

Case Study Presentation 5: Singapore

“City Planning and Citizen Involvement - Case Study from Singapore on Land Use Planning

~Parks & Waterbodies Plan and Identity Plan~”

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[Introduction]

Good afternoon. Today I would like to share with you a case study from Singapore on how we consulted the public on two land use plans, the Parks and Waterbodies Plan and the Identity Plan. These were prepared as part of our Master Plan review.



[Background]

Singapore is a small country in Southeast Asia. It has the land area of 680 square kilometers, about 42 kilometers from east to west and 23 kilometers from north to south.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Singapore, where I work, is Singapore's national planning and conservation authority. Our mission is to make Singapore a great place to live, work and play.

As a small island, the key challenges we face in land use planning are the scarcity of land, how we can meet the needs of a growing population, how we can provide sufficient land for sustained economic growth, and how we can provide for a good quality of life and meet the rising aspirations of our people for a better living environment. In recent years we have also become increasingly aware that in developing and redeveloping our city we need to retain character and identity in our physical landscape to give our people a sense of belonging.

URA's planning and development process comprises four key elements: at the strategic level, the concept plan maps out Singapore's long-term physical development direction at an island-wide level for the next 40 to 50 years. This is reviewed once every ten years. The broad strategies of the Concept Plan are then translated into the Master Plan. And the Master Plan is reviewed once every five years and has detailed land use parcellation and development densities.

Next, two elements are important in realizing our plans. Land sale releases land for the private sector to play a part in realizing our plans. For the projects which require public infrastructure, URA will carry out the development coordination to facilitate the projects. And finally, development control regulates the orderly implementation of our plans. At various stages of this process URA works closely with various agencies to prepare and implement the plans.

[Public Consultation - Changing Approach over Time]

In planning for Singapore, public consultation has become increasingly important. We consult the public so that we can shape Singapore into a home for our people and achieve our mission of making Singapore a great place to live, work and play.

2. Content of Conference

URA's public consultation efforts began in the 1990's. In the preparation of our Master Plan, exhibitions were held to obtain public feedback. In some cases, exhibitions were held in shopping centers to attract more people to view the plans. And for selected areas, professional bodies such as the Singapore Institute of Architects and the Real Estate Association of Singapore were engaged to give ideas and draw up land use plans. These were then exhibited to the public for comment. Dialogues were also organized to allow the public to share their ideas directly to our Minister.

Other exhibitions held to seek public feedback include an exhibition to consult the public on how to make our city center more exciting, and this was held in the year 2000. And another exhibition was held in 2001 to engage the public on how to make Orchard Road, which is Singapore's premier shopping street, more active and vibrant.

In the mid to late-1990's, with the use of the Internet becoming more common in Singapore, the URA website became another channel through which we could reach more people and consult them on our ideas.

In 2000, we started consulting the public using a small group discussion format to provide in-depth feedback on our plans. Two focus groups were formed to provide feedback on Singapore's Concept Plan, which is our long-term strategic development plan. And starting in 2002, URA holds regular review workshops with professionals, developers, industrialists, consultants, policy-makers and members of the business community to discuss how we can make our development control rules less cumbersome.

[Parks & Waterbodies Plan and Identity Plan]

Today I would like to share with you the public consultation exercise we conducted last year for the Parks and Waterbodies Plan and the Identity Plan. These two plans covered all of Singapore and presented ideas on how we can enhance our greenery and living environment. These two plans were drawn up as part of the Master Plan review, arising from public feedback that our residents valued greenery and identity, and where appropriate, the ideas would then be incorporated into our Master Plan.

The aim of the Parks and Waterbodies Plan is to make parks more accessible, to improve the crowdedness of parks, to build a larger network of greenery island-wide, and to tap on unexplored areas of natural beauty.

The Identity Plan aims to recognize, retain and enhance the unique characteristics of various areas in Singapore which have evolved over time and have acquired identity and charm.

These places continue to be relevant to the community that they serve. It is important that they are not lost as Singapore develops.

