

## Executive Summary



## The Braj Foundation

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## 1.0 Introduction

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The Braj region is known for its rich cultural, architectural, ecological and spiritual heritage. There used to be over 1000 splashing water bodies in the entire region having beautiful architectural constructions around. Over 137 lush green forests used to adorn this fabled land. More than 18000 acre of hilly terrain used to provide the natural barrier for the spread of the Thar desert. Hundreds to beautiful mansions and temples have been built in the entire region during the course of history. The cultural and spiritual traditions of the region have been sung and eulogised far and wide. Braj is one of the most visited regions in UP because of its rich religious & cultural heritage. The region's true culture lies in its rural belt and not the urbanized areas. It is in these rural villages that the true essence of Braj and *Radha-krishna leelas* can be experienced.

Over 50 million pilgrims/tourists visit this small geographical area having a spread of around 5000 sq. km. The region spans the Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh, portions of Bharatpur district of Rajasthan and that of Palwal district of Haryana. The region lies very well within the Golden Triangle of Delhi-Jaipur-Agra and is strategically located centrally amidst three world heritage sites – Taj Mahal, Keoladeo National Park and Sariska Tiger Reserve.

The Mathura Vrindavan Development Authority (MVDA), an Authority involved in the development of Mathura Vrindavan region, had floated an invitation for expression of interest dated 19 August, 2008, inviting Technical & Financial proposals for the project titled “Preparation of Tourism Master Plan in the Region of Braj, District Mathura”. In pursuance thereof, the consortium of **IL&FS Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (IIDC)** and **The Braj Foundation** were selected as the project consultants to prepare the Tourism master Plan of Braj region, in a competitive bidding.

Braj is the Land of Lord Krishna, the land where the Divine got simplified. Undoubtedly Braj is always associated with spirituality to offer with. But this is a myopic view of the potential of Braj. Spiritualism is ingrained in the anatomy of the land, but there is more. The richness and continuum of cultural traditions exist only in Braj. Round the year festivity and celebrations is unparalleled in the world. Braj heavily influences all the theatrical, musical and other art forms of India. The system of social gatherings and community feelings is unique to Braj only. The hospitality and warmth extended to the guests is incomparable in the world. The bliss and satisfaction levels are the best here. The cuisine of Braj is irresistible. The natural scenic beauty is among the best. The peaceful and sustainable co-existence of human life with nature is the only example of its kind in the world.

## 2.0 Vision of the project

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Most of the tourists visiting Braj remain limited to the popular townships of Vrindavan, Mathura, Goverdhan, Gokul, Mahavan, Baldeo. Due to lack of awareness and development the larger portion of Braj region remains unexplored and untapped. It is important to understand that the “Braj” is spread in over 5000 sq. Km, in over 600 villages abounding its cultural, ecological and architectural heritage

नः पुरो जनपदा न ग्रामा गृहावयम्  
नित्यं वनौकसतात वनशैलनिवासिनः  
श्रीमद्भागवत 10.24.24

(In Srimad Bhagwatam, while advocating for the worship of Goverdhan, 7 year old Krishna argues with 70 year old Nand Baba “*The cities, the cultured lands nor the villages their houses are ours, we are the forest people dear father, we always live in the forests and on the hills*”)

The consultants plan to exhibit and develop this value of Braj and make the impending visitors feel the inherent spirit of the place, in the Tourism Master Plan of the region.

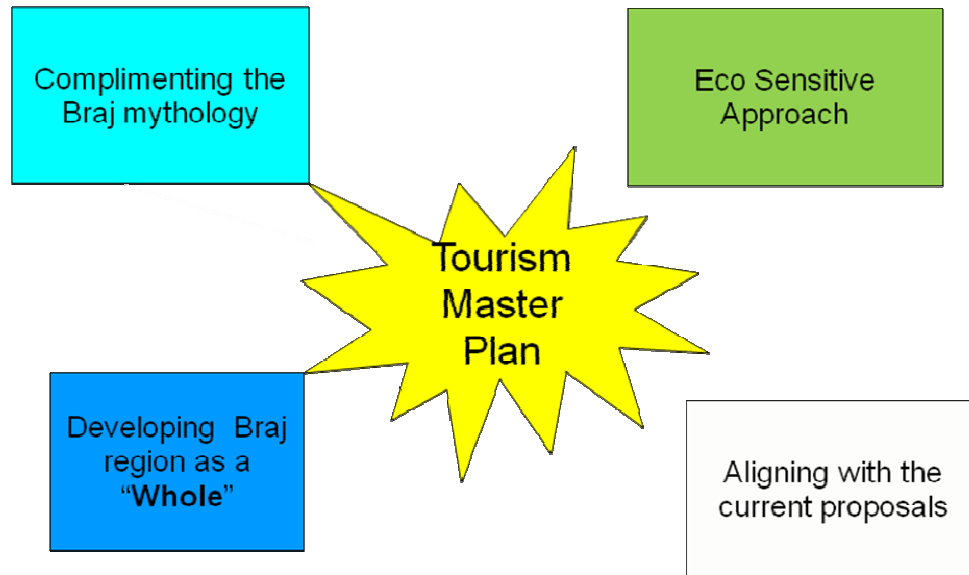
Tourist trips to Braj tend to be 1-2 day visits and such short duration tourism does not contribute significantly to revenue or development of the region. By developing more sites in and around the major centers of Mathura, Vrindavan, Gokul, Barsana, etc and marketing them as a comprehensive package, tourists can be persuaded to stay in the region for longer periods of time. The average visitor should be encouraged to not only visit the temple sites but also experience the Krishna way of life by being part of the areas where the various *Krishna leelas* were performed, picturesque rural landscapes and native hospitality.

