







**B4P TRANSFORMATION TOOLBOX** 

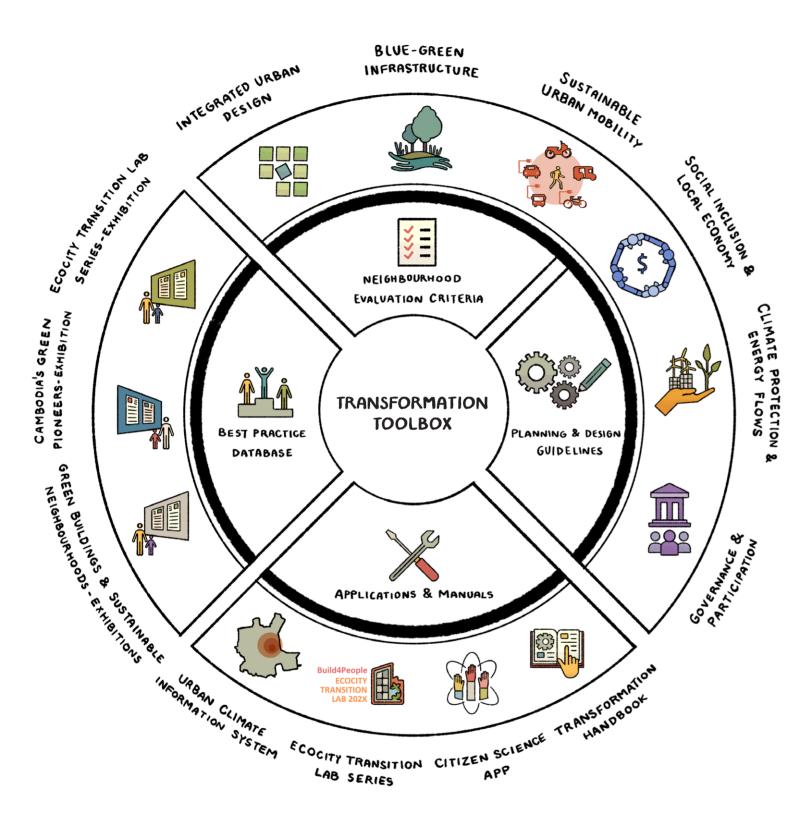
# SOCIAL INCLUSION & LOCAL ECONOMY GUIDELINE

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**Figure 1.** This guideline publication is part of the B4P Transformation Toolbox, a comprehensive learning platform developed by the Build4People project in cooperation with Phnom Penh City Hall to foster sustainable neighbourhood development in urban Cambodia.

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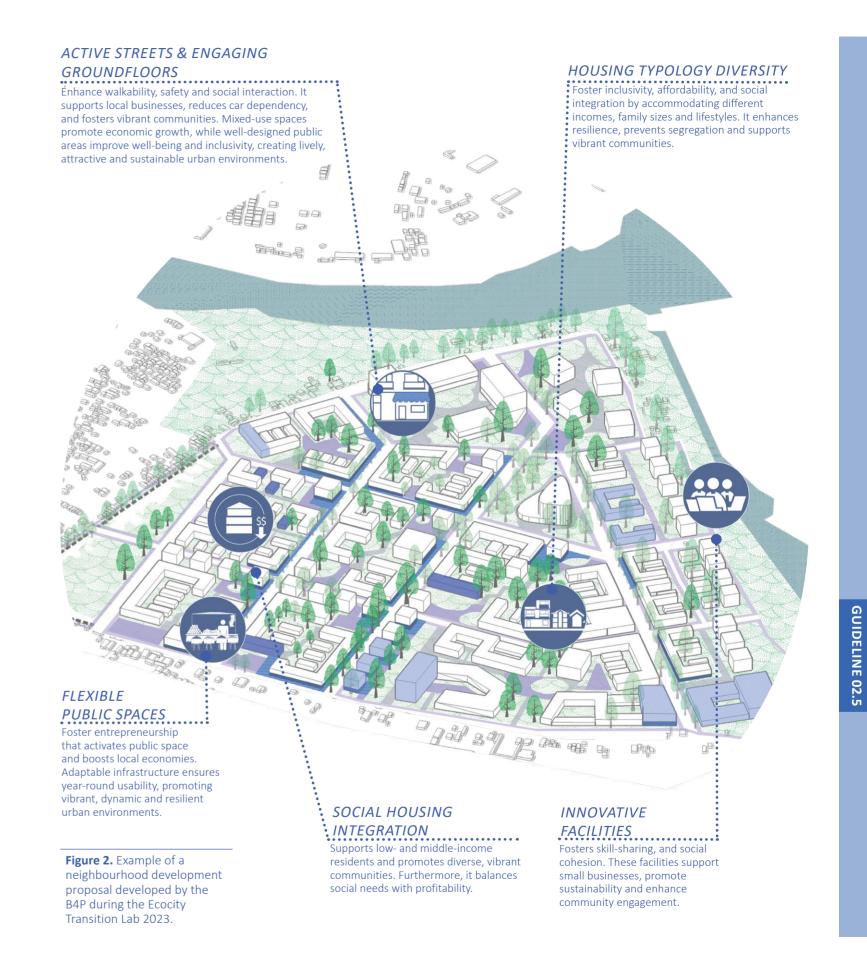
#### **INTRODUCTION**

