Smart is about connectivity; and people connect in real world through various gathering spaces; rather Open spaces. In this virtual world of social network; social networking in person has suffered the most. The open spaces in a city are like pause spaces, where city life exists, citizens rethink, rejuvenate and rejoice; the city life gets a new direction and people experience a sense of security as city dwellers. As we all confirm to the idea of - *'What is the City, But the People'*... **smartness is in creating opportunities in terms of socially acceptable and enjoyable open spaces in a city for everybody in order to achieve wholistic vision for a Smart city.**

-Prof. Vishal Shah- SCET-Architecture, Surat

સૂરત એક ઐતિહાસિક નગર છે. તેનો ઇતિહાસ આર્થિક, સામાજિક, ધાર્મિક, ઐતિહાસિક, અને કલા વિષયક પણ હોઈ શકે. એક કાલે સૂરત વિશ્વવિખ્યાત હતુ. તેના ભવ્યતીભવ્ય વારસાને પુનપ્રસ્થાપિત કરવા સૂરતને વિશ્વભર મા આકર્ષણનુ કેન્દ્ર બનાવવુ જોઈએં. વિશ્વભરના પર્યટકો સૂરતદર્શને આવે એવી યોજનાઓ વિચારવી અને અમલમા મૂકવી જોઈએ. તે પ્રમાણે નીચે પ્રમાણે પ્રયત્નો કરી શકાય.

૧. નિષ્ણાતોની કમિટિ દ્વારા સૂરત નગરના બચેલા ઐતિહાસિક સ્થળોની યાદી, તેમનુ સર્વેક્ષણ અને ઐતિહાસિક પ્રમાણભૂત નોંધો તૈયાર કરી સ્થળ પર મૂકવી જોઈએ. જાળવણી માટે તંત્ર ઉભુ કરવુ જોઈએ.

૨. સૂરત ના વિવિધ વિસ્તારો, લત્તાઓ, ઈમારતોના નામોનો ઇતિહાસ તૈયાર કરવો જોઈએ અને પુસ્તકારે પ્રગટ કરવો જોઈએ.

૩. ઐતિહાસિક અગત્ય ધરાવતી વ્યક્તિઓના નિવાસસ્થાનને શોધી તે પર લખાણ મૂકી શકાય. જે સૂરત ની આગવી ઓળખ બની રહેશે.

૪. સૂરતના ઇતિહાસદર્શન માટે એક કાયમી મ્યૂઝીયમ સ્થાપવુ જોઈએ જેમા સૂરતના નકશાઓ, દુર્લભ ચિત્રો, ફોટોગ્રાફ્સ, દસ્તાવેજો સિક્કાઓ અને અન્ય નમૂના મૂકી શકાય. ત્યા સૂરતના ઇતિહાસ વિષયક ચલચિત્ર પણ નિયમિત બતાવી શકાય.

૫. સૂરત ઉપર ઇંટરનેશનલ સેમીનારોનુ નિયમિત આયોજન થતું રહેવું જોઈએ.

-શ્રી મોહન મેઘાણી, વિખ્યાત ઇતિહાસકાર, સૂરત

Congratulations...

Urban Initiatives was awarded the Jury Commendation for the design of project of Gopi Talao, Surat at a National Level Event held at Bangalore for the GROHE NDTV Design and Architecture Award -2015 on 15th January 2016. Urban Initiatives consists of Prof. Vishal Shah along with Ar. Snehal Shah, Ar. Saloni Shah and Ar. Niti Shah, all of who are visiting faculties at the Faculty of Architecture, SCET. The project is much acclaimed by the people of Surat and is anticipated to become a torchbearer in Urban Renewal of Indian cities through design of Open Spaces.

Prof. Vishal Shah was also invited to present this project as a Chief Speaker at the Kirloskar Vasundhara International Film Festival at Pune on 11th Jan 2016 under the topic of 'Tourism for Smart Cities' with an underlying idea to create an opportunity to market valuable assets of our cities.

