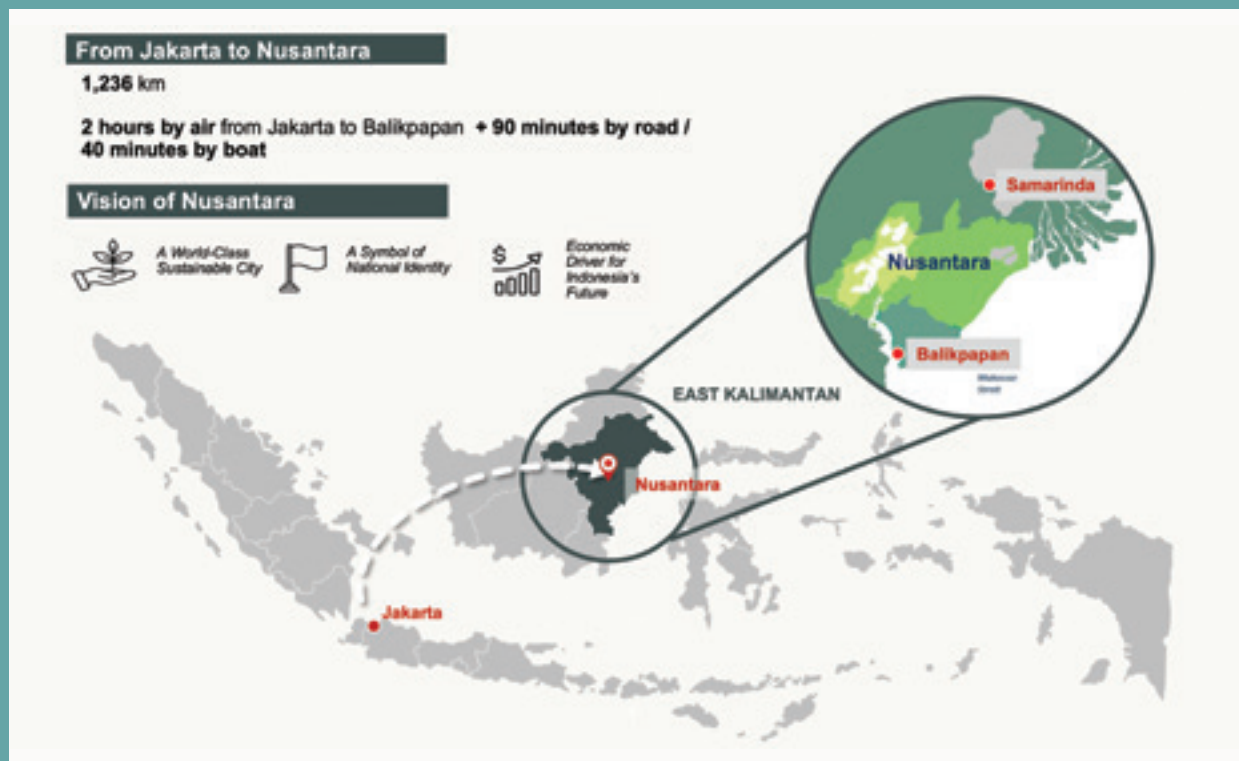




URBAN TRANSFORMATION  
**BAMBANG SUSANTONO**

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# Building a Liveable and Lovable City: Nusantara's Urban Transformation



Moving the Capital City from Jakarta to Nusantara.  
Image: Nusantara Capital Authority (2022)

Cities are rapidly expanding. Driven by the promise of economic and social prospects, cities often attract a high influx of people. While urbanisation brings enhanced economic opportunities, better access to healthcare and education, and improved living standards, fast urban growth presents its own set of challenges, such as widened economic disparities, diminished social cohesion, and increased environmental concerns.