We wanted to consult the public on these two plans as greenery and identity were aspects which are close to the hearts of Singaporeans. The proposals presented in the two plans would contribute to the quality of life. Another reason for consulting the public is because identity is subjective and has meaning only if the public values such places. In addition, getting good support for these plans would help us to realize and implement the ideas.

[Citizen Involvement - The Process]

I will now talk about the process of how we consulted the public on the Parks and Waterbodies and Identity Plan and the lessons that we learned from the public consultation process. Then I would like to share with you examples of how the feedback has led to a change in our plans. Firstly the process: Public consultation for the Parks and Waterbodies and Identity Plan was carried out in four key stages.

Firstly, pre-consultation with community groups took place from March to July 2002. This was followed by widespread consultation from July to October through public exhibition at our office, a virtual exhibition on our website, and publicity through the mass media and public survey. In the same period, we conducted in-depth consultation through subject group discussions and dialogues with stakeholders. We concluded the public consultation exercise in January 2003 this year by giving our responses to the public feedback. I will now go into the details of these processes.

[Pre-consultation with Community Groups from March to July 2002]

We started our public consultation process while the plans were still on the drawing board. Our planners and architects met with local community groups as early as March of last year to consult them on the plans before they were set. By doing so we were able to incorporate local concerns and residents and stakeholders ideas early into our plans.

Once the plans were drawn up, a two-prong approach was used to consult the public. First, we used a widespread approach to publicize our ideas as widely as possible, and to give every interested person a chance to give their ideas and feedback, and secondly an in-depth approach to allow for more in-depth assessment of our plans.

[Widespread Consultation]

We held the public exhibition from July to October last year to publicize our ideas and obtain feedback. A parallel virtual exhibition was displayed on our website so that those who cannot physically visit the exhibition could do so via the website. Over a three month period about 35,000 people visited the exhibition and our website.

The mass media played an important part in helping us to publicize our plans. Many articles were featured in the newspaper, sparking public interest to visit our exhibitions and give feedback. Parks and identity were aspects that the public can understand and identify with, and people were very excited about the new parks that they would be able to visit in future. Others were enthusiastic that their favorite neighborhood would be kept and enhanced. About 4,200 comments were received through survey forms, Internet feedback and letters, and more were obtained through newspaper stories. These were channeled to the subject groups for discussion. These are some more examples of articles which came out in the press.

[In-depth Consultation]

Three subject groups were formed to discuss our ideas in greater detail. Each group was chaired by a person of the private sector with good standing, and each group had about 20 members each comprising

2. Content of Conference

planners, architects, real estate professionals, residents, interest groups, the feedback unit and representatives from the mass media. URA provided secretarial support and resource persons to make sure that the program ran smoothly and that they had all the information and assistance that they needed.

Over a three-month period the three subject groups had an average of ten meetings per group to deliberate on the ideas presented in the two plans. As the members were all volunteers and many held full-time jobs, the meetings were usually held in the evenings and over the weekend. The subject group members also conducted site visits to nature areas, parks and identity areas to get a first-hand experience of these areas. They met with government agencies to understand the policies, and they also conducted a total of 11 dialogues with stakeholders and local residents to understand their views and concerns. 4,200 comments received from the public were channeled through to the subject groups for consideration, and through this, the subject groups were able to reach a set of recommendations that considered all aspects of public feedback. Their recommendations were submitted in November 2002 in three subject group reports.

[Concluding the Public Consultation Exercise]

It is important to let the public know our responses to their feedback and ideas so that they know that their feedback has been considered and will be acted on. We concluded the public consultation exercise in January 2003 by giving responses to the feedback and recommendations received. This was given at an appreciation dinner held to thank the subject group members for the many hours of personal time that they spent discussing our plans and providing feedback.

[Lessons Learned]

What are some of the lessons that we learned? The public consultation exercise provided us with much invaluable feedback. There are three main lessons that we learned from the public consultation exercise.

