

Contrasting Approaches: Local Area Plans in Maharashtra and Gujarat

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Abstract— This study offers a comprehensive exploration of Local Area Plans (LAPs) in Maharashtra and Gujarat, with a focus on their historical evolution, legal frameworks, and operational effectiveness. LAPs are vital tools for revitalizing older urban areas and implementing targeted development strategies. While Gujarat has excelled in utilizing LAPs for sustainable urban growth, Maharashtra faces challenges in seamlessly integrating LAPs into its urban planning framework. The research highlights significant gaps in Maharashtra's LAP setup, emphasizing the need for a more structured process, enhanced public participation, and streamlined administrative procedures. By drawing inspiration from Gujarat's successful LAP mechanism, this study puts forward actionable recommendations aimed at improving Maharashtra's urban planning practices and fostering inclusive and sustainable urban development.

Index Terms— Local Area Plans (LAP), Legal framework, Micro-level planning tool, Time frames.

I. Introduction

This study conducts an analysis of Local Area Plans (LAPs) in Maharashtra and Gujarat, delving into their historical development, legal frameworks, and operational efficiency. LAPs play a pivotal role in rejuvenating older urban areas and implementing targeted development strategies. While Gujarat has demonstrated remarkable proficiency in utilizing LAPs to promote sustainable urban growth, Maharashtra encounters challenges in seamlessly integrating LAPs into its urban planning framework. The research identifies significant shortcomings in Maharashtra's LAP setup, highlighting the pressing need for a structured process, enhanced public participation, and streamlined administrative procedures. By drawing valuable insights from Gujarat's successful LAP mechanism, this study presents practical recommendations aimed at improving Maharashtra's urban planning practices and nurturing an environment of inclusive and sustainable urban development.

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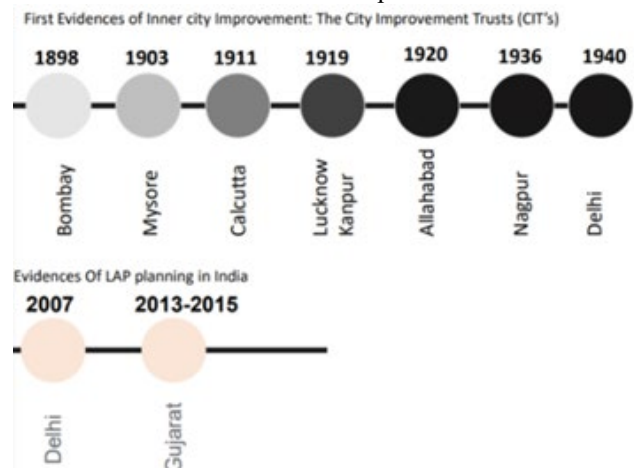
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Fig.1. Relationship of the Planning System
Source I 1: URDPFI Guidelines

II. Background of Local Area Plan

The history and roots of the Local Area Plan (LAP) mechanism in India can be traced back to the establishment of City Improvement Trusts (CITs) in various cities across the country. These CITs played a pivotal role in shaping urban development, particularly in inner-city areas of cities like Bombay (now Mumbai), Mysore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Gujarat, and Delhi. Among these cities, Delhi's CIT stands out for its significant contribution to transforming the urban landscape. Established in 1911, the Delhi CIT had a clear mission: to address the challenges posed by rapid urbanization and modernization in the national capital.



Source II-1: Author

It embarked on various projects aimed at improving

sanitation, housing, infrastructure, and transportation, effectively laying the groundwork for Delhi's future development as it evolved into a bustling metropolis. The enduring impact of these early initiatives, particularly in Delhi, played a pivotal role in shaping the evolution of LAP mechanisms and urban planning practices throughout India.

III. Local Area Plan of Maharashtra

In Maharashtra, urban planning operates within established regulations, primarily through the Development Plan-Town Planning (DP-TP) mechanism. While the state allows for the creation of Regional Plans, the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning (MR&TP) Act of 1966 does not explicitly address Local Area Plans (LAPs). Section 40 of the MR&TP Act grants the government the authority to establish Special Planning Authorities (SPAs) for specific regions. Furthermore, Section 115 empowers these SPAs to formulate and present proposals for approval by the state government. It's noteworthy that the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) serves as an SPA for various projects across Mumbai; each tailored to its unique characteristics and affected areas.

