PLANNING FOR
COMMUNITIES

Lessons from Seoul and Singapore

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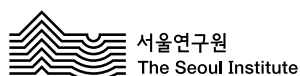
Urban Redevelopment Authority

About the Centre for Liveable Cities

Set up in 2008 by the Ministry of National Development and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) has as its mission "to distil, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities." CLC's work spans four main areas: Research, Capability Development, Advisory Services and Knowledge Platforms. Through these activities, CLC hopes to provide urban leaders and practitioners with the knowledge and support needed to make our cities better. www.clc.gov.sg

CENTRE for
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SINGAPORE

MND
SINGAPORE

About the Seoul Institute

The Seoul Development Institute was established by the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) in 1992 and was renamed as the Seoul Institute (SI) on 1 August 2012. The Seoul Institute's goal is to establish a medium- to long-term vision for Seoul and propose social policies on welfare, culture, education and industries, and urban management policies on city planning, transportation, safety and the environment. SI's primary objective is to improve municipal administration through professional research, improve the quality of life in Seoul, and reinforce and sustain the competitiveness of Seoul. https://www.si.re.kr/

서울연구원
The Seoul Institute

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FOREWORD BY SEOUL

It is my great pleasure to see the fruition of the collaborative research project between the Seoul Institute and the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC), "Planning for Communities: Lessons from Seoul and Singapore." I would like to express my congratulations.

This project contains Seoul's experiences of policy making with citizen participation over the last decade. Currently, all the policies, projects, and various levels of the plans of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) are drafted by the citizens, for the citizens and about the citizens. Urban Master Plan is no exception. Seoul Plan 2030 was completed in 2014, a plan created from the active participation of general citizens and experts across various disciplines. The plan sets the visions for the city and includes how to respond to issues that citizens consider important with concrete strategies by 2030. From its initial stages to the finalisation of Seoul Plan 2030, citizens and experts worked together to create Seoul Plan 2030. In the process, the SMG made an effort to ensure openness and transparency. Such active involvement of general citizens in establishing a master plan of a city with 10 million people is unprecedented in any metropolis around the world. Furthermore, citizen participation was key to devising lower level plans such as Community Plans

and *Dong*-Level Plans. Currently, cities including Moscow, Beijing, and Santiago, have expressed their interests to learn about the planning processes of the Seoul Plan 2030.

Seoul did not always give priority to its citizens. Under the authoritarian leadership from the 1960s to the 1990s, rapid economic growth was pushed forward in a top-down manner. Such a method made it possible for the city to have a better residential environment and social infrastructure in a relatively short period of time. Voices of citizens were neglected in the process, however. Such an era now has come to an end. Seoulites are living in a world of WikiLeaks, where secrets no longer exist, and live in an era of Facebook, where anyone can communicate with each other anytime, anywhere. As far as urban policy goes, citizen involvement is a must, not a choice. This is true for cities both in developed and developing countries. Singapore is no exception. Unlike the past when a paternalistic leader alone devised plans for national development, Singapore has tried to involve its citizens in its governance. "Planning for Communities: Lessons from Seoul and Singapore" contains our experiences of citizen participatory planning. Even though the two cities walked a similar path, there are some differences in how to achieve involvement from citizens. Still, a collaborative research project was only possible because both cities deeply shared the importance of citizen participatory planning.

I wish this collaborative research project will contribute to making Seoul and Singapore more sustainable, people-oriented cities. Lastly, I offer my sincere gratitude to the researchers for their dedication to this project.

Park Won Soon
Mayor, Seoul
South Korea

FOREWORD BY SINGAPORE

Singapore has seen rapid urban changes over the last 50 years. While urban planning in the early years emphasised basic physical infrastructure, the approach evolved over the years to consider the broader aspects of urban development.

In tandem with this shift in urban development, we recognise the need for more community involvement in our planning and development processes. Citizens play a significant role in contributing fresh perspectives to the planning process, and also in initiating and implementing new ground-up ideas.

Singapore and Seoul are interesting cities to study in this respect. Both cities saw great progress in urban development before the 1980s as a result of government-led initiatives. In recent years, we now share common aspirations to give our citizens a greater role in our planning and development processes, and to co-create the living environment with our stakeholders.

Today, Singapore is taking bigger and bolder steps with our community engagement strategies for planning and development. For example, we are converting a disused railway line into a linear park, which runs from the northern to the southern end of Singapore

and connects almost one million people living in estates along its stretch. Through exhibitions and public workshops, we are actively engaging the public on how this "Rail Corridor" can be transformed into a distinctive community green space.

We have also recently launched "Our Favourite Place", a public space programme which supports the community in activating public spaces with innovative place-making ideas. One project under this programme saw unwanted pianos restored and transformed into art pieces at public locations for everyone to use and enjoy.

These are just a few examples of the many engagement projects that we have embarked on. We intend to facilitate broader and deeper collaborations with the community, and develop effective solutions to address increasingly complex urban planning issues.

"Planning for Communities: Lessons from Seoul and Singapore" is a timely publication to distil the experiences of both Seoul and Singapore. I hope this second collaboration between the Centre for Liveable Cities and the Seoul Institute provides inspiration to improve community involvement in urban planning and development.

Lawrence Wong
Minister for National Development
Singapore

1
INTRODUCTION

Urban planning is traditionally regarded as the responsibility of governments. As a process to organise and manage various aspects of the urban environment, urban planning requires a government to balance competing needs for land use and development in a city.

However, urban planning is not limited to physical spaces and infrastructure. Raising the quality of life for citizens requires planners to gain a deep understanding of people's evolving concerns, needs and aspirations. This is especially so for cities in mature stages of development. Once basic physical infrastructural needs have been fulfilled,

social issues often take on greater salience and complexity. There is an increasing realisation that governments do not have a monopoly on good ideas and insights for urban planning and public policies. Citizens and private sector stakeholders can play important roles by contributing fresh, diverse perspectives to the planning process, or by taking the lead in initiating and implementing planning proposals.

As such, cities have been extending planning processes beyond the boundaries of government to include the community. Creating more room for community participation in planning can not only

Citizen participatory planning workshop in Seoul (left).

improve outcomes, but also reinforce the social compact between governments and citizens, and enhance social resilience on the whole.

Seoul and Singapore: From Government-led Urban Development to Greater Citizen Participation

After World War II, both Seoul and Singapore experienced rapid government-led urban transformation. Both cities had been plagued with a multitude of urban problems in the 1950s and 1960s: Singapore suffered from some of the most overcrowded urban slums in the world; while Seoul, in the aftermath of the Korean War, faced the immense challenge of having to completely reconstruct the devastated city.

Effective government action transformed both cities into two of the most advanced metropolises in Asia within a few decades. In Seoul, the South Korean government set the city's redevelopment as a national priority to facilitate economic growth. Massive public construction of urban infrastructure, such as highways and subway systems, was accompanied by planning policies guiding private sector investment in real estate through land readjustment and new town development schemes. In Singapore, the Land Acquisition Act (1966) enabled the government to acquire private land for public benefit, giving it extensive scope to redevelop the city through public sector-led efforts. This allowed the government to effectively implement its urban plans and public infrastructure programmes, including a successful public housing programme that houses over 80% of Singaporeans today.

In recent years, changing social contexts in both cities have driven the growth of community involvement in planning processes. Democratic reforms in South Korea since the early 1990s, which led to the first mayoral election in Seoul in 1995, fuelled demand among citizens for participation in local issues. It was also during this period that the negative side-effects of rapid urbanisation in Seoul—such as inadequate amenities in new towns and poor construction standards—had become increasingly apparent. This prompted citizens to be more proactive in voicing their needs and concerns in urban development issues. Participatory planning efforts in Seoul were institutionalised after the successful election of Mayor Park Won Soon in 2011.

In Singapore, while government-led planning and implementation of urban infrastructure have been largely successful, various factors such as a better educated and more well-informed citizenry, rising affluence, and rising expectations for a high quality of life, have led to an increasing desire among citizens to have a say in public policies, service delivery and infrastructure development. For example, the volume of feedback received by the Land Transport Authority of Singapore rose by about 35% within a short span of three years: from 900,000 emails and calls in 2009 to over 1.2 million in 2012. The government also noted the need to cultivate a more active citizenry to "build social cohesion, sense of community and national belonging among Singaporeans", given an observed over-reliance on the government to address people's needs. These factors prompted the government to create more opportunities for citizen participation in planning and development processes.

To understand each city's efforts in involving citizens in urban planning and development processes, the Seoul Institute (SI) and the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) embarked on a collaborative research study to examine case studies from Seoul and Singapore. While the cultural and political contexts are different and the degrees to which citizens

Residents participating in a community event organised by People's Association.

have been involved in planning processes for each city vary, Seoul and Singapore – both Asian global cities at a comparable stage of development – have similar histories of rapid government-led urban development and share common aspirations to become more inclusive and resilient amidst increasing social diversity.

CLC and SI hope to distil some common lessons from the experiences of both cities and thereby contribute to discussions on citizen participation in urban planning and development.

Seoul

GENERAL

Land Area
605 sq km

Population
9,904,312

Population Density
16,364 per sq km

GDP per Capita
34,646,000 KRW (30,835 USD)

Population Age Profile
0-19 years: 17.7%
20-64 years: 69.8%
65 years and over: 12.5%

Public Land Ownership
47%

Average Household Size
2.39

% of Home Ownership
49.6%
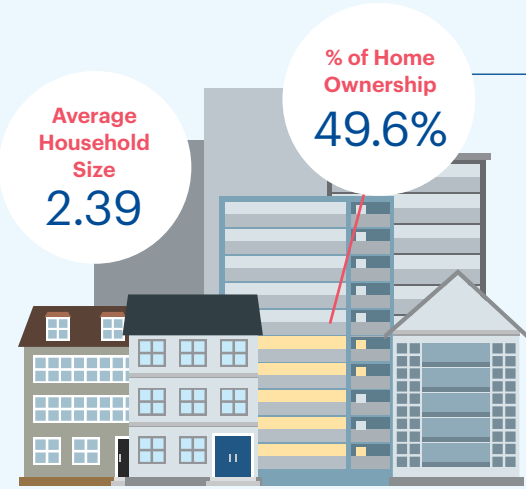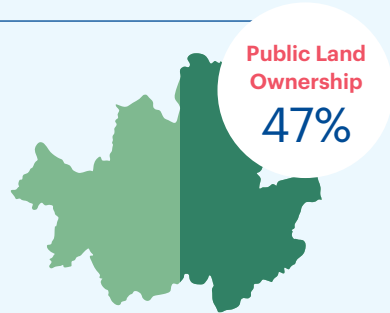
HOUSING

% of Households Living in Public & Private Housing
Public (Rental) Housing: 6.5%
Private Housing: 93.5%

% of Households by Type of Housing
Apartments: 58.6%
Row House & Multi-House: 27.6%
Detached Housing: 12.7%
Others: 1.1%

COMMUNITY

Population Sizes of Local Planning Units
(average figures)
Gu: 396,172
Dong: 23,359

Provision of Community Spaces
(average figures, expressed as no. of community facilities/population)
Resident Centre: 1 / *Dong*
Community Space: 9.8 / *Gu*

Volunteer Rate for Dong-level Community Planning
Average No. of Volunteers:
75.6 people

Average Participation Rate:
0.36%

Funds Dedicated for Local Improvement Programmes in 2017

Urban Regeneration Program
26,850 mil KRW (23.9mil USD)

Resident Environment Management Program
15,474 mil KRW (13.7mil USD)

Local Community Division
32,889 mil KRW (29.3mil USD)

Top 3 Priorities Among Citizens
Safety, Job Security and Housing

Singapore

GENERAL

Land Area
719 sq km

Population
5,607,300

Population Density
7,797 per sq km

GDP per Capita
SGD 73,730 (USD 54,257)

Population Age Profile
0-19 years: 21.2%
20-64 years: 66.4%
65 years and over: 12.4%

Public Land Ownership
75%

Average Household Size
3.35

% of Home Ownership
90.8%
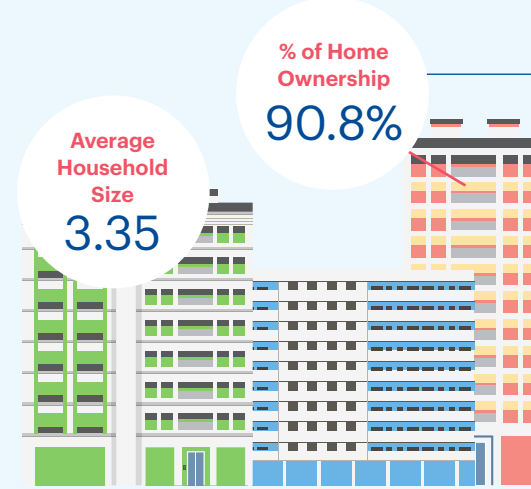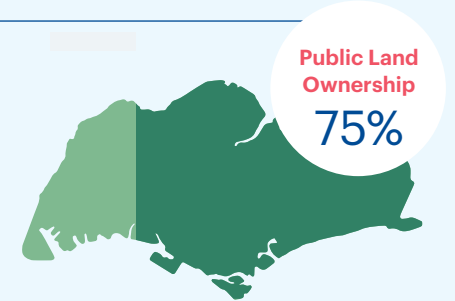
HOUSING

