

CHAPTER 2

STUDY AREA

(2.1) Study Area:

Vadodara also known as Baroda, is the third most populated town in the Gujarat after Ahmedabad and Surat (the Three towns with a population of over 1 million in Gujarat) and 16th most populous city of India. It is located at 22°17'59 North latitude and 73°15'18 East longitude. It is situated on the bank of Vishwamitri River and is known as the “Cultural Capital” of Gujarat. Total area covered by the Vadodara Maha Seva Sadan (VMSS) is approximately 145 km². The name “Vadodara” has originated from the Gujarati word “Vad” which means Banyan tree. The city has many banyan trees growing along the road side and gardens thus manifesting the name of the city. The city is also known as the “City of Gardens”. As the name suggests the city has got as many as 51 gardens located in different areas.

The city has lot of potential to develop as the Eco-city because area and size of the city is very small and thus the planning can be done easily. Moreover, the river Vishwamitri which flows from the middle of the city has much of the green vegetation along the riverside which contributes in maintaining the ecological balance in the city (**Plate 11**). The university campus itself is located on the banks of Vishwamitri and thus having good vegetation all around the campus. In addition to this the city also has roadside vegetation which constitutes prominent part of the urban forest.

2.2. Geography:

Geographically the city is so located that it played the role of a corridor for the movement of people, cultures and armies from the time immemorial. It is in Vadodara that the traditional route connecting the Makran Coast (Indus Delta) with the central India and Malwa Plateau, branches off. The ancient route from northern Maharashtra

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across the Dang and the Saputara hills passes from Chandod on the Narmada River and joins with main transcontinental route at Vadodara. The Vadodara district is surrounded by Panchmahal, Dahod (North), Bharuch, Narmada (South), Anand and Kheda (West) districts. To the east is the state of Madhya Pradesh. The Mahi River also passes through the district.

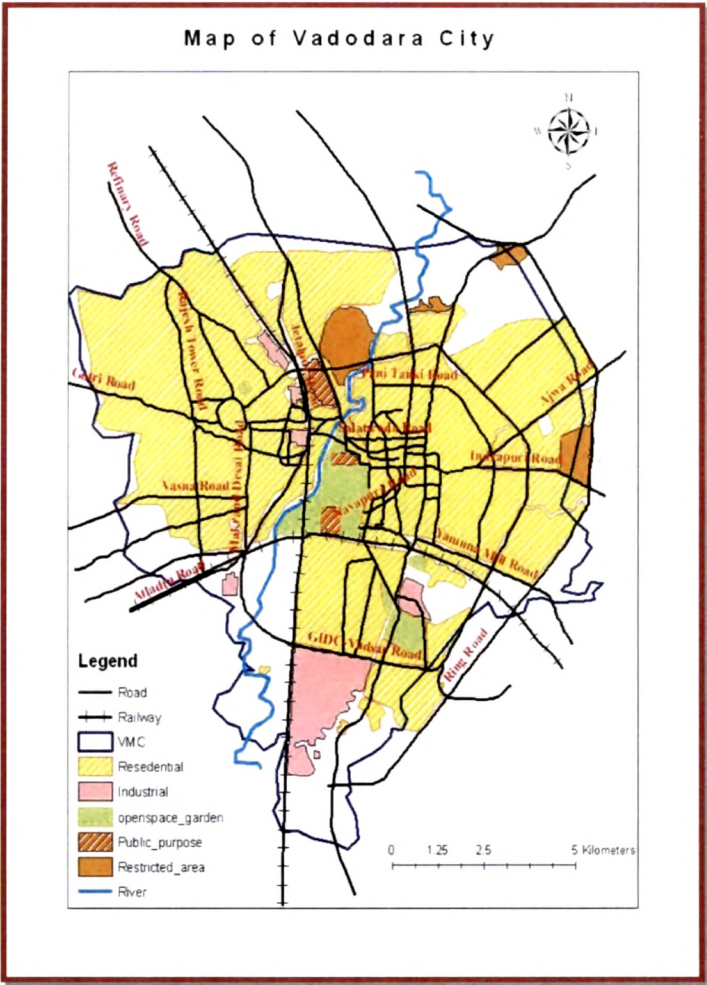


Plate 11: Map showing the study area

(2.3) Regional setting:

Vadodara has become an important flourishing centre of trade and industry, because of its location between Mumbai in the South west and Ahmedabad in the North.

