

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Kannur is a fast developing urban city in the northernmost part of Kerala. Kannur District is known as the land of looms and lores. This chapter gives the introduction to the Municipal Corporation area, the methodology adopted, the earlier planning efforts and the need for a Master Plan.

1.1 GENERAL

Kannur district is enriched with beaches, rivers, hills, forests, wildlife sanctuaries and many historic as well as heritage sites. It was the capital of the one and only Muslim royal kingdom in Kerala, Arakkal. Kannur District witnessed one of the longest and bloodiest resistances to British rule in India, led by Pazhassi Raja during the period 1792–1806 which kept a large part of the district in a state of war. Kannur district is a famous destination for Theyyam; one of the traditional art forms in Kerala. Another feature of Kannur district is the influence of cooperative societies in different sectors. The major traditional industries that come under cooperative societies are Beedi and Handloom. Kannur district consists of two revenue divisions, which includes 5 Taluks, 11 blocks and 132 Villages.

Thalassery revenue division consists of 2 Taluks namely Thalassery and Iritty. Taliparamba revenue division consists of Kannur, Taliparamba and Payyannur. At present, Kannur district has 1 Municipal Corporation, 9 Municipalities, 71 Grama Pachayaths and 1 Military Cantonment.

Kannur Municipal Corporation area, being the headquarters of the revenue district is functioning as the service centre of the entire district. It causes an unplanned growth of the town resulting in the shortage of basic infrastructure and traffic congestion.

The core area of Municipal Corporation area consists of major commercial centres, public buildings, bus terminals, railway stations, recreation spots etc.

1.2 THE CORPORATION AREA

Kannur is the newest Municipal Corporation of the state, formed on November 1, 2015. It was established as a Municipal Town on June 24, 1867 with 4 wards. As per the 2001 census, the Kannur municipal area had 39 wards, which further increased to 42 wards in 2010. The Kannur Corporation has been formed by annexing 5 surrounding Panchayaths

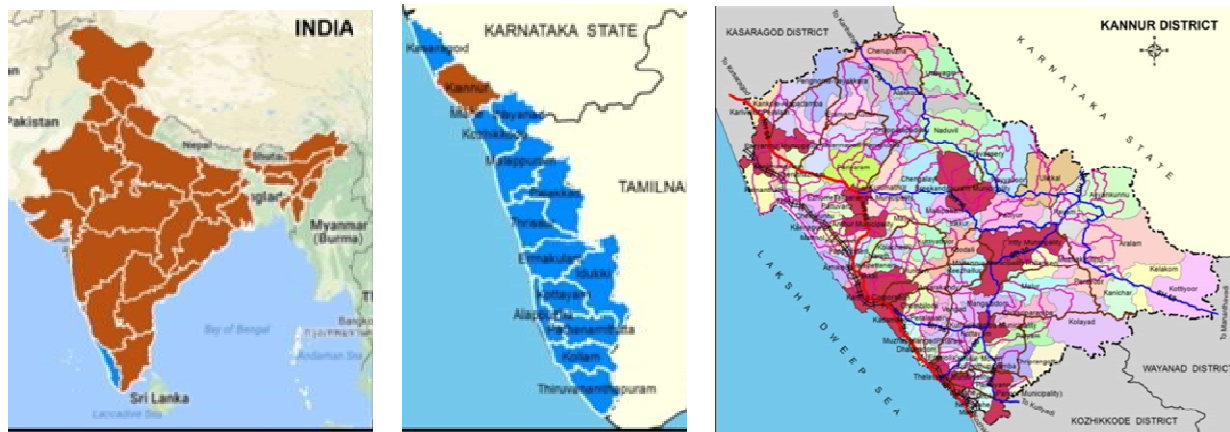


Figure.1.1 District Map of Kannur

namely Pallikunnu, Puzhathi, Chelora, Elayavoor and Edakkad to Kannur Municipality.

The Corporation area, which is a coastal city, is situated along the western border of the district. Figure.1.2 indicates its location.

