



The Evolving Role of the Inspectorate in Achieving a Sustainable Surabaya

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Abstract: *The Evolving Role of the Inspectorate in Achieving a Sustainable Surabaya*

Purpose: to analyze the role of the Surabaya City Inspectorate in overseeing sustainable development policies and to identify challenges and opportunities that support the city's sustainability goals.

Method: using a qualitative approach with a longitudinal case study thematic analysis to explore in local government oversight practices.

Results: strengthening the oversight function of the Inspectorate increases the effectiveness and accountability of sustainable city policies.

Novelty: provides a new perspective on optimizing the role of the Inspectorate through collaborative and technology-based oversight mechanisms.

Contribution: collaboration with institutions, communities, and audit technology enhances early detection of irregularities and improves city governance efficiency.

Kata kunci:

Inspektorat;
Kota Berkelanjutan;
Tata Kelola Kota.

Abstrak: Peran Inspektorat yang Berkembang dalam Mewujudkan Surabaya yang Berkelanjutan

Tujuan: menganalisis peran Inspektorat Kota Surabaya dalam mengawasi kebijakan pembangunan berkelanjutan serta mengidentifikasi tantangan dan peluang yang mendukung tujuan keberlanjutan kota.

Metode: menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi kasus longitudinal dan analisis tematik untuk mengeksplorasi pola pengawasan pemerintah daerah.

Hasil: penguatan fungsi pengawasan Inspektorat meningkatkan efektivitas dan akuntabilitas kebijakan kota berkelanjutan.

Kebaruan: memberikan perspektif baru tentang optimalisasi peran Inspektorat melalui mekanisme pengawasan yang kolaboratif dan berbasis teknologi.

Kontribusi: kolaborasi dengan instansi, masyarakat, dan teknologi audit meningkatkan deteksi dini penyimpangan serta efisiensi tata kelola kota.



1. Introduction

As one of the largest metropolitan cities in Indonesia, Surabaya has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainable development through a vision that emphasizes a balance between the environment, society, and the economy [1].

This commitment is evidenced by various national and international awards such as the ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable City, SDGs Action Award, and Adipura Kencana [2]. While these achievements are commendable, sustainability is not an instant process but requires accountable governance and an effective monitoring system. This is where the role of the Surabaya City Inspectorate becomes crucial. As an internal oversight agency, the Inspectorate not only audits and evaluates performance but also acts as a catalyst for change in supporting urban sustainability. However, the effectiveness of this role is rarely discussed in depth in academic literature, especially regarding the optimization of internal audit mechanisms to support a systemic and innovative sustainability agenda. The leaders of Surabaya have affirmed their commitment to uphold the principle of sustainability as the foundation for long-term development [3]. This commitment is clearly reflected in the Vision of Surabaya City, which emphasizes a balance between environmental management, social equity, and inclusive economic growth [4]. As a dynamic city, Government of Surabaya realizes that achieving sustainability goals cannot be done partially, but requires holistic synergy between stakeholders [5]. Therefore, the Surabaya City Government actively builds collaboration and coordination with various parties, ranging from government agencies, the private sector, academics, to local communities. The urgency of this research is to explain in more detail the efforts of the Surabaya City Inspectorate, which aim not only to strengthen the implementation of sustainable policies but also to ensure that every development step is in line with environmentally friendly principles, responsive to community needs, and encourages innovation in facing future urban challenges. Through this collaborative approach, Surabaya continues to strengthen its position as a model city in realizing sustainable development at the national and global levels [6].

The city of Surabaya has successfully achieved the ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable City (ESC) award in the Cleanest Air in a Large City category [7]. This award confirms Surabaya as the city with the best air quality in the ASEAN or Southeast Asia region. It is important to establish strategies that maintain environmental standards at a level that protects the welfare of citizens. Through its environmental agency, Surabaya has programs to control and preserve the environment [8]. In addition, there are other awards, such as in 2024, Surabaya was named the First Best City in the SDGs Action Award event organized by Bappenas RI in Jakarta. This award was given in recognition of its active role in promoting inclusive sustainable development and providing benefits to the community [9]. Taman Bungkul Surabaya also received the Asian Townscape Award from the United Nations for the best park in Asia due to its comprehensive and integrated facilities [10]. In addition, in 2024, the Surabaya City Government received the KANAKA (Gold) award from the Geospatial Information Agency (BIG) at the Bhumandala Award for its accurate and comprehensive boundary demarcation [11]. In 2023, Surabaya won the Adipura Kencana award in the Metropolitan City category from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (LHK), marking its eighth consecutive win [12]. In the same year, the city of Surabaya received the CI-EL Medal of Distinction at the Government Techno Marketing Award, which serves as motivation for the city's sustainability. These awards demonstrate the City of Surabaya's commitment to achieving sustainable and environmentally friendly development.

