

A Planning Approach for Fast Changing “Socio-Political” Environment: A Case of Delhi Master Plan

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1. Urbanization in India- A challenge

Urbanization in India is a challenge, as well as an opportunity. A challenge because of its rapid growth rate, which generally outpaces growth of infrastructure. An opportunity, as it offers better economic avenues. The urban population of India is growing at a faster rate than the growth rate of total population of India. Following are some of the salient features:-

- a) As per census of India 2011, India's population stand at 1.21 billion; 17.5 per cent of world population and next to China which accounts for 19.4 per cent of the global population.
- b) Over last 10 years (2001-2011) India has added 181 million population.
- c) Population of India is almost equal to the combined population of the United States, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Japan put together.
- d) But growth rate has slowed down from 21.15 per cent in 2001 to 17.64 per cent in 2011.
- e) For the first time since independence, the absolute increase in population is more in urban areas than in rural areas. Rural population in India stood at 68.24 per cent and urban population 31.16 per cent in 2011.
- f) Level of urbanization, increased from 27.81 per cent 2001 census to 31.16 per cent in 2011 census.
- g) The proportion of rural population declined from 72.19 per cent in 2001 to 68.84 per cent in 2011.
- h) In case of National Capital Territory of Delhi, total population is 16.75 million with composition of 97.5 per cent urban population and 2.5 per cent of rural population in 2011.
- i) Delhi recorded the decadal growth rate of 21.6% (2001-11).

2. Challenge of Urban Planning

Urban Planning in India has gone through considerable changes. India as an emerging economic power has been pursuing planning policies with an objective to uplift standard of living of all strata of the society. Economic development in terms of per capita income and availability of resources for infrastructure development, these two factors have impacted and shaped policies, approaches and direction of land use planning in the present context. Focus of planning shifted from **‘the principle of controlled development of land’** to **‘the principle of demand and supply’** of open economy. Due to this paradigm shift, traditional planning requires to readjust its planning tools like master plan and zonal plans, in such a way that it recognizes ground realities and it is also acceptable to the people. The concept of master plan and structure plan are both being questioned in terms of their nature and effectiveness. Nevertheless, stakes related to controlling the urban development are crucial for the future of humanity. City dwellers are expected to account for roughly half the world's population in the 21st century. The increase in urbanization of the world population is inescapable and irreversible. Thus, urban planning becomes essential and fundamental for any future development policies.

Over the years, physical and economic development maintained the same pace. However, the process of economic evolution initiated in 1990 has increased pace of economic development and raised per capita income. Unfortunately, the physical development or

planning process could not measure the pace of economic development. This situation led to distortion in the fabric of physical development within and outside the city. An exegesis of planning policies and strategies implemented through master plan document is needed on the basis of past experience of last five decades.

3. Master Plan – Past Experience

After the independence of the country in 1947 and to manage post partition influx of population in the Capital city, Delhi Development Authority was set up by the Central Government. First Master Plan for Delhi was prepared with help of Ford Foundation, with the perspective upto the year 1981. It adopted a policy of large scale land acquisition, development and disposal by the Government with strict land use zoning. (Refer Figure 1).

MASTER PLAN FOR DELHI - 1962

- **THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS MODERN PLANNING IN INDIA FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF DELHI.**
- **FORMULATED AS PER THE PROVISIONS OF DELHI DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1957.**
- **PROMULGATED ON 1st SEPTEMBER, 1962.**
- **LARGE SCALE LAND ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND DISPOSAL POLICY.**



*Figure 1 - Land Use plan of Master Plan for Delhi 1962 (1961-81)
(Source: Master Plan for Delhi 1962 by Delhi Development Authority)*

Master Plan for Delhi has remained a pioneering document in the field of Urban Planning in India. With vast experience of plan preparation and implementation, the Delhi Development Authority published second Master Plan for Delhi in 1991 (MPD 2001) with perspective upto year 2001(Refer Figure 2).

