

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/>

Citizen interface

Participatory democracy. Building a platform for citizens / resident associations to constructively engage with civic bodies. Patronage to give way to negotiated agreements. Importance of data for decision making.

Supply side reforms in government bodies welcome. However for effective changes in the quality of life ordinary citizens have to engage with the system - call it the demand side pressure. nth the systng.

Reduce need for citizens to approach civic agencies

The premise that operates in government-citizen interaction - the more often the citizen has to visit / interact with the government body, the more 'favourable' it is for government officials! And needless to add, lesser need to interact is in favour of citizens.

- Review the process in civic bodies with respect to requirements in respect of citizen interaction with the body - forms, number of applications, details asked for, number of visits required. A critical look at what is required and what is not
- An example with respect to site allotments. After allotment a successful applicant has to apply for follow up documents to enable them to get a loan. Alternately these and other similar documents can be part of the kit given to the successful applicants so that there is no need to approach the government body for these again
- Another example - citizens often run from pillar to post because they do not know what are the steps to be followed to get a thing done (for eg. apply for a change of owners name in property records). Can there be full and clear disclosure on the steps to be followed for common activities for which a citizen needs to approach a government body. And the associated lead time in which they can expect action
- Can there be an escalation mechanism to senior level officers set in place. This should be indicated to citizens so that they have known means of grievance redressal

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- Citizen friendly administration
- Less scope for 'speed' money

City bodies should report and discuss their quarterly performance with the citizens - akin to the private sector. This can be done if the back end accounting systems (like a fund based accounting system) are in place

Citizens are the 'shareholders' in the civic system. They have a right to information from the civic bodies. An institutional mechanism to generate the required information and a willingness to share it with citizens on a periodic basis can build confidence with government functioning on the ground

- The civic body will need a robust accounting system akin to a fund based accounting system
- Since such systems are built from the lowest unit of measure, compilations can be done as required - for instance it could be city wide or done at just a ward level or restricted to say the education module
- At the end of each quarter, the financial outputs could be made available to citizens for study. They need to be trained to analyse the numbers
- This could be followed by a public meeting between the government body CEO, the elected reps and the interested citizens.
- Over time, the quality of public debate based on data driven analysis will improve

Government and citizens. An acceptance by government that the best way forward for greater accountability is transparency in information sharing with its citizen constituency.

- Availability of financial information
- Forum for raising data driven queries on the financial statements
- Builds confidence on government spending - will create a climate for citizens to truthfully report and pay taxes

Using technology aids to provide information / civic services to citizens.

Computerisation and the internet have enabled newer delivery models. Building back end systems and using a mix of citizen convenience centres / kiosks / internet enabled information can help disseminate relevant information to citizens

- Any e-governance initiative has to initially focus on the back end processes, work flow and information database
- Building an attractive front end interface is easy but of limited utility if it is not powered with relevant information from the back office
- The solution needs to be modular, robust and scalable as the needs increase
- Civic agencies should consider going beyond 'right to information' enabled provisions in the act. They should ask themselves "Why should I not put this information out in the public space" rather than "Why should I". The greater the transparency, the higher the credibility of the organization
- Putting out data on work tenders, work in progress, expected completion dates, grievances, online payments, access to public documents, status updates, etc. necessary
- A pure play internet solution is not feasible nor desirable. There is a need for citizen convenience centres / kiosks where citizens can get their interface issues with the civic agencies addressed with assistance from local officials at the centre
- Citizens can be charged for information sought from the database
- Private agencies could be used for running the citizen convenience centres

Private e-firms, Entrepreneurs and civic agencies

- Towards a transparent, informative civic space replacing traditionally opaque government agencies
- Real time updation of data leading to up to date status
- Citizen friendly administration
- Efficiency in urban local bodies

City governance

Using Memorandum of Understandings between State Government and City Corporations to drive reform measures

State Governments are keen that local urban bodies are financially solvent and less dependant on Government grants. Local bodies need governments for legislative measures for charging levies and want the State Government to honour their grant commitments. An MoU is an appropriate instrument to ensure this compliance.

- The City Corporation can draw up reform measures that it will put in place. For example this could set out financial metrics and shift to a fund based accounting system. Or metrics for improving health care, education, etc. This will be a time bound plan with metrics set out at every stage
- The State Government promises to enact requisite legislation and transfer of funds based on adherence to reform measures by the civic body
- A MoU is drawn up setting out the arrangements. This is signed by the political & administrative leadership of the two agencies
- The terms of the MoU becomes the basis for specific action by the State Government and the local body

Between different wings of government. These could belong to different political affiliations. The MoU works like a common minimum program between the agencies.

- Can accelerate the reforms process in urban local bodies
- Shift to a metrics driven, milestone focussed organization culture
- Clarity on core focus areas
- Greater likelihood of compliance

Setting up an accountability platform. Civic stakeholders publicly set out commitments and report at regular intervals on performance and revised/new commitments

Citizens would like to know what to expect from civic bodies in the short term. This is best done through an organized forum which meets at regular intervals where agencies that impact citizens come together and set out their planned targets.

