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Smart City Governance and Legislative Oversight: The Role of the Surabaya DPRD in the Digital Parking Policy Conflict

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ABSTRACT

This research analyses the role of legislative oversight by the Surabaya City Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in the conflict over digital parking policy following the enactment of Mayor Regulation Number 81 of 2025. Using a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design, this research operationalises McCubbins and Schwartz's Legislative Oversight Theory and Lipsky's Street-Level Bureaucracy as analytical lenses. Data were collected by examining official government documents and online mass media coverage. The research results show that the Surabaya City Council's legislative oversight is fragmented into three incoherent factions. Both oversight models, such as police patrol and fire alarm oversight, in this study failed to function in a complementary manner. The activation of the fire alarm, which is reactive and delayed, combined with the elimination of parking attendants' discretion by the digital system without adequate compensation, deepened the resistance that led to the mass rejection of 600 parking attendants. These findings emphasise that the effectiveness of legislative oversight heavily depends on the DPRD's capacity to read street-level dynamics preventively before resistance escalates into open conflict.

Keyword: Legislative Oversight, Street-level Bureaucracy, DPRD Surabaya, Digital Parking Policy Conflict



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ABSTRAKSI

Penelitian ini menganalisis peran pengawasan legislatif DPRD Kota Surabaya dalam konflik kebijakan parkir digital pasca pengesahan Peraturan Wali Kota Nomor 81 Tahun 2025. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus instrumental, penelitian ini mengoperasionalkan *Legislative Oversight Theory* McCubbins dan Schwartz serta *Street-Level Bureaucracy* Lipsky sebagai lensa analitis. Data dikumpulkan melalui penelusuran dokumen resmi pemerintahan dan pemberitaan media massa daring. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengawasan legislatif DPRD Surabaya terfragmentasi ke dalam tiga kubu yang tidak koheren. Kedua model pengawasan, seperti police patrol dan fire alarm oversight, pada penelitian ini gagal berfungsi secara komplementer. Aktivasi *fire alarm* yang bersifat reaktif dan terlambat, ditambah penghapusan ruang diskresi juru parkir oleh sistem digital tanpa kompensasi memadai, memperdalam resistensi yang berujung pada penolakan massal terhadap 600 juru parkir. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa efektivitas pengawasan legislatif sangat bergantung pada kapasitas DPRD untuk membaca dinamika *street-level* secara preventif sebelum resistensi bereskalasi menjadi konflik terbuka.

Kata Kunci: Pengawasan Legislatif, Birokrasi Tingkat Jalan, DPRD Surabaya, Konflik Kebijakan Parkir Digital

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the smart city concept in the contemporary landscape reflects a global trend that has been internalised in various cities in Indonesia, including Surabaya as an advanced urban entity that continues to show intense transformation. This concept is perceived as a digitalization-based strategy that brings hope and urgency to improve the efficiency and quality of public services (Wachid et al., 2024), while the development of smart cities relies on the integration of dimensions such as smart governance and smart mobility, which represent aspirations for governance characterised by transparency, accountability, and increasingly profound responsiveness to the dynamics of citizens' needs (Hardi et al. 2025). In its articulation, Surabaya presents a concrete manifestation through a cashless digital parking policy legitimised in the Mayor's Regulation Number 81 of 2025 (Perwali, 2025), a policy formulation that not only aims at optimising Pendapatan Asli Daerah (PAD), but also reflects a systemic transformation from conventional parking practices to a more transparent mechanism through an operational cooperation scheme with parking attendants.

In the implementation of the policy, the oversight function of the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (DPRD) represents a crucial significance in affirming that governance innovations do not shift the principles of justice and protection for vulnerable groups (Putri 2023). DPRD, through its three main functions legislation, budgeting, and oversight, has constitutional authority to oversee every regional policy, including transformative ones like parking digitisation, while still focusing on public interest. However, the implementation of Perwali 81/2025 has increasingly caused tension through the resistance of the parking attendant community, who are concerned about the profit-sharing scheme and limited involvement in the policy-making process, creating friction between the executive and grassroots society.

