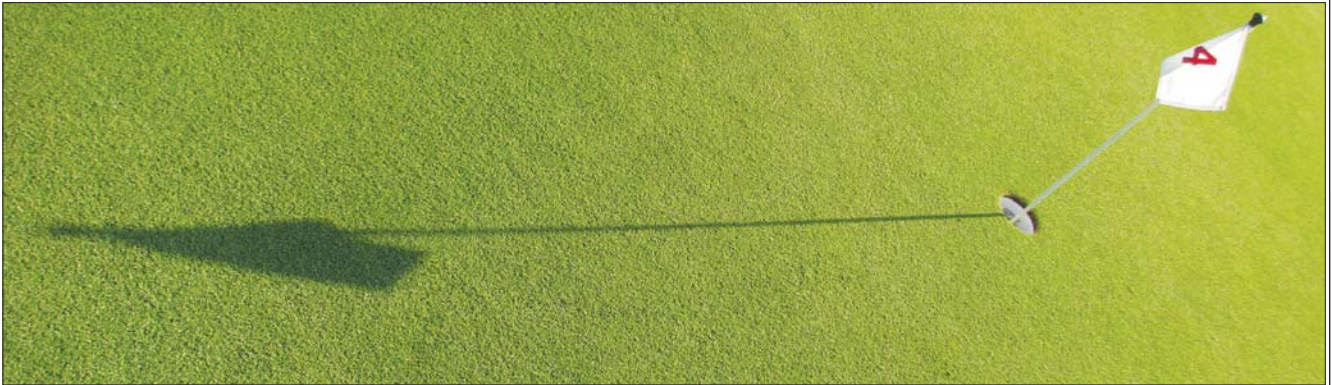


From Kolachi to Karachi...

We all have been a witness to the evolution of Karachi. Dynamic as it may be, our future however lies in the development of land on true international standards which shall create a synergy between residential, recreational and commercial elements, thereby offering a lifestyle which is not only affordable but also contributes in reducing the housing shortage. The author in this article would like to share the past, the present and a hope which is as real as it could get.



168 Million Strong...and Rising!

Entering the 62nd year of independence, Pakistan stands out prominently as one of the fastest developing nations of the region. With a history dating back to the beginning of civilization, a rich and diverse culture and traditions that command respect and admiration, Pakistan is truly a happening place. God has blessed Pakistan with an invaluable bounty of nature's riches, a land of unsurpassed physical beauty and millions of toiling people who simply love this land. Despite the recent global economic turmoil, Pakistan today, is still moving forward on all fronts, from rapid industrialization to economic consolidation and is achieving continuous success in core areas of national development. Without a shadow of doubt, Pakistan is where the future is.

Karachi - Walking a New Path

Who would have thought that the sleepy fishing village of the mid-1800s would one day become a leading hub of economic activity and lifestyle trends? Today, with a population hitting 20 million, Karachi is one of the world's major mega cities. It has emerged as a metropolis that sets trends. It is a city that is expanding in all directions through a multi-dimensional growth which then has also created some serious problems. Every city has its share of administrative problems but Karachi has entered the global lime light due to some astonishing facts - which could have been avoided and controlled such as...

- Karachi has one of the highest pollution rates in the world.
- The level of air pollution in Karachi is estimated to be 20 times higher than World Health Organization.
- Karachi's current population is growing at rate of 6.5% per year. 100 countries of the world have a population less than that of Karachi.

But the city is changing for the better. It is being propelled forward with a new vision that incorporates a progressive approach - and an open and liberal attitude. Karachi remains an economic power-house for Pakistan. But there are two ways of looking at the picture. One, the current economic standing of the city which is no doubt impressive and two, if on-time decisions had been taken while keeping abreast with the world's leading urban success stories, Karachi's economy would have doubled or perhaps even tripled. Here are a few interesting contemporary highlights...

- Karachi generates over 65% of the total national revenue.
- Karachi produces about 42% of value added in large-scale manufacturing and 25% of the GDP of Pakistan.
- In February 2007, the World Bank identified Karachi as the most business-friendly city in Pakistan.
- Karachi provides a Gross Metropolitan Product of Rs. 1,607 trillion or \$265 Billion at purchasing power parity and a GMP per capita of \$21,917 rivaling Western European and American cities.

Karachi has always been a beacon of light for those who desire to move ahead and succeed. It is this basic willingness to look upwards and outwards, and the desire and passion to create priceless opportunities to revolutionize the very concept of urban development that drives the inspiration for many to introduce ambitious and distinctive projects for the people.