MASTER PLAN FOR DELHI - 2001

MPD - 2001 PROMULGATED ON 1st AUGUST, 1990.

PROJECTED POPULATION - 128 LAKH.

- **URBANIZATION OF FURTHER 18000 – 24000 HA. TO ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL POPULATION.**
- **EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF NCR TO CONTAIN RAPID POPULATION GROWTH**
- **THE HOLDING CAPACITY INCREASED THROUGH THE PROCESS OF LOW RISE HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT.**
- **SELECTIVE DENSIFICATION OF URBAN AREAS EXCEPT LUTYENS BUNGALOW ZONE**
- **THE INNER CITY (WALLED CITY & ITS EXTENSION AND KAROL BAGH) DESIGNATED AS SPECIAL AREA.**
- **MASS TRANSPORT SYSTEM TO BE MULTI MODAL.**

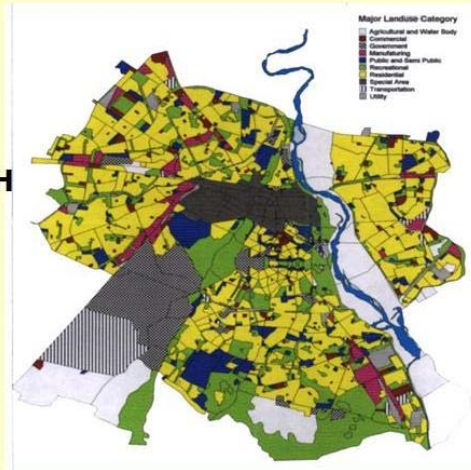


Figure 2 - Landuse Plan Master Plan Delhi 2001 (1981-2001)
(Source: Master Plan for Delhi 2001 by Delhi Development Authority)

Total area of National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD) is 1483 square km and total population is 16.75 million with 97.5 per cent population living in urban areas. The decadal growth rate is 21.6% (2001-11).

A broad review of various planning proposals and processes set during a period of twenty years of Master Plan for Delhi 2001 indicates that implementation of the proposals remains one of the most difficult tasks due to uncertainties of changing environment. It has been observed that the Master Plan proposals are successfully implemented where implementing agencies are clearly identified or implementing agencies are local bodies and Master Plan for Delhi 2001 (MPD-2001) proposals have become part of annual action plan or budget of that agency. In most of the cases land was made available to these agencies by DDA. For example, land was allotted for hospitals, schools, fire station, police stations and sewage treatment plants and water treatment plants, etc. Master Plan proposals remained unaddressed where –

- Role of agencies was not clear;
- There was no allocation of resources in terms of land or finances, for example: proposals related to the Walled City, Special Area, etc; and
- Traditional areas, non-conforming uses and informal settlements where spatial standards prescribed by Master Plan were not practical and implementable.

There were also other issues of central importance like urban population and employment growth, land use permissibility, land use intensity, informal sector and incompatible uses which overwhelmed the Master Plan in the process of its implementation.

Strict land use zoning and policy of compulsory large scale land acquisition resulted in emergence of large number of unauthorized colonies. Non access to affordable housing of public sector to majority of population led to growth of these illegal housing settlements

popularly known as unauthorized colonies. During the plan period of first master plan and second master plan around 2300 such colonies came into existence out of which 612 were regularized despite of the fact that these colonies were not fitting into framework of any Master Plan. Currently, 1639 unauthorized colonies are being considered by the government for regularization. These colonies provide 0.64 million dwelling units (approx. 22% of total) spread over about 9000 Hac. of land. Master Plan for Delhi 2021 (MPD-2021) has recognized this problem in following words –

“Unauthorized colonies in Delhi pose a serious human problem as a huge population is living in these colonies. The issue of existing unauthorized colonies has engaged attention since the mid-seventies when a policy for regularization was formulated. 567 out of 607 listed unauthorized colonies were regularized till October 1993, but many more unauthorized colonies have come up since then. Such colonies are to be identified by the Govt. of NCTD. The present method of regularization of unauthorized colonies is by the provision of basic infrastructure to improve the environment. However, regularization has not really brought in any tangible improvement. Effectively, the process has only led to de-facto tenure rights on the land and access to services”.

