

Redevelopment Framework and Strategies for Local Area Plan: Impact of F.A.R. Incentivization in Urban Village of South Delhi

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Abstract

The urbanization trend in the last few decades has reached a new height in Indian metropolises in regard to the immense migration from the rural and semi urban belt in quest of job opportunities, industrial needs and various other means of livelihood. In the consequent process the inception or expansion of slums, unauthorized colonies, temporary or semi temporary clusters and unplanned developments as such has been an issue of concern but still at the rise, which becomes an undesirable and indispensable impact of urbanization. The urbanization pattern as witnessed in the Indian context results in some positive developments and opportunities but at the same time it evokes the quest for qualitative aspect of habitation of the migrants, which has often been an issue of concern in terms of social security, quality of space both in terms of micro and macro aspects of a neighbourhood and infrastructural needs. In the specified context the phenomenon of urban village which does not fall under the category of urban slums, neither planned urban area but possess the unauthorized and unplanned regulatory aspects of development has been the hotspots for migrant population stay both rental and permanent reflecting all strata of the society and has been a familiar term in context of the National Capital Territory and Region of Delhi. This paper examines a specific case of an urban village named Saidulajaib located in the precinct of a South Delhi locality, with the intent of understanding the morphological context, impact of urbanization and the probable future possibilities of redevelopment strategies for betterment of living with F.A.R. incentivization approach.

Key Words - Urbanization, Impact of Urbanization, Urban Village, Redevelopment Strategies, NCT Delhi.

I. INTRODUCTION

City Profile and Urban Village as a Phenomena

This paper discusses the impact of urbanization in three parts, firstly the profile, regional expansion due to urbanization of the city of Delhi since the post independent era and gradually explores the phenomenon of urban village in context of the region of Delhi that comes under DDA (Delhi Development Authority) and lastly the examining of an urban village named Saidulajaib in Zone J of DDA area in the context of the challenges face by the inhabitants as a consequence of urbanization. To channelize the haphazard growth of Indian cities primarily the largest metropolises in the post independent era which were Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata, the concept of development plan for the cities were initiated for execution of development paradigms in a stipulated manner in the decade of 1950s and 1960s. In the discourse of the process the Master Plan of these cities were promulgated with the engagement of Ford Foundation for the concerned work. Delhi became the first city subjected to the envisioning of directional growth pattern with onset of the execution of Master Plan which reflected specification of land use pattern with the considerate demographic projection for the timeline of 20 years. The growth pattern witnessed in the overall demography was escalating haphazardly primarily with the influx of refugees and migrants from rural settlements as well for better opportunities in industries and business which resulted in growth from 0.7 million in 1941 to 3.6 million in 1971 (DCHB 1971). Due to this process of unexpected influx of refugees, in spite of the envisioned growth pattern, the city of Delhi began to sprawl organically but in a haphazard mannerism thus subjecting to encroachment of public lands too in due course of time since its inception from post-independence period. In the consequent process, Delhi was foreseen as a unified metropolitan region constituted by the core area primarily termed as Urban Delhi and inclusion of 7 ring towns around the urban core area for the intended purpose of balanced development in the context of this specific metropolitan region holistically. The emphasis was more upon the dedensification of the already hugely dense downtown, primarily the walled city of Shahjahanabad and re densification of the newly identified sparsely populated areas of the ring towns. The envisage was given on formation of district centres, sub district centres and other commercial zones away from downtown for the similar purpose comprehended with the concept of decentralization. In the consequent process setting standards and stipulations in regard to land use pattern of the concerned region also became an integral task, hence the constitution of DDA (Delhi Development Authority) with the enactment of Delhi Development Authority Act came into existence for overseeing the Master Plan implementation works involving various action agencies (Ahmad et al., 2013). For the implementation of the development plan and land use proposal in the master plan, agricultural lands falling under the aforesaid identified metropolitan region got subjected to development in some cases, which in next set of decades in the post liberalized era gave rise to the phenomenon of urban village as witnessed primarily with demographic shift and urban growth specifically in the decade of 1970s and 1980s.

Administrative Divisions and Constituents

In the present-day context Delhi is one of the most prominent mega cities of the world in terms of both its geographical area spread and the demographic extent. The administrative divisions and constituents of the National Capital Territory of Delhi along with adjacent urban agglomerations, rural areas inceptioned the formation of “National Capital Region” post the enactment of a regulatory body, NCRPB (National Capital Regional Planning Board) in 1985. The NCRPB Act was enacted through the participation of neighbouring states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana and the newly defined boundary of the National Capital Region comprised of the divisions or land parcels from the aforesaid 3 states. For promoting balanced regional development and decentralize the direction of the economic flow to counter the congestion in the core city region of Delhi, the concept of NCR (National Capital Region) was coined. Hence, as it is inferred from the two respective timelines of 1961 and 1985, that how regional expansion came into play for countering the haphazard growth with formation of governing and regulatory bodies such as DDA, 1957 and NCRPB, 1985 were formed (NCRPB 2012). As specified post 1985, the territory of the National Capital, termed as NCTD (National Capital Territory Delhi) became the division which falls under the boundary of the state of Delhi or the Union Territory jurisdiction and the remaining areas of the NCR were agglomerations which were within the divisions of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan.

