

Research Paper

Urban continuity as a means of socio-economic inclusion in developing cities.

A case of Hubli, Karnataka.

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Abstract

Indian developing middle cities (Tier-II and Tier-III cities) are competing in the same race of development once the megacities led and are swelling with similar problems. Human resource and land are the city's biggest assets. Real estate-driven development often utilizes human resource to achieve its aspiration and dream while forgetting them and the cities culture.

Urban areas in India are increasingly becoming divided and segregated (social marginalization) leading to a denial of the right to the city (exclusion from resources, services, access to space etc.) based on social class. Large industrial land parcels dedicated to livelihood provision to labour class within the cities are undergoing real estate-driven development to profit from private drivers catering to specific classes. Along with development and migration, the city is reorganized based on socio-economic status leading to exclusion, especially of labour (semi-skilled, unskilled). The transformative and replacement method of development in these cities views labours as sojourns. Deemed as a transient population, they have insecure conditions of work alongside housing and utilities. These stakeholders who are long-contributors to the city's aspiration are left behind without adequate space. Better design approaches can trigger an inclusive interdependent model while enhancing economic opportunities and equal right, socially dynamic environments for marginalized stakeholders.

The above-discussed phenomenon in developing cities that attract labours while segregating them within zones is a visible scenario in Hubli. As the gateway to the Deccan region along the industrial corridor, Hubli was culturally inclusive towards anyone who arrived at the city through social institutes such as Mathas. While it has been developing rapidly and attracting labour migrants, the city lacks space for such labour who end up in slums. This creates pressure on slums to accommodate more and more people while the city does not provide them with any support. Old industries which once provided economic opportunities to many are now rapidly commercializing to satisfy real estate needs with no regard to its urban commons or the marginalized. Due to such exclusive developmental processes, stakeholders are segregated within zones to achieve short-term economic gains while also hindering their interdependencies. Urban Design could become a medium/ middle ground to triggering inclusive developments beneficial for both the marginalized and the city. This study would benefit from context while taking advantages of the socio-economical and socio-ecological asset as a new continuous urban seam that connects different interfaces (urban commons, built and open network) for socially inclusive.

Keywords

Social-exclusion, Degradation, Labours inclusivity, Socio-ecological seam, Socio-economical interdependencies.

1. Introduction

Before Independence, in India, the British paid attention to the development of only those regions of their colony, which served their economic interests the most. In the process of Industrialization, liberalization and ongoing globalization most of the same cities became the nucleus of development and are rapidly urbanizing and some have reached their limits. In the past few decades, India is rapidly moving towards developing Tier II and Tier III cities in the development corridors. Tier II and Tier III cities are being viewed as “Demonstrative sites or Demonstrative models” to showcase political power and neo-liberal visions.

Tier II and Tier III cities which were once small towns and villages are now being added with new layers of production and exchange-based infrastructure development to achieve the collective aspiration of the power. New layers such as Production centres, BRTS, Metro, River redevelopment, and industrial corridors are added to rebrand these cities to make them a model/ showcase of development in the region. These layers have a major priority of increasing the economy/ GDP of a region and then later the cause of social welfare.

These new layers of the city are reorganizing the collective life of the city leading to:

- Social exclusion
- Segregation of societies
- Decreased tolerance
- Reduced Liveability
- Strong relationship between income and right to city

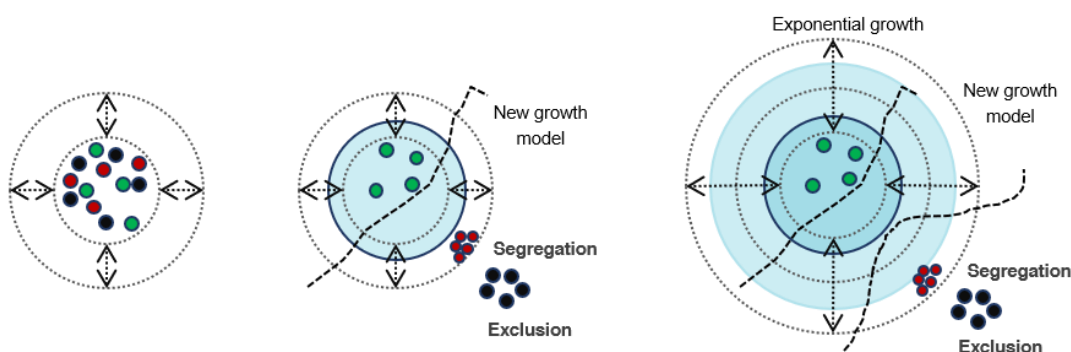


Figure 1 Govt vision demonstration through cities leads to systematic exclusion and exponential growth which is counterproductive and lowers livability. Source: Author

This paper draws attention to exclusionary developments of the city while referring to existing literature studies leading to the denial of the rights, and access of people based on socio-economic categories. Further, to understand the scenario better Hubli, Karnataka, India has been taken as a case example where rapid changes happening in the city to fulfil political aspirations of becoming one of the leading cities in north Karnataka. Planning framework as an entry point to understanding the development pattern of the city indicating future development which might be exclusive and cater to only certain economic classes thus making it relevant. This is a holistic way to understand patterns of exclusion by comparing data and development frameworks with a better approach for the future through lenses such as urban commons, social institutes, changing morphology, spatial composition, aspiration, and economy. While also considering stakeholder participation this paper explores urban design as a means to trigger new possibilities of inclusion and seems to learn, live and work while also contributing to the city's aspiration. This process

will benefit from context while taking advantage of the socio-economical and socio-ecological asset as a new continuous urban seam that connects different interfaces (urban commons, built and open networks) for socially inclusive development. *“To develop a robust environment for growth which is flexible, dynamic enough to adapt to the rapid changes.”*

1.1. Emergence of socially excluded communities/cities.

The close-knit relationship between economic globalization, cities and the formation of new claims on the city by economic and political means has become evident in the 21st century. Cities are constantly being viewed as organizational commodities and production sites. Financial developments by economic generation are considered to reduce the extent of wealth concentration theoretically but in reality, generate boundaries and marginality (Sassen, 2015). Through these ongoing processes of economic development, the linkages of how claims are made on a city by terrorizing/ creating new territory and exclusion in a city can be seen.