As Phnom Penh continues to grow, new neighborhoods must be designed to foster social diversity, economic vibrancy, and sustainability. These guidelines provide urban planners, developers, and policymakers with strategies to achieve this vision, divided into two key sections:

- 1. From Market Inventory to Housing Typology Diversity integrating affordable housing solutions to promote social inclusion.
- 2. From Active Streets to Boosting Local Economy – focusing on vibrant public spaces that embrace the 15-minute city concept, ensuring access to essential services, supporting local businesses and conscious consumption.

Thoughtful design elements, such as active facades, commercial ground floors, and multifunctional rooftops, encourage social interaction and entrepreneurship. New generations' needs should also be met through coworking spaces and flexible facilities.

Finally, supporting local markets, repair cafés and sustainable businesses strengthens neighborhood identity and resilience. By integrating these principles, urban stakeholders can create thriving, inclusive and economically dynamic communities in Phnom Penh.



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# ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Integrating social inclusion and local economic strategies in new neighborhoods brings significant economic, social and environmental benefits. For private developers, it enhances market resilience and investment appeal, while for public authorities, it strengthens economic value and social cohesion. Strategies such as social housing, diverse building typologies and vibrant public spaces create dynamic, livable communities, generating additional social advantages. By fostering inclusive economic growth, local entrepreneurship, and active public spaces, these approaches benefit residents, businesses and policymakers alike. The following sections outline the key outcomes of these strategies and how different stakeholders can leverage them for long-term success.

# ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPERS

From an economic standpoint integrated and sustainable neighborhood design can, for private developers, imply the following benefits:

- Enhanced Property Value and Demand: Diverse neighbourhoods with a mix of housing options are attractive to a broader range of residents. Vibrant ground floors with retail spaces increase foot traffic, make commercial spaces more profitable and enhance the neighbourhood's reputation. This diversity can lead to higher occupancy rates, stronger demand and increased property values over time.
- Greater Market Resilience: By incorporating diverse housing types and income-inclusive strategies, developers build in a more resilient market that can weather economic fluctuations.
- Enhanced Corporate Image and Brand Value: Developers known for creating socially inclusive, community-centred spaces can strengthen their reputation and brand value. This can translate to competitive advantages in securing future projects and partnerships.



# ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC AUTORITIES

Similarly, public authorities could also see an positive economic impact:

- Efficient Land Use and Reduced Urban Sprawl: Mixed-use developments create higher-density neighbourhoods that maximize the use of available land. This helps prevent urban sprawl, reducing the need for costly infrastructure expansions.
- Increased tax revenue: Active neighbourhoods with thriving street life, markets, and community spaces create vibrant local economies, which lead to increased tax revenue from local businesses and property appreciation.
- Attracting Investment and Tourism: Vibrant neighbourhoods enhance the city's appeal as a destination for investment, tourism, and relocation. Active streets, cultural events, and communal spaces increase foot traffic and can attract visitors, boosting the local economy and expanding revenue sources for public authorities.



# ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

• Reduced Carbon Footprint
through Compact, MixedUse Design: Neighbourhood
designs that incorporate a mix
of residential, commercial and
communal spaces reduce the need
for long commutes and lower
vehicle emissions. The presence of
local amenities encourages walking
and cycling, reducing reliance on
cars and contributing to lower

overall emissions.

• Resource Conservation through Shared Facilities: The inclusion of shared spaces, such as repair cafés and meeting places, encourages resource conservation through communal use and maintenance of goods, tools and appliances. This supports a circular economy by extending product lifecycles, reducing waste and lowering overall consumption.

# SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Increased Social Cohesion and Inclusion: Inclusive design promotes a neighborhood where people of varying income levels and backgrounds can interact, promoting social integration and reducing socio-economic divides, fostering a sense of belonging and shared community.
- Enhanced Quality of Life and Well-being: Community spaces and active streets with markets, pop-up events, and meeting places create vibrant social environments that enhance residents' quality of life. Opportunities for social interaction reduce feelings of isolation and improve mental well-being, while active streets encourage physical activity.
- Support for Local Economies and Small Businesses: Neighborhoods with local markets, street vendors, and active commercial areas support local entrepreneurs and small businesses, strengthening the local economy. Accessible and affordable retail spaces enable local enterprises to thrive, generating jobs and retaining wealth within the community.

Source: Own compilation based on various sources.

# SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND AND KEY IDEAS

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PANORAMA IN PHNOM PENH

Affordable housing ensures that residents can access decent and secure homes without exceeding 30-40% of their monthly income. In Cambodia, government policies support the development of low-cost education, healthcare and leisure housing priced between \$15,000 and within a short walk or bike ride. \$30,000. Developers meeting specific This model enhances quality of life, criteria—such as constructing at least environmental sustainability and 100 units within 20 km of the city center and incorporating green and dependence on cars. communal spaces—can benefit from tax incentives, streamlined permits, and access to infrastructure.

Despite these efforts, the policy has vet to achieve significant success. By 2018, only 10,000 affordable housing units had been completed. Recognizing the urgent need, the Cambodian government introduced the National Housing Policy (2014) to facilitate large-scale development, investment and expertise, fostering particularly in urban areas. To meet demand, an estimated 800,000 low-cost urban homes must be built by 2030, underscoring the need for stronger incentives, public-private partnerships and innovative financing resilient neighborhoods, ensuring mechanisms.

Social Mix and the 15-Minute City as a Business Opportunity

The 15-minute city concept integrates mixed-use development, sustainable mobility and local economic growth, ensuring that residents can access work, economic resilience while reducing

Aligned with Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), Land Value Capture (LVC) leverages rising land values from public infrastructure investments—such as transit projects—to finance further urban improvements. Combined with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), this strategy integrates public land and infrastructure with private high-value, mixed-use developments. By aligning financial incentives with inclusive urban planning, LVC and PPPs can accelerate the creation of vibrant, accessible and economically that both public and private sectors contribute to sustainable and equitable urban growth.

Given Phnom Penh's rising demand for social housing, well-equipped, walkable neighborhoods present a compelling opportunity for real estate investors. Strategic developments that combine affordability with accessibility and vibrant local economies can generate strong financial returns while contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable urban future.

Therefore key aspects to adapt the current Affordable Housing in Cambodia include:

- Engaging capable developers
- Increase flxibility: 100 social housing units or 10% units planned
- Location based on planned urban activity centers
- Setting minimum sustainability standards for affordable and middle income housing
- Exploring alternative additional options to home ownership



LAND RESERVATION **POLICY** 

- **VIETNAM'** Vietnam's Decree 188 mandates 20% of privatesector-developed land for social housing.
  - Aims to address supply-side blockages and provide housing for urban low-income groups.
  - » Cambodia could adopt a similar policy to boost affordable housing stock.