One of the agencies supporting the achievement of the Sustainable City of Surabaya is the Surabaya City Inspectorate [13]. This agency is an internal government supervisory body that plays a strategic role in realizing good governance and supporting the sustainability agenda in Surabaya. Its main functions include supervision, auditing, and investigation of government agency

performance to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with regulations [14]. Internal audit is an independent and objective evaluation process that aims to increase organizational value and improve operational performance through a systematic approach [15]. According to the Institute of Internal Auditors, internal audit plays a crucial role in assessing the weight of risk management, internal control, and corporate governance [16]. Informal interactions between the internal audit function and the audit committee strengthen the oversight by complementing formal meetings and are influenced by the independence of the committee, the experience of the audit chair, and the quality of the internal audit [17]. Previous study examines the organizational factors that influence the effectiveness of internal audit in the context of its new role in corporate governance. A survey of 153 companies in Italy shows that internal audit performance is influenced by the characteristics of the audit team, audit processes and activities, and organizational relationships [18]. The main functions of internal audit include risk management evaluation, internal control assessment, verification of legal and policy compliance, and improvement of operational efficiency [19]. In the context of risk management, auditors use data-based analysis to map potential threats, such as financial risks due to market fluctuations or operational risks from process inefficiencies [20]. Meanwhile, in internal control assessments, auditors ensure that procedures such as transaction authorization or segregation of duties are carried out according to standards to minimize potential irregularities [21]. In addition, internal audit acts as a strategic consultant by providing evidence-based recommendations, such as the adoption of automation technology or organizational restructuring, which can drive business innovation [22]. Another previous study examines the influence of internal control systems on the financial performance of companies listed on the Nairobi Stock

Exchange and finds that internal control systems have a significant correlation with financial performance. Factors such as control environment, internal audit function, risk management, management activities, and corporate governance have been shown to play an important role in improving performance [23]. In other words, internal audit not only operates as a supervisory tool, but also as a catalyst for transformation towards a sustainable, competitive, and ethical organization. Through performance and financial audits, the Inspectorate ensures that sustainability programs such as waste management, urban greening, and infrastructure development are carried out according to plan and budget [24]. For example, in the "Green House" program at the Al-Akbar Mosque in Surabaya, the Inspectorate conducts regular evaluations to ensure that funds are used effectively and that ecological impacts are achieved [25].

The Inspectorate also plays a role in preventing corrupt practices that can hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) [26]. By adopting a risk-based monitoring system, this institution identifies potential loopholes in strategic projects, such as the development of low-emission public transportation (Bus Rapid Transit) or river revitalization [27]. Collaboration with the Surabaya Environmental Agency (BLH) in environmental audits also strengthens the integration of sustainability aspects into urban policy [28]. In addition, the Inspectorate encourages innovation through policy improvement recommendations. Their audit reports often form the basis for the drafting of new regulations, such as strengthening green building standards or incentives for companies that implement environment-based CSR [29]. Public participation in complaints through digital platforms is also optimized to enhance participatory oversight [30]. Thus, the Inspectorate is not only a "gatekeeper" of the budget but also a catalyst for transformation toward a sustainable city. Its success is reflected in the 2022 Sustainable City Award

won by Surabaya, where transparent governance was a key factor [31].

Previous research on sustainability in Surabaya has discussed various aspects, ranging from environmental governance, the role of stakeholders, to strategies for achieving sustainable development. However, there are still several research gaps that can be explored further. Most previous studies have focused on environmental control and conservation programs without discussing in depth the long-term effectiveness of these policies [32]. Other studies have also identified the role of the Surabaya City Inspectorate in ensuring transparency and accountability in governance, but there has been no research exploring how internal audit mechanisms can be further optimized to support the sustainability agenda. This study will explain a new perspective on internal auditing, which is not only useful as a supervisory tool but also as a catalyst for change in city governance. The Inspectorate plays a role not only in ensuring compliance with regulations, but also in preventing corrupt practices, improving budget efficiency, and encouraging policy innovation through strategic recommendations. This is supported by collaboration between various stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, academics, and the community, reflecting a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the Inspectorate's strategic contribution to achieve *the Sustainable City* of Surabaya.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach because it allows the researcher to explore and understand phenomena in depth. The research produced descriptive data, which included individual expressions, both verbal and written, as well as behavior that could be studied [33]. A longitudinal case study approach was applied to answer the research questions presented earlier in this paper. Longitudinal research is a type of

research that analyzes data collected at various time periods [34]. This approach allows researchers to observe and evaluate changes that occur over time.

