

iDEAS FOR GOVERNANCE

IDEAS FOR GOVERNANCE TRUST BELIEF

- Administrators and Practitioners in government bodies would welcome ideas that improve the quality of life for all citizens
- It is possible to empower government bodies by making freely available ideas that could work in their local environment
- If appropriate ideas are generically available, local government body CEOs and their team would adapt them suitably and take it forward under their leadership
- Ideas which take shape through this process in local bodies have a greater chance of success over those 'pushed' by external bodies
- The trust does not expect any acknowledgement for use of any of the ideas set out in its forum. It hopes that some of its ideas find form across government bodies.

IDEAS FOR GOVERNANCE TRUST OBJECTIVES

- To compile ideas for use by government bodies for improving quality of life for all citizens
- To make available these ideas as 'freeware' for use by anyone
- To disseminate these ideas by using suitable channels of communication
- To encourage others to contribute ideas for use as 'freeware'

ABOUT IDEAS FOR GOVERNANCE TRUST

Ideas for Governance Trust is a not for profit trust set up to assist government bodies in improving the quality of life for its citizens. This has been set up by V. Ravichandar, Chairman & CEO, [Feedback Business Consulting Services Pvt. Limited](#), India as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility of the firm.

Since 2000, Ravichandar has been serving as a Member of the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF) working with civic agencies in Bangalore on a pro bono basis. The idea of a Ideas for Governance Trust is based on the experience of working with urban local bodies in Bangalore, being part of Janaagraha, a citizen movement for participatory democracy, and carrying the message of public governance to many cities across India.

Contact details

V. Ravichandar,
Trustee,
Ideas for Governance Trust,
c/o Feedback Business Consulting Services Pvt. Ltd,
5th Floor, Oxford Towers,
139, Airport Road,
Bangalore 560 008.

Ph : 91-80-2520 2902
Mob: 91-98450 24823
Fax : 91-80-2520 1402
<http://www.ideasforgov.org/>

City planning

Plan sanctions for construction , April 5, 2004

The Idea

Commencement of construction on self declaration of building plans for pre-specified categories. Involve neighbours at plan sanction stage.

The Rationale

The process of filing building plans and obtaining Corporation clearances tend to be time consuming and cumbersome. A scheme for self declaration by owner and certified by recognized architects / consulting engineers

An Approach

- Corporation decides on categories of buildings which can go in for self declaration - for example this can be initially restricted to single dwellings within a land area of say 2400 sq feet
- Print clear cut guidelines on norms of town & country planning act which need to be followed by the buildings
- Focus on clearly setting out set back areas and height of buildings and any other key criteria to be followed
- Prospective land owner applies for plan sanction in requisite format and pays building license fee
- The plan is accompanied by a sworn affidavit counter signed by a certified architect / professional confirming that the plan conforms to the city guidelines. Allows for penalties, demolition if not in conformance
- The city has a fortnight to study the plan and revert with any changes. The neighbours adjoining the property can file any objections during this period. If not done, permission is deemed to have been given by the city authorities for construction

Potential Partnership

Architects and Building professionals who can be certified by the City Corporation. Code of conduct and debarring professionals who violate the trust could be considered.

The Benefits

- Citizen friendly scheme to expedite plan clearances and remove interaction with officials
- Puts greater responsibility on prospective builders and certifying professionals
- Takes into account any potential conflict areas with neighbours

Digital base maps , April 20, 2004

The Idea

A common digital base map rather than using analog (manual) maps.

The Rationale

Need for all agencies in a city to work on a single base map. They could develop their own applications on this common base map (which is updated regularly).