**CROSS-SUBSIDY APPROACH** 

- **INDONESIA'S** Indonesia's 1:3:6 policy required luxury housing developers to build three medium and six lowcost units per high-end unit.
  - Though amended, it remains a key tool for balancing the housing market.
  - » A similar cross-subsidy mechanism could be implemented in Cambodia, ensuring that high-end developments also cater to the needs of lower-income families.

LAND **ACQUISITION** 

- **SINGAPORE'S** Singapore's Land Acquisition Act (1966) enables government-led land allocation for public housing.
  - **STRATEGY** Acquiring land below market value reduces housing costs and expands affordable housing.
    - » Cambodia could adopt similar strategies to lower housing development costs.

# FROM MARKET INVENTORY TO HOUSING TYPOLOGY **DIVERSITY**

# **UNDERSTANDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS** THROUGH A MARKET INVENTORY

Inclusive neighbourhoods are designed to respond effectively to the unique characteristics and needs of their populations. Collecting comprehensive data through a site inventory is essential to begin understanding key market aspects:

- the current state of the built environment in which the project will be situated,
- the socio-economic profile of the local population.

As outlined in the Sustainable Mobility Guidelines, a site inventory for both the built environment and socio-economic conditions should encompass the following key elements:

# 1 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Block size and nature of blocks
- Walking and cycling infrastructure
- Public transport services and paratransit
- Green and public spaces
- Existing land-use and development typologies
- Active street frontage
- Availability of utilities (water, sewage, electricity, drainage)
- Cultural points of interest

# 2 SOCIO ECONOMIC

- Residential and non-residential densities
- Land ownership and tenure
- Income, age, employment data
- Existing businesses and economic activities



The objective of this analysis is to identify gaps that can be addressed on the new neighbourhood planning process

# **FACILITATING** SOCIAL HOUSING INTEGRATION

According to the Anukret 42 Subdecree of Urbanization, article 48, urban development must take appropriate housing needs into account. There should be a balance between the ability of poor and lowincome households in having proper housing, support by the state and private economic feasibility.

The demand is certanly vast, as 55.000 low-cost urban homes are requiered each year according to the MLMUPC. Facilitating Social Housing Integration by balancing

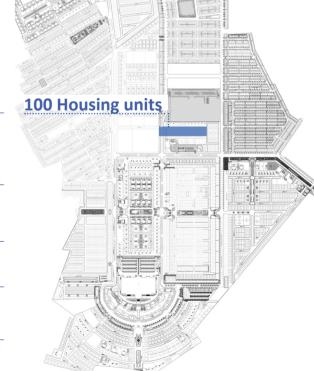
affordability with profitability helps mitigate the financial challenges often associated with social housing projects. Furthermore, developers can take advantage of incentives such as tax exemptions and waived infrastructure costs, defined in the Cambodia's National Housing Policy (2014 and 2017).

To encourage the development of this market, both the government and private developers could consider the following recommendations:

**EVALUATION CRITERIA AFFORDABLE** HOUSING

Figure 3. Diagramm showing the scale that 100 affordable housing units would represent in a borey development.

Cambodia national Alternatives to adapt the policy to housing policy (2014 & the current housing market 2017) Housing priced between **Engage developers** able to develop the \$15.000 - \$30.000 per unit minimum 100 units within broader dwelling areas and encourage them to diversify their typology portfolio tu balance returns Minimum 100 units Offer flexible quotas: 100 social housing units or 10% units planned for affordable and middle income typologies Located at maximum **Adjust location policies** to consider activity centers rather than rigid distances 20 km from the city centre Plan for green and Address also green building criteria, is community's spaces essential in order to ensure the long-term housing affordability Explore additional options to home ownership