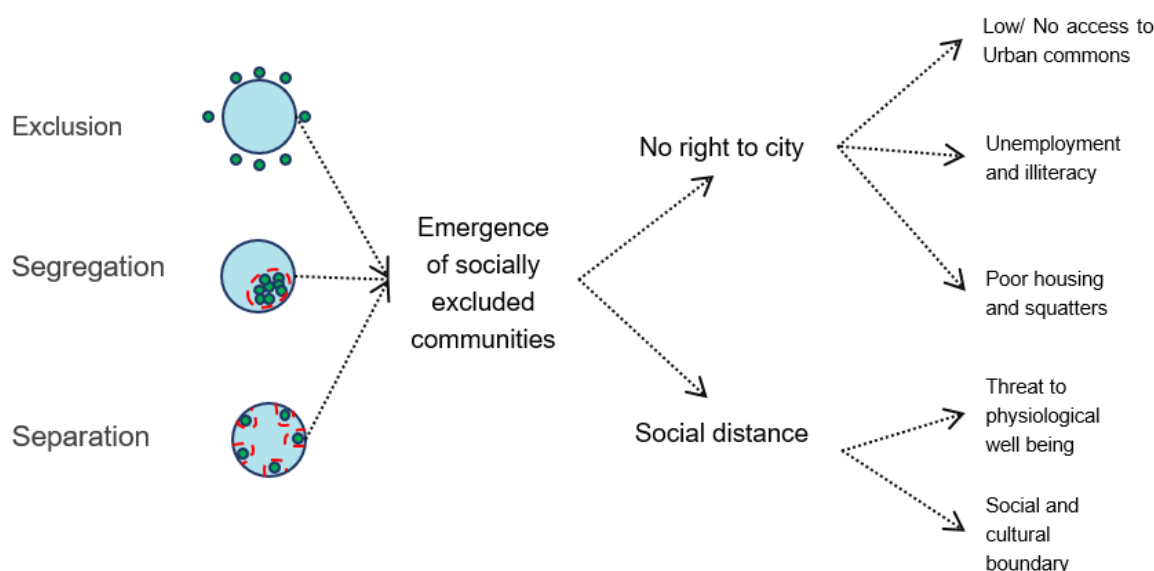


Figure 2 The emergence of socially excluded communities. Source: Author

The dynamics of exclusion can be seen by linking them to various parameters such as household income, socio-religious identity, migration history, issues of access, level of participation by residents in civic activities, and responses of municipal governance institutions. Important aspects can be understood such as accelerated urbanization (particularly in medium and large cities), globalization, and transformations in employment structures never consider or have not aided to a significant degree in the dismantling of these existing deep social and ethnic divides known to Indian society but added to it. It also echoes a pattern that has been established earlier by other scholarly work on the concept of ‘locational disadvantage’. Migrants (outsiders) face obstacles related to the resentment harboured by the older residents (insiders) in their new city. These residents view the new migrants as threats, as unwelcome competitors for jobs and public goods, both of which are already scarce, to begin with. This, not only creates exclusionary barriers but is also fuelling their gradual disenfranchisement, even with dangerous consequences. But a social mix is not always the commonly advocated wonder for curing social exclusion (Lehman-Frisch, 2009), in particular since socially homogenous neighbourhoods can create identities, social capital and social networks that might disappear in mixed areas. In short, “depending on the

situation, relative spatial proximity can favour social relationships or exacerbate tensions” (Grafmeyer,1994).

The physical/ morphological changes and changing ideas of security in emerging private enclaves leading to new patterns of urban segregation based on the economy are added layers of separation in cities (Caldeira, 2011). Emphasis on increasing economic homogeneity over economic heterogeneity leads to changes in public spaces, engagement of spaces, the experience of spaces and its effects on segregation and exploitation of democratic rights. Private residential enclaves can also be applied to new emerging capitalistic developments like malls, private corporations, production centres, etc. leading to a denial of the right to the city.

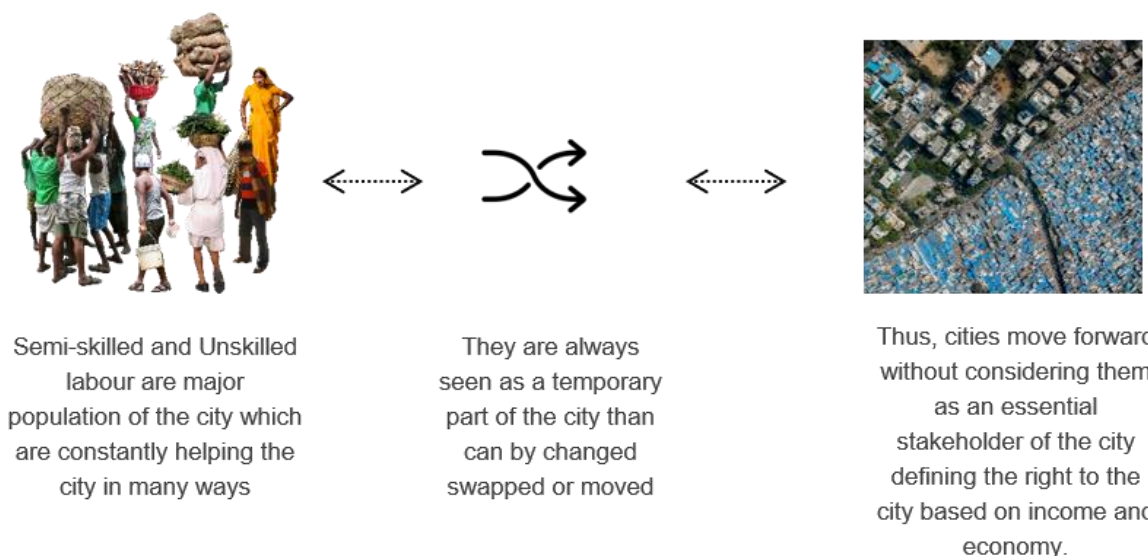


Figure 3 New layers of the city are reorganizing the collective life of the city leading to the socio-economic exclusion of labour (semi-skilled, un-skilled) who have been in the city for a long time. Source: Author.

The right of the city is one of the most precious rights and one of the most neglected and exploited ones (Harvey 1996). Urbanization as a class phenomenon has become an inherent feature of most emerging cities with capitalistic visions redefining ideas of power, control and right of the city. Urbanization and the right of people are seen as a never-ending loop which never balances out. Discussion of many processes like Haussmannization and Suburbanization of America by Robert Moses was the initial or earliest means of separation of people by class and race from cities and curbing their rights and access to the city. Interestingly, the case of European and Asian countries is also being discussed by expressing their urge to become a global symbol and great economic status and how they have created great indifferences in their development process. In the world of neoliberal visions, many countries like India, and Africa with the largest human resources are now going through the same process of globalization and urbanization producing inequalities in the name of civic development and limiting the rights of the people by creating boundaries with income as a criterion. Right to the city needs to be considered essential at all scales along with political, social and capitalistic ideals that are still valid today (Harvey 1996).

In India, urban segregation traditionally happens at a lower scale, at the neighbourhood rather than the agglomeration level. Strong residential segregation, especially in India where caste differentiation is added to the more “traditional” class hierarchy (Dupont and Landy, 2005). We can understand that exclusion is not only the result of poverty, religion or caste status but also involves dynamic participants (the state, civil society, the poor, etc.). In most cities fingers are always pointed toward slums as a

“degradation” of land and ecology while condoning middle- and upper-class settlements and “modern” infrastructure in the name of “development”, Thus, as stated “instead of viewing housing and nature as two opposing, competing issues, they should be considered simultaneously and treated as similar consequences of spontaneous socio-economic trends and urban policies alike” (Harvey, 1996). Space should not only be considered as revealing social exclusion but also as a factor impacting social exclusion. Mapping how exclusion and inclusion processes permeate spatially, economic, political and social-cultural dimensions provide an understanding of how urban policies have been developed and implemented, as well as of their impact.

2. Case of Hubli, Karnataka

Hubli becomes a relevant city for the study due to the rapid changes happening in the city to fulfil political aspirations of becoming one of the leading cities in north Karnataka after Bangalore, Mysore and Mangalore in southern Karnataka. Hubli - Dharwad continue to grow and attract a large number of people to the city. Hubli being the centre for trade and commerce and Dharwad, the educational seat, continue to attract large volumes of traffic both from outside and within the region (Survey Reports, Transport Department Annual Reports 2015-16 and Karnataka at a Glance 2014). The city has its relevance because of major networks such as National Highway (NH), State Highway (SH), and Bus Rapid Transport System (BRTS) along with cities main Unkal Nala passing through which are triggering morphological and structural changes without considering the existing people, their networks and collective life.

