

# Development Dynamics of New Towns in Mid Hill Highway Corridor: A Case of Basantapur

Alisha Gautam <sup>a</sup>, Ajay Chandra Lal <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a, b</sup> Department of Architecture, Pulchowk Campus, IOE, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

✉ <sup>a</sup> 078msurp001.alisha@pcampus.edu.np, <sup>b</sup> ajay@ioe.edu.np

## Abstract

Nepal adopted the federal system of government as directed by the Constitution of Nepal 2015 as federal, provincial and local level government. For the balanced regional development in the country, federalism played an important role. And urban development requires strategic planning to be in reach of overall people. The urban growth trend of the cities in nodal location with Mahendra highway and north-south corridor are very intense. All of these cities are now recognized as metropolitan (Bharatpur) and sub-metropolitan city (Itahari, Hetauda, Kohalpur (Nepalgunj) and Attariya (Dhangadi)). The allocation of these 10 new cities in mid-hill highway may show the same character in near future and can grow as an important urban centers in the hilly region. The development dynamics in Basantapur from different time frame till now will pursue a detail knowledge about how these cities will behave in the nearer future. Various study like the selection criteria, development model and pattern adopted in the case and political commitment has played an important role in this justification. As discussed, the proposed new towns in hilly areas plays an important role in serving the balanced regional development in the country if they were allocated scientifically. Or if they were just allocated as per the political pressure and popularity, huge amount of national budget, human resource and plans would go waste. Here, only around 3% of the total estimated budget is seen in expenditure in this prestigious project and a very few development works are seen carried out till present. This research tends to find out the gap in reality between the planning and actions in the field such as political commitment, coordination between stakeholders and a sense of responsibility too.

## Keywords

Basantapur, Development, New Town, Urban, Settlement

## 1. Introduction

A region is spatial concept with an uninterrupted area with some kind of homogeneity/ similarity in its core, with or without a clear limit. And, Regional planning is "concerned with the ordering of human activities in supra-urban space - that is, in any area which is larger than a single city." [1]. Also, "Under the multi-level planning system for development, regional planning is defined as the ordering of human activities in supra-urban space in relation to other spatial units of the national territory with a view to attain social and economic integration in space and facilitate national development [2].

### 1.1 Regional Planning in Nepal

For the first time in the country, Harka Gurung made an effort in developing a spatial strategy for development in Nepal. He carried out an intensive exercise for developing a regional development strategy which he formulated for the Fourth Plan of the country. It was really the first formal exercise for regional planning in Nepal. The regional development strategy developed by Gurung for the Fourth Plan tried to establish three pioneering concepts in national development efforts as the need of inception of spatial dimension in Sectoral planning, Regional strategy for development, and Development of backward areas [3].

This regional development strategy envisaged a series of north-south axes or development corridors linking diverse

regions in both east-west and north-south directions. In 2007, the Government of Nepal enacted and has been implementing National Urban Policy for balanced urban development in Nepal [4]. In this context with an objective of reducing migration to Kathmandu and other larger cities, encouraging planned development of potential hill cities and building infrastructure that can facilitate and attract the population in the hilly cities, the Government of Nepal has started to develop 10 new towns in Mid-Hill Highway corridor of Nepal since 2068 B.S. where two more cities were added later. It was one of the turning points of the government to develop planned cities in Hilly areas of Nepal.

### 1.2 New towns in the mid-hill highway corridor

The Mid-hill Highway, also called Pushpalal connects 24 hilly districts directly affecting about 7 million people from Chiyo Bhanjyang of Panchathar District in the East to Jhulaghat of Baitadi District in the Far-west [5]. It is envisaged to provide easy access to many of the less accessible and often stagnant communities in the Mid-hill area of Nepal. Marked by low income and increasing out-migration of unemployed youth as well as poor access to public services, these hilly communities are expected to benefit from the easier access to markets in Terai and other higher level market centres of the Region. The government brought this ambitious project of developing cities to reduce growing human pressure in the big cities including the Capital City, Kathmandu [5]. It is believed that with the completion of the project, migrations to the new cities would grow and population would be hold in these

towns by providing services and creating marketing opportunities there. Newly developed towns would create ample of opportunities within the new town and thereby it reduces out migration. It was one of the main strategies of balanced urban development in the Hilly Region as per objectives stated in the National Urban Policy. The Government of Nepal has started to develop these new towns in Mid-Hill Highway corridor of Nepal since 2068 B.S. to develop planned cities in hilly areas of Nepal with an objective of:

1. reducing migration to Kathmandu and other larger cities,
2. encouraging planned development of potential hill cities and,
3. building infrastructure that can facilitate and attract the population in the hilly cities.

