

MoHUA recommends Holistic Planning for Pedestrian Friendly Market Spaces in Consultation with Stake Holders

Million Plus Cities to select at least three market places for Pedestrianisation & Non-Million Plus Cities to select at least one market area

Pedestrianisation in Market Places

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The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has recommended holistic planning for pedestrian friendly market spaces in various cities and municipal areas in the country in consultation with stake holders. The advisory issued by Sh Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to all states/cities/municipal corporations has also suggested the million plus cities to select at least three market places for pedestrianisation & non-million plus cities to select at least one market area for pedestrianisation in market places.

The following steps have been suggested for adopting the Pedestrianisation in Market Places –

1. Selection of Market Location – Million Plus Cities may select at least 3 market places and notify them for Pedestrianisation. Non Million plus cities may select at least one market area for pedestrianisation.
2. Holistic Planning of the Area – The planning for pedestrian friendly market space may be done in consultation with the stake holders – Vendors, Municipal officers, Traffic police, parking facility owners, Shop owners and consumers. This will require proper survey of space used in the present scenario by various stakeholders. A movement/direction plan has to be prepared to see that there are designated walking paths where visitors are able to follow social distancing. Plan could be made keeping the trees and other greens intact, adding tree canopy to improve walkability with clear spaces demarcated for vending, waste collection and access to toilet facilities. Plan should also incorporate interactive spaces for public to be carved out of contiguous unclaimed and under-utilized public spaces in the vicinity of the selected market area.
3. Once the plan is made and firmed up cities may start implementation in two phases – short term and long term.
4. Short-term recommendations include interventions that are quick, temporary, easy to install, and ensure

safety to commuters after the lockdown. The market spaces could be rearranged with quick ad temporary measures such as barricades, road closure for vehicles., etc.

5. On-street parking space or even carriageway lanes can be repurposed to provide more walking and waiting space.
6. Cities may consider providing improved access through additional streets.
7. Cyclists may be allowed with dedicated/ear-marked pathways.
- 8, Provision of access to motor vehicles for residents of the area to commute should be clearly delineated.
9. Municipal Bodies may increase the width of foot paths of the streets leading to the market.
10. Adequate provision of high frequency public transit may be ensured for citizens to access the market area in a comfortable manner.
11. The design of the vending spaces provides a good opportunity for innovations.
12. Long term permanent structures for promoting pedestrianisation can be developed after temporary short-term measures are found working.

Timelines

Selection of City Market spaces for Pedestrianisation may be done by June 30, 2020. The holistic planning of the area through stakeholder consultation can be undertaken in next 3 months, i.e. September 30, 2020. Survey of the vendors and other users of the market space could be carried out and completed by July 31, 2020. By the end of September, 2020, a Plan may be formalised to start implementation. Short term measures such a temporary barricading, closure of roads for traffic, earmarking spaces, etc. to assess the plan on the field may be started in the first week of October 2020. The assessment of the implemented Plan through short term measures may be done by November 2020 and amendments as required ma be completed by November, 2020.

As cities look to ease the lockdown and provide safe, affordable and equitable modes of transport while ensuring physical social distancing, the need for pedestrianisation of market spaces through walking and cycling friendly cities is of utmost importance. The pandemic COVID-19 presents us with an opportunity to reimagine streets for people. To make market areas COVID-19 safe and people-friendly, the need of the hour is for Indian cities to consider pedestrianizing them.

The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has been pioneering the efforts for improving air quality in

million plus cities, by promoting Public Transit through Bus and Metro systems, with special focus on promotion of cycle tracks and pedestrianizing market spaces as well.

Even before COVID-19 hit the world, a few Indian cities like Chennai, Pune and Bangalore started transforming into people-friendly cities. Over the last five years, Chennai has implemented more than 100 km of pedestrian-friendly streets across the city, including a pedestrian plaza at the commercial heart of the city. Further, it is quadrupling its efforts this year through the Mega Streets Programme, which aims to transform Chennai's unsafe streets into 'Complete Streets' prioritising pedestrians and cyclists. Inspired by Chennai's efforts, the state has allocated a budget to expand the program across ten cities of Tamil Nadu. Pune became the first Indian city to develop a Comprehensive Cycling Plan that proposes a 400 km of cycle-friendly streets. Multiple Indian cities rolled out cycle-sharing systems. They have empowered college students, especially women, to embrace cycling and move around the city with freedom. With the enthusiastic push for Bicycles by Mayors/Municipal Commissioners/Smart Cities and civic groups promoting cycling in various Indian cities, this moment could be the golden opportunity for cities to embrace this mode.

RJ/NG

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