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Understanding Infrastructure Challenges Due to Transition to Mixed Land Use in Metropolitan Cities

Bhupendra Dev Singh[1], Arundhatee Mishra[2], Vaibhav Kulshrestha[3]

[1]*Student of Master, Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.*
[2]*Assistant Professor, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.*
[3]*Assistant Professor, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.*

Abstract - *This research explores the challenges associated with the transition to mixed land use in India's rapidly urbanizing metropolitan cities. As cities evolve to integrate residential, commercial, and institutional functions within shared spaces, significant pressure is placed on existing infrastructure systems such as water supply, electricity, transportation, and waste management. Using a mixed-methods approach involving literature reviews, case studies from Lucknow and Jaipur, and geospatial analysis, this research identifies critical gaps in regulatory frameworks and infrastructure capacity. It emphasizes the need for integrated planning, sustainable infrastructure, community engagement, and adaptive zoning policies to ensure balanced, resilient, and environmentally sustainable urban development.*

Key Words: Mixed Land Use, Infrastructure, Sustainable, Transition, Metropolitan

1.INTRODUCTION

India's rapid urbanization has led to the rise of mixed-use developments (MUDs), where residential, commercial, and sometimes industrial uses coexist. These developments improve economic vibrancy, walkability, and reduce commute distances but also strain existing infrastructure like roads, water supply, and sewage systems. In many cities, outdated infrastructure cannot support such high-density, multi-functional use. Urban policies such as the Smart Cities Mission and TOD Policy recognize the value of mixed land use. However, weak regulatory frameworks often undermine their effectiveness. Analyzing organically developed mixed-use patterns is essential to guide more sustainable, efficient, and well-regulated urban development across India.

1.1 Need of the study

Mixed-use development offers benefits like compact urban form, walkability, and social cohesion, but these are not guaranteed. Without proper regulations and planning, such transitions can create significant infrastructure and governance challenges in metropolitan cities.

- No comprehensive studies exist on infrastructure challenges arising from land-use conversion to mixed use.
- Many mixed-use transitions occur organically, lacking proper planning or adherence to urban norms, leads to infrastructure strain and inefficiencies.

1.2 Aim

This study aims to understand the challenges for the physical infrastructure due to transition to mixed land use in India's metropolitan cities through literature study and case studies.

1.3 Objectives

- To understand the dynamics of spatial patterns due to conversion of land use to mixed land use.
- To study the relationship and understand the impact of mixed land use on physical infrastructure.
- To identify relevant parameters and benchmarks for assessing infrastructure strain in mixed-use areas through literature study.
- To explore best practices and policies concerning physical infrastructure in mixed-use through literature and case studies.

1.4 Scope & Limitations

- Focuses on municipal areas within selected metropolitan cities in India, specifically where mixed-use transitions are prominent.
- The study will focus on the adequateness of physical infrastructure in mixed land use areas.
- Study will focus on Water, Power and Solid Waste.
- Transportation infrastructure is not included in this study.
- Social and economic impacts are not part of the study.

- Different characteristics of cities may limit the generalization of findings.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology is a mixed-methods approach that combines both qualitative techniques (such as literature review, case study analysis) and quantitative-geospatial methods (GIS).

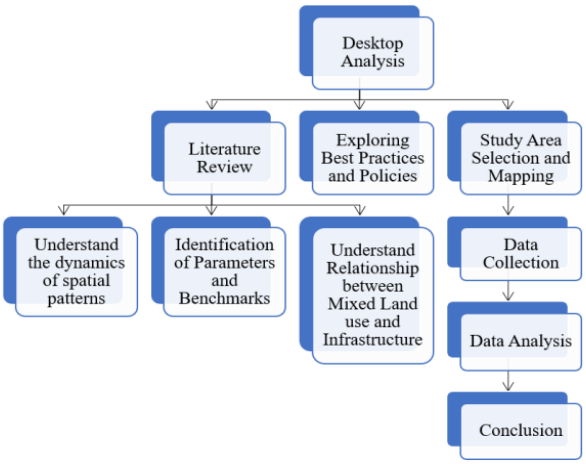

Fig -1: Flowchart of Methodology

2. BACKGROUND STUDY

2.1 Definitions of Metropolitan Cities & Mixed use

- United Nations (UN): A metropolitan city is a large urban area with over 1 million people, marked by strong economic, social, and infrastructural integration.
- Indian Census (2011): Defines metropolitan cities as urban areas with populations exceeding 1 million, often part of larger, interconnected agglomerations.
- David Rhind (1980): Mixed land use refers to two or more functions coexisting on the same land parcel in various combinations.
- URDPFI Guidelines (2014): Defines it as the integration of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses within a single structure or area.

