



Wazir Khan Mosque, inside Delhi Gate

Bazaar-e-Hakima, inside Bhatti Gate

## Urban Rehabilitation in Heritage Cities: Bhatti area of Walled City Lahore

*Sajida Haider Vandal*

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*Islamabad December 1-3*

**Sub-Theme “Sustainable Cities and Communities ”**

*Sub-themes: Urban Planning, Clean water & Sanitation, Clean Energy, Sustainable transport, Eco-cities.*

# Bhatti Project 1

## The Bhatti Project WALLED CITY PROJECT AREA

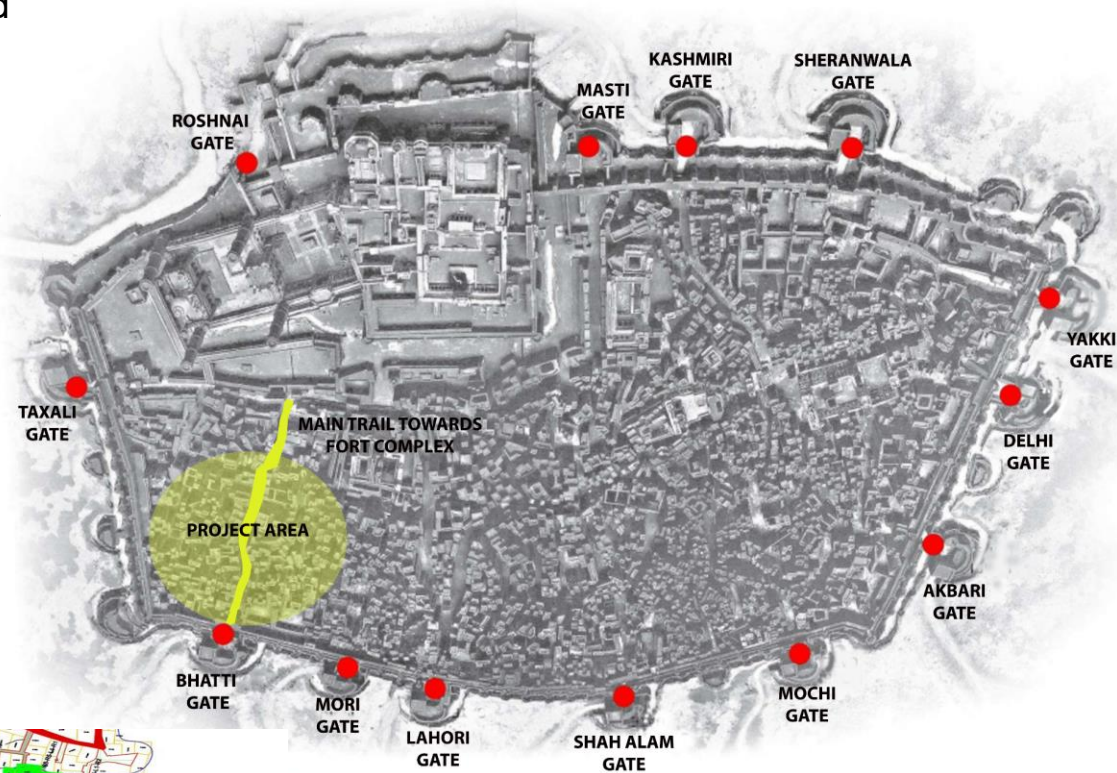
### Introductory Note

Bhatti Gate is one of the thirteen gates of the Walled City of Lahore. It is located on the western side of the old city. The Gate has a long heritage as a center for art, literature, and intellectual pursuits. The region is well known for its mouthwatering cuisine, especially the Bazaar-e-Hakima, home to traditional healers and fragrant spices. With its distinctive blend of historical and cultural significance, this western gateway provides a window into the colorful history of Lahore.

The Bhatti Gate is one of the two earliest entry points to the Walled City. It is also famous for it was the Gate from which Maharaja Ranjit Singh made his triumphant entry into the city in 1799. The main trail of Bhatti, passing through the Bazaar-i-Hakima, leads to the citadel with has the WHS of the Fort, and Aurangzeb Badshahi Mosque with a cluster of monuments of the Sikh and Mughal era surrounding the famous Huzuri Bagh.

### Famous Personalities of Bhatti

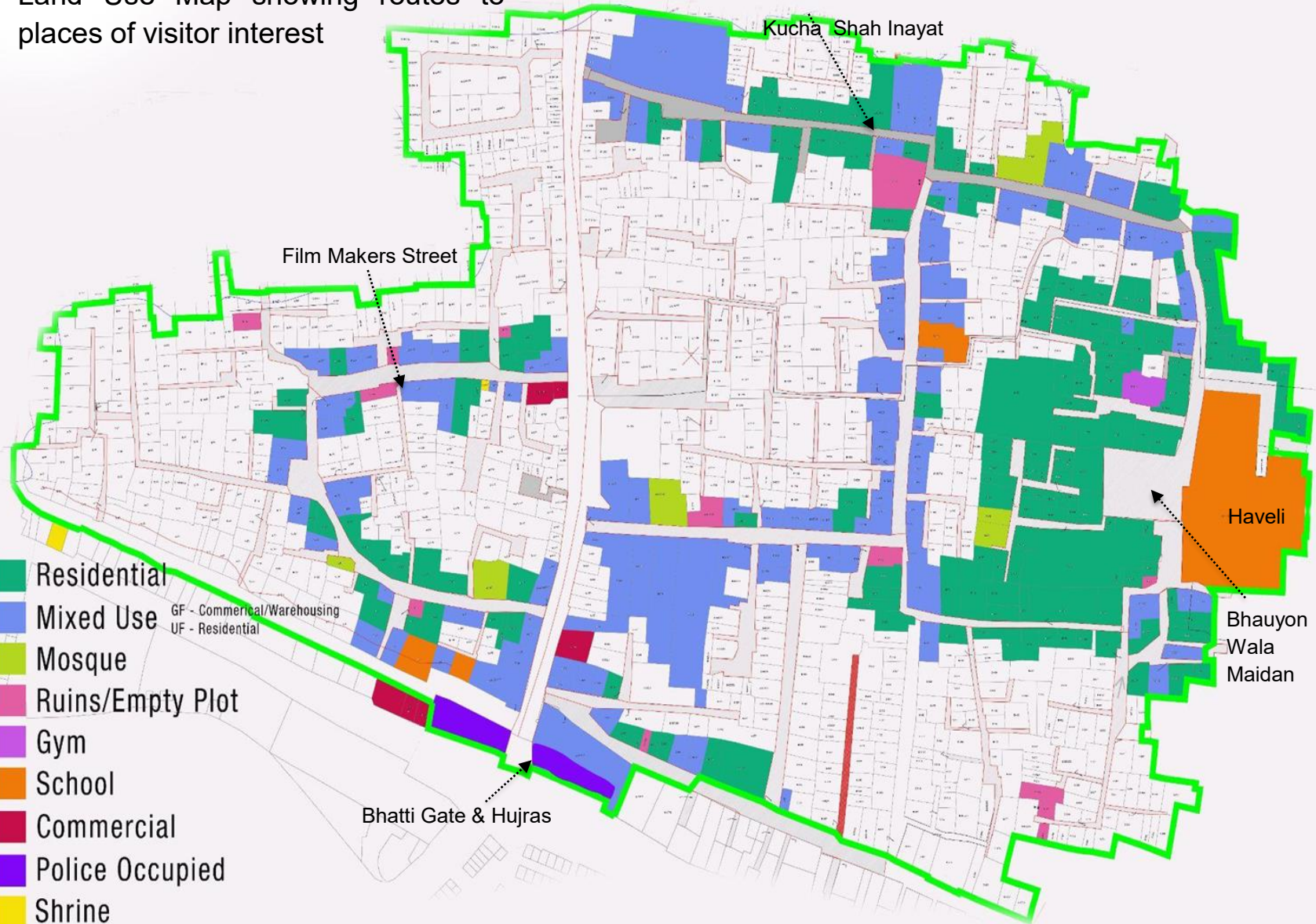
Many famous persons are associated with this area including our national poet Iqbal, Sufi Ghulam Mustafa, and others as well as the famous architect Bhai Ram Singh, the freedom fighter Bhagat Singh. Famous Hakims of Bhatti area include Vasti Ram & Hakim Fakir Azizuddin & Film Makers.



