

**PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
ALONG THE RAM VAN GAVAN PATH:
A CASE OF CHITRAKOOT, MADHYA PRADESH**

Bachelor of Planning

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PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE RAM VAN GAMAN PATH: A CASE OF CHITRAKOOT, MADHYA PRADESH

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submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
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May 2026

DECLARATION

I **DEEPAK RAJ KORI**, Scholar No **2211002109** hereby declare that the thesis titled Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path: A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh submitted by me in partial fulfilment for the award of degree of Bachelor of Planning, at Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal, India, is a record of Bonafide work carried out by me. The matter/result embodied in this thesis has not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the declaration made by **DEEPAK RAJ KORI** is true to the best of my knowledge and that the student has worked under my guidance for one semester in preparing this thesis.

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Deepak Raj Kori

Abstract

The development of religious tourism corridors has emerged as a significant strategy for promoting cultural heritage and regional development in India. The Ram Van Gaman Path, based on the epic journey of Lord Rama during his exile, represents a unique opportunity to integrate religious significance with tourism-led planning. This study focuses on Chitrakoot, a predominant pilgrimage town in Madhya Pradesh, which serves as a key node along this corridor and experiences high seasonal tourist inflow despite its small resident population.

The research aims to formulate a comprehensive planning framework for tourism development in Chitrakoot by analysing existing spatial structure, infrastructure availability, tourist behaviour, and stakeholder perspectives. A mixed-method approach has been adopted, including primary surveys of tourists, local residents, and service providers, along with secondary data analysis and literature review on tourism planning and best practices. The study identifies critical issues such as unplanned land use, traffic congestion, inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation, and lack of organized tourist management systems, especially during peak pilgrimage periods.

Based on the findings, the research proposes planning-level interventions focusing on spatial zoning, infrastructure augmentation, mobility management, and enhancement of tourist facilities. Emphasis is placed on sustainable and integrated development by incorporating best practices such as community participation, environmental conservation, and tourism infrastructure planning. These approaches are essential for ensuring a balance between religious tourism growth and urban management.

The study contributes to the broader discourse on tourism-led urban development in pilgrimage towns by demonstrating how structured planning frameworks can enhance visitor experience, improve local livelihoods, and support sustainable regional development. The proposed framework is intended to guide future development strategies for Chitrakoot and can serve as a model for other destinations along the Ram Van Gaman Path.

सारांश

धार्मिक पर्यटन गलियारों का विकास भारत में सांस्कृतिक विरासत संरक्षण एवं क्षेत्रीय विकास को बढ़ावा देने की एक महत्वपूर्ण रणनीति के रूप में उभर कर सामने आया है। रामायण में वर्णित भगवान राम के वनवास मार्ग पर आधारित राम वन गमन पथ एक ऐसा विशिष्ट अवसर प्रस्तुत करता है, जहाँ धार्मिक आस्था को पर्यटन-आधारित नियोजन के साथ जोड़ा जा सकता है। यह अध्ययन मध्य प्रदेश के प्रमुख तीर्थ स्थल चित्रकूट पर केंद्रित है, जो इस कॉरिडोर का एक महत्वपूर्ण नोड है तथा अपनी कम स्थायी जनसंख्या के बावजूद वर्ष भर विशेष रूप से धार्मिक अवसरों पर अत्यधिक पर्यटक आगमन का अनुभव करता है।

इस शोध का उद्देश्य चित्रकूट में पर्यटन विकास के लिए एक समग्र नियोजन रूपरेखा तैयार करना है। इसके अंतर्गत वर्तमान भौतिक संरचना, उपलब्ध अवसंरचना, पर्यटक व्यवहार तथा हितधारकों के दृष्टिकोण का विश्लेषण किया गया है। अध्ययन में मिश्रित पद्धति अपनाई गई है, जिसमें पर्यटकों, स्थानीय निवासियों एवं सेवा प्रदाताओं के प्राथमिक सर्वेक्षण के साथ-साथ द्वितीयक डेटा एवं पर्यटन नियोजन से संबंधित साहित्य का अध्ययन शामिल है। अध्ययन से यह स्पष्ट हुआ कि चित्रकूट में अनियोजित भूमि उपयोग, यातायात जाम, अपर्याप्त अवसंरचना, स्वच्छता की कमी तथा विशेष रूप से तीर्थ सीजन के दौरान पर्यटक प्रबंधन की कमी जैसी प्रमुख समस्याएँ मौजूद हैं।

इन निष्कर्षों के आधार पर अध्ययन में स्थानिक ज़ोनिंग, अवसंरचना सुदृढीकरण, यातायात प्रबंधन तथा पर्यटन सुविधाओं के विकास पर आधारित नियोजन हस्तक्षेप प्रस्तावित किए गए हैं। साथ ही, सामुदायिक सहभागिता, पर्यावरण संरक्षण तथा सतत पर्यटन विकास जैसे सर्वोत्तम अभ्यासों को शामिल करने पर विशेष बल दिया गया है, जिससे धार्मिक पर्यटन के विकास और शहरी प्रबंधन के बीच संतुलन स्थापित किया जा सके।

यह अध्ययन तीर्थ स्थलों में पर्यटन-आधारित शहरी विकास की व्यापक समझ को समृद्ध करता है और यह दर्शाता है कि एक सुव्यवस्थित नियोजन ढांचा किस प्रकार पर्यटकों के अनुभव को बेहतर बना सकता है, स्थानीय आजीविका को सशक्त कर सकता है तथा सतत क्षेत्रीय विकास को बढ़ावा दे सकता है। प्रस्तावित रूपरेखा भविष्य में चित्रकूट के विकास के लिए मार्गदर्शक सिद्ध हो सकती है तथा राम वन गमन पथ के अन्य स्थलों के लिए भी एक मॉडल के रूप में उपयोगी हो सकती है।

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1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction & Background

India's cultural and spatial history has been deeply influenced by religious narratives, pilgrimage traditions, and sacred geographies. Among these, the Ramayana occupies a central position in shaping the religious consciousness and cultural landscape of the Indian subcontinent. The epic narrates the life of Lord Rama and, in particular, his fourteen-year period of exile (vanvaas), during which he, along with Sita and Lakshmana, traversed vast forested regions of India before reaching Sri Lanka. This journey, known traditionally as the Ram Van Gaman Path, is revered in Hindu belief systems, as several significant events from Lord Rama's life are believed to have occurred along this route.

According to the Ramayana, Lord Rama was required to live in forests during his exile and was prohibited from residing within villages or towns. As a result, his journey followed natural landscapes, forest tracts, river systems, and isolated settlements, shaping what can today be understood as a continuous sacred corridor. This path is believed to have originated in Ayodhya and extended across multiple present-day Indian states, eventually reaching Sri Lanka. The route passed through large parts of northern, central, and southern India, including Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, Refer *Figure 1.1*. Over centuries, places associated with this journey have evolved into important pilgrimage destinations, temples, ashrams, and sacred landscapes, attracting millions of devotees annually.

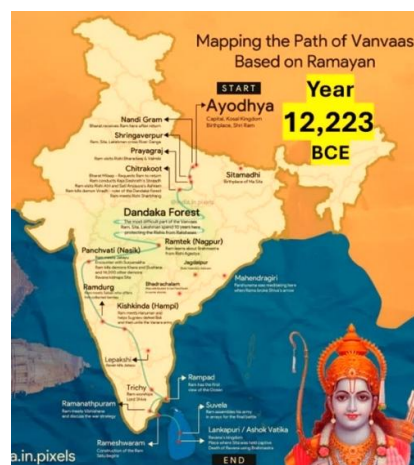


Figure 1.1: Ram Van Gaman Path

Source: Dainik Bhaskar

In contemporary times, the Ram Van Gaman Path has gained renewed significance, not only as a religious route but also as a cultural and tourism corridor of national importance. Recognizing its historical, religious, and tourism potential, the Government of India has initiated the development of the Ram Van Gaman Path as an inter-state corridor under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The objective of this initiative is to improve connectivity between key religious destinations, enhance pilgrimage infrastructure, and promote tourism-led regional development along the corridor. Unlike conventional highway projects, the Ram Van Gaman Path carries strong symbolic and cultural meaning, making it distinct in its planning and development requirements.

In response to this national-level initiative, various state governments have begun planning and implementing projects along the corridor to develop towns and religious nodes associated with the Ramayana. The emphasis has shifted from isolated monument-based development to a more integrated corridor-based tourism approach, wherein connectivity, destination planning, visitor management, and infrastructure development are addressed collectively. Such an approach aligns with contemporary planning principles that view tourism corridors as catalysts for regional development, capable of stimulating local economies, generating employment, and strengthening cultural identity.

Madhya Pradesh occupies a strategically important position along the Ram Van Gaman Path, as a significant stretch of the corridor passes through the state. The state government has proposed the development of the Ram Van Gaman Path in a phased manner, identifying key religious destinations for focused intervention. Prominent among these are Chitrakoot, Amarkantak, and Satna, each of which holds religious, cultural, and tourism significance. Among these, Chitrakoot stands out as one of the most prominent and frequently visited pilgrimage towns associated with the Ramayana.

Chitrakoot holds a special place in Hindu tradition, as it is believed to be one of the primary locations where Lord Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana spent a substantial part of their exile. The town continues to function as a major pilgrimage center, attracting a large number of domestic tourists throughout the year, with significant seasonal variations during religious festivals and auspicious periods. In recognition of its importance, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has announced plans to develop

Chitrakoot on the lines of Ayodhya, aiming to enhance its religious tourism infrastructure and overall urban environment.

However, the increasing focus on tourism development has also brought forth several planning challenges. Chitrakoot, like many pilgrimage towns in India, is experiencing rising tourist inflow without a corresponding improvement in spatial planning, infrastructure provision, and visitor management systems. Issues such as unplanned land use, inadequate tourism infrastructure, congestion during peak seasons, and inefficient circulation patterns are becoming increasingly evident. These challenges highlight the need for a structured planning framework that can guide tourism development in a balanced and sustainable manner.

In this context, planning assumes a critical role in transforming religious destinations into well-managed tourism towns. Rather than relying solely on beautification projects or isolated infrastructure upgrades, there is a need to adopt a comprehensive planning approach that integrates land use planning, mobility, tourism infrastructure, and policy support. Corridor-based development initiatives such as the Ram Van Gaman Path further strengthen the case for node-level planning, where towns like Chitrakoot are developed as organized, accessible, and culturally sensitive destinations within a larger regional framework.

This study is therefore situated at the intersection of religious narrative, tourism development, and spatial planning. By focusing on Chitrakoot as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path, the research seeks to explore how planning frameworks can be used to enhance tourism potential while addressing urban challenges. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of tourism-led development in pilgrimage towns and to propose planning-level interventions that are grounded in spatial analysis, data, and contemporary planning principles.

1.2. Need for the Study

The development of religious corridors such as the Ram Van Gaman Path presents a significant opportunity to strengthen tourism-led development in historically important pilgrimage towns. As a key node on this corridor, Chitrakoot holds immense religious and cultural significance and attracts a large number of pilgrims throughout the year. However, despite its strategic importance and growing recognition at both national and

state levels, the town currently lacks a comprehensive planning framework to guide tourism development in an integrated and systematic manner.

In the absence of structured planning, tourism-related growth in Chitrakoot has largely remained fragmented, leading to issues such as unplanned land-use patterns, inadequate tourism infrastructure, congestion during peak seasons, and inefficient circulation systems. Seasonal surges in tourist inflow further strain existing infrastructure and public amenities, adversely affecting both visitor experience and the daily functioning of the town. These challenges highlight the need for planning-level interventions that go beyond isolated infrastructure projects and address tourism development from a holistic urban planning perspective.

With the Government of Madhya Pradesh proposing phased development of destinations along the Ram Van Gaman Path and announcing the development of Chitrakoot on the lines of Ayodhya, there is a timely need to formulate a planning framework that aligns tourism growth with spatial organization, infrastructure provision, and mobility planning. This study is therefore essential to assess the existing conditions, identify gaps, and propose planning strategies that enable Chitrakoot to effectively utilize its tourism potential while ensuring sustainable and orderly urban development.

1.3. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to formulate a planning framework for tourism development in Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh, aligned with the objectives of the Ram Van Gaman Path, in order to enhance tourist experience, improve spatial organization, and support tourism-led urban development at the town level.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study have been formulated to understand the significance of the Ram Van Gaman Path as a religious tourism corridor and to examine the planning challenges and opportunities associated with tourism development in Chitrakoot. The study focuses on analyzing existing tourism patterns, infrastructure conditions, and spatial characteristics of the town in order to identify its tourism potential and propose suitable planning interventions for sustainable and organized development. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- a) To examine the importance and role of the Ram Van Gaman Path in promoting religious tourism in Madhya Pradesh.
- b) To analyze the tourist profile and patterns of tourist inflow in Chitrakoot, including seasonal variations.
- c) To assess the existing physical, social, and tourism-related infrastructure in Chitrakoot.
- d) To evaluate the tourism potential of Chitrakoot based on spatial, cultural, and infrastructural parameters.
- e) To propose planning strategies and spatial interventions for effective utilization of the identified tourism potential in Chitrakoot.

1.5. Research Questions

The research questions of the study are designed to explore the relationship between tourism development and spatial planning in the context of the Ram Van Gaman Path, with particular focus on Chitrakoot. These questions aim to identify the existing planning and infrastructure challenges affecting tourism growth, examine the role of physical planning in managing religious tourism destinations, and understand how spatial interventions can enhance tourist experience while ensuring benefits for local communities and the regional economy. The study seeks to address the following research questions:

- How can physical planning be structured to support tourism-led development along the Ram Van Gaman Path, with specific reference to Chitrakoot?
- What are the existing gaps in land use, infrastructure, and visitor management that limit tourism potential in Chitrakoot?
- How can planning-level spatial interventions improve tourist experience while supporting local communities and economic development?

1.6. Study Area

The study area for the present research is Chitrakoot town, located in the Satna district of Madhya Pradesh, near the Madhya Pradesh–Uttar Pradesh state boundary. Geographically, Chitrakoot is situated at approximately 25°10' North latitude and 80°52' East longitude, within the Vindhyan region, *Figure 1.2*. The town is

town contains numerous temples, ashrams, ghats, and sacred sites, particularly along the Mandakini River, which collectively attract pilgrims from across the country.

From a regional planning perspective, Chitrakoot functions as a key node on the Ram Van Gaman Path within Madhya Pradesh and serves as a gateway for pilgrims entering the state, especially from Uttar Pradesh. Its location at an inter-state boundary introduces administrative and planning complexities but simultaneously enhances its importance within the religious tourism network. Recognizing this significance, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has identified Chitrakoot as a priority destination for phased development under the Ram Van Gaman Path initiative.

The selection of Chitrakoot as the study area is therefore justified by its religious prominence, strategic corridor location, small resident population with very high seasonal tourist inflow, and inclusion within an official development planning framework. These characteristics make Chitrakoot a suitable and relevant case for examining tourism-led urban development and for proposing planning-level interventions aimed at improving spatial organization, visitor management, and infrastructure efficiency.

1.7. Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study is limited to planning-level analysis and proposals for tourism development within Chitrakoot town, Madhya Pradesh. The study focuses on understanding the spatial structure of the town and its functioning as a major pilgrimage destination along the Ram Van Gaman Path, with particular emphasis on tourism-led urban development.

The study includes assessment of existing land-use patterns, tourism and supporting infrastructure, mobility and accessibility, and tourist movement and flow patterns, especially during peak pilgrimage seasons. Special attention is given to identifying areas of high tourist concentration, infrastructure stress, and potential tourism zones within the town. The scope also covers analysis of the town's role as a node on a religious tourism corridor, and how this influences visitor inflow, circulation, and service demand.

Based on the analysis, the study proposes planning-level spatial interventions, including tourism zoning, identification of tourism precincts, circulation and mobility strategies,

and policy-oriented planning recommendations aimed at improving visitor management and urban efficiency. The proposals are conceptual and spatial in nature, intended to guide future development rather than provide detailed engineering or architectural solutions.

The study explicitly excludes detailed architectural design, structural design, financial feasibility, and project-level engineering details. The scope is site-specific to Chitrakoot; however, the planning approach and framework developed through the study may offer broader insights applicable to other pilgrimage towns located along religious tourism corridors.

1.8. Methodology

The study adopts a proposal-based planning approach aimed at formulating a tourism development framework for Chitrakoot through systematic analysis and spatial planning interventions. The methodology is structured to progress from understanding the broader corridor context to detailed town-level assessment and proposal formulation.

The first stage involves secondary data collection to establish the conceptual and contextual foundation of the study. This includes review of government policies and initiatives related to the Ram Van Gaman Path, regional and town-level planning documents such as the Chitrakoot Draft Development Plan–2031, census data, tourism-related reports, academic literature, and records from relevant government departments. This stage helps in understanding the planning intent, existing development proposals, demographic profile, and tourism significance of Chitrakoot.

The second stage comprises primary data collection, carried out through reconnaissance surveys, site observations, land-use mapping, photographic documentation, and interaction with key stakeholders. Tourist surveys and field observations are used to understand visitor characteristics, movement patterns, peak-season pressures, and usage of public spaces and infrastructure. Primary data collection focuses on identifying spatial issues related to tourism concentration, accessibility, circulation, and infrastructure adequacy.

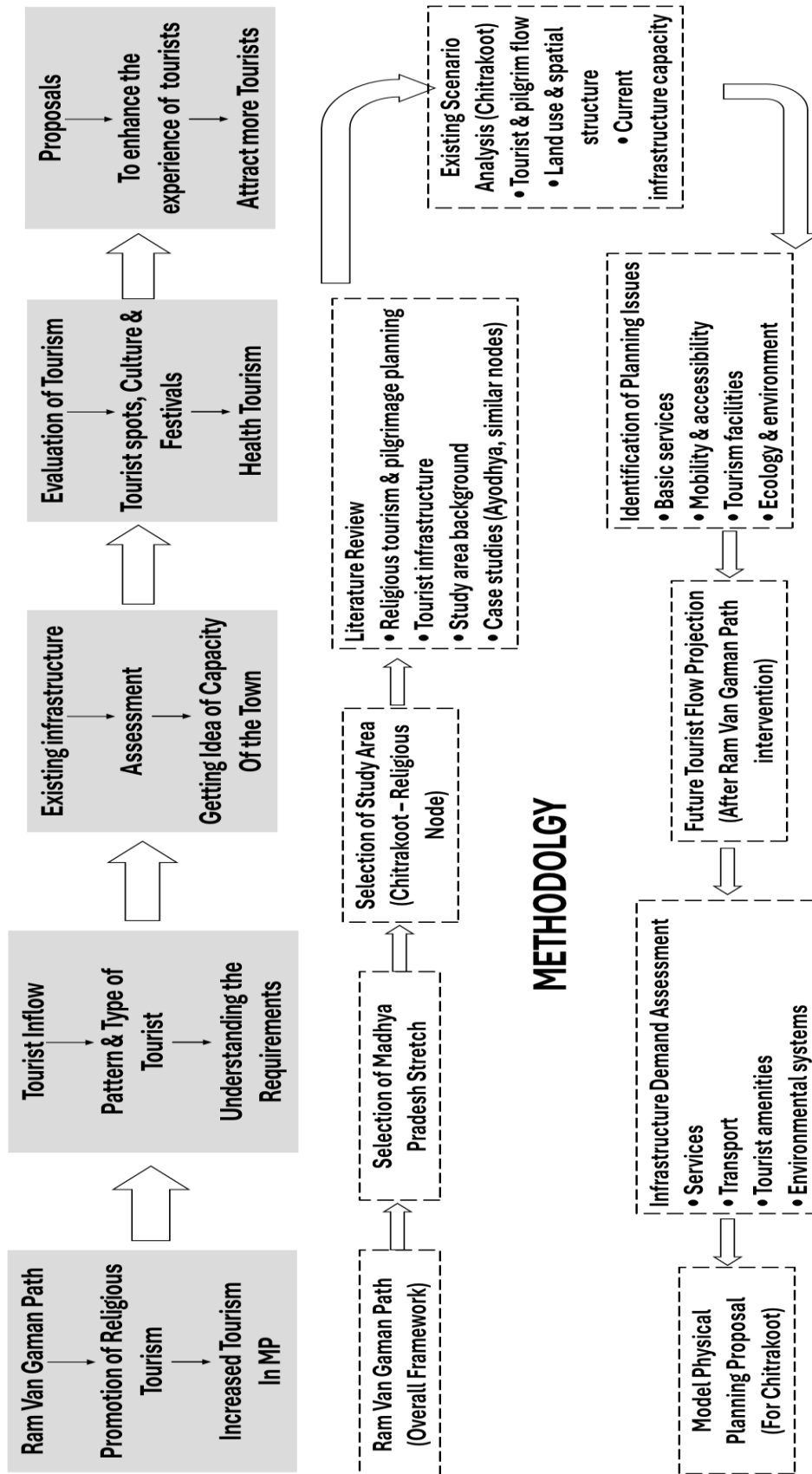


Figure 1.3: Methodology

Source: Author

In the third stage, the collected data is subjected to spatial and analytical assessment. Tools such as GIS, AutoCAD, Excel, and manual mapping techniques are used to analyze existing land use, transportation networks, tourism infrastructure distribution, and tourist movement flows. This stage also includes identification of gaps, conflicts, and potential zones for tourism-oriented development.

A case study of Ayodhya is undertaken to derive relevant planning principles, tourism infrastructure strategies, and visitor management practices applicable to pilgrimage towns. Learnings from the case study are adapted to the local context of Chitrakoot rather than replicated directly, *Figure 1.3*.

The final stage involves formulation of planning proposals, including identification of tourism precincts, circulation and mobility strategies, zoning recommendations, and policy-level guidelines. The proposals are conceptual and spatial in nature, intended to support tourism-led urban development while improving visitor experience and overall urban functionality.

1.9. Expected Outcomes

The study is expected to result in a comprehensive tourism development plan for Chitrakoot, aligned with its role as a major pilgrimage town and a key node on the Ram Van Gaman Path. The outcomes will be primarily planning-oriented and will focus on improving spatial organization, infrastructure efficiency, and visitor management within the town.

The key outputs of the study are expected to include analysis-based spatial proposals, such as identification of tourism zones and precincts, land-use planning recommendations, and strategies for managing tourist movement and circulation, particularly during peak pilgrimage seasons. The study will also provide guidelines for strengthening tourism-supporting infrastructure and public amenities in a manner that responds to seasonal tourist pressure.

In addition, the study is expected to develop a planning framework for tourism-led urban development, which can assist local authorities and planners in guiding future growth in Chitrakoot. By integrating tourism considerations with land use planning, mobility, and policy support, the outcomes aim to enhance tourist experience while ensuring improved urban functionality and benefits for the local community.

1.10.Limitations of the Study

A major limitation of the study is the administrative boundary constraint, as Chitrakoot is divided between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, *Figure 1.4*. Differences in governance structures and data availability across state boundaries may limit comprehensive analysis. Time constraints and availability of primary data may also influence the depth of assessment.



Figure 1.4: MP & UP Boundary Dividing Chitrakoot

Source: Google Earth Pro

1.11.Data Requirements

The study requires a combination of secondary and primary data to support analysis and formulation of planning-level proposals for tourism development in Chitrakoot.

Secondary data requirements include base maps, administrative boundary maps, existing land-use maps, transportation network details, and development proposals as per the Chitrakoot Draft Development Plan–2031. Demographic data such as population figures and settlement characteristics are sourced from the Census of India 2011. Additional secondary sources include government policies and guidelines related to tourism and corridor development, planning reports, DPRs, academic literature, and data from relevant state and local government departments.

Primary data requirements include reconnaissance and site surveys, land-use verification, photographic documentation, tourist surveys, and informal stakeholder interactions. Primary data is used to understand tourist behavior, movement patterns, peak-season pressures, infrastructure usage, and on-ground spatial issues related to tourism activities.

Analytical and spatial data processing is supported through tools such as GIS, AutoCAD, Excel, and manual mapping techniques, which aid in spatial analysis, interpretation, and preparation of planning proposals.

1.12.Report Outline

The report titled “Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path: A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh” is structured into six chapters that systematically examine the tourism potential, planning challenges, and development opportunities in Chitrakoot. The report follows a sequential approach beginning with the introduction of the study context and theoretical understanding, followed by research design, study area analysis, data collection and analysis, and finally the formulation of planning proposals. The overall structure of the report is intended to develop a comprehensive planning framework for sustainable tourism development along the Ram Van Gaman Path with special focus on Chitrakoot.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the background and significance of the Ram Van Gaman Path and explains the importance of Chitrakoot as a major religious tourism destination. The chapter includes the aim, objectives, research questions, scope, limitations, methodology, expected outcomes, and data requirements of the study. It establishes the overall context and direction of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews theoretical concepts, planning approaches, and previous studies related to religious tourism, pilgrimage town planning, tourism corridor development, visitor management, and tourism infrastructure planning. It also examines various case studies and identifies research gaps relevant to the present study.

Chapter 3: Research Design

This chapter explains the overall research framework and methodology adopted for the study. It discusses the types and sources of data, methods of primary and secondary data collection, survey design, sampling approach, analytical techniques, and tools used for spatial and statistical analysis. The chapter establishes the methodological basis for conducting the research systematically.

Chapter 4: Study Area Profile and Existing Situation Analysis

This chapter presents the profile of Chitrakoot, including its regional setting, historical and religious significance, physical characteristics, land use, transportation network, tourism attractions, and infrastructure conditions. The chapter analyses the existing spatial structure and identifies key issues and challenges affecting tourism development in the town.

Chapter 5: Data Collection and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings from primary surveys conducted with tourists, shopkeepers, and local residents. It includes analysis of tourist behaviour, seasonal tourist inflow, stakeholder perceptions, infrastructure deficiencies, and spatial issues observed during field surveys. The chapter also includes spatial mapping, site observations, and preliminary planning proposals derived from the analysis.

Chapter 6: Proposals

This chapter presents the final planning proposals and spatial interventions formulated for Chitrakoot based on the findings of the previous chapters. The proposals focus on integrated tourist circuit development, multi-facility tourist centres, parking and public facilities, waste management systems, wellness tourism, adventure tourism, and ghat redevelopment. The chapter also discusses planning concepts, implementation strategies, operation and maintenance mechanisms, and expected outcomes for each proposal.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review forms a critical foundation for the present study by establishing the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological context within which the research is situated. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the thesis—positioned at the intersection of religious tourism, corridor-based development, and physical planning—a comprehensive review of existing scholarship was undertaken to understand the evolution of ideas, identify methodological approaches, and examine planning practices relevant to pilgrimage towns and tourism corridors.

The process began with an extensive search of academic journals, government reports, policy documents, planning theses, and institutional publications related to religious tourism, pilgrimage town planning, tourism corridor development, infrastructure management, and tourism potential assessment. In total, twenty-nine (29) research papers and related documents were initially identified through database searches, institutional repositories, and official publications. These documents covered a broad range of themes, including sacred geography, socio-economic impacts of pilgrimage, visitor management strategies, tourism infrastructure development, corridor-based planning initiatives, and case studies of major religious destinations in India.

Following the preliminary review, a systematic screening process was undertaken to assess the relevance of each document in relation to the overall aim and specific objectives of the present thesis. Particular emphasis was placed on studies that addressed spatial planning dimensions of religious tourism, infrastructure assessment, seasonal tourist inflow analysis, corridor-based development models, and planning-level interventions in pilgrimage towns. Based on this relevance-based filtering, fifteen (15) research documents were shortlisted for detailed examination *Table 2.1: Literature Review Matrix*. These selected documents were closely aligned with the study's central objective of formulating a planning framework for tourism development in Chitrakoot as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path.

The shortlisted research papers were subsequently reviewed in depth to extract conceptual frameworks, analytical models, and methodological approaches applicable to the present study. Special attention was given to the tools and techniques employed by previous researchers, such as tourist profiling surveys, seasonal inflow analysis, infrastructure gap assessment, spatial mapping, PESTEL analysis, corridor-based

planning models, and case study comparisons. The review enabled identification of best practices in pilgrimage town planning, visitor flow management strategies, and infrastructure planning mechanisms adopted in comparable religious destinations.

In addition to methodological insights, the literature review facilitated a critical understanding of the limitations in existing studies. While several scholars have examined religious tourism from socio-cultural, economic, or promotional perspectives, relatively fewer studies have approached the subject from an integrated physical planning standpoint. This observation further reinforced the need for a structured planning framework that connects corridor-level development with town-level spatial organization, which constitutes the core focus of the present research.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

Table 2.1: Literature Review Matrix

S. No	Author(s) & Year	Study Area (Country/City/River)	Aim of Study	Scale of Study	Methodology Used	Data Sources	Key Findings	Planning Implications	Research Gaps Identified	Relevance to My Thesis (CASE OF CHITRAKOOT)
1	Chang & Liu, 2009	Taiwan (Various Temples)	Determine if environmental strategies help temples meet regulations and gain competitive advantage.	Local Site	Factor analysis, Regression analysis	528 questionnaire s from temple managers	Environmental protection (energy/pollution prevention) boosts financial performance and reputation.	Temples must integrate eco-friendly practices to sustain long-term tourist attractiveness.	Lack of focus on environmental strategies in temple culture tourism.	Useful for proposing eco-friendly spatial interventions (Obj. e) around Chitrakoot's temples.
2	Shinde, 2012	Vrindavan, India	Explain place-making in a Hindu pilgrimage site and its link to environmental change.	City	Historical geography approach, Socio-spatial dialectic	Historical maps, texts, field surveys, interviews	Environmental degradation is tied to historical socio-spatial transformations and the pilgrimage economy.	Need for institutional structures to negotiate and manage environmental responsibilities in sacred spaces.	Neglect of conceptual discussion on relationships between religious practices and environments.	Highlights how religious myths shape spatial reality; vital for understanding Chitrakoot's spatial-cultural evolution (Obj. d).
3	Yaseen et al., 2013	Makkah, Saudi Arabia	Estimate real-time crowd density using a sensory fusion model.	Local Site	Image processing, Artificial Neural Networks	Real-time visual and infrared camera data	Sensor fusion enhances crowd density estimation accuracy over separate systems.	Better predictive safety design and crowd management for mega-events.	Need to combine simulation with real-time characterization.	Offers high-tech crowd management insights, but too micro-level for a town planning framework.
4	Chadha & Onkar, 2016	Allahabad, India	Explore urban planning challenges/change s in religious tourism cities.	City	Comparative study of development/land-use plans	Master Plan, City Development Plan, Kumbh 2013 statistics	Massive floating populations create severe stress on land, traffic, security, and civic infrastructure.	Planners must anticipate rapid demographic changes and integrate tourism into urban proposals.	Difficulty in accounting for rapid urban changes driven by massive tourist influxes.	Directly informs the assessment of existing physical and social infrastructure under tourist stress (Obj. c).

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

S. No	Author(s) & Year	Study Area (Country/City/River)	Aim of Study	Scale of Study	Methodology Used	Data Sources	Key Findings	Planning Implications	Research Gaps Identified	Relevance to My Thesis (CASE OF CHITRAKOOT)
5	Sharma, 2016	Katra, India	Appraise Katra's urban development and propose a model for future sustainability.	City	Case-study, Critical appraisal of urban plans	Census data, Katra Master Plan	Unplanned commercial growth degraded infrastructure, causing a loss of the public realm and legible spaces.	Recommends decentralization, pedestrian-friendly CBDs, and garden-city models for religious towns.	Lack of comprehensive statistical urban models for pilgrimage towns.	Perfect parallel for Chitrakoot; provides a model for proposing spatial interventions and town-level planning (Obj. e).
6	Almeida et al., 2017	Troia-Melides Coast, Portugal	Provide an integrated overview of conflicts between tourism development and spatial planning.	Corridor	Qualitative content analysis (Moore's model)	26 interviews with public/private stakeholders	Conflicts root in institutional disorganization, unclear policies, and differing material interests.	Supra-municipal spatial plans and coordinated strategies are needed to manage land-use conflicts.	Lack of integrated studies analyzing sources of conflict applied to tourism planning.	Relevant for governance and policy frameworks required to manage regional corridor dynamics (Obj. e).
7	Verma et al., 2018	Ujjain, India	Analyze socioeconomic factors affecting walking behavior in mass gatherings.	City	Questionnaire survey, Statistical analysis	2,510 valid observations with GPS verification	Primary religious activities elicit higher acceptable walking distances than secondary activities.	Helps optimize facility locations (food, water, transit) based on pilgrim walking thresholds.	Previous distance studies focused on urban commuting, not mass religious gatherings.	Guides the spatial organization of tourism-related infrastructure and pedestrian routes in Chitrakoot (Obj. c, e).
8	Karthika et al., 2022	Ujjain, India	Evaluate walking accessibility of religious locations to assess route choices.	City	Space syntax analysis, Network analysis	Video datasets, GIS base maps	Physical distance and visual accessibility heavily determine pedestrian route choices in crowds.	Useful for proactive crowd management and designing buffer spaces in religious gatherings.	Lack of literature on angularity and relative accessibility in mass gathering trip chaining.	Useful for mapping spatial connectivity between religious nodes in Chitrakoot (Obj. d).

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

S. No	Author(s) & Year	Study Area (Country/City/River)	Aim of Study	Scale of Study	Methodology Used	Data Sources	Key Findings	Planning Implications	Research Gaps Identified	Relevance to My Thesis (CASE OF CHITRAKOOT)
9	Nagesh et al., 2025	Bengaluru & Tamil Nadu, India	Explore access to leisure mobilities for older adults via religious tourism.	Corridor	Ethnographic study, In-depth interviews	33 interviews, field notes, local archives	Religious tours provide legitimate spatial agency and temporary escape from urban hardships for marginalized women.	Transport policies must recognize diverse mobilities blending leisure, social, and spiritual needs.	Marginalized women's leisure in later life remains under-researched.	Helps analyze the tourist profile and socio-demographic motivations of pilgrims visiting the corridor (Obj. b).
10	Andrade Suárez et al., 2025	Camino Fisterra-Muxía, Spain	Examine if pilgrimage tourism supports rural socio-economic development.	Corridor	Mixed-methods (surveys, discourse analysis)	Demographic statistics, 124 pilgrim surveys	Tourism generated economic vitality but failed to reverse structural population decline.	Calls for adaptive carrying capacity tools and integrated rural development strategies.	Peripheral/emerging pilgrimage paths remain theoretically understudied.	Crucial for understanding the corridor-scale impact of the Ram Van Gaman Path on rural/town economies (Obj. a, d).
11	Nguyen-Viet et al., 2025	Hanoi & Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	Investigate impacts of religious orientation and patriotism on revisit intention.	City	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling	937 tourist survey responses	Religious orientation positively impacts revisit intention, mediated by spiritual behavior.	Tailored marketing can enhance destination image and drive repeat visits for domestic tourists.	Limited integration of patriotism and religious influence within a unified model.	Aids in analyzing tourist patterns, profiles, and behaviors to enhance the tourist experience (Obj. b).
12	Singh & Bhuyan, 2025	Jyotirlinga sites, North India	Construct and validate a scale (PILQUAL) to evaluate service quality at pilgrimage sites.	Corridor	Mixed-methods, Factor Analysis	1,047 tourist survey responses	Identified six service dimensions: Information, Transportation, Safety, Accommodation, Desirable Facility, Food/Water.	Lack of empirically validated tools to assess service quality in religious tourism.	Provides a direct metric (PILQUAL) to assess Chitrakoot's tourism-related infrastructure (Obj. c).	High

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

S. No	Author(s) & Year	Study Area (Country/City/River)	Aim of Study	Scale of Study	Methodology Used	Data Sources	Key Findings	Planning Implications	Research Gaps Identified	Relevance to My Thesis (CASE OF CHITRAKOOT)
13	Chams-Anturi et al., 2025	Santa Cruz de Mompox, Colombia	Present a methodology for evaluating the tourism potential of natural/cultural heritage.	City	Field observation, surveys, expert panel scoring	Official documents, 72 local resident surveys	Identified high-potential but underutilized cultural and natural resources.	Facilitates data-driven decision-making and combats overtourism via structured evaluation.	Need for innovative approaches bridging heritage valuation with market relevance.	Direct methodological fit for evaluating the tourism potential of Chitrakoot based on spatial/cultural parameters (Obj. d).
14	Srivastava & Sinha, 2025	Varanasi, India	Assess how LULC changes influenced the integrity of ritual landscapes.	Local Site	Supervised classification (GIS/Remote Sensing)	Multi-temporal Landsat imagery (2003-2023)	10.21% increase in urban land led to significant losses in vegetation and water bodies.	Recommends GIS-based zoning and Heritage Impact Assessments to protect sacred zones.	Gap in integrating geospatial change detection with cultural heritage analysis.	Essential for assessing physical infrastructure changes and proposing spatial interventions/zoning in Chitrakoot (Obj. c, e).
15	Jitmaneroj, 2026	Global (119 countries)	Analyze interrelationships among institutions, infrastructure, resources, and sustainability.	Global	EM clustering, PLS-SEM, importance-performance map	Enabling environment and resources are the strongest drivers of tourism outcomes.	Shifts policy from descriptive benchmarking to systems-based policy design.	Most studies analyze development dimensions in isolation rather than systemically.	Provides a macro diagnostic framework to formulate the overarching planning framework (Aim).	High

Source: By Author (Used multiple Research papers)

2.1. Search Strategy and Keywords Used

The identification and selection of literature for the present study were carried out through a structured and systematic search process to ensure academic rigor and thematic relevance. Major academic databases, including Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, were used as the primary sources for retrieving peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, planning reports, and scholarly publications. These databases were selected due to their comprehensive coverage of interdisciplinary research in tourism studies, urban planning, infrastructure development, and social sciences, which are directly relevant to the scope of this thesis.

No strict chronological limitation was imposed during the search process. Instead, emphasis was placed on selecting the most conceptually relevant and methodologically robust studies, irrespective of their year of publication. This approach was adopted to capture both foundational theoretical contributions and recent empirical research related to religious tourism, pilgrimage town planning, and tourism corridor development. Priority was given to studies that demonstrated clear analytical frameworks, spatial planning perspectives, and practical relevance to the objectives of the present research.

The literature search was organized around a set of broad thematic domains to ensure comprehensive coverage of the interdisciplinary dimensions of the study. The primary themes explored included tourism studies, management and hospitality, physical planning, transportation and mobility, infrastructure development, environmental management, psychology (particularly visitor perception and satisfaction), economic impacts of tourism, and waste management practices in tourism destinations. These themes were selected to reflect the multifaceted nature of pilgrimage towns, where religious, spatial, infrastructural, social, and economic systems intersect.

To operationalize the search process, a set of keyword clusters was developed and refined iteratively. Keywords related to religious tourism and pilgrimage included terms such as 'religious tourism', 'pilgrimage tourism', 'sacred geography,' 'temple town,' and 'faith-based tourism,' which helped identify conceptual and theoretical literature on the subject. For understanding spatial and planning dimensions, keywords such as 'pilgrimage town planning,' 'tourism-led urban development,' 'land use in religious towns,' and 'heritage-sensitive planning' were used. In order to explore corridor-based

development models, terms such as ‘tourism corridor,’ ‘religious tourism circuit,’ ‘destination connectivity,’ and ‘regional tourism planning’ were employed.

Infrastructure and management-related studies were identified using keywords including ‘tourism infrastructure,’ ‘visitor management,’ ‘carrying capacity,’ ‘seasonal tourist inflow,’ ‘crowd management,’ and ‘mobility planning in pilgrimage towns.’ To examine analytical and methodological approaches, additional keywords such as ‘tourism potential assessment,’ ‘tourist profiling,’ ‘GIS in tourism planning,’ ‘infrastructure gap analysis’, were utilized. Environmental and service-related dimensions were captured through terms like ‘waste management in tourism destinations,’ ‘Religious Tourism Planning,’ and ‘public amenities in pilgrimage towns.’ *Figure 2.1*

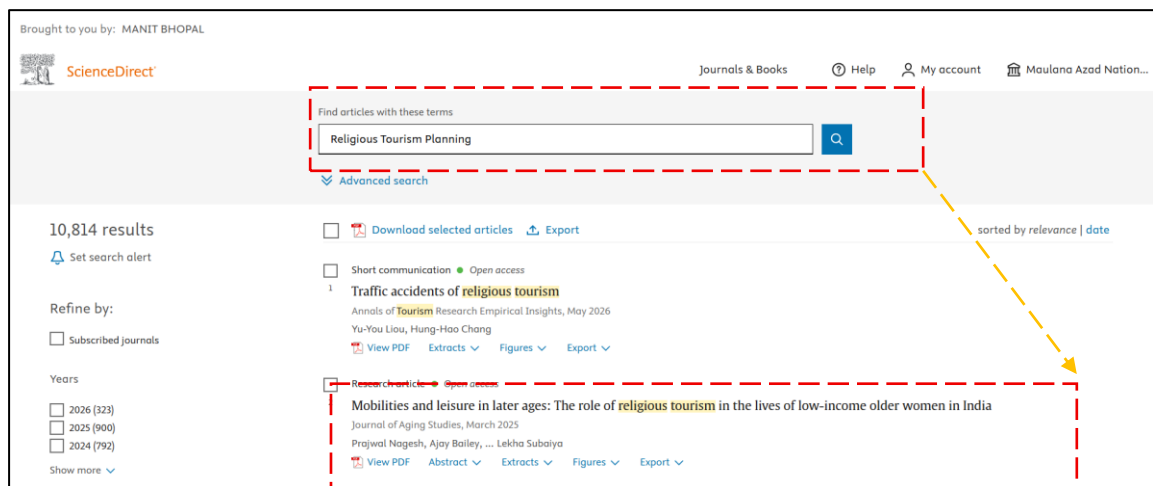


Figure 2.1: Keywords Searching

Source: Science Direct

The use of these keyword clusters allowed for a targeted yet comprehensive search process, ensuring that the selected literature was directly aligned with the study’s objectives of assessing tourism potential, analyzing infrastructure and visitor management issues, and formulating a planning framework for Chitrakoot as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path. The systematic approach adopted in the search and selection process enhances the credibility and methodological transparency of the literature review.

2.2. Religious Tourism – Concept & Theoretical Foundations

2.2.1. Concept of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage

The intersection of religious devotion and travel has historically served as a cornerstone of human mobility, representing a profound synthesis of spiritual pursuit and socio-

cultural phenomena. At the core of this intersection lies the distinction and overlap between pilgrimage and religious tourism. Pilgrimage is traditionally defined as a physical journey in search of truth, the sacred, and spiritual purification, often driven by the desire to fulfill religious vows or achieve moral transformation (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). It is largely ritualistic, bound by sacred narratives, and mandates specific religious practices such as taking a holy dip, performing circumambulation (parikrama), or offering prayers (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025; Verma et al., 2018). In contrast, religious tourism encompasses a broader spectrum of motivations that extend beyond strict ritual obligations. While pilgrimage demands rigid adherence to sacred protocols, religious tourism allows for more recreational, observational, and cultural engagement, drawing individuals motivated by heritage interest, architectural curiosity, and cultural exploration (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). Thus, while all pilgrims are effectively tourists navigating a destination's infrastructure, not all religious tourists are pilgrims engaged in canonical orthodox rituals.

Central to both pilgrimage and religious tourism is the concept of sacred geography. Sacred geography refers to the spatialization of mythology, where specific landscapes, routes, and natural features are invested with divine meaning and metaphysical weight. The making of a sacred place often involves inscribing religious legends onto the physical environment, as observed in the pastoral landscapes of Braj, where forests, woodlands, and the Yamuna River were established as the symbolic setting for the Krishna legend in the fifteenth century (Shinde, 2012). Similarly, in Hindu cosmology, the riverfront ghats of Varanasi are not merely architectural steps leading to a river; they are symbolically associated with the microcosmic body of Lord Vishnu, forming a profound cosmological and ritualistic corridor (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). The sacred geography is continually reproduced through the bodily performances of pilgrims, whose prescribed movements, such as the twenty-one-kilometer circumambulation of the Govardhan hill, transform physical topography into a landscape of devotional ecstasy (Kapoor et al., 2025).

The motivations driving travel to these sacred geographies exist on a continuum between spiritual obligation and secular leisure. Traditional scholarship often creates a dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, but contemporary research reveals a hybridization of motivations. For instance, in mass religious gatherings like the Kumbh Mela, visitors prioritize primary spiritual activities—such as taking a holy dip or

visiting temples—but concurrently engage in secondary leisure activities like shopping, eating, and interacting with local culture (Verma et al., 2018). This blending of motivations is highly evident in the concept of the "post-secular pilgrim" observed along the Camino Fisterra-Muxía in Spain. Here, travelers embark on journeys that blur the boundaries between religious dogma and secular introspection. Contemporary pilgrims on this route are driven by a desire for psychological healing, physical activity, contact with nature, and sociability, demonstrating that spiritual growth and leisure-oriented relaxation frequently coexist without diminishing the experiential value of the journey (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Furthermore, for marginalized groups, such as low-income older women in urban India, religious tourism functions as "escape tourism." Undertaking long-distance bus tours to rural temples provides these women with a culturally sanctioned avenue to escape the drudgery of urban poverty, claim spatial agency, and engage in leisure, singing, and commensality under the legitimate guise of religious duty (Nagesh et al., 2025).

Over time, the practice of pilgrimage has undergone a profound transformation into a structured tourism activity. This shift from sacred mobility to a tourism economy is characterized by the commodification of religious experiences and the modernization of infrastructure. Historically, pilgrimage was a rigorous, ascetic endeavor requiring immense physical endurance. However, driven by modern transport, mass communication, and the rise of a mobile middle class, pilgrimage has evolved into a highly organized industry (Shinde, 2012). The modern pilgrim is an active consumer who expects hygienic accommodation, safe transportation, efficient crowd management, and specialized services alongside spiritual fulfillment (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). This has led to a free-market phenomenon in religious destinations, where traditional priests and monastic establishments operate alongside travel agencies, global food chains, and real estate developers offering spiritual retreats (Shinde, 2012). Consequently, the contemporary pilgrimage landscape is simultaneously a spiritual hub and a bustling marketplace where devotion and commerce inevitably converge.

2.2.2. Evolution of Religious Tourism in India

The evolution of religious tourism in India reflects a complex historical trajectory, transitioning from isolated sacred groves and riverbanks to highly urbanized temple towns. The historical development of these towns is deeply rooted in patronage and socio-political shifts. During the pre-colonial era, religious landscapes like Vrindavan

evolved from pastoral forests into permanent settlements *Figure 2.2*, due to the patronage of Mughal emperors and later Hindu warrior-kings. These rulers provided land grants and funded the construction of palatial mansions, grand temples, and riverside ghats to legitimize their social status and appease deities (Shinde, 2012). The colonial period further accelerated this evolution through the introduction of railways and modern civic administration, which revolutionized pilgrim traffic and transformed seasonal, arduous journeys into mass, short-term visitations (Shinde, 2012). In the post-colonial era, government initiatives and the democratization of travel expanded these erstwhile modest settlements into massive urban centers. For instance, the town of Katra, the base camp for the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, transformed from a village of mud-plastered houses and natural water spouts into a heavily commercialized urban matrix dominated by hotels, guest houses, and paved roads to accommodate millions of annual visitors (Sharma, 2016).

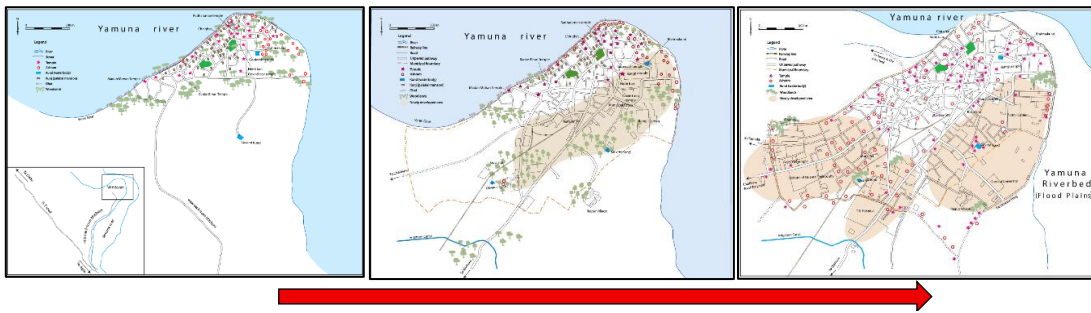


Figure 2.2: Evolution of Vrindavan over the Time.

Source: Shinde, 2012

River-based sacred settlements have historically formed the nucleus of Indian pilgrimage traditions. Rivers such as the Ganges, Yamuna, Kshipra, and Mandakini hold profound purificatory significance in Hinduism. Varanasi, considered the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, exemplifies the river-based sacred settlement, where its eighty-five ghats function as the epicenters of ritual, cremation, and daily life (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). Similarly, cities like Allahabad (Prayagraj) and Ujjain developed complex urban fabrics specifically oriented toward their riverbanks to facilitate mass bathing rituals (Chadha & Onkar, 2016; Karthika et al., 2022). These riverine environments dictate the spatial morphology of the towns, routing pilgrim traffic toward the water and necessitating specialized infrastructure to handle the interface between the urban core and the sacred river.

The temporal flow of religious tourism in these settlements is heavily dictated by seasonal pilgrimage traditions. Unlike conventional leisure tourism, which may be driven by climatic favorability, religious tourism is governed by astrological calendars and mythological anniversaries. The Kumbh Mela, rotating between four sacred river cities, is organized according to specific planetary alignments occurring every twelve years, bringing tens of millions of pilgrims to a single location for a concentrated period (Chadha & Onkar, 2016; Verma et al., 2018). Similarly, the Amarnath Yatra in Pahalgam is a highly seasonal event restricted to the months of July and August, resulting in intense, short-term demographic and environmental pressures on the host town (Bashir & Goswami, 2016). These seasonal surges require temporary municipal restructuring, including the establishment of satellite towns, temporary plotting, and emergency crowd management systems to sustain the massive influx of devotees.

The sacred routes of India are fundamentally shaped by ancient epics, primarily the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, which provide the mythological blueprints for modern pilgrimage circuits. The texts do not merely tell stories; they actively map the subcontinent. A prominent example is the Ram Van Gaman Path (RVGP), a growing religious tourism initiative that traces the exact route believed to have been taken by Lord Rama during his fourteen-year exile. Spanning multiple states and encompassing over seventy-five sites, the RVGP connects pilgrims to India's epic heritage and tribal folklore (George & Mathur, 2023). In regions like Satna, the Ramvan heritage site—where Lord Rama is believed to have spent time—has been developed with temples, museums, and natural parks to physically manifest this mythological journey (Singh et al., 2020).

