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## THE OLD TOWN OF KUPANG: PERSISTENT ELEMENTS AND THE QUALITY OF THE SPACE BASED ON PUBLIC VIEWS

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### ABSTRACT

Kupang's Old Town has undergone significant changes over time, influenced by foreign interventions that left behind a wide variety of historical stories and physical evidence as silent witnesses to the development of Kupang's Old Town. However, these historical elements are currently under threat due to a lack of protection and management.

**Aims:** This research aims to study the physical changes in the urban network from the 17th century to the 21st century, highlighting elements that have disappeared, changed, or survived. The study also explores the community's perception of the surviving historical aspects.

**Methodology and Results:** Using a descriptive qualitative approach, [1]the results show significant changes within the area, including the loss of certain elements, changes in function, and the continuation of others. The community values the aspects that have survived, especially the historical buildings, which are seen as an integral part to the area's identity. There is a desire to improve the quality of space in Kupang's Old Town today.

**Conclusion, Significance and Implication:** The study recommends the development of policies that integrate urban growth, historic preservation, and stakeholder participation to achieve a balanced management of Kupang's Old Town.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The old city of Kupang is one of the legacies of the Dutch East Indies era, which lasted from the 15th century to the 21st century. According to Koepang Tempoe Doeloe [2] and Citra Kota Kupang [3], the area has undergone significant changes triggered by several factors and contributions from various actors throughout its history, including foreign influences that affected economic, social, and political aspects. These changes include the evolution of the area's physical structure and concept of function. The remaining historical buildings from the Dutch colonial period still standing show the potential for tourism development [4].

The area has continued to evolve, influenced by many factors and contributions from various actors that have shaped the new structure and function [5]. These changes include the evolution of physical elements such as open spaces, streets, and buildings and the introduction of new concepts of area function. The existence of these historical elements is important as the character of the old town [6] and as part of the important systems of the past, and how they are integrated into modern urban life [7]. In 2018, the Kupang city government had a plan to demolish historical buildings in the old town of Kupang for business purposes, which was rejected by community groups. This contradicts the government's duty to protect and develop old city sites as cultural heritage [8], as the city of Semarang and its historical heritage are well preserved and maintained in its old city [9].

Research has been conducted in the form of Kupang's morphology [10]. Through several studies related to Kupang's Old City, it is evident that some aspects have not been explored, particularly regarding the process of change in persistent elements within the city, especially in the Kupang's Old Town area. In addition, the inclusion of public perceptions in the assessment of changes in current conditions that affect the spatial quality of Kupang's Old Town area has not been thoroughly addressed. To obtain these public perceptions, this study uses placemaking as an indicator to collect information on public perceptions. Through this approach, the quality of the Kota Lama Kupang area can be revealed. [11]

The results of the research can be used as a basis for policy development aimed at revitalizing the old city area by balancing urban growth, land use policies, and the preservation of the area's historical functions. This process involves all relevant stakeholders, including the community, to create a sustainable positive impact on the development and identity of this old city. In addition to the previously mentioned problem formulation, several problems occur in the old town area of Kupang, namely: a reduced identity and characteristics as an old town area, the diminished

economic vitality of the area, and the lack of a specialized management approach for the old town area of Kupang.

Based on the issues of the importance of the historic physical elements in Kota Lama Kupang, the changes that have occurred over time, and the role of the community in the development of the historic area, several key research questions were identified as the foundation of this study: How has the urban tissue of Kupang's Old Town changed from the 17th century to the 21st century? What elements of the urban tissue are missing, changing, and persisting in Kupang's Old Town? What is the public's perception of the significance of the persistent elements of urban tissue in the Kupang's Old Town?

To answer the research question, this study employs an approach based on the theory of urban morphology, which fundamentally addresses the broad dimensions of changes occurring in a city. In this study, the research focus is more centered on discussing the physical elements in the arrangement of a city's appearance that form the urban form. The approach described by Kropf [12] and Oliveira [13] is used to explain the relevant physical elements, namely the concept of Urban Tissue, Natural Context, Street-Square, Plots/Lots, and Buildings [14]. The five elements are part of the urban form, and when divided into fractions of these five elements, sequential changes can be explained by analyzing the urban tissue.

Kupang's Old Town sub-district is the embryo or generator of Kupang's development [15] [16], changes over time certainly affect these elements physically, through their location or function. Aldo Rossi's [17] approach is used to explain the persistence of the five elements, including those that have been lost, changed (in function, location, and appearance), or remained persistent. The persistence of an element can be influenced by various factors and actors throughout the history of the city, which is closely related to the historical journey of the five physical elements mentioned above.

The existence of historical elements is physical evidence of a long-standing urban history, with Rossi's theory of permanence/persistence, which highlights the development of cities always related to existing old elements, and also the important role of historical areas in the development of areas called historical buildings and collective memory [17]. The transformation of the physical elements of the city includes driving, pathological, and evolutionary elements [17].

