larger cities (Yang, 2009). Large cities in South Asia have also experimented with metropolitan governance approaches, for instance the Development Authority model adopted in Mumbai and Dhaka, or the Planning Board model followed in Delhi. Although there are many big cities in Latin America, the metropolitan government frameworks in São Paulo, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, and Rio de Janeiro, for instance, are still in the early stages of development. More than 50 recognised metropolitan areas have emerged, both in Mexico and Brazil,

because of the numerous smaller metropolitan areas that are a result of the unclear description in national legislation. Nevertheless, interesting models are emerging from the experiments in these countries. The Metropolitan District of Quito in Ecuador has set up an elected metropolitan council with a wide range of functions, led by an elected metropolitan mayor. A similar system has been adopted in Caracas, Venezuela. Sub-Saharan Africa is rapidly urbanising, but most cities lack effective institutions to govern at the metropolitan scale. South Africa is an exception, having established eight large municipalities

through amalgamations, each essentially covering their respective metropolitan area. Where institutional arrangements at local levels are lacking or weak, the main coordination tends to be exercised by provincial governments; for example, in Lagos State, Nigeria; state governments in India; and in many states of Brazil. Countries like India are also witnessing continuous urbanisation along corridors that transcend provincial boundaries and there is a need to innovate and work out hybrid governance mechanisms and inter-provincial coordination arrangements.

### Comprehensive framework's by Cape Town Municipality

The Municipal Demarcation Board of South Africa consolidated a number of local governments to convert Cape Town in to a large, amalgamated municipality in 1998 (Andersson M., 2015). The amalgamated Cape Town Municipality encompassed all areas that constituted the functional economic area and regional labour market to redress inequalities, promote strategic land use planning, coordinate infrastructure investments, and develop a comprehensive framework for economic and social development.

## I Enabling metropolitan governance

Considering its inherent political nature, determining the most suitable governance structure for a region depends on both the national and local context. Factors such as the legal framework, local government responsibilities, specific issues and opportunities of the area, institutional capacity, and tradition need to be taken into account. When defining such structures, a balance must be struck between (a) the potential for economies of scale and service efficiency, as well as addressing spill overs and regional disparities, and (b) ensuring continued access, responsiveness, and accountability of elected local governments to citizens.

**A. To fully harness the potential of metropolitan regions and other multi-jurisdictional urban patterns, it is crucial to ensure not only horizontal coordination at the local level but also vertical integration of governance among different tiers within a country, typically including local, regional, provincial, and national levels.** An interesting insight could be obtained from examples of effective intergovernmental/ supranational arrangements that have resulted in attaining mutually advantageous sustainable growth and managing assets that extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. The Eurotunnel and the Asia Highway Network demonstrate the vital role of trans-boundary urban governance in infrastructure development and regional connectivity. On similar lines, the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP) exemplifies effective collaborative governance for cross-border oil pipelines and also to transport natural gas from Nigeria to North African countries like Algeria and Tunisia. Such arrangements involve collaborative efforts among different governments and encompass agreements that transcend boundaries to manage shared assets like natural resources, oil pipelines, roads, railways, etc. Participating governments also established complementary legal frameworks

and regulatory standards to support such collaborative initiatives. Similar collaborations can be envisaged for projects/ initiatives that transcend provincial boundaries within a country. National governments could play a seminal role in arbitrating such arrangements, particularly along nationally important infrastructure alignments such as industrial corridors, logistics networks, etc.

**B. In any multi-jurisdictional governance arrangement, it is crucial to establish clear delineation of functions and responsibilities among the involved parties, especially if new authorities or a different level of local government is introduced.** At the metropolitan level, strategic decisions can be made regarding regional land use planning, strategic city development planning, strategies for economic development, tourism promotion and management, and regulation of market forces. Additionally, infrastructure development that serves the entire region, such as roads, bridges, public transit routes, police protection, fire services, emergency response, water supply systems, drainage and flood protection, piped sewerage systems, solid waste disposal, and public health services, can be collaboratively planned at the metropolitan level with the involvement of all stakeholders. Local bodies or other sub-regional levels of government would in turn be responsible for aligning local policies, planning strategies and last mile infrastructure or softer initiatives such as skilling to such regional strategy pipelines. Collaborative initiatives between multiple constituent entities may also be considered. Various models of investment and revenue sharing can be employed, including agreements on tax sharing or fee harmonisation, cost sharing or the establishment of a common budget, coordinated revenue mobilisation, and the utilisation of multiple funding sources for large-scale infrastructure projects with area-wide benefits.