*A glorious past juxtaposed with the present realities*

*A microorganism in pockets of the ills such as drug abuse, small crimes, street gangs etc.*

Land Use Map showing routes to places of visitor interest



# The Bhatti Project, WC Lahore 2023- ongoing

BHATTI- 1 PROJECT AREA : NUMBER OF PROPERTIES			
	Total	Phase 1	Phase 2
West	315	144	171
East 1	345	177	168
East 2	356	151	205
Main Trail	72	72	-
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>1088</b>	<b>544</b>	544
<b>Total Heritage Properties</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>72</b>	85
Heritage	133		
High Heritage	21		
Special Category	3		

Phase 1 Main Routes may increase the inequities. ghetto of the poor ???



A typical Street in the private residential enclaves of the Bhatti Area

Major routes to access heritage properties in each area e.g. Film Makers Street, Route to Bhaiyon Wala Maidan, Kucha Inayat Shah. Although most are semi-public streets, some of these also impinge of the privacy of the resident communities.

# Project Objectives and Expected Outcome

## The Bhatti Project

### Expected Outcome

#### Obj. 1 Urban Rehabilitation

##### Physical Fabric

- the building façades,

##### Infrastructure

- improvement/ up-gradation of infrastructure facilities
- ( water supply, fire hydrant system, sewerage, storm water, electrical work, illumination work, sui gas, telecommunication, and street surfacing).

#### Obj. 2 Conservation

##### Preservation of Significant Heritage Structures

Primarily through Façade Uplift & in special cases through conservation and/ or repurposing the usage

#### Obj. 3 Sustainability & Resilience

##### Through Community participatory Approaches

**A PROJECT UNDER THE  
UMBRELLA OF PUNJAB  
TOURISM FOR ECONOMIC  
GROWTH (PTEG)**

#### Revitalization of the Area

- 1) Interventions to resonate the overall goal of enhancing its attraction as a prime tourism destination
- 2) Enhance the Livability of the Project Area

#### Economic Growth

The rehabilitation effort is expected to attract tourism and investment, thereby boosting local economies.