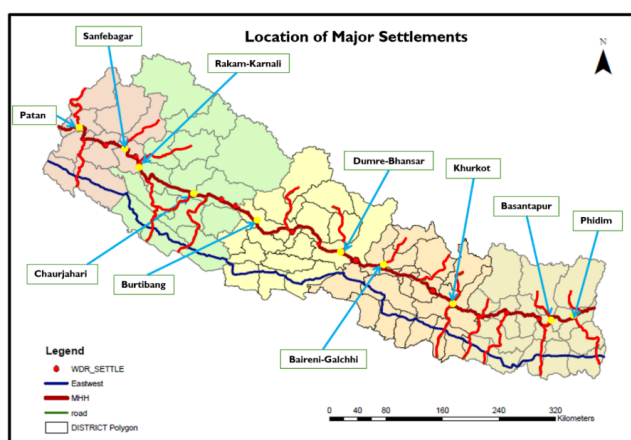


Figure 1: Distribution of 10 New Towns along the Midhill Highway

At present, the government has been investing in its infrastructure projects specially in road improvement, land development, drainage construction, construction of sanitary land fill site, water supply and construction of other urban infrastructure projects in the new towns. However, as being hilly towns and increasing tendency of pre-occupancy of land by the elites, land availability for construction of public infrastructures has been one of the growing challenges in most of the these towns. Therefore, new town project office is increasingly facing challenges to acquire land for construction of urban infrastructures in these towns. In addition to this, due to the lack of political commitments, cooperation and low capacity of implementing agencies, implementation of plans have been quite challengeable. Allocated budget expenditure pattern in most of the towns seems very low.

### 1.3 Case Area

For this study, the case of Basantapur, Koshi province is taken. It is a beautiful city located in the Therathum district of Koshi Province, Nepal. It lies in the nodal location of mid-hill highway (Pushpalal highway) and north-south highway (Koshi highway). It is mainly served by Biratnagar following Itahari, the nodal city in the south (along the intersection of Mahendra and Koshi highway). The total area of the Laligurans is 90.27 sq. Km. According to population census

2011, the number of household is recorded as 3677 and total population is 16936 where male population is 45.63

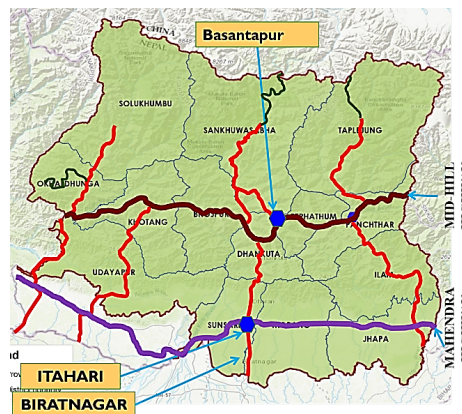


Figure 2: Location of Basantapur in the map of Koshi province

Basantapur lies between latitudes 27° 4' 33" and 27°10' 59" North and longitudes 87° 23' 44" and 87° 30' 59" East. It is located at 587m (Tributary of Limbu Khola and Ping Khola also Known as Limbu Dhoban) to 3034 metre (Tinjure View Tower) altitude from mean sea level. The municipality is surrounded by Murtidhunga and Marek Khatera VDC of Dhankuta District and Tamafok VDC of Sankhuwasava in the West and Maglung Municipality in the East, Likewise Tamafok VDC of Sankhuwasava in the North and Angdim, Sudap and Okhre VDC in the south [6].

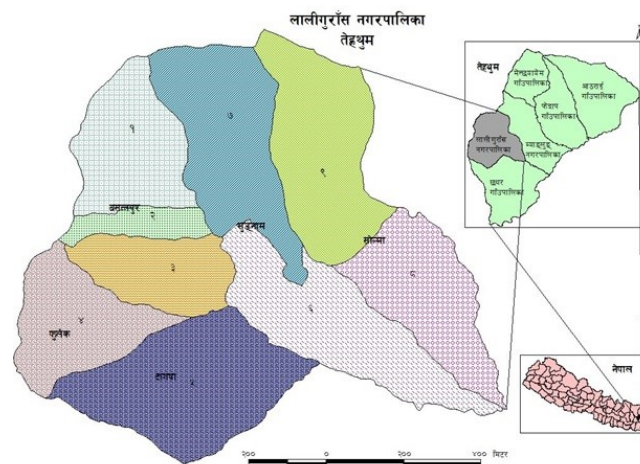


Figure 3: Map of Laligurans municipality with division of wards

## 2. Objectives

### 2.1 Main Objective

To assess the development dynamics of new-towns in mid-hill highway corridor: Basantapur in delivering balanced regional development in the country.

### 2.2 Specific objectives

1. To analyze the selection criteria of new towns in mid-hill highway corridor city: Basantapur (its connectivity, production and regional and sub-regional role).