Although there have been various studies reviewing this policy, the lack of significant attention on the role of legislative oversight in the implementation of smart city policies that generate social resistance presents a rather disturbing analytical gap. For instance, the study on the implementation of the Smart Parking System (SPS) in Surabaya by Nugroho et al. (2024) provides a comprehensive elaboration on the political, technological, organisational, and social factors surrounding the cashless parking policy. Meanwhile, the research by Wahyu et al. (2024) on QRIS-based parking payment conflicts in Taman Bungkul Surabaya only focuses on conflict resolution between the Transportation Agency and parking attendants using Ralf Dahrendorf's framework. From both studies, there has yet to be an in-depth examination of the role of the DPRD as an institutional mediator between executive policies and the articulation of public interests, particularly in this issue.

Starting from the gaps in previous research, this study is formulated with the intention to elaborate on the role of legislative oversight by the Surabaya City Council (DPRD) in the conflictual configuration of digital parking policies following the enactment of Perwali No. 81 of 2025. Through mapping the positions and crucial responses of Surabaya DPRD members towards the digital parking policy implemented by the City Government, this study also identifies factors that reflect the differentiation of approaches among Surabaya DPRD members in addressing the policy. Additionally, this research articulates evaluative efforts on the effectiveness of the DPRD's oversight function in reducing resistance and maintaining an inclusive policy orientation for parking attendants as street-level actors directly affected. Thus, this study is expected to provide conceptual contributions to the development of smart city governance and legislative oversight literature, particularly in the landscape of local-level digital transformation intersecting with livelihood-based concerns.

To elaborate on this conflictual dynamic more sharply, this research operationalises two theoretical frameworks as analytical lenses, namely the Legislative Oversight Theory developed by McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) and the Street-Level Bureaucracy Theory by Lipsky (1980). The Legislative Oversight Theory is utilised to capture the institutional dimensions laden with tension in this conflict, particularly in understanding how the Surabaya City Council positions itself in responding to the digital parking policy, why the responses among its members are fragmented into different factional configurations, and to assess

whether the oversight practices are substantive or merely symbolic. Meanwhile, the Street-Level Bureaucracy Theory is used to articulate the implementational dimension, specifically in examining why parking attendants, as frontline actors, express resistance to the digital policy and what is fundamentally problematic in the grassroots-level implementation process that is fraught with unrest.

The correlation between these two theories is represented at the conceptual intersection of oversight and implementation, where the effectiveness of the DPRD's legislative oversight is articulated through its capacity to read the dynamics of street-level bureaucracy. Meanwhile, the DPRD's inability to anticipate parking attendants' resistance presents a palpable indication of the oversight function that has yet to reach the implementational reality on the ground. Through the integration of these two lenses, this research not only captures the ongoing configuration of legislative oversight but also elaborates on the reasons why such oversight fails to quell the open conflict between the executive and the grassroots community, which is fraught with tension.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopts a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design, as elaborated by Creswell (2014), where case studies represent a relevant research strategy in exploring contemporary phenomena in depth within the real-world landscape, particularly when the delimitation between the phenomenon and its context is ambiguous, often presenting analytical tensions. This approach is chosen not merely to describe the intrinsic case of the digital parking conflict in Surabaya, but to position it as a conceptual instrument to understand and illustrate a broader phenomenon, namely, how the function of legislative oversight operates within the smart city policy configuration that generates grassroots-level resistance. The instrumental case study opens up space for in-depth exploration of the dynamics between actors and political processes that unfold with reflective intensity, while also producing conceptual understanding with potential transferability to similar contexts in other regions.

The data used in this research is entirely sourced from secondary data available in the public domain. The data sources are classified into three categories. First, official government documents such as the Surabaya Mayor's Regulation Number 81 of 2025 on the Procedures for Operational Cooperation in Parking Management are the main legal basis for the policy. Second, online mass media coverage that intensively reports on the digital parking conflict in Surabaya, including statements from key actors such as DPRD members, Transportation Department officials, representatives of parking attendants' associations, and academics. The media used include Kompas, Detik.com, Antara, Tribun Jatim, Beritajatim.com, and Suara Surabaya. Third, scientific journal articles and academic publications relevant to the topics of smart city governance, legislative oversight, and street-level bureaucracy will strengthen the analytical framework of the research.