2.2 Evolution of mixed-use

The concept of mixed-use development dates back to ancient civilizations like Greece, China, and India, where cities naturally integrated residential, commercial, and public spaces. In medieval India, caste- and occupation-based towns fostered self-sufficient, mixed-use neighborhoods. This continued until the Industrial Era introduced modern planning, promoting strict land-use separation through zoning laws. Rapid urbanization and socio-economic shifts in Indian metros revived interest in mixed-use models. Cities like Lucknow historically featured multifunctional hubs such as Hazratganj and Chowk surrounded by residential zones. Today, urban policies increasingly embrace mixed-use development for its sustainability, efficiency, and ability to create vibrant, walkable communities.

2.3 Typologies of mixed land use

The mixed land use typology can be of six types:

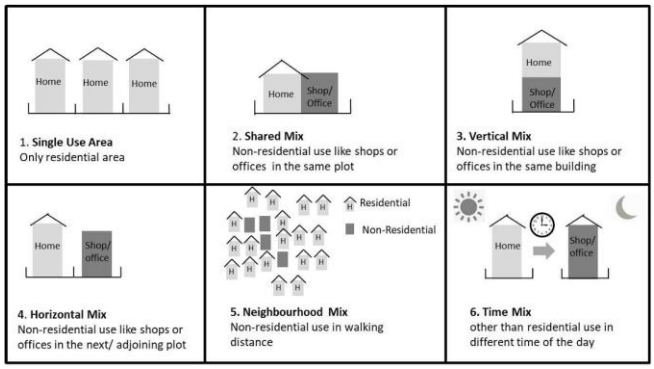

Fig -2: Typologies of mixed land use

- Single-Use Area – Purely residential, with no nearby non-residential uses; included for contrast.
- Shared-Mix – Residential and non-residential uses on the same property in separate buildings.
- Vertical-Mix – Different functions on separate floors of a single building.
- Horizontal-Mix – Adjacent plots with different land uses, creating diversity at a larger scale.
- Neighbourhood-Mix – Non-residential uses integrated within residential areas for walkable access.
- Time-Mix – Same space used for different functions at different times.

Types 2 (Shared-Mix) and 3 (Vertical-Mix) together form mixed-use plots, where different functions—one being residential—coexist within the same building or plot. These can vary based on the type of housing, nature of non-residential use, and the residential-to-commercial ratio. Factors like population density, built-up area, and plot size also influence the planning and functionality of such developments.

2.4 Applicability of the typology at geographical scales

The classifications at different geographical levels are detailed as follows:

		Urban Geographical Scale					
		Individual apartment	Building	Plot	Street/ Block	Neighbourhood	City
Mixed Land use Typology	Single-Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Shared-Mix	✓	✓	✓			
	Vertical-Mix		✓	✓			
	Horizontal-Mix			✓	✓		
	Neighbourhood-Mix					✓	✓
	Time-Mix	✓	✓	✓			

Fig -3: Typology at geographical scales

- At the individual apartment level, shared-mix occurs when a room is used for both living and work, like a painting studio. Time-mix refers to spaces serving different purposes at different times—e.g., crafting by day, sleeping by night.
- At the building level, vertical-mix includes retail on the ground floor and residences above. Shared-mix involves home-based businesses like tailoring or tutoring. Time-mix includes buildings repurposed temporarily, like schools used as shelters at night. Resident-only spaces (e.g., parking or clubhouses) are excluded.
- At the plot level, shared-mix is the coexistence of separate residential and commercial buildings. Vertical-mix involves mixed-use within structures. Horizontal-mix refers to adjacent but differently used plots. Time-mix follows building-level principles.
- At the street or block level, different mix types (shared, vertical, horizontal) may coexist. Time-mix is naturally embedded due to changing use patterns, so it's not treated separately.
- At the neighbourhood level, a neighbourhood may include both residential and non-residential uses. If services are within walking distance, it forms a neighbourhood-mix. The degree of mixing is more meaningful than a simple mixed/unmixed label.
- At the city level, a single mixed-use typology is ineffective. Instead, analyzing the spread and intensity of mixed-use across neighbourhoods is more useful for urban planning.