15.3 PREPARATION OF LOCAL AREA PLAN

A local area plan is a plan for comprehensive development of particular area in city/ town, which may consist of detail provisions than that of development plan addressing the local requirements of the area. The Authority may prepare such plan consisting of planning requirement at micro level, local area specific regulations, urban design etc. The local area plan shall be prepared by following procedure similar to that of section 33 of the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act, 1966. After approval to this plan by the State Government, it shall come into force. In the event of provisions of local area plan not consistent with UDPCR, the provisions of local area plan shall prevail.

Fig.2. Preparation of Local area plan

Source III-1: UDPCR, Maharashtra

In the context of urban planning in Maharashtra, the MR&TP Act of 1966 does not explicitly outline provisions for creating Local Area Plans (LAPs), especially those aimed at redeveloping Brownfield areas. Nonetheless, Section 33(1) of the MR&TP Act grants planning authorities the power to design plans for the development or redevelopment of areas designated as 'Areas for comprehensive development.' Interestingly, the Draft Development Plan for Mumbai -2034 initially proposed the establishment of LAPs at the ward level, as permitted by Section 33(1). However, this proposal faced resistance from various urban experts and key stakeholders who cited concerns about specific requirements, the time required for background studies, and data gathering for LAP development. Consequently, approximately a year later, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (BMC) opted to abandon the LAP initiative, removing it from the Revised Draft Development Plan for Mumbai -2034. The primary reasons behind this decision included the time-consuming nature of LAP preparation and the absence of an administrative structure capable of handling almost 200 LAPs for Mumbai.

Table.1 Special Planning Area under MMRDA

Sl. No	Special Planning Area	Year of Appendment	Project Area (in Ha)
1	Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) [Example of infill development]	1977	370
2	Proposed Growth Centre in Kalyan Taluka	2006	1089
3	Kalyan Complex Notified Area (KCNA)	1976	16662
4	BackBay Reclamation Scheme (BRRS)	1983	
5	Bhinwandi Surrounding Notified Area (BSNA)	2007	14400
6	Gora- Manori-Uttan Recreation and Tourism Development Zone (RTDZ)	2010	4313
7	Indu Mill "Grand Memorial of Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar"	2013	
8	Mumbai (Chhatrapati Shivaji) International Airport Notified Area (CSIANA)	2009	143
9	Oshiware District Centre (ODC)	1992	102
10	Wadala Notified Area	2005	115

Source III-2: MMRDA DP Plan Report



Fig.3. Hierarchy of Plans

Source III-3: MRTP 1966

Image.1. News of LAP in Bombay DP 2034

Source III 4: The Indian Express March 2015

IV. Gap in Local Area Plan of Maharashtra

Upon reviewing existing literature, it becomes evident that there exists a significant gap in urban planning – the need for a mechanism that operates at a scale below that of the Development Plan (DP). This gap arises from the absence of specific provisions within the planning act to cater to localized planning. Presently, areas requiring such planning attention are often subjected to the jurisdiction of Special Planning Authorities (SPAs), as mandated by Section 40 of the MRTP Act, 1966. Subsequent planning and approvals for these areas fall under Section 115 of the same act. While SPAs serve the purpose of local area planning, creating these authorities for every location requiring micro-level planning is neither practical nor efficient. Furthermore, this approach tends to segregate these areas from the broader development plan, giving rise to challenges.

In light of this literature review, several pressing research questions emerge. These questions encompass the origins of micro-level planning, a precise definition of local area planning, and a historical examination of previous initiatives in this domain. Equally critical is an exploration of the existing legal framework governing such plans and an assessment of their potential effectiveness at the ward or neighborhood level. Consequently, the primary aim and objectives of this research endeavor revolve around a comprehensive evaluation of the legal framework surrounding Local Area Plans (LAPs) and their planning and execution. A specific focus will be placed on a case study within the core area of Pune. This study seeks to closely examine LAPs in already developed urban regions, gain an in-depth understanding of the legal framework underpinning local area planning in India, analyze the critical parameters of this legal framework, and ultimately formulate an effective legal framework and planning process tailored to the needs of local area plans in Maharashtra.