The data collection technique was carried out through systematic digital archive searches by gathering, inventorying, and organising all documents and news relevant to Surabaya's digital parking policy and the DPRD's responses to emerging conflicts with certain intensities. The data collection process considered the principle of data saturation, which presents a reflective boundary when the addition of new sources no longer provides elaboration on the research question. Data analysis was operationalised through thematic analysis techniques with procedures that included three stages: data reduction through the selection and focusing of relevant information, data presentation through the organization of findings into meaningful patterns, and conclusion drawing through the dialogue of empirical findings with the theoretical frameworks of McCubbins and Schwartz's legislative oversight and Lipsky's street-level bureaucracy. Source triangulation is conducted through the comparison of information from various documents and media reports to maintain the validity and credibility of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The controversy over the digital parking policy in Surabaya reveals the meeting of three actors with different rationalities. The City Government, which promotes an agenda of efficiency and increased local

revenue, the parking attendant community that bears the most tangible consequences of the system change, and the DPRD that constitutionally bears the responsibility to mediate the tension. However, what is seen is not a cohesive institutional response. The Surabaya City Council instead shows internal fragmentation that goes beyond technical differences and indicates the operation of different, even opposing, legislative oversight styles towards the same policy object. This crack is important as an analytical entry point to explain why the supervisory function of the DPRD is unable to dampen the escalation of conflicts involving 600 parking attendants, while also examining how legislative oversight operates in a smart city landscape that increasingly narrows the discretion space for frontline actors.

This discussion is built in four interconnected parts. The first part maps three factions within the Surabaya City Council along with their accompanying argumentative foundations. The second part interprets the fragmentation through the Legislative Oversight Theory by McCubbins and Schwartz (1984), specifically the distinction between the police patrol model and the fire alarm oversight. The third section explores the resistance of parking attendants using Lipsky's (1980) Street-Level Bureaucracy framework to understand why policies that appear technically rational actually provoke collective rejection. The fourth section weaves the relationship between the fragility of legislative oversight and street-level resistance, and offers conceptual findings regarding the effectiveness of DPRD oversight in the context of the digital transformation of public policy.

Fragmentation of the DPRD Surabaya Position in the Digital Parking Conflict

Fragmentation within the Surabaya City Council in responding to the digital parking policy reveals a spectrum of oversight polarised into three orientations, each with different emphases and implications for the dynamics of conflict. The first faction represents strong support for the executive, accompanied by a push for the government to take a firm stance against parking attendants who reject the policy. This position was explicitly stated by the Chairman of Commission C, Eri Irawan, who considered the Transportation Agency's decision to deactivate the permits of 600 parking attendants who had not opened accounts as an appropriate action. For him, this policy has reached a point of no return and is no longer worth reversing (Eri Irawan, in pdiperjuangan-jatim.com, 9 April 2026). In this perspective, parking digitisation is understood as the Mayor's effort to untangle what Deputy Chairman of the DPRD Arif Fathoni referred to as the "never-ending tangled web of parking issues from previous administrations" (Arif Fathoni, in ANTARA News, 9 April 2026). Support for the 60:40 profit-sharing scheme is also seen as a reasonable consequence of the agenda to increase Local Revenue, which has so far been considered not optimally managed. Interestingly, even though they come from different factions. Eri Irawan from the PDI Perjuangan and Arif Fathoni from the Golkar Party both presented aligned arguments. This similarity indicates that the oversight orientation they present is more aligned with efforts to maintain the executive agenda, with an emphasis on administrative accountability and fiscal efficiency.

The second group presents a more moderate and accommodative position, as voiced by Achmad Nurdjayanto from the Golkar faction. Long before the policy was fully implemented in April 2026, Achmad Nurdjayanto had proposed a hybrid scheme, namely a mechanism for cash and non-cash transactions running side by side during the transition period, accompanied by trials in strategic areas before widespread implementation (Achmad Nurdjayanto, in Beritajatim.com, 10 December 2025). According to him, although digitalisation is an important breakthrough to strengthen the transparency and accuracy of regional revenue, its effectiveness highly depends on the readiness of infrastructure and the adaptability of the community and parking attendants (Achmad Nurdjayanto, in Beritajatim.com, 10 December 2025). His main concern is the risk of the digital divide that can burden vulnerable groups, including the elderly and residents who are not yet connected to digital financial services. This position reflects a supervisory orientation that emphasises procedural justice and the protection of constituents who may be affected by a too-rapid transition, without fundamentally questioning the direction of the policy.

