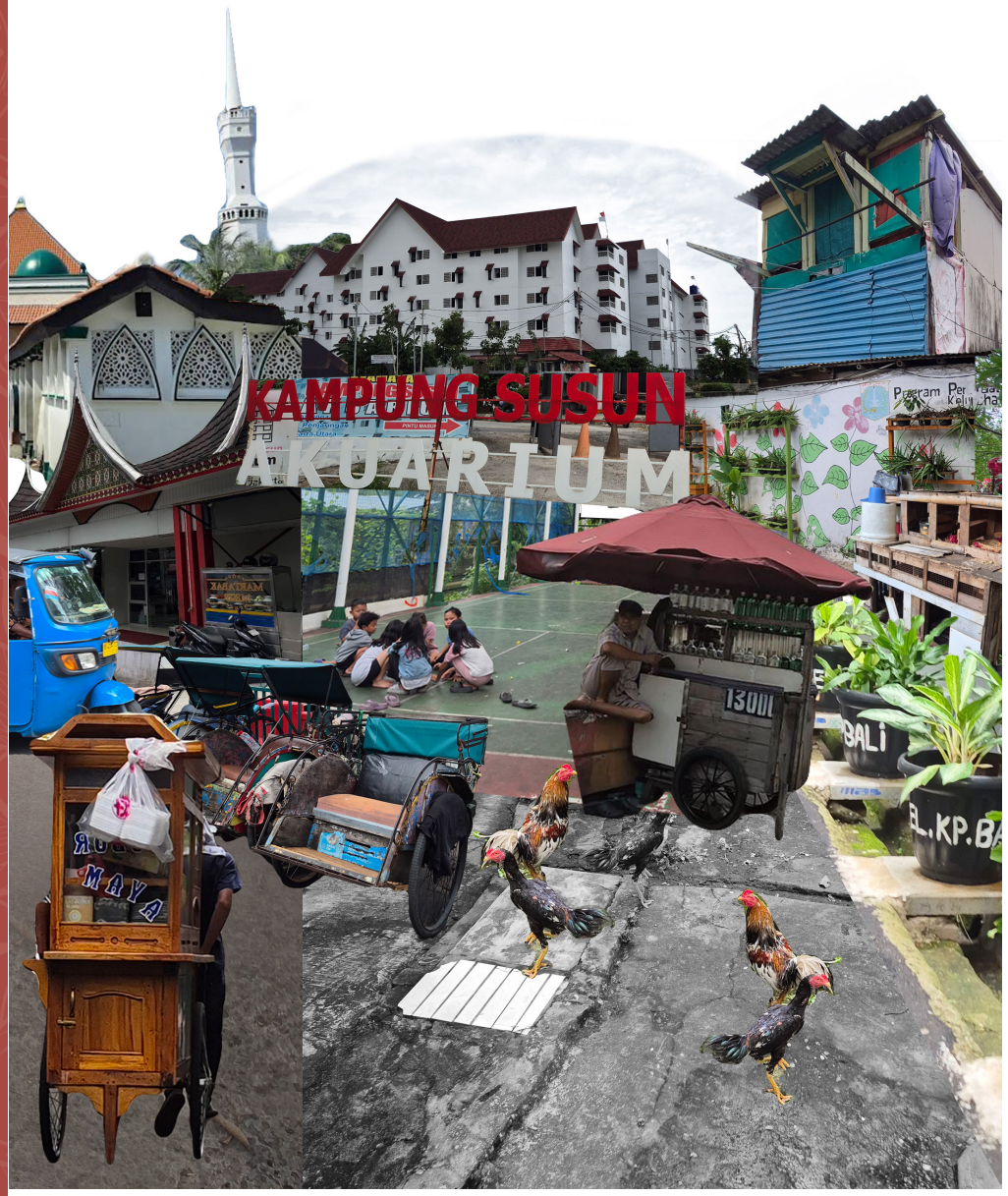
The Kampung Metropolis

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

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Graduation Thesis Urbanism

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Summary

Jakarta is facing increasing social and environmental challenges, including segregation, environmental degradation and flooding. While formal urban development has largely focused on large-scale infrastructure and market-driven projects, the city's Kampungs have often been overlooked or treated as obstacles to modernisation. Despite this marginalisation, Kampungs have developed resilient urban communities, informal economies and social networks that have enabled them to adapt to changing urban conditions over time. This thesis investigates whether social practices and values embedded in Jakarta's Kampungs can provide an alternative approach to urban development. The main research question is:

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

To answer this question, the research combines literature review, spatial analysis, fieldwork, and research-by design. Four Kampungs - Kebon Kacang, Kampung Bali, Kampung Akuarium, and Kampung Tongkol - were studied to identify the social infrastructures and spatial practices that contribute to their resilience. The findings were subsequently translated into spatial principles and tested through design interventions in two contrasting urban areas. Kapuk Muara and Rawa Terate.

The research identifies four core values that underpin Kampung life in the studied areas: **Care, Identity, Resilience, and Ecology.** These values are expressed through collective resource sharing, place making, informal governance, gradual community improvements, ecological integration, and strong social networks. Together, they form the social foundation that enables Kampungs to adapt to environmental, social, and economic pressure.

By analysing how the values are embedded in space, the research develops four spatial principles: **Porous Borders, Chains of Amenities and Socio-spatial temporalities, Mobility Networks, and Ecological Corridors.** These principles create spatial conditions that support coexistence between formal and informal urban areas, improve ecological performance, strengthen social cohesion, and increase resilience against environmental threats.

The principles were applied through design proposals in Kapuk Muara, a developed area with heavy segregation, and Rawa Terate, a poor district highly vulnerable against environmental threats. In Kapuk Muara, interventions focus on reconnecting ecological systems, creating new economic opportunities through ecosystem services, improving mobility, and reducing socio-spatial segregation between Kampungs and formal developments. In Rawa Terate, interventions focus on restoring wetland landscapes, improving environmental conditions, reducing pollution risks, and creating a healthier living environment for vulnerable communities.

To support implementation, the thesis proposes a governance framework based on plural urbanism and polycentric governance. Rather than relying on a single planning model, this approach recognises the diversity of actors, interests, and spatial conditions that shape Jakarta. It positions Kampungs as active stakeholders in urban development and promotes collaboration between communities, governments, NGOs, and private sectors.

The research concludes that Kampungs should not be viewed merely as informal settlements requiring intervention, but as valuable sources of knowledge for urban development. By translating Kampung values into spatial principles and planning strategies, this thesis presents the concept of the Kampung Metropolis as an alternative vision for Jakarta, one that promotes plurality, socio spatial justice, ecological resilience, and more inclusive forms of urban development.

AI Statement

AI tools like Chat GPT and Google Gemini have been used responsibly for brainstorming ideas, resolving issues in Adobe software and for support in writing codes to build queries in QGIS.

All text, research and designs produced in this report are through the authors creation, no AI software has been used during the research and design process and is 100% authentic.

Matthijs Jerez Nova

1st of June, 2026, Delft.



Fig. 1: Me during fieldwork in Kampung Bali, 29 December 2025.

Preface

This thesis is the final project of the Master's Degree in Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment at the TU Delft. The thesis is part of the cluster 'Beyond Growth' in which research and design exploration is conducted towards alternative forms of urban development. The scope of the thesis solely focused on Jakarta Metropolitan Region as the study area.

Chapter 1 shapes the context of the metropolis of Jakarta and how it became a Dual City, including the problem statement, the research questions and research gap. Chapter 2 outlines the research framework and methodology to answer the questions. Chapter 3 includes the fieldwork and the synthesis from the visits in the Kampungs. This is followed by the design interventions, in which proposals of how to include values from the Kampungs in two distinct sites. In chapter 5, the research questions are answered, followed by recommended steps and reflections on the research in chapter 6 and 7.

First, I would like to thank my supervisors Rodrigo Cardoso and Gregory Bracken for guiding me with this thesis in our weekly consultations that provided me with valuable insights during my thesis. A special appreciation goes out to Arra and Chelsea, better known as 'Team symbioscene', that made my time at the faculty rememberable and also helped me to open up and enjoy the process to become a better urbanist.

A word of appreciation goes out to my girlfriends family who helped me during the fieldwork, visiting the Kampungs and provided me with key knowledge on the informal settlements. Not only were these visits pivotal for my research, they also provided me with memorable experiences that I will remember for the rest of my professional career.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, Grada, Darwin, Kelvin for supporting me during my studies, and my beautiful nieces who helped me to clear my mind from my thesis. A special thank you goes out to my girlfriend Keizya, who has been supporting me throughout my Master's and helped me during my thesis. Without these people, I would not have made my dream come true!

Delft, 1st of June 2026

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Glossary

List of definitions

Kampung: Malay for traditional village, that is nowadays used to describe informal settlements in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.
JaBoDeTaBek: Abbreviation of the metropolitan region of Jakarta and its surrounding New Towns Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi.
Dual City: Term created during the 1980s by Manual Castells, describing how socio-economic and spatial division of the urban area created two realities, with a highly developed citadel for the elites and informal settlements in slum-type developments for the urban poor.
Desa: Village, level of government that is slightly smaller than a sub-district.
Desakota: type of urban development in South-East Asia which proposes that urban sprawl develops horizontally and peri-urban areas are intertwined with the urban fabric, creating a sudden transition from urban to rural.
VOC: Dutch East Indian Trade Company, major trading institution during the Dutch colonial period.
Rukun: Indonesian concept of self-reliance and solidarity.
Keluargaan: Indonesian concept of accepting others in the community as a family member.
Rukun Tetangga: Lowest level of government, compared to block.
Rukun Warga: One level above Rukun Tetangga, compared to neighbourhood-village.
JIEP: Abbreviation for Pulo Gadung Industrial estate
Ahok: Governor of Jakarta from 2014-2017
Kelurahan: Sub-district
Kecematan: District
DKI Jakarta: Special provincial status for the city of Jakarta.
Plural Urbanism: Concept that redefines urban design as an open-ended democratic art form that accepts the city's chaotic reality rather than trying to impose strict top down control.
Wijkenstelsel policy: Policy initiated by Dutch Colonialist that segregated the citizens of Jakarta in neighbourhoods based on race.
Masjid: Mosque
Pasar (malam): (Night) Market
TransJakarta: Rapid Bus Transit service for the metropolitan region of Jakarta
MikroTrans: Minibus service part of TransJakarta service
Rusunawa: Social housing developments in Jakarta.
Reformasi: The period after the autocratic regime of Suharto aiming to democratisise the political system of Jakarta.
Space Syntax: Analytical technique to quantify and measure how the lay out of streets and buildings influences human movement, social interaction, and spatial behaviour.
Sukarno: First president of Indonesia after its independence, who aspired to transform Jakarta into a modern metropolis.
Suharto: Second and longest serving president of Indonesia, who with his New Order regime followed an anti-communist and autocratic ideology focusing on growth and development.



I. Introduction

Fig. 2: Photo taken in Old Town Jakarta, August 2023

Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, is a mega city. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) recently published its World Urbanization Prospects report stating that Jakarta is now the biggest metropolis in the world with its 42 million inhabitants (UN DESA, 2025). And like many cities in developing countries, this trend of growth is likely to continue. The national government of Indonesia wants to develop Jakarta into a smart global city to compete with other cities in the region of South East Asia. With the relocation of the capital, the provincial government of Jakarta aims to develop the city into a commercial hub, driven by tech and sustainability making it an attractive destination for foreign industries and the native population to escape poverty in rural areas creating new opportunities in the capital (Bappeda Jakarta, 2024).

Growth has always been at the core of development in the Indonesian archipelago, with Jakarta as the epicentre for trade activities and development. Since 1600, the Dutch colonised the Indies and founded the city of Jakarta, back then called Batavia, as its commercial centre for trade activities in Asia. Its convenient location along VOC trade routes for spice trade was for Jan Pieterszoon Coen to move activities from the remote Banda Islands to the island of Java. Once the market for spice plummeted in the 18th century, the rural lands surrounding Batavia were then transformed into large-scale plantations for tea and coffee as well as rice fields. The rich fertile lands of Java later got the attention from the Japanese empire, to use its resources to supply the empire's colonial endeavours across Asia. After a three year Japanese occupation, Indonesia declared independence after being occupied for more than 300 years (van Reybrouck, 2024). Its first president Sukarno aspired to transform Jakarta into a modern city breaking with its colonial past. This discourse towards modernity resulted in new urban development and rapid urbanisation to Jakarta, later continued by the autocratic Suharto. Its anti-communist regime and focus on development and foreign investments, consumption was stimulated and Jakarta experienced rapid economic growth. The city became an attractive business climate for multinationals to settle and benefit from cheap labour and low restrictions that resulted in the development of new towns in the peripheries (Low, 2000).

But after years of growth, has the city finally reached its limits? In the late 1990s, the economic bubble under Suharto burst and created social unrest, sparking a new revolution in Indonesia that overthrew the autocratic regime of Suharto (Kusno, 2010). Despite the political unrest, Jakarta remained an attractive destination for rural Indonesians and continued expanding into an enormous agglomeration that absorbed the new towns transforming Jakarta into an immense megalopolis, often referred to as JaBoDeTaBek (the abbreviation of Jakarta together with its satellite cities Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi). As a result, spatial planning became a complex task, coping with the fast pace land-use transformations and uncontrolled urban developments that facilitated grid-locked streets plaguing the city with severe air pollution. The city's thirst for water and land to built high-rises and shopping malls resulted in an urban landscape with impermeable surfaces that sinks and prone to flooding. The pursuit of making Jakarta a modern metropolis transformed the deltaic wetland into a concrete jungle, which amplifies the social and environmental struggles the city is facing.

Not only are the environmental issues constraining urban development of Jakarta. The growth-oriented development of Jakarta creates a greater social divide between urban communities. The wealthier citizens benefit economically from new developments whereas informal settlers are often marginalized and endangered by these new developments, sparking gentrification and forced resettlement of communities to other parts of the city, which are located in the urban fringes or in areas that are endangered by climate change. These environmental and social impacts are enforced by officials in different government institutions, who often cooperate with conglomerates and developers to benefit financially from new developments in the city and disregarding the needs of the lower and middle incomes that form the majority of the population (Rukmana, 2015).

The scale and severity of these problems resulted in plans to create a new capital city and relocate political activities to the island of Kalimantan (Borneo). The new capital Nusantara is former president Joko Widodo's prestigious project to create a smart and sustainable city in the middle of a rainforest located, where threats to natural disasters like volcanoes and earthquakes is relatively low. Furthermore, the location was strategically placed outside of Java to lessen the gap in development between Java and the other islands in the archipelago (Kulik, 2024).

However, this project became increasingly scrutinised due to the premises of how the plans for the new capital were approved in 47 days with questionable budget constructions as the majority of funding is from private investors. In spite of the aspiration to be a sustainable forest city, negative environmental implications are projected as protected rainforests and endangered species are being wiped out (Nielson, 2025). Moreover, debates on how to actively involve the local people continue as they are often neglected and in some cases being forcefully evicted. This also raises the question on what the future of Jakarta and its population will look like. The Jakarta administration has tried to integrate climate adaptive measures in flood

prone areas, and considers large infrastructure projects on its coastline to prevent future flood events. This, however, puts a majority of the Jakartans in a vulnerable position, as they are forced to resettle and their needs are often neglected by city officials who favour the formal developments (Koesoemawiria, 2017).

Especially the Kampungs, the traditional informal settlements in the urban and peripheral areas are becoming increasingly contested. Not only are most of these neighbourhoods located in vulnerable parts of the city, prone to flooding and situated in heavily polluted areas. These areas are often stigmatised as slums and due their illegal status have less rights and political power compared to the formally developed neighbourhoods and communities. Thus, the scale of problems in Jakarta is excessive and the often marginalized communities pay the price for it, which fosters Jakarta's identity as a 'Dual City' (Tunas, 2008).

1.1.1 Jakarta's Palimpsest

Colonialism and Dutch influence

Jakarta was 400 years ago a small but strategic fishing village laid along the Java sea. Before Dutch colonisation, the city was called Sunda Kelapa, named as the main port of the Sunda sultanate and an important trade location for the wider Asian networks, accommodating traders from Arabia, India, Malay and China. It became an increasingly interesting location for Dutch traders, who decided to move trade activities from the Banda islands, towards what they named Batavia. Batavia became a fortified town, where the marshlands were transformed into canals to allow traders in the city. Later as trade for spice shifted into commonalities, the Dutch expanded the city towards the 'Ommelanden', with land being transformed in large scale plantations to grow and harvest these goods for the European market. This expansion towards the Ommelanden were combined with infrastructural projects, that connected Batavia with other villages in Java.

Later the Dutch shifted from an urbanism focused towards trade to a form of power oriented urbanism, where the Dutch aimed to protect its interest and control native with the passenstelsel and wijkenstelsel policies, which separated that sought to control the majority of the native and coloured population of Batavia through the implementation of the Passenstelsel policy. The Passenstelsel policy was created to monitor and control Chinese traders who were required to permits to travel outside the city and other districts in Batavia. The Passenstelsel policy was later succeeded by the stricter Wijkenstelsel policy, which specifically separated ethnicities in dedicated neighbourhoods (White, Chinese, Native Indonesians), which started the pathway towards a Dual City. The Dutch colonist inhabited the garden city designed neighbourhood Menteng while the Chinese and Indonesians where forced to live in the traditional Kampungs.

Post Colonialism and Modernisation of Jakarta

After Indonesia became independent, first president Sukarno aspired to make Jakarta a modern city and a leading example for formerly occupied countries in post-colonial times. Sukarno, who was an architect, believed in large scale infrastructure projects and monumental buildings that would transform the identity of Indonesia as a colonial nation into a modern country that would bring hope among the Indonesians. Buildings like the Hotel Indonesia, the National Monument and the Istiqlal Mosque were built in Modernist design to represent the aspirations of the first president and establishing Jakarta as the political and economic capital of the archipelago. This later reflected in large-scale projects that got international attention that would further position Indonesia as the front-runner of a developed post-colonial nation, with large urban development projects for the famous Bandung Conference and the ASEAN games in 1962 in Jakarta.

Sukarno's dream of becoming the leader of the developing world was short lived, as his socialist orientation sparked attention among Western nations, who put him in line with the communist wave that was getting momentum in South East Asia. He was soon abducted and succeeded by Suharto, an autocratic leader that was in favour with the Americans and other Western nations. in spite of ruling with an iron fist, Indonesia experienced rapid economic growth and resulted in rapid urbanisation in Jakarta. The capital slowly grew towards the satellite cities where industries settled and created a Desakota urban development, a characteristic linear urban development pattern along main infrastructural corridors. Informal settlements started to emerge along the peripheries of Jakarta along these corridors, where economic migrants from all over the archipelago settled. Land prices sky-rocketed in the city centre and CBD, and private developments in the urban fringes caused suburbanisation and massive sprawl of Jakarta towards the industrial New Towns. Soon Jakarta became a booming metropolis in the centre amidst a polycentric network of industrial clusters.

Nationalist Urbanism in the *Reformasi* period

The period of economic expansion was soon over as the economic crisis that run throughout the 90s across Asia reached Indonesia. The economic bubble that was blown up throughout the 70s and 80s by the regime and through continuous consumption by the market exploded. Especially the middle class was the group that experienced a major downfall, leading to the mass exodus of foreign companies and industries in Jakarta and leaving many Jakartans jobless. Despite the economic crisis, Indonesians still came to the JaBoDeTaBek region and settled in the informal areas, which saw an increase as many jobless transitioned themselves to fit in the informal economy to work as food sellers or street vendors with *Gerobaks,* as taxi drivers on scooters *(Ojeks)* and other forms of jobs in the informal sector to survive. The planned super blocks and residential middle class neighbourhoods that were planned during economic growth were left vacant through no investments being available, being taken by migrants who settled in urban areas and saw new urban Kampungs emerging in make shift housing. The practices of the Suharto regime and its political elites were put under daylight, leading to increasing political unrest and riots in the streets of Jakarta. The start of the May riots in 1998, a mass act of violence against ethnic Chinese in Chinatown who were partially blamed for the economic misère, and the lack of international backing was the end of Suharto's New Order regime.

A new political era called the *Reformasi*, or reformation period, which aimed to democratise the political system through decentralisation of the government and restore the economic situation brought with it new forms of urban planning in Jakarta. The first governor of Jakarta aimed to restore the once booming economy and maintain the position of the established elites in the centre of Jakarta. The urban Kampungs and its informal economies where a hindrance in restoring the image of the city. Once a new decreed was created in 2007, that would reflect a more democratised way towards urban planning and development, lower levels of government would become more responsible and able to exercise more influence in urban planning strategies. However, this paved the way towards a form of neoliberal urbanism, where state-led partnerships with conglomerates and developers were in a superior position (Rukmana, 2015). The economic and political power of these enterprises bring informal communities in a vulnerable position and prone to eviction (direct forced resettlement) or gentrification (indirect forced resettlement).

What became evident from studying the historical layers and development patterns of Jakarta, a continuous (economic) growth-driven orientation towards urban planning has caused Jakarta to develop towards a Dual City. This is amplified by the interests of conglomerates and political elites who seek short-term and high profit financial gain while cementing their position among the elites in the city.

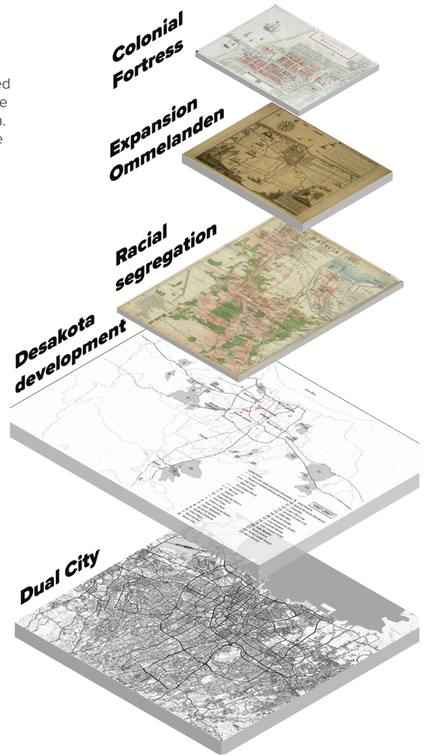


Fig. 3: Visual representation of Jakarta's palimpsest, from small fishing village to the Dual City.

Timeline: The City of Capitalistic Endeavours and Exhaustion

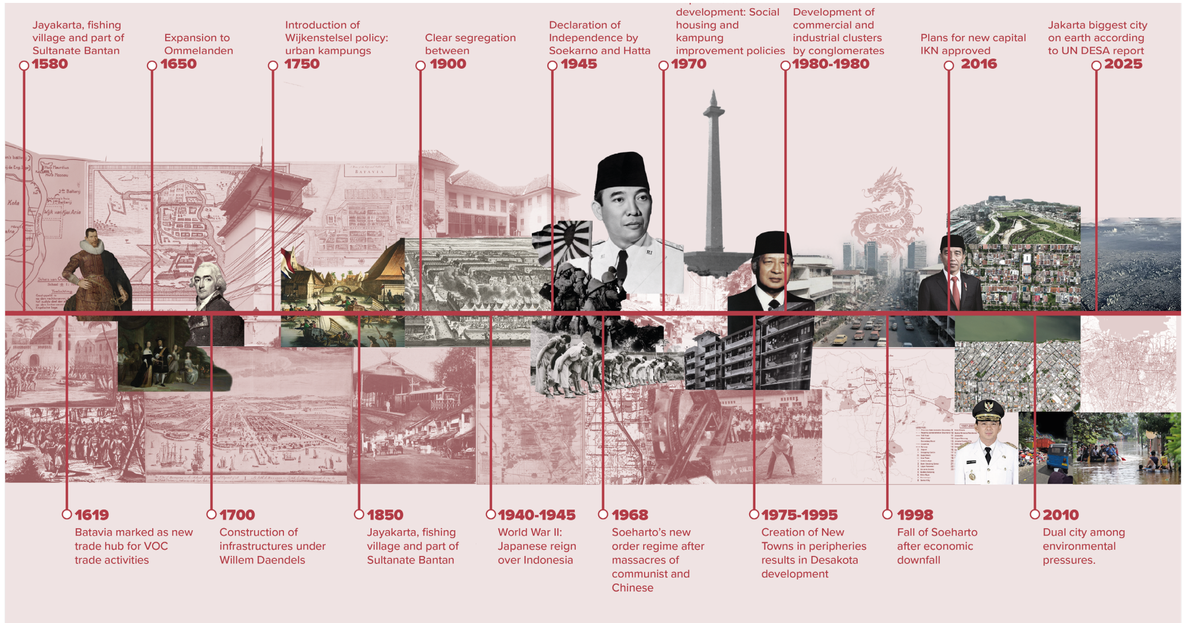


Fig. 4: Timeline of Jakarta from early colonised settlement to modern metropolis.

1.1.2 Fragmentation (Post Suharto)

Since the revolution of 1998 where the Suharto regime was abducted, the bureaucratic organisation became fragmented and power and responsibilities was being transferred to newly formed lower levels of the government. This 'New Order' regime of Suharto was autocratic in nature and urban planning was highly subjected to corruption and nepotism, especially as conglomerates and developers who were closely linked with the Suharto family played on both sides of the fence, profiting from new large-scale mixed-use super blocks in the industrial new towns while violating spatial plans and policies. Once the economy of Indonesia took a major downturn and mobilised the population to revolt against the Suharto regime, Indonesia stepped into a new era called the *'Reformasi'* which aspired to bring the power back to the people and make an end to a regime ruled by oppression and corruption.

In spite of this fragmentation and the hope for more transparency in the government through democratisation, it became evident that the larger levels of government still held a superior position over lower levels of governments. As stipulated by Rukmana who evaluated the transition from autocratic to the neoliberal government, the national government still owned large parcels of lands like the Senayan Area or former Kemayoran airport area, and could therefore manage and regulate these parcels according to national interests, preventing lower governments like the Jakarta city administration from intervening and realising new spatial plans in these strategic urban areas (Rukmana, 2015). It was in this power vacuum where former political elites stepped in and aspired to continue the economic and political power of the conglomerates and elites through forms of nationalist urbanism. The newly elected governor of Jakarta, former general Sutiyoso, aimed through forms of nationalist urbanism to restore a sense of order during a period of social and economic unrest. Governor Sutiyoso aimed to revitalise monumental places like the national monument and the old town and restore a sense of authority (Kusno, 2010). Part of his activities was decreasing the rise of the informalities as a consequence of economic downturn, preventing the food carts and markets from historical sites and clearing the Kampungs that started to emerge in the urban centres.

The shift from autocratic to a decentralised government resulted in a gradual shift towards a neoliberal form of urbanism, driven by capitalism. This, however, transferred the practices of corruption and nepotism that were condemned on the scale of local governments. Regents, who obtained more power as a result of the decentralisation, exploited their natural resources more exhaustively and sought to maximise their revenue by selling parcels of land to developers who in turn transformed these lands into gated communities or these mixed-use super blocks. Even though the newly established government made new spatial planning laws and stricter penalties against spatial planning violations, the premature government was simply incapable to control and perform proper due diligence with these quick land use transformations (Rukmana, 2015). It reflects a core problem in post-colonial Indonesia where corruption is slowly entrenched in multiple levels of government and a continuous form of exploitation of the larger population of Jakarta.

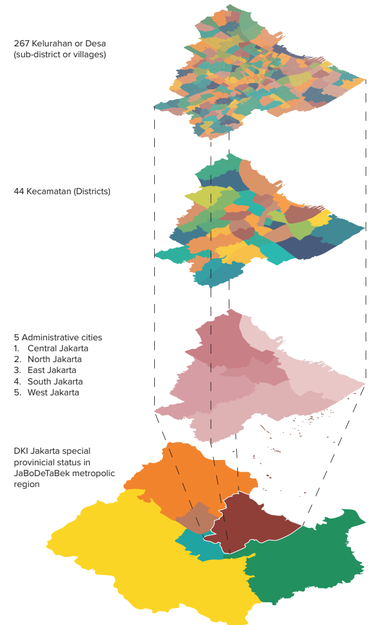


Fig. 5: After the fall of Suharto in 1998, the government system became fragmented with responsibilities being shared to smaller sub-districts, each with their own form of management.

1.1.3 Environmental pressures

Jakarta's environmental issues stem from its situation in a delta and the continuous urbanisation with the inability of the DKI Jakarta to accomodate the rapid urban growth. One of the main issues in Jakarta is to cope with flooding. Over time, the swamp lands of the delta have been transformed into neighbourhoods with impermeable surfaces that have diminished the storage capacity of the wetlands. Furthermore, the population of Jakarta relies on fresh water in aquifers under the city for its daily consumption, resulting in the city to sink as the soil becomes more compact while the sealevel is rising due to climate change. Since the economic boom in the 80s, wetlands have been gradually replaced to accomodate the rapid urbanisation of Jakarta. This often went hand-in-hand with the lack of supervision in spatial planning and land-use transformations as developers built superblocks and neighbourhoods on strategic locations for water storage. Over time, this impacted and distorted the water table of the region, making the city not only prone to pluvial, but also fluvial flooding.

In addition to flooding, the rapid urbanisation of the city resulted in public infrastructures struggling to accomodate the large population growth. The city administration was unable to plan infrastructures accordingly, resulting in a underdeveloped public transportation network for a large population that commutes to Central Jakarta for work. The dependance on private transportation resulted in congested roads and heavy air pollution. This continuous growth of the urban population and neglect by local governments also makes waste collection and the provision of public utilities a complex matter. Especially for the urban poor living in dense informal settlements are problematic, as waste management and public utilities like sewage is underdeveloped. The emphasis on growth and lack of attention to and knowledge on sustainable practices by local governments is often reflected by excessive consumption of the society, making pollution of the urban area an forced habit by the locals.



Fig. 6: Photo taken during fieldtrip, 29 December 2025.

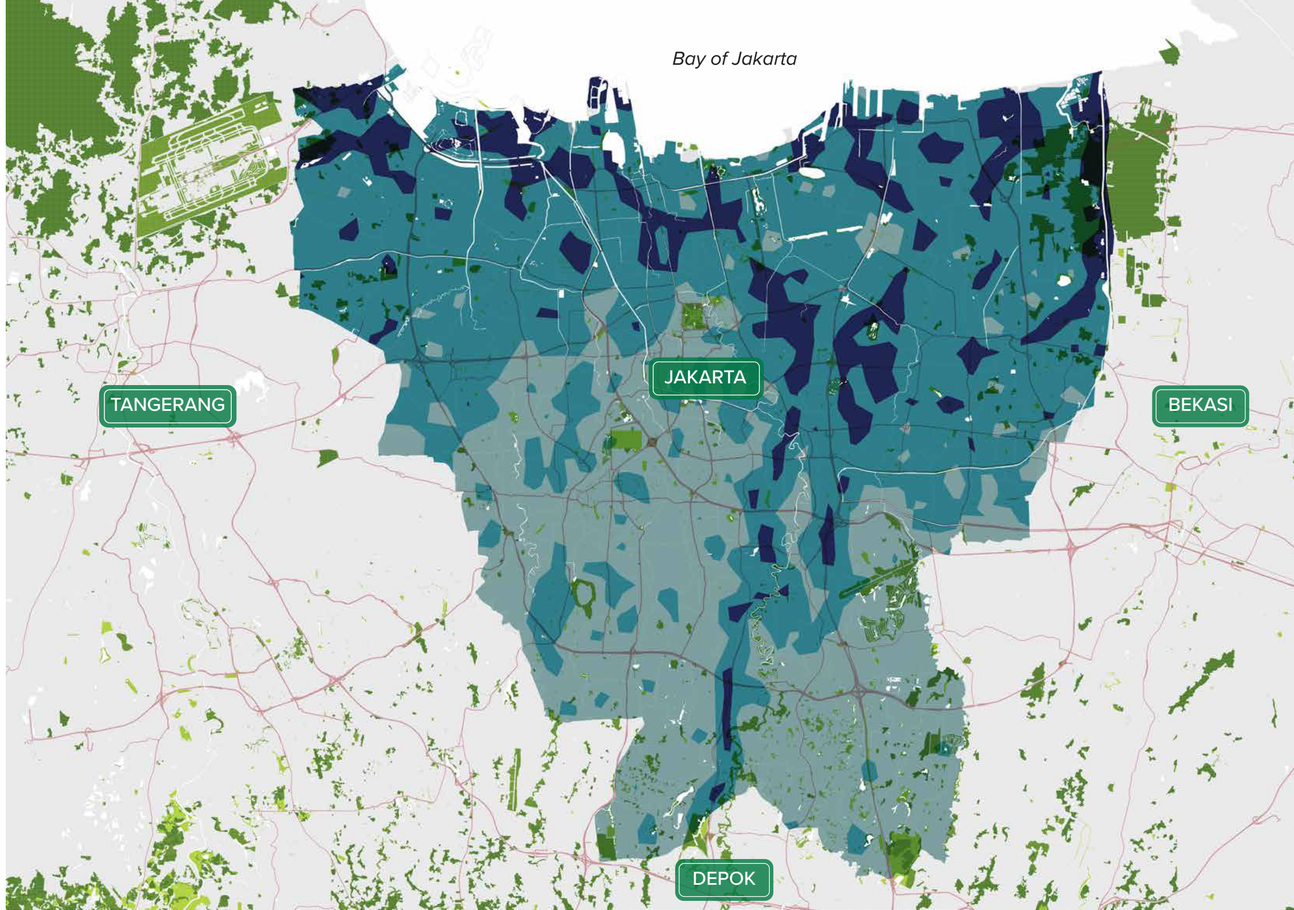


Fig. 7: Flood risk in Jakarta Metropolitan area

1.1.4 Societal pressure

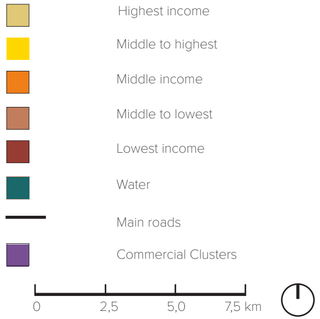
The social externalities have been building up since the colonial period. In the early 20th century, neighbourhoods became racially segregated with the introduction of the *Passen-* and *Wijkenstelsel* policy of the Dutch colonial government as a way to control the indigenous population. After independence, forms of segregation continued through neoliberal urbanism. Segregation became more socio-economic in nature, as the position of Western colonisers where taken by the new elites of Jakarta (Rukmana, 2021). In spite this transition in form of segregation, there is still an ethnic component related to segregation patterns in Jakarta, as demographics show that the main determinant of residential segregation is religion (Kusumah, 2023). As Reybrouck outlined in his book, three classes where established during the colonial period, namely European, Foreign Orientals, and Natives.