Andersson proposes a conceptual division of service provision responsibilities (*highlighted as □*) between local, metropolitan, and national levels of government which may be treated as a starting point.<sup>1</sup>

S. No.	Name	Function	Metropolitan Level	Local Bodies	Central Government	Private Sector
1.	Local Economy	Strategic planning	□	□		
		Economic development	□	□		
		Tourism promotion & management	□			
		Major markets	□	□		
		Informal economy		□		
2.	Land Management	Regional land use planning	□			
		Local land use planning		□		
		Land allocation		□		
		Land surveying				□
		Titling/ provision of tenure				□
3.	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing		□		□
		Social (low income) housing		□		□
		Community upgrading		□		□
		Cultural facilities	□			□
		Parks and recreation facilities		□		□
4.	Transport	Roads and bridges	□	□		
		Public transit (e.g., buses)	□	□		
		Street lighting		□		
		Street cleaning		□		
		Car parking		□		
5.	Security	Police protection/ security	□		□	
		Traffic management				
		Fire service/ suppression & emergency/ rescue services	□	□		
		Ambulance services				
6.	Water, Sanitation and Waste	Water supply system	□			
		Drainage/ flood protection	□			
		Piped sewerage system	□			
		Solid waste collection		□		
		Solid waste disposal	□			
7.	Education, Health, Social care	Education		□	□	
		Public Health	□		□	
		Welfare Assistance		□		
		Child care services				□
8.	Power	Power supply (electricity)			□	

<sup>1</sup> Andersson, M. (2015). Unpacking Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Development [Discussion paper].

S. No.	Name	Function	Metropolitan Level	Local Bodies	Central Government	Private Sector
9.	Other	Libraries				
		Promotion of major events				
		Business licensing				
		Local agriculture				

It must be noted that if the responsibility for a function is divided between the metropolitan level and local authorities (or central government), a risk of confusion, lack of accountability, and "finger-pointing" may arise, and hence it is critical to ensure that the detailed functional distribution is clearly understood at all levels and by citizens at large.

**C. If a metropolitan agency lacks the ability to make definitive policies and is limited to an advisory role, its effectiveness may be compromised.** This in turn can only be ensured if constituent local and/or provincial governments cooperate fully. This can be encouraged or mandated by regional or national governments through intergovernmental systems, legal frameworks, or specific financial incentives. International experience has demonstrated that the effectiveness of a metropolitan-level governance structure relies on the support and commitment of all local governments involved, regardless of whether it is formed "bottom-up" by them or "top-down" by a higher level of governance. Allowing individual local governments, the flexibility to participate in some or all metropolitan-level functions, as seen in the examples of Vancouver, Canada, and Bologna, Italy, can be an option. Furthermore, it is evident that metropolitan coordination is essential for promoting sustainable models that encompass social, economic, and environmental aspects.

**D. Another aspect to be considered while institutionalising a new arrangement for metropolitan governance is the complexity and the time intensive processes involved in the passing of a Resolution, Act, etc.** Interim institutional structures such as Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs), Committees, etc., can enhance the planning and management of urban services and infrastructure, improving efficiency and responsiveness by bringing decision-making closer to citizens (Fay, 1999). This approach can temporarily address larger institutional issues by implementing innovative solutions. Time-bound financial and administrative support can be provided through central schemes, promoting political stability and economic development while clearly defining resource transfers and intergovernmental responsibilities. However, such interim structures can hide larger institutional problems and defer structural solutions by applying a patch work of quick tactical fixes. It is therefore suggested that interim structures, if constituted, should incorporate specific milestones to be achieved and automatic sunset clauses.

**E. Effective metropolitan governance is greatly influenced by the functioning of constituent governments of a region.** Metropolitan or other forms of multi-jurisdictional governance can be enhanced by strengthening the functioning of constituent governments. Empowering the constituent local bodies with powers and responsibilities as may be necessary to enable them to function as effective institutions of self-government, undertake preparation of plans for economic development and social justice, and implement schemes as may be entrusted to them will be critical. Measures to improve the financial position of the local bodies should also be undertaken. This can substantially enhance the cumulative ability of regions to function effectively and create long term capacities for collaboration.