Changes in the physical elements up to the present, or elements that still exist today, are associated with some of the current problems at the location. This section focuses on the

community, particularly the residents, and their responses to the presence of these persistent elements. This approach helps to understand the spatial quality of Kupang’s Old Town, as the development of the area and the preservation of its cultural heritage cannot be separated from the importance of community participation. The goal is to ensure the sustainability and maintain the identity of Kupang’s Old Town area [18][19][20], with the Heritage Urban Landscape and Place Making approach, which includes: Identity & Collective memory, Historical Continuity, Infrastructure, Vitality, Built Environment Formation [21], Comfort & Image Access & Connection [22], Uses & Activities [23] [24].

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research used a parallel/staggered method to explore transformations in Kupang's Old Town area. The analysis followed these stages:

**Stage One:** Significant changes over time were identified using secondary data from previous research. Synchronic analysis was applied to explain the development and sequential changes in the figure-ground from the 17th, 18th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

**Stage Two:** The site was mapped to identify changes in the function and form of elements through historical analysis. This involved reviewing historical records and old photographs. A diachronic analysis was then conducted to identify persistent elements in the current period.

**Stage Three:** The third research question was addressed by converting qualitative questionnaire data into quantitative data. Responses to open-ended questions were coded into categories, transformed into percentages, and visualized using pie charts. The questionnaire was administered to respondents aged 15-60 who live or work in the area, with the results highlighting the most dominant responses.

**Table 1.** Indicators and Sub-indicators that Determine the Quality of the Old Town Area

Indicators	Sub-indicators
Identity & Collective Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of historic elements within the area such as buildings and neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• The personal impression that the historic area gives to the community.</li> <li>• The influence of modern materials and forms on historic buildings and neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
Historic Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics of the atmosphere that can still be felt today</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-maintained spatial arrangement and management.</li> </ul>
Vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of historic elements to the community.</li> </ul>
The Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectation for historic neighbourhood development.</li> </ul>

Comfort & Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe.</li> <li>• Charming.</li> <li>• Attractive.</li> </ul>
Access & Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convenient.</li> </ul>
Uses & Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special.</li> <li>• Useful.</li> </ul>

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Study of Persistent Elements

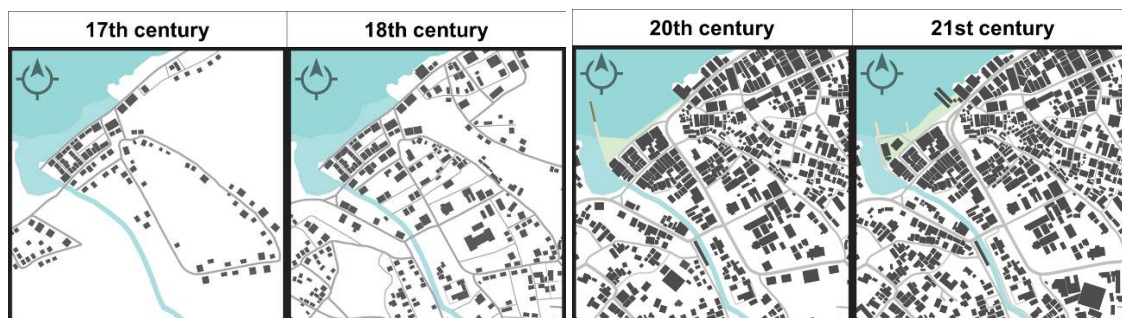
The selection of this research period is based on the events that occurred during the specified times:

1. In the 17th century, the Chinese ethnic group arrived and established Chinatown in Kupang and developed markets along the coast. This coincided with the arrival of the Portuguese and the Dutch in the Old Town area of Kupang, as well as the exodus of the Helong tribe to Semau Island due to the war between the Portuguese and the Dutch [2].
2. In the 18th century, many Chinese temples were built [25], the Dutch established their government system, and earthquakes occurred, causing damage to houses and public buildings.
3. In the 20th century, World War II caused damage to buildings in Kupang due to Allied bombing of Japanese forces, and in the 19th century, British aggression caused damage [26]. There was a transition of government from the Dutch to Indonesia, and Chinese temples were demolished and replaced with shops [25].
4. In the 21st century, the area has developed into a center for trade and services within the land use of the city of Kupang.

A historical analysis of the Old Town area of Kupang reveals its urban transformation, including structural, functional, and socio-economic changes. This has influenced the characteristics of the city, allowing the identification of elements that have persisted, changed, or disappeared over time. This follows the changes in each urban tissue element of the Old Town area of Kupang.

##### a) Concept of Urban Tissue

The transformation of these elements has gradually changed, with the addition of functions and the loss or alteration of some that were originally present. Since the 17th century, the Old Town area of Kupang has evolved, maintaining its role as a strategic port while integrating agricultural land and road infrastructure for mobility.



