

Publicness as an indicator of sustainable built environment on Prawirotaman Street in Yogyakarta

Monica Sheira^{ID}, Ema Yunita Titisari^{*ID}, Damayanti Asikin^{ID}

Master Program in Built Environment Architecture, Department of Architecture,
Faculty of Engineering Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia



ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<i>Article history:</i> Received January 05, 2026 Received in revised form Feb. 26, 2026 Accepted April 07, 2026 Available online June 01, 2026 <i>Keywords:</i> Mixed-use urban corridor Publicness Socio-spatial analysis Sustainable built environment Tourism gentrification *Corresponding author: Ema Yunita Titisari Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia Email: ema_yunita@ub.ac.id ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1564-0521	<i>This research examines the transformation of Prawirotaman Street, Yogyakarta, into a tourism-oriented mixed-use corridor and assesses publicness as an operative indicator of a sustainable built environment. Publicness is evaluated through three principal variables: social (interaction, inclusivity, participation), economic (commercial dominance, ownership patterns, livelihood transitions), and environmental (accessibility, vegetation, drainage, spatial comfort), across spatial units comprising a 500 m corridor, 481 m pedestrian pathways, building interfaces, and 21 designated observation points. A qualitative socio-spatial methodology was employed, integrating the theory of publicness (Carmona, 2015) with the production of space framework (Lefebvre, 1991). Data collection involved 19 structured field observations (spanning morning-evening cycles), in-depth interviews, and field surveys, reinforced by a synthesis of recent scholarly literature. The analytical process utilized thematic and comparative socio-spatial techniques. The findings indicate that 65% of buildings have transitioned to tourism-related functions, while only 26% of pedestrian space remains effectively functional, reflecting diminished accessibility and escalating privatization. Although economic activities have intensified, this growth is not accompanied by proportional improvements in social inclusivity or environmental quality. Publicness endures primarily at a micro-spatial scale through temporary, consumption-driven interactions. This study conceptualizes publicness as a comprehensive sustainability metric and underscores the necessity for pedestrian-oriented design strategies, ecological enhancements, and collaborative governance frameworks to re-establish socio-spatial equilibrium within tourism corridors.</i>

Introduction

The accelerated pace of global urbanization, intensified by the expansion of the tourism sector, has generated substantial transformations in urban spatial structures. These dynamics are closely aligned with the global framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11, which advocates for cities

that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The revitalization of historic districts, the development of large-scale megaprojects, and the conversion of urban spaces into commercial and tourism-oriented destinations represent recurring patterns within these processes (Ferreira 2022).

While the advancement of tourism contributes to local economic growth and enhances urban attractiveness, it simultaneously introduces complex socio-spatial challenges, including

diminished accessibility to public spaces, the erosion of shared environments that facilitate social interaction among residents, the commercialization of everyday spatial settings, and the gradual loss of local cultural identity. The conversion of space from domestic functions to tourism-commercial uses has redefined both its functional role and its user composition. As spatial configurations increasingly respond to tourism demands, residents' access to public space becomes progressively restricted. This transformation also reshapes local consumption patterns and reconfigures everyday cultural practices (Ferreira 2022; López - Gay, Cocola - Gant, and Russo 2021). Although governmental and private sector actors capitalize on these dynamics to increase property values and regional income, they frequently overlook considerations of social equity, environmental sustainability, and the social cohesion among residents (Hübscher 2021; Sigler and Wachsmuth 2020). This duality

underscores the necessity for a critical reassessment of how sustainability is conceptualized and measured within tourism-oriented urban environments.

The growing predominance of tourism-related activities in urban areas is frequently associated with processes of tourism-led gentrification. Within these dynamics, economic imperatives reshape spatial configurations and influence patterns of use, often to the detriment of local communities (Hübscher 2021). Such transformations extend beyond physical modifications, affecting how space is perceived, accessed, and socially negotiated. Public spaces that were once integral to everyday social life increasingly evolve into consumption-oriented environments, where access and utilization are implicitly governed by commercial interests. Consequently, the assessment of sustainability in these contexts necessitates an approach that encompasses not only physical attributes but also social relationships and interactional patterns.



