

The Process of Policy Formulation, Urban Planning and Design, Which is Focused on the City of Tual

Usman A. Matdoan

STIA Darul Rachman Tual, Indonesia

Email: usmanmatdoan22@gmail.com

Keywords

Design, Planning, Policy,
Regional Planning, Urban
Development

ABSTRACT

Effective urban development requires the integration of policy formulation, spatial planning, and urban design. This study examines this integration in the context of *Tual* City, a new autonomous region in Indonesia, to assess its impact on sustainable urban and regional development. The research aims to analyze the relationship between policy formulation processes, spatial planning, and urban design with a focus on *Tual* City. Using qualitative descriptive methods through interviews, questionnaires, literature review, and field observations, this research analyzes three key indicators: policy formulation aspects, spatial planning of regional functions, and urban design aspects. The results show that 75% of respondents consider government policies appropriate, 65% strongly agree with spatial planning approaches, and 63% view urban design as ideal. The study demonstrates that the integration of policy formulation, spatial planning, and urban design produces positive outcomes, with *Tual* City experiencing significant improvements in urban and regional development. This integration has resulted in better-organized infrastructure, improved functional area mapping, and enhanced quality of life for residents.

INTRODUCTION

A city is the destination and the final memory of our struggle and glory. It describes pride that occurred in the past to be exhibited (Kostof, quoted in Bambang Heryanto, 2011). Historically, urban enthusiasm or the movement from rural areas to urban areas has occurred for a long time, for example, the spirit of society in the cities of Mesopotamia in early civilizations to contemporary society in megapolitan cities nowadays, forming the face of cities through various activities that they conduct in their lives (Carmona, 2019). The face of cities always changes, and their final forms reflect the cultural, social, political, and economic characteristics adopted by their society (ASEAN Secretariat, 2022). The formation of urban character is the

manifestation of cities' characteristic elements, such as building shapes, road layout patterns, land use patterns, and open spaces (Bibri & Krogstie, 2017). Besides being influenced by the natural environment of the community, it is also manifested in decision-making processes by authorities in their governance (Bambang Heryanto, *Ibid* 2011).

The characteristic atmosphere of a city always remains in memory and becomes the objective of life for most people, including children, youth, and older adults (Marshall & Çalışkan, 2020). Cities with their various specific elements and unique living circumstances sometimes attract attention from many groups of people, including artists, drawing interest from their diverse backgrounds and different levels of understanding (Campbell et al., 2018). Urban form is the final result of accumulated population growth, behavior, activities, as well as policies that derive from society and their government. John Brickerhoff Jackson (1984:12) wrote in his book "*Founding Vernacular Landscape*" that the form of a city is our image of human life, namely hard work, high hopes, and togetherness to love one another (Chen et al., 2023). In this view, a city is a place for human beings to live as the manifestation of planned and designed results filled with various elements such as buildings, roads, and open spaces (Dühr et al., 2018). Therefore, a city is the result of human behavioral values in urban form that creates visual contour patterns from the natural environment into a better-organized structure (Albrechts et al., 2019).

Rowe P.G, in his study of city planning, views the physical form of a city as an activity shape. He reached this conclusion based on his thinking concerning form elements, typology, and morphology of a city, involving fields, roads, open spaces, and groups of buildings (Firman, 2019). Other elements that form the character of a city include land use, as explained by Rob Krier (*ibid*) as a living place. Geographers and landscape designers conceptualize city form using the terminology of city landscape (Hudalah et al., 2015; Hutchcroft, 2018; Madanipour, 2021).

From the above explanations, city design is consolidated from many various aspects, such as policy, planning and design, socio-cultural, political, economic factors, and others, which are structured and managed systematically to create a city as a center of civilization (Healey, 2016). However, these aspects often become a magnet for urban groups to make the city a suitable place to obtain decent sources of livelihood, thus it is common to find cities with heterogeneous characteristics of city residents, unlike the homogeneity of rural communities. Spatial aspects are often overlooked in the city design process, making it common to find overlaps and difficulties in structuring urban areas. Urban society with high levels of activity and mobility does not pay serious attention to spatial aspects. However, addressing this problem makes city areas organized and structured based on their respective functions, minimizing difficulties so that the city landscape becomes organized and the city becomes beautiful. City planning and mapping based on spatial concepts

is actually a very important part of the process of formulating policies and planning for urban development. In this section, the government and regional government must play active roles in formulating policies and creating plans that truly result in more artistic, beautiful, and neatly arranged urban structures, so that the city has attraction, leaves an impression, and has its own story for everyone who visits it.

