

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORIC FACTORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE CURRENT URBAN MORPHOLOGY OF TAMBARAM

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ABSTRACT:

This paper aims to provide an understanding of the Urban Transformation and the Morphological pattern of Tambaram area in Chennai, India, by exploring its historical development patterns and their relationship with the current morphology. Tambaram, located in the southern part of Chennai, has undergone significant transformations over the years, shaped by its historical, social, economic, cultural and environmental contexts. By studying its historical development, urban growth patterns, and the interplay of various factors, this research aims to shed light on the current morphology of Tambaram and its implications for urban planning and development.

Keywords: Urban Morphology, Land use, Tambaram, urban growth

OBJECTIVE:

The objectives of the study are to

- Understand the Influence of historical events and their effects on land-use change in the current morphology
- Understand the actors of growth and development in urban & sub-urban Areas.

INTRODUCTION

Tambaram is a well-known locality in the southern part of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. It is situated about 25 kilometers away from the city center and is a prominent residential and commercial area. It is part of the Kanchipuram district and falls under the Chennai Metropolitan Area.

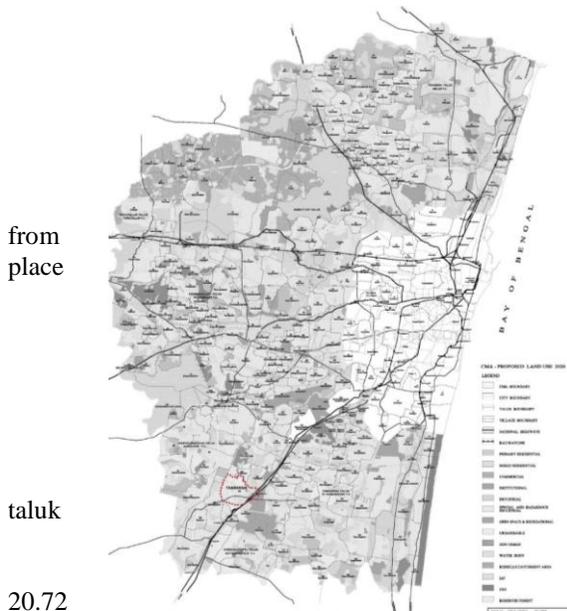


Figure – Tambaram highlighted in Chennai metropolitan map

Once a suburb of Chennai, it is considered as the gateway to city. It acts as a main transit hub for commuters neighbouring districts and long distance commuters. The is famous for its market – a productivity hub and the other commercial establishments. These are the major potential aspects of the space that generally come up when discussing about the place. Tambaram has more historic significance and plays a in important role in many aspects relating to the city.

Tambaram itself acts like a polycentric city, growing eccentrically amidst the contrast. It houses the headquarters. Many central government and state government regional and local offices are located here. As Shown in Figure 1, the area of Tambaram municipality is sq.km. The population as per the 2011 census is 1,64,830.



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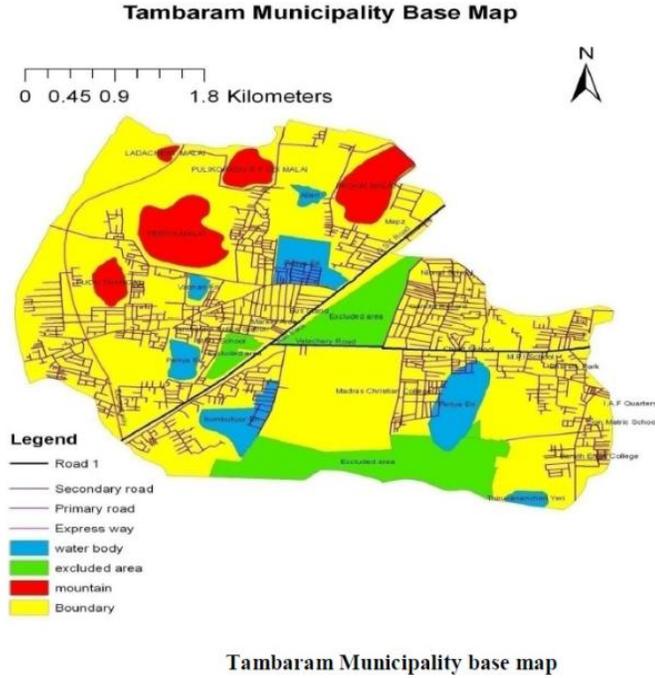


Figure 1 -Tambaram Municipality base Map

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENTS.

It is a historic town, referred to as Taamapuram in an ancient inscription of the 13th century. As Shown in Figure 2, this region was a barren battlefield surrounded by mountains, water bodies, and temples. Many wars have been fought in these grounds from the times of Pallavas. When the emperor's rule declined and the British rule came into action, Tambaram was still strong enough to handle the foreign reign. As Shown in Figure 3, the British held their military camp in Tambaram, as a protecting territory to avoid invaders into Madras.