All tourism development should provide maximum benefit to the local community and not make the cultural resource or improved infrastructure inaccessible to it.

### 3.0 Approach & Methodology

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Therefore the approach to the master plan has been:-



The opportunities in Braj can be summarized into –

- One of the most internationally popular pilgrimage destination in Uttar Pradesh (specially after Uttarakhand getting separated)
- Very popular Krishna Leelas
- International attention & devotees
- Braj is a “region”, full of folklore
- Splendid nature and culture resources

The Tourism Master Plan has outlaid a time frame of five years to initiate development across the Braj region. The proposals have been envisioned in three phases:-

- **I phase: Projects to be initiated in First year**

*(Projects adding basic infrastructure, preparing ground for Private investments)*

- Projects largely to be done with Government funds laying basic infrastructure i.e. accessibility, electric & water supply etc.
- Projects identified to avail the Grants & subsidies from State/ Central government schemes
- Projects to be done with Community participation/ NGOs in reviving the Ecology of the region (Kunds, forests etc)
- Advertisement and Marketing of the region

- **II phase: Projects to be initiated in Second & Third year**

*(Projects with private investments of lesser risks, with some viability gap funding)*

- Projects to be done with PPP mode with a Viability gap Funding approach
- Projects with approved support of Grant & subsidies for State/ Central government under different schemes
- Projects to be done with Community participation/ NGOs

- **III phase: Projects to be initiated in Fourth & Final year**

*(Projects with private investments of higher risks)*

- Large Tourism Projects to be done with PPP
- Projects with a support of Grant & subsidies from State/ central govts under different schemes
- Projects to be done with Community participation/ NGOs
- Projects linking the developments coming from different agencies.

So far the tourism /pilgrimage in Braj was limited to the major urban destinations like Mathura, Vrindavna, Goverdhan, Barsana, Nandgaon, Gokul, Baldeo only. However, the seat of real Braj culture and innumerable pastimes of Sri Krishna remained in the rural hinterland of Braj which remained largely secluded from the impending visitors and more importantly from the purview of the planners & administrators.

The methodology adopted in the Tourism Master plan preparation is:-

- Focus on Cluster wise development (spreading development)
- Each block has series of Villages of some 'legends of Krishna Leelas' of great mythological importance
- These villages have unique sites of interest, including temples, Kunds, Forest/Grooves, heritage sites etc.
- These villages have been prioritized
- The current Master plan focuses on the developments in I, II, III priority villages

## 4.0 Identifying the places of Intervention



To ensure a balanced development in the the entire Braj, the region has been mapped into Five Sacred clusters. These cluster are as per the existing administrative blocks.

1. Barsana Nandgaon Cluster
  - Nandgaon Block
  - Chhata Block
2. Goverdhan Cluster
  - Goverdhan Block
3. Mathura Vrindavan Cluster
  - Mathura Block
  - Chaumuha Block
  - Farah Block
4. Gokul Cluster
  - Baldeo Block
  - Raya Block
5. Mat Cluster
  - Mat Block
  - Naujhil Block

In these five sacred clusters, around 150 village of significance were therefore identified and well documented in this Tourism Master Plan. The cultural history of these villages and the sites of interest present in them has been vividly recorded which would be the basis of future development.