The shift to mixed land use in India is influenced by socio-economic changes, infrastructure, and policy. Understanding these drivers is crucial for sustainable urban development.

2.5 Factors Affecting Transition to Mixed Land Use in India

1. Urbanization & Population Growth
   - Rapid urban growth increases demand for compact land use.
   - Land scarcity in metros promotes space optimization via mixed-use.
2. Economic Shifts
   - Informal businesses thrive in shared residential-commercial spaces.
   - Mixed-use supports local economies and reduces long commutes.
3. Changing Demographics & Lifestyles
   - Young workforce prefers vibrant, walkable areas.
   - Dual-income families seek integrated living, work, and leisure spaces.
4. Policy & Governance
   - Smart Cities and TOD policies promote compact, mixed-use growth.
   - Revised Master Plans (e.g., Delhi 2021, Jaipur 2025) support mixed-use zoning.
   - Liberal zoning allows commercial uses in residential areas.
5. Historical & Organic Evolution
   - Cities like Varanasi and Lucknow grew with mixed-use cores.
   - Lack of strict zoning allowed natural transition to MLU.
6. Infrastructure Pressures
   - Urban sprawl raises commuting stress; MLU improves connectivity and reduces travel.
7. Regulatory Gaps
   - Weak enforcement enables unauthorized land-use mixing.
   - Inadequate planning leads to organic mixed-use development.
8. Technological & Cultural Trends
   - Rise of e-commerce and remote work promotes flexible land use.
   - Home-based businesses are culturally ingrained, encouraging natural MLU.

2.6 Mixed Land Use Policy in International Cities

1. Atlanta, USA
   - Zoning: Mostly segregated; 50% land for low-density single-family homes.
   - Mixed Use: Only 5.5% land zoned mixed-use near commercial areas; excludes industrial use.
2. Amsterdam, Netherlands
   - Scenario: Widespread mixed-use blending residential with non-basic sectors.
   - Challenges: Rising rents due to tourism and short-term rentals like Airbnb.
   - Response: Limits on hotel permits and booking to protect resident quality of life.
3. Berlin, Germany
   - Scenario: Many residential areas are mixed-use by design.
   - City Centers: Special zones where mixed-use is compulsory.

- Response: Local plans manage noise, require minimum residential space, and control rent inflation.

2.7 Mixed Land Use Policy in Indian Cities

1. **Ahmedabad**
   - **Zoning**: Relaxed; residential zones allow most non-industrial uses.
   - **Response**: No official mixed-use zones, but MLU common due to regulations tied to road widths.
2. **Pune**
   - **Zoning**: Based on road width, not dwelling types; detailed permitted uses.
   - **Response**: Non-residential uses often emerge informally, especially in central areas. Infrastructure remains unchanged, affecting quality of life.
3. **New Delhi**
   - **Traditional MLU**: Pre-existing vertical mixed-use in old city.
   - **Master Plan 2021**: Formal mixed-use allowed with road-width and colony type guidelines.
   - **Response**: Over 300 streets proposed as mixed-use; commercial conversion allowed with fees, but balancing interests is still a challenge.

2.8 Infrastructure and its Indicators

1. **Water**

Water infrastructure supports residential, industrial, and agricultural needs, sourced from groundwater, surface water, and rainwater harvesting. Urban population growth leads to shortages, uneven distribution, and contamination. Sustainable water use, conservation, and reuse are essential.

- Residential Demand: 135 litres/person/day
- Usage Breakdown (NBC 2016):
  - Bathing (55 L), Toilet flushing (30 L), Clothes washing (20 L), others (30 L)
  - 90% becomes wastewater
- Non-Residential Demand (NBC 2016):
  - Hotels: 180 L/p/d, Offices: 45 L/p/d, Schools: 45 L/p/d, Restaurants: 70 L/seat

2. **Electricity**

Electricity powers all sectors but faces strain due to urban growth and rising device use. Traditional sources dominate, though renewables are increasing. Grid overload, losses, and renewable integration remain challenges.