% of Resident Households Living in Public & Private Housing
Public Apartments: 80.0%
Private Apartments:14.4%
Landed Properties: 5.2%

% of Households by Type of Housing
HDB Dwellings: 80.1%
Condos and Other Apartments: 13.9%
Landed Properties: 5.6%
Others: 0.3%

COMMUNITY

Population Sizes of Local Planning Units
(typical planning norms)
Town: 260,000 (77,600 dwelling units)
Neighbourhood: 20,000 – 30,000
(6,000 – 9,000 dwelling units)
Precinct: 1000 – 2,300
(300 – 700 dwelling units)

Provision of Community Spaces
(typical planning norms, expressed as no. of community facilities/population)
Community Centres:
1 per 50,000 persons
Resident's Committee Centres:
1 per 1,500 – 2,500 Dwelling Units
Social Service Offices:
1 per town

Volunteer Rate for Grassroots Activities under People's Association Network
1.11%

Funds Dedicated for Local Improvement Programmes in 2017

Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
SGD 61 mil (USD 44.8 mil)

Community Improvement Projects Committee
SGD 37 mil (USD 27.2 mil)

Top 3 Priorities Among Citizens
Job Security, Healthcare and Housing

2
RESEARCH PROCESS

For this study, a joint research team was formed, comprising members from the Seoul Institute (SI) as well as Singapore's Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC), Housing and Development Board (HDB), People's Association (PA), Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) Office for Citizen Engagement and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). The team visited case-study locations in Singapore in December 2016 and in Seoul in February 2017. The research team members held in-depth discussions with city planners and officials, local activists and community representatives involved in the respective programmes, and interviewed key policymakers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community volunteers. These interactions yielded valuable insights and enhanced the comprehensiveness of the research findings.

On 7 December 2016 in Singapore, the research team held a roundtable discussion with domain experts, planners and policy-makers to deepen Seoul's and Singapore's understanding of each other's approaches to engaging communities in urban planning and development processes.

Roundtable discussions between Seoul Institute researchers and participants from agencies, academia and NGOs in Singapore (left).

Salient questions raised at the roundtable included:

What local governance structures support and facilitate community planning processes in both cities?

Singapore participants noted that Seoul has developed a clear and structured process for community engagement in planning. In particular, intermediary support centres in Seoul, aimed at addressing local community needs in an integrated manner, helped to facilitate and support community participation processes. While there is room for Singapore to consider setting up similar organisations, SI researchers appreciated Singapore's systematic community outreach framework within the government, (such as the PA network) which is supported by many passionate volunteers.

How are citizens represented in the local community organisations in both cities?

Most of the key roles in community planning committees in Seoul are to be taken up by residents, with public servants participating as "Community Officers." These Community Officers help organise community activities and set up the engagement processes, while resident leaders rally the residents.

In Singapore, neighbourhood-level community organisations such as Residents' Committees Centres (RCs) provide an avenue for residents to get involved. RCs are managed by volunteer residents and work closely with other grassroots organisations like the Citizens' Consultative Committees and various government agencies to improve the physical environment and safety of their respective precincts.

Are lengthy public engagement processes worth the time and effort?

The impact of lengthy public engagement processes on project development schedules is a key concern for Singapore agencies. Singapore participants also noted that it may be difficult to get people on board for a more in-depth and active engagement process, due to the lengthy time frame.

SI researchers explained that while engagement processes in Seoul can take longer, the entire process—from planning to implementation—has in fact become much shorter. In the past, problems with stakeholders during the implementation phase resulted in delays, even though less time was spent on the planning process. With active public engagement built into the process of the project, potential problems can be addressed together with the community early on, resulting in smoother implementation.

Roundtable discussion (above) and presentation by Seoul Institute researchers (below) on community planning and rejuvenation experiences.

3
URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Good planning can help city leaders effect constructive change. Traditionally, urban development in both Seoul and Singapore has been determined by statutory land use plans and led by various government agencies and departments. Nevertheless, there are fundamental differences. Over 70% of the land in Singapore is government-owned, giving public agencies greater leeway in carrying out the planning and development of infrastructure based on comprehensive urban plans. In Seoul, over half of the land supply resides in private hands. This requires that the government

bring private landowners and developers on board, through various programmes and processes, to realise urban development goals.

More recently, citizens have come to play an increasingly vital role in the urban planning process in both cities. This section outlines the urban planning frameworks in both Seoul and Singapore, and examines how each city's distinctive urban planning and development approach incorporates the views and aspirations of their respective public.

Community participation workshop in Singapore (left).

URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Urban Planning in Seoul

Seoul's urban planning framework is structured both vertically and horizontally. At the top of the hierarchy, national and regional development priorities inform the urban master plan. The urban master plan then guides urban management plans, and in turn, detailed district plans and individual developments downstream. This is complemented by a horizontal layer of domain-based technical plans and statutory guidelines, developed in accordance with relevant laws (e.g., for sectors such as transportation, residential environment improvement, green spaces, parks, and environmental management).

Brief History of Urban Planning in Seoul

Seoul's first modern urban plan was drafted in 1952 to guide reconstruction in the aftermath of the Korean War. The master plans became statutory in 1981, with a mandatory review conducted every five years. The national government considered the development of Seoul a priority, and held final approval authority on urban plans for the city. For decades, urban planning for Seoul has been focused on accommodating its burgeoning urban population and facilitating economic development.

The city government focused on investing in key urban infrastructure, including roads, bridges and subways. However, due to limited public finances, Seoul relied mainly on private capital to finance most of the urban development. Private developments were guided by the government at both national and city levels: the city government designated special project zones and engaged the private sector to develop the land, while the national government established a robust institutional framework as well as guidelines to coordinate development. This unique system of public-private partnership in urban development resulted in rapid improvement in residential environments, as well as the creation of a modern transport network, within a span of four decades.

In February 2009, authority for final approval of the master plan was transferred from the national government to the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG). This empowered the elected mayor of Seoul to incorporate the city administration's priorities and vision in its urban plan. Delegating authority to the city level has also allowed Seoul's planning process to be more responsive to its citizens' needs.

Limitations of Previous Master Plans

Despite incremental improvements over the years, the planning framework before Seoul Plan 2030 had limitations. The previous master plan, Seoul Plan 2020, had been established by the SMG's Urban Planning Bureau. Prepared with limited collaboration amongst different departments, the 2020 plan was not widely adopted even within the SMG. It failed to account for rapid social change in Seoul, as issues such as low growth rates, low birth rates and an ageing population were emerging. Most critically, the 2020 plan was regarded as having been created by planners, for planners. Only urban planners, academics and city officials had been involved in its development, with little scope to include citizens' views. Lacking support from both the public and within government, the 2020 plan was generally regarded as ineffective.

Evolution of Seoul Master Plans
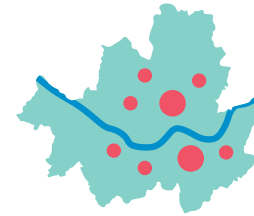
	2001 Plan	**2011 Plan**	**2020 Plan**
Approval Year	Approved in 1990. First statutory city master plan.	Revision of 2001 Plan in 1997, as previous plan was insufficient to accommodate changes in urban development.	Approved in 2006.
Population Target	12 million by 2001.	12 million by 2011.	9.8 million by 2020—the first statutory master plan to consider the decreasing population and demographic changes.
Planning Approach and Objectives	Information and knowledge industries, and cultural and leisure facilities. More balanced development of the Gangnam and Gangbuk areas with a multi-nodal urban structure to distribute activities throughout the city.	Bottom-up approach by incorporating the *gu* master plans developed for 25 local districts. Incorporated adjacent cities and counties in land-use and transport planning. Placed greater emphasis on management and operation, as compared to traditional focus on physical infrastructure.	Focus on new agenda post-1997 Asian Financial Crisis: Information technologies, social integration and reunification with North Korea. City divided into five greater regions and proposed planning directions for balanced regional development. Policy indicators to ensure that the planning goals for each region are met.

Seoul's Urban Planning Framework

National Plan		Metropolitan City-Region Planning	National Territorial Plan, Capital Region Readjustment Plan, etc.	**Urban Planning Domain**	**Community Empowerment Domain**
City Master Plan	Goal 20 years / Modify 5 years	Urban Master Plan	Seoul Plan 2030		
			Local Community Planning		Dong-Level Community Planning
Management Plan	Goal 10 years / Modify 5 years	Urban Management Plan	Sectoral Plan (Statutory)		
		Zoning Plan / Urban Infrastructure Plan / Urban Redevelopment Plan / District Unit Plan	Park / Housing	Transport / Regeneration	Vibrant Community Center
			Residential Environment Management Master Plan	Urban Regeneration Strategy Plan	Community Ownership
Implementation Plan		Gyeongui Line Forest Park	Residential Environment Management Project	Urban Regeneration Activation Plan	

Seoul Plan 2030: Fresh Emphasis on Citizen Involvement and Local Planning

In November 2011, Mayor Park Won Soon was elected by popular vote. Tasked with completing the next master plan for Seoul, Park asked city officials to focus on three areas in drafting the Seoul Plan 2030, namely: citizen engagement; values for the future, such as sharing, innovation, peaceful co-existence, and consensus; and local features and communities.

Taking direction from Mayor Park, the SMG adopted a number of principles in their planning approach. These included establishing a transparent and collaborative planning process that involved both citizens and experts; improving coordination by using the Seoul Plan as an overarching plan to coordinate other subsidiary plans and policies; developing details that addressed everyday needs; and grounding the master plan with detailed local neighbourhood and city centre plans, thereby making the plan more relatable and less abstract.

Screenshot from Official Seoul Plan 2030 Website.

Setting the Direction and Framework: The Advisory Group

The Seoul Plan 2030 process began with establishing an advisory group of 33 experts from academia as well as civic groups. These were managed by a preparation committee comprising the Seoul Institute and SMG officials. With top SMG decision makers closely involved, the advisory group set the direction that the master plan should take and determined the make-up and operation of citizen participants for the planning process. The committee also determined the role that the advisory group would play, and the social values to be incorporated in the plan. The SMG's Planning and Coordination Department which held greater authority than other departments, played a leading role ensuring close collaboration during the planning process between different divisions beyond the Urban Planning Bureau.

Involving Citizens in Planning: The Citizen Group

In August 2012, a 100-member Seoul Plan Citizen Group was set up to determine the future vision for Seoul. In the past, convening such groups by application tended to result in different interest groups sending representatives to champion their agendas. For the Seoul Plan 2030, Citizen Group members were randomly selected by a professional research consulting firm. This was to ensure that participants had no attachment to specific interests. Membership was intentionally balanced across gender, age, region of residence and occupation, and included minorities, persons with disabilities and foreign nationals.

The younger generation, on whom the city's long term vision would have the most significant impact, was represented by a 16-member Youth Group. This was established as a separate entity, so that their ideas would not be influenced by adults in the main Citizen Group.

Public Outreach Programmes to Initiate Development

The preparation committee also organised a series of public outreach programmes, encouraging citizens to express their opinions through the Seoul Plan website, citizens surveys, and a public debate.

The Seoul Plan Debate

A debate was held in 2012 to promote Seoul Plan 2030. It featured presentations by experts on a variety of issues related to urban planning. To seek consensus and buy-in, the debate was open to the general public as well as to the Citizen Group.

Citizen Surveys

To capture the most pressing citizen concerns in greater detail, two surveys were conducted in 2009 (1,500 respondents) and 2012 (1,000 respondents). The results were disclosed to the Citizen Group and helped shape the city's plans and vision.

Urban Challenges and Issues

The SMG organised numerous roundtable discussions involving the Citizen Group and Youth Group, facilitated by experts appointed by the SMG. Through these discussions, the Citizen Group identified 11 challenges confronting Seoul's future, and these were further distilled into seven key issues. The Youth Group also raised seven concerns they deemed critical to the future of Seoul.

Through this process, the Citizen Group also developed a vision statement for Seoul Plan 2030, which was subsequently endorsed by Seoul's mayor: "A happy city of citizens built on communication and understanding."

Citizen Group identifying the city's visions and challenges.

From Vision to Planning:
A Collaborative Approach

To delve further into the key issues raised, a Development Committee for Seoul Plan 2030 was established, with five thematic subcommittees: *Welfare, education and women; Industry and jobs; History and culture; Environment, energy and safety; Urban space, transport improvement.*

Each subcommittee consisted of 20 to 30 recruited persons, including citizen participants, city councillors, planning experts, civil servants and researchers from the Seoul Institute. The involvement of the councillors was highly significant: it signalled the city's emphasis on the voice of the people, whom they represented.