# The Bhatti Project

## Challenges Faced



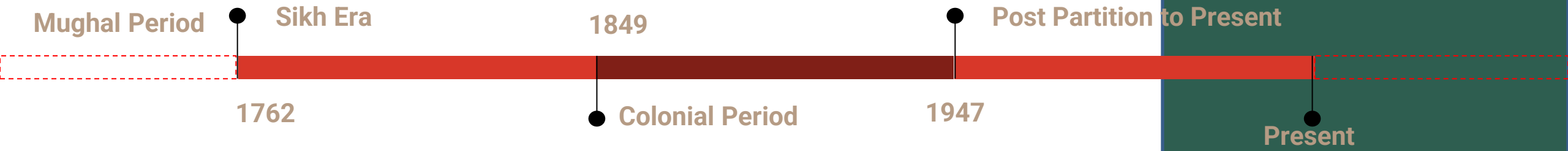
# Timeline

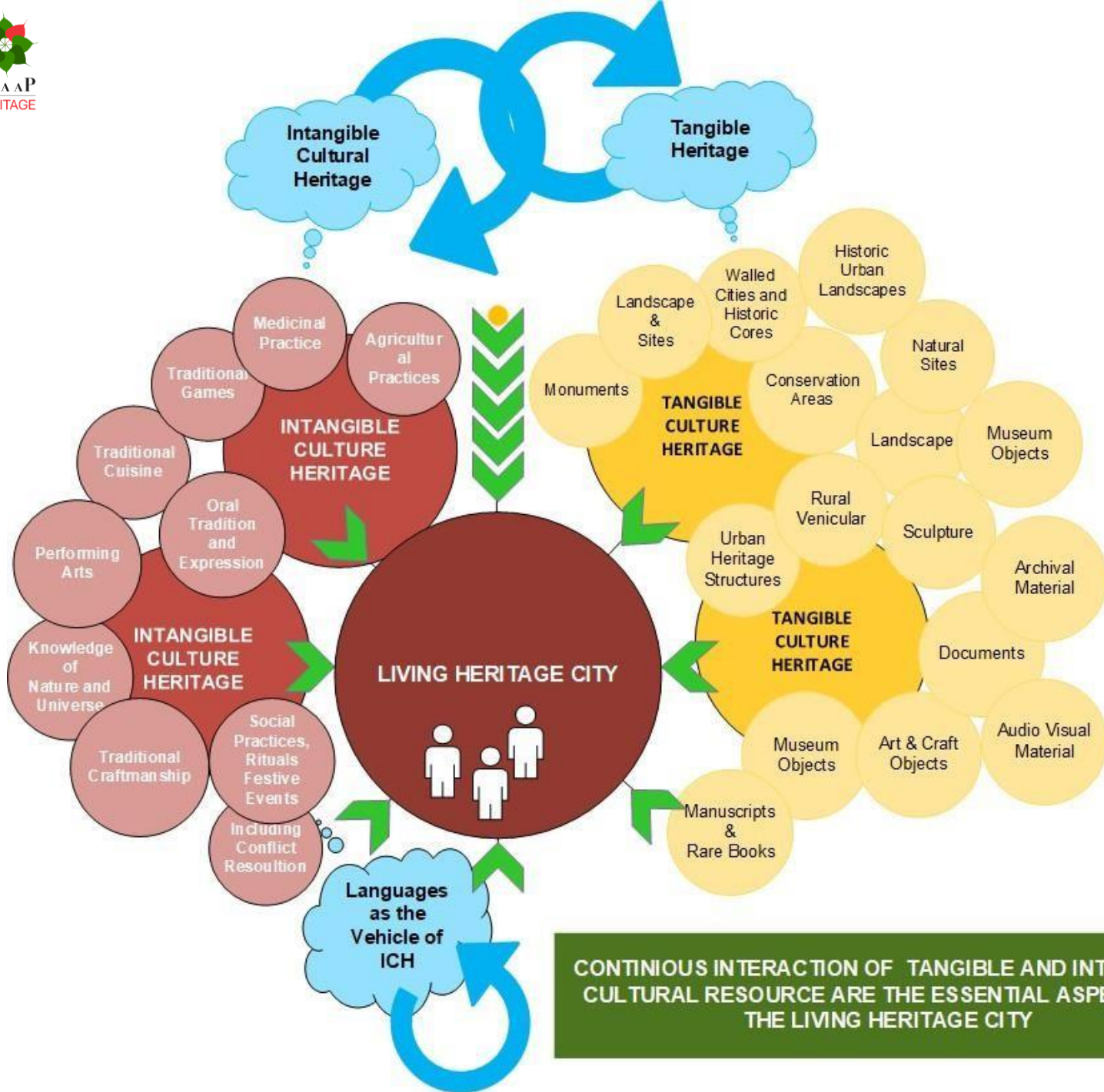
Streets of Lahore (1890s) (Source: Macnabb Collection)

Walled City, Lahore :1921 Source: Maynard Owen Williams (

Delhi Gate (Recent) (moc.pirt.www//:sptth:ecruoS)

- A significant characteristic of a “Living Heritage City” is the Layers of History that it encapsulates. The tangible and intangible layers embedded with the built form and retained in the memory. The narratives, stories, place names, the festivals and melas, the built form all reflect the passing of time
- Retaining the Integrity of the Tangible and Intangible Layers of History. Absorbing changes over time and avoiding “Disneyland” solutions is a significant Challenge





# The Bhatti Project

## Characteristics of a Living Heritage City

Developing the Conceptual Framework

Understanding Cultural Heritage as manifested in the context of the Project Area is essential to developing insights into the complexities of a dynamic changing environment.

*Retaining the Integrity of the Tangible and Intangible Layers of History*

*Learning from the People : Looking for Local Solutions*



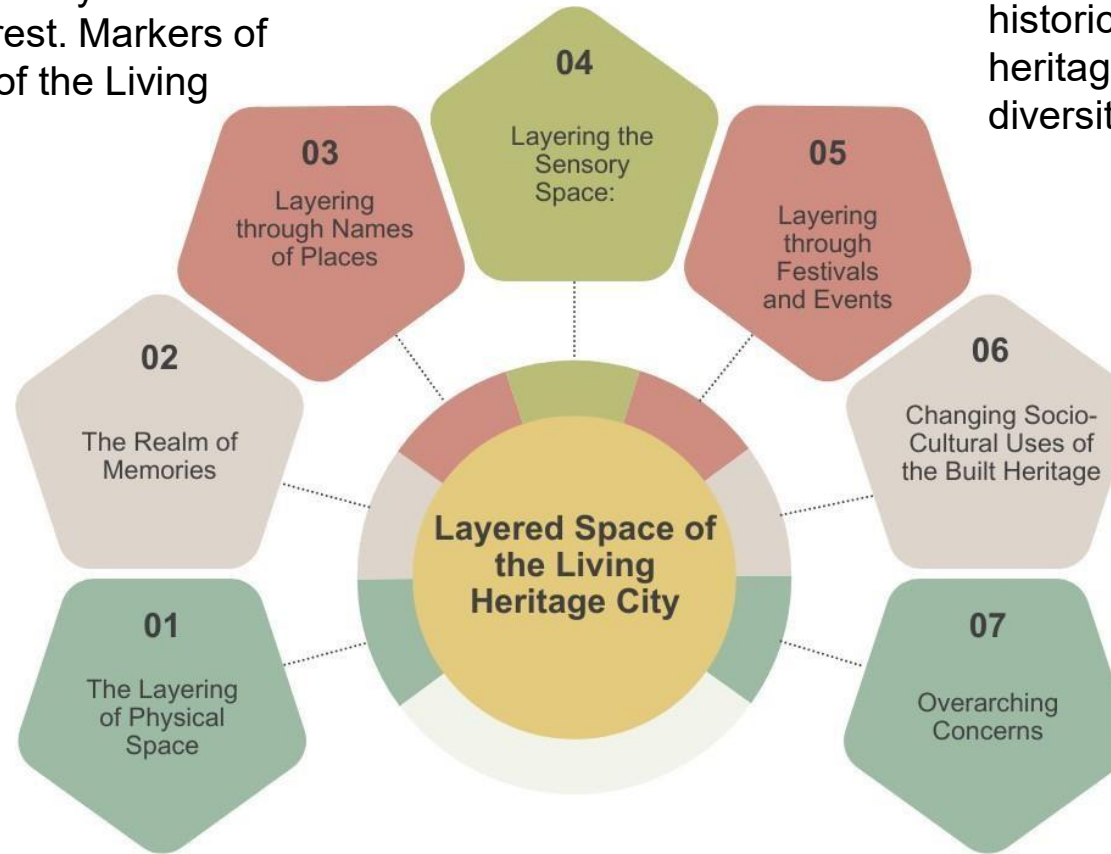
“No Solution Fits All”  
People Centered and Place Bound Approach to Development

3. Prompt Memory and Provoke interest. Markers of the antiquity of the Living City

4. The olfactory and auditory landscape of the city is captured through the cultural and social use of space in the city

5. **The secular & the religious festivals** are a significant marker of the historicity of a living heritage city & the cultural diversity (**Basant. Besaki**)