The local bodies which the NCTD comprises of are NDMC (New Delhi Municipal Council), DCB (Delhi Cantonment Board), NDMC (North Delhi Municipal Corporation), EDMC (East Delhi Municipal Corporation), SDMC (South Delhi Municipal Corporation) that covers the capital territory or the state of Delhi with respect to the overall geographical area. The administrative divisions of Delhi comprise of 9 districts and 27 sub districts. The growth rate of the urban demography of Delhi witnessed an escalation from 1.4 million in 1951 to 16.3 million in 2011 (Ahmad et al., 2013).

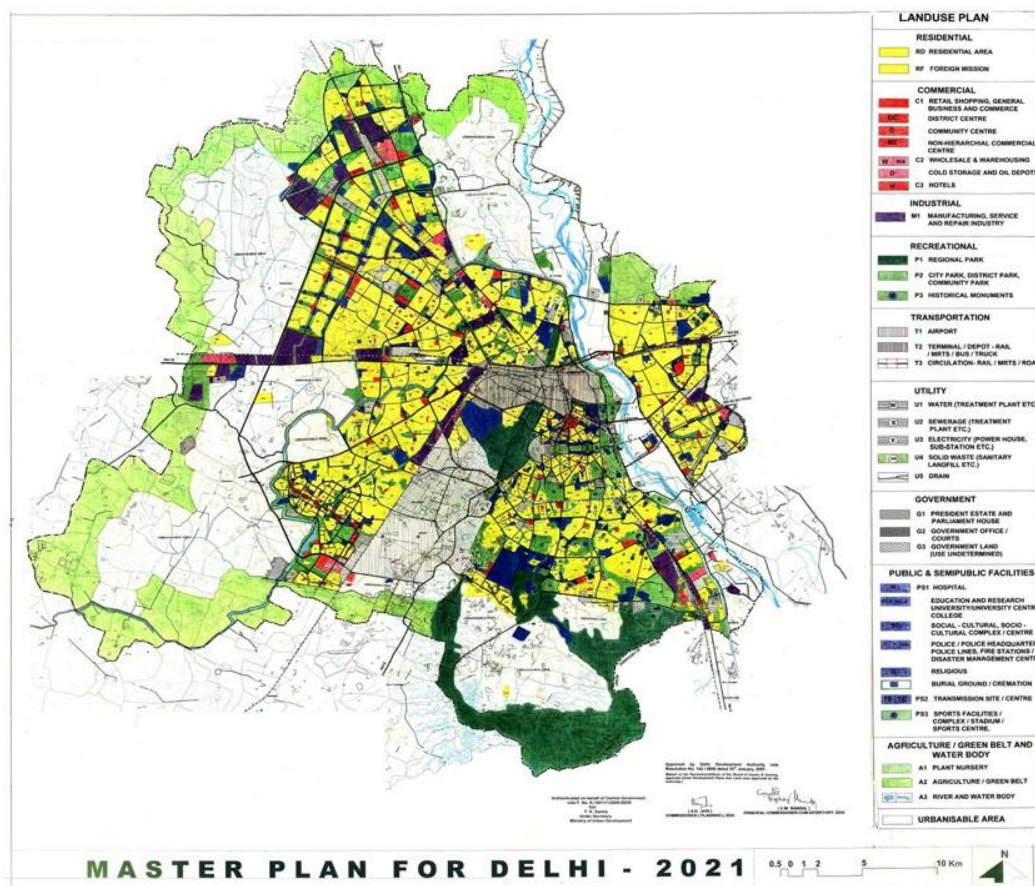


Fig. 1 – Master Plan Delhi 2021

Source: DDA (Delhi Development Authority)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban inhabitants in India now include 31.2 percent of the total population, up from 27.8 percent in 2001. India is regionally most urbanized in the southern part with the states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, and, gradually, Andhra Pradesh. At the same time, the urban drivers vary with the states. Maharashtra is subjugated by big conurbations such as Mumbai, Pune, and Nasik, while Kerala's urban scheme is significantly “flatter” with an inordinate numerous mid-size and smaller towns. In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, the IT cities of Hyderabad and Bangalore, the interpretation is for a large share of the urban growth in those states. The last census detected that in the past decade, natural increase (birth rates in cities) has become less of a basis for urban growth. At the same time, rural-to-urban migration has developed more significantly. Thus, in the last decade, India appears to have curved an angle: overall population growth has deteriorated; urbanization has augmented; rural population growth is considerably down; and rural-urban migration has enhanced. However, from a more significant viewpoint, urbanization is still uncertain (even if it concerns huge absolute numbers). Researchers contemplate it as some economic events behind these varying statistics (Nijman, 2021). Going by the contemporary population theories of the Office of Population Research (OPR), Najafgarh was progressively experiencing modernization and, thereby, demographic evolution to lower birth rates. Along with the geographic juxtaposition to Delhi, international assistance in the system of infrastructural legacies to public health aided fertility deterioration that was not probable for other village areas in the country (Sarcar, 2022). The growing population has unswervingly obstructed the claim for goods and services and controlled the adjacent extension of the city. Metropolitan areas are dispersing

centrifugally to encounter the growing demand for housing, schools, office space, hospitals, and other services resulting in the assimilation of smaller towns or their insertion in the more significant urban agglomeration (Shaw & Satish, 2007)