Once these colonies come into existence, they form a vocal political pressure group. In a democratic setup like India where there are three tier system of elected representatives e.g. – Municipal representatives, State legislative, Assembly representatives and Central Parliament representatives, these unauthorized colonies constitutes major part of vote bank. At times it is political compulsion and matter of political survival to regularize these unauthorized colonies even if they do not fit into overall framework of Master Plan. As a middle path “Procedure based Planning” within the overall framework of Master Plan is a useful planning tool.

4. Fundamentals of Procedure based Planning

Demand in contemporary planning is dynamism, quick adjustment with market forces and approaches to transform from policies into landuse modules. Master Plan remains to be the only planning instrument which stood test of time despite criticism, severe limitations and slow pace of implementation. Master plan becomes a document which may bring reforms, flexibility and set implementable goals for urban planning process, with some innovative ideas and shift from ‘standard based planning’ to ‘procedure based planning’. Current land use planning practice of prescribing uniform standards for all geographic areas irrespective of their socioeconomic status or local elements has resulted in incompatible land uses and unauthorized growth. Procedure based planning integrates local issues like land ownership, socio-economic status and contribute to bottom-up approach to land use planning at zonal and master plan level, which is entirely top down approach. But it does not mean that current land use planning practice can be done away with. Judicious introduction of procedure based planning for integration of local issues in the zonal and master plan framework is need of the hour. Bottom-up procedures are successful for improving the quality of land use planning and resource management. Procedure based planning aims at linking the micro level of management (i.e. farm, community land) and the level of policy making (zonal and master plan). In land use planning, the problem has more often been approached by studying the interactions between the biophysical and socio economical elements of a land use system.

Procedure based planning allows to:

- Ascertain the representation of the important local planning issues at Zonal Development Plan and Master Plan level;
- Assure the feasibility of proposed local interventions by taking into account zonal development plan & master plan objectives and constraints (biophysical, socio-economical) as well as local knowledge, incentives and values; and
- Provide local planners with decision-making tools for maximizing the potential of zonal development plan (ZDP) and master plan support (geo data, financial, organizational,

etc.), checking the relevance of zonal and city level plans to local communities and reducing land use planning conflicts.

Procedure based planning approach within overall framework of ZDP and MPD is most suitable for critical areas of urban policies and development where ZDP and MPD policies could not make impact at local level (land assembly, villages, unauthorized colonies, etc.).

5. Procedure based Planning for Critical Areas

New approach of “Procedure based Planning” may facilitate steps to take care of “unforeseen circumstances” which may emerge during plan period perspective. At the time of Master Plan preparation there is no clarity about how to deal with emerging problems as such problems are yet to be defined and evaluated.

These kind of new approaches are visible in Master Plan for Delhi 2021 document.

Following are few illustrations.

The Master Plan for Delhi with perspective up to year 2021 provides an opportunity to incorporate several innovations for the development of the National Capital. A critical reform has been envisaged in the prevailing land policy and facilitating public private partnerships. MPD 2021 has included following as essential for land policy for future policy formulation:

- Review of the scheme of large scale development and acquisition and its relevance in the present context;
- Alternative options for development of areas identified for urbanization in MPD 2021;
- Evolving a system under which planning for, and provision of basic infrastructure could take place simultaneously; and
- Involving the private sector in the assembly and development of land and provision of infrastructure services.

Procedure for land assembly is to be formulated and notified separately. It has not been made part of MPD document deliberately. Policies and procedures are liable to change from time to time to accommodate ground realities.