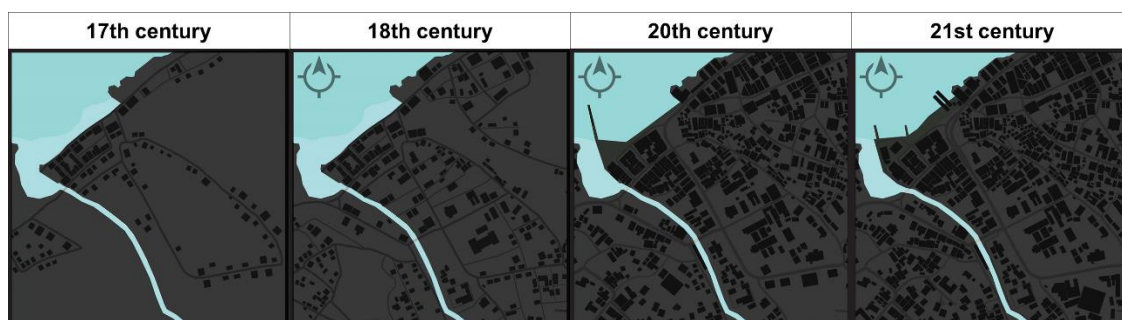
**Fig 1.** Transformation Concept of Urban Tissue Kupang Old Town Area (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

In the 18th century, the port function continued, and the Dutch government established its government system as the trade sector began to grow. In the 20th century, the port function continued, and the involvement of the Chinese ethnic group in the trade and service sectors increased, driving economic growth and leading to an increase in population and settlements. Into the 21st century, the area continues to be used for trade and services, with the addition of a beach tourism function [27], replace the port function.

**Table 2.** Permanence matrix, the Concept of the Urban Tissue

Period		17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century	
Element of urban tissue		17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century	
Concept of Urban Tissue	Settlements	[Black bar]			<i>Persistent</i>	
	Harbour	[Black bar]		[Yellow bar]	<i>Changing</i>	
	Government centre	[Black bar]			[Red bar]	<i>Extinct</i>
	Trade centre	[Black bar]			[Green bar]	<i>Persistent</i>
	Tourism	[Black bar]			[Black bar]	

**b) Natural Context**



**Fig 2.** Transformation of Natural Context (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

The development in Kupang's Old Town has progressed, but key natural elements such as the Dendeng River and Kupang Bay have remained unchanged over time. These elements have been preserved and are still present today. The only noticeable change is at Tedis Beach, where the shoreline has been transformed into a park with additional buildings to expand the jetty area. Kupang Bay, which was once a docking area for ships, has become a popular tourist destination in the city. The natural elements, including the Dendeng River and Kupang Bay, have retained their original pattern and form and can still be developed to support activities and enhance the economic vitality of the area. The use of the Dendeng River as a focal point for development is also proposed.

**Table 3.** Permanence matrix of elements of urban tissue: Natural Context

Period		17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century
Element of urban tissue					
Natural Context	Teluk Kupang				Persistent
	Dendeng River				Persistent

**c) Street/Square**



**Fig 3.** Transformation of Elements; Street-square (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

The road network in Kupang's Old Town has evolved over time due to Dutch and Indonesian influence. The original network stayed the same until the Portuguese built Fort Concordia, extending the roads westward. The Dutch later expanded settlements, modifying roads and adding complexity. In the 18th and 19th centuries, ethnic settlements improved road infrastructure and connectivity. The 20th century saw the construction of new roads, driving further settlement growth. After independence, the focus was on enhancing the road network for better mobility. The Selam Bridge area, once a park, became the site of the Human Rights Monument. By 2023, population growth led to realigned secondary roads and denser settlements. Soekarno and Siliwangi Streets are notable for their Dutch heritage buildings and

the former Kampung Cina.



**Fig 4.** Historic Arterial Roads in Kupang Old City (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

There are two famous streets in Kupang's Old Town area, Soekarno Street and Siliwangi Street. These streets are an important part of the history of the area and have been witnessed significant changes over the years. These streets are characterized by historic Dutch buildings and were once home to Kampung Cina. Another important street in the area is Ikan Paus Street, which has existed since the arrival of the Helong tribe. This road network has not changed over the centuries and still functions well. It was originally used as a link between the kingdom and the residential areas, as well as the fort and the harbour, which were separated by the Kali Dendeng River.