The selected villages were thereafter graded into A, B and C categories depending on the basis of the following set of parameters:

- Mythological and historical significance of the village and its sites
- Archaeological and Architectural significance of the village and its sites
- Accessibility of the village and the sites within
- Available tourism infrastructure within the village and its sites

These villages were thereafter mapped to their respective administrative blocks and five tourism clusters. Based on the perimeter above these selected villages are the development target of this Master Plan.



S.No	Cluster Name	Block Name	Total Villages	Selected Villages	Priority A	Priority B	Priority C
1.	Barsana – Nandgaon Cluster	Nandgaon	46	27	02	18	07
		Chhata	67	24	-	09	15
2.	Goverdhan Cluster	Goverdhan	48	19	01	04	15
3.	Mathura – Vrindavan Cluster	Chaumuha	60	18	01	02	15
		Mathura	84	30	02	03	25
		Farah	75	0	-	-	-
4.	Mat Cluster	Naujhil	93	2	-	-	02
		Mat	52	7	02	-	05
5.	Gokul Cluster	Raya	96	1		01	
		Baldeo	72	7	02	01	03

These 150 selected villages have over 700 sites of interests, where Krishna leelas have been performed. The consultants are of strong opinion that developing these sites with a mythological folklore is the real development of Braj. These sites of interest like kunds, groves, temples and architectural & archaeological structures are categorized phase out the development process.

Cluster Name	Kunds			Groves			Temples			Architectural & Archaeological Structures		
Category	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
<b>Barsana - Nandgaon</b>	51	21	68	8	12	22	7	13	32	21	29	26
<b>Goverdhan</b>	12	18	28	2	6	0	4	6	11	5	6	0
<b>Mathura - Vrindavan</b>	5	14	45	7	8	12	5	8	25	8	16	8
<b>Mat</b>	5	6	2	3	3	0	3	6	6	5	5	0
<b>Gokul</b>	6	3	4	5	2	0	13	16	0	16	15	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Gross Total</b>	<b>288</b>			<b>90</b>			<b>155</b>			<b>166</b>		



## 5.0 Structuring of the proposals

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While developing the proposals in the Tourism Master Plan, it is intended to –

- Integrate and Balance the proposals across the Braj region (cluster wise)
- Not overlap, with other proposals/ projects.

Therefore, the Tourism Master plan-

PART ONE - Facilitates the Implementation of “already laid projects”

PART TWO - New developments proposals in every cluster

In the **Part one**, the Tourism Master Plan suggests development options and the implementation methodology of the already laid out projects in the Braj region-

- Heritage and Tourism Projects of Rs 269 crores as per the CDP of Mathura under JNNURM scheme for Mathura
- Integrating with the development projects announced by the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- The ten unit location development project of MVDA ,intending to make the “Travelers on highway” the “Tourist in Braj”

In the **Part two**, the Tourism Master Plan suggests development of a varied list of proposals. A large intent of these proposals was to gather stakeholders from the entire arena i.e. State government funds/ Central government funds under different scheme and also promote Private participations. Public Private Partnership projects have been given a priority as well.

- Basic infrastructure projects through government funds
- Projects to be developed & clustered, trying to avail the grant/subsidies of different schemes of Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India.
- Development of selected places of interest (Kunds, Grooves etc) availing State government funds.
- Projects to be developed with Community participation/ NGO’s.
- To enable destination development in every cluster, a major tourism attraction to be developed with Public Private Partnership is suggested.

