The Kampung Metropolis

Applying the social values from the Kampungs for an alternative vision for urban development in Jakarta.

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Photo taken during fieldtrip 30 December 2026

Context

1580 Jayakarta, fishing village and part of Sultanate Bantan

1619 Batavia marked as new trade hub for VOC trade activities

1650 Expansion to Ommelanden

1700 Construction of infrastructures under Willem Daendels

1750 Introduction of Wijkenstelsel policy: urban kampungs

1850 Jayakarta, fishing village and part of Sultanate Bantan

1900 Clear segregation between

1940-1945 World War II: Japanese reign over Indonesia

1945 Declaration of Independence by Soekarno and Hatta

1968 Soeharto's new order regime after massacres of communist and Chinese

1970 Rapid economic development: Social housing and kampung improvement policies

1975-1995 Creation of New Towns in peripheries results in Desakota development

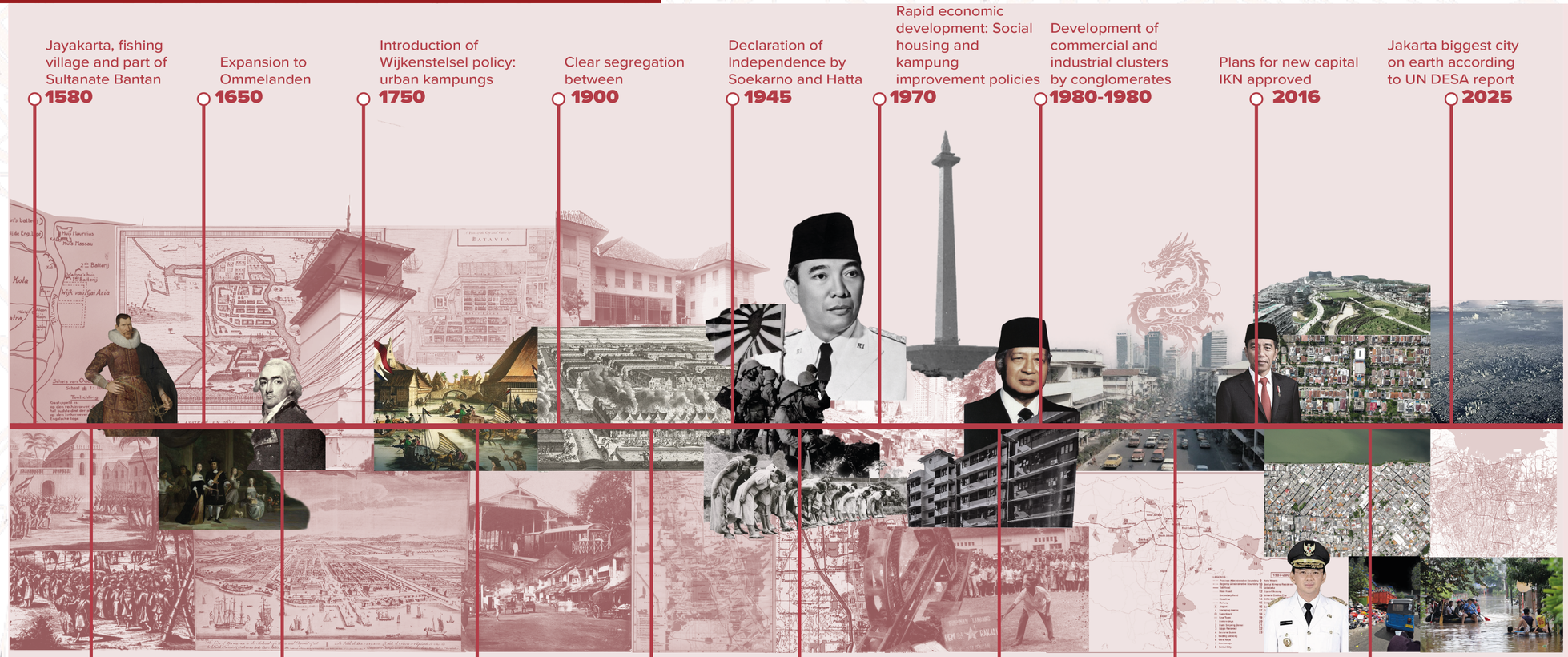
1980-1980 Development of commercial and industrial clusters by conglomerates

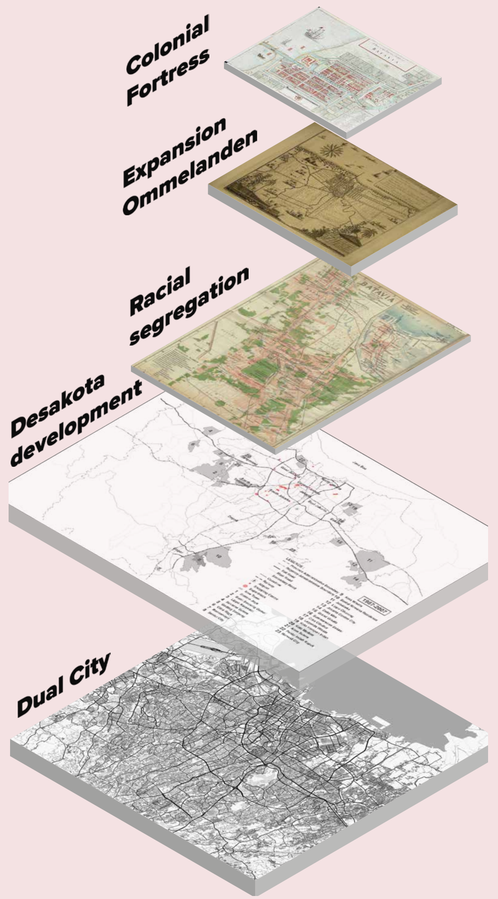
1998 Fall of Soeharto after economic downfall

2016 Plans for new capital IKN approved

2010 Dual city among environmental pressures.

2025 Jakarta biggest city on earth according to UN DESA report

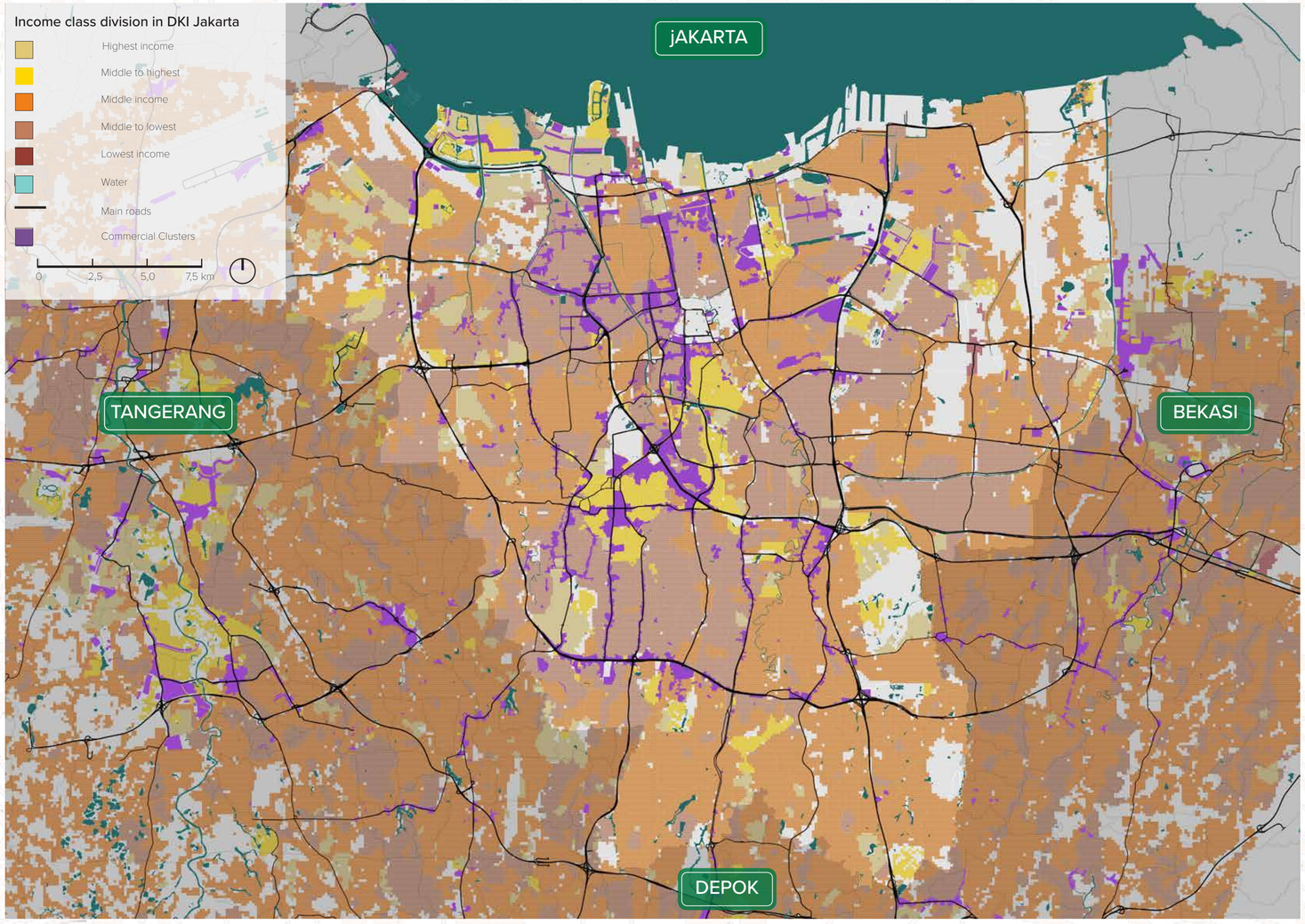




Timeline: From marshlands to Dual City.

Jakarta’s continuous path towards Duality

Neoliberal urbanism is a continuation of segregation in urban planning.



Map of income classes compared to infrastructures.

Informal vs formal

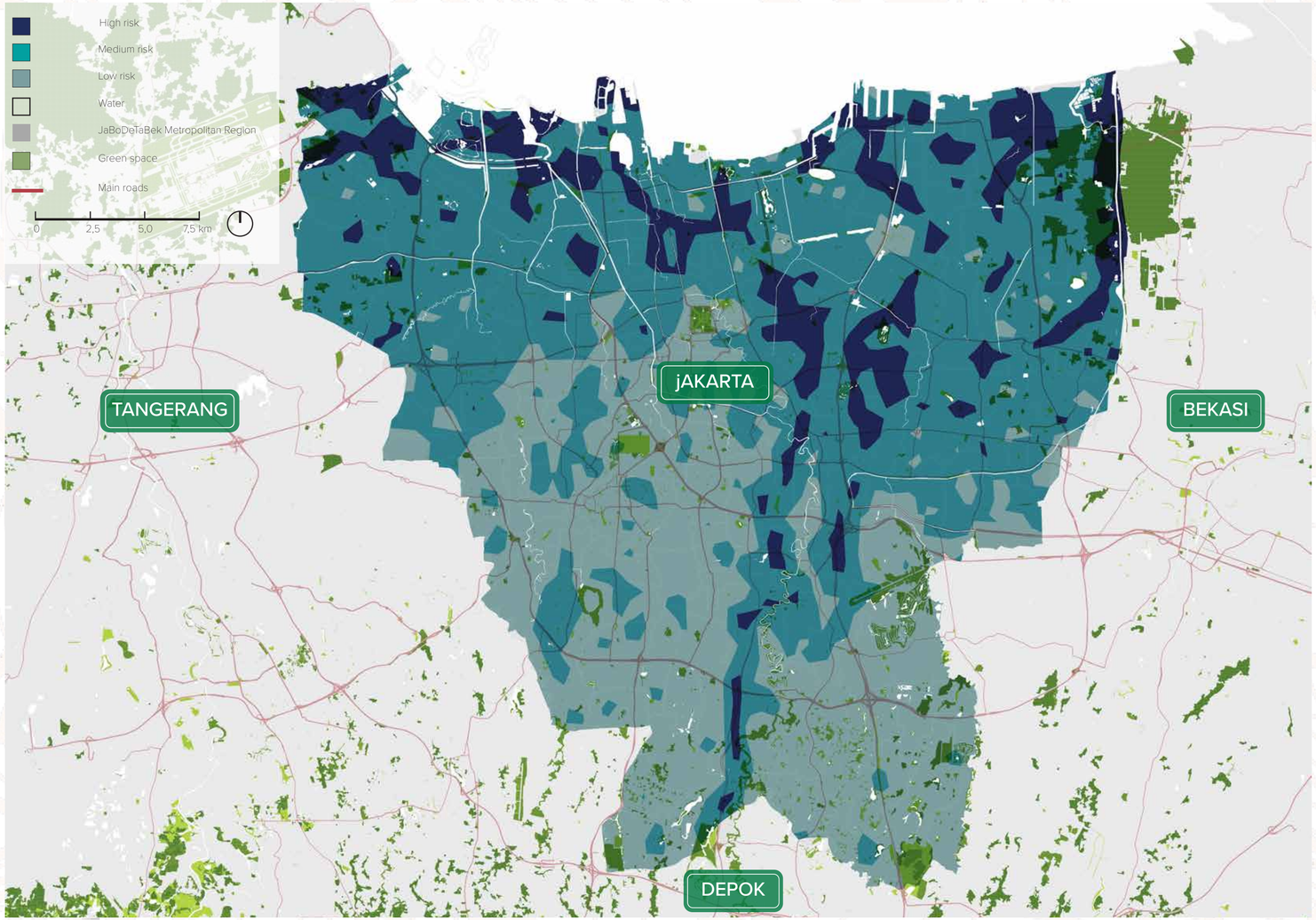
Threat of gentrification and eviction of informal communities.

Dual City in Muara Angke-Kapuk Muara (Google Earth 2022)

Environmental issues

Duality and growth amplifies the environmental crisis in Jakarta:

- Flooding;
- Pollution;
- Environmental degradation.

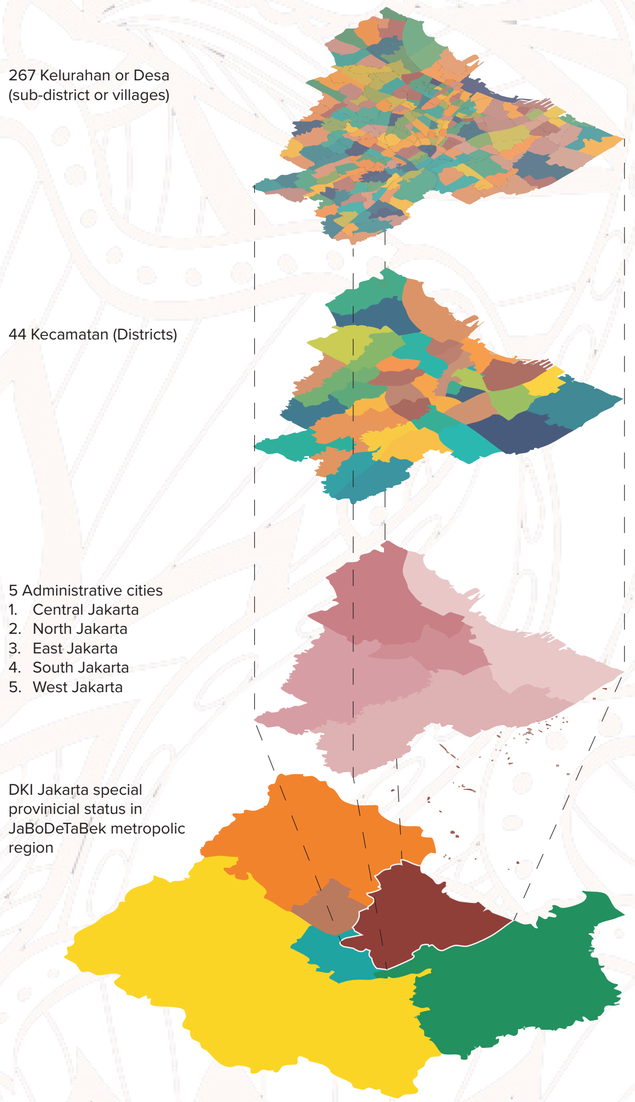


Flood risk in Jakarta

A complex politcal ecology

Since democratisation, responsibilities delegated to local governments.