6. Procedure based Planning Initiated in MPD, 2021

6.1 Local Area Plans (LAP):

Taking into consideration 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment, the Master Plan for Delhi has introduced concept of Local Area Plans, as the Master Plan and Zonal Plans remain to be macro level plans which cannot respond to micro level ground realities. To absorb ground realities and formulate enforceable building bye laws, it will be necessary to focus on much smaller areas with more or less similar character and concerns. In other words areas with specific norms and standards need to be detailed out to prepare three dimensional local area plans.

6.2 Regularization of Unauthorized Colonies:

Master Plan for Delhi, 2021 recognizes the problem of unauthorized colonies in Delhi. In the past, policies for regularization were formulated as a corrective measure on and above prevailing Master Plan. For the first time MPD, 2021 has clearly stated that all unauthorized colonies whether on private or public land regularization should be done as per government orders issued from time to time. For proper improvement of physical and social infrastructure, minimum necessary physical level of services and common facilities are to be provided. Master Plan for Delhi provided reduced space standards for facilities taking into consideration difficulty in finding vacant plots for facilities in built up areas. But actual procedure for regularization has been separated from MPD-2021 document. Thus, procedure based planning as a part of MPD has been stated by the Master Plan for regularization of unauthorized colonies. As a follow up action, the Ministry of Urban Development issued

Revised Guidelines stating procedure for inviting applications from the associations of residents of unauthorized colonies for further processing of these applications by local bodies. Further Ministry of Urban Development notified detailed procedure for regulation of unauthorized colonies on 24th March 2008 and 16th June 2008 for regularization of unauthorized colonies and issuing of 'provisional certificate for regularization' or in other words list of colonies which are eligible for regularization. Thus, MPD, 2021 paved way for an era of Procedure Based Planning.

7. Procedure for Regularization of Unauthorized Colonies

DDA notified Regulations of unauthorized colonies in Delhi under Section 57 of DD Act on 24 March 2008. This notification systematically prescribes procedure with step by step regulations for unauthorized colonies.

- Introduction clearly states the reasons for regularization of unauthorized colonies and the various definitions for terminology used in the Regulations;
- Under the criteria for regularization of unauthorized colonies and habitations, "cut off date" for regularization is specified and criteria for regularization of unauthorized colonies as well as habitation that have come up as extensions of village *abadies* and are outside the *Lal Dora* of village is also given. The Regulations also clearly state that the colonies, which are not to be considered for regularization e.g. colonies falling in notified or reserved forests, falling within the ROW or where 50 percent plots are un-built. Other criteria are violation of ancient monuments and archaeological projects and residential buildings used for non residential purposes or unauthorized construction is not to be considered;
- The following steps are to be followed for regularization after the notification:
 - Registration of residents' society; residents Society shall perform liaison work with concerned Agency in various matters pertaining to the regularization process, preparation of existing layout plan of the colony, it may voluntarily also submit proposal for improved layout plan, submission of list of members make available wherever possible, land to the concerned agencies for social infrastructure;
 - List of documents to be submitted;
 - Steps or procedure to be followed up by the Local body or government for regularization;
 - A separate cell is to be created with the Local body or government to carry out the work. After the receipt of layout plan is submitted by the Residents' Society the local body will complete scrutiny in time bound manner. Similarly, the boundaries are to be finalized in time bound manner by the government with the help of satellite imageries and aerial surveys;
 - After fixation of boundaries layout plan is to be forwarded to local body for approval;
 - After the approval of LAP it will be forwarded to the Government for regularization; and
 - Parameters and bases for regularization are:
 - Title of land;
 - Planning norms;
 - Mix use norms;
 - Recovery of land and development charges; and
 - Other miscellaneous things like grant of sanction or refusal, etc.
- At present the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) has drawn up a list of about 1000 colonies which has clearance from various Government Departments like Forest, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Development Authority and Local Body. The State Government has already initiated steps to provide basic amenities like Water Supply, Sanitation and Electricity etc. These unauthorized colonies

do not have access to Public Utilities and Services which poses serious problem of polluting soil, water & environment.