As they needed a mode of transport to connect with the city, the Tambaram railway station with just 2 tracks was constructed. This was the time when tuberculosis was being spread among the Indians. In order to protect the people, the Tambaram Sanatorium was built and slowly the development came around the hospital.

An electrified suburban line was started in 1930 which connected the Beach station to Tambaram. This addition was important in the development of the place. As Shown in Figure 4, in the modern period, Tambaram became an important destination when the Madras Christian College moved here in 1937. During the Second World War, a temporary Naval Air Station was established as an emergency facility during World War II and later on it was retained to develop the present Indian Air Force Station, Tambaram.

MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY OF TAMBARAM

This part of the study attempts to understand the growth of Tambaram through centuries and to identify the major factors that triggered its development. Diagrams are used for visualizing the development patterns of the place (Figure 2,3,5,6). It is observed that the major growth has happened after the development of the road and railway lines. Relocation of the Madras Christian College has increased the rate of growth and has attracted many new residential settlements for both employment and education purposes.



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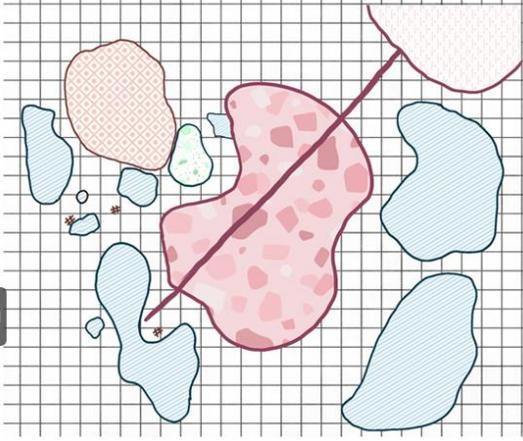


Figure 2 - Tambaram Battle Field

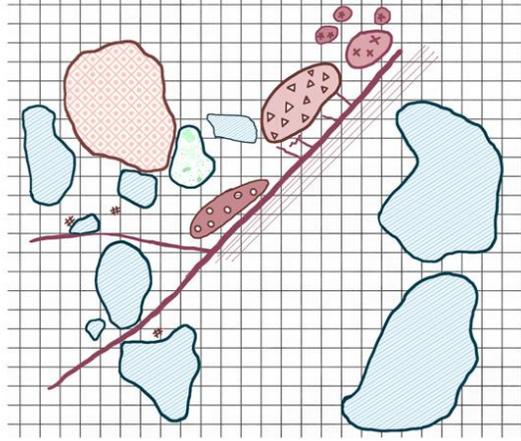


Figure 3 - Military Camp & Railway

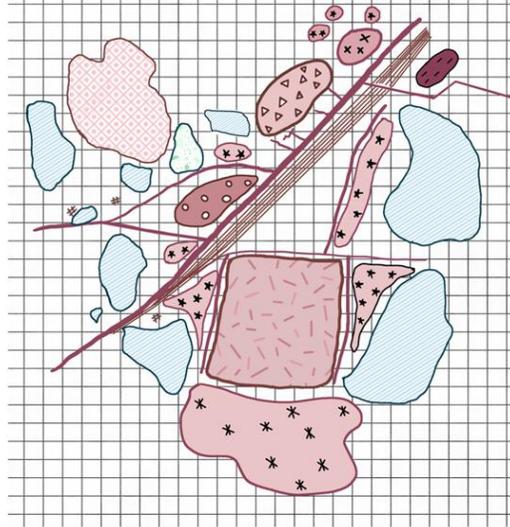


Figure 5 - Relocation of MCC

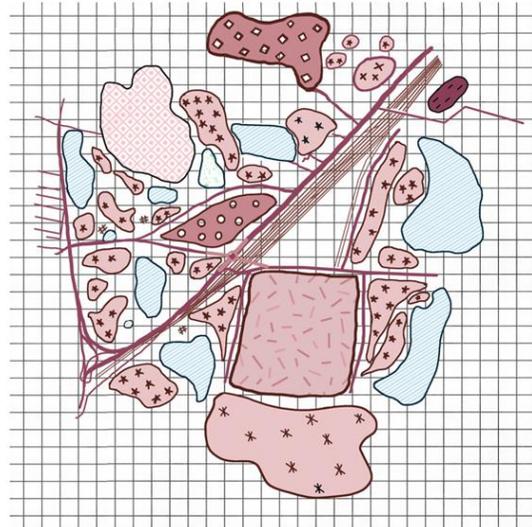


Figure 6 - Current Development.

Tambaram has evolved from a small village into a bustling suburban area with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial zones. As Shown in Figure 8, it is well-connected to the rest of Chennai through road and rail networks. The locality is known for its educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and shopping centers.