The famous dynasties of Chirakkal and Arakkal were based in Kannur area. Arakkal, the first Muslim dynasty in Kerala was located inside the planning area. Kannur is a major trade centre and a major connecting town to Karnataka as well as to Kozhikode.

The administrative area of Kannur Municipal Corporation area is 78.38 km². For the purpose of administration, it is divided into 55 wards. The Corporation area is bounded on the west by the Arabian Sea including the Cantonment board area, in the north by Azhikode, Chirakkal, Narath, Kolacherry

Panchayaths, in the east by the Chembilode and Munderi Panchayaths and on the south by Kadambur and Muzhappilangad Panchayaths.

A number of institutions and establishments including administrative buildings, educational institutions, commercial shopping centers like malls etc. set up inside the planning area have accelerated its growth. Due to the presence of beaches and fishing harbour, fisheries activities are also predominant here.

Due to increasing urbanization, land under cultivation has decreased over a period of time. Therefore agriculture and allied activities are mostly concentrated outside of the CBD (Central Business District) area.

Trade and commerce activities are enriched due to the presence of NH66, SH38, Kannur Mele Chovva-Mattannur road, Kakkad road,



Figure.1.2 Location of Kannur Municipal Corporation

Thazhe Chovva-Anjarakandy road, Azheekal Ferry road etc. Apart from these major roads, there are many minor roads leading to places outside the Municipal Corporation area. Commercial enterprises strengthen the economic structure of the Corporation area, which are mainly concentrated in Caltex, Old bus stand, new bus stand, market and its

surrounding areas. Kannur railway station is located in the Corporation area.

The planning area limit compromises some important beaches, heritage buildings, worship centres etc., which are now emerging as major tourist destinations in the district. The newly opened Kannur International Airport can also boost

the economic activities of the planning area.

1.3 NEED FOR MASTER PLAN

73rd and 74th Amendments of the Indian Constitution provided a new constitutional context for planning in the Panchayaths and Municipalities in India. The various development standards such as urban planning, regulation of land use, construction of buildings, planning for economic development, social justice etc. are considered as the functions of Urban Local Self Governments. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act were enacted in 1994. It provides the necessary powers and authority to enable Panchayaths and Municipalities to function as institutions of self-government and to prepare a Master Plan for its development, in the prescribed manner with focus on Scientific Spatial Planning, taking into account its resources and fiscal investment and to submit the same to the District Planning Committees (DPC).

The Preparation of Master Plans and detailed Town Planning scheme were announced in the Budget of 2008-2009. The scheme aims to prepare statutory Town Planning Schemes for towns in the State in a time bound manner, under Town Planning Acts so as to ensure planned development.

A Master Plan is the long term

perspective plan for guiding the sustainable planned development of the planning area. This document lays down the planning guidelines, policies, and development code and space requirements for various socio-economic activities for supporting the population of the planning area during the plan period. It is also the basis for all infrastructure requirements. A Master Plan will facilitate improvement of basic infrastructure including roads, power and water supply, facilities for parking, telecommunication, facilities for commercial development including modern markets, shopping centres, high level hotels, community halls and recreational facilities like parks, play grounds, stadium, and multiplex theatres. It will also accommodate systems for effective solid and liquid waste management.

According to the 2011 Census report (by Census Department of India), population of Kannur Corporation is 2,32,486, which was 2,26,435 during the 2001 census. This shows a gradual increase of population due to the trend of urbanization. The population projection using four methods of population projection is 2,54,946 by 2041.

Master Plan helps the urban local body to provide a sustainable development with some regulations and guidelines so that the growth of the Municipal Corporation area can be controlled in an organized manner so

as to prevent haphazard development.

Since the Kannur Corporation is in a fast growing stage, there is a good need of Master Plan in order to protect the environmentally sensitive areas and heritage buildings. Moreover, some of the existing physical and social infrastructure facilities are inadequate for the current demand. This Master Plan will help to meet the current and future needs of the population by providing the amenities and facilities as per standards.