- Low transparency among governments.
- Higher governments still hold power over planning.
- Subjected to nepotism and corruption.



Fragmentation after the fall of authocratic regime 1998

An alternative towards urban planning?

- The Kampungs are organised through social practices and community establishment.
- Social values that accurately represent Indonesian culture that are currently lacking in urban planning.

“Whereas good things are shared; burdens are equally shared and together the village carries on supporting each other through whatever may pass.”

— Lisa Scharoun (The Kampong Spirit - symposium Design for Change Singapore, 2024)

The Kampungs as resilient urban community.

Problem Statement

Kampungs *are Indonesian* ***informal settlements*** *that are established through* ***a self-organising community*** *based on principles of* ***solidarity*** *and* ***resilience*** *(Tugas, 2008). Their intangible* ***social infrastructures*** *and their* ***informal economies*** *have shown great* ***resilience*** *in an dynamic and highly complex metropolis (Low, 2000). These systems are frequently overlooked and disregarded by officials and planners who tend to emphasise the negative aspects of the Kampungs. Can these* ***values*** *from informal communities somehow provide a more* ***socio-spatially just*** *and* ***sustainable approach*** *towards urban planning, moving away from current* ***top-down*** *approaches that have fostered the* ***Dual City*** *in* ***Jakarta****?*

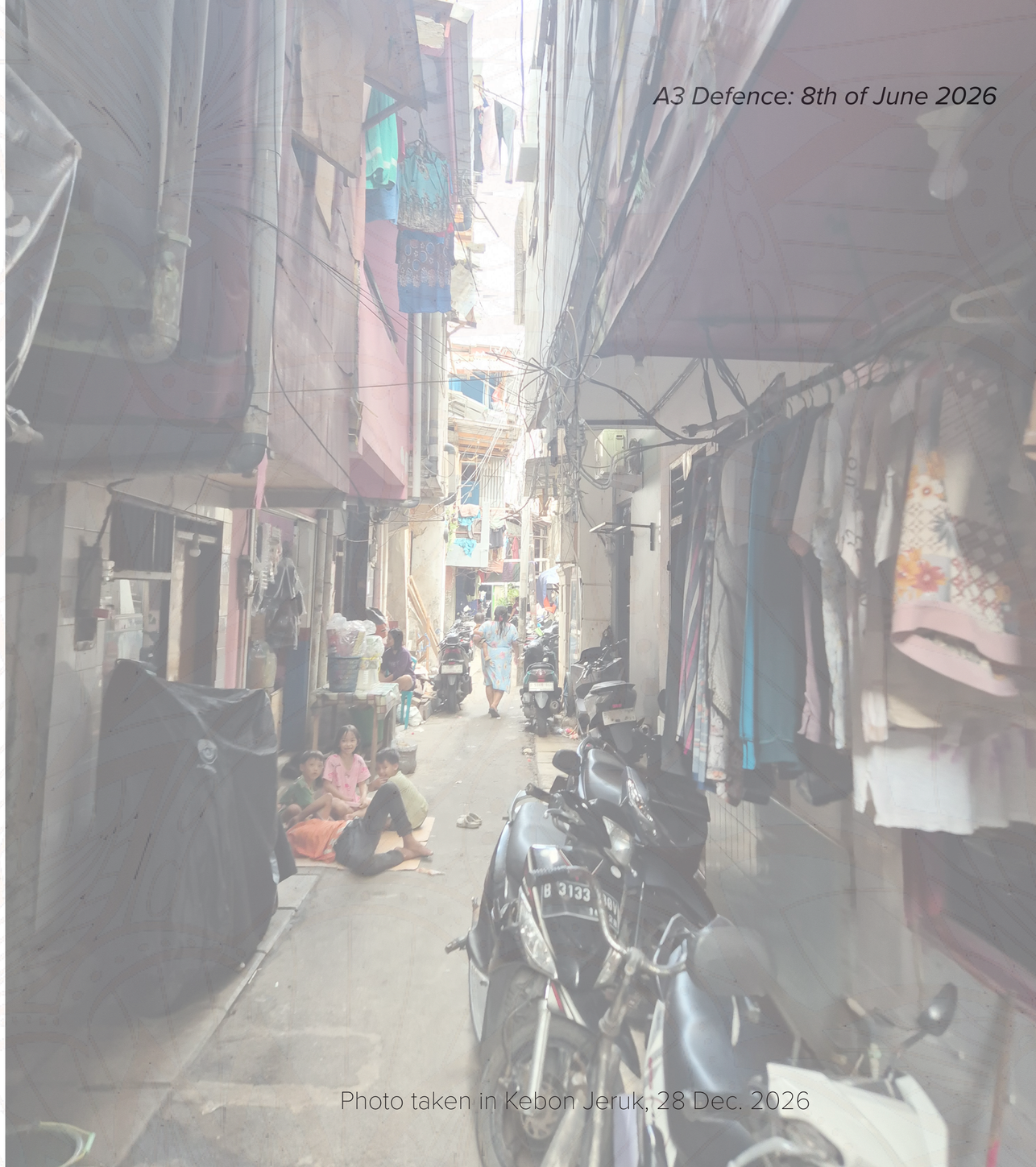


Photo taken in Kebon Jeruk, 28 Dec. 2026

Research Questions

*How can an **alternative spatial strategy** be developed using **embedded social practices** from the **Kampungs** to create a **just** and **sustainable urban development** in Jakarta?*

- SQ1. How have Kampungs ***emerged*** and ***developed*** over time into distinctive neighbourhoods in Jakarta?
- SQ2. Which ***social infrastructures*** and ***approaches*** to ***land use*** from the Kampungs provide a different approach to existing top-down ***spatial planning strategies*** of Jakarta?
- SQ3. How can the ***social oriented practices*** and ***principles*** embedded in Kampung neighbourhoods be ***spatially*** translated on the ***metropolitan scale*** of Jakarta?
- SQ4. Which key ***governance structures*** and ***policies*** should be developed to integrate traditional practices on a metropolitan scale?

Photo taken in Kebon Jeruk, 28 Dec. 2026

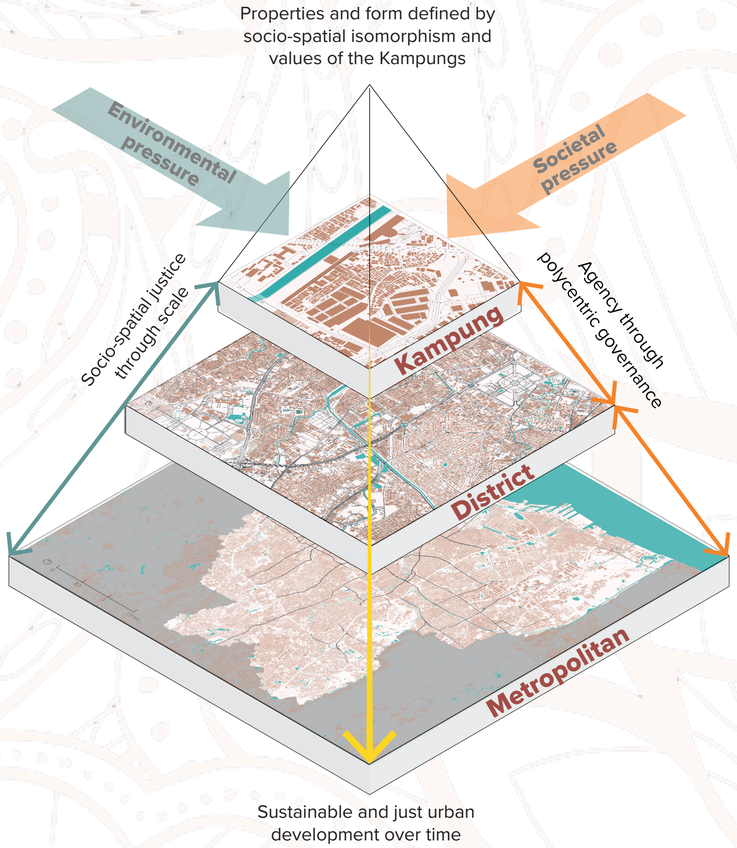
Plural Urbanism

Conceptual framework

- The city as highly diverse and complex systems that are constantly in conflict, competition and negotiation, therefore requires not only one solution.
- Analysing the city through 5 lenses that constantly interact with each other:
  - Agency
  - Form
  - Property
  - Scale
  - Time

(Ryan, 2017)

Aligns with the highly complex urban context of Jakarta and the Kampungs, and provides potential towards alternative planning practices.



Plural Urbanism in the context of Jakarta

Conceptual framework: Plural Urbanism in Jakarta.

Synthesis

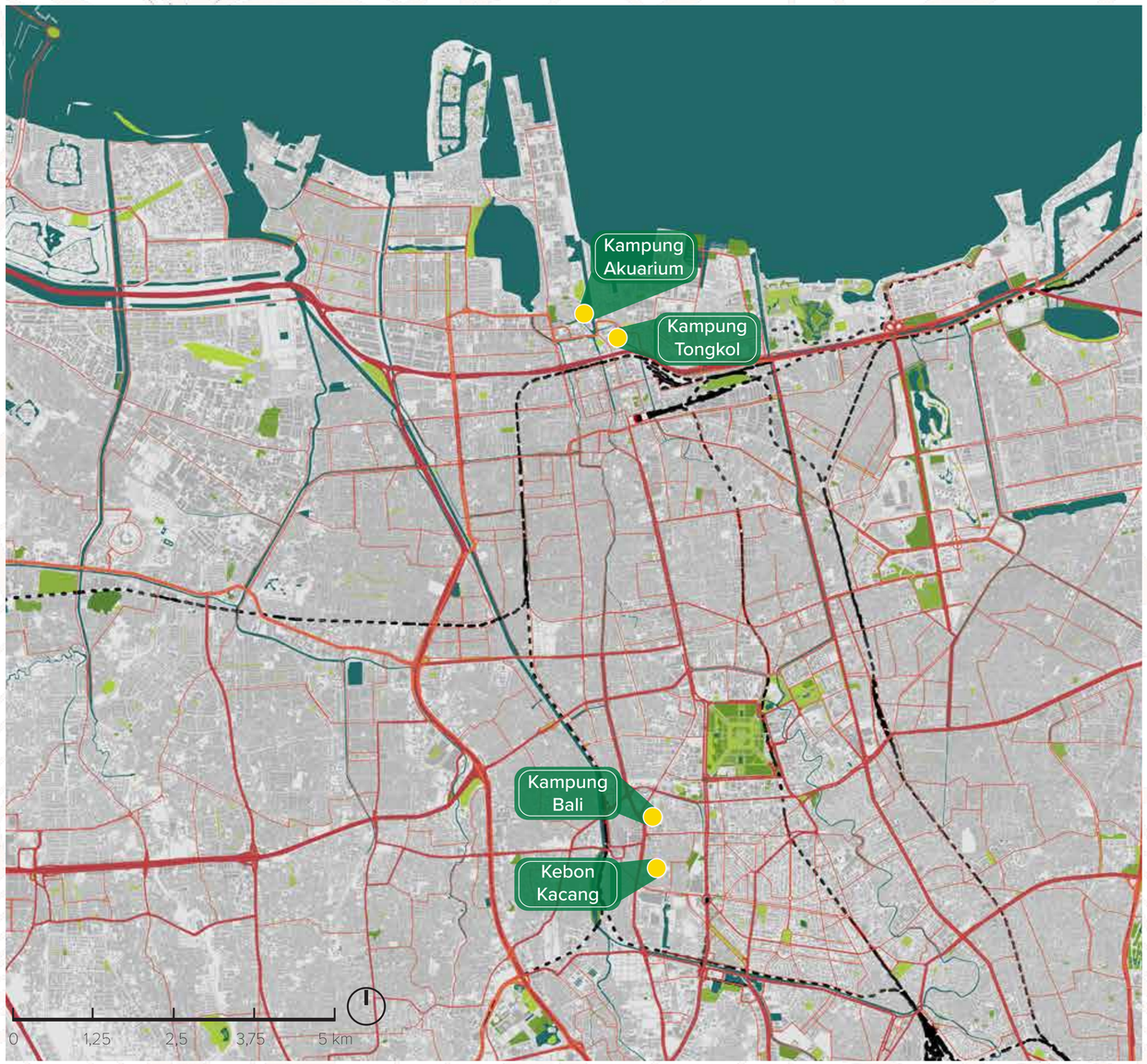
Analysing the values of four resilient Kampungs

Kampung Akuarium

Kampung Tongkol

Kebon Kacang

Kampung Bali



Map showing the locations of the studied Kampungs.

Analysis

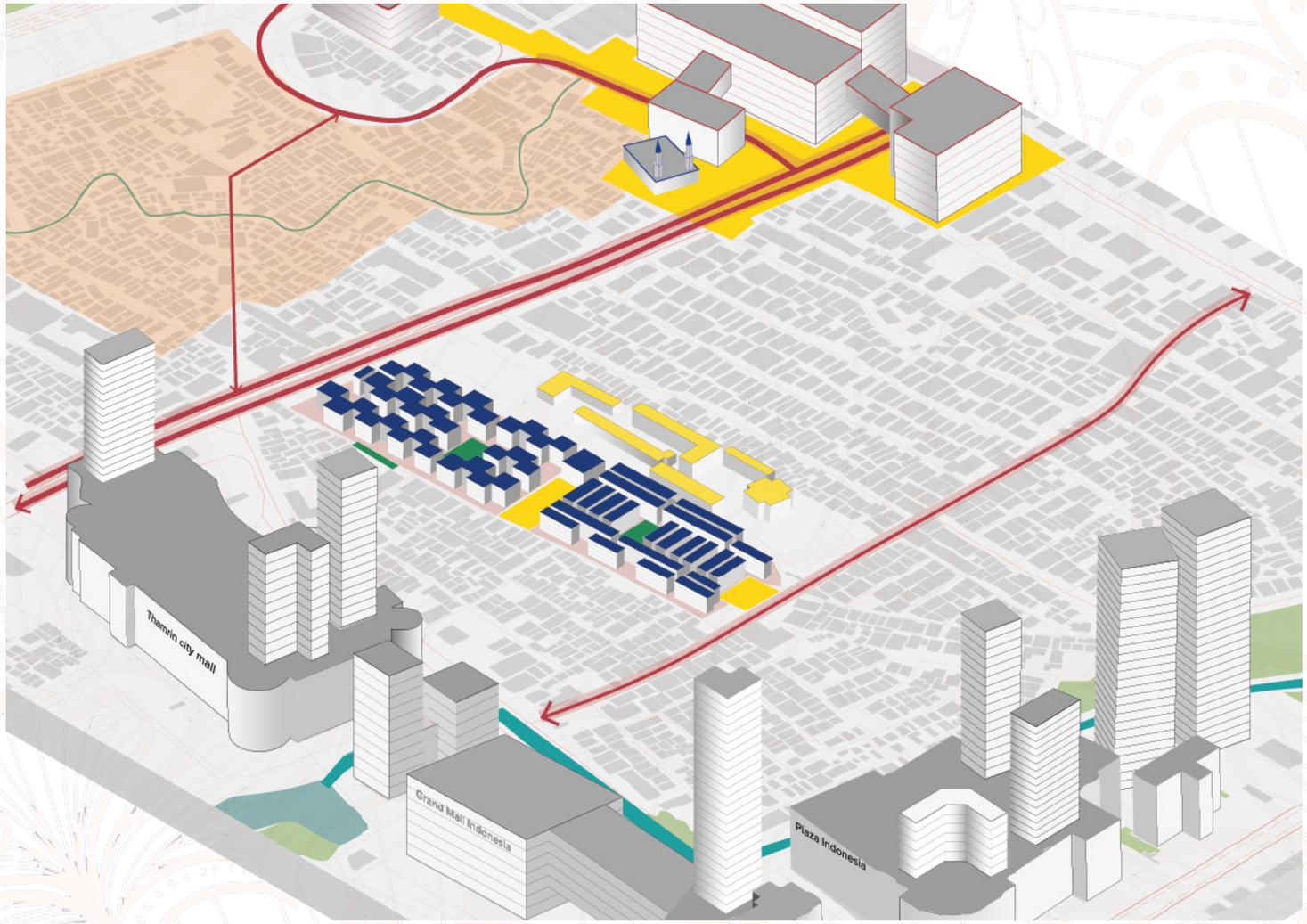
Kampung Akuarium & Tongkol

- Historical context provides amenities and way for advocacy.
- Key infrastructures in the area.
- Care and amenities provided in social housing complex.

