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Title: **IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF MASTER PLANS' APPROACH TOWARDS THE CITY CORE – A STUDY OF DELHI**

ABSTRACT

In 1947 India gained independence, but there were many challenges for the newly independent nation, catching up with the rest of the world on all fronts of development as well as bring order to the chaos in city as a result of the partition of the country and large scale migrations.[Pandey,1997] The slums and squatters all over Delhi made Pandit Nehru initiate the exercise of planned development for Delhi. It was the need of the hour to plan for the new infrastructure and utilities for the growing City.¹

After fifty five years of Urban Planning, the expectations with the Master Plans and the ground realities are totally different, with 70% of work being done is corrective in nature. [Menon,2017] The City of Delhi has seen three Master Plans and has grown in all the directions, with increased congestion, slums and unauthorized development. The Walled City of Delhi with its own share of growth has witnessed many changes and has come a long way from being called the *Sher Alam main Intekhaab*, [Shafi, 1994] i.e. a city select in world and had its own charm, grace and etiquettes, to Slums [GOI, 1962] and Special Area. [GOI,1990]

The first Master plan of Delhi in 1962 termed the Walled City a 'slum' owing to high densities and congestion and proposed shifting of industries and trade from the City and phased redevelopment of the fabric on the lines of rigid zoning. The second Master plan of Delhi – 2001 [GOI, 1990] called for the conservative surgery of the fabric and proposed a light rail transit system in the walled city so as to cater to the increased population and projected increase in traffic and trips. This led to the coming of underground metro stations of Delhi Metro in the Walled City at Chawri Bazaar and C.B.D at Chandni Chowk in 2005 ; at Delhi Gate, Jama Masjid and Red Fort in

¹ See Notes for Pandit Nehru's communication related to The Plan.

2017.[B.S.Web,2017] The Third Master Plan of Delhi- 2021 [GOI, 2007] has given a redevelopment strategy of reconstruction by land pooling with enhanced FAR on following the prescribed norms in the Walled City. This legal sanction to rebuild coupled with the increased accessibility by Delhi metro has made the Walled City an active site for buildings construction.

This thesis attempts to study, understand and analyze the impact of the Master Plan policies of increased accessibility through MRTS and incentivized redevelopment in the Walled City , on the **people** and **the fabric** of the Walled City. The research was divided into :

- Literature based study of history, planning, zoning, mixed land use, urban planning, policy documents of Master Plans of Delhi – 1962, 2001 and 2021. Comparative analysis of the policies pertaining to wholesale trade , industries and redevelopment in the three Master Plans for the Walled City.
- Study of accessibility, impact of railways/MRTS on land use and land values, inner city and measures adopted in other Old Cities in the world to safeguard the character of the city fabric, *managing an acceptable level of change* [Brien, 2012]. This was further interpreted with respect to the Walled City of Delhi and the Delhi metro network.
- Field studies were conducted to understand the fabric, its challenges and changes with time as a result of Master Plan policies. Also, the new developments that are happening as a response of changing needs of the people. Also, to find out if Delhi metro is somehow affecting the city fabric and the lifestyles of people of Walled City.
- A Socio Economic survey was conducted through a survey questionnaire to understand the people's perception of development and the changes in the Socio Economic profile and fabric of the Walled City of Delhi as a result of policies and projects undertaken by the government under the three Master Plans of Delhi for the Old City. The questionnaire also tried to look into the changing needs of the people of the Walled City. This has helped in formulating the recommendations which can be converted to policy decisions for the inclusive growth of the city.