The planning process was coordinated and integrated by a supervisory subcommittee, comprising the chief master planner, five master planners from each subcommittee, city councillors, the heads of the Planning and Coordination Department and the Urban Planning Bureau, and researchers from the Seoul Institute.

Chief Master Planner and Subcommittee Master Planners
Supervise the overall planning process.

SMG Officials
Review mid and long term plans under their jurisdiction in association with the Seoul Plan 2030.

Experts from Academia, Civic Organisations and the Seoul Institute
Provide directions for planning, preparation of draft plans.

Roles and Responsibilities of Seoul Plan 2030 Stakeholders

City Councillors
Express citizens' opinions on planning matters.
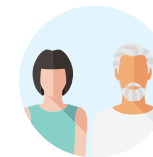
Citizen Participants
Present insights of key groups of the population: senior citizens, persons with disabilities, women, workers, entrepreneurs and youth.

Seoul Plan 2030 subcommittees

Seven Planning Tasks

Character education and lowering the cost of education.

Welfare for the disadvantaged such as youth, children and elders.

Jobs for youth and elders; support for small creative enterprises.

Communication with citizens.

Conservation of historical and cultural resources and landscape.

Response to climate change and conservation of the environment.

Practical, viable urban regeneration; small-scale improvements.

Five Key Issues Subcommittee

Welfare, education and women.

Industry and jobs.

History and culture.

Environment, energy and safety.

Urban space, transport and improvement.

The Seoul Plan 2030 process actively engaged all SMG divisions. Each subcommittee was connected to relevant SMG agencies, with access to the main SMG departments that would oversee its area. For each key issue, the subcommittees produced detailed goals and strategies.

To reach consensus, all subcommittee draft plans were integrated through a series of general meetings involving some 100 subcommittee members. Overlaps in goals and strategies were reviewed and rationalised. Citizen Group members who had helped develop the vision were invited to one of the general meetings, to contribute further on key issues and goals.

In September 2013 the final draft of the plan was presented to the mayor of Seoul.

Key Issues and Goals

Welfare, Education and Women
- Develop a welfare system prepared for a super-aged society.
- Create an environment where citizens lead a healthy life.
- Build a social system that helps eradicate polarisation and discrimination.
- Design an education system that offers lifelong learning opportunities.
- Promote gender equality and social care.

Industry and Jobs
- Recognition as a global economic city built on creativity and innovation.
- Promote shared growth between economic entities and mutual development in the region.
- Promote economic vibrancy with an emphasis on people and jobs.

History and Culture
- Create a city of living history.
- Manage an urban landscape embraced by the population.
- Create a diverse urban culture enjoyed by all.

Environment, Energy and Safety
- Build an eco-friendly city of parks.
- Build an energy-efficient city.
- Create a safe city where everybody looks out for each other.
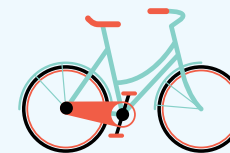
Urban Space, Transport and Improvement
- Promote urban restoration with an emphasis on the balance between home and work.
- Create a green transportation environment where the dependence on cars is minimal.
- Provide more residential spaces where people have stability coupled with a wide range of choice.

Conclusion: A Citizen-Led Process Facilitated by Top-Level Commitment

The Seoul Plan 2030 was the first master plan to directly involve ordinary citizens in identifying challenges for the city and developing its vision for the future. As such, the city did not have a clear initial idea of what citizen engagement entailed.

The success of the Seoul Plan 2030 process was made possible by a high level of commitment to citizen involvement, from both the mayor and the SMG. This helped strengthen the framework for collaboration in the new planning process. To allay concerns about the unprecedented scale of citizen participation in the planning process, city officials and expert advisers had planned for different scenarios, discussing factors such as the scale and means of citizen involvement well in advance.

From the onset, the planning process was designed with citizen involvement as a priority. Experts leading the process agreed that it was important at the beginning to keep an open mind: to focus on creating a new system, and to establish a culture of engaging citizens and thinking from their perspectives, rather than to adopt what is administratively convenient.

Laying the Framework for Closer Coordination with Local Level Plans

Although the Seoul Plan 2030 reached and engaged citizens to an unprecedented degree, the city-level master plan was limited in incorporating public views at the neighbourhood level.

Nevertheless, the Seoul Plan 2030 has paved the way for subsequent local planning programmes. Two workshops have been held for citizen representatives and officials from corresponding *gu*-district governments to identify regional/district agendas, issues, and improvements. Outcomes from the workshops have been reflected in subsequent community/neighbourhood level plans for each of the sub-areas within Seoul. These have helped ensure that the needs and priorities of residents at the local level are addressed in the overall urban planning process.

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INTERVIEW WITH

INHEE KIM
Senior Research Fellow, the Seoul Institute

What are the characteristics of citizen involvement in the Seoul Plan 2030?

Citizens were directly involved in conversations and decisions regarding Seoul's future vision through a deliberative discussion method. Deliberative discussion is a negotiation process through which stakeholders participate in in-depth discussions and deliberations to examine and adjust their opinions. This method was introduced to compensate for the shortcomings of indirect participation, such as surveys, majority votes and selecting from given alternatives.

Citizens were empowered to make decisions on Seoul's future vision and key issues. In this process, experts limited their roles to providing future forecasts, statistics, as well as outlining the pros and cons of different issues in order to assist citizens in making better-informed decisions. In preparing the Seoul Plan 2030, all participants were empowered to propose ideas for the future vision of Seoul and identify key issues, finally reaching a mutual consensus on these matters. For effective citizen involvement, the number of participants was limited to 100 persons.

Participants were asked to settle their conflicts of interest on their own. Ten groups comprising ten people each identified future visions and issues. Their results were discussed and consensus was reached by the whole group. In cases where conflict arose because of differences on factual grounds, experts provided the necessary information and explanations to help resolve the issue.

The SMG did not try to control or mediate the outcome of discussions. This was consistent with the city's public goals, in which the decision-making right given to citizens would be highly respected. City officials were only allowed to provide information and materials about the government's policy directions and objectives. Initially, most citizens were critical of the municipal government's policies. However, after numerous policy workshops and discussions, participants came to understand the city's policies. They began to adopt a more positive attitude by suggesting alternatives instead of merely criticising the government.

What elements contributed to the success of Seoul Plan 2030's citizen involvement process?

The Seoul Plan 2030 was created with active citizen involvement in mind, because there was high social demand and the mayor's commitment was strong. The process, which took more than two years, was not an easy one. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of more than 400 participants—citizens, experts, and SMG officials—the plan came to fruition.

One of the reasons citizen involvement in the Seoul Plan 2030 process was successful was that each stakeholder benefitted from the process. Citizens felt rewarded for contributing to the development of their own hometown. The SMG had confidence that the Seoul Plan 2030 would succeed as a feasible master plan. Experts had an opportunity to be part of a new initiative to involve citizens in a policy-making process.

The decision for the SMG to play a supporting role, not a leading one, was a strategic move that paid off well. If the SMG had tried to lead the initiative, it would not have achieved the same level of success. For citizen involvement, it is important to reconcile citizens' opinions with the SMG's policy directions in an objective way, and by forming a social consensus. The Seoul Institute, an independent research institute, was an appropriate choice for the task of bridging between the SMG and the citizens. If the SMG had been the coordinator, citizens might have doubted the intentions and sincerity of the initiative. Indeed, when the SMG explained its policies to help citizens make an informed decision, some were concerned that the city government was attempting to manipulate their opinions.

Despite the success of the engagement process thus far, improvements can still be made. First, the Citizen Group should be expanded beyond its limit of 100-persons to better represent the entire city's population. Second, as a result of citizen participation, the urban master plan—which is a long-term plan—has inclined toward more short-term agendas. This needs to be addressed in the future. Third, the supporting role of experts in providing consultation and information needs to be enhanced.

What benefits did involving citizens in the Seoul Plan bring?

One of the greatest benefits is that citizens are now more interested in the Urban Master Plan. Citizen opinion on the future of Seoul will be reflected in the revision of the Seoul Plan 2030. Having seen how their own proposals can be reflected in the plan and implemented in reality, citizens will strive to come up with even better ideas.

Before the Seoul Plan 2030, urban master plans were frequently scrapped and re-established when a new mayor took office. While plans need to be flexible in response to external change, it is undesirable for high-level

statutory provisions to be easily modified without popular consent. Given the high degree of citizen involvement, such modifications are unlikely, and thus the Seoul Plan 2030 is a model example of an urban master plan that combines flexibility with sustainability.

Seoul is known for its sophisticated use of data analytics in urban management. Can citizen involvement be substituted through the use of technology to improve planning processes and outcomes?

While the government encourages direct citizen participation and the use of advanced information and communications technology equally, promoting direct citizen participation was prioritised over the use of technology in the Seoul Plan 2030.

Urban master plans before the Seoul Plan 2030 had been established with the help of various technologies such as surveys, statistical data analysis and predictive modelling techniques. However, they failed to be implemented or did not gain social consensus, leading some to regard urban master plans as ineffective. Therefore, in the Seoul Plan 2030, the focus was on obtaining public consensus and to ensure that the plans were feasible.

One concern however remains: whether a citizen group of 100 individuals can represent the 10 million citizens of Seoul. The SMG needs to continually garner opinions through various channels and build consensus. Starting next year, the SMG will revise the Seoul Plan 2030 by utilising big data and cutting-edge technology to improve its data analysis processes and enhance methods of direct citizen participation.

Urban Planning in Singapore

Urban planning in land-scarce Singapore is carried out by the national government. This ensures that limited land within the city state is sustainably developed, and competing development needs are coordinated over the long term. A national urban policy document, the Concept Plan, brings together pertinent policies and programmes across various public agencies. A more detailed Master Plan provides statutory planning guidelines.

Translating Vision to Reality: Concept Plan and Master Plan

The Concept Plan is coordinated by the Ministry of National Development and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the national authority for land-use planning. It establishes the long-term vision and broad strategies for land use and transport for the next 40 to 50 years of development. The first Concept Plan, completed in 1971, guided development of new towns, transport infrastructure and other aspects of urban development while safeguarding long term land use needs. The Concept Plan is reviewed every ten years to address changes in social and economic needs, with mid-term reviews being carried out when necessary.

Broad long-term strategies from the Concept Plan are translated into more detailed plans for implementation in the Master Plan. The Master Plan, in turn, guides development over the next 10 to 15 years. Introduced in 1958, the Master Plan is a statutory plan that stipulates the permissible land use and development parameters on every plot of

land in Singapore. The URA reviews the Master Plan every five years.

To implement the Master Plan, the URA ensures that all developments—public and private—are carried out in accordance with prescribed parameters. These parameters are regulated by the Planning Act and are incorporated into government land sales conditions which private developers have to comply with when developing sites obtained through government land sales. The Master Plan also details urban design and development control guidelines (as illustrated in the diagram on the right).

Extensive public ownership of land in Singapore means that the government can realise planning intentions by leveraging a combination of public infrastructure, public developments and government land sales to the private sector. The Master Plan provides the framework for public agencies to develop infrastructure within their areas of responsibilities. Each agency develops their own detailed implementation plans for approval by URA.

Singapore Concept Plans

1971

First concept plan, drawn up with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme.

Population Parameter: 3.4 million by 1992.

Adopted a "Ring Plan" structure which organised high density satellite towns around a central catchment area.
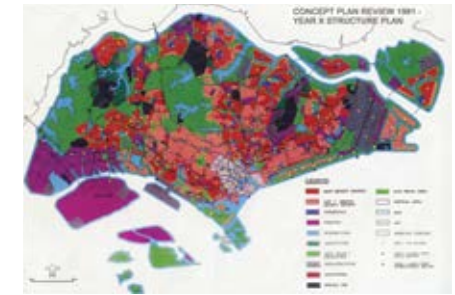
1991

Population Parameter: 3.66 million by 2030 and 4 million by Year X.

Decentralisation strategy to create a heirarchy of commercial centres, ranging from regional, sub-regional and fringe centres.

Technological corridors to promote innovation.

2001

Population Parameter: 5.5 million by 2041 – 2051.

Providing a high quality living environment.

Transforming Singapore into a global financial hub.

Creating a distinctive city of rich heritage, character, diversity and identity.

Reaching out to the public through extensive public consultation.
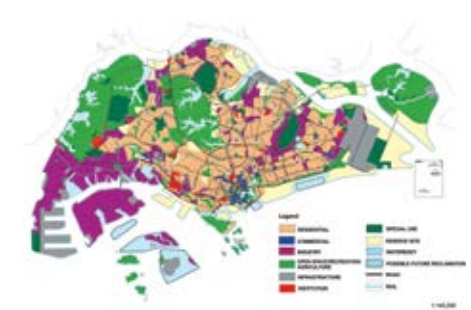
2011

Population Parameter: 6.5 – 6.9 million by 2030 as per the MND Land Use Plan released in 2013.

