

Regeneration of Central Business District, Surat

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Abstract : This paper focuses on regeneration of the Central Business District area of Surat city. This core is the cultural, administrative and economic heart of the city. With the passage of time, population increased and this overcrowding resulted in degradation of civic amenities. It has given rise to many problems like traffic congestion, lack of parking space, encroachment of riverfront and heritage abundance. Paper aims at various measures to overcome these problems. The suggestions for improving living conditions such as restricting the auto-rickshaws entry, encouraging public transportation, provision of parking space, heritage are discussed in this paper. A proposal for river front development also inculcated in this paper. It will help in improving the life of people residing in the area as well as the social integrity.

INTRODUCTION

Inner cities are usually characterized by the intense wholesale and retail commercial activities concentrated in the historical core area. This core is the cultural, administrative and economic heart of the city. However, over the period the inner city is marred by inadequate infrastructure, poor living conditions and traffic congestion. Unless such areas which are the heart of the city, occupying prime land are renovated, the area loses its heritage value & economic importance. The fact that these old cities are significant, rare and impossible to replicate give them the character of a monument which needs to be conserved and maintained. The reasons of the decline of the walled city of Surat are quite old. Over the past few decades, there has been a shift in the focus of development, to the surrounding of the old city. Various factors have been encouraging this trend. Much of the infrastructure in the walled city is over eighty years old and badly in need of up-gradation or replacement. The poor level of services and traffic and parking problems made the walled city neighbourhoods undesirable places to stay. The housing stock is facing serious problems of dilapidation. The narrow streets of the walled-city have become congested with the increase in traffic volume. In the absence of a clear policy for on street parking the streets are choked with parked vehicles despite paid parking facilities being underutilized. While the city bus terminals in this area make it well connected to other parts of the city, they also add to the traffic congestion.



Fig 1: Map of Central Zone Surat

OBJECTIVES

- To study existing situation of central business district area.
- To identify planning issues in old city Surat.
- To plan Regeneration proposal for river front development in Central business district.
- To suggest ideas for regeneration of traffic, transportation, heritage and parking space.

Present Scenario

Central zone of Surat is having an area of 8.18sq.km and there are 18 wards in this zone. The population of this zone is 4.08 lakhs as of 2011.

Area	8.18 sq. km
Population	4,08,760 (in 2011)
Density	49971 persons/sq. km
No. of sanitation wards	18

Table 1: Table showing census of surat

Traffic and Transportation:

There are 3 major intersections in this zone and where the transportation system is such a demarcated for auto-rickshaws

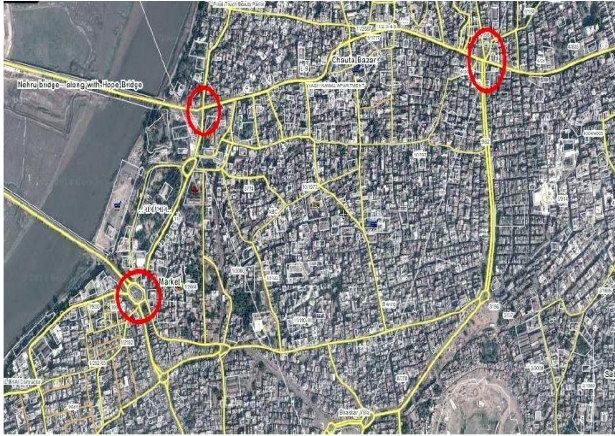


Fig 2: Map showing various intersection in Central Zone



Fig 3: Photo showing Chowk Intersection



Fig 4: Chowk Intersection

Parking

Parking facilities are provided at some places like Vivekanand circle and Muglisara SMC office and nearer to G.N. Chowksi on Chauta Pool but still there is parking problems in CBD area. Users are not willing to use parking facilities and park their vehicles on both sides of road only.



Fig 5: Parking area in central zone

Heritage

The inner city is predominantly composed of communities organized according to their religion. Therefore the residential areas are built around religious structure of historical and architectural eminence. Examples are the chintamani Derasar and the surrounding Jain community, the mota mandir in chouta pul with the surrounding Hindu population and the Khwaja Dana tomb and mosque around the Muslim Community is built.

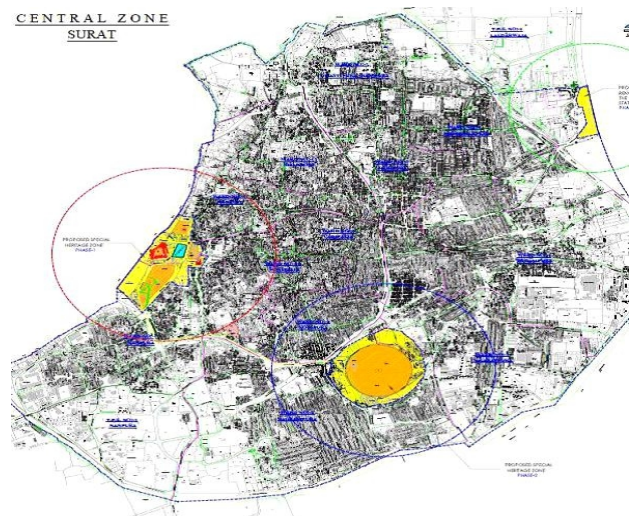


Fig 6: Map Showing Heritage sites in Central Zone

This Church is constructed as per the western design popular in the 19th century. The construction was started under the blessings of Mount Stuart Elphinston.



