



Spatial Assessment of Urban Parks in Mysuru City

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Abstract

Urban parks are essential components of sustainable city environments, contributing to ecological stability, social well-being, and overall urban livability. This study examines the spatial distribution and developmental status of parks across Mysuru City, a rapidly expanding urban centre with diverse neighbourhood characteristics. Ward-wise park information obtained from the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) was compiled and classified into developed and undeveloped categories. Field-based spatial observations were carried out to verify park conditions, followed by GIS-based mapping to analyse patterns of distribution and spatial concentration. Results indicate that while Mysuru possesses a large number of designated park sites, a considerable proportion remains undeveloped, particularly within rapidly urbanizing peripheral wards. Spatial disparities are evident, with well-maintained and fully developed parks predominantly located in older, centrally planned neighbourhoods, whereas peripheral areas show clusters of vacant, underdeveloped, or poorly maintained park spaces. The study emphasizes the need for balanced green space planning, prioritised development of underserved wards, and integration of GIS-based monitoring systems to ensure equitable access to quality parks and support environmentally sustainable urban growth in Mysuru

Keywords: Urban parks, Spatial distribution, Mysuru City, MCC data, GIS, ArcGIS, Developed and undeveloped parks, Urban planning.

1 Introduction

Urban green spaces including public parks, community gardens, institutional greens, and roadside vegetation play a critical role in enhancing environmental quality, supporting urban biodiversity, and improving the physical and psychological well-being of residents. In rapidly urbanizing cities, these green spaces function as essential ecological infrastructure, mitigating the effects of pollution, urban heat islands, and landscape fragmentation

[1]. Public parks in particular serve as accessible, multifunctional spaces that promote social interaction, recreation, and mental restoration, making them indispensable components of liveable and resilient cities [2, 3].

However, urbanization often exerts substantial pressure on available open spaces, leading to their encroachment, fragmentation, or conversion to built-up land. As cities expand, the imbalance between built infrastructure and

ecological spaces becomes more pronounced, resulting in deterioration of environmental quality and increasing disparities in access to urban amenities [4]. In many Indian cities, the pace of land-use change has far outstripped the creation and preservation of public green spaces, leading to significant intra-urban inequalities in park availability and accessibility [5]. As Indian cities expand rapidly, the pressure on available land and the demand for infrastructure have led to uneven distribution and degradation of green spaces.

Mysuru historically known for its planned neighbourhoods, tree-lined avenues, and expansive green cover has witnessed rapid growth in recent decades, with visible transitions from low-density built-up areas to compact urban landscapes. These land-use shifts have placed increasing pressure on the city's green spaces, particularly in densely populated wards where land scarcity and development demand are high. Despite its reputation as one of India's greener cities, recent studies indicate emerging disparities in the distribution and quality of parks across different parts of Mysuru, raising concerns regarding environmental equity and urban liveability. Understanding the distribution of both developed and undeveloped parks is therefore crucial for guiding urban planning and ensuring equitable access to green spaces for all residents.

Therefore, this study examines the ward-wise distribution of developed and undeveloped parks in Mysuru City, analyses spatial disparities in green provision, and evaluates their implications for equitable access, ecological sustainability, and long-term urban planning. By situating park distribution within the larger framework of urban growth and green space planning, this research contributes to ongoing discussions on sustainable urban development and helps identify priority areas for green space enhancement in one of South India's fastest-growing urban centres.

A review of existing literature highlights the growing importance of spatial assessment of green spaces in urban environments. Several scholars have emphasized the critical role of GIS-based analysis in evaluating park distribution, accessibility, and service coverage. According to Sharma (2014), the spatial pattern of parks in Indian cities often reflects socio-economic inequalities, with developed parks concentrated in older, planned neighbourhoods. Singh and Kumar (2018) demonstrated that GIS is an effective tool for identifying underserved

areas lacking adequate green space provision. Similar findings by Prakash (2020) show that undeveloped open spaces frequently remain unused due to poor planning and limited municipal investment. International studies by Tzoulas et al. (2007) and [3] also reinforce that equitable green space distribution is vital for maintaining urban resilience and public health. However, despite Mysuru's reputation as a green city, very few studies have analysed the ward-wise status of its parks using detailed municipal data combined with spatial techniques. This study addresses this research gap by providing a comprehensive spatial assessment of park development in Mysuru City.