**Table 4.** Permanence Matrix of Street-square

Period		17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century
Element of urban tissue					
Street-Square	Arterial Road	[Black bar]			[Green bar] <i>Persistent</i>
	Secondary roads	[Black bar]		[Yellow bar] <i>Changing</i>	
	Park at the end of the "diving bridge"	[Black bar]		[Yellow bar]	[Red bar] <i>Extinct</i>
	Tedis beach / LLBK beach park	[Black bar]			[Black bar]

The changes were quite complex when European nations took control of the Old Town area of Kupang in the mid-17th century, [28] beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese, which triggered a war with the Dutch for violating a truce, and the war between the Portuguese and Koen Kudang Laiskodat II, due to the deception of the Portuguese to own a piece of land as wide as a buffalo hide.

d) Plots/Lots

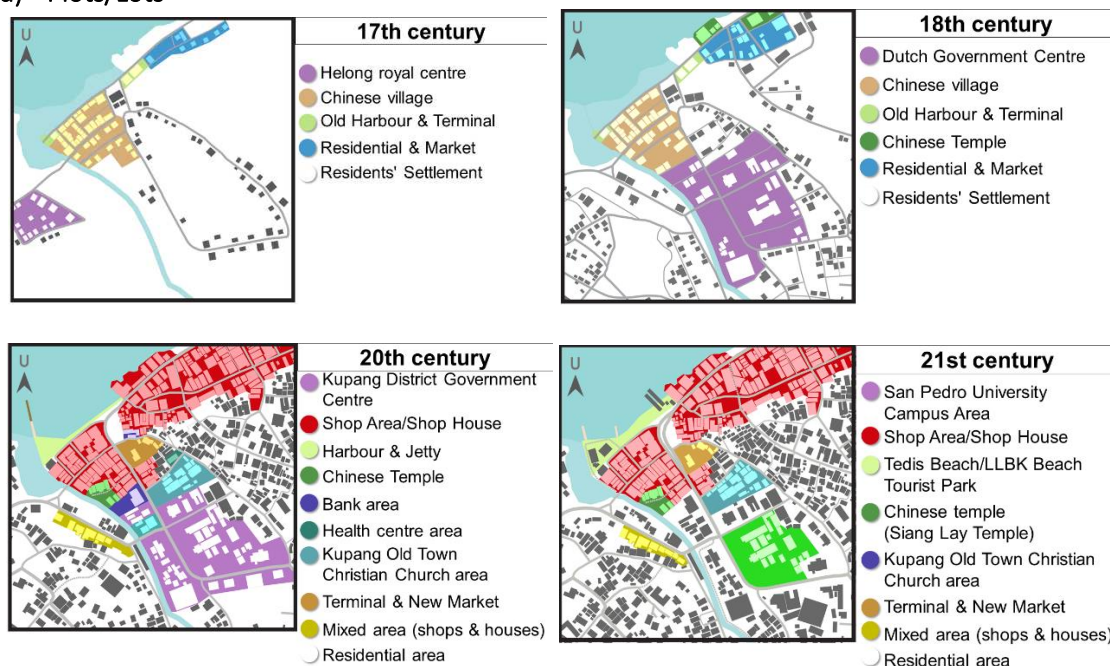


Fig 5. Transformation of Elements; plots/lots (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

Moving into the 18th century, this area saw various functionalities with the government now under Dutch control, along with an increase in settlements due to population growth, and the construction of luxurious houses and Chinese temples.



Fig 6. Land Use of Chinese Kampong and Chinese Temple/*klenteng* in the 18th Century (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

In the 20th century, Kupang Regency became the new administrative centre after Indonesian independence. While some areas retained their previous functions, new functions were added and significant transformations took place. Chinatown, for example, underwent a major transformation and became a shopping area. This change greatly altered the appearance of Kupang's Old Town to meet the economic needs of the time. During this period, the Chinese temple buildings along the Jalan Siliwangi corridor were demolished and replaced with commercial buildings. This illustrates how the functions of areas previously used for the

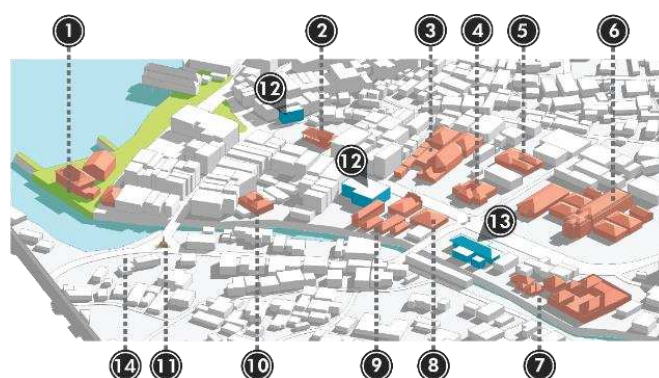
administration of the Kupang Regency have now been replaced by mixed functions. Education, such as the San Pedro Campus, and some restaurants now occupy the west side of the San Pedro Campus, while shopping continues to thrive in the area.

