Article:	**Revitalization of the Urban Space from Grey to Green in Lahore, Pakistan**	Journal QR Code

Author(s):	Saad Mujahid[1], Naeema Saeed[2]
Affiliation:	[1]University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan [2]Al-Barayak-Turkey, Lahore Office

Citation:	Mujahid, S., & Saeed, N. (2021). Revitalization of the urban space from grey to green in Lahore, Pakistan. *Journal of Art, Architecture and Built Environment, 4*(1), 110–132. Crossref

Article QR Code

Indexing

Revitalization of Urban Space from Grey to Green in Lahore, Pakistan

Saad Mujahid[1*] and Naeema Saeed[2]

[1]University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan
[2]Al-Barayak-Turkey, Lahore Office, Pakistan

Abstract

Lahore is a metropolitan city renowned for its historical background. It is also known as the 'City of Gardens'. In today's world, the progression towards the construction of concrete structures and junk spaces is occurring at a rapid pace. The persona of the city is changing in order to accommodate the booming population. Ecological imbalance is resulting into the disappearance of the fauna from the city. The current study was carried out to provide the inhabitants with various opportunities in the form of lively public spaces that are being lost with the passage of time. The site selected for the project was diligently marked by considering some important aspects including an easy approach and a place that provides a rich amalgam of history, culture, traditional cuisine and education to maximize the interaction of people belonging to different professions. It was designed in a fashion that kept intact the Mughal roots of the city by adding a water feature interwoven with the modern world by carefully planning the vegetation, thus making the selection vibrant and colorful in order to make a concoction of the Mughal and contemporary art. The purpose of the fusion was to attract the inhabitants by building a characteristically distinct place that remains non-identical to the already existing public spaces, as well as to revive the lost culture which is fading away due to excessive construction and environmental pollution.

***Keywords*:** public spaces, revitalization, urban, urban spaces

Introduction

Urbanization is defined as a population shift from rural to urban areas for basic necessities of life. Globally the term urbanization developed after Industrial Revolution that took place in 18th and 19th century. Due to this, a significant transmutation was observed and the agrarian/rural areas were converted into urban and industrial ones. Population shift occurred characterized by massive migration into the cities and strong growth of the urbanization process. The cities kept swelling with migrants of rural areas and becoming larger until today, around 54 percent of population on average lives in urban areas with a prognosis to have massive changes to spatial distribution and to the size of global population. It is

---

*Corresponding Author: saad.mujahid@umt.edu.pk

expected that 2.5 billion people will be added to the urban population by 2050, with an increase of 90 percent concentration in Asia and Africa. In addition to that, world's urban population is expected to reach 66 percent by 2050.

Historically the process of urbanization has been linked with other significant transformations of economy and social behaviour. These transformations have brought lower fertility, geographic adaptability and mobility, population ageing and increased life expectancy. Urban living promises to provide the inhabitants with greater access to social services, higher literacy rates, better educational setup, and improved health services, enhanced opportunities for political and cultural participation. They act as an important driver of poverty reduction and development in both rural and urban areas as they centralize the national economic activity, transportation and commerce, government, provides pivotal links with rural areas, between cities and across international borders (United Nations, 2008).

Nonetheless, unplanned and expeditious urban growth poses threat to sustainable development. In order to accommodate a large population and necessary infrastructure, policies need to be made. In today's world, despite the relative advantages of cities, majority of world's urban poor live in sub-standard conditions. Some cities have become a victim of pollution, rapid sprawl and environmental degradation due to urban expansions, unsustainable production and consumption patterns. The integral connection to three pillars of sustainable development in urbanization is: social development, economic development and environmental protection. Strong growth of urban development, often unplanned, was observed in 20th century. The fact gave birth to various problems on the subject of urban structure related to intricacies due to territorial cohesion. Some of the problems observed are:

- The lack of social and physical connectivity in the urban structures (shopping malls, and plazas);
- Marginalization problem and social exclusion;
- The loss of identity
- Economic disparity (Un-Habitat, 2019).

Ideal cities are defined as a place where adults look out for others children, people pause to greet strangers and help them in their needs. Changes were accelerated in the mid-to late- 20th century due to political and economic shift, the way cities manage and provide public spaces to inhabitants, these changes resulted in making cities lose their ability to maintain social integrity. Erection of shopping malls, roads elevation, destruction of open markets for buildings, construction of exclusive luxury apartments have threatened the cities. Public spaces in the form of

parks and squares, gardens and plazas can only be found in the city centers, those people who live beyond the fringes have either few or no recreational spaces (March & Martin, 1972).