Firstly, before we embark on a public consultation exercise, we need to be open and receptive to the public's ideas. Especially in the context of subject group discussions and stakeholders' dialogues, our planners and architects met and dealt with the public face to face. It was important to listen to the public's ideas and perspectives. We can explain, but we don't defend the current government policies and constraints that we face, and we explore with them how their ideas could be incorporated and realized.

Secondly, to achieve a balanced discussion it was important to have a good chairman for each subject group and the right mix of people in each group so that various segments of societies could be heard. The right mix of people will ensure that the wishes of one group are balanced against the consideration of others. For example, one dilemma was whether to protect the nature areas from human disturbance on the one hand, or on the other hand to instead provide public access so that the public can enjoy these nature areas. Having various opinions and ideas could achieve a win-win situation, as I will show you later. Also crucial to this process for balanced discussion is a good facilitator that will ensure that all the opinions are heard and that a



balanced recommendation is reached.

Thirdly, closing the loop is important. We need to let the public know the ideas and recommendations that we have accepted and would be following up on. There is a need to be accountable for all the ideas received so that the public knows that we value their feedback and will continue to provide public feedback in future public consultation exercises.

[Incorporating Public Feedback]

Now I will go into the feedback that was received and some of the follow-up. The public supported 97 percent of our proposals. They provided a lot of other feedback and ideas, and I will now give you three examples of how the plans have been refined after taking into account the public feedback.

[Nature Trail near Freshwater Marshes]

The first example is of a proposed nature trail in an area called Lim Chu Kang. One proposal in the Parks and Waterbodies Plan is to provide more public access to nature areas so that people can visit and enjoy these places.

The Lim Chu Kang area, located in the north of Singapore, is mainly a farmland area. This area has two unique ecosystems, the saltwater mangroves along the coast and the freshwater marshes next to the reservoir. Part of the mangrove area is already designated as a nature reserve; this part. Under the Parks and Waterbodies Plan, the proposal is to provide access to more mangroves along the coast as well as to the freshwater marshes, which are currently inaccessible, and to integrate them as part of nature parks. We also proposed to have a new 5-kilometer long boardwalk to link the two nature areas so that people can walk from one ecosystem to another.

The feedback received was that the nature trail is too close to the sensitive bird breeding grounds which are located over here. After some discussion, the subject group recommended that the boardwalk be limited to just the southern portion, over here, so that while protecting the birds there is still access to the freshwater marshes. URA has agreed with their recommendations to drop the boardwalk in the north.

[Upper Thomson Road Shop Houses]

The second example of how we have incorporated public feedback is at the Upper Thomson Road shop houses, which are located in the middle of Singapore. These (slide 38) are existing 2-story shop-house buildings in a laid-back suburban area with low-rise housing. The original plan for the area was to allow all these shop houses that you see to amalgamate into larger street blocks and build up to four stories, with shops on the first floor and housing on the upper three floors. However, in our pre-consultation sessions with stakeholders the feedback that we received was that they found it difficult to amalgamate into larger street blocks as there were too many owners involved. After further discussions the stakeholders were in favor of keeping the buildings at two stories, but to allow both stories to be used for commercial use instead. This would help to retain and reinforce the existing character and scale of the built environment. This proposal was incorporated as part of the Identity Plan.

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[Conservation]

The third example is about conservation of our developed environment. Conservation has been an integral part of planning since 1989. (slide 40) In Singapore, national monuments are conserved; other key conservation areas include the historic districts, which are shown in red, the secondary settlement areas, which are shown in yellow, and selected bungalow areas, which are in light purple, and elsewhere in Singapore. This map just shows you the central part of Singapore.

In the Identity Plan we have identified four more areas for conservation, namely, at Balestier, Jalan Besar, Tanjong Katong and Joo Chiat. These are areas which were established between the 1920's and 1950's and are characterized by low-rise shop houses with unique architecture, charming streetscapes, rich local activities and flavor. The proposal is to conserve more than 600 buildings in these four areas. We propose to conserve these buildings using an old and new approach, that is, we conserve the main buildings in front but we allow the rear to be extended and built higher so that the development potential of the entire site can still be partially realized.

