



Journal of Contemporary Urban Affairs
ISSN 2475-6164 (online)
www.ijcua.com

Editorial Note: — Journal of Contemporary Urban Affairs, Volume 9, Issue 2 (2025)

Socio-Economic Pathways of Urban Change

Volume 9, Issue 2 (2025) brings together a set of studies that examine contemporary urbanisation through one consistent lens: its economic and socio-economic consequences for people, places, and the built environment. Across diverse geographic contexts—from Lebanon and Italy to Bangladesh, India, Türkiye, Thailand, China, the Philippines, Bahrain, and Iran—the issue documents how urban change redistributes opportunities, reshapes everyday livelihoods, and redefines what resilience and inclusion mean in practice.

The contributions also reflect the journal’s commitment to interdisciplinary inquiry. Quantitative models and spatial analytics (e.g., hedonic pricing, long-term remote sensing, space syntax, environmental simulation) sit alongside qualitative and interpretive approaches (e.g., sensory walks, grounded theory, critical cultural analysis). This methodological breadth strengthens the issue’s ability to connect urban form and policy with measurable socio-economic outcomes such as displacement pressures, land and housing market shifts, informal economy vulnerabilities, accessibility to public amenities, public health co-benefits, and climate-related risk reduction.

Organised under the journal’s three core scopes—Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities, Territorial Dynamics, and Urban Transformations—the articles collectively offer evidence-based insights that are both theoretically meaningful and practically actionable. Within each scope, papers are presented in the issue sequence (and where page ranges are provided, in ascending order).

I. Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities

Comparative Analysis of Informal Vendors around Dhaka Metro Stations through a Sustainable Livelihood Framework

In a rapidly transforming Dhaka shaped by new metro infrastructure, Syeda Rizwana, Tahmina Rahman, and S M Ehsan Ul Haque Shawpnil examine how transport investment reconfigures the socio-economic conditions of informal vendors—an often-invisible workforce central to urban survival economies. Using the Sustainable Livelihood Framework with mixed methods, the study distinguishes between vendors who relocated after station operations and those who entered the market post-inauguration. The results reveal a crucial socio-economic differentiation: relocation was associated with stronger livelihood outcomes, while newcomers faced heightened vulnerability due to competition, limited supportive infrastructure, and regulatory constraints. By translating infrastructure-led transformation into concrete livelihood impacts, the paper fills a gap in understanding how “modernisation” can simultaneously create opportunity and deepen precarity, offering grounded policy directions such as designated vending zones and inclusive station-area planning. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-6>

How Do Socio-Cultural and Built Environment Characteristics Influence Urban Vitality and Walkability in Bahrain’s Commercial Streets? Insights from Muharraq

Focusing on Shaikh Hamad Avenue in Muharraq, Afaf Ebrahim Mohamed and Najla Allani position walkability not merely as a mobility preference, but as a socio-economic condition that shapes commercial vitality, everyday access, and street-based inclusion. Through surveys, observation, and GIS mapping, the study identifies five determinants—imageability, enclosure, human scale, complexity, and safety—that strongly influence pedestrian movement and perceptions. Their findings show how micro-scale urban design choices (shade provision, shop diversity, spatial connectivity, safe crossings) directly affect street life and the informal and formal economies it supports, while climatic constraints and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure

suppress vitality. The paper contributes evidence for culturally responsive, pedestrian-oriented interventions in Gulf contexts where walkability is frequently under-addressed as an equity and economic issue. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-7>

Can Cultural Capital and the Right to the City Explain Class-Based Alienation in Thailand's Art Museums?

Through comparative qualitative inquiry across institutions in Thailand, the UK, and Italy, Amika Naknawaphan and Onnutcha Naknawaphan investigate how cultural spaces can reproduce socio-economic inequality by shaping who feels entitled—or able—to participate. Drawing on Bourdieu's cultural capital and Lefebvre's Right to the City, the authors develop a typology of alienation across psychological, spatial, socio-cultural, and economic dimensions. The study demonstrates that exclusion often operates through layered mechanisms beyond entry cost, including curatorial tone, spatial design, symbolic messaging, and perceived social fit—factors that can translate into real participation gaps for lower-income groups. By foregrounding lived experiences of working-class participants, the article offers a rigorous conceptual tool for diagnosing inequity in cultural infrastructure and for rethinking museums as urban institutions with citizenship implications. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-8>