## The relocation of the capital city to Nusantara is a strategic solution to alleviate the pressures on Jakarta.

There is therefore a pressing need for strategic urban planning and integrated urban development approaches, particularly in Asia. Asia had the highest urban population globally in 2018; its 2.3 billion people represented over 50% of the world's total population. This number is projected to rise to 3.5 billion by 2050 (UN, 2019).

people in 2022 (Statistics Indonesia, 2024), Jakarta is experiencing several ongoing issues, including traffic congestion, overcrowding, and land subsidence.

The relocation of the capital city to Nusantara is a strategic solution to alleviate the pressures on Jakarta.

In Indonesia, the current capital city of Jakarta faces significant urban challenges. With over 10 million

## || The idea of a 'liveable' city places people and community welfare at the centre of urban development and decision-making. ||

### Nusantara as an Economic Centre

Nusantara aims to become the world's first sustainable forest city while also embodying national identity. Nusantara seeks to be a new economic growth centre in Indonesia, bridging the gap between the western and eastern regions of the country and providing economic opportunities for all.

Besides its primary function as the government centre, Nusantara has several economic generators, such as renewable energy, innovation and research.

### Nusantara's Urban Transformation

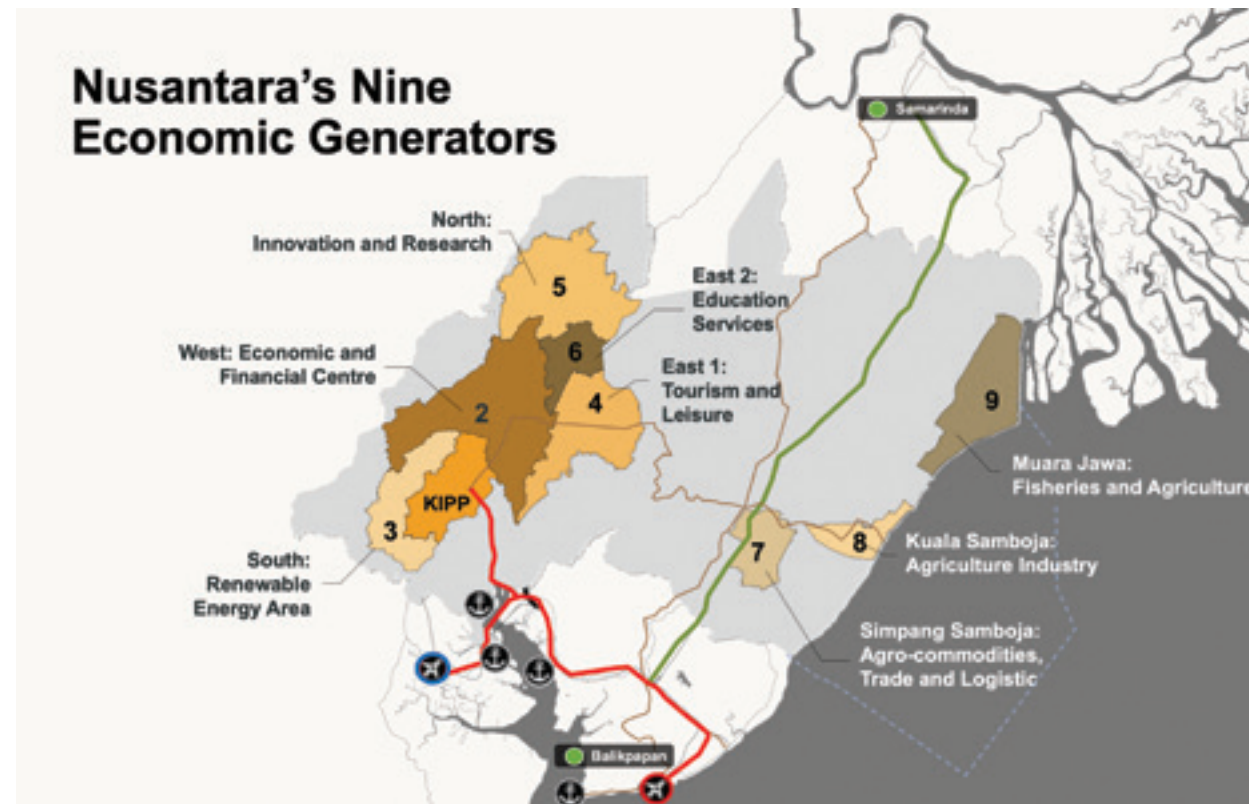
To build the liveable and lovable city we envision, we need to create in Nusantara functional urban environments that cultivate a sense of belonging.