The entire planning area is not fully covered in the existing development plan for Kannur Municipal Area published in 2012. It is confined to the boundary limits of erstwhile Kannur Municipality. This region being the core area had already been saturated.

1.4 DELINEATION OF PLANNING AREA

The first stage in the preparation of a Master Plan is the delineation of the planning area which is done based on the regional study, administrative boundaries, urbanization condition as per Census, Activity Pattern and various other factors like the role of Municipal Corporation area in the overall development of the region. Primary influence zones of the Municipal Corporation area are the major deciding factors.

Based on land use, population distribution and average plot size

which are considered as the basic criteria for identifying the functional characters of each local body, LSGs wholly included in the first order functional zone in the district are Kannur Municipal Corporation and Thalassery Municipality. The role of the planning area as an administrative headquarters of the district in the overall development is the major factor for consideration. Moreover, the planning area is the major urban center with important commercial centers, educational institutions and major transportation nodes. All other surrounding LSGs form an urban continuum along with the Corporation area, which is functioning as the central business district of Kannur region.

So considering all these, the Planning area for the preparation of Master Plan was delineated to include Kannur Corporation which covers a geographical area of 78.38 km².

1.5 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As per the guidelines issued for the preparation of development plans, a Special Committee was constituted in Kannur Corporation as per order No. E4/21539/2001 dated 15/01/2019. The preparation of draft Master Plan including its publication and other coordinated activities are the responsibility of this Special Committee.

The Special Committee is responsible to coordinate the working group’s activities and public participation. Working groups are formed with the members from various sectors such as the Departments concerned, politicians and social workers.

The Special Committee is to conduct local analysis and to give necessary support to the planning team of LSGD Planning. The organizational structure for the preparation of Master Plan is shown in Figure.1.3.

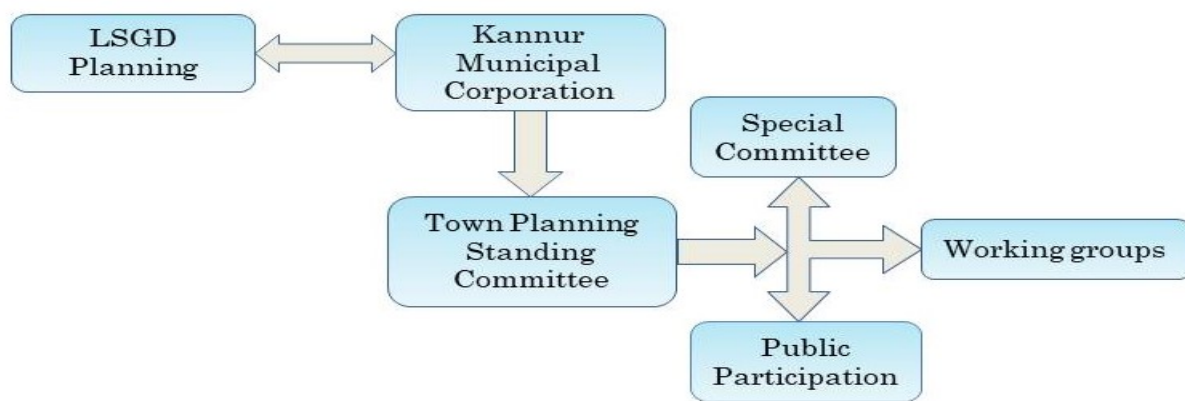


Figure.1.3 Organizational Structure for the Preparation of Master Plan

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The general process of preparation of Master Plan involves four major steps which are shown thematically in Figure.1.4. The first step of the planning process is data collection and compilation. The second step is analysis in which two types of analysis namely spatial analysis and local analysis have to be carried out. Spatial analysis is done by the LSGD Planning and local level analysis is

carried out through Spatial Integration Committee (SIC) and working groups. Consolidation of findings of both the analysis will reveal the development issues. The third step is envisioning process in which development goals, objectives, concept are formed and suitable policies and strategies are evolved for achieving it. Last step of the process of planning is zoning regulations and detailing where sectoral projects, land report preparation are done.