The overarching aim of the present study is to analyse the spatial distribution, development status, and ward-level variations of parks in Mysuru City using secondary data and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To compile and classify ward-wise information on developed and undeveloped parks in Mysuru City.
2. To analyse the spatial distribution and concentration of parks across the 65 wards using GIS.
3. To identify spatial inequalities in park development and highlight wards requiring priority intervention.
4. To provide planning recommendations for the balanced and sustainable development of urban green spaces in Mysuru.

By integrating municipal records, spatial observation, and GIS-based mapping, this study provides an evidence-based assessment that can support urban planners, the Mysuru City Corporation, and policymakers in enhancing the distribution and quality of green spaces in the city.

2 Methodology

The present study is grounded entirely in the most recent and authoritative data obtained from the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC), which supplied comprehensive information on the number of developed and undeveloped parks across all 65 wards of Mysuru City. These data served as the core input for evaluating the spatial distribution and developmental status of urban green spaces. To conduct spatial analysis, the official ward boundary shapefile of Mysuru city was imported into ArcGIS software, where attribute fields were created and populated with MCC's park dataset. This integration enabled the spatial



attachment of park counts to each ward polygon, forming a geospatial database suitable for detailed analysis and visualization.

A Dot Density Map was then generated to depict the spatial distribution of parks across the city. In this map, each dot represented a single park distinguishing between developed and undeveloped categories to provide a visually intuitive representation of concentration patterns. Dot density symbology was applied using separate colour codes, allowing spatial clusters, deficits, and contrasting distribution patterns to be clearly observed. This approach is particularly effective in urban green space studies, as it captures both the magnitude and dispersion of parks within administrative boundaries.

Beyond visual mapping, descriptive spatial analysis was carried out to interpret the geostatistical patterns. Wards with high densities of developed parks were identified, often corresponding to older, well-planned central neighbourhoods, while wards dominated by undeveloped parks or lacking developed parks entirely were highlighted as deficit zones. Special attention was given to peripheral and rapidly urbanizing wards where spatial mismatches between residential expansion and park development were evident.

By combining municipal administrative data with GIS-based dot density mapping, the study ensured an accurate, replicable, and spatially comprehensive assessment of urban green space distribution in Mysuru City. This methodological framework not only enabled precise identification of green space inequalities but also provided a robust basis for subsequent analysis, interpretation, and policy recommendations.

3 Study Area

Mysuru City, the cultural capital of Karnataka, is located in the southern part of the state between 12°18' N to 12°26' N latitude and 76°29' E to 76°38' E longitude. Situated at an average elevation of 763 meters above mean sea level, the city covers an area of approximately 86.68 km² and is administered by the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC), which is divided into 65 wards. Mysuru is one of India's historically planned cities, known for its wide roads, iconic heritage structures, and well-maintained urban landscape. The city lies at the foot of the Chamundi hills and is drained mainly by the Kabini and Cauvery river systems, contributing to its moderate climatic conditions.

Mysuru experiences a tropical savanna climate, with warm summers, mild winters, and an annual rainfall of around 780–820 mm, largely influenced by the southwest monsoon. The climate is favourable for vegetation growth, making urban parks and green spaces an important component of the city's ecological structure. Rapid urbanization over the last two decades has resulted in expansion toward the northern, eastern, and southwestern peripheries, creating concerns about environmental sustainability and the equitable distribution of green spaces.

The study focuses on the ward-level analysis of developed and undeveloped parks, which together form the essential recreational and ecological green network of Mysuru City. Major residential areas exhibit varied green space development.

While older planned neighbourhoods have a higher concentration of developed parks, several peripheral wards still lack adequate recreational open spaces. Understanding the spatial distribution of these parks is crucial for assessing the city's environmental health, community accessibility, and future planning requirements.