Axometric showing the spatial elements related to Kampung Akuarium and Kampung Tongkol.

Kebon Kacang

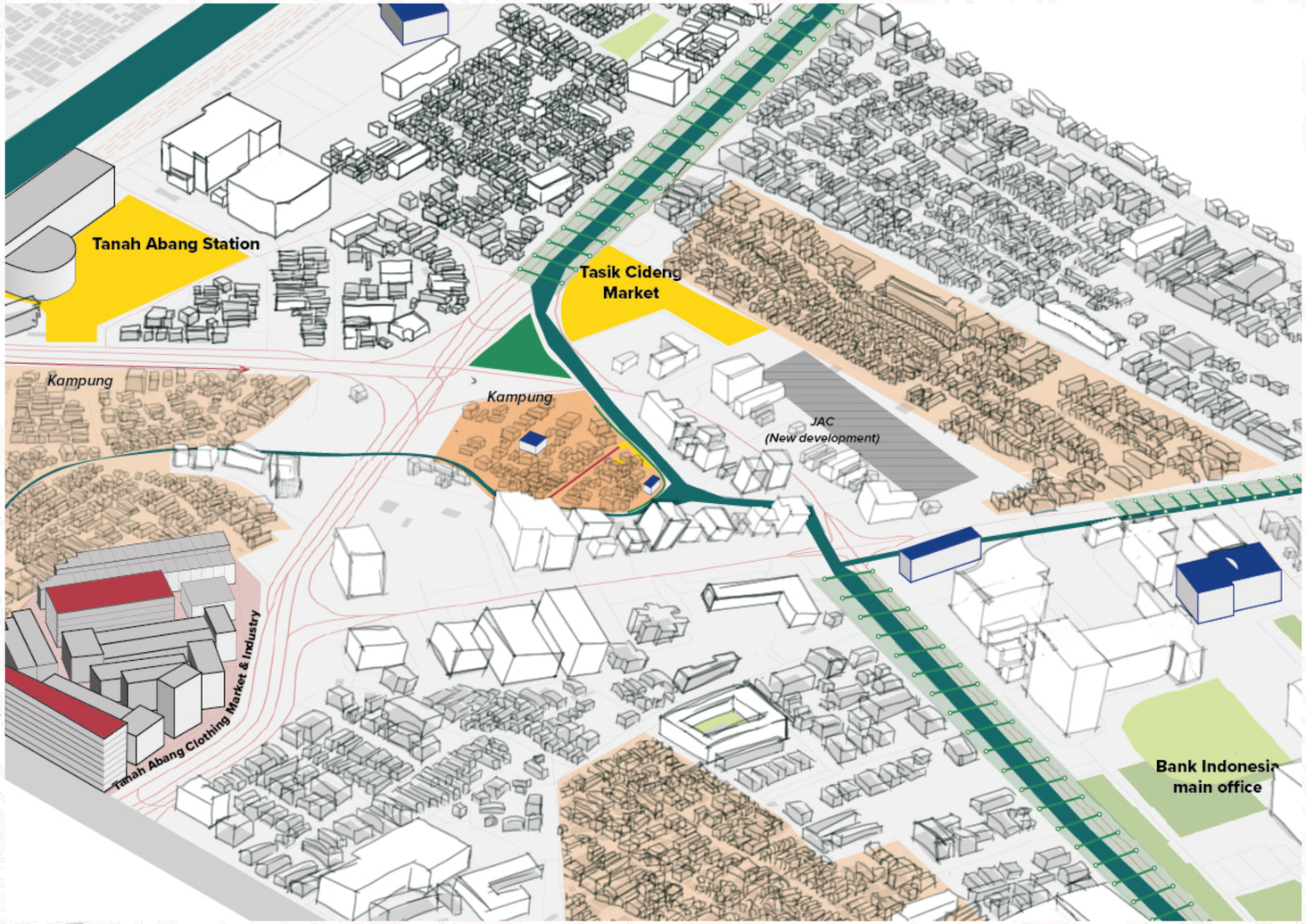
- Proximity to economic clusters.
- Core identity shaped along infrastructures.
- Care and amenities provided in social housing complex.



Axometric showing the spatial elements related to the Kampung Kebon Kacang.

Kampung Bali

- Proximity to Tanah Abang wholesale market helps aligning informal amenities & services;
- Key infrastructure node.

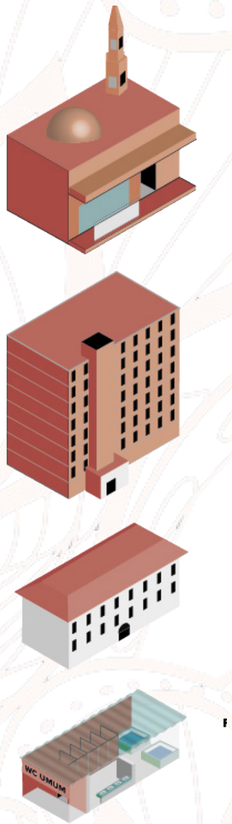


Axometric showing the spatial elements related to Kampung Bali.

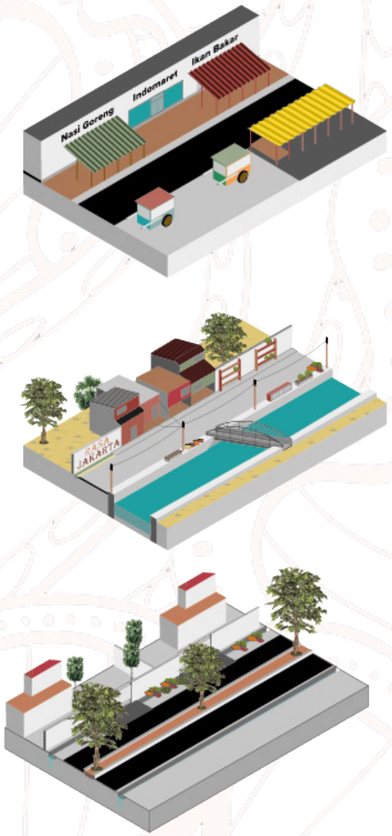
Spatial elements

- ***Buildings*** are clear representations of values.
- ***Corridors*** as connecting spaces between different urban districts.
- ***Open spaces*** provide plural usage and opportunities for relationship building.

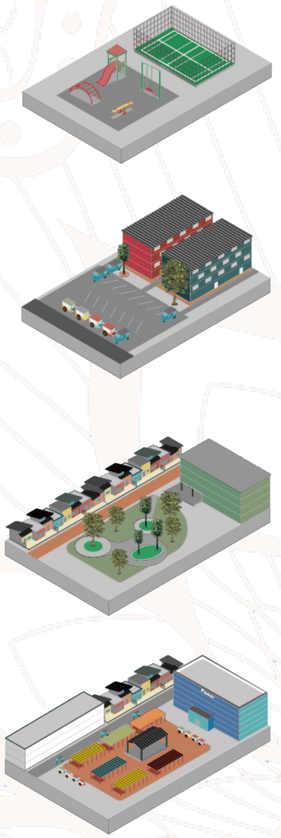
Buildings



Corridors



Open space



Diagrams of spatial elements that represent the values of Kampungs.

Identifying the values

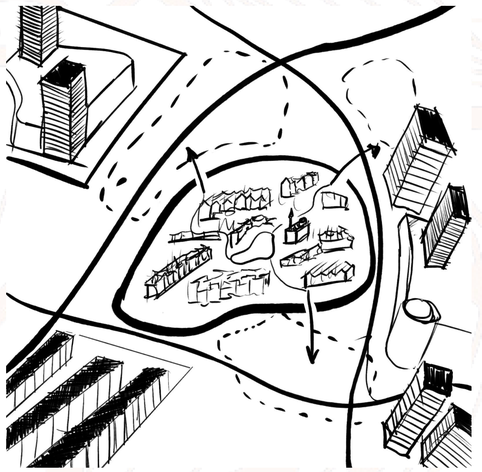
- ***Care*** through sharing utilities and resources that support the Kampung.
- ***Identity*** established through place-making and creating a sense of belonging and pride.
- ***Resilience*** shows through gradual developments and improving space in the Kampung.
- ***Ecology*** adds spatial quality to Kampungs and provides resources and advocacy.

Care **Identity** **Resilience** **Ecology**

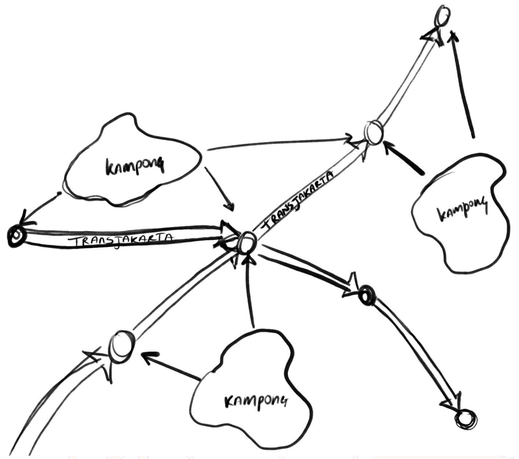
Collage representing the spatial implementations of the values.

Spatial principles

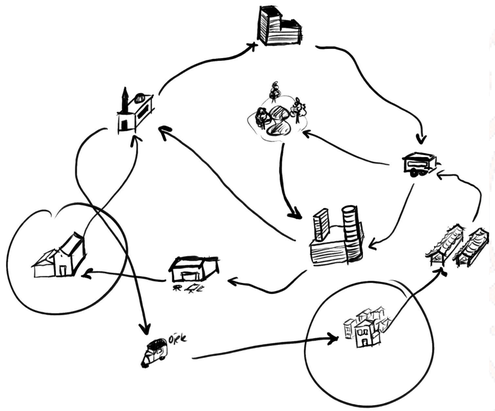
- Values not spatial thus not transferable on its own.
- Translate values into concrete spatial principles to create conditions in which they can materialise in different urban contexts.



Porous borders



Chain of amenities



Mobility networks

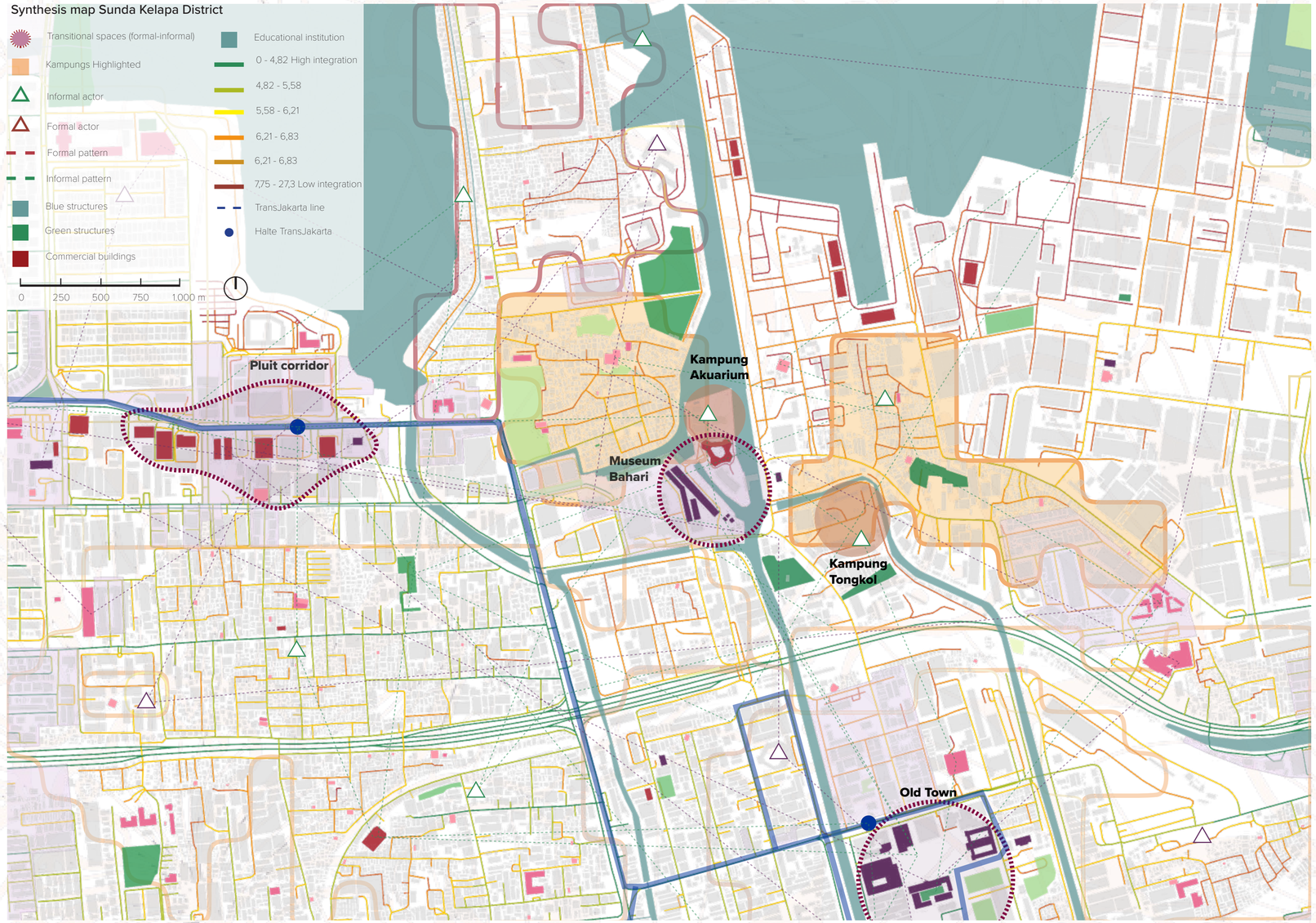
Ecological corridors

Four spatial principles for translating the values in concrete urban conditions.

Analysis Kampungs

Kampung Akuarium & Tongkol

- Resilient through historical palimpsest, providing key infrastructures.
- Opportunities for Kampungs to develop informal economies and enhance spatial quality.