- Residential SEC: 1–3 kWh/m^2/month
- Commercial SEC: 5–16 kWh/m^2/month
- Insight: Commercial buildings use ~3× more energy than residential ones

3. **Solid Waste**

Waste generation is linked to population and consumption trends. Major issues include poor segregation, inadequate collection, and overloaded landfills. Key solutions include waste-to-energy, composting, recycling, and public awareness.

- Types of Waste:
  - Residential, Commercial, Biomedical, Construction & Demolition, Hazardous
- Per Capita Waste Generation: 0.20–0.60 kg/day in major cities

2.9 Relationship Between Mixed Land Use and Physical Infrastructure

Mixed-use development combines residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational functions within a shared urban space. While it promotes walkability, reduces travel time, and fosters dynamic, vibrant communities, it also places considerable stress on physical infrastructure. The integration of multiple land uses leads to higher and more varied water demand, as both residential and commercial users rely on the same supply systems. Electricity infrastructure is similarly affected, with fluctuating loads throughout the day challenging grid stability. Mixed-use zones generate diverse types of waste, making collection, segregation, and disposal more complex. Additionally, infrastructure operates almost continuously—commercial activity during the day and residential needs at night leave little room for maintenance. Transport systems face congestion due to overlapping peak periods and often lack adequate parking. Compounding these issues is the absence of clear infrastructure benchmarks in planning processes, leading to mismatches between supply and demand. Addressing these challenges requires integrated infrastructure planning tailored to the unique demands of mixed-use environments.

2.10 Parameters for Assessing Infrastructure Pressure in Mixed-Use Areas

These parameters are tailored to evaluate the pressure on infrastructure and guide interventions for sustainable mixed-use development.

Type	Parameter	Description
Water	Water Demand & Supply	Compare existing demand with supply to identify deficits
	Continuity of Supply	Assess frequency and duration of water availability
	Water Quality	Evaluate water quality against national standards
	Rainwater Harvesting	% of buildings equipped with rainwater harvesting systems

Electricity	Power Outage Frequency	Measure the number and duration of power outages
	Energy Consumption Trends	Track average monthly or annual electricity usage
	Voltage Stability	Record frequency/severity of voltage fluctuations
	Use of Solar Panels	% of buildings using solar or other renewable energy sources
Solid Waste	Daily Waste Generation	Per capita daily waste produced
	Waste Composition	Categorize waste (organic, plastic, metal, etc.)
	Collection Coverage	Proportion of area covered by waste collection services
	Frequency of Collection	Frequency and % of total waste collected on a regular basis

3. LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

The literature review comprehensively examines existing studies related to mixed land use (MLU), with a focus on infrastructure implications, policy frameworks, and urban development patterns in both Indian and international contexts. Key findings from notable research indicate that while MLU promotes economic activity, walkability, and urban vibrancy, it also brings challenges like increased strain on physical infrastructure—particularly water, electricity, and solid waste systems.

Studies like Bindal & Talwar (2021) and Mahajan (2018) explored the environmental and infrastructural impacts of MLU in Delhi, highlighting issues such as pollution, traffic, and the privatization of public space. These works emphasized the need for need-based infrastructure planning and better regulatory mechanisms.

Research from Pune (Joharapurkar & Anagal, 2022) offered user-centric insights, showing how residents, shopkeepers, and visitors perceive MLU's convenience but also its downsides like noise and lack of parking. Ghosh & Raval (2020) categorized various typologies of MLU and evaluated their applicability across geographic scales, pointing to a gap in integrating unplanned developments into formal regulations.

International perspectives—drawn from cities like Amsterdam, Atlanta, and Berlin—demonstrate that effective MLU requires balancing flexibility with regulatory control. For instance, Amsterdam's compact mixed-use approach faces challenges from tourism, while Berlin focuses on maintaining a balance through zoning standards.

In sum, the literature emphasizes that successful implementation of MLU requires:

- Community participation,
- Adaptive zoning laws,
- Context-specific infrastructure planning,
- Integration of unregulated transitions into official policy.

The review reveals that while MLU is a globally embraced planning model, Indian cities face unique implementation challenges due to informal development patterns, weak enforcement, and infrastructure stress—thereby necessitating a holistic, location-sensitive planning framework.