- There could be government order setting out a task force which brings together the requisite city agencies. Due to the government backing, there is likelihood of greater compliance.
- Alternately citizens / citizen forums could approach the agencies to come and share a platform. The challenge is to make out a compelling case for the agencies to come forward and share their targets / achievements
- Empowered individuals could work with agencies to discuss and help them prepare the presentation material. This has to be based on working in tandem as an extension of the agency - not a 'us' vs. 'them' stance
- The CEO of the government agency presents proposed plans for say the next 6 months. After 6 months the CEO (or his/her successor) comes back to report on progress and set out revised targets for the next 6 months
- Interested citizens attend the meet. Need for wide press coverage as instrument of visibility into the plans / achievements. Dissemination of presentations through a website

Private sector firms / professionals could be empowered by local government. They could act as the facilitators for the accountability platform and fund the platform related events

- Coordinates the activities of the individual agencies towards a common goal of taking city forward.
- The civic agencies take public ownership of their stated targets and by reporting on the progress a public accountability process is created.
- Citizens get visibility into normally opaque government bodies and feet drawn to the idea of citizen participation with civic agencies.
- Ensures continuity of civic agencies goals vis-à-vis the city irrespective of changes at the senior levels of the government body.
- Motivates the civic agencies to deliver on publicly stated commitments and allowed for recognition of public performance among the general populace.
- Brings in a climate of a hope of a better tomorrow through implementation focus.

Using accounting information for management decision making. Building a robust double entry book keeping system which factors in the different nature of activities of government bodies - for instance a Corporations' activities covers Enterprise (Commercial), Social (Roads, Hospitals, Education) and Fiduciary (Collection channel for State). These are different fund types and needs different accounting treatment - A Fund Based Accounting System

Accounts tend to be a terminal activity. The idea is to bring it centre stage by tracking the organizational activities through the money chain - a financial 'enterprise' management system. Further imperative to go beyond a traditional receipt and expenditure accounting system.

- Need to study the existing documents, work flow and sanctioning system
- Reengineer the process wherever necessary
- Rationalise / Develop a coding system. For instance a works code should have clear definition for each type of activity which allows for subsequent tracking
- Set out clear documentation, data entry fields and guidelines at every stage
- Develop a policy for each type of fund - treatment of assets, inflows & outflows, etc.
- Computerisation will be essential. The system should be scalable - use a modular approach in designing the system
- Invest in staff training. Senior management needs to realize the potential of using the information from the system

Professional firms with expertise in rolling out financial accounting systems in government bodies. They could hand hold till internal capacities are built to take over the operations.

- Superior accounting systems geared to act as Management Information systems
- More granular tracking of inflows and outflows.
- Allows measurements of efficiencies / effectiveness of money spending on various activities
- Return on enterprise assets can be improved
- Access to market funds

Need a 'CEO approach' to find solutions. The 'CEO' has to be empowered to get other agencies to comply with the overall solutions in the relevant civic space.

Typically there are multiple agencies involved in delivering the end to end service for citizens. The 'silo' view of each agency hinders the desired integrated view needed to address citizen concerns. Relevant officials need to be empowered sufficiently.

- Take the case of transport in a city. Conservatively 4-5 agencies involved - bus transport (2-3 bodies), Road Transport Authority (RTO), Police, Corporation, Railways, etc. A 'land transit authority' needed if a comprehensive solution to public and private transportation is to be found. The authority can drive policy to meet the overall transportation needs including planning for multi modal transport
- There are many stretches of roads where traffic is chaotic. Normally the authorities involved - Infrastructure agencies responsible for say grade separators, local Corporation bodies which has to maintain the road network, other road authorities (PWD, NHAI) which might have jurisdiction in some areas, traffic police, bus transport agencies which have their bus stops, etc. Now to fix this requires all these and any others to work in tandem - this can be done only if there is an office concerned with the issues holistically and has the requisite authority to get others to fall in line.

Inter government agency cooperation

- Shift from a departmental view to a integrated problem solving approach
- Identify bottle necks and work on fixing it with a view to deliver superior citizen services
- Greater inter agency cooperation - focus on end outcomes

Peer reviews and independent third party audits should become a main stream activity in urban local bodies for project planning and execution

Significant public spending happens on infrastructure projects. Typically contracts are awarded to design firms & contractors and monitored by the urban local body staff. In the interest of greater transparency & accountability, third party firms as peer reviewers / project monitors desirable

- New projects should have peer reviews and third party audits built into the project plan. Accredited engineering firms with the local body should be encouraged to bid for audit engagements
- In respect of maintenance and repair work which involves access to civic assets, third party firms can certify whether the restoration work done well and within time - in these cases the cost of their services can be recovered through a fee from the utility wishing access to civic assets
- The practice of third party can be piloted in a few cases. Based on the experience, the urban local bodies can draft a suitable policy for engaging their services
- Professors from local engineering colleges are a good referral source for peer reviews

Engineering associations, Engineering colleges, Professional engineering firms & Urban local bodies

- Greater transparency in public contracts
- Additional expert opinions could result in safer features / better project engineering
- Will ensure better compliance on projects

Outsource services which result in cost savings, better services while allowing existing local body manpower to be redeployed elsewhere in the system. If VRS possible, plan for it.

Often a comparison of current costs of providing a service (manpower salaries, variable material costs, overheads) vis-a-vis outsourcing the service will indicate huge savings possibilities while improving the delivery of services. The idea is to consider outsourcing wherever feasible

- Take an example of street light maintenance
- In many cities they tend to be partly functional and often failed lights are not replaced
- Do a comparison of 'full' cost of doing it internally by the local body compared to outsourcing it. Chances are the savings would be of the order of 50-60%
- If significant savings are indicated, outsource the activity through a qualified bidding process - the city can be broken into zones and tendered
- Similarly other civic service delivery areas can be evaluated (garbage removal, debris removal, crematoria, etc.)