**F. Adopting a multi-stakeholder planning approach can significantly enhance planning outcomes at the macro level.** Acknowledging diverse perspectives for effective decision-making and sustainable development, involving multiple stakeholders through collaborative governance processes is important. Such engagements facilitate holistic and coordinated response to complex urban challenges, enhance community ownership, foster multi-level governance, and allow local communities to shape development strategies. Engaging community stakeholders in planning requires a comprehensive approach, including orientation meetings, consultations, disclosures, and workshops at each stage of the planning process. To enhance participatory planning, Social Engagement Advisors, behavioural nudges, local language, creative communication, and traditional community-level institutions (e.g. the Dorbar system in Meghalaya, India) can be utilised. However, participatory planning at the macro scale (regional/ city scale) may not yield similar outcomes as at the level of local areas, as the community is not able to associate with the issue at hand. For meaningful participatory planning at the macro scale, consistent efforts to build participatory competence of the community stakeholders and continuous engagement with such stakeholders is required.

**Lastly, it is critical to ensure that any institutional arrangement (new or extant, permanent or interim) is supported through sufficient revenue sources to sustain its mandates. Also, institutional and financial arrangements may need to adapt to changing needs and circumstances. This flexibility must be built into the governance frameworks.**

# Facilitating urban regeneration of existing urban areas

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Urban regeneration is a constant process of evolution that involves replanning, retrofitting and rebuilding, allowing cities to address degradation of built environments, revitalise distressed areas, and improve the overall liveability, encompassing physical, economic, and environmental aspects. Regeneration has the potential to improve aspects such as inclusion, resource efficiency, availability of affordable housing, and result in more sustainable and safer areas. In several cases regeneration activities can also lead to leveraging latent economic potential of areas and land value capture. However, urban regeneration projects, being complex and involving multiple stakeholders, often face challenges and can even result in partial or complete failure. To achieve sustainable outcomes throughout the entire process, from scoping to implementation, cities must effectively utilise their key assets, encourage participation from the public and private sectors, and carefully consider the intricate interplay of socio-cultural, economic, physical, and infrastructural factors. A comprehensive approach is essential for optimising regeneration efforts, promoting sustainable urban development, and incentivising stakeholder engagement. In India, according to the 1901 census, there were 1,830 urban centres in the country, suggesting that these cities are over 100 years old. Their age has started to reflect in the form of physical deterioration of the buildings, inadequate infrastructure, congestion, long commutes to new commercial developments, water logging and social disharmony such as road rage (Bhatiani, Ahluwalia, Wadhwa, & Amuloju, 2022).

## Facilitating Urban Regeneration

As regeneration initiatives vary based on specific contexts, it is important to incorporate contextual intelligence into planning for regeneration. The objective of regeneration policies should be to create conducive conditions that can equally adapt and respond to formal and informal developments, heritage areas, ecologically sensitive zones, transit corridors, and other contexts. Urban regeneration and city marketing are closely intertwined, as physical transformations in neighbourhoods, often through flagship projects, are utilised to enhance the competitiveness of a location in attracting businesses, residents, and investments. To guarantee the effectiveness of regeneration endeavours,

it is essential to implement institutional arrangements and strategic actions that can address a range of needs, promote spatial restructuring, empower local communities, and ensure public outcomes.

**A. Creating a specialised entity responsible for overseeing and coordinating regeneration efforts could ensure focused attention and expertise in managing the process** while working collaboratively with various stakeholders, streamlining decision-making processes, and facilitating effective implementation of regeneration projects. A number of cities have set up such dedicated agencies, e.g. Urban Renewal Authority in Hong Kong, Urban Redevelopment Authority in Singapore, etc. The functions of such agencies may include identification of areas for revitalisation, development of redevelopment plans, acquisition and clearance of properties, and collaboration with stakeholders to carry out regeneration initiatives. These agencies typically work closely with the government, community organisations, and private sector partners to mobilise regeneration activities.