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**GUIDELINE 02.5** 

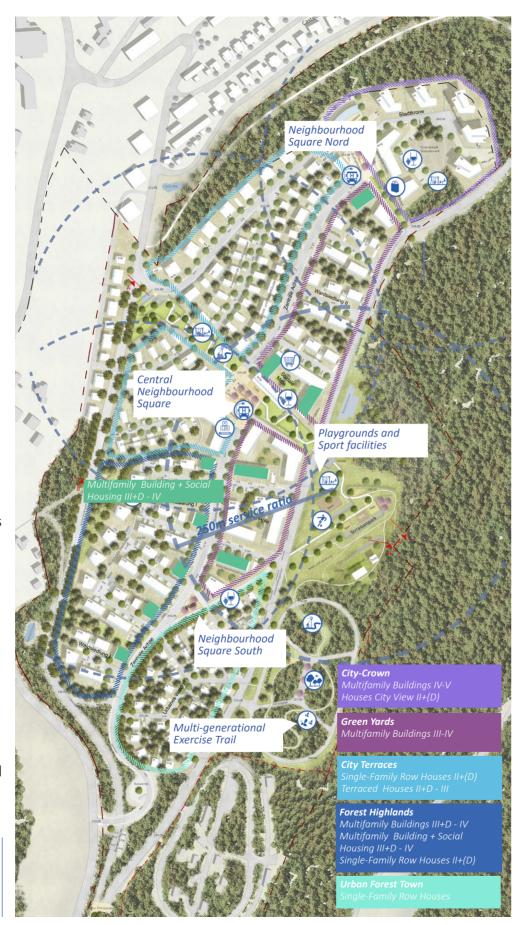
# **DIVERSIFYING**THE TYPOLOGY PORTFOLIO

Developers should design urban areas that align closely with local demand by considering key market characteristics. This includes defining an optimal typology mix, incorporating essential neighborhood features such as parking arrangements, private green spaces and commercial areas, as well as integrating public amenities like parks, playgrounds and other shared spaces.

A well-balanced mix of residential and commercial building types plays a crucial role in shaping the social composition of a district. This approach also offers several economic advantages:

- Investment Diversification:
   A varied typology portfolio reduces risk and enhances financial resilience for stakeholders.
- Expanding Market Potential:
  A diverse mix of housing and commercial spaces increases tenant attraction, stabilizes occupancy rates and fosters long-term economic sustainability.
- Enhancing Investment Security:
  Neighborhoods with diverse
  social and economic dynamics
  tend to experience lower tenant
  turnover, reducing costs associated
  with tenant acquisition and unit
  turnover.

**Figure 4.** Masterplan of the project Trier Castelnau developed by Eble Messerschmidt Partner together with the landscape architect studio Ramboll Dreiseitl in Trier, Germany.



#### TRIER CASTELNAU

A MULTI TYPOLOGY PROJECT EXAMPLE WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The city of Trier (Germany) updated the land use plan to address the pressing housing shortage and to be able to provide sufficient residential building land for the coming years while integrating nature into urban living. A development plan and uniform guidelines were drawn up by a multidisciplinary expert team led by the architecture and planning firm Eble Messerschmidt Partner. Based on the character of each location, five residential quarters were developed. The concept emphasizes social housing. Key indicators are:

Gross Site Area (GSA):	41,2 ha
Forest area	12,3 ha
Public Green	0.5 ha
Streets & Roads	3.2 ha
Net Site Area (NSA)	25,2 ha
Gross Floor Area (GFA)	150.000m
Building Footprint Area (BFA)	78.400m <sup>2</sup>
Building Coverage Ratio (BCR)	0,40
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0,8-1,2

Projected inhabitants:	2542	
Total Residential Units:	1252	
<ul><li>Single-Family Houses:</li></ul>	255	26.5%
• Town Houses:	91	
• Multifamily Buildings:	206	73.5%

# Social Housing Share:

- Multifamily buildings with social housing appartments, each with 20 subsidized (very affordable and rent-controlled) rental apartments. Therefore:
- 9 x 20 = 180 social housing units Social units share = 14,3%

- Eco-friendly wood hybrid construction
- KFW40 energy efficiency standard (reduction 60% energy consumption compared with similar typologies)
- Green spaces, nature conservation and rainwater management system
- Well-connected, walkable infrastructure

