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12th July 2012

Mr. Rajeev Chawla, IAS
Commissioner
BMRDA
Ali Askar Road
Bangalore 560001

Dear Sir,

Subject: Our suggestions on the Revised Master Plan (RMP) 2035 of BDA

Citizens who participated in a discussion organised by CIVIC Bangalore on 5th July 2012 vehemently called for an effective mechanism for proper implementation of the Master Plan of BDA. The discussion was held in the light of BDA calling for inputs from citizens to its proposed Revised Master Plan (RMP) for 2035. The following broad recommendations emerged on the process of preparing the Plan itself:

1. Constitutionally and legally both BMRDA and BDA are not the bodies which should be making plans for Bangalore as the 74th Constitutional Amendment requires a Metropolitan Planning Committee with two-thirds elected representatives to make plans for the Bangalore Metropolitan Region. The planning for the BBMP area needs to be devolved to the urban local body, BBMP. But until these legal issues are sorted out, the two GOs issued by the Urban Development Department, No. UDD 146 CSS 2009 dated 14.12.2009 and No. UDD 28 CSS 2010 dated 22.03.2010 requiring the BBMP Council to vet the Master Plan and a Committee to be set up integrate city planning and delivery functions need to be followed. Before the RMP is prepared, the Structure Plan of BMRDA for Bangalore should be notified. This has been lying for the last two years with BMRDA with no action taken.
2. The Structure Plan guidelines should be the framework within which the RMP of BDA is prepared so that coherence between the Structure Plan and the RMP.
3. There has been lack of consonance between the Structure Plan of BMRDA and the RMP of BDA. The plans of the BWSSB, BESCOM, BMTTC, etc., and BDA "never talked to one another". The example of Delhi Development Authority which had called for all line agency plans and consolidated them into its master plan needs to be followed.
4. As the Structure Plan of BMRDA is for the period 2012 to 2031, the RMP of BDA should also be for the same period.

5. The process of involving citizens and other line agencies of the government at every stage of the planning should be built in while submitting the Request for Proposal itself to the consultants. The necessary finances and time-frames too for this process need to be built into the bid.
6. Citizens need to be involved at all stages of the planning process and not merely at the final draft stage and these stages at which consultations should happen need to be built into the RfP.
7. All 30 sister organisations, such as BWSSB, BESCOM, BMTC, etc., also needed to be involved in the consultation process, which had not happened during the drafting of RMP 2015.
8. There needs to be an Action Taken Report by BDA on RMP 2015 and an analysis of what challenges were faced and how they were met during its implementation.
9. The Advisory Committee on RMP 2015 chaired by Mr. PSS Thomas had recommended that there should be a committee headed by the Chief Secretary to review the implementation of RMP 2015 but this has not been set up. As such there is no institutional arrangement to monitor implementation of the Master Plan.
10. Though training and capacity building of BDA was undertaken during the roll out process of RMP 2015, it did not bring in ownership of the Plan and its implementation by BDA. It is essential to ensure that RMP 2035 does not meet the same fate. BDA needs to take ownership of the Plan and its implementation.
11. Without a strict regulatory mechanism for implementing the zonal regulations and building bye-laws, etc., prescribed in the Plan, it would remain on paper and Bangalore would continue to develop in a haphazard way.
12. There should be 'growth with equity' in the plans, which has been missing in the earlier plans.
13. The Master Plan should be broken down into local area plans as citizens could give inputs only at the local level.
14. There needs to be a system for data-base management within BDA.
15. Citizens' groups and stakeholders should prepare a "vision document" for Bangalore in a bottom-up process within the framework of several national policies, such as the National Vendors' Policy and the National Urban Transportation Policy. This should be discussed by BBMP Council and implemented through BDA.

Based on our objections / suggestions, the Advisory Committee headed by Mr. P.S.S. Thomas had made several recommendations on RMP 2015 and cautioned against some proposals contemplated by the Government in the Master Plan. **In RMP 2015, most of these recommendations were cursorily implemented or not implemented at all. Worse,**

some decisions were so retrograde that they were the reverse of what was recommended. We are hence attaching the objections and suggestions we had made as they are relevant even for RMP 2035.

We would be very happy if you could give us one more opportunity for more of us to meet you and all other service agency chiefs dealing with Bangalore to explain our concerns in detail and clarify any points you wish to be elaborated. We also request you to kindly inform us of the actions you propose to take and the outcomes expected.

Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,

Kathyayini Chamaraj
Executive Trustee
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