2. To explore the dynamism of city development in different time frame and the development model adopted.
3. To access the current stage of development of Basantapur as a New-town and find out gap between planning and reality in the field.

### 3. Literature Review

#### 3.1 Development Dynamics

Development dynamics refers to the patterns, processes, and factors that influence the overall progress, changes, and transformations within a particular area or context. It encompasses various aspects such as social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural dynamics that shape the development trajectory of a region. On the other hand, urban development dynamics specifically focus on the patterns, processes, and factors that shape the growth, transformation, and management of urban areas. Urban development dynamics take into account the unique characteristics and challenges of urban environments, including aspects such as population growth, land use planning, infrastructure development, housing, transportation, environmental sustainability, social dynamics, and economic activities. They can be assessed through various indicators that measure progress, changes, and transformations as economic development, infrastructure development, social development, environmental development and Institutional and governance factors. These indicators help policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders assess the progress and effectiveness of development efforts, as well as identify areas that require attention or improvement in both general development and urban development contexts.

#### 3.2 Regional planning theories

Under the multilevel planning system for development, regional planning is defined as the ordering of human activities in supra urban space in relation to other spatial units of national territory with a view to attain social and economic integration in space and facilitate national development. The main aim of regional planning may be said as to explore the development potential alternatives of the regions, which are usually bypassed under the sectoral plan, and to give focus to promote development process of depressed region for attaining balanced development [7].

##### 3.2.1 Growth pole and axis

The French economist Perroux outlined in the 1950s that economic development, or growth, is not uniform over an entire region but takes place around a specific pole (or cluster). This pole is often characterized by core industries around which linked industries develop, mainly through direct and indirect effects [8].

##### 3.2.2 Gateway model

Gateway model is a framework for explaining the evolution of market centers and their hinterland areas. It refers to centers locating at a strategic entrance to (and exit out of) an

extended hinterland region. Locationally, GCs tend to develop at break-of-bulk points or nodes of transport lines in response to long distance trade or the setting of sparsely populated frontier areas. This theory fits well into Nepal’s context in Koshi Province stating Biratnagar as primary GCs, Dharan as secondary GCs and Dhankuta as tertiary GCs [9].

##### 3.2.3 Central Place Theory

Central place theory is concerned with the size, number, functional characteristics, and spacing of settlements, which are nodal points for the distribution of goods and services to surrounding market areas. Central place theories are put forward to understand service location in a network of market towns and cities [10].

#### 3.3 Regional planning: Documents reviewed

##### 3.3.1 NUDS

For the urban system sector, the national objective is to strengthen the national and sub-national urban system. Strategies include – strengthening urban-rural linkages; upgrading inter and intra-provincial/regional road connectivity standards; facilitating higher level functions in major provincial/regional urban centres; improving connectivity infrastructure in key Tarai urban centres; facilitating small towns in realizing their comparative advantages; creating infrastructure for “smart” cities in priority locations; promoting environment, heritage and tourism friendly economic functions in the Kathmandu valley; and integrating future provincial capitals in the national and sub-national (provincial and regional) urban system [5].

**Table 1:** Major economic centers: Locational advantages, economic base and regional potential

Economic center/ region	Locational advantage	Economic base	Regional potential
Biratnagar	Traditional industrial region, nearness to the railhead in the Indian border; agriculturally productive hinterland, air connection to Kathmandu and eastern hills	Trade/ services and manufacturing	Industrial and trading center, bulk manufacturing, high value crops (tea, herbs, etc)

##### 3.3.2 HABITAT III

Some of the key supporting activities in managing urbanization as stated in Habitat III report include Implementation of “Secondary Cities” development programs/ projects such as the Secondary Towns Urban Environment Improvement Project (STUEIP), Integrated Urban Development Project (IUDP), and Urban Governance and Development Program (UGDP), and New Town Projects in order to de-concentrate economic activities outside Kathmandu Valley [5]. For the major challenges experienced and lessons learnt in Managing rapid urbanization, the plan of action as stated in HABITAT III report for new towns are:

1. Speed up the establishment of New Towns through priority investment and by resolving issues related to land within a time frame of >5 years

- Promote PPP and private sector investment in overall urban development sector (including social housing, infrastructure development, new towns development) within a time frame of >2 years.

### 3.4 Regional Development Strategy: National Planning Commission

Economic Regions and Sub-Regions: Due to variations, most regions divide into sub-regions which generally conform to the ecological zones, mountains, hills and Terai. Among the 8 economic regions, this area falls under Biratnagar region. Biratnagar region includes areas to the east of Sankhuwasabha, Bhojpur, parts of Khotang, Udayapur and Saptari. The core economic area comprises the economic centres of Biratnagar-Dharan including Itahari and Inaruwa. The east-west highway and the Biratnagar-Dharan and Dharan-Dhankuta highways are the major transport spines of this region at present [4].