The third faction presents more structural and fundamental criticism, as shown by the Chairman of the Special Committee for the 2025 Accountability Report (LKPJ), Azhar Kahfi from the Gerindra Faction. In his capacity as the chairman of the special committee with broader access to the performance data of the City Government, Azhar Kahfi highlighted the significant gap between the target and the realisation of parking revenue. Of the approximately 1,500 recorded parking spots, only around 900 have been digitised, while the parking revenue target for 2025, exceeding Rp73 billion, has only been realised at around Rp25 billion (Azhar

Kahfi, in *Pikiran Rakyat* Jatim, 17 April 2026). According to him, digitalisation tends to focus too much on regulating parking attendants in the field, whereas the more significant sources of leakage are actually in the medium and large business sectors, which often escape supervision. Azhar Kahfi also revealed a striking finding, where out of the 11 culinary outlets discussed in the special committee meeting, only one had complete parking permits. This position reflects a supervisory orientation that emphasises structural transparency and the dismantling of disparities in policy implementation. In line with that, Azhar Kahfi urged the Transportation Department to open data more comprehensively and consider a performance-based incentive scheme for parking attendants as part of the system reform (Azhar Kahfi, in *Pikiran Rakyat* Jatim, 17 April 2026).

The three factions cannot be understood merely as expressions of the personal preferences of their members, but rather as reflections of the complex interplay between party affiliation, access to policy information, and differing representation orientations. This fragmentation emphasises that the Surabaya City Council is not an institution that operates monolithically in carrying out its oversight function. It resembles more of an arena of contestation, where political interests and policy considerations confront each other, negotiate. In this context, have yet to result in a sufficiently coherent response to quell the ongoing resistance.

Analysis through the Lens of Legislative Oversight Theory

The fragmentation of the Surabaya DPRD's positions into the three factions previously described not only reflects the individual preferences of the members but can also be interpreted as a manifestation of the functioning of two fundamentally different models of legislative oversight. McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) introduced the distinction between police patrol oversight and fire alarm oversight as two mechanisms that ideally function complementarily in legislative oversight. The first model positions legislators as active actors who centrally and proactively examine samples of executive agency performance to detect and rectify violations of legislative goals. In contrast, the second model is less centralised and reactive, where legislators establish a system of rules and procedures that allow citizens and interest groups to voice complaints (fire alarms) when policies harm them, thereby shifting the monitoring costs to third parties and enabling legislators to identify violations more efficiently.

In the case of Surabaya, these two models are present in an imbalanced form. The first camp, represented by Eri Irawan and Arif Fathoni, conducts a paradoxical police patrol. Instead of independently scrutinising the executives, they acted as the frontline guards, ensuring there were no obstacles to the implementation of the established policies. This is evident from Eri Irawan's statement affirming that the DPRD will "fully oversee" this policy as part of the mayor's target (Eri Irawan, in pdiperjuangan-jatim.com, 9 April 2026), as well as Arif Fathoni's statement requesting the closure of parking locations that still accept cash payments (Arif Fathoni, in *ANTARA News*, 9 April 2026). In the logic of McCubbins and Schwartz, a healthy police patrol actually requires a critical distance between legislators and the executive to ensure that the oversight is objective. However, in this case, the closeness between the first faction and Mayor Eri Cahyadi has blurred that distance, making the oversight resemble a defence of the executive's agenda rather than an independent examination.

The third faction, represented by Azhar Kahfi, conducts a more conventional police patrol by examining irregularities in executive performance through data. As the Chairman of the LKPJ 2025 Special Committee, Azhar Kahfi has access to information that allows him to detect a significant gap between the parking revenue target of Rp73 billion and the realisation of only around Rp25 billion (Azhar Kahfi, in *Pikiran Rakyat* Jatim, 17 April 2026). Azhar Kahfi also revealed the disparity in oversight between the informal sector and large businesses. Out of 11 culinary outlets, only one has complete parking permits and encourages the Transportation Agency to disclose data transparently. However, this critical voice is not strong enough to change the direction of the ongoing policy, because institutionally, Azhar Kahfi is outside the ruling party, and his capacity as the head of the special committee is temporary. Thus, the police patrol conducted by Azhar Kahfi is critical but has minimal institutional leverage to correct policies.