Providing good affordable homes.

Integrating greenery into the living environment.

Enhancing transport connectivity.

Sustaining a vibrant economy.

Ensuring room for growth and a good living environment in the future.

Equivalent Plans in Singapore and Seoul

SINGAPORE	SEOUL
Concept Plan Maps out strategic vision over the next 40 to 50 years	**Urban Comprehensive Plan (Seoul 2030 Plan)**
Master Plan Guides development over the next 10 to 15 years	**Urban Management Plan**
Detailed Urban Design Plans for Key Areas	

Local Community Plan
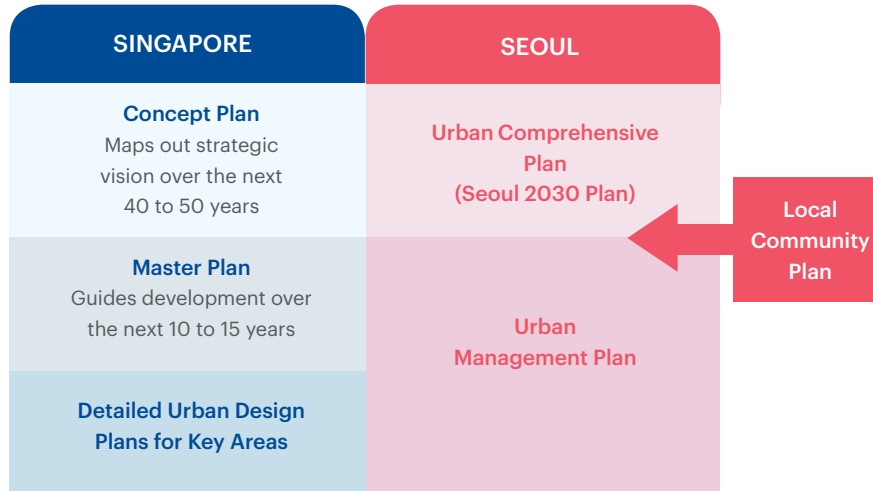
Roles and Responsibilities of Agencies in Singapore

Singapore Land Authority (SLA) manages and optimises state land resources.

Land Transport Authority (LTA) plans, operates and maintains land transport infrastructure and systems.

Housing and Development Board (HDB) plans and develops housing estates.

JTC Corporation develops industrial infrastructure.

National Parks Board (NParks) provides and enhances greenery.

Public Utilities Board (PUB) manages our water supply system.

Public consultation held for Concept Plan 2001.

Public Engagement for Planning Processes in Singapore

Concept Plan

Since the first Concept Plan in 1971, the preparation of Concept Plans in Singapore has largely been carried out within government. The Concept Plan 2001 development exercise, however, included a public consultation process for the first time. To make better-informed strategic planning decisions, the Ministry of National Development (MND) convened two focus groups in late 2000, comprising professionals, interest groups, industrialists, businessmen, academics, grassroots volunteers and students. The focus groups examined two planning dilemmas: (i) balancing scarce land resources among the competing land uses of housing, parks and industries, and (ii) retaining identity in the context of intensive land use. Government agencies conducted briefings and site visits for participants to better understand the issues discussed.

As part of engagement efforts, a public forum was organised in December 2000 to discuss interim proposals before the submission of the final report. The draft Concept Plan, incorporating public views, was then exhibited from 28 April to 11 May 2001, attracting over 2,000 people to view the exhibition.

One of the key outcomes of public engagement efforts in the 2001 draft Concept Plan exercise was the preservation of a biodiversity-rich, coastal wetland area, Chek Jawa, which had previously been slated for reclamation works in the draft Concept Plan. Civil society groups, in particular the Nature Society of Singapore, petitioned the authorities to retain Chek Jawa in its natural state, and backed their proposal with scientific evidence. Following open public discussions and activities such as guided walks by the Nature Society to spread public awareness and interest on Chek Jawa, the MND announced in January 2002 that the planned reclamation works would be put off for as long as the area was not required for development.

Concept Plan 2001:
Process of Consulting the Public

Strategic Review
Dec 1999 to Aug 2000

Focus Groups
Aug 2000 to Nov 2001

Public Forum
8 Dec 2000

Draft Concept Plan Exhibition
28 April to 11 May 2001

Public Dialogue
11 May 2001

Final Concept Plan
Released July 2001

Since the Concept Plan 2001, public consultation has been expanded to include feedback through other channels such as lifestyle surveys, focus group discussions, public exhibitions, forums and Internet platforms. These public views are considered in the final endorsed plans.

Master Plan

The first Master Plan in 1958 was exhibited to the public for a six-week period. Objections and representations received from the public were taken into consideration, following which the plans were prepared by the planning authority. Public participation was limited to formal submissions of objection to the plans.

Until the 1980s, the Master Plans lacked the granularity of detail to clarify what developments were permitted for each parcel of land. Private sector development applications were assessed on the basis of detailed plans prepared internally by the authorities to provide firmer guidance on acceptable densities, development forms and building heights. These detailed plans were not publicly available, so it was often difficult

for the private sector or the public to know the intended use of a parcel of land without formal application to the authorities.

A more open and transparent urban planning framework began to be adopted in the 1990s. Development Guide Plans (DGPs) were introduced, translating the broad intentions of the Concept Plan into detailed local plans that clarified the type of developments allowable for each site. Planners divided Singapore island into five regions (north, north-east, west, central, east) and 55 planning areas, with a DGP for each of these areas.

The preparation of these DGPs also saw Singapore's urban planning process adopting a more proactive approach to public consultation. Selected DGPs were publicly exhibited, with feedback sessions conducted with local stakeholders. Through such dialogue sessions, the public could share their views directly with the Minister for National Development and key planning officials. This made Singapore's urban planning intentions more transparent and accessible to the public.

Private sector consultants were engaged to develop alternative schemes for selected areas such as Jurong East and Kampong Bugis—a significant feature of the DGP process. These private sector planning teams were required to present their proposals to the public for feedback. Suitable elements of these proposals were then incorporated into the final master plans for each area. This collaborative approach between the planning authorities and the private sector represents a paradigm shift from earlier planning processes, when professionals, the public and other stakeholders could only comment on or oppose plans that had already been finalised and endorsed by the government.

The DGPs which were completed by 1998, formed the overall Master Plan 1998, which was gazetted on 22 January 1999. To anchor public engagement as an integral part of the review and preparation of key urban plans,

new statutory requirements were introduced, stipulating that the Draft Master Plan, with all proposed amendments, is to be exhibited for public feedback for a minimum of two weeks before being gazetted.

Subsequent Master Plan reviews in 2003 and 2008 continued the efforts to be more transparent and consultative in forward planning. For the 2008 Master Plan, a series of stakeholder dialogues were included in the process of planning for key growth areas such as Jurong Lake District and Paya Lebar Central. Detailed land-use plans were drawn up for each of Singapore's five planning regions, instead of the previous 55 DGPs.

55 planning areas in Singapore.

Public Engagement for Infrastructure Projects and Programmes

Besides engagement at the broader stages of urban planning, Singapore's planning agencies also engage with the public over specific infrastructure projects and programmes. For instance, URA has sought to solicit more feedback and ideas on the Rail Corridor project, working with the community to shape future plans for the former railway land (see Page 125). Similarly, the Land Transport Authority, which oversees land transport infrastructure, conducted public consultations in 2012 in preparation for their 2013 Land Transport Master Plan. The Housing and Development Board, which is in charge of public housing developments that house more than 80% of residents in Singapore, incorporates public engagement processes into its various upgrading programmes to rejuvenate mature public housing estates and towns.

Conclusion: Balancing Strategic Planning with Community Needs

"Planning requires a very strategic and long-term view, for example, you would have to decide where the regional centre and main transportation networks are. These things need to be determined by macro planning, and generally, by the government. But as the planning becomes more layered and detailed, there is room for participation by everyone.

So in the design of a building or the surrounds of an estate, the community should have a bigger say, with government playing a more facilitative role. So it is an inverse relationship. The government will be involved at the macro level but as we come down the tiers, we

welcome participation and ideas from the community and private sector."

Dr Cheong Koon Hean,
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) HDB,
and former CEO URA

Sound urban planning is of fundamental importance to Singapore. It ensures that multiple developmental needs can be sustained in the long term, within the physical confines of a land-scarce city-state. While city-level planning processes—which include the Concept Plan and Master Plan— have gradually involved the community over the years, these processes are generally still led by the government. This allows complex trade-offs to be assessed and strategic decisions to be made, in order to achieve optimal economic, social and environmental outcomes for the city as a whole.

Nevertheless, through the DGP process of the 1990s and other engagement initiatives by government agencies, opportunities for community participation in planning and development processes have been increasing over the years. The maturing of Singapore's civil society has also yielded more informed and constructive input from the people, with a positive impact on urban plans. The case studies featured in subsequent chapters will discuss Singapore's efforts in these areas, and examine how the engagement processes benefit both planning and development outcomes.

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INTERVIEW WITH

YAM AH MEE
Former CEO, Land Transport Authority, Singapore

On enhancing LTA's organisational culture

When I first joined LTA as Chief Executive (CE), I felt it was very important to first get a sense of the people. After interviewing many of them, I concluded that LTA as an organisation was strong in professional expertise and competence, but the innovative spirit of its people seem constrained by a top-down, command-and-control structure.

If we really want to make transport that benefits people and the community, it is important to optimise the organisation in a way that innovative ideas can be harnessed and the expertise and capabilities of staff can be tapped.

First, I expanded the number of higher management positions, allowing young and capable officers to take up more responsibilities and bring in fresh ideas.

Second, we used the corporate management meeting (CMM) as a mechanism not just to make decisions, but also to discuss ideas. This encouraged consultation, rather than a more rigid command-and-control culture.

Third, I introduced a minimum three-level communication process. I noticed that good ideas may be lost in one-to-one conversations—which tend to be the most common form of communication in a top-down structure. So I made it a point that discussions have to involve a minimum of three levels. I see CE and DCEs (deputy chief executives) as one level, group directors as another, and directors and deputy directors as a third.

On engaging the wider public

We changed our engagement approach with the public. We decided that we shouldn't be calling ourselves a "world-class land transport system." Instead, when we drafted the new Land Transport Master Plan, we

conceptualised a new LTA motto: to be a people-centred land transport system.

From the onset, we were very clear that we cannot create a Master Plan purely by ourselves. Nor should we fall back on top-down consultation, where we tell the public what we want to do and hear only what we want to hear. We knew that if we wanted to increase the use of public transport, we had to know what it takes to get people to travel on public transport. We had to co-create the way forward.

One of our first challenges was the public sentiment that feedback to LTA falls into a black hole. Over two years, we sought comments and ideas from members of the public, as well as transport policy experts, community leaders and partners. By conducting dedicated sessions on different aspects of land transportation—such as cycling, buses, fares—we were able to cover every element of the master plan.

By engaging with people over many weeknights, we put a face to the agency. Those who wrote in with suggestions and comments were invariably those who had volunteered to attend the evening consultation groups. As the engagement continued, they came to understand the bigger picture, and realised that while LTA was open to feedback and co-creation, there were often competing ideas from others that were equally good, and that LTA was collating all of them. It made them realise that "Oh, things are being addressed".

I also strengthened LTA's Communications Department, to have it become a separate department reporting directly to the CE., instead of being a small unit.

The Land Transport Master Plan itself is the outcome of consultation and co-creation. We set up the Land Transport Community Partnership Division to make sure no black-hole situation would arise again, to continue engagement with stakeholders and the community, and to make sure we stay responsive as we roll out new transport infrastructure, bus-route changes, embark on MRT (mass rapid transit) construction, and so on.

Of course, we also engaged with key external partners such as the designers and contractors. For this group of people, we held charity events and activities, such as fund-raising golf days. Even at a golf game, new ideas may come up in discussion, and you are still co-creating. The aim is to keep engaging with people.

On making constructive use of feedback

When we engage with people, a lot of feedback comes through. We have to look at these differently, based on the objectives we are considering and the challenges we face. Once our aims are clearly articulated and the challenges well defined, we can then group suggestions and feedback into various categories: "very useful", "perhaps useful in the future", "benefitting only a narrow group", "not applicable", and so on. We can then compare these ideas against our objectives and challenges and make use of them in our plans accordingly.

At times, we need to test certain things: some ideas warrant counter checking or pre-testing, and so these are brought up in subsequent discussions or during co-creation sessions.

So this is a systematic process to make sure consultation and co-creation serve a purpose. In our case, it is to have a people-centred land transport system that keeps their world moving. What we do must be useful for where people want to go.