**Table 2:** Major economic centers: Locational advantages, economic base and regional potential

Economic centers	Region 8: Biratnagar
Major economic centers	Biratnagar, Kakarbhitta
Cross-road towns and corridor of economic core areas including foothill towns, and towns of the inner Terai	Dharan, Itahari, Birtamod, Lahan
Hill towns with road links	Illam, Terhathum, Phidim
Hill/mountain market towns without road links	Khandbari

## 4. Research Design and Methodology

This research belongs to the pragmatist’s paradigm. This research on studying the development dynamics of new towns in mid-hill corridors is mostly qualitative in nature involving the reviews of documents and interviews with key informant interviews, but also integrates quantitative data derived from collecting, analyzing, and integrating the findings of those surveys. This research will be approached through both qualitative and quantitative methodological approach.

The methodologies namely literature review, case study and consultations with various stakeholders will be carried out in this study of research. For this particular research, the review of literature begins with the observation that are specific and proceeds to a generalized conclusion. Likewise, a case study will be conducted being based on the generalized conclusions and facts and those findings needs to be consulted with the experts in personal interviews and consultations. Here, the core ideas and findings are required to reach the conclusion which suggests that the abductive logic will be used in the analysis and findings sessions. For the different methodologies mentioned, the following methods of information designated in the table below will be used:

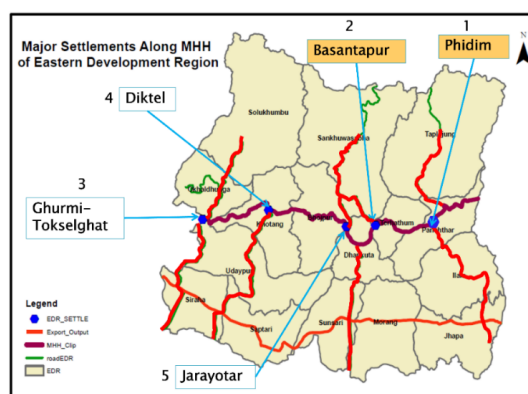
**Table 3:** Major economic centers: Locational advantages, economic base and regional potential

Methodologies	Methods/ Source of information
Literature review	Secondary data from the websites and documents, journals and articles.
Case study	Primary data from case study, KIIs and GDs, secondary data from the published literature
Consultation sessions	Consultative meetings, brainstorming (KIIs, GDs) sessions with the experts

## 5. Findings and Analysis

### 5.1 The selection criteria of New Town Basantapur

To have a balanced development, Government of Nepal planned for the towns having 100 thousand people having complete infrastructures. These are the towns that attract population from Terai and check migration to Terai. For the same, ten towns are selected from a list of 21 potential urban settlements all over the country [11].



**Figure 4:** Major settlements along the Mid Hill Highway of Province-1

These new towns are based on nine different qualifying criterias as population, migration, agricultural and non-agricultural activities, literacy rate, electricity, regional location and so on. Based on the same, the location of 21 major settlements along the midhill highway are studied and the New Cities are selected based on their location in all development regions of that time: two cities in each development region. The regional and district headquarters are not allocated as New Town as they will behave as a growing city because of already available infrastructures in the area.

In case of province-1 (the then Eastern Development Region), five cities are Phidim, Basantapur, Ghurmi- Tokselghat, Diktel and Jarayotar selected and studied where the feasibility study is done in the area. Among these, Phidim and Basantapur are selected for further development as a New Town in Province-1. This study of research will be based on the Basantapur New Town [11].

The scoring of Basantapur was done based on the predefined

qualifying criteria and the weightage score was calculated. Among these five cities, Basantapur was scored 84 after 85.75 for Phidim. The other cities were scored 80.75, 76 and 64.50 for Ghurmi-Tokselghat, Diktel and Jarayotar consecutively. The entire process of scoring appears to be rooted in scientific principles and logical reasoning, leaving little room for doubt or ambiguity in its execution. However, it is during the allocation of weightages that a noteworthy observation emerges. The most substantial weightage, accounting for 27%, is assigned to the factor of land, closely trailed by water resources at 24%, and economic potentialities at 20%. Interestingly, the weightage attributed to population stands at a mere 5%, a seemingly modest acknowledgment of its pivotal significance.

The same trend carries over to migration, a factor with potentially far-reaching consequences. In the context of New Towns situated in mid-hill areas, a recurring trend of declining population becomes evident. Simultaneously, the rate of migration continues to surge, posing potential long-term challenges. This arises a question in the significance attributed to migration within the weightage framework, and whether its current evaluation adequately captures its enduring impact, particularly given the ongoing dynamics of population shifts in these regions or not.