**B. Introducing flexible planning and zoning regulations to allow for more adaptive and responsive approaches to development could facilitate regeneration.** This may include encouraging mixed land uses, promoting higher density development in appropriate areas, and providing flexibility in building design and use. It is critical to ensure that such policies provide flexibility in terms of retaining and retrofitting existing built structures as well as reuse of building material (wherever feasible), thereby introducing circularity in the construction sector. In Netherlands, since 1980s the traditional, restrictive, plan-led system has been evolving to make way for a more flexible, fragmented and tolerant development-led system that facilitates redevelopments to take place independently. This change is reflected in an increased use of public-private partnership models aimed at revitalising cities and the emergence of new commercial actors in the property market (van den Hurk & Tazan-Kok, 2020).

**C. Enabling regeneration through a strategic approach, structured around financial incentives and creation of favourable market conditions can substantially enhance uptake of regeneration activities.**

- Implementing financial incentives and support mechanisms in the form of additional/ incentive development rights, tax breaks, grants, and loans for regeneration projects could attract private investment and encourage participation. Additionally, offering technical assistance, capacity building, and funding opportunities for local communities and businesses could empower them to actively contribute to the regeneration process. The Draft Master Plan of Delhi - 2041 has proposed incentives in the form of higher Floor Area Ratio (FAR), mixed use, use of transferable development rights within regeneration projects, etc.
- The overall planning framework must also support creation of demand for regeneration activities by strategically limiting the availability of greenfield land for development, identifying and providing special norms and incentives for areas with high regeneration potential, supporting pilot/ demonstration initiatives to build market confidence, directing infrastructure investments, etc. Creating conducive market conditions are crucial for successful regeneration, as developers and investors are more inclined to participate when there is a clear demand and profit potential. The strategic approach taken in creating favourable market conditions in Canary Wharf, London demonstrates how targeted policies and incentives could attract private sector investment, stimulate economic growth, and drive regeneration in urban areas (Case study: How the Canary Wharf Group generates employment and creates opportunities for local businesses in the Canary Wharf Estate, 2016).
- It is also critical to ensure that regeneration processes are inclusive, equitable and do not result in large scale gentrification of areas, particularly where regeneration is targeted towards low-income communities. Appropriate policies for protecting the interests of original stakeholders, incentives for affordable and rental housing formats, ensuring deep involvement of stakeholders in project and process design, etc. can help mitigate the social concerns associated with urban regeneration and make the process more attractive to local communities.

**D. Vacant or underutilised public land and public assets can be repurposed or redeveloped to catalyse regeneration.** Such projects can act as demonstration projects, increase the land value of surrounding areas and act as powerful incentives for regeneration, encouraging private investment and development in the vicinity. By strategically identifying public land that has the potential for regeneration, cities can unlock its value and stimulate positive transformation in the surrounding areas. In addition to increasing land value, using public land for regeneration projects can also serve public interest objectives, by providing opportunities to incorporate elements of sustainability, affordability, and community benefit into the development process. For example, public land could be leveraged to create affordable housing, public spaces, cultural institutions, or green infrastructure, thereby ensuring that the benefits of regeneration are inclusive and accessible to all. Effectively using public land for catalysing regeneration requires careful planning, collaboration between public and private stakeholders, and a clear understanding of the local context and needs. The High Line Park in New York City is a good example of such strategic use of public assets. A historic elevated railway track that had fallen into disuse and disrepair has been repurposed into a unique linear park that spans several blocks of Manhattan. This has spurred private investment in the area. Former industrial buildings along the park have been repurposed into high-end residential and commercial spaces, creating new housing options and job opportunities. The increase in land value surrounding the High Line has incentivised further redevelopment and regeneration in the vicinity. Moreover, the park incorporates sustainable design features and green spaces, promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents and visitors. It provides a valuable recreational and cultural resource, offering public art installations, community events, and a peaceful urban oasis amidst the bustling city.

**E. Enhancing community engagement and participation in the decision-making process and giving communities a voice in shaping the regeneration initiatives can foster a sense of ownership and ensure that projects align with community needs and aspirations.** This can be done through public consultations, community workshops, and establishing community-led regeneration initiatives. It is critical to build the capacity of public functionaries engaged with regeneration processes to engage in meaningful stakeholder engagement and participatory planning processes to ensure success of such initiatives. Regeneration efforts in London are successful examples of collaboration and participation of the London Boroughs, the Greater London Authority, community organisations, housing associations and research bodies.