This study uses the Surabaya City Inspectorate during the period, from Tri Rismaharini to Eri Cahyadi (Mayor of Surabaya City) as the unit of analysis. The analysis of public documents, which are available through the city government's official website, online newspapers, archival documents, and interviews with the Head of the Surabaya City Inspectorate and political analysts uploaded on YouTube, is the focus of this study. This approach was chosen because public records are considered the most reliable source of data for longitudinal research, given that these records are not influenced by individuals' ability to remember past events [35]. The Surabaya City Government, through the Surabaya City Inspectorate, conducted document analysis to gather further information on sustainability initiatives. Interviews and document reviews produced data that was compiled descriptively and analytically.

Thematic analysis is used to examine, analyze, and identify patterns or themes that emerge from the data obtained because it provides a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis. This method is designed to capture the deeper meaning within qualitative data, such as interviews, documents, or observations [36]. This method helps researchers explore insights that are not only descriptive but also interpretive, making it suitable for answering complex research questions. In the context of sustainable development, thematic analysis can also be used to explore how internal audits affect the management and success of sustainability initiatives in a region.

The thematic analysis process begins with familiarization with the data. In this first stage, researchers familiarize themselves with the data through repeated reading or review to gain a deep understanding of the context, patterns, and meanings contained in the data. This process allows researchers to

explore key issues relevant to the research, such as the role of internal audit in ensuring the sustainability of development programs. After familiarization. In the second stage, researchers develop initial codes to highlight ideas, concepts, or key points emerging from the data. This process follows the open coding technique introduced by Strauss and Corbin [37], in which labels are given to data segments that best describe a particular idea or phenomenon, such as the effectiveness of audits in identifying risks and ensuring transparency in sustainable development management.

The third stage begins after all data has been coded and compiled, so that a complete list of codes identified in the entire data set can be obtained. At this stage, the analysis focuses on a broader level, namely the identification of main themes rather than simply grouping individual codes [38]. In the fourth stage, researchers refine the themes that have been developed. Some themes are eliminated if the supporting data is limited or too diverse, while similar themes can be combined or divided into sub-themes. Researchers ensure that every theme maintains meaningful internal coherence and distinct external boundaries [39]. The fifth stage begins once researchers have developed a sufficient thematic map, at which point they define and refine the themes for presentation in the analysis and examine the data within those themes [38].

3. Results and Discussion

The role of the Surabaya City Inspectorate in overseeing sustainable development policies. Sustainability and SDGs. Based on data reported on the BPS website, Surabaya is the second largest city in Indonesia, located in East Java, with a population of 2,987,863 as of December 31, 2022 [40]. Most of its area is located at an altitude of 0-20 meters above sea level, while its coastal areas are between 1-3 meters above sea level. The community knows Surabaya as the "City of Heroes" because of its colossal role in the struggle for Indonesian

independence. This study was conducted to examine in depth the aspects that support Surabaya as a humanistic and sustainable city, as well as to understand how sustainability actions are implemented in Surabaya by tracing the institutional work of various events during the leadership of Tri Rismaharini and her successor, Eri Cahyadi. The city government has won various awards, ranging from awards in the aspects of environmental cleanliness to air quality, which contribute to the creation and sustainability of this city as a sustainable city. Thematic analysis (Table 1), based on a longitudinal case study, was used to conduct an in depth study of the agencies that played a role in achieving the city's vision and mission. One of the agencies that was used as the object of this study was the city's internal control agency, commonly known as the City Inspectorate, with primary data sources obtained through in-depth interviews with the Head of the City Inspectorate, R. Rachmat Basari.

"When talking about SDGs, it is about meeting the needs of the present and future generations. The main principle is to maintain economic and social welfare and environmental preservation." (R. Rachmat Basari)

"Community participation is very important. Surabaya is a very heterogeneous city, with different languages and other differences. To achieve the vision of Surabaya as a sustainable city, several strategic issues have been formulated. In the 2021 RPJMD, to foster and equalize the quality of competitive human resources, in this case, it is closely related to improving educational facilities and teaching staff evenly throughout the Surabaya area. In addition, it also improves maternal health and prevents stunting." (R. Rachmat Basari)

This explanation is in line with what is stated in the city's RPJMD that the RPJMD vision of "The Realization of an Advanced Indonesia that is Sovereign, Independent, and has a Personality Based on Mutual Cooperation" is realized by the city of

Surabaya through improving the quality of human resources, particularly in the fields of education and health.