## 5.2 IDP: The development model adopted in Basantapur

Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of new towns is crucial for urban management and infrastructure development. IDP is the guiding document for sectoral development to develop sustainable and liveable city in the future. This IDP focuses primarily Basantapur New town but also covers entire Laligurans municipality area for its strategic projects. Participatory consultation meetings were the basis for contextualizing its existing situation whereas base maps and stakeholder's consultation meetings were the basis for proposing the infrastructure projects [12].

There are huge potentialities of urban development and growth in Basantapur particularly for a touristic hill town. Locating at the triple junction (Terhathum, Dhankuta and Sankhuwasabha districts), the town can be a growth centre of surrounding VDCs. Trekking tourism, recreational tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism are major potentialities of Basantapur New Town. With the potentiality of linear urban growth and development in Basantapur, the city development will take place along the highway corridor in number of pocket areas (Basantapur, Chitre, Deurali, Lasune, Solma, Sungham, Dagpa, Phulek). The town will appear as 'Scattered Pocket Town' within Laligurans Municipality having sufficient greenery.

### 5.2.1 Lead Sectors of NT

For the better and sustainable development of any town, its lead sectors should be identified, which shows the development direction of that area. As stated in IDP, following sectors has been identified for potential lead sectors after regular interaction among the local stakeholders and formal and informal consultations in the municipality as Tourism, Agriculture and Market and Service Centre.

If tourism infrastructures are developed in Basantapur, it would be a popular hill station and holiday destinations for the people of eastern hill and Terai. People living in the eastern Terai region may visit Basantapur during summer for holiday to avoid scorching sun and heat. Likewise, during winter people can visit Basantapur for snow fun. Basantapur is also famous for 28 different species of rhododendron, majestic view of mountains and magnificent views of sunrise and sunset. Different species of rhododendron spread from Basantapur to Sankhuwasabha district is suitable for Rhodo trail. The famous Tinjure, Milke and Jaljale (TMJ) Rhodo trail can attract tourist and may prolong their stay at Basantapur. The place has huge potential for both research and conservation tourism as well. Therefore, Basantapur is ideal destination to visit in both winter and summer seasons for different tourist activities. Basantapur can serve as a gateway to all other nearby hilly towns and settlements due to its strategic location at the nodal intersection of Koshi highway and Mid-hill highway.

### 5.2.2 Integrated LFA Analysis for Long-term Plan

Logical Framework Analysis is an analytical process and set of tools used to support objectives-oriented project planning, management and implementation of developmental projects. Its main objective is to present major indicators, baseline and desired direction of planning for New Town. To achieve the goal of improving livelihood of the people of Basantapur NT through development of tourism, agriculture and infrastructure. Certain assumptions like Sufficient allocation of development budget, Planned development, Coordination of Municipality, TDC and NTPO and Creation of investment guarantee to private sector are made for the future [12].

## 5.3 Development dynamics of Basantapur

Development is itself a dynamics process. Basantapur is an old hub and market center of Terhathum as well as Dhankuta and Sankhuwasabha district. Urbanization in Basantapur is found slightly increasing in these days. Being market center of district, urbanization trend was found in the past. However, after declaration of New Town by the Government of Nepal, an increase in urbanization and building construction trend is found growing upto some extent. To analyze the urbanization trend, some of the indicators such as built-up area, population, household, absent population, economically active population, major industries, access of road and drinking water facilities, uses of fuel for cooking, etc of different years have been presented and analyzed.

The presented graph indicates a subtle upward trajectory in recent years. This suggests a measured and gradual pace of urbanization unfolding within the municipality. This spatial transformation aligns with the data trends, reinforcing the notion of a deliberate urbanization process. Adding further nuance, a recent surge in building construction activity has come to the forefront within the municipality. This surge serves as an additional layer of evidence substantiating the municipality's evolving urban landscape and growth dynamics.