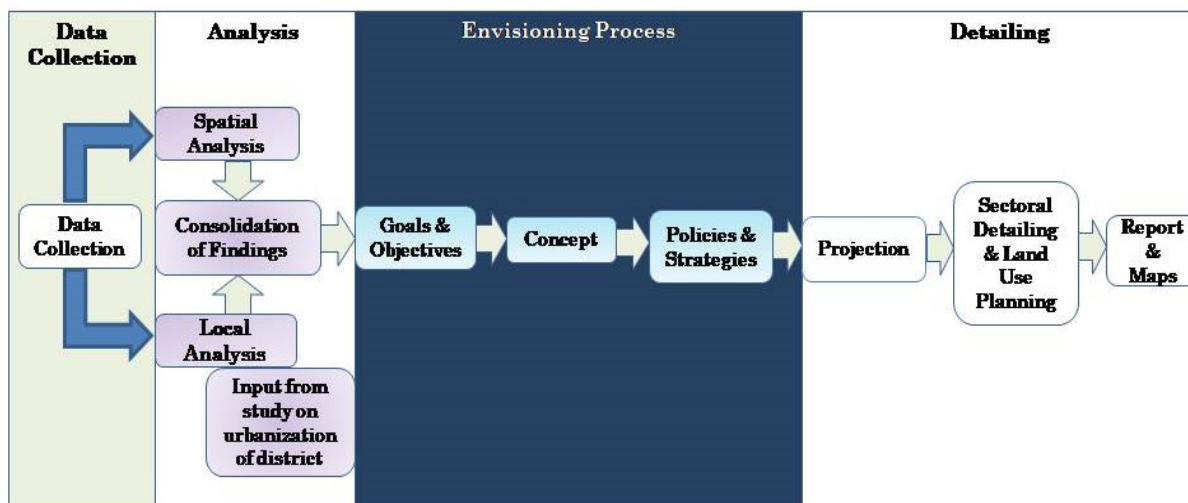


Figure.1.4 Methodology of Master Plan Preparation

1.7 PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION OF MASTER PLAN

Only an effective people's participation can create a meaningful Master Plan. In the preparation of Master Plan for Kannur Municipal Corporation area, the first level of discussion with the stakeholders was socio economic survey conducted at the household level. It was done through a framed questionnaire and interviews. This has helped to identify the people's current living situations and their vision regarding the development priority in wards as well as in the Municipal Corporation area as a whole.

An initial seminar was conducted on 31.01.2019 to give awareness about the people's participation in framing of

Master Plans. Corporation Mayor, Municipal councillors, Municipal Secretary and other personalities from the departments concerned and other social workers took part in the seminar and gave significant suggestions about their visions and development strategies. A Spatial Integration Committee (SIC) was framed by Municipal Chairperson on 15/01/2019 to help and monitor the work related to Master Plan.

Working group meeting was conducted from 13th June 2022 to 21st June 2022. Experts from different sectors participated in these meetings and gave suggestions for improvement of each sector. Special committee meeting was conducted at Corporation Office, Kannur on 28th June 2022.



Spatial Integration Committee



Working Group Meeting

1.8 EARLIER PLANNING EFFORTS AND ITS APPRAISAL

The first attempt for preparing a Detailed Plan and scheme was made by the District Town and Country Planning unit Kannur in the year of

1980. Detailed studies were carried out to identify the town resources, development trends and issues and to estimate the future needs and functions of the town. Various Town Planning Schemes and Development Plans were prepared in the planning area among which some of them were

completed and successfully implemented.

Kannur town has two published Detailed Town Planning Schemes at Thavakkara north and south. Another scheme for civil station area was

notified and prepared, but not published. Development Plan for Kannur Municipality was published on 21.11.2012. The Figure.1.5 indicates the location of DTP schemes in old Kannur Municipality.