The Foreign Orientals, like ethnic Chinese had often better socio-economic positions than native Indonesians as they were involved in trading activities, residing in strategic areas in the city close to the weatlhier neighbourhoods. The spatial inequalities persisted after the independence, with the wealthier classes being located in the nicer neighbourhoods in the urban center, for example the neighbourhood of Menteng (van Reybrouck, 2024).

Since the economy of Indonesia started to progress, new districts for the affluent classes started to emerge in planned suburbs around the Bay of Jakarta and commercial clusters in the urban core. These developments were initiated mainly by the conglomerates of Indonesia, better known as the nine dragons. The power that these conglomerates and developers exercise in Jakarta is significant, increasing the land values and designing the neighbourhoods in a way to exclude the poorer population of Jakarta. Plots with high value in the city centre and the coastal areas are being transformed into mixed-use neighbourhoods with high rise apartments and detached houses to yield the most profit.

Since the Asian economic crisis in 1998, Kampungs could reside close to the city center as land values plummeted, beneffiting from locations along main infrastructures, where they could develop their informal economies (Mörtenbock et all, 2015). But with increasing land values due to new developments, the threat of gentrification and eviction becomes higher, forcing these urban Kampungs to move to the urban fringes and rebuild.

Fig. 8: Income class division in DKI Jakarta



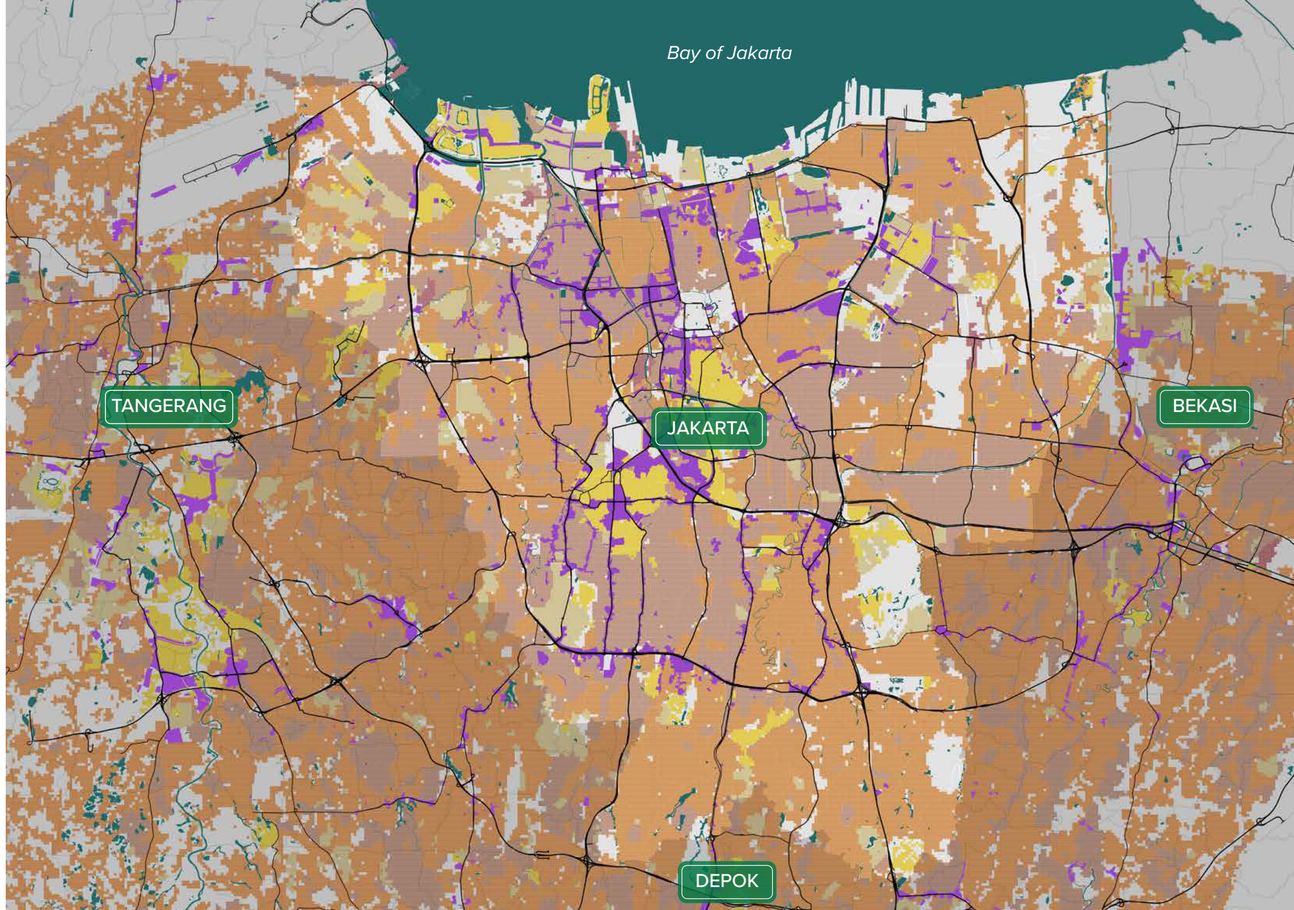


Fig. 9: Dual city development in Angke, North Jakarta



Retrieved from Google Earth, August 2022.

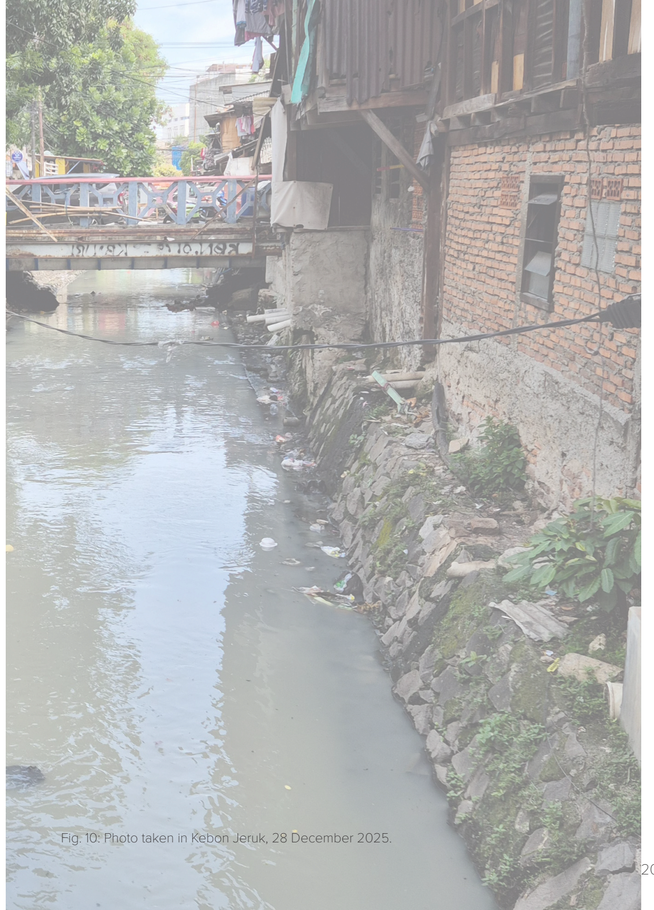


Fig. 10: Photo taken in Kebon Jeruk, 28 December 2025.

1.2 Problem statement

In spite of being stigmatized as ‘slums’, the Kampungs have established a self-organising community over time based on principles of solidarity and care. In the past, the Kampungs with their intangible social infrastructures and their informal economies driven by survival have shown great resiliency and manifested their presence in a modern city (Low, 2000). These intangible social systems are frequently overlooked and disregarded by planners and officials who tend to emphasise the chaotic and dangerous aspects of the Kampungs. But given Jakarta’s current path towards a dystopian megalopolis of segregated neighbourhoods and climate misery, could the traditional mindset of the Kampungs become the foundation towards a more socio-spatially just and sustainable future?

This research aims to explore and learn from the values and practices that the Kampungs have established over time and that have proven to be resilient amidst the social and environmental challenges in Jakarta. Research on addressing infrastructural problems and improving the Kampungs individually has been extensive, however, a vision to translate these values for the metropolitan region of Jakarta amidst a complex political ecology is not yet sufficiently investigated. This research is not mere romanticising the Kampungs as ingenuitive and self-sufficient systems, but rather seeks to learn from practices and structures that the Kampungs have created in order to analyse whether it can be applied in a larger metropolitan context. This thesis therefore adds to the existing body of knowledge on how informal settlements can be more included in spatial planning and provide alternative strategies towards urban development in South-East Asian metropolitan regions.

1.3 Research Gap and Questions

The Kampungs have been studied many times showing their systems of survival and how the residents in these neighbourhoods have create a community of self-sufficiency and resiliency through social oriented practices. There is, however, a lack of research on how these practices could be applied within a larger urban setting, such as Jakarta, providing an alternative strategy towards urban development. This thesis explores how these practices of the Kampung can be applied and improve spatial planning strategies for the Metropolitan region of Jakarta, towards creating a more inclusive and sustainable city.

Central Research question:
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?

To identify potential practices from the Kampungs and project these in the larger context of Jakarta, a comprehensive understanding into the social infrastructures and networks is required as well as a critical reflection to determine if these practices provide an alternative approach in spatial planning for Jakarta. The following sub-questions have been developed to address the hypothesis of Jakarta as the Kampung Metropolis through multiple research methods.

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 multi-level governance structures and policies should be developed to integrate traditional practices on a metropolitan scale?



Fig. 11: Photo taken in Kampung Bali, 29 December 2025.

1.4 Motivation & Objective

Upon my first visit to this enormous city in 2023, I couldn't help to be both frustrated and fascinated by the complexities and the diversity of the city. My girlfriend is originally from Tangerang, a new town on the West of Jakarta and we frequently commuted to Jakarta using a Grab taxi to one of the hyper-luxurious shopping malls, as these places provided a quiet and comfortable climate among the chaos in the city. Talking with Indonesians in the Netherlands who have experienced the city from close by, they often picture a doom scenario that Jakarta is steering towards. Can an alternative perspective be created for Jakarta that transforms the city into a resilient urban environment or is it beyond saving and will it be the next Atlantis?

Jakarta is one of the examples of cities in South East Asia experiencing trouble, as continuous urbanisation to cities continue, which puts more pressure on existing urban communities. In a previous project, informal communities in Can Tho, a city in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta, are experiencing a similar situation as the Kampung neighbourhoods in Jakarta. The Mekong delta is dealing with seasonal flooding and environmental degradation, which is amplified by rapid urbanisation in urban and peri-urban areas. In spite of witnessing the conditions of the urban poor and recent flood events across Vietnam in October 2025, urban planning seems to shift its attention to residential projects to accommodate the increasing middle-class in cities rather than improving conditions of informal dwellers. Noticing the similarities in social and environmental problems and conditions of Kampung neighbourhoods in Jakarta, it made me realise that socio-spatial justice is still an underexposed topic in urban planning in South East Asia.





Fig. 12: Left: Photo taken during a field trip in Can Tho, showing informal dwellers along a stream in Desakota type development, Matthijs Jerez Nova 26 September 202
Fig. 13, Right: Photo of showing segregation in the peri-urban area of Cai Rang, Matthijs Jerez Nova 28 September 2025.

1.5 Relevancy

Jakarta is one of the examples of metropolitan regions in South East Asia where rapid urbanisation amidst complex social and environmental contexts creates challenges in urban planning. In a previous project, I have witnessed similar conditions of informal settlements being under threat in Can Thó, a city in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta. The Mekong Delta is experiencing similar challenges dealing with flooding and environmental degradation due to extensive agriculture and an increasing urban population. During the fieldwork in Can Thó, I noticed how the urban poor in linear settlements along creeks and canals are increasingly under threat, as formal developments increase the impact of flooding along the riparian edges. In spite of their traditional knowledge to deal with flood events, these communities are not included in urban planning strategies and forced to either make way for new developments or seek refuge to safer locations if floods destroy their houses along streams. These observations in Vietnam and Indonesia made me realise that socio-spatial justice for informal urban communities is still underexposed.

Witnessing the struggle of informal settlements in a rapidly changing urban context made me intrigued to look at other examples in Asia. Similar examples of Vietnam and Indonesia can be found across South East Asia, like the Philippines and Thailand. Another case are the urban villages in China, the informal and dense communities in metropolitan areas where economic migrants arrive first to find work in the city. Like many of these informal communities, their illegal status form a threat for eviction as it does not align with local urban planning strategies.







Fig. 14-16: Photos of informal dwellings across Asia. Left: Shipai village, Guangzhou. Middle: Informal settlement in Can Thó. Right: Kloeng Thai, Bangkok

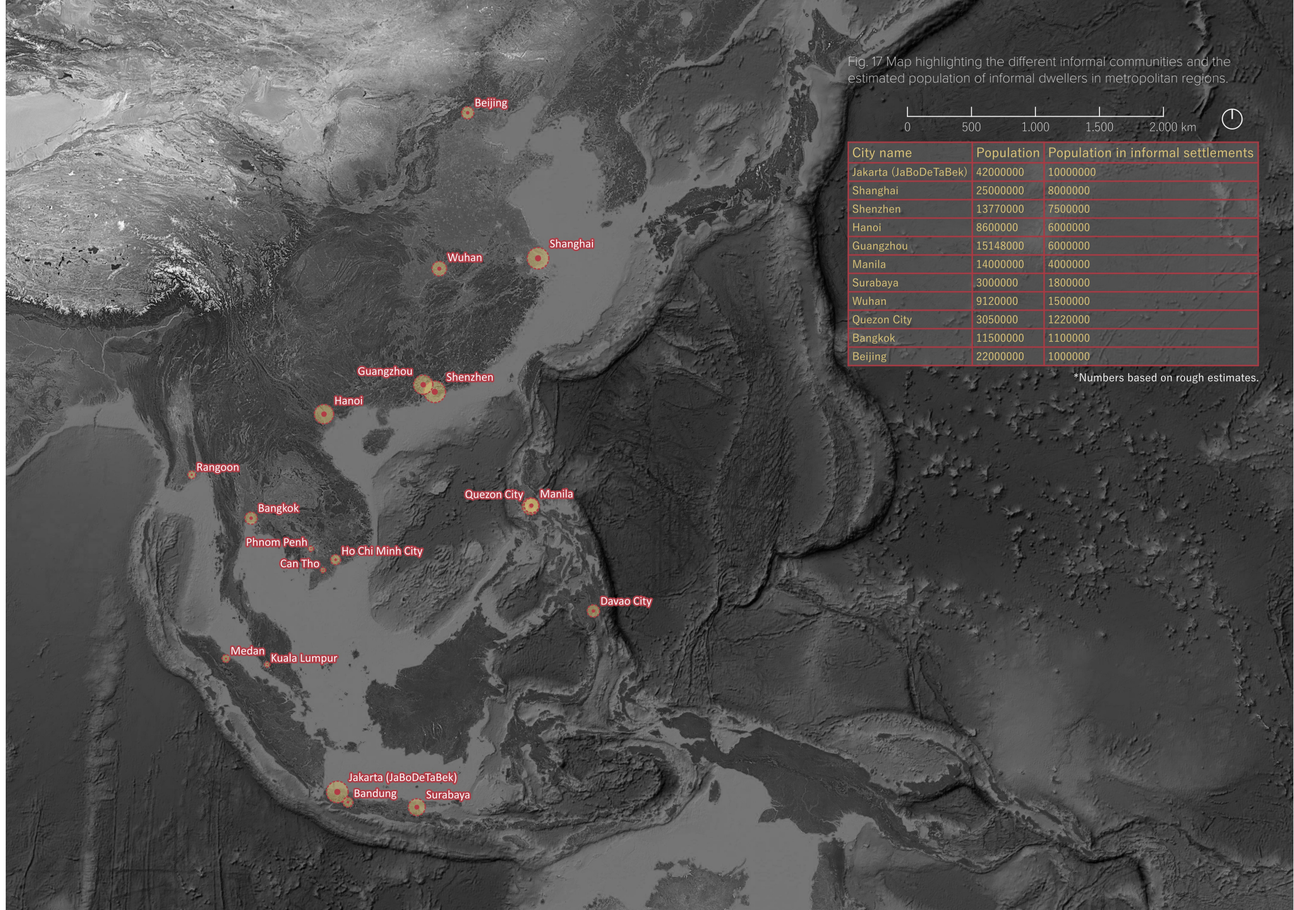


Fig. 17 Map highlighting the different informal communities and the estimated population of informal dwellers in metropolitan regions.

City name	Population	Population in informal settlements
Jakarta (JaBoDeTaBek)	42000000	10000000
Shanghai	25000000	8000000
Shenzhen	13770000	7500000
Hanoi	8600000	6000000
Guangzhou	15148000	6000000
Manila	14000000	4000000
Surabaya	3000000	1800000
Wuhan	9120000	1500000
Quezon City	3050000	1220000
Bangkok	11500000	1100000
Beijing	22000000	1000000

*Numbers based on rough estimates.



2. Methodology

Fig. 13 Photo taken in Kebon Jeruk, 28 December 2025.

2.1 Scope and limitations

The city of Jakarta offers a good starting point for studying the Kampungs with each a different context and pattern of development. Furthermore, the environmental and societal contexts of Jakarta make it interesting to analyse and assess the systems and spatial patterns of these informal settlements and test these in different contexts within the Jakarta Metropolitan region. However, a complete study on the number of different Kampung typologies that exist and its socio-spatial practices and conditions within the scale of Jakarta and the time frame of 6 months in which this research needs to be completed is not feasible.

Therefore, to meet the academic standards of this thesis, four Kampung neighbourhoods with each a different social, economic and political context have been picked to further analyse and to spatially dissect the practices that potentially benefit future urban planning within the Jakarta Metropolitan region. These four different Kampungs have met certain criteria that make these neighbourhoods interesting cases to further investigate, either through their long-lasting presence within urban Jakarta or due to their communal activity that make these districts acknowledged and resilient areas against the social and environmental externalities. Furthermore, these Kampungs have been acknowledged and studied in-depth that helps building a analytical foundation and create a body of knowledge that will benefit the fieldwork in identifying the social practices and land uses that makes these communities thrive in contested urban areas.

The fieldwork and a literature study on the four selected Kampungs are the first stage of the research, which aims to identify the practices and values that are embedded in the Kampungs and how these are reflected in space and patterns of the Kampungs. Visualising these practices and intangible values through critical mapping and mental maps helps to critically reflect on current urban planning approaches and build up a manifesto for the Kampung communities to be involved in future urban planning of Jakarta. Through learning from the principles in the Kampung, the researcher does not want to romanticise the Kampung as the ideal urban composition for Jakarta, but rather emphasise the hidden values of these areas that could create conditions in different urban contexts where formal and informal can coexist in a more sustainable urban environment.

The next stage involves designing interventions that would shape conditions in which these identified values and practices from the Kampungs are presented. The designed interventions are in two different urban context, where these values are either not represented and where the community is not resilient enough to deal with the social and environmental externalities that puts the current population under threat. The third stage builds upon the designed interventions and builds a ‘roadmap to resilience’, a strategic implementation where key policies and governance structure help to create a new urban planning trajectory that maintains plurality of the community and helps to shape a sustainable pathway for future developments. Moreover, this helps to evaluate which contexts have potential to adopt this method and which areas require more attention in shaping these conditions.

Kampung Bali and Kebon Kacang: Kampungs standing the test of time

Kampungs have been in Jakarta since the early colonial period as resorts for migrants and indigenous communities to live. One of the earliest kampungs in Jakarta are the neighbourhoods Kampung Bali and Kampung Kebon Kacang. These urban districts simply started out as destinations for the economic migrants that arrived from areas across the Indonesian archipelago, like Kampung Bali with migrants from the respective island. Other Kampungs simply came into existence due to the trade activities that were conducted and the economies that attracted people towards the area, like Kebon Kacang, which translates to the Peanut Garden because it was the place where early peanut plantations were settled and the product was traded throughout the city. Due to the convenient location at the heart of the city, key infrastructures and economic activities slowly developed into persistent systems that shaped the city, and provided the urban underclass with a means of living. In spite of modern urban development in the form of high rises and super blocks, these urban Kampungs have become resilient urban areas and beacons of hope during economic downturn. Since the independence, these neighbourhoods have been formally acknowledged by local governments and seen investments in the urban environment through social housing and public amenities. These neighbourhoods are nowadays urban districts with different urban morphologies ranging from traditional informal settlements to fully developed neighbourhoods, with at its core a strong identity and a destination for many Jakartans to visit.

Kampung Akuarium and Kampung Tongkol: Kampungs that survived bureaucracy

Since the economic boom in Jakarta, the Kampungs were seen as an eyesore by governors and government officials because of their chaotic and messy morphology and negative identity as these places were often perceived as dangerous areas. With the Kampung Clearance Policy developed in the early 80s, the government of Jakarta aimed to clear slum settlements and move them in so-

called Rumah Susun or Rusunawa to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and make way for new developments that were in line with the economic boom of Jakarta. In more recent years, this urban development strategy became adopted by governor Ahok as a necessary means to deal with increasing flood risks and create room for water storage through urban wetlands. The impact of Kampung clearance for these communities is detrimental, as forced resettlements means rebuilding infrastructures and social ties is often a site specific and intricate process that is developed for a long period of time.

Despite the lack of political representation, some communities took this threat as a last resort to prevent forced eviction. In the case of Kampung Akuarium, which got cleared at first, the community achieved with policy innovation and collaboration with experts to rebuild the community through an innovative and sustainable social housing construction on the same location. In the case of neighbouring Kampung Tongkol, a different form of advocacy was performed through a form of slum beautification, where forms of urban farming and ecology made a case for the community to gain acknowledgement and prevent eviction.









Fig. 19: top left: Kampung Akuarium,
Fig. 20: bottom left: Kampung Tongkol
Fig. 21: top right: Kebon Kacang,
Fig. 22 bottom right: Kampung Bali
Photos taken on fieldwork on 29 and 30 December 2025

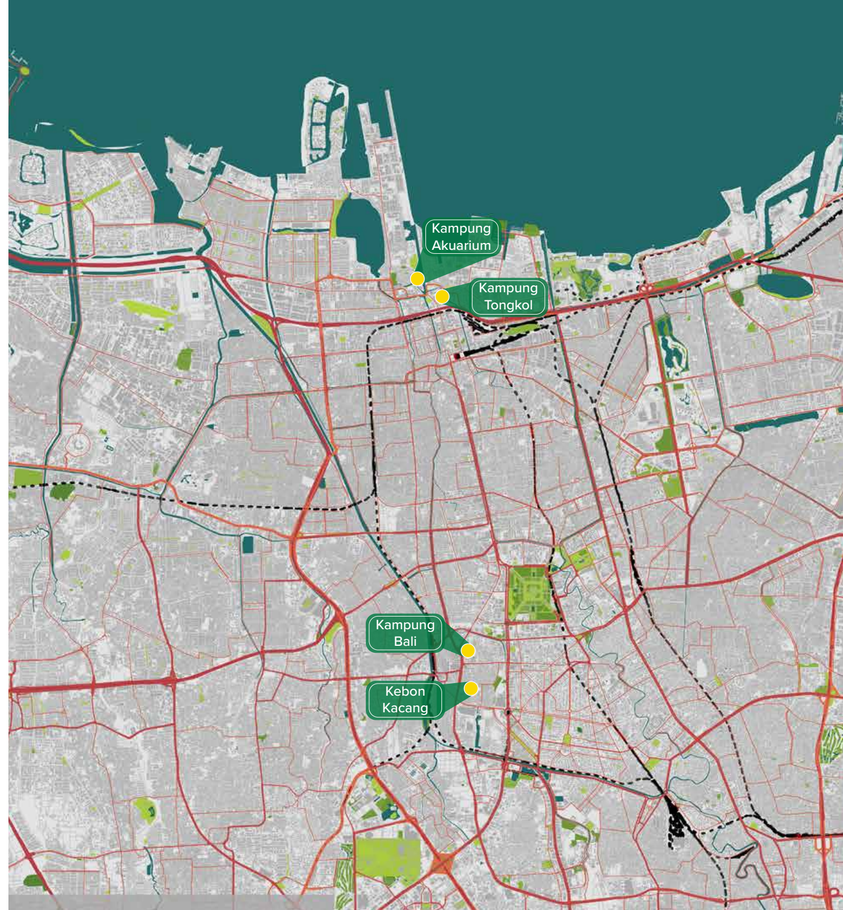


Fig. 23: Map showing the locations of the Kampungs studied for the thesis.

2.2 Research Outline

To understand the social dynamics and principles of the Kampungs, an analysis in combination with fieldwork is conducted. Before the fieldwork is conducted, a set of maps is created to understand the urban morphology and context of these Kampungs, in combination with a literature review on existing practices and data about Kampungs. This creates a foundation and helps to prepare relevant topics to focus on during the fieldwork. The values of the Kampungs are identified and visualised in mental mappings. This helps to visualise the networks and relationships of members in the Kampung and creates a comprehensive understanding on how these communities operate in the complex urban environment. By applying these methods, practices of the Kampungs can be analysed and assessed forming a bases for the next stage.

For the second stage of the research, the identified practices from the Kampungs are further developed into spatial principles. The principles are designed by using the layer approach. Through critical mapping, the relations between Kampungs and the urban context where these Kampungs operate to develop spatial principles that would facilitate designing intervention in other context that would integrate these social values of the Kampung.

The third stage continues building on this vision of the Kampung Metropolis by creating design interventions at strategic locations. These zoom ins help to propose an alternative urban development for Jakarta using the embedded values from the Kampungs as a guideline. The zoom-ins are accompanied by a recommended policy and governance framework that support this vision of the Kampung Metropolis and how it can materialise in the future.

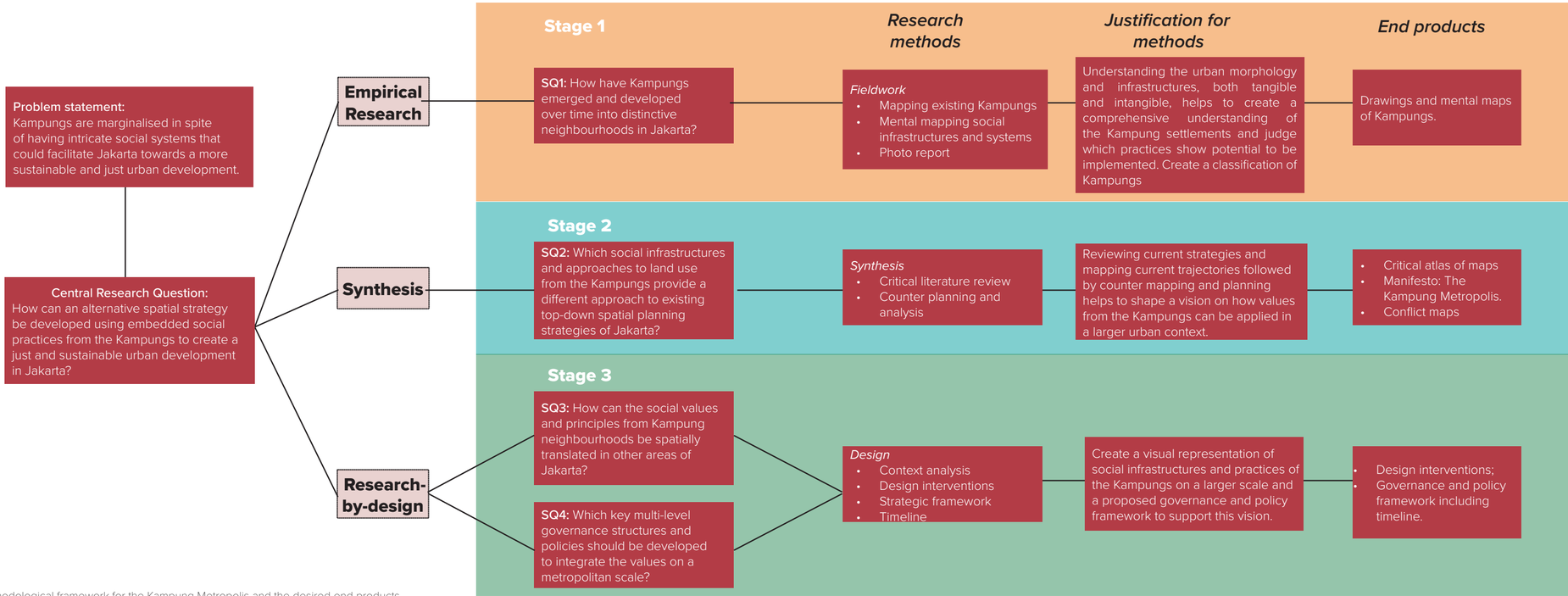


Fig. 24: Methodological framework for the Kampung Metropolis and the desired end products, Matthijs Jerez Nova 2025.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The research explores a different approach in current urban planning practice through the ideology of post growth. Post growth investigates alternative approaches for urban development, contesting current capitalist driven trajectories that focus on economic gain as the main criteria for societal and urban development, and explores theories that are sustainable and social oriented. The context of Jakarta proves an interesting case study that fits well in this narrative. There are multiple theories to integrate post-growth practices in urbanism. However looking at the case of Jakarta and its Kampungs being under the pressure of social and environmental issues, the following theories are chosen to further investigate as they are close to the core values that are identified from the literature review.

Doughnut Economies

The theory of doughnut economics was developed by English economist Kate Raworth, who critically reflected on existing economic models that emphasised GDP growth as the main driver for economic and societal development. Her model suggest an alternative economy that is more socially and environmentally oriented. The doughnut economics model consists of two concentric circles that form the shape of the doughnut and provides a roadmap on how sustainable development can be achieved. The inner concentric circle is the social bottom line, which are the essential needs that society requires to survive. The outer circle presents the ecological ceiling, when exceeded indicates that earth's resources are being depleted resulting in environmental harm. Raworth suggest that economies and its actors should respect these two concentric boundaries to achieve sustainable growth (Raworth, 2017).

Urban planning in Jakarta have for decades emphasised economic growth with the development of large commercial complexes in its urban and peripheries, resulted in a Desakota type development where continuous urbanisation and development resulted in the merging of Jakarta with its satellite cities that resulted in the JaBoDeTaBek metropolitan region.

Socio-spatial Justice

The theory of spatial justice explores how space and the resources and rights provided by these spaces are divided among different actors in a 'just' manner. The theory of spatial justice emerged in the 1970s as an answers against increasing inequality in cities that sparked advocacy in urban communities to demand accessibility to facilities and rights (Harvey, 2019). This concept was later materialised by Edward Soja who argues that social and spatial relations are constantly shaping each other (Soja, 2010).

In the case of Jakarta, the Kampung communities have been under pressure as a result of current urban policies that focus on creating new residential communities along main infrastructural corridors, which results in gentrification and forced displacement of the Kampung communities towards the urban fringes and locations endangered by climate change. This has resulted in Jakarta becoming a 'dual-city', creating a fragmented landscape consisting of slum type neighbourhoods and gated communities. Through socio-spatial justice theory, the needs of these marginalised communities are addressed, including their need and right for space and access to facilities to be acknowledged as part of the city.

