

BACKGROUND NOTE

Parallel Session: **Model Building Bye-Laws (MBBL)**

National Urban Conclave
24-25 October 2026

Background

Building regulations in India have evolved significantly alongside the country's urbanisation journey. Early municipal regulations focused primarily on public health, sanitation, building safety, and fire protection. Over time, the regulatory framework expanded through State Municipal Acts, Development Authority regulations, and local Building Bye-Laws to guide planned urban growth and manage increasing development activity.

To promote greater consistency and strengthen regulatory governance, the Government of India, through the Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO), introduced the Model Building Bye-Laws (MBBL) as a reference framework for adoption by States and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). The successive editions of MBBL, particularly those released in 2004 and 2016, broadened the scope of building regulations to incorporate structural safety, disaster resilience, universal accessibility, environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, and ease of doing business considerations.

Building on this reform trajectory, the Government of India launched Deregulation 1.0 in January 2025, followed by Deregulation 2.0 in January 2026, with the objective of simplifying regulatory procedures, enhancing transparency, and improving the ease of doing business. These reforms have underscored the importance of regulatory frameworks that are not only efficient and predictable but also support buildability, affordability, innovation, and sustainable urban development while maintaining essential safeguards related to safety, accessibility, and environmental performance.

Several States have undertaken notable reforms that provide valuable insights for the next generation of Model Building Bye-Laws. For example, Haryana has adopted digital approval systems¹ and risk-based approval mechanisms²; Uttar Pradesh's Model Building Bye-Laws, 2025 have integrated zoning and building regulations³; Odisha has introduced a more flexible planning and zoning framework⁴; Andhra Pradesh has strengthened digital governance through integrated building permission⁵ and

¹ Directorate of Urban Local Bodies, Government of Haryana, "Approval/Revision of Building Plan," available at: <https://www.ulbharyana.gov.in/Home/ApprovalRevisionOfBuildingPlan>

² Government of Haryana, *Haryana Building Code, 2017*, Chapter 5, Section 5.1, as amended up to 25 May 2023, available at: <https://obpas.ulbharyana.gov.in/docs/Haryana%20Building%20Code-2017%20with%20amendments%20upto%2025.05.2023.pdf>

³ Government of Uttar Pradesh, Housing and Urban Planning Department, *Model Building Construction and Development Bye-laws and Model Zoning Regulations for Development Authorities of Uttar Pradesh, 2025*, 3 July 2025, available at: https://mdamorabad.up.gov.in/images/pressrelease/UP%20Model%20Building%20Bylaws%202025_3July_250704_125142.pdf

⁴ Government of Odisha, Housing & Urban Development Department, *Odisha Development Authorities (Planning and Building Standards) Amendment Rules, 2025*, Notification No. 4007, Odisha Gazette No. 468, 21 February 2025, pp. 2–4, available at: <https://urban.odisha.gov.in/sites/default/files/2025-03/468-H%26UD%20Dept.pdf>

⁵ Directorate of Town and Country Planning, Government of Andhra Pradesh, *Andhra Pradesh Development Permission Management System (APDPMS 2.0)*, official online building and layout permission portal, available at: <https://portal.apdpms.ap.gov.in/portal>

monitoring systems⁶, while Tamil Nadu⁷ and Keralam⁸ provide examples of incorporating climate resilience and disaster risk management considerations into building regulations.

These initiatives illustrate emerging approaches to regulatory modernisation, including digitalisation of approvals, risk-based regulation, streamlined development controls, and greater integration of climate and disaster resilience considerations. They also demonstrate the importance of adapting regulatory frameworks to local contexts while maintaining alignment with broader national objectives.

As Indian cities continue to expand and diversify, there is an opportunity to further strengthen the MBBL framework by promoting greater flexibility, implementation effectiveness, and outcome-oriented regulation to enable ease of living and ease of doing business. Development controls relating to setbacks, parking standards, road widths, and building heights may be periodically reviewed to promote Ease of Living by supporting housing affordability, efficient land utilisation, quality urban design, and convenient, liveable urban environments for citizens. Similarly, regulatory frameworks can promote Ease of Doing Business by improving development feasibility, simplifying regulatory requirements and processes, and responding to emerging urban uses, new building typologies, evolving mobility patterns, and changing economic activities.

Effective implementation is central to translating the objectives of MBBL 2.0 into improved outcomes on the ground. Building on ongoing efforts towards regulatory simplification and digital governance, further strengthening online approvals, single-window systems, self-certification, and risk-based approval mechanisms can facilitate timely and predictable building permissions, enhance professional accountability, and improve Ease of Doing Business. The rationalisation of No Objection Certificate (NOC) requirements, supported by clearly defined roles and responsibilities, can further streamline approval processes while maintaining essential regulatory safeguards. Technology-enabled monitoring, stage-wise inspections, random compliance checks, digital records, and post-approval audits can provide robust checks and balances, strengthen accountability, and ensure continued compliance with building standards, contributing to safe, sustainable, and well-planned urban development.