Welcome aboard... SCET team getting stronger with Eminent Designers on board

Ar. Sharosh Wadia   Ar. Snehal Shah   Ar. Azmi Wadia   Ar. Azaz Calcuttawala   Ar. Saloni Shah

Ar. Sanjay Ramani   Ar. Jasmine Randeria   Dr. Jasmine Kaur   Ar. Harsh Gupta   Ar. Nikunj Patel

The best teachers are those who show you where to look but don't tell you what to see...

ArConnect, c/o, SCET - Architecture, Surat   Kindly mail your contributions to: *arconnect11@gmail.com*

To,

My City, My Town..., a site for everyone to behold,
A place of great edifices, a town with wonderful places,
The land that brought memories of neighborliness...
Oh my great city, 'The Diamond City'.. the Textile City,
You are losing your luster, colour and radiance...
Due to greed of my Citizens...
Wake up My City, My Town...
Be like David, Defeat this Goliath called GREED!!!
Show your feat and make this enemy face the heat.

- Edwina Aleme

Smart City Special...

Warm Greetings to our readers on the New Year as we move into 2016.

Wishing all our readers success, peace and happiness in the year ahead. **Peace should be the key mantra in the year ahead.** Peace eludes us as terror strikes in Pathankot shattered governments complacency, the refugee crisis and the Syrian ISIS conflict continues while the world is shocked at emerging photo news stories of starved, emaciated people, in ISIS captured towns, living off leaves and grass. Gun control in US remains controversial as disturbed students and soldiers indulge their delusions on University and school campuses with random firing. **We must all continue to pray for peace on the planet.**

At the editorial desk we return after a hiatus during which students in various disciplines wound up their semester of studies, appeared for exams, chased deadlines, finished their assignments, while the faculty were busy assessing their copious outputs. And after that…the much desired semester break for all.

Ar. Tarunbhai Dave, a senior and highly respected member of the fraternity had suggested some weeks ago that we should cover the topic of *"Smart City"* in our newsletter. Honouring his suggestion this Arconnect is exclusively dedicated to the *"Concept of Smart Cities"*.

In the last two years there has been a huge acceleration of interest and debate in the concept of Smart Cities. Technology companies, software developers, academics, urban designers and local authorities are enamored with Smart Cities. **But have we really understood What a Smart City is, why its an important concept of our times and how can we turn the concept into reality broadly.** At the risk of sounding naïve, in all honesty, I still don't know what it entails. In my various explorations, this definition by Rick Robinson (IT Director, Amey), in the blog "7 Steps to a Smarter City' seems to capture the concept rather well.

"A smart city systematically creates and encourages innovations in city systems that are enabled by technology; that change the relationships between creation of economic and social value and the consumption of resources and that contribute to achieving a vision and clear objectives that are supported by a broad and active collaboration amongst city stakeholders."

But like all non technical definitions this one also attracts controversy. **There is the basic issue of whether 'smart' implies a key role for digital technology or whether it simply means being creative in the way we manage resources around us to achieve desired outcomes.**

A city is such a broad, complex and multi disciplinary entity and whose behavior is the aggregate of millions of individual behavior of its inhabitants. This behavior is regulated by the environment citizens' experiences. So it seems impossible to create all explanatory and all inclusive definitive statements. Limiting the discussion to cities omits stakeholders not located wholly in cities but without which neither cities nor their inhabitants could survive.

The price of digital technology such as smart phones, sensors, analytics, cloud platforms and markey dynamics will drive their adoption to make city services efficient. However, with the zeal for active digitization **it needs to be remembered that mere efficiency will not ensure health, happiness and opportunity for every citizen.** P.T.O.

It is necessary to ensure that technology with right policy environment – both at local and national level- is deployed in a way that ensures access and adaptation by ordinary people so that conditions are created for successful innovations of citizens, communities and businesses in the economy.

More specifically to cities, in her seminal 1961 work 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities', Jane Jacobs wrote that

'Private investment shapes cities, but social ideas and laws shape private investment. First comes the image of what we want, then the machinery is adapted to turn out that image. The financial machinery has been adjusted to create anti city images because and only because, we as a society thought this would be good for us.'

No single person or group can shape Smart Cities. Local governments have the ethics of civic duty and care but lack the expertise in business model innovation to convert spending schemes into outcomes they desire.