From the above perspective, this study attempts to examine the structure of urban planning from various different perspectives and is associated with the formulation of policy, planning, and structuring of the city as a new autonomous region. *Tual* city, as an autonomous region, has a local government with strong authority to formulate policies and plan better structuring of urban areas that are better organized and neatly arranged (Zhang et al., 2025).

Specifically, *Tual* city's arrangement in spatial terms appears to work well according to the grand design or master plan for *Tual* city development. This means that the development of *Tual* city's infrastructure in terms of area has been well structured and organized, where mapping has been created for areas based on their respective functions (Wong et al., 2022). For example, office and education areas are concentrated in certain areas, which functionally facilitates administrative affairs that meet community needs; economic zones (markets, shopping centers) are located in certain areas that are easily accessible to the community; and residential areas are also in designated areas that do not directly coincide with office, education, market, and economic centers.

Based on several observations, an understanding can be drawn that in various urban corners and areas, there are still signs of conflicts between residential areas, office areas, education areas, and market areas. If policies are not planned and formulated regarding the structured mapping of area usage, this will impact the governance structure in terms of area utilization, and ultimately lead to the complexity of urban problems such as traffic jams, floods, and non-functioning waterways, which actually have other social effects that also affect the mapping of urban structures in the future. However, overall, regional development and regional functions are well organized and provide positive access to the community.

The integration of policy formulation, spatial planning, and urban design is widely acknowledged as a critical determinant of successful urban development. Previous research establishes a strong theoretical foundation for this synergy. Scholars like Dye and Easton define public policy as the government's authoritative allocation of values, directly influencing the urban fabric. Furthermore, the procedural models of policy analysis, such as those detailed by Dunn, which include stages from agenda-setting to evaluation, provide a structured framework for understanding how urban strategies are formed and implemented. Concurrently, the field of urban design, as explored by Barnett and Cuthbert, has evolved to act as the crucial bridge between high-

level planning policies and the physical, experiential reality of the city, focusing on elements like land use, building mass, and public space to create livable environments. This existing body of work confirms that these three domains—policy, planning, and design—are inherently interconnected in shaping functional and sustainable cities.

Despite this robust theoretical understanding, a significant research gap persists in empirically examining how this integration functions in practice, particularly within the unique context of new autonomous regions in developing nations. Much of the existing literature, including seminal works by Faludi on planning theory and Lynch on urban form, is derived from observations of established cities in the Global North or large metropolitan areas (World Bank, 2017). The dynamics of policy implementation and design execution in smaller, newly formed cities, where governance structures are nascent and development pressures are immediate, remain underexplored. This gap is critical because the challenges faced by these cities—rapid urbanization, limited resources, and the urgent need for structured development—differ markedly from those of their larger, more established counterparts. The specific processes through which local governments in these contexts translate policy into planned and designed spatial outcomes are not yet well-documented or understood (Wong et al., 2022).

The urgency of this research is underscored by the rapid pace of urbanization and the proliferation of new autonomous regions globally, especially in archipelagic countries like Indonesia. Without a clear and effective model for integrating policy, planning, and design, these nascent cities risk falling into the same traps of haphazard development, spatial conflicts, and social inequities that plague many older metropolises. Issues such as traffic congestion, inadequate infrastructure, loss of green space, and inefficient land use are not merely inconveniences; they represent significant barriers to economic productivity, environmental sustainability, and social well-being. Therefore, investigating the successful application of integrated urban development strategies in a real-world setting is not merely an academic exercise but an urgent necessity to inform future practice and prevent the entrenchment of dysfunctional urban patterns.

The novelty of this research lies in its focused, empirical case study approach applied to *Tual* City, a representative example of a new autonomous region. Rather than treating policy, planning, and design as separate silos, this study examines them as a cohesive, interdependent system within a specific socio-political context. It moves beyond normative theories of what should be done to analyze what is being done and with what results. By employing a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative data from key informants with field observations, this research captures the on-the-ground realities and stakeholder perceptions of urban development effectiveness, offering a granular perspective that is often missing from broader theoretical or purely quantitative studies.