- **Benefits of Regularization**
Regularization will benefit about 3 million people and 0.6 million families. It will create legal housing stock of 0.6 million Dwelling units and provide an access to basic minimum utilities and facilities. It will contribute to reduce environment pollution and reduce water pollution in water streams and rivers. It will generate housing stock for urban poor.

7.1 Special Area and Villages

MPD 2021 clearly states a procedure for dealing with special area and villages in addition to various planning provisions. Earlier Master Plans had given various provisions for these areas but the clear jurisdiction and responsibility of Local Bodies have been spelled out for the first time. The special area contains old city area, walled city and its extension, Karol Bagh (designated special area), which are mostly under the jurisdiction of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). To make special area plan, practical and legitimate this responsibility has been given to MCD.

7.2 Special Area Plans

MPD-2021 has defined Special Area and divided into three separate parts, namely (i) Walled City (ii) Walled City and Extension and (iii) Karol Bagh. On the basis of similarities in compact built form, narrow circulation space and low rise high density developments, mainly accommodating residential, commercial both retail or wholesale and industrial uses. The strategy is to provide suitable framework for allowing mix use activities, household industries or outlets for specialized services, etc. Parking and open spaces have to be provided as per the norms, while reduced space norms for other facilities may be accepted. The redevelopment strategy should ensure modern services and amenities. Regulations for Special Area shall be different from other areas. All these areas are to be brought with the planning purview. For this, the owners can jointly redevelop on the basis of the norms and regulations to be prescribed.

7.3 Villages

MPD-2021 has recognized that villages have undergone significant physical and functional transformations related with their specific location. Villages are characterized by a mix of different land uses and have similarities in compact built form, narrow circulation space and low-rise high density developments. These mainly accommodate residential, commercial and industrial uses and function as a mix use.

Comprehensive Schemes for the development of villages are to be prepared by the concerned local bodies with the aim of provision of optimal facilities and services within the *abadis* and integration with the surrounding areas. Development along the peripheries of the villages should be planned for the provision of services and green and open areas, circulation, etc; when preparing layout plans for urban extension areas. Reduced space standards prescribed for provision of social and educational facilities. The facilities like community hall, dispensary, etc; may be grouped together depending on the availability land.

7.4 Mixed Use

Mixed use has emerged as a major provision of MPD-2021 due to emerging needs and requirement of people. Delhi, being the country's capital and an important centre of economic activity, it has a large diversity in the typology of residential areas. Apart from the planned residential colonies built as part of Lutyens' Delhi (by British as Capitol Complex) as well as through the process of planned development undertaken by the Delhi Development Authority, there are authorized residential areas in the walled city, special areas and urban villages. Other planned areas include resettlement colonies and pre Delhi Development Colonies including post partition rehabilitation colonies and pre-1962 residential colonies.

There are also regularized unauthorized colonies, unauthorized colonies as well as slums and *jhuggi jhompri* (squatters clusters) in various parts of Delhi; and

MPD-2021 proposed to follow a differentiated approach in the application of the mixed-use policy in Delhi. The differentiated approach based on categorization of colonies as adopted by Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) for unit area method of property tax assessment. Subsequent to the notification of MPD-2021, Municipal Corporation of Delhi issued a public notice notifying 'Mixed Land Use as per MPD-2021 and Payment of Mixed Land Use Charges'. Following are the excerpts: As per Master Plan for Delhi-2021 under the Mixed Use Regulations, the following mixed use and commercial activities are permissible in residential premises (details as per clause 15 of MPD-2021):

- Notified Mixed Use Streets
- Notified Commercial Streets
- The Small Shops of maximum 20 sq m area
- Professional Activity: subject to general terms and conditions
- Other Activities
- Mixed use in Group Housing