Urban planning and design guidelines were established to define the unique character of each neighborhood. Key aspects include:

- » Plot sizes: Ranging from 185 m² for single-family homes to 5.000 m² for multi-family buildings.
- » Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Higher density allowances in specific areas.
- » Typology mix: Varied proportions of housing types.
- » Adequate spacing: Defined distances between neighboring blocks.
- » Colour and material concept: Harmonized architectural aesthetics.
- » Dedicated spaces: Allocated areas for garages and ancillary facilities.
- » Roof landscape design: Options for green roofs or photovoltaic installations



Single-family House Typologies:

**Row Houses** 



Double-Houses



Single-Family Terraced Houses







**Figure 5.** Perspectives of the variety of single-family typologies defined for the project Trier Castelnau. Source: EMP

SOCIAL INCLUSION & LOCAL ECONOMY GUIDELINE 1

# FROM ACTIVE STREETS TO **BOOSTING LOCAL ECONOMY**



**Figure 6.** Public space and green public space planning diagramm of the project Trier Castelnau as example of good practice fulfilling the space and design considerations described. Source: Eble Messerschmidt Partner.

## **ATTRACTING** VISITORS AND PROMOTING LOCAL CULTURE

Public spaces are essential for fostering social interaction, wellbeing, and sustainability in urban environments. According to the German Sustainability Building Council (DGNB), effective public space planning should consider the following:

#### • Space Allocation:

- » 15-20% of the gross site area (GSA) should be dedicated to public open spaces, including green areas.
- » Public spaces must be located within a 750m radius to ensure convenient, walkable access for all residents.

# Key Design and Planning **Considerations:**

- » Strategic Location: Selecting the right site to maximize accessibility and connectivity.
- » Strong Concept & Theme: Reflecting neighborhood identity.
- » Community Involvement: Encouraging inclusivity through local input.
- » Integration of Green Elements: Integrating vegetation and ecofriendly features.

Figure 7. An exemplary illustration applying key active street aspects in the Cambodian context. Source: Eble Messerschmidt Partner (with AI).

INTEGRATING KEY ACTIVE STREETS **ASPECTS** 

Next to a clear planning strategy, public spaces must incorporate specific urban design principles to enhance safety, attractiveness and functionality as neighborhood or urban centers. Key design elements include:

#### Mixed-use Typologies:

» Include different uses within a building, such as street-level retail with residential units above.

# • Roof Usage:

» Include rooftop gardens, terraces and urban farms to extend public use vertically.

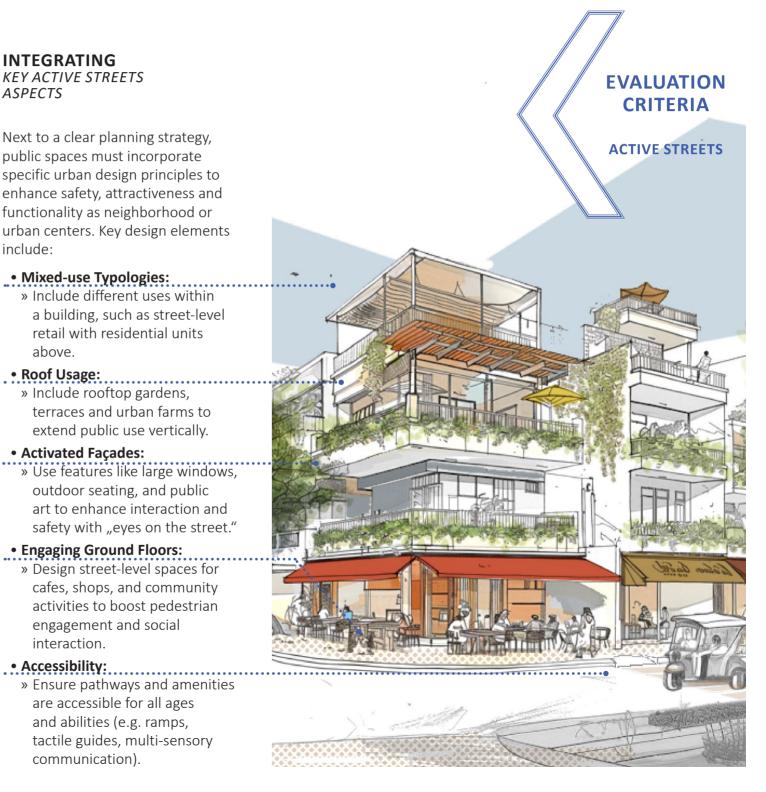
#### Activated Façades:

» Use features like large windows, outdoor seating, and public art to enhance interaction and safety with "eyes on the street."

# • Engaging Ground Floors:

» Design street-level spaces for cafes, shops, and community activities to boost pedestrian engagement and social interaction.

» Ensure pathways and amenities are accessible for all ages and abilities (e.g. ramps, tactile guides, multi-sensory communication).



**GUIDELINE 02.5** 





# **EXPLORING**

TACTIC STRATEGIES TO **BOOST LOCAL ECONOMY** 

Design Flexible Multiuse Public Spaces

- Modular Infrastructure: Install adaptable elements like movable seating, retractable shading and demountable stalls.
- Utility Access: Ensure public spaces have electricity, water and high-speed internet to support vendors, co-working areas and events.
- Weather Protection: Provide covered areas and shaded structures to allow year-round use.
- Durable, Multi-Purpose Surfaces: Use materials suitable for events, pop-up markets and everyday public use.

# Provide Affordable Spaces for Small Businesses

Facilitate accessible commercial spaces to support entrepreneurship by allocating a percentage of available retail spaces to local businesses through a competitive selection process:

- Low-cost Rental Options for vendors, artisans and small businesses.
- Temporary Kiosks & Pop-up **Spaces** to allow new businesses to test ideas with minimal risk.
- » Weekly farmers' markets
- » Monthly flea markets
- » Seasonal markets & cultural festivals

# Strengthen Local Supply Chains

Encourage businesses to source locally and retain economic benefits within the community:

- Promote Local Supply Networks between farmers, artisans and businesses.
- Encourage Restaurants to source Local Ingredients through incentives or branding initiatives.
- » Create a "Made in Phnom Penh" certification or branding program.
- » Implement tax incentives for businesses that prioritize local sourcing

# Introduce Community-Driven **Economic Facilities**

Integrate within the neighbourhoo planning shared spaces that support both business activity and community engagement:

- Co-Working Spaces: Workspaces for freelancers, start-ups and remote workers. Provide essential office infrastructure (Wi-Fi, meeting rooms, printing services).
- Repair Cafés: Set up communityrun repair stations for electronics, clothing, and bicycles. Collaborate with vocational schools and skilled volunteers to provide free repairs.
- District Meeting Places: Designate communal spaces for networking events, business training and social gatherings.

Figure 9. An exemplary visualization of the seamless integration of community-driven economic facilities in a residential area. Source: Eble Messerschmidt Partner (with AI).

Figure 8. An exemplary illustration showing a flexible public space where local businesses and pop-up events can take place. Source: Eble Messerschmidt Partner (with AI).

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**BUILDING** THE PATH TOWARDS **PLACEMAKING** 

Placemaking is a way of creating successful public spaces together with the community. Through placemaking it is possible to improve public spaces, create more interaction between residents and boost economic activities. The method can act as a tool to enhance the aesthetic qualities of public space, but its biggest impact is the process and how it creates a place that serves the community and boosts social life.

Placemaking is about:

- 1. Community involvement
- 2. Gathering ideas
- 3. Evaluating public space
- 4. Create a vision for an area

Therefore, the concept of placemaking goes beyond the quantitative sphere and enters the realm of qualitative elements. The process goes, however, hand to hand. Once the base urban structure of a new neighbourhood has been drafted, the amount and type of

required social infrastructure is clear, and the identification of possible neighbourhood areas for mixed-used hubs has been done, the co-creation stage starts.