Figure 1. The site plan of Prawirotaman Street

The case of Prawirotaman Street in Yogyakarta (figure 1) exemplifies these dynamics. Initially established in the 1960s as a residential enclave for soldiers of the Kraton (Yogyakarta Palace), the area subsequently developed into a *kampung batik*, which experienced decline in the 1970s. It later transitioned into a tourism-oriented settlement, commonly referred to as a *tourist kampung* (traditional urban settlement) or *kampung bule*, characterized by the provision of accommodation and services primarily catering to international visitors.

With its evolution into *Kampung Bule*, the street corridor has developed into a concentrated cluster of accommodations, restaurants, retail establishments, and leisure facilities (Hernadi

2020; Suharyanto et al. 2023). This transformation has reshaped both the physical morphology of the street and its social functions. Transitional spaces, including terraces and front yards that were previously utilized for informal social interaction, are increasingly enclosed or converted for commercial purposes. As a consequence, opportunities for spontaneous social engagement have declined, and the character of the street has shifted toward a more regulated and consumption-driven environment (Fitria, Rasidi, and Said 2022; Yetti, Fitria, and Pujiyanti 2020). This spatial reconfiguration also contributes to a reduction in the level of publicness at the micro scale.

The transformation of spatial functions along Prawirotaman Street has been accompanied by

changes in architectural typologies, particularly evident in the modification of building façades. These alterations include changes to the private public interface through the replacement of openings, the installation of dominant commercial façades, and the addition of solid boundary fences.

Existing scholarship on Prawirotaman and comparable contexts has predominantly concentrated on spatial transformation or the broader impacts of tourism development (Fitria, Rasidi, and Said 2022; Fitria et al. 2023; Hernadi 2020; Prayitno 2017; Suharyanto et al. 2023; Yetti, Fitria, and Pujiyanti 2020). However, relatively limited attention has been directed toward the street corridor as a critical socio-spatial unit where everyday interactions, mobility patterns, and economic activities converge. Furthermore, prior studies tend to address physical transformations and social impacts in isolation, without integrating them into a unified framework for sustainability assessment.

Recent scholarly discourse increasingly emphasizes that the sustainability of urban public spaces cannot be evaluated solely through environmental or physical parameters. Rather, it must also incorporate considerations of how space is accessed, utilized, and experienced by diverse user groups (Carmona 2015; Li, Dang, and Song 2022; Titisari et al. 2024). Within this conceptual framework, the notion of publicness provides a valuable analytical lens.

Publicness refers to the degree of openness, accessibility, inclusivity, and social meaning embedded in space (Li, Dang, and Song 2022). In tourism-driven environments, the intensification of activities has accelerated the privatization of transitional domestic spaces, while the declining availability and quality of public spaces contribute to a reduction in publicness (Zhu 2022). Limited community participation indicates weak procedural publicness, whereas symbolic publicness has shifted from expressions of local identity toward tourism-oriented representations. Publicness is shaped by factors such as ownership, patterns of use, and management structures (Carmona 2015; Ekdi and Çıracı 2015), encompassing dimensions including control and civility (Varna and Tiesdell 2010). In the context of Prawirotaman Street, economically driven management practices have constrained opportunities for social interaction. The concept of the production of space further emphasizes that spatial conditions are continuously constructed

through social relations and power dynamics, reinforcing the importance of everyday practices (Lefebvre 2014). In alignment with Lefebvre's perspective, the conditions observed in Prawirotaman illustrate how publicness is continuously produced and reproduced through social relations and power structures.

Despite its conceptual relevance, the application of publicness as a practical instrument for sustainability assessment remains insufficiently developed, particularly within tourism-oriented urban corridors such as Prawirotaman. Most existing studies employ the concept in a descriptive manner, without translating it into an operational framework that integrates social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Fitria, Rasidi, and Said 2022; Fitria et al. 2023; Hernadi 2020; Prayitno 2017; Suharyanto et al. 2023; Yetti, Fitria, and Pujiyanti 2020). This limitation constrains the ability to comprehensively evaluate how tourism-driven transformations influence the overall balance of urban space.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining the Prawirotaman Street corridor through a socio-spatial approach that integrates publicness within a sustainability assessment framework. It investigates how interactions among users, economic activities, and environmental conditions collectively influence the level of publicness within the corridor. The study synthesizes theoretical perspectives and connects them with approaches to sustainable environmental development within a single analytical framework. In doing so, it positions publicness as an operational metric for assessing sustainability in mixed-use tourism corridors. This constitutes the primary novelty of the research. Accordingly, the research questions are as follows:

- 1) What are the *publicness* factors (social, economic, and environmental) that drive and inhibit publicness?
- 2) How does publicness serve as a sustainable environmental development indicator?