An Approach

- A central agency needs to be the repository of the city base map
- Satellite imagery and its interpretation is the starting point to build the city base map. These need to be obtained from authorized sources
- Control points, ground level survey, etc. needs to be done as per common protocol for such mapping - this domain expertise available with professional firms in this space
- There should be a mechanism to update these base maps on a regular basis and made available to other bodies (eg. Corporation, Water & Sewerage Board, Electricity Board, Telecom companies, etc.). These agencies will develop their own GIS applications using the base map
- Currently the city is likely to have the base map which sets out the land use plan for the city. These could to be 'digitised' and overlaid as a layer on the base map
- The current land use plan, the current ground realities and the future growth could be a basis for developing a digital comprehensive plan for the city involving the multiple agencies.

Potential Partnership

Potential partnerships Mapping & GIS firms. Inter agency cooperation by using common base map.

The Benefits

- All planning activity will have a common reference frame
- Avoids duplication
- Scientific basis for future planning

Zoning compliance measures , April 14, 2004

The Idea

Using financial penalties to check the misuse of residential zoned areas for commercial purposes. Getting local residents a share of the penalty for local area development

The Rationale

Residential areas quality of life declining due to increased commercial activity in designated residential areas. Civic bodies unable to stop such usage. Need for designing a penalty scheme to dissuade such commercial use

An Approach

- For commercial properties in residential zoned plots, levy an annual penalty tax (impact tax) which should be priced at a significantly higher level. This is apart from any property tax applicable for commercial properties.
- A rule of thumb for the penalty levy is that the option of shifting to designated commercial areas in the city needs to become attractive
- Redeploy about 70-75% of the penalty levy back into the local area for development. This is compensation in lieu of the disturbance local residents need to put up with.
- The redeployment to local areas should be over and above any routinely planned development activities from the general pool of funds.

Potential Partnership

Resident communities and urban local bodies

The Benefits

- Deters commercial users from encroaching on areas meant for residences
- If violations happen, local residents partially compensated by penalty levy

Corporates can bring in skilled resources for city planning , May 10, 2004

The Idea

Corporates in a city set up a talent pool of skilled urban planners / technology specialists. This pool is available to civic agencies to help their planning activities

The Rationale

Cities need to invest in planning the city of tomorrow. They lack the skilled manpower resources and state of art know how to do so. Corporates can contribute financially into a central pool which recruits and places appropriate talent with civic bodies for specific tasks in a time bound manner. Corporates stand to gain since the quality of life for all including their employees improve.

An Approach

- Corporates can set up a Trust for the City. They could contribute a fixed financial amount per month into this trust
- The Trust identifies the kinds of skill sets required for planning activities by civic bodies - eg. Urban planners, GIS specialists, etc.
- The Trust hires qualified resources at market level salaries.
- Select resources are attached to civic bodies under a clearly drawn up MoU - clarity on role and expectations necessary
- The resources will report to the respective civic bodies
- Regular evaluation of outcomes of these engagements required
- The Trust will have to plan for talent attrition and new talent recruitment and deployment

Potential Partnership

Corporates and Civic agencies

The Benefits

- The city gets quality skilled resources who normally would not apply for government jobs
- Emphasis on planning for the city as an important step to improve quality of life
- Public private partnership fo a different kind

Ensuring storm water drains work , June 2, 2004

The Idea

Review existing storm water drains. Ensure connectivity of primary, secondary and tertiary drains. Redesign for current load conditions. Build barriers between roads & open drains at crossings.

The Rationale

During monsoons storm water drains tend to overflow leading to flooding. Lives are lost, asphalted roads are damaged. There is a need to have a systemic approach to ensure storm water drains can handle the peak monsoon load

An Approach

- Drain desilting should be a regular activity before the monsoons - start with the main (primary) drain
- Use citizens to monitor contractor activity on desilting in their area - bill clearance post their approval?
- Need implementation focus. Break tasks into a series of activities and follow up to completion - eg. identify breaks in connectivity, missing barriers at road crossings over open drains, specific measures in low lying areas, etc
- Penalise citizens who dump debris into storm water drains
- Monitor any inter connection between sewage network and storm water drain system

Potential Partnership

Citizens and City Corporation

The Benefits

- Human lives can be saved by proactive action on storm water drain system
- Road 'life' will increase since water stagnation on roads will be minimised