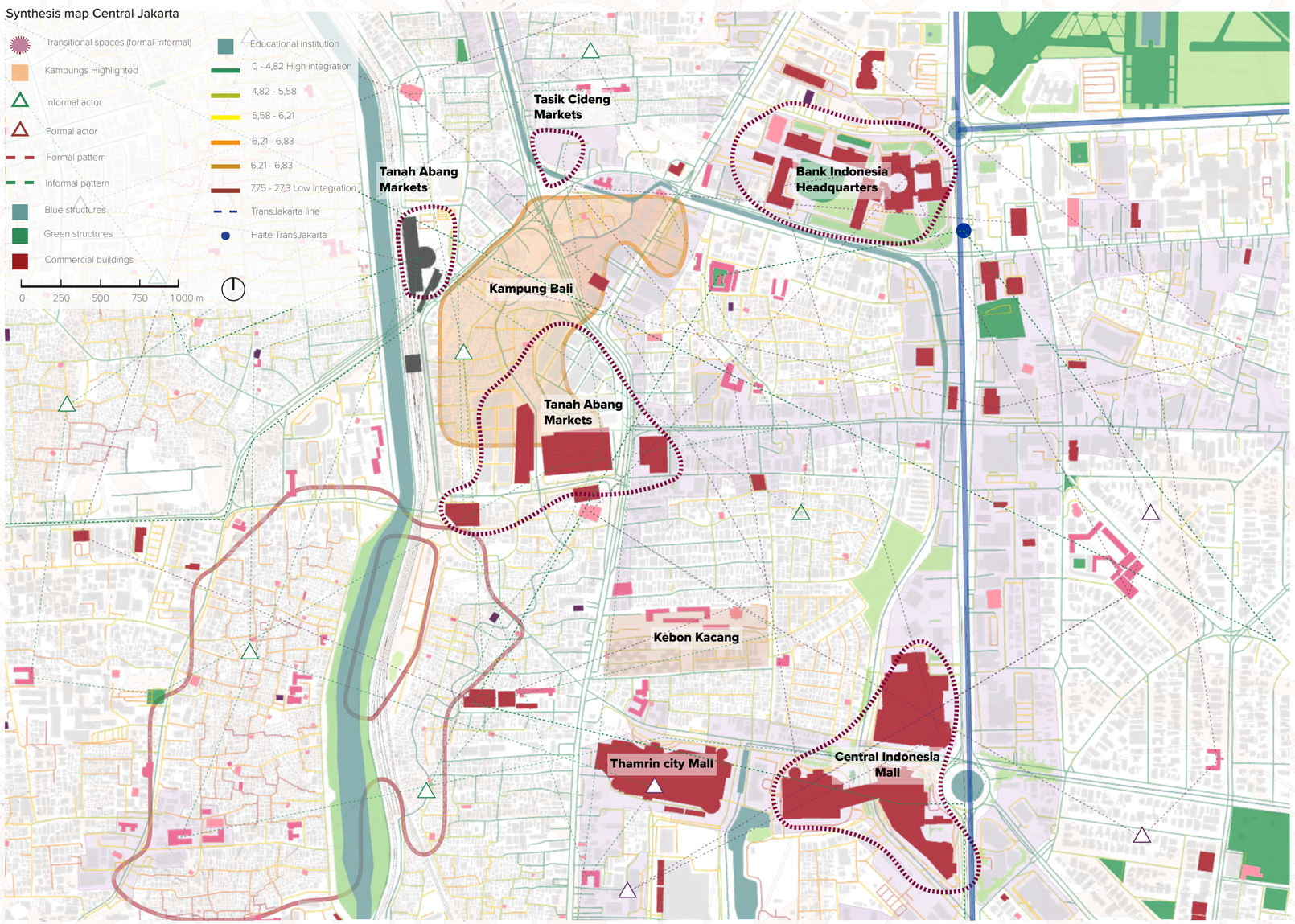


Synthesis map of Sunda Kelapa in North Jakarta.

Synthesis of principles

Kebon Kacang & Kampung Bali

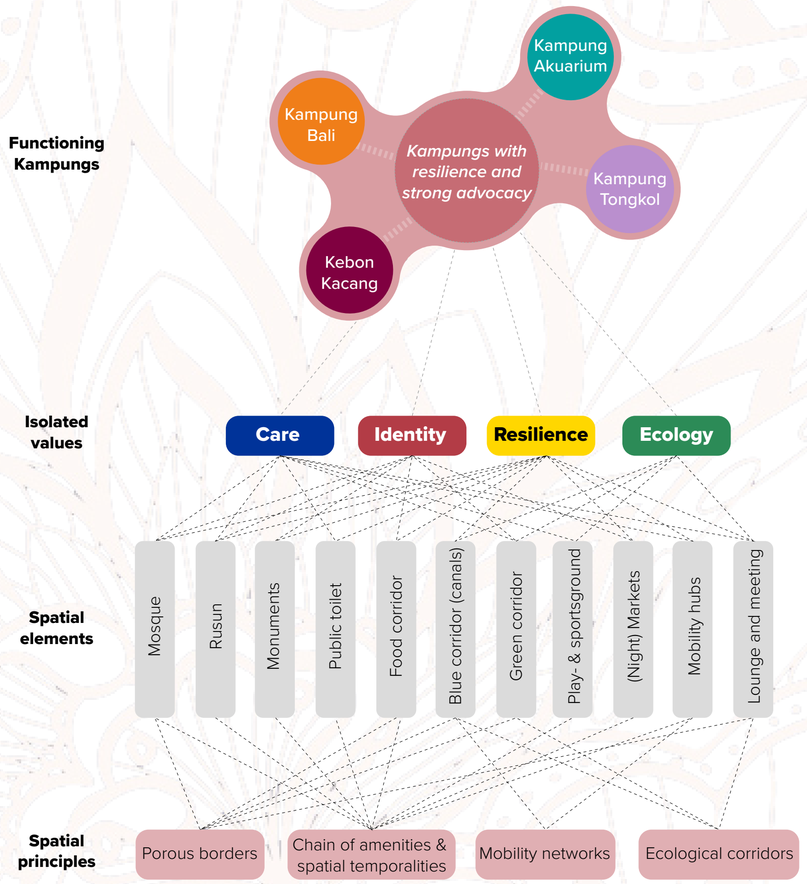
- Coexisting with economic clusters and key infrastructures support development informal economies of Kampungs making them resilient.



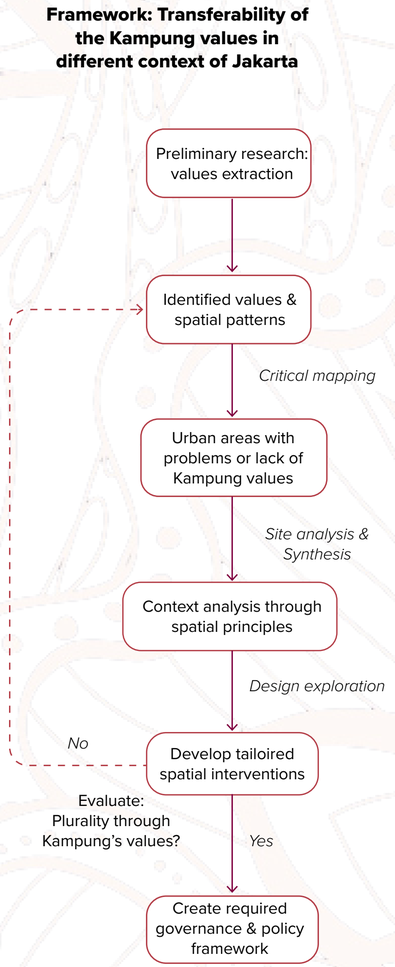
Synthesis map Central Jakarta

A workflow towards plurality

- Identify values;
- Translate the values in spatial principles;
- Critical spatial analysis in underperforming urban context;
- Design interventions derived from context specific conditions.



Value assessment framework



Framework for plurality through informality.

Manifesto from the Kampung

- Diversity of the Kampungs and their values show the foundation for Jakarta that is being lost.
- A bottom-up approach to include the Kampungs is more spatially just.
- A paradigm shift to include social values towards more just and plurality in Jakarta.

“Kampung is the space where people can learn to be a Jakartan, to be an Indonesian”

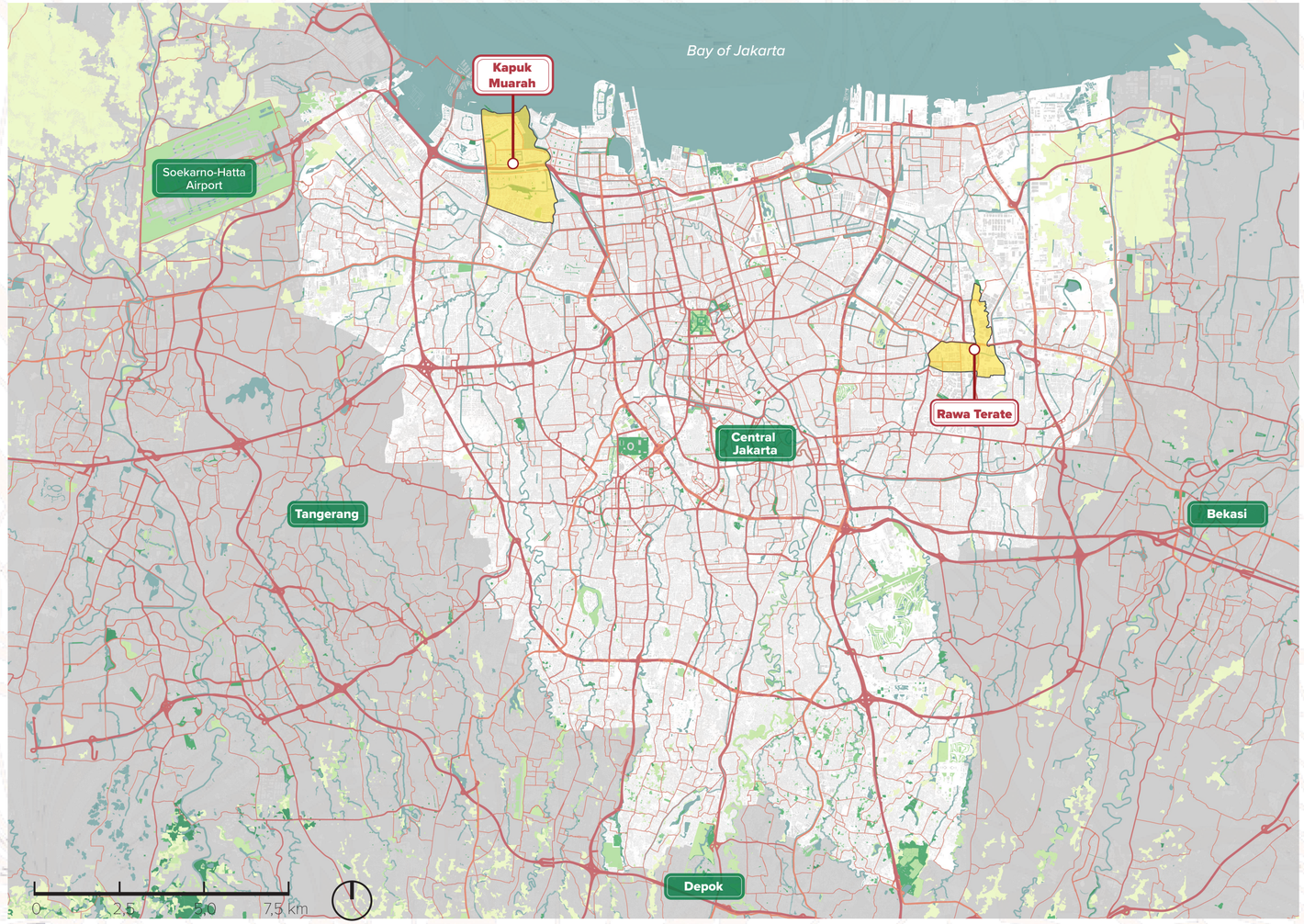
- 4th Governor Ali Sadikin (1966-1977)

Postcard from Jakarta, the Kampung Metropolis.

Applying the values

Contrasting contexts

- ***Kapuk Muara***: Developed district but lack of community and heavy segregation with threat of gentrification.
- ***Rawa Terate***: Industrial district with severe Kampungs plagued by environmental externalities.

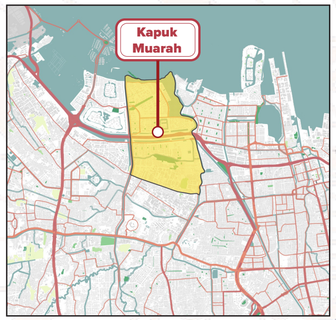


Locations of intervention areas

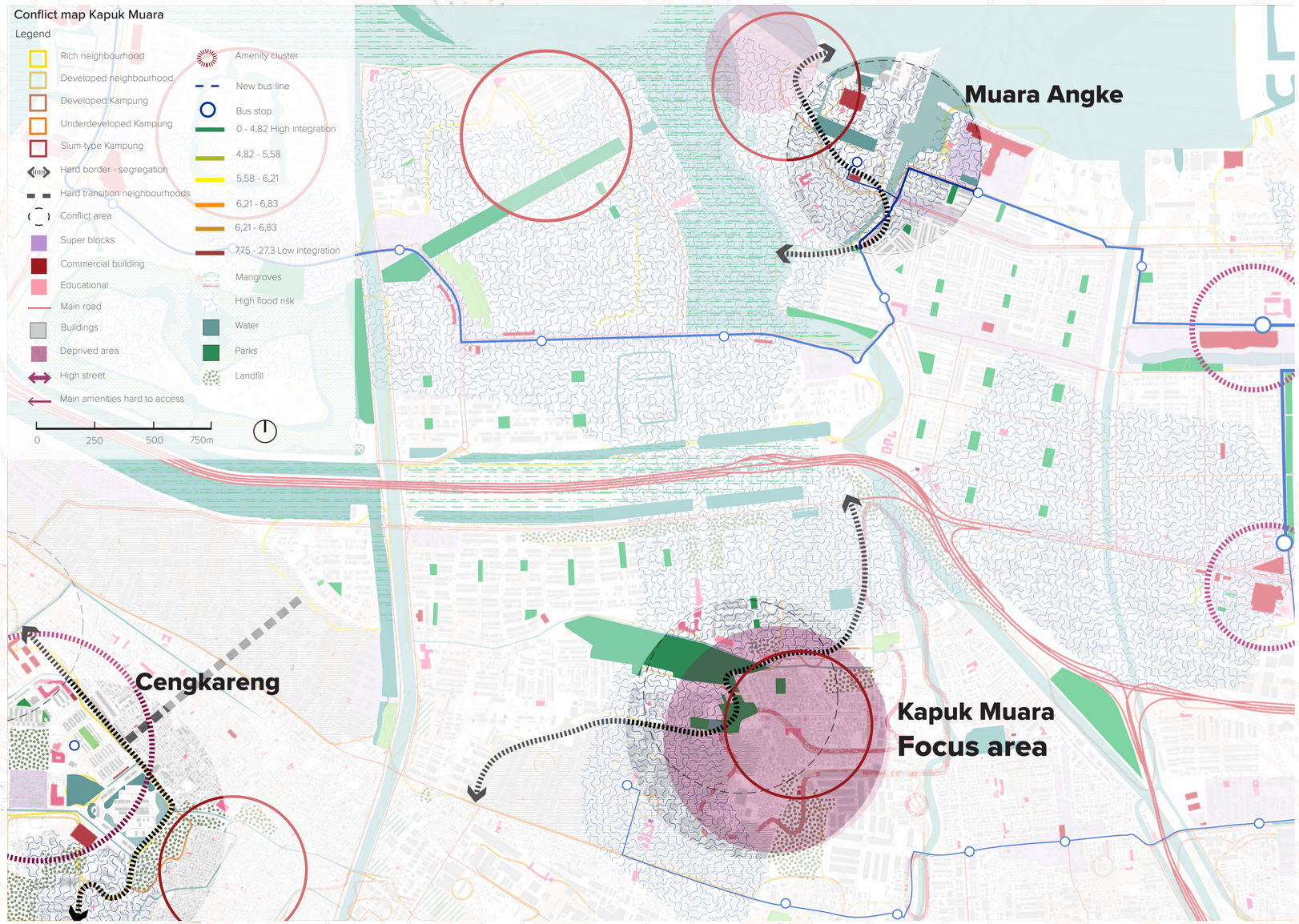
Kapuk Muara

Conflicts between spatial principles

Dual city is present trhough barriers between informal and developed and inequality in amenity distribution.