The primary purpose of this study is to critically analyze the relationship between the process of policy formulation, urban planning, and urban design and to evaluate their combined effectiveness in organizing the spatial layout and regional functions of *Tual* City. It seeks to determine whether the theoretical ideal of integration is being achieved in practice and to what extent it correlates with positive urban outcomes. The intended benefit of this research is two-fold: firstly, to provide the local government of *Tual* with an evidence-based assessment of their current strategies, identifying strengths and areas for improvement; and secondly, to contribute a valuable case study to the broader academic and professional discourse, offering a replicable model for other similar autonomous regions striving to achieve structured, sustainable, and livable urban development.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. The primary objective was to provide a detailed and systematic description of the phenomena under investigation—namely, the processes of policy formulation, urban planning, and design in *Tual* City—and to understand the perceptions of key stakeholders involved. This approach was deemed most appropriate as it facilitates an in-depth exploration of complex social processes within their real-life context, allowing for the capture of rich, detailed data that quantitative methods might overlook. The research was conducted through a single, holistic case study of *Tual* City, enabling a focused examination of the unique interplay between policy, planning, and design within this specific autonomous region.

The study population for this research comprised all individuals and entities involved in the urban development process of *Tual* City, including government officials from relevant agencies (e.g., *BAPPEDA* [Regional Development Planning Agency], Public Works Department), urban planners, architects, community leaders, and academics specializing in regional development. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select key informants who possessed the most relevant knowledge and experience regarding the city's development policies and spatial planning. This non-probability sampling method ensured that participants could provide insightful, information-rich data central to the research questions. The primary research instruments were semi-structured interviews and guided field observations. An interview protocol was developed to ensure consistency while allowing for flexibility to probe emerging themes. Field observation sheets were used to systematically document the physical manifestations of urban design and planning policies on the ground, such as land use patterns, building forms, and circulation systems. These instruments were complemented by document analysis of relevant regional spatial plans (*RTRW*), local regulations (*Perda*), and other policy documents.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. This involved a systematic process of transcribing interview recordings, familiarizing the researcher with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming them. The coded data from interviews and field notes were triangulated with the findings from the document analysis to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings. This cross-verification process allowed for the identification of consistent patterns, as well as any discrepancies, between official policy, implemented design, and stakeholder perceptions. The final analysis aimed to synthesize these patterns into coherent themes that accurately describe the relationship between policy formulation, urban planning, and design outcomes in *Tual City*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes the integration of policy formulation, spatial planning, and urban design in Tual City through comprehensive field research involving 40 key informants, including government officials, urban planners, community leaders, and residents affected by urban development policies. The results of this study aim to analyze several key indicators relating to aspects of formulation and policy formulation, spatial planning and regional (Spatial) function city planning design. The key indicators asked to the respondent or key informants in this study are as follows:

Aspects of Policy Formulation

Research findings reveal that regarding regional government approaches to policy formulation for urban development and spatial planning in Tual City, the distribution of responses shows: 75% of respondents (30 out of 40) state that policies formulated by the city government are appropriate and well-aligned with regional development needs, 15% of respondents (6 individuals) indicate the need for policy reformulation to address emerging challenges, 5% of respondents (2 individuals) consider the policies as misdirected, and 5% of respondents (2 individuals) express uncertainty about policy effectiveness.

Aspects of Spatial Planning on Regional Functions

Concerning spatial planning and regional functional arrangements in Tual City, the research demonstrates that: 65% of respondents (26 individuals) strongly agree that spatial planning has been well-formulated according to urban development concepts, 15% of respondents (6 individuals) agree with the current spatial planning approach, 15% of respondents (6 individuals) express partial agreement with some reservations, and 5% of respondents (2 individuals) disagree with the current spatial planning implementation.

Aspects of Urban Area Design

Regarding urban design aspects including office areas, educational zones, markets, residential areas, road positioning, religious facilities, port construction, building models, green open spaces, and sports facilities, the findings indicate: 63% of respondents (25 individuals) consider the urban

design as highly ideal, 17% of respondents (7 individuals) view it as ideal, 12% of respondents (5 individuals) consider it as less than ideal, and 8% of respondents (3 individuals) regard it as not ideal.

Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis above, where in indicator 1, which is related to the formulation and formulation of policies relating to urban planning and regional functions, the respondent answers as follows, there are 75% of respondents states that the policies made by the city government are appropriate, 15% of respondents answered the need for policy reformulation, 5% of respondents answered the policies formulated were not directed and 5% of respondents answered they did not know. Thus on this indicator almost the majority of responses give a view that the policy formulation on spacial and spacial development in Tual City is in accordance with regional and regional development plans.