Some key features of the spatial decentralization strategy adopted by the London and Tokyo regions were restraint by Greenbelt, dispensing growth to new centers, and endorsing connectivity by transportation. These features are also the principal facts of the Delhi region decentralization policy. Hereafter, they deliver inclusive insight into what intrusions work under which circumstances. Zoning was implemented to limit traffic flow and evade ribbon development. The plans envisioned polycentric development both at the intra-urban and inter-urban scales. The three characteristics of Delhi's spatial decentralization strategies are population devolution, urban restraint, and provincial incorporation of public transport (Jain & Siedentop, 2014). The risk identification methods may be considered as relative methods and essential methods where the methods are constructed on associating with standards. Likewise, the assumed Relative method for Indicator identification is developed for the study. Indicators are selected based on literature, standards, regulations, policies, observations, etc. The vulnerability indicators are identified at two levels, namely plot level and area level. Indicators of vulnerability for plot level are plot coverage, built-up area, number of floors, mixed-use, plot population, plinth height, and distance of balcony from the electric poles and electric wires. The indicators for vulnerability at the area level are population density, open space, built-up density, effective carriage-way, and plots with mixed land use (Kumar, 2018).

The National Capital Region of Delhi (NCR-Delhi) was planned by creating consistently distributed sub-centres throughout the region to decrease the invasion of migrants to NCT-Delhi. However, the recent works of researchers have recognized sprawl in the NCR-Delhi. Furthermore, the policies executed to guide regional growth have had inadequate accomplishment. NCT-Delhi is the organizational centre and, after Mumbai, the second-largest economic capital of India. It has two functions, one as a city and the other as a state. Geographically, it is landlocked between two states. NCT-Delhi's rapid growth and development facilitated economically weaker sections and unskilled migrants to seek employment decrease from 1971 to 2001; migration contributed around 40% of the total growth in NCT-Delhi in 2001. At the same time, more than 40% of the migrants in slums were employed in unskilled and semi-skilled events, thus contributing to the GDP. In 2011, NCT-Delhi became India's most significant urban agglomeration, with 23 million residents, out of which 1.7 million resided in slums. Due to improper planning and poor application, small cities near Delhi (e.g., Khurja and Bulandshahr) have become slums. The significance for small cities is unadorned because their population growth is expected to happen principally in the pattern of slums. Thus, NCT-Delhi and small cities in the capital witnessed massive challenges in integrating these slums (Manisha Jain, Jörg Knieling, 2015).

The Local Area Planning or Appreciation that involves the smallest administrative unit of an urban area, which is a ward, could range from this scale to a zone or region of city limit area either under the jurisdiction of a municipal corporation area or a development authority. (Chaplin, 2011) highlights significant shortcomings in urban sanitation and infrastructure governance in Indian cities, emphasizing that fragmented institutional structures, inadequate municipal capacity, and socio-spatial inequalities continue to limit service delivery in informal settlements. (Oostrum, 2021) presents a comparative morphological analysis of urban villages in India and China, highlighting that these settlements are not merely products of unplanned urbanization but possess distinctive spatial characteristics defined by high density, mixed land use, and fine-grained accessibility. (Syal, 2025) critically examines the challenges of infrastructure and service provision in Delhi's informal settlements through the lens of regulatory overlap, arguing that fragmented institutional responsibilities significantly undermine effective urban governance. The study demonstrates that overlapping mandates among multiple government agencies create fragmented service delivery, unclear accountability, increased transaction costs, and unintended environmental and public health consequences, particularly in the provision of water, sanitation, hygiene (WaSH), drainage, and solid waste management. (Sahasranaman & Bettencourt, 2021) investigate the relationship between city size and the provision of basic infrastructure in Indian slums using an urban scaling framework, revealing significant disparities in access to roads, water supply, sanitation, electricity, and public services across cities of different sizes. (Deshpande et al., 2019) examine the barriers and enablers influencing adaptive capacity in Bengaluru's informal settlements, emphasizing that vulnerability extends beyond climatic factors to include deficiencies in infrastructure, governance, and socio-economic conditions.

III. METHODOLOGY

Delineation of Area

Local Area Planning represents a critical component of urban planning, providing a localized framework for implementing city-wide development strategies. It enables decentralized governance, efficient infrastructure provision, sustainable urban development, and participatory decision-making. In the context of rapid urbanization and increasing environmental challenges, Local Area Planning ensures that urban development is responsive to local needs while aligned with broader metropolitan planning objectives. Strengthening Local Area Planning mechanisms will be essential for achieving resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban growth in metropolitan cities. This study intervenes with the existing phenomenon of the urban village settings in New Delhi with an intent of assessing the morphology and the land development control regulations for redevelopment purposes. The urban village of Saiyadulajab, located in Zone J of New Delhi, represents a typical example of rapid peri-urban transformation influenced by urban expansion, commercialization, and migration dynamics. Historically a rural settlement, Saiyadulajab has undergone significant spatial and socio-economic changes due to its proximity to institutional areas, commercial corridors, and major transport networks. The issue mapping undertaken for the study area highlights critical challenges related to land use patterns, infrastructure deficiencies, demographic pressures, housing typologies, and building conditions. These challenges reflect the transitional nature of urban villages in Delhi and underline the need for targeted Local Area Redevelopment interventions under the planning framework of the Delhi Development Authority.