Literature Review

Cities can be formed into imaginable landscapes, coherent, rational, clear and visible. One of the fundamental functions of a city is to fulfill the hopes of inhabitants and provide them the pleasure they want, this is a focal point that can accentuate the sense of community. Above all environment plays an important role if it is sharply identified and visibly organized. They make the city true, distinctive and astounding place.

Lynch mentioned few of such cities in his book 'Image of City' (1960). Florence is a city with a powerful character which has profound hold on the fondness of numerous individuals. Albeit numerous foreigners will at first respond to it as chilly or forbidding, yet they can't deny its extraordinary power. To live in this environment, whatever the monetary or social issues experienced, appears to add an additional profundity to encounter, whether of joy or of despairing or of belonging.

Cities are made out of numerous sorts of space, including what exists between the assembled environment, wedges of space characterized by the base of transportation, correspondence, industry and improvement (Banerjee & Baer, 2013). This includes what Jacobs describes as the border vacuums, what Trancik calls urban anti-space. This is the odd space left over where highway crosses, where a dynamic waterfront goes unused, where a stretch of area fringes a grounds or substantial complex, where railroad tracks have been surrendered, where a building has smouldered and the part has gone. This may even be what Koolhaas calls garbage space, after the death: vacant shopping focuses, outdated auto showrooms, surrendered huge box stores or fast food eateries, and their nearby parking areas. While individuals can and do regularly utilize this lingering space for a large number of purposes, these are not considered to be an open space. When we consider urban open space, they are all the more frequently identified to be stops, squares and shopping centers. A large number of these modified spaces have been made to be utilized for various purposes.

Frequently, the general population workmanship that we see has been authorized for these spaces, in some cases as landmarks, once in a while not to be touched, some of it not at all interactive. Mike Davis talked about the negative parts of this kind of space: 'The general result of the campaign to secure the city is the

obliteration of any genuinely major urban space'. Much of what we consider as open space is truly corporate space, and does not invite people generally. The exercises that can happen there are entirely controlled. Davis goes ahead to portray a recreation centre made in Skid Row in Los Angeles: "to guarantee that the recreation centre couldn't be utilized for overnight outdoors, overhead sprinklers were modified to soak the clueless sleepers at arbitrary times amid the night." The inquiry emerges: who is the open space truly for? In a few downtowns it might be for buyers, or for individuals who look for specific purposes (Chen et al., 1998)

Public places are made to attract the public and give them aplace for entertainment or relaxation by adding multiple factors. China has designed an interesting public place Chengdu Kaun Alley consisting of three ancient city alleys running parallel toone another with forty five (45) courtyards (Figure-01). The alleys include 'WideAlley (Kuan Xiangzi)', 'Narrow Alley (Zhai Xiangzi)' and "Well Alley (Jing Xiangzi).'The historical and cultural mix to Chengdu is given by Narrow and Wide Alley. Deci Temple reserve and Wenshuastery add to the historical significance of the place. It is a microcosm of the city's history and has a deep imprint on people's memory. In the current project, architecture of Mughals, British and Sikhs is considered to be an epitome of Lahore's history, its impact on the city is significant. A similar idea was taken and site was analyzed for the project to link the public place with the history of the city (Madanipour, 1997).

Figure 1

Wide and Narrow Alleys, Chendu

The idea of High Line New York project is riveting as it started off with a purpose to refurbish or align New York City's past (Figure: 02). Friends of the Highline in collaboration with the New York City Department of Park and Recreation programmed, maintained and operated this place.

Each section of the out-of-use railroad trestle was converted into Public Park demanding two years of construction per section, with careful planning of the place,

work of city's most creative designers and community input. The planting of the High Line was inspired by self-seeded landscape that grew on the elevated rail tracks which were not in use for past 25 years. The hardiness, variation, texture and sustainability to the landscape was provided by planting perennial species, shrubs, grasses and trees with a special focus on the natives. Many species were chosen that were originally grown on the rail and were incorporated in the park's landscape.

Current work was planned with a similar idea, the place had an outstanding location and potential to attract people belonging from multiple professions but it was utilized to dump waste or parking. It was designed to attain maximum benefit which the site promises to give. Renovating an old space and planting native species for landscapes was also considered (David, Joshua & Hammond, 2011).

Figure 2

Picture Showing Highline New York

Old Delhi is famous for its oldest and the biggest market 'Chandni Chowk' just the same way as 'Anarkali' is famous in Lahore for the same attributes (Figure-03). Market has many attractions for the tourists and public. It includes in its premises Red Fort monument, 9-10 historic mansions, 7-8 religious buildings, renowned shops and 10-12 ancient restaurants. The market has an historic significance as it was made by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in 17th century and designed by his daughter Jahan Ara. In past, the market was beautified by the water feature, dividing the market by canals (now closed) to reflect moonlight at night.