The contribution of this research resides in its integrative and micro-scale perspective. Instead of positioning social, economic, and environmental dimensions as discrete domains, this study synthesizes them within the analytical framework of publicness. It further emphasizes the significance of everyday practices in sustaining or transforming public space, demonstrating that sustainability is not solely

determined by design interventions but is also shaped by the continuous use and negotiation of space. Through this approach, the study proposes a more nuanced and comprehensive framework for interpreting and managing urban corridors influenced by tourism dynamics.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative socio-spatial methodology to investigate the interrelationship

between social activities, physical spatial configurations, and publicness within the Prawirotaman Street corridor. Such an approach enables the simultaneous examination of spatial transformations and the embedded social dynamics that shape them. It explores how tourism-driven processes affect the openness of public spaces and the extent of community participation, with particular emphasis on the interplay among spatial morphology, economic practices, and the governance of space by diverse stakeholders.

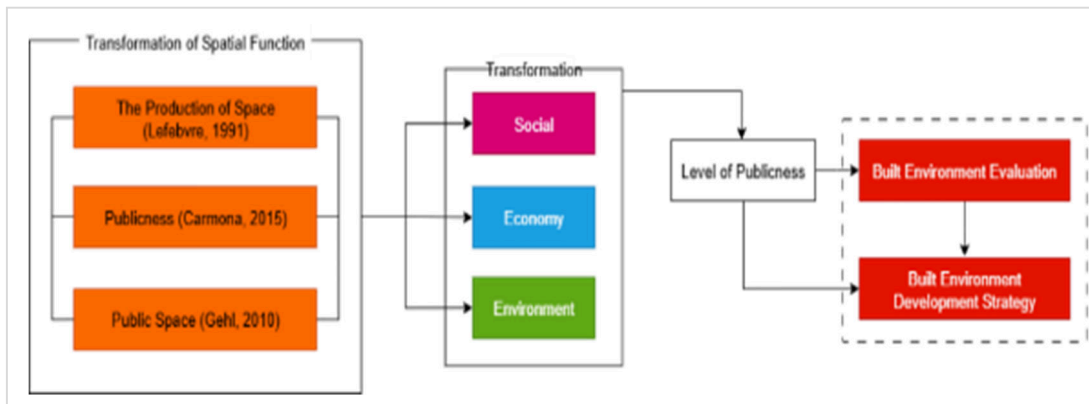


Figure 2. Conceptual framework

This study adopts a conceptual framework (figure 2) to elucidate how shifts in the functions of public space (Carmona 2015; Gehl 2013; Lefebvre 2014) influence the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of Prawirotaman Street. These transformations are utilized to evaluate the degree of publicness along the corridor, with the outcomes serving as a basis for assessment. The identified strengths and limitations of publicness subsequently inform the formulation of strategic development approaches for the corridor.

The study further examines the interconnections among tourism activities, spatial transformations, and publicness theories to uncover the dynamics of publicness as an indicator of sustainable environmental development along the Prawirotaman Street corridor, considering both physical and non-physical elements as well as everyday interactions. Field observations were conducted three times daily (morning/midday, afternoon, and evening) over a seven-day period. However, due to adverse weather conditions on several occasions, a total of 19 observation sessions were

completed within six days. These observations were employed to characterize the level and condition of publicness within the corridor.

Primary data were additionally obtained through in-depth interviews and field surveys. Interviews involved local residents, business proprietors, and visitors to support the analysis of publicness dynamics and to complement observational findings concerning the corridor's social, economic, and physical conditions. Field surveys were undertaken to evaluate and reassess the condition of Prawirotaman Street based on publicness indicators. Secondary data were derived from Scopus-indexed publications addressing public space, publicness, privatization, and tourism within the past five years. These sources were synthesized to formulate strategies for sustainable built-environment development applicable to the Prawirotaman Street corridor, employing publicness as the principal analytical framework.

