

ON A 'SMART' PATH

The project will transform Surat into a modern, world-class and tech-driven city

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Towards a sustainable and clean city, with an efficient, sophisticated, skilled and citizen-centric administration providing the best quality of services to its citizens, Surat has taken route of Pan City solutions and area based development. Few key areas have been chalked for re-developing. The project also plans to focus on each locality and design it in a smart way.

Shankar Lal Somani, chairman, Sumeet Industries Ltd, avers, "Surat is considered as the financial capital of the country and it is growing perennial with other smart cities. The last decade has seen increase in implementation of innovative methods, noted recent break-through of conventional policies and planning which in turn it aims in enhancing the life style in the city." Starting with pan city solution, there is going to be Centralised City Command and Control Centre where everything will be monitored right from administrative functions to addressing any issues related to it through real time monitoring and complain mechanisms. It aims to integrate all administrative functions under one umbrella. The state shall accordingly work closely on core infrastructure elements that include adequate water supply, assured electricity supply, sanitation including solid waste management, efficient urban mobility and public transport, affordable housing especially for the poor, robust IT connectivity and digitization, good governance especially e-governance and citizen participation, sustainable environment, safety and security of citizens and health and education.

Faruk Patel, CMD, K P Group, avers, "The major challenge of Surat is tackling with the growing population with the help of robust infrastructure development. To mention the strength of Surat, this city has already initiated the sustainable development by installing wind turbines and other renewable sources which is a rare thing in the entire country. Other services which take

this city a step ahead towards smart path are installation of Wi-Fi, CCTV cameras, construction of flyovers and bridges to overcome traffic issues etc."

Rajendra Sheth, CMD, RK Infratel Group, explains, "Surat foresaw the importance of underground networking and implemented the project of implanting fiber optic cable network which is base for

export of power so those individual consumers who install Roof Top solar panels needs to pay only for net power consumed. The city shall have sensor-based street lighting management system to smart metering system with on line monitoring for water flow. Siddharth Kantharia, founder and MD, Bhargav Infrastructure Pvt Ltd, exclaims, "As the population is growing each



smart city technology adoption in Surat much before the Surat smart project came in the picture. This proved boon to Surat police for CCTV networking and being one of the safest city in India."

The way ahead

The smart project will bring a very smart city and along with a smart lifestyle for Suratis. Medicine and medical facilities will be available all over the city round the clock using a common web based/mobile platform. Under e-medical system, all micro and macro level medical data are to be uploaded in common platform for information to the public authorities and the citizens. Under Total Sewerage Solution, it will help the corporation to monitor the sewage flows, leakages and increase the efficiency of operations. All conventional meters will be replaced with Bi-directional digital net meter which will record both import and

day and the human requirement for energy and raw materials is growing at an even faster rate, we need to be wise in consuming the materials. Thus sustainable infrastructure for a smart city has become a necessary thing. Lot of research and development is going on for futuristic infrastructure development and lot of innovative products are introduced by many companies which are really very useful for upcoming scenario." There are various parameters that shall be catered in the plan which includes the multi-level parking, e-rickshaw, e-dustbin, smart public transportation, pedestrian and cyclist friendly streets, no overhead cable mesh, development of heritage walk and much more. Surat is surely a smart city in the making.

The entire nation is churning out the idea of being smart. Surat, the diamond city, has also been shortlisted in this smart mission. The significance of urbanisation is realised by this city and it has started heading towards a robust growth.

Adding the layers of smartness, Surat is striding towards urbanisation. Smart living is not only about coping up with the challenges of urban living but it also circles by generating ample opportunities for investment activities. Smart tag in international diamond bourse will also house international banking and insurance facilities, advanced security surveillance, world class recreational and entertainment facilities, smart residential housing projects and other things with the tag smart which aims for quality life in whole.

Kamlesh Yagnik, ex-president of SGCCI (Southern Gujarat Chamber of Commerce), elucidates, "Surat is considered as the growth engine of economy, and with having pro-active municipality, active NGOs and other united chambers the city has initiated its journey way ahead towards smartness and embarking its name in the success story." According to Govind Dhokalika, founder and chairman, SRK exports, avers, "One of the major strengths of Surat is that it is in green corridor belt which is stretched from Ahmedabad to Mumbai. Besides this, Surat is largely focusing on skill development, traffic management and other major challenges such as preventing flood in river Tapi to drive this city to ease."

The big picture of the future in Surat is all planned and the stage to present these smart solutions in improving the quality of life coupling with the element of convenience and efficiency has been initiated. Rich

SILVER LINING IN SMART LIVING

In the era of constant modernisation, it becomes increasingly important to leverage the smart living. Surat is listed to fulfill this smart vision and fuel economic growth

culture and heritage of Surat is now setting ensured outcomes of this mission. The major strength of the city is its established economy of diamond and textile which rides the wave of opportunity. CS Jarivala, president, SGCCI, says, "The city has huge potential to win this race, backed by successful tales of diamond and textile industries it aims at growing par with other metropolitan cities. Surat Municipal Corporation needs to focus on environmental issues and traffic issues as population is growing at a faster pace."

Owing to its strategic location, good connectivity and other big advantage of Surat being selected as a 'solar city', it rounds up the high scope of development. To highlight the point of Surat being listed for the race of smart cities, Velji Sheta, Chairman, Surat Builder's Association and CREDAI, avers, "Undoubtedly Surat is one of the

most liveable city which has witnessed marvelous growth and stocks great potential to grow further in every aspect." He further adds, "The planning picture of Surat says that it mainly focuses on reducing traffic prob-

lems by widening roads, bringing metro rail, improvement in health facilities, and proper solid waste disposal. The population of city is expected to increase by three folds in near future. Keeping in view the future challenges the city is planning to build extra-ordinary infrastructure to compile and overcome all upcoming challenges."

Thus, a combination of cloud technology, clean atmosphere, world class infrastructure, success stories in industries make this city a place where flagships of smart living could be ingrained in the land of Surat where outcomes will be colourful and fruitful.

—Konika Kamra

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