The site for current work was selected to link the planned public place with Anarkali market, an attraction for inhabitants and tourists and a traditional hub. (Singh, 2006).

Figure 3

Chandni Chowk, India

Methodology

A questionnaire based survey was used. The research was also interested to identify whether the public wanted more gardens or public places. The results gave an overturn to the project people were more interested in public spaces. The results further showed what other elements they would like to have in the public spaces. Majority people tend to go and visit public spaces in their free time primarily for a refreshing ambiance, food and shopping. The frequency of recreational trips differs in case of family and friends.

In addition to that people's response towards a question stating why cities are losing social integrity was because of busy schedule and inability of cities to provide a space with healthy environment. They want a place providing interesting medley of flavors (Glover, 2008).The questionnaire has been attached for a detailed review of the questions asked.

Site of the Project

Lahore is the selected city for current work. It acts as a cultural hub and functions as a fulcrum for tycoons of Pakistan (Ahmed, 1982). People for different places migrate to Lahore for amenities and upgrade their quality of life. Present work was carried out to provide the inhabitants a place to socialize, coordinates of the selected sites/site are/is:

Location was selected by considering the following factors:

Easy approach and accessibility: Accessibility of a place is judged by the connections and networks of its surroundings. Edges of the location are important, it is ideal to have a parking space nearby for a convenient public transit. In order to make the project successful site was chosen by keeping all the conditions in view.

Proximity to services and other businesses: Customer traffic of a place is determined by the proximate businesses in the area. These can have a synergistic effect on the project site. There are chances that those businesses and employees could become the customers.

Comfort, history and image of the site: It is important to keep in mind that the location clearly reflects the image of project one intends to work on. The evolution of place with time and failures of previous businesses (if any) would make the project difficult. The other aspects to work on are: the comfort, image, safety, availability of suitable places and cleanliness.

Affordable platform providing activities to people: In order to socialize activities act as a basic building block of a place. They help people to break their comfort zone and engage with others, making a group and pulling them out of their insecurities. People would love to visit and revisit the place if they will have something to do within their budget.

Employment opportunity: One objective of the project is to provide the people with employment opportunity and this can only be possible if the job market is favorable for the common man.

Culture: If a project needs a cultural simulation, a location with lots of cultural offerings is required.

Food options: One of the greatest fascinations of the people is to enjoy scrumptious meals or to munch on something while enjoying the other activities. The connection with food courts and food market is important while looking for an ideal location.

Site Description/Analysis:

The site selected for the project has a potential to provide all the necessary aspects needed for the public space (Figure: 01). It has a sublime taste of history, a facile network and connections for accessibility could provide space for people of all ages and acts as a pivot for shopping/food.