4.CITY OVERVIEW

4.1 Case of Lucknow

Urban Profile:

Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, is a historically significant city with a growing urban population. It lies along the Gomti River, with higher population density in the south and newer residential expansion in the north. The city has experienced substantial spatial and demographic growth over the past decades.

Growth Trends as per the Master Plans:

- 1991: 159.26 sq.km. area | Population: ~16.2 lakh
- 2021: 414.34 sq.km. area | Population: ~44.4 lakh
- 2031 (Projected): 1035.74 sq.km. area | Population: ~65 lakh

This represents a growth of 550% in area and over 300% in population between 1991 and the 2031 projection.

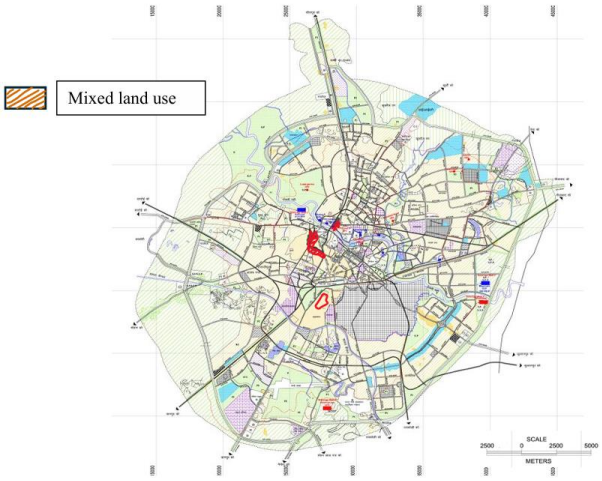

Fig -3: Master Plan 2021 of Lucknow

Mixed Land Use Trends:

The evolution of mixed land use (MLU) in Lucknow highlights a dramatic expansion:

- 2001: 47 hectares (0.2% of land)
- 2021: 110 hectares (0.27%)
- 2031 (Projected): 1,090 hectares (1.05%)

This reflects a nearly 891% increase in mixed-use land from 2021 to 2031, indicating the rising importance of multifunctional land use in the city's planning framework. Additionally, 30% of road networks have adjacent mixed-use zones, indicating high spatial integration.

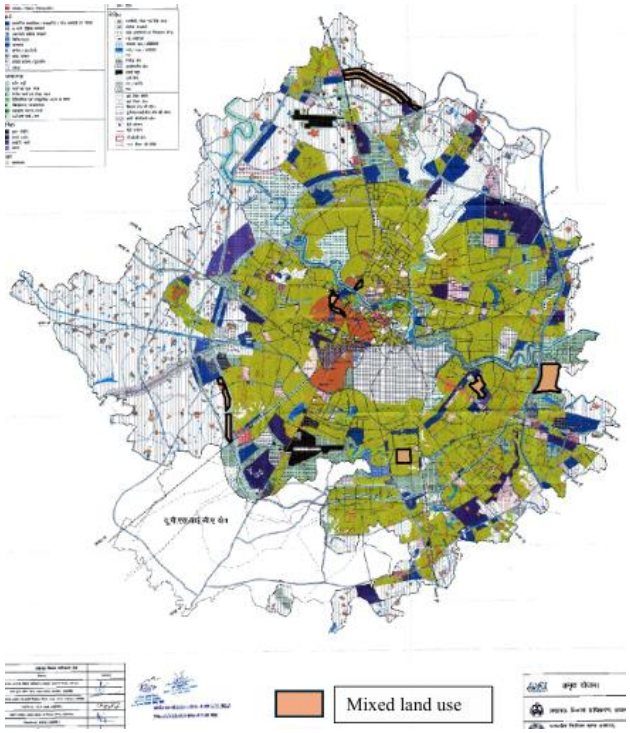

Fig -4: Master Plan 2031 of Lucknow

Housing Distribution by Use:
According to the 2011 Census and City Development Plan (CDP) 2040:

- 81% of properties are residential
- 19% fall under commercial, industrial, and institutional use

Gaps and Observations:
The Lucknow Master Plan 2021 acknowledges mixed-use development but lacks detailed guidelines on permissible activities in residential zones, especially regarding conditions like road width and built area. This regulatory ambiguity may lead to inconsistent implementation and unplanned growth.

