

FAQ's

1. What is the role of axis in city planning?

Of the many definitions of the word “axis” given in the Oxford English Dictionary, the most literal is “a main line of direction, motion, growth, or extension.”

In spatial compositions--such as sculpture or architecture—the line is implicit, serving as the organizing principle to which elements in the composition are referred. In the composition of the city, axial design emphasizes long formal vistas with strongly defined edges; the vista is frequently terminated by a prominent building or monument. The axis itself is invisible, but the perception it creates--of a well-organized city—is definite. As a tool of city building, the axis is a primary element in the European Baroque tradition. The most enduring themes of this tradition were first articulated in the master plan of Pope Sixtus V for 16th century Rome: the notion of the vista, the use of the obelisk as a striking spatial marker, and the overarching principle of geometric order for its own sake.

The street is no longer thought of merely as “the space left over between buildings, but as a spatial element with its own integrity.” The buildings defining the street channel are viewed as continuous planes rather than independent entities. And straight streets are used to connect churches and other public buildings—creating “constellations of monumentality.”

2. What was the importance of orientation in the olden days?

Roman Historic Reference to Orientation

Orientation is an important aspect of building/ city design. Orientation is the act of positioning the building or city with respect to the cardinal directions: north, south, east and west. The urban plan of the settlements

was always the same: the layouts of the newly founded towns were indeed planned in accordance with the so called **castrum** (i.e. military camp) structure. The city boundaries of a **castrum** town formed a rectangle, usually not very stretched in one direction or the other, so that we can refer generally to this kind of town planning as to a squared one. The rectangle was delimited by the walls and the internal streets were organized in a orthogonal grid forming the inhabited quarters (**insulae**). As is well known, orthogonal town planning – which has been a common feature of many other cultures. In addition to the orthogonal layout however, the inspiring principle of the Roman castrum was based on the existence of two main orthogonal roads, called cardus and decumanus.

Indian Historic Reference:

The ancient masters of Vaastu or Vedic Architecture highlighted the importance of proper orientation. Orientation of a layout influences the dwellers in terms of living, education, physical and mental health, family relationships, finances and general welfare. It is a known fact that **magnetic field** runs north-south through the globe and the Sun gives life to the electromagnetic field in the east-west orientation. The Vaastu designer uses the Vaastu Purusha Mandala as the basic pattern for the layout of the building or city. If this grid plan of the mandala is oriented to the cardinal directions of the earthly grid then the plan of the city is said to lie exactly over the earthly grid. This establishes a kind of geometric congruency or harmony with the earthly energy grid. If there is any distortion, deviation or deflection in the grid lines of the building from the Earth's grid lines, then the built space is said to be in disharmony with the Earth's energy grid. The geographical orientation is primarily based on the movement of the Sun. Electric current flows through the Earth's molten core. When the earth rotates, a magnetic field is produced and it extends into space. While creating a residential (house or apartment) layout, proper orientation of buildings and pathways to the

cardinal directions helps in cross-ventilation and creates order and balance that are must for contentment and happiness

3. What is CBD? Discuss.

A **central business district (CBD)** is the commercial and business centre of a city. In larger cities, it is often synonymous with the city's "financial district". Geographically, it often coincides with the "city centre" or "downtown", but the two concepts are separate: many cities have a central *business* district located away from its commercial or cultural city centre or downtown. Both the CBD and the city centre or downtown may also coincide with the central activities district

A city's CBD is usually typified by a concentration of retail and office buildings. The CBD usually has an urban density higher than the surrounding districts of the city, and is often the location of the tallest buildings in the city. The shape and type of a CBD almost always closely reflect the city's history. Cities with maximum building height restrictions often have a separate historic section quite apart from the financial and administrative district. CBDs usually have very small resident populations

In India, the term Central Block District is used to describe commercially vibrant pockets like M G Road area in Bangalore and CBD Belapur in Navi Mumbai and Nariman Point (Fort Area) for Mumbai City.

4. Discuss importance of cultural hub in a city.

The Cultural Hub is a unique consortium of arts/cultural organisations and schools in an area/ city which promotes a direct dialogue, sharing of skills, and a meaningful relationship between the education and cultural sectors. The Cultural Zones of India are seven overlapping zones defined by the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India to promote and preserve the cultural heritage of various regions of India. Each of

these zones has been provided with a zonal centre. Most zonal centres were announced by the then-Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, in 1985 and formally began functioning in the 1986-87 period. Their stated goal is *"to strengthen the ancient roots of Indian culture and evolve and enrich composite national culture"*

The main aim for having such cultural centers is to preserve and promote traditional cultural heritage of India. This not only aids the different cities and states for generating income in tourism but also instils among the citizens a sense of pride and belonging, at the same time ensuring the preservation of our cultural heritage. While planning towns its essential to demarcate or make sure the 'heritage core' is least tampered with, instead it can be developed into a cultural hub- promoting different angles of culture and built heritage. This will not only garner revenue but also promote the importance of heritage. It is essential that urban planners take this into consideration when planning a new part of an old city or even a new city. Even in a new city people do require a part of it remind them of their roots, background and which makes the city unique by itself. It could be a promenade surrounded by a craft bazaar, museum, modern art gallery, theatre, amphitheatre, etc – a sense of communal belonging which goes beyond the boundaries of the city itself.

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