One obstacle to conservation that we face in Singapore has always been the concern that the conservation would suppress the development potential of these buildings and therefore lead to a loss of potential gain for the owners. We brought our proposals to the public and to the stakeholders. About 95 percent of the public feedback supported the conservation of these buildings, as you can see in the photographs (slide 44) ; there are many hands raised to support the conservation. About 64 percent of the public preferred the old and new approach, which I showed you in the previous slide, while 36 percent preferred conservation to be carried out on the entire building.

So with the public support, we are currently in the process of obtaining approval for the conservation of 600 buildings.


[Conclusion]

To conclude, I would like to say that in Singapore we have just started consulting the public more extensively in recent years. It has been a fruitful and rewarding experience in terms of the new ideas gained, and helping us to make our plans better and in giving the public greater ownership of our plans. Thank you.

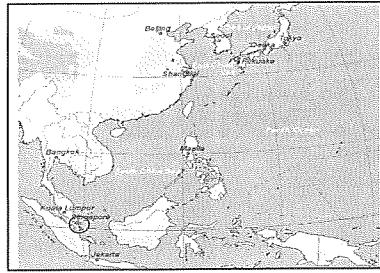
Slides

City Planning & Citizen Involvement

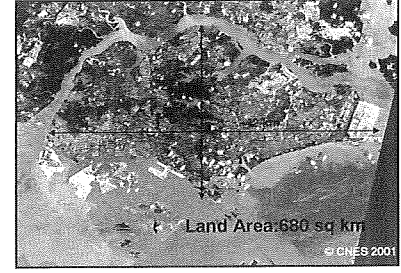
Case Study from Singapore on
**PARKS & WATERBODIES PLAN AND
IDENTITY PLAN**



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Urban Redevelopment Authority

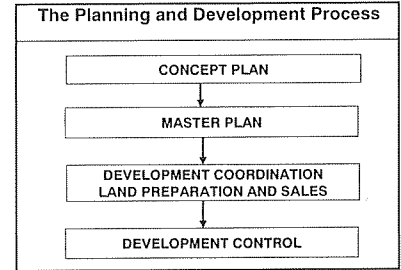
**Mission: To Make Singapore a
Great City to LIVE, WORK & PLAY**

4

Challenges in Land Use Planning

- Scarcity of land
- Growing Population
- Need to plan for sustained economic growth
- Need to provide good quality of life and meet rising aspirations
- Need to retain character and identity

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Why Consult?

- Shape Singapore into a home for the people
- Make Singapore a great place to live, work and play

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Public Consultation Over the Years

- 1990's - Master Plan
 - Exhibitions
 - Selected areas - private sector engaged to draw up plans
 - Dialogues with Minister

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Public Consultation Over the Years

- How to make our City Centre more Memorable
- How to make Orchard Road more Happening

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Public Consultation Over the Years

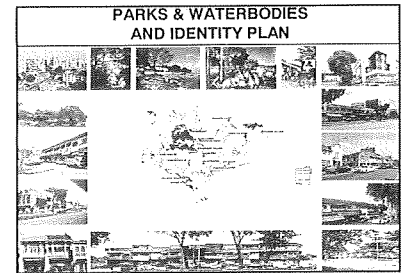
- Use of the Internet

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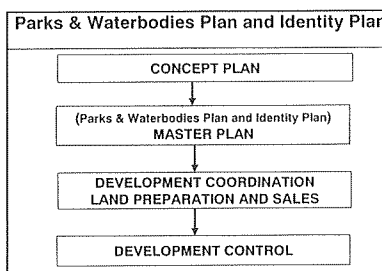
Public Consultation Over the Years

- Use small-group discussion format
 - Concept Plan 2001
 - Review Workshops on Development Control Rules

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Parks & Waterbodies Plan

- Make parks more accessible
- Improve crowded parks
- Build a larger network of green
- Tap on unexplored areas of natural beauty

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Identity Plan

- To recognise, retain and enhance the unique characteristics of various areas which have evolved over time and acquire identity and charm. These places continue to be relevant to the community that they serve
- This is important so that they will not be lost as Singapore develops