In Surabaya, the average length of schooling increased from 10.07 years (2014) to 10.49 years (2020), with the expected length of schooling reaching 14.8 years, equivalent to senior high school/vocational high school level. The development of educational facilities in Surabaya has encouraged the community to pursue higher education. In the health sector, the prevalence of stunting in toddlers decreased from 17.43% (2016) to 7.18% (2020) thanks to nutrition improvement programs and maternal and child health services. These efforts demonstrate Surabaya's commitment to producing high-quality human resources, in line with the national vision of building an independent and competitive society [41].

The role of the Inspectorate as APIP. Internal audits are an important part in ensuring that sustainability policies are implemented effectively and transparently [42][43]. Internal audit plays an important role in an entity by helping management ensure the effectiveness of internal controls and verifying financial reports to prevent accounting fraud [44]. The Head of the Surabaya City Inspectorate was appointed as the analysis unit to understand how the mechanism of supervision and evaluation of sustainable programs is carried out, as well as how the Inspectorate plays a role in ensuring the achievement of sustainable development targets in this city. This commitment is not only reflected in environmental aspects, but also in social development, as stated in the 2021 RPJMD. One of the main focuses is the increase and equal distribution of competitive human resources. This effort is realized through the improvement of school facilities and infrastructure and the equal distribution of educators throughout Surabaya. The development of educational facilities encourages the community to pursue higher education. These efforts reflect the City of Surabaya's commitment to producing

superior human resources, which in line with the national vision (Indonesia 2045: A Prosperous, Advanced, and Civilized Nation) [41]. In addition, sustainable development also covers the health sector, with a special focus on improving maternal health and preventing stunting as strategic steps in creating a healthier and more productive generation. One of the roles that has been carried out is bureaucratic reform.

"So we are reforming the bureaucracy, sir. Simplifying the bureaucracy, improving convenience, ensuring that the development of IT (Information Technology) does not become complicated and confusing. The philosophy is transparency, speed, certainty of time, and ease, like that."
(R. Rachmat Basari)

This is in line with the mission of the Surabaya City Inspectorate, which is to "Strengthen the Transformation of a Clean, Dynamic, and Agile Digital-Based Bureaucracy to Improve the Quality of Public Services"[45]. Public trust in the bureaucracy can be built through easy access and transparency in services. One of the efforts undertaken is to open various communication and complaint channels that enable active public participation in conveying aspirations and obtaining information openly. The Surabaya City Government is committed to improve the quality of governance through bureaucratic reform aimed at strengthening transparency, effectiveness, and accountability in public services. Bureaucratic reform is demonstrated through the ASN Law, which mandates that ASN human resources be based on professionalism, proportionality, accountability, and effectiveness and efficiency so that improvements in bureaucratic performance can be achieved.

"So, the City Government periodically monitors and evaluates the achievement of indicators listed in the RPJMD and the regional apparatus's strategic plan. In general, we can say that, including what you asked about

earlier regarding audits, we conduct performance audits. There are five that we will do, the two main ones being stunting and poverty" (R. Rachmat Basari).

This statement is also supported by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Surabaya City Government and the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) to improve the quality of public services, as reported by the Ombudsman's website on November 29, 2024. The signing took place in the Surabaya Mayor's Office as a form of commitment to creating a government free from maladministration [46].

Bureaucratic reform includes evaluating the performance of civil servants, rotating positions for employees who are unable to meet standards, and implementing a more efficient system in accordance with applicable regulations. Transparency is a key principle in this reform, so that every public service has a guaranteed time frame, for example, in the licensing process, which is guaranteed to be completed within 24 hours. To ensure the effectiveness of the reform, the Surabaya City Government has developed various complaint channels that are accessible to the public. Any report that is not responded to within 24 hours will be forwarded directly to the Mayor for immediate follow-up. With this system, bureaucratic red tape can be minimized, ensuring that every public complaint is handled quickly and appropriately.

Thematic Audit. As an inspectorate, the main task is to conduct audits through a thematic audit approach. Auditors support public sector governance through supervision, assistance, and evaluation [42]. The Surabaya City Government Inspectorate carries out this role by monitoring and evaluating the achievement of RPJMD indicators and regional strategic plans to ensure policy accountability and effectiveness. One form of oversight conducted is performance audits, which cover five main aspects, with two main

focuses on stunting and poverty alleviation issues.

