

## FOREWORD

The Perspective Plan for Delhi (PPD) is the latest in a series of inputs by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) into the process of finalizing the Master Plan for Delhi 2021. In June 2006, NIUA was asked by the Ministry of Urban Development to **peer review** the Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2021 (Draft MPD-2021) posted for public comment in April 2005 by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). The purpose of NIUA's review was to scrutinize the document and to examine the scope for making it user-friendly, and to clarify the policies that would address the 'guidelines' issued by the Ministry in July 2003. In addition to editorial changes and reorganization, NIUA was also asked to restructure the document in a logical sequence, revalidate it by incorporating the ground situation and contemporary policy initiatives. NIUA submitted its peer review to the Ministry on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006. Thereafter, it was asked for a number of additional interventions, such as the **Annotated Version** of the Draft MPD-2021 that highlighted contradictions, inconsistencies and errors. We were also requested to interact with the MPD Division of DDA in order to explore possibilities of revising the draft along lines suggested in the Annotated Version. NIUA has made a number of representations to the DDA and we hope that these inputs have been productive.

While reviewing the MPD-2021 and following closely the trials and tribulations of the master planning exercise, which was subjected to judicial intervention, media attention and rising public skepticism over the last four months, NIUA has come to the conclusion that the Master Plan for Delhi has become a compendium of concessions and amendments rather than a lucid and tenable road map for the future development of the capital of India. The Perspective Plan for Delhi (PPD) is a template for such a roadmap, a strategy that can include the outcomes of the MPD-2021 in its scope and go beyond.

PPD suggests a strategy to deal with the MPD-2021 and its likely ineffectiveness in regulating the unpredictable and unprecedented growth of India's capital city. As is evident from NIUA's rudimentary but informative 'mapping' of Delhi for the PPD, the MPD-2021 is itself limited in scope, given that it fails to address the on-ground spatial and physical character of Delhi: its size, built form, settlement patterns and ways of life. **While drafting the PPD, we have returned to the original purpose of a master plan: to establish an evolved system of spatial and physical order as a manifestation of the needs and aspirations of the city-dwellers and the constrained resources that are natural fallout of unplanned 'urban expansion'.** The PPD rests on the premise that the law-abiding, tax paying and hard working majority of Delhi's residents deserve a planning strategy and policy framework that is implemented completely and without bias or prejudice.

The ineffectiveness of the master planning exercise is due to the constant undermining of its premises by the now chronic doubt regarding the enforcement of its letter and spirit. In the fifty odd years that have transpired since the first and only comprehensive planning exercise undertaken in modern Delhi, i.e., in the original Master Plan for Delhi-62, very little work has been done in terms of planning as such. In being restricted to 'extensive modification' of the original, MPD-2021 is also anchored in an outdated paradigm of urban planning. Perhaps this is why there is a clause in the Delhi Development Act that speaks of the dissolution of the DDA after its purpose has been exhausted, and the assumption of planning to shift to the Government of India.

A paradigm shift is required at various levels. For example, the NDMC area, which directly meets the functional needs of the Government of India (GoI), should function as a largely autonomous entity, a quasi-SEZ, which maintains a symbiotic relationship with the larger city. Once the GoI liberalizes urban development, the limited development exercise conducted by the DDA in its three urban extensions—Dwarka, Rohini and Narela—should be accommodated into **a larger, more holistic strategy: the Perspective Plan.**

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The future of Delhi relies on removing the conflict of interest in DDA's assumption of both planning and executing functions; namely its stranglehold on the supply of land and its role as a developer of housing, commercial and other physical needs of the city. The Ministry has initiated a welcome change by questioning DDA's monopoly in land acquisition and disposal and by insisting that ground realities should guide the making of the master plan.

NIUA has drafted PPD with the objective of returning to the 'first principles' that should govern the planning of Delhi. It has treated the ground realities as a given and projected the policy needs of the city, leaving the responsibility of drafting development controls to the respective urban local bodies that are charged with their enforcement. This might immediately suggest that PPD disregards DDA's pivotal role in Delhi's urban development. Rather, NIUA would like to suggest that a resolution of the 'administrative rigmarole' of Delhi lies in each of the stakeholders (GoI, GNCTD, MCD, DDA, NDMC, DCB, et al) assuming their most appropriate role in decentralized planning and development of Delhi, monitored by the Government of India and economically managed by the offices of Delhi Government and MCD.

The arbitrary and contingent nature of development controls in the Draft MPD-2021 is a serious lacuna. Laws cannot be drafted with the assumption that they will not be enforced. At the same time, planning regulations cannot be effective if citizens cannot understand their underlying rationale: in the Draft MPD-2021 numbers have begun to obfuscate the policies. Further, segregated land use planning is not only against the lifestyles of the people; it is detrimental to creating a 21<sup>st</sup> century metropolis. The segregation of land use and the enforcement of that segregation through opaque and discretionary procedures are both against the grain of contemporary global understanding of how and why good democratic cities work. The Perspective Plan is NIUA's attempt to address the issues of achieving public good and a universally desired quality of life through simply articulated liberal policies like universal mixed use, which put greater pressure on the implementers of public interest rather than on the public itself. PPD treats the errors of the past as simply that: errors. It thus assumes the current MPD-2021 as a ground condition and anticipates the biggest problem that the current plan creates for the citizens of Delhi: the fact that it will not be implemented or that it will nearly sanctify all that could not be implemented. NIUA's PPD looks beyond this bleak prospect.

Shri Jaipal Reddy, Union Minister for Urban Development, has been a source of inspiration with his commitment to a better master planning exercise. We are deeply grateful to Shri Ajay Maken, Minister of State, Urban Development, for his steadfast support for the review process. This project was commissioned by Shri Anil Baijal, former Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, who also provided significant intellectual direction. Shri M Ramachandran, Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, facilitated our continued participation in the MPD process.

We would like to record our appreciation for the inputs provided by Don Elliott of Clarion Associates, Denver, USA. The project could not have been completed without the encouraging presence of Shri M M Kutty and Ms. Aparna Subramani in the Delhi Division of MoUD. And the insights provided by Shri Jitender Narain, PS to MoS, MoUD, will stand us in good stead for years to come.

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Jan 2007