A comparative analysis of the Ram Van Gaman Path and the Jyotirlinga pilgrimages highlights the divergent evolutionary stages of religious tourism circuits in India. The Jyotirlinga pilgrimage, rooted in the Shiva Purana and consisting of twelve pan-Indian shrines, represents a highly developed, established circuit. It benefits from decades of central and state funding, schemes like PRASAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive), and robust infrastructure, resulting in high pilgrim satisfaction (George & Mathur, 2023). Conversely, the RVGP represents an emerging circuit. While it holds profound cultural and narrative value, it suffers from a lack of infrastructure, poor signage, and inadequate transport connectivity, making the journey challenging for pilgrims (George & Mathur, 2023). This comparison illustrates that the

evolution of a pilgrimage route relies not only on its mythological pedigree but fundamentally on institutional support, infrastructure development, and strategic tourism promotion.

2.2.3. Theoretical Perspectives in Religious Tourism

The academic study of religious tourism is anchored in several theoretical frameworks that seek to explain the spatial, economic, and socio-cultural dynamics of sacred destinations. A foundational approach is the sacred landscape theory, often analyzed through the lens of the socio-spatial dialectic. This theory posits that a pilgrimage environment is simultaneously physical, institutional, and cultural; social relationships and religious beliefs are played out over space, and in turn, spatial configurations dictate the functioning of the religious society (Shinde, 2012). The sacred landscape is an ongoing process of "place-making" where patrons, priests, and pilgrims continuously appropriate and modify the natural environment to fulfill spiritual and recreational needs (Shinde, 2012). This is evident in Govardhan, where spatial significance—measured through visibility graph analysis and isovist area analysis—intersects with heritage importance. The spatial openness, visual connectivity, and clear sightlines to the sacred hill actively enhance the pilgrim's cognitive and spiritual immersion, proving that the geometry of a space directly influences its metaphysical perception (Kapoor et al., 2025).

To understand the trajectory of religious destinations, the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) provides a vital, albeit synthesized, conceptual lens. While originally designed for secular resorts, the TALC model aptly describes the morphological shifts in ancient pilgrimage centers. Destinations like Vrindavan, Varanasi, and Katra began in an exploration and involvement phase, characterized by pristine natural environments, ascetic presence, and localized patronage (Sharma, 2016; Shinde, 2012). Following colonial and post-colonial infrastructural interventions, these towns entered a rapid development and consolidation phase, marked by the explosion of guesthouses, commercial markets, and mass motorized transport. Today, many of these centers face stagnation or environmental crisis, where their physical carrying capacities have been breached. In Katra, the loss of the public realm, severe congestion, and degradation of natural water resources reflect a destination struggling to uphold its foundational appeal under the weight of an ever-increasing floating population (Sharma, 2016). Similarly, in Varanasi, the rapid Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) changes—marked by a

10.21% increase in urbanized area and a concurrent loss of vegetation—demonstrate a life cycle stage where uncontrolled commercialization threatens the very heritage that attracts visitors, necessitating urgent rejuvenation strategies (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025).

The socio-cultural impacts of pilgrimage are profound, operating as a double-edged sword that simultaneously empowers and displaces. On one hand, religious tourism provides a vital mechanism for social mobility and inclusion. For low-income older women in marginalized urban neighborhoods, organizing and participating in pilgrimages to rural shrines acts as a subversion of patriarchal and spatial constraints. These journeys provide rare moments of spatial autonomy, leadership, and community bonding outside the restrictive boundaries of their everyday lives (Nagesh et al., 2025). On the other hand, the commercialization of pilgrimage sites often leads to cultural erosion and spatial injustice. In Varanasi, modern construction and beautification projects frequently displace traditional ritual spaces, obscure historical streetscapes, and alienate the local communities whose identities are intrinsically tied to the sacred geography (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). The authentic spiritual ambiance is frequently supplanted by crime, tension, and aggressive religious entrepreneurship, where spiritual practices are heavily commodified for tourist consumption (Shinde, 2012).

Economically, religious tourism is a dominant driver of the local and regional economy. In pilgrimage towns, up to 75 percent of the local economy can revolve around services catering to visitors (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). The influx of millions of devotees spurs immense demand for hospitality, transport, and retail, creating robust spiritual economies that sustain local populations. However, this economic reliance has significant rural development implications, as demonstrated by studies on the Camino Fisterra-Muxía in Spain. In structurally vulnerable rural areas facing demographic decline, pilgrimage tourism introduces crucial economic vitality and entrepreneurial opportunities. Yet, research indicates that while tourism generates revenue, it does not automatically reverse population decline or guarantee sustainable rural development (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). If left unregulated, it leads to seasonal, precarious employment and fails to reinvest capital into local infrastructure. Therefore, leveraging religious tourism for rural development requires integrated, year-round strategies that distribute economic benefits equitably, respect ecological thresholds, and involve local communities in governance (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025; George & Mathur, 2023).

As the volume of religious tourists increases, the complexities of crowd management and service quality have become paramount theoretical and practical concerns. The traditional SERVQUAL model often fails in religious contexts because it cannot capture the emotional, symbolic, and ritualistic dimensions of the pilgrim's experience. Consequently, specialized diagnostic tools like the PILQUAL scale have been developed to evaluate service quality across dimensions uniquely relevant to sacred sites: spiritual ambiance, ritual facilitation, hygienic food and water, accommodation, ease of information, and safety (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). Safety and crowd management are particularly critical. In mass gatherings like the Kumbh Mela, pilgrims exhibit complex "trip chaining" behaviors, subconsciously optimizing their walking routes to visit multiple sub-destinations (ghats, temples, camps) within strict time constraints (Karthika et al., 2022). Analyzing visual accessibility and angular step depth reveals that pilgrims gravitate toward routes with the least directional change. Managing these massive flows requires advanced spatial syntax and network analysis to identify vulnerable links, simulate emergency closures, and establish buffer zones to prevent catastrophic stampedes (Karthika et al., 2022).

Finally, the theoretical discourse on religious tourism must critically address sustainability and territorial impacts. The relentless influx of visitors generates severe environmental degradation, often overlooked by religious actors who emphasize the site's metaphysical purity over its physical reality (Shinde, 2012). The territorial impacts are vast: in Pahalgam, the Amarnath Yatra generates over 18 tons of solid waste daily, much of which pollutes the Lidder River, leading to downstream outbreaks of waterborne diseases (Bashir & Goswami, 2016). In Chitrakoot, enormous quantities of non-biodegradable and floral waste from the Kamadgiri parikrama contaminate the Mandakini River, exacerbating the town's lack of adequate waste management infrastructure (Singh & Gupta, 2021). Furthermore, religious festivals involving the immersion of idols release toxic heavy metals into natural water bodies, necessitating the adoption of artificial immersion ponds to mitigate ecological damage (Yigam & Bharti, 2025). Even the massive volume of floral offerings—amounting to millions of tons across Indian temples—poses a severe threat to river ecosystems, prompting innovative circular economy solutions like vermicomposting and organic incense manufacturing to transform religious waste into value-added products (Goel & Kulshrestha, 2024; Malathy & Dhanraj, 2025). Achieving sustainability in religious

tourism therefore requires bridging the gap between spiritual devotion and environmental stewardship, shifting the paradigm from unchecked exploitation of sacred geographies to integrated, resilient heritage planning.

2.3. Pilgrimage Town Planning

2.3.1. Spatial Characteristics of Pilgrimage Towns

The spatial morphology of pilgrimage towns is intrinsically tied to their spiritual functions, reflecting a complex interplay between religious ideology, cultural practices, and historical patronage. At the core of these settlements is a prominent temple-centric settlement pattern, where the primary deity's shrine or the sacred geographic feature dictates the urban layout. The concept of the socio-spatial dialectic is highly visible in these towns, where social relationships and religious beliefs are physically played out over the space, creating an ongoing process of "place-making" (Shinde, 2012). Historically, destinations like Vrindavan evolved from pastoral forests into dense urban fabrics strictly due to the patronage of royal families and religious functionaries (Goswamis), who constructed grand temples and mansions that functioned as the nucleuses of neighborhood development (Shinde, 2012). Similarly, the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines serve as massive centralized nodes of Pan-Hindu identity, around which extensive built environments have coalesced to accommodate the influx of devotees (George & Mathur, 2023).

Beyond the central temple, the sacred geography is composed of ghats, ashrams, and religious precincts that form the essential ritual infrastructure. In river-based holy cities, the water's edge acts as the primary interface of devotion. For instance, Varanasi's 85 historic ghats form a continuous sacred corridor along the Ganges, deeply tied to Hindu cosmology where specific ghats correspond to the microcosmic body of Lord Vishnu (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). In such towns, the orientation of streets and the placement of ashrams are designed to facilitate mass movement toward these water bodies. Even in linear pilgrimage landscapes, such as the Govardhan parikrama (circumambulation) route, the spatial sequence of sacred kunds (water tanks), shrines, and natural groves dictates the pilgrim's journey, emphasizing visibility and visual integration with the sacred hill (Kapoor et al., 2025).

However, as pilgrimage has evolved into mass tourism, these sacred nodes have been rapidly surrounded by informal commercial zones and mixed land-use developments.

The spiritual economy drives the physical transformation of the town. In the base camp town of Katra (access point for the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine), what was once a village of mud-plastered houses has sprawled into a dense, chaotic matrix of hotels, guest houses, and narrow bazaars catering exclusively to a massive floating population *Figure 2.3* (Sharma, 2016). This commercial dominance often occurs at the expense of the public realm, transforming residential and agricultural land into mixed-use commercial hubs that prioritize economic extraction over spatial legibility (Sharma, 2016). A similar trend is observed along the Ram Van Gaman Path, particularly in nodes like Chitrakoot, where the Kamadgiri Parikrama route has become heavily commercialized, functioning simultaneously as a sacred path and a crowded economic artery (Pandey et al., 2022).



Figure 2.3: Katra's urban development

Source: Sharma, A.K. (2016)

These spatial characteristics are not exclusive to India. The Camino de Santiago and its extension to Fisterra-Muxía in Spain exhibit a transnational, linear spatial characteristic linking peripheral rural and maritime towns. Here, the pilgrimage route itself serves as the urban spine, dictating the conversion of traditional residential housing into short-term tourist rentals and hospitality services (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025).

Critically analyzing this morphology reveals that religious institutions heavily influence urban form by establishing the initial spatial anchors—temples, shrines, and ritual paths—which inevitably attract unregulated secondary and tertiary economic development. The spatial layout is continually reshaped by the "free-market" phenomenon of religious tourism, where secular commercial establishments crowd sacred precincts, fundamentally altering the visual, ecological, and spatial identity of the destination (Shinde, 2012; Srivastava & Sinha, 2025).

2.3.2. Planning Issues in Pilgrimage Towns

The collision between sacred topography and mass modern tourism generates severe planning and management challenges. Foremost among these is congestion during peak seasons, a phenomenon driven by "seasonal urbanism." Mass religious gatherings, such as the Kumbh Mela or the Hajj in Mecca, involve millions of pilgrims converging within strict astrological or lunar timeframes, leading to extreme high-density crowd scenarios (Karthika et al., 2022). Pilgrims exhibit "trip chaining" behavior—attempting to visit multiple sub-destinations (ghats, temples, camps) in one outing—which exponentially increases foot traffic on specific highly-integrated routes (Karthika et al., 2022). In the Amarnath Yatra base camp of Pahalgam, the town experiences a massive demographic explosion restricted to just two months, severely straining local municipal capacities and triggering unmanageable bottlenecks (Bashir & Goswami, 2016).

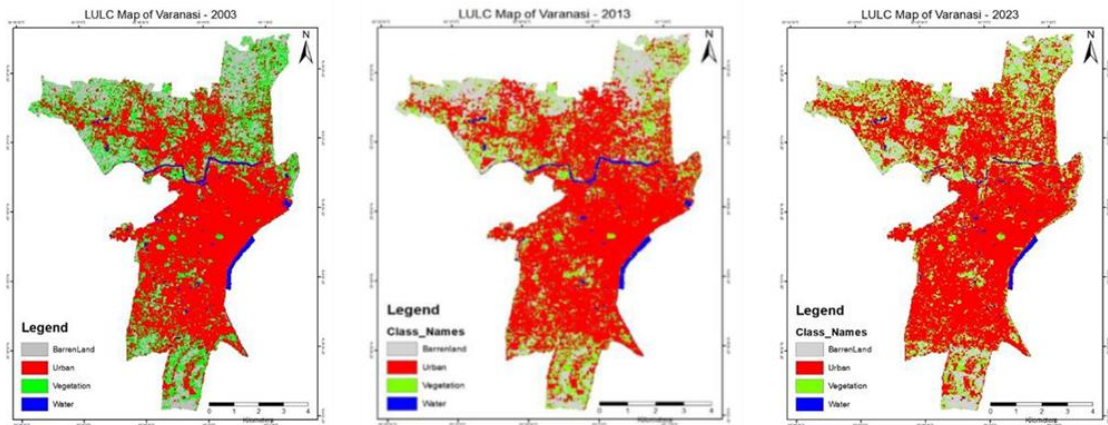


Figure 2.4: LULC Chnage of Varanasi

Source: Srivastava, P., & Sinha, K. (2025).

This seasonal influx acts as a catalyst for unplanned commercial growth and encroachment in sacred areas. In Varanasi's Heritage Zone 1, rapid urbanization has resulted in a 10.21% increase in built-up urban land over two decades, largely encroaching upon traditional riverfronts and leading to the degradation of historical skylines and traditional architectural aesthetics, *Figure 2.4* (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). Allahabad faces similar challenges, where the "mushrooming of ribbon development" and the encroachment of open spaces severely complicate land management during the annual Magh Mela and the Kumbh festivals, *Figure 2.5* (Chadha & Onkar, 2016). In Katra, the unchecked conversion of land for hotels and fast-food chains has resulted in a total loss of legible public spaces, creating a highly congested and visually fragmented urban core (Sharma, 2016).

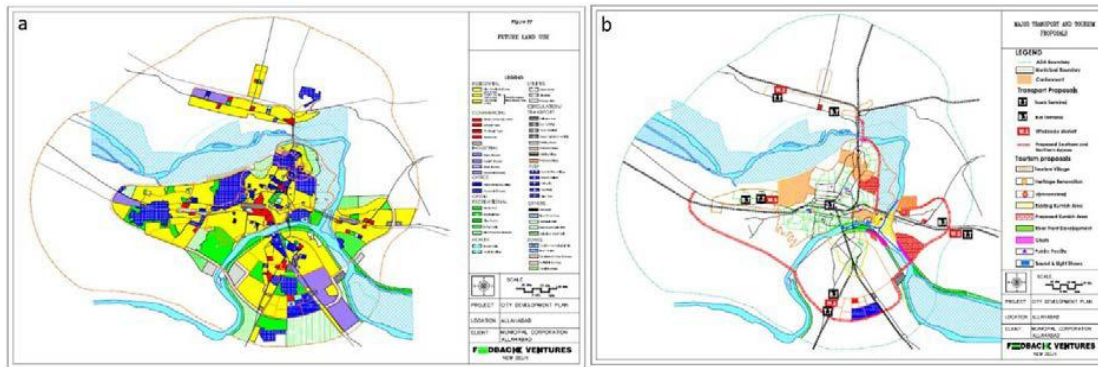


Figure 2.5: Landuse Map & Tourism Plan: Allahabad

Source: Chadha, H., & Onkar, P. (2016).

Consequently, pilgrimage towns suffer from chronic infrastructure stress and environmental sensitivity. The massive influx of visitors routinely breaches the physical carrying capacity of the towns. In Pahalgam, the sudden surge of tourists generates over 18 tons of municipal solid waste daily, overwhelming the town's minimal transport fleet and resulting in open dumping near the Lidder River, which subsequently causes downstream outbreaks of waterborne diseases (Bashir & Goswami, 2016). In Chitrakoot, enormous quantities of non-biodegradable and floral waste generated during the parikrama contaminate the Mandakini River, further degrading the ecological balance of the sacred town (Singh & Gupta, [2011/2014]). The issue of religious offerings is vast; floral waste alone accounts for millions of tons nationally, threatening aquatic ecosystems and requiring targeted circular economy solutions (Goel & Kulshrestha, 2024; Malathy & Dhanraj, 2025). Environmental degradation is also tied to cultural events, as seen in Taiwan's temple fairs, where the burning of ghost money and heavy use of firecrackers generate acute air and noise pollution, demanding stringent environmental mitigation strategies to maintain the destination's competitive advantage (Chang & Liu, 2009).

Critically evaluating these issues exposes a profound conflict between tourism development and conservation. The economic imperatives of religious tourism often override the preservation of carrying capacities. In the Fisterra-Muxía route, while tourism injects vitality into structurally vulnerable rural economies, it creates heavy seasonal imbalances, degrades fragile marine ecosystems, and fails to reverse long-term demographic decline without driving up the local cost of living (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). The continuous breach of perceptual and physical carrying capacities threatens

the very spiritual authenticity that draws pilgrims, highlighting an urgent need for intervention to prevent overtourism from destroying the sacred landscape.

2.3.3. Need for Integrated Physical Planning

The complex, multi-layered crises in religious destinations necessitate a shift away from piecemeal municipal administration toward integrated physical planning. The Tourism Development Systems framework suggests that sustainable tourism outcomes are strictly dependent on the co-evolution of institutional policies, physical infrastructure, resource management, and environmental sustainability (Jitmaneroj, 2026).

Effective land-use zoning is the foundational step in this integrated approach. Pilgrimage towns require spatial decentralization to alleviate the pressure on their historic cores. For instance, the transport strategy for Chitrakoot proposes constructing 30-meter-wide bypass roads and decentralizing bus terminals (to Kamta and Rajoula) to intercept heavy regional traffic before it chokes the sacred Kamadgiri parikrama area (Pandey et al., 2022). In Katra, urban redevelopment models inspired by Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' and Burgess's concentric zone models are urgently needed. These models advocate for relocating bus stands to the periphery, creating a central pedestrian-only Central Business District (CBD) focused on the public realm, and distributing parking infrastructure to the outer commuter rings (Sharma, 2016).

Furthermore, there is a critical need for heritage-sensitive design and socio-cultural preservation. Modern interventions must align with the visual and spatial continuity of the sacred landscape. Utilizing the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) framework recommended by UNESCO, planners in Varanasi must implement GIS-based zoning to enforce buffer zones, height restrictions, and the preservation of traditional architectural styles around the ghats (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). The "Experiential Priority Index" (EPI) developed for Govardhan demonstrates that spiritual perception is intimately linked to spatial significance; preserving visual corridors and clear sightlines (isovists) to sacred landmarks profoundly enhances the pilgrim's cognitive and spiritual experience (Kapoor et al., 2025).

Managing the cyclical extremes of these towns requires robust seasonal population management and sustainable infrastructure provision. Traditional service quality metrics often fail here; specialized tools like PILQUAL emphasize that beyond basic

tangibles, pilgrims require safety, organized crowd control, hygienic food, and ritual facilitation (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). To achieve this, Smart City planning principles must be integrated. Technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT) camera networks for real-time crowd monitoring and dynamic traffic rerouting are essential to prevent stampedes and manage congestion at critical bottlenecks (Kapoor et al., 2025).

Ultimately, pilgrimage towns require multi-scalar governance to mediate the inevitable conflicts over spatial planning. Conflict analysis in tourism planning reveals that overlapping jurisdictions—between temple boards, environmental agencies, and municipal authorities—often lead to institutional paralysis (Almeida et al., 2017). Ensuring rural development through pilgrimage, as analyzed along the Camino in Spain, requires collaborative governance platforms that involve local residents, businesses, and heritage experts to ensure that tourism revenues are reinvested into community resilience and infrastructure rather than merely extracted by external operators (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Integrated physical planning is thus not merely about spatial beautification; it is a vital governance tool required to balance economic vitality with infrastructure resilience, environmental stewardship, and the profound socio-cultural legacy of the sacred geography.

2.4. Tourism Corridor Development

2.4.1. Concept of Tourism Corridors

The conceptualization of tourism development has increasingly shifted from an isolated destination model to a network-based approach, fundamentally characterized by the tourism corridor. A tourism corridor operates on a linear development model, utilizing a node-and-link approach to connect geographically dispersed attractions, thereby structuring regional tourism economies, *Figure 2.6* (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Rather than concentrating economic benefits in a single location, corridors facilitate spatial interaction and mobility, creating a continuous flow of tourists between origin and destination (OD) points (Krataithong et al., 2025). This connectivity reshapes the spatial hierarchy of a region. As tourists travel along the corridor, peripheral and structurally vulnerable rural areas are integrated into a broader economic network, driving regional revitalization and extending the economic footprint of tourism beyond traditional urban centers (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025).



Figure 2.6: Camino de Santiago pilgrimage Route

Source: Andrade Suárez, M.J., et al. (2025).

The theoretical foundation of this connectivity-led tourism growth is deeply rooted in the Tourism Development Systems framework. According to Jitmaneeroj (2026), tourism development is a complex, adaptive system where infrastructure and resources act as strategic national assets. In a corridor model, physical infrastructure (the links) and localized services (the nodes) do not merely facilitate travel; they actively stimulate institutional responsiveness and cross-sectoral coordination. This systemic interdependency means that enhancing connectivity directly amplifies a region's policy capacity and environmental governance (Jitmaneeroj, 2026).

However, transitioning from an isolated destination to a network-based corridor model carries profound planning implications. Corridor development often sparks intense land-use conflicts. As Almeida et al. (2017) note in their conflict analysis of spatial planning, harmonizing rapid tourism development with the conservation of territorial heritage involves navigating antagonistic interests among private developers, environmental organizations, and public authorities. Successful corridor planning must therefore bridge territorial physical planning with destination economics and management, ensuring that infrastructure-led growth does not compromise the natural or cultural assets that drive the corridor's appeal (Costa, 2020).

2.4.2. Religious Tourism Circuits in India

In India, the theoretical model of the tourism corridor is practically manifested through the development of religious tourism circuits. Recognizing the immense socio-economic potential of pilgrimage, the Government of India has instituted national policies such as the PRASAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation

Drive) and Swadesh Darshan schemes. These initiatives represent a deliberate shift toward investment-led, corridor-based religious tourism promotion, focusing heavily on upgrading physical infrastructure, enhancing digital services, and formalizing the spatial structuring of pilgrimage networks (George & Mathur, 2023; Singh & Bhuyan, 2025).

A prominent emerging circuit is the Ram Van Gaman Path (RVGP), a sacred corridor tracing the mythological 14-year exile route of Lord Rama through various states, including Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh (George & Mathur, 2023). The objective of the RVGP initiative is to revive ancient sacred heritage and tribal folklore by developing a connected spiritual tourism circuit. For instance, in Chhattisgarh, specific sites such as the Mata Kaushalya Mandir and Shivrinarayan Mandir are being systematically developed to improve pilgrim amenities and cultural tourism potential (George & Mathur, 2023).

A critical analysis of these schemes reveals that corridor logic is deeply embedded in their design; they aim to promote regional integration by linking sequential mythological sites into a cohesive journey. However, a comparative analysis between the RVGP and the well-established Jyotirlinga pilgrimage circuit exposes a tension between infrastructure-led and culture-led planning. The Jyotirlinga circuit, supported by decades of central and state funding through schemes like PRASAD, boasts superior infrastructure, reliable roads, and robust promotional strategies, resulting in high pilgrim satisfaction (George & Mathur, 2023). Conversely, the RVGP is primarily driven by its profound cultural and mythological significance but suffers from a severe lack of foundational infrastructure, inadequate transport connectivity, and poor signage (George & Mathur, 2023). This dichotomy illustrates that while a shared cultural narrative can conceptualize a corridor, successful regional integration strictly requires massive, sustained infrastructure development to transform a mythological path into a functional tourism economy.

2.4.3. Corridor-Based Development and Node-Level Planning

The success of a continuous tourism corridor relies fundamentally on the strength and resilience of its strategic nodes. Within a linear pilgrimage route, intermediate settlements and gateway towns function as essential service hubs, providing the necessary accommodation, transit, and commercial support required to sustain mobile

populations. As tourists traverse the corridor, these nodes experience rapid, corridor-driven urban transformation. For instance, the transport strategy for the religious town of Chitrakoot—a critical node on the Ram Van Gaman Path—highlights how regional routes like the Chitrakoot-Karvi state highway act as the developmental backbone of the area. The influx of pilgrims along this corridor necessitates extensive infrastructure reinforcement, including the proposed widening of roads to 30 meters and the establishment of decentralized bus terminals at peripheral nodes like Kamta and Rajoula to intercept heavy regional traffic (Pandey et al., 2022).

This corridor-driven transformation drastically affects land use in small towns. As observed along the Camino Fisterra-Muxía route in Spain, linear pilgrimage development often triggers the conversion of traditional residential and agricultural land into short-term tourist accommodations and hospitality services (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). If left unchecked, this spatial shift leads to territorial fragility, where local populations face rising living costs and the erosion of public realms to accommodate seasonal visitor surges. Gateway towns and base camps are particularly vulnerable to these seasonal pressures, which frequently breach their physical carrying capacities. In hill towns like Pahalgam, the base camp for the Amarnath Yatra, the seasonal influx of pilgrims generates massive quantities of municipal solid waste that overwhelm local infrastructure and degrade sensitive environmental assets, such as the Lidder River (Bashir & Goswami, 2016).

Therefore, node-level planning within a broader corridor framework is absolutely necessary for sustainable growth. A systemic diagnostic approach dictates that physical infrastructure must co-evolve with environmental sustainability and institutional policy (Jitmaneroj, 2026). To achieve this, planners must implement integrated land-use controls that prevent the unregulated sprawl of commercial tourism facilities into ecologically and culturally sensitive zones. Furthermore, infrastructure phasing is critical; developments must be scaled to handle peak seasonal carrying capacities. Advanced spatial syntax and crowd management modeling—such as analyzing visual accessibility, angular step depth, and vulnerable network links—must be deployed at high-density nodes to safely route pedestrian flows during mass religious gatherings (Karthika et al., 2022). Ultimately, without rigorous, heritage-sensitive node-level planning, the connectivity intended to empower a tourism corridor will instead catalyze the degradation of the strategic gateway towns that anchor it.

2.5. Infrastructure & Visitor Management in Pilgrimage Towns

2.5.1. Tourism Infrastructure Components

The physical and service-based infrastructure of a pilgrimage town acts as a strategic national asset that not only facilitates travel but directly stimulates institutional responsiveness and sustainable policy development (Jitmaneroj, 2026). The provision of adequate infrastructure—encompassing accommodation, parking, sanitation, and public amenities—is foundational to the pilgrim experience. Evaluating service quality at pilgrimage sites using the PILQUAL scale demonstrates that pilgrims prioritize clean and accessible accommodation, safe drinking water, hygienic food, and structured queue management just as highly as the spiritual ambiance of the destination (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). The stark impact of infrastructure quality on pilgrim satisfaction is evident when comparing established and emerging circuits. The Jyotirlinga pilgrimage, supported by decades of funding through schemes like PRASAD, boasts superior accommodations, well-maintained roads, and reliable food availability, culminating in high visitor satisfaction (George & Mathur, 2023). Conversely, the emerging Ram Van Gaman Path (RVGP) struggles significantly; surveys indicate that 42% of visitors are dissatisfied due to a lack of transport, and 50% report poor signage and wayfinding systems (George & Mathur, 2023).

Wayfinding systems are critical components of visitor management, particularly in complex heritage sites. Clear signage, multilingual assistance, and visually accessible routes reduce anxiety, prevent bottlenecks, and enhance spatial orientation, thereby deepening the pilgrim's spiritual immersion (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). Without formal infrastructure, pilgrimage towns default to informal, unregulated economies that degrade the environment. Environmental implications are particularly pronounced regarding sanitation and waste management. In Indian temple towns, millions of tons of floral offerings are discarded into rivers and open dumps daily, causing severe water pollution, heavy metal bioaccumulation, and soil degradation (Goel & Kulshrestha, 2024). Mitigating these impacts requires a shift from temporary, informal waste dumping to permanent, circular-economy infrastructure, such as establishing vermicomposting units or converting floral waste into eco-friendly organic incense sticks (Goel & Kulshrestha, 2024). Similarly, studies on temple fairs in Taiwan demonstrate that adopting strict environmental strategies—such as utilizing environmentally friendly firecrackers and modern incinerators for ghost money—

directly enhances the destination's reputation and competitive advantage (Chang & Liu, 2009).

2.5.2. Seasonal Tourist Inflow & Carrying Capacity

Religious tourism is inherently cyclical, characterized by massive floating populations converging during specific festivals or auspicious lunar dates. This intense seasonality routinely breaches the physical carrying capacity of host towns. During events such as the Hajj in Mecca or the Kumbh Mela in India, millions of pilgrims engage in complex movements characterized by high-density, driven flows within strict time constraints (Hussain et al., 2011; Karthika et al., 2022). The infrastructural stress during these peak festivals is immense, leading to severe solid waste accumulation, water resource depletion, and acute safety risks, including fatal stampedes if crowd density is not systematically monitored (Hussain et al., 2011).

Beyond physical limits, the social and environmental limits of a destination are rapidly tested by overtourism. In heritage towns such as Besalú, Spain, a high tourism intensity (the ratio of visitors to residents) fundamentally alters the social carrying capacity. When the threshold of acceptable tourism is crossed, residents experience spatial constraints, loss of public space, and friction regarding conservation versus commercial development (Muler Gonzalez et al., 2018). Similar socio-economic tensions are observed along the Camino Fisterra-Muxía rural pilgrimage route. While tourism injects economic vitality, the intense summer concentration leaves infrastructure underused for the rest of the year and fails to reverse long-term demographic decline. Furthermore, the conversion of residential properties into short-term tourist rentals exacerbates housing affordability crises for local residents (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Critically analyzing these peak season pressures reveals that continuous breaches of carrying capacity threaten the structural resilience of pilgrimage towns, demanding that planners adopt adaptive visitor management tools and establish strict ecological thresholds to protect the community's wellbeing (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025; Jitmaneeroj, 2026).

2.5.3. Mobility and Circulation Planning

Managing the movement of massive crowds requires highly specialized mobility and circulation planning to resolve inherent vehicular versus pedestrian conflicts. In mass religious gatherings, pedestrianization of the sacred core is essential. Pilgrims exhibit

complex "trip chaining" behaviors, subconsciously seeking to optimize their routes to encompass multiple sub-destinations (e.g., ghats, temples, and camps) in a single outing (Karthika et al., 2022). Space syntax and walk accessibility studies of the Kumbh Mela demonstrate that pilgrims gravitate toward routes with high visual integration and the least angular step depth (fewer directional changes). During peak event mobility planning, authorities frequently employ temporary barricading to allow processions to pass. However, simulation models show that such spontaneous link closures force pilgrims to reroute, heavily overloading alternate pathways and creating high-vulnerability bottleneck zones (Karthika et al., 2022).

To prevent these internal bottlenecks, external mobility infrastructure must be established to intercept traffic before it reaches the sacred route. The transport strategy for Chitrakoot addresses this by proposing 30-meter-wide peripheral bypass roads to divert heavy regional traffic away from the highly congested Kamadgiri parikrama area (Pandey et al., 2022). Furthermore, decentralized bus terminals and peripheral parking hubs are proposed at gateway nodes like Kamta and Rajoula. By parking vehicles at the periphery, authorities can deploy eco-friendly shuttle systems or battery-operated vehicles to transport pilgrims into the pedestrianized core, thereby ensuring smooth sacred route circulation and reducing localized emissions (Pandey et al., 2022). Additionally, leveraging real-time data, such as GPS tracking from taxis during major urban festivals (e.g., Songkran), allows planners to map origin-destination flows and identify spatial distribution anomalies, ensuring that transit resources and crowd control measures are dynamically allocated to high-density zones (Krataithong et al., 2025).

2.5.4. Institutional & Governance Mechanisms

The successful implementation of infrastructure and mobility plans in pilgrimage towns is strictly contingent upon robust institutional and governance mechanisms. The Tourism Development Systems framework posits that a strong "enabling environment"—characterized by effective governance, public safety, and institutional coordination—is the primary driver for embedding sustainability into tourism development (Jitmaneeroj, 2026). In practice, however, spatial planning in tourism destinations is frequently paralyzed by overlapping jurisdictions and conflicting interests among municipal bodies, heritage authorities, tourism departments, and private developers (Almeida et al., 2017).

To overcome this institutional fragmentation, there is a critical need for multi-agency coordination. Best practices in tourism development dictate the establishment of unified governing bodies, such as Tourism Development Corporations or specialized District Tourism Promotion Councils, to streamline administrative processes and mandate joint fact-finding. For instance, the successful development of the Jyotirlinga circuits has relied heavily on coordinated central and state funding through the PRASAD scheme, whereas fragmented state-level governance continues to hinder the infrastructural progression of the Ram Van Gaman Path (George & Mathur, 2023).

Furthermore, governance must be highly inclusive to ensure sustainable rural and urban development. Research on the Fisterra-Muxía pilgrimage route highlights that institutional responses often prioritize top-down physical infrastructure over community engagement (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Local stakeholders frequently express concerns over the lack of reinvestment of tourism revenues into local municipal services. Therefore, integrated planning requires participatory governance platforms that include civil society, local priests, businesses, and heritage experts. By implementing targeted fiscal mechanisms—such as localized tourist taxes earmarked for waste management, site conservation, and crowd control infrastructure—governance bodies can balance the economic imperatives of pilgrimage tourism with the socio-cultural and environmental preservation of the sacred town (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025; Almeida et al., 2017).

2.6. Tourism Potential Assessment Methods

2.6.1. Approaches to Tourism Potential Assessment

Evaluating the tourism potential of religious destinations and pilgrimage corridors requires multidimensional assessment methods that capture the interplay between natural or cultural endowments and physical capacities. A foundational approach is the resource-based assessment, which evaluates the intrinsic value of natural, cultural, and heritage assets. According to the Tourism Development Systems framework, resources act as the strategic foundation for destination identity and competitiveness (Jitmaneeroj, 2026). However, resource abundance alone does not guarantee sustainable tourism; it must be coupled with an infrastructure-based assessment to determine a destination's readiness. For instance, a comparative study of the Ram Van Gaman Path (RVGP) and the Jyotirlinga pilgrimage illustrates this dichotomy. While the RVGP possesses profound resource potential through its association with the Ramayana epic, it performs

poorly in infrastructure-based assessments due to inadequate roads and signage, leading to high pilgrim dissatisfaction compared to the highly developed Jyotirlinga circuit (George & Mathur, 2023).

Accessibility-based models further refine potential assessments by evaluating how easily visitors can navigate and utilize destination services. In pilgrimage contexts, spatial accessibility and wayfinding are critical determinants of service quality. The PILQUAL scale demonstrates that pilgrims prioritize clear signage, multilingual assistance, and physical accessibility (e.g., wheelchairs and safe walking routes) as highly as the destination's spiritual ambiance (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025).

To synthesize these structural and resource variables, planners often rely on diagnostic tools akin to SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to map institutional capacities against environmental constraints. In spatial planning, conflict analysis frameworks act as a crucial diagnostic step to identify structural threats—such as overlapping jurisdictions, contradictory public policies, and divergent stakeholder values—that hinder sustainable development (Almeida et al., 2017). Furthermore, assessing potential in corridor-based and rural development contexts requires bridging destination economics with territorial physical planning (Costa, 2020). For example, evaluating the Fisterra-Muxía pilgrimage route in Spain required assessing not only the economic vitality injected by tourism (opportunities) but also the threats of demographic decline and housing affordability crises for local residents (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Thus, in religious and corridor tourism, potential assessment must systematically weigh spiritual and heritage assets against infrastructural readiness and local community resilience.

2.6.2. Tourist Profiling & Flow Analysis Methods

Understanding pilgrimage dynamics relies heavily on empirical tourist profiling and flow analysis, which allow planners to dissect heterogeneous visitor behaviors and temporal travel patterns. Survey-based profiling remains a primary method for capturing visitor demographics, motivations, and satisfaction levels. In the comparative analysis of Indian religious circuits, structured questionnaires using Likert-scale items applied to 105 pilgrims effectively identified critical satisfaction gaps, revealing that RVGP visitors were highly dissatisfied with transport and accessibility, whereas Jyotirlinga visitors reported overcrowding as their primary challenge (George &

Mathur, 2023). Similarly, the validation of the PILQUAL scale utilized extensive survey profiling of 1,047 domestic tourists to extract essential dimensions of the pilgrim experience, such as the need for safety, hygiene, and ritual facilitation (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025).

Because pilgrimage tourism is often tied to specific religious calendars, seasonal inflow analysis is vital for capturing extreme fluctuations in tourist volume. The Fisterria-Muxía study emphasizes the necessity of evaluating off-season profiles (e.g., surveying in December) to understand year-round tourism dynamics and combat the structural vulnerability caused by intense summer concentration (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025). Such extreme seasonality regularly tests the social limits of host communities. Overtourism perception studies rely on profiling local residents to evaluate social carrying capacity. By cross-referencing socio-demographic variables with indicators like the tourist function index and residents' willingness to accept more tourists, planners can identify thresholds where tourism transitions from an economic benefit to a source of spatial friction and cultural erosion (Muler Gonzalez et al., 2018).

Advanced flow analysis increasingly utilizes origin–destination (OD) patterns and expenditure analysis derived from digital footprints. The TOURISTA model demonstrates how taxi GPS trajectories combined with geo-tagged social media data can infer tourist trip purposes and spatial behavior during mass urban festivals (Krataithong et al., 2025). By mapping OD flows, this probabilistic model identifies high-density popular tourist zones and tracks complex movements between accommodations and attractions. Furthermore, tracing trajectories allows for granular expenditure analysis. For example, categorizing trips that originate from budget hostels versus luxury hotels enables planners to segment tourists into high-spending and economical-spending profiles, thereby revealing distinct activity preferences (e.g., local dining vs. nightlife) and informing targeted economic interventions (Krataithong et al., 2025). Similarly, cluster analysis of pilgrim behaviors along rural routes identifies diverse traveler typologies—such as "Traditional" foot pilgrims versus "Busgrims"—who exhibit vastly different spending patterns and interactions with the local rural economy (Andrade Suárez et al., 2025).

2.6.3. Spatial Tools in Tourism Planning

The complex spatial configurations of pilgrimage towns require advanced spatial tools to support infrastructure provision, mitigate congestion, and align tourism development with environmental constraints. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping and remote sensing are foundational for executing precise land-use analysis. In the religious town of Chitrakoot, spatial tools utilizing remote sensing imagery were essential for developing a smart city traffic plan. GIS maps allowed planners to delineate planning boundaries, visualize land-use patterns, and propose peripheral bypass roads and decentralized bus terminals to intercept heavy regional traffic before it impacted the sacred parikrama core (Pandey et al., 2022).

These spatial data sets are crucial for conducting infrastructure gap mapping. The Tourism Development Systems framework advocates utilizing tools like Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to map structural deficiencies visually. By plotting the relative importance of a dimension against its actual performance, planners can identify strategic leverage points; for instance, identifying that natural and cultural resources possess high strategic importance but severely underperform regarding conservation and infrastructure readiness (Jitmaneeroj, 2026).

Finally, tourist movement mapping is critical for crowd management and capacity control in high-density religious gatherings. Utilizing GPS-based spatial interactions, planners can generate clustering maps (e.g., using DBSCAN techniques) to identify dense accumulation zones and traffic anomalies in real-time, thereby ensuring dynamic allocation of transit and security resources (Krataithong et al., 2025). In hyper-dense religious events such as the Hajj, spatial mapping extends to pixel-based crowd density estimation systems utilizing video cameras. These automated image-processing tools map the density of pilgrims in specific bottleneck areas (e.g., Masjid al-Haram), allowing authorities to detect capacity breaches and prevent catastrophic stampedes (Hussain et al., 2011). Ultimately, integrating GIS, movement tracking, and land-use analysis provides the objective spatial intelligence necessary to sustain the delicate balance between high-volume corridor development and the socio-cultural preservation of historic pilgrimage destinations.

2.7. Case Studies: Planning Approaches in Major Religious Towns

The transition of religious destinations from traditional pilgrimage centers into modern tourism hubs necessitates diverse urban planning responses. By examining major religious nodes—ranging from emerging temple-centric redevelopments to established institutional models—planners can identify the critical intersections between spatial morphology, infrastructure provision, and heritage conservation.

2.7.1. Ayodhya – Temple-Centric Urban Redevelopment

Temple-led urban restructuring serves as the primary catalyst for regional revitalization in emerging pilgrimage epicenters. As the anchoring node for mythological circuits like the Ram Van Gaman Path (RVGP)—which traces the 14-year exile route of Lord Rama—destinations like Ayodhya rely on their profound cultural and narrative value to drive tourism economies (George & Mathur, 2023). In such temple-centric models, the physical temple acts as the developmental nucleus, spurring massive infrastructure expansion and land-use transformation in its immediate vicinity.

The branding and identity building of these towns are heavily dependent on their mythological pedigree, which functions as a strategic national resource to establish a competitive destination identity (Jitmaneroj, 2026; George & Mathur, 2023). However, translating this cultural identity into a functional urban space requires significant mobility reorganization. The influx of regional tourists necessitates strategies to intercept vehicular traffic before it breaches the sacred core. As demonstrated in transport strategies for similar RVGP nodes like Chitrakoot, this involves the construction of wide peripheral bypass roads, the decentralization of bus terminals to gateway points, and the implementation of eco-friendly shuttle systems to maintain the sanctity of the central pedestrian zones (Pandey et al., 2022).

Riverfront development is also integral to this restructuring, as adjacent water bodies often hold profound ritual significance. Yet, rapid infrastructure-led development frequently triggers intense spatial conflicts. Applying a conflict analysis framework reveals that harmonizing the fast-paced commercialization of religious tourism with environmental and territorial conservation often leads to antagonistic interests between private developers, municipal authorities, and heritage conservationists (Almeida et al., 2017). Therefore, temple-centric redevelopment must rigorously prioritize service quality—such as providing hygienic food, clean water, and clear wayfinding—without

commodifying or degrading the spiritual ambiance that fundamentally attracts the pilgrim (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). If infrastructure expansion outpaces the town's carrying capacity, the destination risks alienating visitors and degrading its foundational heritage (George & Mathur, 2023).

2.7.2. Varanasi – Corridor & Riverfront Integration

Varanasi exemplifies the complex planning approach required to integrate massive urban corridor developments within a highly sensitive, historic riverfront. The city's Heritage Zone 1—encompassing 85 historic ghats symbolically linked to the microcosmic body of Lord Vishnu—forms the spiritual and cultural heart of the settlement (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). The introduction of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in 2019 represents a monumental shift in ghat redevelopment, fundamentally restructuring the dense urban fabric to prioritize pedestrian access and facilitate massive pilgrim movement toward the river (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025).

While this corridor integration aims to improve accessibility and safety, it generates profound socio-spatial impacts. LULC (Land Use and Land Cover) change detection between 2003 and 2023 reveals a 10.21% increase in built-up urban land in Varanasi, predominantly at the expense of natural vegetation (-7.12%) and water bodies (-0.71%) (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025). The expansion of concrete structures and commercial platforms often obscures the historical skyline and displaces traditional socio-religious practices, illustrating that unchecked urbanization acts as a culturally disruptive force (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025).

To mitigate these disruptions, heritage-sensitive planning that incorporates advanced spatial analytics is paramount. Studies utilizing space syntax, including Visibility Graph Analysis (VGA) and Isovist Area Analysis (ISA), demonstrate that preserving visual corridors and spatial openness directly enhances a pilgrim's cognitive orientation and spiritual immersion (Kapoor et al., 2025). Furthermore, pedestrian prioritization along these corridors must account for complex crowd dynamics. Pilgrims engage in "trip chaining"—visiting multiple sub-destinations like ghats and temples in a single outing—which heavily overloads specific network links (Karthika et al., 2022). Integrating the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) framework recommended by UNESCO with real-time crowd management modeling allows planners to enforce buffer zones, limit visual obstructions, and dynamically route pedestrian flows to

prevent bottlenecks in hyper-dense riverfronts (Srivastava & Sinha, 2025; Karthika et al., 2022).

2.7.3. Tirupati – Institutional Visitor Management Model

Managing the extreme seasonal and daily pressures of mass religious gatherings requires moving beyond physical spatial planning toward robust institutional governance. Tirupati stands as a prime example of an institutional visitor management model, where a centralized temple board governs the vast intersections of charity, religious entrepreneurship, and municipal service delivery (Shinde, 2012). The Tourism Development Systems framework posits that such an institutional "enabling environment" is the most critical driver for embedding sustainability into tourism development, as it coordinates the necessary policy responses to manage strategic infrastructure and resources (Jitmaneeroj, 2026).

A core function of this institutional model is the execution of advanced queue management systems and crowd density control. In mass gatherings, the unified effect of high crowd density, restricted access, and strict ritual time constraints drastically increases vulnerability to fatal stampedes (Karthika et al., 2022). Institutional models counter this by utilizing structured, time-slotted darshan (viewing) systems, supported by spatial analyses that identify routes with the least angular step depth (directional changes) to optimize safe, continuous pedestrian flow (Karthika et al., 2022).

Furthermore, institutional governance allows for effective accommodation zoning and transport planning. Pilgrims demand safe, culturally appropriate lodging and reliable transit systems. However, evaluations using the PILQUAL service quality scale indicate that even in highly visited sites like Tirupati, visitors frequently face challenges regarding sanitation, overcrowded dormitories, and unregulated commercial exploitation (Singh & Bhuyan, 2025). By centralizing governance, authorities can enforce stringent zoning laws that separate commercial hospitality from sacred ritual spaces, ensuring that the physical carrying capacity of the site is not breached. Ultimately, the institutional model proves that visitor management cannot rely on ad-hoc municipal interventions; it requires a systemic, heavily coordinated approach that balances the logistical efficiency of mass mobility with the intimate, emotional, and ritualistic needs of the pilgrim (Jitmaneeroj, 2026; Singh & Bhuyan, 2025).

3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a structured and systematic research methodology to examine the tourism dynamics and spatial planning aspects of Chitrakoot in the context of the Ram Van Gaman Path. The methodology is designed to establish a clear linkage between tourism patterns, stakeholder perspectives, and spatial characteristics of the town, in order to formulate planning-based interventions. The research follows an integrated approach combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the study area.

The overall research process is sequential in nature, beginning with the identification of the study area and research problem, followed by an extensive review of literature and secondary data. This is further supported by primary data collection through surveys, field observations, and on-site mapping. The findings derived from these stages are then analyzed to identify key issues, which ultimately guide the formulation of planning proposals. This step-by-step approach ensures logical continuity and strengthens the reliability of the research outcomes.

3.1. Selection of Study Area

The selection of Chitrakoot as the study area is based on its strategic, cultural, and planning relevance within the Ram Van Gaman Path corridor. The corridor itself is being developed as a major religious tourism route connecting multiple destinations associated with the exile journey of Lord Rama, thereby enhancing its significance at both national and regional levels. Within this larger framework, Chitrakoot emerges as one of the most prominent pilgrimage destinations, holding strong religious associations and attracting a substantial number of visitors throughout the year.

In recent years, the town has gained further importance due to government initiatives aimed at developing it as a major religious destination on the lines of Ayodhya, with a focus on infrastructure improvement and tourism promotion. Despite this recognition, the town continues to face challenges such as unplanned growth, infrastructure deficiencies, and seasonal congestion. These conditions make Chitrakoot a suitable case for examining the relationship between tourism growth and spatial planning.

Additionally, the town's unique characteristics, including a relatively small resident population and a significantly high floating population during peak seasons, create a distinct planning scenario. The presence of multiple religious sites, clustered activities

along the Mandakini riverfront, and inter-state administrative complexity further justify its selection as a representative case for studying tourism-led development in pilgrimage towns.

3.2. Research Framework and Process

The research is structured as a multi-stage process in which each stage contributes to building a comprehensive understanding of the study area. The process begins with the formulation of research objectives and identification of key parameters related to tourism, infrastructure, and spatial organization. This is followed by a detailed review of literature and policy documents to establish a theoretical and contextual base for the study.

Subsequently, secondary data is collected from various sources, including government reports, planning documents, and tourism-related studies, to understand the broader development context of the Ram Van Gaman Path and its implications for Chitrakoot. This stage provides insights into existing policies, institutional frameworks, and best practices in tourism development, which serve as a reference for further analysis.

The next stage involves primary data collection through field surveys and direct observation. Structured questionnaires are administered to tourists, local residents, and shopkeepers to capture diverse perspectives on tourism patterns, infrastructure conditions, and socio-economic impacts. These surveys are complemented by on-site mapping and spatial analysis, which help in understanding land use distribution, movement patterns, and activity concentrations within the town.

The collected data is then systematically analyzed to identify key issues and gaps related to tourism infrastructure, mobility, and urban management. Based on this analysis, planning proposals are formulated to address the identified challenges and enhance the overall functioning of Chitrakoot as a religious tourism destination.

3.3. Secondary Data Collection and Literature Review

The initial stage of the research involved an extensive review of secondary data and literature to build a strong theoretical and contextual foundation for the study. Secondary data was collected from a range of sources, including government reports, planning documents, policy frameworks, and published research related to tourism development, pilgrimage planning, and corridor-based development. Documents

related to the Ram Van Gaman Path were particularly important in understanding the larger regional context, as the corridor is being developed to enhance connectivity between religious destinations and promote tourism-led development across multiple states . This broader understanding helped position Chitrakoot within a network of culturally significant locations rather than as an isolated settlement.

The literature review focused on key themes such as religious tourism, pilgrimage behavior, tourism infrastructure, and planning challenges in pilgrimage towns. Special emphasis was placed on understanding how tourism influences spatial structure, infrastructure demand, and local economies. Studies on best practices in tourism development were also examined to identify strategies related to infrastructure provision, environmental management, and community participation . These references provided valuable insights into how different states have approached tourism planning through integrated and sustainable methods.

In addition to theoretical understanding, the literature review helped in identifying key parameters for analysis, such as tourist flow patterns, infrastructure adequacy, land use distribution, and stakeholder perception. It also assisted in framing the survey questionnaires and determining the scope of field investigations. Overall, the secondary data and literature review stage played a crucial role in guiding the direction of the research and ensuring that the study is grounded in established planning principles and real-world practices.