4.2 Case of Jaipur

Urban Profile:
Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan and India's first planned city, is known for its structured growth and architectural heritage. It serves as a hub for the state's socio-economic and political activities. The city has experienced rapid urban expansion with a projected annual population growth of 5.3%.
Growth Trends

- 1991: 102.26 sq.km. | Population: ~15.18 lakh
- 2011: 308.3 sq.km. | Population: ~36.02 lakh
- 2025 (Projected): 945.34 sq.km. | Population: ~64.95 lakh

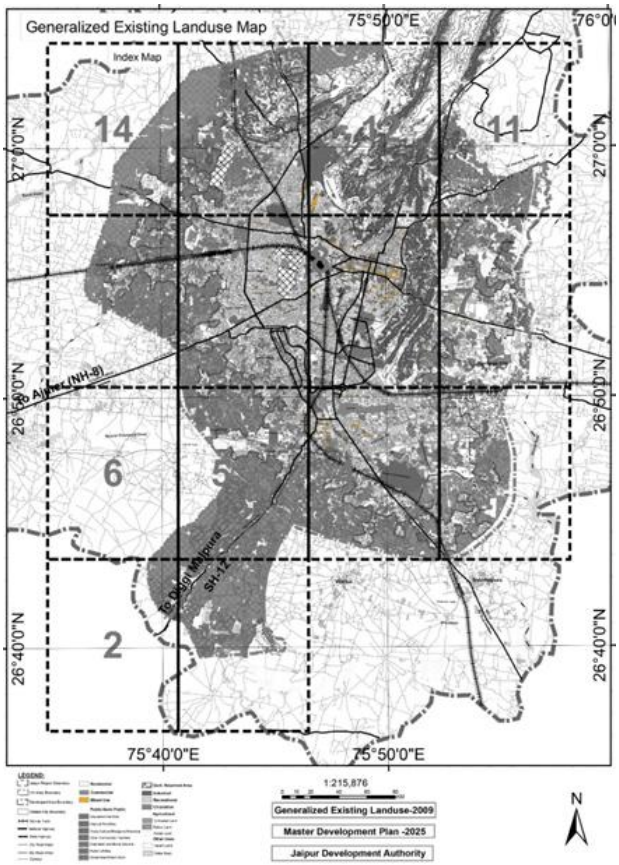

Fig -5: Existing Plan 2009, Jaipur

This represents nearly a 9-fold increase in area from 1971 to 2025 and over 4-fold population growth since 1991.
Mixed Land Use Trends:

- 2009: 1,978 hectares (7.05% of total area)
- 2011 (Proposed): 1,034 hectares (3.35%)
- 2025 (Proposed): 2,958 hectares (3.13% of total area)

Approximately 7% of proposed mixed-use areas lie adjacent to road networks, showing planned integration with transport corridors.