Results and discussion

Public space should not be understood merely as a static physical construct; rather, it is continuously produced and reproduced through social practices and power relations (Lefebvre 2014; Titisari et al. 2024). Its level of openness, or publicness, can be assessed through

dimensions such as ownership, accessibility, control, and inclusivity (Carmona 2010). Within tourism contexts, publicness is intrinsically linked to issues of access and the right to use, interpret, and appropriate space. As economic interests intensify, market-driven logics increasingly supplant social considerations, resulting in a gradual decline in publicness (Varna and Tiesdell 2010).



Figure 3. Type of buildings in Prawirotaman Street

The expansion of global tourism has profoundly reconfigured public spaces in culturally significant cities, including Yogyakarta. This phenomenon, often termed touristification, illustrates how tourism activities restructure urban functions (Genç, Türkay, and Ulema 2022). Along Prawirotaman Street, spaces that were once residential and socially oriented

have been converted into commercial uses such as hotels, restaurants, and souvenir outlets (figure 3 and figure 4). Field observations reveal that approximately 65% of buildings have undergone conversion into tourism-related enterprises, reflecting a transformation consistent with processes of tourism-led gentrification (Yang, Liu, and Yang 2022).



(a) Private house and business (law office)



(b) Bar (Tilldrop Bar & Resto)



(c) Restaurant (Via Via Jogja)



(d) Souvenir shop (OASIS: Assesories, Handicraft, Garment)
Figure 4. Types of buildings in Prawirotaman Street

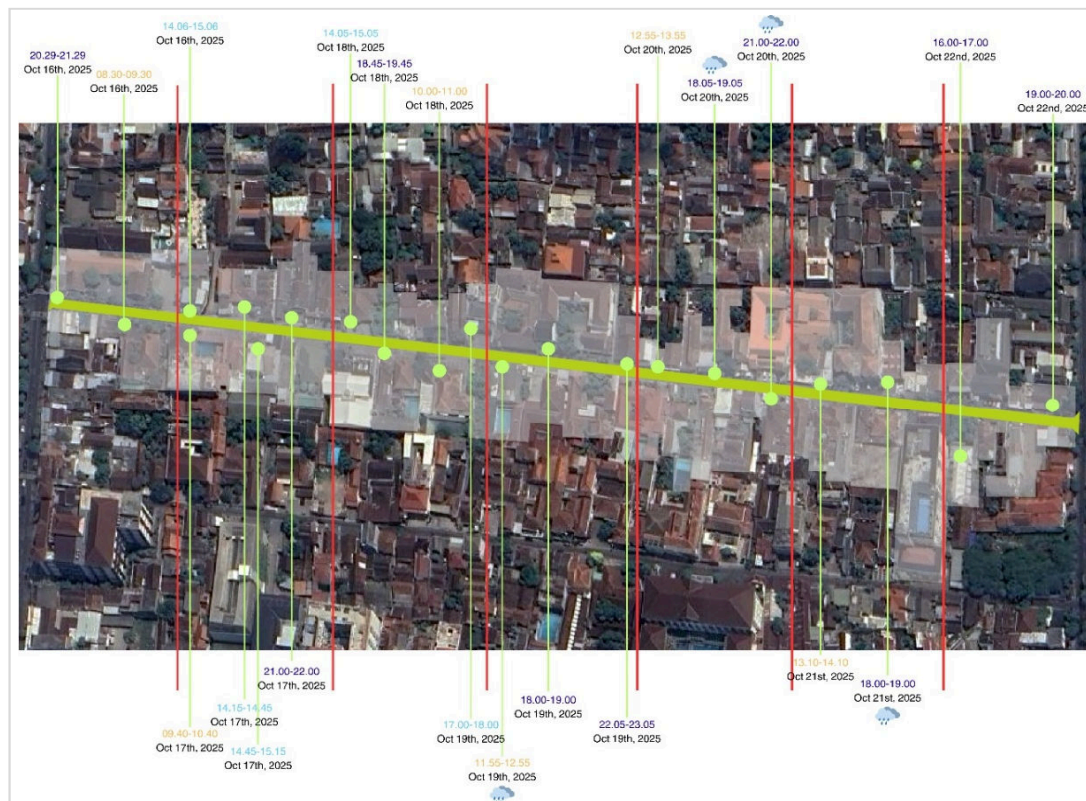


Figure 5. Field observation points on Prawirotaman Street

These transformations have direct implications for the quality and functionality of public space. Field surveys indicate that pedestrian pathways, which should function as essential public infrastructure, operate only partially due to their appropriation for parking and commercial spillover activities. Only approximately 26% of the 481 m pedestrian