II. Territorial Dynamics

The Urban Sensory Ambiance of Batroun's Old Patrimonial Souk in the Face of Overtourism

In Batroun's patrimonial souk, Darine Zacca and Paul G Abi Khattar Zgheib show how overtourism can operate as a socio-economic restructuring process, transforming a locally rooted commercial ecosystem into a tourism-oriented landscape of consumption. Employing Jean-Paul Thibaud's "commented city walks," the study captures change through residents' sensory and emotional registers, revealing dislocation and solastalgia as daily rituals and long-standing spatial familiarity erode. The paper's contribution lies in demonstrating how heritage strategies that prioritise visual appeal and tourist revenue may inadvertently weaken community attachment and reduce the socio-economic viability of local practices and crafts. By treating sensory experience as a diagnostic for cultural and economic loss, the research expands how territorial change is evaluated and supports more participatory approaches to balancing tourism development with community continuity. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-1>

Heritage-Led Urban Regeneration in Rome: Recontextualising the Campo Trincerato through Network Strategies

Addressing Rome's neglected system of nineteenth-century military fortifications, Francesca Perrone, Paola Nicoletta Imbesi, and Laura Ricci advance heritage-led regeneration as an economically and socially strategic response to peri-urban marginalisation. Through a multi-scalar analysis of typology, accessibility, ownership, and planning frameworks, the paper identifies institutional fragmentation and limited reuse as the principal barriers preventing these assets from contributing to local development. At the same time, the "defensive ring" configuration is reinterpreted as a territorial network capable of hosting cultural functions, ecological connections, and community-driven uses—interventions that can strengthen social cohesion and generate distributed socio-economic value beyond the historic core. The study fills an important gap by offering a network-based regeneration logic for widespread heritage that is often excluded from mainstream urban investment priorities. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-2>

From Connectivity to Liveability: Enhancing Urban Waterbody Accessibility through Space Syntax in Dhaka

In the context of the Dhaka City Neighbourhood Upgrading Project, Fouzia Masud Mouri, Ahmad Abdul Wasi, and Farida Nilufar examine urban waterbodies as public assets whose socio-economic benefits depend heavily on spatial accessibility. Using space syntax measures (connectivity and global/local integration), the authors compare two upgraded waterbody environments and demonstrate distinct scales of potential: one shows stronger city-wide accessibility, while the other is better positioned for neighbourhood-level use. This differentiation is significant for equitable planning, because public open spaces deliver social interaction, health benefits, and everyday liveability gains that are often unevenly distributed in dense and disadvantaged settings. The study's originality is its early-planning emphasis—showing how syntactic analysis can anticipate patterns of use and help decision-makers avoid upgrades that appear successful in design but fail to deliver inclusive access in practice. <https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-3>

Influence of the Mass Rapid Transit System on Plotted Residential Property Prices: A Case Study of Gurugram, India

With direct implications for urban land markets and distributive outcomes, Sneha Fandian and Manoj Panwar assess how metro expansion influences plotted residential property prices in Gurugram using a hedonic pricing

model, surveys, and spatial analysis. The paper provides robust evidence of proximity premiums concentrated within walkable catchments: price growth increases markedly near stations, then weakens rapidly beyond 1 km and disappears at wider distances. This spatially bounded uplift matters socio-economically, because it can intensify unequal wealth gains and reshape who can afford to live near high-accessibility locations. By quantifying these gradients across multiple project phases, the study fills an empirical gap in emerging urban contexts and strengthens policy discussions on land value capture and regulation so that public transit investment does not amplify existing disparities. <https://doi.org/10.25034/jcua.2025.v9n2-4>

Assessing Urban Sprawl and Agricultural Land Loss: A 40-Year Remote Sensing Study in Çanakkale

Using land-use mapping from 1984–2024 combined with regression analysis, Emre Özelkan and Esra Eren interpret sprawl as a socio-economic transition as much as a physical one. The study documents substantial agricultural land loss near the city center and links these territorial shifts to employment restructuring toward industrial and service sectors, demonstrating how economic transformation is materially inscribed onto the landscape. High classification accuracy supports the reliability of long-term change detection, while the negative correlation between service-sector employment and agricultural land highlights the structural forces that accelerate conversion of productive territories. By integrating spatial evidence with socio-economic dynamics, the paper fills a gap in sprawl research that too often stops at describing expansion rather than explaining the economic mechanisms driving land loss, offering critical insight for balancing development pressures with long-term local productivity and resilience. <https://doi.org/10.25034/jcua.2025.v9n2-5>