2. Retained in the minds of people & transmitted intergenerationally over time



6. A dynamic living organism creates a layering of uses of heritage resources due to society's changing values or needs. **Drivers for Repurposing & Adaptive Reuse** are many including the **intent to erase memory**

1. Changing architectural styles & elements which become the essential markers of a particular period of history. "Proof of Live" of a Living Heritage City

7. the Heritage City represents the continuum in time and space of countless generations who have left their mark in the past as the present generation continues to do so daily. **The urge to recreate an imagined past is the biggest challenges**

# The Bhatti Project

## Characteristics of the Living City : Layered Space



A significant characteristic of a "Living Heritage City" is the **Layers of History** that it encapsulates. The tangible and intangible layers embedded with the built form and retained in the memory. The narratives, stories, place names, the festivals and melas, the built form all reflect the passing of time

The layering represents the values, world view, the aesthetics and the socio-cultural needs, the state of the technology and the environmental concerns among many more.



Mian Singh Haveli, Bhatti



Barriers against storm water



Islam Khan Street

## The Bhatti Project Challenges Faced

Fast Track Project with many complexities

1. Mega Projects of Conservation versus heritage rehabilitation of the habitat of the poor
2. Non-integrated approach and problems of sequencing
3. Mismatch of Priorities of Communities and the need for unlocking the Tourism potential for economic growth

### Reduced Heritage Structures & Premises

- Decline in the number of Heritage properties
- Structural Failure
- Demolished and Replaced with new , modern construction
- Loss due to natural causes
- Sub-division & Multiple ownership

### Structural Deterioration

Many buildings in the Bhatti Area suffer from neglect and decay, impacting the structural integrity and safety of the homes.

Structurally unstable buildings are prone to collapse during rains,

### Inadequate Infrastructure

The area's infrastructure is outdated, leading to poor sanitation, drainage issues, and limited access to essential services.

Electric overhead mains create safety issues. Wires clinging to walls are dangerous and hamper façade work

### Transport & Traffic Management

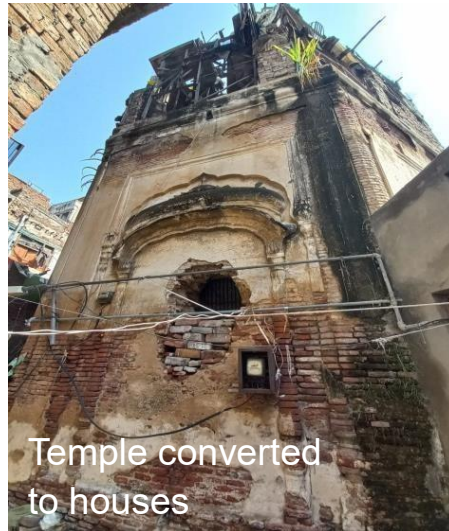
Roads essentially designed for pedestrian movement and animal driven transport are now chocked with all modes of transport.

Pedestrian movement along main roads is serious hurdle

No viable plan has been



Basic living



Temple converted to houses



Street corners, vacant lots converted as garbage dumps

### Increase of social – spatial inequalities and growing poverty & unemployment

The area's infrastructure is outdated, leading to poor sanitation, drainage issues, and limited access to essential services.

Drug Dens, Unemployed/ under employed youth

No leisure space and activities

### Urban Transformation Space and Meaning Post Independence Loss of Historical Layering

Less attention given to the properties of the “Others”

Reaffirmation of the Muslim City evidenced with an increase in Mosques

Many properties of the “Enemy” are now unidentifiable

No memory of the non-Muslim Literati, Hakims etc.

### Poor Services and Governance Structures

Garbage strewn in the Streets. Cleaning their City was named as the first priority in all formal and informal meetings with the community.

Over Reliance on the Government,

No viable alternatives exist.

Community Organizations are weak with limited roles

- Finding Ways for an Inclusive Urban Regeneration
- Retaining the Integrity of the Tangible and Intangible Layers of History
- Rapid Loss of Heritage