Global Cities - Beyond Evolution

All over the world, cities constitute as back bone of not only the economy but also that of the entire nation in terms of social and cultural identity. As time passed and as science paved the way for rapid all-round development especially throughout the 20th century, man started to design not only towns and cities but also the very concept behind their creation together duly keeping in view the objectives of their future growth and development. Extremely well organized and structured to the extent of sheer envy, Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta are classic examples of urban land development.

Through an overview, it is evident that both cities had been planned to the extent of sustaining an 'x' number of populace. Accordingly, the infrastructure had been designed and established, duly keeping in view the immediate and future needs of the city. With the due passage of time, the authorities suspended further expansion and controlled these cities by capping further growth, thereby assuring that the infrastructure and development correlates with the population. Accordingly, 'satellite towns' were planned and developed on out-skirt of these cities. Each of which was a mini-city and revolved around the theory of a self-contained community.

This was practically implemented by ensuring that these mini-cities were 'complete' in all respects including economic sustenance which gradually and overtime would reduce and then eliminate their



"Expansion be allowed only in terms of developing new self-contained suburbs or mini-cities"



dependence on e.g. Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur. Other examples of cities which have successfully initiated similar urban planning include New Delhi

and Mumbai and more recently Lahore. Can't the same be done in Pakistan for our metro cities? The answer is yes but it requires a sincere will and a dedicated effort.

Developing the Land - When?

In the last 20 years, in Karachi and its vicinity neither any major urban land development took place nor was any suburban self-contained satellite town planned. Ironically, most of the projects that had been announced were all related to basic land plotting and due to a complete lack of vision, the land today remains as it is - undeveloped. The world over, governments encourage private sector to take the initiative in developing the land. The same is expected from the Government of Pakistan.

If ways and means are discovered to develop the land then multiple financial benefits (to the government and the people) will not only be numerous, huge and long term but will also play a critical role in strengthening the all-round economic set-up of Pakistan.

A revolutionary think tank should be created that develops master plans for the next 50 years and then through merit alone, the land should be developed by engaging the pri-

vate sector.

Planning Essentials - How?

Any metropolis has its share of problems and in Pakistan such problems have risen over the due passage of time basically due to the fact that the original master plans had not been implemented the way they should have been.

In Pakistan, the growth of a city has simply sprawled in every direction without considering infrastructure support. Environment (pollution), crime, traffic, water, electricity, sewage are not only the basic problems which in the first place should not even exist but they together hamper the growth pace and generate numerous other issues which are all being fought on a daily basis including wastage of time and tremendous fuel expenditure.

In order to ensure that a solid grip is maintained over all civic machinery then the urban population should be restricted and expansion be allowed only in terms of developing new self-contained suburbs or mini-cities.

So how do we do it? Through...

- ✦ Preparation of pro-active long term strategic development plans.
- ✦ Preparation of realistic and flexible policies that are in the national interest.
- ✦ 100% continuity of policies.
- ✦ Enforcement and continuity of merit.
- ✦ Implementation of ideal law and order.
- ✦ Staying abreast of global changes and reflecting the same on plans and policies.
- ✦ Positive resolution of land and local issues.

A New & Conceptual City

So what is the most important reason in developing a new and self-con-

tained city?

The only logical answer that comes to mind instantly is that it will attract both national and international investments; rapidly.

One can then only imagine the countless positive and long term repercussions that such strategic investments will create. A residential city offering contemporary lifestyle coupled with recreational elements. This serves as the basic foundation of a conceptual new city.

The Perfect Living

By embedding roots on a conceptual platform, eventually a vision will evolve of creating the perfect living environment. The vision to build a city, developed in its true essence and ensure that a family and its future are secured like never before.

The idea is to develop a mini-city with a dynamic infrastructure thereby allowing us to experience the finest standards of living with all the prime essentials. Providing the complete home environment for everyone; where all luxuries of life are within reach and affordable. Presenting a lifestyle inside an environmentally responsible and self-contained community should remain the foundation of our vision.

Such a place is now the inevitable need of Karachi. Home, food, education, health-care, transportation, employment, business and entertainment; these aspects constitute the primary needs of large strata of the socio-economic segments of Pakistan.

There is a destination that is within reach. We just have to make that special effort and implement our dreams.

The realization of a dream that brings with it a promise of quality and care, and a lifestyle that lends itself to a joy that we have always aspired.

To have the best of everything, to be free of pollution and congestion, to be entertained, to have a well planned life, to show the world of what we are capable of doing.

Blending the residential, recreational and commercial elements would lead to a balanced life. Let us together aim for achieving that extra-ordinary synergy.

"Blending the residential, recreational and commercial elements would lead to a balanced life."