The fire alarm oversight model, which ideally allows residents and affected groups to voice their complaints, has proven to be ineffective in Surabaya. McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) emphasise that the

success of fire alarm oversight depends on the availability of formal mechanisms that allow third parties to draw legislators' attention to the violations that occur. In this case, the mechanism is reactive and tends to be delayed. The statement by the representative of the Paguyuban Jukir Surabaya (PJS) that "this forum has never been invited to discuss" the rule changes (PJS, in suarasurabaya.net, 7 April 2026) is the clearest indication that the DPRD did not provide a participation channel for the directly affected group. On April 21, 2026, Commission A of the Surabaya City Council held a hearing with PJS, two weeks after the conflict peaked with the freezing of 600 parking attendants and unrest in Manyar Kertoarjo (ANTARA.News, 21 April 2026). In the hearing, Acting Head of the Transportation Agency, Trio Wahyu Bowo, also emphasised that parking digitalisation must be adhered to and if not, "there will be enforcement." An indication that the executive's position remains unchanged, even though the participation channel has been opened. This hearing did indeed result in several agreements, such as the push for accelerated digitisation, legal protection for parking attendants, and a plan for an MoU with the police ([Suarasurabaya.net](https://suarasurabaya.net), 21 April 2026). However, this forum also revealed unresolved tensions. PJS Chairman Izul Fikri regretted the video of the regional head urging residents "not to be defeated by thugs" and stated that the statement hurt the feelings of parking attendants ([Jatimupdate.id](https://jatimupdate.id), 22 April 2026). This shows that the fire alarm has indeed sounded, but it was only activated after the escalation of the conflict occurred, not as an early detection mechanism as envisioned by McCubbins and Schwartz. Thus, fire alarm oversight in Surabaya reflects a crisis response rather than preventive oversight. A pattern that continues to show a substantive deficit in the oversight function of the DPRD. This finding is in line with the study by Hadi, Amir, and Riau (2024) on the Central Buton DPRD, which shows that the supervisory function of the DPRD in Indonesia often remains formalistic and has not yet reached the substantive impact of policies on directly affected groups.

The implications of the delayed activation of fire alarm oversight in Surabaya are very serious. The hearing of Commission A of the DPRD with the PJS was indeed held on April 21, 2026, but the forum was only convened two weeks after the conflict reached its peak. The fire alarm mechanism envisioned by McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) as a complaint-based early detection system only functioned after the escalation occurred, not as a preventive channel that would allow the DPRD to anticipate resistance before it erupted. Thus, fire alarm oversight in Surabaya reflects a crisis response rather than preventive oversight. This shows that the Surabaya City Council continues to lose its capacity as an oversight institution to detect and mitigate resistance early on, so the conflict has already taken its most raw form in the field.

Resistance of Parking Attendants through the Lens of Street-Level Bureaucracy

The failure of the fire alarm oversight, which was only activated after the escalation of the conflict, serves as an analytical bridge to the dimension of Street-Level Bureaucracy. Lipsky (1980) emphasises that public policy is essentially "made" at the implementation level by frontline bureaucrats who have substantial discretion in carrying out their duties amidst the pressures of workload, resource limitations, and often ambiguous organisational goals. Lipsky explicitly states that "policy implementation ultimately depends on the people who actually carry it out," so the daily discretionary decisions of these street-level actors shape the de facto policies accepted by society.

In the context of conventional parking in Surabaya, parking attendants have a considerable amount of discretion. Starting from situational tariff setting, direct negotiations with service users, to daily revenue management, which cumulatively form a de facto policy regime on the ground. This space of discretion, in Lipsky's analysis, is not a deviation but a structural necessity. Without discretion, frontline actors cannot possibly respond to the complexity of field situations that cannot be fully anticipated by written regulations. In Article 7 of Perwali 81/2025, with a cashless payment system that automatically records every transaction and directly deposits revenue into the regional treasury through a 60:40 profit-sharing scheme, it fundamentally eliminates that discretionary space.

The removal of this discretion is exacerbated by the perception of distributive injustice felt by the parking attendants. PJS Chairman Izul Fikri explicitly stated that "We in the field have great risks and

responsibilities." The profit-sharing of 60 percent for the city government and 40 percent for the parking attendants is small" (Beritajatim.com, 8 April 2026). In line with that, PJS Deputy Chairman Feri Fadli questioned the reality of parking attendants' income: "I think the parking attendants will refuse. There are no parking attendants on public roads who earn that much. Varies, some only get Rp100 thousand" (Suarasurabaya.net, 18 Desember 2025). This statement shows that resistance is not solely rooted in the rejection of technology, but rather in the economic calculation that the new system will worsen their livelihoods. Lipsky (1980) predicted that when the discretion space of frontline actors is drastically eliminated without adequate compensation mechanisms, resistance becomes an almost inevitable response. Lipsky (1980) also explains that this situation is a perfect illustration of what happens when policies formulated "from the top" (top-down) ignore the street-level dimension. The policies created may be technically and legally sound, but they fail in implementation because they do not take into account the socio-economic realities of the frontline actors.