Socio-spatial Isomorphism

Socio-spatial isomorphism is the phenomenon and the recurring cycle where communities are influenced and shaped by spaces, who in turn influence and transform the spaces which they inhabit and use (Rajendran 2014). It is often the case of informal dwellings that locate themselves along adjacent commercial and industrial hubs or urban infrastructures, like transit spaces or spaces with natural resources that are pivotal for survival. Since these informal communities are not formally acknowledged by the governments and are excluded from support and access to public utilities, these communities are required to rely on the resources provided by spaces and the community itself. The theory supports how informal settlements use self-organisation to shape an urban community, and how these communities interact with space.

Various Kampungs in Jakarta emerged through the spaces they laid claim to. Space has been one of the key elements that shaped the identity of Kampungs, looking at examples like Kampung Akuarium or Kebon Kacan, that got their name through the fish market and peanut plantations and were trade hubs for the products that were produced in these neighbourhoods. Furthermore, practices like slum beautification show how Kampungs are developing into active communities becoming more acknowledged by the transformation of those spaces that are pivotal for the continuity of these settlements. Socio-spatial isomorphism is a key part of the identity of Kampungs for shaping future interventions in urban design and shaping policy frameworks to support the community.

Polycentric governance

The practice of polycentric governance was first introduced by Elinor Ostrom and proposes a system where decision-making is equally distributed among civil, public and private actors. Ostrom argues that through polycentric governance, parties are more involved and relying on each other addressing each needs of the stakeholders which creates a more fair and competitive system compared to multi-level governance, which include only different levels of government institutions (Ostrom, 2010).

Jakarta has suffered over time from governments who were incapable of planning the city cohesively, due to complex political environment that was driven by growth. After its independence, urban planning was mainly top-down, especially during the autocratic regime of Suharto were urban development was often state-led and due to Nepotism favoured the more affluent and conglomerate societies in Jakarta that were close to the regime. After the fall of Suharto, the autocratic approach was exchanged for a more decentralised government structure that delegated power towards local governments, making them responsible for creating spatial plans and policies. However, due to low transparency in the government and the lack of multilateral collaboration between government institutions, the problem of corruption was transferred towards the lower governmental levels, who sought personal gain from urban developments.

In recent years, improvements have been noticed due to the increasing pressures from climate change and active advocacy from key partnerships between Kampung communities and NGOs, with satisfactory results. This understates the value of stakeholder involvement in urban planning, and an incentive for the city administration to co-design with locals.

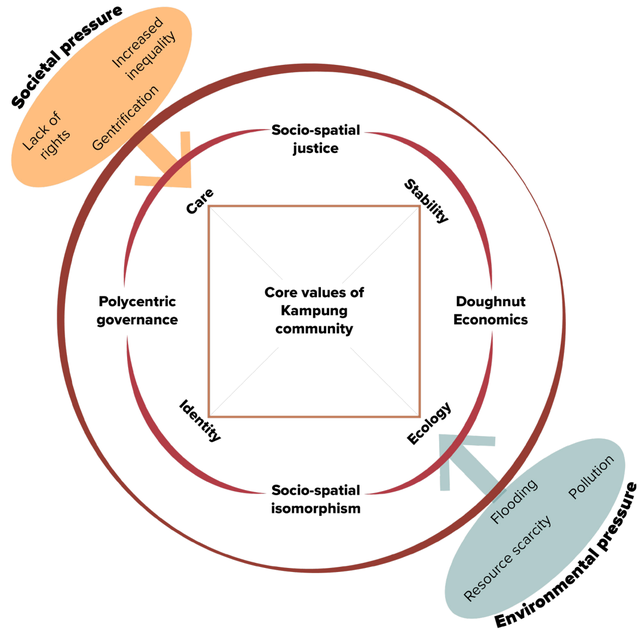


Fig. 25: Theoretical framework presenting the overlap between theories and values and how they respond towards the societal and environmental pressures in Jakarta, Matthijs Jerez Nova.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

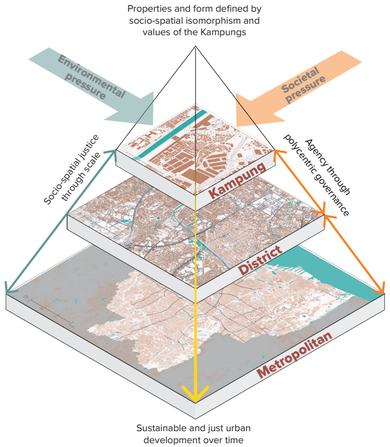
To use the Kampungs ideology and embedded values as an alternative approach for urban planning practices in Jakarta, a conceptual foundation is required to apply the values to specific spatial conditions in Jakarta. The concept of plural urbanism challenges traditional planning approaches that seek singular solutions to complex urban environments, but rather embraces multiplicity (Ryan, 2017). Traditional urbanism assumes that cities are coherent and unified entities that can be analysed, planned and designed using singular approaches. Plural urbanism challenges the traditional ontology and accepts that cities are complex evolving systems that interact and overlap and that require multiple solutions rather than one. Ryan arguments that actors, scales and interests are constantly competing, conflicting and negotiating with each other. It is not simply about reaching a consensus towards one holistic vision, but it acknowledges that conflicts, negotiation and adaptation are characteristics of urban development. The concept uses five lenses which are interconnected with each other and constantly interacting when shaping urban development.

- **Agency:** Indicates the diversity of actors that participate and interact with the city, which requires different perspectives on designing.
- **Form:** Cities consist of different forms challenging the approach of one holistic design approach.
- **Property:** Land use is incredibly diverse and each have different users that interact with space, which requires coordination among numerous actors.
- **Scale:** Urban systems and infrastructures vary and operate at multiple scales, and form an interrelated and complex system.
- **Time:** Cities are constructed through multiple palimpsests, reflecting core identities and construction principles of certain eras that are subjected to change.

The concept of plural urbanism fits well in the context of Jakarta and the narrative of the Kampung Metropolis, due to the city's emphasis on relying on large scale urban development projects in the form of super blocks, that fails to acknowledge the complexity of the city and resolve the social and environmental problems that the city is facing. Instead of large scale urban development projects, a new approach in urban planning should acknowledge the diversity and complexity of Jakarta. Furthermore, the concept aligns with the highly diverse urban communities of Jakarta that coexist in the metropolitan area, who are constantly interacting, crossing and have conflicting needs and interest for their communities. The Kampungs of Jakarta embody the dimensions of plural urbanism through their unique and diverse character, how they develop over time, their level of acknowledgement (legal or informal), and how they operate across different scales.

The diagram shows how the concept of plural urbanism fits within the context of this theoretical foundation and the context of Jakarta. The five lenses are presented as pillars that interact with each other and how the Kampung fits within the complex environment, being a small entity in a hyper diverse urban environment.

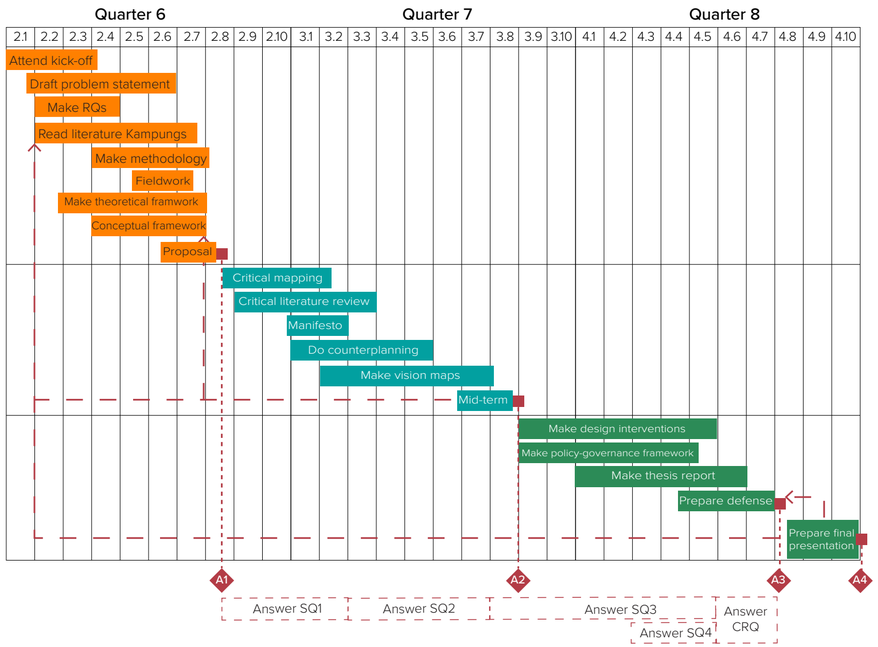
Over time, the values embedded within Kampung communities can be translated into spatial practices and planning approaches that operate across multiple scales in Jakarta. Through ongoing processes of negotiation and adaptation, these values may contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable urban future.



Plural Urbanism in the context of Jakarta

Fig. 26: Conceptual framework explaining how plural urbanism with its 5 lenses relate to the Kampungs in a highly complex environment Jakarta, Matthijs Jerez Nova.

2.5 Planning



Milestones
A1: Research Proposal
A2: Mid-Term Presentation
A3: Defence of thesis - Go/No-go
A4: Final Presentation

Fig. 27: Planning research

3. Synthesis

Fig. 28: Street in Kampung Bali, photo taken by Mahendra Ilham Nasution on 29 December 2025.

Jakarta, A Big Kampong

"Jakarta as a metropolis is essentially begun from numerous of kampongs that were formed since ages, either based on specific ethnic group or naturally formed. The formation of Kampongs as a unit of community with similar ethic background is often deemed as one of segregation policies implemented by the colonial government. Ethic group based on residential such as Makassar, Bugis, Bali, Madura, and others in separate kampongs surrounding the city does not only occurred in Batavia, but also occurred in other cities on the north coast of Java. There is no clear pattern in organizing the location of these kampongs surrounding Batavia."

"The location of kampong was more determined by the availability of lands that were located around six redoubts that circle the outer side of the city wall in radius on to two kilometer. Yet that segregation impression itself became unseen since each kampongs does not limit their interaction with each other and many of the residents move in between kampongs, so today most of these kampong names does not reflects ethic population inside."

Text taken from a panel in Jakarta History Museum, visited on 30 December 2025.

Fig. 29: Photo taken during visit Jakarta history museum on 30 December 2025.

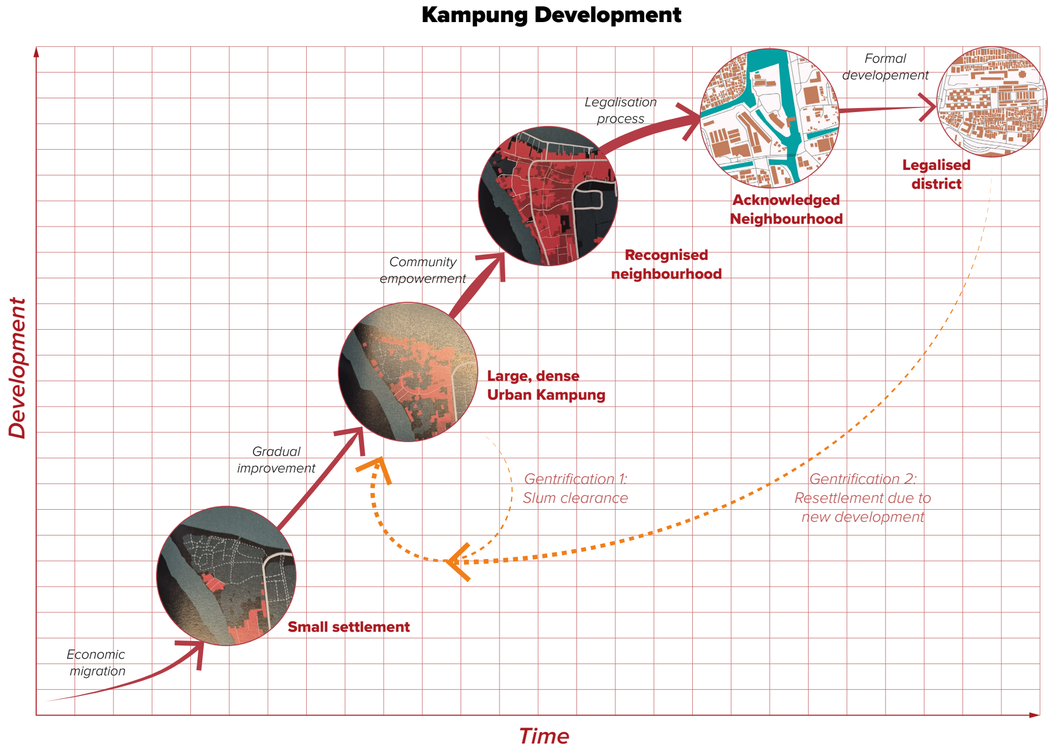


Fig. 30: Development of the Kampung

3.1 Development of the Urban Kampung

The Kampungs have established themselves over time as cohesive urban communities by embodying Indonesian culture and through social oriented practices of solidarity and self-sufficiency. The lack of government support have forced the urban poor to settle on fallow lands close that were unused or close to urban infrastructures or topographic conditions that could provide resources or would create utilities for the community to exist. This would help the Kampung communities to build up an informal economy that can coexist with the formal parts of the city (Mörtenbock et all, 2015). After the settlement manifested and integrated in the existing urban fabric, the Kampung starts to expand either progressive or in a dispersed pattern, depending on the context of the Kampungs. As the settlement becomes part of the city, it attracts new migrants from outside the city or through earlier clearance of informal settlements, increasing in size and becoming more dense. The Kampung develops new infrastructures and amenities over time to sustain the growing Kampung, like public toilets and mosques. The first settlers in the meantime made sufficient income to improve their accomodations, transforming the shacks into sturdy two-story houses made of concrete (Dovey, 2023). These small improvements slowly transforms the slum-like Kampungs into a developed neighbourhood, also bonding the community through place-making and improvements in the public realm. Some Kampungs never reach this point as their illegal status and vulnerability against natural disasters, like fires and flooding force them to move to other settlements and rebuild the community.

In recent years, however, Kampung communities under threat of clearance have shown through advocacy and partnerships with NGOs, officials and policy experts resilience against forced eviction. Developed Kampungs become more recognised by higher government authorities, initiating the process of formalisation. This acknowledgement results in more investments in public utilties and social housing in order to develop the Kampungs into a formal urban districts. The process of legalisation, however, is a long and complex process due to the formalisation of land rights and handing propriety contracts to informal settlers, which requires extensive administrative work for local (often premature) government institutions. Once this formalisation process is completed, the Kampungs have developed into a sub-district with formal and informal developments, initiating new government-led developments. This, however, makes the Kampung prone to gentrification as land values increase rapidly. The resilience of the Kampung community is a decisive factor whether the community continues to exist or slowly transforms into a developed neighbourhood for the more affluent population.

3.2 Identifying Social practices in the Kampung

Identifying the values of these communities solely relying on literature is too ambiguous. Additional fieldwork to clarify how these values manifest in space and the role of the Kampung community in materialising these values is essential. During the visits in the four Kampungs, the social values are translated to tangible spatial elements and conditions and visualised. These spatial elements can be divided in three categories: Buildings, Streets and Open spaces.

Buildings are very tangible elements and clearly show how the Kampungs are designed and organised. The buildings are often located at the center of the settlement, with houses oriented towards these buildings making access from all direction easy. The buildings function as key resources that support the community with public utilities or with spaces for social gatherings and communal events. In more developed Kampungs, local governments have built public facilities through National programs and funds that supports the community with housing complexes and offices where programs and activities are initiated to further develop the Kampungs into acknowledged neighbourhoods.

Streets and open space are in detail studied as the manifestation of the social values are less visible and require observations of the social dynamics of the community interacting with space. Streets and open spaces have been contested and neglected spatial elements in urban planning, as political elites and city officials fear gatherings of the urban poor resulting in uprising and riots. This would damage the authority of the elites residing in the capital, like the notorious May Riots after the fall of Suharto. Urban planning have designed these public spaces especially for the middle and higher social classes, by placing these in large public buildings like shopping malls and super blocks (Kusno, 2010). Not only provide these places refuge from the tropical climate and the chaos outdoors, but it also forms as an extra barrier excluding the urban poor classes from entering these places. Shopping malls or super blocks often come with security guards and social protocols forming an additional barrier and excluding these groups from entering. Instead, the informal communities reside in the transitional spaces outside of commercial clusters, and through forms of insurgent citizenship lay claim on the streets and open spaces (Holston, 2009). The streets are the places that provide the Kampung with opportunities to develop services and amenities that supply the population of Jakarta. Open spaces are the areas where the community meets and interacts, creating life in the urban realm and build a network of social infrastructures and relationships that integrates the informal communities with the formal developments (Harvey, 2019).



Fig. 31: A public toilet in Kampung Luar Batang, clear representation of a communal building that expresses multiple values of the Kampung, photo taken during fieldwork 30 December 2025.



Fig. 32: A street in Kebon Jeruk, showing a mix of different uses that represents the daily life of the Kampungs, photo taken 28 December 2025

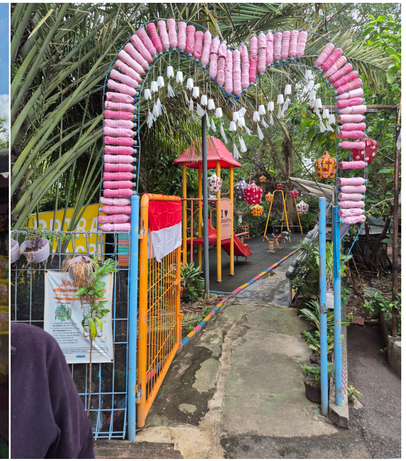


Fig. 33: A dedicated area for the Kampung Community realised by the Kelurahan Kampung Bali, the lowest governmental form. The area contains a playground, a communal garden and community building, photo taken during fieldwork 29 December 2025.

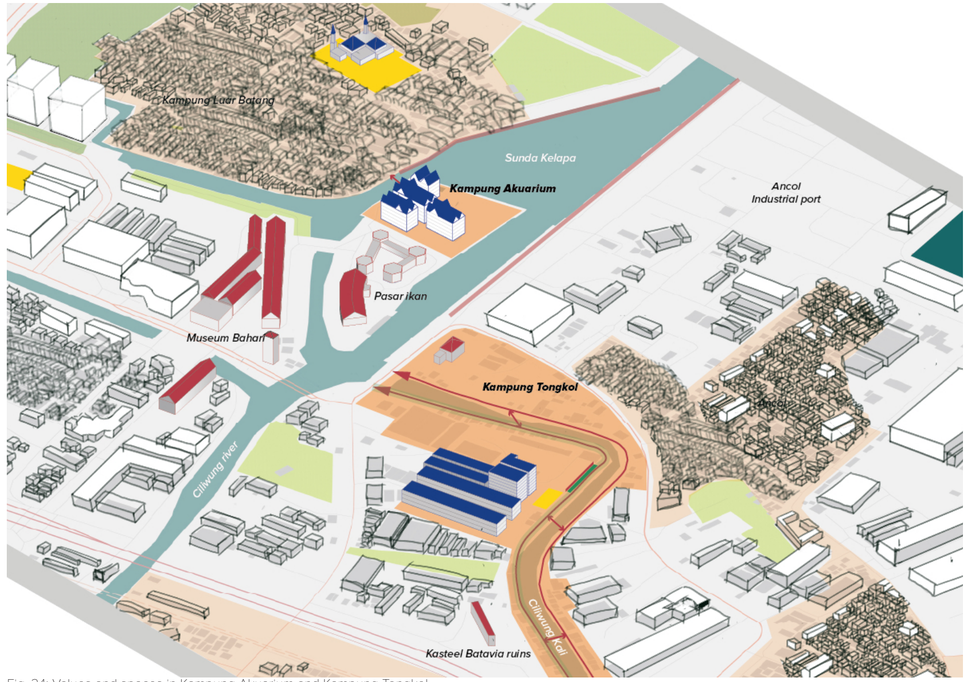


Fig. 34: Values and spaces in Kampung Akuarium and Kampung Tongkol

The strong location close to heritage sites from the colonial period create a sense of identity. Furthermore, social housing typologies show government involvement in upgrading the Kampungs to acknowledged urban districts. The historical palimpsest provide the area with key infrastructures to develop amenities and resources for the community.

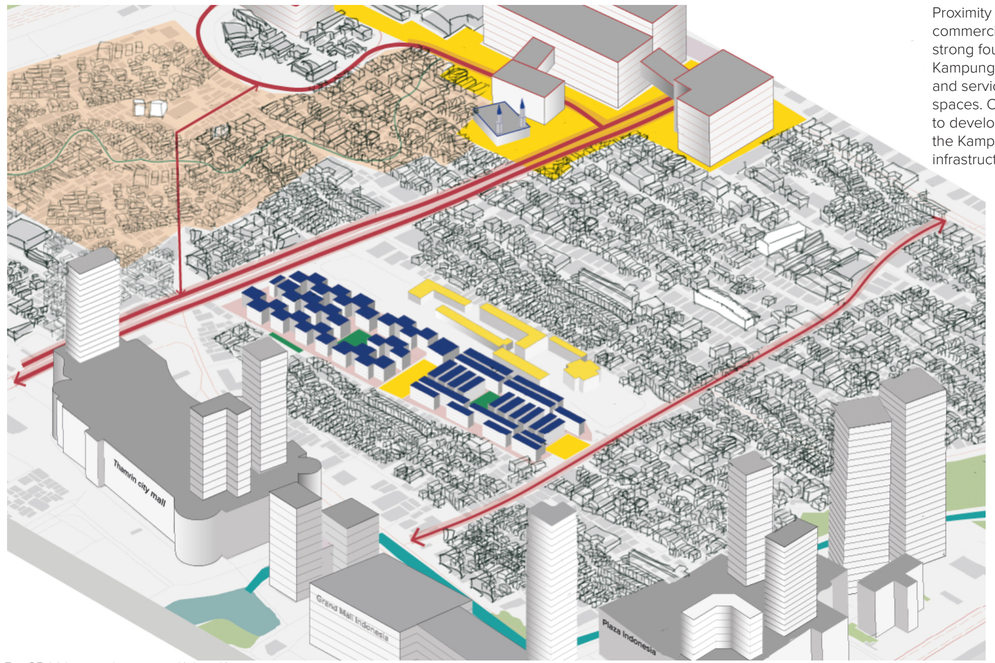


Fig. 35: Values and spaces in Kebon Kacang

Proximity to urban center and commercial clusters provide strong foundation for the Kampung to develop amenities and services in intermediate spaces. Over time, these helped to develop a distinctive identity for the Kampung. Furthermore, key infrastructures are located close.

Kampung Bali is conveniently located along infrastructural nodes, aligning transport networks with the mobility needs of the Kampung. The area has distinct commercial clusters that provided the community with a means to develop informal economies, especially concentrated around clothing wholesale markets. This shapes part of the Kampung's identity.

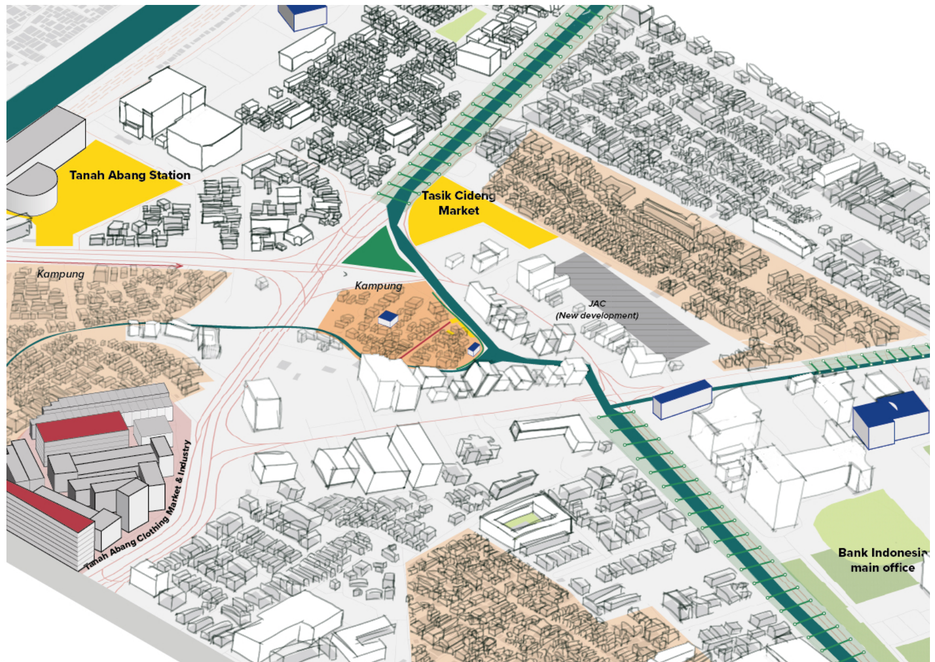


Fig. 36: Values and spaces in Kampung Bali

Buildings

Masjid

The mosque (called Masjid in Indonesia) is an important spatial element in communities and is located in the heart of neighbourhoods as a central beacon bringing the community together. Predominantly to serve for religious activities throughout different times of the day from the early morning until late in the evening, the masjid functions also as a place for social gatherings and events that brings people together. There is always activity in or surrounding Masjids which reflects the heartbeat of the community.

Rumah Susun (social housing)

During the 1980s, the Suharto regime started to build social housing units as part of a policy to improve housing in Kampungs and improve the negative stigma of these neighbourhoods as a step forward during economic boom. It helped to clear make-shift housing for more orderly apartment buildings. In spite of scepticism form the existing communities, the Rumah Susun (literally meaning 'Stacked Housing') became a physical representation of Kampung neighbourhoods, where new enterprises started to emerge within the building and providing the inhabitiants with new amenities and supporting with a living. Nowadays, social housing include amenities outside the building as well improving the quality of life and forming a tight-knit community.

Historical buildings

After Independence, the newly established government of Sukarno tried to transform Jakarta into a modern capital breaking with its turbulent past of oppression and trauma. This resulted into an aversion against remnants of these traumatic periods and often buildings became either neglected or torn down to forget traumatic experiences from the past. However, nowadays these remnants from the past have become part of identity for Kampungs neighbourhoods and a way of advocacy to become acknowledged. Buildings have become persistent structures and are appreciated as remnants of remembering and learning from past events and the resiliency of past Indonesian generations.

WC Umum

Since the Kampung Improvement Policy (KIP) was implemented during Suharto's regime, government invested more in public utilities for Kampung communities. The public toilets was one of these amenities that provided water access and improve sanitary standards and prevent the spread of diseases in impoverished neighbourhoods. For a small fee, people in the Kampungs can make use of the public toilets to clean and relieve themselves (these units are also called *BMC* in Indonesian, standing for *Berak, Mandi* and *Cuci*) and are to date still in use because of their cheap and spatial benefits in dense Kampungs.

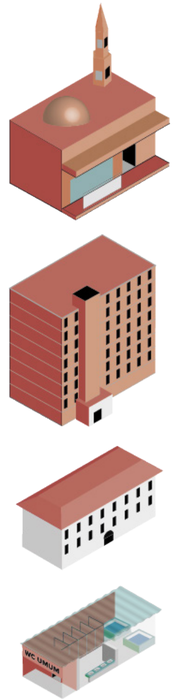


Fig. 37: Identified buildings typologies that represent the values.

Food corridors

Food is an important aspect in daily life of Indonesians and relfects multiple values that are embedded in Indonesians culture. It is in these food corridors that the gap between the poor and the rich are blurred and where the informal economies are intertwining with the formal. The *warungs* (restaurant and local food stalls) and *tokos* (larger stores selling specialised products) are the formal stores consisting of indoor spaces with a back kitchen and a terrace on the street with an outdoor kitchen. The streetscape is varied with these terrace-like occupancy together with flexible food carts and street vendors the street comes to life throughout different parts of the day.

Blue corridors

Jakarta once started as a small fishing village built on marshlands. Years of land cultivation and exploitation by Dutch colonialism has transformed the wetlands into a concrete jungle where mangrove fields have been transformed into impermeable urban villages for the middle-class. This however amplifies the city's struggle with water management. Traces of Dutch colonialism are still present in the older Batavia districts through these canal structures and formed corridor structures in which the Kampungs can use it as a key resource, for fishing, additional space by claiming embankments, or for trash and sewage. In the more developed Kampungs, canals are not seen as borders but are connected through self-made brdiges expanding the community's networks and increase the web of social relationships.

Green corridors

The development of Jakarta towards a modern metropolis has come at the cost of nature. The wetlands that helped to deal with monsoon rains and high tides in rivers have been transformed in large residential complexes serving the middle class. In spite of continuous urban development, the need for more nature seems to be acknowledged and given attention to. In the more affluent neighbourhoods of Jakarta, ecology seems to be already integrated in urban design. The district Menteng is designed according to the Garden City principles by Dutch colonists, with parks and park-like avenues with planted *taluds*. Smaller in scale but according to the same principle, the Kampungs have made a case for themselves of 'greenifying' the neighbourhood as a way of improving its image and a form of advocacy to be acknowledged by higher governments. Pots of plants and plantwalls with herbs and spices used by the community have improved the image of the Kampungs and created and active form of urban citizenship. Through these small scale interventions, the corridors from the wealthier districts are extended into the Kampungs, which slowly connects the fragmented patchwork into a cohesive urban ecological landscape.

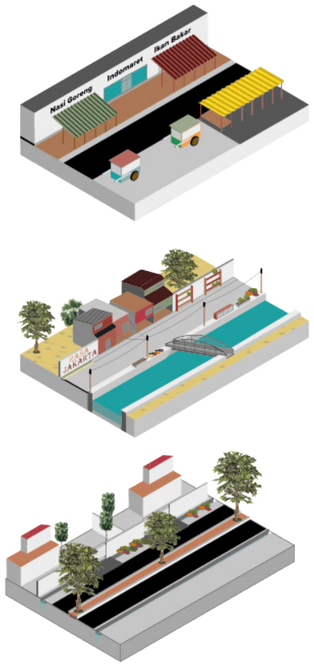


Fig. 38: Street typologies that represent the values

Sports and play

The high density of Kampungs and the limited space available for public amenities have put a strain on quality of life for Kampung neighbourhoods. In recent years, however, the more developed Kampungs and social housing projects have addressed space for leisure and sports to improve the living environment of Kampung communities. Courts for racket sports are also used as communal spaces where crowds gather and lounge, serving thus a dual purpose that both brings the community together.

Mobility hubs

The houses of the Kampungs are densely packed in small parcels of land, bounded by larger infrastructures or office buildings. This density of the Kampungs brought limited availability for infrastructures to built, resulting in narrow alleyways that prevents cars from entering the neighbourhood. that there is limited space left for roads for cars to go through or even park. It is in the boundaries of the Kampungs where inhabitants found empty lots where they can park their cars or vehicles for transportation services (*Bajaj* & *Angkots*), and from their commute to their homes. Moreover, within the Kampung they have collective spaces to store Gerobaks (Food carts) where they store and cook their food before they go to sell their food. This shows a clear organisation and sharing of space between the community.

Lounging areas

A core part of Indonesian identity is 'togetherness'. With limited available space, Jakartans find a way to find spaces where they can seek comfort or shelter. The streets are often claimed for gathering smaller communities or compounds to share a meal. In spaces with shelter from trees or the burning sun *Gojek* and *Grab* drivers lounge together waiting for pick-up orders, often dozing off. These in-between spaces are often neglicted but take part in daily patterns of Jakartans and provide the Jakartans places for resting and social cohesion.

Pasar (Malam) - (Night) markets

In a city with self-sufficient super blocks and commercial clusters, markets remain a pivotal means for a large population of Jakarta. The markets operate from the early morning where people buy they groceries followed by enterprises who buy for dedicated wholesale volumes, untill late in the night to grab a late night dinner. Food markets are predominantly present, but there are also specialised markets for clothing and crafts. These markets operate through many informal systems, from traffic and security guards to musicians and artists, attracting large crowds throughout the day who find themselves enjoying the active and bustling atmosphere that the market offers.

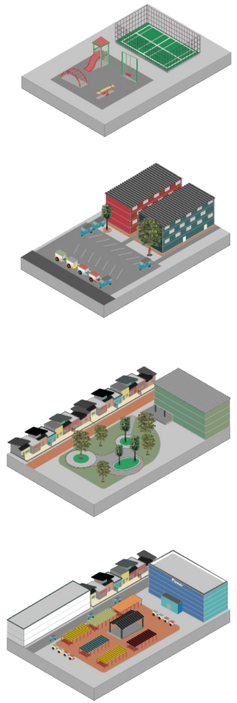


Fig. 39: Open spaces that embody the values of the Kampung.

3.3 Values of the Kampungs

The analysis of the four Kampungs have shown spatial elements that were created by the community through forms of insurgent citizenship and socio-spatial isomorphism, where the community supported its people by using the topographic and socio-economic conditions of the site and generating resources that helped to develop the Kampung into a tight-knit community. Furthermore, these locations have shown how local governments intervene with projects that would improve the conditions of the Kampung community and providing them with new infrastructures that would make these communities resilient.