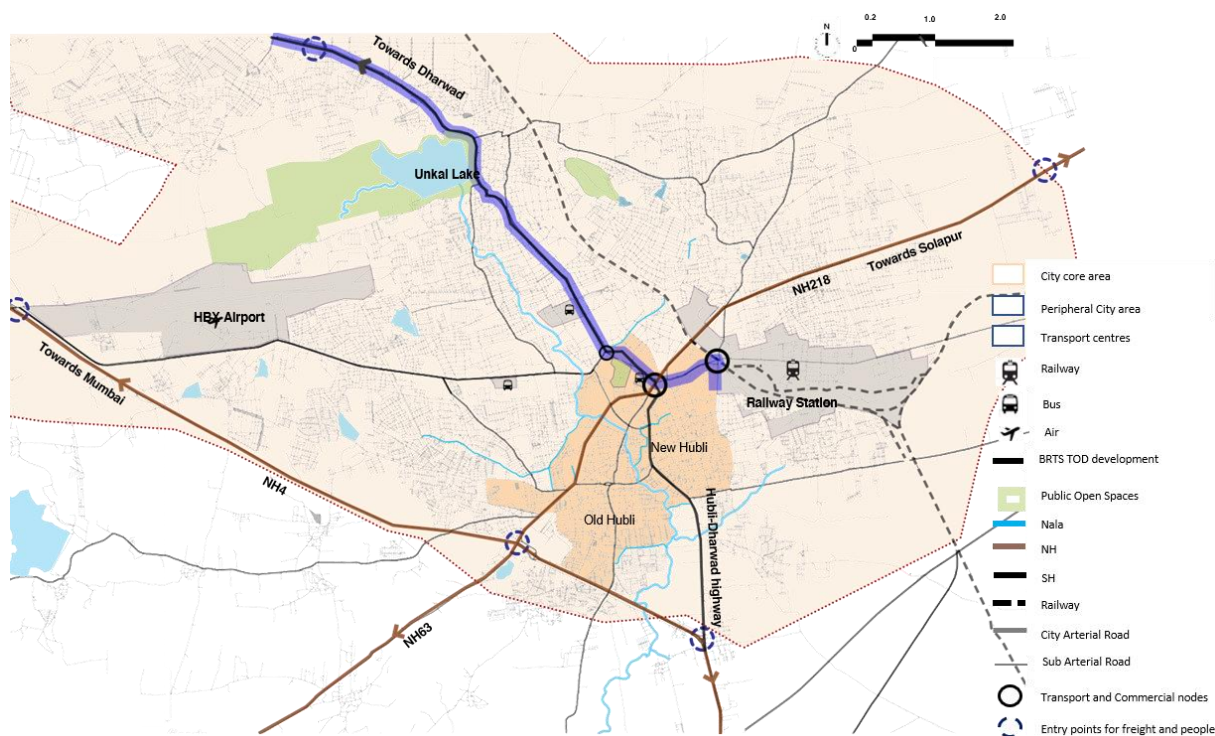


Figure 4 Map of Networking in Hubli. Source: Author

2.1. City Core, Ribbon development and Planning framework

City core is rapidly changing due to real estate pressures and infrastructure development. Major agglomeration of marginalized groups dwell in this area. Major residential zone in the city directly

connected to the city core. Central city which is undergoing changes in terms of land development and increasing labour population. Projects like BRTS which was implemented to make Hubli-Dharwad connected cities. BRTS along the Hubli-Dharwad state highway has 3 major implications for the city to increase density along its corridor from 100ppH to 600pph adding pressure to rapidly commercialise and creating major nodes along it in the core of the city.

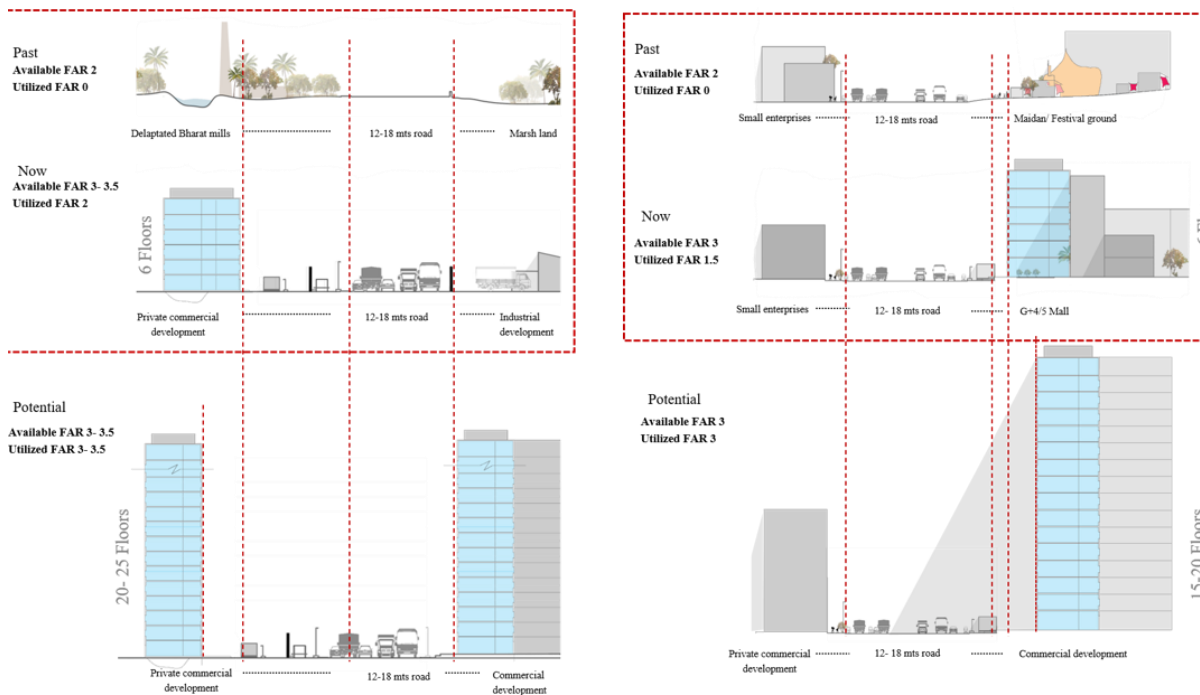


Figure 5 Sections Indicating changes in form and use due to FAR changes. Source: Author

No setback changes and relative less FAR utilization indicates no major commercial forces. But increased commercial development eliminates local/ small enterprises thus leading to exclusion in the core. As shown in the Figure above the existing potential of land and available FAR indicate taller buildings could be constructed whereas no such developments indicate lesser commercial forces or no demand. Large footprint development and bounded development arising due to FAR changes under influence of BRTS and Smart city causes visual and physical barrier. Whereas small-scale development pattern sustains local economy and inclusivity. No utilization of available FAR indicates no demand in the commercial sector. The commercial potential of the road is not massive and market forces indicate there is no need for so much commercialization. The quantity of demand for retail is the same but the user group the retail is catering to is changing thus leading to exclusion of local economies and functions catering to a certain class. This, also indicates that public land does not need to have a higher FAR right now. This provides the potential to propose multifunctional typologies that cater to local economies as well as the city's aspiration on the same land but are not necessarily driven by revenue/ commercial forces. New economic centres in the city with increasing migration of tertiary sector seeking more human resources thus city centre becoming highly commercial in nature and agglomeration of the migrants there. New economic centres along the corridor are developed as homogenous centres catering to some economic class. There is a need to ensure network interdependencies between core and newer centres to ensure economically marginalized have better access.

2.2. Bharat Mill and Hindered interdependencies

Bharat mill was a major identity and economic resource for people within the marginalized areas. The identity of Hubli is changing due to the conversion of mill land to commercial development while this new development doesn't cater to the marginalized in any way. People that had dependencies on the production-based economy of the city have the production-based skill and have to depend on other far away opportunities in the city.