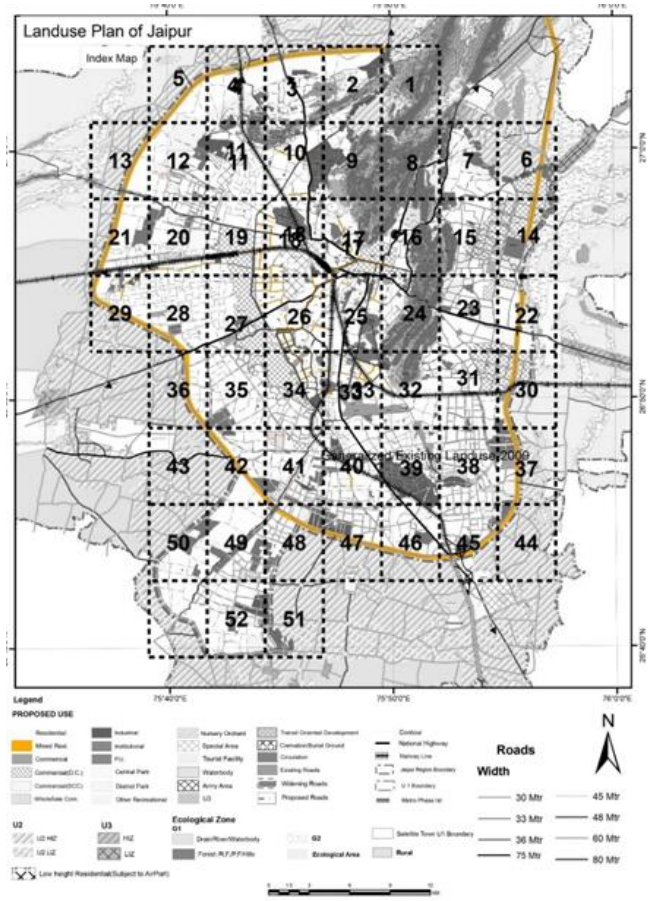

Fig -6: Master Plan 2025, Jaipur

Policy Framework:
As per the Jaipur Master Development Plan (MDP) 2025:

- Only one mixed-use activity is allowed per residential plot (e.g., shop or professional service).
- Mixed-use developments require building permissions and annual permit renewals.
- Commercial uses must comply with road width standards, FAR (Floor Area Ratio), and height restrictions.
- Activities involving hazardous or polluting processes are strictly prohibited.

Key Observations:
Although mixed-use development is recognized in planning documents, the focus is on controlled, formal implementation through building codes and zoning regulations. However, informal mixed-use growth patterns also persist due to rapid urbanization.

4.3 Comparative Analysis of Mixed-Use Development in Lucknow and Jaipur

Both Lucknow and Jaipur exhibit distinct patterns of mixed-use development (MUD), shaped by different growth trajectories and planning frameworks.

- Urban Expansion: Lucknow's area increased from 159.26 sq.km. (1991) to 1,035.74 sq.km. (2031), while Jaipur expanded from 40.46 sq.km. (1971) to 945.34 sq.km. (2025).
- Mixed-Use Growth: Jaipur had 7.05% of its land under mixed use by 2009, compared to Lucknow's projected 1.05% by 2031, reflecting Jaipur's earlier integration of MUD principles.
- Infrastructure Pressure: In Lucknow, 30% of road networks are adjacent to mixed-use areas, leading to greater strain, while Jaipur reports 7%, indicating relatively lower but growing impact.
- Planning Gaps: Both cities show a disparity between proposed and actual MUD implementation, emphasizing the need for adaptive policies and infrastructure planning.

Key Insight: While Jaipur reflects earlier and broader adoption of mixed-use zoning, Lucknow is undergoing more rapid transformation, necessitating stronger regulatory and infrastructure responses.

5.CONCLUSION

The transition to mixed land use (MLU) in metropolitan cities presents a dual reality—while it enhances urban vibrancy, economic activity, and land-use efficiency, it also intensifies pressure on infrastructure systems. This study, focusing on Lucknow and Jaipur, reveals a critical gap between planned frameworks and organically evolving urban forms, highlighting the urgent need for responsive and sustainable planning.

Unregulated MLU leads to congestion, pollution, and infrastructure inefficiencies, exacerbated by weak enforcement mechanisms. The comparative analysis emphasizes the importance of integrating flexible zoning, improving service capacities, and adopting adaptive, location-specific policies.

To address these challenges, the study recommends:

- Integrated Planning: Develop comprehensive, city-specific frameworks to align infrastructure with evolving land-use patterns.
- Sustainable Solutions: Promote water conservation, waste management efficiency, and renewable energy integration.
- Adaptive Governance: Implement flexible zoning and regularly assess infrastructure performance to respond to dynamic urban demands.
- Future Research: Encourage mapping, field surveys, and stakeholder engagement to bridge knowledge gaps and guide effective interventions.
- Holistic Development: Balance the functional benefits of MLU with infrastructure resilience and community well-being for sustainable urban futures.

By adopting this multi-dimensional approach, Indian metropolitan cities can better manage the shift toward mixed-use development while ensuring livability and long-term urban sustainability.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Bhupendra Dev Singh is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the Faculty of Architecture, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Ansal Technical Campus, affiliated with the same university, completed in 2020.

Pl. Arundhatee Mishra is an urban planner and academician, currently Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture & Planning, Lucknow. She earned her Master's in Planning from SPA New Delhi and is a member of the Institute of Town Planners, India.

Ar. Vaibhav Kulshrestha is an architect, urban planner, and academician currently Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Planning, AKTU, Lucknow. He holds a Master's in Urban and Rural Planning from IIT Roorkee and is a member of the Institute of Town Planners, India.