Urban Kampungs like Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali have been present since the colonial period, and manifested themselves as distinctive urban communities in Jakarta. This reflects not only through the demographic, but also in the amenities and services that are generated by the community. In the process of Kampung development, the community starts to lay claim to space and gradually improve the built environment making it their own neighbourhood. This form of slum beautification not only improves the outlook and the image of the Kampungs, but is also a way of the community to create a sense of belonging and pride. By slowly transforming the built environment into a neighbourhood that is socially cohesive and integrated with the city, governments start to show more appreciation and pay attention towards the Kampungs. This is the reason why Kebon Kacang was one of the first sites where social housing was being developed in the 1970s and 1980s. Now, the government of Jakarta has started to modernise and update the existing social housing complexes and large infrastructural projects, embodying the spirit of gradual development that is central for Kampungs. Kampungs like Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali have managed to obtain formal status, having access to government funds and administrative support through local offices allowing these neighbourhoods to continue developments. Their location in the urban centre close to commercial clusters helped these communities to develop their local economy that sustained the Kampung.

However the process of legalisation that these two Kampungs have taken was long and complicated. Younger Kampungs that face the immediate threat of clearance have to rely on other measures to continue to exist. Some Kampungs use their contested future as a way to organise the community and find ingenuitive ways to make a case for themselves preventing potential eviction. The Kampungs in Jakarta's old district, Kampung Akuarium and Tongkol, are examples of communities that have established a strong advocative body through insurgent citizenship (Holston, 2014) and key partnerships. Furthermore, they used forms of slum beautification and their morphology close to key infrastructures and heritage sites to legitimise their settlement. After being demolished, Kampung Akuarium partnered with policy makers and NGOs to develop a ingenuitive, sustainable social housing concept that won the UN heritage awards, becoming an acknowledged Kampung (Fauzi, 2022). For the case of Kampung Tongkol, they use their special location close to old colonial buildings and canals to integrate forms of urban nature and permaculture to mobilise the community and advocate against eviction. This resulted in urban development projects being cancelled by the DKI Jakarta (Munk, 2016).

The Kampungs have shown different development trajectories due to their specific site conditions, that result in different development patterns. Furthermore, the demographic composition of these Kampungs are very different, resulting in visually distinctive urban environment. Nevertheless, these four Kampungs have profoundly shown four values that define how the Kampungs have organised their community, and how space is used to shape the built environment to support these communities amidst changing urban conditions. These values are Care, Identity, Resilience and Ecology.

Care shows the attention that the informal settlers in these community show towards one another and how space is constantly being appropriated, negotiated and improved. Furthermore, once the Kampung community starts to develop, they shown a greater appreciation towards private and public space, gradually improving the urban environment through beatification practices.

Identity is gradually formed over time, as the Kampung builds the community and provides distinctive amenities that supplies the community. The context of the Kampung and its demographic composition provides the core foundation to how identity is shaped over time.

Resilience is created through gradual improvements in the Kampung and the Indonesian mindset of sharing and caring for each other. Space is being used to serve the community and to create resources that would support informal economies.

Lastly, ecology is becoming an important value for communities, as it is used to improve the image of the Kampung and a form of advocacy. Furthermore, it is used as a spatial practice to generate resources for the community and show more appreciation towards ecological structures.

Care Identity Resilience Ecology



Fig. 40: Collage of values and their relation to space

3.4 Spatial Principles of Informality

Applying these spatial elements in different urban districts that fail to represent the four values have to consider the different socio-political, economical. environmental context. To successfully integrate the Kampung's values in other urban contexts, the identified spatial elements are translated into four abstract principles as an intermediate step to design and tailor spatial elements before applying them in other parts of Jakarta. The abstract principles help to acknowledge the different contexts and provide the right elements that would create favourable conditions for these four values to materialise. Furthermore, these abstract principles help to create and maintain plurality through respecting the varied conditions, designing the spatial elements that each district requires.

1. Porous borders

Jakarta's ongoing urban development created a dual landscape where different classes of Indonesian society have retrieved in their self-contained bubbles of urban life, which can be seen as different heterotopias with their own organisation and political systems. However, in order to make a living, the community of the Kampung have established an informal economy that exist in symbiosis to formal economies.

2. Chain of amenities and socio-temporal patterns

Living in two separate worlds, the patterns of informal and formal communities overlap throughout the day through amenities and services provided by inhabitants of the Kampungs in in-between spaces. This supports social networks where Jakartans from different parts of life interact and coexist with eachother.

3. Mobilty networks

The development of the TransJakarta revolutionised a disorganised transportation system plagued by congestion. Despite favouring the more developed classes through linking the commercial clusters and super blocks with buslanes. The informal economies adapted by connecting the stops with intermediate modes of transport, connecting the Kampungs and desolated parts with the public transportation network. It shows resilience through adaptation and bridges the gap between classes.

4. Blue-green corridors

Blue-green infrastructures have persisted and shaped urban development in Jakarta. In future planning, these elements become increasingly pivotal as they help increase the resilience of both urban communities against pressures of climate change. Extending the existing blue and green corridors helps to regenerate ecological systems and make the urban landscape more cohesive.

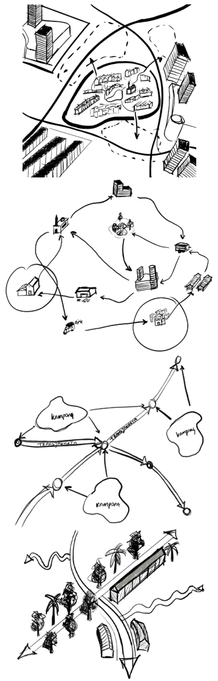


Fig. 41: Spatial principles derived from the Kampung's values

3.4.1 Porous borders

The borders of the Kampungs in the harbour region of Sunda Kelapa have openings through the blue-green corridors. Kampung Akuarium is an exception where the social housing complex is hermetically sealed with fences and a control post at the entrance of the complex. Signs of the Kampungs say that the complex is closed for unauthorised persons 11pm until 5am. For the case of Kampung Akuarium, the community itself is self-reliant, provided with all the amenities to sustain the community (mosque, garden, pond, and outdoor kitchens). For the adjacent Kampungs that have developed more informally, the neighbourhood is more open towards the outside, with connections between areas through green blue corridor, which is supported by the colonial palimpsest of the old town.



Fig. 42: Porous borders Sunda Kelapa region

Kampung Bali and Kebon Kacang have porous borders through the in between spaces where formal economies blend with informal economies. Kampung Bali has become resilient over time through the various clothing markets and the manufacturing industries that supply these markets. These industries extend in some places until deep in the Kampungs. The Tanah Abang train station is one of the important infrastructures of the city that connects the economies and the Kampungs to a larger scale of Jakarta. Kampung Bali is characterised by the canal that functions as a bypass and goes through multiple Kampungs. The blue infrastructures continuity into multiple Kampungs supports the larger sewage infrastructure, but could potentially become part of a larger ecological system that connects Jakarta.

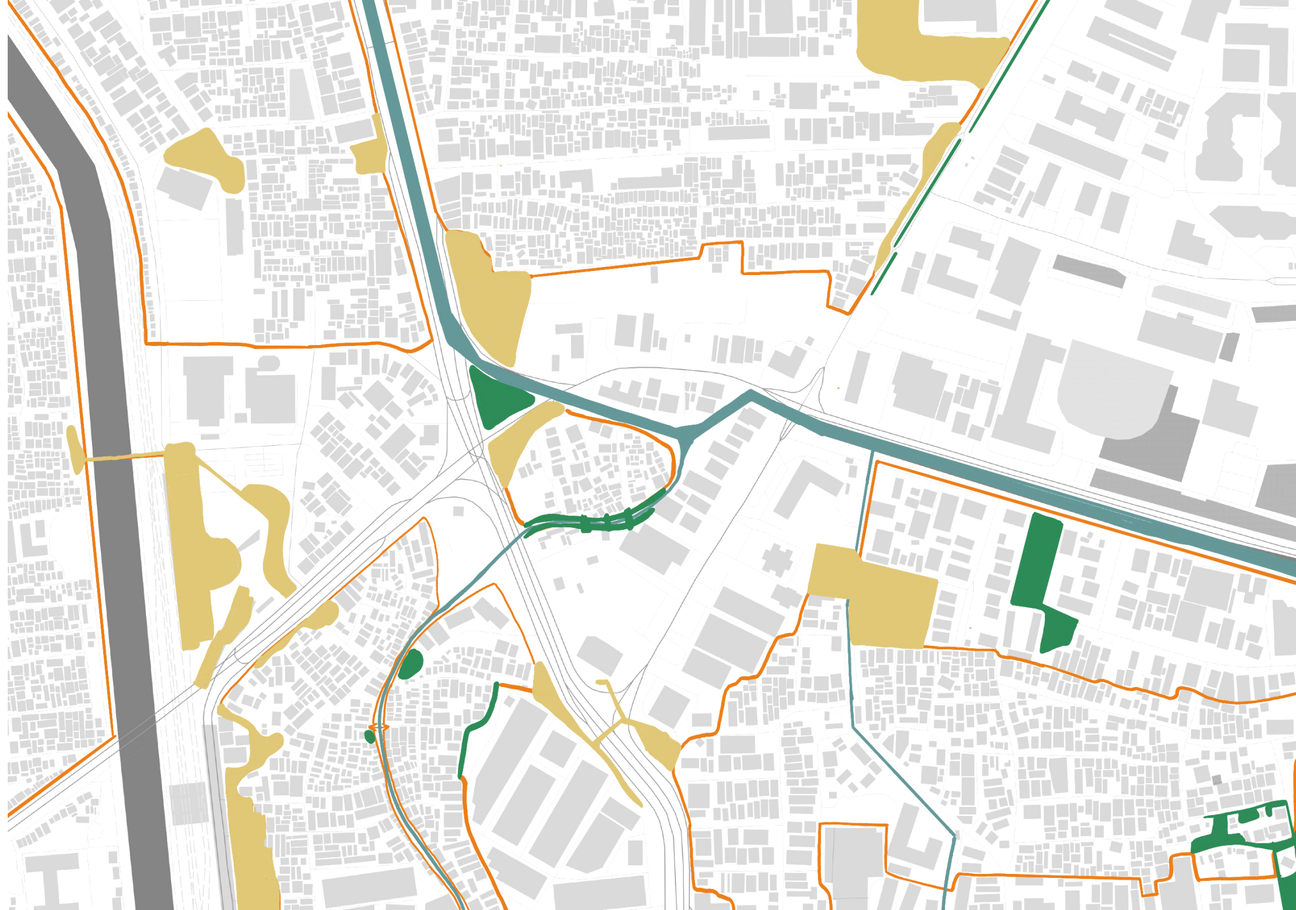


Fig. 43: Porous borders Kampung Bali

Kebon Kacang is similar to Kampung Bali, but the commercial clusters that open up the borders are larger in scale and its character tends to be more formal in character, allowing for better symbiosis between the formal economies and the informal sectors. The luxurious mixed-use commercial clusters provide the Kampungs with continuous informal services. Furthermore, the area is bordered by a large ecological corridor on the East, originating from Kampung Bali and continuing to the South to rejoin the Ciliwung river. The area is block of for humans, however can become an important part for biophilic urbanism in the future, extending the ecological values of the Kampungs towards a larger scale.



Fig. 44: Porous borders Kebon Kacang

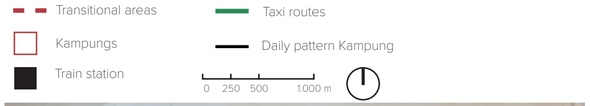
3.4.2 Chain of Amenities

Space Syntax is a software program introduced by Stephen Hiller that analyses how spaces are configured in order to understand urban morphology and urban patterns (van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

Using the Angular Integration analysis, the software analyses the level of integration of roads within the road network, and helps to predict and understand social patterns in the urban fabric. Using Angular Integration one can identify the urban centres due to their high integration level which allow for high connectivity with the surrounding area.

Furthermore, we can identify the level of integration of neighbourhoods and understand how these areas are impacted socio-economically through this configuration. As the analysis shows, the Kampungs are less integrated with their road network, which explains to what extent Kampungs are able to coexist and develop.

Fig. 46: Daily patterns of classes and socio-spatial temporalities in Sunda Kelapa



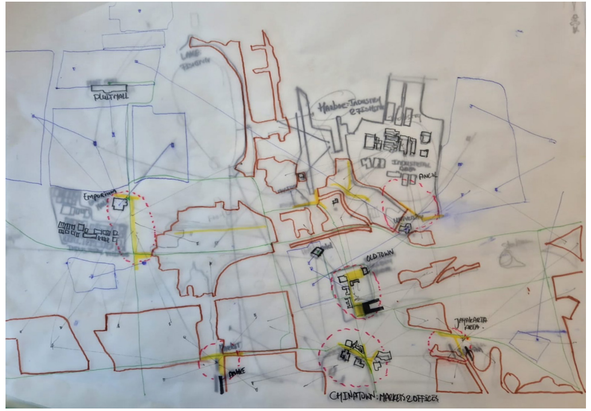
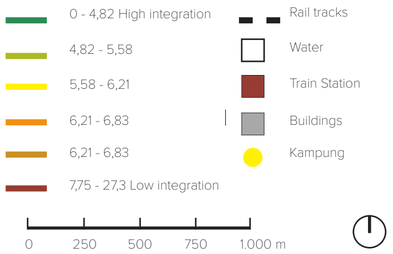
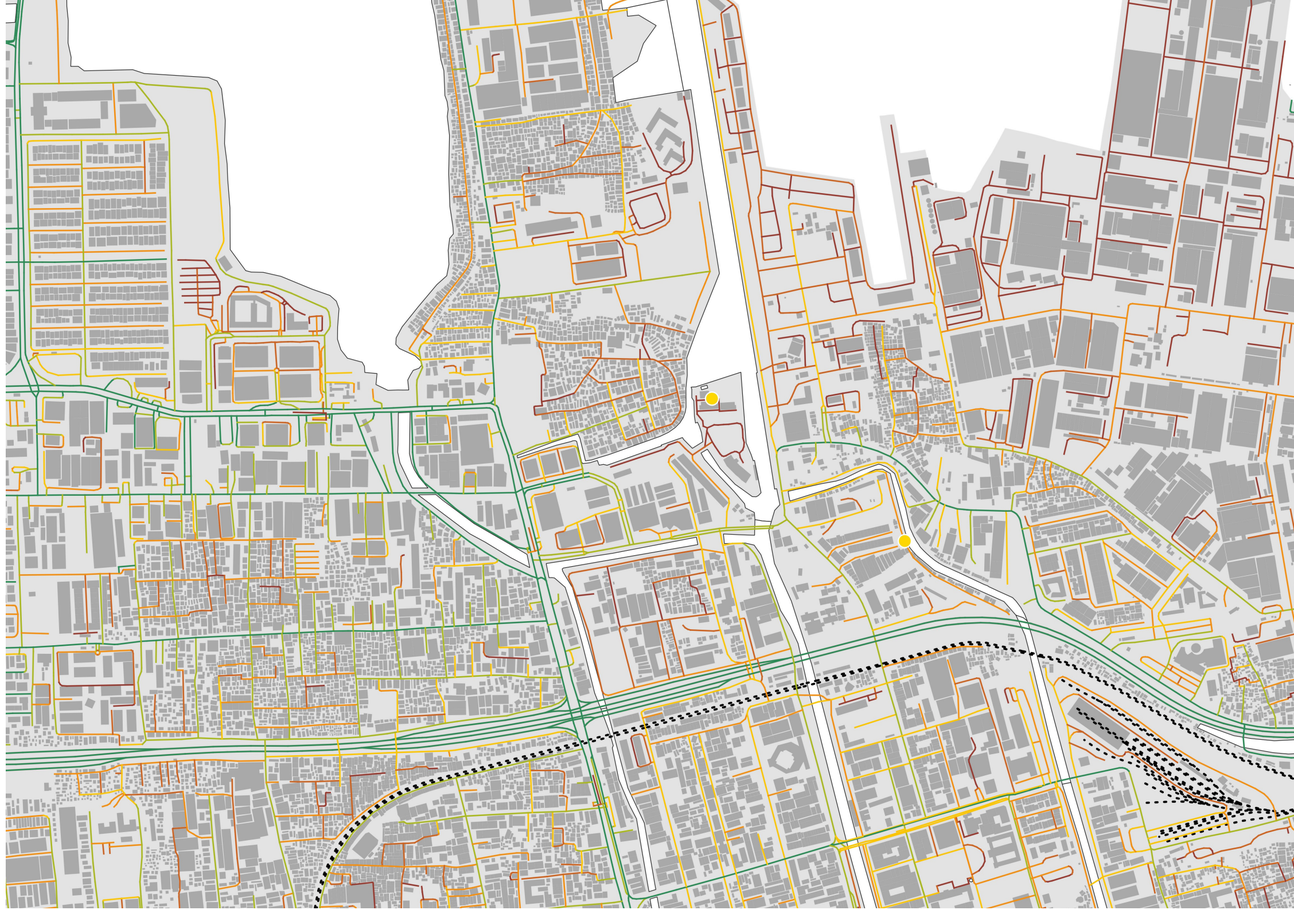


Fig. 45: Angular Integration 500 m Central Jakarta (Walking distance)

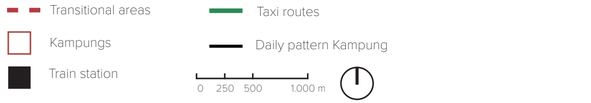




In Central Jakarta, the level of integration of the Kampungs is slightly higher, because of their vicinity to commercial clusters, like the Tanah Abang markets which is located at the intersection of primary roads as well as the modern shopping malls in along the main infrastructural corridor. The Kampungs across the Ciliwung river show a lower degree of integration. As these Kampungs are less developed and higher in density, the road network has developed along these ramified self-organised morphology, becoming less integrated with the primary road that crosses through these two Kampungs.

The patterns of the informal communities mainly focus around the economic clusters where informal services are provided.

Fig. 48: Daily patterns of classes and socio-spatial temporalities in Central Jakarta



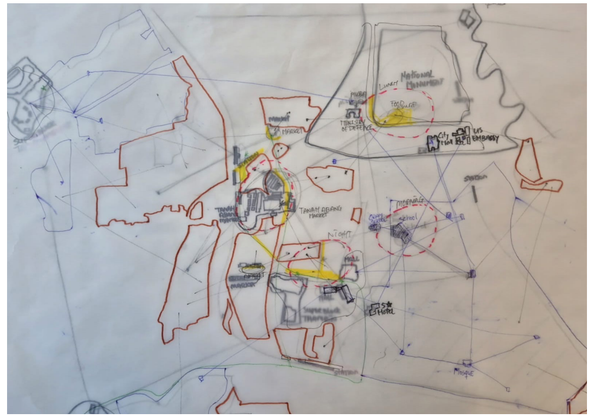
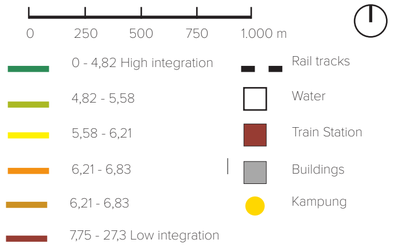
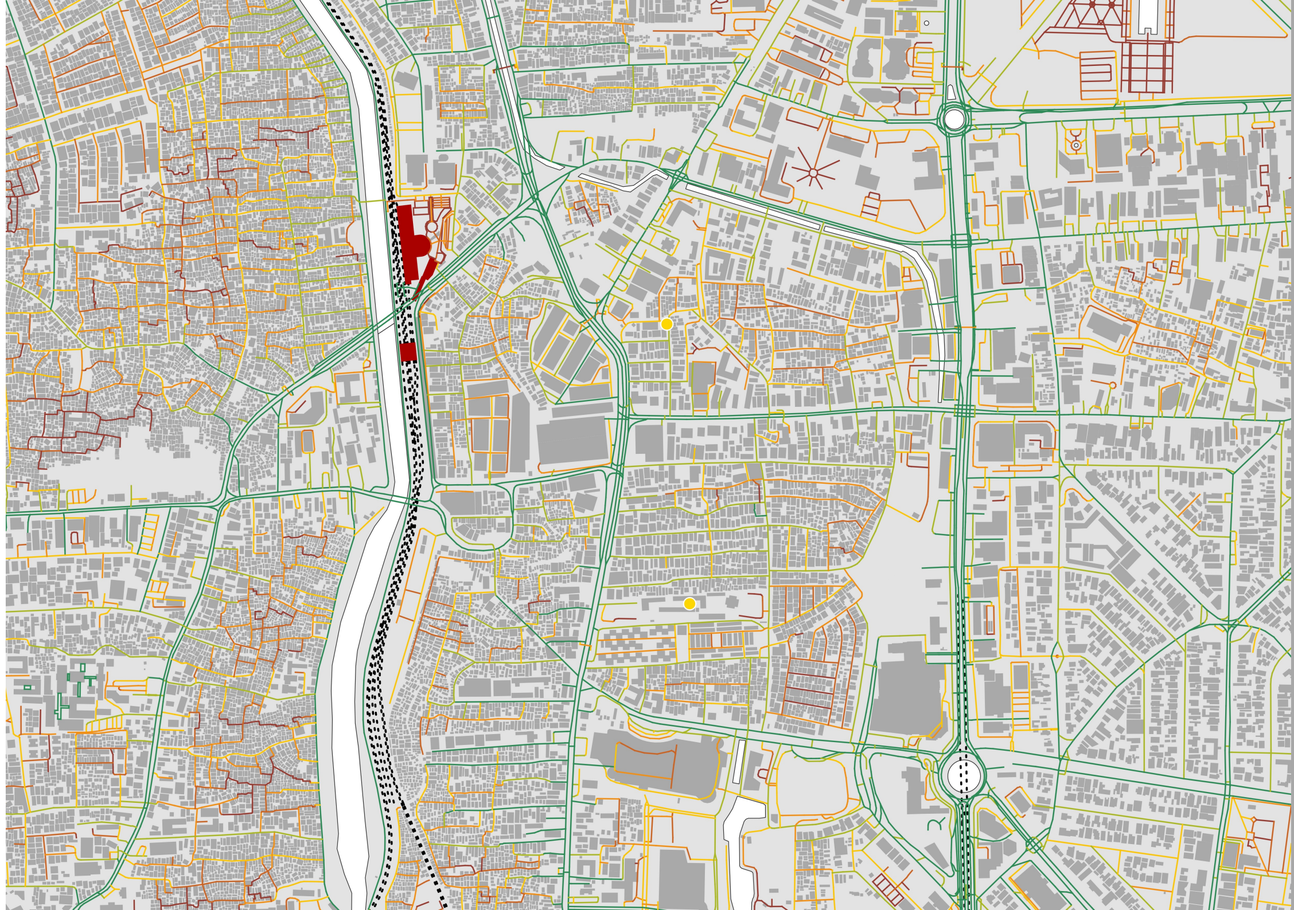


Fig. 47: Angular Integration 500 m Central Jakarta (Walking distance)





3.4.3 Mobility networks

Jakarta has been plagued with congestion for years, which in turn make pollution a major problem on urban health with smog hanging as a thick cloud over the city. The problem was acknowledged by the first government after the New Order regime by Governor Sutiyoso, who developed a public transportation network that would increase connectivity and benefit the increasing middle class. The TransJakarta line has been developed as a way to disincentive private transport use and dedicate one lane for public transportation to better connect the main areas of the city. Currently there are 12 lines spanning across the capital. The lines, however, seem to connect the more developed areas significantly better than the lesser developed areas and informal communities. Here in the map of the Northern bay area, the newly developed neighbourhoods on the coastal line are still underdeveloped and rely still heavily on public transport.

Mobility intermediaries

For the more central region of Jakarta it is different, because many of these TransJakarta lines intersect in these main infrastructural corridors that span from North to South and East to West. Furthermore, the train lines offer also a strong connection to the urban centres of the satellite cities in the JaBoDeTaBek region. Noticeable is the large gap in the Eastern area, predominantly Kampung areas that are poorer compared to the rest of the region.

Fig. 50: Mobility intermediaries Sunda Kelapa

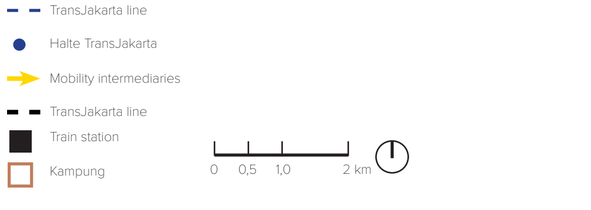


Fig. 49: Mobility networks Sunda Kelapa region

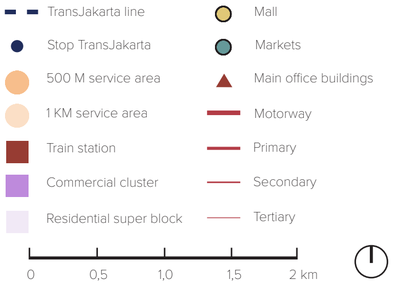




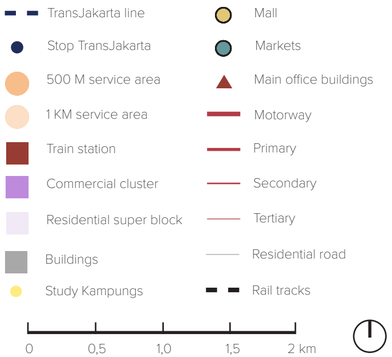
Fig. 52: Mobility intermediaries in Central Jakarta

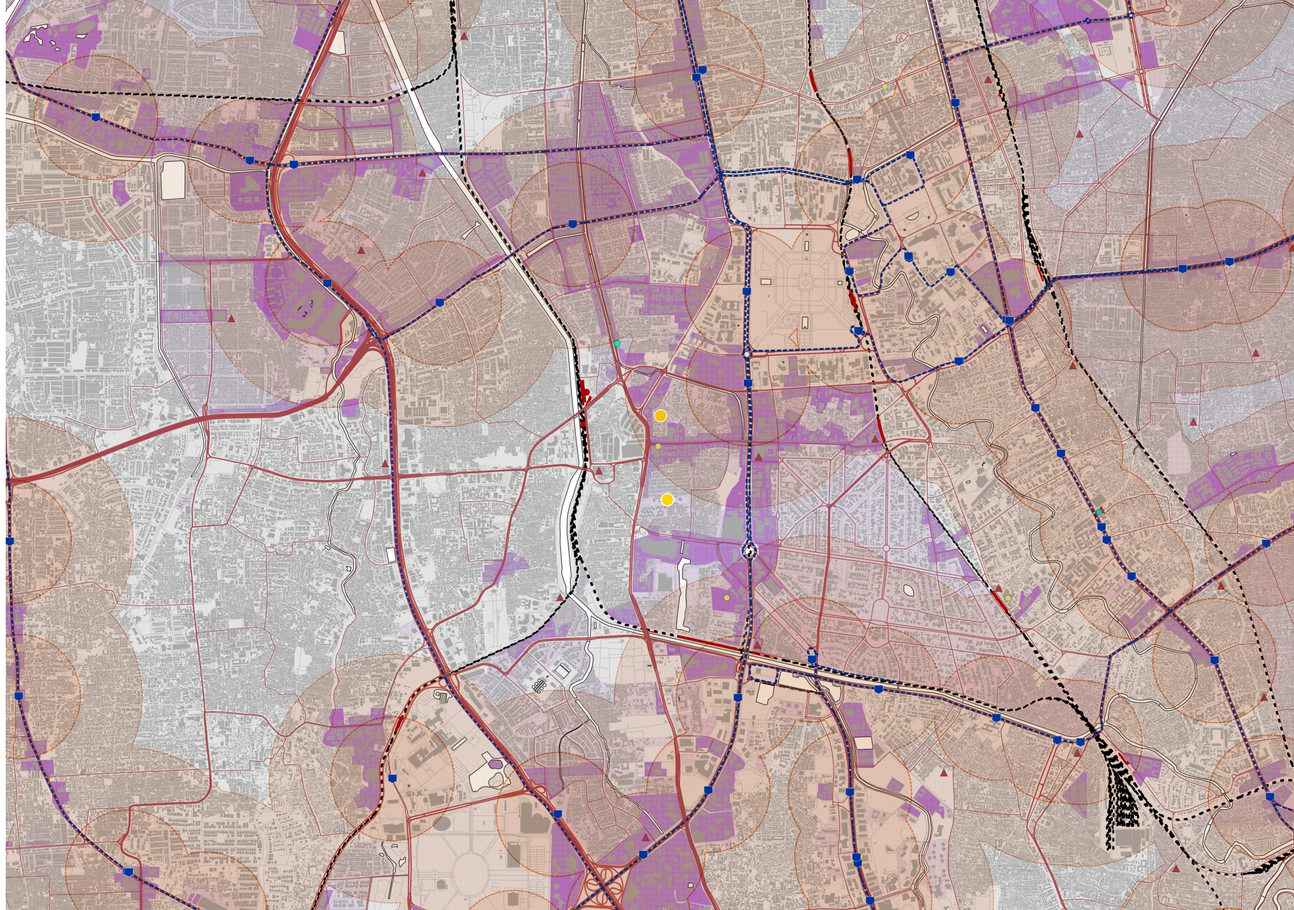




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Fig. 51: Mobility Network Central Jakarta





3.4.4 Blue-green corridors

In the old part of Jakarta, the canal structure provides an extensive network forming an urban ecological system. The hard banks of the canals are planted with indigenous trees that connect the larger parks. In the more developed area of Pluit in the North-West, the neighbourhoods is designed with eye for open space and small parks, connected through boulevards with green *taluds*.

The Kampungs are slowly adapting by integrating urban nature and forms of permaculture in the neighbourhoods, but this is dependent on the density of the settlements. The lesser dense Kampungs often find more space available for green interventions connecting the Kampung with other parts of the city.



Fig.54-58: Impressions of green structures in Sunda Kelapa, retrieved from Google Streetview.

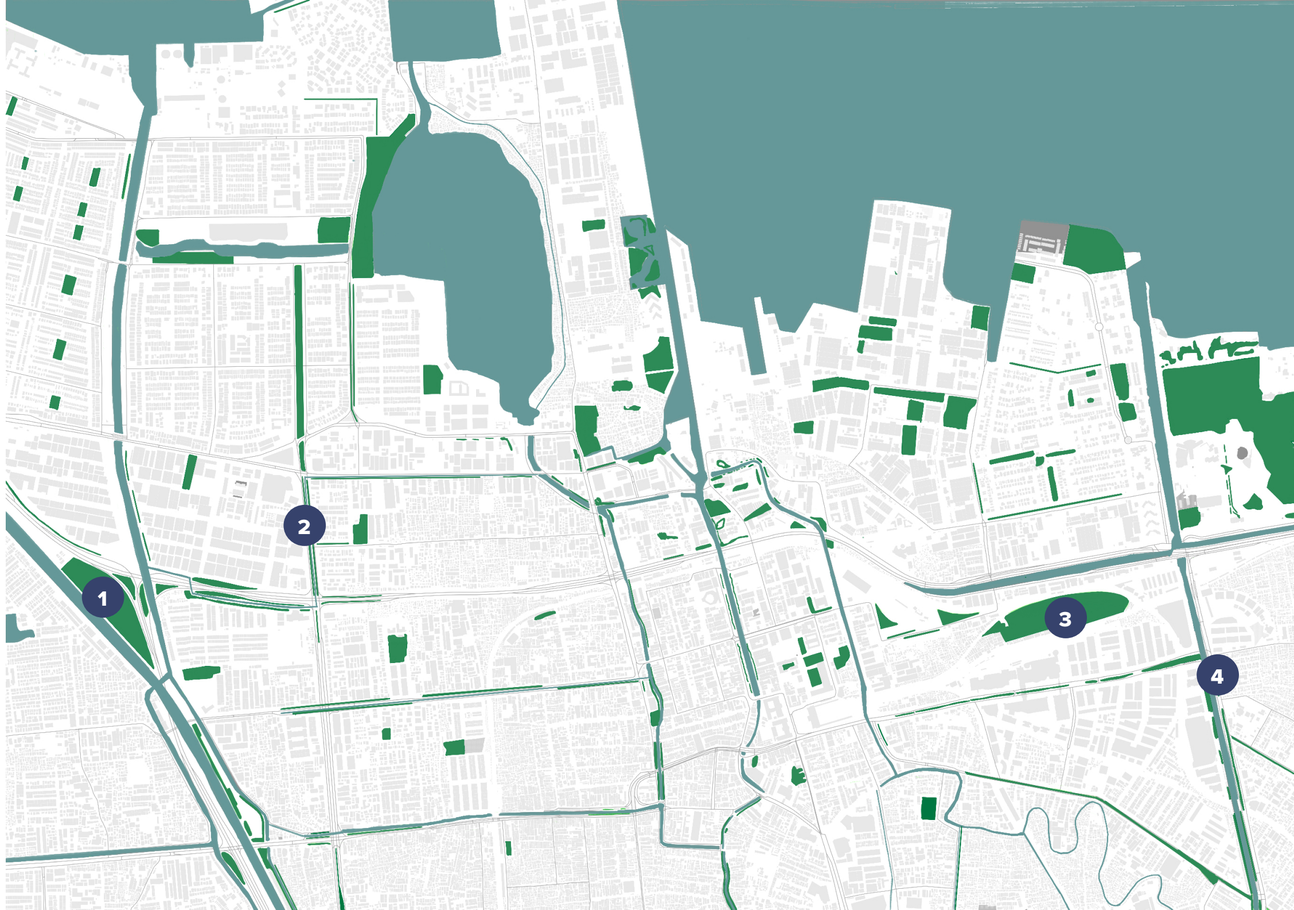


Fig. 53: Ecological corridors Sunda Kelapa region

The urban centre of Jakarta shows a clear juxtaposition between urban nature in the neighbourhoods. Noticeable is the large neighbourhood of Menteng on the South East, a district where the rich of Jakarta is living. Formerly designed as a garden city neighbourhoods for Dutch colonists, the nouveau riche of Jakarta enjoy a healthy neighbourhood with large housing, green boulevards and urban parks. The Kampungs are less planned to accommodate urban nature, but successfully manage to maintain the green structures along canals and through small scale interventions making the neighbourhood part of a larger ecological system. There is a clear distinction between Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali, where Kampung Bali has managed to integrate urban nature more extensively than Kebon Kacang.