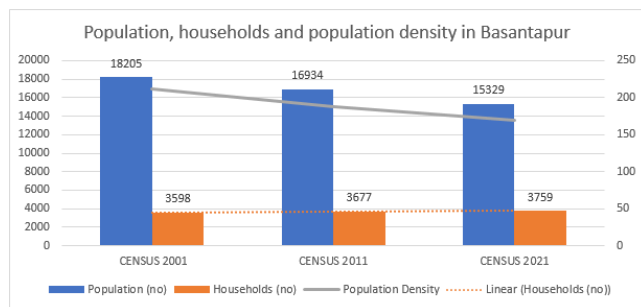


Figure 5: Population, households and population density in Basantapur

Table 4: Indicators of urbanization trend in different time frame

S. N	Indicators	YEAR		
		CENSUS 2001	CENSUS 2011	CENSUS 2021
1	Built-up Area (Sq km)	2.1	90.27	90.27
2	Population (no)	18205	16934	15329
3	Households (no)	3598	3677	3759
4	Population Density	212	187.59	169.81
5	Economically Active Population (percentage)	56.5		71.5
6	Major Industries (no)	2		3
7	Blacktopped Road (km)	25.6		-
8	Concrete Road (km)	-		4.28
9	Drinking Water Supply (hh coverage percentage)	73%	81.73%	96.35%
10	Uses of Fuel for Cooking (LP Gas user percentage)	10.1%	4.53%	18.25%
11	Cable Television, Computer and Internet User Househlds (no)	120, 44 and none	314, 80, 42	2147, 301, 1464
12	Non agricultural Occupation	0.29%		0.1%
13	Types of Concrete Houses (no)	-	57	217

5.3.1 Settlement Pattern and Urban Form

Settlement pattern varies in different geography, climate, available construction materials, caste/ethnicity, local culture and economic condition of the local people. Basantapur has linear type of settlement along market area such as Basantapur, Tute Deurali, Lasune, Chitre. Linear settlement is increasing in ward no 1, and 3. Most of the households are concentrated along the two sides of the Highway whereas scattered settlements are found in the rest of the areas of the municipality. Some cluster settlements have been developing to serve as small market centres such as Lasune, Chitre and Dandakharka etc. These market centres serve as suppliers of goods and services and collectors of location production. This provides a good forward and backward linkages in the settlement system within the municipality area. The urban growth pattern of four market areas is depicted in the images of different time frame in the interval of 5 years as below, where urbanization is seen at a very slow pace. The amalgamation of these insights paints a comprehensive picture of the current state of Laligurans municipality in terms

of its settlement patterns. Within its boundaries, there exist pocket areas characterized by cluster settlements, particularly prominent around major market centers. This clustering follows a linear arrangement, indicative of a deliberate organization and spatial layout.

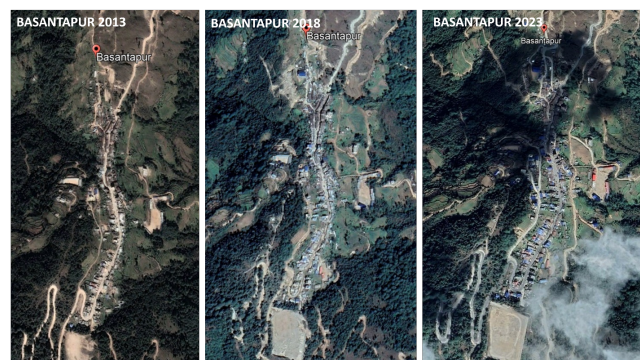


Figure 6: Linear Settlement, Basantapur Bazar in different time frame

In contrast, a significant portion of the municipality portrays a different facet of settlement distribution. These areas are marked by scattered settlements, evoking a rural essence. This mosaic of settlement patterns underscores the intricate blend of urban and rural dynamics within Laligurans municipality, where pockets of vibrant clustering coexist alongside expanses that retain a more traditional and scattered arrangement, capturing the multifaceted nature of its landscape.

5.3.2 Landuse: existing and proposed

The existing landuse map was prepared in 2015 by DUDBC (Department of Urban Development and Building Construction), MOUD (Ministry of Urban Development) on the basis of which Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of NT Basantapur was planned and prepared. The landuse data at 2021 is published by the Department of forest research and survey where total forest area of Laligurans municipality is stated to be 48.4sq.km, covering 53% of the total land area.

The area of different landuse types are calculated in sq.km. and presented in the table as below.

Table 5: Indicators of urbanization trend in different time frame

Land Use Type	Existing (2015)		Proposed	
	Area (Sq Km)	%	Area (Sq Km)	%
Agricultural Land	24.4	27.1	17.40	19.29
Built-up Area	4.6	5.1	17.20	19.07
Barren Land	10.4	11.5	4.60	5.10
Forest Cover	44.7	49.5	42.30	46.90
Other (Road, Water body, Cliff etc)	6.1	6.8	8.70	9.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>93.3</b>	<b>100%</b>

This data is presented in the chart where the agricultural land, barren land and forest cover are decreased for various development projects whereas built-up area and other areas

like roads and other infrastructures are proposed to be increased. This is a must for the physical development of any area.