Transition points as important nodes-These people need public transport for work leisure and entertainment but the lack of access or link to public transit zone hinders interdependencies. Access at a certain location along major roads which are critical exchange points, bus stops, local, and para transit points are isolated by development happening where they on other hand need to travel to these ends to get to places of work, etc. **Land locking phenomena**- Marginalized areas being surrounded by development at the periphery that is not catering or connected or functional to them as they cater to middle- and other-income people.

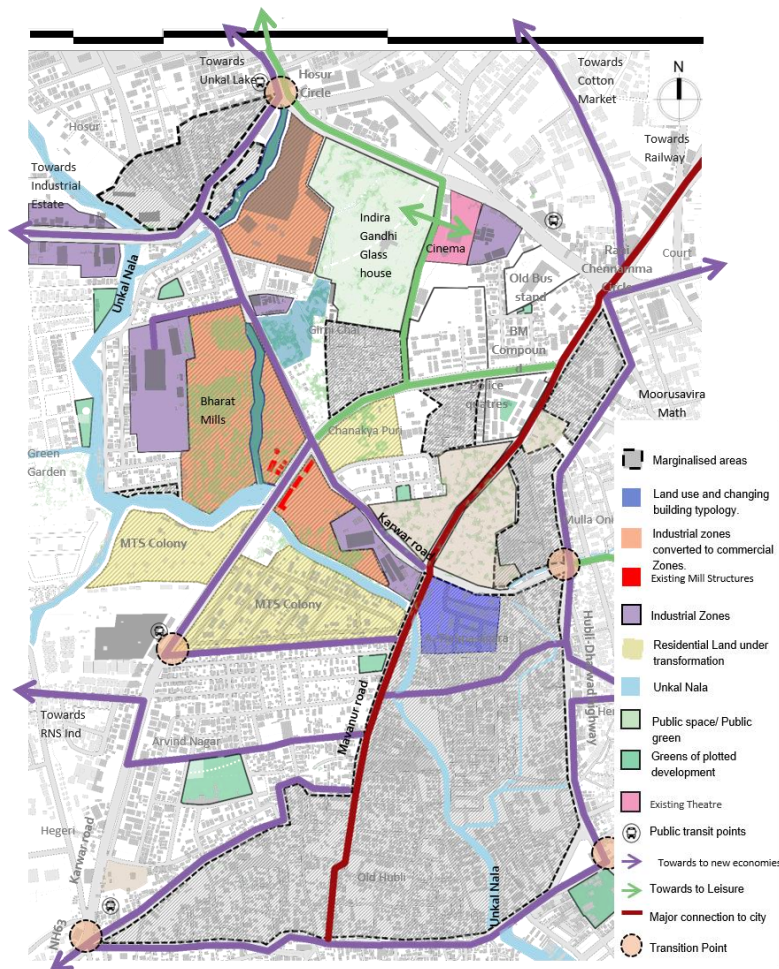


Figure 6 Map showing existing interdependencies in the core city. Source:Author

2.3. Mathas as inclusive social entities

Historically and culturally inclusive Hubli, a trading commercial town going through urbanization is also causing social and spatial transformation of places affecting the inclusivity of people of every caste,

gender and economic background. The city consisted of 9 lakes, Mathas within the fortified Old Hubli and New Hubli surrounded by farmlands. The migrated labour settled between the old and new Hubli.

The Matha is a socio-economic entity, a social welfare institution that runs many institutions for poor children, differently-abled and other marginalized sections of society. In many ways, Mathas acted as a mediator or a middle ground where the surplus of the society was redistributed to the society through this agency. This indicated the inclusivity of people of all genders, castes and regions. Till independence, Mathas in Hubli functioned as the legal aid for the rural population, a Social Security system. They helped in times of emergencies like floods, famines, epidemics and other such emergencies by providing relief work. Today the Mathas are merely points in the city whose potential is not considered as a part of Hubli's development.

2.4. Urban Common – Unkal Nala

The Cascading system of trapping stormwater runoff by constructing earthen bunds across second and third-order streams was a technology that developed over centuries in this and the larger peninsular region of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. As one reservoir filled and overflowed, its overflow was directed along a narrow path in the erstwhile stream, called a Raj- Kaluve or a royal channel, which was given official status as an urban common to prevent encroachment and consequent interruptions in the movement of stormwater.

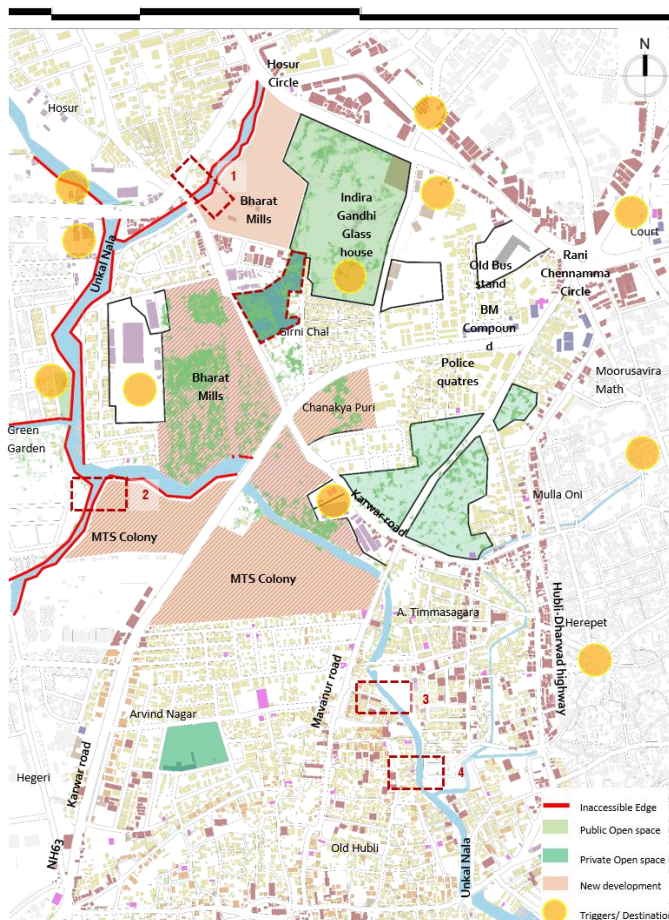


Figure 7 Map showing Nala with social infrastructure in the core city. Source: Author

During British rule, the Unkal Nala lost its status as an urban common that everyone in the society enjoyed and had access to as the British considered it unsanitary. Soon it became a hotspot for migrating labours and the marginalized that couldn't afford a space in the rapidly growing town settled. Thus, emerged the rapid growth of settlements that the city today terms slums along the Nala. Post-Independence the city still follows the same pattern of economic centres as drivers of growth and labour settling along Nalas.

Nala has become the backyard of the city with disconnected everyday networks and negotiated spaces for new migrants in the core and with private development such as industries along it that pollute the Nala. Even with the presence of the Nala redevelopment Policy major morphological changes such as hard building edges and industrial development along the Nala decreasing its visibility and accessibility. Along with changes to land the urban common is being privatised and used very different in new parts vs the traditional parts. Yet the city views slums as the only factor in environmental degradation. Although "bourgeois environmentalism" tends to point fingers at the slums while condoning middle- and upper-class settlements and "modern" infrastructure in the name of "development", environmental harm is engendered by spatial injustice and unfair policies. It also shows a need for equitable distribution of these resources to each part of the city is irrelevant to its socio-economic strata. As the Nala connects major destinations of the city, it becomes a potential to be used as a urban seam in the city.