Fig 7: Church of North India (CNI)

Andrew's library was started in 1850 as part of the efforts to improve educational infrastructure by British officials leading Parsi and Surti citizens. Currently the library has collection of more than 30,000 books.



Fig 8: Andrew's library

The old fort is an impressive architecture with strong walls and iron bars. Among all monuments in Surat, Old fort demands a special mention and is worth a visit. The Old Fort was built by Mohammed Tughlak in the 14th century.



Fig 9: structure of old fort of Surat

River Front

Surat is situated on the banks of River Tapi, The river has played a crucial role in its economic growth and development. Today the river is a major source of water. Many issues face the river edge today – the modern development is haphazard & the edge is neglected; there are slums which are prone to flooding & lack basic infrastructure services; inflow of domestic waste as well industrial waste into the river and tidal flooding as the city is very close to the mouth of river.



Fig10: A view of river bank

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major sectors that need to be catered are;

- 1) Traffic and transport
- 2) Parking
- 3) Heritage walk

1) Traffic and transport

- Chauta bazaar, shanivari market and Bhagal market to be no vehicular zone; only pedestrian area and proper bus stand facility.
- -Park-and-ride (or incentive parking) facilities should be implemented with a well connection to public transport.
- Relocating all the informal activities automatically reduces the traffic in the zone.

- Loading and unloading in the market areas like the Bhagal market, Chauta bazaar, fish market and meat market etc. should be restricted to timings.
- Only the mini buses are allowed to enter the zone through the delhi-darwaja, going towards chowk.
- The city bus stands to be re-designed, and few bus stops to be introduced.
- The public transport buses are allowed to move around the major roads of the city.

2) Parking

- Except the existing parking lots additional parking lots can be provided in some portion of Gandhi Baug.
- Existing single-storey parking space should be converted to multi-storied.
- Use a wide variety of tools for pricing parking-time variable rates.

3) Heritage walk:

The heritage walk booking center is suggested in Old fort because it has maximum number of visitors.

- The walk starts at Andrews library from there tourists move to the CNT church and Kasturba Udhyan.
- From there they move to J.J. training school where history of Surat is shown using pictorial means.
- From there they walk down to the river near to the fort and visit old Fort of Surat where rich culture and history of the city with traditional games and cultural activities performed over here.
- Then they come back and go the Gandhi Baugh and go to see the riverfront development. Visit of river front development will available on fair basis.
- In future this walk can be extended up to Gopi Talav via clock tower using tourist bus.
- The visitors who have their own transport arrangement can see these monuments, River Ghats and reach their desired destinations.

PROPOSAL FOR RIVER FRONT DEVELOPMENT

The Tapi riverfront development will have walkway development, food plaza, cycle track, walking track, festival ground for public festivals, green garden and mini floral park. It will also have parking for 2,200 four-wheelers and 3,000 two-wheelers for people who want to come with their family and spend an entire evening relaxing and having fun.

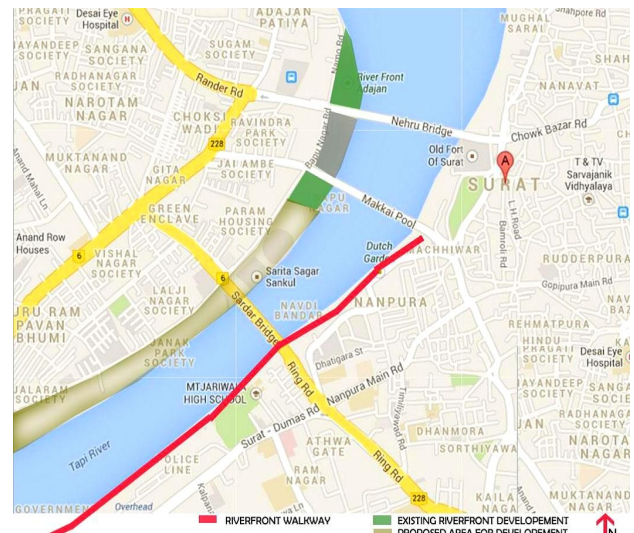


Fig 11: Map showing Existing bridges in Central Zone on Tapi River

□□ Diaphragm wall at the riverbank to reduce soil erosion is suggested.