India's urban governance ecosystem has also witnessed significant institutional innovation through the establishment of dedicated implementation agencies, digital governance platforms, and Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs). As cities undertake

⁶ Government of Andhra Pradesh, Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department, *Revised Guidelines for Self-Certified Building Permissions under Self Certification Scheme (SCS)—2025*, G.O. Ms. No. 120, 13 July 2025, available at: https://dtcp.ap.gov.in/admin/upload_files/gos_circular/Jul2025/14Jul2025/mCDGplCj.pdf

⁷ Government of Tamil Nadu, Housing and Urban Development Department, *Tamil Nadu Combined Development and Building Rules, 2019*, Rule 51, "Structural Safety," pp. 76–78, and Annexure XII, "Protection against Hazards," p. 133 onwards, available at: <https://www.chennaicorporation.gov.in/images/TNCDRBR-2019.pdf>

⁸ Government of Kerala, Local Self Government Department, Kerala Municipality Building (Amendment) Rules, 2025, dated 29 October 2025, available at: <https://buildingpermit.lsgkerala.gov.in/Content/Rules/KBR2025.pdf>

increasingly complex development and infrastructure projects, there is an opportunity to further strengthen institutional coordination, lifecycle asset management, technical capacity, and service-delivery arrangements to support long-term urban development objectives.

In parallel, procurement and financial frameworks play an important role in influencing project quality, innovation, and delivery efficiency. Ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, competition, innovation, and wider participation by professional firms, start-ups, and emerging organisations can contribute to improved development outcomes and investment confidence.

Against this backdrop, the proposed session seeks to explore how the next generation of Model Building Bye-Laws can build upon recent reforms and emerging best practices to create a more enabling, implementation-oriented, and future-ready regulatory framework. The discussion will examine opportunities to strengthen development feasibility, digital governance, climate resilience, institutional effectiveness, and regulatory efficiency, ensuring that building regulations continue to support safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urbanisation across India's cities.

2. Objective

The session aims to initiate a policy dialogue on strengthening the Model Building Bye-Laws (MBBL) by connecting regulatory reform with effective implementation, development feasibility, building safety and urban resilience. The key objectives are to:

- Examine MBBL and their implementation, and identify opportunities for simplification, modernisation and improved ease of compliance.
- Explore state-level approaches to planning regulation, risk-based and digital building approvals, and monitoring systems to identify lessons for improving regulatory efficiency and accountability.
- Examine how development controls and regulatory requirements affect practical buildability, housing affordability, development costs and the efficient use of urban land.
- Explore how building standards and regulations can strengthen risk compliance, energy efficiency, sustainability and climate resilience, while ensuring effective compliance and enforcement.
- Identify priority reforms for MBBL 2.0, including streamlined approval processes, self-certification, and technology-enabled checks and balances without compromising safety, accessibility, environmental performance, or liveability.

The session will seek to generate actionable recommendations that can inform future approaches to Model Building Bye-Laws and urban institutional reforms.

3. Problem Statement

India's growing and changing cities present several considerations for building regulations, including better coordination between planning regulations, municipal laws, and building bye-laws; streamlined approval and self-certification processes; and improved housing affordability and development feasibility. Greater use of technology can make building approvals more efficient and transparent, while clear checks and balances can strengthen accountability and ensure compliance with building standards, while safeguarding citizen safety, sustainability, and climate resilience.

Against this backdrop, MBBL 2.0 offers an opportunity to build on ongoing government reforms and State-level best practices to further improve Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business. A coherent, effective, and adaptable framework can support quality development, sustainable urbanisation, and improved urban governance while responding to the evolving needs of Indian cities.

Session 1: Deregulating Procedural and Planning Regulations for Improved Ease of Living (EoL) and Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)

i. Planning Regulations for Economic Growth, Ease of Doing Business, and Promoting Urban Development: Insights from Uttar Pradesh

- a) What lessons from Uttar Pradesh's integrated Building Construction and Development Bye-laws and Model Zoning Regulations, 2025 and Model Zoning Regulations, 2026 (for Industrial Development Authorities), could inform MBBL 2.0 in reducing overlaps between zoning and building regulations?
- b) What key lessons from implementing the 2025 framework could inform the next revision of MBBL?
- c) How can risk-based approval pathways, single-window systems and time-bound clearances help streamline the process and improve accountability?
- d) How can interconnected development controls, including FAR, setbacks, ground coverage, building height and parking, be revised under MBBL 2.0 to improve practical buildability and development feasibility?
- e) How can MBBL 2.0 transition from prescriptive, fixed development controls towards a performance-based approach that allows greater flexibility in building height and mixed-use development?
- f) As industrial regulations enable greater vertical development and density, what provisions should MBBL 2.0 include for ensuring risk compliance and sustainability?
- g) How can MBBL 2.0 balance the rationalisation of plot-level green-space requirements with environmental performance, and the quality of life of citizens in industrial developments?

