

The Hindu 08.12.2011

## Exclusive city development plan for added Corporation areas

Karthik Madhavan

To aid development in areas recently added to the city, the Coimbatore Corporation has initiated the process of coming out with an exclusive development plan.

The city development plan for the 40 wards that constitute the areas will provide a broad guideline for projects to be taken up there in the near and far future.

As first step in that direction, the Corporation will place a subject for approval before the Council at its next meeting for appointing a consultant to prepare the plan. Sources in the Corporation say that the subject before the Council will also seek its nod for paying the consultant.

Once the Council says yes, the Corporation and the consultant approved will invite suggestions from stakeholders like various organisations, residents' associations, experts, etc.

The plan will talk about the demography of the area, economic development, socio-economic profile, urban governance, planning and land use management, infrastructure services, finances of the Coimbatore Corporation, urban basic services for the poor, infrastructure development and service provision, initiatives to mobilise resources, etc.

S. Baskar of the IC Centre for Governance, an NGO, says that the city development plan will and should be a guideline for the Corporation to take up development projects in the area.

“The plan lets the local government - the Corporation – have a say in and guide the growth in the area.

And if it fails to do so, it will lead to property developer-initiated, piecemeal development.”

It should not be a document prepared for fulfilling a procedure, just as the Coimbatore Corporation's city development plan, prepared as part of JNNURM requirements, has turned out to be.

“The projects that the Corporation had initiated subsequent to the preparation of the report was not as per the guidelines of the plan,” he says and refers to the storm water drain as an example.

Mr. Baskar also wants the Coimbatore Corporation to involve all stakeholders, including slum dwellers and street vendors, in the preparation of the city development plan.

“They are a part of the city and only they can highlight their woes in the best possible manner,” is his justification.

He also wants the Corporation to revisit the city development plan for the other areas saying it should be a dynamic document that reflects the reality of today.