This thematic audit refers to data from the Regional Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPD) and the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD). The audit process covers all stages, from planning to implementation and program accountability. Auditors play an important role in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of local government policy implementation. This is in line with the findings of previous research, which show that internal auditors have the potential to act as agents of change through reflection on their daily activities, while also ensuring the effectiveness of local government policy implementation [42].

To support the competence of auditors who are members of the inspectorate, special training is held under the guidance of the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP) as the supervisory institution. This training aims to increase the understanding and capabilities of auditors, especially in the aspect of risk management (CRO), so that they can identify, analyze, and manage risks in each audit process optimally.

"This thematic audit takes data from the RPJPD & RPJMD. This data is related to planning documents, because this thematic audit starts from the planning stage to the implementation and accountability stages. This is what our auditors must do." (R. Rachmat Basari).

Internal auditing is described as an independent function within a company that is established to examine and evaluate its various activities, serving as a form of support to the organization [47]. In carrying out this role, its objectives include conducting analysis, providing consultation, and assessing the effectiveness of organizational members in fulfilling their responsibilities, as well as delivering information on reviewed actions and offering recommendations for improvement [48].

Thematic performance audits are conducted in several stages. First, determine the theme or topic relevant to the audit objectives to ensure the focus of the evaluation is appropriate. Next, data is collected and analyzed using appropriate methods to obtain accurate and objective information. After that, the audit results are compiled into a systematic, clear, and accountable report. Finally, recommendations for improvement are formulated with the aim of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of government performance [49].

We are currently focusing more on prevention. We have abandoned post-audits. In the past, the APB was audited after it had been completed. If there were errors, we would return it and redo it. This is not good, as it means there is a failure in the internal audit function. Finally, we changed our audit process. There are ongoing processes, and we conduct audits. Some are based on a mentoring model. So, when a job is about to begin, they ask whether this stage is in accordance with the regulations. Because in our department, the smaller the findings, the better" (R. Rachmat Basari).

Preventive audits aim to identify and reduce potential risks before irregularities or errors occur. This approach ensures that an organization's internal control system can prevent fraud or inefficiency. Internal control encompasses policies, procedures, practices, and organizational structures that are designed to ensure the achievement of business objectives [50]. In addition, this system plays a role in preventing, detecting, and correcting undesirable events. Internal audits implement preventive measures by ensuring the accuracy of the data being examined. This confirmation process is part of the internal control system, particularly in cash reporting. In addition, preventive measures implemented in the audit process play a role in reducing the risk of fraud [51].

Challenges and Opportunities in Realizing Sustainable Development in Surabaya. Participatory Approach, Mutual Cooperation, and Collaboration.

As part of the Surabaya City Government's commitment to sustainable development, various initiatives have been carried out to improve community welfare and support local economic growth. The government emphasizes that government officials are public servants who must always be close to the people. The current challenge is how the Surabaya city government can get to know its citizens better and understand their needs. One form of service innovation is the Sayang Warga (Love Your Citizens) application, which can be accessed by neighborhood and community leaders to facilitate coordination with the government. The Sayang Warga application is an initiative of the Surabaya City Government that was launched on January 27, 2022, by the Mayor of Surabaya, Eri Cahyadi. This program aims to comprehensively record the conditions of residents, including the number of households (KK), individuals in need of assistance, cases of malnutrition, and household income. With this data, interventions by Regional Government Agencies (OPD) can be targeted effectively [52].

"If there is anything, we must get as close to the community as possible. There is an application called "Sayang" that can be accessed by the head of the neighborhood association or the head of the community association, to make it easier to coordinate with the government" (R. Rachmat Basari).

The implementation of this program also involves cadres and assistants in the field to ensure that the data collected reflects the actual conditions of the residents. This is in line with the city government's efforts to improve the welfare and public services for the people of Surabaya. Overall, the "Sayang Warga" application is a proactive step by the Surabaya City Government in utilizing

technology to improve the quality of life of its citizens through accurate data collection and targeted interventions.

"The success of the city of Surabaya in receiving various awards is due to the greatness of its people, who are very supportive of any government program. It is the people who are great, not the mayor or the government" (R. Rachmat Basari).