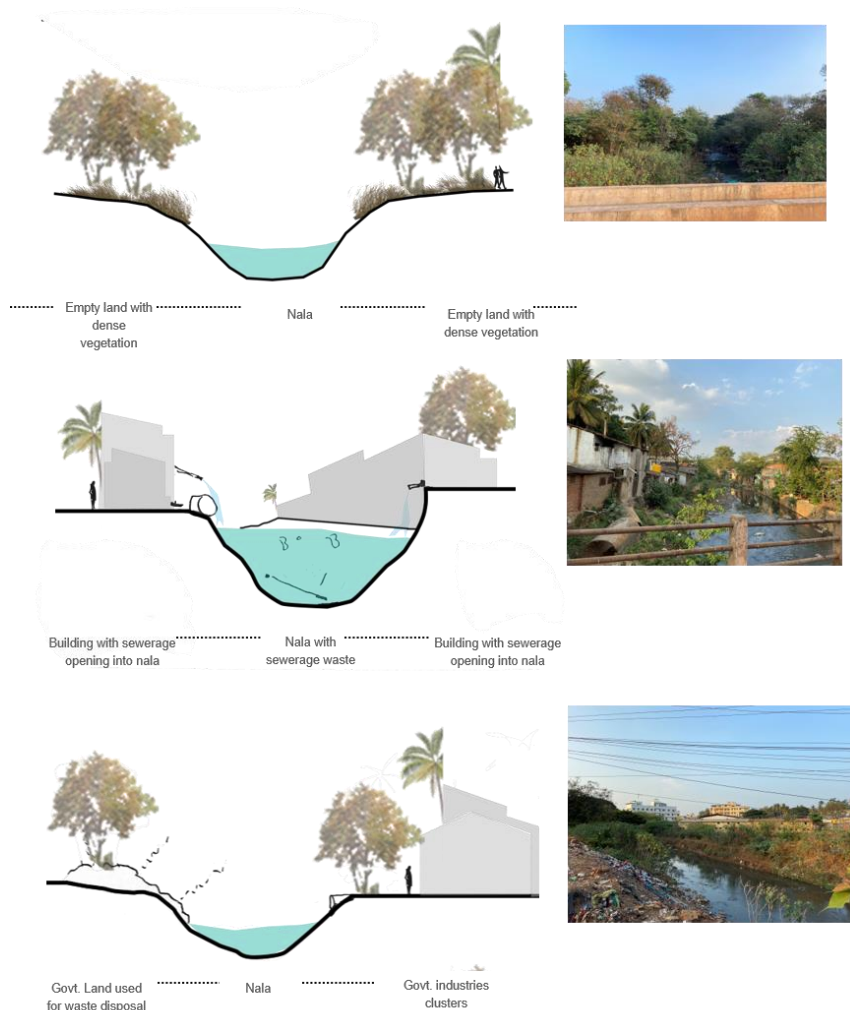


Figure 8 Nala Edge conditions today. Source: Author

2.5. Built-up area of city v/s Built-up area of slums.

The city has most of its economic agglomeration to the western part of the city, along its corridors. The city thrives on the tertiary economy which is human resource exhaustive. Most of the city’s labour live along the Nala or in the core city in the slums. This also indicated that Hubli has moved from Nala being the front of the city to highways and corridors as the front of the city. The share of marginal workers has increased from 0.6% to 3.79% in the last two decades. In absolute terms, the number of marginal workers has increased from 4,083 to 35,773. This indicates the growth of employment in unorganized sectors 2% of the city's population is street vendors. Slum dwellers most of them are employed on a daily wage basis, the nature of the job is temporary and not secured

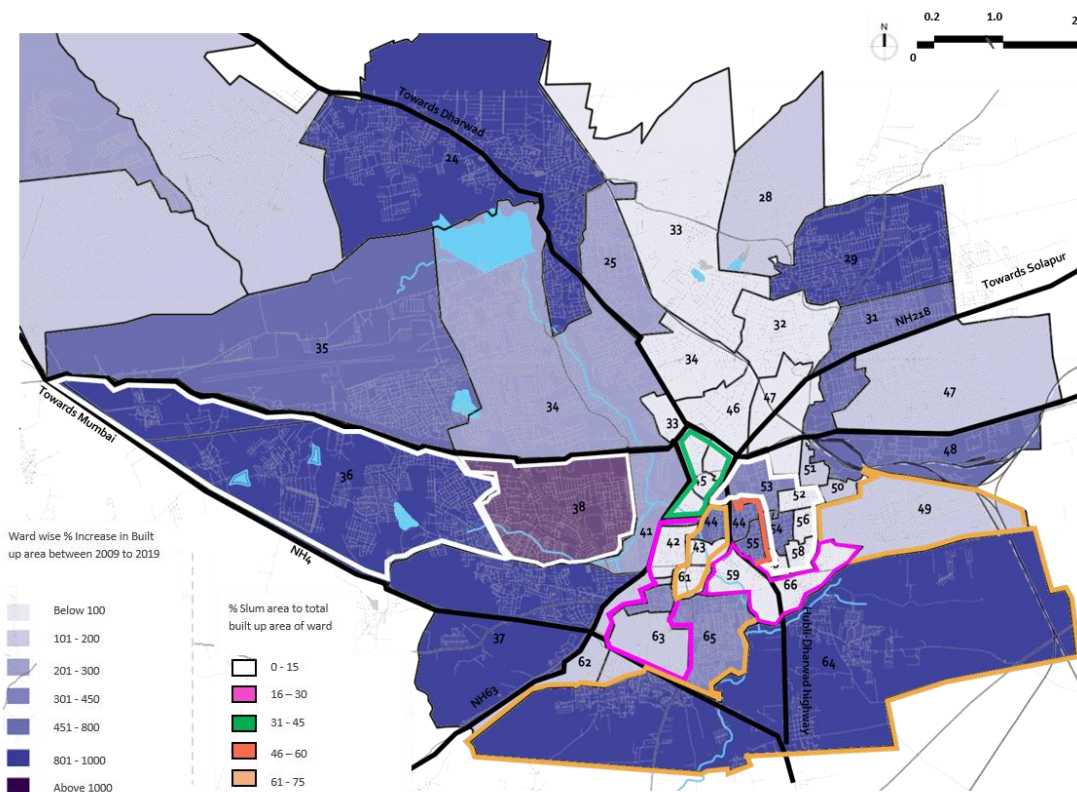


Figure 9 Map of the built-up area of city v/s built-up area of slums. Source: Author

Between the years 2009-2019 increased density of built-up area can be seen in the periphery of the city due to economic centres located there and the movement of the upper middle class to the periphery. Along with this the core of the city also has seen a drastic increase in the built-up area even with land constraints due to increased Immigration. When overlapped with the percentage increase in a slum in each ward we see it most concentrated in the core. Migrant populations face obstacles related to the resentment harboured by the older residents in their new city. Congestion in the slums is an outcome of the increase in population and immigration together with the limited capacity of the city. Through this, we can understand inequality happening in 2 categories in the city.

- **Spatial-** Growth constraints (in the form of undulating terrain); Location of engines of growth (industries, commercial activity and connectivity); Spatial exclusion process (measured in terms of location of slums, building and layout sanctions [approved and unapproved], land values and

property tax collection). Land value of Min. 3000 rs/sqm to Max. 6000 rs/sq in the core even with high slum % areas.

- **Infrastructure** - Certain population to be served under potable water and infrastructure was excluded because of faulty design and how certain spatial locations were preferred over others in the provision of a 24x7 water supply scheme.

3. Urban Seam- An attempt

Within the study area (City Core), major stakeholders can be identified based on gender, age, migration history, occupation, role in the neighbourhood and years spent/ tenure of stay. Different participatory tools such as interviews to understand the views of stakeholders. Transit walks to understand gender and age-based usage of localities. A mapping exercise to understand collective everyday life, and issues of the study area. Exercises were undertaken to understand the potential and aspirations of the stakeholder and the site.