□□ Mangroves should be planted near the riverbank as it purify water and also helpful to reduce the stinky smell coming from marshy land.

□□ In view of the Indian conditions, special amenities overlapped with certain design parameters have been provided to avoid encroachment.

□□ Plaza for programmed and un-programmed events should be proposed.

□ The development will not hinder the flow of water.

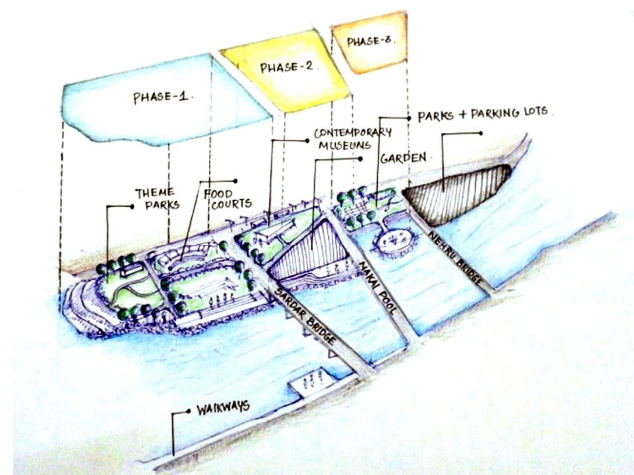


Fig12: Conceptual Overview of proposed promenade.

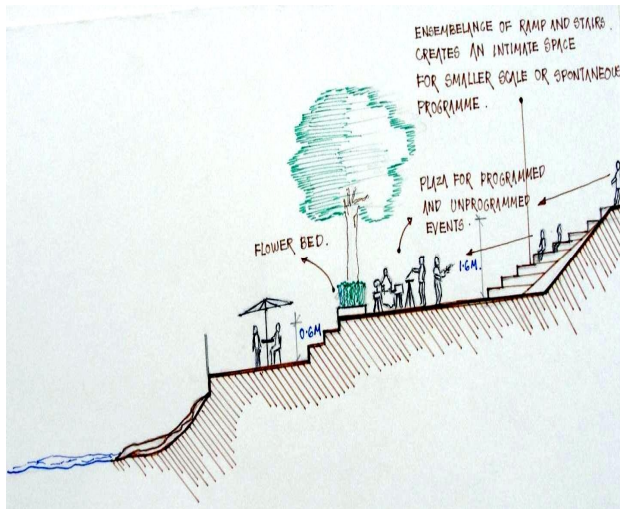


Fig13: Conceptual Cross section of proposed promenade through plaza.

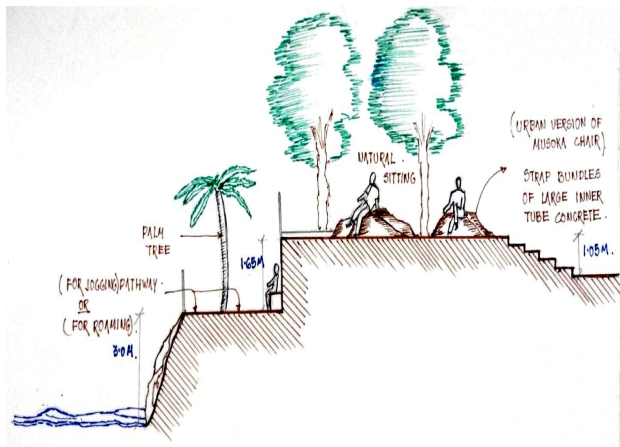


Fig14: Conceptual Cross section of proposed promenade through natural sitting.

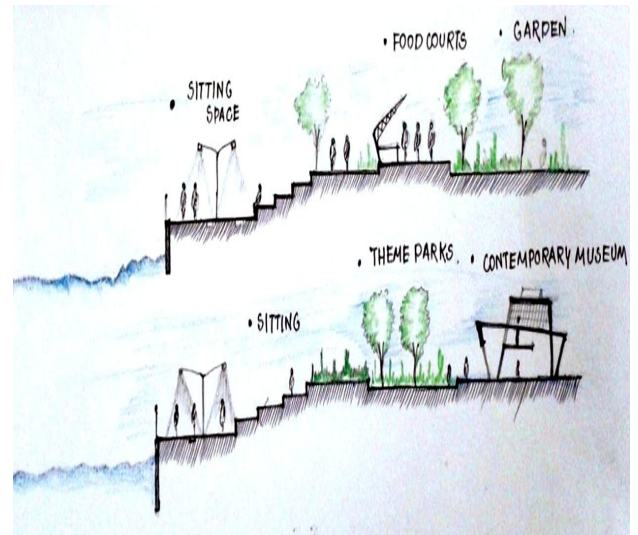


Fig 15: Conceptual Cross section of proposed promenade.

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