

DRAWING  
BOARDURBAN PLANNING &  
CHANGING DESIGN  
SENSIBILITIES

ARCHITECTS AND REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS OFFER THEIR DESIGN PERSPECTIVES AND OUTLOOK ON WHAT THE FUTURE URBAN CITIES SHOULD TAKE COGNIZANCE

**Gurjot Bhatia, Managing Director – Project Management Group, CBRE India, Middle East and North Africa** opined that all the challenges of city planning and design are easily solvable if the Government and urban planners work together to find holistic solutions. “Sustainable design solution is the need of the hour. Collectively, we need to reimagine the way we live, work and enjoy. In fact, a lot of ills of the

society can be prevented through better designed and planned urban spaces.”

**Anubhav Gupta, Business Head Vikhroli, Head CSR & Sustainability, Founder, GPL Design Studio, Godrej Properties** shared his thoughts on the expectation of society from urban planning. “Preferences and sensibilities are changing with the changing demographics. Millennial have a fair amount of global



## MODERATOR

**Gurtej Bhatia**  
CREA India**Anubhav Gupta**  
Design Professionals**Prof. Charanjit Singh Shah**  
Creative Group**Jayant Vaitha**  
Colliers International India**Pankaj Dharkar**  
Partner, Director & Executive  
National Chairman, GEM Council  
ASSOCHAM**Rahul Kadri**  
IMK Architects**Vijay Wadhwa**  
The Wadhwa Group

## SPEAKER

exposure and demand similar sensibilities, not just the buildings, but also the spaces between buildings. Simple things like the structuring of streets and parks have become quite important to the people. The opportunity to live, learn, work and play within a vicinity is becoming an important consideration."

**Prof. Charanjit Singh Shah, Founding Principal, Creative Group** added, "Covid has made us realise that when human intervention decreases, nature thrives... We now need to focus on minimalistic architecture and human settlements, without overdependence on technology tools. Passive designs for buildings and open areas such as plazas and town squares can create naturally ventilated built-spaces and open areas within cities for citizens. Indian city planners should consider underground transportation infrastructure to maximize greenery on ground and minimize pollution, just like New York and Tokyo."

**Jayant Vaitha, Director & Head Design Services, Colliers International India** expressed, "There are statistics which show that some cities have more cases of covid-19 than others. The main reason being the density of the city. This has given rise to the concept of 15 minute city, wherein a person finds everything within 15 minutes of walking distance. This concept has made a lot of urban planners and designers rethink their design strategies. Now even governments and urban planners are coming together to work out ways of creating cluster cities around the main cities where all facilities are available locally."

**Pankaj Dharkar, Director, Pankaj Dharkar & Associates, National Chairman – GEM Council, ASSOCHAM** speaking about the importance of sustainability in today's world said, "Currently more than 50% of the population lives in urban cities and the numbers are fast growing. Architectural findings show that we will have to build a 1 million per square feet city per week. In the next 15 years if we don't solve this equation people will be living in terrible conditions in cities. Without proper urban planning, Indian cities will continue to feel the pressure of lack of housing, water, education and waste management. The local government's role is to find solutions to face the challenges of urbanization. One such solution can come through the public private partnership and can accelerate the proper planning of urban cities."

As per a World Bank report there will be 6.5 billion people in the world who will live in urban areas by 2050. By 2030 it is predicted that the most urbanised city will be Tokyo and out of the top ten three cities will be Indian. But when compared to the most sustainable cities none of the top urbanised cities make the list.

## REDESIGNING CITIES FOR CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

**Rahul Kadri, Partner & Principal Architect, IMK Architects** explained the challenges with Mumbai as an example, "In Mumbai we have less than 2 sqm of open space instead of minimum 10 sqm. The problem lies in our faulty planning byelaws which causes tremendous wastage of space. Almost 15% of area is wasted in open spaces left around buildings which can easily be made part of the public spaces, like in western countries. This will create more open green public spaces. For cities like Mumbai a lot of the problem lies in slum development. We need new solutions to deal with overpopulation, pollution and inadequate low cost housing for slum inhabitants."

**Vijay Wadhwa, Chairman Emeritus, The Wadhwa Group** added, "We need to see the city with a holistic point of view starting from addressing the problem of slums. Firstly, the government has to take up the slum redevelopment projects not in isolation but as a cluster development of the entire neighbourhood. When we have a large chunk of land, the planning and solutions can be implemented in totality. For instance, while designing our Wise City in Parvel, we brought in foreign consultants to study sea levels for next 5 years to protect the township from flooding in future. That's the level of long term vision that is required for the city planning to avoid natural disasters impacting the lives of the citizens,"