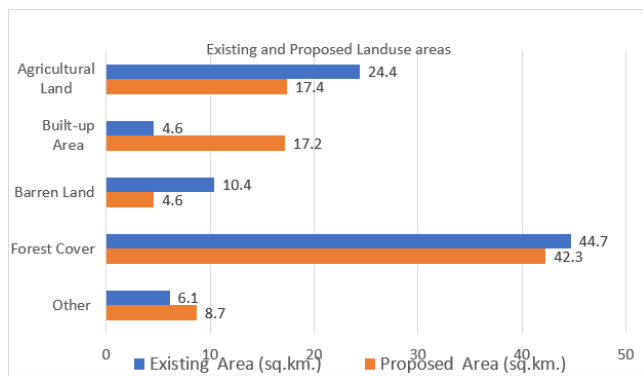


Figure 7: A bar chart showing existing and proposed landuse datas

### 5.4 The current stage of development of Basantapur as a New-town

After Basantapur has been chosen for New Town, some development works can be seen in the area. But as per the Integrated development plan, those works cannot be increased in its pace rapidly due to many reasons. These are the gaps in this study of research, which will help to draw conclusions and recommendations in further.

#### 5.4.1 Budget expenditure till now

The total budget of New Town Basantapur is around 11.33 billion. Till now, only 839.97 million of the total budget is spent under different heads; which is only 7.5% of the total budget. Only around 8.5% of the total budget is released till now. The line graph below shows the allocated budget and expenditure from fiscal year 2070/71 till now at present. This shows that the highest amount of budget expenditure was in the fiscal year 2075/76.

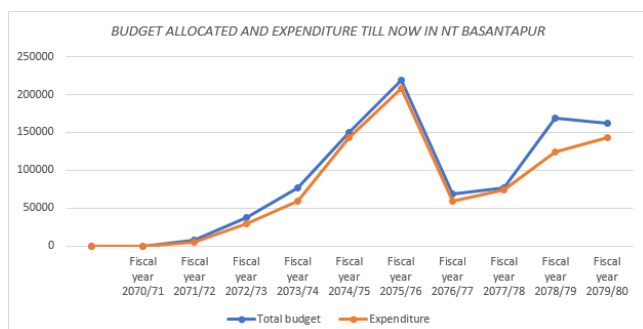


Figure 8: Budget allocated and expenditure till now in NT Basantapur

The enclosed graph provides a comprehensive overview of the total budget allocation and corresponding expenditures across fiscal years since the inception of the Basantapur project. Examining this data reveals a noteworthy trend in the financial management of the project. During the project's initial phase in fiscal year 2070/71, a modest 54.12% of the allocated budget was expended by the New Town authorities. Subsequently, a discernible pattern emerges, showcasing a

gradual and consistent upsurge in the rate of expenditure in successive fiscal years, culminating in its peak during 2075/76. This upward trajectory signifies a commendable improvement in financial execution. However, a critical aspect comes to light upon closer scrutiny. The allocated budget for each fiscal year is conspicuously inadequate, exhibiting an exceptionally low level. This inherent financial constraint casts a shadow on the project's ambitious objectives. As we stand at the midpoint of the project's stipulated timeline, it becomes apparent that the project's financial aspect mirrors the same shortfall. This situation raises pertinent concerns about the feasibility of the government's ambitious goal to complete this prestigious undertaking by the targeted year of 2090. The symbiotic relationship between budget allocation and expenditure presents a complex challenge. While the expenditure rate showcases an encouraging trajectory, the dearth of adequate annual budget allocation presents a formidable obstacle, jeopardizing the project's ability to achieve its envisioned completion by the predetermined date.

#### 5.4.2 Development works till now

Analysing the development works completed till now by New Town Basantapur, there are some works accomplished in physical development sector. As per the data by New Town Office, Basantapur; the major physical development works accomplished are presented below:

Table 6: Major development works accomplished till now

S.N.	Development works	Unit	Target by IDP	Completed in 2079/80	Completed till now
1	New tracks/ upgrading/ gravelled roads	Km	-	6.4	51.7
2	Black topped roads	Km	80	0	0
3	Concrete roads	Km	50	0.56	4.28
4	Sewerage line and canals	Km	60	2.89	32.54
5	Government building	Nos.	-	2	10
6	Solar lighting	Nos.	-	-	44
7	Vegetable/ fruit market	Nos.	-	-	1
8	Buspark	Nos.	2	1	2
9	Playground	Nos.	1	0	1
10	Parks	Nos.	-	-	6
11	Water supply	Nos.	-	1	2
12	Land development program (127.3 ropani)	Nos.	1	0	0
13	Landfill site	Nos.	1	0	0
14	Land acquisition	Nos.	-	0	0

Major development works are seen in road, a physical development sector. Total of 92km roads construction (soling- 22km, new cutting- 12km, upgrading- 51km, track- 7km) is completed by the municipality and New Town in Basantapur.

### 5.5 Site analysis and findings

The key informant interviews were taken with the various stakeholders of the community as ward chairperson, journalist, local businessman, teacher, residents, political party representatives, community group and advocacy organizations. Also, a group discussion was conducted in the

municipality. So, basically two methods of information collection are conducted in the site as:

- a. Group discussion (GD)
- b. Key Informant Interview (KII).