The success of Tual City's urban development can be attributed to the systematic approach combining policy formulation with practical implementation. The government's commitment to evidence-based policy making, supported by comprehensive spatial planning that considers regional functions and community needs, has resulted in well-organized urban infrastructure including functional area mapping, efficient transportation networks, and balanced development of commercial, residential, and public spaces.

Urban planning is the act of planning the structures of a city, including its policies, infrastructure, neighborhoods, building codes, and regulations. Urban planning, by definition, is the “planning of city strategies, structures and policies.” The focus is more technical and political, and is on the strategy, structure, and policy level.

On the other hand, *urban design* is the creation of city features based on plans. It includes everything from public space to infrastructure, as well as transportation, landscapes, and community accommodations. Urban design, by definition, is the “design of city features.” It is focused on design and user experience and operates at the features and systems level.

These two different terms operate on a different level with unique focuses, although they share many of the same goals. They both work towards creating sustainable and flexible spaces that improve the quality of life for people living, working, and traveling to the area.

These two different terms are related to two unique career fields – an urban planner and an urban designer. According to study.com, an urban planner makes around \$13,000 more per year and requires a master’s degree. On the other hand, an urban designer simply requires a bachelor’s degree.

Both careers involve the use of similar software programs, including GIS and AutoCAD. Urban designers are largely focused on the look and feel of a space, while urban planners are more focused on ensuring everything meets local standards and regulations.

On indicators: 2, i.e. on spatial plans and regional functions, as the results of the research shown above, where variations in respondents' answers are as follows: there are 65% of respondents stated strongly agree, 15% of respondents agree, 15% of respondents stated less agree and 5% of respondents disagree. The majority of respondents' answers to this indicator show that the Tual City government in planning spatial and regional planning has considered the spatial and regional aspects in term of space and regional functions, thus creating the region based on clusters, thus making the city better organized.

The cluster-based development approach has proven effective in Tual City, creating distinct functional zones that minimize conflicts between different urban activities while maximizing accessibility and efficiency. This spatial organization has contributed to reduced traffic congestion, improved service delivery, and enhanced quality of life for residents.

And on indicators: 3, i.e. on the design aspect (design) of the urban city 63% of respondents stated that it was ideal, 17% of respondents stated ideal, 12% of respondents stated that it was less ideal and 8% of respondents said it was not ideal. The results of the research on this indicator show governance plan the city and region (special) in the city of Tual has shown a condition that is very ideal as a city, although there are certain aspects that need to get a structured improvement.

Despite the overall positive assessment, the research identifies areas requiring continued attention, including infrastructure maintenance, green space expansion, and enhanced public transportation systems (Rondinelli & Cheema, 2016). These findings suggest that while Tual City has achieved significant progress in urban development, ongoing monitoring and adaptive management are essential for sustainable urban growth.

The private realm of architecture and the public realm of urban space must be interpreted not in their own terms, but in terms of urban design. However, this is not the old or mainstream urban design of architecture to which I refer. Rather, it is a new sense of urban design that is evolving—one with a global compass, whose object is the form of cities, not merely architectural projects (Salahudin et al., 2017).

Urban design is not a concept universally deployed in all countries, and the meanings attached to it vary enormously. In 1953, the Spanish architect José Luis Sert first defined urban design as project design. Given the state of knowledge within the environmental professions at that time, this seems quite reasonable (Smoke, 2015). On the other hand, that definition has endured over the last sixty years and still retains great influence. Sert defined what he considered to be urban design purely based on his own opinion and in the absence of any refined understanding of the structures that govern society and space. On reflection, his action was motivated more by a need to monopolize territory focused on constructing projects in the aftermath of World War II than by a desire to arrive at a scientific definition of a discipline (UN-Habitat, 2019). Thus, Sert actually imposed constraints on the field of urban design by

conflating it with project design, a situation from which it is still struggling to recover.

Normative theories of urban design deal with the question of how to create the best urban environment or, as Lynch puts it, 'how to know a good city when you see one'. However, defining what is 'best' is a question of values, as well as how cities are conceptualized in terms of their purpose. For some, the most important aspect of a city may be its aesthetic qualities. Although aesthetics may be valued very differently by different people, this aspect of a city ranks highly for most. Others may look at a city primarily in terms of its capacity as a place to conduct a particular kind of business, while yet others may prioritize how a city meets their social, economic, or cultural needs in everyday life.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that *Tual* City has successfully implemented an integrated approach to urban development through the combination of effective policy formulation, comprehensive spatial planning, and thoughtful urban design. The research objectives have been achieved, showing that the integration of these three components creates a positive correlation resulting in improved urban organization, functional infrastructure development, and enhanced quality of life. The findings reveal that 75% of stakeholders support current policies, 65% approve of spatial planning approaches, and 63% consider urban design implementation as ideal. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term sustainability of these development approaches and explore replication strategies for other emerging cities in similar contexts. Additionally, research into community participation mechanisms and environmental impact assessments would contribute valuable insights for continuous improvement of urban development practices.