Any Smart City initiative must draw together **skills from a variety of disciplines such as architecture, economics, social sciences, technology.** Hence through our special issue we have tried to explore *'What a Smart City'* is as envisaged by eminent citizens and professionals of Surat.

-Vahhbiz Engineer, Niraj Naik, Hardik Gandhi & Editorial Team

Opinions of eminent citizens on Smart City...

The smart city mission intends to promote adoption of smart solution for efficient use of available assets, resources and infrastructure to enable to give a decent quality of life, a clear and sustainable environment. Surat has already adopted state of the art technology so in that direction, enhancing the smart connectivity is of prime importance for making Surat as smart city. Adoption of solar technology for domestic as well as trade and industries and shifting of polluted industry from city to defined area with efficient road and train connectivity shall be of prime importance for smart city.

- Mr. C.S.Jariwala- President-The SGCCI & Vice Chairman Sarvajanik Education Society (SES)

A developed urban area that creates sustainable economic development and high quality of life by excelling in multiple key areas; economy, mobility, environment, people, living and government. Excelling in these key areas can be done so through strong human capital, social capital, and/or ICT (Information Communication Technology) infrastructure. High quality of life is not possible without health. So there cannot be smart city action plan without health consideration. More true for nations, yet to reach to a health status where every key factor mentioned in definition can automatically lead to better health. **- Dr. Vikasben Desai- Technical Director at Urban Health and Climate Resilience Center, Surat**

Suggestions for Smart city from Environment point of view:
1).At present there is only 3% green cover, which should be increased to at least 15%.
2).Urban forest concept should be introduced, in all the different zones of city. One or two plots should be exclusively made into Urban forest. The area below tree cover can be used for recreational activities like walking track, jogging track, cycling track and picnic place.
3).All the roads dividers and sides of the road should be planted with large trees which will provide Oxygen to the city, Shelter for the birds and also absorb CO_2 & dust emitted by vehicles.
4).Water recharging and grey water reuse for toilet flushing should be made compulsory.
5).Large rain water storage tanks should be made compulsory in all the new high rise buildings.
6).Flyovers can be covered with Solar panels and street light can be powered by it.
7).Solar panels can be fitted above roads and power can be used for changing electric two wheelers.

Mr. Snehal Patel- Founder, Nature Club- Surat

There are innumerable aspects that go into the making of a *'Smart City'* and Surat has been making strides in almost all directions to that effect, whether it is housing, infrastructure, transport or e-governance. **However, a major issue that has been eluding Surat for many years now has been the lack of air connectivity. In the age of e-governance, this is a basic requirement for any city of our scale, not to mention a Smart city.**

Another important aspect of concern is the acute lack of quality open spaces.....it is this lack of open space that drives hordes of people to Gaurav Path on public holidays. Think of London, Paris, Singapore, Delhi or Mumbai and an image of the cityscape immediately springs to mind. Surat needs to develop large urban plazas / spaces / promenades for people to simply hang out and to create a sense of belonging and pride in one's city.

- Ar. Azmi Wadia- Chairperson, IIA Surat Centre

I feel that cycle/pedestrian dedicated walkways should be created all over the city so that people can easily walk, run or do cycling. Also a public activity center with multi-sport facilities should be created so that people can come and play sports of their choice with their families. I strongly beleive that sports should be encouraged among the youth to create a healthy society which will probably boost our efforts to make our Surat a Smart City. **- Mr. Anshul Kothari- Renowned Sportsperson of Surat (Swimming)**