This statement is supported by the achievement of the City of Surabaya, which received an award with the title Sangat Cettar (Very Excellent) in 2024 for its success in implementing a performance integration scheme and using the Cettar culture (Fast, Effective and Efficient, Responsive, and Responsive) in public services. This award was reported by the official website of the East Java Provincial Communication and Information Agency on November 13, 2024. The approach implemented by the Mayor of Surabaya focuses on providing comfortable facilities and infrastructure for the community. By creating a conducive environment, it is hoped that the community will be more interested and motivated to make maximum use of the services provided. This can be seen from the level of utilization of public transportation modes, such as city buses and Wira-Wiri cars, which show high occupancy rates and are used effectively by the community.

In addition to efforts in sustainable economic and transportation development, the Surabaya City Government is also committed to flood control and improving sanitation infrastructure to support the quality of life of the community. In addition, the government also pays attention to environmental sanitation by making Surabaya a city free from open defecation. This is realized through the construction of more than 8,000 units of proper bathing, washing, and toilet (MCK) facilities, with funding sourced from the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) and cooperation with various agencies, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

programs and universities that contribute in improving community access to sanitation. This effort is reinforced by the fact that PT. PET and LMI built sanitation facilities for residents of Jagir, Surabaya, as part of the program to improve the quality of the environment and public health [53]. The Surabaya City Government also continues to expand and improve the quality of Green Open Spaces (RTH) as part of the public infrastructure that supports community welfare. The provision of city parks, sports facilities, meeting halls, places of worship, and well-organized cemeteries is a priority in creating a comfortable and sustainable environment. In addition, clean water management is integrated with the Superior Raw Water concept, which aims to ensure long-term water security and maintain the availability of water resources for the community in a sustainable manner.

Digitalization and Smart Cities.

Digitalization is the process of converting information or services from physical to digital form using information and communication technology. The goal is to improve efficiency, accessibility, and service quality. Meanwhile, a smart city is a concept of city management that incorporates technology and data to improve the quality of life of its citizens, operational efficiency, and environmental sustainability. The implementation of a smart city covers various sectors such as government, transportation, environment, economy, and social life.

"Now that we are at 5.0, economic development must be supported by digitalization, business start-ups, and investment awareness. All permits are now centralized in Siola Surabaya. Development of green transportation and integrated transportation systems. Environmentally friendly infrastructure and active economic activities. For example, there are public transportation vehicles (public transportation in Surabaya) with cashless payments, their routes are

already available on Go-Bis Surabaya (arrival times, etc.), and departures are on time. We prioritize the comfort of residents, and we hope that the community can also make good use of public transportation" (R. Rachmat Basari).

This statement is supported by research showing that macro environmental factors and community readiness in facing digital transformation are the main obstacles to optimizing the benefits of digitization. Therefore, to encourage more significant economic growth through digitization, a strategy is needed that includes increasing community digital readiness, policies that support technology adoption, and strengthening digital infrastructure. Digitalization has become a key element in shaping modern life, changing various aspects such as food, education, communication, transportation, entertainment, and medical care [54].

"And now, this city has several applications. These applications are integrated, making things simple and easy so that the community can be helped quickly and easily. This is indeed a challenge towards becoming a smart, truly smart city. 5.0 is waiting" (R. Rachmat Basari).

The concept of Smart City aligns with the findings of previous research, which indicate that Smart City initiatives positively influence economic development by enhancing the efficiency of public services and urban infrastructure [55]. Opportunities can be achieved by applying smart solutions in the areas of economic development, public safety, energy, environment, infrastructure, and transportation. Smart City can overcome the challenges of urbanization and improve the quality of life of its citizens. Cities that are more active in Smart City policies tend to have higher levels of innovation. Thus, Smart City policies not only encourage local innovation but also contribute to a broader innovation ecosystem [56]. Over time, the city of Surabaya has contributed at the

international level thanks to its physical attractiveness, opportunities in the economic and educational fields, good quality of life, and the openness of its people. This contribution is further strengthened by various innovations in the Smart City concept, particularly in the aspects of Smart Governance, Smart Environment, Smart Economy, and Smart Living [57]. Surabaya's smart city initiatives and branding strategies go hand in hand, supporting each other in building a positive image of the city. Although significant progress has been made, there are still aspects that need to be further developed. Surabaya has been a pioneer in digital transformation, but efforts to spread innovation throughout East Java still require commitment, collaboration, and continuous innovation so that the benefits of Smart City can be felt by the entire community.

Transparency and Accountability.