The concept of "liveability" in urban contexts is widely understood to refer to the quality of life and well-being of a place with robust governance systems and equitable access to efficient urban services and quality infrastructure. The idea of a liveable city places people and community welfare at the centre of urban development and decision-making.

In transforming Nusantara, we take a 5D approach to incorporating five important aspects into city planning:

<b>Design</b>	Spatial design needs to be reviewed to make it more decentralised and resilient to economic, financial, health and climate change shocks.
<b>Density</b>	There needs to be a new balance for ideal population density in an area, supported by technology that encourages efficiency.
<b>Diversity</b>	Efforts are needed to maintain inclusivity, such as encouraging the development of mixed-use buildings, walkable cities and 10-minute cities.
<b>Digitalisation</b>	Digi-life becomes the new normal and opens new opportunities for the economy, education, health, and work.
<b>Decarbonisation</b>	The importance of low-carbon living is increasingly felt, and cities must have specific and measurable action plans to tackle climate change.

5D approach for a sustainable liveable city. Image: Susantono (2023)



Nusantara's economic generators. Image: Nusantara Capital Authority (2022)

## || A 'lovable' city goes beyond mere functionality by embracing cultural diversity, fostering vibrant social interactions, and nurturing a sense of belonging. ||

In addition to being a liveable city, a "lovable" city must go beyond mere functionality by embracing cultural diversity, fostering vibrant social interactions, and nurturing a sense of belonging that cultivates a deep emotional connection between citizens and their surroundings. Deloitte (2021) describes a lovable city as a humane city, emphasising inclusion, connection, attachment, stimulation, freedom, and agency as key aspects.

Nusantara's transformation into a world-class city for all is based on its unique concepts of a forest city, sponge city, and smart city.

### Forest City

The forest city concept is based on the idea that developing Nusantara and preserving the environment can coexist. The principles of Nusantara as a forest city include:

- Zero deforestation
- Biodiversity
- Conservation
- Carbon stock increase
- Indigenous and local community involvement
- Sustainable forest management
- Governance
- Land use improvement

||  
**Nusantara's transformation into a world-class city for all is based on its unique concepts of a forest city, sponge city, and smart city.**  
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### Forest City as a Nature-Based Solution

Economic	Social	Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create green job opportunities</li> <li>• Reduce energy costs</li> <li>• Increase property value</li> <li>• Attract tourists</li> <li>• Reduce disaster costs</li> <li>• Reduce healthcare costs</li> <li>• Obtain financing opportunities from forest-based carbon trading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen unity</li> <li>• Encourage outdoor activities</li> <li>• Reduce illnesses</li> <li>• Boost immunity</li> <li>• Reduce depression through forest bathing/healing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate climate change</li> <li>• Increase biodiversity</li> <li>• Maintain urban microclimates</li> <li>• Reduce air pollution</li> <li>• Preserve water quality</li> </ul>

The benefits of a forest city concept.  
 Image: Presidential Regulation Number 63 of 2022

The forest city concept is a nature-based solution, with a land use plan allocating nearly 200,000 hectares (2,000 km<sup>2</sup>) (around 65%) of the area to natural forests and marine reserves which comprise green (terrestrial) and blue (aquatic) zones. Around 10% of Nusantara's land will be dedicated to sustainable food production while only 25% will be designated as highly-controlled urban areas to minimise carbon footprint and emissions. The remaining 75% will be earmarked as green spaces, with 65% of those to be made up of tropical forests.