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Geographically the city is so located that it played the role of a corridor called “Gujarat Region”. The agglomeration is in advantageous position of the growth of the whole western and North western corridors of the country. This is a challenge and opportunity, too.

(2.4) History of Vadodara:

The earliest mention of Baroda is in a grant of charter of [812] that identifies it as Vadapadraka replaced Ankottaka as the main town. The city was once called Chandravati, after its ruler Raja Chandan, then Viravati, the abode of the brave, and the Vadpatra because of the abundance of Banyan trees on the banks of the Vishwamitri.

The archaeological evidences suggests that Vadodara originated as a small hamlet called Ankottaka (present day Akota) on the western banks of the river Vishwamitri, a tributary of Dhadhar. The hamlet existed 2BC to 600AD.

Evidence shows that the inhabitants lived in well-built houses of burnt brick. Ankottaka was the seat of nonferrous foundry, molding bronze sculptures known to be better than the Chola bronzes. Gujarat artisans in metal foundry were prior to any other culture in the world. Ankottaka was the centre of Jainism.

Around 600 AD, a massive flood in Vishwamitri washed away Ankottaka; its inhabitants took refuge in Vadapadraka to the east and a little away from the Vishwamitri. The new settlement of Vadapadraka (present day Kothi), that grew to the east around 600 AD, perhaps, brought the development of Ankottaka to an end. Vadapadraka served the administrative centre during Mauryan, Gupta and Chalukyan rule from 900AD to 1500AD.

The wall city of Kille e-Daulatabad was founded further east by the Muslims in 1511AD. Located on a plateau and inhabited by Hindus and Muslims, the city was

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square form with major roads on east west and north-south axis and at cross junction the dominant institution of Mandvi was located.

The first expansion in 1650AD, was a planned growth to the south (present day Wadi), mainly inhabited by Muslims. The rule of the Mughal Sultanate came to an end after the Marathas took over the city and made it their capital in 1725AD, naming it Barode.

After the Treaty Bassein in 1802AD, the British became powerful and constituted themselves as arbitrator in all transactions of the Gaekwads. They further consolidated their position around 1818AD after their treatise with the Gaekwads. Subsequently, the establishment of the British Residency, the Cantonment to the northwest, and the Railway station to the west took place.

Baroda began to experience the first aspects of urbanization during the rule of Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad III (1875-1939 AD). Sayajirao III was a visionary and institution builder. Under his able guidance, the princely state of Baroda became one of the most progressive states in the country. **Plate 12** shows the Map of Baroda state of year 1909. Sayajirao III also had the foresightedness to realize that planned development has to be supported by infrastructure development. He initiated the construction of an eastern dam across the river Surya at Ajwa. The city began to receive filtered water through pipelines in 1894AD. The flow in the entire network was through gravity. Piped sewerage was put in place in 1896AD. The first water boosting station with elevated reservoir and the sewage treatment plant were commissioned in 1952, although localized collection of sewage by pumping was in practice prior to that. Surface runoff was directed to detention tanks interconnected by storm water drains. Surplus water from the tanks was

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directed by underground tunnels to Sursagar. Water from Sursagar was emptied into the river Vishwamitri when in excess.



Plate 12: Map showing Baroda state in 1909

(2.5) Topography, Natural Drainage and water Bodies:

Vadodara has a flat terrain, with five rivers i.e. Mahisagar in the north going along the boundary of the VUDA whereas the Mini, Vishwamitri, Surya Jambuvai and the Dhadhar flowing in the south. Apart from this there are smaller drains which cut across the landscape and form important part of the natural drainage system. Vadodara city has a general slope from east to west and north to south.