3.4. Primary Data Collection

Following the secondary research, primary data collection will be undertaken to obtain ground-level insights into the functioning of Chitrakoot as a religious tourism destination. This stage is intended to capture real-time conditions, user experiences, and stakeholder perspectives, which are often not reflected in secondary sources. The primary data collection process will include structured questionnaire surveys, field observations, and on-site investigations.

The survey component will be designed to cover three major stakeholder groups, namely tourists, local residents, and shopkeepers or service providers. Each group will be selected to represent a different dimension of the tourism system, including demand, local impact, and economic activity. The questionnaires will be carefully structured to

extract both quantitative and qualitative information, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of tourism dynamics in the town.

The tourist survey will primarily aim to understand travel behavior, visit characteristics, and the overall experience of visitors. It will include questions related to group size, purpose of visit, duration of stay, and frequency of visits, which will help in identifying patterns of tourist inflow and seasonal variation. The survey will also capture information on modes of transport, accommodation choices, and expenditure patterns, providing insights into the economic aspects of tourism. Additionally, questions related to issues faced during the visit, such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, sanitation, and lack of facilities, will be included to identify key problem areas affecting tourist experience. The inclusion of satisfaction ratings will further help in evaluating the overall performance of the destination from a visitor's perspective.

The local residents survey will be conducted to understand the impact of tourism on the everyday life of people living in Chitrakoot. The questionnaire will focus on aspects such as employment generation, income improvement, and infrastructure availability. It will also explore issues faced by residents during peak tourist seasons, including traffic congestion, water shortages, waste accumulation, and noise pollution. By assessing residents' perceptions regarding tourism development and their willingness to support future interventions, the survey is expected to provide important insights into the social dimension of tourism planning. It will also help in identifying the need for better infrastructure management and possible zoning strategies to reduce conflicts between tourist and residential activities.

The survey of shopkeepers and service providers will aim to understand the economic dependence on tourism and the operational challenges faced by businesses. Questions related to type of business, years of operation, and seasonal variations in income will help in assessing the role of tourism in supporting local livelihoods. The survey will also identify key issues affecting business activities, such as traffic congestion, lack of parking, poor sanitation, and inadequate tourist facilities. Furthermore, it will capture stakeholder opinions on infrastructure priorities, including the need for better parking, public amenities, signage, and riverfront development. This information will be crucial in understanding the economic ecosystem of the town and in identifying areas requiring targeted intervention.

In addition to questionnaire surveys, field observations will be conducted to validate survey responses and to gain a deeper understanding of spatial and functional characteristics. Observations will include the assessment of crowd movement, traffic conditions, infrastructure availability, and activity patterns at major religious and tourist locations. This combination of surveys and field observation is expected to ensure that the data collected is both comprehensive and grounded in real-world conditions.

3.5. On-Site Mapping and Spatial Analysis

In order to understand the spatial structure and functional dynamics of Chitrakoot, detailed on-site mapping and spatial analysis will be undertaken as a key component of the research methodology. This stage will be essential in translating observations and survey findings into a visual and analytical framework, enabling a clearer understanding of how tourism activities are distributed across the town and how they interact with the existing urban fabric.

The mapping exercise will involve the identification and documentation of major land use categories, including residential areas, commercial zones, public and semi-public spaces, religious sites, and open or environmentally sensitive areas. Particular attention will be given to the clustering of religious and tourism-related activities along the Mandakini riverfront, as this area functions as the primary attraction zone and experiences the highest intensity of visitor activity. Through this mapping process, areas of high congestion, mixed land use conflicts, and zones of infrastructural stress are expected to be identified.

In addition to land use, circulation patterns within the town will be analyzed to understand movement dynamics during both normal and peak periods. Road networks, pedestrian pathways, and access routes to major tourist destinations will be studied to identify bottlenecks, traffic congestion points, and areas lacking proper connectivity. It is anticipated that the analysis will reveal constraints in movement, particularly in areas where narrow and unstructured streets connect major religious sites, leading to congestion during peak pilgrimage periods and affecting both mobility and safety.

The spatial analysis will also include the mapping of tourist attractions and activity nodes such as Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri Parikrama Path, and other significant religious locations. These nodes will be studied in relation to each other to understand tourist movement patterns and the sequence of visits. This is expected to help in identifying

informal tourist circuits and areas where infrastructure support such as signage, parking, and public amenities is required.

Furthermore, infrastructure mapping will be carried out to assess the availability and distribution of essential public facilities, including toilets, drinking water points, parking areas, and accommodation zones. The analysis is expected to highlight gaps in infrastructure provision, particularly in high-footfall areas where demand is likely to exceed supply. This spatial understanding will provide a strong basis for identifying priority intervention areas.

Overall, the on-site mapping and spatial analysis will enable the study to move beyond descriptive observations and develop a structured understanding of the town's physical and functional characteristics. It will serve as a critical link between data collection and proposal formulation by identifying key spatial issues and opportunities for planning intervention.

3.6. Data Analysis and Identification of Key Issues

The data collected through secondary research, questionnaire surveys, and spatial analysis will be systematically compiled and analyzed to derive meaningful insights. Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be employed to interpret the data, ensuring that numerical patterns as well as stakeholder perceptions are adequately considered.

Quantitative analysis will primarily be applied to the survey responses, where patterns related to tourist behavior, duration of stay, expenditure, and frequency of visits will be identified. This will help in understanding the scale and nature of tourist inflow, as well as the economic contribution of tourism to the town. At the same time, responses related to issues faced by tourists, such as congestion, sanitation, and lack of facilities, will be analyzed to determine the most critical problem areas affecting visitor experience.

Qualitative analysis will be used to interpret perception-based responses from residents and shopkeepers. This will provide insights into how tourism impacts local communities, particularly in terms of employment, income, and quality of life. It is also expected to highlight the challenges faced during peak seasons, including pressure on infrastructure, environmental degradation, and conflicts between tourist and residential activities.

The integration of survey findings with spatial analysis will further strengthen the identification of key issues. For instance, areas identified as congested through mapping are expected to correspond with issues reported in survey responses, thereby reinforcing the reliability of the findings. Similarly, gaps in public amenities identified through spatial analysis are likely to align with user feedback collected during surveys.

Based on this comprehensive analysis, several critical issues are expected to emerge, including traffic congestion during peak periods, overcrowding at major religious sites, inadequate sanitation and public facilities, lack of organized parking, poor signage and wayfinding systems, and uneven distribution of infrastructure. These issues will indicate a mismatch between the scale of tourist inflow and the existing capacity of the town to accommodate it.

3.7. Methodological Outcome

The methodological framework adopted in this study provides a holistic understanding of Chitrakoot as a religious tourism destination by integrating multiple layers of analysis. Through the combination of literature review, secondary data, primary surveys, and spatial mapping, the study is able to capture not only the physical characteristics of the town but also the behavioral patterns of tourists and the perspectives of local stakeholders.

This integrated approach ensures that the planning proposals developed in subsequent chapters are grounded in empirical evidence and real-world conditions. The methodology facilitates the identification of spatial, infrastructural, and socio-economic gaps, thereby enabling the formulation of targeted and context-sensitive interventions.

Moreover, the step-by-step research process aligns with the broader objective of developing a planning framework that can be replicated in other towns along the Ram Van Gaman Path. By establishing clear linkages between tourism dynamics and spatial planning, the methodology contributes to a deeper understanding of how religious tourism destinations can be managed in a sustainable and organized manner.

In conclusion, the research methodology serves as a strong foundation for the study, ensuring that the proposed planning strategies are both practical and responsive to the needs of Chitrakoot as an emerging religious tourism hub.

4. CHAPTER 4: TOWN PROFILE – CHITRAKOOT

Chitrakoot is a prominent pilgrimage town located in the Satna district of Madhya Pradesh, positioned along the inter-state boundary of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The town holds immense religious, cultural, and mythological significance, primarily associated with the epic Ramayana. It is widely believed that Lord Rama, along with Sita and Lakshmana, spent a significant portion of their exile period in this region, making it one of the most sacred landscapes in Hindu tradition.

The name “Chitrakoot” itself translates to “picturesque hill,” reflecting the natural beauty and spiritual ambiance of the region. The town is characterized by a combination of forested hills, river systems, ghats, and temples, forming a unique cultural landscape where natural and spiritual elements coexist harmoniously.

Chitrakoot functions not only as a religious center but also as an emerging tourism destination, attracting thousands of pilgrims and tourists annually. The town experiences significant seasonal variations in population due to religious events such as Amavasya, Ram Navami, and Diwali fairs, during which the number of visitors increases manifold.

4.1. Regional Setting and Connectivity

Chitrakoot occupies a strategic location in central India, situated along the border of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The town is administratively governed under Satna district in Madhya Pradesh, while its adjoining urban counterpart, Chitrakoot Dham (Karwi), lies in Uttar Pradesh. This dual-state character significantly influences its governance, infrastructure, and tourism management.

In terms of regional connectivity, Chitrakoot is moderately accessible. The nearest railway station is Chitrakoot Dham (Karwi), located approximately 11–18 km from the town, situated on the Jhansi–Manikpur rail line. The town itself lacks a direct railway connection, relying on intermediate transport systems such as auto-rickshaws and buses for last-mile connectivity, *Figure 4.1*.

The nearest airport is Coming up near Hanuman Dhara site in Chitrakoot under UP state and another functional airport located at Khajuraho, approximately 175 km away, providing limited air connectivity primarily for tourism purposes. Road connectivity

forms the backbone of access to Chitrakoot, with links to nearby cities such as Satna, Banda, Maihar, and Prayagraj.

Furthermore, Chitrakoot is an important node along the Ram Van Gaman Path, a proposed religious tourism corridor connecting key sites associated with Lord Rama's exile journey. This enhances its regional importance and future tourism potential.

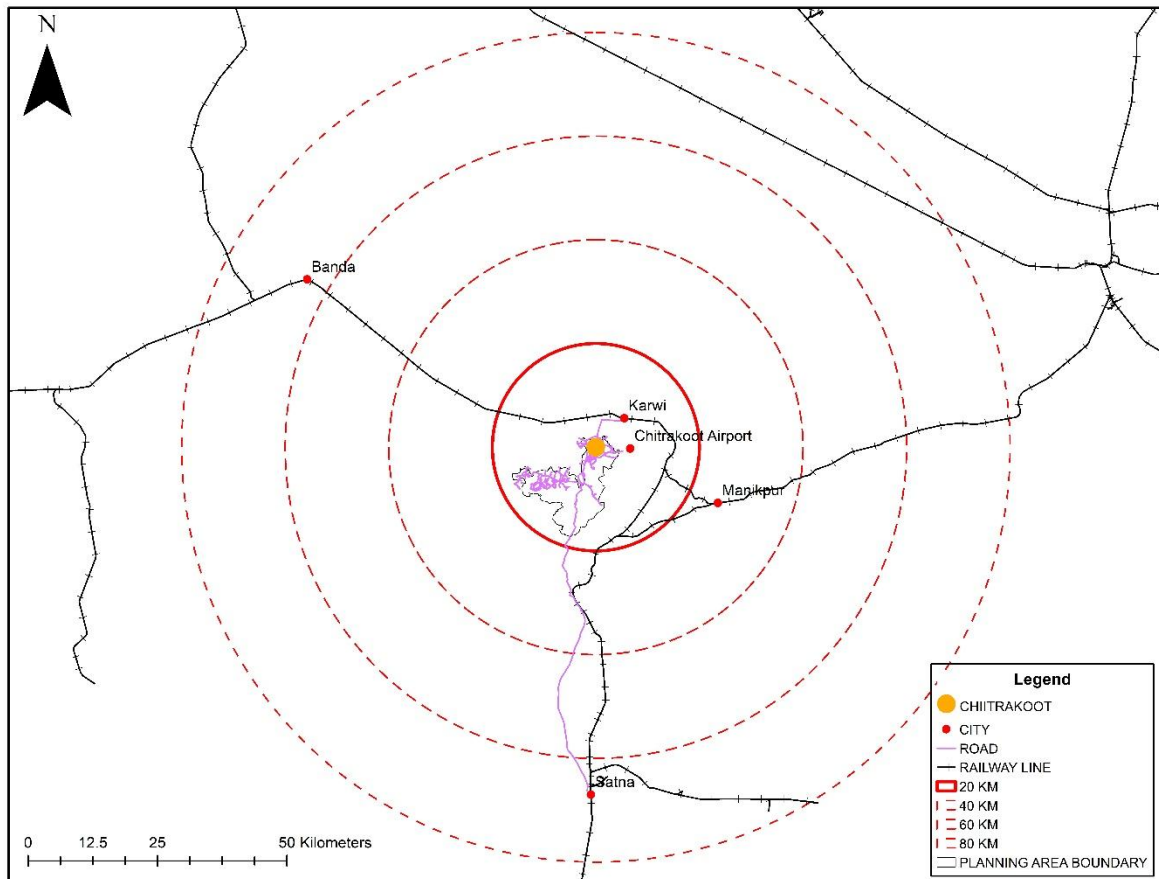


Figure 4.1: Chitrakoot Regional Setting

Source: Author

4.2. Administrative and Planning Structure

Chitrakoot is governed as a Nagar Parishad (Nagar Panchayat), reflecting its classification as a small urban settlement with a predominantly pilgrimage-based economy. Historically, the area was designated as a Special Area Development Authority (SADA) in 1977 to facilitate planned development, but later transitioned into a municipal governance structure.

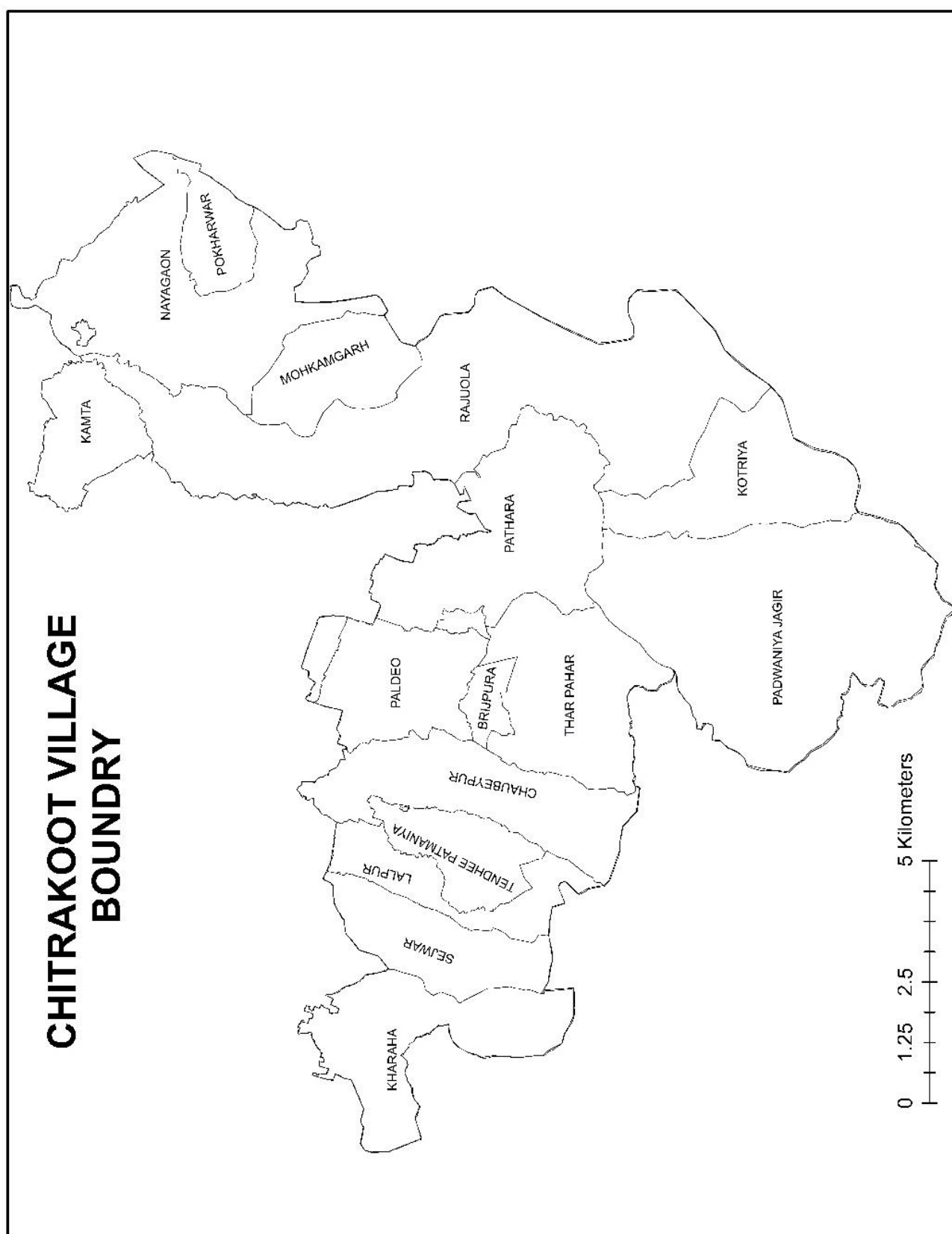


Figure 4.2: Administrative Boundary Map of Chitrakoot Planning Area

Source: CDP Draft 2031

The planning area of Chitrakoot extends beyond the core urban settlement and includes surrounding villages, forming a broader planning region of approximately 144.39 sq. km, out of which the urban area covers around 103.31 sq. km, *Figure 4.2*.

The town is divided into administrative wards (approximately 15 wards), and its governance involves coordination between multiple agencies, including local municipal authorities, district administration, and state-level tourism and planning bodies.

Due to its location across two states, administrative coordination between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh becomes crucial, particularly for infrastructure provision, tourism management, and environmental conservation.

4.3. Demographic Profile

Chitrakoot is a relatively small town in terms of permanent population but experiences a significant temporary population influx due to tourism and pilgrimage activities. As per Census 2011, the population of Chitrakoot Nagar Parishad is approximately 23,316, while the total population of the planning area (including surrounding villages) is about 33,441, *Table 4.1*.

Table 4.1: Decadal Population Chnage

Census Year	Population	Decadal Growth
1991	14,381	—
2001	20,294	41.1%
2011	23,316	14.9%

Source: Census

The demographic structure of the town reflects its economic dependence on religious tourism. A large proportion of the population is engaged in tertiary activities such as trade, services, and tourism-related occupations.

Population growth in the region has been influenced by institutional developments such as the establishment of educational and healthcare facilities, as well as increased tourism activity. However, overall population density remains relatively low compared to urban planning standards, indicating underutilized land and dispersed settlement patterns.

A key characteristic of Chitrakoot is the seasonal population surge, where the floating population during peak pilgrimage periods far exceeds the resident population, placing immense pressure on infrastructure and services.

4.4. Economic Profile

Chitrakoot is an important religious and pilgrimage town located in the Satna district of Madhya Pradesh near the Uttar Pradesh border. The economy of the town is primarily service-oriented and is significantly influenced by religious tourism and pilgrimage activities. Despite having a relatively small resident population, Chitrakoot experiences a substantial floating population throughout the year due to continuous tourist inflow associated with the Ramayana circuit and various religious events. This unique economic structure differentiates Chitrakoot from conventional urban settlements, as a large proportion of local economic activities are directly or indirectly dependent on tourism.

The town functions as one of the major pilgrimage destinations associated with Lord Rama and the Ram Van Gaman Path. As a result, tourism acts as the principal driver of the local economy. Economic activities in Chitrakoot intensify during religious festivals such as Amavasya, Somvati Amavasya, Ram Navami, Deepawali, Makar Sankranti, and other auspicious occasions when tourist arrivals increase manifold. Seasonal variations in tourist inflow significantly influence income generation, employment opportunities, and commercial activities within the town.

The tertiary sector dominates the local economy of Chitrakoot. Trade, commerce, hospitality, transport services, religious offerings, and small-scale tourism-related businesses form the backbone of economic activities. Markets around Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri Parikrama Path, and other major religious sites contain a concentration of shops selling puja materials, religious items, souvenirs, handicrafts, food products, and local goods. Hotels, dharamshalas, guest houses, restaurants, tea stalls, and temporary vending activities also contribute substantially to the town's economy.

A significant portion of the local population is engaged in informal and semi-formal employment linked to tourism. These include occupations such as shopkeepers, priests, guides, transport operators, street vendors, flower sellers, food vendors, photographers, and workers employed in hotels and lodges. The tourism economy also generates indirect employment in construction, maintenance, sanitation, and local transport services. According to field-level observations and stakeholder surveys, tourism is

perceived as one of the primary sources of livelihood for local residents and business owners.

Table 4.2: Occupational Categorisation

Occupational Category	Number of Workers
Total Population	23,316
Total Workers	7,846
Main Workers	6,215
Marginal Workers	1,631
Cultivators	412
Agricultural Labourers	536
Household Industry Workers	428
Other Workers	6,470

Source: Census

Apart from tourism-related services, agriculture continues to play an important role in the peripheral rural economy surrounding Chitrakoot, *Table 4.2*. Villages within the planning area are engaged in agricultural activities, including cultivation of wheat, paddy, pulses, oilseeds, and seasonal crops. However, within the urbanized core of Chitrakoot town, agricultural dependence is relatively low due to increasing commercialization and tourism-oriented land use transformation. Over time, several areas near major pilgrimage routes and roads have witnessed conversion of agricultural land into commercial establishments, hotels, parking areas, and tourism-support infrastructure.

The informal sector forms a major component of the local economy. Temporary shops, roadside vendors, seasonal stalls, and informal service providers become highly active during peak pilgrimage periods. This flexible economic structure allows local residents to benefit from seasonal tourism demand; however, it also creates issues related to congestion, encroachment, sanitation, and inefficient public space management. The absence of organized vending zones and formal commercial infrastructure further intensifies these challenges during festival seasons.

Tourism has also increased land values and commercial activity in areas located near major religious destinations such as Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri, Janki Kund, and Gupt Godavari. The concentration of economic activities around these nodes has created uneven spatial development patterns within the town. Areas with high tourist footfall have experienced rapid commercialization, while peripheral areas remain

comparatively underdeveloped. This imbalance highlights the need for integrated spatial and economic planning to ensure balanced urban growth.

The proposed development of the Ram Van Gaman Path and the state government's initiative to develop Chitrakoot on the lines of Ayodhya are expected to further strengthen the local economy. Improved connectivity, enhanced tourism infrastructure, and increased visitor inflow may generate additional employment opportunities and stimulate investment in hospitality, transport, retail, and cultural tourism sectors. At the same time, rapid tourism-led economic growth may also exert pressure on infrastructure, land resources, environmental quality, and local communities if not managed through proper planning interventions.

From a planning perspective, the economy of Chitrakoot demonstrates strong dependence on pilgrimage tourism and associated service activities. Therefore, future economic development strategies for the town must focus on sustainable tourism development, infrastructure improvement, formalization of local economic activities, support for small businesses, and enhancement of visitor facilities. Strengthening tourism-linked livelihoods while ensuring environmental protection and efficient urban management will be essential for achieving balanced and sustainable economic growth in Chitrakoot.

The economic structure of Chitrakoot clearly indicates that tourism is not only a cultural and religious activity but also the principal economic engine of the town. Consequently, planning interventions related to mobility, infrastructure, public amenities, commercial zoning, riverfront development, and tourism management will directly influence the economic performance and livelihood opportunities within the town.

4.5. Historical and Cultural Significance



Figure 4.3: Ram Ghat & Gupt Godavari

Source: Primary Survey

Chitrakoot holds a central place in Hindu mythology and is deeply associated with the Ramayana. It is believed to be the site where Lord Rama spent nearly eleven years of his exile, making it one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in India, *Figure 4.3*.

The town is dotted with numerous religious sites, including Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri Parikrama, Gupt Godavari, Hanuman Dhara, Sati Anusuya Ashram, and Janki Kund. These sites collectively form a sacred circuit that attracts pilgrims throughout the year, *Figure 4.4*.

Cultural practices such as parikrama (circumambulation) around the Kamadgiri hill and ritual bathing in the Mandakini River are integral to the spiritual experience of visitors. Festivals such as Ram Navami, Diwali, and Amavasya fairs play a significant role in shaping the cultural identity and economy of the town.

The religious and cultural significance of Chitrakoot has also led to its inclusion in major tourism initiatives such as the Ram Van Gaman Path, further reinforcing its role as a key pilgrimage node.

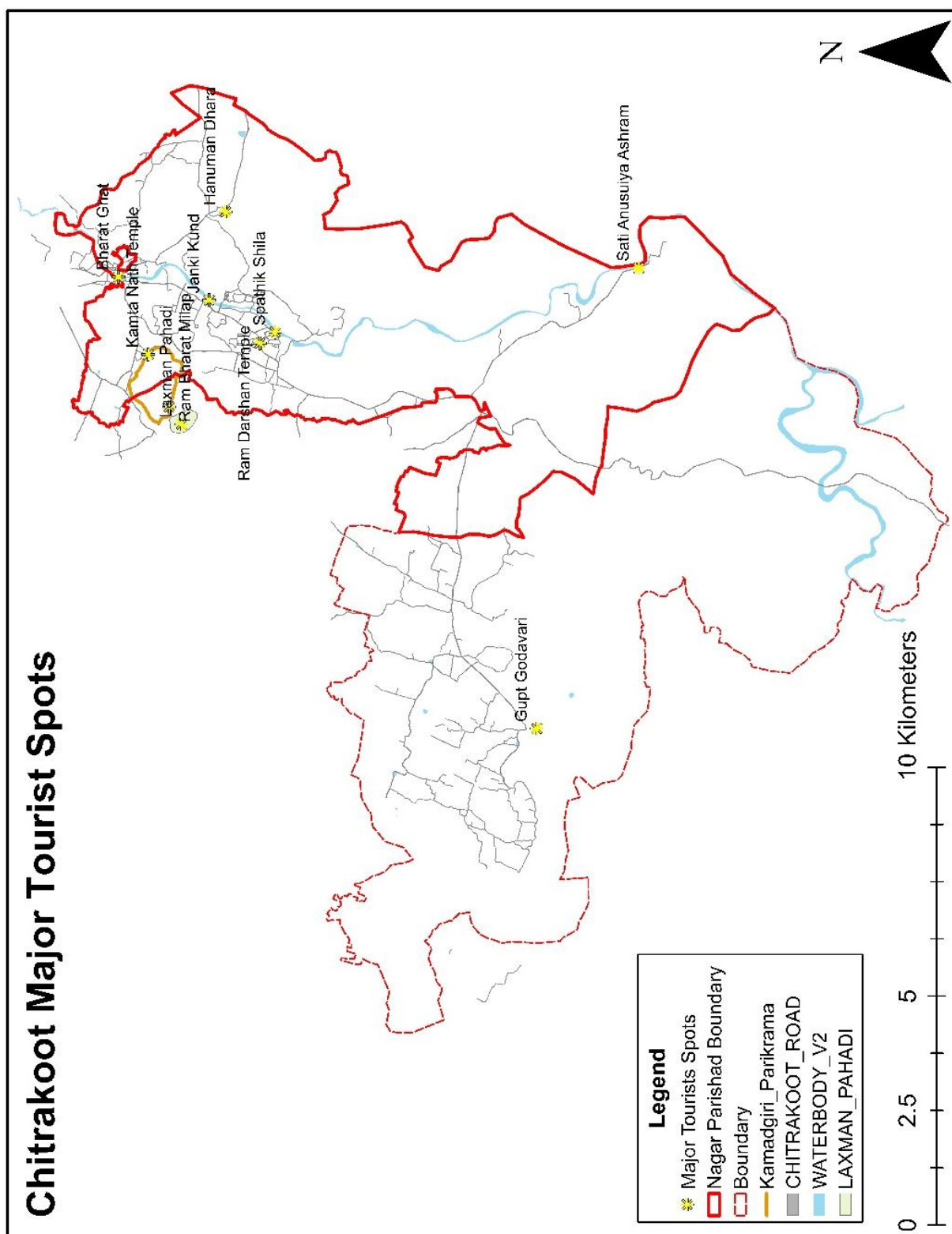


Figure 4.4: Chitrakoot Major Tourist Spots

Source: Author

4.6. Physical Setting (Topography, Climate and Natural Features)



Figure 4.5: Mandakini & Ram Ghat

Source: MP Tourism

Chitrakoot is located within the Vindhyan hill range, characterized by undulating terrain, rocky outcrops, forested patches, and river valleys. The physical setting of the town plays a crucial role in shaping its spatial development, settlement pattern, and religious significance. The presence of hills, forests, and water bodies creates a unique cultural landscape that supports both ecological diversity and spiritual activities, *Figure 4.5*.

The Mandakini River is the most significant natural feature of Chitrakoot, flowing through the town and forming the focal point of religious activities. Major ghats, including Ram Ghat, are located along its banks, making the river an integral part of both the physical and spiritual identity of the town. The river also influences settlement concentration, with dense development observed along its edges.

Topographically, the region exhibits moderate slopes and elevation variations, especially around Kamadgiri hill and surrounding forested areas, *Figure 4.6*. These features restrict horizontal urban expansion in certain directions while promoting linear growth along accessible corridors and riverbanks, *Figure 4.7* **Error! Reference source not found.**

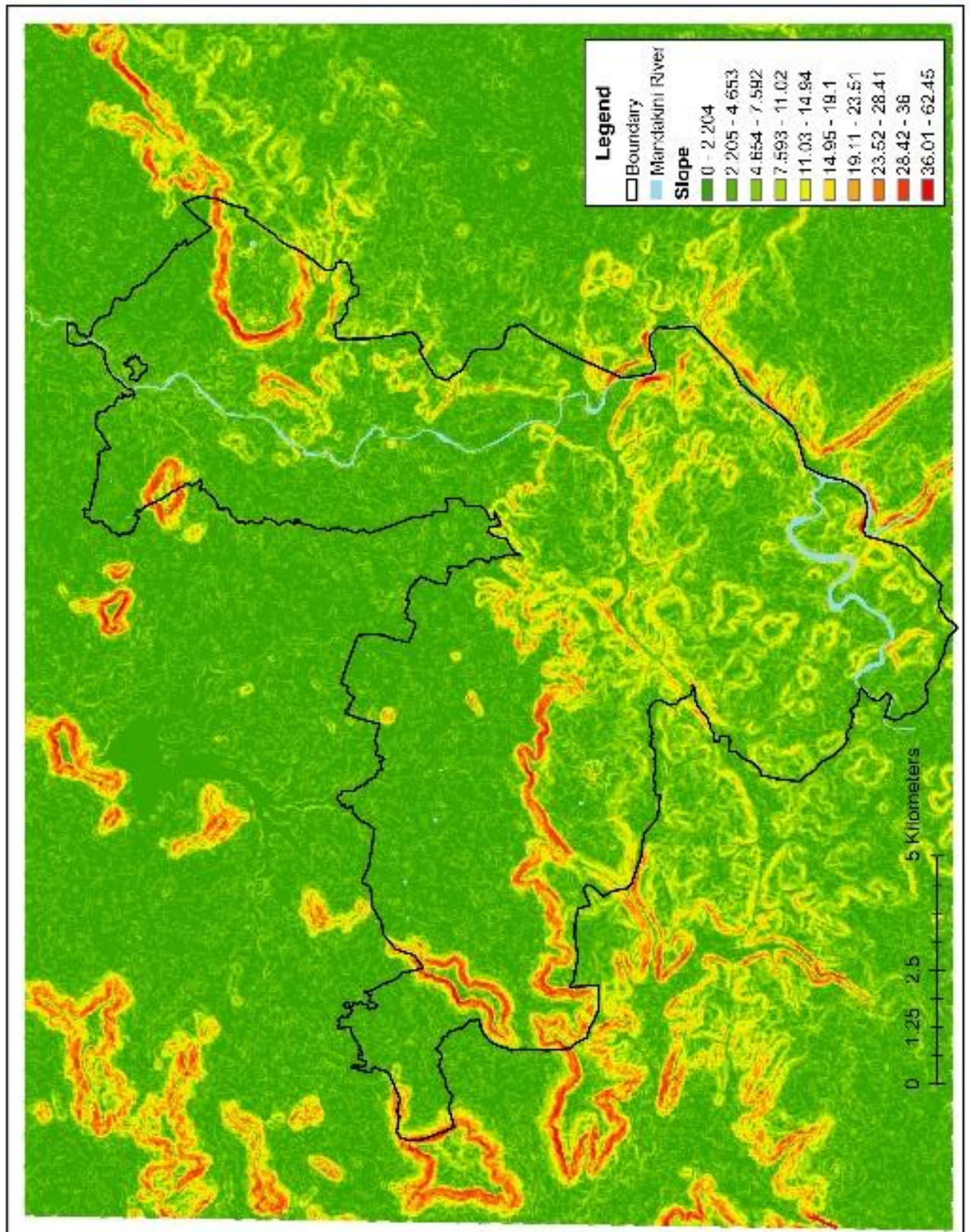


Figure 4.6: Slope
Source: Author

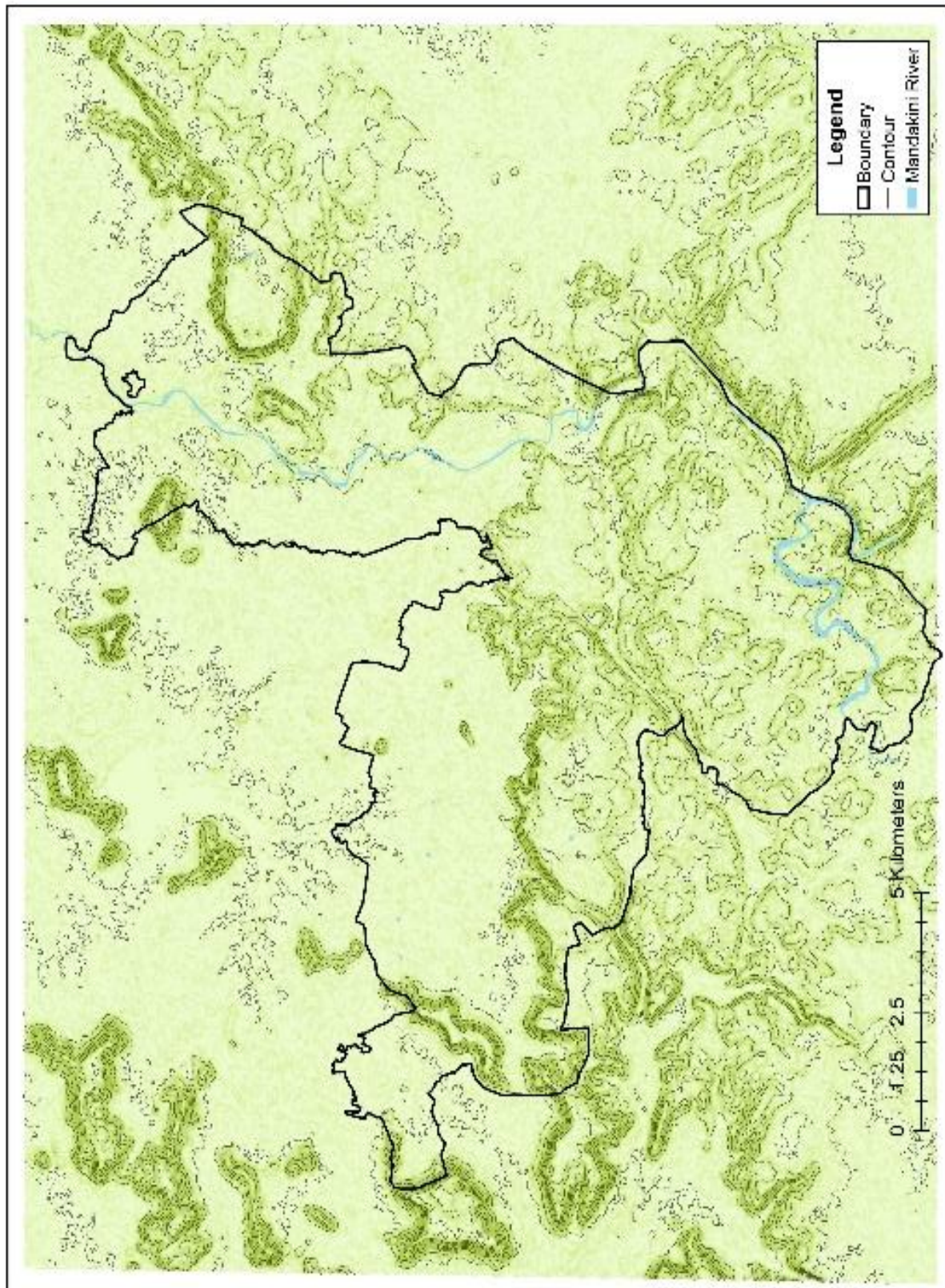


Figure 4.7: Contour

Source: Author

Climatically, Chitrakoot experiences a tropical climate with hot summers, moderate monsoons, and mild winters. The best tourist season is from October to March, when climatic conditions are favorable for pilgrimage and tourism activities.

The forested landscape of Chitrakoot, located within the northern Vindhyan range, constitutes a critical ecological and cultural asset characterized by tropical dry deciduous vegetation, diverse wildlife habitats, and rich ethnobotanical resources. The region supports native species such as bamboo, khair, mahua, palas, salai, and tendu, which play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance while also sustaining local livelihoods. Its undulating terrain, interspersed with hills, seasonal streams, and riverine systems, creates multiple micro-habitats that support fauna including leopards, wolves, chinkara, sambar, and sloth bears, along with a variety of bird species, highlighting its moderate biodiversity significance. The presence of nearby protected areas such as Ranipur Wildlife Sanctuary further reinforces its importance as a conservation landscape. Additionally, the forests serve as a repository of medicinal and ethnobotanical plant species, traditionally used by local and indigenous communities, reflecting a deep-rooted ecological knowledge system. Beyond their ecological value, these forests hold strong cultural and spiritual significance, being intrinsically linked to the Ramayana landscape and historically associated with sages and ascetic practices, *Figure 4.8*. Functionally, they act as fragile ecological buffers that regulate the microclimate, prevent soil erosion in the fragile Vindhyan terrain, and support the health of river systems such as the Mandakini. However, increasing tourist pressure and unregulated development pose significant threats to these sensitive ecosystems, thereby necessitating environmentally conscious and conservation-oriented planning interventions.

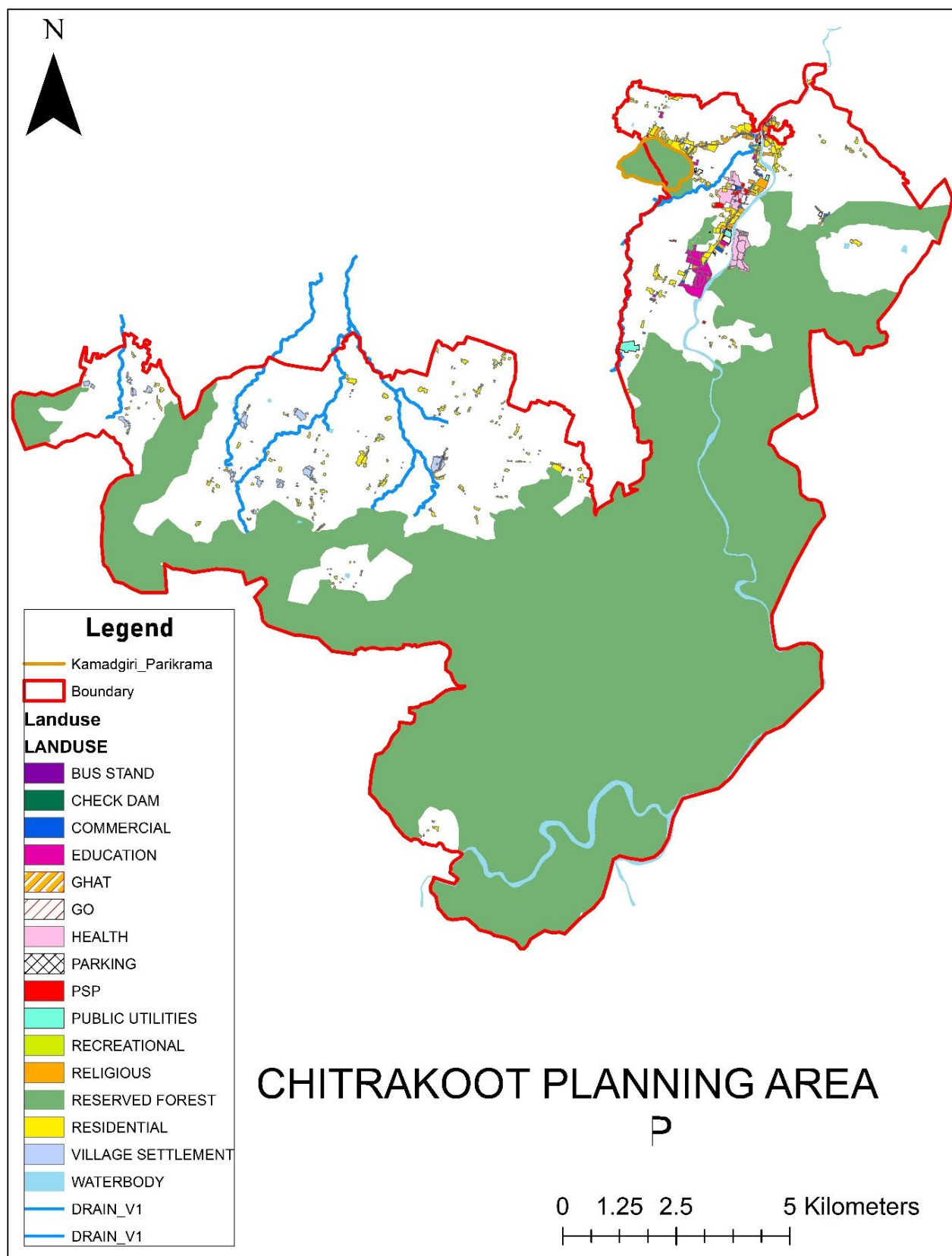


Figure 4.8: Chitrakoot Planning Area

Source: CDP Draft 2031

4.7. Land Use and Urban Structure

The land use pattern of Chitrakoot reflects its identity as a pilgrimage-oriented town, where religious, commercial, and residential uses are closely interlinked. The urban structure is primarily influenced by the Mandakini River and the distribution of major religious sites.

The core area of the town is concentrated around Ram Ghat and Kamadgiri hill, where religious activities dominate. This zone is characterized by high-density mixed land use, including temples, dharamshalas, shops, eateries, and informal vending spaces. The narrow streets and organic growth pattern indicate the absence of planned development in the historic core.

Commercial activities are largely tourism-driven and are concentrated along major access routes and near religious nodes. These include shops selling religious items, local handicrafts, food stalls, and small-scale service establishments.

Residential areas are distributed around the core, with a mix of traditional housing and newer developments. Peripheral areas consist of low-density settlements and rural villages, forming the urban fringe of the planning area.

A significant portion of land is also covered by forest areas and open spaces, particularly in the outer regions, which act as ecological buffers but are increasingly under pressure due to urban expansion and tourism-related development.

The overall urban structure can be described as linear and node-based, with development aligned along roads and clustered around religious attractions. This results in congestion in core areas and underutilization of peripheral land, *Figure 4.9*

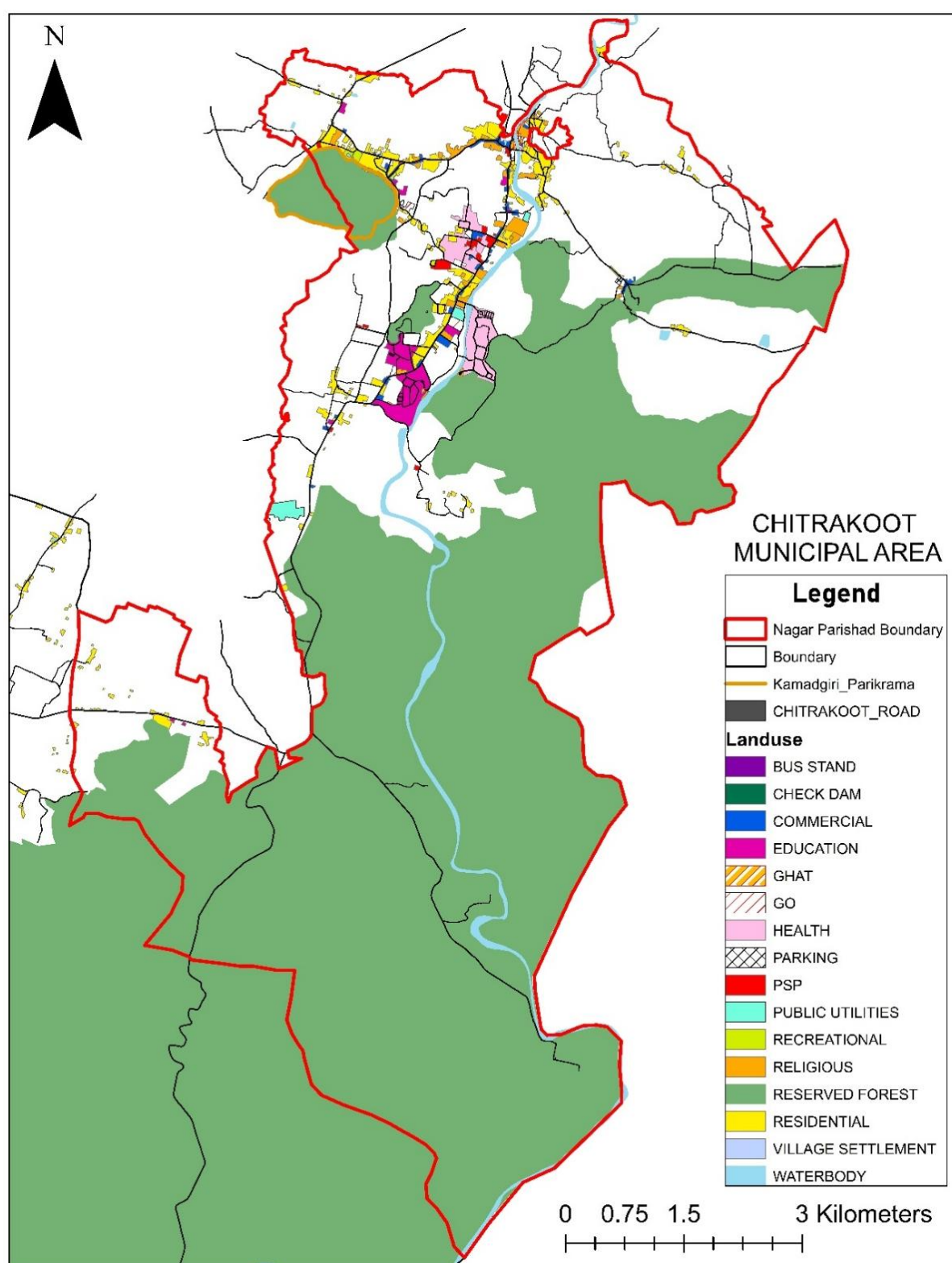


Figure 4.9: Chitrakoot Municipal Area Landuse

Source: Chitrakoot Development Plan Draft 2031

4.8. Economic Profile

The economy of Chitrakoot is predominantly driven by religious tourism, which forms the backbone of livelihood for a large section of the population. Unlike industrial or manufacturing towns, Chitrakoot's economic activities are centered around service-based sectors catering to pilgrims and tourists.

A significant proportion of the workforce is engaged in tertiary activities, including retail trade, hospitality, transport services, and religious services. Local markets are dominated by shops selling पूजा सामग्री (puja items), souvenirs, food products, and other tourism-related goods.

The hospitality sector includes a mix of hotels, guest houses, and dharamshalas, catering to different economic groups of visitors. Informal economic activities, such as street vending and small-scale service provision, also play a major role in sustaining livelihoods.

Seasonality is a defining feature of the town's economy. During peak pilgrimage periods such as Amavasya and major festivals, economic activity increases significantly, leading to temporary employment generation and higher income levels. However, during off-season periods, economic activity declines, reflecting a lack of diversification.

The dependence on tourism makes the local economy vulnerable to fluctuations in visitor inflow, highlighting the need for diversification and sustainable economic planning.

4.9. Tourism Profile of Chitrakoot

Chitrakoot is one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in central India and attracts a large number of domestic tourists throughout the year. The tourism profile of the town is predominantly religious in nature, with visitors primarily coming for pilgrimage purposes, although a growing segment also visits for cultural and leisure experiences.

The major tourist attractions include Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri Parikrama, Gupt Godavari, Hanuman Dhara, Janki Kund, and Sati Anusuya Ashram, which together form a well-

defined religious circuit within the town. These sites are deeply interconnected through religious narratives and pilgrimage practices.

Tourist inflow in Chitrakoot exhibits strong seasonal variation, with peak periods during festivals such as Ram Navami, Diwali, and monthly Amavasya. During these times, the town experiences a massive influx of pilgrims, often exceeding its carrying capacity and leading to congestion, pressure on infrastructure, and environmental stress.

Based on primary survey insights (Tourist Questionnaire), most visitors fall under the categories of family groups and religious groups, with short-duration stays ranging from 1–2 days. Common issues reported include traffic congestion, overcrowding, poor sanitation, and inadequate public facilities.

The mode of travel is largely road-based, with a high dependency on private vehicles and buses, further contributing to congestion in the core areas.

Despite these challenges, Chitrakoot holds immense potential for development as a dual tourism destination, integrating religious tourism with eco-tourism and wellness tourism, given its natural setting and spiritual environment.

The inclusion of Chitrakoot in the Ram Van Gaman Path further enhances its tourism importance, positioning it as a key node in a larger national pilgrimage corridor.



Figure 4.10: Sadguru Netra Chikitsa Kendra & Aarogya Dham Swasthya Kutir

Source: Shri Sadguru Seva Sangh Trust

In addition to its religious significance, Chitrakoot also functions as an emerging center for health-related services, particularly in the field of eye care. The town is known regionally for its specialized eye treatment facilities, which attract a substantial number of visitors seeking medical services. This adds another dimension to the floating population, as a considerable proportion of visitors arrive not only for pilgrimage but also for healthcare purposes, *Figure 4.10*.

Furthermore, the presence of large-scale resort-type infrastructure within and around Chitrakoot indicates the growing potential of wellness and health tourism. These facilities cater to visitors seeking a combination of spiritual, environmental, and therapeutic experiences, thereby expanding the functional character of the town beyond traditional pilgrimage tourism.

The coexistence of religious tourism and health-related visitation creates a complex demand pattern on infrastructure and services. This contrast between a relatively small resident population and a significantly larger and diverse floating population places considerable pressure on urban systems, including accommodation, transportation, water supply, and sanitation. As a result, effective tourism and service management becomes a critical planning concern for ensuring sustainable and balanced development in Chitrakoot.