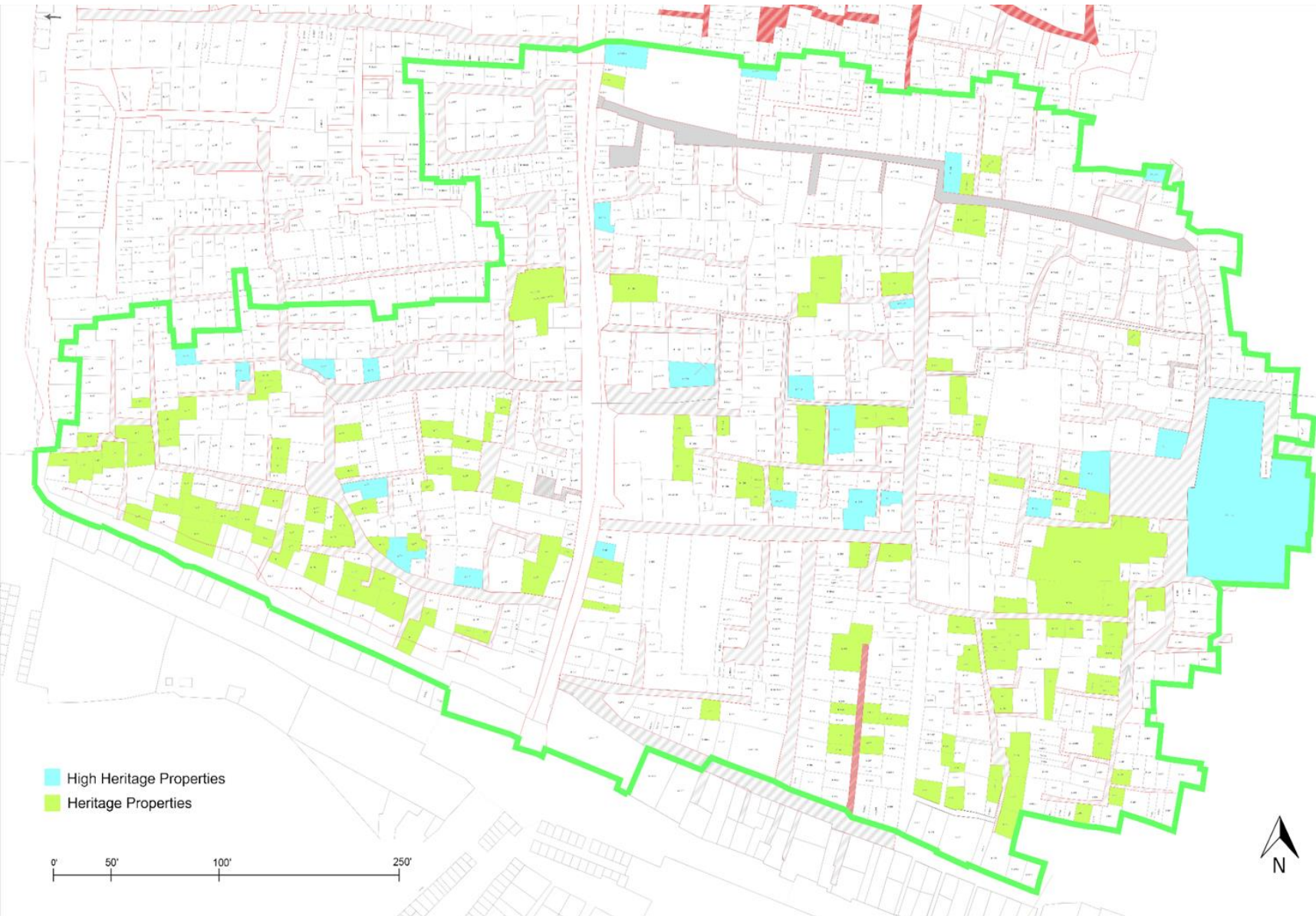


# Rapidly Diminishing Heritage Properties

## The Bhatti Project Challenges faced

### Loss of Heritage Properties over the years.

From 183 Heritage properties identified by WCLA count in 2018, there was a loss of 26 properties in 5 years in the Project Area. Another major loss was the demolition of the Main Singh Haveli.



Location of High Heritage and Heritage Properties in 2023		
Phase 1	High Heritage Properties	Heritage Properties
East 1	7	56
East 2	7	15
West	7	56
Main Trail	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Total Count 157</b>		

3 Properties were placed in the High Heritage Special Significance ( Haveli Nau Nihal Singh, Bhatti Gate and ancillary buildings & Main Singh Haveli

# Understanding Urban Rehabilitation: What is needed ?



## The Bhatti Project Challenges Faced: Gentrification

Gentrification is creeping in and parts of the Walled City are becoming out of bounds for local people

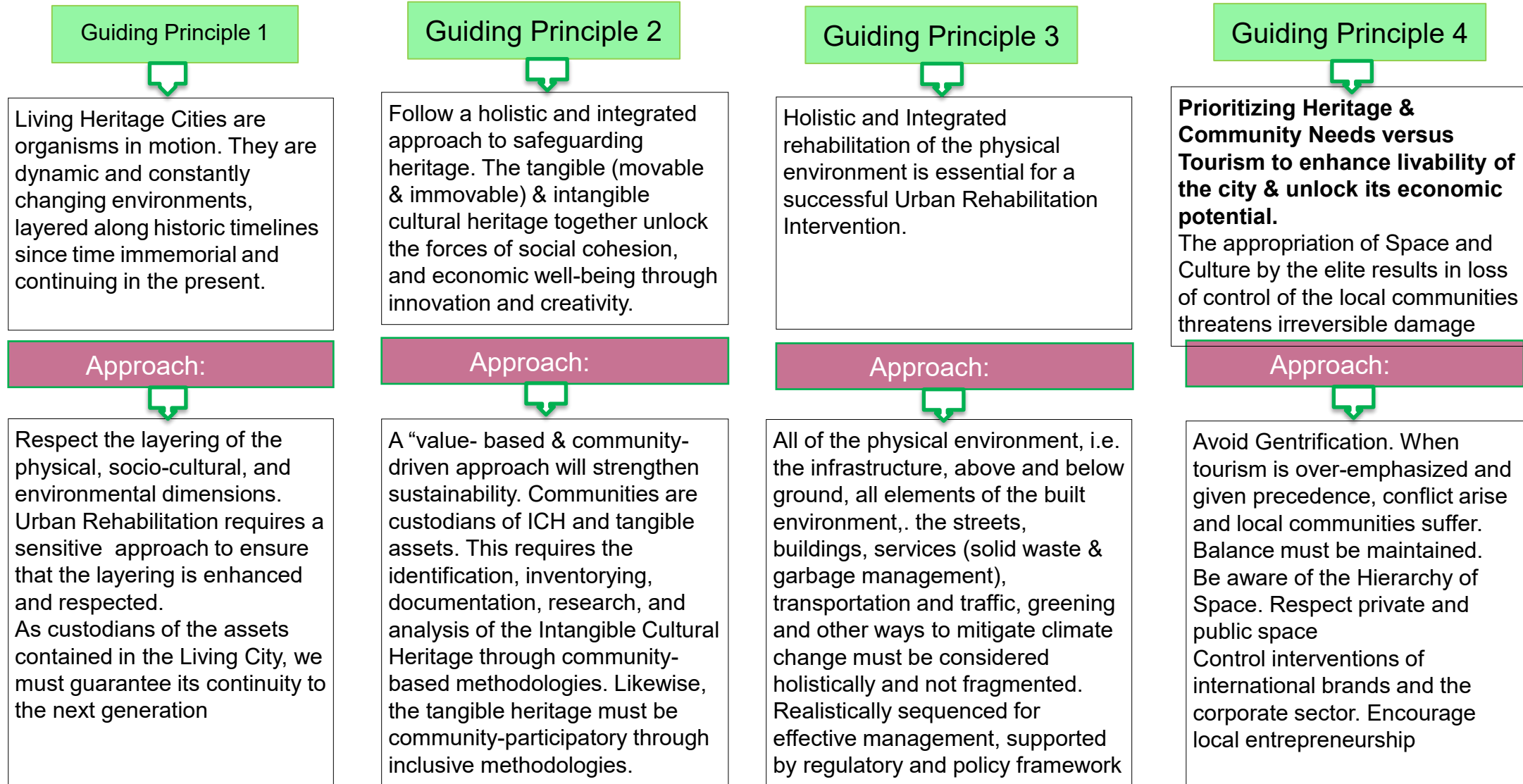
Urban Rehabilitation is meant to increase tourist footfall with an expected increase in income for local communities and investments from the high income groups and corporate sector.

Routes to the main magnets in the Bhatti Area e.g. Haveli Nau Nihal Singh will be developed through pathways to choose destinations with tourist facilities located on these select routes.



