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<p>Cover Photograph: Wikimedia Commons</p>	

PROJECT VENDOR JULY 2012

Planning modern parking infrastructure in Urban India



N. Sathyanarayanan writes about Indian cities having a nasty parking spiral of high demand for parking space, on-street parking chaos and the lack of off-street parking facilities.

Growth and development are two terms that is commonly associated with a country's progression; however, there is a subtle difference between the two. India is growing faster than it is developing and here comes the foremost reason for the acute space crunch in our country.

India's population growth is no secret. It's ticking faster than ever; people are fighting to find a foothold to survive in the cramped world. India's mobility has increased outpacing the kilometers of connectivity, ensuring that a proper parking system is like finding a method to this madness.

It is believed that India will be No. 3 auto market by 2020 after China and the US, making it one of the fastest growing automobile markets in the world. So it's time people understand that parking is not just about halting vehicles at whim-the conscience among the public at large should come first to ensure that the solution to the problem is meted with a more sustainable solution. Then comes the importance or the need of a navigator who would give direction to this randomness.

People buy vehicles in India not knowing where to park - the problem begins at home. Like charity the solution also needs to be started from there. In the city premises the same problem is amplified and it takes a huge shape thus contributing to the overall crisis. Here comes the need of a proper rule to man the indiscipline.



Parking at Bengaluru international airport

EXPERTSPEAK



CPS Parking in Pune

Indian cities have a nasty parking spiral of high demand for parking space, on-street parking chaos and the lack of off-street parking facilities.

LET'S UNRAVEL THE SPIRAL IN A BIT MORE DETAIL

The number of cars and motorcycles on the road has rocketed and grown in double digits. This has led to an acute shortage of legitimate places to park near most centers' of activity like malls, schools, offices, hospitals. The walking environment is uncomfortable partly because of all the chaotic parking, so parking three or four hundred meters' away cannot be considered the best parking option.

Finding a proper parking solution is like drawing with your mind on empty spaces. It is not just about finding the right space but also making the most from the given one. In this junction comes the need of good engineering which thinks beyond just the designs and makes it a complete package. Therefore an integration of optimization of utilization of space and the use of technology is the way to the future.

Now, our authorities are waking up to intelligent and innovative solutions that not only optimize space but also help in revenue generation by leveraging latest technologies to help to resolve the parking crisis. Equipments like access control barriers, vehicle detection and automatic parking technology systems are steadily being implemented to solve the parking chaos in the country.


I believe, we need to look at the parking scenario more seriously. Obviously something has to change. But what?

1. The authorities need to bring about stringent rules to ensure that every builder provides enough provision to accommodate a certain number of vehicles in the building. I believe malls and commercial buildings must pay more attention to providing parking space which is one of the critical parameters in defining the long term sustainability of a mall.
2. Fully automated mechanical parking systems which are computer controlled robotic devices with horizontal and vertical movement capability to transport vehicles from street level to storage compartments and back without human intervention should be used. These automated systems are so advanced that it enables to park upto 70




cars in the space whether otherwise 4 cars would have been parked.




3. Shared parking can be used to effectively utilize the space for instance a bank uses the parking space during the day and during the evening it can be used by a restaurant. Shared parking between two such businesses can cut down on the amount of parking required for a commercial area, leading to a more efficient use of valuable land. Shared parking schemes can also utilize space in government buildings.




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EXPERTSPEAK



CPS operations

4. There needs to be strict enforcement of on-street parking rules. Unless unauthorized parking is dealt with severely, the demand for off-street parking will never build up and private builders will not build parking spaces.
5. Thousands of acres of land in cities is kept idle because of dispute, development laws and many other reasons. These precious pieces of land can be allocated to private companies which specialize in providing parking services with state of the art technology. The land can be utilized for parking services till further development is planned.
6. In some of the major parking centres across the country, the space available is not used to its full capacity due to lack of clearly defined method to identify empty spaces, this can be prevented with effective use of technology to assist drivers in finding parking spots. This will also minimize the time drivers spend searching for a parking spot.
7. Finally, an important factor that can determine the future of parking management in India is BOOT projects. BOOT (Build, Own, Operate, Transfer) project is often seen as a way to develop a large public infrastructure project with private funding. Here's how the BOOT model works: The licensor contracts with a private developer - typically a large corporation or a consortium of companies with

specific expertise - to design, construct and implement a large project. The licensor may provide the space associated with the project and the licensee assumes the risks associated with planning, constructing, operating and maintaining the project for a specified time period. During that time, the developer charges customers who use the infrastructure that has been built to realize a profit. At the end of the specified period, the licensee transfers ownership to the licensor, either freely or for an amount stipulated in the original contract. Such contracts are typically long-term and may vary between 15 to 40 years.

Most developed countries are faced with the space crunch for parking. This is primarily because the cities



were planned hold a particular number of cars which is now way beyond the expected number.

Parking enforcement and intelligent solutions are key components of parking management because enforcement as they lead optimization of parking spaces and solve a city's infrastructural woes to an extent.

India, however, has a tremendous advantage in this regard. It is estimated that 90% of the commercial buildings that will exist by 2050 are yet to be built. Cities like Mumbai are preparing themselves for large-scale redevelopment of entire neighbourhoods. If India changes its parking policy today, it can effectively rebuild its cities in a way that does not privilege the interests of automobiles over the interests of the city at large. ■

(The author is Managing Director - Central Parking Services (CPS) Pvt Ltd.)