III. Urban Transformations

Superblock Urbanism in Dhaka as a Sustainable Redevelopment Strategy for Tejgaon Industrial Area

In Tejgaon Industrial Area—an urban district reshaped by unregulated mixed-use growth—Shahriar Iqbal Raj, Tajwar Hossain Wasif, Mujtaba Ahsan, and AKM Saleh Ahmed Anik test superblock urbanism as a redevelopment model capable of improving mobility efficiency, environmental performance, and public-space equity. Combining GIS analysis, traffic observations, policy review, and participatory design inputs, the study compares plot-based, block-based, and superblock scenarios and reports tangible performance gains, including congestion reduction and expanded permeable and public surfaces. The socio-economic relevance is clear: the proposed spatial reorganisation supports healthier urban environments, more accessible civic amenities, and greater resilience under rapid urbanisation pressures. By grounding design propositions in both regulation and stakeholder experience, the paper contributes a scalable framework for transforming legacy industrial districts into more stable, inclusive urban systems. <https://doi.org/10.25034/jcua.2025.v9n2-9>

Landscape of Anonymity: Transforming the Retired COVID-19 Field Medical Facility into a Memorial Park

Addressing the underexplored “afterlife” of emergency infrastructure, Haotian Ma and Siqing Chen propose a design paradigm to convert the retired Huoshenshan Field Hospital into a memorial park, merging civic meaning with material and economic efficiency. The project is structured around a four-stage emotional narrative of the pandemic and employs counter-memorial theory and spatial translation methods to move beyond conventional symbolism toward participatory, experiential remembrance. Importantly, the study quantifies transformation benefits through substantial material recycling and cost savings, demonstrating how adaptive reuse can reduce resource waste while delivering new public space capacity. By linking memory, sustainability, and economic prudence, the paper offers a replicable approach for cities seeking resilient, socially valuable reuse strategies after crisis-driven construction. <https://doi.org/10.25034/jcua.2025.v9n2-10>

Ethno-sustainability of an Indigenous Architecture in the Northern Philippines Using Grounded Theory

Through ethnographic research and grounded theory analysis, Michael Tabao and Junar P Tablan examine Itawit indigenous architecture as a durable knowledge system where sustainability is inseparable from social organisation, local economy, and cultural continuity. The study shows how locally sourced materials, ritual practices, and collective labour systems (such as *ivvet*) support resilience and affordability, even as modernisation pressures introduce permanent materials and new construction norms. By conceptualising “ethno-sustainability” as an integrated framework connecting belief, environment, and social contract, the article provides both documentation and theory that can guide conservation and planning decisions. The socio-economic significance lies in recognising indigenous building practices as living infrastructures of community resilience—systems that can inform inclusive development rather than be displaced by it. <https://doi.org/10.25034/jcua.2025.v9n2-11>

Advancing Zero-Carbon Cities through Urban Green Infrastructure in Karaj, Iran

In semi-arid Karaj, Mahsa Salimi, Mohsen Kafi, and Mahdi Khansefid evaluate green infrastructure strategies as a practical route toward zero-carbon urbanism with measurable public benefits. Combining satellite-based

time-series indicators and ENVI-met simulations, the study tests current conditions against a hybrid greening scenario (green roofs, vegetated walls, moss, microalgae panels) and reports improvements in vegetation cover and district-level cooling alongside reductions in carbon-related proxies. Beyond environmental performance, the paper articulates socio-economic implications through health co-benefits, potential energy-cost reductions, and fairer access to cooling and greenery—outcomes particularly relevant in dense areas facing rising thermal stress. The study strengthens evidence for implementable, model-driven greening policies in arid and semi-arid contexts, where performance uncertainty often delays investment.

<https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2025.v9n2-12>

Concluding remarks

Volume 9, Issue 2 (2025) demonstrates how contemporary urban research can remain analytically rigorous while staying close to the socio-economic realities of cities: livelihoods shaped by infrastructure, land markets altered by mobility investment, heritage territories contested by tourism and governance, public spaces defined by accessibility, and climate resilience pursued through design and policy innovation. Together, the articles reinforce the journal's role as an international venue for scholarship that clarifies the stakes of urban change and supports more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban futures.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hourakhsh A. Nia
Editor-in-Chief,
Journal of Contemporary Urban Affairs
Department of Architecture
Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences
Alanya University, Alanya, Turkey
www.ijcua.com