The *placemaking* process can be initiated by private developers and/ or public authorities and/or citizens. The following steps can be taken as reference:

1. Identify Core Areas in the neighbourhood that will gather social uses.

- 2. Brainstorm and Evaluate what are the elements that define a good *public space*. Facilitators can use inspirational material like photos or ask participants to describe their favorite place in the city.
- **3. Co-create a Vision** by asking the following questions: Who will use the place? What activities will happen there? How should you feel in that place?

infrastructucture and complementary Particularly useful is to use sketches to illustrate that community vision.

> 4. Make an Action-, Process- and **Maintenance-Plan** defining the steps needed, responsible persons and materials needed. Clarify the process on what needs to be achieved in the short, medium and long term. Finally, organise who will be responsible for maintaning the space and if other stakeholders can be involved and how can they help.

Figure 10. An exemplary illustration showing a community planning event. Source: Eble Messerschmidt Partner (with AI),



# **WAY FORWARD**

# TO BE FURTHER DISCUSSED WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS **DURING B4P IMPLEMENTATION PHASE 2025-2027**

Phnom Penh, the capital and largest city of Cambodia, is rapidly evolving as a central hub for business, industry, education and cultural heritage. The city has become an economic powerhouse, attracting both local and international businesses. This represents a unique opportunity to leverage sustainable development as in integrative part of the city. By flourishing and committing to shared goals, stakeholders can create neighborhoods and cities that are thriving, resilient and equitable for

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING, FROM CHALLENGE TO OPPORTUNITY

However, while Phnom Penh thrives economically, there are notable challenges, particularly in the area of affordable housing. Developers and policy experts have pointed out that current housing policies often fail to meet the needs of the city's growing population. One of the main obstacles is the difficulty in identifying and acquiring land within a 20 km radius of the city center at affordable prices, which is essential for keeping housing units within a \$15.000 to \$30.000 range.

Additionally, the lack of integration between employment zones and residential areas complicates the

development of truly affordable housing solutions. This gap creates an urgent opportunity for both public authorities and private developers to rethink urban planning and integrate housing with employment hubs, ensuring more balanced and inclusive development.

TYPOLOGY DIVERSITY, PUBLIC SPACE, MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS AND THE 15 MINUTE CITY CONCEPT AS A LOCAL ECONOMY **BOOSTERS** 

Phnom Penh's future holds exciting potential, particularly in the development of pedestrian-friendly spaces, which have been proven to generate economic benefits in cities worldwide. By creating an environment that prioritizes foot traffic over vehicles, Phnom Penh can tap into these advantages and unlock new opportunities.

A well-designed public space, combined with commercial. social infrastructure and a variety of housing typologies, offers a unique chance to meet current market demands while fostering sustainable urban development. This approach not only supports vibrant communities but also invites investment by addressing diverse needs in a balanced urban ecosystem.

Cities like Paris, London and Seoul have shown that integrating pedestrian-friendly spaces and mixed-use developments can significantly boost local economies, increase real estate values and reduce public costs over time. The "Preah Sisowath Quay: Riverside Heritage Walk" serves as an excellent benchmark and goodpractice example, illustrating how such initiatives can support local businesses, enhance tourism and create lively leisure spaces within Phnom Penh's neighbourhoods. This kind of development aligns with the city's growth vision, offering an opportunity to create sustainable, resilient and prosperous urban areas that benefit both residents and visitors alike.

By focusing on inclusivity, integrating affordable housing with employment hubs and prioritizing pedestrianfriendly spaces and green building practices, Phnom Penh can lead the way in urban development, fostering a dynamic city that thrives economically and socially.

**GUIDELINE 02.5** 

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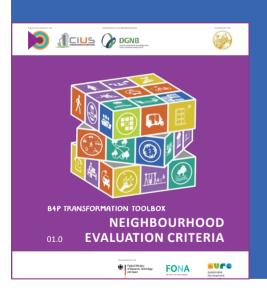
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# **BUILD4PEOPLE**EVALUATION CRITERIA & DESIGN GUIDELINES OVERVIEW



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