**F. Strategies and policies for urban regeneration must be nuanced to address different regeneration needs and facilitate contextual public outcomes in different areas.**

- **Urban regeneration can address issues like preservation of traditional settlements, communities, and practices by promoting adaptive reuse in heritage precincts for the survival of indigenous communities and the creation of new economic activities.** Adaptive reuse contributes towards facilitating employment opportunities while ensuring the revival of traditional skillsets. However, it is important to note that adaptive reuse should be undertaken sensitively and the essence of the heritage precinct should be retained. San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square, which opened in 1964, was the first large-scale adaptive reuse project in the United States. The adaptive reuse movement's greatest value is that hundreds of abandoned schools, factories, hotels, warehouses, and garrisons can be used as affordable housing, office buildings, and even commercial, civic, educational, and recreational centres, as it extends the life of such buildings and avoids demolition waste, encourages reuse of the embodied energy and also provides significant social and economic benefits to the society.
- **Directing urban regeneration projects to facilitate Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) can help to capitalise on existing transportation infrastructure and enhance the connectivity and accessibility of cities.** By concentrating development and increasing the density of buildings and activities near transit nodes, TOD aims to maximise the advantages of transit proximity and encourage more sustainable and efficient modes of transportation. Through regeneration and redevelopment efforts, the surrounding areas of transit stations can be transformed into compact, vibrant, walkable neighbourhoods that offer a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces.
- **Regeneration initiatives can also play a crucial role in improving unplanned areas and informal settlements such as slums, unauthorised colonies, etc. within a city** by replacing substandard and unsafe housing, upgrading infrastructure and integrating environmental sustainability measures into unplanned areas, such as promoting green spaces, implementing waste management systems, and adopting energy-efficient practices. It is particularly crucial to involve the residents of unplanned areas in the regeneration process. Community participation and empowerment could ensure that the initiatives align with the needs and aspirations of the residents and allows for better and more efficient multi-use programming of spaces and facilities created as part of the regeneration project..

**G. Encouraging public-private partnerships can bring expertise, resources, and innovative approaches to regeneration projects.** This can involve joint ventures, development agreements, or contractual arrangements where both public and private sectors work together towards common regeneration goals. London's Canary Wharf project (presented above) is an example of how private-public partnerships within designated zones can supercharge regeneration and development.

**H. Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks enables the assessment of progress, impact, and effectiveness.** This ensures accountability, identifies areas for improvement, and enables adaptive management throughout the regeneration process. The Critical Urban Areas Programme in Cova Da Moura, Amadora, Portugal aimed at legalising the area's land ownership, laying the ground for social and economic sustainability, and rehabilitating the community's basic infrastructure, is an example of using robust monitoring and evaluation instruments for collective and participatory analysis of processes. With a focus on comprehensive and action-oriented methodologies, the initiative aimed to gain insights and knowledge from the dynamic nature of processes involving various stakeholders. The goal was to understand and analyse the fluctuations, patterns, and interactions within these processes to foster a deeper understanding and facilitate informed decision-making (Lechner, 2010).

# Conclusion

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**R**apid urbanisation, improved connectivity and land and labour market dynamics are resulting in large integrated urban systems like metropolitan areas and other trans-jurisdictional urban forms, with interlinked economies and labour markets, communities with common interests, and the potential of benefiting from joint planning and action in various sectors. Hybrid governance arrangements with cross-jurisdictional and cross-sectoral coordination will have to be evolved. However, these are often politically challenging and difficult to operationalise. To enable this, institutional reforms need to be carefully designed and implemented, to ensure setting of common goals, strong inter-governmental and interdepartmental coordination, active citizen engagement and accountability mechanisms, and creation of institutions with functional autonomy and financial powers to make impactful decisions.

Horizontal urban growth and land and labour market dynamics also result in sub-optimal utilisation of land and urban decay in city cores. While the experience in the Global South is not one of 'emptying cores' since erstwhile economies are being replaced with new, albeit often informalised economic networks, the distress linked with inadequate infrastructure, degraded and unsafe built environments, trapped land and real estate potential, remain issues that need to be addressed through sensitive urban policy. Cities need to develop nimble and innovative solutions that shift away from a one-size-fits-all approach towards context-based strategies that can be put into action for planning and regeneration. Regeneration combined with robust urban design can act as an effective tool to revitalise older areas and infuse sustainability and resilience. Regeneration of brownfields is a complex process and collaborative efforts are needed from all stakeholders including the government, the realty sector, and the community. Buy-in from the community and businesses is a determining factor for ensuring the sustainability of regeneration efforts, and this needs to be secured through development of incentive frameworks and safety nets that make the process profitable and risk-free for stakeholders.