V. Comparison of Maharashtra and Gujarat Local Area Plan Mechanism

The setup for Local Area Plans (LAPs) has several gaps that need attention. Firstly, there's a lack of a clear process for defining the boundaries of LAPs, and no specific criteria for choosing where LAPs should be created. Additionally, there's no framework for conducting surveys before creating the base map, and errors in land ownership records pose challenges. Public participation is not well-integrated into the LAP boundary delineation process, and the current mechanism doesn't allow for determining the shape, size, or ownership of LAP areas with public input. Furthermore, there are no guidelines for preparing LAP reports, no provisions for compensation details, and no clear provision for conducting meetings. The existing time frame for LAPs is also too lengthy. Addressing these gaps is essential for a more effective and inclusive LAP process.

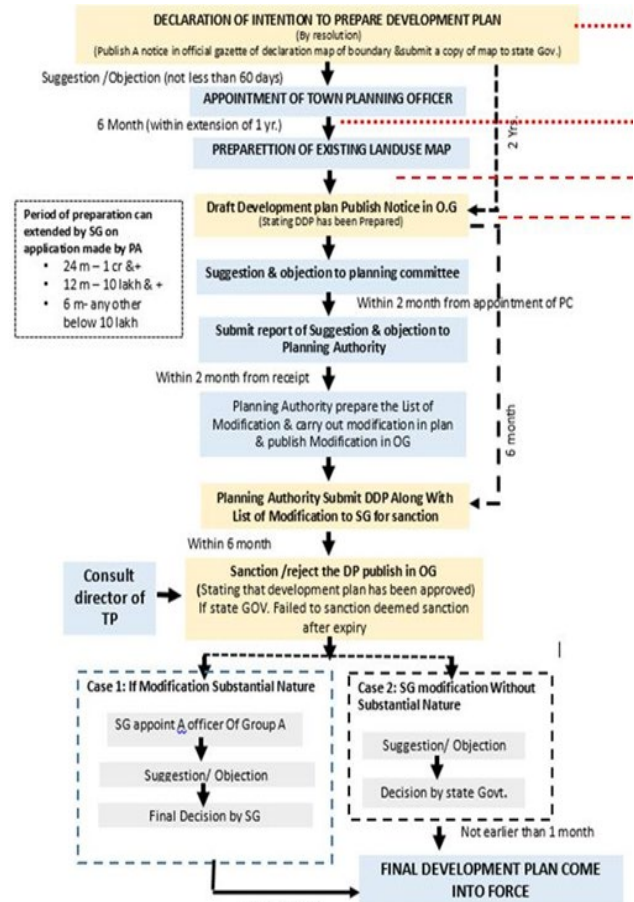


Fig.4. Current LAP Process in Maharashtra

Source V 1: By author, MRTP 1966

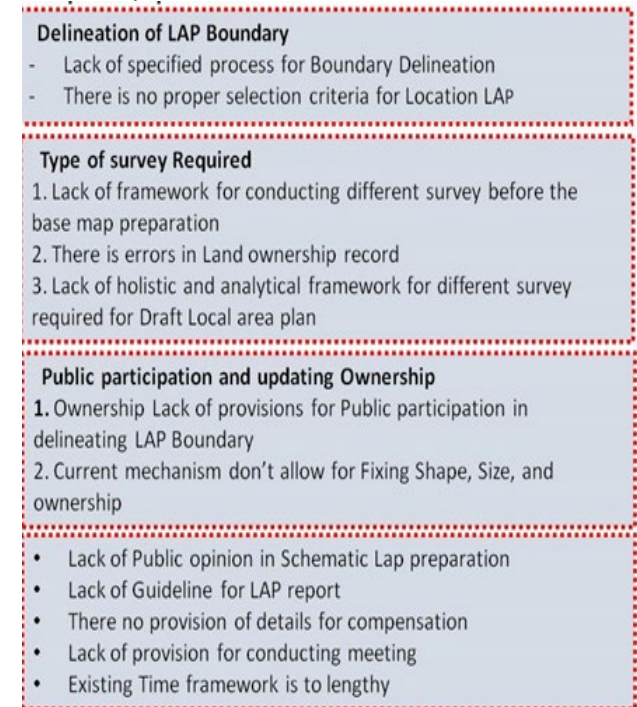


Fig.5. Scope of Improvement in current Framework of LAP MH
Source V 2: Autho

CURRENT LOCAL AREA PLAN MECHANISM

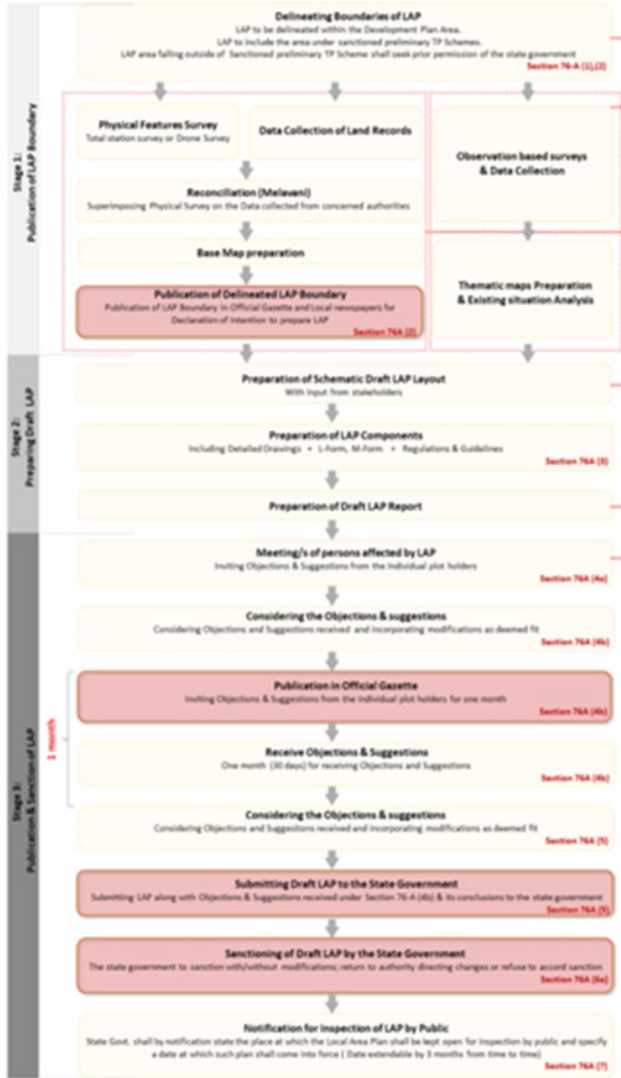


Fig.6. Current LAP mechanism in Gujarat

Source V 4: GTPUDA 1976, According to 2014 amendment

VI. Research Methodology

A. Looking at Existing Information:

We will gather information about LAPs from books, research papers, government documents, and reports. We want to know how LAPs have developed over time, what the rules are, and how well they work.

B. Understanding the Rules:

We will carefully study the laws and rules that Maharashtra and Gujarat have about LAPs. This will help us see how LAPs are supposed to work according to the law.

C. Comparing the Two States:

We will compare how LAPs work in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Are there any differences in how they are used and how well they work?

D. Finding Problems:

We will find out if there are any issues with how LAPs are used. This could include problems like figuring out where LAPs should be used, how to get people involved, or how long it takes to finish them.

E. Making Suggestions:

After studying all this information, we will make practical suggestions on how to make LAPs better in both states. Our focus will be on fixing the issues we find.

F. Putting it All Together:

Finally, we will write a detailed report that shows what we discovered, what we compared, the problems we found, and the ideas we have to make LAPs work better.