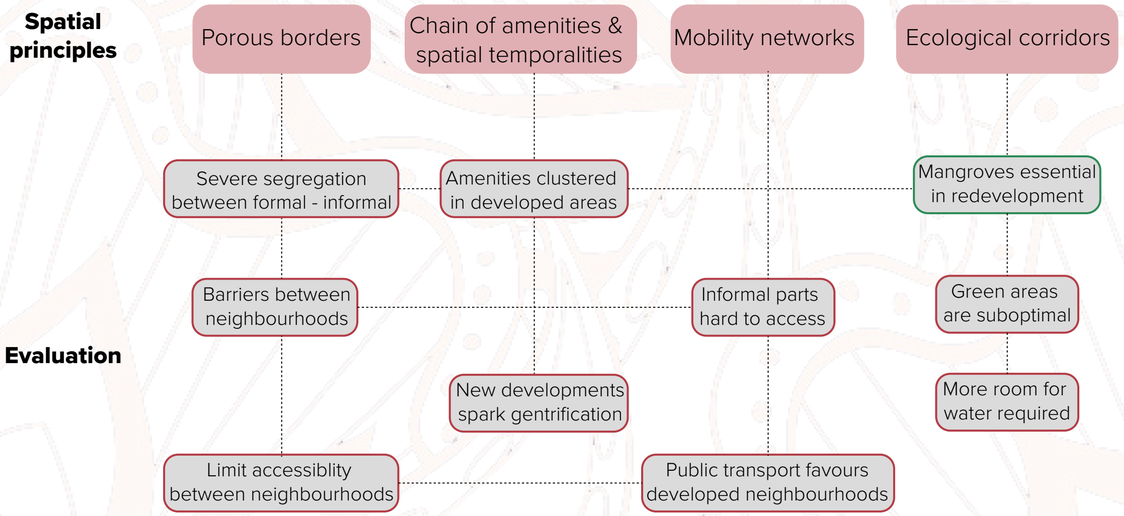
Location



Conflict map Kapuk Muara.

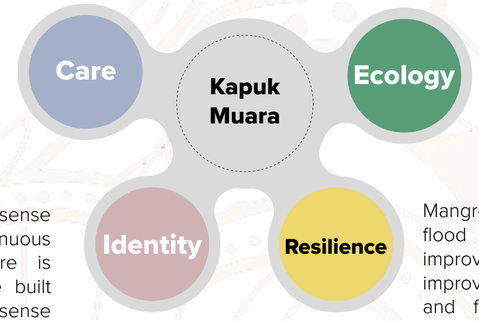
Evaluation

- Lack of care towards informal communities due to profound segregation through barriers between areas.
- Central identity missing in developed areas.
- Ecological foundation is strong, but can be improved to integrate the areas and provide new amenities.



Neighbourhoods are introverted and highly segregated, practices of care can be identified locally but social cohesion between areas is not present. Continuous development foster gentrification endangering long-lasting Kampung communities

New developments lack a sense of identity due to homogenuous design, Indonesian culture is often not reflected in the built environment, therefore no sense of belonging is created. Traditional neighbourhoods are prone to gntrification.



Area has strong ecological foundation with Mangroves and water infrastructure, plots of empty land are sometimes unused or used as landfills, goal is to integrate and improve the ecosystem.

Mangroves provide some degree of flood protection, but can be improved. Overall resilience can be improved by integration of informal and formal economies. Transition towards sustainable economies can leverage the Kampungs from poverty and develop the area holistically

Value assessment Kapuk Muara district.

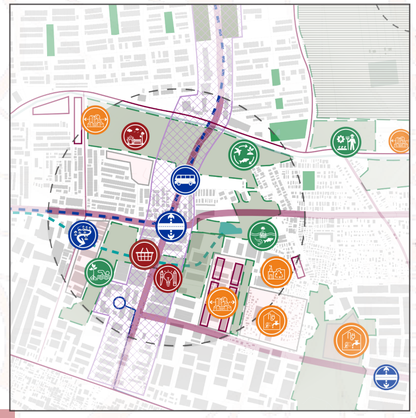
Key areas & Strategic Interventions

- Enhance blue-green infrastructure through mangroves.
- Providing ecosystem services that align with needs of both communities.
- Improving street network of conflict areas for integration.

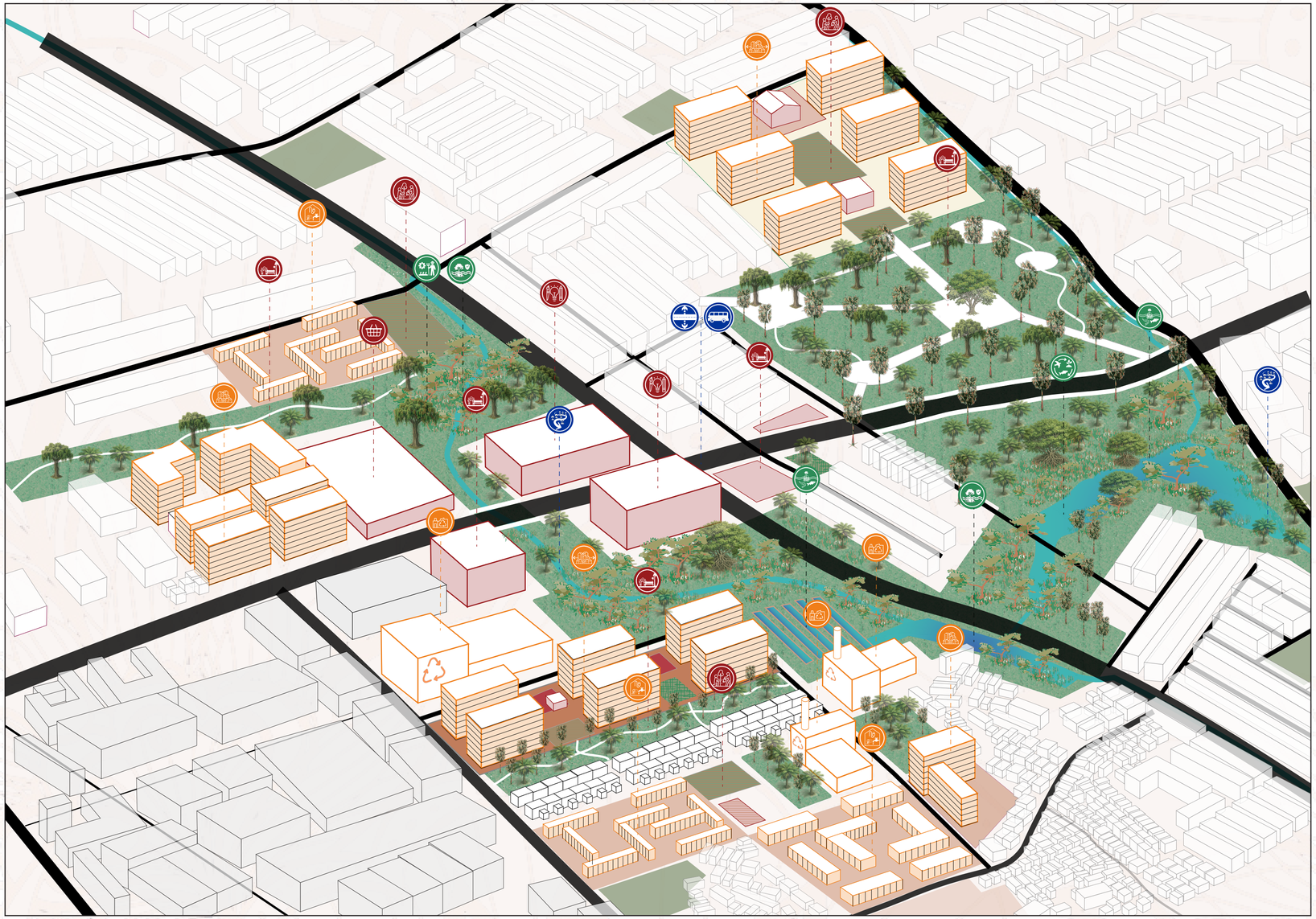
Strategic plan Kapuk Muara

A new heart for Kapuk Muara district

- New traffic corridor to integrate the area with bus service.
- Extending blue-green corridors providing ecosystem services and community integration.



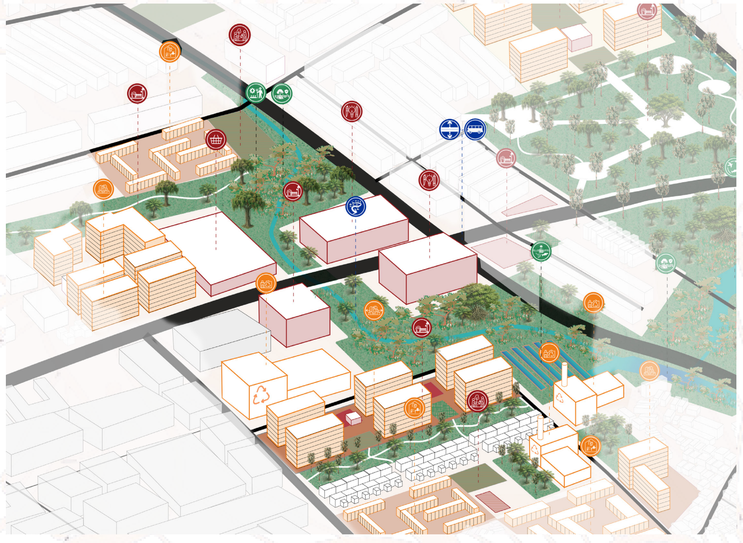
Zoom in Kapuk Muara

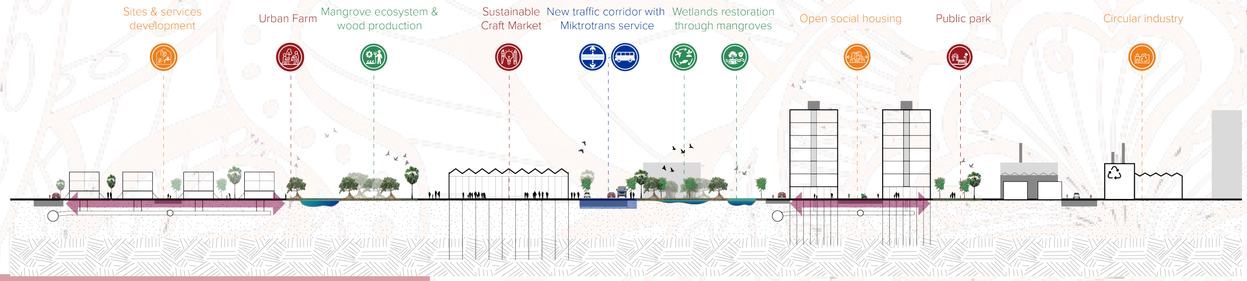


Strategic plan Kapuk Muara

Strategic interventions

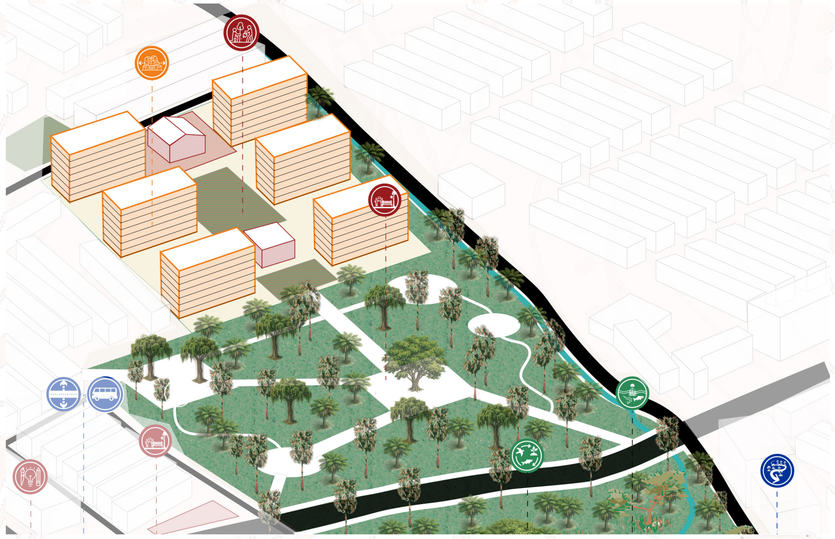
New activity to open borders

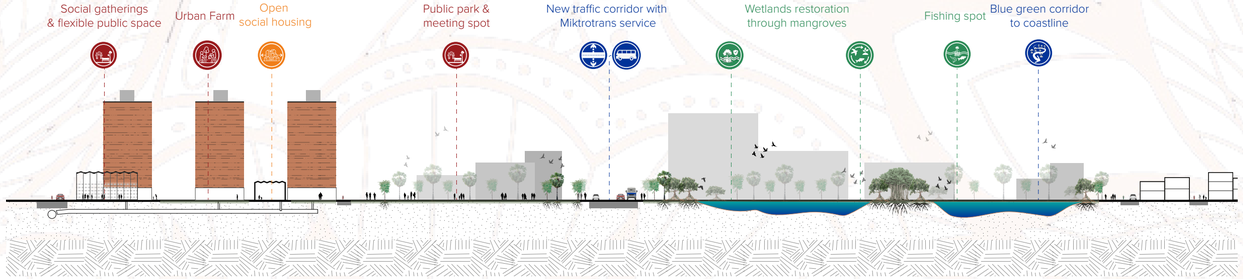




Zoom in inclusive area

Space for social and ecological redevelopment



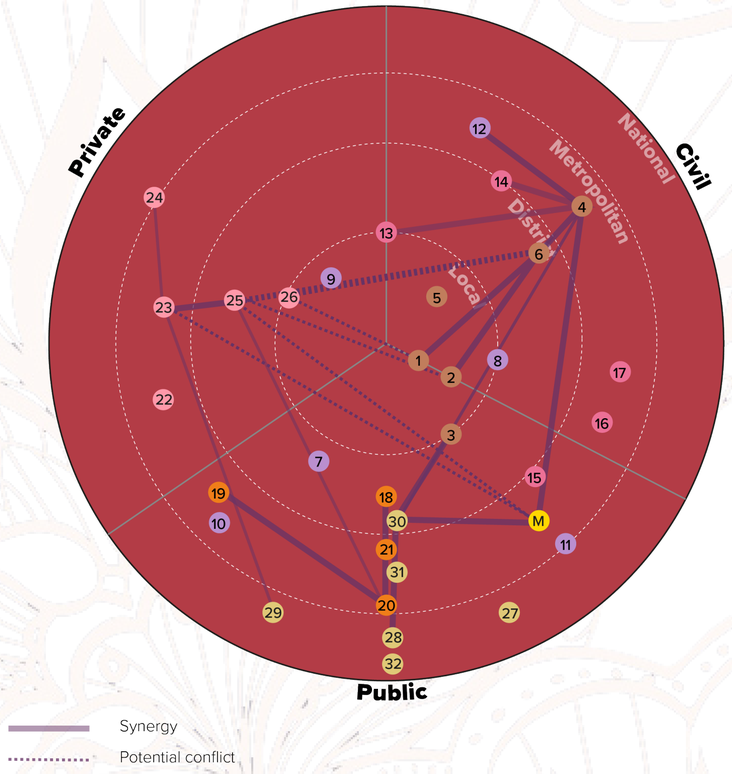


Zoom in socio-ecolgical area

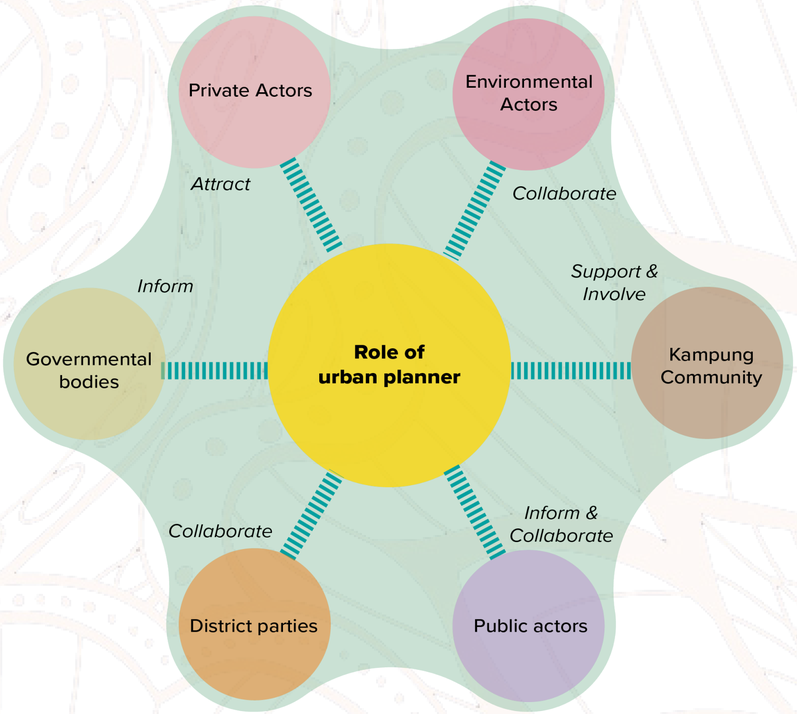
Strategic implementation

- Attract and persuade private actors to integrate surrounding communities in development.
- Support Kampung communities through partnerships with NGOs and civil stakeholders.