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Why Citizen Involvement

- Parks and Identity are issues close to hearts of residents
- Contribute towards quality of life
- Identity is subjective
- Need public's support to realise and implement plans

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Citizen Involvement

- Process and Lessons Learnt
- Feedback Received and Follow-up

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Citizen Involvement - Process

- Pre-consultation with Community Groups (Mar to Jul 02)
- Widespread consultation - Public Exhibition, Web Site, Media & Survey (Jul to Oct 02)
- In-depth consultation - Subject Group Discussions and Dialogues with Stakeholders (Jul to Oct 02)
- Concluding the exercise (Jan 03)

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Pre-consultation with Community Groups

- Started consultation when plans were still on the drawing board
- Met with local community groups in Mar 2002
- Able to incorporate local concerns and stakeholders' ideas early into the plan

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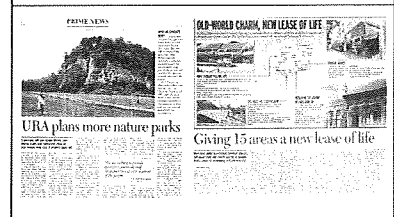
Widespread Consultation Public Exhibition, Web Page

- Public Exhibition and Virtual Exhibition on web site from Jul to Oct 2002
- 35,000 people visited the exhibition



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Widespread Consultation Publicity in the Media



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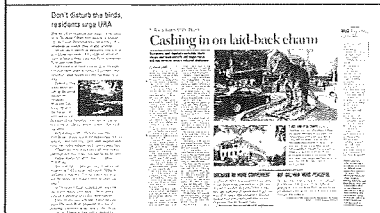
Widespread Consultation Survey Forms, Letters, Media

- 4,200 feedback were received
- Feedback was channelled to the Subject Groups for deliberations



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Widespread Consultation Survey Forms, Letters, Media



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

- 3 subject groups formed to study different areas
- Chaired by private sector person of good standing



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

- Members comprise planners, architects, real estate professionals, residents, interest groups, feedback unit, and media
- URA provides secretarial support and resource persons



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

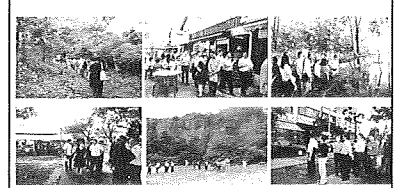
- Deliberate on the plans



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

- Conduct site visits



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

- Had discussions with government agencies
- Conducted 11 dialogue with stakeholders



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In-depth Consultation Subject Group Discussions

- Considered the 4,200 feedback
- Submit recommendations, feedback and ideas



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Concluding the Public Consultation Exercise

- Gave response to ideas and feedback



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Lessons Learnt

- Be open with information and receptive to ideas
- Important to have good chairman, and an right mix of people in the subject group
- Giving our responses to the feedback is important in closing the loop

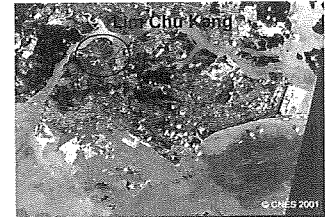
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Feedback Received

- Supported 97% of our proposals
- Provided other ideas
- 3 examples:
 - Nature trail along freshwater marshes
 - Upper Thomson Road shophouses
 - Conservation

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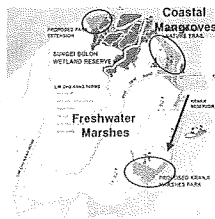
Nature Trail near Freshwater Marshes



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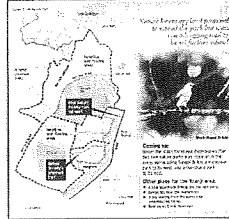
Nature Trail near Freshwater Marshes

- Access 2 unique ecosystems
 - Coastal mangroves
 - Freshwater marshes
- Integrate within 2 new nature parks
- New 5km long boardwalk linking the two parks