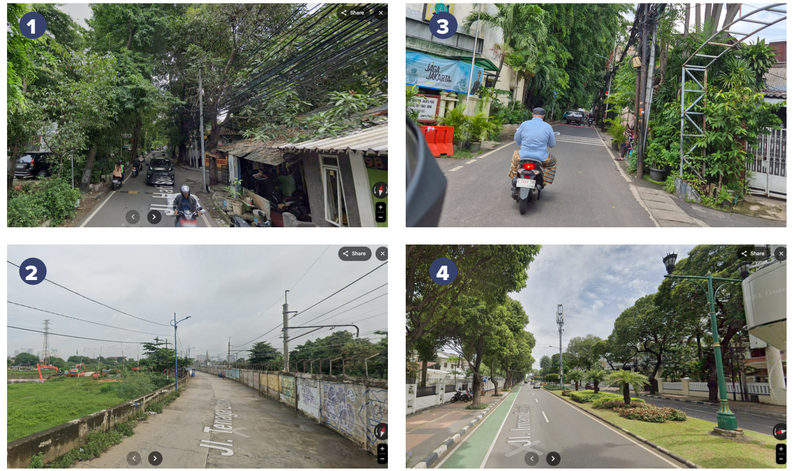


Fig.60-64: Impressions of green structures in Sunda Kelapa, retrieved from Google Streetview.

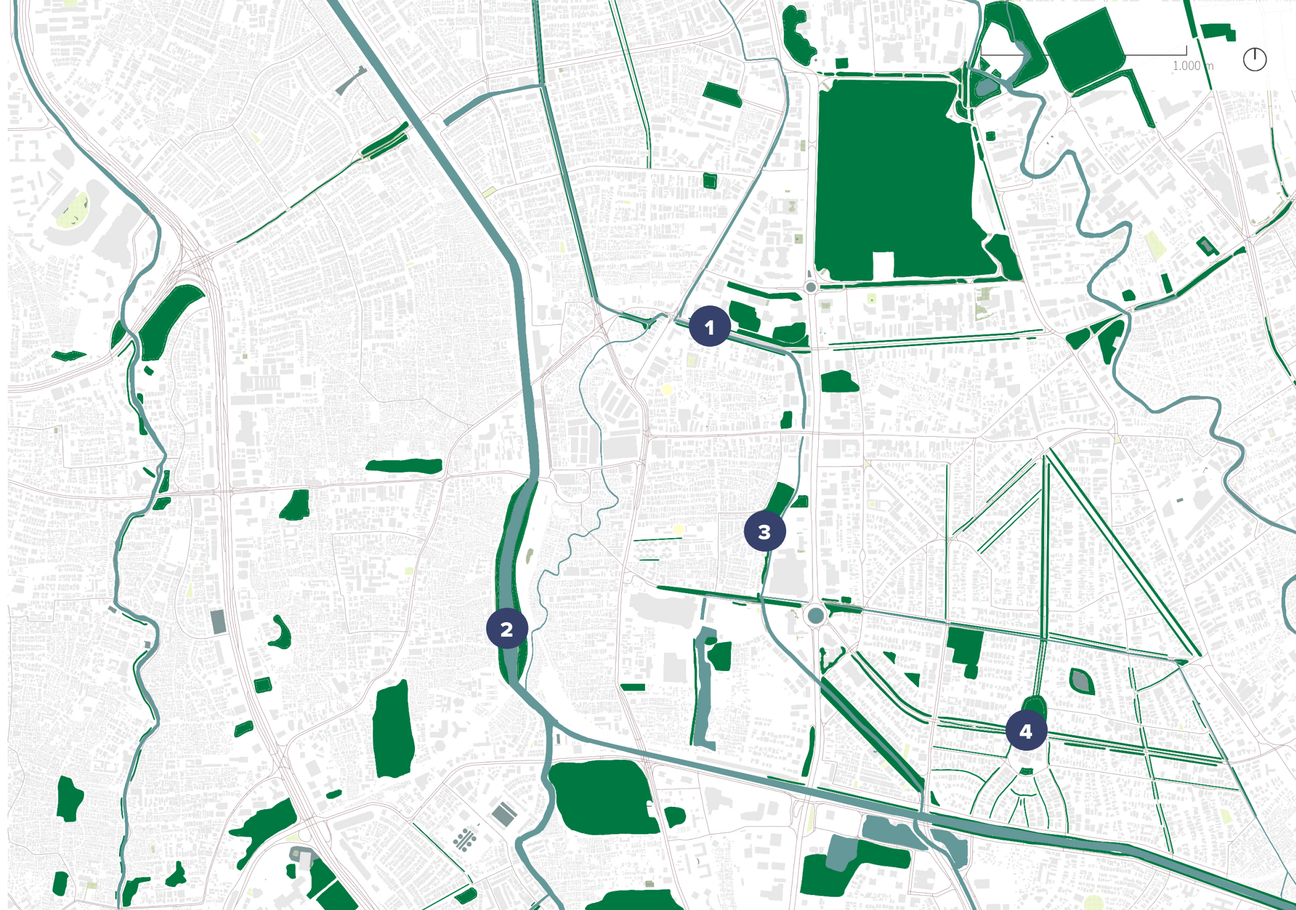
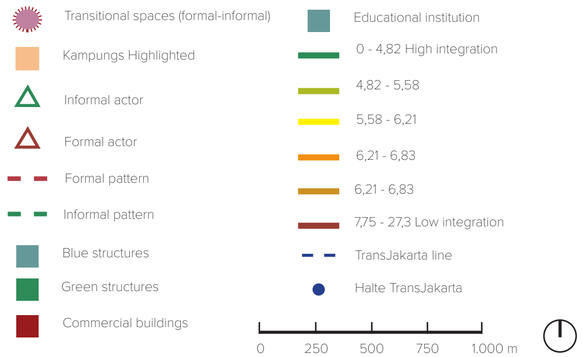


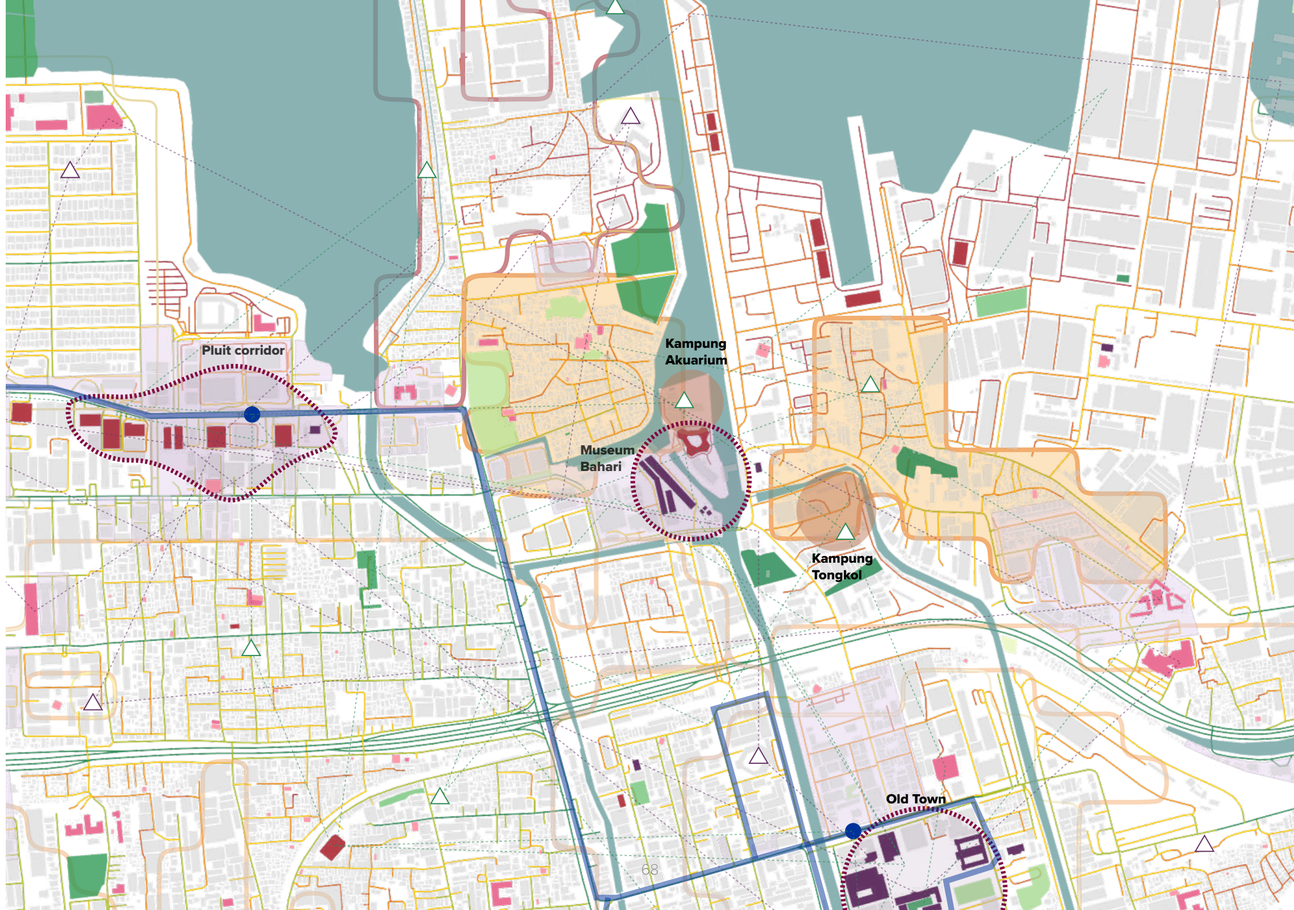
Fig. 59: Ecological corridors Central Jakarta

3.4.5 Superimposed maps

Overlaying each layer results in a synthesis map where we can see the how these Kampungs are situated towards these spatial principles, supporting the values to manifest in urban space. For example, the amenity clusters, which in the case for the Sunda Kelapa region are the historical sites. Not only provide these areas places that help the community to align their informal services in these areas. Furthermore, the existing infrastructures support the Kampungs to become integrated with the urban fabric. The transport corridors and integration with the road network helps the Kampungs accessing transitions spaces, where formal meets informal, but also the historic canal structure helps the Kampungs to integrate.

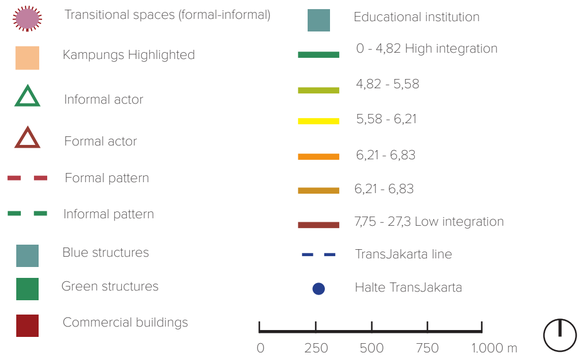
Fig. 65: Synthesis map Sunda Kelapa

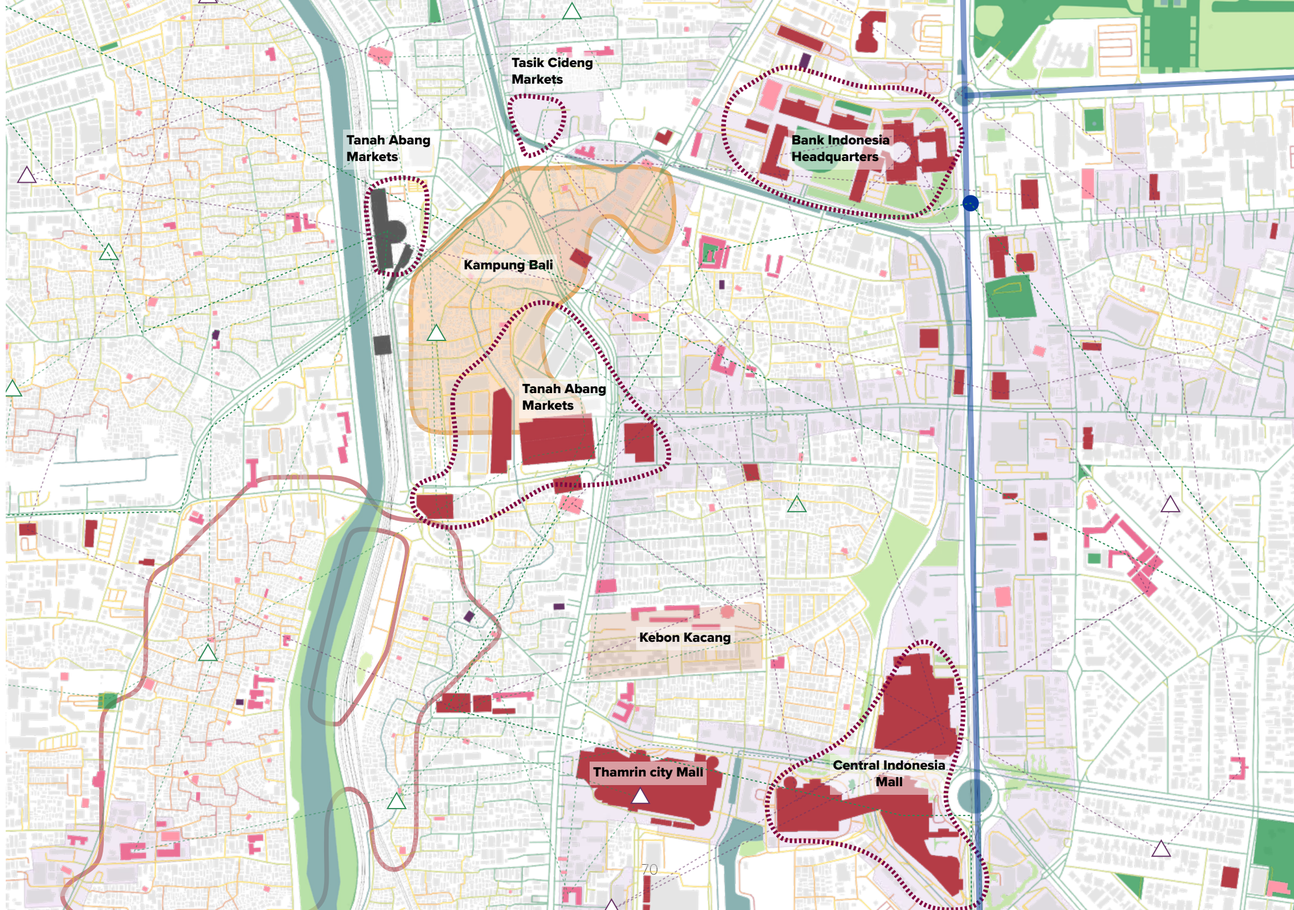




In Central Jakarta, the area of coexistence can be found on the borders of economic clusters. The Kampungs are ideally located adjacent to these economic epicentres, with in the heart of the neighbourhoods the Tanah Abang clothing markets, where the Kampung community provides informal services blending the informal with the formal. Furthermore, Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali are well integrated through the infrastructures.

Fig. 66: Synthesis map central Jakarta





3.5 Conclusion Synthesis

Kampungs have a long presence in Jakarta throughout the colonial period and followed by suburbanisation and urbanisation patterns following the newly established government. Policies that divided social classes were the main factor that these informal settlements were organised during the colonial period, but have been sustained in post-colonial Jakarta through market-driven factors and growth-oriented urban planning, with political elites and conglomerates as the main drivers for this Dual City development. Kampungs over time developed in these resilient communities through this negligence by these actor with high leverage due to their political connections and financial power. The studied Kampungs took this continuous threat of forced eviction and resettlement and slowly developed the Kampungs as resilient communities with distinctive identities, becoming embedded in the urban fabric and strong advocates for becoming acknowledged districts in the urban centres of Jakarta.

At the core of these Kampungs lay four values that makes their self-organised neighbourhood immune against the externalities that puts other Kampungs under threat. These values are Care, Identity, Resilience and Ecology, which based on the site and how the community is using spaces in the Kampung reflect differently, but overall work together to make these community strong entities in Jakarta. These values reflect in buildings, streets and open spaces supporting the citizens living in the Kampung to exercise their rights as Jakartans and sustain the community through their informal economies, that blend with the formal economies in the in-between spaces. These spatial elements are translated in 4 abstract principles, that are urban conditions and could potentially be replicated in different urban contexts. These abstract principles are porous borders, chain of amenities and socio-temporal spaces, mobility networks, and lastly the ecological corridors. Overlaying these conditions provides us the spaces where synergies between the values occur and provide foundations on how both informal and formal communities coexist and create plurality in Jakarta, more able to deal with the social and environmental externalities that currently steers Jakarta towards a dystopian future.

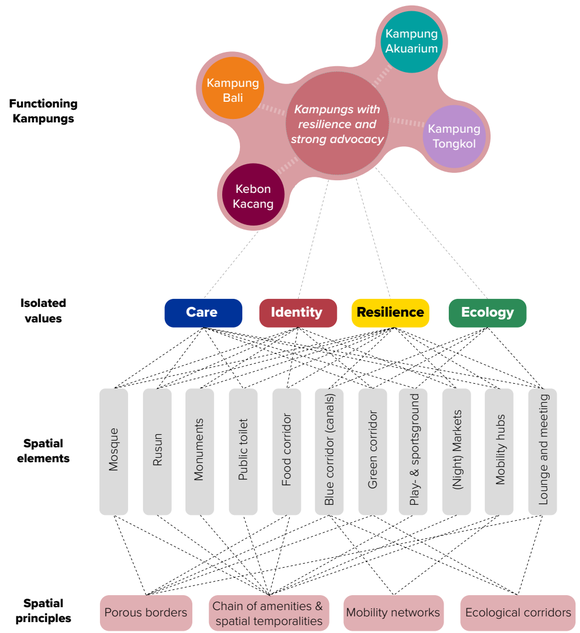


Fig. 67: Value assessment framework

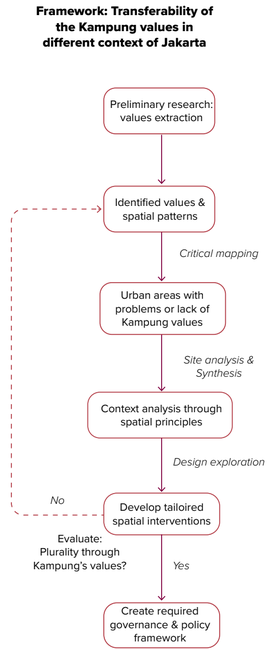


Fig. 68: Value assessment framework

3.6 Manifesto from The Kampung: A bottom-up approach towards plurality

The city of Jakarta is on a decisive point in its history, that could either make the city the new Atlantis, or a city transforming into a sustainable metropolis in the Southern hemisphere. The city's ongoing struggle to deal with continuous urbanisation and breaking with its past traumas of oppression not only resulted in the creation of a Dual City dividing the population of Jakarta. The lack of cohesive urban planning also impacted the health of its urban communities with increasing environmental issues endangering the Jakartans. The government has acknowledged these issues with efforts to build a new sustainable capital city in the rainforest of Borneo, and large infrastructural projects on the coastline, where land reclamation projects with mixed-use developments suggest a hopeful image for the sinking metropolis. But are these projects indeed addressing the core problem of urban development in Jakarta?

Even though Kampungs have proven to be resilient urban communities, there remains an image that works against these settlements that prevents them from being included in urban planning. It is important to note that Kampungs are indeed not perfect neighbourhoods, as some can be chaotic, dirty and even dangerous for outsiders. The lack of government support and supervision have in the past leaded to conflicts and worsened the rate of crime compared (Tunas, 2008). This social unrest is partially due to Jakarta's long past of inequality, occasionally erupting in riots that originate from these underpriviliged areas. There remains a sense of injustice in these communities that creates a tension between formal and informal parts of the city. The continuation of negligence of the Kampungs make this urban communities contested and under threat of eviction due to the lack of rights and acknowledgement for example the cases where previous governor of Jakarta Ahok, favours to clear the Kampungs to restore the wetlands as a measure against flooding. His reason for clearing the Kampung was in order to save a larger population against flooding and protect key infrastructures in the city by sacrificing a small informal community that had no right for settling in the first place (Koesoemawiria 2017).

In my recent visit to Jakarta in December 2025, I ended up in one of the newly developed super blocks along the bay of Jakarta. An urban landscape meticulously designed using elements from Chinese and Western architecture, where homogeneous residential areas with wide boulevards and high-rise apartments with shopping malls shape the coast line. These desolated urban landscapes in the urban fringes feel surreal compared to the urban Kampungs, the dense neighbourhoods with make-shift housing and where food carts and tuk-tuks dominate the streets and shape the economy for the informal. These urban areas present the extremes of the capitalist-oriented urban development that shaped Jakarta. As Sukarno aspired to break with Jakarta's colonial past and move towards an area of development and modernity through neoliberal urbanism, only for the city to slowly adopt a form of neocolonial urban development, where the political elites and conglomerates have taken control over urban development of the city and continued the path of segregation and exploitation in modern day Jakarta.

The top-down approach that higher governments favour in combination with their strategic land ownerships and partnerships with wealthy developers conserves the power that the elites exercise on urban planning. The needs of the informal communities are overshadowed by the urge of these powerful actors to maximise their investments, which in the long-term endangers these communities. Instead of labelling the Kampungs as deprived and underdeveloped communities and clearing these areas for formal urban development, city officials and urban planners have to acknowledge these communities as active stakeholders that have established persistent structures that have integrated into the urban fabric. Not only integrate the Kampungs social values in spatial practice, their values reflect the foundations of what Indonesian identity and society means. Their marginalised position has created a community that survives in times of crisis and thrives during times of the progress, relying on sharing burdens and profits.

These neighbourhoods function currently as urban heterotopias with their own form of communal and spatial organisation. Only through learning and understanding these embedded values that these Kampungs reflect, urban development can become more inclusive and cohesive and address the increasing divide between urban communities in Jakarta. A paradigm shift moving away from capitalist-oriented neoliberal urbanism towards a more bottom-up approach appreciating the informal structures and systems of the city could provide a different trajectory for Jakarta. This not only supports the Kampung in becoming acknowledged actors in urban planning, but helps to transfer the values, identities and knowledge of these communities in urban development strategies. Only through plurality can Jakarta explore different trajectories to resolve the sophisticated externalities it's facing. The Kampungs are the key to find a sustainable and just future for troubled city of Jakarta.



Figure 69 : Postcard from Jakarta, The Kampung Metropolis

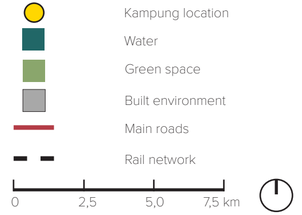
4. The Values in Effect

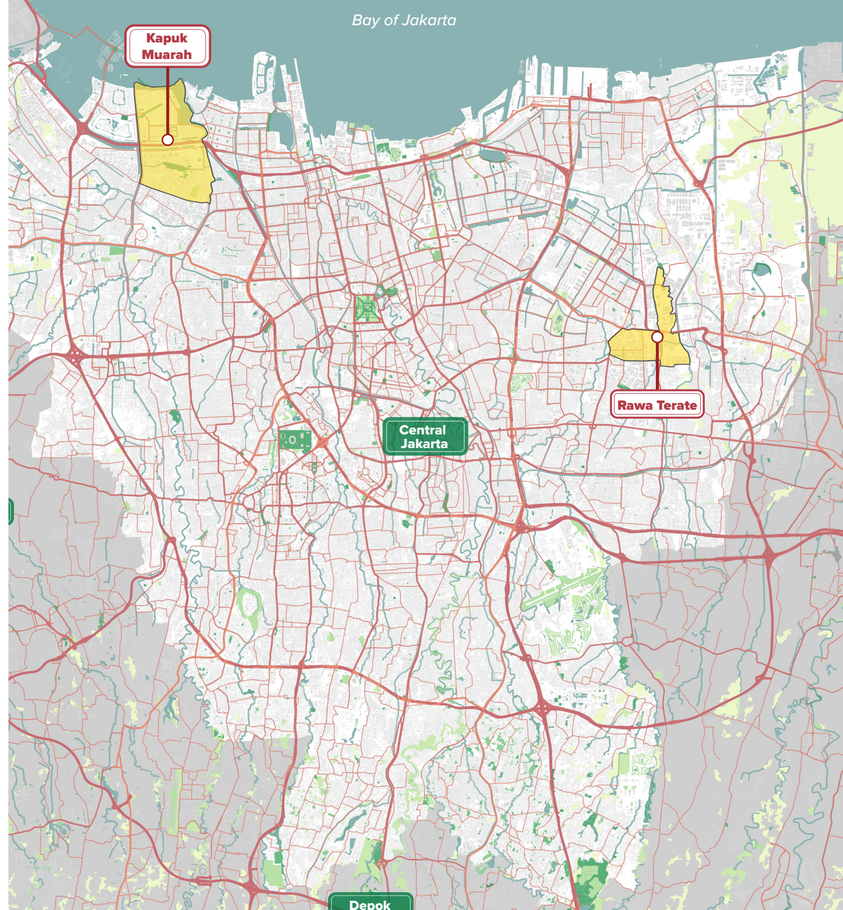
Fig. 70: Street in Kebon Jeruk, photo taken by Matthijs Jerez Nova on 29 December 2025

Locations

Its scale and plethora of social, environmental and political challenges makes Jakarta a complex testing ground to explore how these values can be applied and design the necessary interventions as part of a holistic vision for the Metropolitan region of Jakarta. However, by developing interventions in areas that are polar opposites, it provides a strategic foundation of how these different sites require different spatial elements that materialise the four values and become a starting point on how other areas that fall within this spectrum can develop to achieve this plurality. Two areas are chosen to study and explore interventions that have either high environmental threats or are highly secluded from the rest of the city. Furthermore, the sites are completely different in nature as one is categorised as a slum, while the other is a meticulously designed neighbourhood for the higher social class.

Fig. 71: Location Intervention Sites





4.1 Kapuk Muara

The Kapuk Indah super block located in the bay area of the city is part of a larger revitalisation project of the coastal area. In this master plan, the city administration aims to provide a liveable area through land reclamation while providing a coastal defence system that deals with increasing sea-level rise. The neighbourhoods are often designed collaboratively with foreign designers and fail to capture a sense of identity and communal spirit that reflect the four values in the analysed Kampungs.

In Kapuk Muara, the Dual City is profoundly present as borders between informal and formal communities amplify unequal developments and strenghten the division between these communities. The borders between the communities could become strategic that could foster integration.

Furthermore, the new developments has impacted the existing ecosystems. Before the land reclamation and urban developments, the area was known for its mangrove fields that provided the existing Kampungs with a key infrastructure that sustained the urban community. Furthermore, the mangroves provided a form of protection against flooding. The size of the mangroves has been decreased, ultimately impacting their performance and indirectly affecting the urban communities depending on the fields. There is an opportunity to restore the fields and provide new amenities that could integrate the area in a cohesive urban community, where synergies between formal and informal are making the district more resilient.

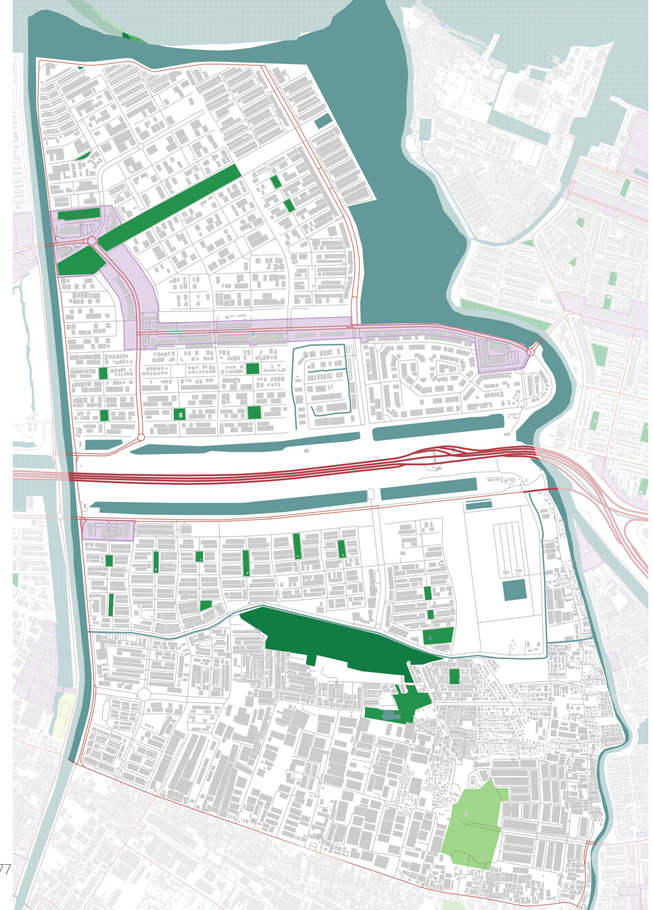


Fig. 72: Kapuk Muara urban morphology

4.2 Analysis









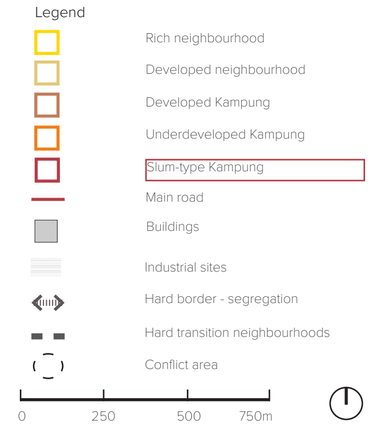
Fig. 73-77: Kapuk Muara urban urban development, retrieved from Google Earth.

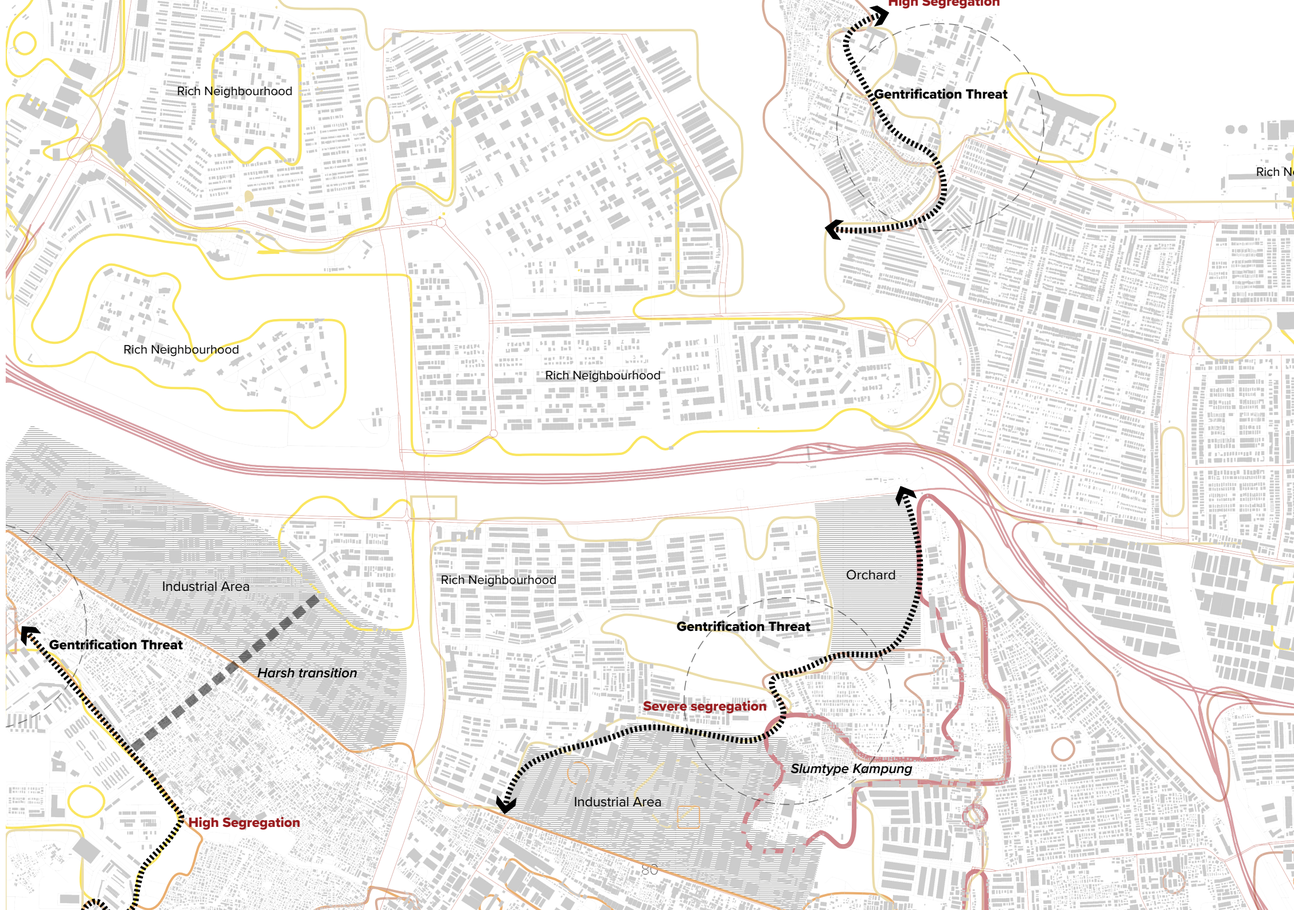
4.2.1 Borders

Kapuk Muara developed significantly over the past 40 years, being transformed from a mangrove landscape into a developed urban district, with residential neighbourhoods for the wealthy being developed on reclaimed land. This however resulted in the established Kampungs being under threat of eviction for future developments, if not being forced out due to increasing land prises due to gentrification. This is especially visible in the centre of the neighbourhood and on the coastline in the North-East. Cengkareng, a neighbourhood in the South-East is undergoing rapid urban development through large-scale social housing projects, which is essentially unattainable for the urban poor as the developers ask a high rental price to have a return on investment. It is likely that this area is undergoing a similar trajectory as the other districts in Kapuk Muara.