ii. Integrated Online Building Permission and Monitoring Systems: Learnings from Andhra Pradesh

- a) How should MBBL 2.0 revise documentation standards and submission formats to improve digital approvals and automated scrutiny while ensuring building safety compliance?
- b) How can MBBL 2.0 strengthen provisions for construction-stage inspections, digital verification and completion certification to ensure compliance with approved building plans and prescribed safety standards?
- c) With the rising use of AI, is there scope to embed it in the MBBL for real-time monitoring and redressal, and what safeguards would be needed for transparency and accountability?
- d) How can MBBL 2.0 enable a shift from NOC-based approvals to trust-based, self-certification and deemed-approval systems while ensuring safety, compliance and accountability through robust audits and enforcement mechanisms?
- e) How can MBBL 2.0 integrate building-permission platforms with GIS-based master plans to identify incompatible proposals at the application stage?
- f) Road Width Based DCR
 - How has Andhra Pradesh's road-width-based framework improved the speed, transparency and predictability of building approvals, and what lessons can inform automated approvals under MBBL 2.0?
 - What economic and Ease of Doing Business benefits have emerged from Andhra Pradesh's road-width-based framework, and how can MBBL 2.0 replicate these gains while ensuring infrastructure adequacy and safety?

iii. Climate and Disaster Mitigation Strategies and Technology: Experiences from Kerala

- a) What lessons from Kerala's risk-sensitive planning framework can inform stronger climate resilience and disaster-risk integration in MBBL 2.0?
- b) How can MBBL 2.0 better incorporate hazard-based planning and building standards for floods, cyclones, landslides, coastal vulnerability and extreme heat?
- c) What regulatory reforms are needed to strengthen climate-resilient and safe building design at both site and building levels?
- d) What institutional, compliance and monitoring mechanisms are required to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of resilience and structural-safety provisions under MBBL 2.0?

iv. NBCS: Norms and guidelines for enhanced building safety standards

- a) Which provisions of NBCS 2026 should remain mandatory for building approvals, and which could be advisory under MBBL 2.0 to simplify compliance without compromising safety?
- b) How can MBBL 2.0 establish a clear mechanism for referencing and updating relevant BIS standards as national codes evolve to address building safety, sustainable construction and emerging infrastructure needs, such as EV charging stations?
- c) How can the MBBL be better aligned with relevant BIS seismic, wind and flood codes and local hazard maps (seismic zones, flood plains, cyclone-prone coasts, landslide-prone areas and heat-risk areas)?

v. Developer's Perspective on Economics of Building Bye-Laws

- a) How do existing building bye-laws and development controls create challenges for developers in meeting sustainability goals, particularly in terms of energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, waste management and low-carbon materials? What revisions to MBBL 2.0 could make sustainable building practices more technically feasible and economically viable without compromising safety or affordability?
- b) How do FAR, setbacks, ground coverage, parking requirements and other design controls affect usable carpet area, construction efficiency and the viability of affordable housing, and what changes could improve affordability?
- c) How do delays, multiple NOCs and uncertainty in building-plan approvals increase financing and project-delivery costs, and what reforms would make approval processes more predictable and time-bound in practice?
- d) How can building regulations and zoning frameworks better enable integrated townships, mixed-use development, rental housing, co-living and worker accommodation, while ensuring adequate infrastructure and liveability?
- e) Based on the development sector's experience, what regulatory and procedural reforms should MBBL 2.0 prioritise to reduce avoidable costs, improve development feasibility and expand housing supply without diluting safety, environmental standards or quality?

Session 2: Interactive Session

Stakeholder engagement on Model Building Bye-Laws

- a) What should be the key priorities for MBBL 2.0 to support safe, sustainable, and efficient urban development?

- b) How can building regulations be further simplified while maintaining standards for safety, accessibility, and environmental performance?
- c) What lessons from state-level reforms, digital approval systems and single-window clearance system should inform the next generation of MBBL?
- d) How can MBBL 2.0 better support housing affordability, practical buildability, and efficient land utilisation?
- e) What additional measures are needed to strengthen climate resilience and disaster risk reduction within building regulations?
- f) How can form-based codes be integrated into MBBL 2.0 to promote context-sensitive and better-designed urban environments?
- g) How can MBBL 2.0 better integrate building regulations with street design and the public realm to promote safer, more accessible, pedestrian-friendly streets and liveable neighbourhoods?
- h) What are the key challenges and safeguards that MBBL 2.0 should address when transitioning from NOC-based approvals to trust-based, self-certification and deemed-approval systems?
- i) How can technology make building approvals faster and more transparent under MBBL 2.0 while ensuring accuracy and accountability?