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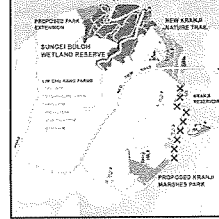
Nature Trail near Freshwater Marshes



- Received feedback that proposed trail is too close to sensitive bird feeding areas

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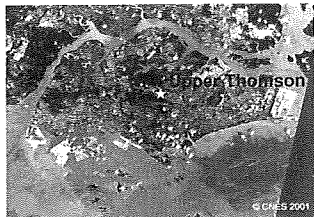
Nature Trail near Freshwater Marshes



- Subject Group recommends that we limit boardwalk.
- URA agreed to drop boardwalk

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Upper Thomson Road Shop Houses



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Upper Thomson Road Shop Houses

- Original plan : amalgamate into larger streetblocks and redevelop up to 4 storeys, with shops on 1st storey and residential on upper floors



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Upper Thomson Road Shop Houses

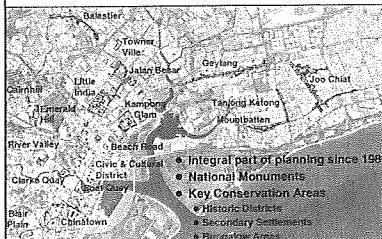
- After consultation: keep to 2 storeys, allow both floors for commercial uses
- Help retain and reinforce existing character and scale of built environment

Outdoor dining at Thomson Village



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Conservation



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Conservation

- Identified 4 more areas
- Areas established between 1920s & 1950s
- Characterised by low-rise shophouses with unique architecture, charming streetscapes, rich local activities and flavour



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Balestier, Joo Chiat, Tanjong Katong, Jalan Besar

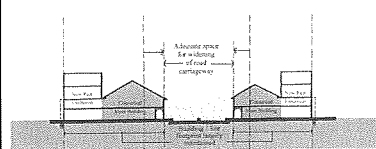


- Conserve > 600 shophouses and integrate new development with the 'old'

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Balestier, Joo Chiat, Tanjong Katong, Jalan Besar

- Conserve using the 'old and new' approach
 - Conserve main building
 - Allow extension at back of the site



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Public Consultation Findings

- 95% of public feedback supports conservation
- 64% prefer old-and-new approach while 36% prefer conservation of entire building



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Conclusion

- Through public consultation:
 - gain new ideas
 - make our plans better
 - give the public greater ownership

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Case Study Presentation 6: City of Oita

“Citizen-partnered urban revitalization ~ Collaborating with incorporated NPOs ~”

Mr. Yoshiyuki Eto, Executive Director
Planning Department, City of Oita

[Introduction]

My name is Eto of the City of Oita. I am sure you have had a long day already, and I have listened to all the presentations. Oita included, it seems there are many collaborative activities between the municipalities and the cities. Compared with other cities' examples, it seems Oita is still led by the Municipal Government. Perhaps we should be doing a little better at learning lessons from others. But we do hope to promote collaboration with the citizens further on. And what I am going to present is like an announcement of the determination by the Mayor.



We have a new Mayor from April this year for Oita. The new Mayor is very keen on promoting the partnership with citizens since taking office in April. And at this time it is indeed very tight in terms of the fiscal side of the cities. Oita is not an exception. But the Mayor made it clear that he would definitely be running Oita City, and he spoke to the City Council, the Assembly, about his plans and, whenever there is an opportunity, he talks to the citizens. The Mayor emphasizes the partnership with citizens. So he is very keen on partnership.

The Mayor's message is very clear among the very young staff of the Oita City Government but not quite so popular among the senior members of the Oita City Government. Some are even suggesting the change in the terminology of citizen partnership. So perhaps we should reflect upon where we have come and try to join the Mayor to promote this activity.

Since taking office the Mayor is indeed very committed, and every day, rainy days, windy days or stormy days, even when he is in Shanghai on duty, he leaves a message on the website, the Mayor's website, so he can continue to communicate to the citizens and also his staff in the City Government. He is encouraging everybody in Oita City to visit his website; no matter how busy he is, the Mayor is fully committed to continuing this communication process with the citizens.