Figure 7 -Tambaram Imageability Map.

- Tambaram has a range of housing options, including independent houses, apartments, and gated communities. It is home to a diverse population, including professionals, students, and families.
- Commercial and Industrial Centers: Tambaram houses several commercial establishments, including retail outlets, restaurants, and offices. The locality also has industrial areas, contributing to the city's economic growth.
- Transportation: Tambaram is a major transportation hub in Chennai. It has a railway station that connects the locality to various parts of the city and neighboring towns. The Chennai International Airport is approximately 13 kilometers away from Tambaram.
- Education and Healthcare: Tambaram is renowned for its educational institutions, including schools and colleges offering courses in various disciplines. The locality also has several hospitals and healthcare centers, ensuring easy access to medical facilities.
- Infrastructure: Over the years, Tambaram has witnessed infrastructure development projects to meet the needs of its growing population. Roads, public transportation, and other civic amenities have been improved to enhance the quality of life for residents.



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Figure 8 -Tambaram - Study Area.

In recent years, Chennai has witnessed significant urban expansion and development in its suburbs, including Tambaram. The city's growth has been driven by factors such as population increase, economic opportunities, and improved connectivity.

The historical development patterns have shaped Chennai's current morphology, with a mix of traditional and modern architecture, a diverse socio-cultural fabric, and distinct neighborhoods with their own unique characteristic.

ANALYSIS.

Various aspects such as demographics, infrastructure, economy, transportation, education, and healthcare were analyzed.

1. Demographics:

- Population: Tambaram has a significant population, which has likely increased over the years due to urbanization and migration.
- Diversity: The area is known for its diverse population, with people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds residing there.

2. Infrastructure:

- Residential Areas: Tambaram is primarily a residential area, with a mix of independent houses, apartments, and gated communities.
- Commercial Establishments: It has several commercial centers, including shopping complexes, markets, and retail outlets, catering to the needs of the residents.
- Utilities: The area has access to essential utilities such as electricity, water supply, and sanitation facilities.
- Connectivity: Tambaram is well-connected to other parts of Chennai through road and rail networks.

3. Economy:

- Employment Opportunities: Being a suburban area, Tambaram provides employment opportunities mainly in sectors such as education, healthcare, retail, and services.
- Industrial Growth: The presence of industrial zones and business parks in nearby areas has contributed to the economic development of Tambaram.

4. Transportation:

- Rail Network: Tambaram has a major railway station that serves as a transit hub for local and long-distance



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trains, connecting it to various cities and towns.

- Road Connectivity: It is well-connected to other parts of Chennai through arterial roads and highways, facilitating easy commuting.

- Public Transport: Buses and auto-rickshaws are commonly used modes of public transportation within and around Tambaram.

5. Education:

- Schools and Colleges: Tambaram houses numerous educational institutions, including schools, colleges, and professional training centers, providing access to quality education.

- Higher Education: There are well-known universities and colleges in nearby areas, offering higher education opportunities to the residents.

6. Healthcare:

- Hospitals and Clinics: Tambaram has several hospitals, clinics, and healthcare centers, catering to the medical needs of the residents.

- Specialized Services: The area provides access to specialized medical facilities, including multispecialty hospitals and diagnostic centers.

FINDINGS

Analyzing the historical growth of Tambaram it can be seen that the current day GST road has existed as the main spine connecting the then growing city from age old times. Growth of Tambaram and its neighboring settlements have occurred along the GST road.

Historically Tambaram used to be a battle ground and in a similar fashion, it currently houses Tambaram Air Force Station. The opening of a small railway station has now transformed into a transit hub supporting a major share of public transportation. It can be seen as an important historical development that has resulted in the economic development of the current day Chennai.

Tambaram's population is likely to have grown further since 2021 due to ongoing urban development and migration trends. The area's diverse population indicates a multicultural and vibrant community. Continued urbanization and industrial growth in nearby areas may have a positive impact on Tambaram's economy, providing employment opportunities. Ongoing investments in infrastructure development are expected to enhance connectivity and improve the quality of life for residents.

The availability of educational institutions and healthcare facilities suggests that Tambaram is well-equipped to cater to the educational and healthcare needs of its residents. Tambaram is a densely populated area with a diverse mix of residents. The region offers a range of housing options and has witnessed significant real estate development. The presence of transportation infrastructure, including railways and roadways, ensures good connectivity to other parts of Chennai.

The availability of educational institutions, healthcare facilities, shopping centers, and recreational spaces contributes to the overall livability of the area. Tambaram's economy benefits from a mix of industries, commercial establishments, and a thriving small business sector. The proximity to the Chennai International Airport and its connectivity through railway and bus services make Tambaram accessible for both domestic and international travel.

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