Balanced Approach with communities needs taking precedence will lead to viable sustainable solutions

Through the Project envisaged a limited agenda for the Urban Interventions, it became important to take a more integrated and holistic view to enable Guiding Principles that would be useful tips as keep in sight as we confronted the complexity of the urban heritage city.



Pockets of Heritage Structures can be found in a state of deterioration and neglect which the Project intends to salvage



### Community Engagement

Engaging local residents in the rehabilitation process ensures their needs are met and builds a sense of ownership.

### Sustainable Development

Implementing eco-friendly practices in construction and urban planning to enhance the living conditions.

*Look for Local Solutions and Build upon that*

### Conservation of Heritage

Preserving the historical elements of the Bhatti Area is essential to maintain its cultural identity while modernizing facilities.

## The Bhatti Project

### Rehabilitation Strategies envisaged

Opportunities

- Whose City ?
- Whose priorities?
- Whose Aesthetics

Opportunity for Social Justice & reduction of inequities

What is needed ?

Developing Place bound and People Centered Solutions

People's Centred Approach aims to Empower People to take charge of their lives.

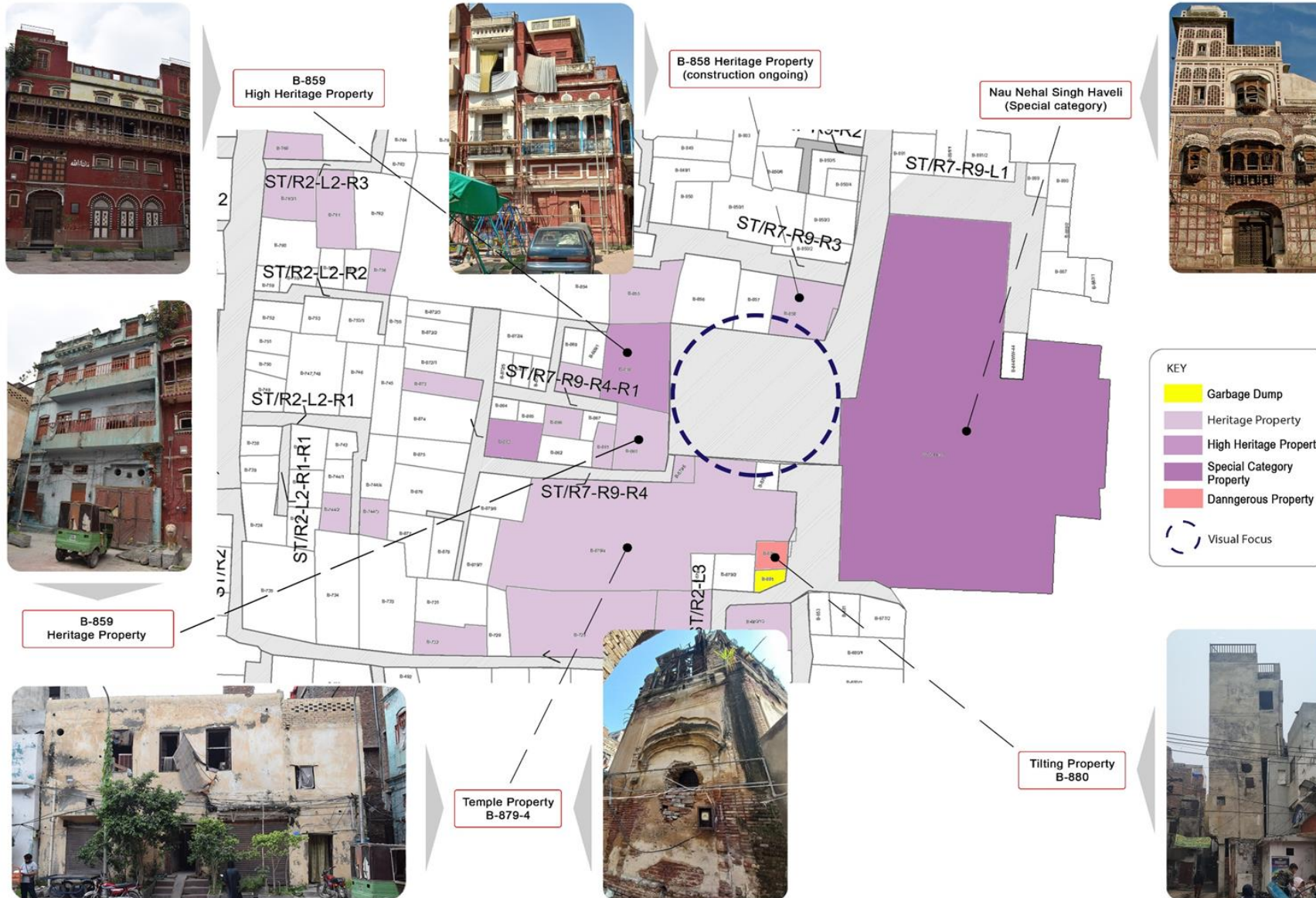
Place Bound Approach builds on Local Solutions



# Urban Transformation Space and Meaning: The Bhaiyon Wala Maidan

## The Bhatti Project Understanding the Context

- The Popular Narrative, actively promoted by the dominant clan in the area emphasises the connection & quasi ownership of the Kambo clan. (land belonged to them; temporarily leased to the Maharaja for the construction of the Nau Nihal Singh Haveli.)
- The tilted 4 Story building has been declared “Dangerous”, a misnomer since it allows government to demolish even heritage premises under this.
- **Bhaiyon Wala Maidan named after 4 Brothers is one of the few secular Urban Open Spaces in the Walled City**

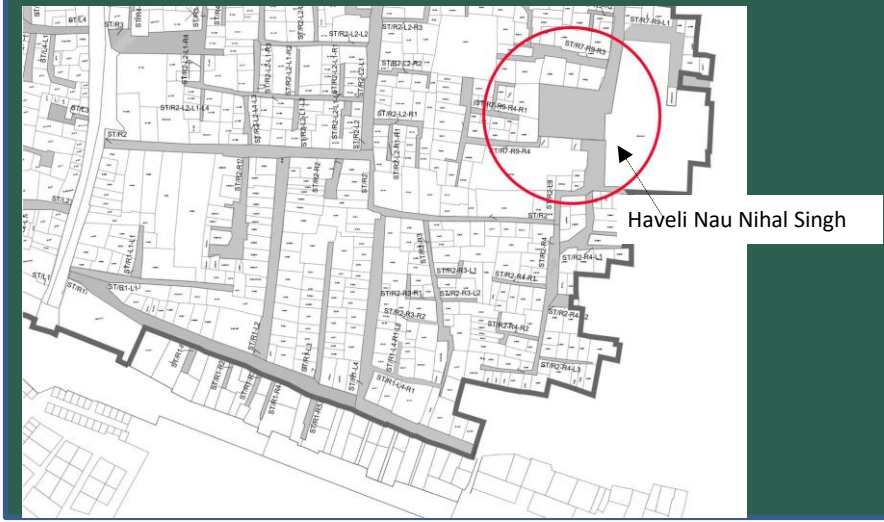


## The Bhatti Project Understanding the Context



Bhaiyon Wala Maidan, view from the Roof top of Haveli Nau Nihal Singh Bhatti Gate, Lahore(2023)