Within the city we have 52 school districts, and he is covering all 52 school districts in his first year in office so that he can have about a one-hour dialogue with the people in each school district. This is his on-going commitment.

And also for promoting this partnership in town building with citizens, we really have to involve the citizens. So there are many proposals coming up from the government's employees, and they are now organized into a set of measures.

We have a tea-talk late in the afternoon, like 5 o'clock or sometimes at 6 o'clock in the afternoon. The Mayor encourages participation of citizens in the localities, also the city staff members in charge, to sit down and talk together over a cup of tea.

In 1963 the population of Oita was 260,000, but since then Oita progressed in industrialization; now the population is 440,000. The city is busy improving the living conditions of the people, and although I don't think we have such neat and tidy city streets in the urban areas, we do have abundant nature. Takasakyama is famous for monkeys, rivers, and mountains, and we are not affected much by natural disasters. We have two major river systems. These are really the assets of the city.

Based upon this nature and infrastructure, we are trying to develop the city further into a core city in the area. Last year we had the pleasure of hosting the Soccer World Cup, and there were many infrastructure projects going on, building an over-pass in and around Oita Railway Station, among others. I listened to other cities' presentations and I hope we can do a better job of learning lessons from those examples.

[Citizen-partnered Urban Revitalization in Oita City]

I think I can share with you some of the activities going on to promote partnership with cities in Oita. Now with the omnibus decentralization law, there are more authorities delegated to the local governments, and with March 2005 as a target, there is an on-going consolidation of municipalities on a nation-wide scale. So there is much progress going on in the administrative autonomy side of the local government.

So we have to consider the ongoing development, and also the fiscal situation must be fully effected for the central government and also local governments. Both are suffering from very difficult fiscal situations. To find a breakthrough we must rebuild the social systems and revitalize the regional economy. We also need to have a better linkage between globalization and also regional competition.

Oita has a comprehensive plan, Oita 2010. Again we are trying to promote partnership with citizens, and specifically we are promoting volunteer activities, garbage and waste reduction activities, recycling activities and other vital measures for the region.

Specific projects would include the Love-Your-Park activity. We have more than 600 parks in the city. We are trying to encourage citizens to have a sense of ownership for the parks in their neighborhood, and to clean up the parks in their neighborhood two or three times a year, for instance. Another project is registration of Citizen Volunteers. Also, Greening Oita and providing financial assistance to community-based activities by Oita City are other projects. When there are activities, cultural, sports related or local festivals that may help strengthen the sense of community, Oita City assists by providing some financial aid. So such activities may be promoted and the community strengthened. We are also calling for more members of the Councils so there will be more participation in Council activities. Also we are calling for monitors for city policies and members for promoting Clean Oita. So these are the specific examples.

[Challenges Facing Citizen-partnered Urban Revitalization - Development and Assistance of Incorporated NPOs]

Now let me touch upon some of the future challenges for our citizen partnership activities. Non-profit organization is important. Since coming into office in April, the Mayor is very keen on promoting NPO activities. Oita City is trying to work with NPOs as much as possible to revitalize the city. NPOs should play a central role in the community development. However, this is going to be a bit different from the

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NPOs traditionally. We are not urging NPOs to promote activities or policies driven by the local government, but rather, a new concept of social services may be generated by the NPOs in many areas like welfare, environment and community building, cultural and art promotion, and children's healthy development. NPOs could be very active. Today we have over 50 NPOs active in promotion getting in touch with nature, environmental protection, and outdoor activities for youth development.

In big cities like Tokyo and Yokohama they have assistance from scholars because they are citizens of these cities, so they could be of great help for the city's initiatives. And also they may have better financial situations. In Oita it's tight in terms of resources, both in people and in finances, so we are yet to come so far.

But NPOs should try to help themselves and grow further. This is ideal, but Oita City thinks at this stage that it needs to assist the development of NPOs. Then, how we could help the NPOs, and in what way can the city partner with the NPOs for community development or city revitalization? Early next year we hope to launch some new projects.