**Table 5.** Permanence Matrix of Plots/lots

Period		17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century		
Element of urban tissue							
Plot/Lots	Kingdom Centre	[Black bar]			[Yellow bar]	<i>Changing</i>	
	Centre of government	[Black bar]			[Yellow bar]	<i>Changing</i>	
	Settlement	[Black bar]			[Green bar]	<i>Persistent</i>	
	Chinese village	[Black bar]			[Yellow bar]	<i>Changing</i>	
	Harbour	[Black bar]			[Yellow bar]	<i>Changing</i>	
	Education	[White bar]				[Black bar]	<i>Persistent</i>
	Terminal	[White bar]		[Black bar]	[Green bar]	<i>Persistent</i>	
	Market	[Black bar]			[Yellow bar]	[Green bar]	<i>Persistent</i>
	Mixed Area	[White bar]			[Black bar]	[Green bar]	<i>Persistent</i>






**e) Building**

The passage of time in the Old Town area of Kupang has led to significant changes, including those affecting the architectural elements within this region. Some buildings have managed to survive, while others have changed their function and structure. In addition, a number of them have disappeared and cannot longer be found in the 21st century.











**Fig 7.** Transformation of Elements; Building (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

**Table 6.** Caption of Figure 5

No	Building	Description
1	Warehouse at Kupang City Harbor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built in the 18th century period.</li> <li>• Today the building has disappeared and no trace of it can be found on the site of the park which is part of the Tedis LLBK Beach Park.</li> </ul>
2	Kupang Old Town Terminal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built in the 17th century, as a support to the harbor.</li> <li>• The terminal location was moved in the 20th century.</li> <li>• Today, it is still in good condition.</li> </ul>
3	Kupang Old Town Christian Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built during the Dutch administration in 1753</li> <li>• Ammunition depot, during Japanese rule.</li> <li>• Still survives with the same function as a place of worship until now.</li> <li>• Physical changes that occurred were carried out by renovating the interior and adding a terrace section.</li> </ul>
4	Resident Assistant House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built 1701 - 1800 in the middle of the 18th century.</li> <li>• In the 20th century (Indonesian independence), the Office of Mining and Energy of Kupang Regency.</li> <li>• Currently a museum: De Museum Café JKK.</li> </ul>
5	Indigenous Evangelism School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built in the 18th century period in 1761.</li> <li>• Kupang District Revenue Office.</li> <li>• 2020, Koperasi Simpan Pinjam (KSP) Koperasi Kredit (Kopdit) Suka Damai, Kupang Branch.</li> <li>• in 2023 this building became a Christian Theological High School.</li> </ul>
6	Resident House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built in the mid-18th century.</li> <li>• New building with function as Kupang Regent's Office, after independence – 2010.</li> <li>• In 2022, the building was leased by San Pedro University to become a campus building.</li> </ul>
7	Old Prison 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built by the Dutch government in the 18th century.</li> <li>• In 1978-1979, the prison was abandoned and had no activity until 1985.</li> <li>• Changed its function to become a magi until today.</li> </ul>
8	Missionary House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established at the same time as the Kota Lama Kupang church building with the function of a residence for "important church people".</li> <li>• Now functions as KSU Talenta which is a co-operative ministry in LLBK urban village.</li> </ul>
9	Tax Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established during the 18th century as a customs office.</li> <li>• In the 20th century period, after independence, the role of this office changed to a tax institution.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Since the transfer of the district, it has been left vacant.</li><li>• Some of the buildings are used as residences by local people.</li></ul>
10	<p>Kongsi Sen Tiong and Siang Lay Temples</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Kongsi Sen Tiong temples were built in the 17th century and have now disappeared in the 20th century, replaced by shops along the Jl. Siliwangi corridor.</li><li>• Klenteng Siang Lay, built in 1869 and currently still well maintained, is one of the many klentengs that once existed in the Kota Lama Kupang area.</li></ul>
11	<p>Human Rights Monument / Pancasila Monument</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Built in the 20th century.</li><li>• The Human Rights Monument still stands at the intersection of Jl. Ikan Paus, Jl. Soekarno-Hatta and Jl. Pahlawan.</li></ul>
12	<p>State Trading Bank &amp; Regional Revenue Bank</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Built in the 20th century to support the activities of the Kupang District Government.</li><li>• Today, these two banks are no longer functioning and the existing buildings are now empty and poorly maintained.</li></ul>
13	<p>Immigration Office</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Built in the 20th century.</li><li>• Today, this building is no longer functioning and is left empty.</li></ul>
14	<p>School Tot Opleiding Voor Inlands Leraars (STOVIL)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Built in the 20th century.</li><li>• Today, the building is nowhere to be found, leaving no trace of the place where it was once built.</li></ul>

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**Table 7.** Permanence Matrix of the Elements of the Urban Tissue: Buildings

Period	17th century	18th century	20th century	21st century
Element of urban tissue				
Building				<i>Changing</i>
Pier				
Warehouse				<i>Extinct</i>
Kupang Old Town Terminal				<i>Persistent</i>
Kupang Old Town Christian Church				<i>Persistent</i>
Resident Assistant's house				<i>Changing</i>
School for Indigenous Evangelism				<i>Changing</i>
Resident's House				<i>Changing</i>
Old prison				<i>Changing</i>
Missionary house				<i>Changing</i>
Tax office				<i>Changing</i>
Kongsi Sen Tiong and Siang Lay temples				<i>Persistent</i>
Human Rights Monument / Pancasila Monument				<i>Persistent</i>
State Trading Bank & Regional Revenue Bank				<i>Changing</i>
Immigration Office				<i>Changing</i>
STOVIL Building				<i>Extinct</i>