4 Results and Discussion

The spatial assessment of urban parks in the Mysuru City highlights a distinct pattern in the distribution, development status, and functional condition of green spaces. The assessment of 65 municipal wards revealed a marked spatial heterogeneity in the distribution and development status of urban parks across Mysuru City. A total of 529 parks were identified, of which 184 (34.8%) are developed and 345 (65.2%) remain undeveloped. This imbalance between developed and undeveloped parks highlights the city's incomplete transition from reserved open spaces to functional recreational green areas.

The spatial pattern indicates that the north-western and south-eastern peripheral wards possess the largest number of parks, but most of these remain undeveloped. Notably, Hebbalu Lakshmikanthanager (Ward 1) and Vijayanagara 1st & 2nd Stage (Ward 20) each contain 43 parks, the highest among all wards, yet a substantial majority are undeveloped (33 and 38 respectively). Similar patterns are observed in Bannimantapa HUDCO (Ward 8; n=27), Kesare (Ward 9; n=16), and Dattagalli (Ward 46; n=21), suggesting that peripheral residential layouts have provisioned land for neighbourhood parks but have not yet translated these reserves into developed green spaces.



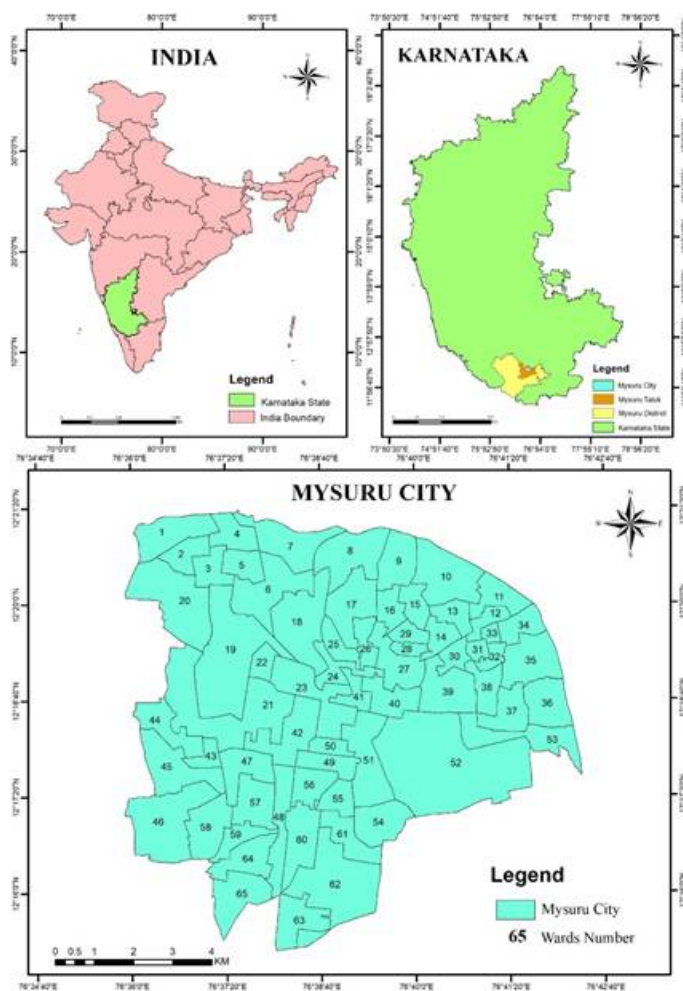


Fig 1: Location of Study Area

In contrast, older planned neighbourhoods in the city such as Yadavagiri (Ward 18), Jayalakshmi-puram–V.V. Mohalla (Ward 19), Agrahara (Ward 51), and Gokulam–Brundhavana (Ward 6) exhibit higher proportions of developed parks. These wards contain between 6 and 7 developed parks each, with a balanced ratio of developed to undeveloped open spaces. This reflects legacy planning characteristics wherein low-density residential layouts incorporated well-designed and accessible public green spaces.

Conversely, several high-density inner-city wards revealed a critical deficit of public parks. Mandi Mohalla (Ward 24), K.N. Pura & Gousianagara (Ward 31), Gousianagara A-Block/Usmaniya Block (Ward 32), Ajizsait Nagara (Ward 33), Sunnadakeri (Ward 50), and Gundu Rao Nagar (Ward 54) reported zero parks, indicating structural deprivation of basic recreational infrastructure. These wards are characterized by compact urban morphology, high population concentrations, and limited availability of open space, which collectively exacerbate the challenges of heat stress, inadequate ventilation, and reduced environmental quality.