The city of Surabaya has implemented transparency and accountability in governance as part of developing the concept of Smart Governance in Smart Cities. Transparency is realized through public information disclosure, whereby the public can easily access data related to government policies, programs, and budgets. The Surabaya City Government provides various information through digital platforms, including an official website that contains financial reports and strategic policies. Accountability in the Surabaya City government is realized through a public complaint system that allows citizens to report various issues related to government services, which are then followed up by the authorities. The government also implements a technology-based employee and government agency performance evaluation system to ensure work effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, community involvement in decision-making is an important prospect in creating good governance, where policies are made more in line with the needs of citizens. By implementing transparency and accountability, the city of Surabaya has

Table 1. Thematic Analysis

Theme	Interview Results	Coding
Surabaya's Commitment to Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The main principle is to maintain economic and social welfare and environmental preservation 2. Development in the city of Surabaya prioritizes sustainable development 3. The 2021-2026 RPJMD focuses on balanced economic, social, and environmental development. 4. The Surabaya City Government is improving governance by reforming the bureaucracy in order to enhance public services. 	Sustainability and SDGs
The Role of the Inspectorate as APIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Surabaya City Inspectorate updates Presidential Regulation No. 111 of 2022 2. Conducting oversight of policy implementation and ensuring compliance with regulations. 3. TPB is carried out with the primary objective of ending all poverty in the City of Surabaya. 4. The audit focus is more on prevention, such as through mentoring and consultation. Post-audits are beginning to be phased out. 5. Recommendations from the Internal Audit Agency are for the decision-making of local government leaders. 	The role of the Inspectorate as APIP
Thematic Audit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audits focus on strategic issues such as stunting and poverty to improve program effectiveness. 2. The Inspectorate conducts periodic monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of indicators listed in the RPJMD and Renstra. 	Thematic Audit
Community Participation and Mutual Cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surabaya City's award is due to the greatness of its community. They are very supportive of any programs created by the Surabaya City Government. 2. All public services are well utilized by the community. 3. Community-based development programs with the "Sayang Warga" application for coordination. 4. There is a strong spirit of mutual cooperation among the people of Surabaya City. 	Participatory Approach, Mutual Cooperation, and Collaboration
Theme	Interview Results	Coding
Digitalization and Smart City	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are now in the 5.0 era, and economic development must be supported by digitalization. 2. Implementation of technology in public services such as e-Peken, licensing systems, and cashless transportation. 	Digitalization and Smart City
Transparency and Accountability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Merit systems and information disclosure strengthen governance. 2. Variables for bureaucratic reform to improve the quality of governance, one of which is the need for transparency, integrity, effectiveness, and, of course, trustworthiness. 	Transparency and Accountability
Corruption Prevention and Bureaucratic Reform	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Inspectorate oversees anti-corruption policies and implements a merit system for civil servants. 	Corruption Prevention and Bureaucratic Reform
Innovation in Public Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Efforts to improve access and efficiency of public infrastructure through innovative breakthroughs based on Information Communication Technology or ICT are indeed a requirement for the city of Surabaya as a metropolitan city. 2. Public services are becoming more efficient with various innovations, such as online complaint systems and e-Peken. 	Public Service Innovations

succeeded in creating a more open, efficient, and responsive government system. This success not only strengthens public trust in the government but also encourages citizen involvement in the process of developing a more advanced city.

The Government Agency Performance Accountability System for Reform and Bureaucracy (SAKIB RB) plays an important role in ensuring government transparency and accountability, including in efforts to prevent corruption. Through coordination with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in the Korsupgah and MCP Monitoring programs, this system focuses on asset management, debt settlement, and revenue optimization to prevent budget leakage. In addition, audits are an important part of asset recording and security, including the certification of public facilities (PSU) that have not yet been handed over. With these measures, the system aims to create a more efficient and corruption-free system of governance" (R. Rachmat Basari).

Korsupgah (Coordination and Supervision of Corruption Prevention) is a program implemented by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) to support corruption prevention efforts in government, both at the central and regional levels. This program aims to ensure open, accountable, and corruption-free governance through various strategic measures. In its implementation, Korsupgah KPK provides assistance to government agencies in managing assets, settling receivables, optimizing regional revenues, and preventing budget leaks. In addition, Korsupgah also monitors government compliance in implementing anti-corruption policies through the Monitoring Center for Prevention (MCP), a system that measures the effectiveness of corruption prevention efforts in various regions [58].