Conflict - synergy diagram

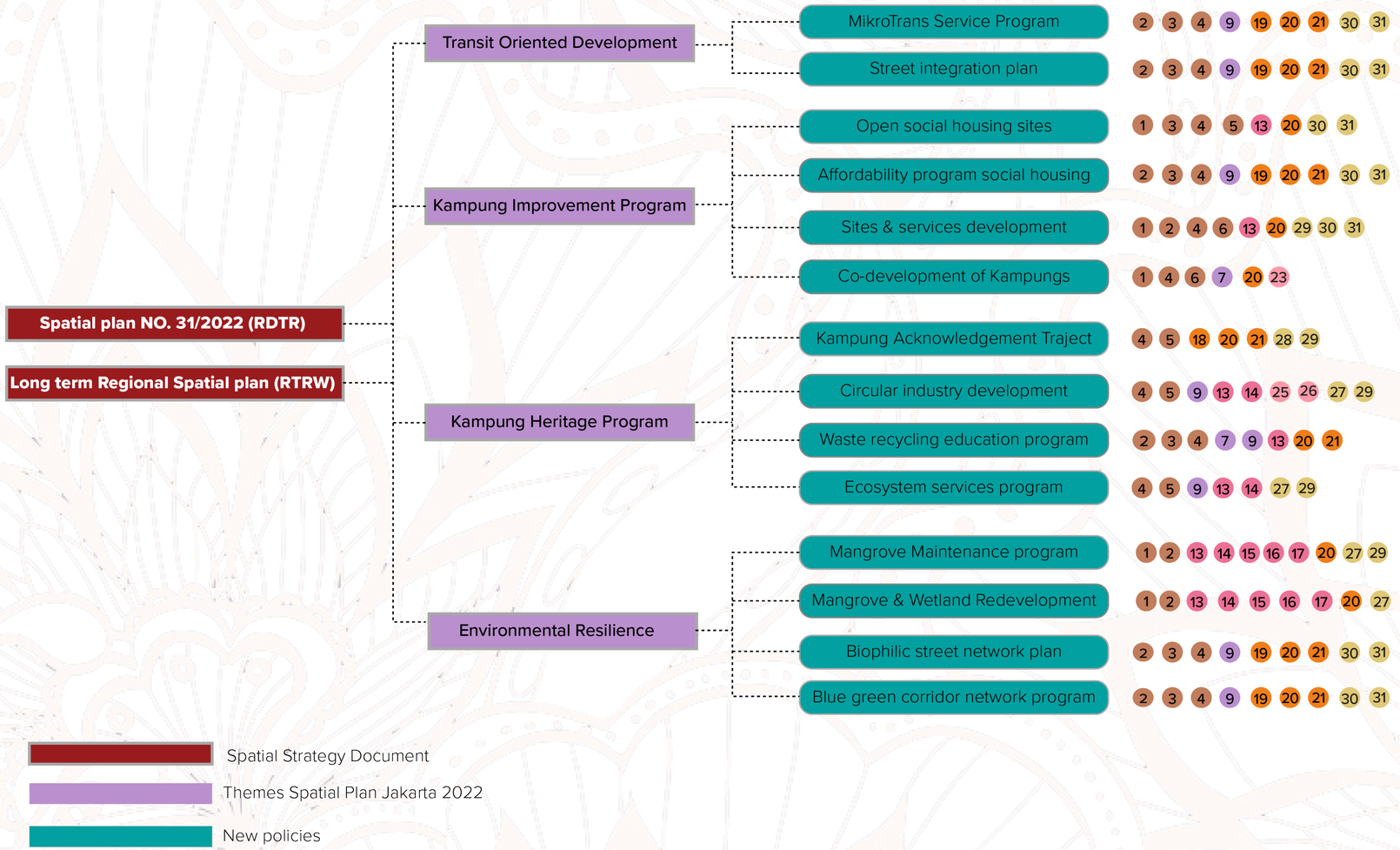


Polycentric governance diagram



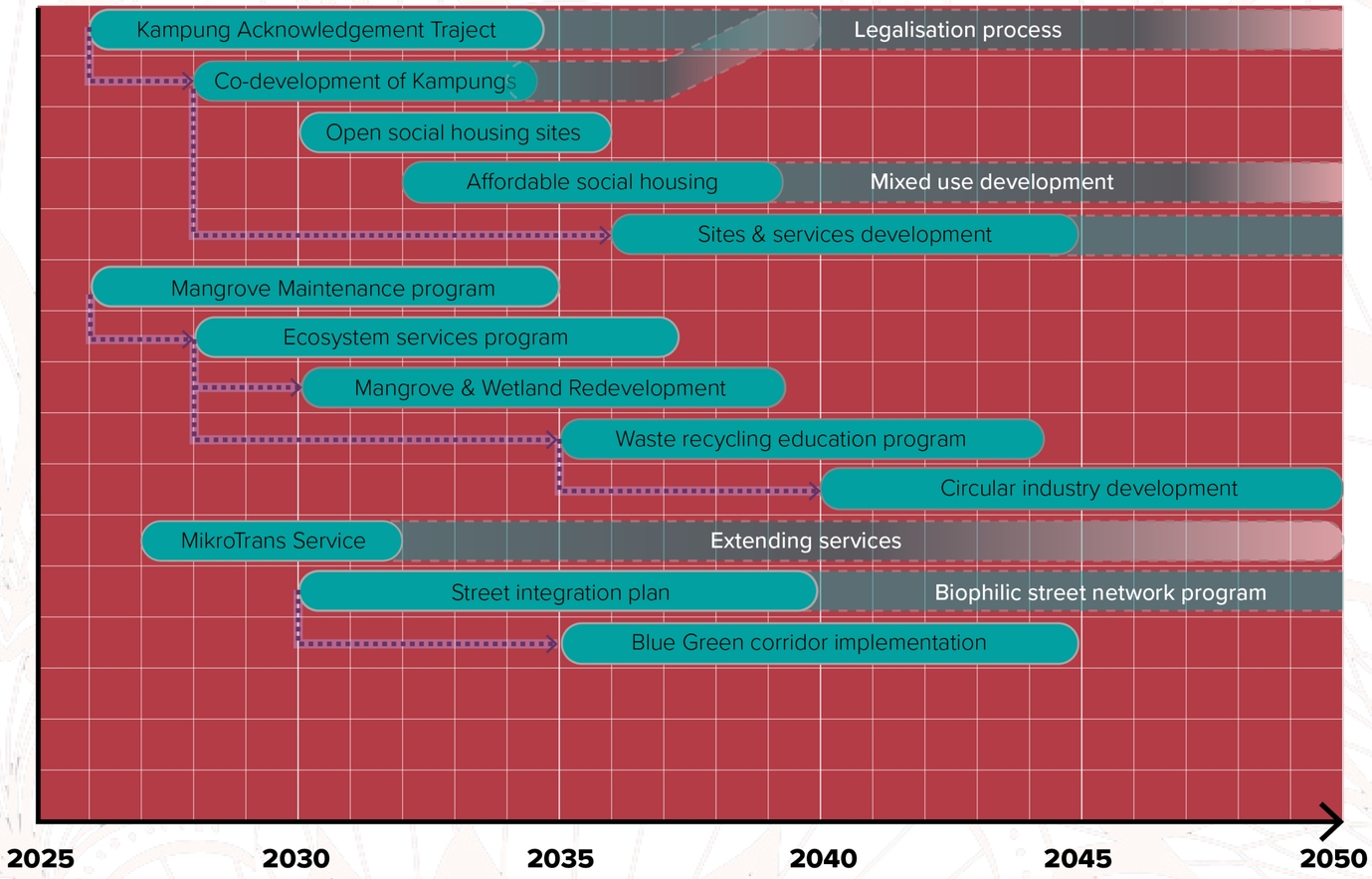
Policy framework

- Improve integration through mobility and street network.
- Endorse ecosystem services through mangroves.
- Improve slum type Kampungs with residential developments.
- Transition into sustainable area.



Timeline

- Involve Kampungs early in planning traject;
- Start redeveloping mangroves into cohesive urban landscape;
- Redevelop street network and industry towards ecosystem services.

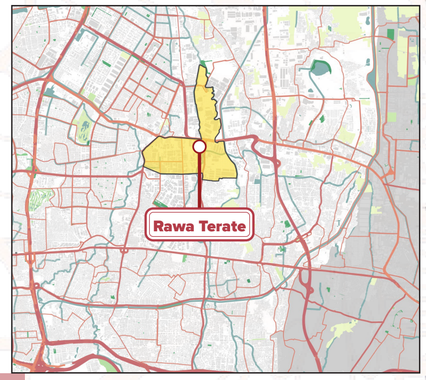


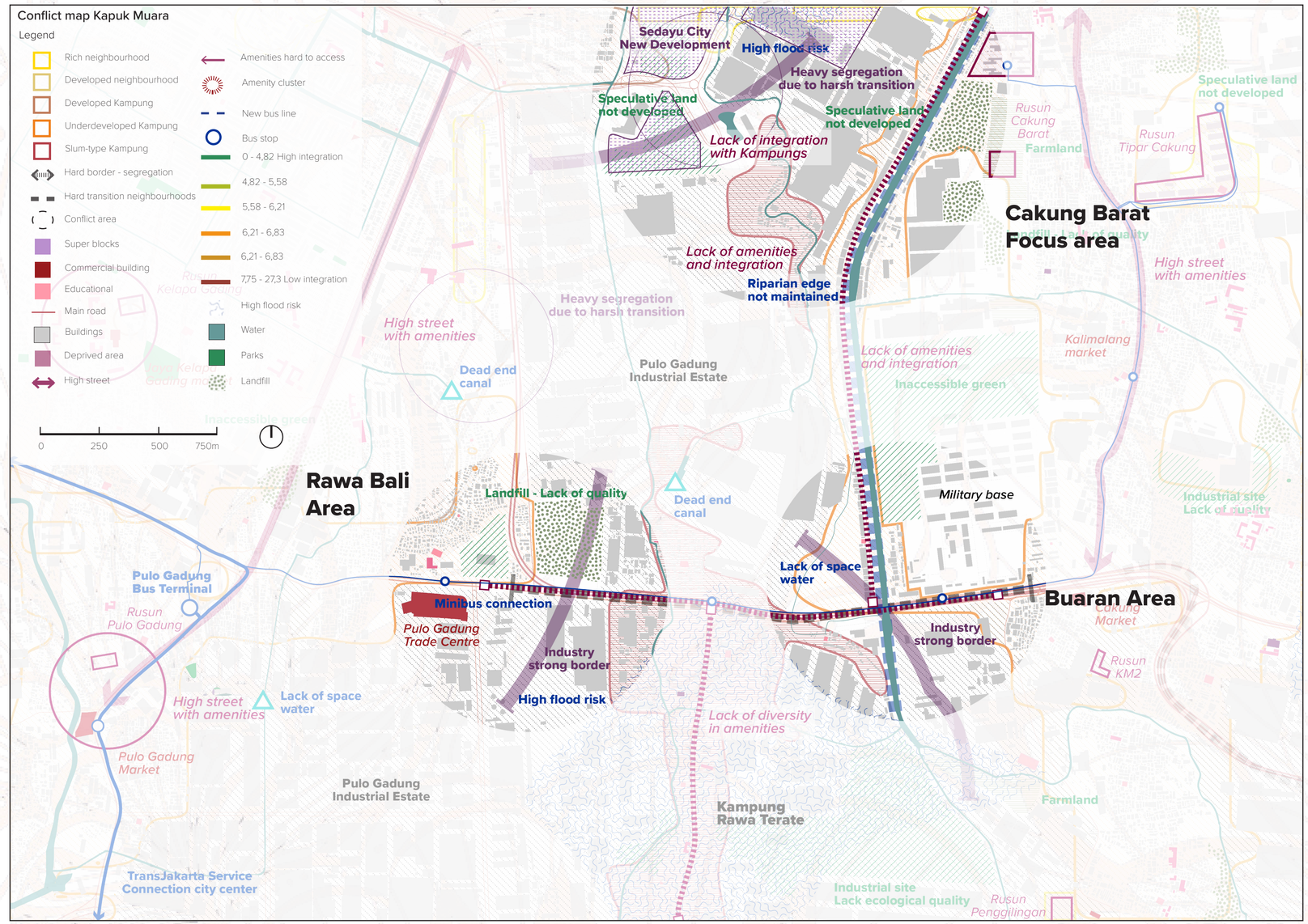
Sources

Rawa Terate

Conflicts

- Kampung isolated and hard to access due to surrounding industry;
- Fragmented wetlands underperforming;
- Vulnerability against flooding;

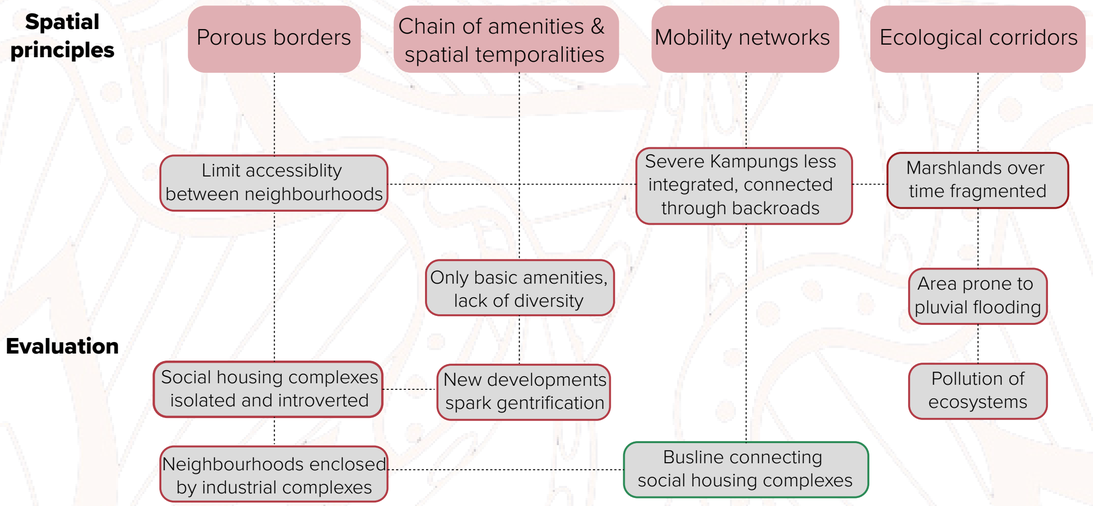




Conflict map Rawa Terate.

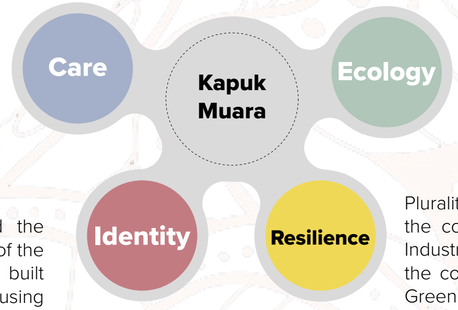
Values Evaluation

- No buffers between industry and residences show lack of care.
- Main developments exclude informal communities.
- Ecological infrastructures are undervalued and badly maintained, increasing the threat of flooding.



Continuous growth of industrial activity has resulted in harsh transitions from living to industry. Marshlands have been degredated and lack of care to public design has decreased performance of the landscape. Area improved through social housing and connectivity but are not integrating the area as a whole

Industrial activity has shaped the community. Continuous efforts of the industrial estate to improve built environment through social housing breaks with traditional values, creating complexes that are isolated from each other. Opportunities to integrate housing concepts with traditional values.