Figure 4

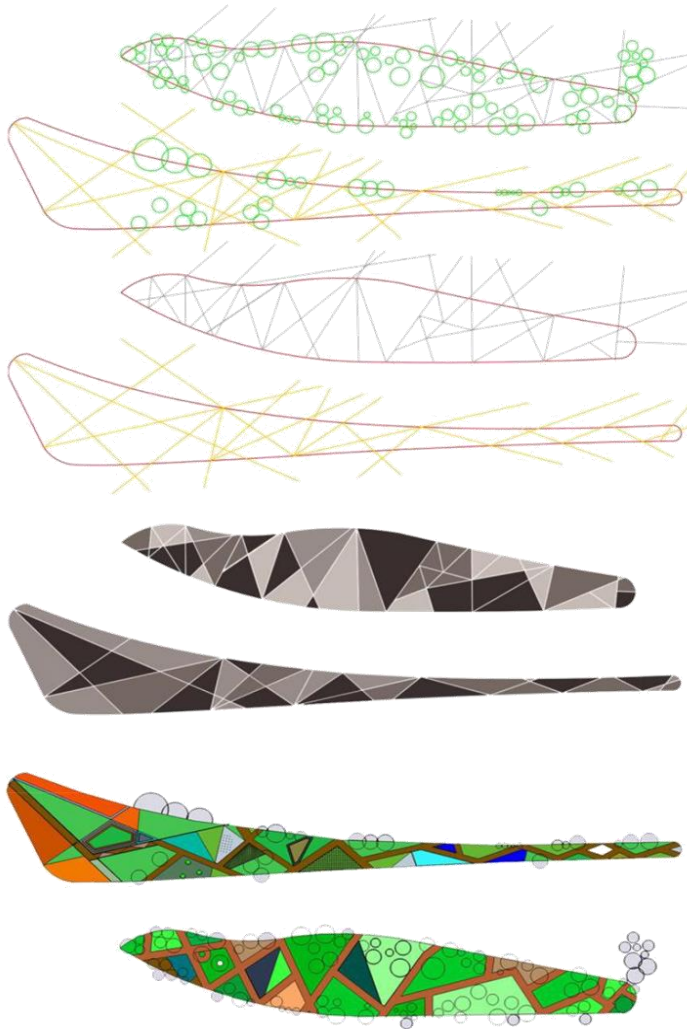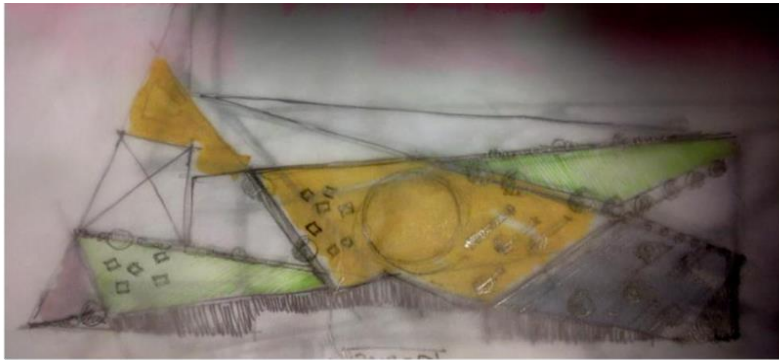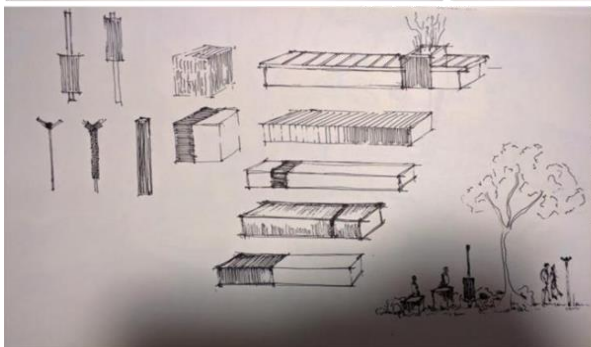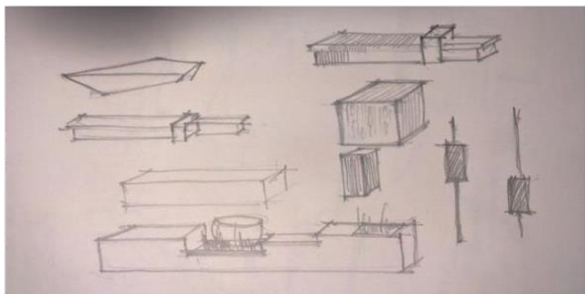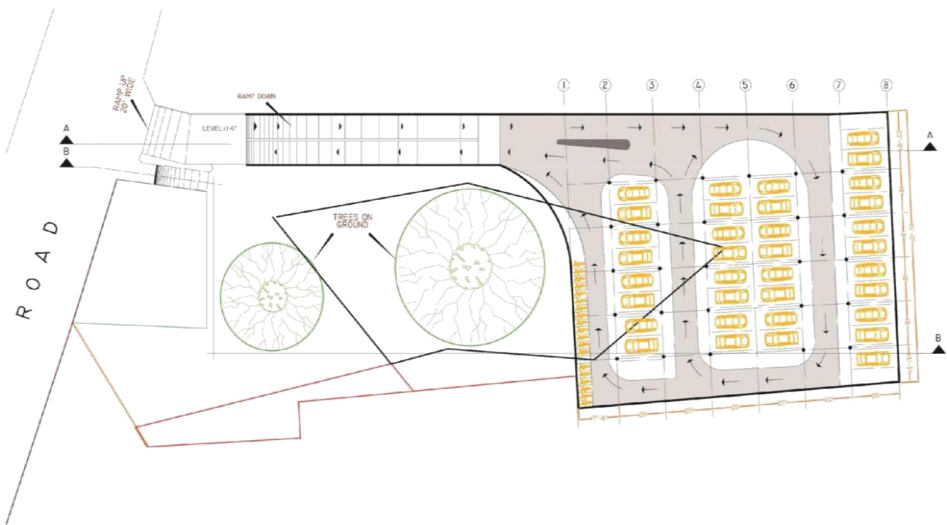*Design Process