pathway remains effectively usable. Comparable findings in historic urban areas in China demonstrate that the revitalization of public space without adequate consideration of social functions can produce exclusionary outcomes (Zhang et al. 2024).

In the context of Prawirotaman Street, publicness persists in a physical sense but is

diminished socially. Although access appears ostensibly open, the use of space is largely regulated by commercial actors. Observations conducted at 21 points (figure 5) reveal limited vegetation, insufficient drainage systems, and a reliance on artificial illumination provided by commercial establishments, all of which reduce ecological comfort and overall urban livability (Gehl 2011; 2013).

Temporal patterns further reinforce this condition. Daytime activities remain relatively limited and are primarily characterized by local mobility, whereas nighttime activities are predominantly driven by tourism. Interview responses describing the area as “fun but uncomfortable” highlight a discrepancy between visual vibrancy and experiential quality. This indicates that publicness within the corridor is transient and consumption-oriented, where social interactions occur predominantly within the framework of the tourism economy.

Everyday publicness within consumption-oriented spaces does not vanish; rather, it transforms into micro-scale, temporary, and symbolic forms of interaction (Xu 2024). In this context, everyday publicness constitutes a tangible manifestation of SDG 11, as it reflects the degree to which inclusivity, accessibility, and social interaction are sustained within everyday urban life despite tourism-driven transformations. Consequently, the presence or decline of

everyday publicness becomes a crucial indicator of whether the corridor continues to support inclusive, accessible, and socially vibrant urban environments.

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Table 1. Activities observed during the field observation

Date	Time	Activities
October 16, 2025 (Thursday)	08:30 – 09:30 AM	- Elementary students study and play - Online shuttle picks up and drops off passengers - Motorcycle rickshaw drivers greet scavengers passing by - Motorcycle taxi drivers rest at a shop not yet open for business
	2:06 PM – 3:06 PM	- Elementary students join scouting activities - Pedestrians walk on the vehicle lane - Parents pick up SDN Timuran students by motorcycle and park - Some parents chat on their motorcycles - Children ride bicycles
	8:29 PM – 9:29 PM	- Kampung Prawirotaman residents greet unfamiliar passersby - Many pedestrians walk in groups - Rickshaw drivers communicate well in English - Tourists look confused about which shop to visit - Some foreign tourists rent becaks; others politely decline - Online motorcycle taxi drivers pick up foreign tourists' roadside - Shop employees/owners greet and serve visitors warmly - Visitors mostly mind their own activities - Foreign tourists rent motorbikes - Some motoryclists speed along the corridor
October 17, 2025 (Friday)	09:40 – 10:40 AM	- A foreign decline a becak ride - Two mothers take their children to school by bicycle while chatting - SDN Timuran students attend school
	2:15 PM – 3:15 PM	- Two men chat on the terrace of a building for rent/sale - The area is quiet, with little interaction

