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In a first, devpt plan pitches for green city

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Mumbai: Finally, after a wait of four years, the BMC is ready with the city's new development plan (DP) and is scheduled to reveal it on Monday. The city's comprehensive development has been considered in the revised DP, which is expected to change the city's face and skyline.

The revised DP will be based on the 'Green City' concept, said sources.

In the last two DPs, from 1961 and 1991 respectively, there was no mention of environment and ecology. In the revised DP, the environment will be an important factor and it will have a bearing on the city's development.

"The green area will be considered in all aspects such as roads, railways, infrastructure or institutional complexes and reserved or private areas as well. The percentage of green space will be increased with the percentage increase of the floor space index (FSI)," said Ulhas Rane, ecology and environment expert.

The city's open spaces, environment and infrastructure would be given top priority in the revised DP. Apart from civic schools, gardens, playgrounds, civic markets, hospitals and dispensaries, the revised DP will also include reservation for sewage water treatment plants, police stations and women support centres called Mahila Adhar Kendra for the first time.

Livelihood, climate change, health, gender equality and empowerment, arts and culture, sports and governance also occupy a prominent position in the DP. The revised DP will have about 336 maps with 50 layers and data, said sources.

Civic officials said the cost of the DP had escalated and the plan had been delayed because the consultants had asked for more time to prepare it in a comprehensive manner and because the Lok Sabha and state assembly elections took place last year.

The firm also incorporated a few workshops at the ward and zone levels, with the local MP, MLA, corporator and public. According to the original plan, the work should have been done in June 2011 and cost Rs 5.48 crore. The delayed DP has come at a cost of Rs 12.83 crore.

"We will reveal the proposed DP on Monday before the mayor and group leader in the BMC HQ. We will invite suggestions and objections later," municipal commissioner Sitaram Kunte said.