The Dual City has clearly taken over in this coastal region, where there is no integration between the formal and informal neighbourhoods.

Fig. 78: Conflicts Kapuk Muara - Borders





4.2.2 Amenities

In line with expectations, the amenities follow the line of the formal developments. Commercial buildings benefit from the ideal infrastructure in the developed neighbourhoods. In spite of the ideal circumstances, the commercial areas are still in development and lack a certain attractiveness. The informal areas are lacking behind with the amenities. This is due to their difficult situation as they are hard to reach. Amenities in these areas focus on basic needs and communal well-being. This results in an introverted urban landscape where each area relies on themselves.

Fig. 79: Conflicts Kapuk Muara - Amenities

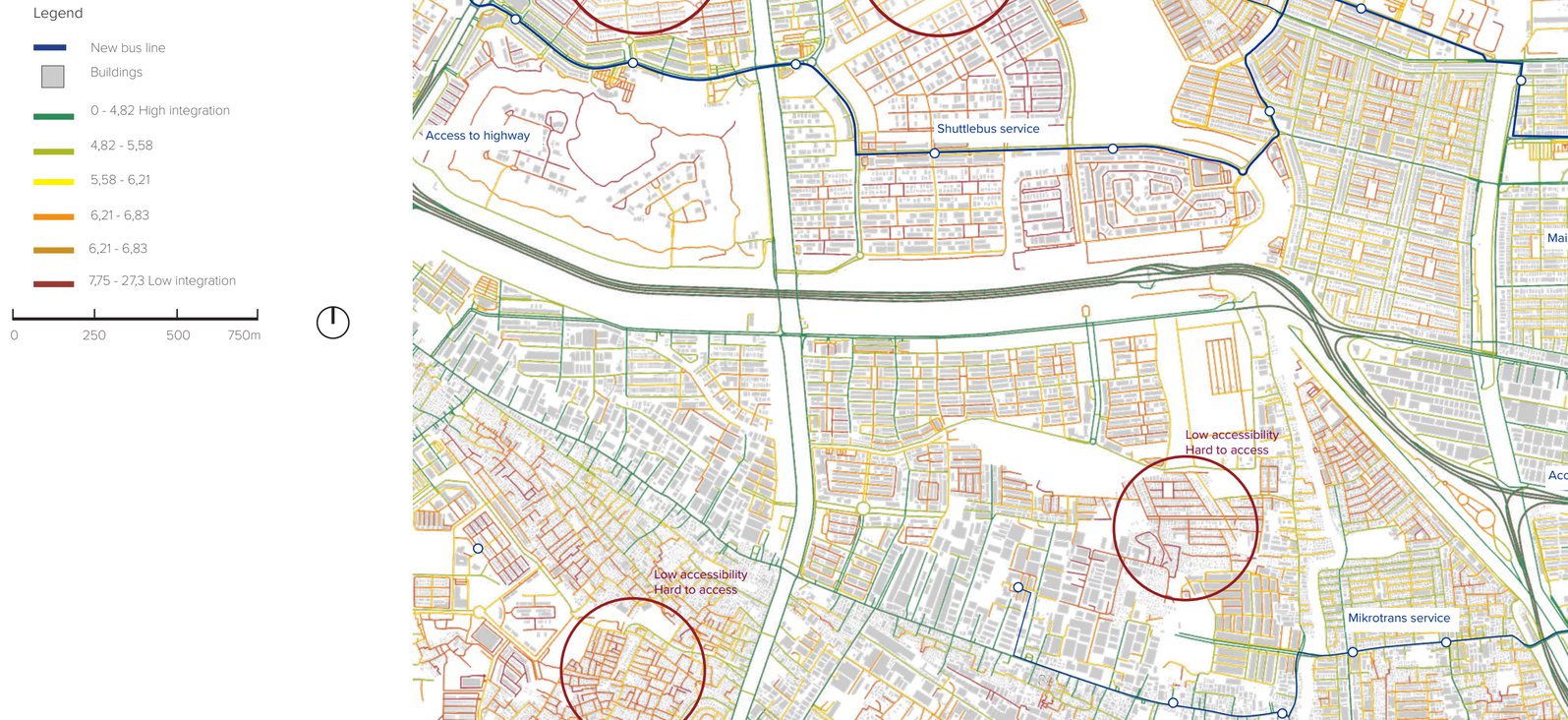


4.2.3 Mobility Networks

As mentioned in the amenities paragraph, the developed areas benefit from good accessibility, being connected to the main road network of Jakarta. This, however, makes the developed community reliant on public transport, as private vehicle transport is an attractive option. There is a bus line connection in the area, but is a shuttle service that connects the area with local hubs, not on a metropolitan scale.

The informal communities are not well integrated with the surrounding environment. Their difficult to access from main roads, which doesn't facilitate those communities to becoming integrated with the district. Efforts to provide better connectivity would boost the local economy.

Fig. 80: Conflicts Kapuk Muara - Mobility

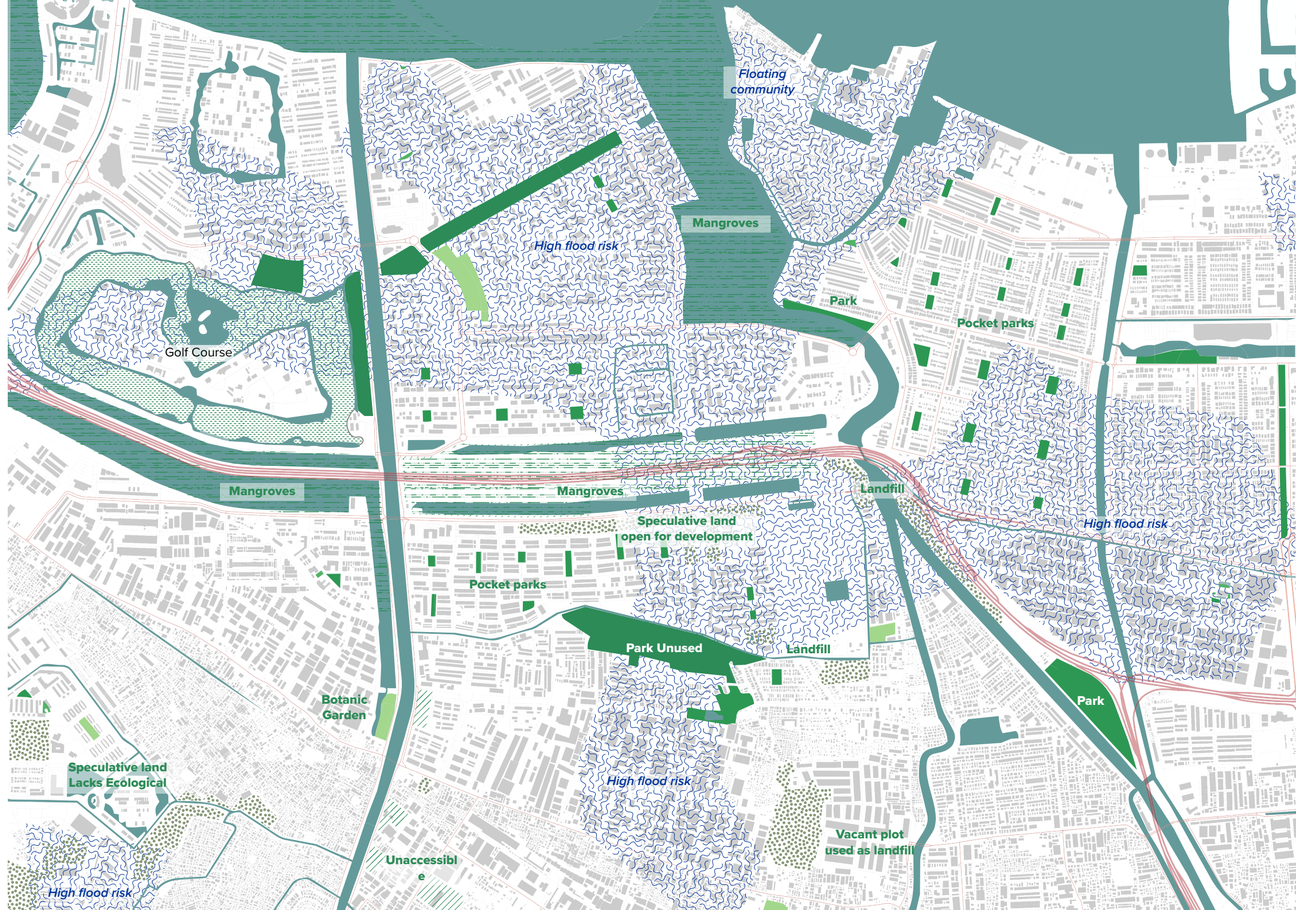


4.2.4 Ecological Corridors

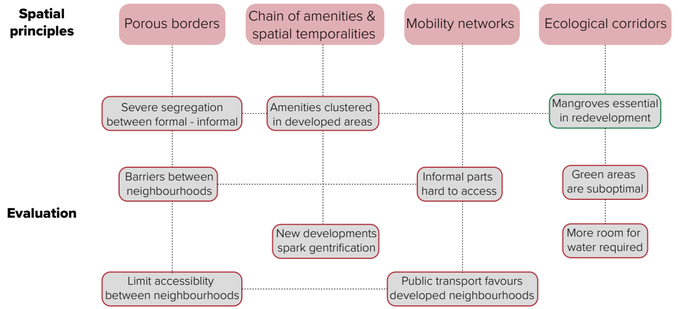
In spite of the land reclamation for the large residential projects, the mangroves are still present in the area, however their size have been diminished which affects their performance. Nevertheless, both formal and informal communities benefit from the existing mangroves, generating qualitative outdoor spaces and services that generate value for the local economy.

Qualitative public space is a serious problem in Jakarta. In Kapuk Muara there are plots of land available for ecological development and public space, but these areas are badly maintained and used as landfills. Especially the central park is unused and can become a place of interaction and therefore integration between communities.

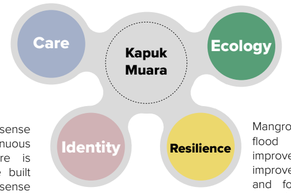
Fig. 81: Conflicts Kapuk Muara - Ecological corridors



4.2.5 Values evaluation



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



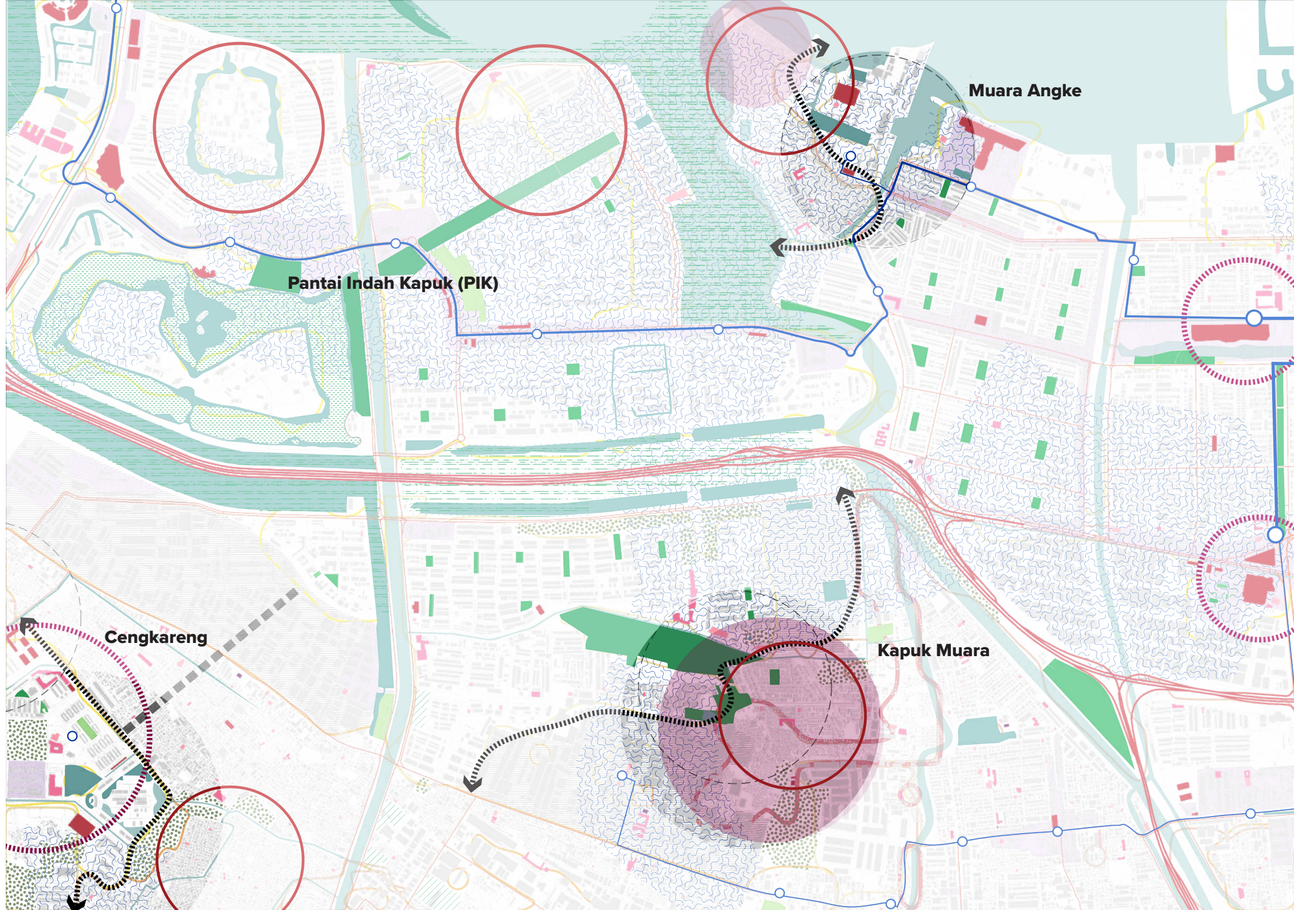
Area has strong ecological foundation with Mangroves and water infrastructure, plots of empty land are sometimes unused or used as landfills, goal is to integrate and improve the ecosystem.

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.

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

Fig. 82: Conflict Map - Kapuk Muara





4.3 Interventions Kapuk Muara

The spatial plan focusses on the problematic areas, that shown defaults in creating the spatial elements that can materialise the values. Furthermore, there are clashes between the formal and informal communities which shows in a clear manifestation of the Dual City problem. In order to resolve the Dual City, the barriers between the communities have to be cleared in order to integrate the areas and create forms of coexistence that would make the area more resilient.

The area provide an ecological foundation that should be used to integrate the segregated areas. Mangroves provide a multitude of solutions through ecosystem services that could align with the needs of each community.

Through blue-green corridors and a new mobility network, the areas of Cengkareng, Kapuk Muara and Muara Angke are connected. Along these connections, new amenities are added, specifically tailored to each areas needs. In Muara Angke for example, ecosystem services are supporting the floating community through mangrove farming and ecotourism services. In Kapuk Muara, amenities focus more on facilitating industrial development towards more sustainable practice. Landfills are transformed into waste collection and recycling plants, that provide sustainable materials and resources for local communities. The spatial elements in Cengkareng focus more on improving the traditional market there and align with current large scale urban renewal projects.

For design interventions, the area of Kapuk Muara is further explored due to its key location in between two developed areas and the diversity of urban communities that are heavily segregated.

Fig. 83: Master plan Kapuk Muara

Legend

- Aquaculture through mangrove
- Biodiveristy redevelopment
- Leisure through ecology
- Mangrove farming and production
- Ecological defence through mangroves
- Extending blue corridors
- MikroTrans service
- Improving road connectivity
- Local market
- Creative industries
- Community gahtering spot
- Urban farming - permaculture
- Open social housing
- Circular waste management
- Sites & services development
- Kampung preservation
- Residential development
- Ecological redevelopment
- New traffic corridor
- New traffic corridor
- New bus line

0 250 500 750m



4.3.2 Kapuk Muara: Central district

Kapuk Muara's central area is pivotal for better integration of the formal and informal communities in the district. Its proximity to the mangroves makes it ideal for removing existing barriers between the neighbourhoods, and make an urban landscape that is integrated through ecological corridors and amenities.

The central area is redeveloped to accommodate better connectivity and activity. There is an extension of the mangrove landscape through blue corridors that provides the neighbourhood with potential new services and amenities to support the local economy. The local economy is provided with a multitude of new resources and amenities that are more sustainable and supports making the transition towards circular economy.

Furthermore, the area provides new housing for the severe slums that live on landfills and plots next to industries. New houses in the form of social housing and sites and services development provides these dwellers with new sites that would secure and provide them with better accomodation. The mangroves could provide materials to help rebuilt these communities and gradually improve the area.

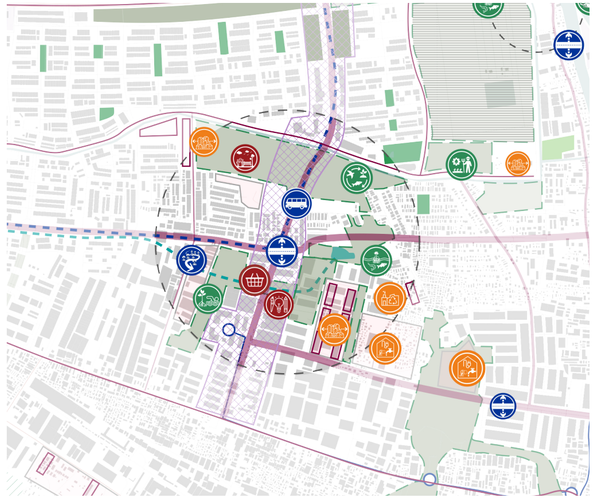


Fig. 84: Kapuk Muara: Central district

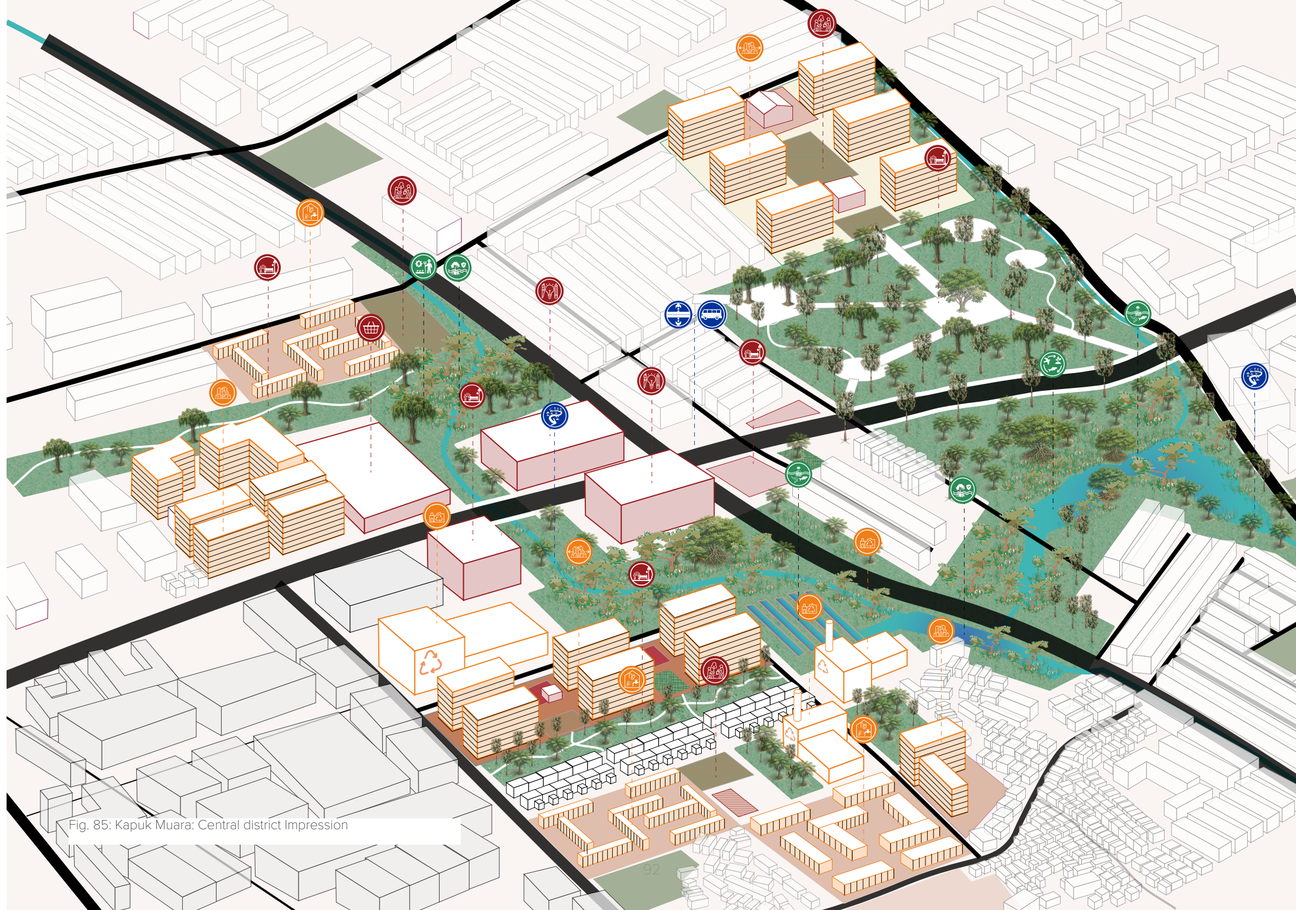
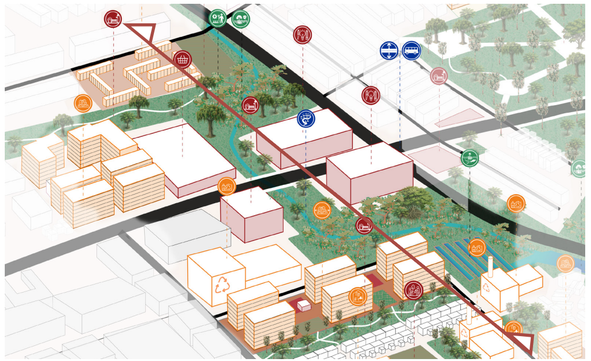


Fig. 85: Kapuk Muara: Central district Impression

4.3. A new heart for Kapuk Muara

The once so segregated neighbourhood is connected through a newly developed high street that connects the Kampungs in the South with the newly developed formal neighbourhoods. This corridor is strengthened with a MikroTrans or minibus service that connects the area with the economic clusters along the shore (Muara Angke) and the new developments in the South-East (Cengkareng). The area becoming more integrated results in new amenities being developed that aligns the needs of both communities. The extension of blue-green infrastructure and mangrove fields results in opportunities to develop the industry into more sustainable oriented practices. The mangroves provide different activities that results in the area becoming more diverse and active.



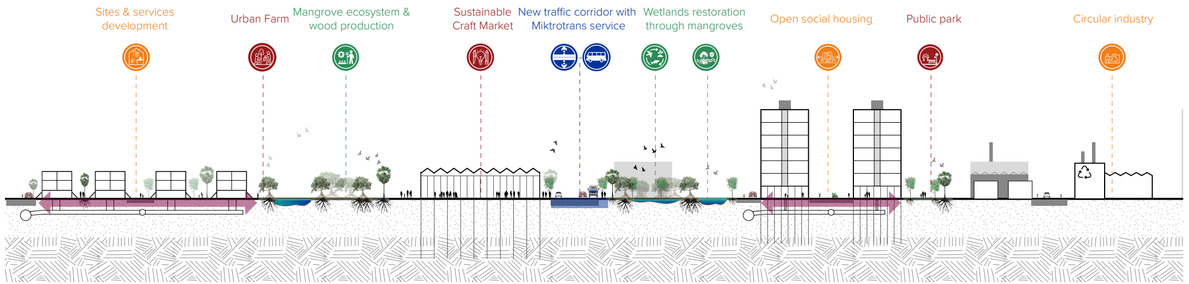
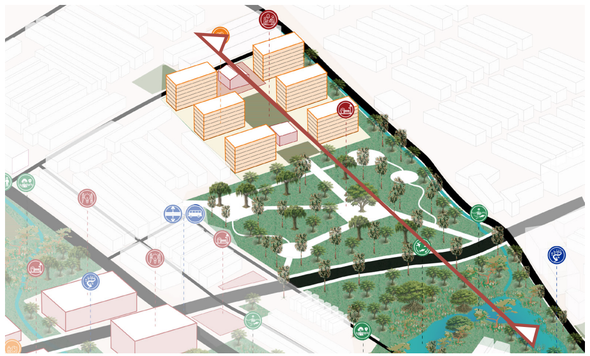


Fig. 86: Section 1: Main corridor

Nature and social well-being

The central park that was in-between the neighbourhoods but left unused provides the area with a green infrastructure that can be used as a spatial element that creates integration. Along new developments, a public park is created that encourages places for socialising and spontaneous activities along the main corridor. Additionally, a new mangrove field is created to make the area more resilient against occasional flooding. The coastal environment provides an ideal environment for mangroves. By extending the mangrove field inland, ecosystems will be enhanced and new activities for leisure and urban communities are created.



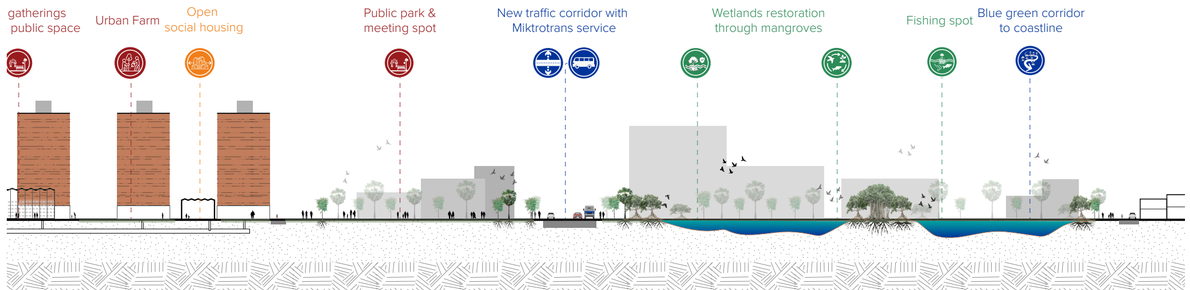


Fig. 87: Section 2: public park

4.4 Strategic Framework

4.4.1 Governance

The integration of the Kampungs in the formal neighbourhoods is a sensitive task, since the needs of both parties are contrasting. However, the context of Kapuk Muara in between the mangroves and the industrial districts provides opportunities to imrpove the local economy with new amenities and services.

The role of urban design is to involve the Kampungs and support them with sharing knowledge on how to make use of the new environment. Parties like environmental NGOs who are already active in the mangrove fields nearby can play a key role in supporting these communities to leverage the mangroves and their potential services. The formal actors on the other hand have to be persuaded to be involved in initiatives that could steer the area towards more sustainable forms of economies. Creating start-ups and organise local events to attract visitors and investors that could make use of these amenities and services.

Governments can play a supportive role as well by consulting actors about policies and subsidising local sustainable practices. Especially the lower levels of government, like the city can be essential, as they manage the waste and transportation system. Collaborating with these actors can help the informal communities to adopt sustainable practices.