How smart are we? **In my opinion to talk of smart cities in present day India is an anachronism with one foot stuck in muck and dreaming of placing the other foot on the moon and bridging the gap with talks of smart cities.**
- We will be smart when...**We don't amend the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, two days after we release heinous juvenile criminal (Rapist),** letting him get away with light punishment.
- We will be smart when...We stop identifying colors with communities. Wear a saffron scarf and get identified with Hindutva. **Wear a green scarf and win the label of Muslim...!!!**
- We are not labeled *"criminals"* for enjoying a glass of whisky with friends in the evening. Hauled up for Criminality in one state for consuming alcohol but the moment you cross the border into another state, you can tank up. **How absurd can we get!!!**
- We will be smart when...The state stops telling us what to eat, what to drink, how to enjoy, what to speak, when to speak. All prescriptions and proscription for which the state has no business dictating terms.
- We will be smart when...We allow voices of dissent no matter how illogical without imprisoning them. We allow voices of protest without accusing of *"sedition"*.
- We will be smart when...We don't blow **conches at a science congress** claiming it will strengthen rectal muscles without furnishing any scientific evidence, we don't claim expertise in Avionics 2500 years ago without furnishing scientific proof, we don't claim astrology is a science, at least not at an International Congress. **Let's get smarter first and then talk about Smart City.**

- Prof. Persi Engineer- Principal, SCET-Architecture, Surat

The Modi government has announced the ambitious urban plan entitled Smart Cities. While the focus on urban problems is welcome, the doubt in my mind remains whether the government is only thinking of technocratic solutions to urban India's problems. **Anyone who lives in Surat knows that the making of flyovers has neither shortened commute time nor addressed the issue of traffic jams. In my opinion the Smart Cities plan will not succeed, if the government does not fully appreciate the relevance of people's participation. Popular participation in governance is not limited to voting. It is people's participation between elections which is vital to democracy.** Much of the problem has to do with the fact that local government's operations are opaque and confusing. People do not know where to go to solve problems.
Smart Cities need Smart Citizens.In this zeal for Smart, the poorest citizens have not just been excluded, they have been left out of the conversation entirely. The poorest need the most articulation of water, electricity, sanitation needs. Solutions can only emerge from living, breathing cities and from voices of people whom our cities have failed.

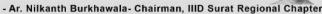**- Prof. Vahhbiz Engineer, SCET-Architecture, Surat**

The City with Smart Citizens would naturally manifest into a Smart City. So the entire concentration of the efforts should be on making the Citizens Smart. This smartness can be achieved through inculcation of right value system, right education about the universal principles, and a high level of sensitivity and integrity. As an architect, I would like to create a Green Smart City and not just Smart City, where the houses are green, schools are green, offices are green, factories are green, and thereby the entire city is green. Sustainability is the success mantra to make our city green and to me the real smartness lies therein.

- Ar. Snehal Shah- Principal Architect, Essteam Architects, Surat

Core components of smart city according to Frost & Sullivan are **1) Smart Governance, 2) Smart Energy, 3) Smart building, 4) Smart Mobility, 5) Smart Infrastructure 6) Smart Technology 7) Smart Healthcare and 8) Smart Citizen. Personally I would like to start from the bottom of the list.** I strongly believe that the single most important task is to focus on developing Smart Citizen. And this process has to start at very young age, we need to focus on educating our young generation not only for content but skills, we need to make them sensitive towards their surroundings, we need to make them aware about their roles and responsibilities towards society. If we are able to educate the young generation in real sense, not only a city but the world will become a smarter place to live.

- Ar. Kekul Vikas- Director, Millenium School, Surat

A smart city needs smarter professionals. There are lot of varied kind of professionals working in the building industry with defined roles. For a smart city each of this professional need to work within his domains and coordinate with others for a really smart building industry. **Smart does not mean 'more', it means 'precise and perfect'.**

- Ar. Nilkanth Burkhawala- Chairman, IIID Surat Regional Chapter

A city is as smart as its citizens.
The foundation of 'smart' is based on awareness. Having been the hub of global trade as early as the 16 th century , our city Surat boasts of a cosmopolitan culture since ancient times. The functioning of its trade and traditions was made smooth with not only immaculate town planning but also the communion of think tanks at its core . Denizens had access to the world' s most famous literature through well stocked libraries that stacked books on travel, philosophy and trade in varied languages. Surat's metropolitan nature inspired Leo Tolstoy to pen , The Coffee-House of Surat. **The idea behind a smart city is to make it people friendly in terms of services offered, enhance their convenience in every which way ,and to provide the public with utmost utility services.** That is the mantra on which the success of Surat has always thrived upon.

- Ms. Ashleshaa Khurana- Writer and Freelance Columnist,The Times of India