Introduction

Before we discuss the plan, planning, urban and regional planning, we will discuss the origin of human settlements. The organized form of human settlement started in the real sense of the term after the development of the agricultural practices. For looking after the cultivated crops, human had to make their shelter nearby so that they can work in the fields and protect the crops from wild animals. The practice of agriculture is a collective endeavour and hence the group of settlements started to evolve. This group of settlements led to the formation of clusters and then community. To manage the growth of the settlements, planning evolved as a rational approach to the utilization of the resources for the sustenance of the community.

Town planning that started with Malthus (Hippodamus had planned this town who is also referred as the father of planning) and the Towns of Indus Valley civilization got evolved through different phases of the history. In the term of viz. ancient, medieval, Renaissance, industrial and post-industrial phases which later gave way to the modern form of the planning.

The study of the human settlements will give us not only the idea of the evolution of the planning, but also an insight into the understanding of the social fabric and changes. The study is more important for the students of the planning, architecture, civil engineers and sociologist who works for the sustenance and gradual modification in the human settlements to suit and meet the need of the residents. To resolve the issues of the current urban problems, it is necessary to have an insight into the human settlements and sociology.

Before we discuss the evolution of the human settlements and the planning in the different phases of the history, we need to have a better understanding of the concepts of the plan and planning.

Plan and Planning

Plan

The common perception and understanding of the term along with the dictionary meaning.

1. A detailed proposal for doing or achieving something.
2. An intention or decision about what one is going to do.
3. Decide on and make arrangements for in advance.
4. Design or make a plan of (something to be done or built).

According to Armstrong (1986), “The most popular ways to describe plans are by their breadth, time frame, and specificity; however,
these planning classifications are not independent of one another”.

The plan can be defined by many experts in different fields like architecture, economics and planning in a different manner. The essence of the different planning definition is that it is the work schedule envisaged for the future, which can be completed within a stipulated time frame using the available resources.

So, if you plan then is must have some process, the time period for completion, resources which can be used to get a desired outcome.

According to the American Planning Association, “Planning, also called urban planning or city and regional planning, is a dynamic profession that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations”.

It we can have a look at the definition mentioned by Institute of Town Planning, India (ITPI). They state, “Planning is a balancing act between constructing modern communities and conserving our natural and built heritage to create diverse, vibrant and sustainable places where people want to live, work and play. Balance means poise, stability, fairness, neutrality - all qualities indispensable for planners”.

From the above definitions and it can be interpreted that planning is a process of making plans through the use of the rational decision making to achieve or try to achieve intended outcomes within a particular period of time with the available resources.

In planning, we may use different statistical methods, economic analysis methods and rational decision making based on the alternatives that we might get used different approaches to the resolve the development issue or to achieve some intended goal of development.

Here it is necessary to understand the term, development which a structural change which should be assessed in the physical term. Like changes in the landuse, changes in the FAR, changes in the density etc.

Terminologies used in Planning

Landuse

“Land use involves the management and modification of natural environment or the built environment. It also has been defined as "the arrangements, activities and inputs people undertake in a certain land cover type to produce, change or maintain it" (Guttenberg, 1959).

The proposed distribution and segregation of activities in spatial terms in knowing as landuse. It is usually a part of the Master plan or development plan document in the form of a plan wherein different uses viz. residential, commercial. Industrial, recreational, public and semi-public, utilities, water bodies and agriculture, institutional and transportation.

Ground Coverage

It is the area of the built up space that one floor building will take. The area of a plot is usually the ground coverage of that plot.

FAR

Floor area ratio (FAR) (also floor space ratio (FSR), floor space index (FSI), site ratio and plot ratio) is the ratio of a building's total floor area
(gross floor area) to the size of the piece of land upon which it is built. The terms can also refer to limits imposed on such a ratio (Dwight, 2004).

As a formula:

\[
\text{Floor area ratio} = \left( \frac{\text{total covered area of all floors of all buildings on a certain plot, gross floor area}}{\text{area of the plot}} \right)
\]

FAR i.e, the floor area ratio is the method of calculation or estimation of the build-up space which can be generated on a particular plot of land. The floor space of a plot is termed as 1 FAR and if we plan a number of floors than the value of FAR will increase. This in turn is used as a mechanism for controlling the built up space that can be allowed in a particular use zone.