The forest city concept can be achieved by optimising knowledge and technology, involving communities and the forging of collaboration by diverse stakeholders to offer numerous economic, social, and environmental advantages. These include the creation of green employment opportunities, increased resilience to climate change, and the conservation of biodiversity. The benefits offered by Nusantara's forest city concept are diverse, ranging from economic and social to environmental.



The three principles of the sponge city.  
 Image: Nusantara Capital Authority (2022)

### Sponge City

A sponge city is able to restore and maintain the natural water cycle which changes with alterations in land cover and function.

Implementing the sponge city concept will yield several benefits, including water purification, ecological preservation, increased water availability and reduced flood risks, and economic, social, and cultural advantages for society. Nusantara's sponge city concept is based on the principles of an archipelago city, absorbent city, and integrated city.

- **Archipelago City**  
 Green and blue open spaces form the foundation of the city and allow for greater connectivity with and integration of nature into its urban design to maintain and preserve biodiversity.

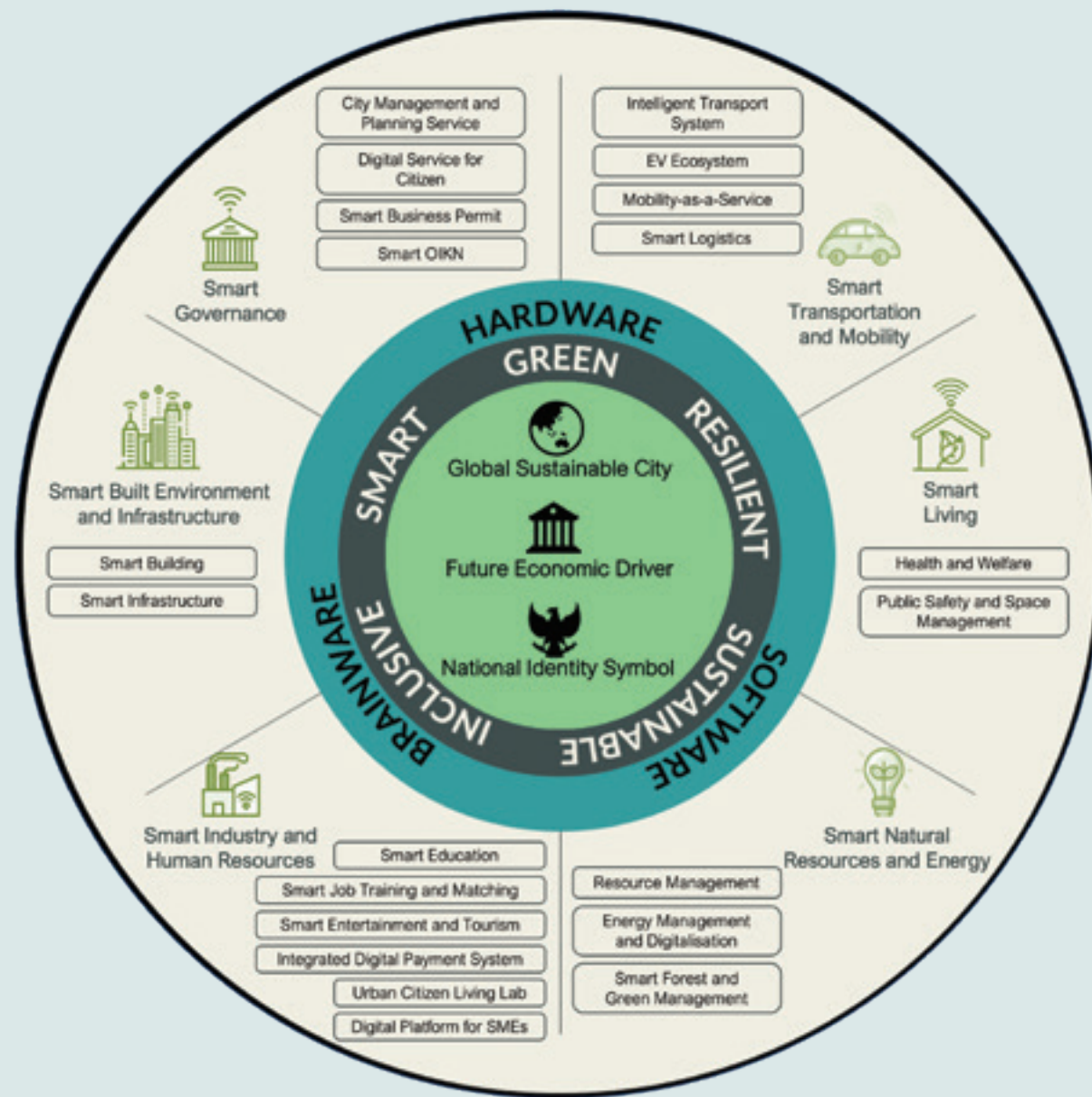
- **Absorbent City**  
 Green and blue open space corridors are designed to capture rain runoff, which is then collected and channelled to city parks. By acting like sponges, the parks allow rainwater to be absorbed and filtered to replenish aquifers (underground layers of water-bearing material), thereby maintaining balance in the ecosystem.