4
LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

While planners are equipped with technical skills and knowledge, they often cannot fully address local contexts and complex urban issues by themselves. Local community organisations can help bridge the gap between professional planners and the community, creating better and more informed planning outcomes.

This section outlines the evolution and roles of local community organisations in Seoul and Singapore, as well as the provision of community infrastructure in each city. Seoul and Singapore both provide public amenities, community space and space for leisure activities. They also have established strong networks of local community organisations that provide a direct link between the city

government and the citizen. However, there are fundamental differences to the systems and approaches in both cities.

In Seoul, local community organisations are closely related to local governance structures. Provision of physical community spaces and amenities, however, consists of a combination of publicly-owned spaces and public support for privately-owned and run community establishments. In Singapore, the public housing town structure serves as the basis for a systematic hierarchy of community space provisions. Hence, community organisations are also closely tied into the town structure.

Local Community Planning in Seoul (left).

LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Seoul: From Institutionalised Structures to Community-Led Initiatives

South Korea is a unitary state with a system of local self-governance. Citizens elect the heads of the central government, city governments and local district (*gu*) governments. Seoul, the capital of Korea, is the largest city with a population of 10 million. The city has 25 *gu* Local District Governments (LDGs), each with an average population of 400,000. These LDGs are divided into *dongs*, the smallest public administrative unit. Heads of *dongs* are appointed by LDGs. There are 423 *dongs* in the city (an average of 17 per LDG), each with an average population of 23,000.

There are three types of local community organisations in Seoul—the resident governing body, resident organisations and grassroots units. The first type, the Resident Self-Governing Committee (RSGC), is a statutory organisation operated at the *dong* level. The Apartment Resident Committee (ARC) falls under the RSGC, and manages common living and facilities in an apartment complex. Grassroots units refer to spontaneous local communities and their networks at *gu* level.

Dong-Offices and Resident Self-Governing Committees (RSGC)

Dongs have undergone major changes under the central government's administrative reforms since 1995. In 1999, a new national policy introduced "*dong* offices" (responsible for administrative services and official resident affairs) and "resident centres" (to accommodate local community activities). In 2007, *dong* offices were restructured to strengthen social welfare delivery services.

The *dong* office administers official services for social welfare, culture and daily life, ranging from nurses making home visits to the disabled, to delivering meals to the elderly who live alone. Resident centres, on the other hand, handle non-governmental community activities. The provision of public services is hence separate from community development functions.

Current laws require *dong* offices to provide amenities and conveniences such

as day-care centres, facilities for seniors, and sports facilities, to allow the building to serve as a base for the local community. These amenities take up most of the floor area of *dong* offices, with only a small percentage—17.1%, or 232,358 square metres out of a total 1,357,989 square metres for all 423 *dong* offices—being used for administrative purposes.

In addition to these amenities, *dong* office buildings also house resident centres. By municipal law, resident centres offer a range of facilities and programmes to nurture the local capacity for self-governance, revitalise local communities and enhance local convenience and welfare. They provide residents with spaces such as multipurpose rooms, cultural classrooms for civic education, conference rooms and auditoriums, where community activities can take place.

While the head of a *dong* office oversees the operation of its respective resident centre, all decisions must be reviewed in advance by the RSGC. The committee is a formal and representative body that plans, decides and conducts various activities for self-governance and community development. RSGC members are residents appointed by the head of the *dong*, recommended by fellow residents, and/or publicly recruited. All 423 *dong* in Seoul have such committees; each consists of about 25 residents who actively participate in the management of their respective resident centres and also lead or participate in local activities such as special events, volunteer activities, neighbourhood clean-ups, and outreach during times of crisis.

Apartment Complexes and Their Resident Committees

In Seoul, 58.6% of all residential units are high-rise apartments. In one survey, 62.2%

of residents in an apartment complex regarded it as their neighbourhood. South Korea's Housing Act requires apartment complexes to be installed with community facilities, such as playgrounds, parks, book cafes and exercise facilities, in accordance with their size. All LDGs in Seoul have to comply with the 'Ordinance on Assistance for Multi-Family Housing', by providing financial assistance for the maintenance of community facilities that are five years or older. This policy means that the public sector shares responsibility for maintaining the private amenities and facilities that residents need.

An ARC manages shared living space on behalf of the residents of an apartment complex. Residents in each building elect their own representatives, who then elect a representative for the entire complex. ARCs organise resident festivities, volunteer programmes, resident hobby clubs and other community activities that promote a sense of community and generates social capital within the apartment complex.

Many ARCs fare well in handling day-to-day social issues such as floor noise, energy-saving drives, and issues with engagement of caretakers. As resident-governing bodies, however, ARCs are limited in their effectiveness. Most residents are not involved enough: a 2011 study indicated that 62% of apartment dwellers have never participated in any resident organisations or their activities. In addition, tenants have the right to select a building representative to make decisions regarding property rights, but cannot themselves serve as building representatives. This restriction poses some serious limitations for local community organisations.

Requirements for Provision of Community Amenities in Apartment Complexes

≥ 50 households
Playground

≥ 300 households
Childcare Facility

≥ 100 households
Neighbourhood Facilities, Senior Centres

≥ 300 households
Library

≥ 300 households
Common Facilities for Residents

≥ 2000 households
Kindergarten

≥ 500 households
Sports Facilities for Residents

Local Communities and Community Networks

As institutions created by the central government without taking into account the needs of communities on the ground, or the willingness of residents to participate, RSGCs and ARCs face serious limitations. In light of low resident involvement, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) took steps to make these community organisations more relevant; at the same time, it sought to support residents in forming their own communities.

Since 2012, SMG and 25 LDGs have run publicly-funded Local Community Support Programmes (LCSPs), aiming to increase citizen participation in community activities and strengthen the foundation of local communities. Each LCSP consists of a range of thematic sub-programmes (such as child care, culture, economy). Small resident groups are formed to prepare a comprehensive plan for implementation. To lower thresholds of participation, many sub-programmes were designed so that only three residents are needed to form a small group for conducting community activities.[1]

1   A recent Seoul Institute study found that some 4,987 small community groups, consisting of 128,743 residents, participated in LCSPs between 2012 to 2015.

The LCSP initiative established 240 residents-led community centres (in contrast to the resident centres created by the government). These served as important catalysts for creating vibrant local communities in each neighbourhood.

The LDGs also set up "community networks" to connect different community entities, and encourage free and open engagement between members of different communities. These networks involve spontaneous resident groups, grassroots organisations, institutionalised community units such as RSGCs and ARCs, cooperatives and social welfare centres, as well as architects, individuals and experts interested in the community within each *gu*.

The need for community networks was first raised by grassroots activists at a conference in 2011. In 2012, the 25 local *gu* districts held discussions to form local networks. This approach served two purposes: it enabled civic entities or individuals who had been active in community activities to take part in drafting and implementing SMG policies. It also provided a platform for competent entities to contribute more to the local community.

As of 2016, all 25 local districts have their own community networks that seek to meet each district's unique needs from economic well-being to social welfare. In the beginning, interested activists and organisations led the way; network membership was later opened to the general public, attracting residents and expert organisations. As each network grew and expanded over time, members gained community project experience, and the networks became important platforms for communicating and discussing community policies and agendas.

On 27 July 2016, the Association of Community Networks organised an SMG Policy Discussion on Community. It subsequently submitted a key proposal to reinforce the local district's intermediary support centre to Seoul's Mayor Park. More recently, community networks have expanded their scope, driving innovation in community policies at the local district level.

Conclusion: Revitalising Institutionalized Resident Units through Community Empowerment

While the RSGC and ARC—institutionalised community units introduced by the central government—provided residents with basic authority and resources for community activities across the nation, the top-down approach limited the ways in which residents were engaged and did not enable the building of robust communities.

Seoul has since shifted to a less rigid and less formal community-led approach so as to encourage participation and ensure that residents benefit more from community policies. This has meant building collaborative networks that extend beyond local communities in order to leverage on mutual strengths and generate greater impact by influencing SMG and LDG policies, which single individuals or communities cannot achieve. These community networks are now important partners for the city administration, providing innovative policy solutions tailored to each local community.

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INTERVIEW WITH

HYO-GWAN JEON
Director, Seoul Innovation Bureau, Seoul

Explain what the Seoul Innovation Bureau does.

When Won-Soon Park, a social designer and civic activist, took office as the Mayor of Seoul in October 2011, he established the Seoul Innovation Bureau to bring his experience with social innovation into government administration.

Reporting directly to the Mayor's office, the Seoul Innovation Bureau is at the forefront of establishing "governance" and "innovation" as the key thrusts for this administration. The Bureau nurtures a system for public-private cooperation in which citizens, experts and the administration collaborate to implement policies and resolve urban issues. It also supports innovative policies by identifying new projects and providing assistance to implement them.

The Bureau is the first of its kind in Seoul's public sector and organised into six divisions that oversee issues relating to: social innovation, public-private cooperation, local community, conflict resolution, youth, and human rights.

Why was the SMG so keen to promote community empowerment policies and collaborative governance?

When the Mayor first took office, the indicators showed that the quality of life for citizens was low: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data in 2012 ranked South Korea 32nd out of 34 countries in terms of quality of life. In 2010, more than half of Seoul's population surveyed did not trust their neighbours. In the same year, the number of people who committed suicide was one-and-a-half times higher than what it had been five years ago; the number of senior citizens living alone had doubled in eight years.

The SMG's primary means of enhancing citizens' well-being was reinforcing the welfare system. But welfare alone could not make up for weakened

social trust and cohesion. Community empowerment activities, however, could let citizens experience the joy of living together, take a greater interest in their local community and establish a network amongst neighbours, thereby benefitting everyone. This is why the SMG was so keen to encourage citizens to take part in such activities.

Where community empowerment activities are vibrant, citizens feel more closely-connected to the large social system in which they spend their day-to-day lives. They believe that they can make a difference. In order to help Seoul's 10 million citizens build happier lives, collaborative governance was a logical policy direction for the SMG.

How does the city support community empowerment activities and citizen involvement?

When the SMG began to promote community empowerment, there were concerns that it was just a propaganda campaign, similar to what they had experienced under the old authoritarian regime. The Mayor had to reiterate the key principle of the policy: that community empowerment would be led by citizens, with the administration playing a supporting role.

The SMG offered more details to encourage citizens to take up the initiative. It also started the Seoul Community Support Centre (SCSC)—an intermediary organisation staffed by private partners with professional expertise—to help nurture a system of collaborative governance between the public and private sectors.

What are the major achievements of the SMG's community empowerment policy? What are the success factors?

Seoul's local government leadership was convinced that social innovation arises when citizens are entrusted to lead, to take initiative and govern themselves. An important success factor was that citizens were provided not only with funding support but also other subtle forms of assistance from intermediary organisations. Eligibility requirements for programme subsidies were lowered, while funding given to participants was also reduced to one to three million Korean won. These adjustments allowed the resources to be distributed among more residents, to encourage an increase in the take up of community activities.

A 2015 study by the SCSC found the outcomes of these initiatives to be very positive. The SCSC conducted a survey among residents who benefitted from these initiatives. 82.6% expressed happiness, 87.6% felt a sense of community, and habitability had increased to 88.4%. (In 2016, overall habitability for all citizens in Seoul was only 59.4%.) Clearly, the community empowerment policy has been effective.

What impact have community empowerment and collaborative governance had on Seoul's urban policies?

In order to resolve local community issues, residents, who are at the heart of the matter, must engage voluntarily and participate in activities. Over the past five years, SMG support for community empowerment has laid a foundation for citizen involvement. Residents have built close-knit relationships amongst themselves and now drive problem-solving on their own.

Collaborative governance shows that when citizens and the community partner the administration, they can find solutions to complex urban issues. Civil servants learn from the experience of working together with citizens. Citizens are also able to better understand the city's policies, and increasingly take the lead in resolving local issues, instead of leaving them to the city government.

The SMG is now poised to work with citizens across the entire range of urban affairs. The city's 25 *gu* district governments are also working hard to create a collaborative system at the local level that will involve residents in all stages of decision-making, from identifying policy issues to implementation and evaluation.

—— Singapore: Public Housing Development and Community Building

Some 80% of Singapore residents live in public housing estates built by the Housing and Development Board (HDB). The structure of local community units in Singapore is hence closely related to the development, management and rejuvenation of HDB towns and estates.

HDB Planning—A Rational Approach to Building Communities

Since the establishment of the HDB in 1960, Singapore's towns have been planned on the basis of providing affordable housing for the masses, while creating a sense of community in an urban environment. As Dr Liu Thai Ker, former Chief Architect and Chief Executive Officer of HDB (1979–1989), explains:

> Our primary objective was to create good, liveable environments with a sense of community for our multicultural society, with facilities to fulfil daily needs, such as schools and shops that are linked by bus services, as well as job opportunities. And we had to keep our costs as low as possible to allow the maximum number of people to afford such housing.