A Key Informant Interview was done with various stakeholders of the municipality, that are actively taking part in developing Basantapur as a New Town in one or other way. Various stakeholders are analysed and interviews were taken with 10 of them including all sectors of the community.

The local people had positive perception towards New Town though development is not in rapid pace at Basantapur. All of them prioritize tourism as a major occupation for the development of their city followed by agriculture. No identifiable changes is seen in the local economy due to this prestigious project. From the questionnaire survey, lack of coordination and personal interest of powerholders are the problems in successful implementation of the project. Also, insufficient budget is the major problem of success of New town.

Many suggestions are given by the Key Informants for the improvement of infrastructures in New Town, Basantapur. They envision to construct road infrastructure to connect tourism with agriculture so that local products gets branding among the tourists. Provision of street lighting and alternative energy sources are also expected from the community. A large scale water supply project was cancelled by the concerned authority, which can be the reason behind scarcity of water in the coming future. So, appropriate water supply project should be introduced in time. Only primary schools and very few secondary school and campus are present in Basantapur. As one of the main reason for out-migration is education, more colleges for higher and technical education should be constructed in the site. They say, no any works are done in the communication infrastructure sector. Landpooling works are being delayed by the local government and New Town. As per the informants, there is huge negligence of officials in implementation phase (timely implementation), which hamper the overall pace of development of New Town. This may be due to lack of political assurance and coordination among the various stakeholders in the society.

## 6. Conclusion

As stated in IDP, planning is a participatory process. If there is no public participation, there becomes very hard for implementation of the plans. As per the assumptions of LFA, Sufficient allocation of development budget and Coordination of Municipality, TDC, NTPO and other stakeholders are the gaps in implementation of New Town Basantapur.

All the scoring process while selection of New Towns in Mid-Hill highway corridor seems scientific and justifiable, so there doesnot seem any gap in the scoring process. But during weightage assignation, there has been an adverse impact in the very long run as the population of these New Towns are in decreasing rate in almost all mid-hill cities and the rate of migration is also increasing day by day. This arises a question whether this scoring process and selection criterias are justifiable or not.

From the list of development works completed by New Town Basantapur, many such works are seen completed that are not stated by the Integrated Development Plan. So, there is gap in implementation between the predefined projects and projects done too. Here comes either the personal interest of some power holders or something else. As many large scale projects are found cancelled by the power holders at present; there arise a question whether the powerholders themselves are aware of IDP or not. And are they really interested in making Basantapur a planned New Town or just spend its budget as per their wish? Or a huge political clash is born somewhere in between.

As per the demographic data, there is a huge question about population projection in coming years. It may not be justifiable to the demographic data to say population is growing in near future in Basantapur.

For a better coordination and awareness, there should be the feeling of ownership from all sectors. This is only possible when the local stakeholders, mainly political leaders take a step forward and initiate for public consent rather than private interest. It seems very difficult to hold the existing population in Basantapur in coming years, if no one initiates for the planned development. The city exists and grows when there are people or when people are coming to reside in that place. So, either make better implementation plans or the massive prestigious projects like New Town will just be in documents and papers.

## References

- [1] John Friedmann. Missing title. No date. Description or source of the document.
- [2] J. Joshi. *MISSING TITLE*. 1979.
- [3] Harka Gurung. Regional development plan for nepal. *Kathmandu: National Planning Commission, HMG*, 1969.
- [4] Nepal National Planning Commission. *Main Report: All Regions Regional Development Strategy*. 2007.
- [5] Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD). *National Urban Development Strategy*. Urban Development and Physical Planning Division, Kathmandu, 2017.
- [6] Government of Nepal. *IDP (Integrated Development Plan) Profile*. Kathmandu, 2015.
- [7] Ronaj Bhandari. *Emerging Urban System in Federal Setting: A Case Study of Province One in Nepal*. PhD thesis, IOE Pulchowk Campus, 2022.
- [8] Jean-Paul Rodrigue. *The geography of transport systems*. Routledge, 2020.
- [9] A.C. Lal. *Regional Planning Handsout*. Pulchowk Campus, IOE, Pulchowk, 2022.
- [10] Rob Kitchin and Nigel Thrift. *International encyclopedia of human geography*. Elsevier, 2009.
- [11] E. Thapa and Ministry of Secretary. *Development of Mid-hill Towns - An Effort for Regional Balance*. Kathmandu, Nepal, 2012.
- [12] *Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Basantapur*. Government of Nepal, Ministry of Urban Development, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction, New Town Project Coordination Office, Babarmahal, Kathmandu, 2014/15.