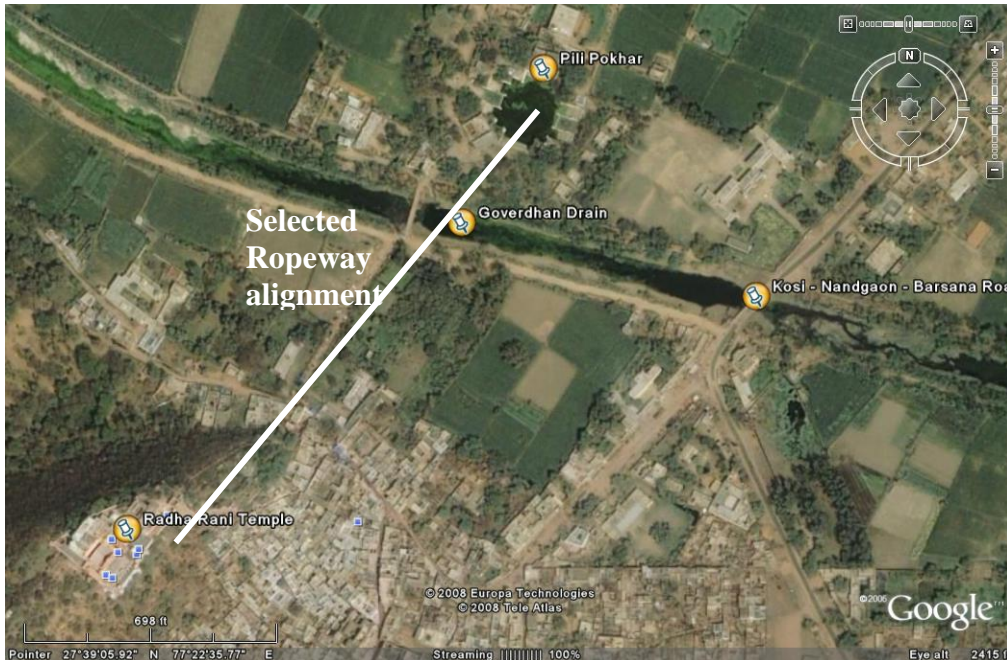
The Tourism Master Plan has tried a comprehensive development approach taking the opinion of the people of all walks of Braj region. Several meetings and presentations were held during the course of preparing the Tourism Master Plan in cognizance with MVDA. The most important one was held on 19th of October 2008 under the chairmanship of the Principle Secretary, (Tourism), GoUP Mr. Sushil Kumar. Several suggestions and inputs were floated by the public representatives, members of the civil society and other prominent dignitaries. All these components have been considered and duly incorporated in the tourism master plan.

## 6.0 Highlight proposed projects

Amid many proposals proposed in the Tourism Master Plan, some of the highlight projects are listed below in every cluster.

### 6.1 *Developments in Cluster 1: Barsana - Nandgaon*

- Developing a **ropeway** from Pilli Pokhar to Radha Rani temple



#### **Vision for the project:**

To create an environmentally-friendly means of transport, to help religious tourists reach Radha Rani shrine and add suitable infrastructure to enable Barsana to have tourists all round the year". The ropeway alignment to be designed ensuring minimum infringement upon Forest, Power Transmission Lines, Roads, Habitation etc.

The project should be developed with a Public Private Partnership.



Estimated ropeway length- 900 meters  
**Estimated project cost: Rs 20 crores**

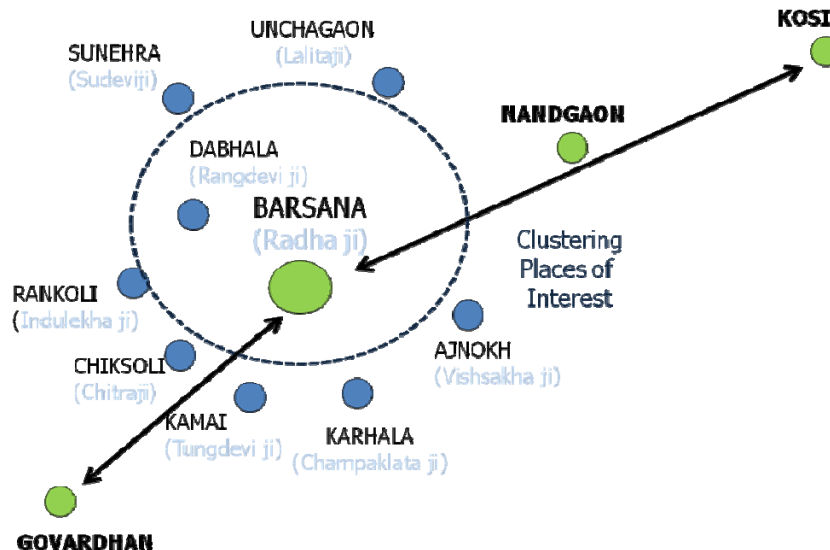
- To enable destination development in every cluster, a major tourism attraction, to be developed with Public Private Partnership is suggested.

### PROJECT IN BARSANA- NANDGAON CLUSTER-

Developing the Romantic trail around the Barsana node.

A) Barsana is a famous tourism and pilgrimage destination. Barsana, the land of Radhaji, can act as a node for development of sites, in its vicinity.

B) **VILLAGES COVERED IN THE ROMANTIC TRAIL** – Barsana – Chiksoli – Manpur – Rupnagar - Dabhala – Rankoli – Unchagaon – Ajnokh – Kamai - Karhala - Sunhaira (Rajasthan)



Picture- Clustering the places of interest around a node.

C) These villages have a legend and a popular folklore as their identity. One unique location is selected in each of these villages. These locations are pictures sites. An area of 2-5 acres of land should be made available for development of the project.

