



Shyam Khandekar

Founder & Editorial Director

An architect, urban designer and planner by training, Shyam has nearly four decades of professional experience designing several prize-winning projects in Europe and India. He has lectured and published extensively on different aspects of Liveable Cities at universities and conferences across the world.

By their very definition, cities are places for a diversity of people: old and young, rich and poor, women and men, healthy and physically and/or mentally challenged, religious and non-religious, the majority as well as the many minorities.

In any country where citizens have freedom of movement, and particularly in the present decades when the pace of urbanisation has been growing around the world, there is no way of curbing this diversity.

We at *MyLiveableCity* believe that the 'Happy City' is one in which each group from this diversity of minorities feels welcome and safe and has the opportunity to enhance their prospects for the future in the city of their choice. Not only because it is morally right to let each minority participate and contribute in its own way in the progress of 'their' city, but also because a case can be made that the more the city allows and encourages even its minorities to engage and participate in the urban life, the more it will prosper economically (since a larger percentage of its citizens will be taking part in the urban economy). The participation of a larger group in the development of the city will also make it more resilient and culturally more engaging.

Through the public transportation they offer, the employment they have, the public spaces that are accessible to all and the affordable housing they create, cities have to make this happen to welcome the diversity of their population.

The important thing to remember is this: that since urbanisation is a dynamic process, there will never be an end to seeking equity in public places, in transportation, in housing and health benefits and education. A continuous effort must be made by each department of each city and, apart from the bureaucrats and professionals, all the citizens too need to continue to strive to achieve this goal. ●

Shyam Khandekar is also the Founder & Chairman, DAIDA Foundation