Under Dr Liu, the HDB planned systematically for community needs, employing rigorous research to refine physical designs in support of community development. Each town was planned for a population of about 200,000 to 250,000, to ensure that amenities serving residents would be sustainable. Towns would

consist of neighbourhoods that encompassed 4,000 to 6,000 dwelling units each, situated within walking distance of a neighbourhood centre where there would be day-to-day amenities such as wet markets, eateries and provision shops. HDB neighbourhoods were also planned to be walkable in scale in order to promote familiarity among neighbours, and facilitate community development over time.

The prevailing British town planning theories of the 1960s to 1970s, when HDB towns were being constructed rapidly, stipulated the neighbourhood as the smallest basic planning unit. Dr Liu, however, felt that neighbourhoods were still too large a scale for people to meaningfully relate to each other. Further research conducted by HDB sociologists suggested that grouping 700 to 1,000 dwelling units would offer residents a better sense of community. HDB planners divided neighbourhoods into community-scaled precincts, anchored by activity nodes such as basketball courts and playgrounds. Such precinct-based planning facilitates casual daily interactions among residents and nurtures a sense of belonging to the community.

At the individual building level, HDB also took pains to introduce design features that promote neighbourly interaction. After consulting sociologists, HDB learnt that residents tended to relate meaningfully to only about seven or eight neighbours along the corridor of a typical residential apartment slab block. So HDB created the segmented corridor concept: they broke up long corridors into segments of seven to eight units each, with each segment served by a common stairway to promote neighbourly interaction. Another designed element was the void deck: empty public spaces on the ground floor of each apartment block, through which residents pass on their way home, meet each other and interact. Void decks have also served as spaces for important social and religious events, such as weddings and funerals. They have since become a distinctive feature of the Singaporean way of life.

In all, these planning and design norms provided the basis for development of HDB towns, most of which were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. In response to changing lifestyles and preferences, HDB experimented with fresh planning approaches for newer towns such as Punggol, while remaining true to the objective of community building in public estates.

Community Facilities and Organisations

The People's Association (PA), is a statutory board established on 1 July 1960 to promote racial harmony and social cohesion. It has a network of more than 1,800 grassroots organisations (GROs) with some 40,000 volunteers, and over 100 Community Clubs (CCs).

The network of GROs in the PA includes the Citizens' Consultative Committees (CCCs), CC Management Committee,

Residents' Committees (RCs), Neighbourhood Committees (NCs), Community Sports Clubs, Community Emergency and Engagement Committees, Malay and Indian Activity Executive Committees, Senior Citizens' Executive Committees, Women Executive Committees and Youth Executive Committees. These committees are run by volunteers who organise community events to foster greater social bonding and neighbourliness amongst residents. In addition, they also help to gather feedback and share Government policies with residents so that people can get the help they need.

In the early days, CCs were common spaces for people from different backgrounds to meet and interact through sports and educational activities. While the mission remains unchanged, CCs have now become vibrant community spaces located near transport nodes with high human traffic areas within the community. Many are today well equipped with modern facilities such as air-conditioned community halls, sheltered multi-purpose courts, dance and music studios, culinary studios and theatrettes. With the wide array of facilities and programmes, the CCs are able to offer different programmes which cater to the different needs and interests of diverse residents.

With modernisation and the move from kampongs to high-rise buildings, the Residents' Committees Centres (RCs) in public housing estates and Neighbourhood Committees (NCs) in private housing estates were introduced to retain some "*gotong royong*" spirit and to serve as direct touch points for residents. The RCs and NCs are run by residents, for residents, to promote neighbourliness and community bonding in their respective estates. These committees also work closely with government agencies and other community organisations to improve the living environment and public safety in their estates.

One of the examples of CCCs and RCs working together to improve the physical environment in HDB public housing estates, is the Community Improvement Projects Committee (CIPC), administrated by the Ministry of National Development. The CIPC carries out improvement projects in HDB estates, including covered walkways, footpaths and cycling tracks. CCCs and RCs

identify needs within the community by interacting with residents and then propose improvement projects, which in turns receives funding support from the CIPC.

More recently, PA worked with other government agencies and service providers and introduced the concept of town hub/ Community Hub, which provided a critical

Three-Tier Community Facility Cluster in HDB Towns
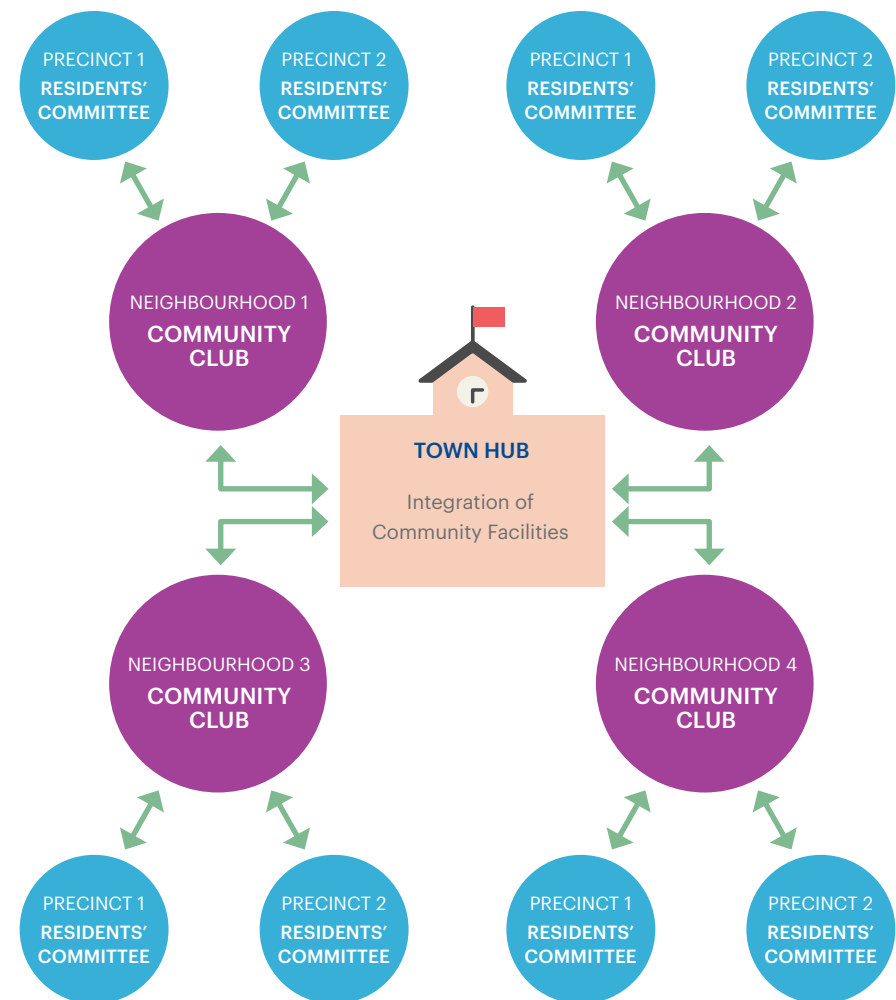
Functions of Town Councils

Primarily service and conservancy charges collected from residential households and commercial lessees/tenants.

An annual operating grant from the government (about 15% of the Council's total annual income).
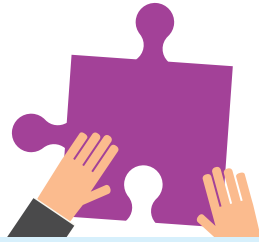
Implementation of local improvement projects funded by the government, such as Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.

Control, management, maintenance and improvement of the common areas of HDB residential and commercial properties.

mass of community facilities and services to serve an entire town. Such facilities may include sports, recreational, educational and other community assets. Our Tampines Hub is the first such town hub that was implemented (see Page 136). RCs/NCs, CCs, Town/Community Hubs form a three-tier community facility cluster.

Town Councils

In the early days of Singapore's housing estates, town development and management were undertaken directly by the HDB. This allowed the HDB, as developer, to continually improve on its planning standards and building designs, based on feedback from residents. However, this also gave rise to the impression that HDB estates were becoming too monotonous, and that Singaporeans had become passive observers in the development of their own towns.

In 1989, Town Councils were introduced to give residents a greater say in the management of HDB towns and estates, and to develop for themselves, the type of environment they prefer to live in. The towns' boundaries are defined according to the electoral boundaries, and the town councils are led by their respective elected Members of Parliament.

Generally, each town council shall consist of elected members who are elected Members of Parliament (MP) and appointed members or Councillors. The Town Council Chairman appoints Councillors to key positions in the Town Council; they are expected to direct the Council's policies. The Chairman must appoint not fewer than six councillors but not fewer than six but no more than 30 councillors or up to 10 town councillors per MP, whichever is greater. To capture a slice of the diverse views of the local community, at

least two-thirds of the appointed members have to be residents of the housing estate within the town.

However, as town councillors and committee members are part-time volunteers, the actual running of the town is undertaken by professional estate managers or a management team who are provided by managing agents appointed by Town Councils, or hired directly to administer the councils' affairs and carry out its duties.

Conclusion: Creating Greater Room for Citizen Participation

Singapore's extensive system of public housing development has resulted in a comprehensive network of community spaces, forming the backbone of local community organisations. However, centralised planning and development system, and public policy making in general created a situation where citizens tend to act as mere observers rather than actively participate in community initiatives.

In the late 1990s, a new vision of Singaporeans as "active citizens" was put forward by then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong. The vision was part of the recommendations proposed by the Singapore 21 committee, which aimed to strengthen the "heartware" of Singapore in the 21st century, to build a "greater social cohesion, sense of community, and national belonging among Singaporeans." Active citizens were envisioned as a "people" sector to complement the public and private sectors, by offering constructive feedback or

suggestions particularly for local community issues, and taking action to help implement these suggestions. Two key communication channels were highlighted for active citizens—the resident committees and town councils.

Since then, new opportunities for citizen involvement in local planning and development have arisen, as the government judiciously pruned back its involvement. For example, the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme, introduced in 2007 to improve the environment in mature public housing neighbourhoods, incorporates a local Town Council-led public consultation process overseen by the HDB. Meanwhile, new types of community developments such as "Our Tampines Hub" are designed to integrate a wider range of community activities within one location. Such developments enable the government to work hand-in-hand with residents to meet new community needs and aspirations. National-level engagement initiatives like Our Singapore Conversation[2], and the SGfuture dialogues[3] further deepened the conversation between the government and citizens, and encouraged greater citizen participation in community issues and national level policies.

In all, recent initiatives represent a shift in community engagement approaches from top-down educational campaigns in the early days of independence, to programmes that encourage greater citizen participation at both community, as well as national levels.

2   Our Singapore Conversation is a year-long national level conversation consisting of 660 dialogue sessions held from 2012 to 2013, involving more than 47,000 Singaporeans. The sessions covered various themes on Singapore's future direction, such as providing opportunities for all Singaporeans, and trust and collaboration between the government, the community and civic society.

3   The SGfuture engagement sessions were organised between November 2015 to July 2016, as Singapore reached the milestone of 50 years of nationhood. The sessions provided a platform for Singaporeans to co-create ideas for Singapore's future, and involved more than 8,300 Singaporeans over a total of 121 engagement sessions.