Corruption Prevention and Bureaucratic Reform. In 2024, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) of the Republic of Indonesia assessed that the Surabaya City Government had the best corruption prevention efforts in East Java, with a score of 97 percent. This assessment highlights the measures taken by the city government to prevent corruption in its work environment [9]. Bureaucratic reform efforts in Surabaya also include the development of an Integrity Zone towards a Corruption-Free Zone (WBK) and a Clean and Serving Bureaucracy Zone (WBBM). This step is in line with the national policy to create a clean, competent, and serving bureaucracy. However, high pressure, opportunities, and justifications encourage corruption, while internal audits are still not playing an optimal role in preventing corruption [59].

In addition, Surabaya has been proposed as one of Indonesia's anti-corruption model cities. This recognition confirms Surabaya's position as a pioneer in the implementation of anti-corruption policies at the city level. In terms of bureaucratic reform, the Surabaya City Government has implemented integrated digital governance. One notable innovation is the "Sayang Warga" application, which is used to collect citizen data in real time. This application assists in addressing various social issues, including reducing stunting rates. In 2023, the prevalence of stunting in Surabaya fell to 4.8 percent, the lowest rate in Indonesia. However, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring the sustainability of these programs and overcoming resistance to change within the bureaucracy. Synergy between the government, community, and private sector is a key factor in maintaining the progress that has been achieved and ensuring that the reforms implemented provide tangible benefits for all Surabaya residents.

Innovation and Public Services. The Surabaya City Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to

improving public services through technology-based innovation and a humanistic approach. Digitalization programs, such as e-Kios, which facilitates population administration, and Surabaya Single Window (SSW), which simplifies the licensing process, are clear evidence of a faster and more transparent bureaucratic transformation. In addition, the existence of the Public Service Mall (MPP) in Siola further facilitates public access to various services in one place. With these innovations, Surabaya continues to develop as a city that prioritizes convenience, efficiency, and affordability in public services.

"The basic principles are transparency, speed, certainty of time, and convenience. Therefore, in meetings discussing efforts to improve the accessibility and efficiency of public services beyond various innovations based on Information Communication Technology or ICT, this is a must for the Metropolitan City of Surabaya. Digitalization and the smart city concept must be implemented comprehensively" (R. Rachmat Basari).

In addition, the Surabaya City Government has established Command Center 112 as a control center that monitors various aspects of the city in real-time, such as traffic, security, and emergency response. This innovation enables a faster and more appropriate response to various issues, in line with the principles of efficiency and certainty of time. In order to increase information transparency, Surabaya has also launched an Open Data portal, which provides broad access to public information for the community. This initiative strengthens government transparency while encouraging active citizen participation in the city development process.

The smart city concept in Surabaya is not only oriented towards the use of

technology, but also aims to improve the welfare of the community. Programs such as e-Health for digital health services and e-Education in the technology-based education sector are part of a comprehensive effort to create a smart and inclusive city. Overall, Surabaya's dedication to integrating key principles of public service with information and communication technology (ICT) innovation has made it one of the successful models for smart city implementation in Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals that the Surabaya City Inspectorate plays a strategic role as an APIP in supporting the vision of sustainable development in line with the SDGs. Not only does it carry out conventional audits, but the inspectorate has also transformed itself through thematic audits, policy assistance, and monitoring of the RPJMD with a focus on strategic issues such as stunting, poverty, education, and bureaucratic reform. The challenges faced include bureaucratic complexity, community participation, and readiness for Smart City 5.0. However, opportunities exist through the digitization of public services, anti-corruption monitoring systems, and technological innovation. Surabaya's success in reducing stunting, expanding access to education, improving sanitation, and strengthening green spaces proves that the synergy between the government, community, and private sector can create a transparent, accountable, and sustainable city. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of internal oversight, digital innovation, and citizen participation in a single sustainable governance ecosystem.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on sustainable governance by emphasizing the importance of a collaborative approach between the government and the community as a strategy to accelerate the achievement of

SDGs. The internal audit approach implemented by the Surabaya City Inspectorate not only strengthens accountability but also encourages policy innovation. In practice, the findings of this study can serve as a model for other cities in Indonesia that wish to replicate Surabaya's efforts in realizing more participatory, transparent, and technology-based development governance.

This study has limitations in the scope of primary data, which only focuses on one institution, namely the Surabaya City Inspectorate, so it does not fully cover the dynamics between agencies in the implementation of SDGs. Further research is recommended to explore the perspectives of other key actors, such as the private sector, civil society organizations, and local legislative bodies, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the city's sustainability ecosystem. In addition, quantitative exploration of the effectiveness of digital technology in policy monitoring and evaluation could also be part of the future research agenda

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