This resistance is concretely manifested in astonishing numbers. As many as 600 parking attendants had their permits frozen by the Transportation Department because they refused to activate accounts as a requirement for implementing the digital system (Newskota.com, 7 April 2026). Of that number, only 64 people have activated their accounts, leaving more than 500 parking attendants still refusing. Interestingly, even after the hearing of Commission A of the DPRD with the Acting Mayor on April 21, 2026, which discussed issues of intimidation, the stigma of "illegal parking attendants," and legal protection. The substance of the parking attendants' demands regarding the profit-sharing scheme has not changed. The hearing did produce a commitment to legal protection and the elimination of negative stigma, but the Acting Head of the Transportation Agency still emphasised that "if not complied with, there will be enforcement" (Suarasurabaya.net, 21 April 2026). This shows that the fire alarm oversight, which was newly activated post-conflict, can only touch the surface dimensions (stigma and intimidation) but fails to reach the root issues at the street level. This results in the loss of discretionary space and dissatisfaction with the income distribution scheme.

Thus, through the lens of Street-Level Bureaucracy, the Surabaya digital parking conflict can be understood as a consequence of top-down policies that eliminate the discretion of frontline actors without first establishing socially accepted compensation mechanisms. When the DPRD's fire alarm oversight only worked after the conflict erupted and only touched on non-substantive issues, resistance continued in the form of unresolved mass rejection. Lipsky is right, policies are ultimately determined at the implementation level, and when the implementation level is neglected in the policy formulation or legislative oversight process, conflict becomes inevitable.

Theoretical Correlation and Conceptual Findings

Analysis of the digital parking conflict in Surabaya through two theoretical lenses, namely McCubbins and Schwartz's Legislative Oversight Theory (1984) and Lipsky's Street-Level Bureaucracy (1980), yields conceptual findings that illustrate how the failure of legislative oversight and the resistance of frontline actors are systemically intertwined. The fragmentation of the Surabaya City Council into three incoherent oversight factions, the delayed activation of fire alarm oversight, and the failure to read street-level dynamics are not isolated issues; rather, they form a chain of failures that reinforce each other and culminate in the escalation of conflict involving 600 parking attendants.

The first correlation lies in the relationship between the fragmentation of oversight and the inability of the DPRD to conduct fire alarm oversight preventively. McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) emphasise that fire alarm oversight can only function effectively if legislators have political incentives to respond to constituents' complaints. The fragmentation of the Surabaya City Council shows that these incentives are not distributed evenly. The first faction, which comes from the ruling party, is more oriented towards overseeing the executive agenda, while the critical faction, which has the potential to be a channel for complaints like Azhar Kahfi, is only outside the ruling party with limited institutional push. As a result, the parking attendants'

complaints did not find adequate representation within the local parliament until the conflict reached its peak. This finding enriches McCubbins and Schwartz's argument by showing that the success of fire alarm oversight does not only depend on the availability of formal mechanisms but also on the internal political configuration of the legislative body that enables or hinders responses to the sounding of the alarm. In other words, a fire alarm may be available, but if no legislators are willing and able to respond to it, the mechanism remains substantively non-functional.

The second correlation lies in the relationship between legislative oversight that fails to understand street-level dynamics and the escalation of resistance. Lipsky (1980) asserts that public policy is shaped by the discretionary decisions of frontline actors, so any policy transformation that eliminates discretion without adequate compensation will trigger resistance. In the case of Surabaya, the DPRD should have been able to detect this potential resistance through its oversight function, either by directly examining the impact of the policy in the field (police patrol) or by providing a channel for parking attendants to voice their objections (fire alarm). However, both of these mechanisms failed to be implemented adequately. The police patrol conducted by the critical faction produced adequate data. Azhar Kahfi successfully uncovered a gap of Rp48 billion between the target and actual parking revenue, but the finding was not followed up with policy corrections. Meanwhile, the fire alarm was only activated after the conflict erupted, and even then, it only touched on surface issues like stigma and intimidation, without addressing the root problems at the street level. Like the loss of discretionary space and dissatisfaction with the 60:40 profit-sharing scheme.