Fig. 2 – Demarcation of Zone F and Zone J (National Capital Territory Delhi),
Source: DDA (Delhi Development Authority)

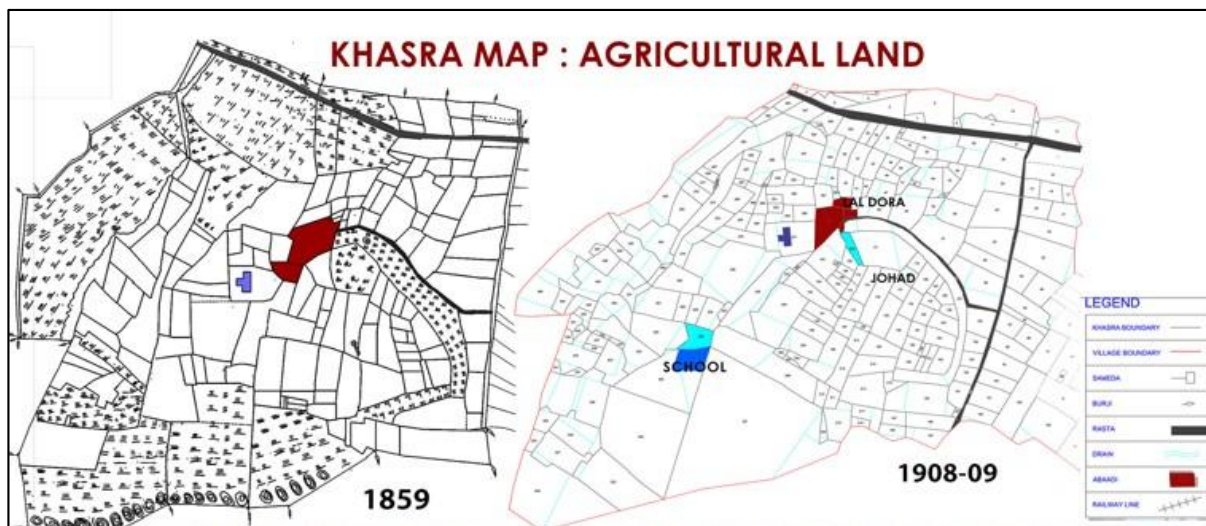


Fig. 3 – Khasra (Plot) Map of the Intervened Urban Village Saiyadulajab, Zone J
Source: Delhi Land Record, Revenue Division

Mapping the Physical and Social Infrastructure of the Intervened Area

Infrastructure deficiencies constitute one of the most critical challenges in Saiyadulajab. The issue mapping clearly identifies inadequate physical and social infrastructure services affecting the quality of life of residents. With regard to the physical infrastructure, the village settlement faces persistent problems related to:

- **Water supply shortages**, particularly during peak demand periods
- **Inadequate drainage systems**, leading to waterlogging during monsoon seasons
- **Congested street networks**, restricting both pedestrian and vehicular movement
- **Limited parking facilities**, especially for middle-income and higher-income households
- **Poor waste management and sanitation services**

The narrow internal streets and irregular street patterns have resulted in restricted vehicular accessibility, particularly for emergency services such as ambulances and fire vehicles. These conditions increase safety risks and reduce overall mobility efficiency. With regard to the social infrastructure, the mapping highlights a lack of healthcare facilities, including clinics, dispensaries, and nursing homes within the settlement. Residents often depend on nearby institutional areas or neighbouring colonies for medical services. Similarly, the availability of community facilities such as social gathering spaces and public halls is limited, restricting opportunities for community engagement and social development. Overall, the infrastructure system in Saiyadulajab is under significant stress due to rapid population growth and unplanned development. The data collection for the research has been implied with the mapping of the mentioned entities and later with a survey on satisfaction of infrastructural parameters as stated in redevelopment strategies by, (Ghia & Mukhopadhyay, 2024) taking into consideration a local cohort as

stakeholders, which enables participatory approach in local planning, further substantiated by (Reddy & Mukhopadhyay, 2024) for community level planning.