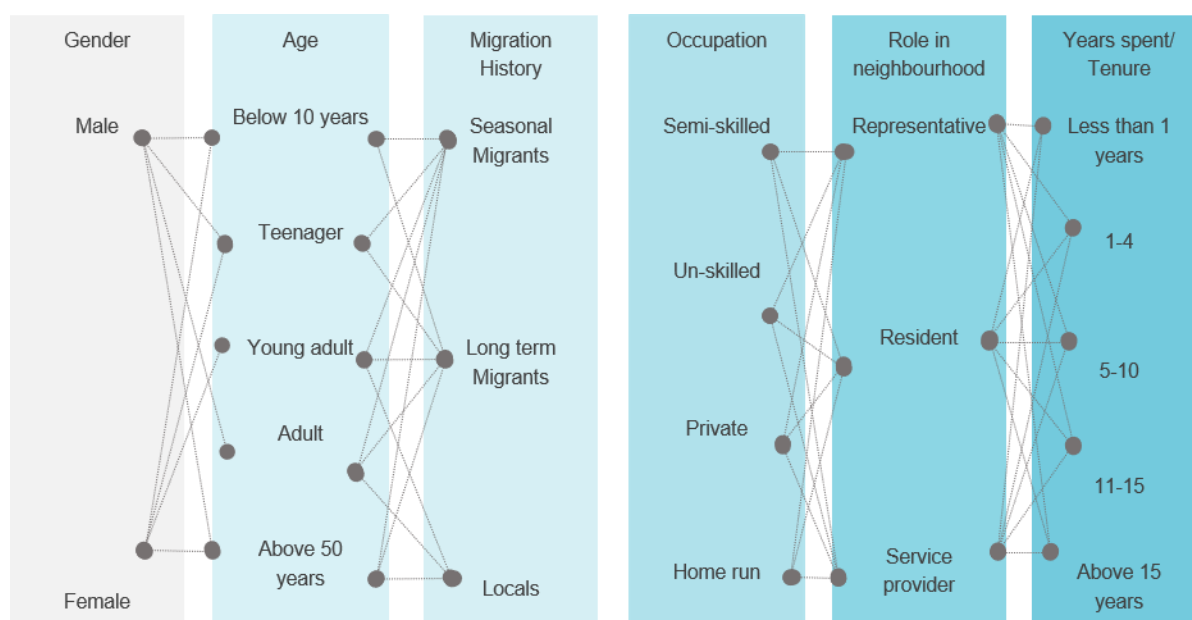


Figure 10 Stakeholder Matrix. Source: Author

The stakeholder matrix is devised keeping in mind gender, age, migration history, occupation type, role in the neighbourhood and years spent in the locality/ city. This matrix helps understand and have a better approach without considering them under one group but as a part of the spectrum. Due to the exclusive development process, stakeholders are segregated within zones to achieve the short-term goals of the city.

The vision is to attempt to be a middle ground to trigger inclusive growth beneficial for both city and the stakeholder. The vision is subdivided into sub-goals. **Social equality, economic opportunity, Socio-ecology and networking** under which major objectives and strategies can be derived to achieve a hierarchy of spaces that trigger possibilities of interdependencies between different social groups, economic opportunities at different scales and a new connected open corridor.

3.1. Social equality

Developing public lands under pressure as permeable multifunctional spaces through form and typologies that cater to local small enterprises as well as other economies. The objective here is to

"Enhance opportunity and equitable access for all groups of society regardless of individual characteristics (such as gender, age or migration history)."

Mixed Use Development that are smaller and more horizontal distribution to create a more open, responsive. Through this infill development public plazas and other spaces would be improved depending on functions next to them while creating different interfaces. Clustering not more than two or more clusters with 50%- 75% ground coverage while providing guidelines for edge conditions and built volumes at crucial nodes maintains the built-on edge and enclosure quality.

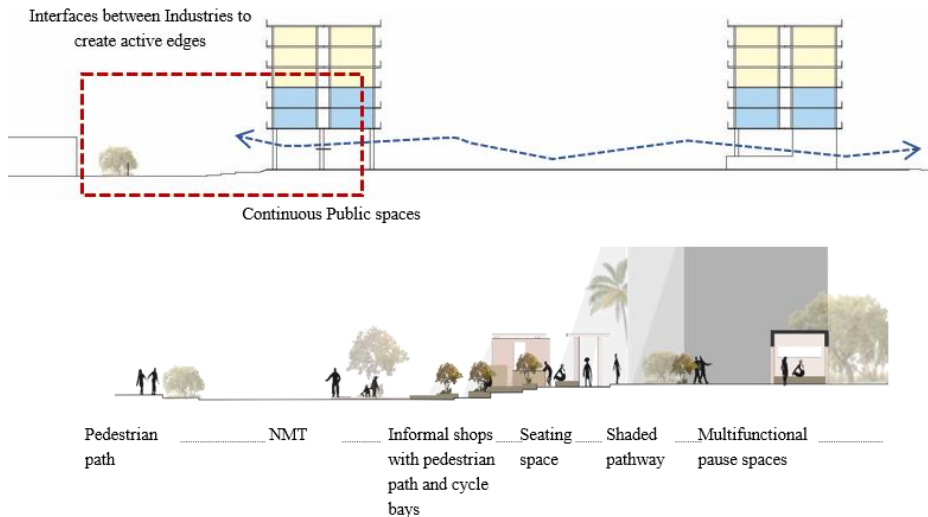


Figure 11 Sections to create an interface between industries to generate active edges. Source: Author

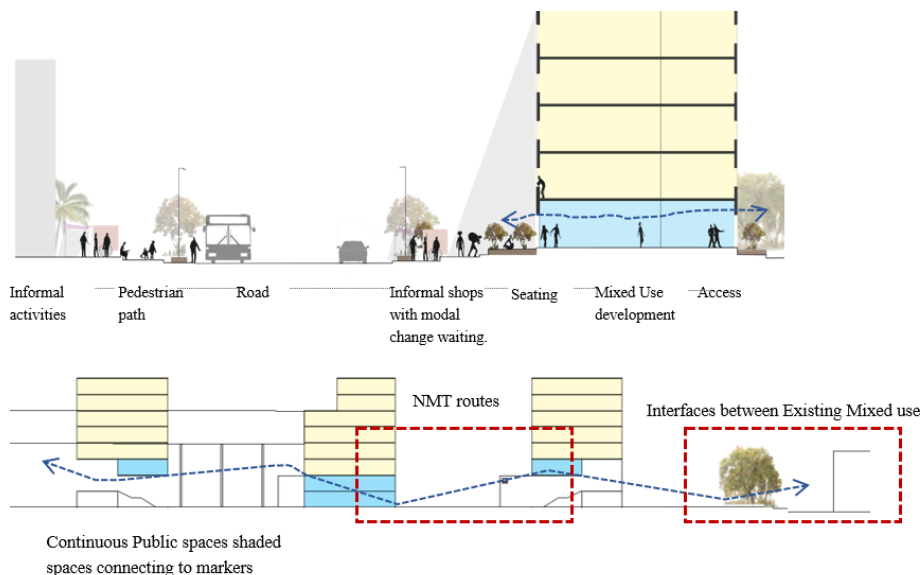


Figure 12 Continuous public space connecting existing functions to create a better interface. Source: Author

3.2. Economy and Opportunity

A common platform can be established based on the cultural ideologies of Mathas to create opportunities for rental housing to work and live within walking limits and also ensure no marginalization in future. Opportunities for the economy and skill upgradation keeping in mind existing production-based skills, local skills, cities aspirations and common opportunities to create a centre at neighbourhood levels

while retaining the existing mill structures as markers and identity of area and history. The objective here is to "Creating sustainable opportunities for economic generation and social welfare."