From these two correlations, a conceptual finding can be drawn that constitutes the main contribution of this research. The effectiveness of legislative oversight in digital transformation policy is not only determined by how often commission meetings are held or how many recommendations are produced, but by the capacity of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) to read and respond to dynamics at the implementation level before resistance escalates into open conflict. This capacity requires two things simultaneously. First, the internal political configuration of the DPRD that allows critical voices from outside the ruling party to have institutional leverage. Second, a fire alarm mechanism that is not merely available formally but functions preventively. By detecting complaints early, rather than responding after conflicts have erupted.

These findings confirm Lipsky's (1980) thesis that *de facto* policies are determined at the street-level, while also extending McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) argument by showing that, in the context of local digital transformation policies, reactive and delayed fire alarm oversight is as bad as the absence of a mechanism. When the fire alarm only sounds after the conflict has taken its most raw form, mass rejection, permit freezes, and field riots, then legislative oversight has lost its preventive function. The Surabaya City Council, in this case, did not completely neglect its oversight duties. They carry it out, but at a pace and with a substance that is inadequate to prevent escalation.

The broader implications of these findings are relevant to the study of smart city governance in Indonesia. Urban digital transformation policies such as parking digitisation are often formulated with an orientation towards efficiency and revenue optimisation, but they overlook the socio-economic dimensions of frontline actors who are at the forefront of implementation. In this context, the role of the DPRD as an oversight institution becomes crucial. They are the only institution that constitutionally has the mandate to bridge the logic of executive efficiency with the logic of community protection. When this mandate is carried out in a formalistic manner, fragmented by party interests, and slow to respond to field dynamics, the smart city policies designed to enhance welfare instead have the potential to create social conflicts that harm vulnerable groups. Surabaya provides a valuable lesson in this regard: the digital parking policy may succeed in terms of transaction recording, but it fails in terms of conflict management, and that failure stems from ineffective legislative oversight.

CONCLUSION

This research departs from the literature gap regarding the role of legislative oversight in smart city policies that trigger social resistance, using the case of the digital parking conflict in Surabaya City following the enactment of Perwali Number 81 of 2025. Through an analysis of the fragmentation of the Surabaya City Council's positions into three factions, namely full supporters who oversee the executive agenda, inclusive supporters who advocate for a gradual transition, and fundamental critics who call for structural transparency. This research reveals that legislative oversight in digital transformation policies does not occur monolithically. Using the lens of McCubbins and Schwartz's Legislative Oversight Theory (1984) and Lipsky's Street-Level Bureaucracy (1980), this study finds that both oversight models fail to function complementarily. Police patrols lost critical distance due to party affiliation between the supporters and the mayor, while the fire alarm was only reactively activated after the conflict reached its peak. On the other hand, the removal of parking attendants' discretion by the digital system without socially accepted compensation deepened the resistance, leading to a mass rejection by 600 parking attendants and unrest in the field.

The main theoretical contribution of this research lies in the synthesis of these two lenses. The effectiveness of legislative oversight in digital transformation policy heavily depends on the capacity of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) to read and respond to street-level dynamics before resistance escalates. This capacity requires two interrelated prerequisites: the internal political configuration of the DPRD that allows critical voices from outside the ruling party to have institutional leverage, and a fire alarm mechanism that functions preventively, not merely reactively. These findings enrich McCubbins and Schwartz's argument by demonstrating that the success of fire alarm oversight does not only depend on the availability of formal mechanisms but also on the political incentives for legislators to respond to it. At the same time, these findings confirm Lipsky's thesis that when the discretion of frontline actors is removed without adequate compensation, resistance becomes inevitable. When these two prerequisites are not met, legislative oversight loses its substantive dimension and is reduced to an institutional ceremony that fails to protect vulnerable groups from the negative impacts of policies.

Practically, this research recommends three things for strengthening the role of the DPRD in local digital transformation policies. By institutionalising a preventive fire alarm mechanism through the obligation of public hearings before policy implementation, strengthening the technical capacity of DPRD members in understanding the socio-economic dimensions of technology-based policies, and ensuring equal space for critical voices across factions in the council's supporting tools. This research has limitations, particularly the reliance on secondary data without direct interviews with key actors, as well as the case study being limited to a single city.

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