

Cities, Communities and Homes: Is the Urban Future Livable?

• **Paper / Proposal Title:**

Balancing the World - Outwitting Urban Temptations.

• **Format:**

Verbal presentation + Powerpoint

• **Author(s) Name:**

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• **University or Company Affiliation:**

No

• **Abstract (300 words):**

(Reworked Abstract)

The paper explores the root cause - as against the solution - of the complexities of urbanization today.

The World has evolved from a mere patchwork of countries to a network of developments, where communities merge with neighborhoods and cities merge with villages. Propelled by the then Industrial revolution that throttled an exponential growth of human population from a mere 1 billion to 7 billion in under two centuries, to the much more powerful yet exceptionally quieter technological revolution that now seamlessly connects these 7 billion socially.

While the advent of high-rise and urbanization were a direct consequence of industrial revolution, the technological revolution failed to trigger any corresponding revolution in the way housing and architectural technologies emerged. The top-down approach of the planners, governments and financial institution focused primarily on return-on-investments models, completely neglecting the R&D, paradigm shifts in social behavior and new opportunities in design.

The sole purpose of an urban system is to enhance efficiency and productivity by bringing people, resources and talent together. A successful Urban ecosystem continues to renew its unique history and evolution while fostering local practices, thus providing economic and political stability that cannot be substituted with top-down master planning schemes and "international designs" that most often do not engage the sidewalk-up lower income majority. This disconnect between financially-driven real estate and harsh grass-root realities seeded in faith and ideology, has created a chaotic urban fabric. Even as people struggle with regional, linguistic and cultural crisis in the wake of globalization, chasing the diminishing line that divides contentment, challenge, sense of belonging and love, from rat race, humiliation, instability and narcissism.

Humans are built for community, their realities defined by less than half a dozen touch points. More often, the realization comes in too late. King Ashoka, propelled Buddhism to world religion, only after running one of the bloodiest empires in history.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Suvir Mathur is a qualified Architect from the prestigious University of Roorkee (now called IIT Roorkee). His design firm is called Evolve Designs, and is based out of New Delhi.

With over 20 years of rich hands-on experience, Suvir has spearheaded Urban Development Projects that include Infrastructure, Real Estate, Airports, Hospitality, Commercial & Retail Development, and skills to cover Business Development, Project Management and Architecture & Interior Design applications.

One of the most valued aspects of Suvir's expertise is the business knowledge he brings to project development, considering into account the complex interplay between urban ecologies, socioeconomic forces and consumer realm. By capitalizing on his multi-disciplinary strengths, Suvir brings forth holistic strategies to all challenges that may arise, be it policy constraints, ground conditions or construction limitations.

With a flair for design and innovation, he has vast experience in working with international designers and consultants. His exceptional communication skills and understanding of a project work-breakdown structure, enables him to devise apt solutions that are both technically sound and financially viable.

He has handled projects as diverse as Airport privatization comprising of over 8000 acres of land, to Retail rollouts and restoration projects for heritage tourism.