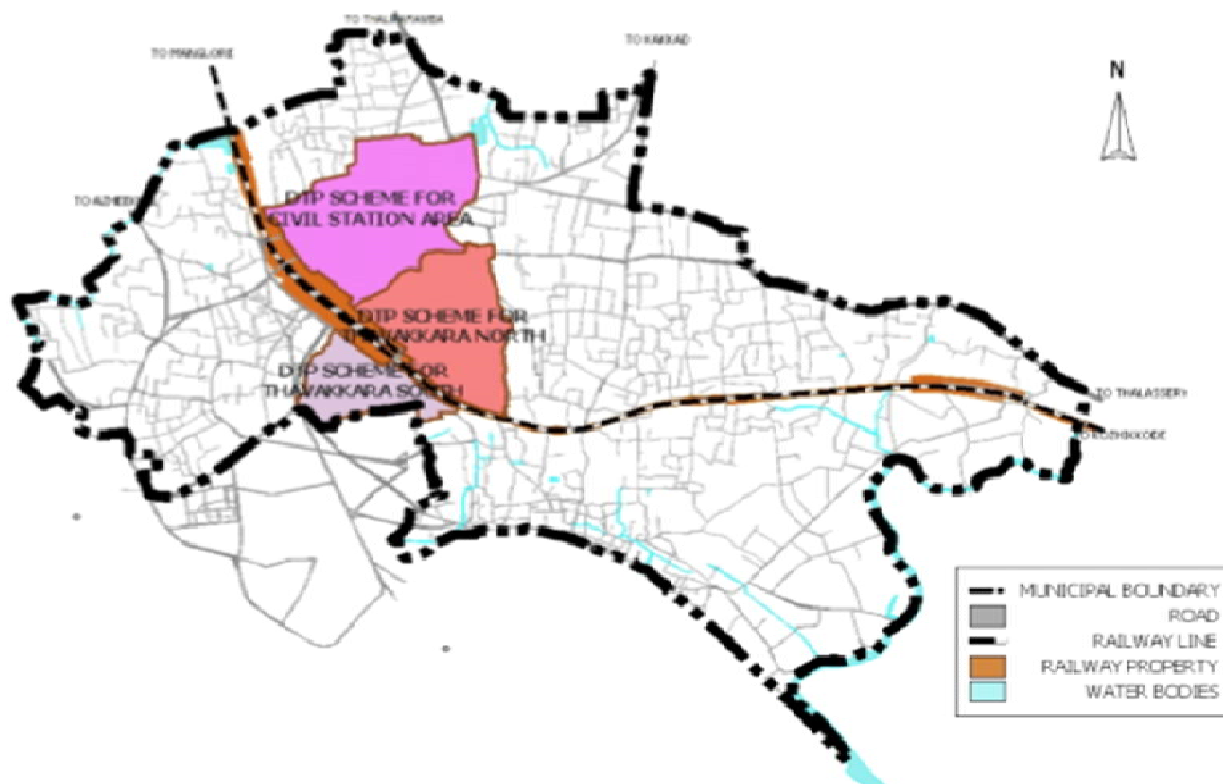


Figure.1.5 Location of DTP Schemes in old Kannur Municipality

1.8.1 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR KANNUR MUNICIPAL AREA - 2031

The Development Plan for Kannur town for an area of 11.03 km² was published on 2012. The sectors to study in the planning area include history, demography, occupational structure, land use, economic aspects,

infrastructure (water supply, drainage, sewerage, solid waste management, traffic and transportation, education, health, recreational facilities and civic amenities), environment, housing, heritage and tourism, poverty alleviation, urban governance and financial sustainability. The plan

predicted a rise in the population from 63,795 in 2001 to 74,588 by the end of the plan period.

The important proposals envisaged in the development plan were improvement of existing transportation networks with sufficient parking area, development of industries, and zoning of commercial and administrative activities and utilization of tourism potential in the Corporation area.

The Figure.1.6 indicates the

proposed land use map of Kannur Municipality as per the published Development Plan for the town.

