

The Indian Express 11.07.2013

Patil nod for draft Master Plan 2031, suggestions invited

Nearly four years after the process was initiated, draft Master Plan 2031 that provides an outline for the development of the city received the approval of Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Shivraj V Patil on Wednesday. Capping the city's population at 16 lakh, the Master Plan has enumerated the measures that need to be taken to manage the pressure on housing, transport and other infrastructure.

With Chandigarh being a landlocked city, the draft of the Master Plan has suggested ways for judicious use of land. Stress has been laid on maintaining the original character of the city, while ensuring development for the years to come. The entire 114 sq km area, including 70 sq km of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the original plan prepared by Le Corbusier and Phase 3 sectors, besides the area under the periphery, has been covered in the plan.

Housing

The draft Master Plan recommends redensification of identified pockets of single storey, low density original government housing of the city. It advocates population dispersal and housing strategies addressed through an inter-state regional plan to accommodate the projected population.

A holistic housing policy framework has been recommended to ensure that needs of all the socio-economic sections of the population are catered to. Judicious use of limited land, group housing in place of plotted development for the pockets identified for future housing, along with compulsory provision for the economically weaker section in all housing schemes to avoid emergence of slums in the city, has also been proposed.

Traffic

The Master Plan has recommended a people centric, efficient and reliable multi modal mass rapid transport system. It has proposed 12 green corridors running north to south,

connecting various areas of Chandigarh.

Stress has been laid on retrofitting the existing road network and last mile connectivity. Providing passage to pedestrians and cyclists is also part of the plan.

Periphery

As many as 17 vacant pockets have been identified in the periphery and land use for each pocket has been proposed to meet the requirements for housing, institutions, commercial, social and physical infrastructure taking into consideration city's compatibility with adjoining land use and ongoing projects of the Chandigarh Administration. Development plans for each village will be made.

Commercial areas

The Master Plan recommends that the concept of SCOs/SCFs be dispensed with. Planning and execution should be undertaken for shopping centres and space be rented/leased out on the pattern of shopping malls. On both sides of the Dakshin Marg, a commercial-cum-institutional area will be developed. The facades of markets will be cleaned up. The development of Sector 17 will be completed as per the original plan. It is proposed that government offices in Sector 17 will be weeded out.

Environment

Recommendations have been made to reduce carbon footprint through enhancement of green cover and afforestation. Stress will be laid on ensuring preservation of open spaces by declaring land use inviolable, adoption of green building concepts and solar passive designs, fast tracking Solar City concept to harness solar energy, reduce, recycle and reuse policies for solid waste management and water management. The flora and fauna of the Sukhna Wild Life Sanctuary will be preserved through declaration of an eco-sensitive area and wild life corridor linking the sanctuary with the Sukhna forest.

Objections sought

Objections and suggestions have been invited from city residents on the Master Plan. It has to be submitted within 30 days, after which the draft Master Plan will be taken into consideration by the Chandigarh Administration through a board of inquiry or hearing. It is available on the website chandigarh.gov.in.

Copies of the draft Master Plan are also available at offices of the deputy commissioner and municipal commissioner, central libraries in Sector 17 and 34, Panjab University, Chandigarh College of Architecture, Le Corbusier Centre, SDM offices in Sector 17 and Industrial Area, and block development and panchayat offices. The copies can be purchased from the office of the senior town planner, Department of Urban Planning of UT Secretariat, Sector 9, for Rs 6,000.