

# How urban planning can help promote tourism

*Well-planned cities like London, Paris and Tokyo, are very popular tourist destinations. Tourism and urban planning is essentially based on how traditions, lifestyles, cultural attractions and historic sites can be combined in a coherent city tourist map. Here's how efficient urban planning can help the tourism industry grow...*

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India is home to one of world's oldest civilisation and has a unique combination of culture, modernisation and natural beauty, making it an ideal tourist destination. The emerging middle-class in the country has huge potential for domestic tourism market to sustain and survive. However, India is not able to realise its full potential for tourism. Several factors are responsible for it. Convenience, safety, infrastructure etc are some of the reasons why India is not able to take its tourism industry to the next level, where it could be a significant contributor to the economy. Efficient planning and management can overcome the challenges.

Urban planning can play an important role in **tourism promotion**. Cities with efficient urban planning are known to attract maximum number of tourists across the globe. London, Paris and Tokyo are some prime examples. Tourism and urban planning is essentially based on how traditions, lifestyles, cultural attractions and historic sites can be combined in a coherent city tourist map. Here we will discuss some ways efficient urban planning can help the tourism industry grow.

**Information:**When somebody travels to a different city, he/she wants to be equipped with proper information. In an alien place, people don't want to get stuck, lost or roam around aimlessly. They want to maximise their experience in that place in the limited amount of time they have. For this, they like to plan things in advance. Administrators and planners should ensure that enough information is available on the internet about their city for the tourists to make plans and take informed decisions. More importantly, there should be a provision of tourist information centres and signages at prominent places in the city for providing practical information to tourists.

**Saving time and Convenience:**As mentioned above, the tourists want to maximise their time in a new city, there should be practical provisions for their fast and convenient travel between various tourist destinations. Several cities run Hop-on Hop-off (HoHo) buses taking the tourists on city tours and stopping at prominent tourist destinations. Amsterdam runs a successful HoHo bus service. New Delhi also tried this idea several years ago, however the plan could not be successful due to inefficient planning and management.

**Efficient public transport:**People in most developed countries use public transport for their day-today travels. They are not used to booking taxis or negotiating with auto rickshaw drivers. Effectiveness of public transport can be the difference between the success or the failure of any city in terms of trade, investment and development, whether in traditional or **smart cities**. The public transport system needs to provide last mile connectivity to every part of the city. This could be a combination of various modes like metro, buses, feeder buses etc i.e. Integrated Multimodal Transport Facilities and at every interchange or stop there should be digital information system about route and waiting time of upcoming modes of transportation.

**Accessibility and connectivity:**Accessibility to the city itself and tourist destinations within the city is of utmost importance to attract tourists. Urban planners should take special care of accessibility to the tourist destinations. A quick and comfortable travel to tourist destinations not only attracts tourists, but also motivates them to visit again. On the basis of the importance of the destination, proper packages and circuits need to be designed, complete with all tourist facilities.

**Safety and hygiene:**It is no secret that clean and safe places attract more people. Same goes for tourism. Although safety and hygiene have more to do with public attitude and law & order, urban planning can also play an important role in it. Properly covered drainage system, provision of suitable waste dumping and processing grounds etc could greatly help in keeping the cities clean and healthy. Green spaces in urban areas greatly enhance the beauty and appeal of any city. Disaster preparedness and emergency response provisions also make tourists visit a city. Any help that's just a call away at the time of distress is of utmost importance.

Tourism plays an important role in employment and in economic growth. To realise the potential of tourism as a tool for sustainable inclusive growth, a multi-stakeholder and multi-level approach is required, based on close cooperation at the various levels of tourism and non-tourism administrations. But unattended growth can negatively affect the destination. It is therefore sensibly necessary, through careful planning and execution, to ensure that tourism development improves or maintains the environment and culture of the destination while providing maximum visitor satisfaction. Therefore, while developing or re-developing the cities, administrators need to draw up a tourism master plan as it is important to plan for the basic infrastructure that enables tourists to access resources easily. Thorough strategic planning and marketing help cities to become a destination for tourists, rather than just a transit point.