Private agencies and local bodies

- Savings in annual costs allowing for deployment of scarce resources elsewhere
- Better upkeep / maintenance
- Superior citizen services

It makes sense to invest in resources (manpower, technology) to enforce the law. The returns through the fines collected will more than pay for the investment apart from ensuring greater compliance

Often the argument is that there is insufficient resources for monitoring. A properly planned enforcement drive can be revenue surplus while achieving the objective of the civic body

- Nuisance detection squads have been effective in some cities
- Possible for many public nuisance, offences - eg. littering, jumping traffic signal, relieving oneself in public, etc.
- A tender could be invited for detection agencies to be appointed
- The agency concerned needs to invest in surveillance equipment since proof of the offence would be necessary. Eg. Video camera for traffic offences; digital camera for littering, etc.
- A rate is fixed for various offences - this needs to act as a deterrent as well as cover the detection costs.
- The enforcement squads could be empowered to fine (or challan) on the spot. In cases of citizen complaints, they could be referred to a tribunal which examines the documented evidence.

Private agencies and Urban local bodies

- Greater compliance with the law
- Acts as a deterrent
- Could generate additional revenue

Plan for urban development in cities with own finances through systemic measures in augmenting resources. The idea is to conserve Government resources for investments for the rural populace and the economically challenged sections in urban areas.

Government needs to channel scarce resources to needy sectors - below poverty line, rural, education, health, etc. If major cities can stand on their own feet with no need for State Govt resources, the surplus can be diverted to more needy sectors.

- Bangalore during 2000-04 is an example of the possibilities
- The Bangalore Development Authority spent around Rs. 300 crores on infrastructure (fly overs, roads), eco restoration (Lakes, Lalbagh) from own funds (sale of sites, recovery of govt property). No govt burden
- The Bangalore City Corporation reforms its property tax through Self Assessment - over Rs. 300 crores additional revenue over 4 years. Less burden for State grants
- The Bangalore Metropolitan Road Transport Corporation is a profitable enterprise. Less need to get State funds
- The Bangalore Police is empowered to retain its fine collections for traffic improvements (Over Rs. 20 crores in 4 years).
- The above measures are indicative of how a city can be more self reliant. The State can contemplate a MoU with the urban local bodies that say over a 10 year time frame State grants will be progressively reduced.

Urban local bodies with the State Government

- Urban local bodies are forced to think through creative solutions to raise own resources and deploy them for development activities
- State can use its scarce resources for the truly needy sections of society
- The myth that rural or urban development can only happen at the expense of the other can be broken

City planning

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

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

- 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

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.

- 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

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

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).

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

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

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

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

- 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.

Resident communities and urban local bodies

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

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

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.

- 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

Corporates and Civic agencies

- 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

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.

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

- 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

Citizens and City Corporation

- 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

Civic assets

The agency that digs the roads restores it within a tightly defined time frame. Penalties for delays and poor restoration.

Utilities like telephones, power and water need to access city roads / pavements for new lines & maintenance. Citizens need them back in good shape at the earliest. A mechanism needed to ensure compliance.

- For any access requirements for laying new lines below roads / pavements or for maintenance set out a norm. This should set out the days the utility firm has access to the city asset for digging, laying & restoration.
- The utility firm is responsible for bringing the road back to its original condition.
- A nominal fee is charged for this access provided it is done within the norms. An additional charge can be levied for third party audit of the work - the third party auditor is hired by the Corporation to report on the time lines and the quality of restoration work.
- In case of delay beyond the norm, levy an escalating penalty rising with each day of delay

Local civil engineer associations and Corporations for third party audits.

- The utility agency will be on guard to ensure timely completion and proper restoration. If not done, they will have to explain to their finance departments why there was a cost over run.
- The city gets back its assets at the earliest. Minimizes inconvenience to citizens.

Do not give free right of way to utilities below the ground. Ensure the city Corporation has a lieu on the below ground infrastructure.

In the new economy, access is critical. Firms are getting free right of way for life from City Corporations when the terms of their license for operations is of 15-20 years tenure. The City should lock into future gains from use of its underground assets.

- Utility firms can get access to city assets for laying the lines.
- However, the deal with the urban local body (ULB) should make the ULB the owner of the duct (conduit) through which the wires are drawn.
- The ULB needs to get into an agreement with the utility for a nominal access charges (could be Rs. 1 / km / year) for the duration of the license from the Government
- In case the utility sells its business to another firm, the ULB is free to set a suitable rental charge / annum for use of the underground duct. The idea is that the city needs to get a share for loaning access to its assets to a commercial body

Between private utilities and ULBs.

- A source of financial security for future citizens of the city in the years to come
- Over time, like property tax likely to be become a useful revenue source for the city
- Firms likely to think of wireless access options reducing the road cutting activity in the city

Collect annual parking fees in city through vehicle insurance firms. Restrict additional pay and park to select high traffic areas

Traditional pay and park schemes based on tender bids by Contractors. This yields low revenue to Corporations while offering no guarantee on safety of vehicles. Case for examining alternate avenues for levying pay and park charges

- Collect pay and park charges as city asset levy charges when vehicle owners renew their vehicle insurance
- The rates can vary by class of vehicle - LCV, 4 wheeler (by size), 2 wheelers
- Insurance firms can be paid an collection charge for the service of collecting & remitting the amounts on a fortnightly basis - say 10% of the levies
- In busy thoroughfares, to ensure that a few vehicles do not monopolise the scarce parking space, parking meters which need to be charged up (eg. every 2 hours) regularly can be installed

With insurance firms for collection of levy.