The transformation of the Old City of Kupang reflects significant changes over four eras, involving five main elements. The Urban Tissue concept highlights the evolving functions of social life, from settlements and commercial centres to tourism, ports, and government centres. The Natural Context includes Kupang Bay and the Dendeng River. The Street-Square element shows changing street patterns from the 18th to 20th centuries, with some roads from the Helong Kingdom era still in use. Open spaces have been reused, such as Tugu Ham, and harbors have become tourist parks. Land has been developed for commercial, educational, and residential use. Historic buildings from Dutch era have experienced altered or deteriorated functions. These elements illustrate the dynamic development and changes in the function and structure of the city.

### 3.2. The Study of Perception

The questionnaire distributed to the community elicited a variety of responses, demonstrating that open-ended questions provide valuable insights for future planning. However, a limitation

of this study was the insufficient number of respondents. The research focused on how current perceptions of surviving elements in the area—both those that have retained their original form and function and those that have changed—could inform planning. This suggests a need for specialized research to gather community perceptions to inform focused planning for the Old Town area of Kupang. Responses to 14 questions from 26 participants indicated that open-ended questions allowed respondents to freely express their opinions.

**Table 8.** Age and Occupation of Respondents

	Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-20	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	21-25	9	34.6	34.6	42.3
	26-30	3	11.5	11.5	53.8
	30-45	5	19.2	19.2	73.1
	46-50	5	19.2	19.2	92.3
	51-60	1	3.8	3.8	96.2
	61-70	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

	Job	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Architect	2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Consultant	1	3.8	3.8	11.5
	Office Worker	6	23.1	23.1	34.6
	Student	7	26.9	26.9	61.5
	Teacher/Lecturer	5	15.4	15.4	76.9
	Self-employed	6	23.1	23.1	100.0
		Total	26	100.0	100.0

The study's respondents were predominantly between the ages 21-25, followed by 30-45 and 46-50, out of a total of 26 individuals. Their backgrounds were diverse, including architects, consultants, office workers, students, teachers, and entrepreneurs. The most dominant respondents in providing their perceptions were students, entrepreneurs, and office workers. Below are the responses of each respondent (See Fig 9.)

**a) Area identity**

The Old Town area of Kupang is widely perceived by the community as a city rich in historical and cultural. However, challenges in maintenance and infrastructure development are evident as respondents prioritize the historical value of the area. Despite these issues, the general perception of the city is positive, highlighting its friendly and safe coastal atmosphere.