- **Integrated City**  
 The sponge city integrates different levels of city planning, ranging from the smallest scale of individual buildings and neighbourhoods to the broader urban scale. This approach will more effectively help restrain water flow, harvest rainwater, and increase rainwater absorption into the soil.

## Smart City

As a smart city, Nusantara seeks to harness digital innovations and data-driven solutions to redefine urban living, fostering an interconnected city centred around its citizens. Nusantara aims to do this by incorporating multiple domains of a smart city that include:

- **Smart governance**—Nusantara prioritises effective and transparent governance through features such as digital identity, integrated operation centres, citizen-reporting systems, and smart administration. These features provide citizens access to government services and enable city authorities to make informed decisions, paving the path for a more responsive and accountable administration.



Nusantara Smart City  
Image: Nusantara Capital Authority (2023)

## Nusantara not only seeks to overcome its challenges, but also endeavours to set a precedent for urban development across Asia.

- **Transportation and mobility**—the Intelligent Transport System consists of an autonomous driving system, urban air mobility, and an advanced traffic management system that will improve safety, reduce congestion, and optimise traffic management. Efficient smart logistics systems utilising advanced digital technology will streamline the movement of goods, leading to faster and more sustainable supply chains.
- **Smart living**—initiatives focusing on citizen well-being aim to enhance quality of life through smart features, providing services for public safety, health, culture, and leisure.
- **Smart natural resources and energy**—this domain delves into the role of technology in reshaping the utilisation of natural resources. Natural resources encompass materials or components found in nature that humans harness to fulfil our needs. This domain focuses on

ensuring sustainability in water resource management, waste recycling, renewable energy, and biodiversity monitoring.

- **Smart industry and human resources development**—promotes innovation and skills enhancement by supporting economic growth through small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) platforms, technology centres, and citizen living labs. The application of advanced technology in the industrial sector aims to boost operational efficiency and offer more flexible responses to market changes. The human resources domain adopts an upskilling approach to prepare our workforce to navigate the industrial landscape.
- **Smart built environment and infrastructure improvement**—this domain includes facility management systems, internet access propagation and smart infrastructure systems to enhance liveability and sustainability.

### Conclusion

Asian cities are grappling with the challenges caused by rapid urbanisation. Jakarta, the current capital city of Indonesia, is no exception. By relocating our capital to Nusantara, we hope to create a city that is both liveable and lovable. Nusantara not only seeks to overcome its challenges, but also endeavours to set a precedent for urban development across Asia.