- In most cities, an annual levy of around Rs. 100 per 4 wheeler (average) and Rs. 50 per 2 wheeler will more than quadruple the existing collections through pay and park
- Easier administration
- Less litter of parking tickets
- However, a scope for employment is removed. With higher revenues, scope for hiring contract labour for guiding vehicle parking at high traffic areas.

Monthly fees for using city roads for night parking. Permission fees for digging bore wells for water.

Day time parking attracts parking charges. Why not extend the concept to night parking too. Similarly if fees need to be paid for mining, why not charge for digging bore wells?

- Some cities may need changes in State legislation to levy additional charges of this nature
- Need to convince the citizens that these additional levies are warranted
- In respect of bore wells, it could be made mandatory to invest in rain water harvesting facilities at the site

Local citizen groups & the Corporation

- Additional source of income for the city
- Conserve scarce resources

Local bodies have 'dead' investments - community halls, auditoriums, shopping complexes, marriage halls, etc. Leasing these out to private bidders will help augment revenue and improve upkeep of these facilities

While there is interest in building infrastructure (if funds available), many are in decrepit condition due to negligible operating funds as well lack of interest in running the facilities. Leasing viable facilities will improve the state of the facilities while generating additional revenue.

- Make a list of all the NPAs in the local body
- Identify those assets which have high commercial viability
- Set out user charge limits and any reservations / special cases
- Go in for a tender cum auction for the Operations & Transfer of assets to maximise return. It could be for a 3-5 year period
- Enter into an MoU on conditions to be met by the private bidder

Private bidders and government agencies

- Assets will be refurbished to attract citizen traffic
- Maintenance will be taken care of by the private bidder - needed to attract business
- Additional revenue to the local body
- Better citizen services

Public Transport

Using SMS technology to allow citizens to complain about public vehicles which refuse to transport people. Police & RTOs should be willing to take cognizance of such complaints and act on them

New technology allows alternative channels for citizens to complain to public authorities. In cases where the complainant source is authenticated (eg. mobile phones), authorities must be willing to accept such complaints.

- Often autos and taxis refuse to take citizens to their desired destinations even during non hours
- Citizens should be allowed to SMS the offending vehicle number, current location / desired destination and time of day to a specified 'call centre' number.
- The 'call centre' facility could pass on the vehicle and complaint details on an end of day basis to the RTO / Police
- This is to be reckoned as an official complaint akin to a visit to the police station or writing in subsequently
- The RTO should penalize offending vehicles when they are up for annual renewal of their license depending on the number of instances of such complaints
- The police could reserve the right to proceed against the offending vehicles

Telecom companies could be willing to partner with RTO / Police for managing the central 'call centre' facility

- Greater responsiveness can be expected for autos / taxis
- Citizen friendly initiative

Consider direction oriented bus transport instead of destination oriented transportation

Many cities tend to have point to point buses with stops in between within the city - typically destination oriented. A direction oriented bus system could allow for faster movement of vehicles as well as reduced travel time for commuters

- Study the city's road network and current bus routing
- Evaluate if directional bus system will work. Examples of North-South, West-East corridors & Circular networks on the outer ring
- Undertake a traffic study. This will be an input for Operational planning of alternative routings
- Typically a direction oriented system implies that commuters will need to take more than one bus to reach their destination. However, they will commute faster since there will be higher bus frequencies on the corridors. And technology allows for billing solutions which are on par with current fares
- Evolve a suitable direction oriented system. Colour codes can be adopted for the various directions
- Dedicated bus lanes will help wherever possible. Buses tend to transport over 50% of the city while accounting for less than 10% of the vehicle population - there is a case for dedicated lanes

Commuters and Bus transport authorities

- Faster travel times to destinations
- Likelihood of managing with a reduced bus fleet
- Less congestion
- Colour codes allows commuters to identify the bus direction easily

City roads are witness to vehicles weaving in and out of lanes. For starters, can public buses be restricted to the left lane.

The idea is to reserve other than left lane for non-bus traffic.

- Bus authorities often ask for dedicated lanes. In many cities this is a scarce resource and infeasible to reserve it exclusively for buses
- Alternately can city buses be asked to stay in the left lane - no major purpose is achieved by a short swerve to the right to soon return to the left lane
- Weaving becomes necessary when private vehicles need to turn left and buses need to turn right
- Monitoring necessary - can use central call centre facility (idea listed separately) for reporting deviations
- The challenge is to find a solution for slow moving traffic like bicycles, push carts, etc. since they would slow the bus movement. Another hurdle is the need to overtake a stationary bus at the bus stop.

Bus drivers need to buy into the concept

- Less need to overtake vehicles on the left
- Greater lane discipline likely
- Less scope for accidents

Encourage use of public transport by making it an attractive option. This implies that it should be feasible to leave home & return through use of a mix of public transport options.

Traffic congestion reduction can be achieved by having planned multi modal public transport options (bus, light rail, metro rail, auto/taxi). Personal vehicles should not be needed for any leg of the day's movement. Planning for metro rail in isolation restricted to central area is self defeating unless viewed in the context of overall travel needs of citizens.

- Buses - evaluate scope for direction oriented system with lane planning. Low floor bus design with bus chassis more appealing.
- Light rail - could work as feeder system in some cases
- Main rail - integrate existing rail networks in city. New metro rail type solutions - should have connectivity with suburbs to encourage suburban living
- Integration - need land transit type authority to drive a holistic view. Currently silo based approach of different departments not helpful.