S.No.	Site selected	Land Requirement & Availability
1	Vrishbhanu Kund, Barsana	17 acres
2	Dohini Kund, Chiksoli	8.5 acres
3	Gahvarvan, Manpur	2-5 acres

4	Rup Kund, Rupnagar	2-5 acres
5	Ratna Kund, Dabhala	2-5 acres
6	Ranku Van, Rankoli	2-5 acres
7	Karah Van, Karhala	2-5 acres
8	Kamna Van, Kamai	2-5 acres
9	Anjan Van, Ajnokh	2-5 acres
10	Lalita Van, Unchagaon	2-5 acres

The sites selected adjacent to the Van, the development should be proposed as per the Forest department guidelines.

- D)** One major development of a world class theme park is suggested in an area of around 30-50 acres. This development has intentionally not proposed at Barsana, so that it does not overpower the religious aura of the Barsana town.

This development is proposed in between Bansana and Uchagaon village, at the backdrop of Asth-Sakhi hills. This highlight of this theme park would be a 100 feet Statue of Krishna- Radha, in a moment of love. This statue would in the placed on a three floored structure which would be a 1500 pax Convention center for religious discourses.

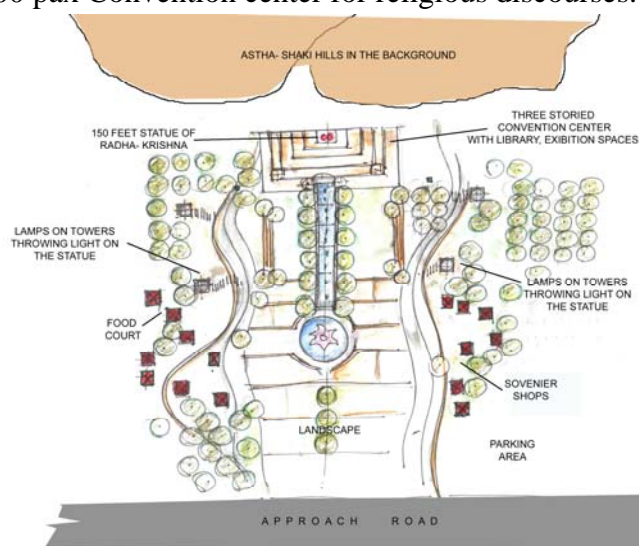
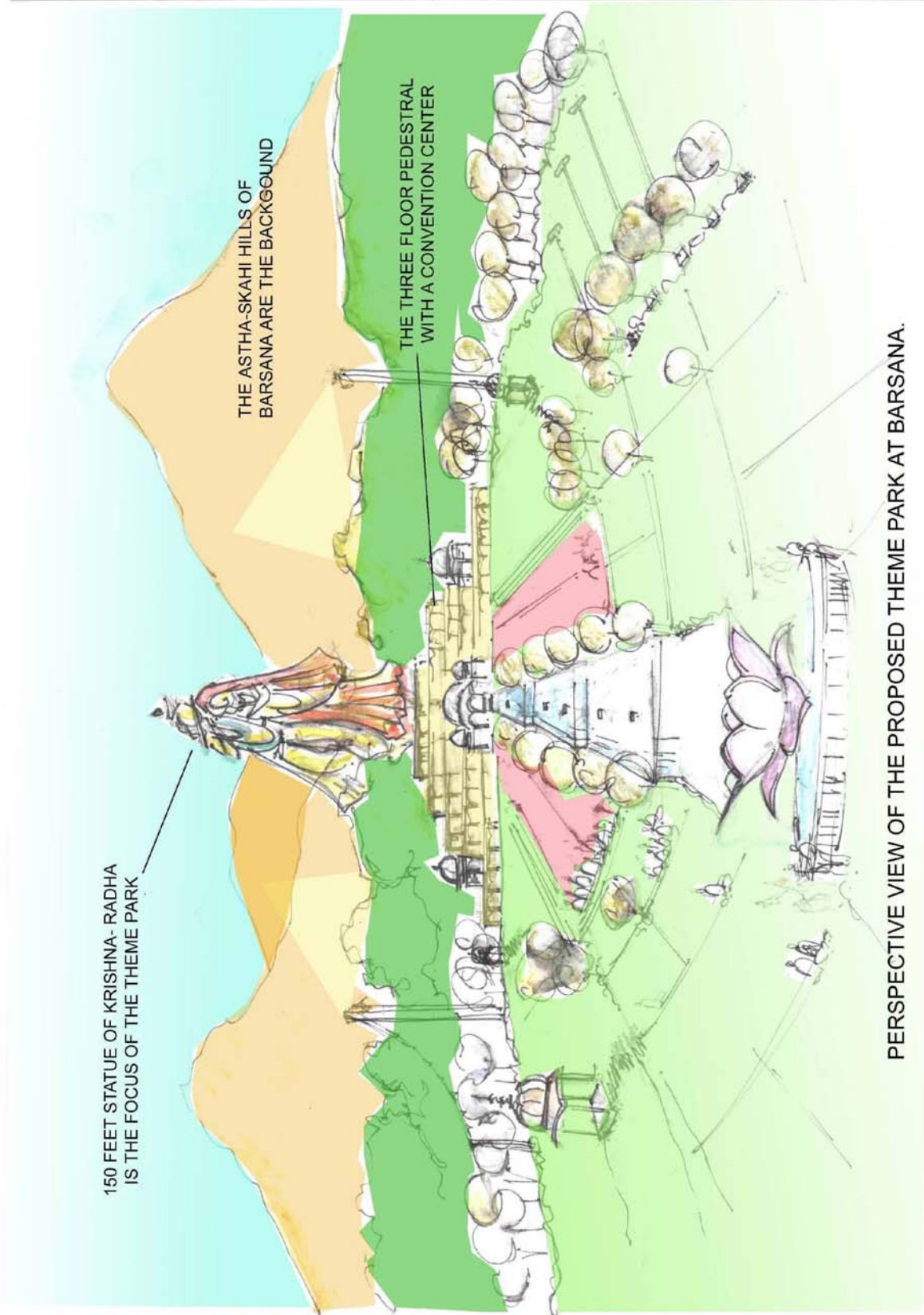