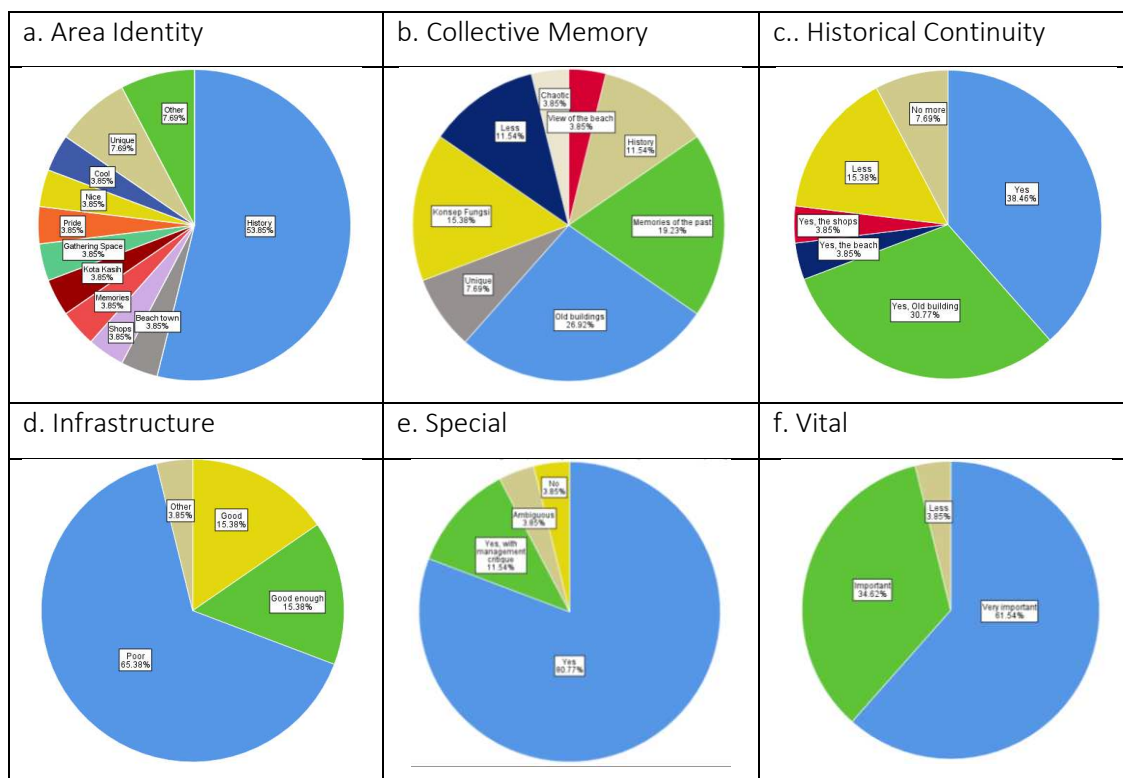


Fig 8. Diagram of Community Perspectives  
(Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

**b) Collective memory**

The Old City of Kupang has significant historical, cultural, and emotional value, with old buildings reinforcing these perceptions. The area is recognised for its unique architectural and historical heritage, coastal views, and functionality. However, challenges in maintenance, development, and conservation elicit negative reactions from the community, despite overall positive sentiments.

**c) Historical continuity**

There is an awareness and appreciation of the historical characteristics of Kupang's Old Town, although concerns remain about the sustainability and condition of historic sites. While some respondents believe that these characteristics remain strong, others observe a decline or change. The physical condition and maintenance of historic sites, as well as the impact of modern development, influence these perceptions.

**d) Infrastructure**

Opinions on the management of historic buildings in the Old City of Kupang vary. Some respondents consider it good and fair, but most feel it is inadequate. Key issues include lack of attention, limited funding, ownership disputes, and the physical condition of the buildings.

**e) Special**

Most respondents are proud of the historic buildings in the Old Town of Kupang, but are dissatisfied with their management. Criticism centres on the lack of an effective conservation strategy, which leads to neglect of the buildings and insufficient funding. Some respondents advocate for strict preservation laws and increased funding for restoration projects, emphasizing the potential positive impact on tourism, education, and Kupang's economy and culture.

**f) Vital**

The majority of respondents consider the physical historical elements of Kupang to be very important, citing reasons such as identity, historical education, cultural heritage, and urban orientation. They emphasize the need to preserve and maintain these elements as part of Kupang's historical heritage and identity, although some respondents consider them as less personally important.

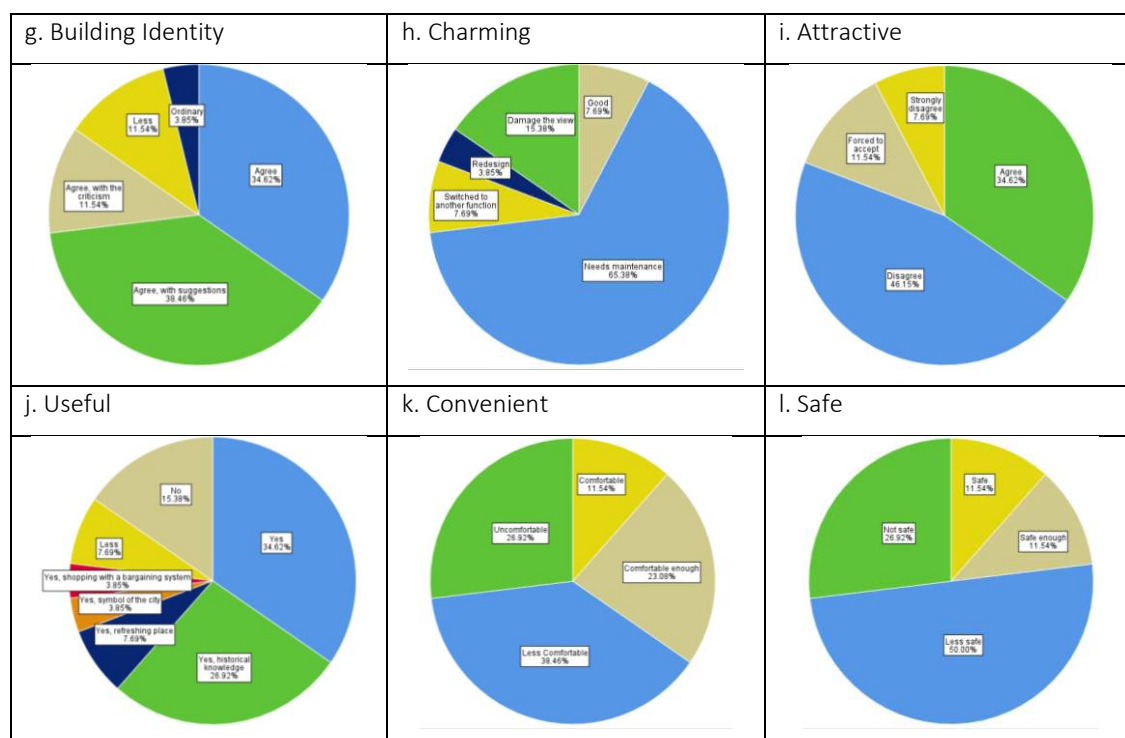


Fig 9. Diagram of Community Perspectives (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

**g) Building Identity**

Many respondents support the reuse of historic buildings for new purposes, but emphasize the importance of preserving their original features and character. They stress the need for maintenance and protection from vandalism and suggest that these buildings could serve as

museums or public facilities. Sensitive conservation approaches are considered as crucial to preserving the historical and architectural value of these buildings.