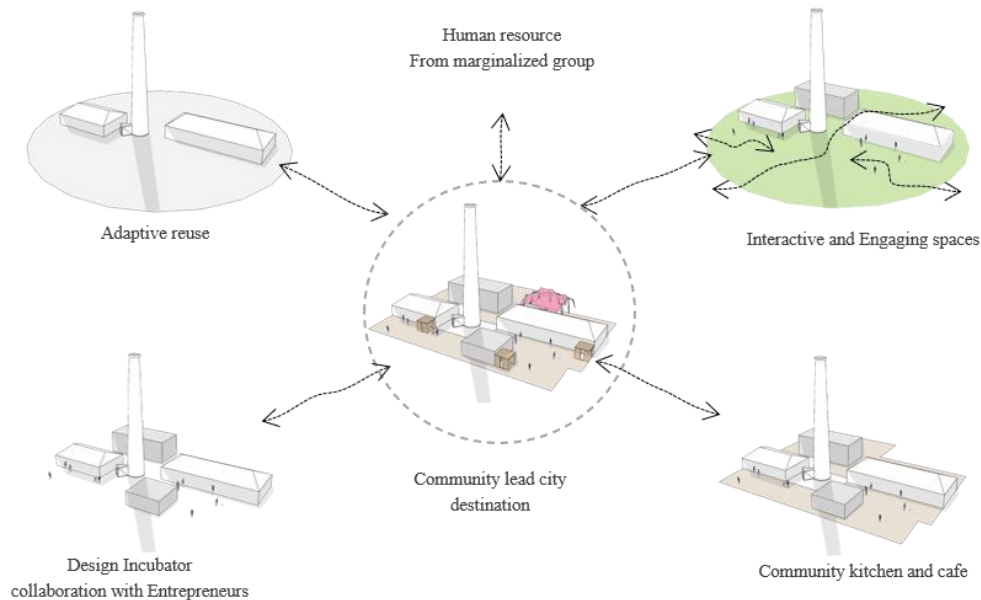


Figure 13 Schematic representation of collaborative development at different skills. Source: Author

3.3. Social ecology and Networking

Generating restricted development zones to trigger visibility and enhanced access while also re-establishing Unkal Nala as a new everyday corridor by triggering possibilities of recreation, and informal activities in walking proximity. Relief spaces can be introduced at intervals that in turn connect inner roads for increased accessibility. The objective here is to "Increasing the potential of Nala by reimagining it as a socio-ecological space by developing it as an everyday anchor rather than a destination."

Another objective here is to "To establish loops which are responsive to community activity that also penetrates existing and new networks and anchors."

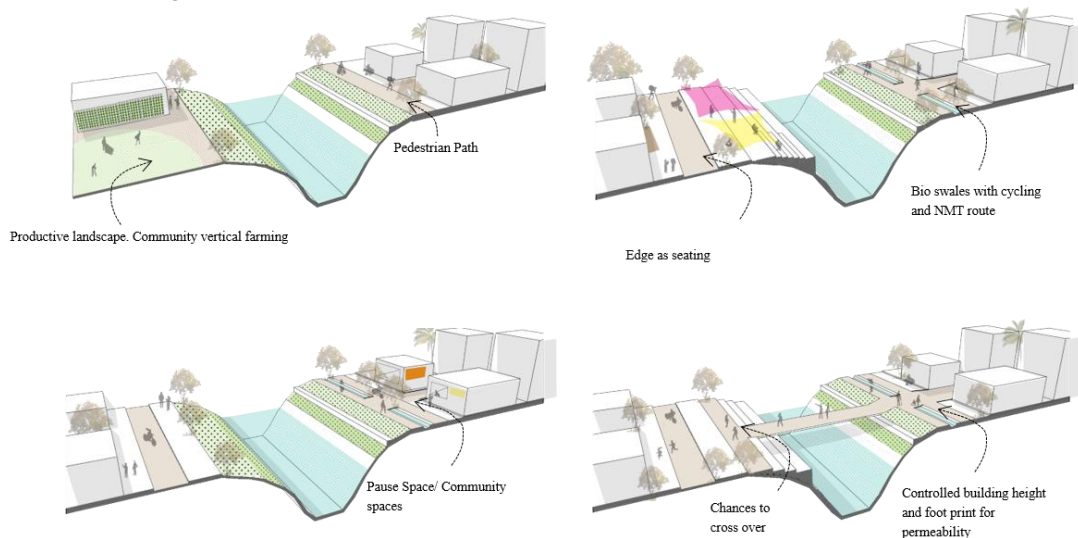


Figure 14 Schematic representation of utilizing Nala as a productive community space. Source: Author.

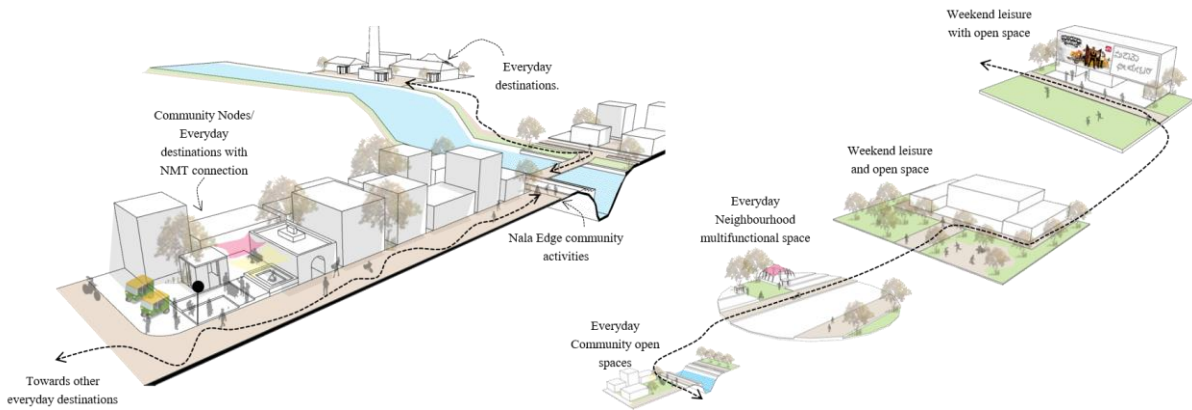


Figure 15 Schematic representation of local spaces everyday spaces connected to city destinations. Sources: Author

3.4. Approach

The demonstration site has 3 major overlapping zones that have different social groups, development trends and different aspects of operation of city. National Highway is a feature of divide and Karwar road as connector. Overlapping Zones have different social classes and developmental trends. Triggers were identified that are spots of existing social interdependencies’ which can be taken advantage to engage and bring people out of defined zones. Triggers within zones are spots of exiting interdependencies. These triggers of different social conditions will be used or taken advantage to engage and bring people within defined zones for Tangible and Intangible purpose.