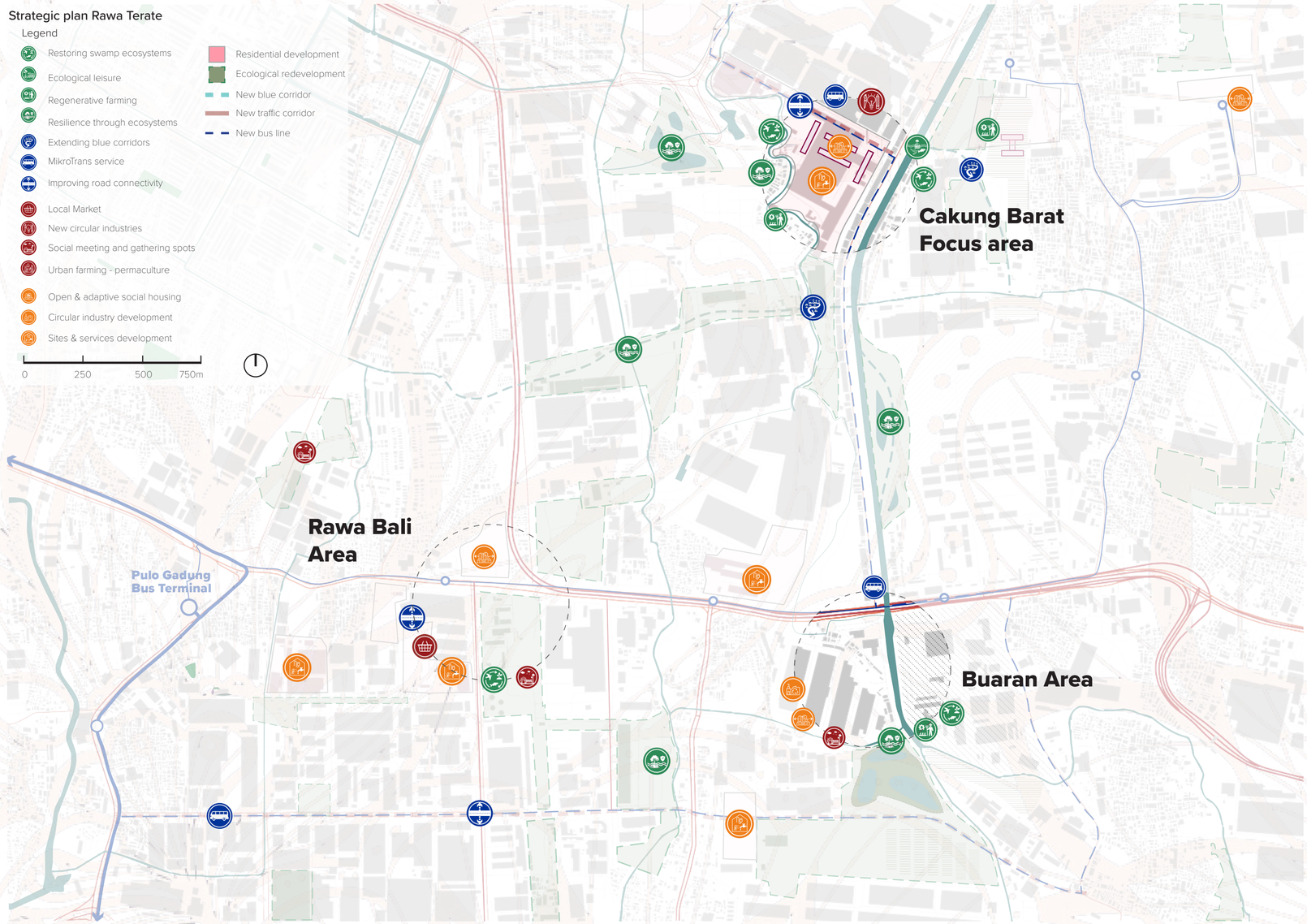
Marshlands have become polluted and fragmented because of continous exploitation. Area is prone to flooding due to the lack of land accomdated to prevention. Requires interventions that restores capability of marshalnd ecosystem.

Plurality of problems has not forced the community to move elsewhere. Industrial activity somehow provides the community with a form of living. Green patches have been appropriated for farming, potential to reclaim land for more sustainable practices that provides the community with alternative form of living

Value evaluation diagram Rawa Terate.

Key areas & Strategic Interventions

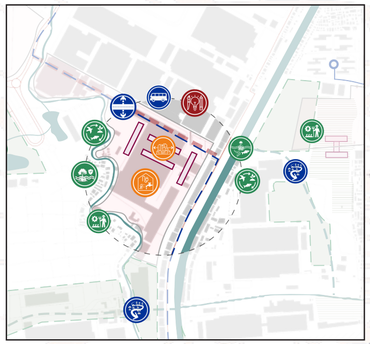
- Improve ecological corridors and riparian buffers to make district resilient.
- Improve ecological areas in industrial zones to restore wetlands.
- Provide improved and adaptive housing typologies in flood-prone areas.



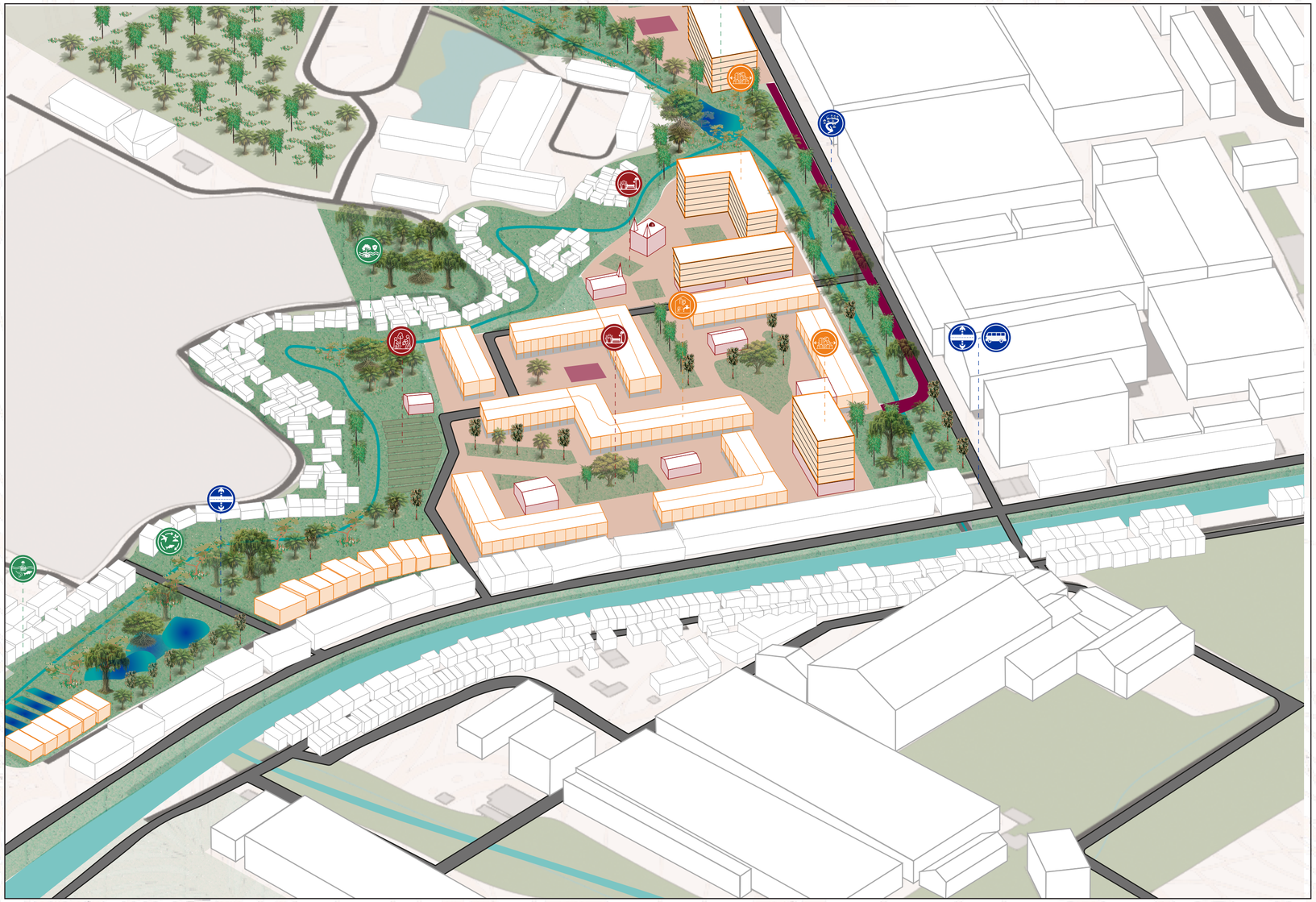
Strategic plan for Rawa Terate district.

Improving the Kampung's Resilience

- New residential developments, focusing on adaptive housing and sites & services developments.
- Restoring swamp areas and multiple usages of green structures to maintain buffers.



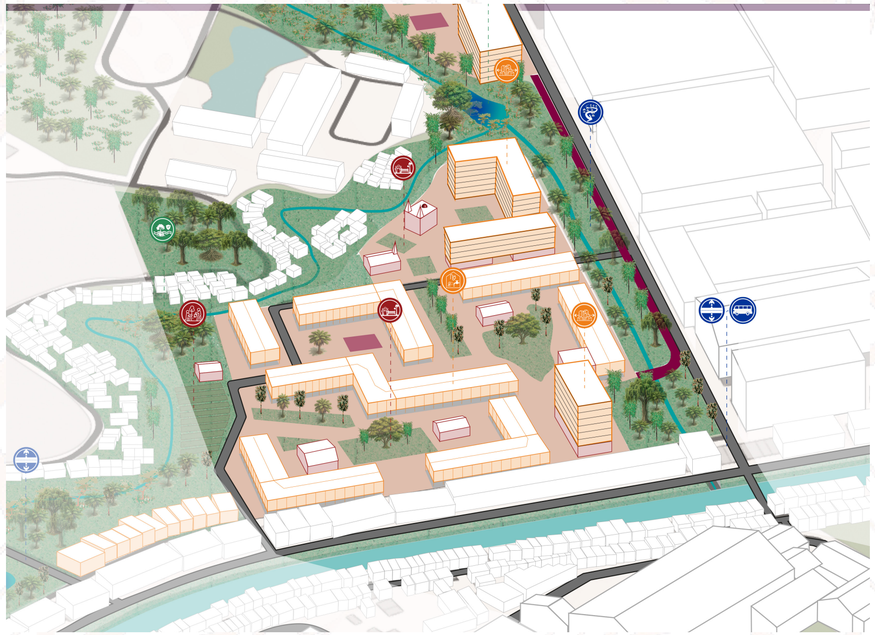
Cakung barat area

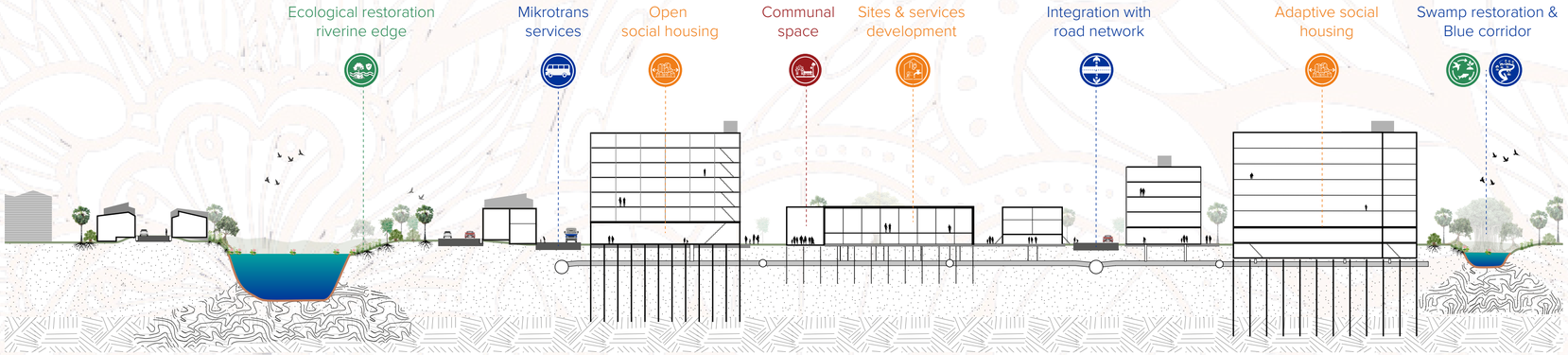


Strategic plan for Cakung Barat area.

A livable informal urban environment

- Redeveloping the industrial area into an ecological and resilient urban neighbourhood.

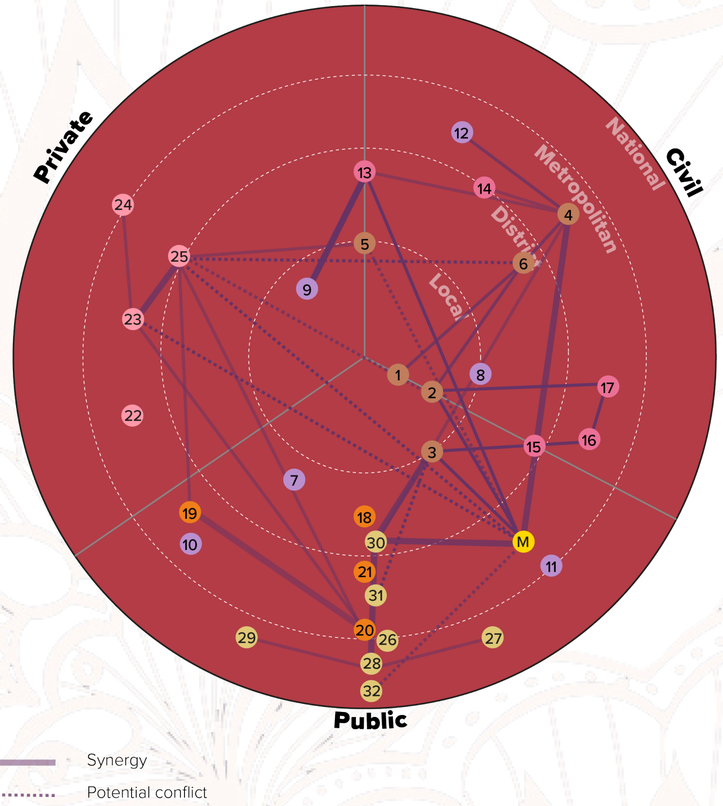




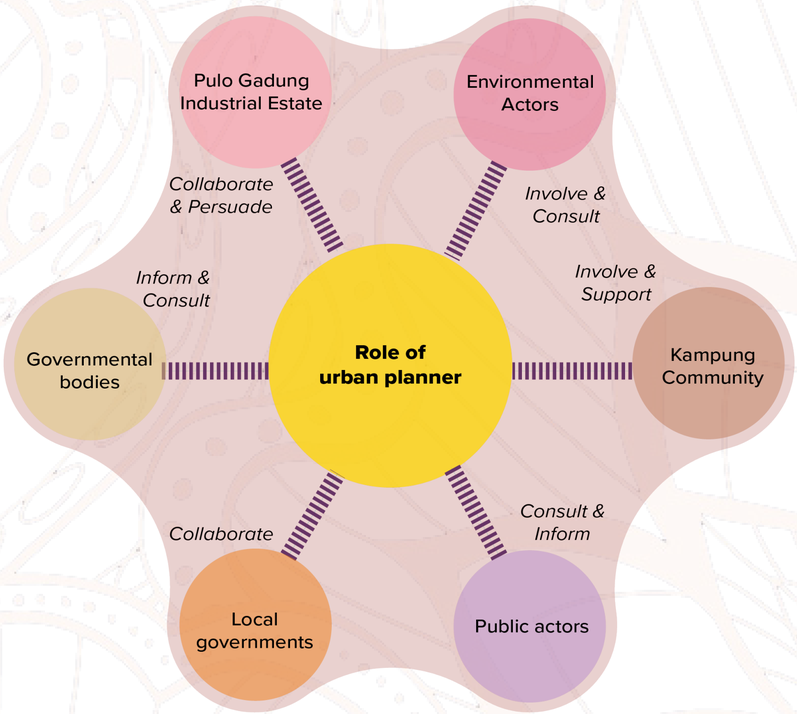
Strategic implementation

- Collaborate and persuade Industrial Estate to involve Kampungs in developments.
- Support the Kampungs with knowledge and key stakeholders, like NGOs and local governments.

