

# “The People’s Square”

(The outdoor living room of the Karachi city)



Karachi Neighborhood Improvement Project

## The Vision of People’s Square

The vision of Square is to upgrade the livability status of the neighborhood through environmental improvement, infrastructure rehabilitation and by creating spaces for social integration. A more livable neighborhood also looks into optimizing the still existent cultural, social and recreational potential provided by the relevant structures and spaces through utilizing them as catalysts for public space design interventions that are characterized by their inclusive, accessible, safe and comfort based designs - that rely on creating 'places' rather than 'structures'. Burnes Garden is named after Dr. James Burnes (elder brother of Sir Alexander Burnes) the doctor who treated Mir Murad Ali Khan Talpur in 1828. Originally covering an area of 26.20 acres, the Garden was watered by three wells and a water course running along its north-eastern side. The garden was intersected by walks shaded by well grown trees, with flower beds and vegetable pots. There was also a winery.

This Square in Saddar downtown has been developed by Government of Sindh with the support of World Bank under Karachi Neighborhood Improvement Project (KNIP) implemented by Planning and Development Department. The ground breaking of this Square along with underground parking plaza, enhancement of open spaces in Arts Council and adjacent roads development of educational and cultural zone was made by Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Sindh in 2018 as single sub-project of KNIP. The sub-project with its all components including public square has been completed in August 2020.



## The naming of Public Space- Square

The name “People’s Square” was finalized for this public space of Saddar downtown through vigorous stakeholders’ consultation process. KNIP and NED University jointly organized consultation session with students, faculty of various institutes i.e., D.J. Science College, NED University City

Campus, S.M Arts & Commerce Government College, S.M. Law College and Arts Council of Pakistan. Besides this, the representatives of civil society and citizens have also participated in the event.



## Prominent design features of People’s Square

It consists of **8000 Sq/meter** with following salient features:

- Canopied and open seating on benches for **300** people (at one time)
- Event space for more than **2000** persons (at one time) at People’s Square
- **3** Lifts/staircase lobbies including security counters
- **11** Convenience/Food Kiosks
- Planters/Large Trees (Malaysian palm/Goldmohur) with seating
- Public Toilets (separate for women and specially-abled persons)
- Substation and backup Gensets.
- Entrance and Exit ramps with canopies
- Access gates to the surrounding buildings



## Unique Location & Multiple Access Points

The People's Square can be easily accessed from various parts of the old town, downtown and uptown through public and private transport. It has walking distance from densely populated old quarters of the city. The following are five entrance/ exit points of the Peoples' Square:

- ❖ From Deen Muhammad Wafai Road, in front of Sindh Secretariat
- ❖ From Muhammad Bin Qasim Road (Burns road) adjacent NED City Campus
- ❖ Adjacent to DJ College main gate on Ziauddin Ahmed Road
- ❖ Adjacent to S.M. Law College
- ❖ It is also accessible from the main entrance of National Museum/Burns Garden, DJ College, NED City Campus and SM Arts College. Ramps are provided on flanking major roads to accommodate vehicular mobility. The easy access to the newly developed space makes it a hub of Youth and Public gathering.

## Freedom Movement Monument

The Location of Peoples' Square is historic in nature where various public gathering, processions regularly convened during freedom movement of Pakistan. To commemorate and respect the sacrifices of people who were proactive during independence, a symbolic expression has been planned called 'Freedom Movement Monument'.



## Artwork on walls and Ramps

The Artwork breaks the monotony of dead walls and creates an interesting space for all ages. This concept is used in People's Square and artwork has been done on the external walls of various structures such as toilet block and ramps by well-known artists. The beautiful artwork comprises of the painting of 'Historic Buildings of Karachi' The painting is conceptualized by KNIP team and painted by Artist Mr. Wasi Hyder. The "Harmony in diversity through colors/shapes" is conceptualized and designed by Artist Mr. Sharjeel Baloch for the inner walls of the ramps.



## National Museum Interface

People's Square makes an interesting interface with National Museum gate, which is already constructed by Culture Department. The structure having Mughal and Central Asian Architecture features makes vista with People's Square. The offsetting space, having beautiful green Burns garden in background becomes a selfie point for youth and children.

## Kiosks

There are eleven kiosks out of which eight are dedicated to food-related activities while three are reserved for books, souvenir etc. The Kiosks are located in such a manner that the visitors have plenty of space for seating.

## Covered and Open Seating:

The sitting arrangement caters for the requirement of people from all age groups. With more than 300 seats on both sides in open and covered space. The seating comprises of both covered and open seating.

## Tree Planters

Especially designed granite stone finished tree planters with Malaysian palm and Goldmohur trees have been constructed. The planters are designed in such a manner that **12 persons** can easily enjoy the ambiance while sitting around on benches designed around planters.

## Lighting

The Square is well lit with specially designed street poles and garden lights for safe and secure pedestrian movement.