4.10. Infrastructure Profile

Infrastructure in Chitrakoot is largely shaped by its role as a pilgrimage town, with most facilities concentrated around major religious nodes such as Ram Ghat and Kamadgiri. While this concentration supports the needs of pilgrims in core areas, the overall infrastructure remains inadequate to accommodate the significant seasonal surge in population. During peak periods, especially festivals and Amavasya, the pressure on basic services increases substantially, revealing multiple deficiencies in the existing system.

The road network of the town has developed in an organic and unplanned manner, particularly within the core temple areas. Streets are narrow, irregular, and frequently encroached upon by informal vendors, which restricts movement and leads to severe congestion. The absence of a clear road hierarchy and efficient traffic management system further exacerbates mobility issues. Public transport options are limited, with a heavy reliance on intermediate para-transit modes such as auto-rickshaws and shared vehicles. At the same time, a large number of tourists prefer private vehicles, which increases the demand for parking and contributes to congestion, especially in high-density areas.

Water supply in Chitrakoot is dependent on a combination of local sources and groundwater. Although basic water provision exists, it becomes inadequate during peak tourist seasons when demand rises sharply. Residents and local stakeholders have

reported instances of water shortages during festivals and high inflow periods, indicating the lack of a resilient and scalable water supply system.

Sanitation and solid waste management remain critical concerns in the town. Public toilet facilities are limited in number and often poorly maintained, particularly in areas with high footfall such as ghats and temple precincts. Solid waste management systems are insufficient to handle the volume of waste generated during peak periods, leading to visible accumulation of waste, especially along the Mandakini riverfront. This not only affects the aesthetic and environmental quality of the town but also impacts the overall visitor experience.

Electricity supply is generally available across the town; however, it may experience interruptions during periods of high demand. In addition, street lighting is inadequate in certain areas, which affects safety and convenience, particularly during night-time religious activities and festivals.

Tourism infrastructure in Chitrakoot is also limited and unevenly distributed. Facilities such as accommodation, signage, parking, and visitor amenities are insufficient to meet the growing demands of tourists. The accommodation sector is largely dominated by dharamshalas and budget-level facilities, with limited availability of higher-quality tourist infrastructure. This imbalance restricts the town's ability to cater to diverse visitor groups and limits its potential for broader tourism development.

5. CHAPTER 5: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the process of data collection and analysis undertaken for the study of Chitrakoot as a significant religious tourism destination along the Ram Van Gaman Path. The objective of this chapter is to develop a grounded understanding of tourism dynamics, user behavior, and spatial conditions through primary field-based investigations supported by secondary data.

The study adopts a multi-source data collection approach, with a strong emphasis on primary surveys conducted at key tourist locations such as Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, Hanuman Dhara, Sphatik Shila, Gupt Godavari, and Sati Anusuya Ashram. Three distinct stakeholder groups—tourists, residents, and shopkeepers—have been surveyed to capture diverse perspectives on tourism, infrastructure, and local economy.

The collected data has been analyzed using a combination of quantitative, qualitative, and spatial techniques. This includes interpretation of survey responses, field observations, stakeholder inputs, and mapping exercises. The analysis focuses on identifying key issues such as seasonal tourist pressure, infrastructure gaps, informal economic activities, and spatial inefficiencies.

The findings of this chapter form the foundation for subsequent planning proposals aimed at improving tourism management, infrastructure provision, and spatial organization in Chitrakoot.

5.1. Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data collection formed an essential component of the study, providing the foundational understanding required for analyzing Chitrakoot within its regional, spatial, and institutional context. The use of secondary data enabled the establishment of a base framework for the study, which was further validated and supplemented through primary surveys and field observations.

The primary objective of secondary data collection was to understand the demographic characteristics, spatial structure, tourism dynamics, and planning framework of Chitrakoot, particularly in relation to its role as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path. Additionally, secondary data was used to identify existing infrastructure provisions, service availability, and administrative mechanisms related to tourism management in the town.

5.1.1. Sources of Secondary Data

Secondary data for the study was collected from a combination of official documents, planning reports, and institutional sources to ensure reliability and authenticity. Key sources included the Census of India (2011) for demographic information and the Chitrakoot Draft Development Plan–2031, which provided detailed insights into land use patterns, planning area boundaries, and proposed development strategies.

In addition to published reports, significant data was collected during the field visit from the Chief Municipal Officer (CMO) office, Chitrakoot. This included records related to floating population estimates, availability of public toilets, and a list of registered hotels, which provided valuable insights into tourism pressure and infrastructure capacity. Survey-related data available at the municipal level was also reviewed to understand local administrative perspectives.

Furthermore, spatial datasets such as shapefiles of administrative boundaries, road networks, water bodies, forest areas, and land use were obtained from the Chitrakoot Draft Development Plan–2031. These datasets were instrumental in preparing base maps and conducting detailed spatial analysis using GIS tools.

Additional references included government documents related to the Ram Van Gaman Path, tourism development reports, and relevant academic literature on religious tourism and pilgrimage planning, which helped in establishing a broader conceptual and policy framework.

5.1.2. Types of Secondary Data Collected

The secondary data collected for the study can be broadly categorized into demographic, spatial, infrastructure-related, tourism-related, and policy-oriented data.

Demographic data included information on population size and settlement characteristics, which helped in understanding the scale of the resident population in comparison to the significantly higher floating population associated with pilgrimage activities, Table 5.1

Table 5.1: Month Wise Tourist Inflow

Month	Tourist Count
January 2025	2344634
February 2025	2810187
March 2025	1136212

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Month	Tourist Count
April 2025	646915
May 2025	639286
June 2025	886181
July 2025	1841353
August 2025	1597293
September 2025	763234
October 2025	2496083
November 2025	853772
December 2025	244687
January 2026	1081106
Total	17340943

Source: CMO Office Chitrakoot

Spatial data comprised land use maps, administrative boundaries, transportation networks, and environmental features such as forests and water bodies. The acquisition of shapefiles enabled accurate mapping and spatial analysis of the study area.

Infrastructure-related data included information on public amenities such as toilets, accommodation facilities (registered hotels) *Table 5.2*, and basic services, which are critical in assessing the town's capacity to handle tourist inflow.

Table 5.2: List of Registered Hotels

क्र०	होटल का नाम	होटल स्वामी का नाम	वार्ड न०
1	श्री श्याम होटल	श्री संदीप कुमार, श्री विनीत कुमार त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 2
2	श्री नारायण होटल	श्री शान्त नारायण पाण्डेय	वार्ड न० 2
3	निर्मल सदन	निर्मला सोनी	वार्ड न० 11
4	होटल स्फटिक	श्री मती दिव्या त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 11
5	द रिवर फ्रन्ट रेसॉर्ट	श्री अर्जुन जैन	वार्ड न० 11
6	श्री कमला भवन	श्री अवध किशोर	वार्ड न० 02
7	होटल श्री जगन्नाथ धाम	श्री प्रेमनारायण त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 03
8	श्री रामेश्वर साकेत सदन	श्रीमती अंजली शुक्ला	वार्ड न० 11
9	मालवा रिसोर्ट	श्रीमती सुमन देवी	वार्ड न० 11
10	भरत गेस्ट हाउस	श्री मती सीमा द्विवेदी	वार्ड न० 12
11	होटल रिलैक्स इन	श्री बृजेश पाण्डेय	वार्ड न० 12
12	होटल माथोडया रेसीडेन्सी	श्रीमती माया तिवारी	वार्ड न० 10
13	होटल स्टार	श्री राजेश कुमार श्रीवास्तव	वार्ड न० 12
14	होटल मॉ पार्वती रेजीडेन्सी	श्री मती आशा देवी	वार्ड न० 09
15	होटल कल्पतरु	श्री पद्मनाभ द्विवेदी	वार्ड न० 12
16	त्रिपाठी लॉज	श्री राजेन्द्र कुमार त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 04
17	होटल चन्द्रलोक	श्री चन्द्रभान त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 03
18	गुरु कृपा इन	अरविन्द कुमार अवस्थी	वार्ड न० 02
19	होटल रघुवीर	अश्वनी कुमार यादव	वार्ड न० 10
20	होटल पार्थ	श्री मती राजेश्वरी द्विवेदी	वार्ड न० 12
21	गंगा वाटिका	श्री अनुपम त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 11
22	होटल दिनेश	दिनेश कुमार पाण्डेय	वार्ड न० 04

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क्र०	होटल का नाम	होटल स्वामी का नाम	वार्ड न०
23	शिवहरे पैलेश इन	विनीता शिवहरे	वार्ड न० 09
24	श्री भरत रेसिडेन्सी	राकेश कुमार अग्रवाल	वार्ड न० 10
25	कामतानाथ होटल	संतोष कुमार शुक्ला	वार्ड न० 04
26	होटल मंदाकिनी हैरिटेज	सरिता अग्रवाल	वार्ड न० 10
27	होटल अशोक रेसीडेन्सी	अमन कुमार जयसवाल	वार्ड न० 10
28	रोहणी लॉज	श्री श्यामदीन शर्मा	वार्ड न० 04
29	होटल कृष्णा भवन	बबलू गुप्ता	वार्ड न० 11
30	होटल श्याम रेसीडेन्सी	श्री मती तुलसा गर्ग	वार्ड न० 11
31	सैनिक भवन	श्री अजय कुमार सिंह	वार्ड न० 12
32	अवतार पैलेस	श्री मनोज कुमार गुप्ता	वार्ड न० 02
33	श्रद्धा शिवम् रेजीडेन्सी	श्री महेन्द्र कुमार तिवारी	वार्ड न० 10
34	राजन राम वाटिका	विजय कुमार गुप्ता	वार्ड न० 10
35	माँ कृपा होटल	श्री अशोक कुमार पटेल	वार्ड न० 12
36	राव रिसॉर्ट	श्री राव प्रबल श्रीवास्तव	वार्ड न० 12
37	होटल रामदरबार	श्री ताराचन्द्र जैन	वार्ड न० 11
38	होटल अनुज रेसीडेन्सी	श्री नन्दकिशोर अग्रवाल	वार्ड न० 10
39	कंसल भवन	केशर देवी अग्रवाल	वार्ड न० 11
40	तुलसी भवन	श्री खुशीराम मोदनवाल	वार्ड न० 11
41	राजाराम होटल	श्री मती चुनिया देवी	वार्ड न० 03
42	क्षमा होटल	श्री महेन्द्र कुमार त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 03
43	सरजू विश्राम ग्रह	श्री ज्ञानेन्द्र त्रिपाठी	वार्ड न० 03
44	मणि होटल	श्री मती शरद पूर्णिमा गुप्ता	वार्ड न० 04
45	आनन्द भवन	श्री वंशमणि गौमत	वार्ड न० 04

Source: CMO Office Chitrakoot

Tourism-related data included estimates of floating population, major tourist locations, and the religious significance of Chitrakoot within the Ram Van Gaman Path corridor. This data helped in understanding the intensity and pattern of tourist movement.

Policy and planning data included development proposals, planning guidelines, and government initiatives related to tourism and corridor-based development, providing insights into the planned direction of growth for the town.

5.1.3. Methods of Data Collection

The collection of secondary data was carried out through a systematic review of planning documents, official records, and institutional data sources. Relevant information was extracted, compiled, and organized based on thematic relevance to the study objectives.

Spatial datasets obtained from the Development Plan were processed and analyzed using GIS tools to prepare thematic maps such as land use, tourist locations, and

environmental features. Map interpretation and overlay analysis were used to understand spatial relationships and development patterns.

Institutional data collected from the CMO office was analysed to assess infrastructure availability and service gaps in relation to tourist inflow. Literature review was conducted to support conceptual understanding and provide comparative insights into religious tourism planning.

5.1.4. Role of Secondary Data in the Study

Secondary data played a critical role in establishing the baseline context for the study and guided the direction of primary data collection. It provided a macro-level understanding of Chitrakoot's regional setting, spatial structure, and tourism significance.

The availability of shapefiles and planning documents enabled the preparation of accurate base maps, which formed the foundation for site analysis and spatial assessment. Infrastructure-related data obtained from the CMO office helped in evaluating the adequacy of existing facilities in relation to tourist demand.

Secondary data also supported the identification of key issues such as unstructured land use patterns, infrastructure gaps, and seasonal tourism pressure. Furthermore, it served as a reference framework for validating findings from primary surveys and field observations, ensuring consistency and reliability in the overall analysis.

5.1.5. Limitations of Secondary Data

Despite its importance, certain limitations were observed in the use of secondary data. Much of the demographic information is based on the Census of 2011, which may not accurately reflect current population dynamics and tourism trends.

Additionally, detailed and updated data on tourist inflow and infrastructure at the local level is limited, requiring reliance on estimates and institutional inputs. Variations in data availability due to administrative division between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh also posed challenges in obtaining uniform datasets.

These limitations highlight the importance of primary data collection in supplementing secondary sources and providing a more accurate and context-specific understanding of the study area.

5.2. Primary Data Collection

Primary data collection constituted a crucial component of the study, enabling a ground-level understanding of tourism dynamics, user behavior, and spatial conditions in Chitrakoot. Unlike secondary data, which provides a macro-level overview, primary data offered direct insights into the functioning of the town as a pilgrimage destination.

The data was collected through structured surveys, field observations, stakeholder interactions, and spatial mapping exercises conducted during the site visit. A multi-stakeholder approach was adopted to capture diverse perspectives, including those of tourists, residents, and local shopkeepers. This approach ensured a comprehensive assessment of tourism impacts on both users and the local community.

5.2.1. Objectives of Primary Data Collection

The primary objective of collecting field-based data was to understand the behavioral patterns, needs, and challenges associated with tourism in Chitrakoot. The surveys were designed to assess tourist characteristics such as purpose of visit, duration of stay, satisfaction levels, and expenditure patterns.

Additionally, primary data collection aimed to capture the perception of local residents and shopkeepers regarding tourism-related development, infrastructure availability, and economic dependency on tourism. The process also focused on identifying key spatial and infrastructural issues such as congestion, lack of amenities, and informal activities, which directly influence planning decisions.

5.2.2. Types of Surveys Conducted

To ensure a holistic understanding of the study area, three types of surveys were conducted targeting different stakeholder groups.

The tourist survey was conducted with a total of 98 respondents to understand visitor characteristics, travel patterns, and overall experience. The residents survey, comprising 43 responses, focused on capturing local perspectives on tourism impacts, infrastructure conditions, and quality of life. The shopkeepers survey, with 49 responses, aimed to understand the economic aspects of tourism, including dependency on tourist inflow, seasonal variations, and operational challenges.

This multi-dimensional survey approach helped in integrating both demand-side and supply-side perspectives of tourism in Chitrakoot.

5.2.3. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaires for primary data collection were carefully structured prior to the site visit to capture both quantitative and qualitative aspects of tourism and its impacts in Chitrakoot. Separate questionnaires were prepared for tourists, residents, and shopkeepers to ensure that the perspectives of different stakeholder groups were adequately represented.

The tourist questionnaire (Annexure 1A & B) was designed to understand visitor characteristics, travel behavior, and overall experience. It included questions related to group size, type of travel group (family, friends, religious groups), and whether the visit was part of a larger religious tour. Information on duration of stay, frequency of visits, and purpose of visit was collected to analyze tourist patterns and dependency on pilgrimage tourism.

Further, the questionnaire captured details regarding mode of transport, type of accommodation, and number of tourist places visited within Chitrakoot. Economic aspects were assessed through questions on total expenditure, spending within Chitrakoot, and major spending categories such as accommodation, food, religious offerings, and shopping.

To evaluate visitor experience, respondents were asked about problems faced during their visit, including issues such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, lack of parking, poor sanitation, and inadequate basic facilities like toilets and drinking water. A rating-based section was included to assess connectivity, cleanliness, availability of public facilities, and overall satisfaction levels. The questionnaire also included demographic details such as age group, gender, place of origin, and income category, along with an open-ended section to capture suggestions for improvement.

The residents questionnaire (Annexure 3) was designed to assess the impact of tourism on the local community. It included questions related to occupation, duration of residence, and perception of tourism in terms of employment generation and income improvement. Respondents were asked to identify issues faced during peak tourist seasons, such as traffic congestion, water shortage, waste accumulation, and noise pollution.

The questionnaire also included a rating-based assessment of infrastructure availability, including water supply, sanitation, and electricity. Additional questions focused on the

adequacy of public services during festivals, the need for segregation of tourist and residential areas, and opinions on developing Chitrakoot on the lines of Ayodhya. An open-ended question was included to gather suggestions for future improvements.

The shopkeepers and service providers questionnaire (Annexure 2) focused on understanding the economic dimension of tourism and business-related challenges. It included questions on type of business, years of operation, and the impact of tourist seasons on income levels. Respondents were asked to identify peak revenue periods and major issues affecting their business, such as traffic congestion, lack of parking, poor sanitation, irregular electricity, and inadequate tourist facilities.

The questionnaire also explored supply chain aspects through questions on source and customer networks, along with stakeholder perception regarding the development of the Ram Van Gaman Path. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify priority areas for government intervention, including parking, public toilets, street lighting, signage, and riverfront development.

Overall, the questionnaire design ensured a comprehensive coverage of tourist behavior, infrastructure conditions, economic dependencies, and stakeholder perceptions, forming a strong basis for subsequent data analysis and planning recommendations.

5.2.4. Survey Locations

The surveys were carried out at key religious and tourist destinations within Chitrakoot, ensuring coverage of high-footfall areas and major activity nodes. These locations included Kamadgiri (Kamta Nath Mandir), Ram Ghat, Hanuman Dhara, Sphatik Shila, Gupt Godavari, and Sati Anusuya Ashram.

These sites represent the primary pilgrimage circuit of Chitrakoot and experience significant tourist movement throughout the year. Conducting surveys at these locations allowed for the collection of diverse responses from different types of visitors and stakeholders.

5.2.5. Field Observations

Field observations were conducted simultaneously with surveys to understand the physical and spatial characteristics of the town. It was observed that Chitrakoot is a

relatively small and compact settlement, making it physically manageable in terms of scale.

Despite being divided between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, the town functions cohesively at a social and economic level, with no apparent disruption in daily activities due to administrative boundaries. Tourist locations were generally found to be clean and well-maintained; however, there was a noticeable lack of basic amenities such as public toilets, drinking water facilities, and organized parking.

Encroachments and informal commercial activities were observed along access routes to major temples and ghats. Due to restrictions on vehicular movement near key religious sites, these areas have been informally transformed into pedestrian-dominated economic zones, where local vendors operate. While this supports local livelihoods, it also leads to congestion and unregulated spatial use.

5.2.6. Stakeholder Interaction

Stakeholder interactions formed an important part of primary data collection, providing insights beyond structured survey responses. Interactions were conducted with shopkeepers, tourists, and local authorities.

At the institutional level, discussions were held with the Chief Municipal Officer (CMO) of Chitrakoot and planning officials from Satna district. These interactions revealed that the town experiences significant seasonal variation in tourist inflow, leading to periodic stress on infrastructure and services.

It was observed that current management practices rely largely on temporary and short-term action plans, particularly during peak seasons and religious events. This highlights the absence of a long-term, integrated planning framework for tourism management in the town.

5.2.7. Spatial Mapping and Analysis

Spatial data collection was carried out through on-site mapping and digital documentation. Key spatial outputs prepared during the study included land use mapping, tourist attraction mapping, and on-site tourist movement mapping.

Tools such as GIS and digital sketching (iPad-based mapping) were used to document spatial patterns, identify activity zones, and analyze movement corridors. This spatial

analysis helped in identifying areas of high tourist concentration, infrastructure stress, and potential zones for intervention.

5.2.8. Limitations of Primary Data

While primary data provided valuable ground-level insights, certain limitations were observed. The surveys were conducted during a non-peak period, which may not fully capture the intensity of conditions during festivals and peak tourist seasons.

Additionally, the sample size, although representative, is limited in scale and may not reflect the complete diversity of visitors and stakeholders. Time constraints during the field visit also influenced the extent of data collection and coverage.

Despite these limitations, the primary data collected offers a reliable and context-specific understanding of the study area and serves as a strong basis for further analysis and planning proposals.

5.3. Data Analysis

The data analysis for the study was carried out using both secondary data obtained from institutional sources and primary data collected through field surveys. The analysis focuses on understanding tourism patterns, user behaviour, infrastructure gaps, and stakeholder perspectives in Chitrakoot.

The findings have been categorized into three major sections:

1. Secondary Data Analysis
2. Tourist Survey Analysis
3. Residents and Shopkeepers Analysis
4. Spatial and On-site Mapping Analysis

5.3.1. Secondary Data Analysis

The secondary data obtained from the CMO office provides important insights into tourist inflow patterns and infrastructure capacity in Chitrakoot. The analysis of tourist inflow reveals a highly fluctuating and seasonal pattern, with peak months such as February recording approximately 28.1 lakh visitors and October around 24.9 lakh visitors, while significantly lower footfall is observed during off-season months such as April and May, Table 5.1. The total recorded tourist inflow exceeds 1.73 crore

visitors, clearly indicating the immense pressure exerted on the town's infrastructure and service systems.

This pronounced seasonal variation confirms that Chitrakoot functions primarily as a seasonal pilgrimage destination, where the demand for infrastructure and public services changes drastically over time. Such uneven distribution of tourist inflow poses significant challenges for urban management, as the town must be capable of accommodating peak loads without maintaining excessive infrastructure during lean periods. This highlights the need for flexible, adaptive, and scalable planning strategies that can respond effectively to fluctuating demand.

The analysis of accommodation infrastructure further reveals a mismatch between capacity and demand, as the town has only 45 registered hotels, *Table 5.2*. Which appears insufficient in comparison to the magnitude of tourist inflow. This gap suggests a reliance on informal accommodation systems or short-duration visits, reflecting limitations in the town's ability to support extended stays and higher-value tourism.

Additional insights derived from survey data collected by local bodies indicate that the majority of visitors belong to the economically active age group of 26–50 years, with a noticeable dominance of male visitors. The regional distribution of tourists shows that a significant proportion of visitors originate from nearby states, particularly Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, emphasizing the regional importance of Chitrakoot within the pilgrimage network. Furthermore, a large majority of visitors, approximately 83 percent, travel for religious purposes, strongly reinforcing the identity of Chitrakoot as a pilgrimage-centric destination.

Overall, these findings establish Chitrakoot as a religious-dominated, high-intensity tourism node characterized by strong seasonality, limited infrastructure capacity, and significant dependence on pilgrimage-based activities.

5.3.2. Tourist Survey Analysis

The tourist survey conducted with a total of 98 respondents provides detailed insights into visitor behavior, travel characteristics, and overall experience in Chitrakoot. The analysis of group size indicates that the majority of tourists travel in small groups, particularly in the range of two to four persons, accounting for approximately 45 percent of the respondents. This is followed by solo travelers and medium-sized groups, suggesting a combination of individual and family-based pilgrimage patterns. Such

group compositions reflect the cultural nature of pilgrimage travel, where visits are often undertaken with close social units rather than large organized tours, *Table 5.3*.

In terms of group composition, family groups constitute the largest share of visitors, followed by groups of friends and organized religious groups, *Table 5.4*. This distribution indicates that Chitrakoot caters to a diverse range of visitor types, though the dominance of family groups reinforces its identity as a traditional pilgrimage destination. A significant proportion of tourists, approximately 58 out of 98 respondents, reported that they were visiting only Chitrakoot, while the remaining respondents included it as part of a broader religious circuit. This highlights the dual role of Chitrakoot as both a primary destination and a node within a larger pilgrimage network.

Table 5.3: Group Size

Group size	No. of Responses
Solo	20
2-4 persons	44
5-10 persons	20
More than 10	14
Grand Total	98

Source: Primary Survey

The duration of stay further emphasizes the nature of tourism in Chitrakoot, with nearly 80 percent of visitors staying for one to two days, and a considerable number undertaking day visits. Very few tourists extend their stay beyond three days. This pattern clearly indicates that Chitrakoot functions predominantly as a short-duration pilgrimage destination. The limited duration of stay has direct implications on the local economy, as it restricts tourist spending and reduces opportunities for extended engagement with the destination.

Table 5.4: Group Type

Group Type	Frequency
Family	36
Friends	26
Colleagues	14
Religious Group	22
Grand Total	98

Source: Primary Survey

The frequency of visits shows that a large proportion of respondents are first-time visitors, while a smaller segment consists of repeat visitors and those who visit during specific festivals. This suggests that while Chitrakoot has a steady inflow of new visitors, repeat visitation is relatively limited and often linked to religious events rather than recreational tourism. This pattern reflects the need to diversify attractions and enhance visitor experience to encourage longer stays and repeat visits.

The purpose of visit strongly reinforces the religious character of the town, with the majority of respondents identifying pilgrimage as their primary motive, *Table 5.5*. A smaller but notable proportion of visitors indicated a combination of tourism and sightseeing, suggesting the presence of potential for expanding non-religious tourism activities. This duality presents an opportunity for planning interventions that can integrate cultural, ecological, and experiential tourism with existing pilgrimage activities.

Table 5.5: Purpose of Visit

Purpose of Visit	Responses
Religious Pilgrims	53
Tourism/Sightseeing	18
Both	27
Grand Total	98

Source: Primary Survey

The spatial distribution of tourist activity reveals a clear concentration of footfall at major religious and cultural sites such as Gupt Godavari, Ram Ghat, Hanuman Dhara, and Janki Kund. These locations form a well-defined pilgrimage circuit, where visitor movement is largely linear and node-based. Such concentration results in localized pressure on infrastructure, particularly in areas with limited carrying capacity. The uneven distribution of tourist movement also indicates that several potential sites remain underutilized, highlighting opportunities for spatial redistribution of tourist activity.

The analysis of mode of transport indicates a reliance on a mix of public and private modes, with buses and private vehicles forming a significant share. The presence of pedestrian movement within the town further reflects the compact nature of the settlement and restrictions on vehicular access near key religious sites. This has

implications for last-mile connectivity and the need for organized transport and parking systems, *Figure 5.1*.

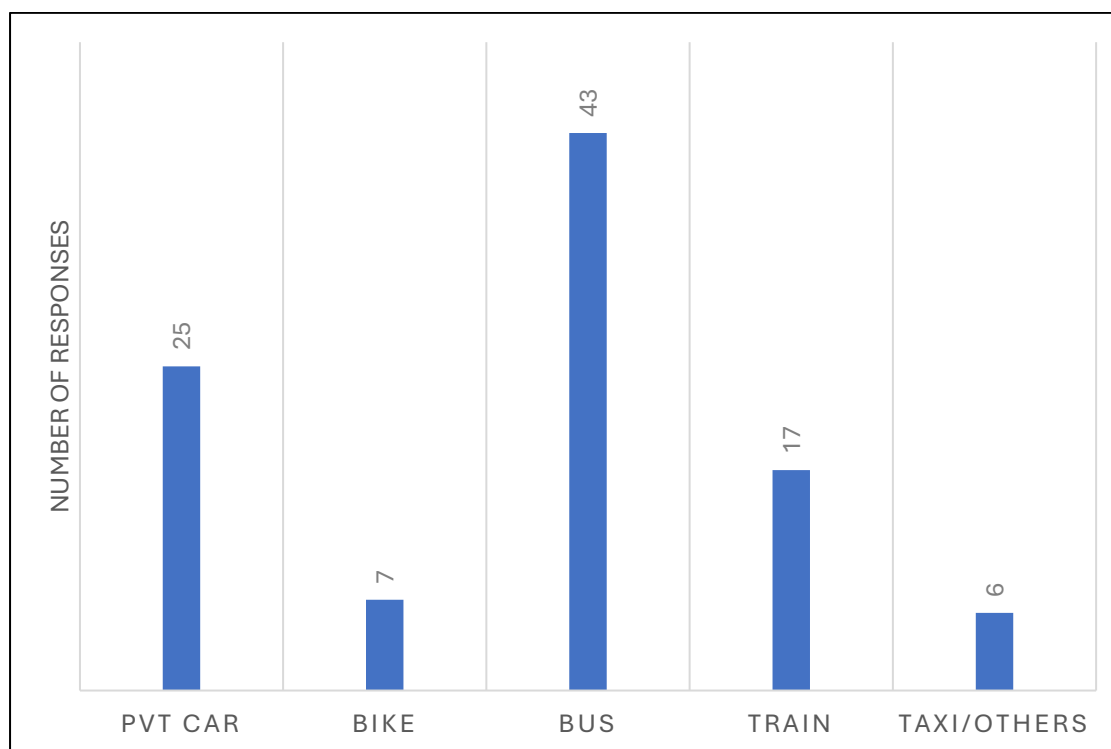


Figure 5.1: Mode of Transport

Source: Primary Survey

The expenditure pattern of tourists suggests that most visitors fall within a low to moderate spending range, with the majority spending between ₹2,000 and ₹5,000 within Chitrakoot. This aligns with the short duration of stay and the predominantly pilgrimage-oriented nature of visits. However, transport and accommodation emerge as the highest expenditure categories, indicating that accessibility and stay infrastructure play a crucial role in shaping the local economy. Spending on religious offerings, food, and shopping also contributes significantly, reflecting the cultural and ritualistic aspects of tourism in the town.

A critical component of the analysis is the identification of issues faced by tourists during their visit. The responses indicate that basic infrastructure deficiencies are the most pressing concerns, particularly in relation to drinking water availability, public toilet facilities, and organized parking. In addition, issues related to safety, accommodation, and signage were also reported, indicating gaps in both physical infrastructure and management systems, *Figure 5.2*. These challenges directly affect the quality of visitor experience and may influence the overall perception of the destination.

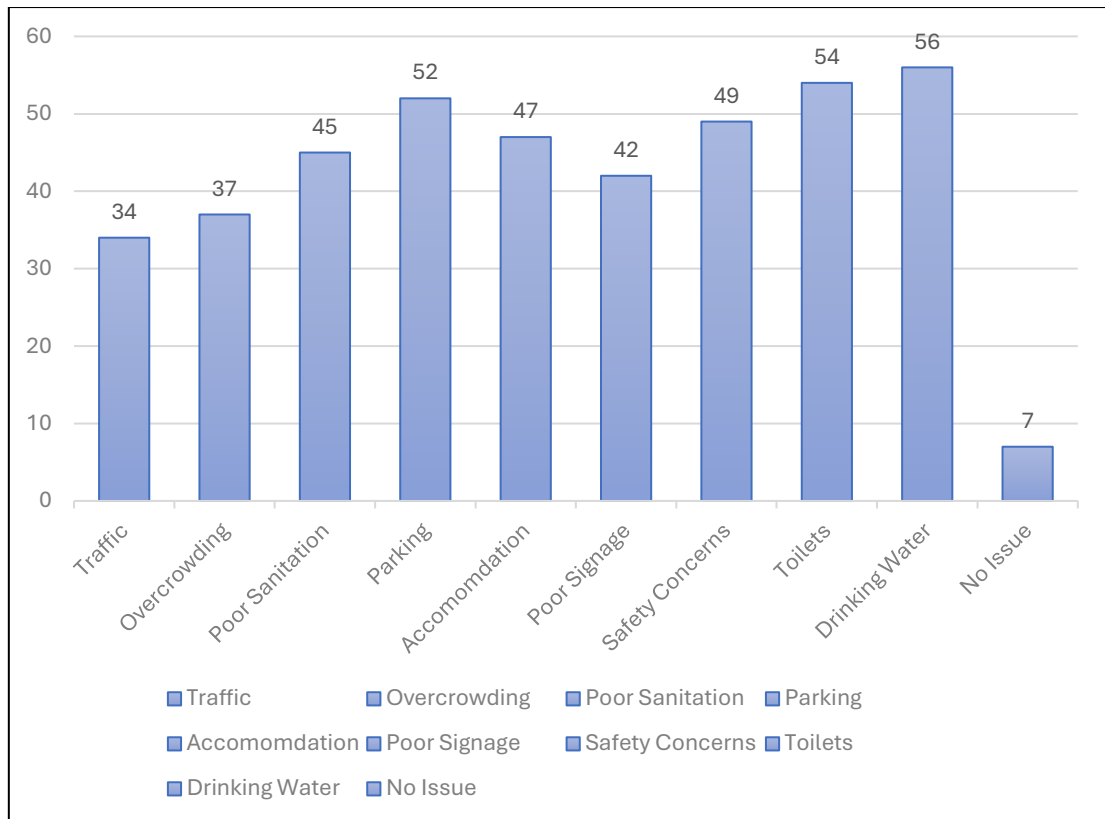


Figure 5.2: Issues Faced by Tourists

Source: Primary Survey

The perception-based evaluation of connectivity, cleanliness, and availability of public facilities reveals that most respondents rated these aspects as average. While this indicates a basic level of functionality, it also highlights significant scope for improvement in service quality and infrastructure provision. The relatively moderate satisfaction levels suggest that while Chitrakoot meets the essential expectations of pilgrims, it lacks the level of organization and comfort associated with well-developed tourist destinations.

Overall, the tourist survey analysis indicates that Chitrakoot is characterized by short-duration visits, concentrated activity zones, moderate expenditure patterns, and significant dependence on religious tourism. The findings highlight the need for improving basic infrastructure, enhancing visitor experience, and diversifying tourism offerings to transform the town from a transit-oriented pilgrimage center into a more sustainable and well-managed destination.

5.3.3. Shopkeepers and Residents Analysis

The analysis of shopkeepers and residents provides important insights into the local economic structure and community perception of tourism in Chitrakoot. The findings

from the shopkeepers' survey indicate that a majority of local businesses are directly dependent on tourism for their livelihood. A significant proportion of respondents reported an increase in income during peak tourist seasons, highlighting the strong economic linkage between pilgrimage activities and local commerce. However, this dependency is largely seasonal in nature, resulting in fluctuations in income and economic instability during off-peak periods.

Shopkeepers also identified several challenges that affect their business operations, particularly during periods of high tourist inflow. Issues such as traffic congestion, lack of organized parking facilities, poor sanitation conditions, and inadequate tourist infrastructure were commonly reported. These challenges not only hinder business efficiency but also negatively impact the overall experience of visitors, *Figure 5.3*.

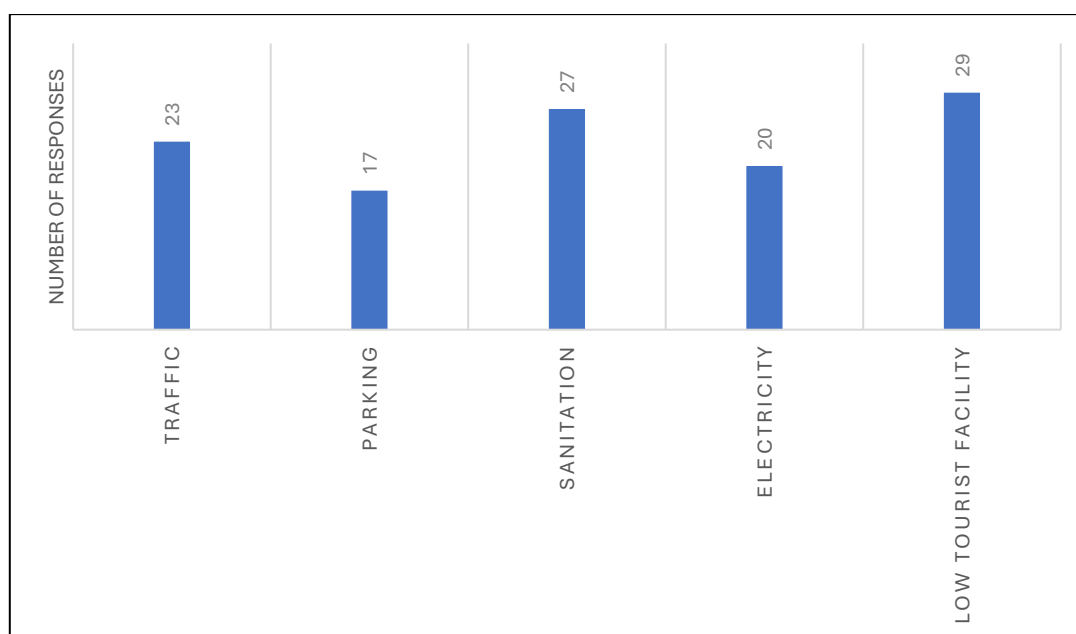


Figure 5.3: Issues According to Shopkeepers

Source: Primary Survey

The supply chain network of local businesses reflects a broader religious economy, with goods being sourced both locally and from major pilgrimage centers such as Varanasi and Ayodhya. This indicates that Chitrakoot is integrated within a wider network of religious destinations, where economic exchanges are influenced by shared cultural and spiritual linkages. The customer base of shopkeepers is predominantly composed of pilgrims, followed by local residents, further emphasizing the central role of tourism in sustaining the local economy.

From the residents' perspective, tourism is generally perceived as a positive force contributing to employment generation and income enhancement. However, residents also experience several challenges associated with increased tourist activity, particularly during peak seasons. Common issues reported include traffic congestion, water shortages, and the accumulation of waste, all of which affect the quality of daily life.

The assessment of infrastructure by residents indicates that basic services such as water supply and sanitation are inadequate, often rated as average to poor, especially under conditions of high demand. In contrast, electricity supply is perceived to be relatively reliable. An important observation from the survey is that a majority of residents support the idea of developing Chitrakoot along the lines of established pilgrimage destinations such as Ayodhya. This reflects a positive inclination towards planned development and suggests a willingness within the local community to adopt structured interventions aimed at improving tourism management and infrastructure.

5.3.4. Spatial and On-Site Mapping Analysis

The on-site mapping conducted at major tourist locations provides critical insights into spatial behavior, movement patterns, and activity zones.

The mapping exercise revealed that tourist movement is highly concentrated along defined pilgrimage routes and temple access corridors, with clear patterns of entry, circulation, and exit.

At locations such as Gupt Godavari and Hanuman Dhara, movement is largely linear and regulated due to physical constraints, leading to congestion during peak hours. The presence of ropeway facilities at elevated locations further influences movement concentration.

A significant observation from the mapping is the presence of informal commercial activities and temporary shops along major movement routes. These areas function as active economic zones but lack spatial organization, resulting in congestion and inefficient use of space.

Parking areas are often located at a distance from key tourist spots, leading to pedestrian-dominated movement corridors, which are further encroached upon by vendors.

The mapping also highlights the interaction between natural features (such as the Mandakini River) and built spaces, emphasizing the need for integrated planning that balances environmental sensitivity with tourism development.

5.4. Key Findings

The analysis of both primary and secondary data reveals that Chitrakoot functions as a high-intensity, pilgrimage-dominated tourism destination with significant seasonal variation and limited infrastructural capacity. The tourist inflow data clearly demonstrates that the town experiences extreme fluctuations throughout the year, with peak months witnessing exceptionally high visitor numbers compared to relatively low footfall during off-season periods. This uneven distribution of tourist inflow places substantial pressure on infrastructure and public services during peak times, while leading to underutilization during lean periods.

The relationship between tourist inflow and infrastructure capacity highlights a critical mismatch, particularly in terms of accommodation facilities and basic services. With only a limited number of registered hotels available in the town, the existing infrastructure appears insufficient to support the scale of tourism observed. This gap suggests a reliance on informal systems and short-duration visits, which restrict the town's ability to retain tourists for longer periods and benefit economically from extended stays.

The tourist survey analysis further establishes that Chitrakoot primarily functions as a short-duration pilgrimage destination, with the majority of visitors staying for one to two days or undertaking day visits. This pattern indicates that the town operates largely as a transit-oriented religious node rather than a destination for prolonged tourism. The limited duration of stay directly impacts the economic potential of tourism, as visitor spending remains low to moderate and is concentrated on essential activities such as transport, accommodation, and religious offerings.

The purpose of visit and visitor profile strongly reinforce the religious identity of the town, with pilgrimage emerging as the dominant motivation. The spatial distribution of tourist activity reveals a concentrated pattern, where major sites such as Ram Ghat, Gupt Godavari, Hanuman Dhara, and Janki Kund form a core pilgrimage circuit. This concentration leads to localized congestion and overuse of infrastructure at specific

nodes *Figure 5.4*, while other areas remain underutilized. Such uneven spatial distribution highlights the need for better planning and dispersal strategies.

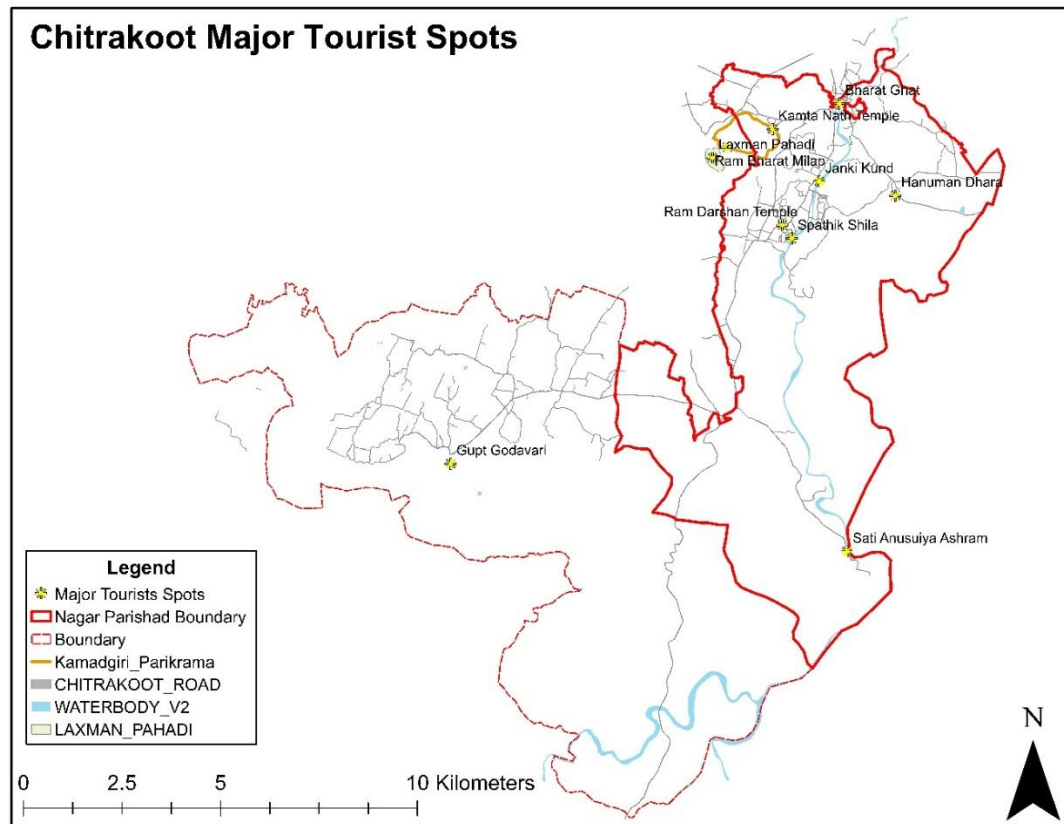


Figure 5.4: Major Tourists Spots

Source: Author

The analysis of issues faced by tourists indicates that the most critical challenges are related to basic infrastructure, particularly drinking water availability, public toilet facilities, and organized parking. These deficiencies directly affect the visitor experience and reflect the inability of existing infrastructure to cope with high tourist volumes. Additionally, concerns related to safety, accommodation quality, and signage indicate gaps in both physical infrastructure and management systems.

From the perspective of local stakeholders, tourism is identified as the primary driver of the local economy, with a majority of shopkeepers depending directly on tourist inflow for their income. However, this economic dependency is highly seasonal, leading to fluctuations in earnings and limited financial stability, *Figure 5.5*. The business ecosystem is closely linked to pilgrimage activities and is supported by supply networks extending to other religious centers, indicating the presence of a broader interconnected religious economy.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

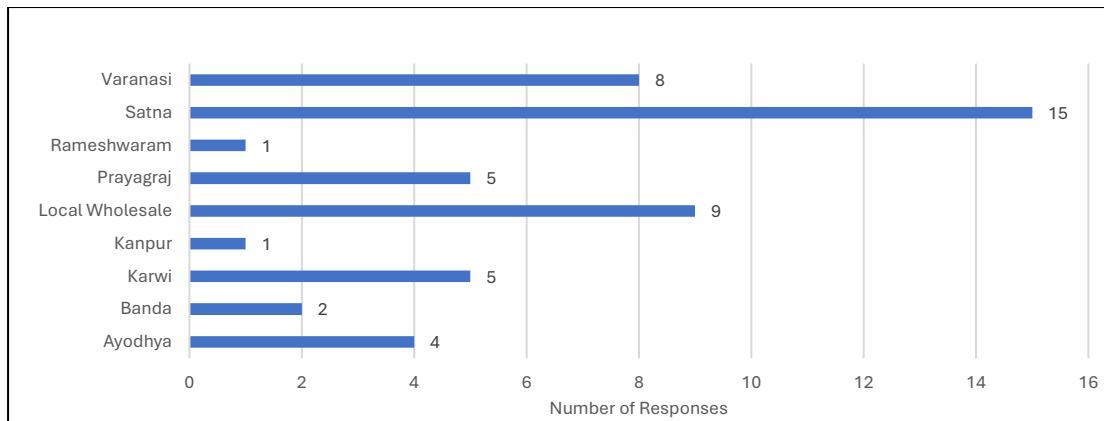


Figure 5.5: Dependence on Regions

Source: Primary Survey

At the same time, residents acknowledge the economic benefits of tourism but also highlight several challenges associated with peak tourist inflow. Issues such as traffic congestion, water shortages, and waste accumulation significantly affect the quality of life, particularly during festival periods. Infrastructure assessments further reveal that essential services such as water supply and sanitation are inadequate, especially under high demand conditions, while electricity supply remains relatively stable, *Figure 5.6*.

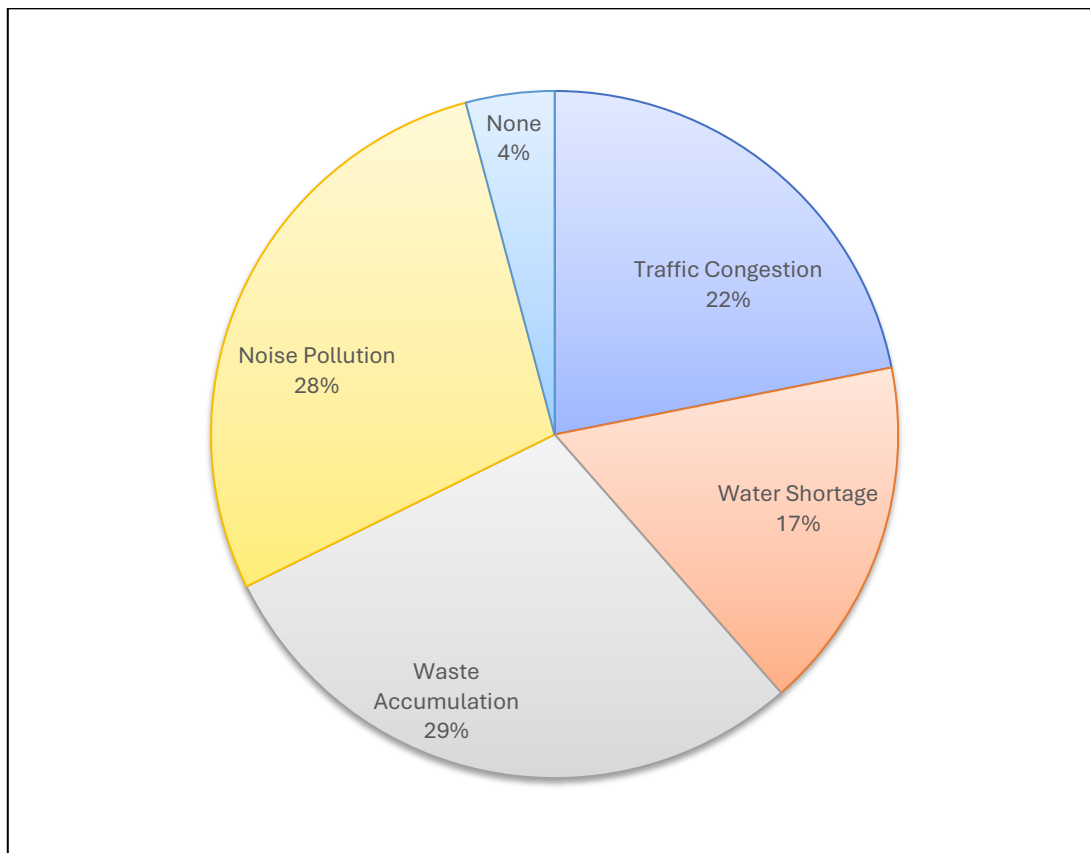


Figure 5.6: Issues Faced by Local Residents

Source: Primary Survey

The spatial analysis and on-site mapping provide critical insights into the physical organization and functioning of the town. Tourist movement is largely confined to specific routes and corridors connecting major religious sites, resulting in high pedestrian activity and congestion in these areas. Informal commercial activities and temporary shops occupy significant portions of these movement corridors, transforming them into active economic zones but also leading to inefficient use of space and circulation challenges, *Figure 5.7*.