Kampung Community

1. Rukun Tetangga (Settlement)
2. Rukun Warga (Neighbourhood)
3. Kelurahan (Sub-District)
4. Urban Poor Consortium
5. Social housing Kapuk Muarah (RT)
6. Jakarta Urban Poor Network

Public Actors

7. Education institutions
8. Religious institutions
9. Local entrepreneurs
10. Labor unions
11. Political parties
12. NGOs (Kota Kita)

Environmental Actors

13. Sustainable Start-Ups
14. Environmental NGOs
15. Jakarta Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA)
16. Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM)
17. Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara (YKAN)

District parties

18. Kecamatan (District)
19. PT Transportasi Jakarta
20. DKI Jakarta
21. Kota administrasi (Administrative city)

Private organisations

22. Consulting firms (private enterprises)
23. Project & Real estate developers
24. Conglomerates
25. Commercial clusters
26. Industrial compounds

National Government & Ministries

27. Ministry of Environment and Forestry
28. Ministry of Agrarian affairs and spatial planning
29. Ministry of National Development planning
30. Public Housing and Settlement Areas Agency (DPRKP)
31. Spatial planners (Bappeda)
32. National Government

M Me

Fig. 88: List of related stakeholders

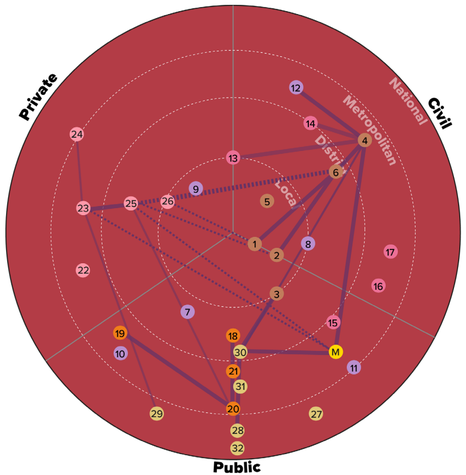


Fig. 89: Synergy conflict diagram

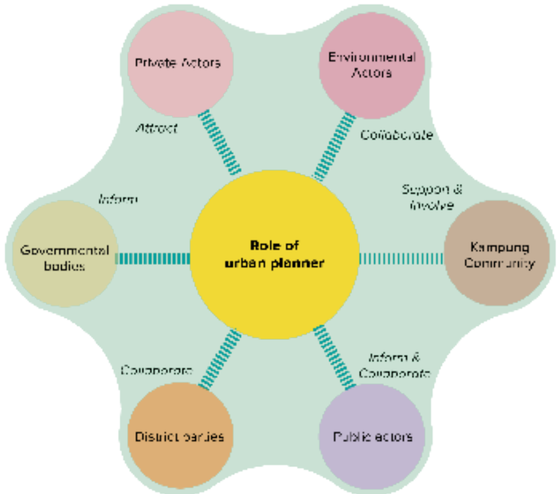


Fig. 90: Polycentric governance strategy

4.4.2 Policies

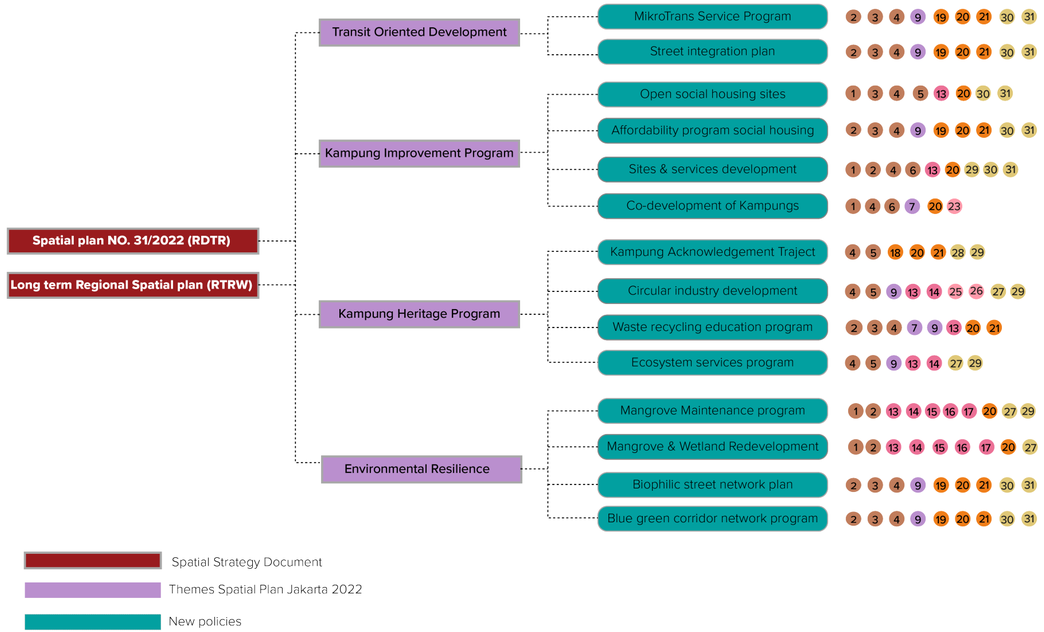


Fig. 91: Policy framework

4.4.3 Timeline

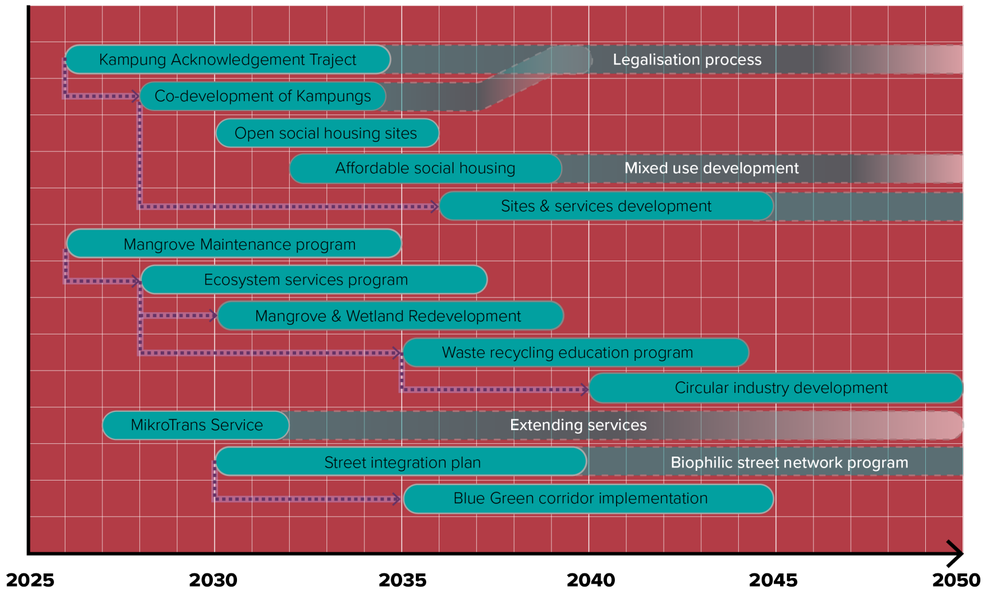


Fig. 92: Timeline

4.5 Rawa Terate: Kampungs under threat

Rawa Terate is a district in the East of Jakarta and fully surrounded by the Pulo Gadung Industrial estate. The site was dedicated in the 1980s as one of the areas in Jakarta for extensive industrial exploitation amidst the period of economic progress. Over time, the area developed into one of the biggest industrial clusters in the capital, especially since a transit terminal was created to attract more workers to the area to facilitate growth. However, the district became known as one of the most problematic, as pollution in the area due to emissions and traffic is one of the worst in Jakarta. Air pollution levels are significantly high, caused by industry emissions and fine dust particle emissions like PM2.5 due to intense traffic and congestion. Furthermore, the industrial estate continued its growth and polluting practices due to the lack of governmental supervision over land transformation and waste dumping, affecting the surrounding neighbourhoods. Due to its continuous growth and wet lands being allocated for industrial activity, the area became prone to flooding.

The industrial estate (JIEP) pledged to improve liveability in the area and developed a master plan to become a Smarttown, an industrial complex with innovative and tech industries making its way for the traditional manufacturing industries. Furthermore, the government aims to redevelop the bus terminal through transit oriented development, with dense mixed-use commercial development. In spite of the good intentions, does this growth-driven approach benefit the existing Kampungs and resolve the environmental threats?

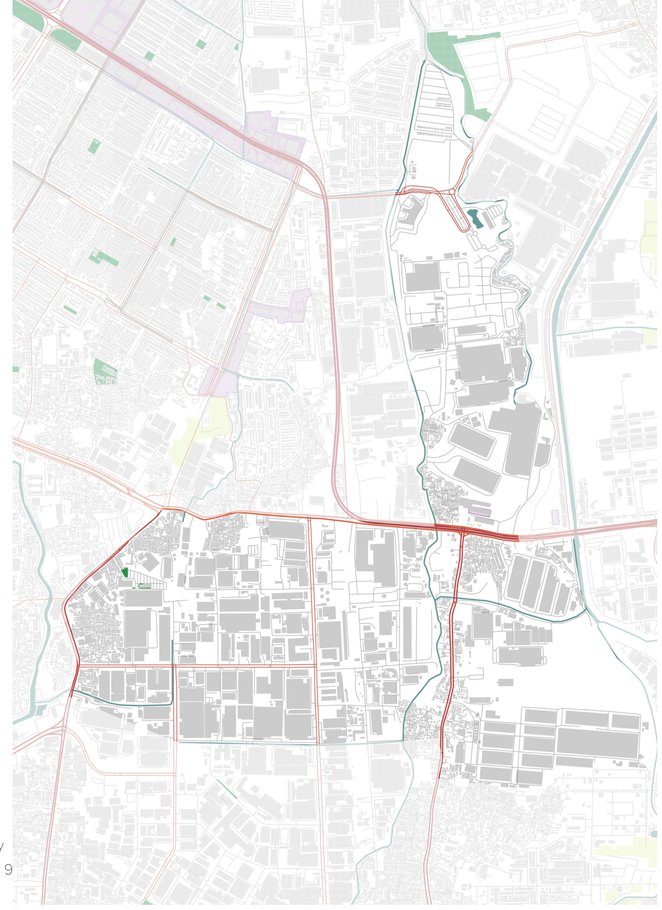


Fig. 93: Rawa Terate district urban morphology

4.6 Analysis









Fig. 94-98: Development of Rawa Terate, retrieved from Google Earth.

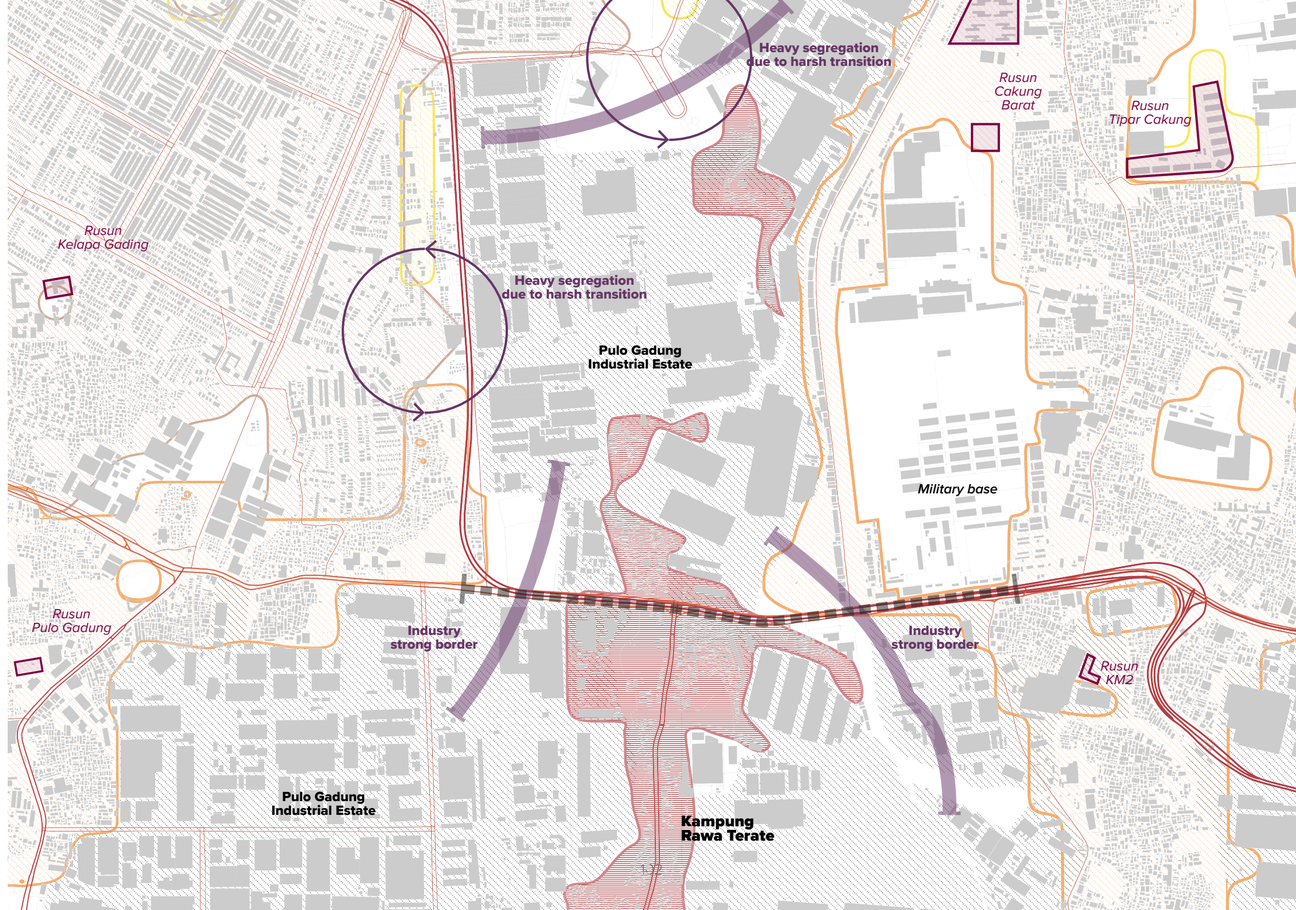
4.6.1 Borders

Rawa Terate is surrounded by industrial activity. The Industrial estate managed to grew rapidly over the past decades due to the lack of supervision in land use regulations. The Kampungs manage to survive but it had major implications for the quality of life, as there are no barriers between the heavy industry and the settlements. Furthermore, there is lack of integration with surrounding neighbourhoods. Especially since the construction of the overpass highway that splits the area in half, integration between the communities is a serious issue.

Future developments are focused on transit-oriented and mixed use development, especially around the Pulo Gadung bus terminal on the east of the district, but this could spark gentrification. The Northern part of the district is slowly being developed into a middle- to upper-class neighbourhood, which means that segregation and gentrification might be amplified in this region.

There have been efforts to improve the built environment through social housing complexes. These complexes are connected by bus shuttles that connects the social housing complexes in the neighbourhood. These complexes are however located in secluded areas, that are hard to reach for other Kampungs.

Fig. 99: Conflict Map Rawa Terate - Borders



4.6.2 Amenities

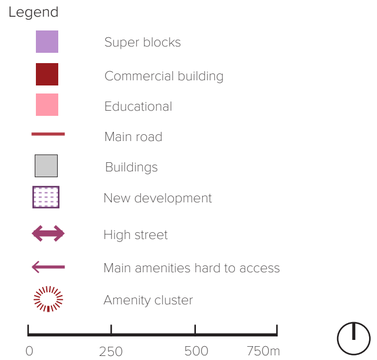
Amenities are mainly focused along the main traffic corridors and public transit hubs. Especially in Rawa Terate, there is one main roads where activities are clustered. The amenities in the slum-type Kampungs are basic and focused on the local community.

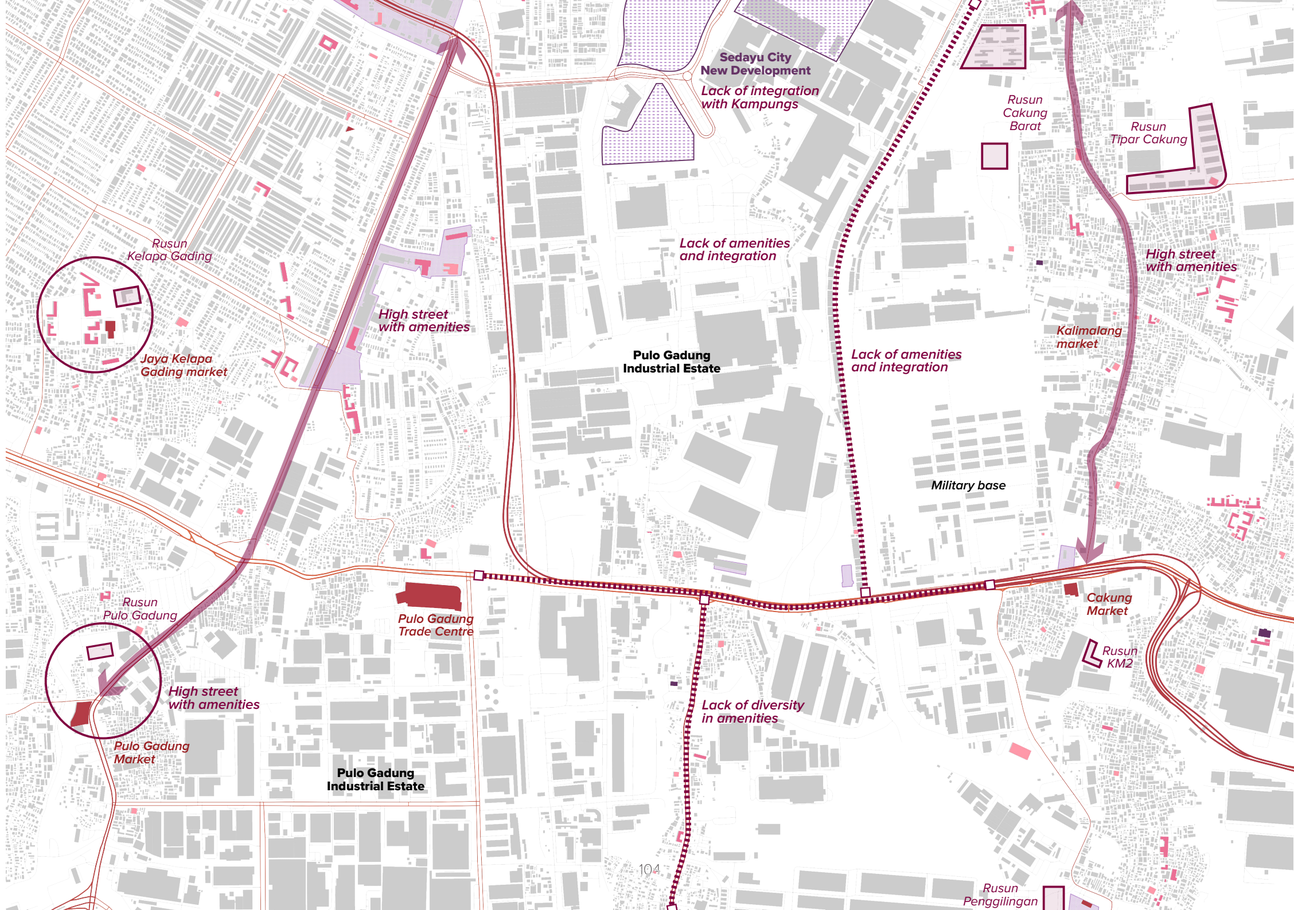
Services that provides for a larger urban community, like shopping malls and markets are located in more developed Kampungs, which are not easy to reach through direct roads.

New amenities are added with the Sedayu City developments, but these seem to attract the more wealthier classes in the Northern district of Pulo Gadung.

Some industrial compounds provide leisure amenities on their site, but these seem only accessible for social housing units on site.

Fig. 100: Conflict Map Rawa Terate - Amenities





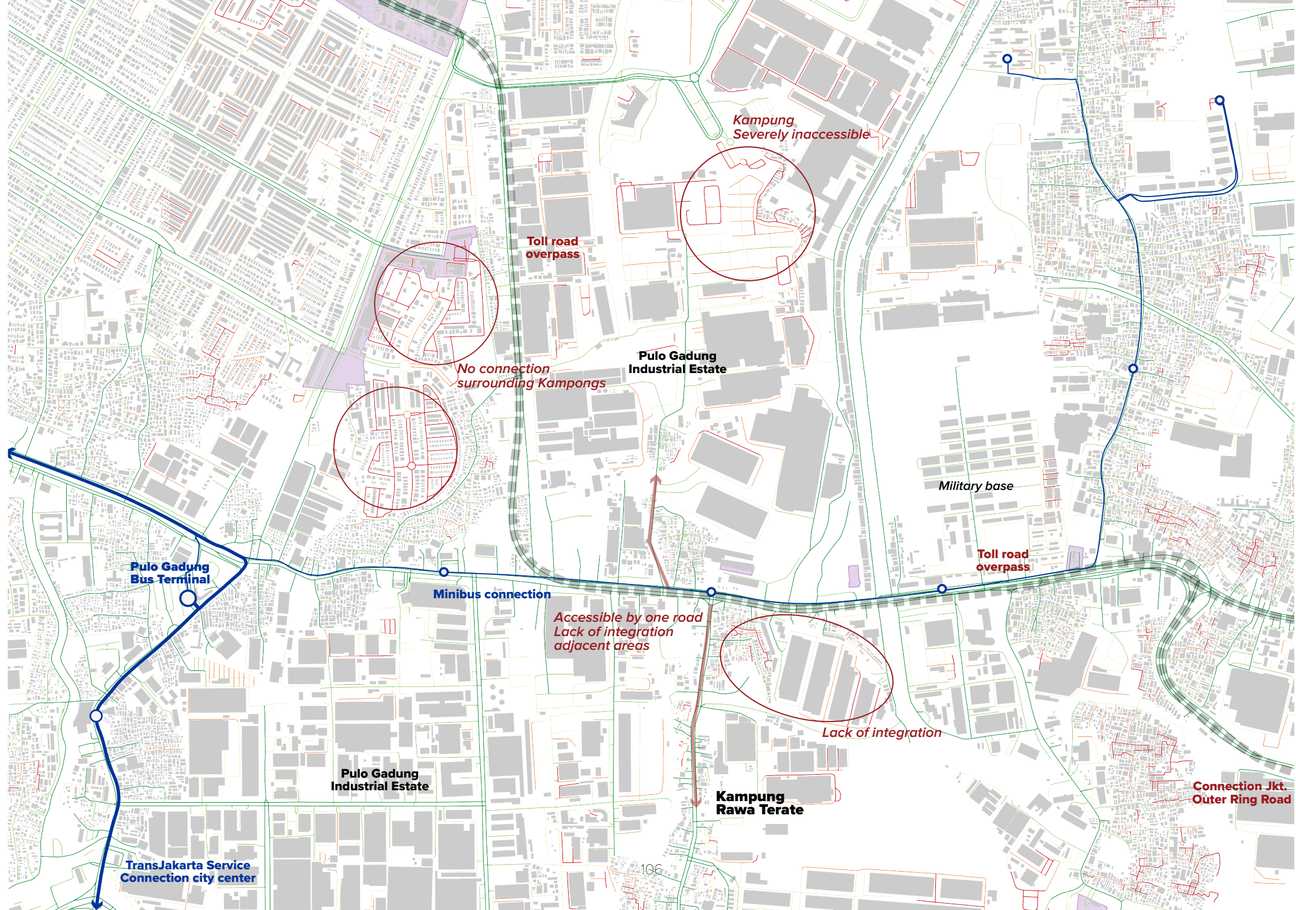
4.6.3 Mobility network

The bus terminal of Pulo Gadung is located nearby the Rawa Terate district. From the bus terminal, shuttle bus services to nearby social housing complexes are in place providing a connecting line with the East and city centre of Jakarta.

The Southern part of Kampung Rawa Terate has one main road crossing through the village. Since the settlement is very narrow, it provides good access to the high street were amenities are located. The Kampung on the North on the other hand is severely isolated and has no formal connection with the road network, why proves why there are very limiited amenities.

Connectivity between Rawa Terate and other neighbourhoods is limited because there are limited roads avaibable that connects them.

Fig. 101: Conflict map Rawa Terate - Mobility

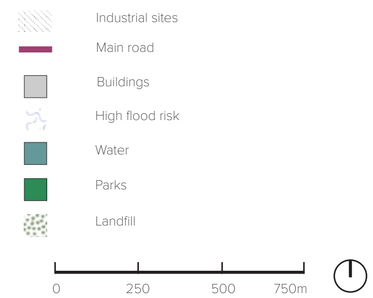


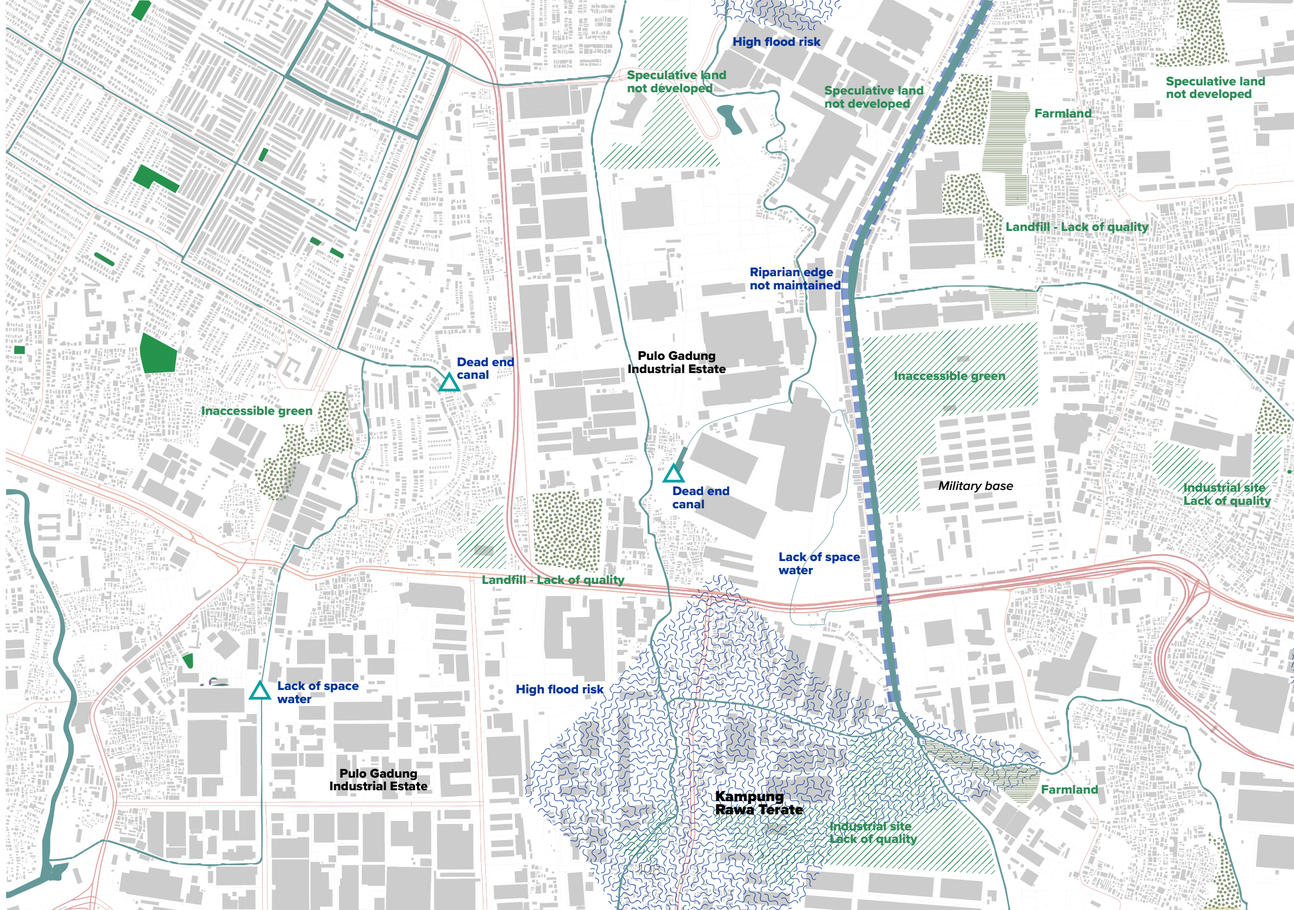
4.6.4 Ecological corridors

The expansion of the industrial estate has made the area vulnerable to flooding, especially during monsoons. The industrial sites have limited green spaces where water can infiltrate, resulting in large parts being inundated for long periods of time. Furthermore, the continuous development results in a lack of buffer between the settlements and the industries, which could potentially be a threat for the Kampungs living ajdacent to industries.

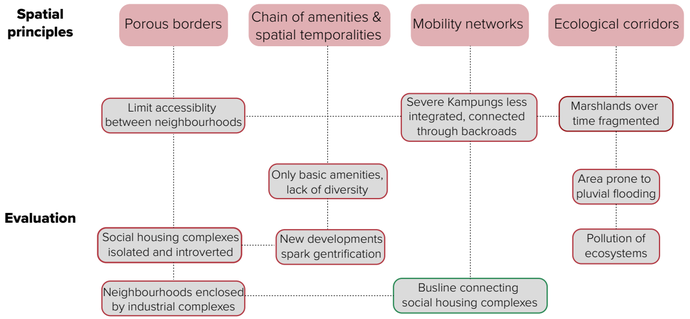
The area of Rawa Terate was once known as a swamp with a large sweet-water reserve. But uncontrolled extraction of groundwater by industries resulted in increased salinisation that is endangering the indigenous species. In addition, some plots of land that have green structures are badly maintained or not accessbile for public
.
The Kampungs are located along the waters, but these are the areas that are especially vulnerable. To make the community resilience against future flood events, more space needs to be accomodated for wetlands that could store large amounts of water during flood season.

Fig. 102: Conflicts Rawa Terate - Ecological corridors

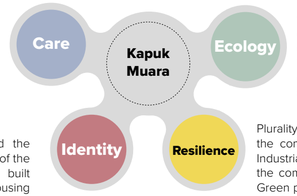




4.6.5 Values Assessment



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

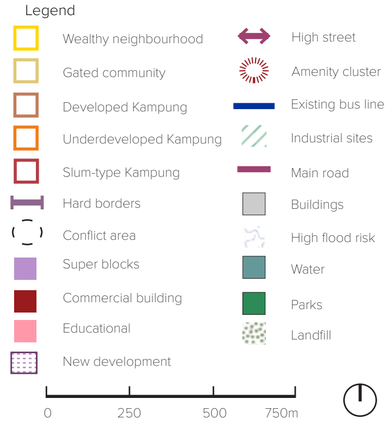


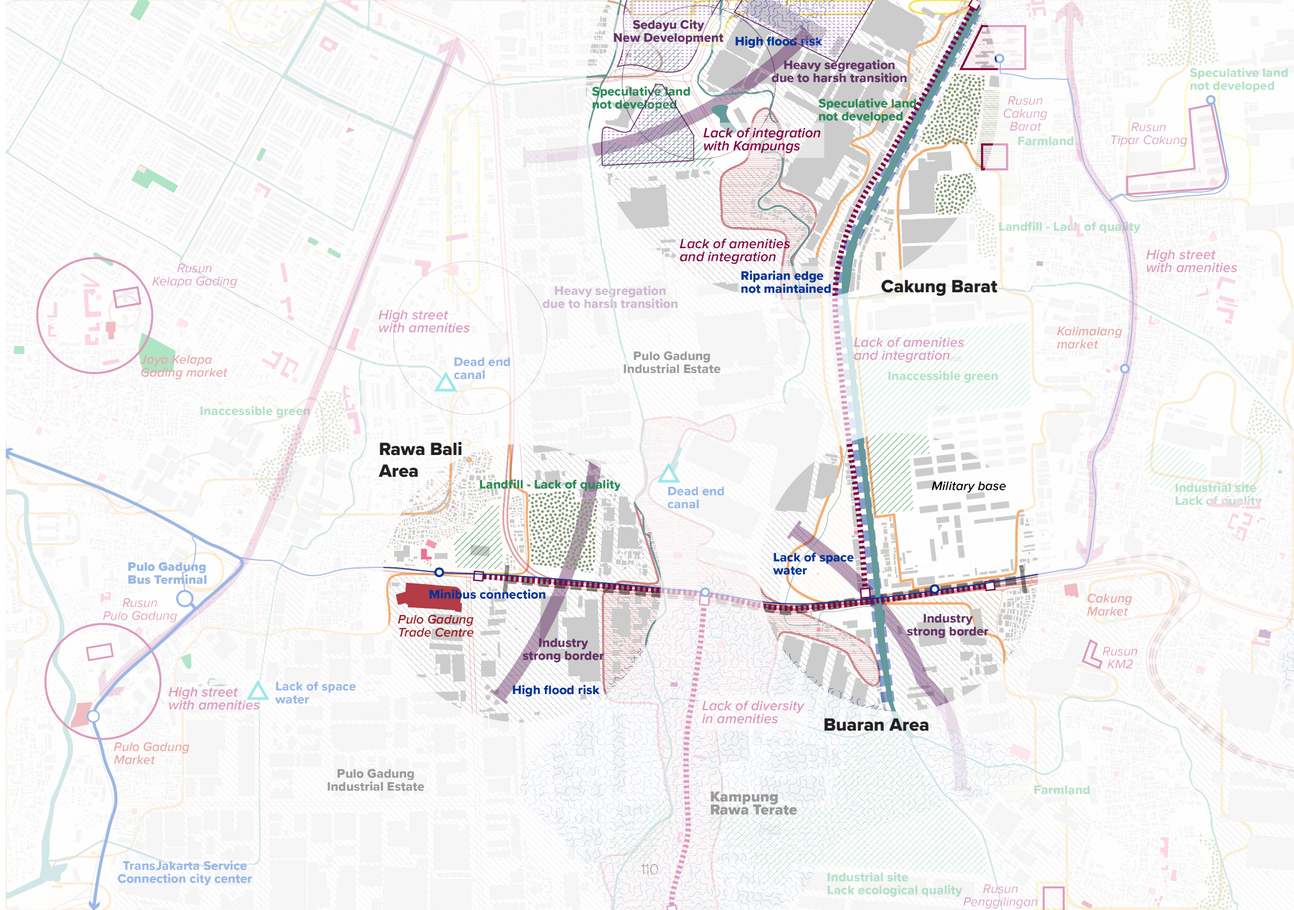
Industrial activity has shaped the community. Continuous efforts of the industrial estate to improve built environment through social housing breaks with traditional values, creating complexes that are isolated from each other. Opportunities to integrate housing concepts with traditional values.

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

Fig. 103: Conflict map - Rawa Terate





4.7 Interventions Rawa Terate

From the studies of the site, the sub-district of Rawa Terate is one of the troubled locations where flooding during the monsoons is a reccuring event, simply because there is a lack of space dedicated to retain this water. Restoring the swamp area and repairing riverine edges to make the informal communities resilient is key for Rawa Terate. New corridors for green and blue infrastructures are thus created to for ecological redevelopment, extending into the industrial areas.

Extending these corridors not only helps to accommodate space for potential flood events, it also helps to integrate isolated parts of the Rawa Terate district with other neighbourhoods in the vicinity. That allows for a more integrated street network with shuttle services that connects isolated communities with local transportation hubs.

Along with infrastructure developments, new residential developments to accommodate the poor community into more sustainable and resilient forms of housing. This could be realised through open and apative social housing and sites and services developments. Ground floors are elevated and protected from occasional flood events.