Concept of the Development Plan was formed by considering the Municipal Corporation area as the district administrative headquarters. The major railway station and the wholesale market area at the western side enhanced its commercial potential. The long beach along the border near the town is a tourist destination.

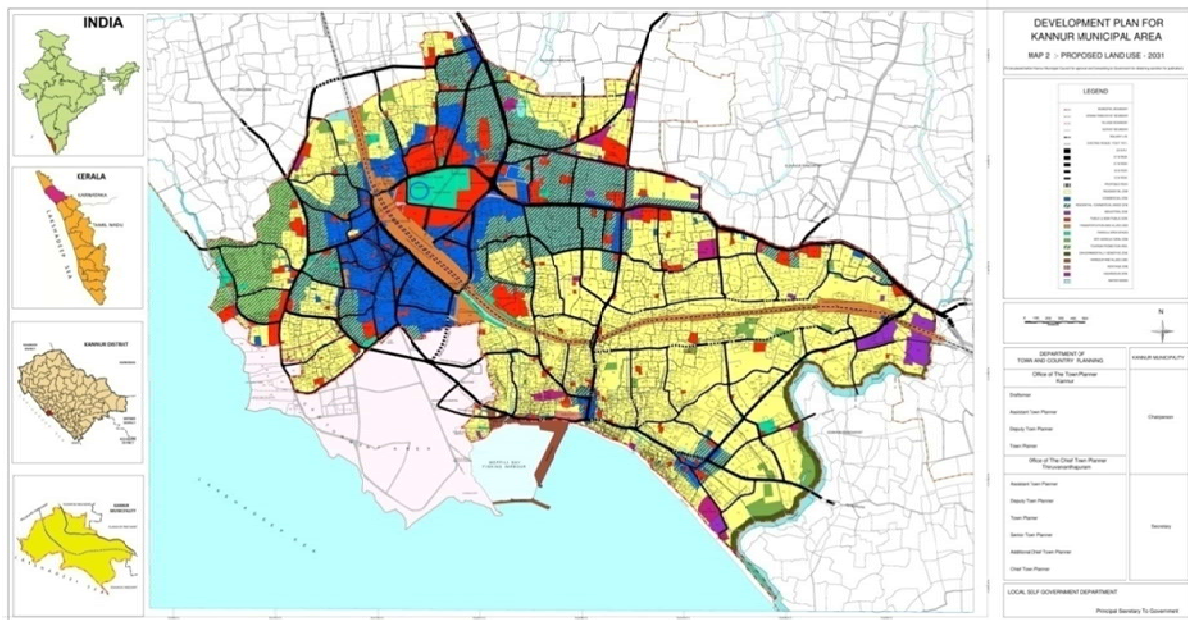


Figure.1.6 Proposed land use map of Kannur Municipality as per Published Development Plan for the Town

1.9 CONCLUSION

From the date of notification, implementations of all schemes are deemed to be started. After the formal notification of the above schemes, mainly Development Plan, the new developments are regulated as per the

proposed plan. All new developments were sanctioned only after complying with the norms of road widening and zoning regulations as per the published schemes.

Even though there were complaints regarding the width of proposed roads

from the peripheral land owners, gradually they accepted the need for development. But for the secondary roads in the planning area, mainly in the existing dense residential area, there exists a wide spread unhappy situation about the 16 m and 12 m internal roads. Hence it has to be reviewed based on the context of NH Bypass, City Road Improvement Scheme etc.

Regarding zoning regulations, the pressure of land along Kanampuzha River side set apart as ecological sensitive area is tremendous without compromising the natural flow of this small water body. It is difficult to allow new construction in these areas.

The green space available in the heart of the planning area is also under tremendous pressure due the demand for to new constructions in those areas, disregarding the threat to the healthy environment of the Corporation area.

Various efforts adopted in the last few years for saving the water bodies in different parts of the planning area were partially successful. The Anakulam, Chettiyarkulam, Valiyakulam etc. were renovated and is kept clean. Similarly, such serious efforts are also required in traffic sector to improve the road network and parking facilities.