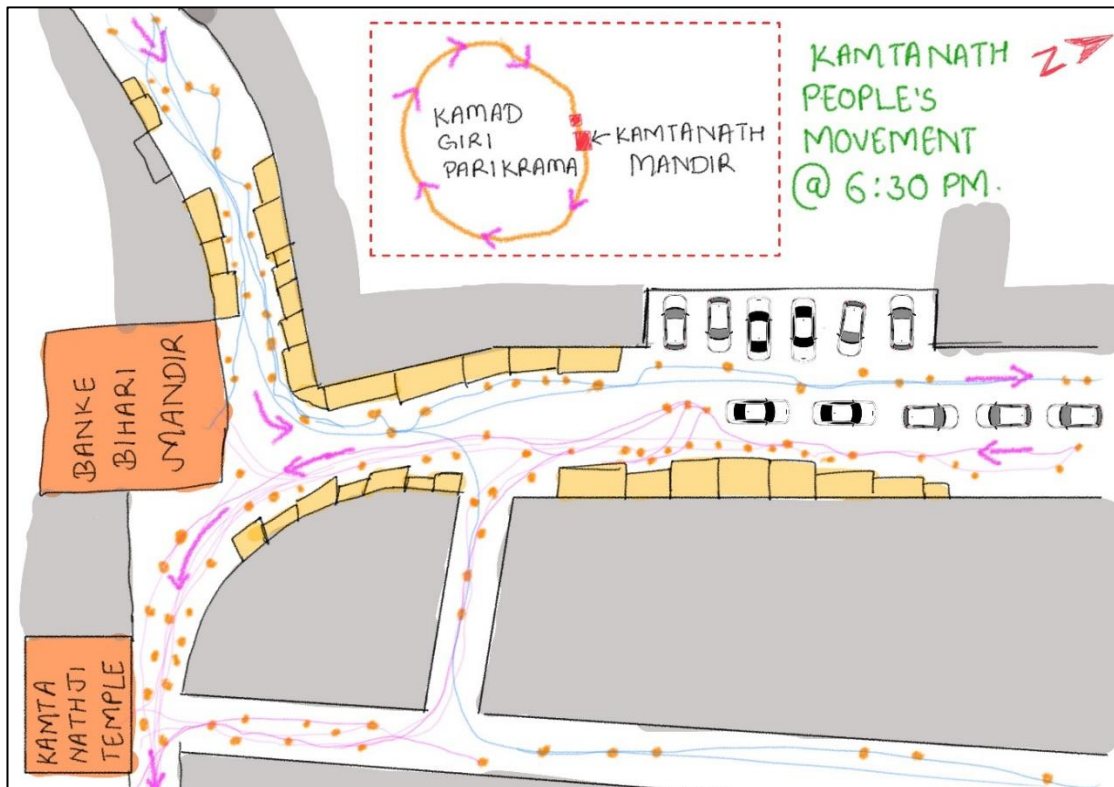


Figure 5.7: Kamadgiri On-Site Mapping

Source: Author

The interaction between natural features, particularly the Mandakini River, and built development further emphasizes the environmental sensitivity of the area. The concentration of activities along the riverfront increases the pressure on ecologically sensitive zones, necessitating careful planning interventions that balance tourism development with environmental conservation.

Another significant finding is the administrative complexity arising from the location of Chitrakoot across two states, which creates challenges in coordinated planning and management. Despite functioning as a single socio-economic entity, differences in administrative control can lead to fragmented development approaches, highlighting the need for integrated governance mechanisms.

Overall, the findings indicate that Chitrakoot is characterized by high tourist intensity, strong seasonality, short-duration visits, inadequate infrastructure, concentrated activity zones, and significant dependence on pilgrimage tourism. These conditions underline the urgent need for a comprehensive planning framework that addresses infrastructure gaps, improves spatial organization, enhances visitor experience, and ensures sustainable development while preserving the cultural and environmental identity of the town.

5.5. Preliminary Planning Proposals

Based on the findings derived from site analysis, primary surveys, and spatial mapping, a set of preliminary planning proposals has been formulated to address the key issues of infrastructure deficiency, unorganized tourist movement, and seasonal pressure on the town. The proposals aim to develop Chitrakoot as a well-managed, integrated pilgrimage and tourism destination, while preserving its cultural and environmental significance.

5.5.1. Development of Tourist Circuit

A major component of the proposal is the development of a structured tourist circuit, which organizes the movement of visitors across key destinations within the town. The proposed circuit has been delineated based on existing road connectivity, tourist preferences, and the spatial distribution of major attractions. It connects important nodes such as Kamadgiri, Janki Kund, Ram Darshan, Sphatik Shila, Gupt Godavari, Sati Anusuya Ashram, Hanuman Dhara, and Ram Ghat in a sequential manner. The total length of the circuit is approximately 34 kilometres, allowing tourists to experience all major sites in a planned and efficient route, *Figure 5.8*.

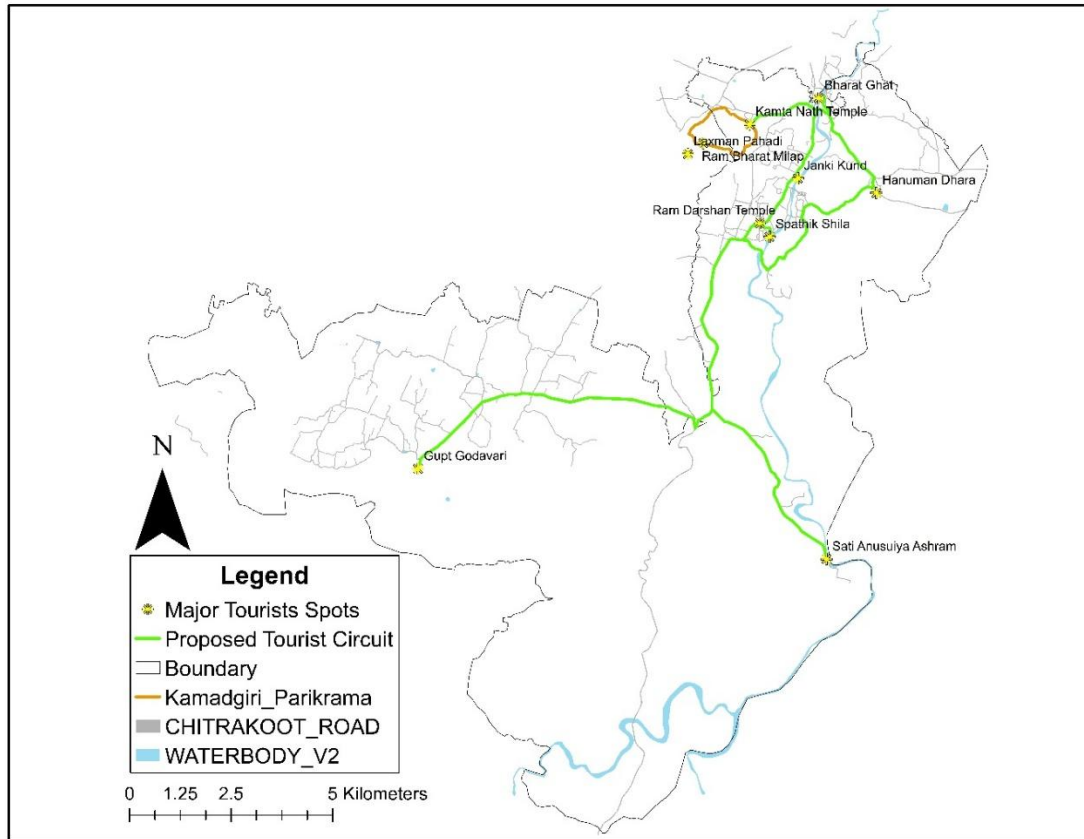


Figure 5.8: Proposed Tourist Circuit

Source: Author

This intervention aims to reduce random and unstructured movement patterns, minimize congestion at individual nodes, and improve overall accessibility and visitor experience. By structuring the flow of tourists, the circuit also helps in better distribution of tourist activity across the town.

5.5.2. Site-Specific Interventions

In addition to circuit-level planning, targeted interventions have been proposed at key high-footfall locations to address localized issues and improve functionality.

a) Ram Ghat Redevelopment

Ram Ghat functions as one of the most active nodes in Chitrakoot, characterized by high tourist inflow, religious activities, boating, and commercial interactions. However, the analysis reveals that the Madhya Pradesh side of the ghat is relatively underdeveloped. The proposal focuses on redesigning this area by introducing essential amenities such as drinking water facilities, public toilets, organized vending zones, and improved pedestrian circulation. This intervention aims to enhance usability, balance development across both sides of the river, and reduce congestion, *Figure 5.9*.

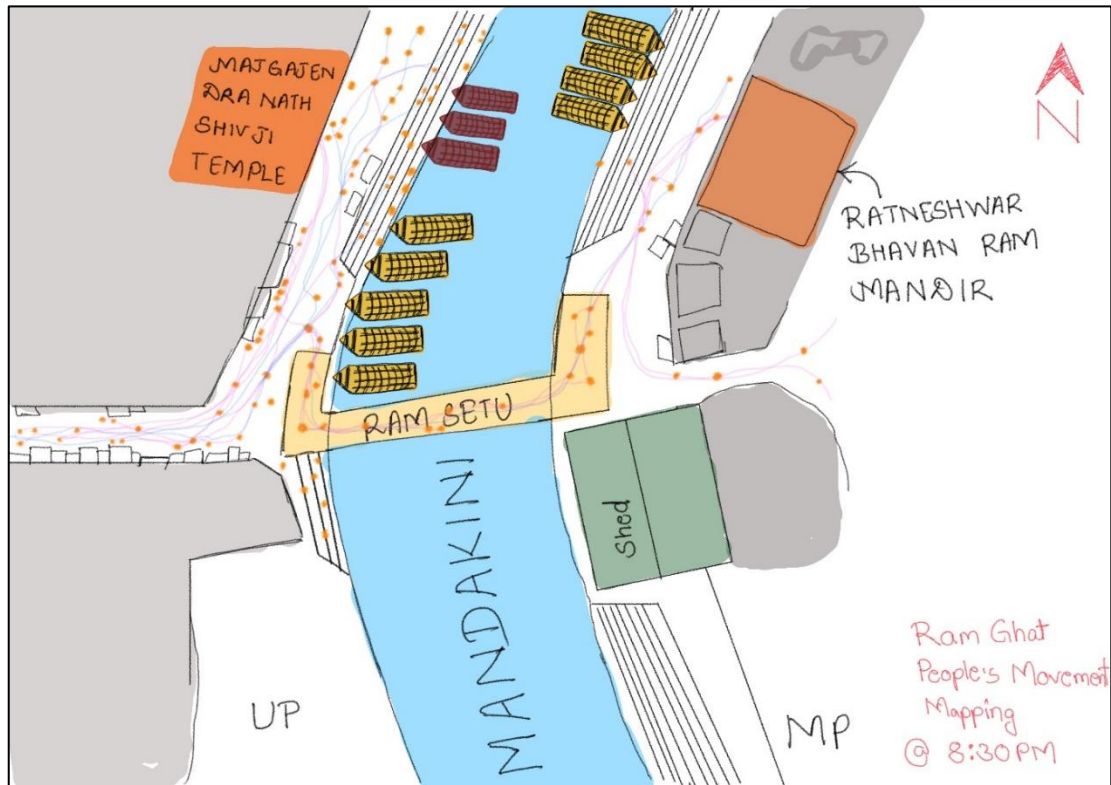


Figure 5.9: Ram Ghat On-Site Mapping

Source: Author

b) Hanuman Dhara Access Improvement

Hanuman Dhara, being located on an elevated terrain, faces issues related to accessibility, parking, and waiting areas for ropeway users. The proposal recommends the development of organized parking facilities at the base, provision of drinking water, and the creation of designated waiting areas along the access route. These measures are intended to streamline visitor movement and improve comfort, especially during peak periods, *Figure 5.10*.

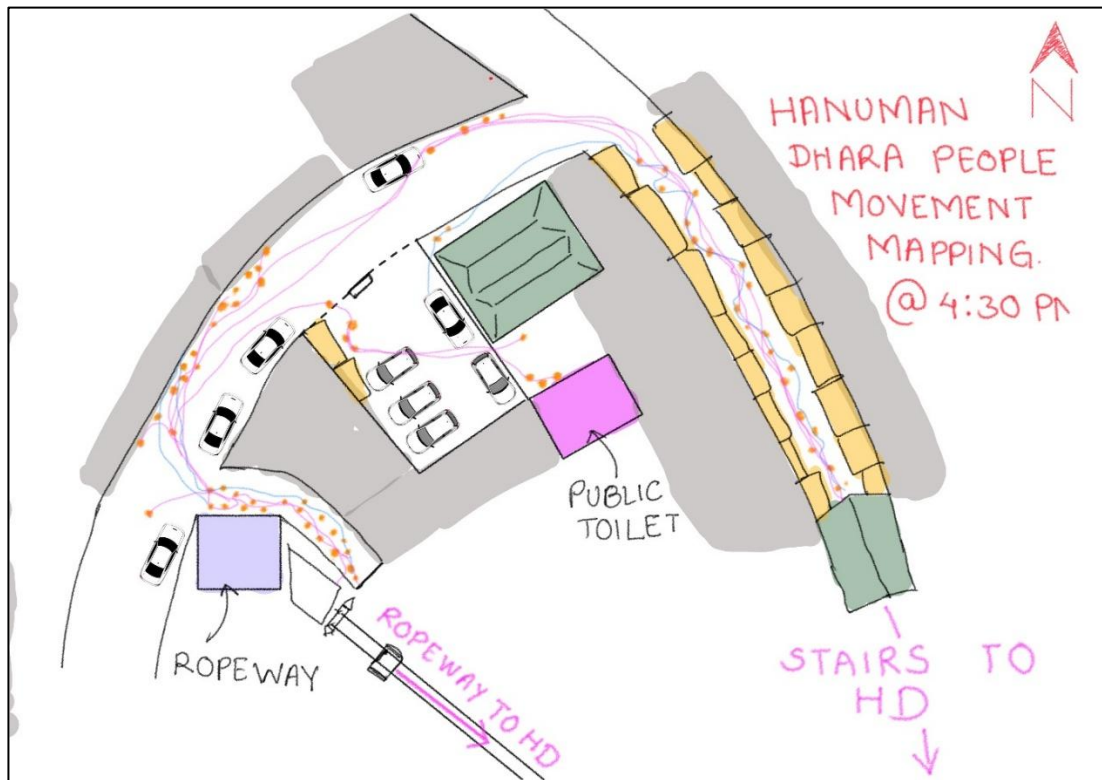


Figure 5.10: Hanuman Dhara On-Site Mapping

Source: Author

c) Gupt Godavari Queue Management

Gupt Godavari experiences high tourist inflow combined with limited entry capacity, resulting in overcrowding and long waiting times. The proposed intervention focuses on improving the entry and exit system, expanding queue management areas, and reorganizing the surrounding space to facilitate smoother movement. This will enhance visitor experience while maintaining the sanctity and functionality of the site, *Figure 5.11*.

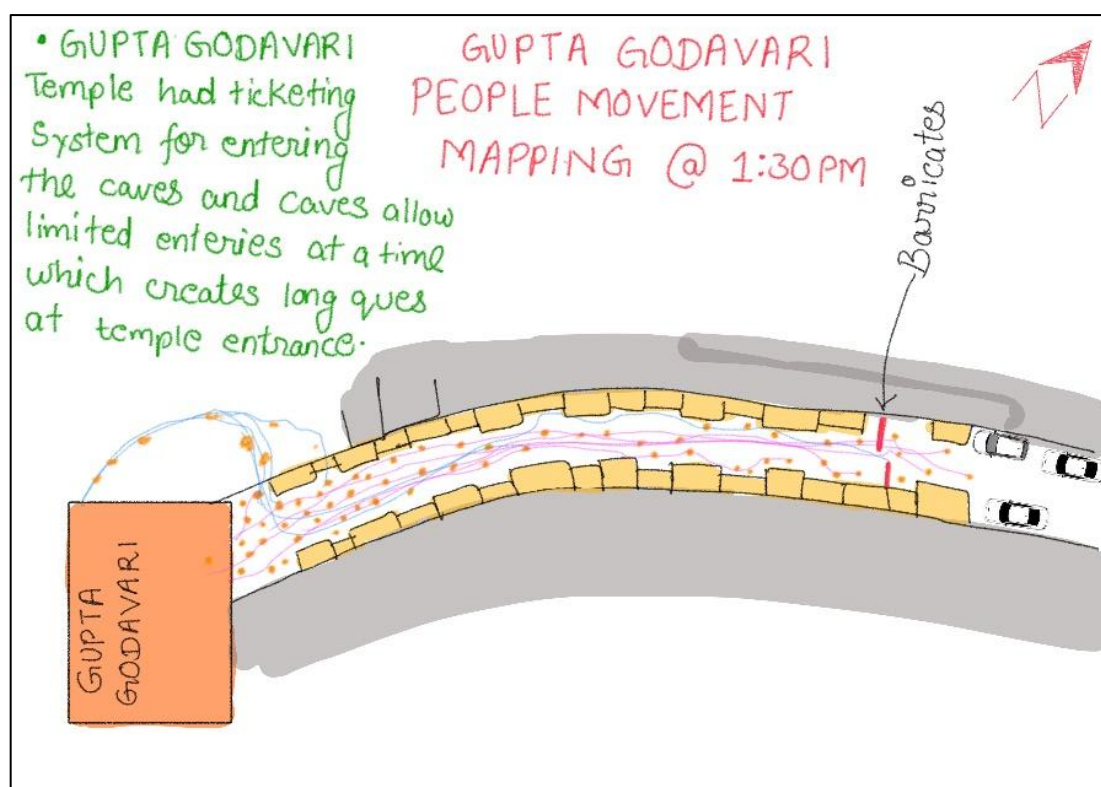


Figure 5.11: Gupt Godavari On-Site Mapping

Source: Author

d) Kamadgiri Parikrama Facilities Enhancement

Kamadgiri Parikrama is a continuous movement corridor with heavy pilgrim flow, where issues such as bottlenecks, lack of amenities, and safety concerns are prominent. The proposal includes the development of organized parking facilities, installation of clear signage systems, introduction of surveillance measures, and provision of essential amenities such as drinking water and public toilets along the route. These interventions aim to improve safety, reduce congestion, and enhance the overall pilgrimage experience, *Figure 5.12*.

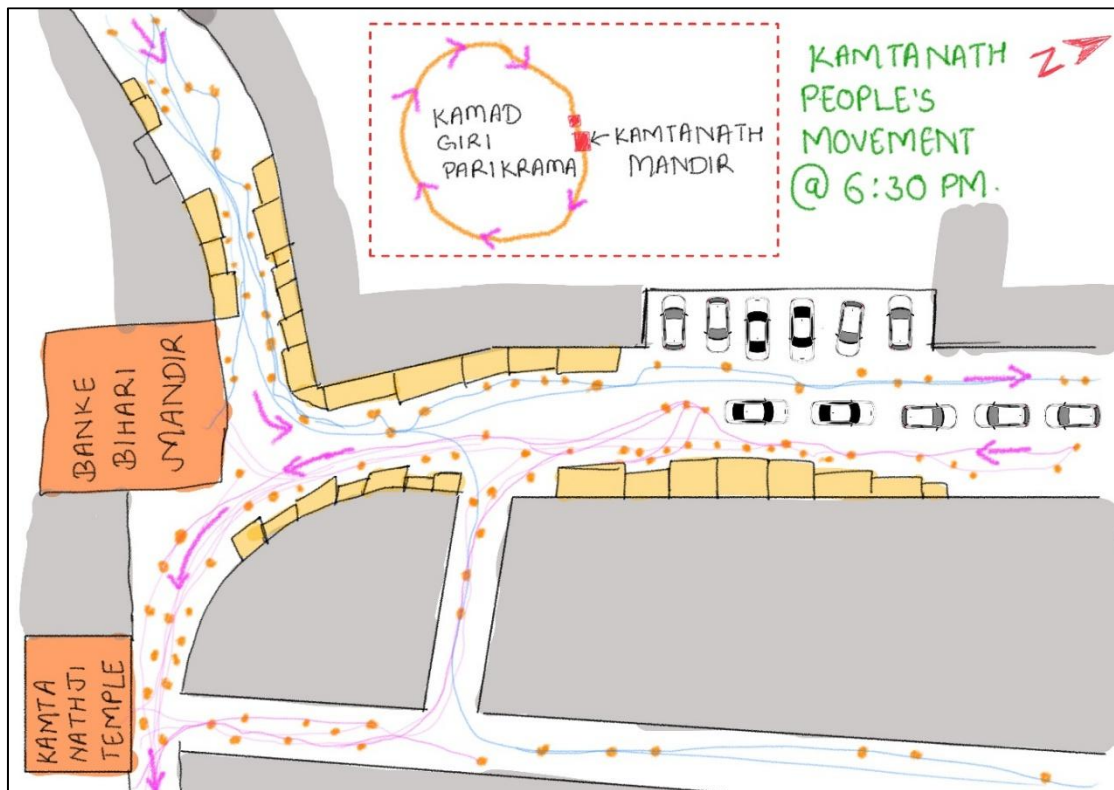


Figure 5.12: Kamadgiri (Kamtanath) On-Site Mapping

Source: Author

5.5.3. Promotion of Religious and Health Tourism

The proposals also recognize the potential of Chitrakoot to evolve as an integrated destination combining religious and health tourism. In addition to its spiritual significance, the town is known for its specialized eye care facilities and wellness-oriented institutions, which attract a substantial number of visitors seeking medical and therapeutic services.

The presence of such infrastructure provides an opportunity to position Chitrakoot as a holistic tourism destination offering combined experiences of pilgrimage, wellness, yoga, and naturopathy. With appropriate planning and infrastructure development, this integration can diversify tourism, increase the duration of stay, and enhance economic benefits.

5.5.4. Integrated Tourism Management System

To improve the overall management of tourism, the introduction of a unified single-ticketing system is proposed. This system would allow tourists to access multiple major attractions through a single pass, thereby simplifying movement and reducing unregulated entry practices.

The implementation of such a system would also enable better monitoring of tourist flow and generate a steady revenue stream. This revenue can be utilized by the Urban Local Body for the provision, operation, and maintenance of essential public amenities such as sanitation, drinking water, signage, and infrastructure upgrades. This approach ensures both efficient management and financial sustainability of tourism-related services.

5.5.5. Overall Planning Approach

The preliminary proposals collectively aim to transform Chitrakoot from an organically developed pilgrimage town into a planned, efficient, and sustainable tourism destination. The approach focuses on organizing tourist movement, strengthening infrastructure, improving site-level functionality, and integrating emerging tourism sectors such as health and wellness.

By aligning spatial planning with user behavior and stakeholder needs, the proposals seek to create a balanced development framework that enhances visitor experience while preserving the cultural, social, and environmental character of the town.

6. CHAPTER 6: PROPOSALS

6.1. Introduction to Proposal Chapter

This chapter presents a comprehensive set of planning proposals for Chitrakoot, developed in response to the issues, gaps, and opportunities identified through the preceding analysis. The overall aim of the study has been to formulate a physical planning framework for religious tourism development along the Ram Van Gaman Path, with Chitrakoot as a pilot case, where tourism growth is aligned with spatial organization, infrastructure provision, and sustainability considerations. The proposals *Figure 6.1*, in this chapter are therefore not isolated interventions, but are derived from a systematic understanding of the town's religious significance, spatial structure, tourist behavior, and stakeholder perspectives.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

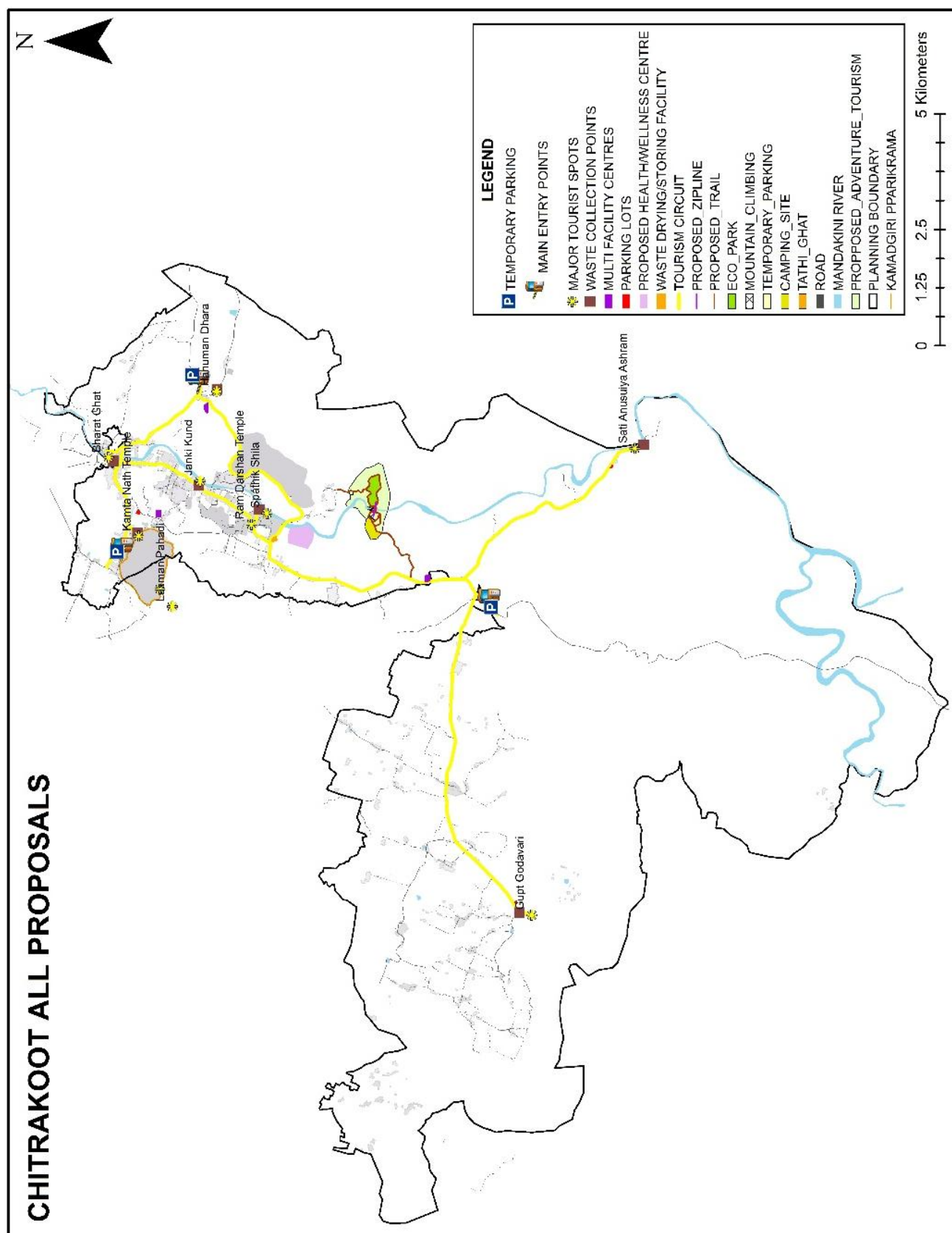


Figure 6.1: Chitrakoot Proposals

Source: Author

The study has established that Chitrakoot occupies a strategically significant position within the Ram Van Gaman Path, a nationally important religious corridor connecting Ayodhya to multiple destinations across central India. The corridor-based development approach adopted by the government emphasizes connectivity, destination enhancement, and integrated tourism planning, rather than fragmented site-level improvements. Additionally, policy directions at the state level aim to develop Chitrakoot on the lines of Ayodhya, indicating a shift toward large-scale religious tourism infrastructure and place-making. Within this context, the proposals are framed to position Chitrakoot as a well-organized religious tourism node, capable of handling increased tourist inflow while maintaining its spiritual and ecological character.

The need for these proposals emerges from a series of critical issues identified through both spatial analysis (Chapter 4) and primary stakeholder surveys (Chapter 5). One of the most dominant issues observed is the mismatch between tourist inflow and infrastructure capacity. Chitrakoot experiences significant seasonal variation, with intense crowding during festivals and peak pilgrimage periods. Tourist survey responses indicate that a large proportion of visitors come for short durations—often as day visitors or for 1–2 days—primarily for religious purposes. This short-stay, high-volume visitation pattern leads to concentrated pressure on key nodes such as Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri Parikrama, and other temple areas, without corresponding economic distribution across the town. As a result, the town functions more as a transit pilgrimage destination rather than a well-rounded tourism experience centre, limiting both visitor satisfaction and local economic potential.

Mobility and traffic-related issues emerged as another major concern. A significant number of tourists reported experiencing traffic congestion, especially during peak hours, which is further intensified by narrow, organically developed streets and the mixing of pedestrian, vehicular, and informal vending activities. The absence of designated parking areas and structured circulation systems leads to chaotic movement patterns, particularly around major religious nodes. These findings are strongly supported by both tourist responses and shopkeeper surveys, where traffic and lack of parking were identified as key constraints affecting not only visitor experience but also business activity. Spatial analysis further reinforces that the existing road network is

not designed to handle high-intensity pilgrimage flows, indicating the need for a hierarchical and segregated mobility system.

Another critical issue identified is the inadequacy of basic urban infrastructure and public amenities. Tourists frequently highlighted concerns related to poor sanitation, insufficient public toilets, lack of drinking water facilities, and overall cleanliness, particularly around temple precincts and ghats. These deficiencies are further validated by local resident responses, who reported experiencing waste accumulation, water shortages, and pressure on services during peak seasons. The seasonal overloading of infrastructure indicates that existing systems are not designed for peak demand scenarios, which is a common challenge in pilgrimage towns but remains unaddressed in Chitrakoot.

Accommodation and tourism infrastructure also present a significant gap. The survey data suggests that many visitors either opt for short stays or rely on basic accommodation such as dharamshalas, with limited availability of diverse and quality lodging options. This reflects a lack of tourism diversification and infrastructure hierarchy, which restricts Chitrakoot's ability to attract longer-stay tourists or higher-value tourism segments. Consequently, the local economy remains dependent on low-value, high-volume pilgrimage activities, rather than benefiting from a broader tourism ecosystem.

From the perspective of local stakeholders, tourism is recognized as an important economic driver, with many residents and shopkeepers acknowledging that it contributes to employment and income generation. However, this benefit is accompanied by significant challenges. Residents reported issues such as congestion, environmental degradation, and inadequate public services during peak periods, indicating a conflict between tourism activity and local livability. Similarly, service providers emphasized the need for better infrastructure such as parking, sanitation, street lighting, and signage to support tourism-related businesses. These responses highlight that while tourism has economic benefits, its current unplanned nature is creating stress on both the urban system and the local community.

A key structural issue identified through spatial analysis is the lack of integration between various tourist destinations within Chitrakoot. Although the town has multiple religious and natural attractions—such as Kamadgiri, Gupt Godavari, Sati Anusuya

Ashram, and others—these sites function in isolation, without a coherent tourism circuit or structured movement network. As a result, tourist movement remains fragmented, and many locations remain underutilized despite their significance. This lack of connectivity reduces the overall tourism potential of the town and limits opportunities for spatial and economic distribution.

Environmental concerns also form an important dimension of the identified issues. Being located in a sensitive riverine and forested landscape, Chitrakoot faces challenges related to waste management, river pollution (especially around ghats), and ecological degradation due to unregulated tourism activities. The absence of structured waste management systems and sustainable practices further aggravates these issues, highlighting the need for eco-sensitive planning approaches.

In response to these multi-dimensional challenges, the proposals presented in this chapter are grounded in a data-driven and integrated planning approach. They are based on a combination of primary survey findings, stakeholder inputs, spatial analysis, and policy review, ensuring that they are both context-specific and practically implementable. At the same time, the proposals are aligned with broader policy directions related to religious tourism and corridor development, particularly the vision of developing Chitrakoot as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
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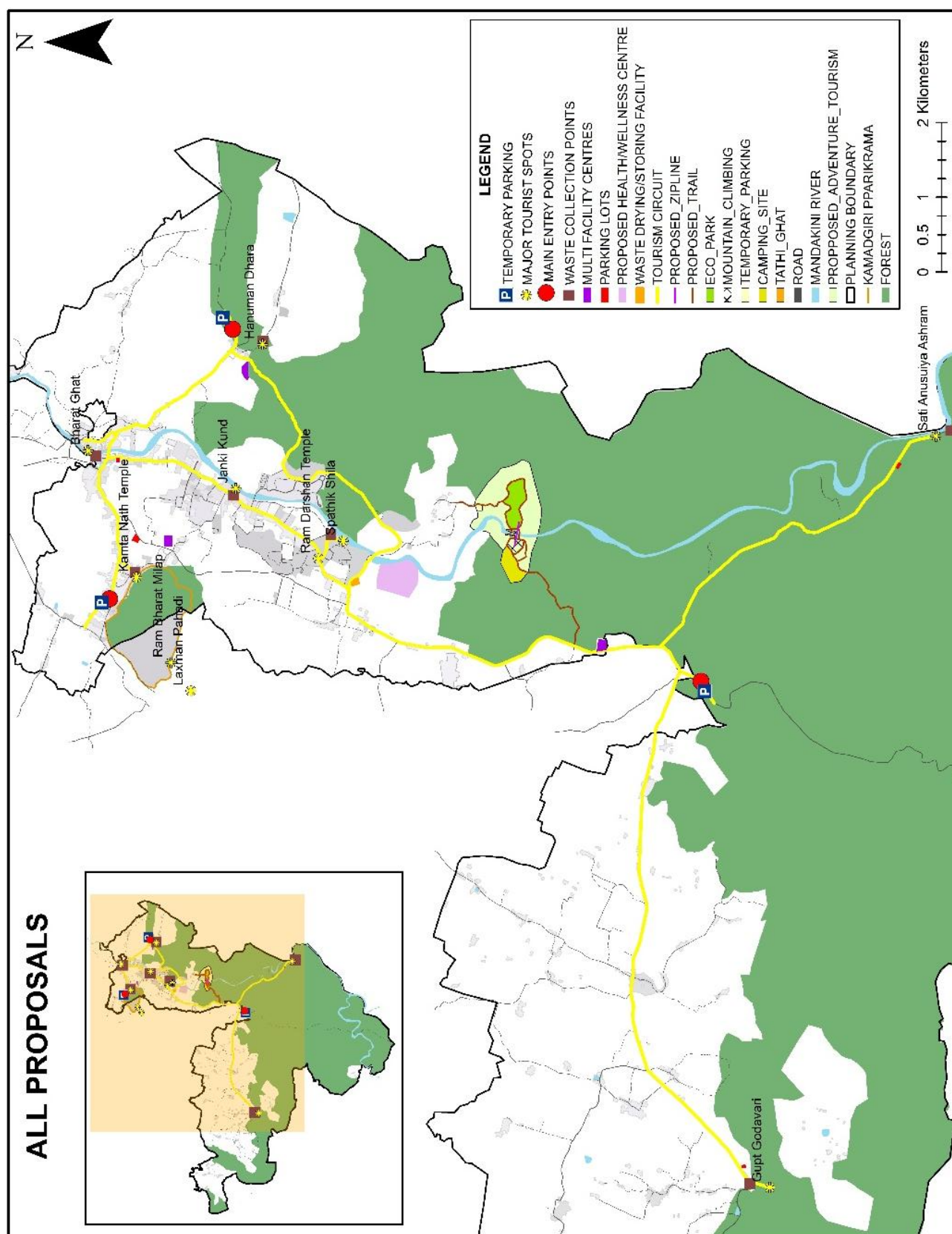


Figure 6.2: All Proposals Map

Source: Author

Overall, this chapter aims to translate the identified issues into strategic planning interventions, addressing mobility, infrastructure, tourism development, environmental management, and spatial organization in an integrated manner, *Figure 6.2*. The proposals seek not only to improve the current conditions but also to establish a long-term framework that supports sustainable, inclusive, and culturally sensitive tourism development in Chitrakoot.

6.2. Planning Approach and Concept

6.2.1. Planning Vision

The planning vision for this study is to develop Chitrakoot as a well-managed religious tourism town within the framework of the Ram Van Gaman Path, where pilgrimage experience, local economy, and environmental sustainability are balanced in an integrated manner. The vision recognizes Chitrakoot not only as a sacred destination associated with the Ramayana but also as an emerging tourism node that requires structured planning to accommodate increasing visitor inflow and future development pressures. In alignment with national and state-level initiatives to develop the Ram Van Gaman corridor, the vision emphasizes transforming Chitrakoot into a model religious town with improved infrastructure, organized spatial structure, and enhanced visitor facilities.

This vision seeks to shift the existing condition of Chitrakoot from a congested and organically developed pilgrimage settlement into a planned and efficiently managed religious tourism destination. At present, the town experiences high tourist inflow with limited infrastructure support, resulting in congestion, inadequate services, and poor visitor experience. The vision therefore focuses on improving the overall pilgrimage experience by ensuring better accessibility, organized circulation, and provision of essential facilities. Particular emphasis is placed on increasing the duration of stay of tourists, as primary survey findings indicate that a significant proportion of visitors are day tourists or short-stay pilgrims, limiting the town's tourism potential and economic benefits.

Another important dimension of the vision is the strengthening of the local economy through tourism-led development. Since a large section of the local population is directly or indirectly dependent on tourism-related activities, a well-planned tourism system can significantly enhance livelihood opportunities, support small-scale

businesses, and create new employment avenues. At the same time, the vision recognizes the need to ensure that tourism growth does not compromise the ecological and cultural integrity of the town. Special attention is therefore given to the protection of the Mandakini River, ghats, and surrounding natural landscape, which form the core of Chitrakoot's religious and environmental identity. Thus, the vision integrates development with conservation, ensuring that growth is sustainable and context-sensitive.

6.2.2. Concept Framework

The conceptual framework guiding the proposals is based on the idea of “Integrated Religious Tourism and Circuit-Based Development”, which combines corridor-level planning with town-level interventions. This approach ensures that Chitrakoot is not planned in isolation but as an integral part of a larger religious tourism network.

At the regional level, the concept adopts a corridor-based development approach, recognizing Chitrakoot as a key node along the Ram Van Gaman Path. The corridor connects multiple religious destinations across states and is being developed to enhance connectivity, promote pilgrimage tourism, and stimulate regional development. Planning interventions in Chitrakoot are therefore aligned with this broader framework, ensuring that infrastructure, accessibility, and tourism facilities contribute to a seamless movement of pilgrims across the corridor. This approach strengthens inter-regional linkages and enhances the overall tourism flow, positioning Chitrakoot as an important stop within a larger spiritual journey .

Within this corridor framework, the study adopts a node-based planning approach, where Chitrakoot is treated as a major religious and tourism node requiring focused and structured interventions. As a predominant religious character, the town attracts large volumes of pilgrims, especially during festivals, which necessitates organized land use planning, efficient visitor management systems, and concentration of infrastructure at key activity nodes. Node-based planning allows for better spatial organization of the town, ensuring that high-intensity activities are managed effectively while maintaining the sanctity and functionality of religious spaces.

A key component of the concept is the development of a circuit-based tourism system within the town. At present, tourist movement in Chitrakoot is largely unstructured and fragmented, with visitors moving independently between different sites without a

defined sequence or organized route. This results in congestion at certain locations while others remain underutilized. The proposed approach aims to create an integrated tourism circuit connecting major religious and cultural sites such as Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, Gupt Godavari, and Sati Anusuya Ashram. This structured movement system is expected to reduce congestion at core areas, improve accessibility, and enhance the overall visitor experience, while also distributing economic activity more evenly across the town.

Furthermore, the concept positions tourism as a primary driver of local economic development. Observations from the field and stakeholder interactions indicate that a significant portion of Chitrakoot's economy is dependent on tourism-related activities, including small businesses, hospitality services, and religious offerings. By strengthening tourism infrastructure and improving visitor experience, the proposals aim to increase tourist spending, generate employment opportunities, and support local enterprises. This aligns with the broader approach of tourism-led development, where economic growth is achieved through strategic planning and enhancement of tourism assets.

6.2.3. Planning Principles

The planning approach is guided by a set of key principles that ensure the proposals are responsive to the local context while aligning with broader planning objectives.

The first principle is carrying capacity-based planning, which recognizes that Chitrakoot experiences extremely high seasonal tourist inflow, particularly during major religious events. Planning interventions must therefore be designed to manage peak loads effectively, prevent overcrowding, and ensure that infrastructure systems are capable of handling maximum demand without failure. This approach is essential to maintain both visitor experience and environmental sustainability.

The second principle focuses on integrated mobility and circulation. The current transportation system in Chitrakoot is characterized by congestion, lack of parking, and unorganized movement patterns. The planning approach emphasizes the development of a structured mobility system, including designated tourist circuits, peripheral parking facilities, and introduction of sustainable public transport options such as e-buses. The objective is to create a smooth and efficient movement system that prioritizes pedestrians and pilgrims while reducing vehicular pressure in core areas.

Another important principle is infrastructure augmentation for seasonal demand. Given the fluctuating nature of tourist inflow, infrastructure in Chitrakoot must be flexible and scalable. This includes the provision of temporary accommodation during peak periods, development of multi-functional facilities, and improvement of essential public amenities such as sanitation, drinking water, and resting areas. Such an approach ensures that the town can adapt to varying levels of demand without overburdening permanent infrastructure.

The principle of community participation and local economy integration is central to the planning approach. The involvement of local residents, shopkeepers, and community groups is essential for the successful implementation of tourism development strategies. By integrating local stakeholders into the planning process, the proposals aim to ensure inclusive development and equitable distribution of economic benefits. Initiatives such as converting floral waste from temples into incense products not only address waste management issues but also create livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The planning framework also emphasizes public–private partnership (PPP)-based development as a means to enhance efficiency and financial sustainability. Private sector participation is encouraged in areas such as accommodation, tourism facilities, and wellness resorts, which can help reduce the financial burden on government agencies while improving the quality of services and infrastructure.

Finally, the principle of environmental sustainability and resource management underpins all proposed interventions. Chitrakoot's identity is closely linked to its natural and spiritual landscape, particularly the Mandakini river and surrounding ecological features. Planning strategies therefore prioritize the protection and conservation of these resources through measures such as waste management systems, promotion of eco-friendly transport, and adoption of renewable energy solutions like solar infrastructure. This ensures that development is not only economically viable but also environmentally responsible and culturally sensitive.

6.3. Identification of Key Issues

This section presents a detailed identification and analysis of key planning issues in Chitrakoot, derived from a combination of primary survey data (tourists, residents, and shopkeepers), field observations, and spatial analysis, *Figure 6.3*. The issues discussed

here form the critical foundation for the proposal framework, as they reflect both user experience and ground realities of the town. The analysis reveals that most challenges in Chitrakoot are interconnected and stem from the lack of a structured planning framework to manage high-intensity religious tourism.

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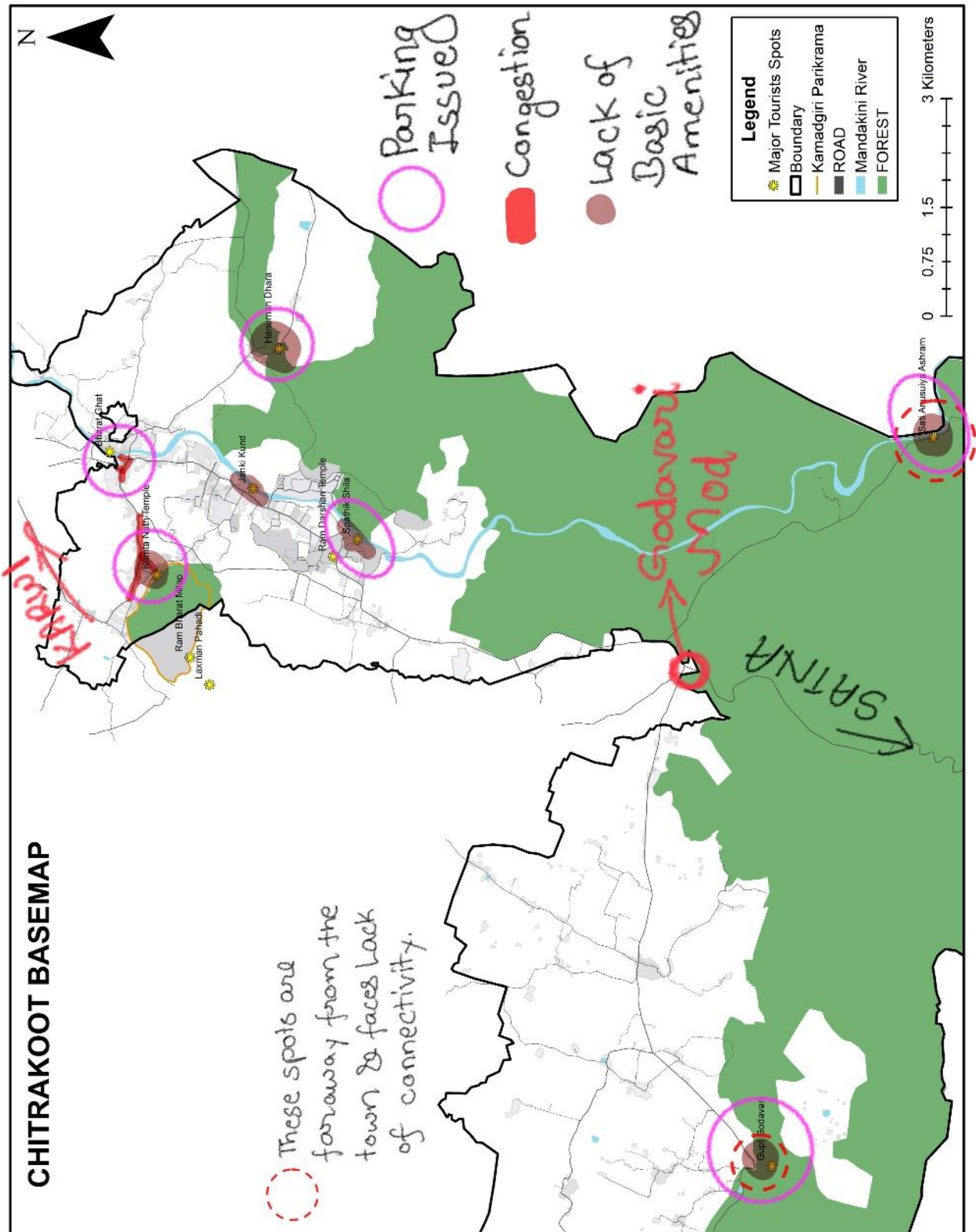


Figure 6.3: Chitrakoot Key Issues

Source: Author

6.3.1. Traffic Congestion and Movement Constraints

Traffic congestion emerges as one of the most critical and visible issues in Chitrakoot, directly affecting both the pilgrim experience and the daily life of residents. Based on the tourist survey, a significant number of visitors reported facing congestion during their visit, particularly during peak hours and festival periods, *Figure 6.4*. While movement during non-peak days is relatively manageable, the situation deteriorates drastically during peak seasons, when the town experiences a sudden surge in pilgrim inflow.

The problem is rooted in the organic and unplanned street network, particularly around key religious nodes such as Ram Ghat and Kamadgiri Parikrama Path. These areas are characterized by narrow streets, mixed land use, and encroachments by informal vending, resulting in the absence of clear segregation between pedestrians and vehicles. Additionally, the high proportion of pilgrims traveling by train (38%) and bus (29%), along with a notable share of pedestrians (20%), indicates a heavy dependence on shared and intermediate modes of transport, which further complicates circulation patterns (Primary Survey Data, 2024).



Figure 6.4: Congestion and Traffic in Chitrakoot

Source: Primary Survey and News Report

From the perspective of local residents, congestion is not limited to peak tourism periods but is also experienced regularly, especially in core areas. During major events such as the Diwali Mela and Amavasya gatherings, the situation becomes extremely

critical. In response, the administration adopts temporary traffic management strategies, including blocking major entry points to the town, diverting vehicles to peripheral areas, and restricting internal movement to non-motorized or intermediate public transport such as e-rickshaws. While these measures help manage crowd movement temporarily, they highlight the absence of a permanent and structured mobility system.

This issue is not merely a transportation problem but reflects a broader planning gap where infrastructure capacity has not kept pace with increasing tourist inflow. The lack of defined circulation routes, absence of dedicated pedestrian pathways, and uncontrolled vehicular access to core religious areas collectively result in congestion, delays, and reduced accessibility. As a result, both pilgrims and residents experience inconvenience, reduced safety, and a compromised overall experience of the town.

6.3.2. Lack of Organized Parking Infrastructure

Closely linked to traffic congestion is the issue of inadequate and poorly organized parking infrastructure. Field observations and stakeholder feedback clearly indicate that Chitrakoot lacks sufficient designated parking spaces at major tourist destinations. Key locations such as Kamadgiri Parikrama (Kamtanath), Ram Ghat, Gupt Godavari, and Sphatik Shila are particularly affected, where the absence of formal parking facilities leads to random and unregulated parking along roads and carriageways.



Figure 6.5: Vehicles Parked on Roads

Source: Primary Survey

This encroachment of parking onto road space significantly reduces the effective right of way, *Figure 6.5*. Further aggravating congestion and disrupting traffic flow. In many cases, vehicles are parked in an ad-hoc manner near temple entrances and access roads, creating bottlenecks and obstructing pedestrian movement. Even at locations where parking exists, such as Hanuman Dhara, the facilities are limited in capacity, poorly

organized, and not designed to handle peak demand, making them insufficient for the volume of visitors.

Shopkeeper surveys strongly reinforce this issue, as local businesses identified lack of parking as one of the major challenges affecting tourism activity. According to them, the absence of proper parking discourages tourists from spending more time at specific locations, thereby impacting local economic activity. Tourists, on the other hand, experience inconvenience in finding parking spaces, which affects their overall perception of the town.

The issue of parking in Chitrakoot highlights a broader planning deficiency in terms of absence of peripheral parking systems, lack of parking hierarchy, and poor integration with mobility planning. Without structured parking solutions, the town continues to experience spillover effects on roads, leading to congestion, reduced accessibility, and inefficient use of public space.

6.3.3. Poor Sanitation and Lack of Basic Amenities

Sanitation and availability of basic public amenities represent another major concern identified through both survey data and field observations. Tourists reported dissatisfaction with the availability and quality of essential services such as public toilets, drinking water, and cleanliness around major religious sites. These issues are particularly prominent in high-footfall areas such as Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri, and other temple precincts.

The tourist survey indicates that sanitation is one of the most frequently reported problems, reflecting a gap between the intensity of usage and the capacity of existing infrastructure. Although some locations, such as Hanuman Dhara, have basic facilities, their availability is limited and often inadequate in terms of maintenance and capacity. The lack of sufficient public toilets and drinking water facilities forces visitors to rely on informal or inadequate arrangements, negatively affecting their overall experience.

Local residents also highlighted sanitation-related issues, particularly during peak seasons, when the town experiences waste accumulation, water shortages, and pressure on existing infrastructure systems. The seasonal nature of tourism in Chitrakoot means that infrastructure is often overwhelmed during festivals, leading to deteriorating environmental conditions and reduced livability for residents.

From a planning perspective, this issue reflects the absence of a comprehensive public amenities framework, where facilities are neither evenly distributed nor designed to cater to peak demand. The lack of maintenance mechanisms and monitoring further exacerbates the problem, resulting in poor hygiene conditions, especially in areas of religious significance. Given that sanitation directly influences both public health and tourist perception, it remains a critical issue requiring immediate and long-term interventions.

6.3.4. Inadequate Accommodation Facilities

Accommodation represents a significant gap in Chitrakoot's tourism infrastructure, particularly during peak seasons. While the town has approximately 45 registered hotels along with dharamshalas and lodges *Table 5.2: List of Registered Hotels*, these facilities are largely sufficient only during non-peak periods. However, during major festivals and high tourist inflow periods, the demand for accommodation far exceeds supply, leading to a critical shortage.