Between transport agencies of government

- Less personal vehicles on the road
- Higher occupancy ratios for public transport
- Less traffic congestion

Revenue augmentation

Trust the citizens to declare truthfully. Self Assessment scheme for property tax based on simple guidelines. Random scrutiny (eg. 5% of all tax payers) to deter potential violators.

City corporations lose potential property tax revenue due to opaque systems administered with discretionary powers by tax inspectors. A transparent fair system with no discretionary element will result in greater tax compliance - even if citizens pay 'similar' amounts as in the past but the gains will accrue to the city corporation.

- The basic premise of Self Assessment is that when the citizen files his/her return, property tax is deemed to have been paid unless the Corporation reverts with 'mistakes apparent on record' or the case is taken up for random scrutiny (eg. 5% of all tax payers)
- Develop a system which citizens can identify with. For example a basis of a uniform rate / square feet for a class of residential property in a locality requires the citizen only to state their property area & compute the tax. This is the area based approach
- Classify localities using other government indicies - eg. Land rates used for stamps & registration - can help capture extent of development and attractiveness of the locality. Rates can be based on a zonal classification using land valuation basis.
- Choose an appropriate valuation basis - Rateable value, Capital value, etc. based on the local market conditions
- Have property sub categories and develop a suitable tax basis - eg. Residential dwelling, Apartments, Commercial, Wedding halls (billing rate), Cinema theatres, Hotels (Star category), Hospitals (by no. of beds), etc.
- If desired rental & owner occupied can attract differential tax rates. Allow for depreciation for age of building.
- Have vacant land taxation - use it as an instrument to guide property development goals
- Will need evangelizing among the target groups

Give citizens Self Assessment as an optional scheme and check out its acceptance. Marketing & Advertising professionals could come forward with means of communicating the scheme benefit to the citizens.

- Significantly higher tax revenues for the City Corporation
- Citizens will welcome a scheme that is considered transparent and fair
- Sends out a strong message that government trusts its citizens
- Revenue officials can be deployed to identify non tax payers rather than focusing on routine tax collection

Using visibility of property tax payment information to increase incidence of correct reporting. Share classification data with other utilities

The Self assessment tax scheme assumes that citizens report honestly. Tax administrators often come up with instances of mis-reporting. Smart measures need to be thought of to ensure proper compliance.

- Aim to put out the tax paid information in the public space with access at Corporation offices, web sites, kiosks
- An example of how this could help in cases where tenant occupied properties have higher taxes. In such cases tendency to report as 'owner occupied'. Allow any citizen to get a print out of tax paying status of any property in the city. In cases of property disputes between property owner and tenant, if the 'tenant' can show the court that the property is owner occupied in a Self assessment scheme, the case in court gets severely compromised. A few publicized cases and property owners have an 'incentive' to state the truth!
- Publicly available information allows local neighbourhood citizens to alert errors in reporting
- Normally water and electricity rates different for residential and commercial uses. Sharing tax and billing base of the Corporation and different water / electricity utilities should allow all three agencies to improve their collections.
- Work towards a uniform property numbering system used by all agencies in the city
- Move to a map based GIS property enumeration system to track potential receipts vs. actuals

Between Corporation & Water / electricity utilities

- Augment property tax collections due to correct reporting of status
- Comparison of databases of Corporation & Utilities will allow missing property cases and mis-classification cases to be identified. However it will be necessary to understand billing basis (eg. meter numbers) vs. property tax basis and property numbering issues for this to be effective.

Ensure that enterprise assets of the city get market rates

The city agencies have many properties which are akin to commercial assets. In many cases the return on these properties are way below market rates. The database of these assets need to be built in a transparent manner and bench marked against return from other similar properties in the area

- Build a comprehensive database of civic properties - classify them into enterprise (Commercial) and community assets (eg. parks, civic amenities, schools, etc.)
- Ideally the database needs to be archived (digitally) with associated paperwork setting out property details, maps and ownership documents
- Focus on enterprise assets. List rates obtained currently and nature of current lease agreements
- Compare rates with 3-4 similar commercial properties in the same area. Use these as a bench mark target rate to be got from the civic enterprise asset
- Renegotiate terms through a transparent process when leases come up for renewal
- Display list of enterprise assets and returns on them to provide accountability
- Consider disposal of enterprise assets which are a drain on civic budgets particularly in the form of high interest burden on borrowings for capital intensive projects

Local neighbourhood groups to report on any potential under utilization of enterprise assets in their area

- Civic bodies starved of funds. City enterprise assets often end up subsidizing creamy layer of society
- Higher income for civic body for development initiatives
- Transparency allows for gains to accrue to city body
- Visibility of government properties make it difficult for encroachments or 'siphoning' away civic assets

Reduce discretion in issuing annual trade licenses. Have a self declaration trade license scheme.

There is considerable leakage of trade licensing revenue when there is discretionary authority with officers. A self assessment scheme that works well in the property tax arena can be extended to cover trade licenses.