Image- Proposed schematic plan of the Theme Park at Barsana





PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE PROPOSED THEME PARK AT BARSANA.

This state of art, convention center would have a Exhibition gallery and Library. A 100 bed accommodation can also be integrated to support the convention center.

The Landscape in front of this building & the statue has musical fountains which can be a venue to large cultural functions. A food court and an Art & craft village, displaying the vernacular architecture and culture of Braj, flank the landscape on both its sides.

- E)** The project cost for this project is estimated at around Rs 250 crores and to be developed with a Public Private Partnership project. A project SPV will be created, where the GoUP will consolidate the land required for the project. The Land could be leased out to the SPV for a period of 30years with an automatic extension of 30 years.

#### **Investment Summary for Barsana – Nandgaon Cluster**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Required Investment</b>
1	Access and Connectivity (Roads)	Rs 22 crores
2	Ropeway	Rs 20 crores
3	Romantic Trail	Rs 250 crores
4	Padav Sthals	Rs 50 crores
5	Kund	Rs 78.5 crore
6	Grove/ Forests	Rs 50 crore
7	Architectural and Archaeological Sites	Rs 35.85 crores
8	Temples	Rs 19.75 crores
	<b>Total Investment for Barsana - Nandgaon Cluster</b>	<b>Rs 526.1 crores</b>

## 6.2 Developments in Cluster 2: Govardhan

- To enable destination development in every cluster, a major tourism attraction, to be developed with Public Private Partnership is suggested.