for Sketching the Design of the Selected Site*
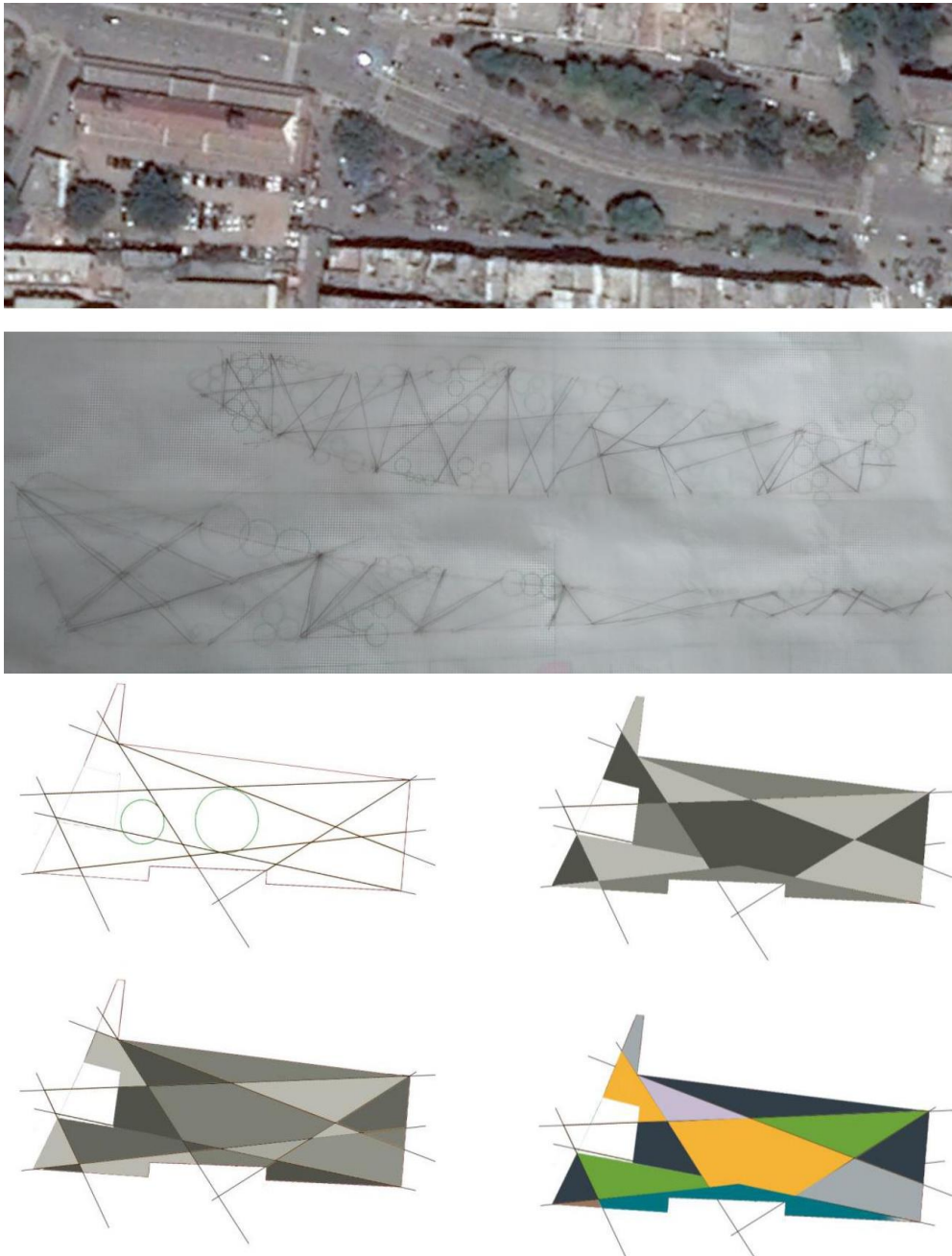
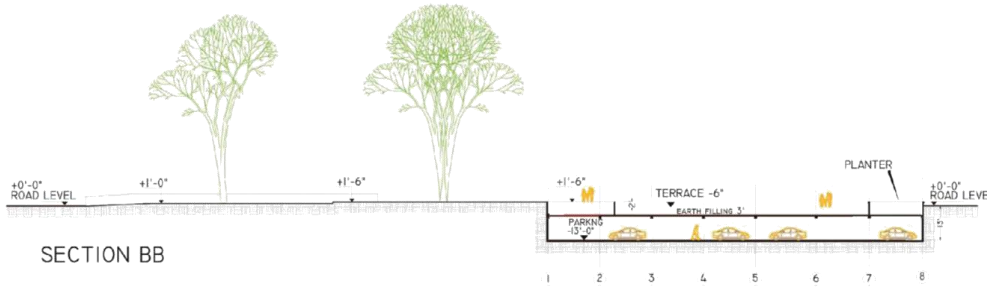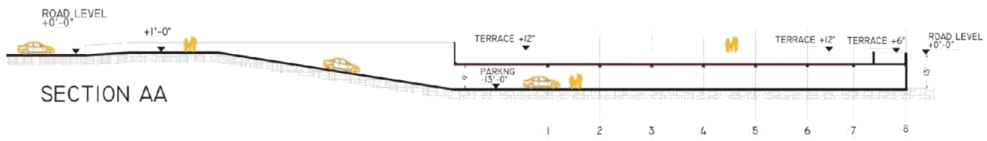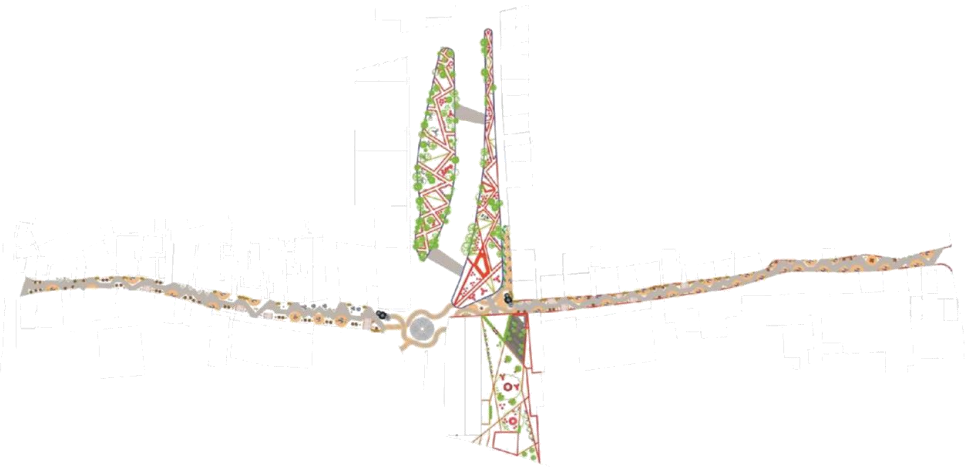**Figure 5**