7.5 Spot Zoning

In April 2008, the Authority approved a policy for Spot Zoning of pre existing cultural, religious (including spiritual) health care and educational institutions. The genesis of the concept of Spot Zoning comes from the recommendations of the Tejender Khanna Committee to protect genuine pre-existing institutions for this purpose. A committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Commissioner (Planning), Chief Town Planner, TCPO, and Chief Town Planner of MCD to go into the concept of Spot Zoning. The Committee recommended that:

- The institutional activities which existed up to 1 February 2006 only are to be considered for regularization;
- The regularization shall be allowed on the lands which do not form part of the Ridge, Regional Park, developed park, Riverbed, *Gram Sabha* land or public land. Institutions on the lands affected by Heritage Zone, land required for Master Plan roads, service corridors, etc; shall not be regularized;
- The extent of buildable area shall be limited to the extent of MPD, 2021 norms and the remaining surplus area shall be reserved for Recreational Green and Open with a maximum 15 FAR subject to payment of levies, charges, other conditions as may be stipulated. Buildings so permitted will have to directly serve the principal objectives of the Institution;
- MPD-2021 under Clause 8 (2) permits certain public and semi-public facilities in residential and other use zones as a part of approval of lay out or as a case of special permission from the Authority;
- The regularization shall be subject to payment of all charges and levies;
- The applicant will submit all the details of land ownership and area, built up area, site plan indicating the location of building, building plans, etc; and
- The applications, thus, received will be examined by zone-wise committee for recommendations to the Authority.

The above steps suggest detailed procedure for integration at micro-level which is useful for the zonal plans. Contrary to the practice in our country, planning is not ruled by standards but by procedures in some of the developed countries. Planning practice in India inherited from colonial system of planning with rigid land use plan with well defined functions, uniform standards and non-existence of flexibility.

Planning is considered an art, the planners has to have the freedom to propose an individual solution best adapted to the specific local conditions. Procedures do not prescribe uniform results; they ensure that for each individual situation the best possible results are identified.

8. Conclusion

Delhi has emerged as a economic and political centre not only for Northern region of India but for the entire nation. For the purpose of planning, National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD) with an area of 1483 sq.km. and population of 17 million people forms a hub for entire “Central National Capital Region” comprising of an area of 2000 sq.km. of neighboring cities of Gurgaon, Faridabad & Sonapat in the State of Haryana and Ghaziabad, Noida, Greater Noida in the State of Uttar Pradesh is entire urban agglomeration forms an area of 3500 sq.km. and approx. population of 28 million people. With such a wide variety and diversity in Municipal administration, State Government policies and Interstate issues, a keyword for survival of planning is flexibility within the framework of Master plans of respective cities with Procedure based Planning for critical areas of “Socio-Political” environment (Refer Figure 3).

Looking at experience in procedure based planning, one can say that innovative, people oriented procedures and trust based planning system has resulted in saving of cost, regeneration of environment and improved living conditions for cities. Contrary to this, the Indian system of planning depends on standards rather than procedures which make it rigid, expensive and unimaginative.

Master plan stays despite of many odds. Urban planning needs to add wide range of planning tools like implementation mechanisms, short term policies to meet with political exigencies and create interface between planning, implementing agencies and decision makers. Adding important planning tools like “procedure based planning” to the master plan document makes it implementable and result oriented.

Message is clear that within the overall framework of long term goals of the Master Plan, flexible localized “procedure based planning” approach is necessary to integrate local issues like land assembly, mixed use, regularization of unauthorized colonies and urban villages, etc. among themselves so that land use planning becomes practical and implementable.