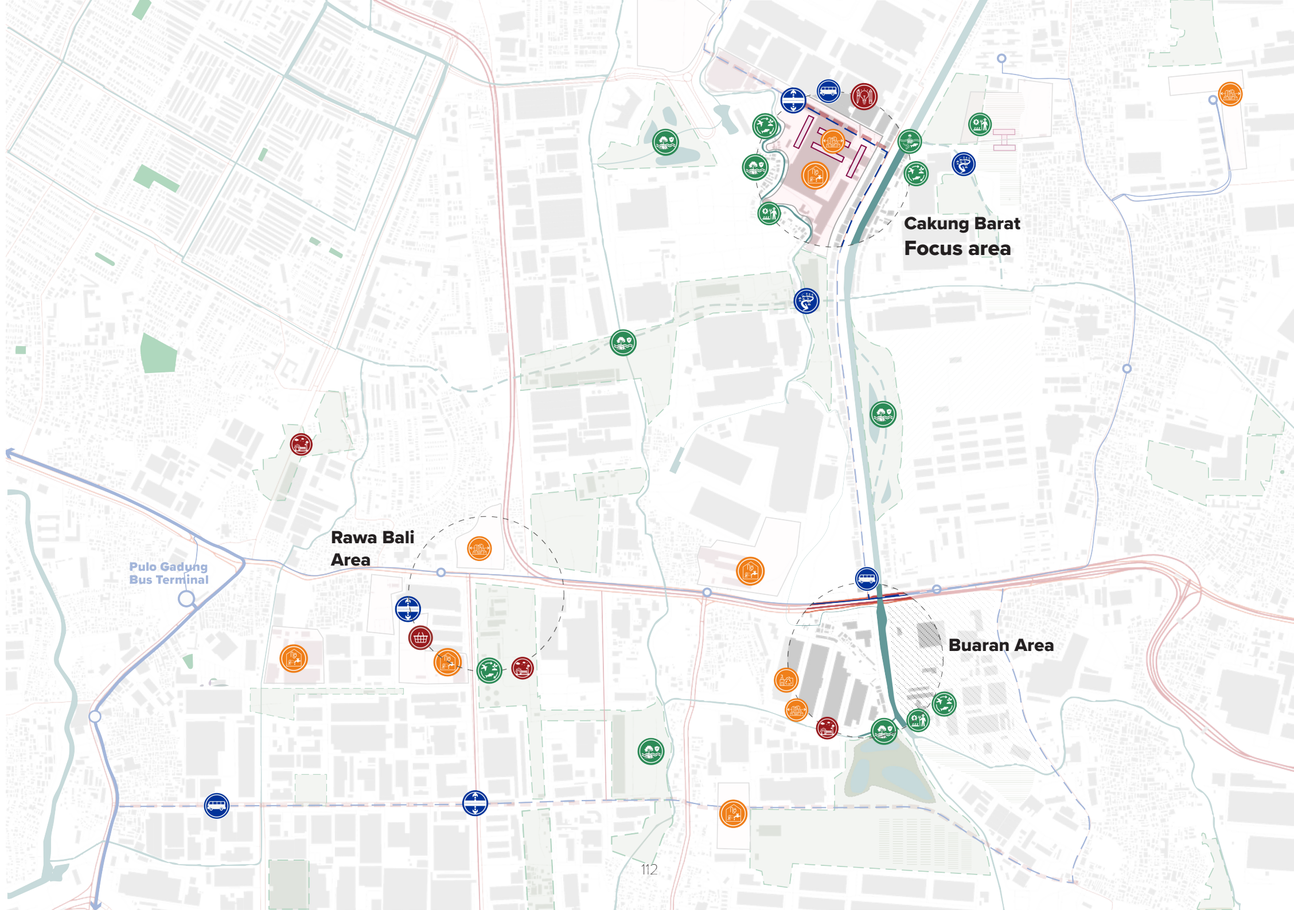
For further design exploration, the area of Cakung Barat is further worked out. Its location along waters in flood prone area and industries could improve urban conditions drastically. Furthermore, with new developments planned close to the site, the interventions provide the existing Kampung with prospect for maintaining the community among potential threats of gentrification.

Fig. 104: Strategic plan Rawa Terate

Legend

- Restoring swamp ecosystems
- Ecological leisure
- Regenerative farming
- Resilience through ecosystems
- Extending blue corridors
- MikroTrans service
- Improving road connectivity
- Local Market
- New circular industries
- Social meeting and gathering spots
- Urban farming - permaculture
- Open & adaptive social housing
- Circular industry development
- Sites & services development
- Residential development
- Ecological redevelopment
- New blue corridor
- New traffic corridor
- New bus line

0 250 500 750m



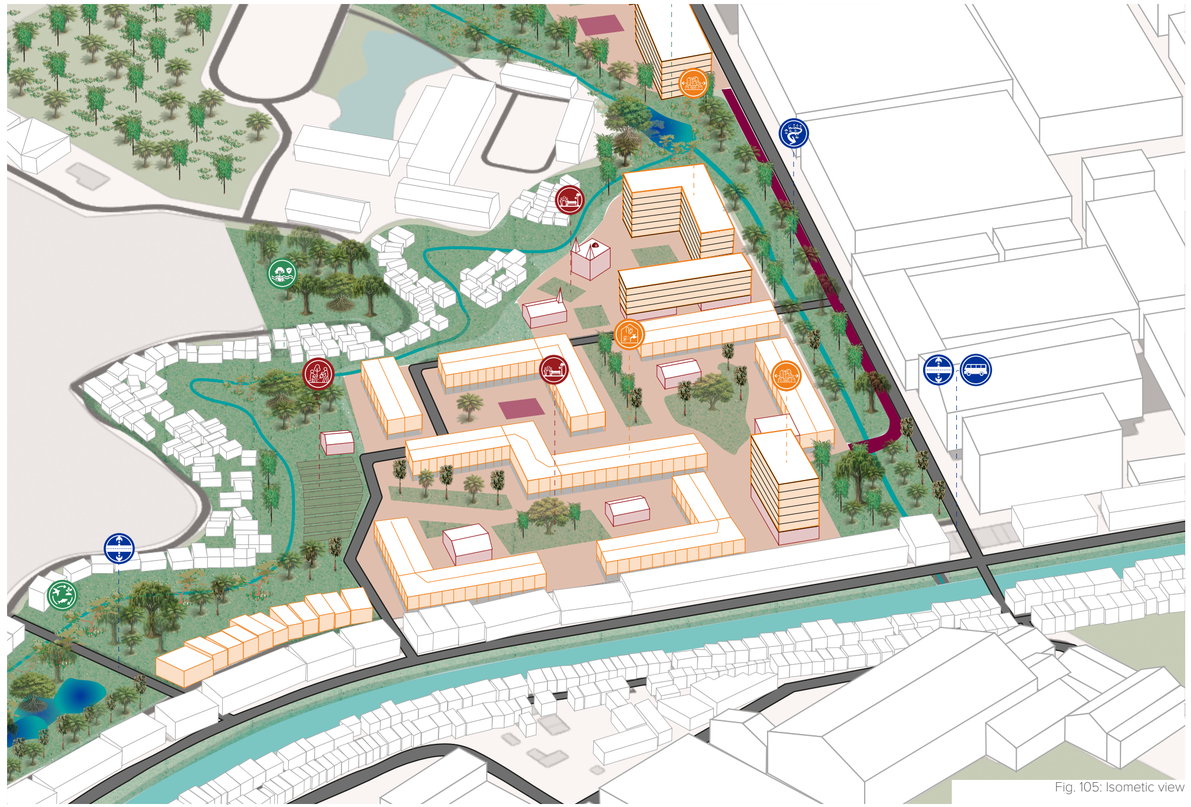
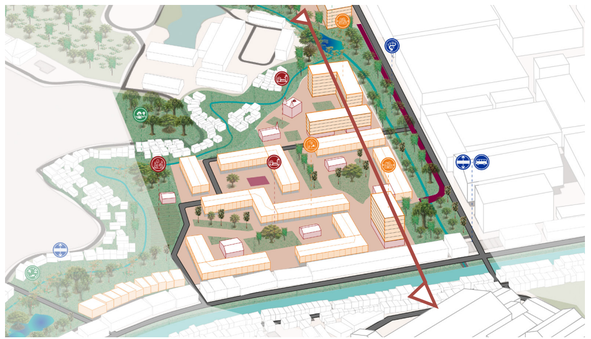


Fig. 105: Isometic view

Restoring the swamp area

The site provides a key location for new developments that involve the informal communities. Through a new connection to the new Sedayu City development, the informal settlements are more integrated and have better access to amenities located nearby. Through green buffers, extra land is dedicated for restoration of the swamp, and make the area more resilient against occasional flood events.

The large industrial plot is repurposed for development of open social housing and sites-and-services development, providing informal communities with dedicated areas to develop the Kampung. Aligned with the new developments, new public spaces are created to improve quality of life and strengthen the community.



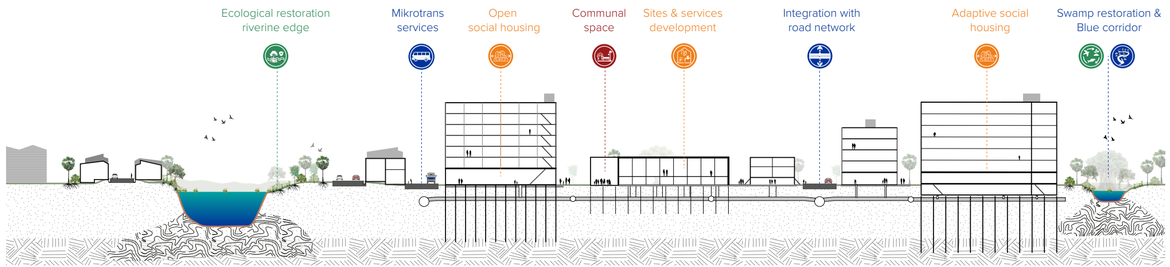


Fig. 106: Section focus area

4.8 Strategic implementation Rawa Terate

4.8.1 Governance

For Rawa Terate, restoration of the swamp area and improving the conditions of the urban poor could are the main focus points, indicating that key roles are laid out for environmental parties and informal communities to be more represented in urban development. Ensuring that these parties form key partnerships and supporting through information by other parties, like public organisations and governmental bodies. Only by including the informal communities there is a chance to integrate them and consider them in redevelopment projects in the area. Furthermore, these communities can become key actors when it comes to ecological preservation and improving resilience of settlements along waters.

The Industrial estate has to be persuaded to consider the Kampungs and the environmental organisations as key partners to improve resilience in the district. A first start is to improve the buffer zones with ecological areas to improve the hard borders between industrial and residential. Furthermore, dedicating land and improving the quality for wetlands in industrial areas have to be implemented to deal with occasional flood events and improve resilience of the urban community. Through these spatial interventions, the Industrial estate can initiate the developments towards more a more sustainable industry and attracting new kinds of activity that would improve the district. It has to be considered about the existing informal community and collaborate with them to build the local economy into a circular economy.

Kampung Community

1 Rukun Tetangga (Settlement)
2 Rukun Warga (Neighbourhood)
3 Kelurahan (Sub-District)
4 Urban Poor Consortium
5 Social housing compounds (RT)
6 Jakarta Urban Poor Network

Public Actors

7 Education institutions
8 Religious institutions
9 Local entrepreneurs
10 Labor unions
11 Political parties
12 NGOs (Kota Kita)

Environmental Actors

13 Sustainable Start-Ups
14 Environmental NGOs
15 Jakarta Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA)
16 Peatland and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM)
17 Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara (YKAN)

District parties

18 Kecamatan (District)
19 PT Transportasi Jakarta
20 DKI Jakarta
21 Kota administrasi (Administrative city)

Private organisations

22 Consulting firms (private enterprises)
23 Project & Real estate developers
24 Conglomerates
25 Pulo Gadung Industrial Estate

National Government & Ministries

26 Ministry of Defense
27 Ministry of Environment and Forestry
28 Ministry of Agrarian affairs and spatial planning
29 Ministry of National Development planning
30 Public Housing and Settlement Areas Agency (DPRKP)
31 Spatial planners (Bappeda)
32 National Government

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Fig. 107: List of involved stakeholders in Rawa Terate

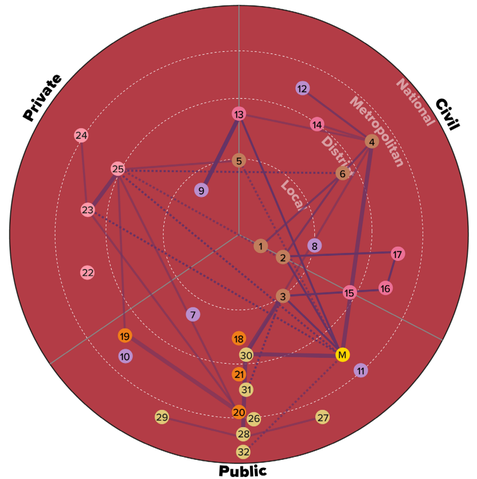


Fig. 108: Conflicts & Synergies diagram

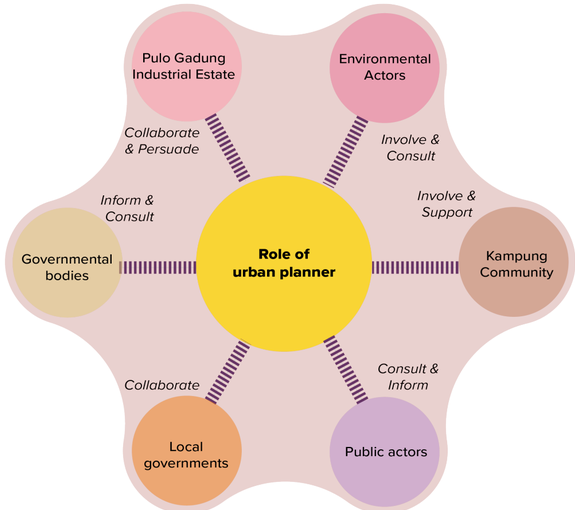


Fig. 109: Polycentric scheme

4.8.2 Policy framework

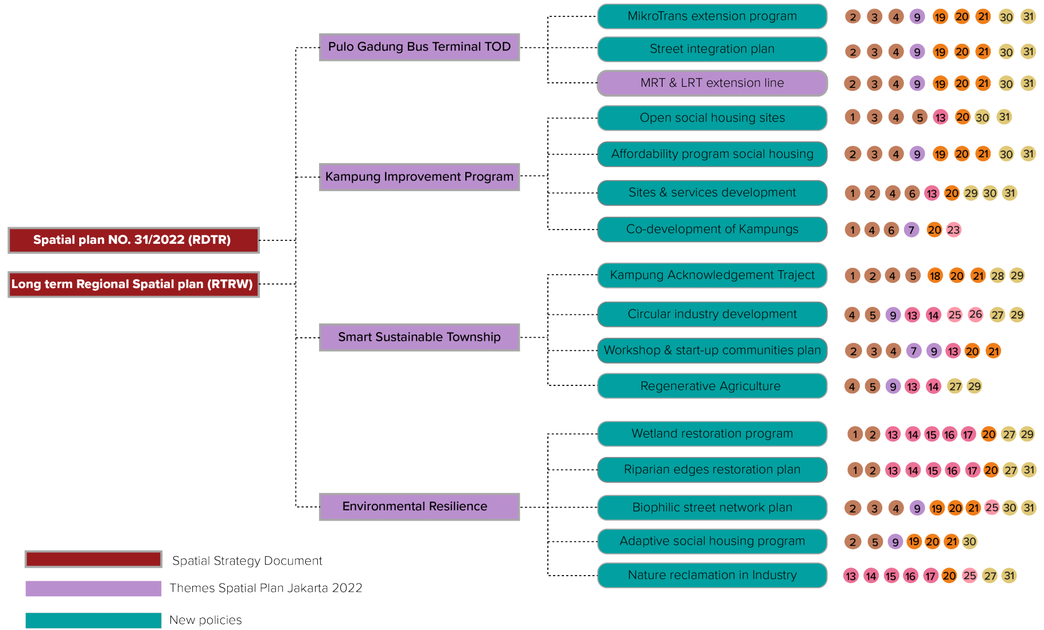


Fig. 110: Policy framework Rawa Terate

4.8.3 Timeline

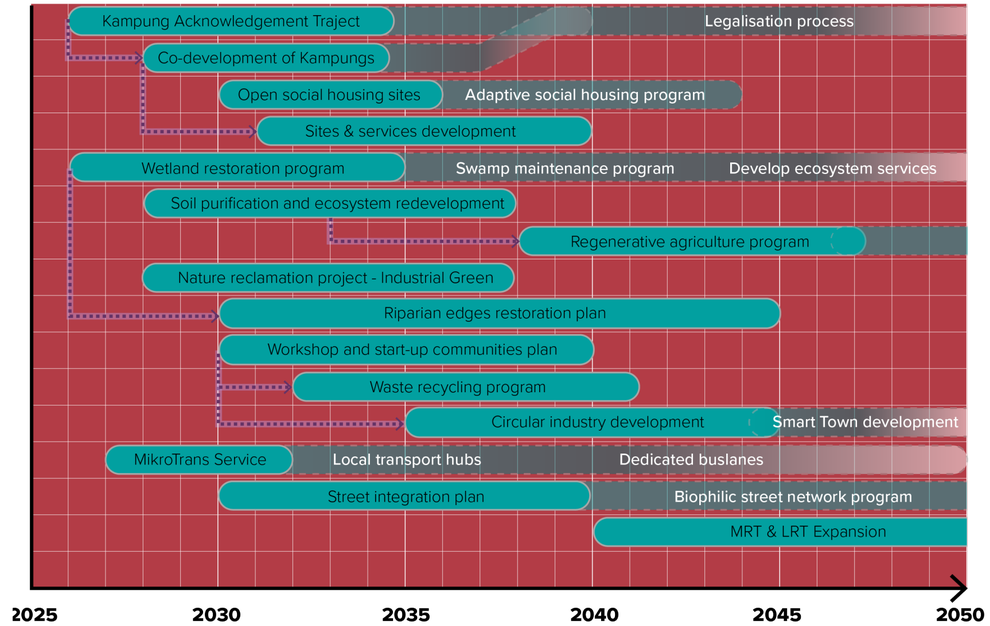


Fig. 111: Timeline

5. Conclusion



Fig. 112: Photo taken in Kampung Bali, 29 December 2025

The Kampungs have a long history being neighbourhoods for the informal communities and natives of Jakarta. However, they have been neglected and excluded in the past and in current urban development of Jakarta. Nevertheless, the Kampungs have created resilient communities trough social oriented practices, becoming an integral part of Jakarta. In times where Jakarta is becoming the next Atlantis amidst environmental pressures, could the Kampungs with their socio-spatial practices provide an alternative approach towards urban development? By investigating four Kampungs, and applying the concept of plural urbanism, four Kampungs have been studied in order to proof if the values can be implemented in problematic urban areas in Jakarta.

Over time, these neighbourhoods developed into communities and gatekeepers of Indonesian identity and values. The mature Kampung Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali have proved to be settlements that have developed into resilient urban districts through their ideal location close by commercial clusters. They have developed practices and informal economies along these intermediate spaces and infrastructures were informal meets formal creating a form of coexistence. For the younger Kampung Akuarium and Kampung Tongkol, governance practices and spatial improvements to change its identity as cohesive and ecological friendly communities have make them resilient and acknowledged by public stakeholders. At the core of the Kampungs are embedded practices which they translate into spatial practices and organisation. These are Care, Identity, Resilience, and Ecology. Practices of care present itself through sharing public utilities and resources, as well as the use of spaces supporting the Kampung. Identity is established through place-making and improvements on the public area and private realm. This creates a sense of belonging and pride of the community and making a foundation for strong advocacy. Resilience is a key value that shows how Kampungs developed over time, from a contested community forced to live on landfills, to gradually improve into developed neighbourhoods with each their own character. Gradual improvements in the build environment and public realm shows development in the community, while maintenance of public space and utilities show a sense of responsibility. The sense of community helps to build the community and share resources and spaces during times of crisis and progress. Through forms of ecology, spatial quality is added in the communities while bringing resources to the community, which also improve the urban quality of the neighbourhood. These four values interact with the community on a daily basis. Depending on the character of the Kampung and the urban context, some values are more dominant than others.

Compounding the spatial elements and the values they carry, the values can be translated into spatial principles. These spatial principles shape urban conditions in which these values can manifest in space and ultimately affect the Kampungs and other neighbourhoods in Jakarta where these values can materialise. The following socio-spatial infrastructures are, Porous Borders, Chain of Amenities and Socio-spatial Temporalities, Mobility Networks, and Ecological Corridors. In the case of the studied Kampungs, these spatial conditions facilitate coexistence between formal areas and commercial clusters, as well as making these communities resilient against socio-environmental threats.

To test whether these spatial principles can be applied elsewhere while creating plural outcomes, two sites have been analysed and spatial interventions have been developed to evaluate whether values of the Kampungs can be enhanced in other and different urban context. Kapuk Muara is a reclaimed area from mangrove fields where new middle-class and expensive neighbourhoods have been developed, with tailor-made amenities. The older Kampung neighbourhoods on the other hand are more reliant on industries and construction projects that are ongoing in the area. The bay area has been known for its mangrove fields and wetlands providing the coastline with a unique ecosystem that is undervalued. By providing ecosystem services and extending these ecological corridors more inland, new opportunities for sustainable economies can be created giving the Kampungs with new incentives for their economies, while providing the developed classes with new liveable areas and amenities that could be used in the area. This would make the existing boundaries more porous allowing these communities to coexist. Aligning a new Mikrotransit line that would connect the Kampungs to new developed sites enhances integration and makes new corridors on existing boundaries. For the Rawa Terate district, spatial elements should accommodate the existing environmental problems like flooding and pollution while improving the condition for the urban poor in the area. The Kampungs are surrounded by heavy industries, inconveniently located on empty plots of land. Furthermore, the continuous exploitation of the once swamp results in fragmentation of ecosystems and amplifies the environmental problems putting the community under threat. Spatial interventions focus on restoring the swamp landscape and diminish the land dedicated for heavy industries. Through new blue-green corridors, more room for drains and water buffers are accommodated. This is paired with lands to purify the soil and creeks to make the area liveable for the existing communities.

The next steps to implement these spatial interventions require spatial planners to set up a strategical framework that aligns with the interventions developed for each site. In order to implement these interventions, the urban planner is required to take different roles to handle each actor accordingly. For the same sites, the Kampungs require support and expertise knowledge, which can be create key partnerships with public actors like NGOs or policy experts in ministries and local government who can support the Kampungs by consulting them. For handling the parties that have contrasting interest, like the Industrial estate of Pulo Gadung and the developers in Kapuk Muara, the urban planner has to be considered in his approach as these actors can play a key role in initiating development. Therefore, these parties have to be persuaded that integrating the informal communities in development can create synergies. Through ecosystem services in Kapuk Muara, both communities benefit from improved quality of life and diversity in amenities creates new opportunities. In Rawa Terate, restoring the swamp area and improving the conditions of the urban poor could ultimately improve the resilience of the area. Polycentric governance is thus a continuation of plurality that requires different approaches for each specific urban context.

To conclude, the synthesis of the Kampungs and extraction of social embedded values resulted in a framework, creating a work flow where plural urbanism through the values of the Kampungs can be applied in different urban contexts. The first step requires a critical analysis of areas where social and resilient practices in informal communities can be identified. These are then translated into spatial principles that help analyse problematic sites in order to develop spatial interventions that would integrate the values in the affected communities. This framework not only helps to acknowledge the Kampungs as an active stakeholder in urban planning, but provides a new approach in urban planning of Jakarta by achieving plurality, in contrast to the previous Dual City approach.

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

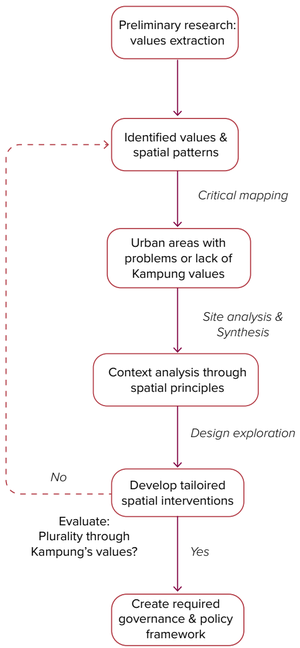


Fig. 113: Framework plurality through informality

6. Recommendations

Fig. 114: Photo taken in Kampung Bali, 29 December 2025

Implications of the Framework

The developed framework shows how plural urbanism helps to translate values that informal settlements possess into concrete spatial principles, shaping conditions for coexistence between different urban communities. The framework begins with identifying the values, which in the case of this thesis have been retrieved from literature and fieldwork visits to Kampungs that proved to be resilient and have a strong community. The four values of Care, Identity, Resilience and Ecology were then further investigated on their spatial implementations. However, using different methods of extracting the values from informal settlements could result in different value identification, and therefore result in different outcomes. A clear specification of what literature is reviewed and what forms of fieldwork have been conducted is therefore recommended when applying the framework. In addition, performing different analyses to identify and evaluate the values is an additional step to ensure extracted values are indeed valid. In case of fieldwork, performing interviews with locals and visiting the Kampungs in different periods of the day can strengthen the outcomes when applying the framework.

In addition, this research has analysed the values of informal communities extensively, because of the scope in which this research was conducted, namely developing an alternative from the Dual City from a post growth perspective. The designed interventions therefore align predominantly with the values and practices of the informal communities. Through the governance and policy frameworks, the formal communities are integrated in the design concepts with a supportive role, but might raise the question whether it is spatially just since the values that informal communities possess is more dominantly represented. In a Dual City context like Jakarta, researching the values of the formal communities and evaluating the spatial principles against the informal communities could strengthen the argument of spatial justice.

A final note about the policy and governance structures, is to maintain a level of flexibility to respect the plural character of the city. The timelines created for the strategic framework form a suggestive trajectory in which these developments can be realised. However, changing social dynamics and urban conditions should be taken into account. Planners have to consider how the five lenses act and could change over time. Only by constantly evaluating the changing conditions, a level of plurality can be maintained.

Moving forward

Jakarta is on a decisive point: whether to continue its approach or to drastically change its course towards a precarious future. Often, plans that look esthetically pleasing with large skyscrapers and futuristic buildings seem to provide the population of Jakarta with hope for a better future. But are those images misleading and hiding the painful truth of what is wrong with urban planning in a rapidly evolving city? During my research, I came across a quote by Low in his book ‘Consuming Cities’, which highlight that the Kampung neighbourhoods manage to survive and thrive during times of crisis. And I became convinced that in order to move forward and deal with the environmental crises and the Dual City that Jakarta is nowadays, it has to return back to its roots and understand what the core of Indonesian society are. And that starts by looking and learning from the Kampungs.

In a city that has been plagued by exploitation and division for decades, the population and governments in the city should realise that the continuous pursuit of growth has not created the desired results. Rather than fixating on a single solution that fixes all the problems, multiple approaches and perspectives by including urban communities and their values have a more positive effect on urban planning than traditional approaches. Urban planning might be decentralised under the responsibility of local governments, but powerful actors still hold much power over decision making in urban plans.

Examples like Kampung Akuarium, Kampung Tongkol, Kebon Kacang and Kampung Bali, where people with limited resources but with a strong motivation and embedded social values to spatially improve the Kampungs have shown that they can manage changing urban conditions while providing a dinstinctive identity in Jakarta. By highlighting the good practices that are initiated from informal communities of Jakarta, officials and planners cannot continue to overlook the impact these urban communities have on the city. Urban planning should not be an activity reserved for the experts and elites in the city, but rather a reflection of the diverse urban communities to exercise their right to live and make an impact on the city.

7. Reflection



Fig. 115: Photo taken in Kampung Bali, 29 December 2025

Academic Context and The Delft Approach

Starting on Jakarta as my thesis topic felt like a challenging endeavour. In my visits to the city, I often felt frustrated by the organisation of the city and the lack of idea behind urban planning. Once I started, I discovered that a city of this size and complexity cannot be solved in one go, but rather is a trajectory of discovering multiple ways of designing and developing plans over multiple stages.

This research-by-design process of continuously exploring different relationships and interventions really helped me to use the concept of plural urbanism in the context of Jakarta. Throughout my research, I have learned that working with values can have different applications in different urban contexts. This also really helped against my bias. My Dutch background falls into these biases that certain practices like spatial justice are self-evident while in Indonesia its not.

What also helped throughout synthesis was working with the Dutch layer approach. Treating the spatial principles as a layer each really helped me to identify patterns between the values and how they apply into space. Sometimes I had to change the scale which was sometimes confusing and frustrating to use different scales as it was a very time consuming activity, but it helped me to understand how the Kampungs operate and their impact on the city. The layer approach helped me to identify the intermediate spaces where informal meets the formal developments, and identify the spatial elements where these two communities coexist. These later provided the foundations for interventions that could facilitate this coexistence.

The research and design conundrum

In the beginning I was very confused on how to use plural urbanism and develop design interventions that were appropriate to translate the values of the Kampungs in a larger context. Since my initial research proposal, I was set on using plural urbanism as I found this concept to have the potential to provide a contrasting approach that is currently used in urban planning in Jakarta. However during the synthesis of the values I find it hard to work on the appropriate scale. I was encouraged to try out different ways and scales of analysing the values and concretisise them in what later turned out to be the spatial principles. Understanding that the spatial principles where the conditions for designing interventions was the first step.

In the beginning it was difficult to spatially translate values, because they were quite intangible concepts. It encouraged me to use different methods to visualise the values so they would be understandable for people that were not familiar with my concept. Exploring different methods really helped to showcase the values.

In the final stage of the design, I felt more comfortable in developing the spatial elements that would materialise these values. With all the previous explorations, I knew what was required. Additionally, the context analysis proved to be important as well. Treating each site uniquely and studying all the elements and conflicts helped to identify the critical sites and develop the appropriate interventions accordingly.

Reflection on Research Methodology

A thesis about Jakarta is always an ambitious endeavour. Because of its mere scale and list of complexities, it is hard to accurately lay a finger on one problem to resolve urban planning practices, as each problem is related to another. Therefore, the initial steps in defining the problem and the scope of this research where crucial in setting up a research framework that would create the desired results. The cluster of Beyond Growth provided a good frame for formulating a critique against current urban planning practices in Jakarta, which also directed me towards one of the main problems in Jakarta which is the Dual City. It aligned with my interests in how spatial justice is an underexposed topic in urban planning, and amplified with the social and environmental threats in Jakarta. Having this scope and problem definition set was a helpful start, but deciding on what scale to conduct the research proved to be the next hurdle.

Deciding on what scale to analyse the existing situation and develop interventions was confusing by times, as it steered me away from the initial problem, which was the Dual City. I focused by times to much on the scale of the Kampungs, forgetting the urban context and how developed parts interact with informality. After I decided to pick Plural Urbanism as my concept for replicating the values on the Kampungs, I was confused to what scale I should conduct research. Rather than focusing on one scale, moving through the scales helped me to construct an analysis of the Kampungs that would translate their spatial implications in larger urban contexts. Moving through the scales helped in developing the spatial principles and argue how conditions can shape foundations for coexistence between formality and informality in other areas for Jakarta. The visits to the Kampungs clarified in identifying the four values that were used in spatial practices in and around the Kampungs, and moving through the scales helped to concretisise the values into spatial conditions that can be replicated.

Since my fieldwork was constrained as it was done in the early stages before the research proposal, the data retrieved was based on observations and small talks with people. Time to conduct fieldwork was limited to three days and therefore relied only on one single visit to the Kampungs. I believe visiting the Kampungs during different times of the day would give me different and more accurate data on peoples' patterns that could be used during the synthesis stage where I analysed the Kampungs. Furthermore, in-depth interviews with different actors related to urban planning or the Kampungs, would provide me with data on how Kampungs and its spaces are organised.

This also came to mind during the design stage of the thesis, where I found it difficult to develop spatial interventions that would align with the existing communities in Kapuk Muara and Rawa Terate. It required extra time dedicated towards research on what interventions could potentially align well with the context. This could also been further explored through co-designing with the communities, especially with the different urban communities in Kapuk Muara. Especially as polycentric governance was one of the theoretical pillars, co-design would initiate a discussion where different needs require special attention towards policy making and governance.

Academic and societal value of project

Starting this thesis, it was my aim to develop an alternative metropolitan vision for Jakarta that would be more sustainable and socially just. Soon I realised that the metropolitan scope was not the answer, but rather look from a smaller scale at practices that could be replicated into urban planning that could create a paradigm shift. From the start, the Kampungs intrigued me as I faced similar circumstances during my elective in Vietnam. I found out that the Kampungs were studied extensively, but that left me questioned on why there are still not getting acknowledged in urban planning.

From there I realised that there was a gap were social values and good practices in the Kampungs remain unrepresented on a higher scale. Especially in the context of Jakarta, were homogeneous super blocks are designed everywhere, I realised that the Kampungs could provide an answer against the Dual City and form an alternative approach in Jakartan urban planning.

I believe this thesis emphasises that informal communities can play a key role in transforming urban planning practices towards more creative approaches. It emphasises the need for bottom-up approaches in urban planning and representing the values and needs of urban citizens is pivotal as an urban designer.

Transferability

Treating the values of the Kampungs as abstract principles in order to translate them into concrete spatial conditions helped to respect the values that would prevent duplicating elements in other contexts. Aligning the research approach with the framework of plural urbanism as a guiding line throughout the project helped to constantly critically think what the implication of interventions where on the sites. Once I understood the way of working, I could translate it into concrete steps that resulted in the concluding framework.

This framework emphasises the uniqueness of each urban contexts and derive the values and spatial conditions from each site with attention. In the latter stages of the project, the framework helped to assess the conditions of the intervention sites in order to develop tailored interventions and critically evaluate them against the values, before continuing to the strategical implications.

To make it applicable and realistic, the framework has to be tested with values from different urban communities and different urban contexts. However, a first step is made for advocating the involvement of informal communities in Jakarta.

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