- The basic premise of Self Assessment is that when the trade entity files their return, annual licensing fee is deemed to have been paid unless the Corporation reverts with 'mistakes apparent on record' or the case is taken up for random scrutiny
- Classify trade activities into appropriate groups
- Define every classification and set out an easily understandable basis for computing the annual license fee
- Give the licensing scheme wide publicity
- Allow trade to pay their fees through multiple channels - make it easy to pay up

Between the trade community and the local urban body

- ULB revenue likely to go up with self assessment
- Less harassment of trade - more trade friendly
- Officers can be redeployed to identify non payers rather than focus on routine fee collections

Standardise 2-3 aesthetically designed bus shelters which are done on a BOT through outdoor ad agencies

Traditionally bus shelters get done in myriad designs and typically as a contribution by Social groups, Corporates, NGOs, etc. It is better to design standard bus shelters with clearly defined advertising space which is tendered to outdoor agencies - build & operate for a specified period before transferring to the city. They then have an incentive to maintain it well

- Have a contest among city architects, planners to suggest suitable bus shelters. Get prototypes of 4-5 promising designs built
- Short list 2 designs worthy of implementation across the city. Lay out detailed material / finish specifications
- The designs should have clearly designated areas for use by advertisers. Provision for indicating bus numbers, bus routes desirable.
- Identify proposed areas for the bus shelters. Bundle them into a few groups - each group can have a mix of good and average locations from an ad perspective.
- Tender among accredited outdoor agencies. The outdoor agency is to invest their funds for building the bus shelters as per the specified designs. They would get advertising rights for a specified period (eg. 3-5 years). They would also have to pay applicable annual license fee to the Corporation.
- Monitor the implementation of the bus shelters.

Outdoor agencies and City Corporation

- Aesthetically designed bus shelters across the city
- Scope for revenue from bus shelters without need to invest in capital and operating costs
- Incentive to outdoor agency to maintain the shelter well since ad revenue depends on it
- Symbol of better days to come in the city administration

Towards clear land titling in urban areas. Allow citizens to bequeath clean titles to their successors.

In some urban centres historical agricultural tracts are used for urban land developments. If conversion charges are not paid to the Revenue department for the full agricultural survey number, the land remains in the farm records. Consequently urban property owners are unable to get clear title from the urban local body. Need for resolving these discrepancies.

- Start with a survey which identifies all developed urban land tracts which also reflects in land records of other departments like village records / agricultural land records
- In most cases the problem arises because the land developer has sold the land to individuals without paying the requisite conversion charges to the revenue department
- Once the magnitude of the problem is clear, the government will have the requisite data to take administrative decisions. For instance the government could allow for pro rata payment towards conversion charges by individuals based on their land holding area.
- Pro rata conversion charges should allow the individual to get a unique property number with clear title from the urban local body
- Computerisation of urban land records essential. This will also allow for easy transfer of ownership, property mutation, amalgamation, etc.
- For newer areas coming into the purview of the urban local body, they tend to levy betterment charges for providing amenities to the area. There should be a mechanism to ensure that such levies are used for the local area - this can be done through the fund based accounting system which ensures that funds collected for a specific purpose is used for that purpose.

Between government departments.

- Property owners get comfort from having clear, clean titles
- Additional revenue for government departments
- Less litigation

Traffic

Tell us how we are driving. Using a central call centre number to improve bus transport driving habits

From time to time, citizens tend to be exasperated with the city bus transport drivers. For example, it could be about dangerous driving or not stopping at designated places. There is a need to obtain data on a regular basis and act on the information using technology aids

- Set out a single landline number where citizens can call in. If this can be a toll free number (1-600...) its even better
- The number needs to be visible at the back (and maybe sides / inside of the bus)
- Citizens report violations on the road indicating bus number, route number, location, time of day and type of violation
- At the end of every day, the call centre compiles a list of the calls by bus number and delivers a soft copy to the Bus transport authority
- The Bus transport authority has a software which converts bus number data into driver based information on a daily basis
- In respect of drivers who have say 5 or more violations / week, the Bus transport authority agrees to run a 'remedial' class for them. In respect of drivers against whom there are no call ins for say a year, they could be rewarded appropriately
- The data on the number of call-ins could be publicised regularly through the media and local radio stations

Telecom companies / call centre firms could be willing to run the service free - they might expect some logo Telecom companies / call centre firms could be willing to run the service free - they might expect some logo advertising along with the call centre number. Firms interested in traffic improvements could sponsor the 'remedial' classes and the reward for 'complaint free' drivers

- Addressing road driving habits of city bus drivers based on data feedback from citizens
- Moving towards better traffic on city roads

Using one ways to reduce junction conflicts. And save on fly overs in the inner city areas.

Urban city traffic is increasingly worsening. One way traffic can ease some of the congestion. It will involve longer distances but allows for faster travel times, smoother flow of traffic, less idling at junctions and reduces need for fly overs at key junctions

- The starting point for any one way planning is a detailed traffic survey (vehicle counts) and a design study of all the major junctions
- Simulation of traffic flow with planned one ways will be necessary. It may be advisable to implement the changes in phases as part of the larger plan
- In deciding on the one ways try and ensure minimizing junction conflicts so that free flow of traffic sans signaling is possible for larger stretches
- Local neighbourhoods will need to be convinced of the one way change - expect NIMBY ("not in my back yard") to operate. Some private compromise for the larger public good inevitable
- At junctions, the road geometry needs to be studied. In many Indian cities, the roads tends to intersect at right angles with left turning traffic being held up by vehicles which wish to go straight - need to try and implement free left turns ahead of the junction wherever possible. Land acquisition may be necessary - useful if the city has a law for tradeable development rights for such acquisition

Local affected neighbourhood groups, City Corporation and Traffic police.

- Less congestion
- Faster transit
- Lower pollution since idling traffic reduces
- Savings on expensive and associated disruptions with fly over solutions

Track habitual traffic violators using automated enforcement measures through computerization. Share the database with vehicle insurance companies for a fee to deter traffic violations.