The comparative study of the three policy documents helped in understanding the concept and approach of planning towards the whole of Delhi as well as towards the Walled City. The challenges that the American planners faced in understanding the

compact, low rise- high density fabric and mixed land use of Walled City terming it as a **'Planners' nightmare** with its multiplicity of conflicting uses and its million problems created by acute congestion, insanitary conditions, dilapidated structures, narrow lanes and high land prices." [GOI,1962a, p.94] This led to the policies of phased redevelopment of the fabric on the lines of segregation of land uses, shifting of obnoxious village like trades from the city and relocation of trade and commerce outside the Walled City. The Second Master Plan of Delhi -2001 mostly reiterated the first master plan proposals and called for conservative surgery of the fabric and played an important role in shifting of hazardous industries and non conforming land uses from the walled city. The traders have continued to stay and the commercial activity has increased, with the number of establishments registering twenty fold increase, from 44,500 in 1958-59 to 8,75,308 in 2012-13 , with Central district having 18.30 percent of establishments as per Economic Survey of Delhi 2012-2013. [GNCTD,2013] The MPD-2001 proposed a light rail transit system[DDA,1999], as a result of which the Delhi metro underground network arrived in 2005 in the Walled City and had two stations at Chawri Bazaar and Chandni Chowk on the Yellow line.

The Third Master Plan of Delhi – 2021 [GOI,2007] has given legal sanction to rebuilding the old properties and pooling of properties with enhanced FAR on following the prescribed norms of parking space, access, setbacks and openings in the new structures. This coupled with the increased accessibility of the Walled City by MRTS has made it an attractive place for both the residents and traders, which is indicated by the spurt of construction activities of multi storey flats by the builders as well as increase in land values and rents.[www.magicbricks.com] Also, the Delhi metro network has covered almost the whole of Delhi contributing towards making *Delhi a global metropolis and a world class City* [GOI,2007, p.2]. The new stations at Delhi Gate, Jama Masjid and Red Fort on the Purple line have become operational in May 2017, making the Walled City accessible from all the directions. [B.S.Web,2017]

The field studies show the coming up of multi-storey residential flats with commercial use on the ground floor in almost all the corners of the Walled City. This **is an alarming situation and is posing a 'severe, irreversible, threat' to the indigenous, non-renewable, physical form and character of the Walled City.** The temptation to sell the blighted property for high returns to the builder is strong and ultimately the market forces will prevail. **But this would not just stop here.** The policies of increasing accessibility and allowing incentivized redevelopment in the Old

City fabric will then be applied to other Old Cities of India as **whatever is done for Delhi becomes a blueprint for the other cities too.** Similar to the MPD-1962, which “*became a model for the local authorities in different states to be emulated.*” [Ansari, 2002,p.9] This will cause an enormous irreversible damage to our indigenously developed Old Cities, like Varanasi, Madurai, Shrirangam, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Hazratganj, Aminabad, Amritsar, to name a few, which are the harbinger of heritage and culture.

The Socio Economic survey conducted to assess the people’s perception of development and Master Plans contribution to the amelioration of the Walled City came out with interesting findings. The people strongly feel that the Policy document has not done anything for the Walled City. But, in spite of the traffic congestions, dilapidated fabric and other shortcomings, most of the people are generally satisfied and would continue to live in the Walled City.

The study found that there is a very strong need to review the policies of the Master Plan for the Walled City. The incentivized redevelopment needs to be stopped, assessed and reviewed as it is changing the whole character of the Walled City. The dimension of accessibility is important for the Old Cities, but at the same time, the indigenous character of the fabric needs to be safeguarded. There is a need to have codes specific to the form and context of the fabric; rules pertaining to the type and scale of construction permitted in the Old City for the purpose of redevelopment and also in the advent of a transportation network in the Old fabric. Then only the indigenous, mixed use, low rise, high density, compact character of the fabric can be protected from the loss.

To protect our Old Cities the measures need a combination of strong political will, public participation, relevant and appropriate legislation and effective implementation on the ground zero. Also, the philanthropic organizations, the corporate organizations under their Corporate Social Responsibility and the moneyed class needs to be pulled in and their interests be co-opted for the conservation , adaptive reuse of the fabric , *managing an acceptable level of change* [Brien, 2012]. These Cities are our unique examples of Indigenous urbanism and holds heritage and cultural value. They are our non-renewable resources with both tangible and intangible assets and needs to be safeguarded for the future generations to come.