Wards with moderate to well-distributed park networks include Sharadadevinagara (Ward 45; 16 parks), Kuvempunagara CITB (Ward 57; 14 parks), Ramakrishnanagara (Ward 58; 14 parks), and Raghavendra Nagara (Ward 37; 8 parks). Though these wards host a relatively larger number of parks, a substantial proportion is still undeveloped, indicating the need for strategic intervention to convert reserved lands into functional, well-equipped neighbourhood parks.

Overall, the spatial pattern demonstrates a clear gradient of green space availability:

- **Peripheral and rapidly urbanizing wards:** possess a high number of parks but low development levels.
- **Historic planned residential areas:** contain fewer parks but exhibit better development and maintenance.
- **Inner-core commercial and densely populated wards:** show critical shortages or complete absence of parks.
- The uneven distribution and development status of parks highlight the necessity for targeted ward-level green infrastructure planning, prioritizing densified and underserved wards while accelerating park development in peripheral areas with high green reserve availability. This ward-wise assessment forms the basis for evaluating green accessibility, adequacy, and policy alignment with URDPFI norms in subsequent analyses.
- This distribution demonstrates a significant imbalance in the provisioning of green spaces across the city.

Table 1: Distribution of Developed and Undeveloped Parks Across 65 Wards of Mysuru City

Sl.No	Ward No.	Ward Name	Developed Parks	Undeveloped Parks	Total Parks
1	1	Hebbalu Lakshmikanthanagar	10	33	43
2	2	Manchegowdanakoppalu	3	2	5
3	3	Madeshwaranagara Badavane	2	0	2
4	4	Hebbalu Lokanayakananagar	1	2	3
5	5	Kumbarakoppalu	0	3	3
6	6	Gokulam-Brundhavana	7	11	18
7	7	Metagalli	1	5	6
8	8	Bannimantapa HUDCO	2	25	27
9	9	Kesare	1	15	16
10	10	Rajivanagara	2	12	14
11	11	Shanthinagara 1	5	9	14
12	12	Shanthinagara 2	1	1	2
13	13	Udayagiri	2	4	6
14	14	Sathyanagara	3	1	4
15	15	Rajendranagara	1	10	11
16	16	Subashnagara	2	5	7
17	17	Bannimantapa	5	2	7
18	18	Yadavagiri	6	4	10
19	19	Jayalakshnipuram-VV Mohalla	6	3	9
20	20	Vijayanagara 1st & 2nd Stage	5	38	43
21	21	Gangothri	1	9	10
22	22	Padavarahalli-Vontikoppal	2	0	2
23	23	Subbarayanakere	2	1	3
24	24	Mandi Mohalla	0	0	0
25	25	Tilaknagara	1	2	3
26	26	Meenabazaar	3	0	3
27	27	Yeraganahalli	4	2	6
28	28	Gandhinagara	4	1	5
29	29	N.R. Mohalla	1	1	2
30	30	Kyathamarahalli	2	5	7
31	31	K.N. Pura & Gousianagara	0	0	0
32	32	Gousianagara A-Block/Usmaniya Block	0	0	0
33	33	Ajizsait Nagar	0	0	0
34	34	Kalyanagiri	1	10	11