Table 6.1: Type of Accommodation used by the respondent

Sr. No.	Nature of Accommodation	No. of Pilgrims	% Share
1	Open Ground	577	48%
2	Dharamsala	301	25%
3	Hotel	208	17%
4	Mandir	080	07%
5	Ashram	034	03%
	Total	1200	100%

Source: CMO Office Chitrakoot

Primary survey data provides strong evidence of this gap. Out of 1200 surveyed pilgrims, 48% reported staying in open grounds, while only 25% used dharmshalas and 17% stayed in hotels, *Table 6.1: Type of Accommodation used by the respondent*. This clearly indicates that a substantial proportion of visitors are unable to access formal accommodation facilities and are forced to rely on temporary or informal arrangements. Such conditions not only reflect inadequacy in infrastructure but also raise concerns related to safety, hygiene, and overall visitor experience.

The dominance of short-duration visits (often 1–2 days or even day visits) is also closely linked to this issue. The lack of adequate and diverse accommodation options

discourages longer stays, thereby limiting the town's potential to develop as a comprehensive tourism destination. Instead, Chitrakoot continues to function primarily as a high-volume, low-duration pilgrimage center, with limited economic retention.

From a planning perspective, the issue highlights the absence of a hierarchical accommodation system, including budget, mid-range, and higher-end facilities, as well as the lack of temporary accommodation strategies for peak demand. Without addressing this gap, the town will continue to face pressure during festivals, while also missing opportunities to enhance tourism revenue and visitor satisfaction.

6.3.5. Waste Mismanagement and Environmental Concerns

Waste management, particularly related to religious activities, is a major environmental issue in Chitrakoot. Being a प्रमुख धार्मिक town, Chitrakoot generates a significant amount of floral waste from temples, rituals, and offerings, which increases substantially during peak festival periods. Field observations indicate that this waste is often not managed efficiently and is sometimes disposed of in open areas or directly into the Mandakini river.

The accumulation of waste not only creates visual and environmental pollution but also poses a serious threat to the ecological health of the river and surrounding landscape. Given that the Mandakini river holds immense religious significance, its degradation directly impacts both the spiritual value and environmental sustainability of the town.

The absence of a structured waste management system, including segregation, collection, and processing mechanisms, further aggravates the problem. While general municipal waste is also a concern, the issue of temple and ritual waste is particularly significant, as it represents a continuous and culturally embedded source of waste generation.



Figure 6.6: Waste from the Temples

Source: Primary Survey

At the same time, this challenge also presents an opportunity. The large quantity of floral waste generated in temples *Figure 6.6*, can be utilized for value-added products such as incense sticks, organic compost, and other eco-friendly products. Such initiatives can simultaneously address waste management issues and create livelihood opportunities for local communities.

From a planning perspective, waste mismanagement in Chitrakoot highlights the need for an integrated environmental management strategy, focusing on sustainable practices, community participation, and resource recovery. Without such interventions, increasing tourist inflow will continue to exacerbate environmental degradation and reduce the overall quality of the town.

6.3.6. Conclusion of Key Issues

The analysis of key issues clearly indicates that Chitrakoot's challenges are not isolated but are deeply interconnected, arising from the lack of integrated planning in the context of rapidly increasing religious tourism. Issues related to mobility, infrastructure, accommodation, sanitation, and environment collectively impact both the visitor experience and local quality of life.

These findings establish a strong foundation for the subsequent proposal framework, which aims to address these challenges through a holistic, data-driven, and context-sensitive planning approach, aligned with the broader vision of developing Chitrakoot as a model religious tourism destination under the Ram Van Gaman Path.

6.4. Proposal 1: Integrated Tourist Circuit Development

6.4.1. Rationale

The proposal for an integrated tourist circuit is grounded in the issues identified through spatial analysis and primary surveys, which highlight that tourist destinations in Chitrakoot currently function in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner. Major religious sites such as Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri, Gupt Godavari, Sphatik Shila, and Sati Anusuya Ashram attract large volumes of pilgrims, yet there is no defined system that organizes their movement across these locations. As a result, tourist flow becomes scattered, repetitive, and inefficient, leading to excessive pressure on certain nodes while others remain relatively underutilized.

This lack of a structured movement system directly contributes to traffic congestion, overcrowding, and reduced accessibility, particularly during festival periods such as Diwali Mela and Amavasya. Even during non-peak periods, the absence of clear routes, signage, and transport coordination results in confusion and inconvenience for visitors. Furthermore, the current system does not allow the administration to effectively monitor tourist inflow or manage services in response to demand.

Therefore, there is a critical need for an integrated, circuit-based approach that not only connects major destinations but also regulates movement, enhances accessibility, and improves the overall pilgrimage experience. This proposal addresses both operational inefficiencies and spatial disorganization, while aligning with the broader vision of corridor-based religious tourism development under the Ram Van Gaman Path.

6.4.2. Proposal Description

The proposal envisions the development of a structured and integrated tourist circuit that connects all major religious and cultural destinations within Chitrakoot. The circuit will include Ram Ghat, Kamadgiri (Kamtanath Parikrama), Sphatik Shila, Janki Kund, Gupt Godavari, Sati Anusuya Ashram, and Hanuman Dhara, forming a continuous and well-defined movement network, *Figure 6.7*.

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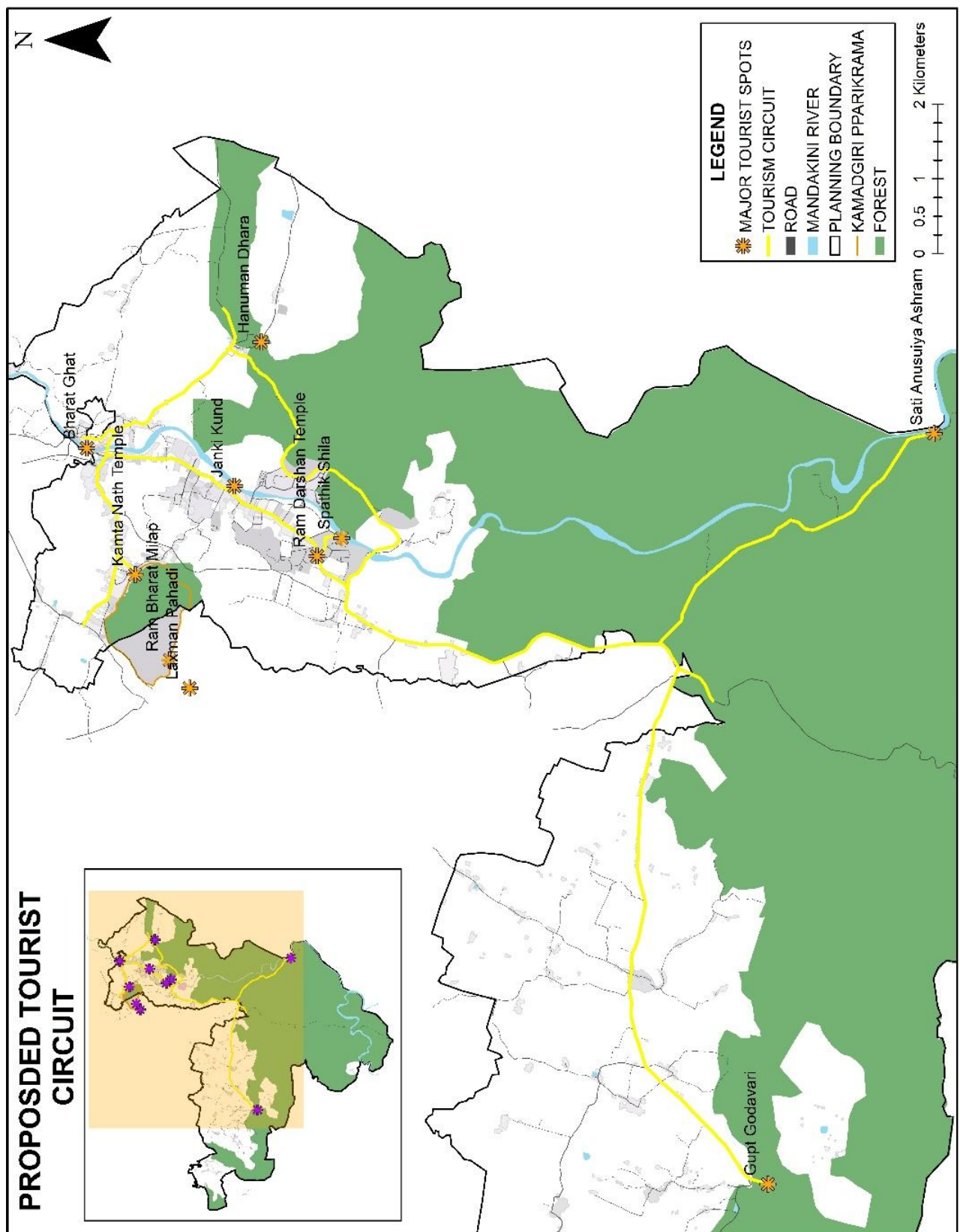


Figure 6.7: Proposed Tourist Circuit

Source: Author

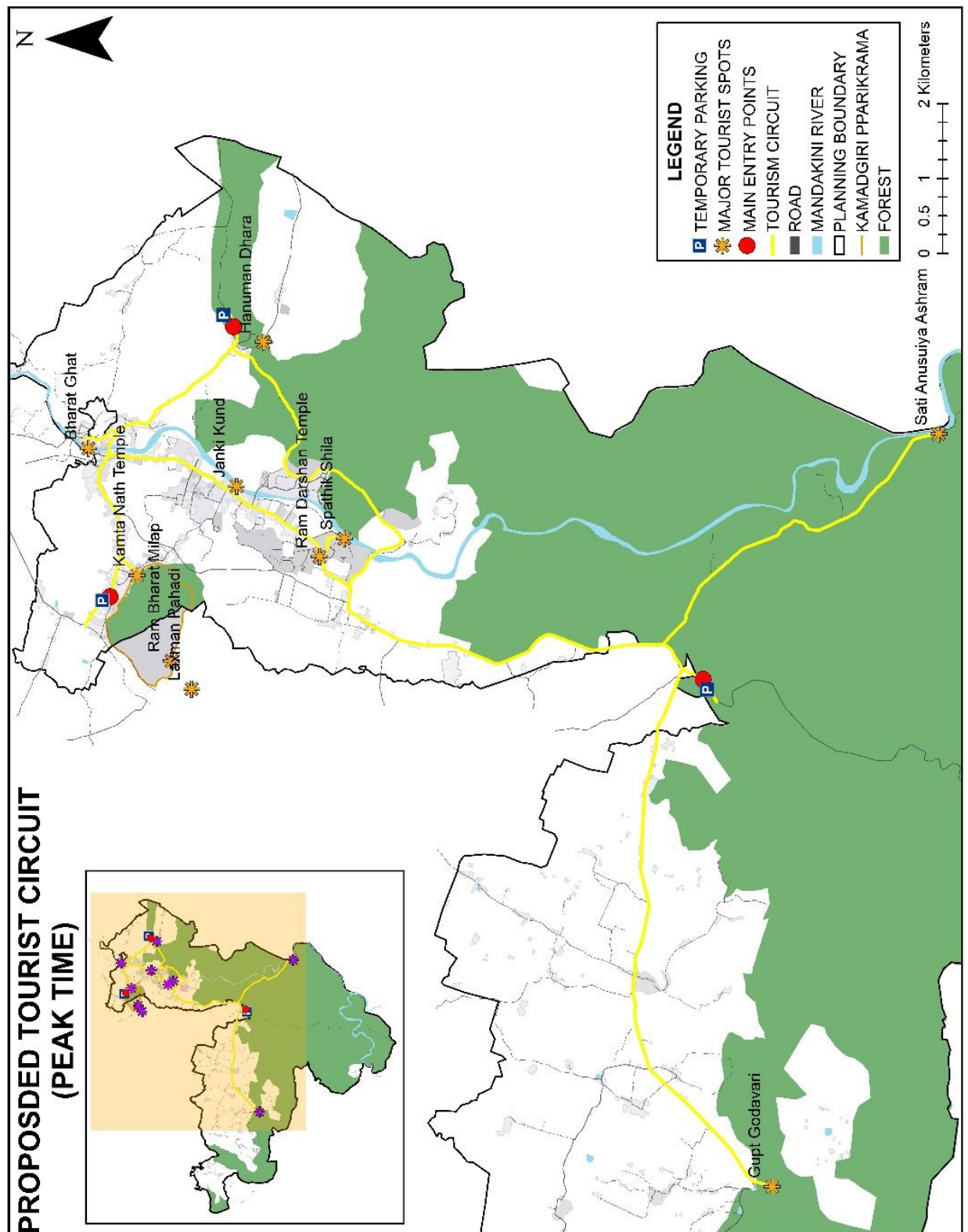


Figure 6.8: Tourist Circuit During Peak Season

The circuit is designed to function under a dual operational system, responding differently to non-peak and peak conditions, ensuring flexibility and efficiency throughout the year.

6.4.3. Functioning During Non-Peak Periods

During non-peak periods, when tourist inflow is moderate and manageable, the circuit will operate under a regulated access system for private vehicles. Tourists entering Chitrakoot through the major entry points—Godavari Mod, Hanuman Dhara Road, and Kamtanath Road—will be required to obtain a single-entry ticket and vehicle pass. This system will enable controlled access to the town while allowing flexibility for visitors to move within the circuit.

Private vehicles will be permitted to use the circuit roads, but their movement will be regulated and monitored to avoid congestion and ensure smooth circulation. The introduction of a universal ticketing system will simplify the visitor experience, as tourists will not need to arrange separate transport or permissions for different locations. This approach will also enable the administration to track the number of vehicles and visitors entering the town, allowing better management of infrastructure and services.

In addition, e-rickshaws and local transport systems will operate alongside private vehicles, providing alternative mobility options, especially for short-distance travel and for pilgrims who prefer non-motorized or shared transport. The circuit will thus function as a mixed-mobility corridor, balancing accessibility with regulation.

This system will improve overall efficiency by reducing random vehicular movement, organizing traffic flow, and enhancing connectivity between tourist sites, thereby improving the visitor experience even during regular days.

6.4.4. Functioning During Peak Periods

During peak periods, particularly festivals and major religious events, when tourist inflow increases significantly, the circuit will shift to a restricted vehicular access model. In this mode, private vehicles will not be allowed to enter the core areas of Chitrakoot, thereby preventing congestion and ensuring pedestrian safety.

All incoming vehicles will be directed to designated temporary parking zones located near the major entry points—Godavari Mod, Hanuman Dhara Road, and Kamtanath Road. These peripheral parking areas will act as buffer zones, accommodating large volumes of vehicles without allowing them to enter the congested core, *Figure 6.8*.

From these parking points, pilgrims will access the tourist circuit using organized local transport systems such as e-rickshaws, shuttle services, and shared mobility options.

This will create a controlled and centralized movement system, significantly reducing traffic pressure within the town.

The restriction of private vehicles in core areas will also allow the prioritization of pedestrian movement and religious activities, which are essential aspects of the pilgrimage experience. The circuit, in this mode, will function as a public transport-oriented system, ensuring smooth, safe, and efficient movement even during high-density conditions.

This dual operational strategy ensures that the circuit remains adaptive and resilient, capable of handling both normal and extreme demand scenarios without compromising efficiency or safety.

6.4.5. Planning Components

The implementation of the integrated tourist circuit involves several key physical and infrastructural components. The proposal includes the development and upgradation of circuit roads that form a continuous loop connecting all major tourist destinations. These roads will be designed to support both vehicular and pedestrian movement in a structured manner.

Dedicated Non-Motorized Transport (NMT) lanes and pedestrian pathways will be incorporated to promote safe and comfortable walking conditions for pilgrims. Given the religious significance of walking in pilgrimage, this component plays a crucial role in enhancing the experiential quality of the circuit.

The proposal also includes the installation of solar-powered street lighting, ensuring energy efficiency and improved safety during evening and night-time movement. A comprehensive wayfinding system, including directional signage, maps, and information boards, will be developed to guide tourists effectively and reduce confusion.

In the advanced stage, the circuit will be designed with a thematic identity based on the Ramayana, incorporating cultural elements, landscape features, and interpretive installations that enhance the spiritual and cultural experience of visitors.

6.4.6. Integration Approach

The integrated tourist circuit is designed as a multi-layered planning intervention, linking mobility, tourism infrastructure, and spatial organization into a cohesive system.

At the town level, it acts as a primary movement spine, structuring tourist flow and connecting key destinations. At the regional level, it aligns with the Ram Van Gaman Path corridor, strengthening Chitrakoot's role as a major node within the larger religious tourism network.

The proposal also integrates different modes of transport, ensuring coordination between private vehicles, public transport, and intermediate modes such as e-rickshaws. This multimodal integration enhances accessibility while minimizing conflicts between different types of movement.

6.4.7. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the tourist circuit is proposed in a phased manner, allowing gradual development and adaptation.

In the initial phase, the focus will be on demarcation of the circuit and establishment of entry control systems, including ticketing points and vehicle pass mechanisms at major entry locations. Basic traffic management measures will also be introduced to regulate movement.

The intermediate phase will involve physical infrastructure development, including improvement and widening of circuit roads, development of NMT lanes, pedestrian pathways, and provision of essential public amenities such as toilets, drinking water, and resting areas.

In the final phase, the circuit will be developed as a thematic "Ramayan Circuit", incorporating cultural design elements and advanced technologies such as surveillance systems, sensors, and smart monitoring tools. These systems will enable real-time tracking of tourist movement and support advanced crowd management mechanisms, ensuring safety and efficient management during peak periods.

6.4.8. Operation & Maintenance

The management of the tourist circuit will require a coordinated governance structure, involving local authorities, tourism departments, and private stakeholders. A dedicated management body or Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) can be established to oversee operations, maintenance, and revenue management.

The proposal introduces a self-sustaining financial model, where revenue generated through ticketing and vehicle passes is reinvested in infrastructure maintenance and

service improvement. Additionally, Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) can be explored for components such as transport services, parking facilities, and tourist amenities, ensuring efficiency and financial viability.

6.4.9. Expected Outcomes

The integrated tourist circuit is expected to significantly improve the overall functioning of Chitrakoot as a religious tourism destination. It will help in reducing congestion, particularly in core areas, by regulating vehicular access and organizing movement patterns. The proposal will enhance the tourist experience by providing seamless connectivity, better facilities, and a structured visitation system.

Furthermore, the circuit will enable effective monitoring of tourist inflow, allowing the administration to plan and manage services more efficiently. The revenue generated through the system will support maintenance and further development, while also creating employment opportunities for local communities.

Overall, this proposal represents a comprehensive and scalable intervention, capable of transforming Chitrakoot into a well-managed, accessible, and sustainable religious tourism town.

6.4.10. PESTEL Analysis

A PESTEL analysis is used to understand how external factors—political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal—can influence the success of a proposal . For the Integrated Tourist Circuit Development in Chitrakoot

Table 6.2, this analysis helps evaluate both opportunities and constraints associated with implementation and long-term sustainability.

Table 6.2: PESTEL Matrix for Tourist Circuit Proposal

Factor	Key Aspects	Impact
Political	Government support for Ram Van Gaman Path, tourism policies, inter-state coordination	Positive
Economic	Revenue generation through ticketing, employment creation, boost to local businesses	Highly Positive
Social	Improved pilgrim experience, community participation, cultural strengthening	Positive
Technological	Smart ticketing, surveillance systems, crowd management technologies	Positive
Environmental	Reduced congestion, controlled access, eco-friendly transport (e-rickshaws)	Positive with risks

Legal	Regulations for land use, traffic control, PPP frameworks, safety norms	Moderate (compliance needed)
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Source: Author

a) Political Factors

The success of the integrated tourist circuit is strongly influenced by political support and policy direction. The proposal aligns closely with ongoing government initiatives such as the Ram Van Gaman Path development, which aims to enhance religious tourism infrastructure and connectivity across multiple states. Such alignment ensures that the proposal can benefit from policy backing, funding opportunities, and administrative support.

However, since Chitrakoot lies on the Madhya Pradesh–Uttar Pradesh border, effective implementation will require inter-state coordination, particularly in managing tourist inflow, transport systems, and infrastructure development. Political will and institutional collaboration will therefore play a crucial role in ensuring smooth execution. Additionally, local governance bodies must actively participate in managing entry control systems, parking zones, and circuit operations.

b) Economic Factors

Economically, the proposal presents significant opportunities for tourism-led development and revenue generation. The introduction of a universal ticketing system and vehicle pass mechanism will create a steady revenue stream, which can be reinvested into maintenance of infrastructure, public amenities, and management systems.

The structured tourist circuit is also expected to increase tourist stay duration, which is currently low as per survey findings. By improving accessibility and experience, tourists are more likely to spend additional time and money in the town, benefiting local businesses such as hotels, dharmshalas, shops, transport services, and food vendors.

Furthermore, the proposal will generate direct and indirect employment opportunities, including e-rickshaw operators, maintenance staff, ticketing personnel, guides, and service providers. This aligns with the existing economic structure of Chitrakoot, where a large portion of the population is dependent on tourism-related activities.

c) Social Factors

From a social perspective, the proposal significantly enhances the pilgrim experience and overall satisfaction level. By organizing movement through a defined circuit, reducing congestion, and improving accessibility, the proposal addresses many of the issues highlighted in the tourist survey.

The circuit also strengthens the cultural and spiritual identity of Chitrakoot, especially when developed as a thematic “Ramayan Circuit.” This enhances the religious experience by connecting sites in a meaningful sequence, allowing pilgrims to engage more deeply with the narrative of the Ramayana.

Importantly, the proposal encourages community participation, as local residents, shopkeepers, and service providers become integral to the functioning of the system. This promotes inclusive development and ensures that the benefits of tourism are distributed more equitably across the community.

d) Technological Factors

Technology plays a critical role in the efficiency and management of the proposed circuit. The introduction of a digital ticketing system enables seamless access control, reduces manual intervention, and allows real-time tracking of tourist inflow.

Advanced technologies such as surveillance cameras, sensors, and crowd monitoring systems can be integrated into the circuit to support advanced crowd management mechanisms, particularly during peak periods. These systems can help authorities monitor movement patterns, identify congestion points, and respond proactively to emergencies.

In addition, mobile-based applications and digital information systems can be used to provide navigation, site information, and real-time updates to tourists, further enhancing their experience.

e) Environmental Factors

Environmentally, the proposal has both positive impacts and potential risks. On the positive side, the restriction of private vehicles during peak periods and the promotion of e-rickshaws and non-motorized transport will reduce air pollution, noise levels, and traffic congestion within the town.

The development of a structured circuit will also help in controlling unregulated movement, thereby reducing pressure on sensitive areas such as the Mandakini river

and surrounding landscapes. Solar lighting and sustainable infrastructure further contribute to environmental conservation.

However, there is also a risk that increased tourist inflow, if not managed properly, could lead to greater environmental stress, including waste generation and resource consumption. Therefore, the proposal must be integrated with strong environmental management strategies, including waste management and conservation measures.

f) Legal Factors

Legal considerations are important for the implementation and operation of the tourist circuit. The development of infrastructure such as roads, parking areas, and entry control points will require compliance with land use regulations, urban planning norms, and environmental laws.

The introduction of ticketing systems and restricted access zones will require formal regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, including traffic regulations and local bylaws. Additionally, if Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) are adopted, clear legal agreements and contracts must be established to define roles, responsibilities, and revenue-sharing mechanisms.

Safety regulations, including those related to crowd management, transport systems, and public facilities, must also be strictly followed to ensure the well-being of visitors.

Conclusion

The PESTEL analysis indicates that the Integrated Tourist Circuit Development proposal is highly feasible and beneficial, particularly from political, economic, social, and technological perspectives. While environmental and legal aspects require careful management and compliance, they can be effectively addressed through proper planning and governance mechanisms.

Overall, the proposal aligns well with existing policy directions and local needs, making it a strong and implementable intervention for transforming Chitrakoot into a well-managed religious tourism destination.

6.5. Proposal 2: Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs)

6.5.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, being one of the most significant religious destinations along the Ram Van Gaman Path, experiences a continuous inflow of pilgrims throughout the year, with sharp seasonal peaks during Amavasya, Diwali, and other religious events. However, the existing tourism infrastructure in the town has not evolved proportionately with the increasing number of visitors. The gap between demand and supply of basic tourist facilities is clearly evident, particularly in terms of accommodation and supporting services.

Primary surveys conducted as part of the study reveal a critical shortage of formal accommodation infrastructure. Nearly 48% of the visitors were found to be staying in open grounds, temple premises, or informal spaces due to the unavailability or unaffordability of organized lodging facilities. At present, the town has only about 45 registered hotels, along with a limited number of dharamshalas and lodges, which are insufficient to cater to the large influx of pilgrims, especially during peak seasons. This situation not only affects the dignity and comfort of tourists but also raises concerns related to safety, sanitation, and public health.

In addition to the shortage of accommodation, there is a significant lack of basic services at major tourist locations such as Kamtanath Parikrama, Hanuman Dhara, and Gupt Godavari. Visitors often face issues such as lack of shaded parking, inadequate public toilets, absence of drinking water facilities, poor waiting areas, and insufficient food options. These deficiencies directly impact the overall visitor experience and reduce the carrying capacity of the destination.

The findings of the stakeholder surveys further reinforce these issues. Shopkeepers and service providers identified lack of parking, poor sanitation, and inadequate tourist facilities as major constraints affecting their businesses. Similarly, tourists highlighted accommodation shortage, overcrowding, and lack of basic amenities as key issues faced during their visit. These challenges indicate that the problem is not limited to accommodation alone but extends to the absence of integrated tourist service infrastructure.

At a broader level, the current development pattern in Chitrakoot reflects fragmented and uncoordinated infrastructure provision. Facilities are either concentrated in limited

areas or completely absent in others, leading to uneven distribution of services. This creates pressure on specific nodes while leaving other potential areas underutilized. In the context of the planned development of Chitrakoot under the Ram Van Gaman Path initiative, there is an urgent need to introduce structured, scalable, and integrated infrastructure solutions that can address multiple issues simultaneously.

6.5.2. Proposal Description

To address the identified gaps, the proposal suggests the development of Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) at strategic locations within Chitrakoot, *Figure 6.9*. These centres are envisioned as integrated infrastructure hubs that combine accommodation, parking, and essential tourist services within a single, well-organized complex. The concept is inspired by best practices in religious tourism planning, where multi-functional facilities are developed to efficiently manage large volumes of visitors while enhancing their overall experience.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

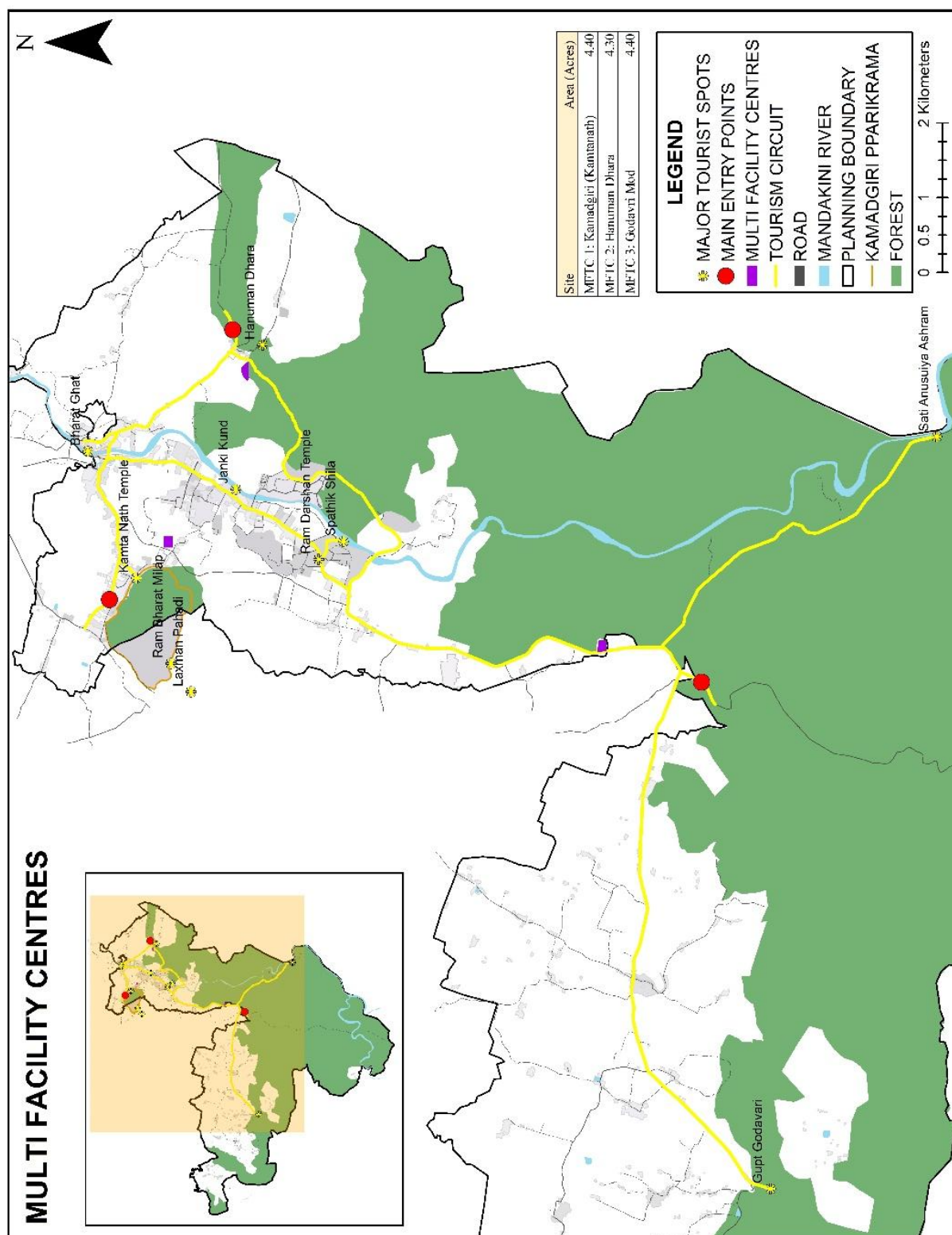


Figure 6.9: Proposed Multi Facility Centres

Source: Author

The MFTCs are designed to cater primarily to the budget and mass tourism segment, which constitutes the majority of visitors in Chitrakoot. Instead of focusing on high-end hospitality, the centres aim to provide affordable, accessible, and well-managed facilities that meet the basic needs of pilgrims. The core components of each centre include dormitory accommodations, budget rooms, common halls, food courts or cafeterias, and essential public amenities such as toilets, drinking water, and waiting areas.

One of the key features of the MFTC model is its flexibility in accommodating fluctuating tourist volumes. During normal days, the centres function as standard accommodation and service hubs. However, during peak seasons, when the influx of pilgrims increases significantly, the design allows for adaptive use of spaces. For instance, parking areas and open grounds within the complex can be temporarily utilized for accommodating pilgrims, ensuring that visitors are not forced to stay in unsafe or unsanitary open spaces. This approach directly addresses the issue of tourists sleeping in open grounds by providing at least a covered and organized environment.

In addition to accommodation, the centres will incorporate a range of supporting facilities aimed at improving the overall visitor experience. These include tourist help centres for information and guidance, locker rooms for secure storage of belongings, basic healthcare facilities for emergency assistance, and shaded seating areas for rest. The integration of these services within a single complex ensures convenience for tourists and reduces the need for multiple trips across the town.

Another important aspect of the proposal is the inclusion of organized parking facilities within the MFTCs. Currently, lack of parking is a major issue in Chitrakoot, leading to congestion and inefficient circulation, especially near major tourist spots. By providing designated parking areas within these centres, the proposal aims to reduce on-street parking and improve traffic management. This aligns with broader mobility planning strategies for pilgrimage towns, where peripheral parking combined with pedestrian movement is encouraged.

The proposed MFTCs are not merely infrastructure projects but are envisioned as activity nodes within the tourism network of Chitrakoot. By combining accommodation, services, and parking, these centres will act as anchors that organize tourist movement and distribute visitor load more evenly across the town. This will help

in reducing congestion at key religious sites while promoting a more balanced spatial development pattern.

6.5.3. Location Strategy

The effectiveness of the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres largely depends on their strategic placement within the town. Based on tourist movement patterns, major attraction nodes, and connectivity considerations, three primary locations have been identified for the development of MFTCs in Chitrakoot.

The first proposed centre is located near the Kamtanath Kamadgiri Parikrama Path, which is the most significant religious activity zone in Chitrakoot. This area experiences extremely high footfall throughout the year, with peak congestion during religious occasions. Locating an MFTC in proximity to this node will directly cater to the largest concentration of pilgrims, providing them with immediate access to accommodation and services.

The second centre is proposed near Hanuman Dhara, which is another major tourist attraction characterized by steep access routes and limited infrastructure. Visitors to this site often face difficulties due to lack of basic facilities and parking. The establishment of an MFTC in this area will not only improve visitor convenience but also support better management of tourist inflow.

The third centre is proposed near Godavari Mod, which functions as an important intermediate node connecting Gupt Godavari and Sati Anusuya Ashram. This location has been strategically selected to serve as a transit and distribution point, facilitating movement between multiple tourist destinations. By developing an MFTC at this node, it will be possible to create a decentralized service network, reducing pressure on the core areas of the town.

Together, these three centres form a network of distributed infrastructure nodes, ensuring that facilities are available across different parts of Chitrakoot rather than being concentrated in a single area. This approach supports the concept of corridor-based development under the Ram Van Gaman Path, where multiple nodes are strengthened to create a cohesive tourism system.

6.5.4. Planning Components

The planning of Multi-Facility Tourist Centres involves the integration of multiple functional components within a single site, ensuring efficiency, accessibility, and user convenience. Each centre is designed as a self-sufficient unit capable of catering to a wide range of tourist needs.

The accommodation component includes dormitories, which are particularly suitable for large groups and budget travelers, as well as basic rooms for families and small groups. Common halls are also provided to accommodate large gatherings, especially during peak seasons. These spaces are designed to be flexible and adaptable, allowing for multiple uses depending on demand.

The service component includes food courts or cafeterias offering affordable and hygienic food options. Public amenities such as toilets, drinking water facilities, and bathing areas are integrated into the design to ensure basic comfort and sanitation. Tourist help centres provide information, guidance, and support services, enhancing the overall experience of visitors.

Parking facilities form a crucial part of the planning components, with provision for both small and large vehicles. The design includes shaded parking areas to protect vehicles from extreme weather conditions. In addition, designated circulation patterns within the site ensure smooth movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

Other supporting facilities include waiting areas, locker rooms, and basic healthcare units. These components are particularly important in a pilgrimage context, where visitors often require rest, storage, and medical assistance. The integration of these facilities within the MFTC ensures that all essential services are available at a single location.

6.5.5. Justification

The proposal for Multi-Facility Tourist Centres is strongly aligned with the principles of sustainable and inclusive tourism development. By focusing on the needs of budget and mass tourists, the proposal addresses the largest segment of visitors in Chitrakoot. This is consistent with best practices in tourism planning, which emphasize the importance of providing affordable accommodation and basic facilities for domestic tourists.

The concept of integrated service centres also reflects successful models adopted in other religious destinations, where multi-functional infrastructure has been used to manage large crowds effectively. The emphasis on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) further strengthens the feasibility of the proposal, as it allows for private sector participation in development and operation while ensuring public access to essential services .

From an economic perspective, the MFTCs have strong revenue-generating potential through accommodation charges, parking fees, and commercial activities such as food courts. This makes them financially viable projects that can sustain themselves over time. At the same time, they contribute to local employment generation and support small businesses, thereby enhancing the socio-economic benefits of tourism.

In the context of the planned development of Chitrakoot as a major religious destination under the Ram Van Gaman Path, the introduction of such integrated infrastructure is essential. Government initiatives emphasize phased and structured development of tourism facilities, with a focus on improving visitor experience and infrastructure provision . The MFTC model aligns perfectly with this vision by offering a scalable and replicable solution that can be implemented across multiple nodes.

6.5.6. Integration Approach

The success of the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) depends not only on their individual functionality but also on how effectively they are integrated within the broader spatial, infrastructural, and tourism framework of Chitrakoot. The proposed centres are conceived as part of a larger network of tourism infrastructure aligned with the development vision of the Ram Van Gaman Path, where each node contributes to a cohesive and well-managed pilgrimage system.

At the spatial level, the MFTCs are integrated with major tourist circuits and movement corridors. Each centre is strategically located along key access routes leading to important religious destinations such as Kamadgiri Parikrama, Hanuman Dhara, and Gupt Godavari. This ensures that the centres function as intermediate service nodes, intercepting tourist flows before they reach highly congested areas. Such an approach not only improves accessibility but also helps in decentralizing tourist activities, thereby reducing pressure on core pilgrimage zones.

In terms of mobility integration, the MFTCs are designed to support a park-and-walk model, which is particularly suitable for pilgrimage towns. Visitors arriving by private vehicles or buses can park at these centres and continue their journey on foot or through intermediate modes such as e-rickshaws or shuttle services. This reduces vehicular congestion in sensitive religious areas and enhances the overall pedestrian experience. The integration with local transport systems also ensures last-mile connectivity, which is often a major challenge in such destinations.

The proposal also emphasizes integration with urban services and infrastructure systems. The MFTCs are designed to be equipped with essential utilities such as water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, and electricity. Where feasible, sustainable solutions such as rainwater harvesting, solar energy, and decentralized waste management systems can be incorporated, drawing from best practices in tourism infrastructure development. This ensures that the centres are not only functional but also environmentally responsible.

From a tourism planning perspective, the MFTCs are integrated with other proposed interventions such as riverfront development, pedestrian pathways, and heritage conservation initiatives. They act as support infrastructure that enhances the usability and attractiveness of these projects. For example, tourists visiting the ghats or participating in the parikrama can utilize the facilities at nearby MFTCs, thereby improving their overall experience.

Institutionally, the integration approach involves coordination between multiple stakeholders, including local authorities, tourism departments, and private operators. The centres are proposed to be developed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, where the government provides land and regulatory support, while private entities are responsible for development, operation, and maintenance. This aligns with national and state-level tourism policies, which recognize the importance of private sector participation in infrastructure development .

Overall, the integration approach ensures that the MFTCs are not isolated facilities but are embedded within the larger planning framework, contributing to a more organized, efficient, and sustainable tourism system in Chitrakoot.

6.5.7. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of Multi-Facility Tourist Centres is proposed to be carried out in a phased manner to ensure feasibility, adaptability, and efficient resource utilization. Given the scale and importance of the project, a step-by-step approach allows for gradual development while responding to on-ground conditions and evolving tourist demand.

In the first phase, the focus will be on land identification, acquisition or allocation, and basic site preparation. Suitable land parcels near the identified locations—Kamadgiri Parikrama, Hanuman Dhara, and Godavari Mod—will be demarcated based on accessibility, availability, and minimal environmental impact. During this phase, the sites will be developed primarily as organized parking areas with essential basic amenities such as temporary toilets, drinking water facilities, shaded seating, and basic lighting. This immediate intervention will address the pressing issues of parking and lack of basic services, providing quick relief to tourists and local stakeholders.

The first phase also includes the establishment of temporary or semi-permanent structures that can function as initial service points. These may include ticketing counters, information kiosks, and basic food stalls. By starting with minimal infrastructure, the project can become operational quickly, generating initial revenue and building user acceptance.

In the second phase, the development will be expanded to include permanent structures such as dormitories, common halls, and food courts. The design of these facilities will be based on modular and scalable principles, allowing for future expansion if required. During this phase, emphasis will be placed on improving the quality and capacity of accommodation, ensuring that a significant portion of tourists can be accommodated within organized facilities.

The second phase will also involve the development of supporting infrastructure such as internal roads, drainage systems, landscaping, and utility networks. Special attention will be given to creating a comfortable and user-friendly environment, with shaded areas, proper signage, and well-maintained public spaces.

In the third phase, the centres will be further enhanced with additional facilities such as budget rooms, healthcare units, locker rooms, and improved commercial spaces. At this stage, the focus will shift towards optimizing operations, improving service quality, and

enhancing the overall visitor experience. Smart management systems, including digital booking platforms and information systems, can also be introduced to improve efficiency.

The phased implementation approach is aligned with the broader development strategy of the Ram Van Gaman Path, where projects are planned and executed in stages to ensure systematic growth and effective utilization of resources . This approach also allows for flexibility, enabling modifications based on feedback and changing requirements.

6.5.8. Operation and Maintenance

The long-term success of the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres depends significantly on efficient operation and maintenance mechanisms. Given the nature of these facilities, which cater to large volumes of tourists, it is essential to ensure high standards of cleanliness, safety, and service quality.

The proposal recommends a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for operation and maintenance. Under this model, private operators will be responsible for managing day-to-day activities, including accommodation services, parking management, maintenance of facilities, and operation of food courts and commercial spaces. The government, on the other hand, will play a regulatory and monitoring role, ensuring that services are provided in accordance with established standards.

Revenue generation will be a key aspect of the operational model. Income can be generated through accommodation charges, parking fees, rental of commercial spaces, and service charges for additional facilities such as locker rooms and healthcare services. This revenue will not only ensure financial sustainability but also provide incentives for private operators to maintain high standards.

Maintenance of cleanliness and sanitation is particularly critical in a pilgrimage town like Chitrakoot. Regular cleaning schedules, waste segregation, and proper disposal mechanisms must be implemented to ensure a hygienic environment. Lessons from successful waste management practices in tourism destinations highlight the importance of community participation and decentralized systems in maintaining cleanliness .

Security and safety are also important considerations. The centres should be equipped with basic security infrastructure such as surveillance systems, lighting, and trained personnel. Emergency response mechanisms, including first-aid facilities and coordination with local health services, should be established to handle any unforeseen situations.

Capacity building and training of staff will play a crucial role in ensuring quality service delivery. Training programs focusing on hospitality, hygiene, and visitor management can be conducted to enhance the skills of personnel involved in operations.

Overall, a well-structured operation and maintenance framework will ensure that the MFTCs remain functional, efficient, and user-friendly over the long term.

6.5.9. PESTEL Analysis

A comprehensive PESTEL analysis helps in understanding the broader implications of the proposed Multi-Facility Tourist Centres and assessing their feasibility from multiple perspectives,

Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: PESTEL Matrix for Multi Facility Tourist Centre Proposal

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Alignment with Ram Van Gaman Path development initiatives and state vision to develop Chitrakoot as a major religious destination; support from tourism and urban development authorities; policy backing for PPP-based infrastructure	Strong policy support
Economic	Revenue generation through accommodation, parking, and commercial activities; employment opportunities for local population; boost to local businesses such as food vendors, transport, and retail	Increased local economy
Social	Improved accommodation and basic amenities for pilgrims; enhanced visitor comfort, safety, and dignity; reduction in tourists staying in open grounds; benefits to local community through better infrastructure	Improved visitor experience
Technological	Use of digital booking systems, information kiosks, and smart management tools; potential integration of renewable energy systems such as solar lighting; improved operational efficiency	Better service efficiency
Environmental	Organized infrastructure reduces unplanned activities; provision of sanitation, waste management, and controlled parking; opportunity for sustainable practices like rainwater harvesting	Reduced environmental stress

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Legal	Compliance with land use regulations, building norms, and environmental guidelines; requirement of clear PPP agreements and institutional approvals; adherence to tourism and municipal policies	Regulatory compliance required

Source: Author

a) Political

From a Political perspective, the proposal aligns strongly with government initiatives aimed at developing religious tourism infrastructure along the Ram Van Gaman Path. The support from state authorities and policy backing enhances the likelihood of successful implementation. The vision to develop Chitrakoot on the lines of major religious destinations further strengthens the political feasibility of such projects .

b) Economic

From an Economic perspective, the MFTCs offer significant potential for revenue generation and employment creation. By providing organized facilities, the centres can attract more tourists and increase their duration of stay, leading to higher local spending. The involvement of private sector through PPP reduces the financial burden on the government while ensuring efficient management.

c) Social

From a Social perspective, the proposal addresses key issues faced by tourists, such as lack of accommodation and basic amenities. It also benefits local communities by creating employment opportunities and supporting local businesses. Improved infrastructure enhances the overall quality of life for residents, particularly during peak tourist seasons.

d) Technological

From a Technological perspective, the centres can incorporate modern systems for booking, information dissemination, and facility management. The use of digital platforms can improve efficiency and transparency, making it easier for tourists to access services.

e) Environmental

From an Environmental perspective, the proposal emphasizes sustainable development practices such as efficient use of resources, waste management, and integration with natural surroundings. By reducing unorganized activities such as open parking and informal accommodation, the centres contribute to better environmental management.

f) Legal

From a Legal perspective, the implementation of the project will require compliance with land use regulations, building codes, and environmental guidelines. The PPP model will also involve contractual agreements and regulatory frameworks to ensure accountability and transparency.

6.6. Proposal 3: Parking and Integrated Public Facilities

6.6.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, as a major religious tourism destination along the Ram Van Gaman Path, experiences a significant influx of visitors throughout the year, with particularly high concentrations during festivals, Amavasya, and other religious events. However, the existing mobility and parking infrastructure in the town is highly inadequate and unorganized, leading to severe congestion, inefficient circulation, and reduced accessibility to major tourist sites.

One of the most critical issues identified through field observations and primary surveys is the lack of designated parking spaces near key tourist destinations. Visitors arriving by private vehicles, buses, and intermediate transport modes are often forced to park along narrow roads, temple surroundings, or informal open spaces. This results in encroachment of carriageways, disruption of pedestrian movement, and increased travel time within the town. The absence of structured parking infrastructure not only affects tourists but also creates daily challenges for local residents and businesses.

Survey findings further indicate that traffic congestion and lack of parking are among the most frequently reported issues by tourists and stakeholders. The tourist survey highlights that a significant number of visitors face congestion during peak hours, while shopkeepers and service providers identify parking shortage as a major constraint affecting business operations. These findings clearly establish that parking is not merely a mobility issue but a critical component influencing the overall tourism experience and economic activity in Chitrakoot.

The problem becomes more severe during peak seasons when the volume of visitors exceeds the carrying capacity of existing infrastructure. In such situations, vehicles are parked haphazardly across the town, leading to chaotic conditions, safety concerns, and environmental degradation. The lack of basic facilities such as toilets, drinking water, and resting areas in these informal parking zones further deteriorates the experience for pilgrims, many of whom travel long distances.

Additionally, the absence of integrated planning between parking infrastructure and tourist facilities results in fragmented development. Parking spaces, where available, function merely as vehicle storage areas without providing any support services. This

reflects a missed opportunity to utilize these spaces as multifunctional nodes that can cater to various needs of tourists.

In the context of the planned development of Chitrakoot under the Ram Van Gaman Path initiative, there is a clear need to introduce a structured and integrated parking system that not only addresses vehicular management but also enhances the overall visitor experience. Given the emphasis on developing Chitrakoot as a well-organized religious tourism destination, improving parking infrastructure becomes a fundamental requirement for achieving efficient mobility, better spatial organization, and sustainable tourism development.

6.6.2. Proposal Description

To address the identified issues, the proposal suggests the development of a comprehensive parking system combined with integrated public facilities across key tourist locations in Chitrakoot. The approach focuses on creating both dedicated parking spaces and integrated parking hubs, forming a network of organized infrastructure that supports efficient movement and enhances visitor convenience.

Planning Framework for Tourism Development Along the Ram Van Gaman Path:
A Case of Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh

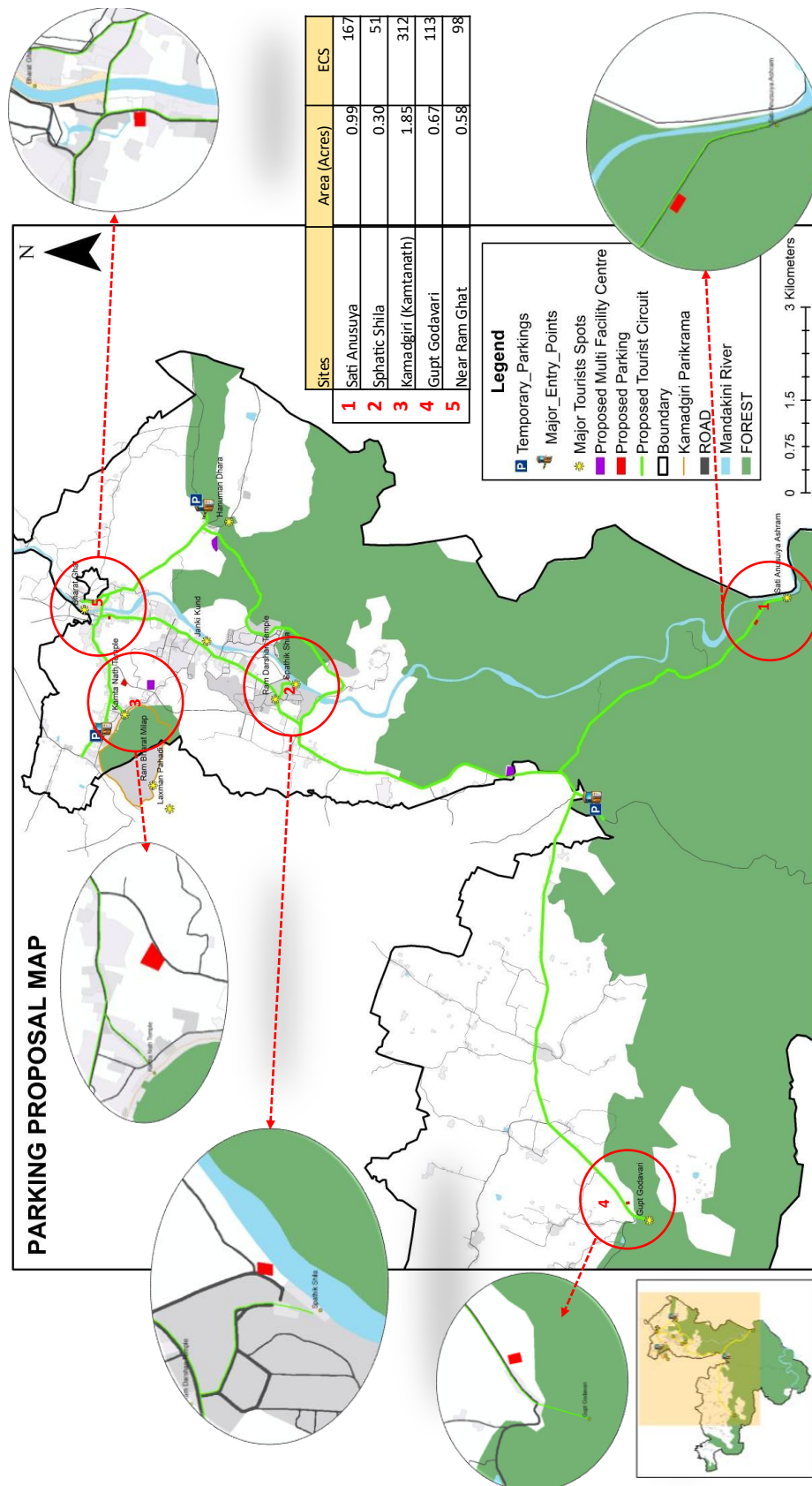


Figure 6.10: Proposed Parking

Source: Author

A total of five dedicated parking spaces are proposed at major tourist destinations, including Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, Sati Anusuya Ashram, Sphatik Shila, and Gupt Godavari, *Figure 6.10*. These locations have been selected based on their high visitor footfall, strategic importance, and existing congestion issues. The dedicated parking areas are intended to cater to localized demand, ensuring that vehicles can be parked in an organized manner close to the respective destinations.