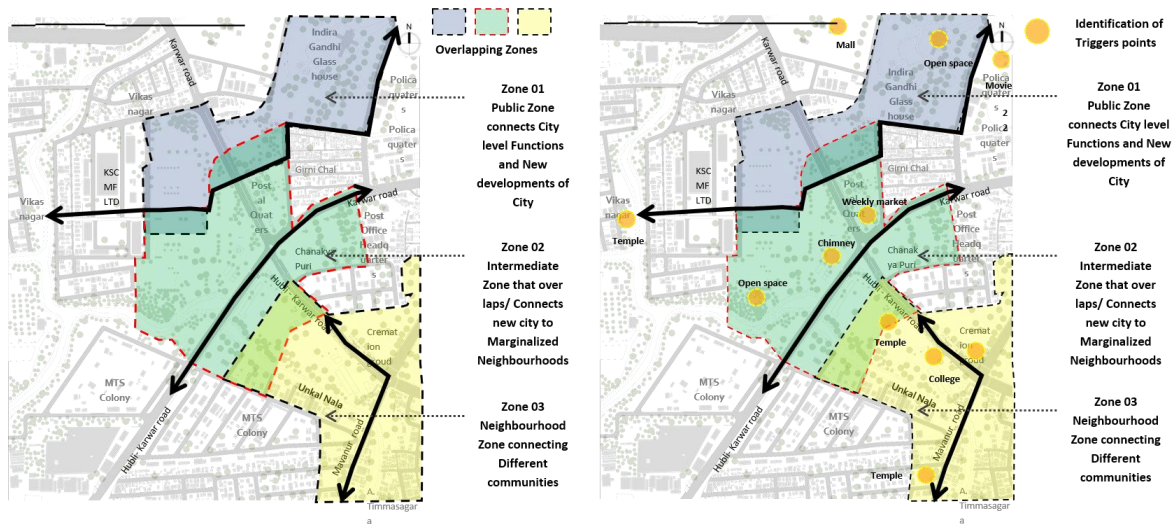


Figure 16 Existing Zones with triggers. Source: Author

Further new hotspots can be introduced to create spots of activities while engaging existing triggers. These now create relationship between elements and constitute social groups. Tangible and Intangible hotspots as reaction to the triggers to create spots of activities while engaging with existing triggers. This creates relationship between elements existing on site and constituent groups. Further utilizing the potential of nala new linkages are introduced to integrate urban context activating the corridors through nodes. This new socio-ecological seam acts as a pivot along which life gets reviled.

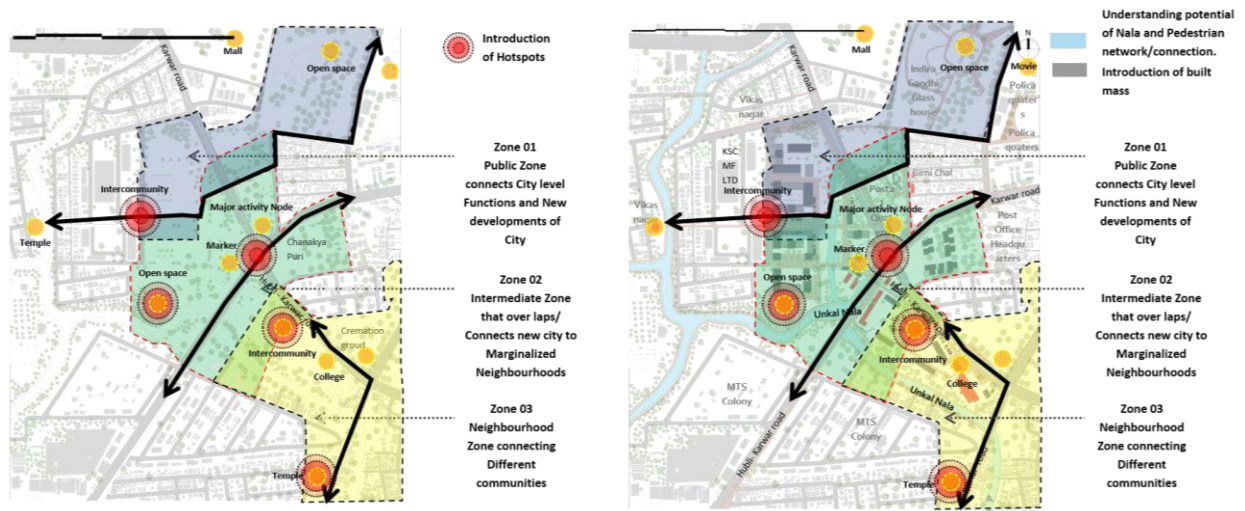


Figure 17 New introduced hotspots between exiting triggers and overlapping zones. Utilizing linkages, nala and new introduced mass as containers of public space. Source: Author.

Unkal Nala is now a major social-ecological seam connecting destinations integrating Urban context next to it. New networks and linkages can be introduced to increase accessibility within zones while also activating with functions. Thus, connecting different interfaces where ecologically driven open space system informs development around it.

The built and functions become container of activities and open network. They now act as additions to create interfaces between open and existing functions on site. These would also form shaded open spaces and highlight exiting urban markers while engaging and containing activity within them. Built mass proposed as a remainder of connected urban seam to triggers and hotspots that enhance the public life. The zones and functions on the site were introduced defining the connection to marginalized areas and the seam that behaves as a catalyst to socio economic and socio ecological inclusivity. Typologies of built use can be achieved understanding aspiration of stakeholder and city with added layers that bind the area together which are tangible in nature.

4. Conclusion

Developing cities do not need grand visions but they need adjustments that are unique to define their culture. Hubli was an attempt to understand the larger picture that most developing cities are undergoing similar changes that cities like Bangalore and Delhi once did.

The approach that was attempted to integrate marginalized into the city fabric through spaces produced with incompleteness as catalysts where freedom is given to each who completes the space and the activities create the complete picture. This now provides a perspective to find layers between the wants and needs of the city to enhance its everyday life and social wellbeing.

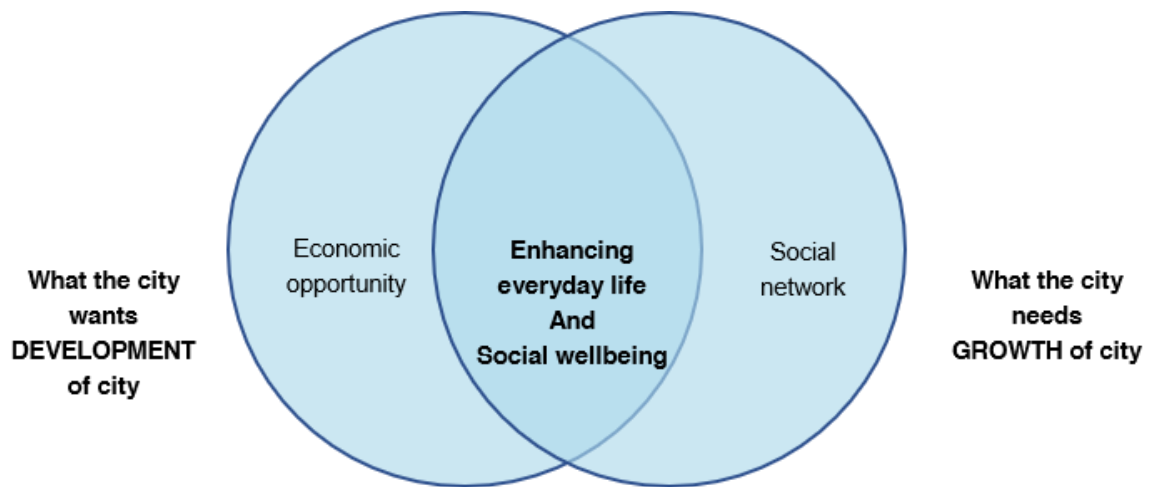


Figure 18 Conclusion. Source: Author

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WEALTHY
TO HEALTHY
CITIES

URBANISM AND
PLANNING FOR
THE WELL-BEING
OF CITIZENS

3-6 OCTOBER
2022
BRUSSELS
BELGIUM