### Highlight Project in Govardhan Cluster- Tourism Rail around Giriraj Parikrama

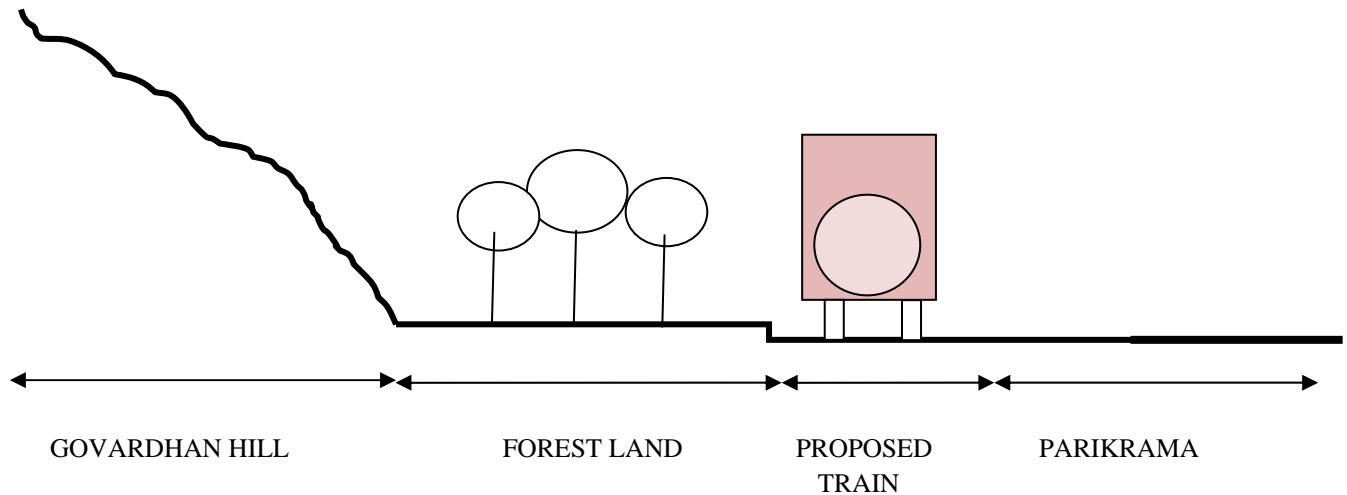
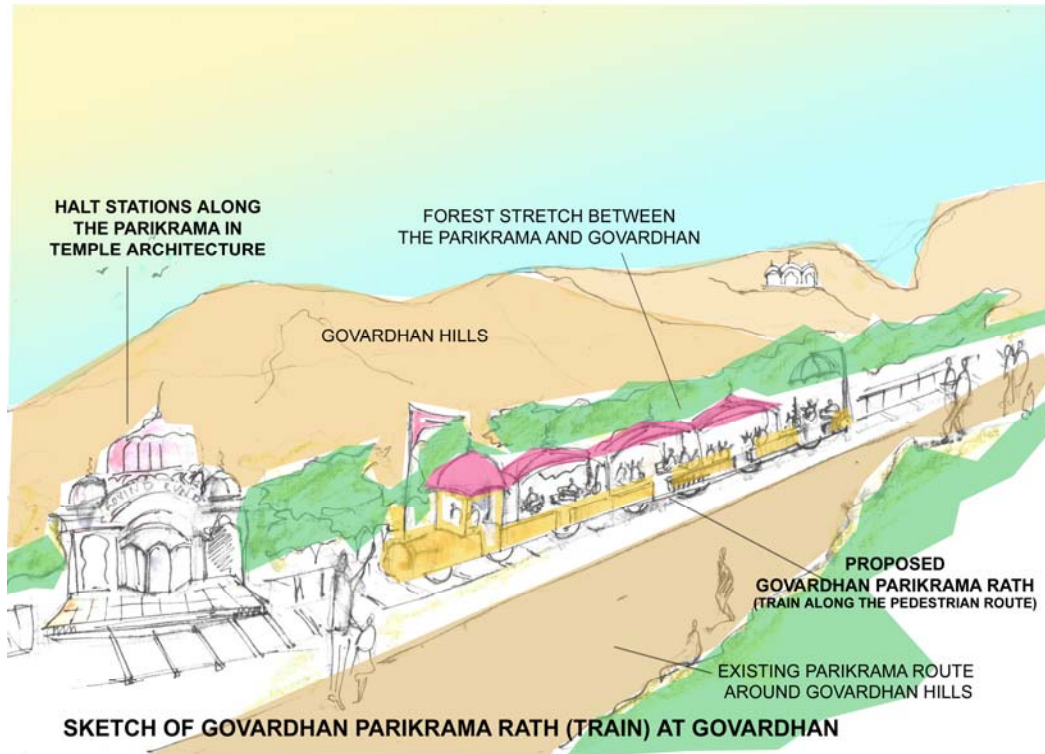


IMAGE: PROPOSED SCHEMATIC SECTION OF THE GOVARDHAN PARIKRAMA





### Investment Summary for Goverdhan Cluster

S.No.	Project Type	Required Investment
1	Access and Connectivity (Roads)	Rs 55.9 crores
2	RoBs	Rs 40 crores
3	Parking	Rs 3.25 crores
4	Padav Sthals	Rs 10 crores
5	Kund	Rs 28 crore
6	Grove/ Forests	Rs 10 crore
7	Architectural and Archaeological Sites	Rs 6.75 crores
8	Temples	Rs 8.75 crores
9	Tourist Train	
	<b>Total Investment for Goverdhan Cluster</b>	<b>Rs 162.65 crores</b>

### **6.3**     Development in Cluster 3: Mathura – Vrindavan

#### **Investment Summary for Mathura-Vrindavan Cluster**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Required Investment</b>
1	Access and Connectivity	Rs 42.0 crores
2	RoBs	Rs 40 crores
3	Parking	Rs 2.75 crores
4	Padav Sthals	Rs 80 crores
5	Kund	Rs 23.25 crore
6	Grove/ Forests	Rs 34 crore
7	Architectural and Archaeological Sites	Rs 16 crores
8	Temples	Rs 14 crores
	<b>Total Investment for Mathura Vrindavan Cluster</b>	<b>Rs 252.00 crores</b>

#### 6.4 Development in Cluster 4: Mat Cluster

- To enable destination development in every cluster, a major tourism attraction, to be developed with Public Private Partnership is suggested.