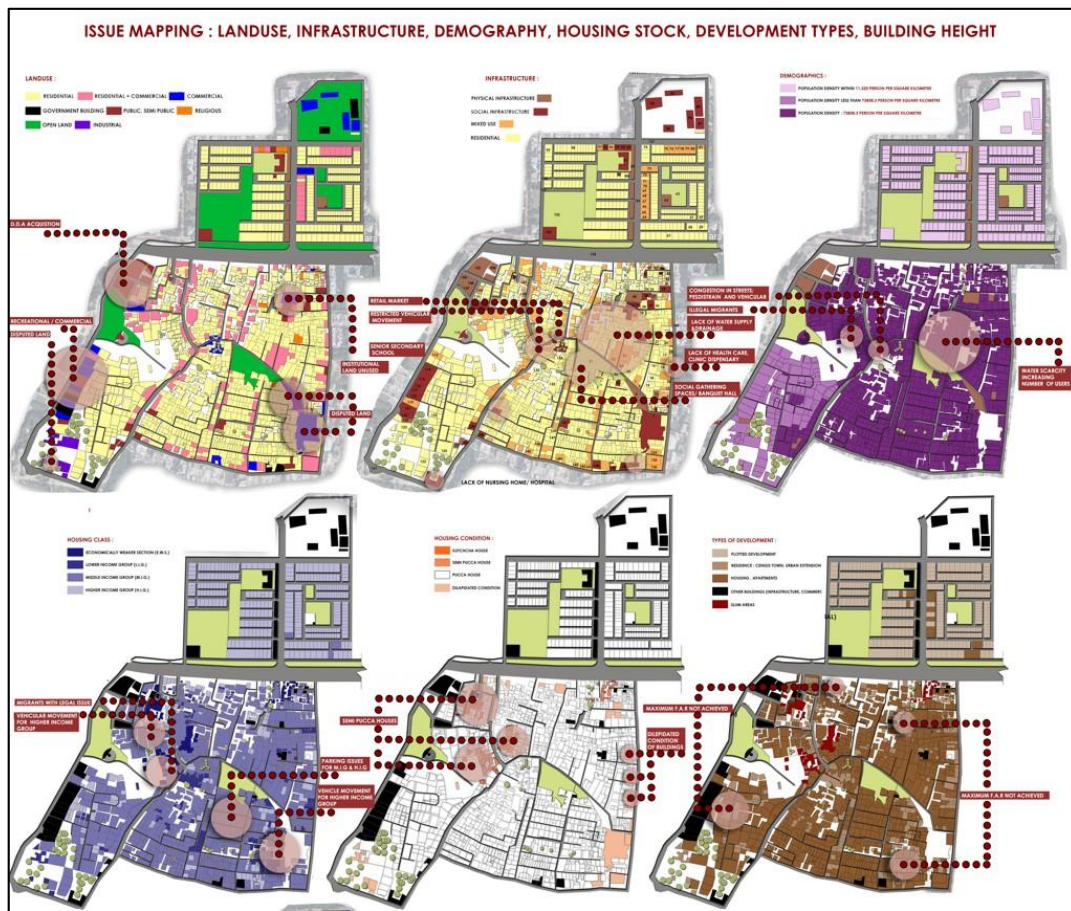


Fig. 4 – Infrastructure, Demography, Housing Stock, Single Digit Land Use Mapping of the Intervened Area / Urban Village, Source: (Author)

Existing Demography, Housing Condition and Residents

The demographic structure of Saiyadulajab reflects the characteristics of a dynamic urban village with a heterogeneous population composition. The mapping indicates a high population density, particularly in central residential clusters, where multi-storey housing units accommodate migrant workers and low-income households. A key demographic trend observed in the study area is the increasing number of migrants, many of whom are engaged in informal or service-based occupations. This influx of population has contributed to rising demand for housing, water supply, and public services. In some cases, migrants with limited legal documentation occupy rental units or temporary accommodations, creating challenges related to tenancy regulation and service provision. Another demographic concern identified in the mapping is the rapid increase in the number of users dependent on limited water resources, resulting in frequent water scarcity and supply interruptions. The demographic pressure on infrastructure systems is expected to increase further as urbanization continues in surrounding areas. The housing stock in Saiyadulajab is characterized by a diverse mix of housing classes, ranging from economically weaker sections to middle-income and higher-income households. The mapping indicates the presence of:

- Lower-income group housing clusters
- Middle-income group residential units
- Higher-income group residences, often located along major access roads

One of the significant housing class issues identified is the vertical expansion of buildings, particularly among higher-income households seeking additional rental income or commercial space. This vertical growth has increased population density without corresponding improvements in infrastructure capacity. Additionally, the mapping reveals disparities in housing distribution, where lower-income households are concentrated in densely packed clusters with limited access to basic amenities. These conditions contribute to social inequality and reduced living standards within the settlement. Parking shortages and restricted vehicular movement are particularly evident in areas dominated by middle-income and higher-income housing units, where vehicle ownership rates are higher. The physical condition of housing structures in Saiyadulajab varies significantly across the settlement. The mapping identifies several buildings in dilapidated or semi-pucca condition, particularly in older residential clusters. These structures often lack adequate structural stability, ventilation, and sanitation facilities. Key housing condition issues include:

- Dilapidated building structures
- Poor maintenance and structural deterioration
- Inadequate ventilation and lighting
- Limited access to sanitation facilities
- Unsafe building extensions and modifications

Another critical issue identified is that maximum Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) potential has not been fully utilized in several parts of the settlement. While some buildings have undergone vertical expansion, others remain underdeveloped due to land ownership disputes, regulatory constraints, or financial limitations. This uneven development pattern contributes to inefficient land use and spatial imbalance. Furthermore, the absence of planned open spaces and setbacks has reduced environmental quality and increased vulnerability to hazards such as fire incidents and structural collapse.

Redevelopment Strategies

The redevelopment proposal for Saiyadulajab Urban Village, Zone J, New Delhi, has been formulated based on a comprehensive assessment of existing land use, housing conditions, infrastructure deficiencies, parking demand, and stakeholder consultations. The proposed interventions adopt a Local Area Redevelopment approach by identifying strategic pockets where land pooling, plot reorganization, and infrastructure augmentation can collectively improve the urban environment while preserving the socio-economic fabric of the settlement. The redevelopment strategy primarily aims to optimize land utilization through Floor Area Ratio ((F.A.R.)) maximization, reduce excessive ground coverage, improve circulation networks, create adequate parking infrastructure, and generate additional housing stock to accommodate future population growth.