For a partnership with an NPO we do have one example in Oita City. It was four years ago in the field of environment we entrusted an NPO organization to handle environmental problems. It called the Citizens' Eco-Life Movement and the Movement for Garbage Reduction, and it fostered groups committed to the environment, recycling, and also to supporting consumers' issues. We dealt with the environmental issues and encouraged movement from the citizens. There was a shopping mall that was very active in these activities, and there was one vacant area that used to be a bank lot but the bank moved out. We discussed that the shopping mall had to purchase that lot. However they couldn't. That's why they made an inquiry and consulted in Oita City.

So in order to reactivate or revitalize this center area we decided to purchase the lot by spending 240 million yen. We considered the combination of environmental protection and the consumer consumption activities. This is a very rare case, but we combined these two aspects and we entrusted the NPO, that is, the Funai Ecology 21, and we are funding 20 million yen each year for support of their activities. But the Mayor has now changed, so including this project, we have to review our activities to reexamine whether this approach is appropriate or not. And we will consider an alternative, if possible. And by having discussion together with the NPO, we would like to seek various approaches to compare.

Regarding the NPO organizations there are about 50 some organizations in Oita City, and we have already had discussion at least once. We are trying to grasp information about these organizations, about the numbers of people participating and also in what area their activities are involved. So by doing that we would like to take further steps for supporting NPOs starting from the next fiscal year.

There are issues such as high school kids not going to school, they shut themselves at home, and also there are juveniles shutting themselves at home. There is also a need for assistance for the elderly who are left behind in the age of IT; PC schools would be supported by the elderly; also the refractory disease patients.

They are not asking for funds for that but rather, they would be looking for some assistance. Anyhow, NPOs would be the core for the community planning in the future and we would regard an NPO as a fair

partner. At this moment, the NPO is not perfect as an organization, but we are quite positive in having partnership with them.

[Establishing Urban Revitalization Bylaws]

Also we are discussing community planning, and trying to provide information to the citizens such as that we would guarantee citizens' participation and provide a forum or a place where they can contribute.



At this stage of the city planning, or the pre-stage of this, the stage of explanation of our projects, we are trying to incorporate residents or citizens to our activities. So provision of information would be further implemented, and based on rules we would support setting up various organizations of citizens and private sectors. Also by regarding citizen organizations as equal partners, we would like to distribute our roles and burdens to each other, and then we can recognize what are the challenges among ourselves, and then we would come up with collaborative community planning. And also we are planning to set a rule for enhancing the citizens' collaboration.

There were suggestions from the city staff to the Mayor, and there is one example, that is, the Foster Parents for the Roads: Neighborhood residents of a certain road are designated to take the responsibility of cleaning the road or to set the road condition. In a proactive manner the residents are encouraged to be involved in the road adjustment or monitoring. At the early stage we would like to incorporate citizens in this way. Also we are trying to create the community so that children are raised not only by their own parents but also by the community. Also we are trying to set up regional-based sports clubs. Every month the Mayor is getting new ideas from City Hall employees. And sometimes we encounter a very good idea, so we would like to emphasize the opinions from the City Hall employees.

[Conclusion]

Now I am getting into the final part. In our collaboration we would like to utilize the Internet; especially our Mayor is highly utilizing the Internet system, and we would like to provide city information in a proper manner. Also in the field of community planning, it is essential to provide information and exchange information among citizens. It is essential for citizens to be aware of the situation of Oita City. So far the city administration has not been so active in providing information to the public. But we have to be open to the public so that we can disclose our information as much as possible, such as the specific projects or budget issues, and also we would like to invite the participants, the citizens, to join in the process of planning.

But at the same time we have to be careful not to cause any confusion among the citizens by providing unnecessary information. It is necessary to have an appropriate guideline in relation with the NPO, the planning of community development, and also we have to consider how to let the citizens participate to our administrative work. There are many challenges to be solved, but in a couple of years we will do our best to catch up with Kumamoto City or Kagoshima City. Thank you.