##### **Highlight Project in Mat Cluster-** Vrindavan park

Prepared by: **Prof (Dr.) Surinder Suneja**

Head of the Department , Landscape Architecture, S.P.A New Delhi



- Only concrete roads backed by cycle track and tree lined pedestrian promenade.
- Mud treated cottages to impart an ethnic look. Meditation centre in Kadamb Van.
- Open air theatre for Raas Leela.
- 8m high wall for sound and light show.
- The ethnic village comprising of 200 cottages with community facilities based on energy conservation pattern to encourage social interaction.
- Public amenities and shelters at strategic locations.
- Bon fire spaces for interaction
- Social congregation cum camping arena.
- Asia's highest single jet fountain 140 ft high as a landmark of the entire site.
- Specialized channel sections designed with sand filters on the pushta
- Environmentally sensitive designed parking area at two tiers to accommodate 800 cars and 50 buses.

**Proposed Investment: Rs 100 crores**

### Investment Summary for Mat Cluster

S.No.	Project Type	Required Investment
1	Access and Connectivity	Rs 1.5 crores
2	Yamuna Over Bridge near Gangroli	Rs 50 crores
3	Kund	Rs 8.5 crore
4	Grove/ Forests	Rs 9 crore
5	Architectural and Archaeological Sites	Rs 6.25 crores
6	Temples	Rs 6.75 crores
7	Vrindavan Theme Park	Rs 100 crores
	<b>Total Investment for Mat Cluster</b>	<b>Rs 182.00 crores</b>

## 6.5 Development in Cluster 5: Gokul Cluster

- To enable destination development in every cluster, a major tourism attraction, to be developed with Public Private Partnership is suggested.

### Highlight Project in Gokul Cluster- Krishna Theme park



#### Description:

Krishna did spend his early two and half years here. In this phase of life, many interesting leelas were performed by him. The proposed Theme park at Gokul intends to display the most popular phase of Krishna's life.

The theme park is spread in 30 acres and would be located between Mahavan and Gokul. Accommodation facilities in the themed landscape would give Gokul a much needed Thrust in its growth. The theme park also includes a place for religious discourses.

**Estimated project cost:** Rs 120 crore.

### **Investment Summary for Gokul Cluster**

S.No.	Project Type	Required Investment
1	Access and Connectivity	Rs 16.2 crores
2	Kund	Rs 8.5 crore
3	Grove/ Forests	Rs 12 crore
4	Architectural and Archaeological Sites	Rs 21 crores
5	Temples	Rs 17.75 crores
6	Krishna Theme Park	Rs 120 crores
	<b>Total Investment for Gokul Cluster</b>	<b>Rs 195.45 crores</b>

## 7.0 Financial Summary

All figures in (Rs Crores)

Assumption:

25% of Total Project Cost – GoI Contribution

25% of Total Project Cost – GoUP Contribution

50% of Total Project Cost – Private Investment

S. No	Location	GoI Contribution	GoUP contribution	Private Investment envisaged	Total
1	Projects under JNNURM	215.00	60.43	-	275.43
2	Projects of CM declaration	-	255.00	-	255.00
3	The 10 unit location project on Highway	50.00	Contribution in terms of land	108.00	158.00
4	Investments in Barsana Nandgaon cluster	131.50	131.50	263.00	526.10
5	Investments in Govardhan cluster	80.66	80.66	161.33	322.65
6	Investments in Mathura Vrindavan cluster	63.00	63.00	126.00	252.00
7	Investments in Mat cluster	45.50	45.50	91.00	182.00
8	Investments in Gokul cluster	48.86	48.86	97.72	195.45
	<b>TOTAL INVESTMENT</b>	<b>634.52</b>	<b>684.95</b>	<b>847.05</b>	<b>2166.63</b>

## 8.0 Limitations

Since, it was for the very first time that the scope and expanse of Braj tourism was enhanced to over 150 villages of Braj, the complexity of the entire process of planning increased manifold. The Tourism Master Plan of Braj region is an honest attempt by the consultants, in the time frame granted for the entire exercise (a mere 45 days).