Conflict - synergy diagram

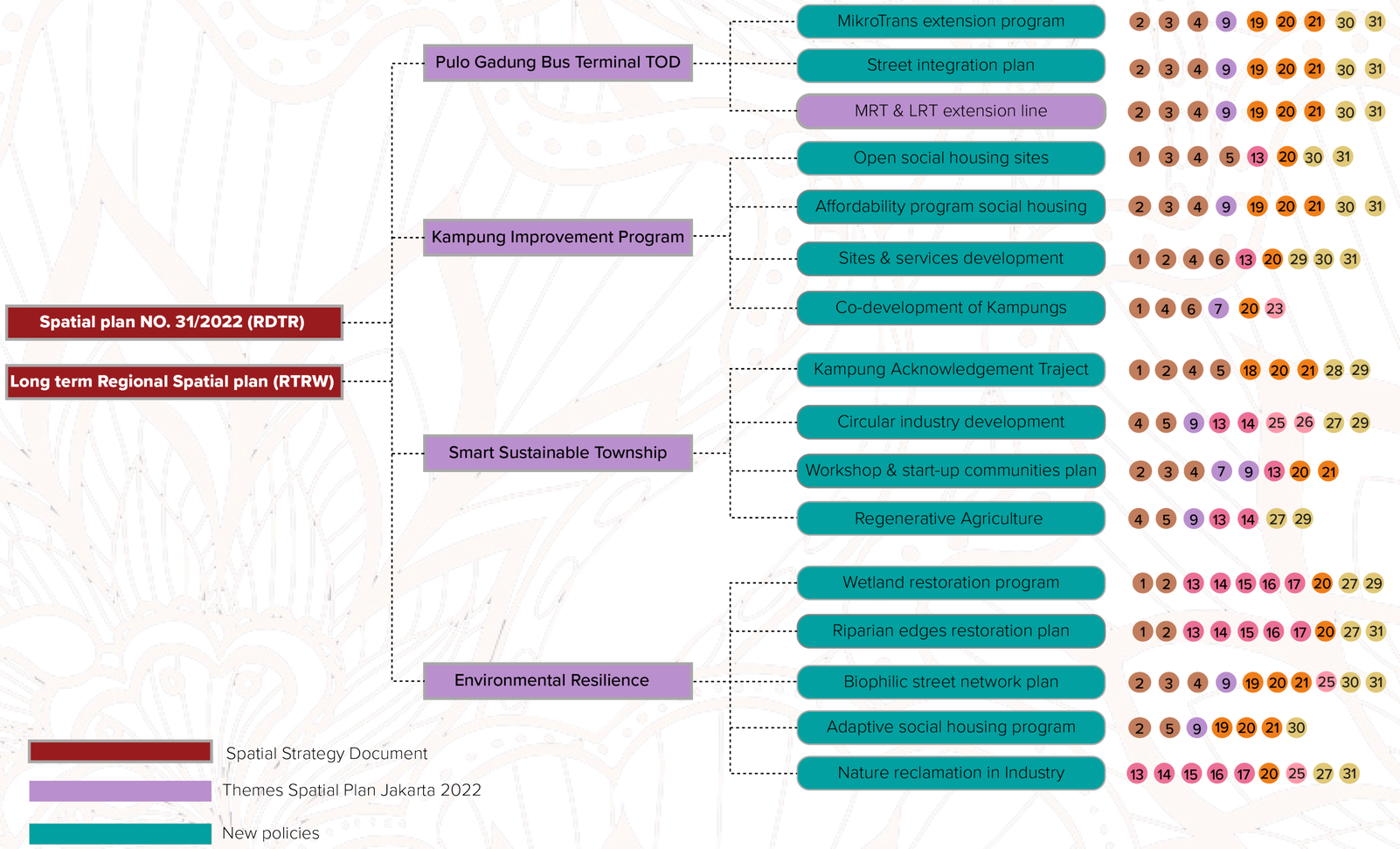


Polycentric governance diagram



Policy framework

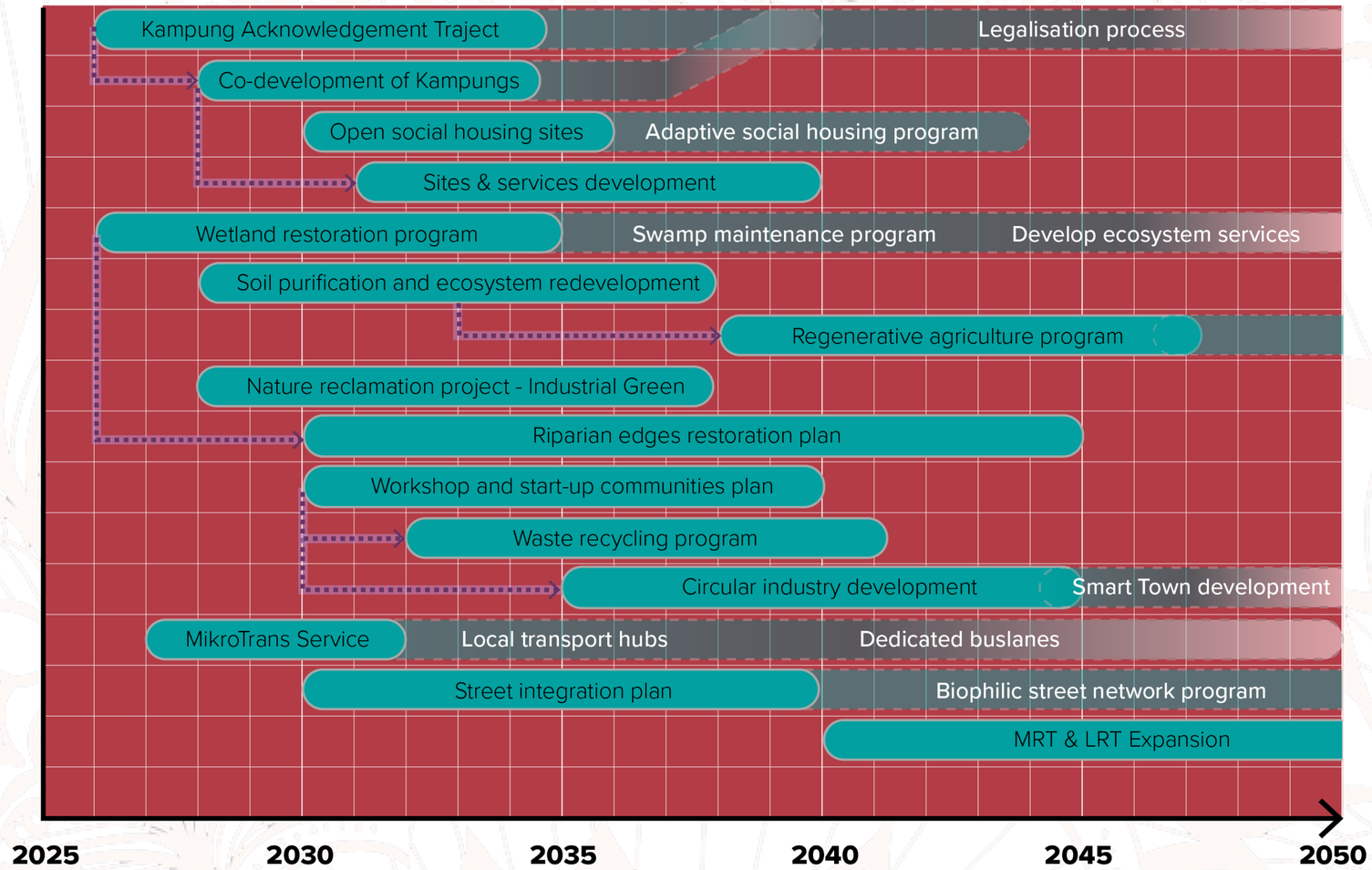
- Steer developments towards excluded areas with ecological interventions.
- Enhance blue-green infrastructures in industrial areas.
- Use TOD around bus terminal as leverage to improve connectivity with Kampungs.



Sources

Timeline

- Acknowledge Kampungs and include in planning;
- Start developing buffers between industry and Kampungs;
- Restoration swamp and riparian areas into integrated wetland.
- Sustainable interventions aligning with TOD bus terminal plan.

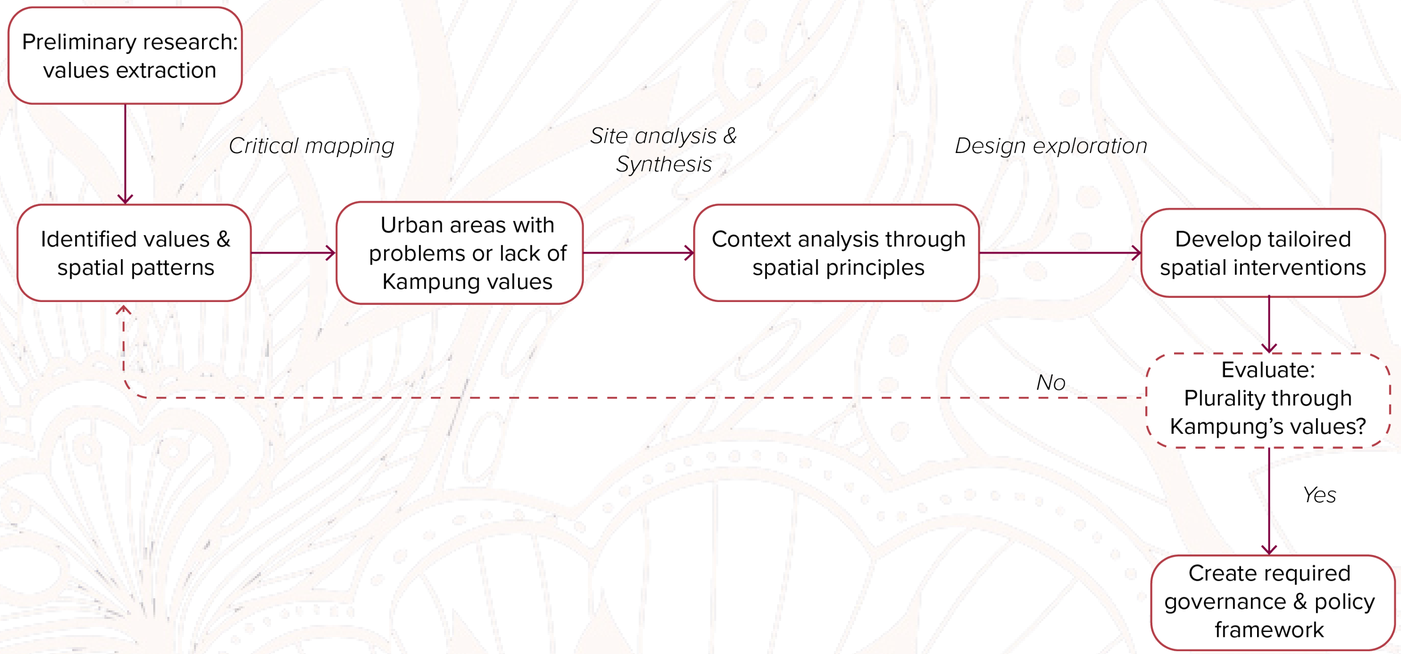


Proposed timeline

Conclusion

- Kampung's values provide way to achieve plurality in urban planning.
- Framework critically reflects the use of values in different urban context through tailoring design interventions.
- Polycentric governance as tool for managing plurality.

Framework: Transferability of the Kampung values in different context of Jakarta



Framework for plurality through informality.

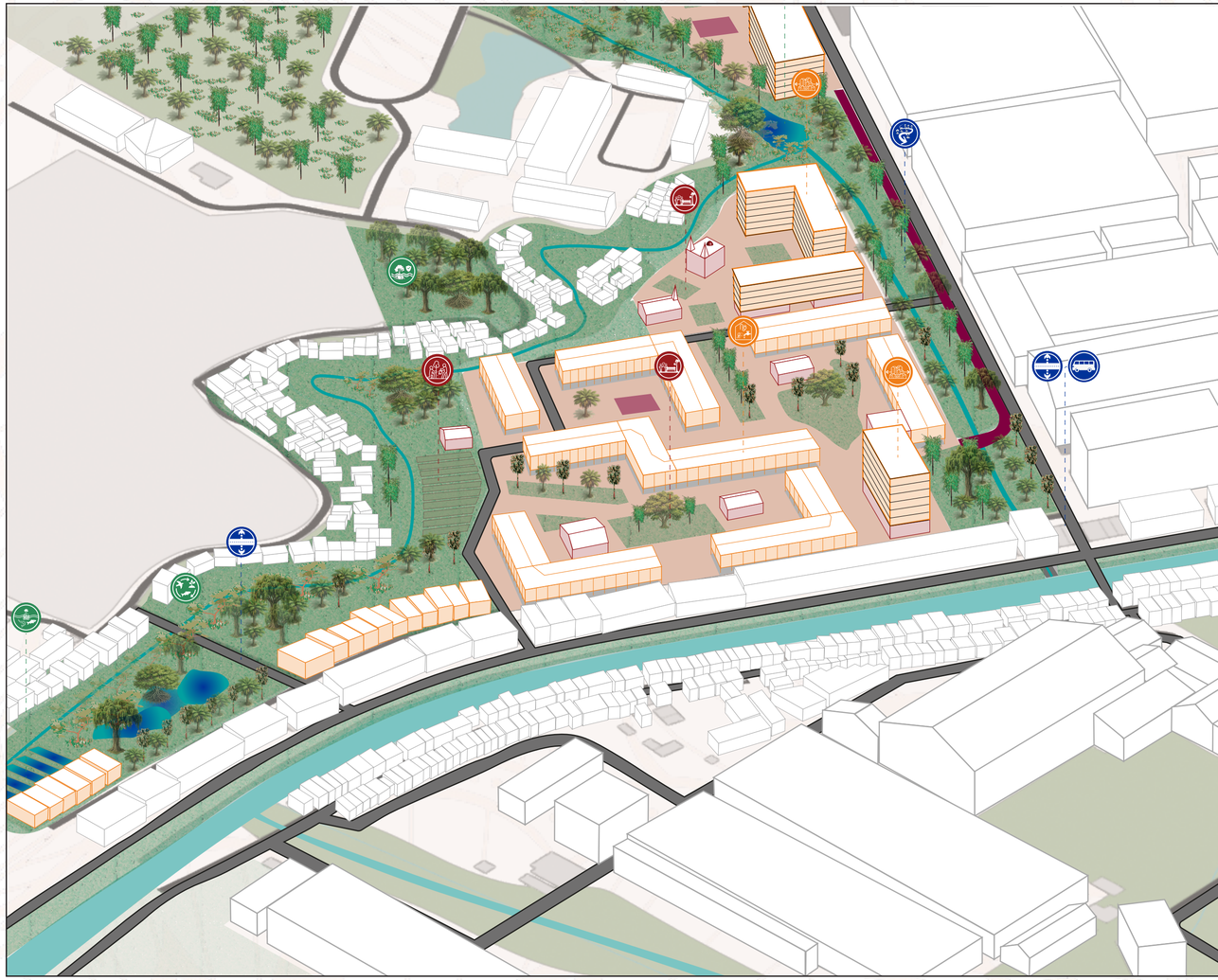
Moving Forward

Recommendations & Reflections

- Initiating bottom-up approaches in urban planning, integrating social and sustainable values from informal communities.
- Integrate with formal values towards more socio-spatial justice.

- First step in acknowledging the values of informal communities in urban planning.

A3 Defence: 8th of June 2026

Personal photo taken during fieldwork 29 Dec. 2025

The first steps towards plural Jakarta!