In addition to these, integrated parking facilities are proposed in conjunction with the previously suggested Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) at three strategic locations. These integrated hubs serve a dual function by combining parking with accommodation and other tourist services. This approach ensures optimal utilization of land and resources while providing a comprehensive solution to multiple infrastructure gaps.

The proposal adopts a peripheral parking strategy, where major parking hubs are located at entry points or intermediate nodes rather than within the core religious areas. This helps in reducing vehicular intrusion into sensitive zones and promotes a shift towards pedestrian movement and intermediate transport systems. Visitors can park their vehicles at these designated hubs and continue their journey through walking or shared mobility options such as e-rickshaws.

A key feature of the proposal is the integration of essential public facilities within parking areas. Unlike conventional parking spaces, these hubs are designed as service-oriented environments equipped with toilets, drinking water facilities, first-aid centres, and shaded resting areas. This ensures that visitors have access to basic amenities immediately upon arrival, improving comfort and convenience.

The proposal also introduces the concept of multi-functional use of parking spaces, particularly during peak seasons. Given the high number of pilgrims who currently stay in open grounds, these parking areas can be designed to function as temporary accommodation spaces during festivals. With the provision of shaded structures and basic amenities, these spaces can offer a more organized and dignified alternative to informal open-ground stays.

Furthermore, the parking system is envisioned as a revenue-generating infrastructure, where parking fees contribute to the financial sustainability of the project. This aligns

with the broader objective of developing self-sustaining tourism infrastructure that reduces dependency on public funding.

Overall, the proposal represents a shift from conventional parking provision to an integrated and multi-functional infrastructure model, addressing mobility, comfort, and service needs simultaneously.

6.6.3. Planning Components

The planning of the proposed parking system involves a combination of physical infrastructure, functional services, and design elements that together create an efficient and user-friendly environment.

At the physical level, the proposal includes the development of well-defined parking areas with proper demarcation for different types of vehicles, including cars, buses, and two-wheelers. Internal circulation within parking sites is carefully planned to ensure smooth movement and minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Entry and exit points are designed to reduce congestion and facilitate efficient traffic flow.

The integration of public amenities forms a crucial part of the physical components. Each parking site is equipped with essential facilities such as public toilets, drinking water stations, and first-aid centres. Shaded structures are provided to protect vehicles and users from extreme weather conditions, which is particularly important given the climatic conditions of the region.

From a functional perspective, the parking system includes services such as ticketing and fee collection, security management, and maintenance operations. The introduction of organized parking management systems ensures transparency and efficiency in operations. During peak periods, additional services such as temporary accommodation arrangements and crowd management measures can be activated.

In the later stages of development, the proposal incorporates smart parking technologies, including digital monitoring systems, real-time information displays, and online booking options. These technologies help in optimizing space utilization and improving user experience by providing accurate information on parking availability.

Design elements play an important role in enhancing the usability and aesthetic quality of the parking spaces. Landscaping, proper lighting, and signage are integrated into the design to create a safe and welcoming environment. The use of culturally appropriate

design elements can also help in maintaining the religious and spiritual character of the town.

Accessibility is another key consideration in the planning process. The parking facilities are designed to be inclusive, with provisions for differently-abled users, including accessible pathways and designated parking spaces.

Overall, the planning components ensure that the proposed parking system is not only functional but also responsive to the needs of diverse users, contributing to a better organized and more efficient tourism environment.

6.6.4. Integration Approach

The proposed parking and integrated public facility system is designed as a critical component of the overall tourism and mobility framework of Chitrakoot. Rather than functioning as isolated infrastructure elements, these parking hubs are strategically integrated with other proposals, existing infrastructure, and the broader Ram Van Gaman Path corridor to create a cohesive and efficient system.

At the town level, the parking proposal is closely linked with the previously proposed Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs), forming a network of service nodes distributed across major tourist locations. The integration of parking with MFTCs ensures optimal land utilization and enhances functionality by combining accommodation, services, and mobility infrastructure within a single framework. While the MFTCs serve as larger multi-functional hubs, the dedicated parking spaces complement them by addressing localized demand at specific tourist destinations.

The proposal also integrates with the tourist movement patterns and circuits within Chitrakoot. The identified parking locations—Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, Sati Anusuya, Sphatik Shila, and Gupt Godavari—correspond to key nodes within the religious tourism circuit. By providing organized parking at these locations, the proposal facilitates smoother movement of visitors between different sites, reducing travel time and improving accessibility.

From a mobility perspective, the parking system supports a peripheral and decentralized circulation model. Vehicles are encouraged to park at designated hubs located at strategic entry points or intermediate nodes, minimizing their movement within congested core areas. This is particularly important for preserving the pedestrian-

friendly nature of pilgrimage zones such as the Kamadgiri Parikrama path. The integration with intermediate transport modes such as e-rickshaws, shared vehicles, and pedestrian pathways ensures seamless last-mile connectivity.

At the corridor level, the proposal aligns with the objectives of the Ram Van Gaman Path, which emphasizes connectivity, infrastructure development, and enhanced visitor experience across multiple nodes. By strengthening parking infrastructure at key locations, the proposal contributes to the overall efficiency and attractiveness of the corridor, supporting increased tourist inflow and better management of visitor movement.

The integration approach also extends to environmental and service systems. Parking areas are designed to incorporate waste management facilities, water supply systems, and energy-efficient solutions such as solar-powered lighting. This ensures that the infrastructure is sustainable and does not impose additional stress on the town's resources.

Institutionally, the integration involves coordination between various stakeholders, including local municipal authorities, tourism departments, and private operators. The implementation and operation of parking facilities under a structured framework ensures consistency in standards and service delivery across different locations.

Overall, the integration approach ensures that the parking proposal is embedded within the larger planning vision, contributing to improved mobility, better tourist management, and enhanced spatial organization of Chitrakoot.

6.6.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the proposed parking and integrated public facility system is planned in a phased manner to ensure practicality, flexibility, and efficient allocation of resources. This approach allows for gradual development while addressing immediate needs and accommodating future expansion.

In the initial phase, the focus will be on the identification and development of land for parking purposes at the proposed locations. This includes demarcation of sites, basic leveling, and creation of organized parking layouts with clear entry and exit points. During this stage, the primary objective is to address the immediate issue of unorganized parking and traffic congestion. Minimal infrastructure such as temporary

lighting, basic signage, and security arrangements can be provided to ensure functionality.

The initial phase serves as a quick intervention that can be implemented within a short time frame, providing immediate relief to tourists and local stakeholders. It also helps in establishing a structured parking system, reducing chaos and improving traffic flow.

In the second phase, the parking facilities will be upgraded by integrating essential public amenities such as toilets, drinking water stations, and first-aid centres. Shaded structures will be introduced to provide protection from weather conditions, improving comfort for both vehicles and users. This phase transforms the parking spaces from basic infrastructure into service-oriented environments, enhancing their usability and attractiveness.

During this phase, attention will also be given to improving internal circulation, landscaping, and overall design quality. Proper drainage systems and waste management facilities will be incorporated to ensure sustainability and hygiene.

In the final phase, advanced features such as smart parking systems and renewable energy solutions will be introduced. Smart technologies, including digital monitoring, real-time information systems, and automated payment mechanisms, will improve operational efficiency and user experience. The installation of solar panels on shaded structures and Charging stations for electric vehicles, not only provides energy for lighting and other facilities but also contributes to optimal resource based development.

This phase also includes the expansion and optimization of facilities based on demand patterns and user feedback. Additional services and improvements can be incorporated to ensure that the parking system continues to meet evolving requirements.

The phased implementation strategy ensures that the proposal is both feasible and adaptable, allowing for continuous improvement while minimizing initial investment. It also aligns with the broader approach of phased development adopted for the Ram Van Gaman Path, ensuring consistency in planning and execution.

6.6.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation and maintenance of the proposed parking and integrated public facilities are critical to ensuring their long-term functionality, efficiency, and sustainability.

Given the scale and importance of these facilities, a well-defined management framework is essential.

The proposal recommends a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for the operation and maintenance of parking facilities. Under this model, private operators are responsible for day-to-day management, including parking operations, fee collection, maintenance of infrastructure, and provision of services. The role of the government is primarily regulatory, ensuring that operations adhere to established standards and guidelines.

Revenue generation is a key component of the operational model. Parking fees collected from users provide a steady source of income, which can be utilized for maintenance and further development. Additional revenue can be generated through commercial activities such as kiosks, food stalls, and service charges for facilities like locker rooms and resting areas.

Maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene is particularly important, given the high volume of users and the religious significance of the town. Regular cleaning schedules, proper waste disposal mechanisms, and monitoring systems must be implemented to maintain high standards. The involvement of local communities and self-help groups can further enhance maintenance efforts and create employment opportunities.

Security and safety measures are also essential. The parking facilities should be equipped with adequate lighting, surveillance systems, and trained personnel to ensure the safety of users and their vehicles. Emergency response systems, including first-aid facilities and coordination with local health services, should be in place to handle any incidents.

Training and capacity building of staff are important for ensuring efficient operations. Personnel should be trained in areas such as customer service, traffic management, and facility maintenance to provide a high-quality experience to users.

Overall, a well-structured operation and maintenance framework ensures that the parking facilities remain functional, safe, and user-friendly, contributing to the overall success of the proposal.

6.6.7. PESTEL Analysis

The proposed parking and integrated public facility system has implications across multiple dimensions, which can be analyzed using the PESTEL framework,

Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: PESTEL Matrix for Parking Proposal

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Alignment with Ram Van Gaman Path; support for tourism infrastructure; mobility improvement initiatives	Strong policy backing
Economic	Revenue from parking fees; support to local businesses; job creation in operations & services	Increased local income
Social	Reduced congestion; improved visitor convenience; safer and organized environment; support during peak seasons	Better user experience
Technological	Smart parking systems; digital payments; solar-powered shading structures	Efficient operations
Environmental	Reduced roadside parking; controlled traffic flow; solar energy use.	Lower environmental impact
Legal	Land use approvals; parking regulations; PPP agreements; compliance with local bylaws	Regulatory compliance

Source: Author

a) Political

From a political perspective, the proposal aligns with government initiatives aimed at improving tourism infrastructure and mobility under the Ram Van Gaman Path. Strong policy support and institutional backing enhance the feasibility of implementation.

b) Economic

Economically, the proposal has significant potential to generate revenue through parking fees and associated commercial activities. It also contributes to local economic growth by supporting businesses and creating employment opportunities.

c) Social

Socially, the proposal improves the experience of tourists by providing organized parking and essential amenities. It also benefits local residents by reducing congestion and improving overall infrastructure.

d) Technological

Technologically, the integration of smart parking systems and renewable energy solutions enhances efficiency and sustainability. The use of digital platforms improves transparency and user convenience.

e) Environmental

Environmentally, the proposal promotes organized development, reducing unplanned parking and associated environmental impacts. The incorporation of solar energy and charging stations within the parking for Electric Vehicles.

f) Legal

Legally, the implementation requires compliance with land use regulations, building codes, and environmental guidelines. Proper institutional arrangements and agreements are necessary to ensure smooth execution.

6.6.8. Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the proposed parking and integrated public facility system is expected to result in multiple positive outcomes across economic, social, environmental, and spatial dimensions.

Economically, the proposal will generate revenue and create employment opportunities, contributing to local development. Socially, it will enhance the comfort, safety, and overall experience of tourists, while also improving the quality of life for residents.

Environmentally, the organized parking system will reduce congestion, pollution, and unplanned activities, leading to better environmental management. Spatially, the proposal will contribute to a more structured and efficient urban form, with clearly defined activity nodes and improved circulation patterns.

Overall, the proposal plays a crucial role in transforming Chitrakoot into a well-managed religious tourism destination, aligned with the vision of the Ram Van Gaman Path.

6.7. Proposal 4: Floral Waste Recycling System

6.7.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, being a prominent religious destination associated with the Ram Van Gaman Path, experiences a continuous inflow of pilgrims and tourists throughout the year. Religious practices and rituals form an integral part of the visitor experience, leading to the generation of a significant amount of waste, particularly floral waste such as flowers, garlands, leaves, and other biodegradable offerings. This waste increases substantially during peak festival periods such as Amavasya, Diwali, and other religious gatherings, when the number of visitors rises sharply.

Field observations and primary surveys indicate that the management of this temple-generated waste is highly inadequate and unstructured. In the absence of proper segregation, collection, and processing systems, floral waste is often disposed of in open areas or directly into the Mandakini River. This practice not only creates visual pollution but also contributes to environmental degradation, affecting water quality, aquatic life, and the overall ecological balance of the region.

The Mandakini River holds immense religious and cultural significance, serving as a central element of spiritual activities in Chitrakoot. The degradation of this river due to waste disposal directly undermines its sacred value and negatively impacts the experience of pilgrims. The accumulation of organic waste in the river also leads to issues such as foul odor, water contamination, and increased health risks, particularly during peak tourist seasons.

The problem is further intensified by the absence of an integrated waste management system that specifically addresses religious waste. While municipal waste management systems exist to some extent, they are not designed to handle the unique characteristics and continuous generation of temple waste. This gap highlights the need for a targeted intervention that focuses on the collection, processing, and reuse of floral waste.

At the same time, the issue presents a significant opportunity for resource recovery and sustainable development. Floral waste, being biodegradable and rich in organic content, can be converted into value-added products such as incense sticks (agarbatti), organic compost, and other eco-friendly products. Such initiatives have been successfully

implemented in other religious towns, demonstrating their potential to address environmental challenges while generating economic benefits.

From a planning perspective, the management of floral waste is not merely an environmental concern but a critical aspect of sustainable tourism development. With increasing tourist inflow, the pressure on natural resources and infrastructure is expected to grow, making it essential to adopt sustainable practices that minimize environmental impact. The introduction of a structured floral waste recycling system can play a key role in improving environmental conditions, enhancing the image of the town, and promoting responsible tourism.

6.7.2. Proposal Description

To address the issue of floral waste mismanagement, the proposal suggests the development of a Floral Waste Recycling System based on a decentralized and community-driven model. The system focuses on the collection, processing, and conversion of temple waste into value-added products, thereby transforming a major environmental challenge into an economic opportunity.

The proposed system operates through a structured process involving three main stages: collection, processing, and production. At the initial stage, dedicated collection points will be established at major religious locations where floral waste generation is highest. These include temples, ghats, and other ritual sites such as Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, and other prominent locations. Temple staff and designated workers will be responsible for collecting floral waste from these points and ensuring that it is segregated from other types of was

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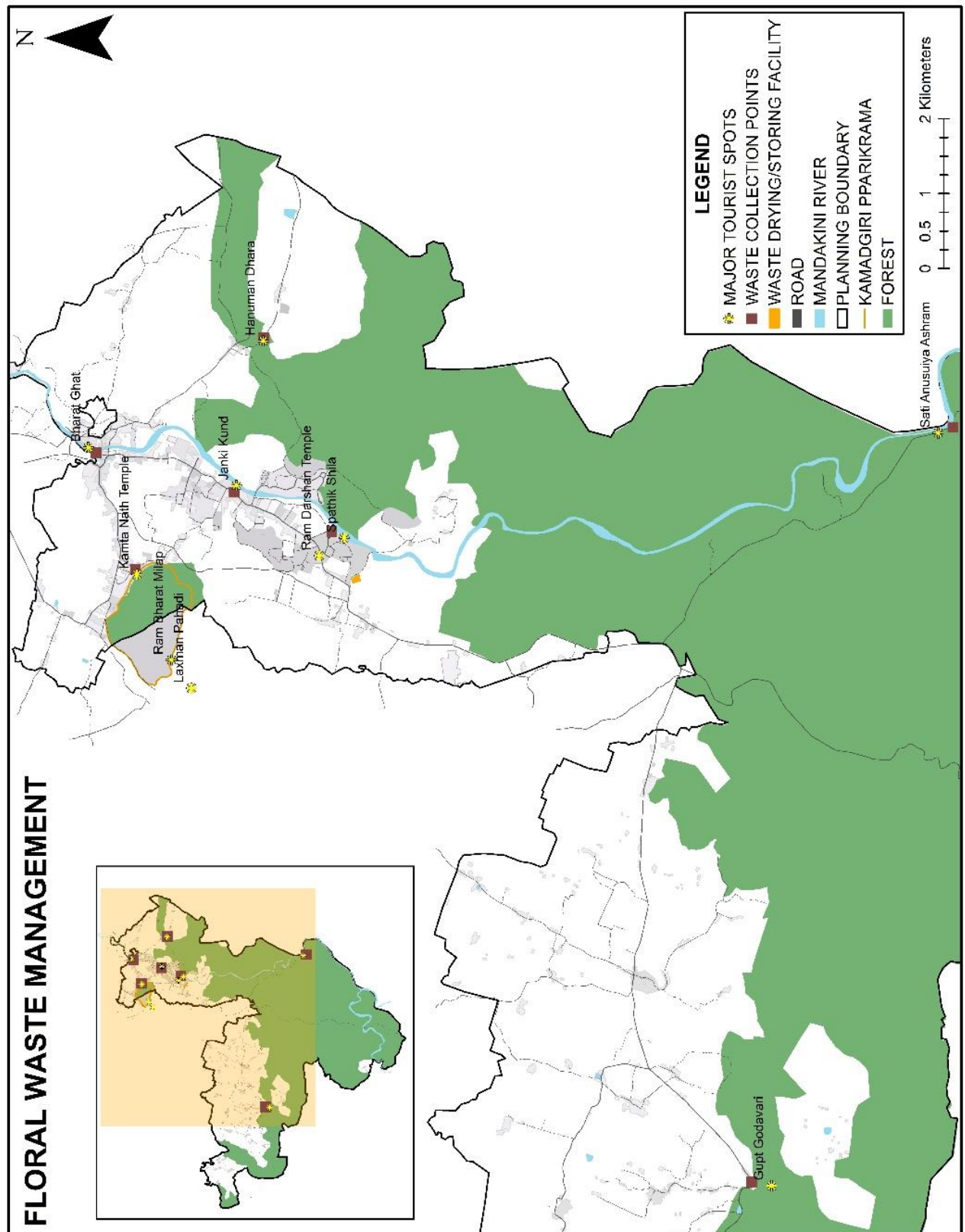


Figure 6.11: Proposed Waste Collection Points & Drying/Storage Facility

Source: Author

The collected waste will then be transported to a centralized Waste Drying and Storage Facility, proposed at the backside of Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwavidyalaya. This location has been strategically selected due to its relatively central position with respect to major tourist sites, ensuring efficient transportation and minimal logistical challenges, *Figure 6.11*. At this facility, the floral waste will undergo processes such as segregation, drying, and storage, preparing it as raw material for further utilization.

Once processed, the dried floral waste can be used for the production of value-added products such as incense sticks, dhoop, and other eco-friendly items. The production process is proposed to be carried out at a small scale by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), local women groups, and individual households, promoting community participation and decentralized economic activity. This approach ensures that the benefits of the initiative are directly shared with local communities, contributing to livelihood generation and socio-economic development.

The proposal adopts a small-scale decentralized production model, which is particularly suitable for a town like Chitrakoot. Instead of establishing large industrial units, the focus is on creating multiple small units that are easy to manage, require low investment, and can be integrated within the existing socio-economic framework. This also aligns with the cultural and spatial character of the town, avoiding large-scale industrialization.

In addition to addressing waste management, the proposal contributes to the development of a unique identity for Chitrakoot by promoting eco-friendly products derived from religious offerings. These products can be marketed as sustainable and spiritually significant items, enhancing their value and appeal.

Overall, the proposal represents an integrated approach that combines environmental management, economic development, and community participation, creating a sustainable model for handling floral waste in Chitrakoot.

6.7.3. Planning Components

The planning of the Floral Waste Recycling System involves a combination of physical infrastructure, functional processes, and organizational mechanisms that together create an efficient and sustainable system.

At the physical level, the proposal includes the establishment of collection points at major religious sites. These points are designed to facilitate easy segregation and collection of floral waste, ensuring that it does not get mixed with other types of waste. Proper containers, signage, and designated spaces are provided to guide users and maintain cleanliness.

The central component of the system is the Waste Drying and Storage Facility, which serves as the processing hub. This facility includes spaces for sorting, drying, and storing floral waste, as well as basic infrastructure such as sheds, ventilation systems, and storage units. The design ensures that the processing activities are carried out efficiently while maintaining hygiene and environmental standards.

From a functional perspective, the system includes processes such as waste collection, transportation, segregation, drying, and distribution of processed material. A structured workflow is established to ensure smooth coordination between different stages, minimizing delays and inefficiencies.

The production component involves small-scale units operated by SHGs and local groups, where the processed floral waste is converted into value-added products. These units require basic equipment and workspace, making them accessible and easy to implement.

The proposal also incorporates elements of branding and marketing, particularly in later stages, to promote the products and create a recognizable identity. This enhances the economic viability of the initiative and supports its long-term sustainability.

Design considerations include maintaining cleanliness, ensuring proper ventilation, and integrating the facilities with the surrounding environment. The use of simple and locally appropriate design elements ensures that the infrastructure is cost-effective and context-sensitive.

Overall, the planning components create a comprehensive system that addresses all stages of waste management, from collection to production, ensuring efficiency, sustainability, and community involvement.

6.7.4. Integration Approach

The proposed Floral Waste Recycling System is designed to function as an integral component of the broader environmental and tourism management framework of

Chitrakoot. Rather than operating as an isolated intervention, the system is closely interlinked with other proposals, existing infrastructure, and the overall vision of sustainable development under the Ram Van Gaman Path.

At the town level, the proposal complements other infrastructure initiatives such as the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) and the integrated parking system. These facilities generate significant footfall and associated waste, particularly near temples and public gathering areas. By integrating floral waste collection points within or near these nodes, the system ensures efficient capture of waste at source. This reduces the chances of waste being dumped in open areas or water bodies and strengthens the overall waste management network of the town.

The proposal is also closely linked to the religious tourism circuit of Chitrakoot. The identified collection points at major religious locations such as Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, and other key sites correspond to areas with high ritual activity and waste generation. By aligning the waste collection system with these activity nodes, the proposal ensures maximum efficiency in waste capture and management. This integration also supports better visitor experience by maintaining cleanliness in high-footfall areas.

From an environmental perspective, the proposal directly contributes to the conservation of the Mandakini river. By preventing the disposal of floral waste into the river, the system helps in maintaining water quality and preserving the ecological balance. This is particularly important given the religious significance of the river and its central role in pilgrimage activities.

Institutionally, the proposal integrates multiple stakeholders, including temple authorities, local municipal bodies, self-help groups (SHGs), and private partners. Temple staff play a key role in initial waste collection, while SHGs are involved in processing and production activities. In later stages, private sector participation through PPP models can further enhance efficiency and scalability. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures shared responsibility and long-term sustainability.

At the corridor level, the proposal aligns with the objectives of the Ram Van Gaman Path, which emphasizes not only infrastructure development but also environmental conservation and cultural sustainability. By addressing waste management in a structured manner, the proposal contributes to improving the overall quality and image of Chitrakoot as a clean and well-managed religious destination.

Overall, the integration approach ensures that the Floral Waste Recycling System is embedded within the larger planning framework, supporting environmental sustainability, economic development, and improved tourist experience.

6.7.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the Floral Waste Recycling System is proposed in a phased manner to ensure feasibility, adaptability, and gradual scaling of operations. This approach allows for testing and refinement of the system while minimizing initial investment and risk.

In the initial phase, the focus will be on establishing a basic collection and processing system. Collection points will be set up at major religious locations, with clearly designated bins and awareness signage to encourage proper disposal of floral waste. Temple staff and designated workers will be trained to collect and segregate waste at source. The collected waste will be transported to the Waste Drying and Storage Facility, where it will be sorted and dried.

During this phase, the processed floral waste will be made available as raw material for SHGs and local households, who can utilize it for small-scale production of incense sticks and other products. This approach minimizes the need for large initial investments while promoting community participation and skill development.

In the second phase, the system will be expanded to include organized production units and basic machinery for processing and manufacturing. This includes the introduction of simple equipment for incense stick production, packaging, and storage. Branding and marketing initiatives can also be introduced at this stage to create a recognizable identity for the products.

The second phase may also involve the introduction of a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, where private partners contribute to the development and operation of processing and production facilities. This enhances efficiency, brings in technical expertise, and supports scaling up of operations.

In the long-term phase, the system can be further expanded and optimized based on demand and performance. Advanced processing techniques, improved product diversification, and wider market reach can be explored. The system can also be

replicated at other locations within the region, creating a network of decentralized waste recycling units.

The phased implementation ensures that the proposal remains flexible and responsive to changing conditions, while gradually building capacity and achieving long-term sustainability.

6.7.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation and maintenance of the Floral Waste Recycling System require a well-coordinated framework involving multiple stakeholders. Given the nature of the system, which involves continuous waste generation and processing, efficient management is essential to ensure smooth functioning.

In the initial stages, the operation of the system can be managed by local authorities in collaboration with temple management committees and SHGs. Temple staff will be responsible for primary collection and segregation of floral waste, while municipal bodies can oversee transportation and facility management.

The processing facility will be managed by trained personnel, including members of SHGs and local workers. Their responsibilities include sorting, drying, and storing the waste, as well as coordinating with production units. Regular maintenance of the facility, including cleaning and equipment upkeep, is essential to ensure hygiene and efficiency.

As the system evolves, the involvement of private operators through PPP models can enhance operational efficiency. Private partners can take responsibility for large-scale processing, product manufacturing, and marketing, while ensuring adherence to environmental and social standards.

Revenue generation is an important aspect of the operational model. Income can be generated through the sale of value-added products such as incense sticks and other eco-friendly items. This revenue supports the financial sustainability of the system and provides income opportunities for local communities.

Regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established to assess performance and identify areas for improvement. Training and capacity-building programs for workers and SHG members are also essential to ensure quality and efficiency.

Overall, a collaborative and well-structured operation and maintenance framework ensures the long-term success and sustainability of the proposal.

6.7.7. PESTEL Analysis

The Floral Waste Recycling System has wide-ranging impacts across political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal dimensions, *Table 6.5*.

Table 6.5: PESTEL Matrix for Floral Waste Recycling System

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Alignment with clean tourism and river conservation initiatives; support for SHGs and local livelihoods	Strong policy support
Economic	Income through agarbatti and eco-products; employment for SHGs and local women	Increased local livelihood
Social	Community participation; improved cleanliness at temples and ghats; awareness of sustainable practices	Better public hygiene
Technological	Basic processing units; scope for machinery and product branding in later phases	Scalable system
Environmental	Reduction in river pollution; reuse of floral waste; improved waste management practices	River conservation
Legal	Compliance with solid waste management rules; approvals for processing units and PPP operations	Regulatory compliance

Source: Author

a) Political

From a political perspective, the proposal aligns with government priorities related to sustainable tourism, environmental conservation, and livelihood generation. Support from local authorities and policy frameworks enhances the feasibility of implementation.

b) Economic

Economically, the proposal creates opportunities for income generation through the production and sale of value-added products. It supports local entrepreneurship and provides employment, particularly for women and marginalized groups.

c) Social

Socially, the proposal promotes community participation and improves the overall cleanliness and image of the town. It also enhances awareness about sustainable practices and environmental responsibility.

d) Technological

Technologically, the system can incorporate simple and scalable technologies for waste processing and product manufacturing. In later stages, advanced techniques can be introduced to improve efficiency and product quality.

e) Environmental

Environmentally, the proposal has significant positive impacts by reducing waste disposal in open areas and water bodies, conserving the Mandakini river, and promoting resource recovery.

f) Legal

Legally, the implementation requires compliance with environmental regulations, waste management rules, and institutional approvals. Proper agreements and guidelines are necessary to ensure smooth operation.

6.7.8. Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the Floral Waste Recycling System is expected to result in multiple positive outcomes across various dimensions.

Environmentally, the proposal will significantly reduce pollution in the Mandakini river and surrounding areas, contributing to ecological conservation. Economically, it will generate employment and support local livelihoods through small-scale industries.

Socially, the proposal will improve the cleanliness and overall experience of visitors, enhancing the image of Chitrakoot as a well-managed and sustainable religious destination. Spatially, it will contribute to a more organized and efficient urban environment by integrating waste management into the planning framework.

Overall, the proposal represents a sustainable and innovative approach to addressing waste management challenges in Chitrakoot, aligning with the broader vision of responsible tourism and environmental stewardship.

6.8. Proposal 5: Health & Wellness Tourism Development

6.8.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, traditionally recognized as a major religious destination along the Ram Van Gaman Path, possesses inherent characteristics that extend beyond pilgrimage tourism and present strong potential for the development of health and wellness tourism. Unlike issue-based interventions, this proposal is primarily opportunity-driven, focusing on leveraging the existing strengths and unique environmental conditions of the town.

One of the key factors supporting this potential is the presence of established healthcare and wellness institutions in Chitrakoot. Facilities such as Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya and Aarogyadham Swasthya Kutir attract a considerable number of visitors seeking medical treatment and holistic healing. These institutions not only provide specialized healthcare services but also contribute to positioning Chitrakoot as a destination associated with healing and well-being.

In addition to institutional infrastructure, the demographic profile of visitors further strengthens this potential. A significant proportion of tourists visiting Chitrakoot includes elderly pilgrims, many of whom seek both spiritual fulfillment and physical well-being. The combination of religious tourism and an aging visitor base creates a natural demand for wellness-oriented services such as yoga, naturopathy, and Ayurvedic treatments.

The environmental context of Chitrakoot also plays a crucial role in supporting wellness tourism. The town is surrounded by forested areas and natural landscapes that are conducive to relaxation, meditation, and holistic healing practices. The presence of medicinal plants and herbs in these regions provides an opportunity for developing herbal-based treatments and products. The relatively शान्त and pollution-free environment further enhances the suitability of Chitrakoot as a wellness destination.

Moreover, the current scenario indicates that thousands of visitors already travel to Chitrakoot for health-related purposes, either for treatment or for wellness retreats. This existing demand, combined with available infrastructure and natural resources, highlights the untapped potential of the town in the health and wellness tourism sector.

At a broader level, India has emerged as a global hub for medical and wellness tourism, driven by traditional practices such as Ayurveda, yoga, and naturopathy. The success of

such initiatives across the country demonstrates the viability of integrating wellness tourism with cultural and religious destinations. In this context, Chitrakoot has the potential to position itself uniquely as a destination that combines spirituality with wellness.

From a planning perspective, leveraging this potential can contribute to diversifying the tourism economy, increasing the duration of stay of visitors, and generating additional income opportunities for local communities. It also supports the vision of developing Chitrakoot as a holistic destination under the Ram Van Gaman Path, where spiritual, environmental, and wellness aspects are integrated.

6.8.2. Proposal Description

The proposal aims to develop Chitrakoot as a “Spiritual + Wellness Destination” by promoting health and wellness tourism through a combination of infrastructure development, resource utilization, and strategic branding.

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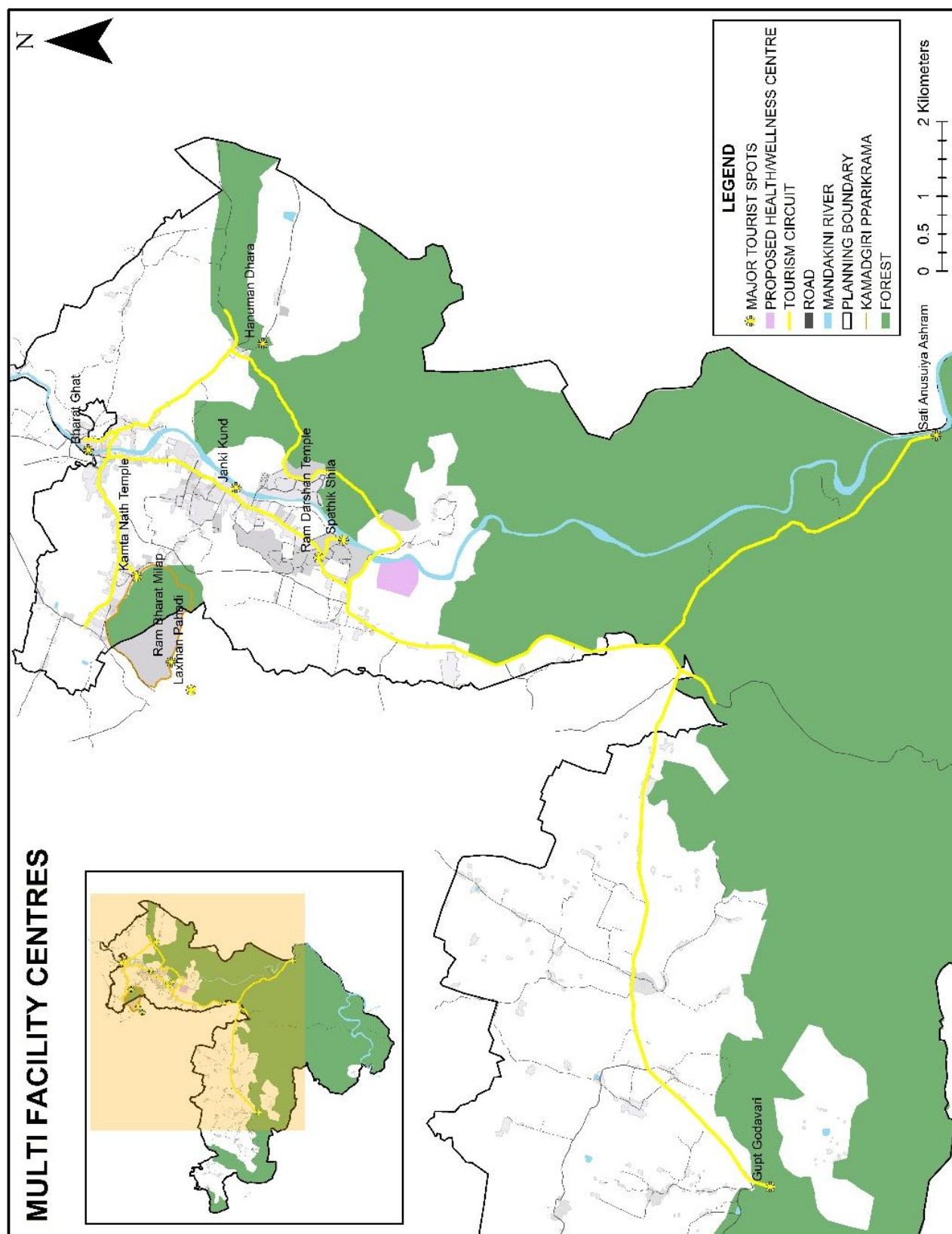


Figure 6.12: Proposed Landuse for the Health/Wellness Resort

Source: Author

At the core of the proposal is the development of a wellness resort zone on a designated land parcel of approximately 21.6 acres located near the banks of the Mandakini River, *Figure 6.12*. This location has been selected for its serene environment, scenic value, and proximity to religious sites, making it ideal for integrating spiritual and wellness experiences. However, strict regulations will be enforced to ensure that construction near the river is minimized and limited only to essential and temporary structures such as ghats, thereby preserving the ecological and cultural integrity of the riverfront.

The wellness resort is envisioned as a comprehensive facility offering a range of services including yoga centres, Ayurvedic treatments, naturopathy therapies, meditation spaces, and wellness retreats. The design of the resort will emphasize harmony with nature, incorporating open spaces, green landscapes, and environmentally sensitive architecture.

In addition to the resort, the proposal includes the promotion of herbal plantations in nearby forest and rural areas. These plantations will focus on cultivating medicinal plants and herbs that can be used for wellness treatments and product development. The involvement of local communities, particularly forest-dependent populations, ensures that the benefits of the initiative are widely distributed.

A key component of the proposal is the development of a value chain for herbal products, linking cultivation, processing, and marketing. In the later stages, a small-scale production hub can be established near the resort to manufacture herbal products such as oils, medicines, and wellness products. These products can be branded and marketed to tourists, as well as distributed to larger markets.

The proposal also emphasizes the importance of branding and promotion, positioning Chitrakoot as a destination that offers both spiritual and wellness experiences. This dual identity differentiates it from other religious destinations and enhances its appeal to a broader range of visitors.

Overall, the proposal represents a holistic approach that integrates tourism, healthcare, agriculture, and local economy, creating a sustainable and diversified development model.

6.8.3. Planning Components

The planning of the Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal involves multiple components that together create a comprehensive and integrated system.

At the physical level, the primary component is the development of the wellness resort, which includes facilities such as accommodation units, therapy centres, yoga halls, meditation spaces, and landscaped open areas. The design focuses on creating a शांत and rejuvenating environment, with minimal disturbance to the natural surroundings.

The proposal also includes the development of herbal plantations in nearby forest and agricultural areas. These plantations require basic infrastructure such as irrigation systems, storage facilities, and access roads. The integration of these plantations with local agricultural practices ensures sustainability and community participation.

From a functional perspective, the proposal includes services such as wellness programs, medical treatments, and guided therapy sessions. Different packages can be offered based on duration and type of treatment, catering to diverse visitor needs.

The production component involves the establishment of small-scale units for processing and manufacturing herbal products. These units require basic equipment and workspace, and can be operated by local communities or private partners.

Technological components include the use of modern techniques for herbal cultivation, processing, and packaging, as well as digital platforms for booking and promotion of wellness services.

Design considerations emphasize environmental sensitivity, cultural integration, and user comfort. The use of local materials, traditional architectural elements, and sustainable practices ensures that the development is contextually appropriate.

Overall, the planning components create a multi-dimensional system that integrates infrastructure, services, and economic activities, supporting the development of Chitrakoot as a wellness destination.

6.8.4. Integration Approach

The Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal is conceptualized as an integrated extension of the existing tourism and development framework of Chitrakoot, complementing its religious identity while introducing a new dimension of wellness-

based tourism. The proposal is not standalone but is designed to connect with other interventions, existing infrastructure, and the broader vision of the Ram Van Gaman Path.

At the town level, the proposal integrates closely with the previously suggested Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) and parking infrastructure. These facilities improve accessibility and provide essential services, which indirectly support the functioning of wellness tourism by ensuring a smooth and comfortable visitor experience. Tourists arriving for wellness purposes can utilize these facilities for accommodation, transit, and support services, thereby strengthening interlinkages between different proposals.

The integration with the religious tourism circuit is a key aspect of this proposal. Visitors coming to Chitrakoot primarily for pilgrimage can be encouraged to extend their stay by participating in wellness programs such as yoga, meditation, and naturopathy. This creates a seamless transition from spiritual activities to wellness experiences, enhancing the overall value of the visit. The proximity of the proposed wellness resort to the Mandakini river further strengthens this connection, as the riverfront already serves as a major spiritual and cultural space.

From an environmental perspective, the proposal integrates with the natural landscape of Chitrakoot. The development of herbal plantations in nearby forest regions ensures that the initiative is rooted in the local ecological context. These plantations not only support wellness activities but also contribute to environmental conservation and sustainable land use practices.

Institutionally, the proposal establishes linkages with key stakeholders such as the tourism department, local authorities, and educational institutions like Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwavidyalaya. The involvement of the agriculture department of the university in herbal cultivation ensures technical support and knowledge transfer, enhancing the effectiveness of the initiative.

At the corridor level, the proposal aligns with the objectives of the Ram Van Gaman Path, which emphasizes holistic development of religious destinations. By introducing wellness tourism, the proposal diversifies the tourism profile of Chitrakoot and enhances its attractiveness as a multi-dimensional destination.

Overall, the integration approach ensures that the proposal contributes to a cohesive and sustainable development framework, where spiritual, environmental, and economic aspects are interconnected.

6.8.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal is structured in a phased manner to ensure feasibility, gradual growth, and efficient utilization of resources. This approach allows for the development of core infrastructure first, followed by expansion into supporting activities and value-added components.

In the initial phase, the primary focus will be on the development of the wellness resort on the identified 21.6-acre site. This phase will be implemented through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, where private developers invest in the construction and operation of the resort, while the government facilitates land allocation and regulatory approvals. The resort will offer a range of wellness services such as yoga, meditation, Ayurvedic treatments, and naturopathy therapies. Various packages of different durations can be designed to cater to diverse visitor groups, encouraging longer stays and increasing tourist expenditure.

The first phase also includes basic infrastructure development such as access roads, utilities, and landscaping. Careful planning will ensure that construction near the Mandakini river is restricted and environmentally sensitive, preserving the ecological integrity of the area.

In the second phase, the focus will shift towards the development of herbal plantations in nearby forest and rural areas. This will be carried out in collaboration with the agriculture department of Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwavidyalaya, which can provide technical expertise and support. Local communities, particularly forest-dependent populations, will be actively involved in cultivation activities, creating livelihood opportunities and promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

This phase also strengthens the supply chain for wellness services by ensuring a steady availability of raw materials such as medicinal herbs. It establishes a direct link between agriculture and tourism, enhancing the economic impact of the proposal.

In the final phase, a small-scale production hub will be established near the wellness resort for processing and manufacturing herbal products. This includes the production

of oils, medicines, and other wellness products, which can be branded and marketed to tourists as well as external markets. The introduction of branding and packaging enhances the commercial viability of the products and creates a distinct identity for Chitrakoot's wellness offerings.

The phased approach ensures that the proposal evolves gradually, building on initial success and expanding into a comprehensive wellness ecosystem. It also minimizes risk and allows for adjustments based on demand and performance.

6.8.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation and maintenance of the Health and Wellness Tourism Development initiative require a structured and multi-stakeholder approach to ensure efficiency, quality, and sustainability.

The wellness resort, being the core component of the proposal, will be operated by private entities under the PPP model. These operators will be responsible for managing accommodation, wellness services, staff, and day-to-day operations. Their expertise in hospitality and healthcare ensures high-quality service delivery and enhances the attractiveness of the destination.

The role of government agencies will primarily be regulatory and facilitative, ensuring that development adheres to environmental guidelines and planning regulations. Monitoring mechanisms will be established to maintain standards and ensure compliance.

The herbal plantations will be managed by local communities in collaboration with the agriculture department of the university. Training and capacity-building programs will be conducted to equip farmers and local workers with the necessary skills for cultivation and maintenance. This not only ensures the success of the plantations but also promotes community ownership of the initiative.

The production hub, in later stages, can be operated either by SHGs, cooperatives, or private partners, depending on the scale and structure of operations. Revenue generated from the sale of herbal products contributes to the financial sustainability of the system.

Maintenance of infrastructure, including the resort, plantations, and production units, is essential to ensure long-term functionality. Regular monitoring, quality control, and adherence to standards are critical components of the O&M framework.

Overall, a well-coordinated operation and maintenance system ensures that the proposal remains effective, sustainable, and beneficial to all stakeholders.

6.8.7. PESTEL Analysis

The Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal has significant implications across multiple dimensions, *Table 6.6*.

Table 6.6: PESTEL Matrix for Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Alignment with wellness tourism policies; support for Ayurveda & naturopathy; PPP-based development	Strong policy backing
Economic	Increased tourist stay; revenue from resorts & products; employment in services and farming	Boost to local economy
Social	Improved health services; benefits to elderly tourists; livelihood for local communities	Better quality of life
Technological	Modern wellness therapies; herbal processing techniques; digital marketing & bookings	Enhanced service quality
Environmental	Herbal cultivation; eco-friendly resort development; controlled construction near river	Sustainable development
Legal	Land use regulations; river protection norms; PPP agreements; tourism compliance	Regulatory compliance

Source: Author

a) Political

From a political perspective, the proposal aligns with national and state-level initiatives promoting wellness tourism, Ayurveda, and sustainable development. Government support for such initiatives enhances the feasibility of implementation.

b) Economic

Economically, the proposal contributes to diversification of the tourism economy, increasing revenue and creating employment opportunities. It supports local livelihoods through agriculture, production, and service sectors.

c) Social

Socially, the proposal promotes health and well-being while also benefiting local communities through employment and improved infrastructure. It enhances the overall quality of life and strengthens the cultural identity of the town.

d) Technological

Technologically, the proposal incorporates modern techniques in healthcare, herbal processing, and digital marketing, improving efficiency and outreach.

e) Environmental

Environmentally, the proposal promotes sustainable practices such as herbal cultivation and eco-friendly development, contributing to conservation of natural resources.

f) Legal

Legally, the implementation requires compliance with land use regulations, environmental guidelines, and tourism policies, ensuring structured and responsible development.

6.8.8. Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the Health and Wellness Tourism Development proposal is expected to generate multiple positive outcomes.

Economically, it will increase tourist spending, extend the duration of stay, and create employment opportunities across various sectors. Socially, it will improve health and well-being while enhancing the experience of visitors.

Environmentally, it will promote sustainable practices and conservation of natural resources. Spatially, it will contribute to the development of a well-organized and diversified tourism framework.

Overall, the proposal positions Chitrakoot as a unique destination that combines spirituality with wellness, creating a strong and sustainable identity within the Ram Van Gaman Path.

6.9. Proposal 6: Adventure Tourism Development

6.9.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, as a major religious destination, attracts a large number of pilgrims throughout the year. However, the nature of tourism in the town is predominantly pilgrimage-oriented, with a significant proportion of visitors being short-duration or day visitors. This results in limited tourist engagement beyond religious activities and restricts the overall economic potential of the town.

Another important characteristic of tourism in Chitrakoot is its high seasonality. The inflow of tourists increases significantly during specific religious events and festivals, while there is a noticeable decline during non-peak periods. This uneven distribution of tourist flow creates pressure on infrastructure during peak times and underutilization of resources during lean periods. Such a pattern not only affects the efficiency of infrastructure but also impacts the livelihoods of local communities that depend on tourism.

The absence of diversified tourism activities further contributes to this issue. Currently, most visitors engage primarily in religious activities such as temple visits, parikrama, and ritual practices, with limited opportunities for recreation or extended stay. As a result, tourists often complete their visit within a short duration and leave the town without exploring its natural and ecological assets.

Chitrakoot, however, possesses significant untapped potential for nature-based and adventure tourism. The presence of forested areas, river landscapes, and natural terrain provides an ideal setting for activities such as trekking, camping, eco-tourism, and water-based recreation. Existing informal usage of certain areas, such as river ghats and viewpoints within forest regions, indicates that there is already a demand for such experiences among visitors.

From a planning perspective, the introduction of adventure tourism can play a crucial role in diversifying the tourism profile of Chitrakoot. It can help in increasing the duration of stay of visitors, reducing seasonal fluctuations, and attracting a new segment of tourists beyond pilgrims. This aligns with contemporary tourism planning approaches, which emphasize the integration of multiple tourism types to enhance economic resilience and sustainability.

Moreover, the development of adventure tourism offers opportunities for local economic development, particularly for communities residing near forest and rural areas. By involving local populations in tourism-related activities, the proposal can contribute to livelihood generation and inclusive growth.

Overall, the rationale for this proposal lies in transforming Chitrakoot from a predominantly pilgrimage destination into a multi-dimensional tourism destination, where religious, ecological, and recreational experiences coexist.

6.9.2. Proposal Description

The proposal aims to develop a designated Adventure Tourism Zone within a forested area of approximately 232 acres *Figure 6.13*, focusing on low-impact, nature-based recreational activities. The objective is to create a controlled and sustainable environment where visitors can engage with the natural landscape while preserving ecological integrity.

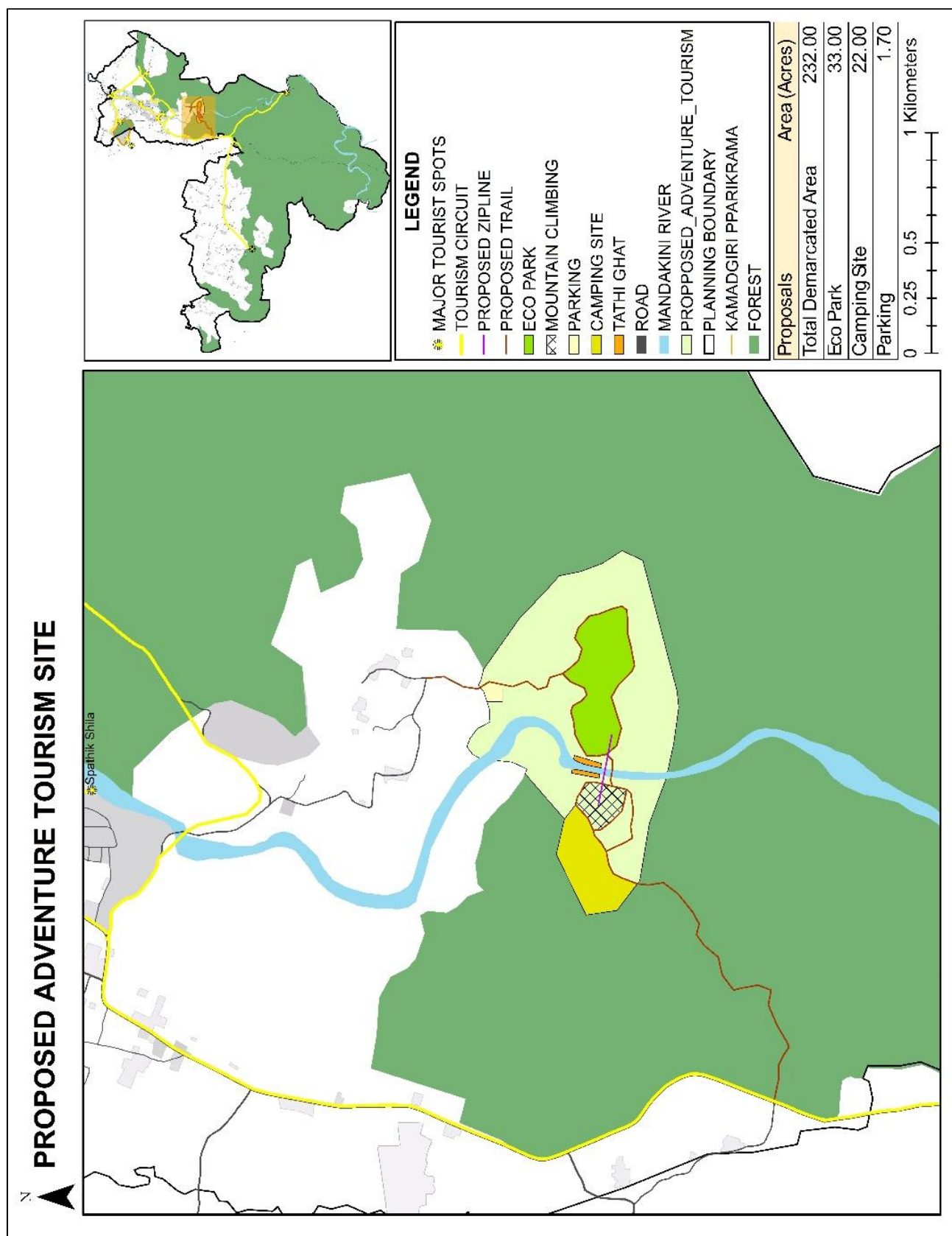


Figure 6.13: Proposed Adventure Tourism

Source: Author

The development approach emphasizes minimal intervention and environmental sensitivity, with strict restrictions on permanent construction. Only temporary and eco-friendly structures such as walking trails, bamboo bridges, camping sites, and lightweight recreational installations will be permitted. This ensures that the natural character of the area is maintained while providing necessary infrastructure for tourism activities.