Sketch Developments and Technical Drawings

Scale: 1/40" = 1'
GROUND FLOOR PLAN
Site: Tollinton Market, Lahore, Pakistan
Grey to Green: Revitalizing Urban
Junk Space in Lahore

Scale: 1/40" = 1'
BASEMENT PARKING PLAN
Site: Tollinton Market, Lahore, Pakistan
Grey to Green: Revitalizing Urban
Junk Space in Lahore

SECTION AA

SECTION BB

Scale: 1/32" = 1'
PLAN
Site: Tollinton Market, Lahore, Pakistan
Grey to Green: Revitalizing Urban
Junk Space in Lahore

Scale: 1/192" = 1'
PLAN
Site: Tollinton Market, Lahore, Pakistan
Grey to Green: Revitalizing Urban
Junk Space in Lahore

Figure 6

Renders and Views

Figure 7

Top View

Figure 8

Entrance from Tollinton Market

Figure 9

Entrance from the Side of Mosque
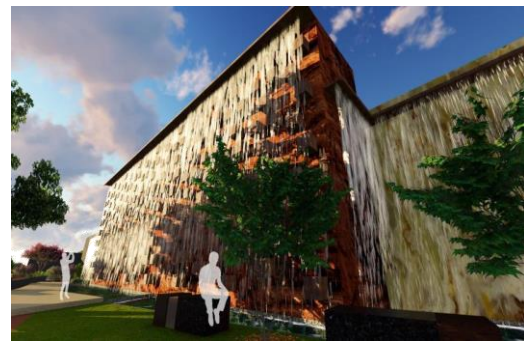
Figure 10

Water Feature

Figure 11

A View with Existing Trees

Figure 12

Another View from Private Sitting

Figure 13

Existing Trees with Benches

Figure 14

Axonometric View

Figure 15

Sitting Area View and Different Dimensions of the Project
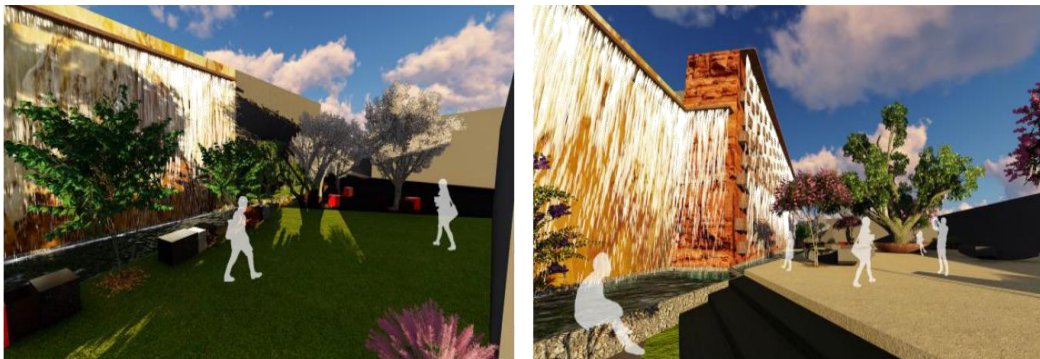
Results and Discussion

The project is planned to refurbish a place in the heart of the city to provide copious opportunities to the people, to bring them together to a common platform in such a way that their insecurities get subdued and an idyllic setting can be made for their efficacious communication. Successes of cities do not lie in the prodigious and stupendous buildings present in them but in the public spaces provided to them (Corbusier & Eardley, 1973).