Date	Time	Activities
	9:00 PM – 10:00 PM (After rain)	- Live music and crowd noise are audible from the middle section of Prawirotaman Street - Loud conversations and laughter come from a group of people - Foreign tourists walk on the vehicle lane while chatting, causing vehicles to adjust - A security guard and a guest at Putra Jaya Hotel drink coffee and chat on the terrace - Interactions occur mainly within groups - One person is jogging
October 18, 2025 (Saturday)	10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	- Construction work is underway - Online drivers picking up and dropping off passengers randomly cause congestion on the narrow street - Some visitors shelter in unopened commercial buildings while waiting for pickup
	2:05 PM – 3:05 PM	- Two motorcyclists park near Stairs Restaurant, sit on their motorcycles, and chat
	6:45 PM – 7:45 PM	- A creative market is held beside Tastyxpress; sellers and buyers interact warmly - Most interactions occur within tourist groups - Most visitors appear to enjoy their activities - A couple seems unsure where to go - Crowded and noisy
October 19, 2025 (Sunday)	11:55 AM – 12:55 PM	- A group of pedestrians chat briefly - Online drivers pick up and drop off passengers - One online driver briefly stops at an empty building to rest while waiting for orders - Benches and tables in front of the Kampung Prawirotaman community hall are used only by local residents - Children play by riding bicycles - Some people take photos and create content - Only a few pedestrians use umbrellas uring light rain; most choose not to shelter and instead run
	1:30 PM	- An online driver reports that a high school student was deceived by someone newly met at Tilldrop, and the student's motorcycle was stolen
	2:54 PM	- Someone sings karaoke at Tilldrop very loudly and unpleasantly
	5:30 PM	- A resident riding a motorcycle interacts warmly with a foreign tourist and asks about the tourist's country of origin
	6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	- No interaction
	10:05 PM – 11:05 PM	- Interaction occurs only within groups - Loud music and visitors' activity at Warung Heru may disturb guests at Duta Guest House across the street
October 20, 2025 (Monday)	12:55 PM – 1:55 PM	- Street vendors (PKL) regularly sell goods and engage in normal vendor-customer interaction - Two foreign tourists visit Warung Heru; the elderly waiter speaks fluent English and interacts warmly - Two foreign tourists interact amicably with a local motorbike renter - SDN Timuran students return home by bicycle and turn into a small alley
	18:05 – 19:05	- Street vendors and workers interact in Javanese and wish for good sales, suggesting familiarity - A pedestrian walks while drinking beer - Visitors move in groups and mind their own business - Foreign tourists photograph the street atmosphere and alley murals - ViaVia workers speak English and are friendly to foreign tourists - As rain begins, some pedestrians use umbrellas, some hurry, and other walk casually
	7:44 PM – 7:55 PM (Heavy Rain)	- A brief power outage leaves the corridor completely dark before power returns about a minute later
	9:00 PM – 10:00 PM (Heavy Rain)	- The café/bar looks quiet, with no loud music - POR AQUI accommodation appears busy, with full parking - Some pedestrians use umbrellas, but most walk casually without them - A foreign tourist rides a rented motorcycle with a friend in the rain
October 21st, 2025 (Tuesday)	1:10 PM – 2:10 PM (Cloudy)	- Construction workers renovate the roof of Prayogo Lama Guest House - Foreign tourists tend to speak loudly while walking in groups

From a social perspective, the transformation of Prawirotaman has reconfigured community structures and roles. Long-term residents (Mr. A, male, 74 years old) have increasingly opted to sell or lease their properties in response to escalating land values and declining residential comfort, resulting in a shift from ownership-based positions to service-oriented roles. This condition is consistent with prior research, which indicates that tourism-driven transformation often produces both physical and social displacement (Astore and Tricarico 2024). Concurrently, new business actors (Mr. K, 23 years old, female) introduce globalized lifestyles and aesthetic preferences, reinforcing the area's status as an international tourism destination while subtly reshaping local identity.

From an economic standpoint, tourism has stimulated growth and employment, positioning Prawirotaman as a dynamic economic corridor. However, such expansion is frequently accompanied by reduced social diversity and unequal ownership structures (Cocola-Gant and Lopez-Gay 2020). This condition is evident in Prawirotaman, where several long-established enterprises, such as Via-Via Jogja and Tempo Gelato, are owned by external investors. In this context, major commercial activities are dominated by external capital, while local residents are predominantly engaged in informal or service-based occupations. This imbalance suggests that economic vitality does not necessarily correspond with social sustainability (Carmona 2019).

From an environmental perspective, the corridor has not yet fulfilled key sustainability criteria. Limited vegetation, inadequate drainage systems, and elevated noise levels reduce spatial comfort, while environmental quality remains essential for sustaining publicness (Ghavimi, Bonerath, and Haunert 2025; Nahdatunnisa et al. 2024). Suboptimal ecological conditions discourage prolonged engagement with public space, thereby weakening its social function.

