

XII. SMART STREETS – VISAKHAPATNAM

CONTEXT

Visakhapatnam is the largest city and financial capital of Andhra Pradesh. It is the most populous city in the state and one of the million-plus cities in India with a population of over 2 million. The core city and its surrounding settlements together constitute Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region, one of the most populous urban regions in the country with a population of over 5.3 million. The economy of the city is the tenth largest in the country. Visakhapatnam is famous as a port city due to the presence of two big ports namely Visakhapatnam Port and Gangavaram Port. Recently the city has seen the growth of IT and Pharmaceutical industry as well.

The city has a large network of roads but almost all of these roads are designed for vehicular traffic. The road design in most cases have not considered users such as: pedestrians, hawkers, differently abled persons etc.

THE INTERVENTION

Project description

Under the Smart City Mission there is an emphasis on design and development of roads/ streets with priority to pedestrians. In this backdrop; the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) has planned a Smart Street intervention under their Smart City agenda.

A pilot project of 7 km including 2 major streets – Waltair Main Road and Chinna Waltair Road has been planned under this intervention. This project includes: wide footpaths, cycle tracks, landscape corridor with trees, pedestrian street lighting, bus bays, on-street parking, road markings, median, hawker zone, improved junctions, table tops, universal accessible design by introduction of ramps, benches and planting beds, provision for future bus stops, public toilets and ATMS, reserving the space for utilities in a specified corridor, reserving the utility crossing duct at every 500 m along the Smart Street, rehabilitation of tertiary storm water road side drain for easing out of rain water with proper shoulders, new water supply lines, Public Bike Sharing system (PBS).

The project intervention is expected to be completed by mid 2018, and is likely to benefit in the following ways:

Road Diet & Safe Streets: This transportation planning technique will reduce the width of the carriageway to achieve systemic improvements. Streets with clearly demarcated spaces for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and dedicated on-street parking will emerge, this will minimize conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Safe Streets with shaded walkways will promote walking as a daily activity for encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

Resilient Streets: Streets will have defined utility corridors including undergrounding overhead utilities, where upgraded utilities will be able to withstand severe natural and human-made disasters. Streets will provide infrastructure allowing safe walking experience in night time through pedestrian lighting; and clean public space through dustbins at regular intervals.

Inclusive Streets: Streets will allow and provide multiple mobility options to citizens including walking, cycling, driving private vehicles and commuting through public transport. Universally accessible design will allow safe walking experience to all citizens especially elderly and people with special needs.

Streets as Public Spaces: Streets will provide spaces outside homes for social, cultural or intellectual interactions, to walk or to just breathe fresh air. Streets will have reduced congestion through removal of encroachments, also contribute to curtail low carbon emission.



Concept Image: Proposed SMART Street in Visakhapatnam