5
FROM THE DRAWING BOARD TO THE COMMUNITY: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING CASE STUDIES FROM SEOUL AND SINGAPORE

To better appreciate and understand citizen involvement for various levels of planning and development processes in Seoul and Singapore, a series of case studies have been documented and categorised based on the scale of planning efforts:

Town-Level Rejuvenation

Seoul
- Local Community Planning
- Urban Regeneration
  Programme

Singapore
- Remaking Our Heartlands
  (ROH)

Neighbourhood-Level Planning

Seoul
- *Dong*-Level Planning
- Resident Environment
  Management
  Programme (REMP)

Singapore
- Neighbourhood Renewal
  Programme (NRP)

Major Developments in Existing Communities

Seoul
- Gyeongui Line Forest Park

Singapore
- Rail Corridor
- Our Tampines Hub (OTH)

Community Participation and Ownership

Seoul
- Vibrant Community Center
  (VCC)
- Community-Owned
  Community Centre

Singapore
- Social Linkway
- Community Participatory
  Programmes

Seoul Case Study Locations

Vibrant Community Center in Banghak 3-Dong

Urban Regeneration in Changdong and Sanggye

Urban Regeneration at Changshin and Soongin

Gyeongui Line Forest Park

REMP at Seowon Village

Citizen Ownership at Namuguneul
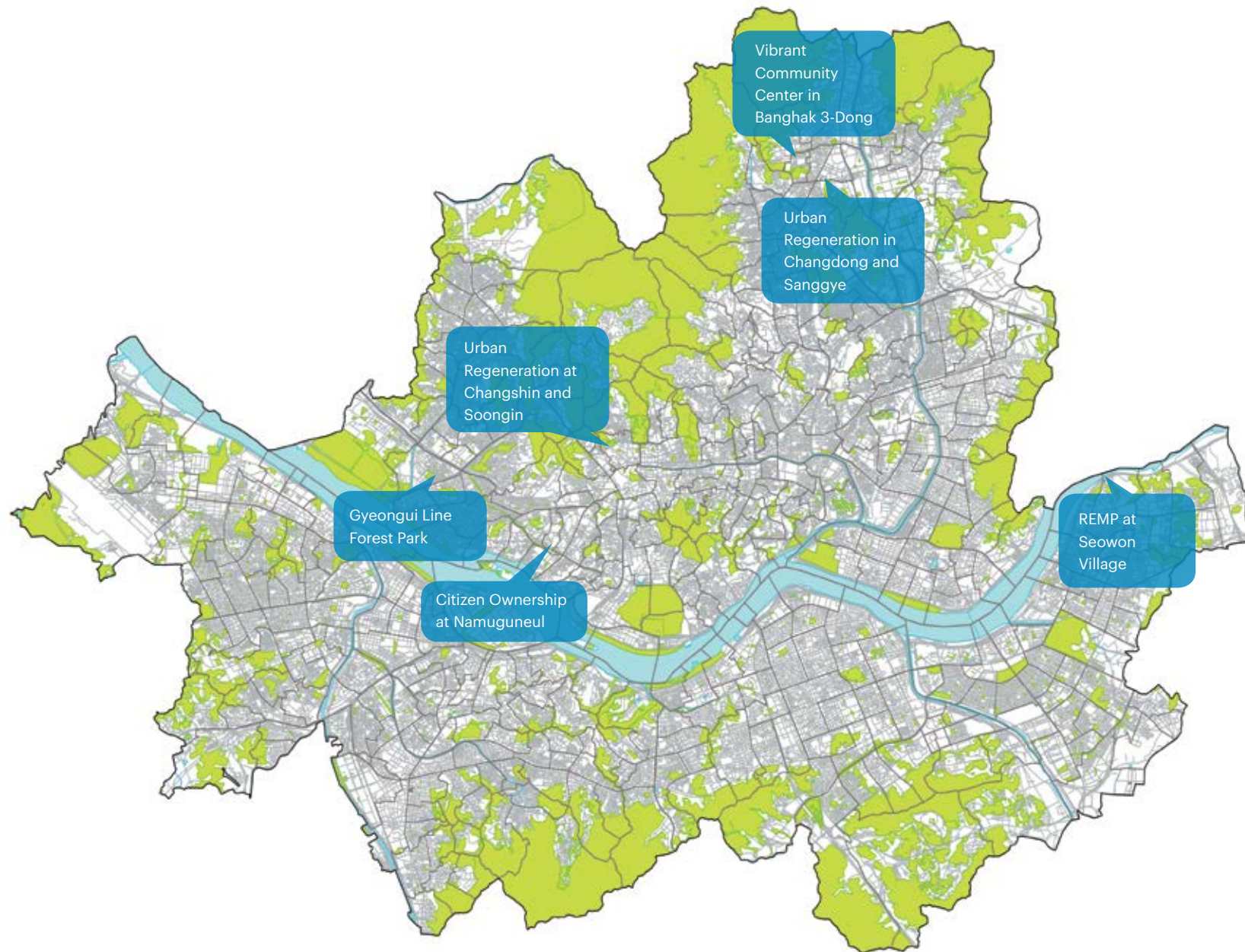
Singapore Case Study Locations

Rail Corridor

Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator at Tampines Central

NRP at Bukit Panjang

Our Favourite Place: Project Bus Stop

Our Tampines Hub

Friendly Faces, Lively Places: Welcome to Our Backyard

Friendly Faces, Lively Places: Blooming in Harmony

'Our Favourite Place: Project Oasis in Little India

East Coast ROH

Our Favourite Place: Play it Forward

Town-Level Rejuvenation

Large cities like Seoul and Singapore often comprise satellite towns and urban districts that support main urban centres. These towns and districts, like *gu* districts in Seoul and public housing towns in Singapore, generally aim to provide residents with amenities they need in their everyday lives. Broad planning strategies established at city level are implemented through more detailed town-level plans.

Seoul and Singapore are both cities in a mature stage of development. Consequently, towns and districts constructed decades ago need to be rejuvenated to ensure that they continue to cater to everyday needs of residents. Community engagement is often a necessary part of such rejuvenation processes, to ensure that proposed solutions align with pertinent local needs. These case studies illustrate how Seoul and Singapore involve residents in rejuvenation efforts, despite the challenge of reaching out meaningfully to the substantial populations—typically over 100,000 people each—within these towns and districts.

Seoul
Local Community Planning

Background of the Seoul Community Plans

Following the completion of the Seoul Plan 2030 master plan, planners grew more interested in expanding public engagement in urban planning. However, while the Seoul Plan 2030 articulates the vision and broad strategies for the city's future, it does not provide detailed guidelines for Urban Management Plans (such as District Unit Plans), which address specific planning issues at the local level and provide a basis for implementation. To bridge this gap, in 2014 the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) introduced the Seoul Community Plans—a set of sub-regional plans for different areas in Seoul.

Objectives of the Seoul Community Plans

The Seoul Community Plans have the following objectives:

First, they serve as intermediate plans between the Seoul Plan 2030 and the Urban Management Plans. Urban planning systems in Korea generally consist of two tiers: the Master Plan and the Urban Management Plans. While this system suits small to medium-sized cities, it is inadequate for Seoul, a megalopolis of 10 million people and 25 *gu* districts. In October 2014, planning laws were revised at the national level to enable community plans to be developed according to the city's needs. The community plans provide details and guidelines for developing the Urban Management Plans, as well as other lower level plans by different local offices and municipal departments.

Second, they take into account the unique needs and character of local neighbourhoods and their residents. In the past, urban planners in Seoul had focused more on large-scale development projects than local concerns. By integrating different local requirements, the community plans bring

Needs of the Local Community Plan

Open House
Resident Briefing
Street Promotion and Survey
Newsletters
Online Opinions
Surveys
Group Workshop
Community Mapping
Focus Group Workshop
Seoul Plan Citizen Group Workshop
Ahn-Am Tong Council
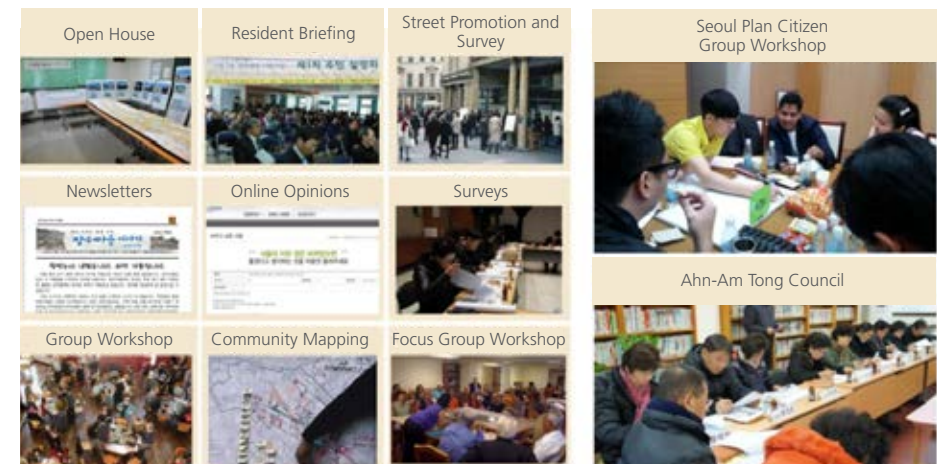
greater coherence to future developments in each neighbourhood, and serve as a platform on which Seoul and its 25 *gu* districts can coordinate their plans and budgets.

Third, the community planning process balances conventional top-down planning with a bottom-up approach to engage the public and gain consensus. In Korea, urban planning is generally determined by planning experts and city officials. While this approach has contributed to integrated and consistent urban management, it cannot meet the varying needs of different districts within the city.

Development of Seoul's Local Community Plan

PREVIOUS	MODIFIED
URBAN MASTER PLAN	URBAN MASTER PLAN

Individual Urban Management Plans

COMMUNITY PLAN

SUB-REGION

Local Area Local Area

Comprehensive & Individual Urban Management Plan

Urban Planning Facility

District Unit Plan

Zoning Plan

Improvement Project

Unit Development Project

District Unit Plan

Zoning Plan

Urban Planning Facility

Unit Development Project

Improvement Project

The Role of the Community Plan

URBAN MASTER PLAN

Create detailed plans based on overall urban master plan

Integration and adjustments

COMMUNITY PLAN

Provide directions for urban management plans

Reviews

URBAN MANAGEMENT PLAN

Individual Sectoral Plans

- Development Plans by Region
- Development Plan for Central Area
- Comprehensive Development Plan for Sub-Centres
- Urban & Residential Environment Improvement Master Plan
- Comprehensive Development Plan for Semi-industrial Areas
- Master Plan for City Metro
- Master Plan for Road Improvement
- Master Plan for Landscaping
- Master Plan for Green Parks

- *Gu* Development Plan
- Common Agenda for the Dongbuk4-Gu *Development Council (Northeastern Region)*
- Community Master Plan at *Gu* Level

Seoul Community Planning Structure

There are two tiers to the Seoul Community Plans: Regional Community plans and Local Community plans.

Regional communities cover three to seven *gu* Districts. Seoul is divided into five regional communities: City Centre, Northeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast. Each consists of higher-order nodes, such as a city or regional centre, and a residential hinterland. Regional Community Plans detail the planning objectives and strategies for each region as developed in the Seoul Plan 2030. The community planning process engages residents in identifying the main issues for each region. Such issues may include: balancing regional development, developing facilities and infrastructure for the region, enhancing regional competitiveness and self-sufficiency, or other issues that need to be jointly addressed by *gu* districts. Addressing these issues requires coordination across various neighbourhoods within the region.

Local communities each comprise three to four administrative dongs (neighbourhoods; smaller than *gu* districts) with an approximate population of 100,000. These smaller areas provide basic amenities for daily living, and consist of localised nodes—often organised

around train stations—and residential areas. In Seoul, there are 116 local communities, determined by their administrative zones, geography, zoning, population and travel patterns.[4] Local Community Plans provide comprehensive guidance for local-level improvements, with inputs from residents through a citizen participation process.

Regional and Local Communities in Seoul
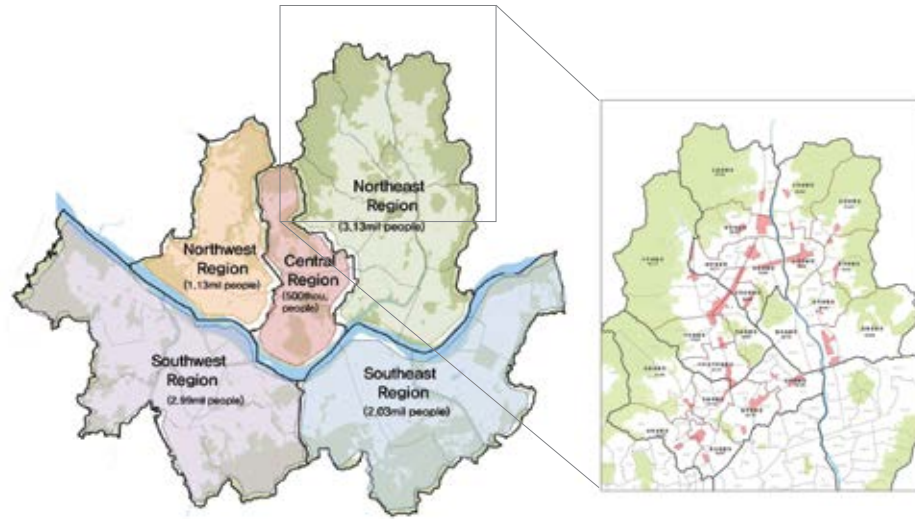
Outline of Regional and Local Neighbourhood Plans

Sub-Regional Community Plan	Local Community Plan
Balance regional development.	Improve living environment.
Increase competitiveness and self-sufficiency (city centre, industry).	Address urban planning issues.
Build regional infrastructure and facilities.	Find agendas involving conservation, management and development.
Address common issues and programmes jointly among *gu*s.	Develop a comprehensive development and management schemes at the local level.

4   Local community plans are developed for the 105 local communities in the four regions except for the City Centre region. For the City Centre region, 11 local community plans are developed based on the Historical City Center Management Plan.

Example of comprehensive plan for a local neighbourhood.

Each community plan consists of sub-level plans organised according to theme and space. The sub-level thematic plans propose future directions for specific themes: e.g., industry, jobs, history, culture, residential/transport/living services, environment, safety, or public services. These thematic plans may be reviewed on a regular basis to suit the needs of each community. Spatial plans translate the thematic plans into spatial proposals and requirements, providing guidelines for the Urban Management Plans.