A key component of the proposal is the development of a camping zone over an area of approximately 22.6 acres, designed to offer a natural living experience. This space will cater to tourists seeking immersive experiences such as overnight stays in tents, bonfire activities, and nature-based relaxation. The camping site is expected to be particularly attractive during winter and spring seasons, contributing to increased tourist inflow during non-peak periods.

The proposal also includes the development of a temporary walking and trekking trail, allowing visitors to explore the forest landscape and the banks of the Mandakini river. These trails are designed to provide an ecological experience, encouraging interaction with nature while ensuring safety and accessibility.

An eco-park is proposed over an area of approximately 33.2 acres, focusing on conservation and environmental education. This park will serve as both a recreational and educational space, promoting awareness about local ecology and biodiversity while offering a pleasant environment for visitors.

In addition to land-based activities, the proposal incorporates water-based recreational activities such as bathing, swimming, and non-motorized boating. These activities are designed to enhance the overall visitor experience while maintaining environmental sustainability.

The natural terrain of the area also allows for adventure activities such as rock climbing and ziplining. A small mountain peak within the site can be utilized for climbing activities, while zipline installations across the river can provide a unique and आकर्षक experience for tourists.

Access to the site is planned through two primary routes: one from the Satna Road near Godavari Mod and another from Rajola village. Vehicular access is restricted to the entry point near Rajola village, where a designated parking area is proposed. Beyond

this point, the movement will be pedestrian-based to maintain the ecological integrity of the zone.

The entry-level infrastructure includes basic amenities such as toilets, rest areas, drinking water facilities, and first-aid centres within the parking and entry zone. This ensures that visitors have access to essential services without disturbing the core natural area.

The proposal adopts a facilitation-based model, where the role of planning is to provide infrastructure and regulatory framework, while the actual operation of adventure activities is carried out by private players. This ensures professional management, efficient service delivery, and financial viability.

6.9.3. Planning Components

The planning of the Adventure Tourism Zone involves a combination of physical, functional, and design components that together create a balanced and sustainable system.

At the physical level, the proposal includes the development of trails, camping areas, eco-parks, and activity zones. These elements are designed to be temporary and eco-friendly, minimizing environmental impact. The entry and parking area serves as the primary access point, providing essential infrastructure and acting as a transition zone between built and natural environments.

Functional components include various adventure and recreational activities such as trekking, camping, water activities, and ziplining. These activities are designed to cater to different user groups, ensuring diversity in experiences. The management of these activities is proposed to be handled by private operators, ensuring professionalism and efficiency.

The proposal also includes support services such as ticketing, guiding, safety management, and emergency response systems. These services are essential for ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors.

Design considerations focus on environmental sensitivity, user safety, and experiential quality. The use of natural materials such as bamboo, minimal lighting, and low-impact construction techniques ensures that the development remains in harmony with the surroundings.

Accessibility and circulation are carefully planned to ensure ease of movement while maintaining ecological balance. Pedestrian pathways, clear signage, and controlled entry points help in managing visitor flow and minimizing disturbance to the natural environment.

Overall, the planning components create a well-structured system that balances recreation with conservation, ensuring sustainable development of adventure tourism in Chitrakoot.

6.9.4. Integration Approach

The Adventure Tourism Development proposal is designed as a complementary extension to the existing religious tourism framework of Chitrakoot, ensuring that it integrates seamlessly with other proposals and the overall planning vision of the town. Rather than replacing or competing with pilgrimage-based activities, the proposal enhances the tourism ecosystem by introducing an additional layer of recreational and nature-based experiences.

At the town level, the proposal integrates with earlier interventions such as Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs) and the parking system. These facilities support accessibility and provide essential services to tourists visiting the adventure zone. Visitors can utilize MFTCs for accommodation and basic amenities, while the structured parking system ensures smooth vehicular management up to the entry point of the adventure zone. This interlinking strengthens the overall tourism infrastructure network.

The proposal is also integrated with the tourist circuit of Chitrakoot, particularly through its proximity to nodes such as Godavari Mod, which acts as a connecting point between multiple destinations. The access routes from Satna Road and Rajola village ensure connectivity to the wider regional network, making the adventure zone easily accessible without disrupting the core religious areas.

From a mobility perspective, the proposal adopts a controlled access model, where vehicular movement is restricted beyond the entry point, and the internal circulation is primarily pedestrian-based. This approach aligns with sustainable mobility principles and helps in preserving the ecological character of the site.

Environmentally, the proposal integrates with the natural landscape by adopting low-impact development strategies. The use of temporary structures, minimal intervention, and eco-sensitive design ensures that the natural ecosystem is preserved. The eco-park component further strengthens this integration by promoting conservation and environmental awareness.

At the socio-economic level, the proposal is closely linked with nearby villages, particularly Rajola village, which serves as an access point. The development of adventure tourism creates opportunities for local employment in areas such as guiding, maintenance, hospitality, and operation of activities. This ensures that the benefits of tourism are distributed to local communities, supporting inclusive development.

At the corridor level, the proposal aligns with the broader objectives of the Ram Van Gaman Path by enhancing the attractiveness and diversity of destinations along the route. By introducing adventure tourism, Chitrakoot can cater to a wider range of visitors, strengthening its position as a multi-faceted tourism destination.

6.9.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the Adventure Tourism Development proposal is planned in a phased manner to ensure environmental sensitivity, feasibility, and gradual scaling of activities.

In the initial phase, the focus will be on demarcation of the 232-acre adventure tourism zone and development of basic infrastructure, Figure 6.14. This includes clearing and marking of trails, establishment of entry points, and creation of temporary parking facilities near Rajola village. Basic amenities such as toilets, drinking water, resting areas, and first-aid centres will be provided at the entry zone to ensure visitor convenience.

During this phase, limited activities such as walking trails and basic eco-tourism experiences can be introduced. This allows for controlled initiation of tourism activities while assessing environmental impact and user response.

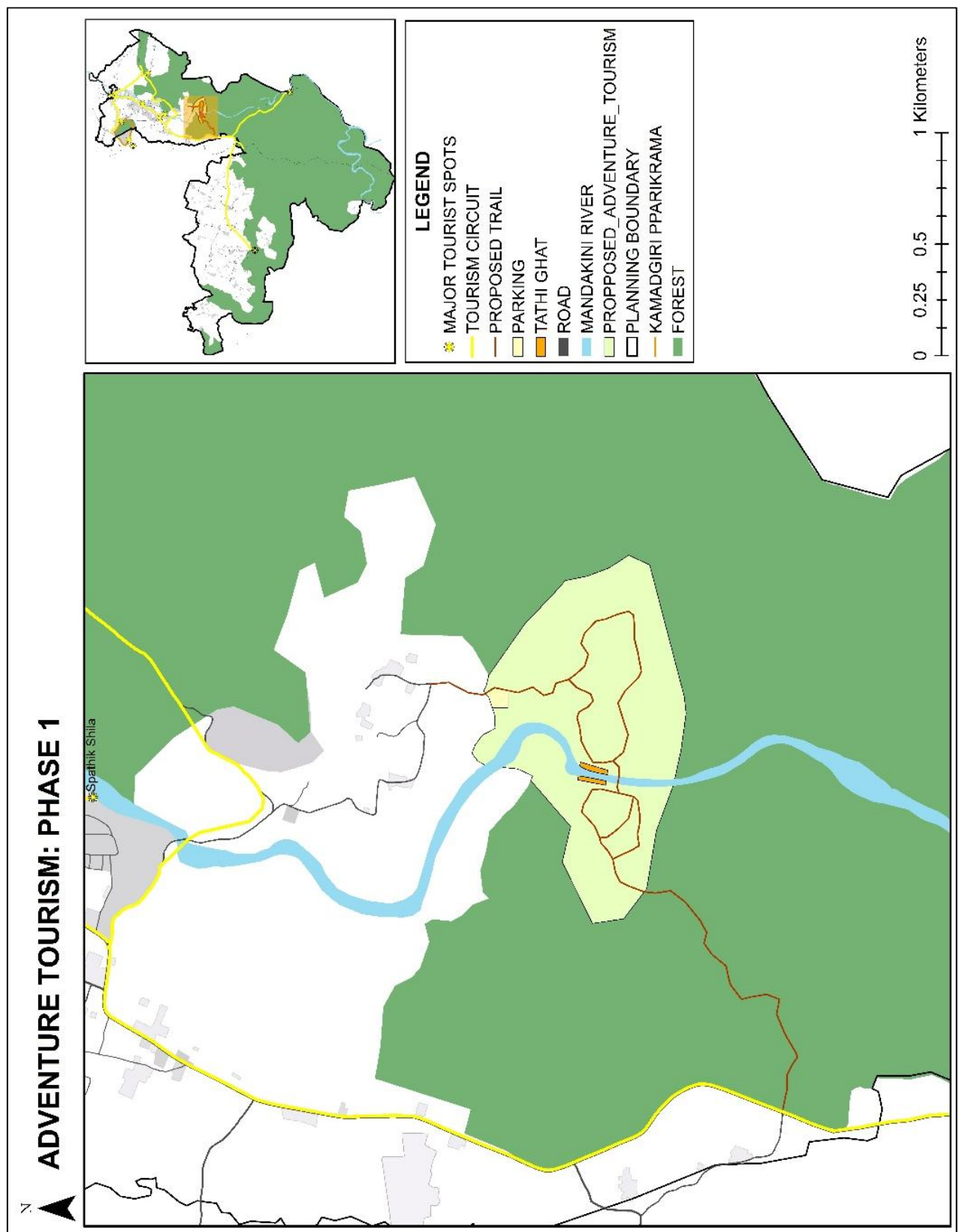


Figure 6.14: Proposal Phase 1: Adventure Tourism

Source: Author

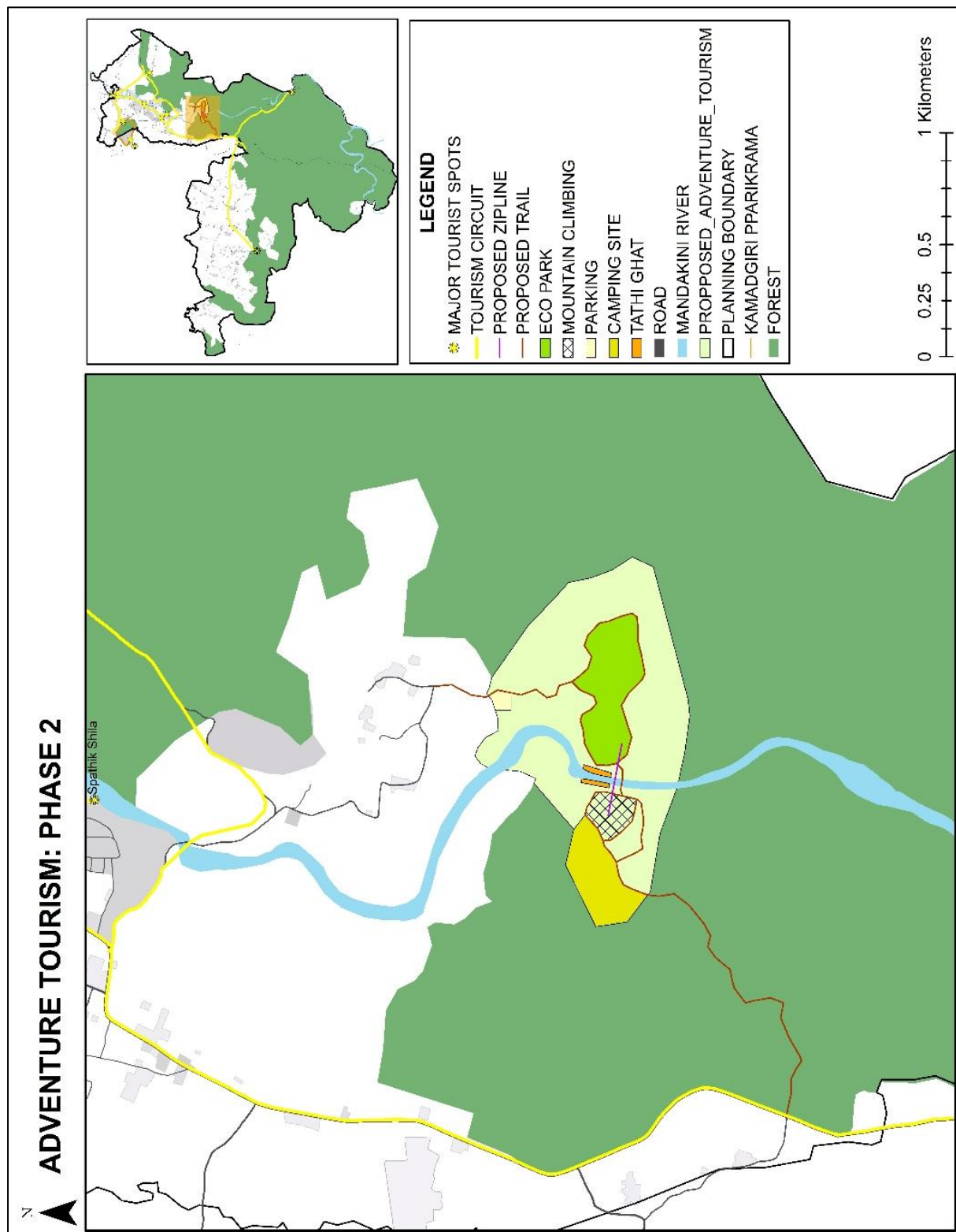


Figure 6.15: Proposal Phase 2: Adventure Tourism

Source: Author

In the second phase, the development will be expanded to include additional facilities such as camping sites, eco-park development, and introduction of water-based activities. The 22.6-acre camping zone will be developed with temporary tents and basic infrastructure to provide a natural living experience. The eco-park area of 33.2 acres will be developed with pathways, seating areas, and interpretive elements to enhance ecological awareness, Figure 6.15.

Adventure activities such as ziplining and rock climbing can also be introduced during this phase, with appropriate safety measures and professional management. The involvement of private operators becomes crucial at this stage, ensuring efficient and safe operation of activities.

In the final phase, the focus will be on expansion, optimization, and branding of the adventure tourism zone. Additional activities can be introduced based on demand, and existing facilities can be upgraded. Marketing and promotion efforts will be intensified to attract a wider audience, including non-religious tourists.

The phased approach ensures that development remains controlled and adaptable, minimizing environmental impact while maximizing economic and social benefits.

6.9.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation and maintenance of the Adventure Tourism Zone are proposed to be managed through a facilitation-based model, where the government provides infrastructure and regulatory oversight, while private players are responsible for operating and managing tourism activities.

Private operators will be responsible for managing adventure activities such as ziplining, camping, and water-based recreation. Their role includes ensuring safety, maintaining equipment, managing staff, and providing quality services to visitors. This approach ensures professional management and enhances the overall experience.

The government and local authorities will oversee the maintenance of basic infrastructure such as trails, entry points, and public amenities. Regular monitoring will be conducted to ensure compliance with environmental guidelines and safety standards.

Local communities, particularly those from nearby villages, can be involved in various aspects of operation, including guiding, maintenance, and support services. This not

only creates employment opportunities but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the project.

Maintenance of the site is critical to preserving its ecological integrity. Regular cleaning, waste management, and monitoring of environmental impact are essential components of the O&M framework. Strict regulations should be enforced to prevent littering, overuse, and damage to natural resources.

Overall, a collaborative approach involving government, private operators, and local communities ensures effective operation and long-term sustainability of the adventure tourism zone.

6.9.7. PESTEL Analysis

The Adventure Tourism Development proposal has multi-dimensional impacts across political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal aspects, *Table 6.7*.

Table 6.7: PESTEL Matrix for the proposal of Adventure Tourism

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Support for tourism diversification; alignment with eco-tourism policies; PPP facilitation model	Policy support
Economic	Increased tourist stay; revenue from activities; employment for local communities	Boost to local economy
Social	Recreational options for tourists; skill development for locals; community participation	Enhanced tourist experience
Technological	Adventure equipment; safety systems; digital bookings and management	Improved efficiency
Environmental	Low-impact development; forest conservation; non-motorized activities	Eco-friendly tourism
Legal	Forest regulations; environmental clearances; safety norms for activities	Regulatory compliance

Source: Author

a) Political

From a political perspective, the proposal aligns with government initiatives aimed at promoting tourism diversification and regional development. Support from tourism authorities enhances implementation feasibility.

b) Economic

Economically, the proposal generates employment opportunities and supports local businesses. It also contributes to increased tourist spending and extended duration of stay.

c) Social

Socially, the proposal enhances recreational opportunities and improves the overall tourist experience. It also benefits local communities through livelihood generation and skill development.

d) Technological

Technologically, the proposal incorporates modern equipment and safety systems for adventure activities, ensuring efficiency and reliability.

e) Environmental

Environmentally, the proposal emphasizes sustainable development through minimal intervention and conservation-focused planning. The eco-park and controlled access help in preserving natural resources.

f) Legal

Legally, the implementation requires compliance with forest regulations, environmental guidelines, and tourism policies. Proper approvals and monitoring mechanisms are essential to ensure responsible development.

6.9.8. Expected Outcomes

The implementation of the Adventure Tourism Development proposal is expected to bring significant benefits across various dimensions.

Economically, it will increase tourist inflow, extend the duration of stay, and create employment opportunities, particularly for local communities. Socially, it will enhance the diversity of experiences available to visitors, making Chitrakoot more attractive to a broader audience.

Environmentally, the proposal promotes conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Spatially, it contributes to a more balanced distribution of tourist activities, reducing pressure on core religious areas.

Overall, the proposal plays a crucial role in transforming Chitrakoot into a diversified and sustainable tourism destination, combining spirituality, ecology, and recreation.

6.10. Proposal 7: Art & Craft-Based Livelihood and Tourism Development

6.10.1. Rationale

Chitrakoot, while primarily known as a religious tourism destination, also possesses significant potential in the domain of traditional art and craft. The district of Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh has been recognized under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme for its wooden toys and craft traditions, highlighting the presence of skilled artisans and a cultural base for craft production. However, despite this recognition, the integration of local art and craft with the tourism economy remains limited and largely untapped.

The existing tourism pattern in Chitrakoot is heavily oriented towards pilgrimage activities, with limited engagement of visitors in local cultural and economic systems. A large number of tourists visit religious sites but do not significantly contribute to local value-added economic activities beyond basic consumption. This creates a gap between tourism potential and local livelihood generation.

At the same time, the continuous influx of pilgrims presents a strong opportunity for promoting locally made products, particularly religious idols, wooden toys, and handcrafted items. These products are directly linked to the cultural and spiritual context of the town, making them highly relevant and desirable for visitors. However, the absence of organized production, training, and marketing systems limits the scale and quality of such activities.

From a planning perspective, there is a need to create a structured platform that connects local artisans with tourism demand. This not only supports economic development but also helps in preserving traditional crafts and cultural identity. The integration of art and craft with tourism aligns with sustainable development principles, promoting inclusive growth and community participation.

6.10.2. Proposal Description

The proposal aims to develop an Art and Craft-Based Livelihood System integrated with tourism infrastructure, particularly through the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres (MFTCs). The core idea is to establish small-scale training and production centres

within or near the MFTCs, where local artisans and interested individuals can learn and practice the making of idols, wooden toys, and other craft products.

These training centres will function as skill development hubs, supported by government initiatives and programs such as ODOP and skill development schemes. Training programs will focus on improving craftsmanship, introducing better techniques, and enhancing product quality. Special emphasis will be given to the production of religious idols and culturally relevant items that have direct demand among pilgrims visiting Chitrakoot.

In addition to training, these centres will also serve as production and display spaces, where artisans can create and showcase their products. Tourists visiting the MFTCs *Figure 6.9*, can directly observe the craft-making process and purchase products, creating an interactive and engaging experience. This not only enhances tourist satisfaction but also increases the market visibility of local crafts.

The proposal promotes a decentralized and small-scale production model, ensuring that activities remain manageable and inclusive. Instead of large industrial setups, the focus is on empowering local artisans, self-help groups (SHGs), and households to participate in craft production. This approach ensures that economic benefits are distributed across the community.

Over time, the initiative can be expanded to include branding and marketing of Chitrakoot crafts, creating a distinct identity for products made in the region. This can further enhance their market value and enable wider distribution beyond the local market.

6.10.3. Planning Components

The planning of the Art and Craft proposal involves multiple components that collectively support production, training, and marketing activities.

At the physical level, the proposal includes the development of training and workshop spaces within MFTCs. These spaces are designed to accommodate small groups of artisans and trainees, with basic infrastructure such as workstations, storage areas, and display zones. The integration within MFTCs ensures accessibility and visibility, as these centres are located at key tourist nodes.

From a functional perspective, the proposal includes skill development programs, production activities, and retail opportunities. Training modules can be designed in collaboration with government agencies and local institutions, ensuring quality and relevance. Production activities focus on creating items that cater to tourist demand, particularly religious and souvenir products.

The proposal also includes a marketing component, where products are displayed and sold within MFTCs and other tourist areas. This creates a direct link between production and consumption, reducing intermediaries and increasing income for artisans.

Institutional components include the involvement of government agencies, local bodies, and organizations such as SHGs. These institutions play a key role in providing training, funding, and support for the initiative.

Overall, the planning components ensure a comprehensive system that integrates skill development, production, and marketing within the tourism framework.

6.10.4. Integration Approach

The proposal is closely integrated with other tourism infrastructure projects, particularly the Multi-Facility Tourist Centres, which serve as key nodes for visitor interaction. By locating training and production centres within MFTCs, the proposal ensures maximum visibility and accessibility.

The initiative also complements other proposals such as the tourist circuit and parking system by enhancing the overall tourist experience. Visitors can engage in cultural activities, purchase local products, and gain a deeper understanding of the region's heritage.

At the economic level, the proposal integrates with local livelihoods by creating opportunities for artisans and small-scale entrepreneurs. It also aligns with government initiatives such as ODOP, ensuring institutional support and scalability.

6.10.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the proposal is planned in phases to ensure gradual development and capacity building.

In the initial phase, training programs will be initiated in collaboration with government agencies, and basic workshop spaces will be established within selected MFTCs. Local artisans and interested individuals will be identified and trained.

In the second phase, production activities will be expanded, and dedicated spaces for display and sale of products will be developed. Branding and packaging of products can also be introduced at this stage.

In the final phase, the initiative can be scaled up with wider market linkages, improved production techniques, and potential involvement of private partners. This phase focuses on strengthening the economic viability and sustainability of the system.

6.10.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation of training and production centres will be managed by local groups such as SHGs, artisan cooperatives, or small enterprises. Government agencies will provide initial support in terms of training, funding, and infrastructure.

Maintenance of facilities within MFTCs will be managed as part of the overall operation of these centres. Regular monitoring and capacity-building programs will ensure quality and sustainability.

Revenue will be generated through the sale of products, providing income for artisans and supporting the maintenance of the system.

6.10.7. PESTEL Analysis

From a political perspective, the proposal aligns well with government initiatives such as the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme and various skill development programs aimed at promoting local industries and crafts. The involvement of government support in training, funding, and promotion strengthens the feasibility of the proposal and ensures institutional backing,

Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: PESTEL Analysis Matrix for Art & Craft Based Livelihood Proposal

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Political	Support through ODOP scheme; govt skill development programs	Policy support
Economic	Sale of idols & crafts; income for artisans; tourism-linked market	Local livelihood boost
Social	Skill development; preservation of traditional crafts; community participation	Cultural upliftment

Factors	Key Aspects	Impacts
Technological	Basic tools & improved crafting techniques; scope for branding & packaging	Better product quality
Environmental	Use of natural/local materials; small-scale production	Low environmental impact
Legal	Compliance with small-scale industry norms; ODOP guidelines	Regulatory compliance

Source: Author

From an economic perspective, the proposal creates opportunities for income generation through the production and sale of idols and handcrafted items. By linking art and craft with tourism demand, it enhances local economic activity and provides sustainable livelihood opportunities for artisans, self-help groups, and small-scale entrepreneurs.

From a social perspective, the proposal contributes to skill development, community participation, and preservation of traditional crafts. It empowers local artisans and encourages the transfer of knowledge to future generations, thereby strengthening the cultural identity of Chitrakoot.

From a technological perspective, the proposal involves the use of basic tools and improved crafting techniques to enhance product quality. In later stages, advancements in packaging, branding, and marketing can further improve the competitiveness and reach of locally produced goods.

From an environmental perspective, the proposal promotes small-scale and low-impact production using locally available materials. This ensures minimal environmental impact while supporting sustainable practices and resource efficiency.

From a legal perspective, the implementation of the proposal requires compliance with small-scale industry regulations, local governance frameworks, and ODOP guidelines. Proper institutional coordination and adherence to regulations will ensure smooth functioning and long-term sustainability.

6.10.8. Expected Outcomes

The proposed Art and Craft-Based Livelihood System is expected to generate multiple benefits. Economically, it will create employment opportunities and increase income for local communities. Socially, it will promote skill development and preserve traditional crafts.

From a tourism perspective, the proposal enhances visitor experience by providing cultural engagement and unique products. It also contributes to the identity of Chitrakoot as a destination that combines spirituality with cultural richness.

Overall, the proposal represents a sustainable and inclusive approach to development, leveraging local resources and skills to create long-term economic and social benefits.

6.11. Proposal 8: Ghat Redevelopment on Madhya Pradesh Side (Ram Ghat)

6.11.1. Rationale

Ram Ghat is one of the most significant and high-footfall religious locations in Chitrakoot, situated along the Mandakini river and shared between the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. While both sides of the ghat hold equal religious importance, there exists a noticeable imbalance in terms of infrastructure development and utilization.

The Uttar Pradesh side of Ram Ghat is relatively well-developed, with better-designed ghats, improved accessibility, and availability of basic amenities. As a result, a majority of pilgrims and tourists tend to concentrate on this side, leading to overcrowding and increased pressure on infrastructure. In contrast, the Madhya Pradesh side of the ghat, despite having a comparable spatial extent of approximately 2.5 acres (similar to 2.6 acres on the UP side), remains underutilized due to relatively lower levels of development and lack of facilities, *Figure 6.16*.

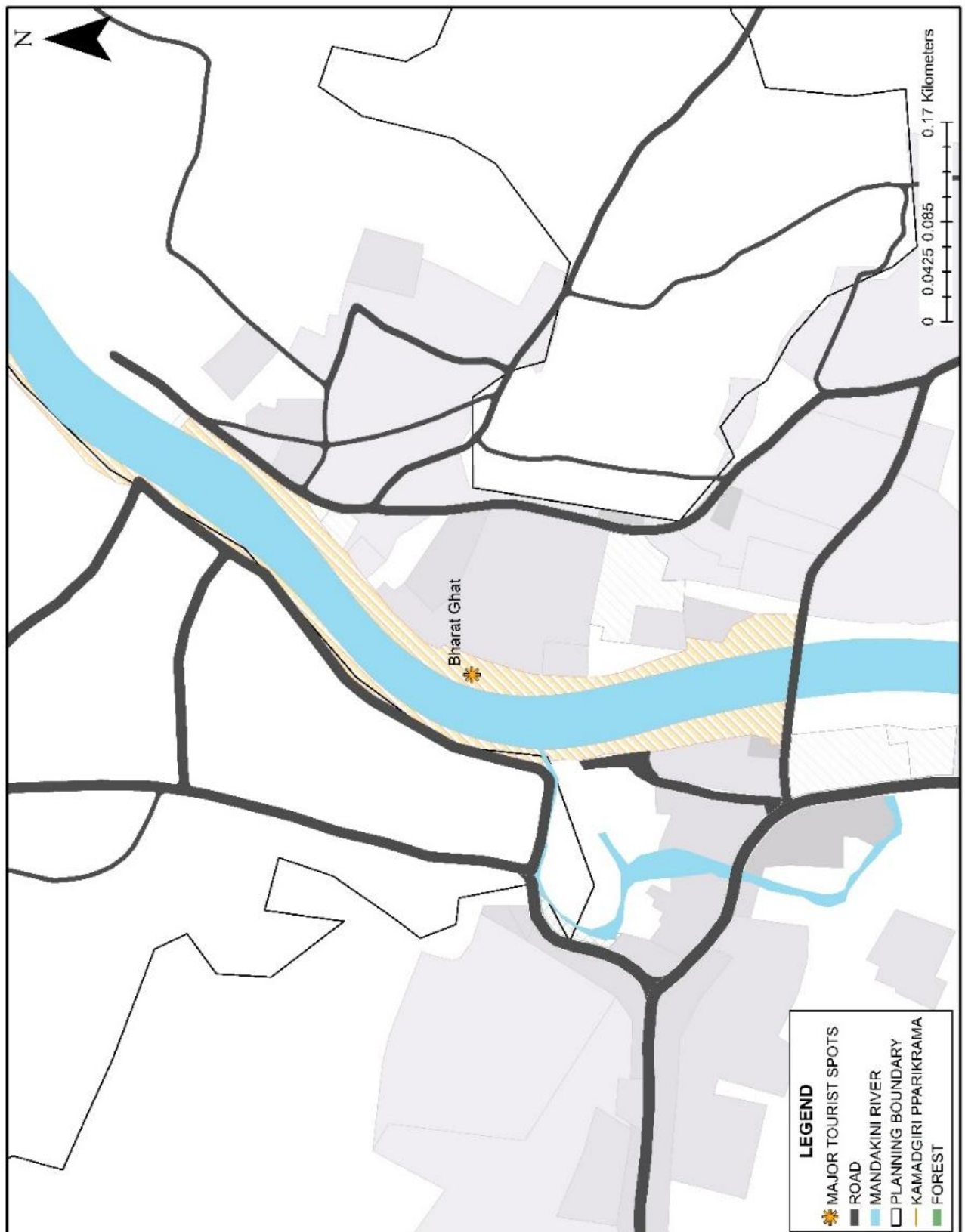


Figure 6.16: Existing map of Ram Ghat

Source: Author

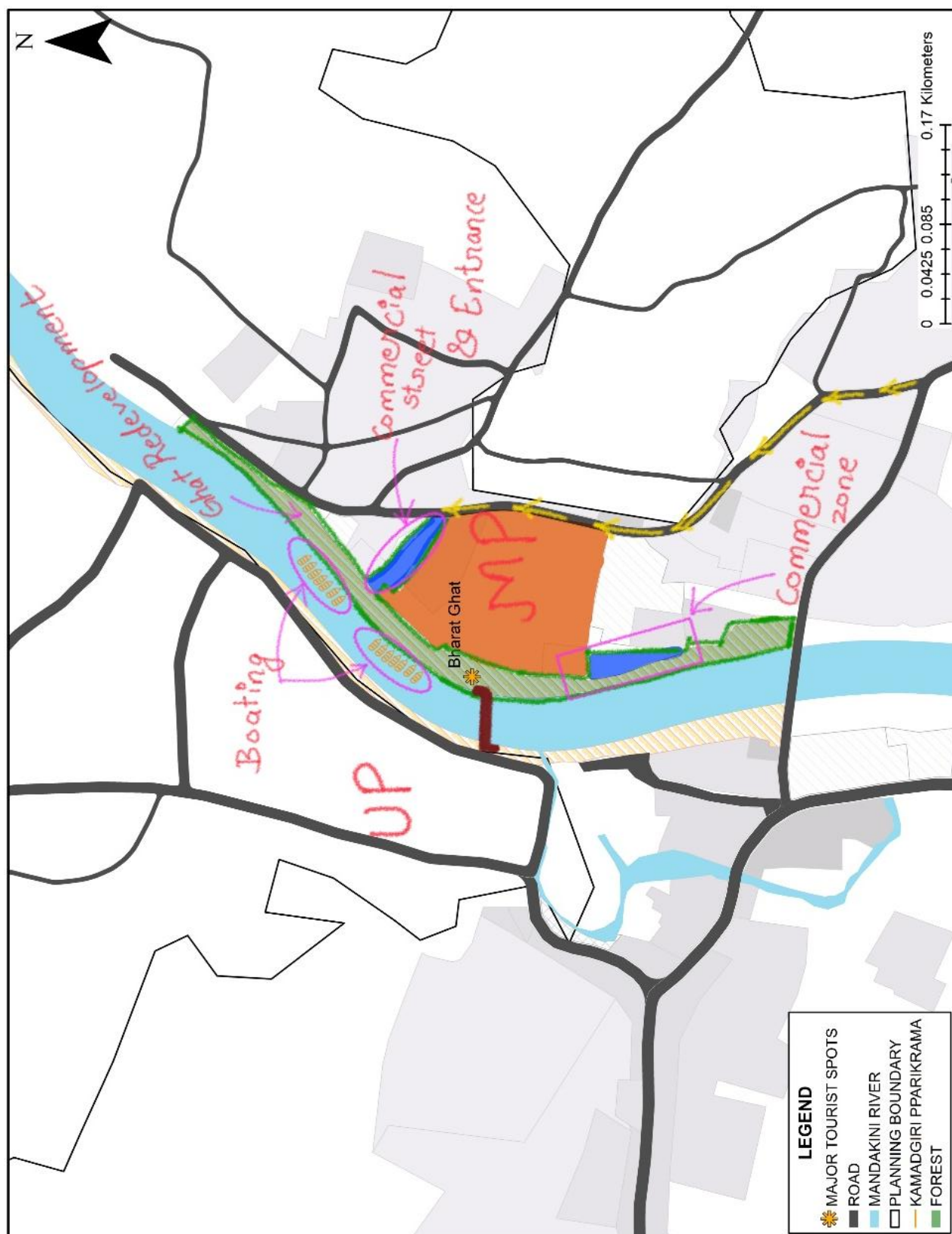


Figure 6.17: Ghat Redesign Proposal

Source: Author

This uneven development results in inefficient use of available space and missed economic opportunities for the Madhya Pradesh side. The concentration of visitors on one side not only affects the quality of experience but also creates issues related to congestion, safety, and environmental stress.

Given the high and continuous footfall at Ram Ghat, there is a strong opportunity to redistribute visitor activity by enhancing the infrastructure and attractiveness of the MP side. By redesigning and upgrading this area, it is possible to balance the usage of both sides of the ghat, improve overall visitor experience, and create additional economic opportunities for local vendors and stakeholders.

6.11.2. Proposal Description

The proposal aims to redevelop and upgrade the ghats on the Madhya Pradesh side of Ram Ghat, transforming them into well-designed, functional, and attractive spaces that can effectively accommodate a larger number of visitors.

The redevelopment focuses on improving both physical infrastructure and user experience. This includes the construction and enhancement of stepped ghats for safe and comfortable access to the river, along with improved pathways and circulation systems. Special attention is given to ensuring safety, particularly during peak periods, through proper design and materials.

In addition to basic infrastructure, the proposal includes the provision of essential amenities such as seating areas, shaded spaces, drinking water facilities, public toilets, and lighting. These facilities enhance the usability of the ghats and make them more attractive for visitors, *Figure 6.17*.

The proposal also incorporates aesthetic and cultural elements, ensuring that the design reflects the spiritual character of the place. Use of traditional materials, architectural elements, and landscape design helps in creating a harmonious and culturally sensitive environment.

Another important aspect is the development of activity spaces for rituals, aarti, and community gatherings. These spaces are designed to accommodate large groups while maintaining order and safety.

The redevelopment is planned in such a way that it complements the existing ghats on the UP side, creating a balanced and integrated riverfront experience. The aim is not to compete but to distribute activities more evenly across both sides of the river.

6.11.3. Planning Components

The planning of the ghat redevelopment includes several key components that contribute to its functionality and attractiveness.

At the physical level, the proposal includes the construction of stepped ghats, improved access points, and pedestrian pathways. The design ensures ease of movement and safe access to the river, particularly for elderly visitors and during peak crowd conditions.

Functional components include the provision of basic amenities such as toilets, drinking water facilities, seating, and shaded areas. These are essential for improving user comfort and supporting long-duration visits.

The proposal also includes lighting systems for enhanced safety and usability during evening hours, particularly during religious events such as aarti.

From a design perspective, the redevelopment emphasizes cultural integration and visual appeal. Landscaping, use of local materials, and incorporation of traditional design elements help in maintaining the spiritual character of the space.

Environmental considerations are also incorporated, ensuring that construction and activities do not adversely affect the river ecosystem. Proper drainage and waste management systems are included to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

6.11.4. Integration Approach

The proposal is integrated with the broader tourism and riverfront development strategy of Chitrakoot. It complements other proposals such as the tourist circuit, parking system, and MFTCs by enhancing one of the most important nodes in the tourism network.

The improved ghats on the MP side will be connected through the tourist circuit, ensuring accessibility and visibility. This integration helps in redistributing tourist flow and reducing congestion on the UP side.

The proposal also aligns with environmental and waste management initiatives, ensuring that the riverfront is maintained in a clean and sustainable manner.

Institutionally, the redevelopment requires coordination between authorities from both Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, ensuring a unified approach to riverfront development.

6.11.5. Implementation Strategy and Phasing

The implementation of the ghat redevelopment is proposed in phases to ensure feasibility and minimal disruption to ongoing activities.

In the initial phase, basic improvements such as cleaning, minor repairs, and provision of temporary amenities will be carried out. This ensures immediate enhancement of usability.

In the second phase, major infrastructure development including stepped ghats, pathways, and essential facilities will be undertaken. This phase focuses on creating a well-structured and functional space.

In the final phase, aesthetic enhancements, landscaping, and additional features will be introduced to improve the overall experience and visual quality of the ghats.

6.11.6. Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

The operation and maintenance of the redeveloped ghats will be managed by local authorities in coordination with relevant government agencies. Regular cleaning, maintenance of facilities, and monitoring of activities are essential to ensure long-term functionality.

Community participation can be encouraged in maintaining cleanliness and managing activities, particularly during peak periods. Proper management systems should be established to handle crowd control and ensure safety.

6.11.7. Expected Outcomes

The redevelopment of ghats on the MP side is expected to create a more balanced and efficient riverfront system. It will reduce congestion on the UP side, improve visitor experience, and enhance the overall functionality of Ram Ghat.

Economically, the proposal will generate new opportunities for local vendors and businesses on the MP side. Socially, it will improve accessibility and comfort for visitors.

Overall, the proposal contributes to creating a more equitable, functional, and sustainable riverfront environment, enhancing the identity of Chitrakoot as a well-managed religious destination.

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ANNEXURE

Annexure 1A: Tourist Survey Questionnaire

Tourist Survey

1. Group Size
 - a) Solo
 - b) 2–4 persons
 - c) 5–10 persons
 - d) More than 10 persons
2. Type of Group
 - a) Family
 - b) Friends
 - c) Colleagues
 - d) Religious Group / Yatra Group
 - Other _____
3. Type of Tour
 - a) Only visiting Chitrakoot
 - b) Part of a larger religious tour
4. Total Duration of Entire Tour (including other cities)
 - a) 1–3 days
 - b) 4–7 days
 - c) 8–15 days
 - d) More than 15 days
5. Duration of Stay in Chitrakoot
 - a) Less than 1 day (Day Visit)
 - b) 1–2 days
 - c) 3–5 days
 - d) More than 5 days
6. Frequency of Visit to Chitrakoot
 - a) First time b) Once a year c) 2–3 times a year
 - d) Only during festivals e) Regular visitor
7. Purpose of Visit
 - a) Religious Pilgrimage
 - b) Tourism / Sightseeing
 - c) Both
 - Other (Specify): _____
8. Mode of Transport Used to Reach Chitrakoot
 - a) Private Car
 - b) Bike
 - c) Bus
 - d) Train
 - e) Taxi / Auto
 - Other _____
9. Did you face traffic congestion during your visit?
 - a) Yes

- b) No
 - c) Only during peak hours
10. Type of Accommodation Used in Chitrakoot
- a) Hotel
 - b) Dharamshala
 - c) Guest House
 - d) Staying with relatives
 - e) Day Visit (No stay)
11. **How many places have you visited in Chitrakoot?**
- a) Kamadgiri Parikrama Path b) Gupt Godavari c) Ram Ghat
 - d) Janki Kund e) Hanuman Dhara f) Sati Anusuya Ashram
 - g) Sphatik Shila h) Van Devi Shakti Peeth i) Saryu Kund
 - j) Sarbhang Ashram k) Sutikshan Ashram k) Mukti Devi Temple
- Any other : _____**
12. Approximate Total Expenditure of Entire Tour
- a) Below ₹10,000
 - b) ₹10,000–₹25,000
 - c) ₹25,000–₹50,000
 - d) Above ₹50,000
13. Approximate Expenditure in Chitrakoot Only
- a) Below ₹2,000
 - b) ₹2,000–₹5,000
 - c) ₹5,000–₹10,000
 - d) Above ₹10,000
14. Major Spending Category in Chitrakoot (Tick one or more)
- a) Accommodation
 - b) Food
 - c) Religious offerings
 - d) Shopping / Souvenirs
 - e) Transport
 - f) Donations
15. Main Issues Faced During Visit (Tick applicable)
- a) Traffic Congestion b) Overcrowding
 - c) Poor Sanitation d) Lack of Parking
 - e) Inadequate Accommodation f) Poor Signage
 - g) Safety Concerns h) Toilets i) Drinking water
 - j) No major issue

Rating Section

16. How would you rate connectivity to Chitrakoot?
- a) Very Good b) Good c) Average d) Poor
17. Cleanliness around Temples & Ghats
- a) Very Clean b) Clean c) Average d) Poor
18. Availability of Public Facilities (Toilets & Water)
- a) Adequate b) Limited c) Poor

19. Overall Satisfaction Level
a) Very Satisfied b) Satisfied
c) Neutral d) Dissatisfied
20. Would you recommend anybody to visit Chitrakoot? Why?
- _____

Personal Information (Ending Section)

21. Age Group
a) Below 18
b) 18–30
c) 31–50
d) 51+
22. Gender
a) Male b) Female c) Other
23. Place of Origin & Last Visit
Origin: _____
Last Visit _____
24. Family Income (Monthly)
a) Below 10000 b) 10000-25000 c) 25001-50000
d) 50001-100000 e) Above 1 Lakh
25. What improvements would you suggest for Chitrakoot?
- _____

Annexure 1B: Tourist Survey Questionnaire in Hindi

पर्यटक सर्वेक्षण (Tourist Survey)

1. समूह का आकार (Group Size)
☐ अकेले ☐ 2-4 व्यक्ति ☐ 5-10 व्यक्ति ☐ 10 से अधिक
2. समूह का प्रकार (Type of Group)
☐ परिवार ☐ मित्र ☐ सहकर्मी ☐ धार्मिक / यात्रा समूह
☐ अन्य _____
3. यात्रा का प्रकार (Type of Tour)
☐ केवल चित्रकूट घूमने आए हैं
☐ बड़ी धार्मिक यात्रा का हिस्सा
4. पूरी यात्रा की कुल अवधि (अन्य शहरों सहित)
☐ 1-3 दिन ☐ 4-7 दिन ☐ 8-15 दिन ☐ 15 दिन से अधिक
5. चित्रकूट में ठहरने की अवधि
☐ 1 दिन से कम (सिर्फ दिनभर) ☐ 1-2 दिन ☐ 3-5 दिन
☐ 5 दिन से अधिक
6. चित्रकूट आने की आवृत्ति
☐ पहली बार
☐ साल में एक बार
☐ साल में 2-3 बार
☐ केवल त्योहारों में
☐ नियमित रूप से
7. आने का उद्देश्य (Purpose of Visit)
☐ धार्मिक यात्रा ☐ घूमना / दर्शनीय स्थल ☐ दोनों
☐ अन्य _____
8. चित्रकूट आने के लिए उपयोग किया गया साधन
☐ निजी कार ☐ बाइक ☐ बस ☐ ट्रेन ☐ टैक्सी / ऑटो
☐ अन्य _____
9. क्या यात्रा के दौरान ट्रैफिक जाम का सामना करना पड़ा?
☐ हाँ ☐ नहीं ☐ केवल भीड़ वाले समय में
10. चित्रकूट में ठहरने की व्यवस्था?
☐ होटल ☐ धर्मशाला ☐ गेस्ट हाउस ☐ रिश्तेदारों के यहाँ
☐ ठहराव नहीं (सिर्फ दिनभर)
11. आपने चित्रकूट में किन-किन स्थानों का भ्रमण किया है?
 - a) कामदगिरि परिक्रमा पथ
 - b) गुप्त गोदावरी

- c) राम घाट
- d) जानकी कुंड
- e) हनुमान धारा
- f) सती अनुसूया आश्रम
- g) स्फटिक शिला
- h) वन देवी शक्ति पीठ
- i) सरयू कुंड
- j) शरभंग आश्रम
- k) सुतीक्ष्ण आश्रम
- l) मुक्ति देवी मंदिर

अन्य कोई स्थान : _____

- 12. पूरी यात्रा का लगभग खर्च
 - ☐ ₹10,000 से कम
 - ☐ ₹10,000 – ₹25,000
 - ☐ ₹25,000 – ₹50,000
 - ☐ ₹50,000 से अधिक
- 13. केवल चित्रकूट में लगभग खर्च
 - ☐ ₹2,000 से कम ☐ ₹2,000 – ₹5,000
 - ☐ ₹5,000 – ₹10,000 ☐ ₹10,000 से अधिक
- 14. चित्रकूट में मुख्य खर्च (एक या अधिक चुनें)
 - ☐ ठहराव ☐ भोजन ☐ पूजा / चढ़ावा ☐ खरीदारी / स्मृति-चिह्न
 - ☐ परिवहन ☐ दान
- 15. यात्रा के दौरान प्रमुख समस्याएँ (जो लागू हों)
 - ☐ ट्रैफिक जाम ☐ बहुत भीड़ ☐ खराब सफाई ☐ पार्किंग की कमी
 - ☐ ठहरने की कमी ☐ संकेतक / साइनज की कमी
 - ☐ सुरक्षा संबंधी चिंता ☐ कोई बड़ी समस्या नहीं

रेटिंग सेक्शन (Rating Section)

- 16. चित्रकूट तक पहुँच / कनेक्टिविटी कैसी लगी?
 - ☐ बहुत अच्छी ☐ अच्छी ☐ ठीक-ठाक ☐ खराब
- 17. मंदिरों और घाटों के आसपास सफाई
 - ☐ बहुत साफ ☐ साफ ☐ सामान्य ☐ खराब
- 18. सार्वजनिक सुविधाएँ (शौचालय, पानी, संकेतक आदि)
 - ☐ पर्याप्त ☐ सीमित ☐ खराब

19. कुल मिलाकर संतुष्टि स्तर
☐ बहुत संतुष्ट ☐ संतुष्ट ☐ सामान्य ☐ असंतुष्ट
20. क्या आप किसी अन्य व्यक्ति को चित्रकूट घूमने/दर्शन करने की सलाह देंगे? क्यों?

व्यक्तिगत जानकारी (Personal Information)

21. आयु वर्ग
☐ 18 से कम ☐ 18-30 ☐ 31-50 ☐ 51 से अधिक
22. लिंग (Gender)
☐ पुरुष ☐ महिला ☐ अन्य
23. निवास स्थान एवं पिछली यात्रा
निवास स्थान: _____
पिछली यात्रा: _____
24. परिवार की मासिक आय
☐ ₹10,000 से कम
☐ ₹10,000 – ₹25,000
☐ ₹25,001 – ₹50,000
☐ ₹50,001 – ₹1,00,000
☐ ₹1 लाख से अधिक
25. आप चित्रकूट में क्या सुधार सुझाना चाहेंगे?

Annexure 2: Shopkeepers Survey Questionnaire
Shopkeepers/Service Providers Survey

1. Type of Business:
a) Puja Shop b) Hotel c) Restaurant d) Souvenir (Local Products)
e) Transport Other _____
2. Years in business: _____
3. Does tourist season increase income significantly?
a) Yes b) No
4. Which months bring highest revenue? _____
5. Major issues affecting business:
a) Traffic
b) Lack of Parking
c) Poor Sanitation
d) Irregular Electricity
e) Low Tourist Facilities
6. Goods Network (Name of Places)
Source _____
Customer _____
7. Do you support Ram Van Gaman Path development?
a) Yes a) No
8. What facilities should government prioritize?
a) Parking
b) Public Toilets
c) Street Lighting
d) Signage
e) Riverfront Development

Annexure 3: Local Residents Survey Questionnaire

Local Residents Questionnaire

1. Age: _____
2. Occupation: _____
3. Years of residence in Chitrakoot: _____
4. Does tourism create employment?
a) Yes b) No
5. Does tourism improve your income?
a) Yes b) No c) Partially
6. During peak season, do you face:
a) Traffic congestion
b) Water shortage
c) Waste accumulation
d) Noise pollution
e) None
7. Infrastructure Availability (Rating 1-5)
Water-
Sanitation-
Electricity-
8. Are public services sufficient during festivals?
a) Yes b) No
9. Should tourist areas be separated from residential areas?
a) Yes b) No
10. Should the town be developed like Ayodhya?
a) Yes b) No c) Not Sure
11. What changes do you want in Chitrakoot?