As cities experience rapid transformation, traditional long-term, land use-based, over-regulated planning methods must make way for strategic planning approaches at all levels to adapt and manage change dynamically and continuously. This involves conducting regular self-analysis to respond effectively to fast-moving events. It is important

to note that strategic planning approaches do not replace existing plans. Instead, they complement and enhance conventional plans, making them more feasible by guiding development and investments, both public and private, and aligned with the strategic priorities (sectoral and spatial) that are identified by all stakeholders through a consultative process. Flexible and tactical development control regulations - inclusive zoning, mixed-use, density bonusing, etc. could be most effective to implement and achieve the objectives of a strategic city plan. At a regional level, strategic planning is imperative to prevent unplanned sprawl beyond the city limits. Facilitating regional economic clusters, regional transportation networks and satellite towns can be a few steps in this direction.

Broadly speaking, four different transitions will have to be enabled to ensure inclusive, responsive and strategic planning and governance frameworks at all levels:

- **Transition from 'norm-driven' to 'strategy-driven' frameworks** - Most traditional planning has followed a land use linked regulation of norms. However, norms and regulations should reflect and enable achievement of strategic outcomes such as sustainability and resilience, economic productivity, transit focus and so on. For instance, norms can be designed to support transition from a sprawling urban form to a compact, low-emission, resilient and resource-efficient urban environment. This will require creation of customised norms for different areas, prepared in collaboration with concerned agencies and stakeholders.
- **Transition from siloed to integrated frameworks**- There is a need to go beyond jurisdictional siloes (whether within departments, sectors or administrations) and adopt collaborative metropolitan-level planning and governance to enable cross-jurisdictional and cross-sectoral coordination. Moving from sectoral planning to integrated, data-led, gender-sensitive, evidence-based spatial planning will further ensure that development decisions are coherent and aligned with overarching objectives.
- **Transition from input based to outcome-oriented frameworks** - This will really help to set long term targets around macro-outcomes and provide flexibility in the pathways adopted to lead up to those outcomes. This also reduces the rigid nature of long-term planning and keeps it agile and responsive to changing urban contexts.

- **Transition from 'regulatory' to 'enabling' frameworks -** Providing adequate flexibility in norms while regulating certain essential public outcomes and safeguards can help substantially boost private innovation and investment in building/ rebuilding cities.
- Outcome-based and collaborative planning requires robust data systems that provide reliable, updated and granular data to all stakeholders. Setting up data protocols in terms of periodicity, standardised metrics, data sources, etc. will be critical. Funds may be allocated for creation of data infrastructure and cells, within each city and at the macro, regional scale. Some countries, such as South Korea, India, Singapore, and Latin American nations, have successfully developed land information systems through Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) for effective urban governance. Fiscal incentives may be provided to cities for adopting data-based governance and decision-making processes. These could be structured as a milestone-based achievement with outcomes transparently verifiable by citizens or third-party verifiers.

Additionally, two cross-cutting aspects will be critical for executing transformative solutions to emerging urban challenges.

- Building capacities of public agencies/ institutions will be critical to the success of any transformative policy and it must form an integral part of processes adopted at all levels of government. Periodic assessment of capacity gaps and needs, use of innovative tools such as inter-departmental deputation and internships to improve coordination, sensitisation of political representatives, citizens and businesses, incremental self-paced learning instruments and peer learning and knowledge exchange platforms can play a major role in creating a culture of innovation and collaborative governance. It is critical, however to transition from ad-hoc efforts to learn from, and adapt, sustainable urban development lessons to systems for capturing and sharing good practices and lessons learned nationally and internationally.

Urban planning and governance frameworks must undergo continuous reinvention if they are to keep pace with changing requirements of emerging urban morphology and growth. Forward-looking urban planning tools with strategic thinking to adopt integrated, inclusive, and reflective approaches as suggested in this Paper, can not only provide a more implementable framework to address the challenges of cities and regions, but also help to localise global urban agendas such as urban climate change resilience, economic vitality, and inclusiveness.

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