- Bhaiyon Wala Maidan named after **????** Brothers is one of the few secular Urban Open Spaces in the Walled City of Lahore. The others are mainly attached to religious establishments e.g. Wazir Khan Mosque forecourt
- The Maidan is currently used as an outdoor open space by the community. Children play swings, a large bed for community meetings and tables drawn out where men are found sitting playing board games





### Haveli Nau Nihal Singh Special High Heritage Category

- Popularly known as the Victoria School (est. in the early years after the annexation of the Punjab by the British in 1849).
- The Haveli was constructed in the late 1830s by Maharaja Ranjit Singh for his grandson Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh as a palatial residence.
- It has undergone various “unrecorded” conservation works with the embellishments of naqashi, jalliwork, *ainakari* seriously compromised.
- A Conservation Plan is proposed with independent funding sources being sought to avoid this on the “fast track” conservation projects
- ETPB are the custodians of the Property



Haveli Nau Nihal Singh, Bhatti Gate ,  
Lahore (2023)

Protected Monument 'under the Federal Antiquities Act 1975 transferred to Punjab under 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment



Haveli Nau Nihal Singh, Bhatti Gate, Lahore(2023)



Sikh Era

# The Bhatti Project

## Understanding the Context

Haveli Nau Nihal Singh  
Special High Heritage Category

### Surface Finishes

- Nanak Shahi Brick, Red Sandstone
- Lime Plaster, Kankar Limewash
- Colorful Frescoes

### Typology

- Distinct Jharokas
- Bukharchas
- Flora and fauna used in decorative facade work especially the symbolic use of lotus flower
- Mixture of curved and linear elements
- Carving and decorative elements in woodwork
- Khawab Gah or Rang Mahal on the rooftop, profusely decorated with Kangra Style *naqashi* on walls , *tehseen bandi* ceiling embellished with *ani-e-kari* and *naqashi*

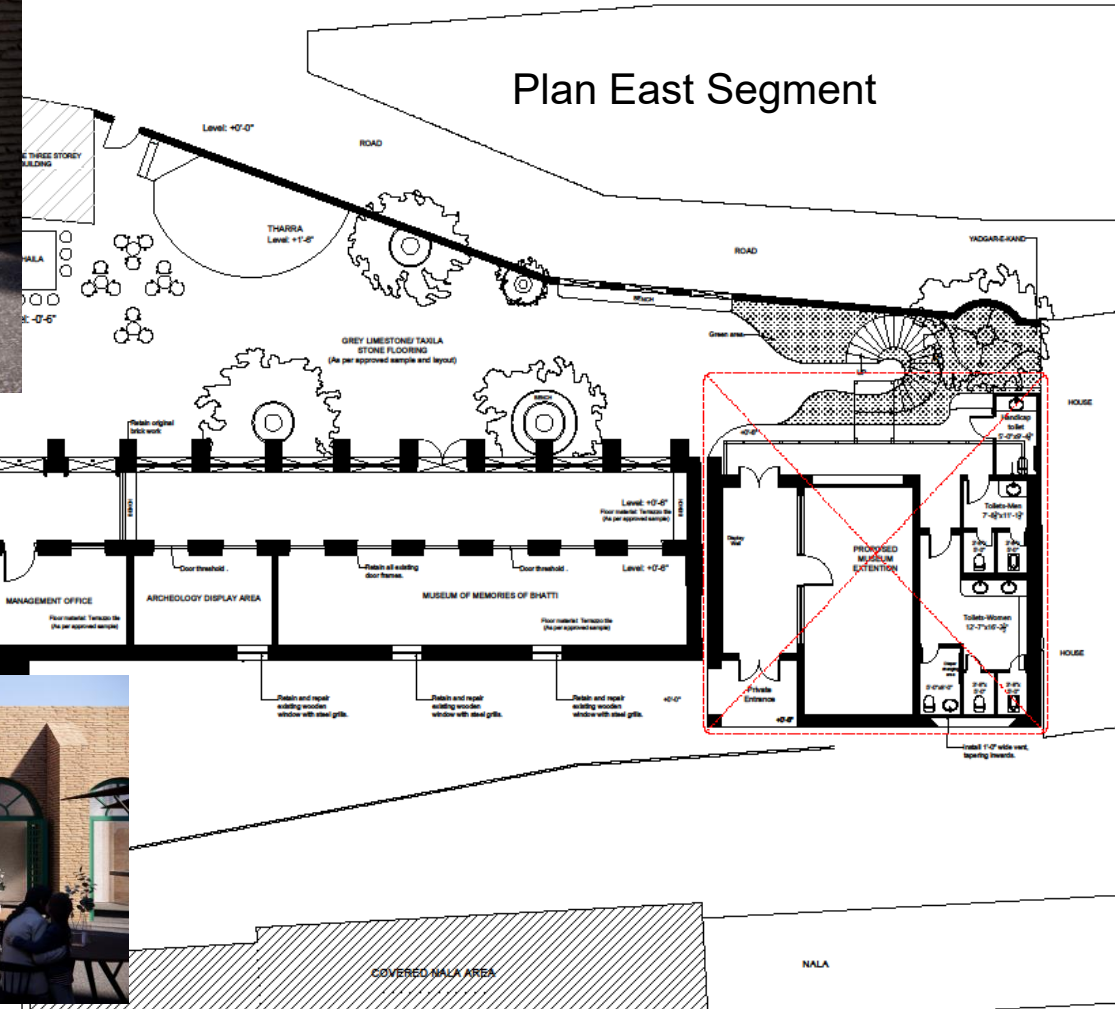




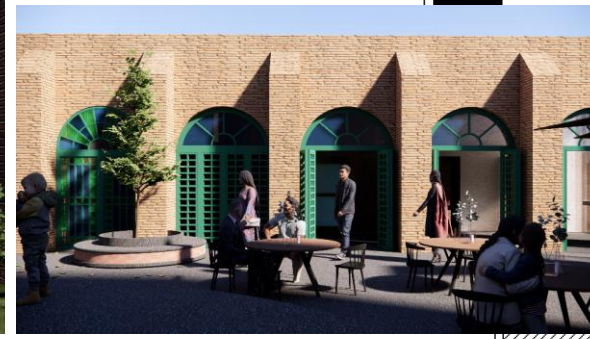
# Museum of Bhatti Memories at the Bhatti Gate: Repurposing in Hujras