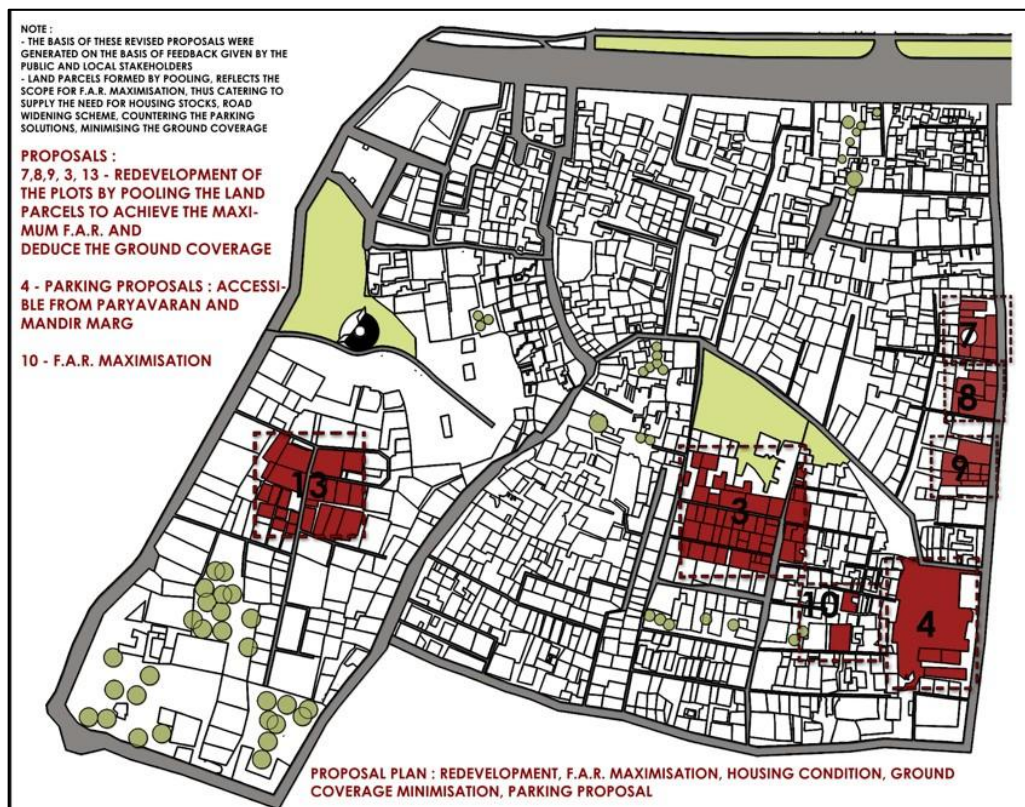


Fig. 5 – Proposal Plan for Redevelopment on the Identified Plots,
Source: (Author)

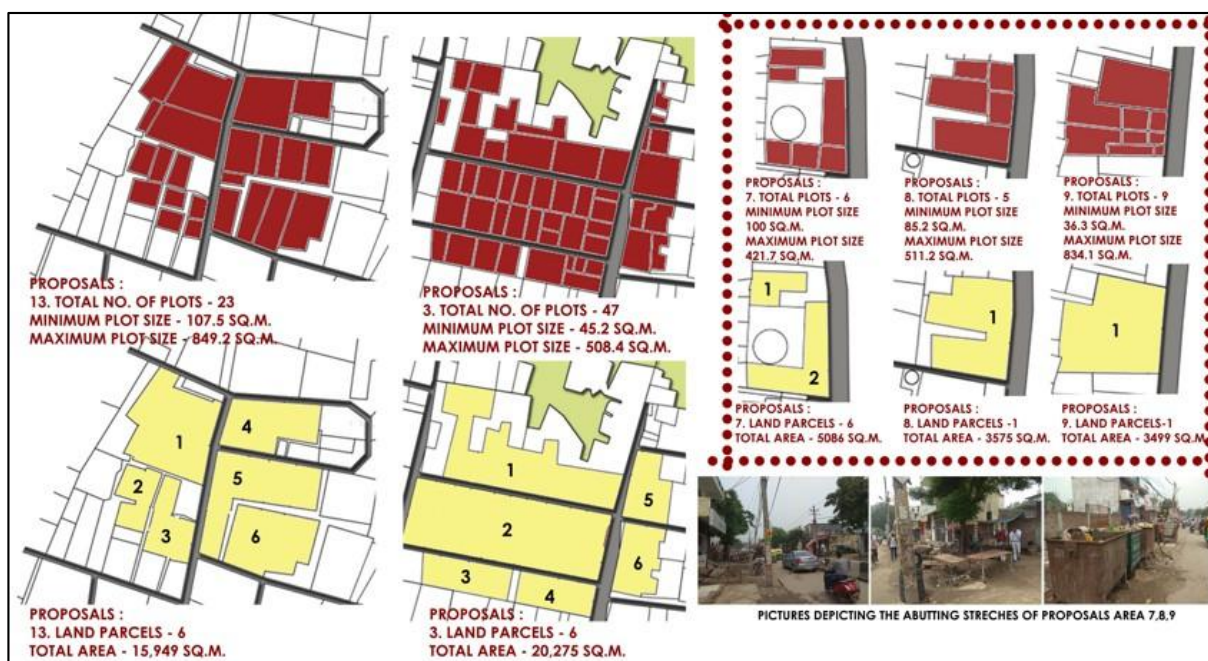


Fig. 6 – Adoption of F.A.R. incentivization for the Identified Land Parcels,
Source: (Author)

The proposal identifies four major intervention pockets comprising Proposals 3, 7, 8, 9, and 13, where fragmented land parcels have been consolidated through a land pooling mechanism. The selected pockets consist of multiple small and irregular plots ranging from approximately 45.2 m² to 849.2 m², which are reorganized into larger development parcels varying between 3,575 m² and 20,275 m². Such consolidation facilitates comprehensive redevelopment by enabling planned building layouts, wider internal streets, improved access, and better provision of public utilities. The reorganization of land parcels also allows for a more efficient utilization of permissible (F.A.R.), thereby increasing housing capacity without further horizontal expansion of the village.