Sl.No	Ward No.	Ward Name	Developed Parks	Undeveloped Parks	Total Parks
35	35	Sathgalli 1st Stage	3	5	8
36	36	Yaraganahalli & Ambedkar Colony	1	3	4
37	37	Raghavendra Nagara	4	4	8
38	38	Giriyabovipalya	1	1	2
39	39	Gokulapuram 1st Stage	6	8	14
40	40	Lashkar Mohalla	5	2	7
41	41	Devaraja Mohalla	1	1	2
42	42	K.G. Koppal	2	0	2
43	43	T.K. Layout	2	1	3
44	44	Janathanagara	3	6	9
45	45	Sharadadevinagara	6	10	16
46	46	Dattagalli	3	18	21
47	47	Kuvempunagara	4	8	12
48	48	Jayanagara	0	3	3
49	49	Lakshmipuram	2	0	2
50	50	Sunnadakeri	0	0	0
51	51	Agrahara	6	4	10
52	52	Ittigegudu	6	1	7
53	53	Kurubarahalli	7	5	12
54	54	Gundu Rao Nagar	0	0	0
55	55	Chamundipuram	2	4	6
56	56	Krishnamurthipuram	3	0	3
57	57	Kuvempunagara CITB	8	6	14
58	58	Ramakrishnanagara	3	11	14
59	59	Kuvempunagara M Block	3	10	13
60	60	Ashokapuram	0	1	1
61	61	Vidyaryapuram	0	2	2
62	62	Vishweshwaranagara	4	6	10
63	63	J.P. Nagar	5	1	6
64	64	Aravindanagara	3	2	5
65	65	Srirampura	5	6	11

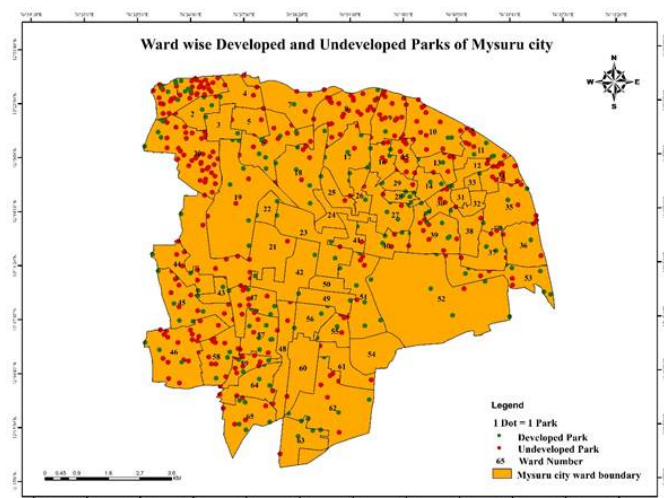


Fig 2: Ward wise Developed and Undeveloped parks of Mysuru city.

4.1 Uneven Green Space Provision and Evidence of Spatial Inequity

The dot-density map reinforces these disparities by showing dense clusters of park symbols in the core city area, gradually thinning toward the outer wards. This pattern suggests that urban expansion has not been accompanied by proportionate investment in green infrastructure. The analysis demonstrates a clear imbalance between developed (34.8%) and undeveloped (65.2%) parks, which indicates systematic inadequacies in translating reserved open spaces into functional recreational amenities. The presence of several wards with **zero parks**, particularly in the inner-core areas such as Mandi Mohalla, Sunnadakeri, and K.N. Pura, points to entrenched inequities in access to green spaces. These densely built neighbourhoods suffer from high levels of congestion, limited availability of public land, and historically organic growth patterns that often neglected structured green space planning.

This reinforces a major theme in urban environmental justice research that residents in low-income, high-density wards often face disproportionate exposure to environmental deficits, including lack of recreational amenities, elevated temperatures, air pollution hotspots, and reduced resilience to climate impacts. Such patterns emphasise the need for targeted interventions that

prioritise the most underserved wards in future urban development agendas.

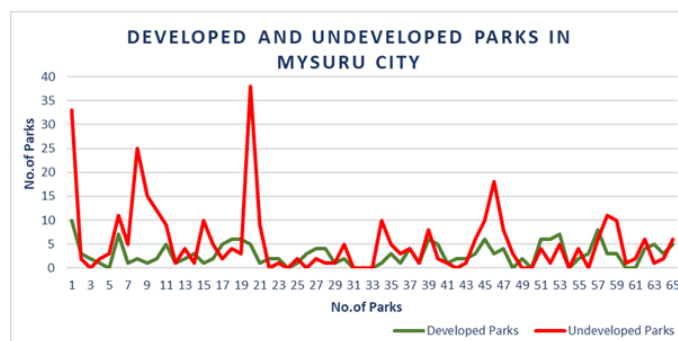


Fig 3: Developed and Undeveloped Parks in Mysuru city

4.2 Legacy Planning and Green Space Advantages in Planned Neighbourhoods

Developed parks in planned residential areas such as Yadavagiri and Jayalakshmipuram indicate the persistent benefits of early, structured urban planning. Similar findings have been observed in planned neighbourhoods in other Indian cities, where formal layout regulations historically incorporated public gardens, tree-lined streets, and recreational pockets (Nagendra & Gopal, 2011).