Vehicle insurance companies would welcome data on risk profile of drivers. If repeat offenders are tracked through a computerized system, this data can be made available to insurance companies. The likelihood of higher premiums for risky driving is expected to have drivers conform to good driving behaviour.

- The Regional Transport Office (RTO) database of vehicles registered in the city needs to be computerized
- Every time there is a traffic violation, the recording of the incident goes to a central enforcement centre.
- Going forward digital recording where possible will strengthen the case against the driver - in the long run this activity could be privatised
- The automated enforcement centre enters the data. A print out of the offence is mailed out to the vehicle owner. In case of multiple offences (to be decided), the RTO can be informed in case the driver license is to be cancelled.
- The database is updated with all the reported offences.
- A consortium of all the leading vehicle insurers need to agree on a penalty fee for violators
- Whenever a vehicle is up to annual insurance, the insurance firm could seek the traffic record from the enforcement centre for a fee (eg. Rs. 100 per violating case: Rs. 10 for general enquiry)
- If violator, the insurance premium should be at higher levels

Vehicle insurance firms, Traffic police and RTO

- In cases where the offender is not the owner but the driver, likelihood of the driver being admonished for the offences since it has a penalty implication for the owner through higher premiums
- Drivers will be more careful about their driving habits
- Better traffic discipline in the city

Designate a central area as zero tolerance. Educate. Publicise. Come down heavily on traffic offenders.

Need to show case what can be a model traffic area through deterrence. If the concept of zero tolerance can be accepted in a central area, the concept can be extended outwards.

- Choose a high profile area in the city centre for starting the zero tolerance
- Announce the concept about 2-3 months in advance
- Educate the public about good driving habits and do's and dont's in the designated no tolerance zone
- Put up hoardings / road signs in the designated zone
- Consider augmenting the traffic police with home guards - the incremental fine amounts will more than reimburse the spends on the additional manpower
- Implement the zero tolerance scheme irrespective of the offender profile
- For starters, drivers might be careful in the zero tolerance zone if the implementation is strict. This can subsequently be extended to other areas

Home guards & Traffic police. Corporates can participate in educating the public on good driving habits.

- Exhibits seriousness about improving traffic discipline through implementation measures
- Builds awareness about good driving habits

Traffic fines collected by the police to be retained by them for traffic improvements

Currently in most urban cities, police dependent on the City Corporation for funds for traffic improvement and maintenance. This leads to inordinate delays in requisitioning material depending on budgetary considerations. Traffic police can be allowed to keep the fine collections for deploying as they deem fit for traffic measures

- The State Government needs to pass a government order allowing traffic fines to be used by the police for traffic purposes
- The accounting system needs to keep track of traffic fine remittances and make it available for the traffic fund
- Police spend the amounts as per government directives on spending limits
- Ideally the police need to draw up their own budgets based on estimated receipts and direction of spends. Spending needs to be for a mix of short and long term measures

State Government and Traffic police

- Traffic police empowered by having own source of funds for deployment
- Higher vigilance likely by traffic police against violations since fine amounts no longer go into a general government corpus
- Faster responsiveness on ground regarding traffic control measures

Standardisation of road design across the city. These could cover bus stop locations, road safety humps, U-turn locations, pedestrian crossing design and road crossings.

Successful traffic solutions needs to be deployed across the city. The criteria should be in favour of planning for the greater collective good - some inconvenience to a few inevitable

- Bus stops - avoid them near road crossings. Where possible plan bus bay lanes (proactive planning needed while designing new roads)
- Road humps - have a uniform design across the city. Painting the hump and signage well in advance important. Implement road humps on side roads rather than the main roads
- Pedestrian crossings - underground and overhead have limitations. Surface crossings ideal. Can these be planned say every 200 metres (apart from signal crossings). Use it for 'traffic calming'.
- U-turn / road crossings - On main highways, ring roads it is is not desirable that a side road cuts through the highway lanes. Better for the traffic to join the main traffic and plan for U-turns at regular intervals.
- Road intersections - Can free lefts be planned through appropriate road geometry ahead of the intersection

Traffic police, City Corporation and local Corporates (signage sponsors)

- Smooth flowing traffic
- Standardisation prepares drivers for what to expect
- Less accidents

Truck traffic to be discouraged during 6 am to 11 pm on all city roads. Levy a fee if they wish to use it during the daytime.

Many major cities in India do not allow truck traffic in the city during peak work hours. For starters this can be done for inter city trucks

- Inter city trucks to take the bye-pass to skip city roads where such provisions exist
- In cases where bye-pass do not exist, they need to be regulated at the entry point (check post)
- Where intra city trucks need to move within the city during the daytime hours, a provision to license them on a monthly basis could be considered. The fee structure should vary depending on time of day - levy unreasonably higher fees for peak hour usage.

Police and Commercial check post authorities

- Less traffic congestion during peak hours
- Scope to levy user charges for usage in day time hours

Utilities

Using private agencies for detecting un-metered connections (water, power). Share property use database with other utilities / city corporation to ensure user billed under the same category (residential, commercial, etc.)

Water and Power corporations tend to lose a lot of unbilled revenue due to unauthorised connections. There is merit in getting private agencies to identify un-metered connections for a fee. By ensuring that customer classification is uniform across all agencies, utilities can plug loss in revenue due to mis-classification.