VII. Results and Findings

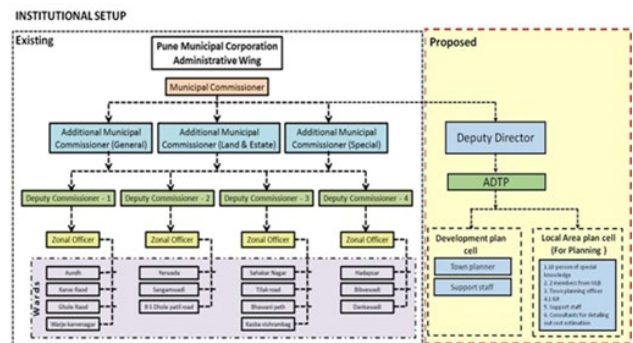


Fig.7. Institutional Setup

Source V 3: Author

Proposed Improvement in Institutional Framework

Constitution of LAP cell

1. Chairman – Deputy Director
2. Ass. director of T.P
3. 8+2member of special knowledge appointed by DTP (advisor)
4. secretary- Town planning officer
5. 2 members from local authority

- DTP may appoint a 10 members of special knowledge at time delineation/selection of boundary.
 -They will be involved in providing guidance during subsequent stages of LAP up to till submission of DLAP to DTP.
 -They include experts in various aspects of planning (urban planning, urban infra and urban design, social and urban environment planning)

LAP cell to appoint support staff under TPO responsible for preparing Drawings, maps, carrying out surveys, studies, analysis and planning proposal

TP Department appoint a cadre post of ILR within LAP cell undertaking preparation of LAP with all powers of land revenue code for crosscheck and update draft base map LR for freezing them

LAP cell authority to appoint consultants for detailing out & cost estimation for infra. Proposal (street network, water supply , sewage line storm water lines, electricity ,SWM, road design)

Source VII-1: Author

Proposed Improvement in Statutory Framework

Acts / Rules should further elaborate various content and format for survey, analysis of maps

Acts / Rules should for publishing of ownership records by LAP cell with base map for freezing of ownership Record, shape, size of plots.

Meeting and display for updating land record organized by LAP cell

Act/Rule should provide for a Conceptual LAP layout stage and should elaborate on the content of the Report.

Authority to publish the report for public viewing and reference. Act/Rule should also specify for report to be published along with the scheme layout.

Act/Rule should provide for formats, content, duration & method for conducting meeting/s of persons affected and other consultations.

Consultation may be carried out in Groups identified based on the socio-economic make-up

given its rapid urbanization and diverse urban complexities, can glean valuable insights from Gujarat's LAP experience. However, it's imperative to tailor any adoption to align with Maharashtra's specific requirements, legal framework, and local nuances. Effectively addressing the gaps in LAP implementation, as highlighted in our discussion, is paramount for achieving a more efficient, inclusive, and sustainable urban planning process in both states. By drawing inspiration from the strengths of Gujarat's LAP mechanism and adapting them to Maharashtra's unique context, the state can progress toward more efficient and locally tailored urban development, ultimately benefiting its residents and urban centers alike.

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Source VII-2: Author

Maharashtra could greatly benefit from considering and potentially adopting elements of Gujarat's Local Area Plan (LAP) mechanism. Gujarat has demonstrated a proactive approach to urban planning and development through the effective utilization of LAPs. By empowering local authorities and fostering community participation, Gujarat has successfully addressed urban challenges and promoted sustainable growth. Given Maharashtra's status as one of India's most urbanized states, adopting a similar mechanism could help address the pressing issues of rapid urbanization, infrastructure development, and environmental sustainability. While it's important to adapt any approach to suit the specific needs and contexts of Maharashtra, looking to Gujarat's LAP model for inspiration and best practices could be a valuable step towards more efficient and localized urban planning in the state.

VIII. Conclusion

Local Area Plans (LAPs) play a pivotal role in urban development, particularly when it comes to addressing the distinct challenges that older, densely populated neighborhoods encounter. While the roots of LAPs can be traced back to the Bombay Province, which includes present-day Maharashtra, it's clear that Gujarat has distinguished itself in successfully implementing and promoting LAPs. Gujarat's proactive approach, its commitment to empowering local authorities, and its emphasis on engaging communities have positioned its LAP mechanism as a model for other states to emulate. Maharashtra,