

Call for Papers: Special Issue on New Urbanism and its Contours of Inclusion

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The *Journal of Law and Public Policy (JLPP)* publishes original scholarship at the interface between law and public policy at the national, regional, and international levels. Contributions that examine the processes of public interest decision-making are especially welcome. Articles must advance interdisciplinary approaches to law and policy with a strong focus on socio-economic and political contexts. The journal also welcomes empirical, historical, and comparative analyses that are grounded in theoretical debates. In addition to upholding high academic standards, *JLPP* encourages writing that is accessible to a wide range of readers, such as policymakers, researchers, and faculty and students of law and public policy across the world. The journal is open access and follows a double-anonymous peer review process.

Founded in 2014, *JLPP* was published by the Centre for Environmental Law, Education, Research and Advocacy at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. The University relaunched the journal in 2024 with a new Editorial Board consisting of faculty members from various departments and centres. In its new avatar, *JLPP* releases two issues a year—one general and one theme-based issue. While it continues to be open access, the journal is available in print format as well.

FRAMING NOTE: SPECIAL ISSUE ON NEW URBANISM AND ITS CONTOURS OF INCLUSION

India's journey toward sustainable urbanization has been fraught with challenges. However, a shift in urban planning through the adaptation of the concept of New Urbanism (originally developed in the United States in the 1970s) is evident. Promoting sustainable, livable, and community-oriented urban spaces, New Urbanism in India strives to achieve a human-scaled urban growth. Government projects, including the Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, and the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), prioritise the development of essential urban infrastructure, such as water supply, sewerage, drainage, transport systems, and green spaces. Through the integration of advanced technologies and innovative approaches, these initiatives underscore the overarching goal of creating sustainable urban environments with a commitment to 'inclusivity'.

In this special issue, we question the conceptualisation of ideas of 'inclusion' in New Urbanism. It is also noteworthy to highlight that most scholarship on urban problems addresses issues in the metropolises while evidence shows that the small towns require greater focus because they are growing at a faster steadier rate than the metropolises. Therefore, small towns are left out from New Urbanism. The important preliminary question to consider in this context is: what constitutes a 'small town' in India? While there is no agreement on this, one of the most common ways of identifying small towns has been by referring to the size of population in the city. In other words, using the categorizations of cities (I to VI) by the Census data, Category IV, V, and VI (of having up to 19,999 inhabitants) have been usually identified as 'small towns' in India (Alam & Choudhury 2016; De Bercegol 2017). Despite this issue of identification of small towns, what is interesting to note is that 'small towns' are showing evidence of growing faster and more steadily in India (with significant decadal growth from 2001 to 2011) (Alam & Choudhury 2016; Tripathi 2021). Thus, the case for a greater focus on issues of environmental sustainability in small towns is a strong one.

Relevance to planning, governance, and urban planning

Inclusion also involves specific concerns of livability. Housing affordability and urban land management have become a challenge for countries that are rapidly urbanising. These challenges are reshaping the question of urban property. Traditionally, instruments of land management have included zoning, tenure management, building obligations, taxation, expropriation, incentives and subsidies, land readjustment, land redistribution and reform, environmental and conservation regulation, different ownership models, financialization of land and housing, and public land management. However, there are limits to such established instruments. Therefore, new innovations and policies are emerging in both formal and informal land management. Hybrid spaces, technology-assisted cartographies and property registries, collective property ownership, and informal property regimes are among the approaches seeking to address the dual goals of equitable access and efficient management.

Policy relevance

This special issue will explore how legal ambiguities around land, tenure, and zoning generate social vulnerability, stigmatization, and unequal access to urban opportunities. The contributions in this issue will also aim to interrogate the extent to which national and subnational policy frameworks conceptualize inclusion, and how these visions diverge across megacities, small towns, and diverse regional contexts. Contributors will assess emerging policy gaps in urban sustainability missions, analyse governance reforms required for responsive urban land management, and evaluate the risks of top-down interventions that may erode traditional neighbourhood forms, local identities, and indigenous planning tradition.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The convergence of law, economics, sociology, and policy is critical in shaping the future of urban development. Yet, scholarship on the interface of these critical disciplinary

frameworks and spatial dimensions of the city is often confined to isolated case studies from the Global South, which are frequently dismissed as exceptions rather than being integrated into the broader global discourse on urban studies. This special issue seeks to remedy this scantness of literature as well as challenge the lack of such literature's integration into the discourse on urban studies.

Through this special issue, we seek to address some of the following questions:

- What is the nature of conceptualization of 'inclusion' in New Urbanism in India?
- How divergent or similar are the challenges when geographic and regional diversity are considered?
- What are some policy gaps concerning the specific issues and dilemmas between mega cities and small towns when urban sustainability is considered?
- How can innovations in New Urbanism be effectively scaled in a world marked by deep economic and social inequalities?
- What governance changes are desirable to design a responsive urban land management?
- Are top-down urban reforms risking alteration or erasure of traditional neighbourhood forms, social ties, and everyday practices that shape local identities?
- How does the coexistence of formal and informal property regimes create social tension, stigmatization, and legal vulnerability for many urban residents?
- What is that location and status of local cultural practices, indigenous planning traditions, and everyday experiential knowledge in India's new urbanism?

The special issue will focus on, but not be limited to, the following themes:

- Informal housing, disposition, and the politics of space
- Housing rights, social justice, and economic policy
- Gentrification, inequalities, and the future of scalable urban innovations
- Cultural landscapes, everyday urbanism, and the changing identities of Indian cities

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please refer to our submission guidelines at: <https://repository.nls.ac.in/jlpp/>

All submissions will be through *JLPP*'s Digital Commons platform. When entering the article name in the title field in the submission portal, and while mentioning the article name in the document you upload, please ensure that it mentions the themed issue on New Urbanism and its Contours of Inclusion.

Example: Title of Article (for New Urbanism and its Contours of Inclusion)

Last date to receive the full paper is 31 January 2026 (with expected publication in July 2026).

REFERENCES

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