- Utilities could tender for private agencies which have the resources to identify unauthorized connections
- In this case, the agency which offers the most competitive rate per connection detected could be selected
- The revenue from the additional connections would more than compensate any fee income / case payable to the private agency
- A protocol for sharing property owner / usage information across the City Corporation and other utilities needs to be evolved. The challenge will be to adopt a unique 'numbering' system since Corporations tend to keep records by Municipal number, while utilities prefer to track by meter number.

Inter government agencies for sharing property information

- Increase in revenues for utilities
- Reduced losses due to 'leakages'
- Surpluses to maintain networks

Replacing large footprint transformers with smaller footprint transformers. Using short term advertisement revenue to make the transition

In most cities the power transformers tend to occupy a large space on footpaths. A sleeker modified single pole transformer could allow pedestrian access to footpaths while improving the urban landscape

- Of late power distribution companies have come up with improved single transformer designs in place of the earlier multi pole transformers
- There is scope to improve the designs further - use criteria of atleast 8 feet clearance of transformer base from ground to allow for pedestrian movement
- Any operation of transformer by power company is normally from vehicle with ladder - so ensuring this height clearance feasible
- Power distribution firms claim that it is not possible to recover the cost of the transition to single pole transformers (about Rs. 100,000 per single pole)
- City Corporations could give power firms license to advertise on the single pole for say a 2 year period. Space for ads to be clearly spelt out
- Power firms can tender the space to outdoor ad agencies
- The ad revenue can offset the costs involved in shifting to a single pole transformer set up

Outdoor advertising firms. Corporates could come forward for 'adopting' single pole transformers in their areas.

- Pedestrian friendly pavements due to single pole transformers
- Less need for pedestrians to step on to city roads
- Ad revenue for a limited period allows the city to shift to a better set of transformers

Reducing 'leakages' through a mix of district metering and regular transfer of meter readers

Water Boards claim Unaccounted for Water of 30% and more leading to huge loss of revenue. Part of the losses is due to non metering of all the supplied water. A system to track the supplied and billed water by region could reduce part of the losses

- On a pilot basis 1-2 areas of the city could be chosen for the district metering scheme
- A single district meter measures the total water supply to the designated area
- At the end of the month the total billed units in the area needs to be equal to the supply through the district meter - any losses could be on account of physical infrastructure leaks, non metering or poor metering
- The area in charge at the Utility needs to be given the bottom line responsibility of ensuring that 'near' full billing happens
- Sometimes local officials (meter readers) could have arrangements with local residents to avoid paying the full bill - this can be partly checked by transferring meter readers across areas in the city
- The distribution and water billing activity could also be considered for administration by private agencies

- Reducing incidence of unaccounted for water
- A systemic measure to plug losses
- Increased revenue

Waste management

Building clean and aesthetic toilets in high traffic areas on a pay and use basis

A health and sanitation initiative required to keep our city clean. Necessary for charging nominal rates so that O&M expenses are covered.

- Site locations need active engagement and cooperation of the urban local body
- The sites need to be selected taking into account pedestrian traffic considerations and socio economic profile
- The look and feel of the toilets need to be uniform in design. The external walls could be used for advertisements in designated places
- Security considerations, ticket counter location, number of WCs, bath and urinals needs to be planned on a case to case basis
- Per use charges work best. However in slums, monthly household cards work better - further the slum residents prefer someone from outside the area to administer the toilet for greater compliance
- Toilets is more about maintenance than construction. Need to ensure that the return through the fee structure allows proper maintenance. This can be tendered to private agencies

Corporates, Local architects and City Corporation

- Allows citizens on the road a clean place for use
- Gives the city a more hygienic look
- Self funding on O&M

Building sewage treatment plants in areas where there is large need for non potable water (eg. Public parks, Industrial units).

Water is a scarce resource. We need to encourage eco projects to reclaim water and use it in feasible areas (gardening, processes). The excess treated water (apart from the captive consumption) can be sold in the neighbourhood to fund the project

- The scoping of a water treatment plant from sewage will be based on the specific local requirements - size (eg. 1 MLD), treatment (tertiary, UV radiated, etc.), technology, etc.
- The idea being set out is to try and think beyond the specific local requirement in sizing the plant. Take into consideration the possibility of selling the surplus water in the local area (some estimate indicate that a realization of around Rs. 40 / kl is feasible)
- The advantage of thinking of selling part of the produce is that it is likely to make the overall project more viable rather than thinking of just the specific local need
- The treated water could be wholesaled through the Water Board - this would reduce the burden of individual marketing

Water & Sewerage Board with interested parties

- Eco friendly solution
- Likelihood of making the investment decision feasible

Segregate wet & dry waste at source. Have separators in transport vehicles. Track where disposed through GPS in vehicles. Suitable site locations for land fills

If cities are to get a clean, hygienic look it is necessary to work on an integrated waste management solution starting from the source (household, commercial, industrial, hospital, etc.). Garbage bins can be removed through this process.

- Invest in education & building awareness on source segregation
- Door to door collection using a mix of Corporation employees and private contractors. Appropriately designed push carts
- Corporations could consider collecting a solid waste management fee based on suitable legislation
- Garbage vehicles tend to dump the garbage at nearby locations rather than carry them to designated locations. A off line GPS installation in vehicles can allow end of day tracking of disposal location
- There are different views on whether there should be local compost plants or a central plant for the wet waste. Appropriate local solutions necessary
- Build in a scheme for rag pickers to participate in the garbage disposal process
- Debris removal needs to be addressed separately

NGOs, local resident associations with City Corporation

- Improved health and sanitation
- Less inconvenience with stray dogs
- Better mosquito control