An affirmative action to keep the shared pre-partition history as part of our common heritage

The Western wing has craft shops and visitor facilities whereas the Eastern has the Museum



The Western wing has craft shops and visitor facilities



# Local Greening initiatives for HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT and FOOD SECURITY

صحت مند ماحول کے لیے مقامی ہیریالی کے اقدامات



## The Bhatti Project Looking for Local Solutions

Climate Change & Urban Heat Island Effect

The few available data sources indicate that the UHI in the Walled City shows higher temp by 4.1 – 5.0°C at night and 2.9 – 4.1°C during the day

Non-segregation of Data re % of green area in the WC is not available.

Lahore shows a decline of green cover by about 75% from 2010





Multiuse Rooftops

# The Bhatti Project

## Strengthening Local Initiatives into Action Plans

### Green Action Plan

Integrated Green Transformative Action Plan to mitigate climate change effects in the Bhatti Area to maximize greening initiatives spearheaded by local communities and facilitated by WCLA & other stakeholders

The following priority plans can be considered

1. **Greening of Rooftops & Vertical surfaces**
2. **Property fronts**
3. **Greening of urban open spaces**
4. Greening of the Circular Garden
5. Greening of School Grounds & institutional buildings wherever land available
6. Developing an Effective Information-Education-Communication (IEC) Strategy
7. Effective & Intense Capacity Building of Local community for full participation and leadership of the program
8. Strengthening local organizational Structure for effective & sustainable delivery



**Khala Ji ki Bethak** ,  
Koocha Wasti Ram B-612 House) Meetings:  
Oct 2023  
Salman Public School,  
Bhatti Gate: a popular venue for larger meetings.

# The Bhatti Project

## Strengthening Local Initiatives into Action Plans

Social & Leisure Space for Communities

### *Baitaks & Women's Gyms*

1) Build on what exists.

Some which comes from the Traditional Value System & Lifestyle

Social Practices embedded in the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Communities

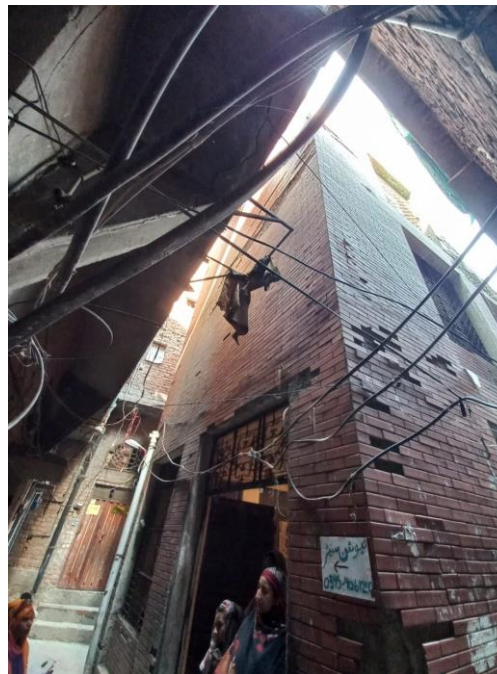
2) And Others which demonstrate the continuously changing aspect of ICH in response to new realities



Khala Ji ki Baithak



Community Center, Mohalla Aurangzeb, (East 2)



Community Center, Exterior (Local Government)

People's Centred Approach aims to Empower People to take charge of their lives

Place Bound Approach builds on Local Solutions

## FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS



Looking for a Brighter Future : The Bhatti children



Greening of Streets



Preparing for a Funeral

## The Bhatti Project Strategies For Enhanced Outcomes

The following will strengthen the interventions made under the Urban Rehabilitation Projects in Historic Towns

1. Communities as the primary Stakeholders must be involved early in the process and be involved in the Long Term. Economic Wellbeing must be built in for reducing inequities and injustices over the years
2. The imbalance created in the Walled city as a consequence of the narrative of our inability to co-exist with the “other” must be addressed through well planned interventions
3. Gentrification is already noticeable. Strategies & Policies need to be put into place to ensure that tourism needs do not take precedence
4. Urban Rehabilitation Intervention Strategies must be based on and INTEGRATED APPROACH and wisely sequenced for efficiency, quality and timely delivery.
5. Fragmenting projects and putting them on a Fast Track will not yield any results.
6. Conservation Projects must be done patiently with an eye on quality. Sufficient Resources and Technical Skills need to be accumulated including the establishment of an educational institute

# THE BHATTI PROJECT STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCED OUTCOMES

## FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS



Community Engagement Program as a Key Component of Urban Rehabilitation to accrue economic wellbeing and strengthen identity.



Integrating Cultural Knowledge in the local Schools

Pilot Project 2009  
UNESCO-THAAP



Traditional Craftmanship  
Bhatti Project Database

## Evidenced Based Community Engagement Program started at inception of a Rehab Project is the Key to Success

Suggested for the Bhatti Project Area at inception  
**Communities Empowered through ICH**

- Transmittal of Cultural Knowledge in the school system, education and Learning among youth and students
- Safeguarding Traditional Craftmaking through innovative strategies for Economic wellbeing of Communities
- Greening and Mitigating Climate Change

Future Projects should involve communities and plan projects according to their priorities and needs. Collaborating at all stages of the decision making process, rapid response to changing dynamics needs to be factored in community

Future projects should prioritize long-term community involvement and ensure transparent communication for better stakeholder alignment

Provide Technical Support to establish a viable Community Organizational Structure ensuring long term sustainability

The *socio-spatial dynamics* need to be addressed in the Urban Rehabilitation of the Project Area.

While the risk of *gentrification and residential displacement* must be kept at a minimum and a policy of no eviction must be followed, strategic intervention emanating from tourism also needs to be accommodated.

This can never be at the cost of *community needs which must take precedence*.

The vacant lots in the project area can be used to serve the requirements of both the community and facilitate tourism and must be considered as the asset to be judiciously used to align these potentially sensitive concerns.

THANK YOU