Such neighbourhoods continue to enjoy superior per-capita green space availability, reflecting the long-term ecological and social advantages of planned urban form (Khoshkar et al., 2020). This supports the argument that early planning frameworks can create enduring green infrastructure legacies.

4.3 Urban Expansion, Reserved Open Spaces, and the Development Gap

Peripheral wards with high numbers of undeveloped parks represent areas where planning has reserved land for green space, but functional development has lagged. Similar delays between land reservation and on-ground development have been documented in expanding Asian cities, where administrative, financial, and institutional constraints slow conversion of designated spaces into fully developed parks (Feng & Tan, 2017; Mell, 2018).

The large stock of undeveloped parks therefore represents “latent green infrastructure,” echoing findings that reserved open spaces often remain underdeveloped despite their high potential for enhancing ecological networks and social well-being (Haase et al., 2014).

4.4 Policy Implications for Accessibility, Urban Health, and Equity

Given that only one-third of total parks are developed, Mysuru city requires a more deliberate green space development strategy emphasising accessibility and equity. Research has shown that walkable access to neighbourhood-level parks significantly enhances usage, health outcomes, and social interaction (Giles-Corti et al., 2005; Maruani & Amit-Cohen, 2007). URDPFI norms recommending 300–500 m walkable access align with global principles of green space accessibility and inclusivity.

Ensuring equitable spatial distribution is especially important in the context of climate adaptation strategies, as urban green spaces serve as critical buffers against heat islands, stormwater runoff, and air pollution (Gill et al., 2007; Bowler et al., 2010). The deficiencies identified in high-density wards indicate zones where targeted interventions would produce the greatest environmental and public-health benefits.

4.5 Linkages with LULC Change and Urbanisation Patterns

The concentration of undeveloped parks in rapidly urbanising wards aligns with broader LULC findings for Mysuru, which indicate significant conversion of vegetated and open areas to built-up land between 2000 and 2020. (S.Sushmitha et al.,). This correspondence between LULC change and green space pressure is consistent with trends observed across Indian and global cities, where urban expansion disproportionately reduces accessible green areas (Seto et al., 2012; Pandey et al., 2021).

4.6 Suggestions and Policy Implications

- **Prioritizing Greening in High-Deficit Wards**

The ward-wise analysis reveals several neighbourhoods such as Mandi Mohalla (Ward 24), K.N. Pura-Gousianagara (Ward 31), Gousianagara A-Block (Ward 32), Ajizsait Nagar (Ward 33), Sunnadakeri (Ward 50), and Gunduraanagara (Ward 54) that have no developed parks. These areas are critically underserved and require immediate attention. Converting vacant parcels, government-owned lands, or brownfield lots into pocket parks can offer quick gains in green accessibility. Following URDPFI recommendations for walkable green spaces would help ensure equitable access across these wards.

- **Development of Existing Undeveloped Parks**

Several wards possess a large number of undeveloped park sites, including Hebbal (Ward 1), Bannimantapa HUDCO (Ward 8), Kesare (Ward 9), Rajivnagar (Ward 10), Vijayanagar (Ward 20), Dattagalli (Ward 46), and Kuvempunagar–CITB (Ward 57). These areas represent substantial latent green infrastructure. Transforming these undeveloped spaces through basic landscaping, native tree planting, and installation of essential amenities can quickly improve environmental quality and recreational access. Such upgrades would also help distribute park facilities more evenly across the city.

- **Addressing Spatial Inequity in Green Accessibility**

Green space distribution shows marked clustering, with the north-eastern sector of Mysuru having many undeveloped parks but relatively few functional ones. In contrast, western neighbourhoods such as Jayalakshmipuram, V.V. Mohalla, and Gokulam show stronger provision. Implementing ward-level accessibility analysis using 300–500 m buffers can identify underserved households and guide targeted interventions. Enhancing equitable distribution of parks is essential to ensure that all residents benefit from environmental and recreational services.