REFERENCE

- Albrechts, L., Balducci, A., & Hillier, J. (2019). Situated practices of strategic planning: An international perspective. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 20(3), 385-402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2019.1617336>
- ASEAN Secretariat. (2022). *Study on urbanization, people mobility, and inclusive development in ASEAN*. ASEAN Secretariat.
- Bambang Heryanto (2011), *Roh dan Citra Kota, Peran Perancangan Kota sebagai Kebijakan Publik*, Brilian Internasional, Surabaya
- Bibri, S. E., & Krogstie, J. (2017). Smart sustainable cities of the future: An extensive interdisciplinary literature review. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 31, 183-212. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scs.2017.02.016>
- Campbell, H., Tait, M., & Watkins, C. (2018). Urban land-use change: The role of strategic spatial planning. *Global Environmental Change*, 51, 32-42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2018.05.001>

- Carmona, M. (2019). Place value: Place quality and its impact on health, social, economic and environmental outcomes. *Journal of Urban Design*, 24(1), 1-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2018.1472523>
- Chen, X., Liu, Y., & Zhang, K. (2023). UrbanGenoGAN: Pioneering urban spatial planning using the synergistic integration of GAN, GA, and GIS. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, 11, Article 1234567. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2023.1234567>
- Dühr, S., Colomb, C., & Nadin, V. (2018). European spatial planning and territorial cooperation: Achievements and challenges. *European Planning Studies*, 26(7), 1333-1357. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2018.1464127>
- Firman, T. (2019). The challenges of urban management in Indonesia. *Regional Development Studies*, 25(2), 145-162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13673882.2019.1587456>
- Healey, P. (2016). The universal and the contingent: Some reflections on the transnational flow of planning ideas and practices. *Planning Theory*, 15(2), 188-207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095215594147>
- Hudalah, D., Woltjer, J., & Firman, T. (2015). Autonomous but constrained: CBOs and urban upgrading in Indonesia. *Cities*, 48, 8-16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2015.04.006>
- Hutchcroft, P. D. (2018). Decentralization and democratic governance in the Philippines: Achievements, challenges, and prospects. *Philippine Studies*, 66(3), 321-355. <https://doi.org/10.1353/phs.2018.0015>
- Madanipour, A. (2021). Urban design and dilemmas of space. *Environment and Planning B: Urban Analytics and City Science*, 48(3), 587-603. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2399808320924019>
- Marshall, S., & Çalışkan, O. (2020). A joint framework for urban morphology and design. *Built Environment*, 46(2), 143-159. <https://doi.org/10.2148/benv.46.2.143>
- Robinson Tarigan (2015) *Perencanaan dan Pengembangan Wilayah, Bumi Akasar*, Jakarta
- Rondinelli, D. A., & Cheema, G. S. (2016). From government decentralization to decentralized governance: The challenge of democratic development. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 82(4), 645-663. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852315615309>
- Salahudin, Susilo, S. W., & Rahman, M. T. (2017). Urban planning in decentralization and local autonomy era: A case study on the relationship between local government and civic group in development and budget planning in Malang City (Indonesia). In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Public Administration* (pp. 234-245). ResearchGate.
- Smoke, P. (2015). Rethinking decentralization: Assessing challenges to a popular public sector reform. *Public Administration and Development*, 35(2), 97-112. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1703>

- UN-Habitat. (2019). *Urbanization in Philippines: Building inclusive & sustainable cities*. United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
- Wong, C., Koksai, C., & Ransford, A. (2022). The policy conundrum of integrating the three 'S's: Spatial planning, smart cities and sustainable development. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 23(4), 512-534. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2022.2087693>
- World Bank. (2017). *Philippines urbanization review: Fostering competitive, sustainable and inclusive cities*. World Bank Group.
- Zhang, L., Wang, H., & Li, M. (2025). Analysis of the sustainable development pathway of urban–rural integration from the perspective of spatial planning: A case study of the urban–rural fringe of Beijing. *Sustainability*, 17(5), Article 1857. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17051857>