A key component of the redevelopment strategy is the maximization of permissible (F.A.R.) in redevelopment pockets where existing built forms remain significantly underutilized. Through controlled vertical development, the proposal seeks to accommodate additional residential units while simultaneously reducing ground coverage, thereby creating opportunities for landscaped open spaces, internal courtyards, and community facilities. This approach aligns with the objectives of compact urban development and promotes a more sustainable pattern of land consumption in high-density urban villages. Recognizing the acute shortage of parking facilities within Saiyadulajab, the proposal introduces dedicated parking interventions strategically located with direct access from the primary accessible abutting roads, which are Paryavaran Marg and Mandir Marg. These parking facilities are intended to reduce on-street parking, improve vehicular circulation, and enhance pedestrian safety within the narrow internal streets. The provision of organized parking infrastructure also minimizes traffic congestion and improves accessibility for emergency and service vehicles, which is currently constrained by encroachments and irregular street networks. The redevelopment proposals further emphasize the rationalization of street hierarchies and the improvement of internal circulation by creating interconnected road networks within the redeveloped parcels. Wider access roads, improved pedestrian movement, and the integration of green open spaces contribute to enhanced environmental quality and neighborhood livability. Additionally, the proposed redevelopment encourages mixed-use development at appropriate locations, allowing compatible commercial activities at the ground level while maintaining residential uses on upper floors, thereby supporting local economic activity without compromising residential amenity.

Overall, the proposed redevelopment framework demonstrates a balanced approach toward urban regeneration by integrating physical planning, infrastructure enhancement, housing redevelopment, and stakeholder participation. By employing land pooling, (F.A.R.) optimization, parking provision, and improved urban design, the proposal seeks to transform Saiyadulajab into a more efficient, accessible, and sustainable urban village. The identified intervention pockets serve as pilot redevelopment models that can subsequently be replicated in other unauthorized and urban village settlements within Delhi, contributing to the broader objectives of inclusive urban renewal and Local Area Planning.

IV. CONCLUSION

A household survey comprising 42 respondents was conducted in Saiyadulajab Urban Village, Zone J, South Delhi, to understand the socio-economic characteristics, housing conditions, infrastructure accessibility, and residential preferences of the inhabitants. The survey findings indicate that the study area is predominantly occupied by Hindu households (80%), with Muslims constituting the remaining 20%. Educational attainment is relatively encouraging, with 40% of respondents being graduates, followed by 30% having education up to Class X or below, 20% diploma holders, and 10% postgraduates, suggesting a moderately educated population.