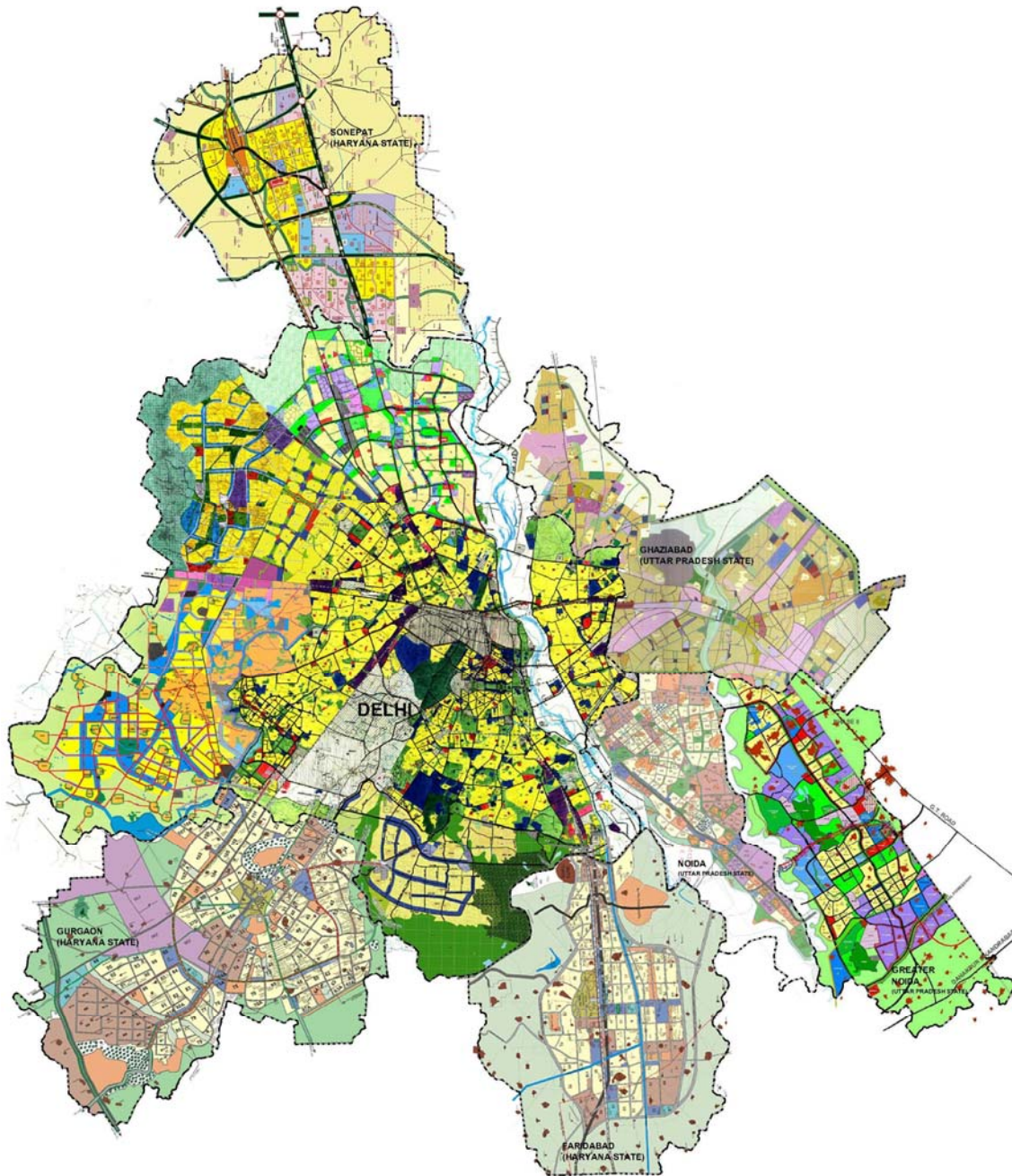


Figure 3 Landuse Plan of Urban Agglomerations of Delhi & Central National Capital Region
{Source: Mosaic of landuse plans as available on websites (not to scale). Color codes for landuse are not uniform}

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