The idea of my proposal is of an architectural intervention in urban space as an impetus for change. The objective is the designing of a building and environment that could be utilized for any mix of reasons, be utilized by all individuals and planned so that the architecture and art becomes interactive, and could be changed by the clients of the space. The project makes utilization of urban space that would somehow remain to a great extent out of reach. The project investigated how the space could be intended to give a feeling of responsibility to the group, and how it could be intended to reunify territories of the city that have been disjoined by urban renewal (Ryan,et al., 2006).

The site I have chosen for the project is an open space in Lahore. It has the potential to connect people belonging to different professions, neighbored, different educational institutes, green space, historical monuments, architecturally significant buildings, largest and oldest market and food courts. The idea of walk able cities on a smaller scale was introduced; a birth place of many renowned philosophers of Pakistan Pak Tea House is present in the neighborhood of the selected site (Nath, 1986). It initiated a learning process, pupils learned from their ancestors and the cycle continued for a short span, while developing the concept of current project, importance of Pak Tea House was kept in mind to revive the learning cycle by reviving this place.

Design Process

Studying for 5 years in that area, I realized few things specific to the site there was no interaction between the universities, there societies (drama, mime, eastern and western bands, speeches and others), the two architectural colleges were disconnected; destroying the no public space where all of these things could be brought on a single platform as said by Jane Jacobs in The Death and Life of Great American Cities "You can't rely on bringing people downtown, you have to put them there."

So, I decided not to design only what I think should be there, but to involve the community too, because they are the users, they have insecurities which need to be addressed, a lost culture should be revived. For this purpose a questionnaire was designed, a lot of people gave suggestions and opinions about the project. These included ideas from having a food court to reviving the Pak Tea House all of which would stimulate the society and the inhabitants of that area intellectually. Lines were drawn in all of three sites, to make a visual axis from outside of the boundaries, while considering the point of access and trees, making it a visual frame. Basic idea

was to invite people and make them interested, as Jane Jacobs said in The Life and Death of Great American Cities "You can't rely on bringing people downtown, you have to put them there." So, a public place should be something which offers different activities. As people want to see something different from what is already there (Perren, & Mlecek, 2015).

So after marking the axis, another layer of program was interwoven with the suggestion of the community already using the area. During the duration of the program, a water body was also added, with a fountain purposefully, as the temperature of Lahore is usually quite high; it added the traditional Mughal touch as they used to have a water bodies in their courtyards to cool down a hot temperature in the environment. Another reason of Mughals putting down the fountain was to symbolize the Islamic architecture; they took the concept of gardens from Quran (Holy Book), and attributed the water feature with the explanation of rivers of milk from it. After the functional layer, another layer of materials was added.

Keeping in view the questionnaire and the law restrictions, a space was designed which functions as a food court, some space was chunk left for private and social gatherings. Trees are planted accordingly to provide the shade as well and act as an atmosphere changer.

Plants and Material Selection:

Materials

Following materials was selected for the site:

- ➢ Local marble
- ➢ Onynx
- ➢ Ziarat white
- ➢ Galaxy black
- ➢ Wood: Kikar, Sharol, Shisham
- ➢ Concrete (color: shades of red, dark/light grey, black)
- ➢ Rusted plates
- ➢ Fibre glass
- ➢ Glossy deco wood with varnish

No.	Name/Season	Common Name/Height	Image	No.	Name/Season	Common Name/Height	Image
9.	Casa javanica/ Flowering Season: May-June	Java Shower/ 12-15m		10.	Castanospermum Austral/ Season: Mar-May	NA/20m	
11.	Chorisia insignis/ Flowering Season: Oct-Nov	Budha Tree/ 12-15m		12.	Cinnammomum Camphora/ Flowering Season: April-June	Camphor or Kafoor/ 10-15m	
13.	Cupressus Sempervirens/ Flowering Season: Foliage beauty	Saroo or Cypress/ 18m		14.	Ficus benghalensis/ Flowering Season: April & Oct-Nov	Bohr/ 20-30m	
15.	Ficus Benjamina/ Flowering Season: Foliage Beauty	Kali Ficus or Kubra/ 12-15m		16.	Jacaranda Mimosifolia/ Flowering Season: March-April, Sept-Oct	Gul-e-neelam/ 10m	
17.	Kigelia pinnata/ Flowering Season: June-July	Sausage Tree or Gul-e-fanoos/ 15-20m		18.	Plumeria Obtuse/ Flowering Season: Around the year	Gul-e-sheen or Gul-e-fanoos/ 4-6m	
19.	Sophora secundiflora / Flowering Season: Mar-May	Shamma/ 5-8m		20.	Acacia retinodes/ Flowering Season: All year	Rukh-e-Zard/ 10-12m	
21.	Bauhinia alba/ Flowering Season: Mar-April	Sufaid Kachnar/ 8-10m		22.	Bauhinia variegate/ Flowering Season: Sept-Dec	Kachnar/ 8-12m	
23.	Cassia fistula/ Flowering Season: May-June	Amaltas/ 12-15m		24.	Chorisia Speciose/ Flowering Season: Oct-Nov	Budha/ 12-15m	
25.	Parkinsonia Aculeate/ Flowering Season: Mar-April, Sept-Oct	Parkinsonia/ 7-10m					