#### **h) Charm**

The community expresses concern and dissatisfaction with the poorly maintained condition of the buildings in the area, particularly the row of shops. There is a strong expectation for government intervention to restore, maintain, and reuse these buildings to revitalize the area. Preserving the historic and aesthetic value is important to the community, who hope for more proactive government efforts to maintain and use historic buildings for public benefit.

#### **i) Attractive**

Community views on the use modern materials and designs in commercial buildings are mixed. Some welcome modernization as a natural evolution, while others worry that it may obscure the historic value and unique architecture of the area. There are calls to preserve the original character of buildings and for clear government regulations to balance historical preservation and renewal in Old Town of Kupang.

#### **j) Useful**

While some individuals feel that historic areas in Kupang City do not provide significant benefits, the majority highly value them as reflections of the past and valuable learning resources. These areas are recognized for their educational potential in raising awareness of local and national history and providing socio-recreational benefits. Some believe that the potential benefits of these areas are greater than currently realized and should be further explored and developed.

#### **k) Comfort**

Many responses point to issues related to the comfort of pedestrian spaces in the area, such as narrow sidewalks or those occupied by street vendors, leading to discomfort for the majority of respondents. Some appreciate the convenience or aesthetic appeal of the sidewalks, but highlight the need for improvements to ensure pedestrian comfort and safety. There is a call for more attention to these issues to make the area more comfortable for pedestrians.

#### **l) Safe**

Respondents highlight concerns about safety in pedestrian areas, particularly due to narrow sidewalks and careless vehicle parking. While some feel safe, the majority express the need for improvements such as better lighting to increase security. Although crime is rare, there is a consensus that safety measures should be more comprehensive. The community values the pedestrian areas, but emphasizes the need for further safety measures. With appropriate

improvements, the accessibility and safety of pedestrian areas can be significantly improved to the benefit of all users.

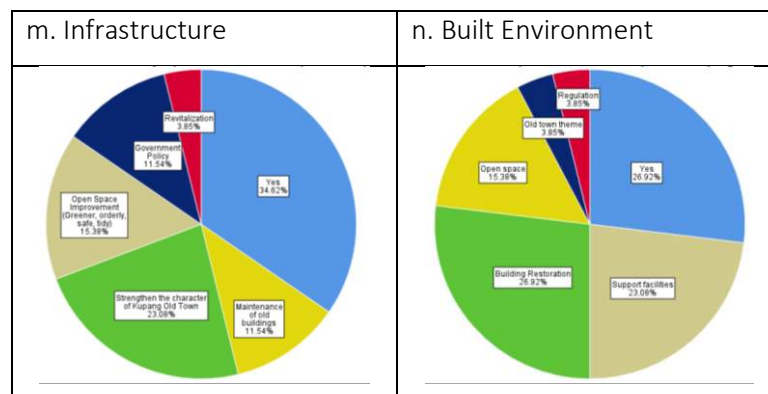


Fig 10. Diagram of Community Perspectives (Source: Author's Analysis, 2023)

#### m) Infrastructure

Respondents hope to see sustainable development in the Old Town Area, with the emphasis on historical significance and environmental preservation. They expect the preservation of historic buildings, development that respects historic values, environmentally friendly infrastructure improvements, and the involvement of appropriate experts in planning and revitalization.

#### n) Built environment

The research highlights the need for improvements in Kupang Old Town Area, including infrastructure, public spaces, repairs to historic building, green spaces, safety, and cleanliness. The community values the historical and cultural significance of the area and emphasizes preservation and sustainable development, along with greater involvement in planning and revitalization efforts.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Changes in the physical elements of the Old City of Kupang over time: The Old Town area of Kupang has undergone significant development over the centuries, heavily influenced by the Dutch since their arrival in the 17th century, among other foreign entities. This transformation has seen the area evolve from a royal center to a commercial, services, and tourism hub as it is today.

Persistent elements: Throughout this evolution, various physical elements that once existed have disappeared, while others have become more dominant, and a few remain. Despite changes in land use, street patterns, parcels, and buildings, the community continues to value the area for

its historical and cultural significance.

Community perceptions: The community values the historic elements of Old Kupang and is deeply concerned about the current quality of the area. However, there is disappointment with the management of these elements and the condition of the space. Preserving these values while improving the quality of the area is a challenge that requires the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders to strike a balance between economic development and cultural preservation.

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