**Zoning**

The provision of the segregation of the different landuse into different groups or location is zoned. In urban planning, the areas of the town which might have some sort of homogeneous character need special attention, like the inner or older areas of the town, areas having architectural and cultural importance, areas having an eco-sensitive ecology etc. For the convenience of the planning and development projects such areas are classified into zones.

Special zoning regulations are devised which might not be available in the master plan. Or it can be a detailed approach to the provision suggested in the master plan.

**Central Business District (CBD)**

Central Business District is the prime location of the transport, commerce, industry etc. Usually the core of the city is also the CBD of the town as most of the high end facilities and commercial activities will be concentrated there. Some of the metropolitan towns like Delhi will have more than one CBD. For example, in Delhi, we can find CBD located at Connaught Place, Nehru Place, Saket, Laxmi Nagar, Chandni Chowk, Rajiv Chowk etc.

**Nodes**

Nodes are the major junctions of the transport network in the city and other things that can make a place a node is the concentration of the commercial activities and institutional areas. There are the major points of the town which comes into the picture when one visits a town. In smaller urban centres the number of nodes will be limited and most of the small town will have a single node in the urban areas. But on the contrary, a metropolitan town will have more number of the nodes.

One the major distinction between CBD and node is the expanse of the area of the influence. Usually the CBD will be spread over a comparatively larger area than a node. In the mode of the cases the nodes and the CBD will be same.

**Suburbs**

The areas near by a town which may or may not be within the municipal limit of the town. These areas are the developed areas along the major transportation corridor of the town connecting to some other towns. The suburbs are urban in look and nature, but they are devoid of the density, and urban infrastructures, services and utilities which are available in towns.

**Green Belts**

Green belts are the patches of the open spaces vegetated or non-vegetated. The extent of such open spaces is usually large and they might be interconnected with other open space. If we take the case of Chandigarh, then we will find that the lower hierarchy of the road along with the open spaces constitute the green belts. But in the case of Delhi, the green belt is the open agricultural lands adjoining the town. The existence of the
green belt in Delhi is well visible in the proposed landuse plan, but in the ground reality is different.

**Urban-Rural Fringe/ Urban Continuum/ Rurban**

The terms urban rural fringe, urban continuum and rurban are used interchangeably as they mean the same thing. The areas which are in between the urban municipal limit and rural areas are called urban rural fringe. As they exist on the fringe of the town. These areas will be in the phase of the transition wherein the agricultural land will be slowly converted into an industrial estate,

**Outgrowths**

Outgrowths of the urban areas are the result of the improved urban transport and improved connective through the roads and exchange of good and services. There areas might be lying outside the municipal boundary, but will have a continuous stretch of the development taking place which might not be distinguishable.

The increase of the urban development outside the municipal limit is the major indicator of this transformation. Usually such areas may or may not be linked to some rural settlements.

**Satellite Towns**

The towns which heavily depend on the economy of the primate or mother town. The satellite towns are the counter magnetic urban development nodes. The residents of the satellite towns may be the main source of the workforce of the main town or it can be the market place for the products and services of the main town. The main things that we have to note is that the level of the dependence or rather interdependence decides whether a town is satellite town or not.

**Concluding Remarks**

The study of the urban planning will be coupled with the study of new terms and terminologies which will be used for the study of the planning and development mechanism of the town.

The urban system is one of the most complex system. The study will evolve from the study of the economy, architecture, commerce, industry etc. and then then there will be a synthesis of the different urban sub-systems. The nature of the planning being multi-disciplinary, we need to have a fair understanding of the economics, political science, public administration, sociology, geography, geology, management, demographics etc.

The process of the planning is a ration decision making process which is usually taken by a group of the decision makers and for those planning acts a mechanism of co-ordination and regulation of the conflicting interests of the different stakeholders.

Planning is done for the resources of the city which is primarily land, which should be accomplished within a time frame or plan period, the test of the alternative models of the development suggested or evolved during the process of rational decision making will result in the selected of the most appropriate option for which will guide the future course of the development to the town.

**References**