Ficusreligiosa

It is commonly known as Peepal and developed by forte plant nurseries for its use as an ornamental tree, in greenhouses and parks in tropical and subtropical atmospheres. They are local to India and strive in hot and humid climate. They prefer full daylight and can develop in most soil sorts, however loam is preferable. Whenever planting soil with a pH of 7 or underneath should be used. While it is feasible for the plant to grow indoors in a pot, it grows best outdoors and requires full daylight and proper watering.

*Ficusreligiosa*isis utilized as a part of traditional medicine for around 50 different ailments including asthma, diarrhea, diabetes, epilepsy, gastric issues and sexual disorders.

This specie has various environmental benefits, the leaf has a broad surface area, an increased area provides dust and gas molecules to settle. Peepal plant is endangered getting in the area due to its use of other species this imbalance has resulted in enhancing the environmental problems. In the current study this specie was used to show how an endangered plant can be utilized.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The site taken under consideration has been changed entirely from to a rejuvenating and exhilarating environment.

Figure 6

The site (original and after designing) (a) The original site before design (b) Ariel view after design (c) 3D view after design

Public places are needed in the cities to provide people a recreational outlet. In addition these places can be utilized to tackle the environmental problems as well. Plants suitable for the environment were chosen.

Traditions and cultures of a city are crucial Lahore's unique culture should be revived and preserved. The spaces available in the city are usually parking spaces and areas not designated for public outings. The concept of amalgamation of public space with other important threads of cities (depending on their specialties) should be introduced. This not only improves the persona of thecity but also give space to people to socialize. Environmental problems are increasing in today's world so while working on a project this should be kept in view.

References

Ahmed, Z. (1982). *Lahore and the Punjab*.Sang-e-Meel Publications.

Banerjee, T., & Baer, W. C. (2013). *Beyond the neighborhood unit: Residential environments and public policy*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Chen, N., Valente, P., &Zlotnik, H. (1998). *What do we know about recent trends in urbanization? Migration, urbanization, and development: New directions and issues*. 59-88. New York: United Nations Population Fund.

Corbusier, L., &Eardley, A. (1973). *The Athens Charter*.Grossman Publishers.

David, J., & Hammond, R. (2011). *High Line: The inside story of New York City's park in the sky*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Davison, G. M., & Reed, B. E. (1998). *Culture and customs of Taiwan*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Glover, W. J. (2008). *Making Lahore Modern: Constructing and imagining a colonial city*. Minnesota Press.

Habitat, U. N. (2013). *State of the world's cities 2012/2013: Prosperity of cities*. Routledge.

Lynch, K. (1960). *The Image of the City*. Cambridge Massachusetts.

Madanipour, A. (1997). Ambiguities of urban design. *The Town Plannin Review*,*68*(3). 363-383.

March, L., & Martin, L. (1972). *Urban space and structures*. Cambridge: University Press.

Nath, R. (1986). *Jharokha: an illustrated glossary of Indo-Muslim architecture*. Historical Research Documentation Programme.

Perren, C., & Mlecek, M. (Eds.). (2015). *Perception in Architecture: Here and Now*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ryan, R. M., Deci, E. L., Grolnick, W. S., & La Guardia, J. G. (2006). The significance of autonomy and autonomy support in psychological development and psychopathology. In Cicchetti, D. & Cohen D. J. (Eds.), *Developmental psychopathology: Theory and method* (pp. 795–849). John Wiley & Sons, Inc

Singh, U. (2006). *Delhi: Ancient History*. Berghahn Books.

United Nations (2008), *World Population Monitoring, focusing on population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development*. (Report No. E/CN.9/2008/3). United Nation, Economic and Social Council.

Un-Habitat. (2019). *Planning and design for sustainable urban mobility: Global report on human settlements 2013*. Routledge.