When analyzed through the Star Model of Publicness (Varna and Tiesdell 2010), Prawirotaman Street demonstrates high levels of accessibility and activity, yet exhibits low degrees of control, civility, and spatial quality. Although economic activity generates vibrancy, it simultaneously reinforces exclusion in the absence of inclusive design strategies and governance mechanisms. Factors contributing to publicness include user diversity and open

commercial activities, whereas inhibiting factors encompass privatization, diminished social functions, and limited policy intervention. This condition reflects a form of soft privatization (De Magalhães 2010), in which public space remains physically accessible but is effectively regulated by private interests.

Despite these challenges, publicness has not been entirely eroded. Micro-scale interactions, such as informal conversations, street vending, and mobility-related encounters, indicate that public values persist in fragmented forms. This observation aligns with Splichal (2022), who contends that, within contemporary contexts, publicness is reproduced through everyday practices rather than through formally centralized shared spaces (Splichal 2022). Accordingly, publicness in Prawirotaman is more appropriately interpreted as a dynamic condition that is continuously produced and reproduced.

Through the examination of these dynamics, publicness operates as an integrative indicator of sustainable environmental development, reflecting the equilibrium among social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Elevated levels of publicness foster social engagement and help mitigate the adverse impacts of tourism (Zhu 2023). In the context of Prawirotaman, this objective can be realized through a co-production approach (Healey 2020), involving collaborative engagement among governmental institutions, local communities, and business actors (Simpson 2001; Titisari, Yusran, and Wulandari 2023). Strategic interventions, including the expansion of pedestrian spaces, the enhancement of urban vegetation, the improvement of infrastructural systems, and the promotion of non-commercial social activities, are essential for strengthening publicness.

Nevertheless, spatial limitations, particularly the corridor's restricted width of approximately 5 meters, present significant challenges for implementation. A viable strategy is to prioritize pedestrian movement by limiting vehicular access while simultaneously providing alternative parking solutions. Through such measures, Prawirotaman Street can develop into a more balanced urban environment that accommodates both economic vitality and social functionality.

By implementing these strategies, the Prawirotaman Street corridor has the potential to serve as a model for a tourism area that is both socially and spatially sustainable. It can function not only as an economic landscape but also as a

lived environment that reflects a balanced integration of residential, commercial, and tourism-related uses. The case of Prawirotaman Street illustrates that the primary challenge in tourism-driven urban contexts lies not in the disappearance of public space, but in the preservation of publicness within it. Sustaining this balance is essential for achieving socially and spatially sustainable urban environments (SDG 11).

Conclusions

The evolution of the Prawirotaman Street corridor exemplifies how processes of touristification have reconfigured urban public space, shifting it from a socially oriented environment toward a consumption-driven economic landscape. Nevertheless, publicness has not been eradicated; instead, it has been reconstituted into more nuanced and subtle forms. Evidence from observations, interviews, and field surveys indicates that, while the corridor demonstrates robust economic activity, it simultaneously suffers from deteriorating environmental quality, diminished social interaction, and restricted access to inclusive public spaces for local residents.

Publicness endures in the form of everyday publicness, manifested through small-scale, spontaneous interactions among residents, workers, and tourists. From an economic perspective, the corridor continues to expand but remains precarious due to its reliance on tourism; socially, communal bonds are weakening despite persistent values of openness; and environmentally, insufficient vegetation, inadequate drainage, and high noise levels diminish spatial comfort. These findings underscore that publicness operates as an integrative indicator of sustainable development, linking social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Enhancing publicness through pedestrian-prioritized design, reinforcement of local identity, and collaborative governance is crucial for re-establishing equilibrium within mixed-use tourism corridors. Conceptually, the notion of everyday publicness enriches the interpretation of SDG 11 at a micro scale, providing a transferable and practical framework for evaluating inclusivity, accessibility, and social

vitality in tourism-driven urban contexts across comparable settings.

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Author(s) contribution

Monica Sheira contributed to the research concepts preparation, methodologies, investigations, data analysis, visualization, articles drafting and revisions.

Ema Yunita Titisari contribute to the research concepts preparation and literature reviews, data analysis, of article drafts preparation and validation.

Damayanti Asikin contribute to methodology, supervision, and validation.

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