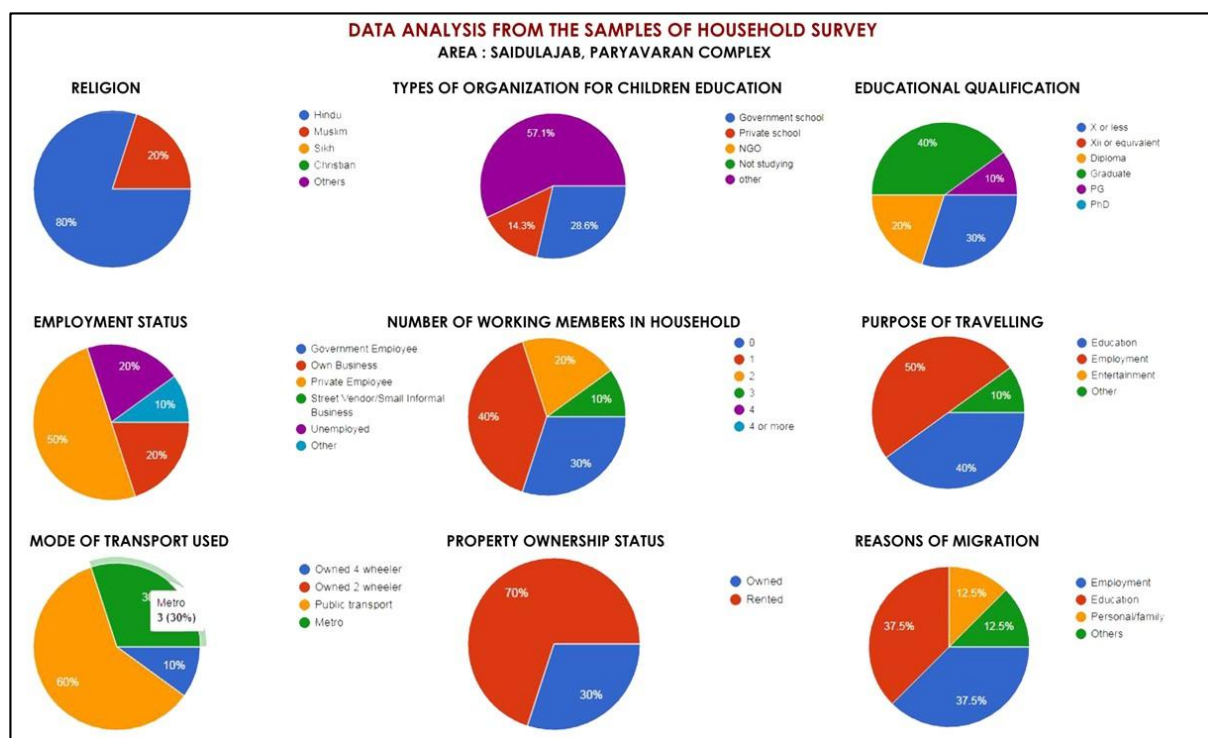


Fig. 7 – Local Cohort Survey Findings,
Source: (Author)

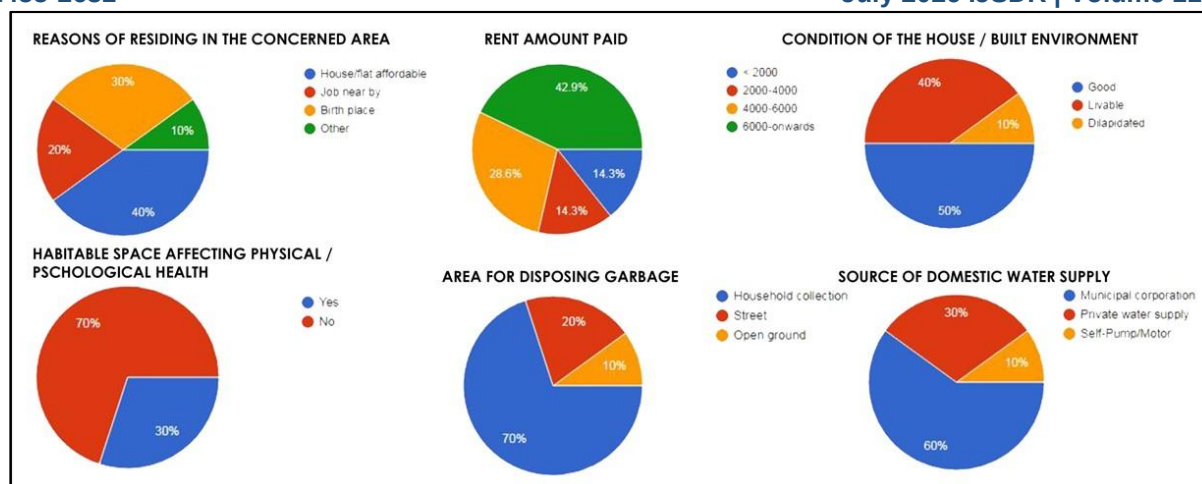


Fig. 8 – Local Cohort Survey Findings,
Source: (Author)

Employment patterns reveal that 50% of respondents are engaged in private-sector employment, while others are self-employed, unemployed, or engaged in informal occupations, reflecting a diversified local economy. The survey further indicates that 70% of households reside in rented accommodation, highlighting the area's importance as a rental housing destination for migrants and working professionals. This is reinforced by the finding that employment (37.5%) and education (37.5%) are the primary reasons for migration into the locality. Housing affordability (40%) and proximity to workplaces (20%) emerged as the principal reasons for choosing to reside in Saiyadulajab. Although 50% of respondents considered their dwelling conditions to be good and 40% rated them as liveable, a substantial 70% reported that the available habitable space adversely affects their physical and psychological well-being, indicating issues of overcrowding and inadequate living space despite structurally acceptable housing. With regard to infrastructure, 60% of households depend on municipal water supply, while the remaining respondents rely on private vendors and self-pumping arrangements, indicating inconsistencies in water service availability. Household-level waste collection is available to 70% of respondents, although a notable proportion continues to dispose of waste on streets or open land, reflecting gaps in solid waste management. Public transport remains the dominant mode of travel (60%), supplemented by metro usage (30%), demonstrating the settlement's strong connectivity to the city. Overall, the survey findings suggest that Saiyadulajab functions as an affordable and well-connected urban village; however, increasing rental dependency, high residential density, limited habitable space, and deficiencies in essential urban infrastructure underscore the need for integrated redevelopment and Local Area Planning interventions to improve housing quality, infrastructure provision, and overall quality of life.

The integrated assessment of land use, infrastructure, demography, housing class, and housing condition reveals that Saiyadulajab Urban Village is undergoing the characteristic challenges associated with the transformation of urban villages within rapidly expanding metropolitan cities. The analysis indicates that the settlement is characterized by high population density, resulting in increased pressure on existing urban infrastructure and public services. The coexistence of mixed and largely unregulated land-use patterns has contributed to incompatible land uses and inefficient spatial organization. Furthermore, the existing infrastructure is inadequate to meet the growing demands of the resident population, while a significant proportion of the housing stock exhibits signs of physical deterioration and aging. The settlement also faces an increasing demand for essential social infrastructure, including healthcare, education, recreational facilities, and community spaces. Collectively, these challenges underscore the need for integrated planning interventions that prioritize infrastructure augmentation, housing redevelopment, and sustainable land-use management to enhance the overall liability and resilience of the urban village.

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