- **Enhancing Community Participation and Co-Management**

Given Mysuru's strong civic culture and active residential associations, community participation can play an important role in maintaining urban green spaces. "Adopt-a-Park" initiatives involving resident associations, educational institutions, and local NGOs can improve park upkeep and promote stewardship. Establishing community gardens in residential areas, particularly in Vijay Nagar, Dattagalli, and Kuvempunagar, may further strengthen public engagement with green spaces.

- **Improving Park Quality and User Experience**

Public perceptions generally emphasize the need for clean, safe, and well-equipped parks. Upgrading larger parks with jogging tracks, open gyms, children's play spaces, and adequate seating can significantly enhance user experience. Safety measures such as improved lighting and regular patrolling can increase park utilisation, especially among women, elderly residents, and children. Adopting universal

design principles will make parks more inclusive and accessible.

- **Ecological Restoration and Native Vegetation**

To counter projected future declines in green cover, emphasis should be placed on ecological restoration within parks. Introducing native species that require less maintenance and support local biodiversity—such as neem, honge, badami, and peepal—can strengthen ecological resilience. Larger wards like Vijayanagar, Dattagalli, Yadavagiri Gokulam Jayalakshmiapuram and Ittigegudu have potential for creating biodiversity zones or themed ecological parks

- **Micro-Level Greening for Dense Wards**

In high-density wards lakshkar mohalla, Mandi mohalla, sunnadakeri, Kalyangiri, Ajizsait nagara etc, with limited open space, micro-greening strategies can be effective. These include street-side tree planting, creation of green corridors, rooftop gardening, and promoting vertical greenery on public buildings. Integrating urban greening with road improvements and housing development will help supplement the limited green areas within compact neighbourhoods.

- **GIS-Based Monitoring and Data-Driven Planning**

A GIS-based green space monitoring system should be institutionalized to support long-term planning. Regular updates to ward-level park inventories, buffer-based accessibility analyses, and satellite-based vegetation assessments will help track the condition and distribution of urban green spaces. MCC should maintain a live GIS database for all parks, updated annually, to support planning, maintenance, and transparent public access to green space information.

- **Integrate Parks into Broader Urban Planning:**

Future residential layouts should mandatorily include green space planning at the initial design stage, avoiding delays in park development after occupancy begins. A minimum per capita green space norm should be introduced and monitored at the ward level to ensure that all residential areas have adequate access to recreational parks.

5 Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive assessment of the spatial distribution and development status, of urban green spaces in Mysuru City using ward-level park data which highlights the significant spatial variations in the distribution and development of parks within Mysuru City. With 529 parks identified across 65 wards of which 184 are developed and 345 remain undeveloped the city demonstrates substantial green space potential. However, the dot-density analysis reveals a clear concentration of well-developed parks in elite residential wards, while core and NE and NW peripheral and rapidly urbanising areas show sparse distribution and higher numbers of undeveloped parks. Such disparities point to the imbalance in green infrastructure provisioning during recent phases of urban expansion. In contrast, western and southern neighbourhoods such as Gokulam, Jayalakshmiapuram, and V.V. Mohalla exhibit relatively better provision of functional parks and recreational spaces. These spatial disparities highlight the uneven distribution of environmental benefits across the city.

The presence of a large number of undeveloped park sites in many wards indicates substantial untapped potential for strengthening the city's green infrastructure. Transforming these lands into functional neighbourhood parks could significantly enhance green accessibility and help address deficits identified in underserved wards. This emphasizes the need for proactive planning measures, including the protection of existing parks, development of new green spaces in deficit areas, adoption of micro-greening interventions in high-density neighbourhoods, and implementation of data-driven monitoring systems.

Although Mysuru has historically been recognised as a planned and green urban centre, the present findings indicate the need for equitable spatial planning, sustained investment, and systematic GIS-based monitoring of parks, especially in newly developing wards. Strengthening green infrastructure in outer wards will not only enhance recreational access but also contribute to ecological sustainability, urban livability, and public health. The study therefore reinforces the importance of integrating green space development with future urban planning policies to ensure Mysuru maintains its identity as a livable and environmentally balanced city which is in its rapid phase of urbanization.

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