

NCR Planning Board approves draft regional plan 2041 with modifications; to be finalised by March 2022

The NCR Planning Board on October 12 approved the draft Regional Plan-2041 with some modifications paving the way for a slum-free National Capital Region with air ambulance facility and high-speed connectivity through helitaxis, road, 30-minute Mass Transit Rail System and inland waterways.

The approved draft plan will be made public soon for comments.

The Board has approved Draft Regional Plan-2041 with some modifications to be shared for public comments. "It was desired that after carrying out necessary changes as per procedure to consider comments or feed back, efforts should be made to notify the final version of Regional Plan-2041 by the end of March 2022 with the approval of the board," a ministry of housing and urban affairs statement said.

The Plan lays key focus on multi modal connectivity across NCR through air, road, rail and inland waterway connectivity. It proposes 30-minute connectivity through super-fast trains within major cities of NCR as well as proposes to explore feasibility of 30-minute Mass Transit Rail System from nearest NCR boundaries to Delhi.

"The Plan's proposal of promoting electric mobility infrastructure, emphasis on circular economy of water and air quality improvements will help environment conservation. Urban regeneration, ease of living, slum free NCR, 24-hour Air ambulance, Swachh and Smart NCR are major initiatives of the Plan," the NCRPB statement said.

The 41st meeting of the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) was held under the chairmanship of Hardeep Singh Puri, minister of housing and urban affairs. According to an official statement, the plan was approved in a meeting of the NCRPB on Tuesday which was chaired by Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs (MHOUA) Hardeep Singh Puri.

The meeting was attended by Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister Haryana, Sidharth Nath Singh, Minister of Khadi & Gram Udyog, Kapda, MSME and NRI Deptt., Uttar Pradesh; Shanti Kumar Dhariwal, Minister of Urban Development, Rajasthan; Satyender Jain, Minister of Urban Development, Govt. of NCT Delhi through digital mode.

Besides, Secretary (HUA), Govt. of India, the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Haryana; Additional Chief Secretary of Govt. of NCT Delhi; Member Secretary, NCRPB and other senior officers of the Central Govt., and NCR participating States attended the meeting.

Puri said that with increasing urbanization levels in NCR, the region is going to be the largest agglomeration in the world by 2030, which presents major challenges for the future of this region.

There was a broad agreement on the major elements of the draft RP-2041 at the meeting.

On NCR Delineation, consensus was arrived at the fact that the geographical size of the region should be a contiguous circular region of 100 km radius from Rajghat (Delhi). Beyond 100 km radius and upto existing NCR boundary, all notified cities/ towns along with a corridor of 1 km on either side of connecting Expressways/ National Highways/ State Highways/ Regional Rapid Transit System will be included. The decision to include or omit tehsils lying partly within this 100 km delineation shall be left to the respective state governments.

"As for population projections, the population estimates of the Draft RP are indicative and do not imply any restriction on the states. States may take / use figures as per their projections for next 20 years and their infrastructure and other development requirements," the statement said.

The Natural Conservation Zones issue was discussed in detail and it was agreed that this be called a 'Natural Zone' and development within this shall be protected/ conserved/ regulated/ utilized as per relevant Central/ state laws and directions of the Courts and NGT.

Uttar Pradesh requested that NCZ delineation for the four newly added districts may be done under RP-2041 as the current RP-2021 is going to expire in next few months. This was discussed and agreed to by the Board.

The chairman expressed the view that the Draft RP is an evolving document and views of the States on the draft provisions may be reviewed till it gets finalized and approved by the Board for publication and implementation.

It was decided that after carrying out necessary changes in the draft RP-2041, it should be placed in public domain for 30 days as mandated under the law to seek views of all stakeholders that includes states/organisations/public.

Key Highlights of the Regional Plan 2041

The priority areas for the Draft Regional Plan are urban regeneration, future ready infrastructure, multi-modal transport and logistics, industries and MSME, economic corridor, tourism, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions & Exhibitions) and leisure, farm income and traditional economy, skill development and employment, smart and digital NCR and Ease of Doing Business.

The Plan's proposal of ToD (Transit Oriented Development) along major transport corridors, high FAR (Floor Area Ratio), TDR (Transferable Development Rights), vertical brown field re-development, mixed land use in old parts of cities and smaller towns to promote medical/educational/tourism hubs, affordable rental housing are transformative in nature and will go a long way in meeting demands of rapid urbanization.

Water is going to be a scarce resource and the Plan's proposals of decentralized STPs with dual piping and recycled water will address the water scarcity.

The NCRPB covers entire Delhi, eight districts of Uttar Pradesh, 14 districts of Haryana and two districts of Rajasthan. Collectively it covers an area of about 55,083 square kilometres. The regional plan says that population in the NCR is expected to grow to around 7 crore by 2031 and to about 11 crore by 2041 so there is a need to make the region future-ready for sustainable development.