Citizen Engagement in Developing Community Plans

Local-resident involvement is vital to the development of Local Community Plans, since residents are the ones most familiar with the specific problems, strengths, weaknesses and improvements needed in each community. Workshops with residents are conducted to identify local issues, local resources, and the actions that need to be taken for the future of their communities are a critical part of the community planning process.

The SMG initiated a pilot on Local Community Planning in August 2014 and began recruiting for citizen groups to participate in the community planning process. Some 2,800 posters were put up on buses and subway trains. Outdoor advertisements, video clips on subway trains, social networks and other media were used to encourage citizens to apply for the groups.

Citizen Group Participants in Jangwi Seokgwan Community

Members of Self-Governance Board
(recommended by community service centre)

General Residents
(Internet applications, recommendation from community service centre)

Residents Related to Urban Planning
(students majoring in urban planning, office workers, etc.)

10 Members
Jangwi 1-Dong
(24,380)

10 Members
Jangwi 2-Dong
(21,452)

10 Members
Jangwi 3-Dong
(17,534)

10 Members
Seokgwan-Dong
(36,699)

**Jangwi-Seokgwan Community
(total population: 100,065)**

A website (http://planning.seoul.go.kr) was set up in August 2014 to offer information on community plans and their progress, as well as a schedule of citizen group workshops in different *gu* districts, and to invite citizen feedback and views.

Developing a Plan for Citizen Involvement

With help from experts, the SMG developed a manual with detailed instructions for citizen group workshops. A workshop was also held after the manual was published in September 2014, to help *gu* district officials better understand the citizen group workshop process. SMG officials urged district governments to build consensus with citizens on local issues, and to step up efforts to recruit for the citizen groups, taking into account age, occupation and other factors to ensure diversity of the groups. In turn, district governments asked SMG officials to clarify the scope and assignment of roles in the community planning process.

Recruitment of Participants for Citizen Groups

From September 2014, a total of 913 participants for the Citizen Groups were recruited from 22 communities in 87 *dongs*.

While the citizen groups were initially meant to comprise equal numbers of ordinary citizens and members of local committees, individual citizen applications were low: on average, only five participants from each local community had applied on their own. About 90% of participants were community leaders or activists recommended by local residential committees.

Citizen Group Workshops

From 20 September to 6 December, 2014, a total of 42 citizen group workshops were held in the 22 local community pilot planning areas. Two workshops were conducted for each local community. Facilitators, engaged by the *gu* district governments, focused on encouraging citizens to voice their opinions and take an active part in discussions. Some *gu* districts organised their own programmes, such as site tours and lectures, to help residents better understand the plans.

Citizen Group Workshop Program

Workshop 1

Offers sessions such as "Imaging Our Neighbourhood in 2030."

Helps people understand the community plan, paint a picture or map of the neighbourhood, identify neighbourhood resources, and form consensus.

Workshop 2

Engages participants in deeper discussions on local issues and improvements to be made by further examining their neighbourhoods in terms of available amenities and facilities.

Manual for the Citizen Group Workshop

	Identify Resources and Vision	Explore Issues and Identify Improvements
Description	The first Citizen Group Workshop was an opportunity for residents to get together and begin their first official activity as a group.	The second Citizen Group Workshop was an opportunity to discuss local issues, causes and resolutions.
Objectives	Understand urban planning policy directions of Seoul. Understand the role of community planning and the Citizen Group. Find local resources and explore their potential. Identify a vision for the local community.	Identify current issues in the local neighbourhood and their causes. Explore resolutions to the issues in the local neighbourhood. Identify the facilities and services most desired by the residents and reasons why.
Activities	"Map Our Neighbourhood." Identify the resources in our neighbourhood. "Our Neighbourhood in 2030."	"Explore Our Neighbourhood." "Improve Our Neighbourhood Better." Survey on the facilities and services most desired.
Outcomes	Neighbourhood mapping. Utilisation plan for local resources. Map of local resources (landscapes, citizen spaces, etc.). Vision for the neighbourhood. List of participants per *dong*.	List of local issues. Causes and improvement plans for local issues. Map of local issues. Desired facilities and services and reasons why. Feedback from resident participation.

Citizen Group Workshop for development of the local neighbourhood plan in in Wangsimni-Haengdang Neighbourhood, Seongdong-gu.

Issues most frequently raised by citizen group participants included concerns about transportation and infrastructure, such as the lack of parking space, the narrowness of roadways, and the scarcity of public facilities such as libraries, gyms, sports facilities and senior centres. Other issues raised included changes in zoning, leisure facilities, and the hosting of local festivals. Most of the resident feedback is taken into consideration when developing the final plan.

Outcomes of the pilot Citizen Group Workshops

Post Pilot Review

Following the workshops in the 22 pilot areas, the SMG and *gu* district governments met to evaluate outcomes and discuss plans for other local communities in 2015. *Gu* district government officials were concerned that because interest in the community plans remained low, it was a challenge to encourage people to participate and stay involved. In some cases, the progress of the community plans had not been shared with the *gu* district governments, making it difficult for them to address resident requests. Some *gu* officials also suggested that the city provide support for citizen group budgets and training for workshop facilitators.

Operating Manual for Citizen Group Workshops

Based on the pilot programme, the SMG reviewed and finalised an operating manual for local community planning, and presented it to *gu* district governments, which would take up the responsibility of conducting participatory Local Community Planning efforts in the future. The manual covered the entire engagement process, from the recruitment of citizen participants, to the Citizen Group workshops, and reporting. These manuals were distributed to *gu* district officials in charge of the Community Planning programme, and workshop facilitators.

Conclusion: Closing the Loop

By December 2016, local community planning workshops had been completed for all 116 local communities throughout Seoul. The views and aspirations of each community were captured in a systematic and comprehensive manner, and offered clear directions and specific guidelines to inform the statutory urban management plans that would then be drafted for these smaller areas of the city. This deliberate process helped to ensure that the citizen engagement process achieves its aims of having a positive impact on the government's urban plans.

Seoul
Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan

Shift in Focus for Urban Regeneration in Seoul

Following decades of rapid population and economic growth, Seoul's population has plateaued since the mid-1990s. The city has hence shifted its focus from spurring rapid economic growth through intensive urban development to urban regeneration —addressing areas of urban decline given its environment of slow growth environment.

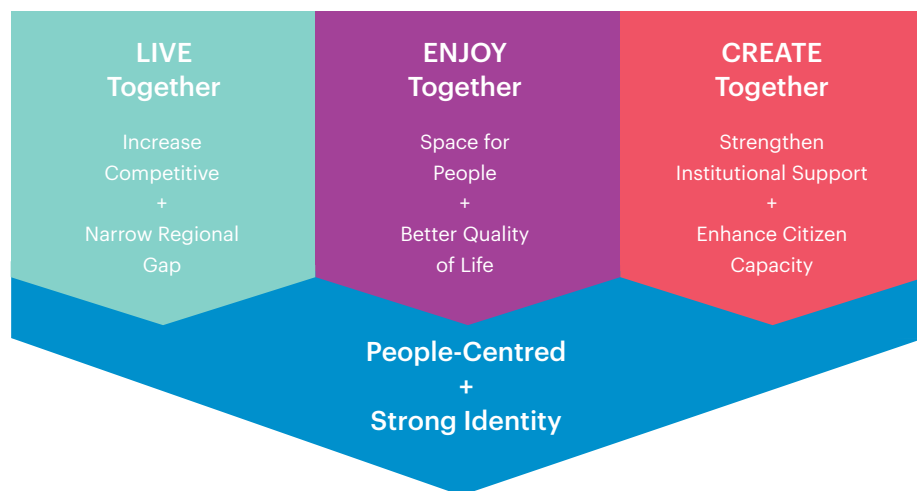### A Statutory Master Plan for Urban Regeneration in Seoul

In March 2015, Seoul announced the "Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan 2025" —an urban regeneration master plan which outlines a framework, vision, processes and resources for urban regeneration in Seoul. The Strategic Urban Regeneration

Plan is guided in turn by the national guidelines for Urban Regeneration, which informs the selection of urban revitalisation areas. Developed by the Ministry for Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, these national guidelines are published every 10 years and reviewed every five years.

The Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan designates suitable areas for revitalisation, for which detailed Revitalisation Plans are then developed. Each Revitalisation Plan takes into account the opinions of all stakeholders to identify urban regeneration projects and proposes a detailed budget for each project which is then financed by the national and city governments, as well as the private sector.

Seoul's Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan, the first of its kind in Korea, was developed

Vision of the Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan

LIVE Together	ENJOY Together	CREATE Together
Increase Competitive + Narrow Regional Gap	Space for People + Better Quality of Life	Strengthen Institutional Support + Enhance Citizen Capacity

People-Centred + Strong Identity

A Warm and Competitive Seoul

Structure of the Urban Regeneration Plan

National Approach	National Guidelines for Urban Regeneration (Plans and Approach) National strategies developed for comprehensive, systematic, efficient urban regeneration.
Strategic Initiative	Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan (Plans and Guidelines) Strategic initiatives (e.g., fundamental direction of urban regeneration, designation of target areas, guidelines for Revitalisation Plans).
Action Plan	Revitalisation Plan for Urban Regeneration (Implementation) Comprehensive action plan for urban regeneration that engages local residents of the target area.
Execution	Urban Regeneration Integration of individual projects launched under different laws to support complex programmes.

with three principles in mind. First, being a statutory plan, it has legal requirements and objectives, but does not narrowly restrict the areas targeted for regeneration. Instead, it allows for a broader interpretation of urban regeneration. Second, it proposes a phased 10-year roadmap to allow for past urban regeneration policies to continue within the legal and institutional framework. Finally, it specifies only basic principles and a framework for implementation, allowing flexibility in implementing more detailed Revitalisation Plans based on local feedback.

Vision and Core Values of the Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan

The vision for urban regeneration in Seoul is to create a "warm and competitive Seoul".

"Warm" emphasises the city's focus on the socially disadvantaged, while "competitive" highlights the city as a source of economic opportunities. Three core values were established to complement this vision:

1) "Create together" a sustainable environment for urban regeneration, in collaboration with local residents, the private and public sector;

2) "Live together" by enhancing the competitiveness of key areas to drive the city forward;

3) "Enjoy together" by enhancing the quality of life, especially in areas of decline.

Basic Directions to Enhance the Competitiveness of Seoul
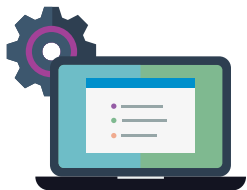
Create jobs across broader areas by promoting creative and MICE industries.

Revitalise local industries and commerce.

Revitalise relatively isolated areas.

Basic Directions to Enhance the Quality of Life in Seoul

Encourage people to regenerate and revitalise the local community.
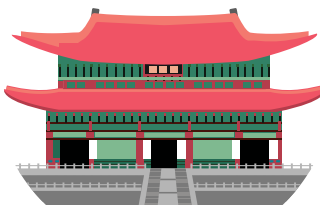
Utilise historical and natural resources as local attractions.

Create people-friendly spaces that are inclusive for the socially vulnerable.

Forms of Collaboration between the Administration, Residents and Private Sector to Carry out Urban Regeneration

Projects led by the administration, with resident consensus and cooperation.

Projects led by the private sector, with support from the administration.

Public guidelines for urban regeneration projects to ensure alignment of objectives; private investment for funding support.

In particular, Seoul wants local residents and stakeholders to be able to resolve their own issues, instead of relying on the government. With this aim in mind, the government may take the lead in the short term while supporting local stakeholders as they develop their capabilities in the long term.

Roadmap for a Sustainable Urban Regeneration Process Led by Citizens

The Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan maps out three stages of implementation: Inception (2015–2017), Maturity (2017–2020), and Stability (2020–2025). During the Maturity phase, areas for revitalisation would be publicly discussed, following which

a four-step process—preparation, planning, implementation and self-sustainability— would be put into action to develop citizen competence for the regeneration plans.

During preparation phase, the selection of appropriate areas for regeneration through public discussion and consensus, is the key focus. This is particularly important for the regeneration of non-residential central areas. The SMG conducts public discussions for areas accorded special status in the Seoul Plan 2030 or in Local Community Plans. Traditional markets, regional centres, or other areas suggested by local district governments which have not been mentioned in the Seoul Plan 2030 or Local Community Plans, may also be selected.

Roadmap for Urban Regeneration

Inception 2015 – 2016	Identify Target Areas
	• Identify 13 model regeneration areas from 27 regeneration target areas.
	• Initiatives to enhance competency within the administration, residents and the implementing entity.
Maturity 2017 – 2020	Pilot implementation in Target Areas
	• Implement urban regeneration initiatives in target areas.
	• Review outcomes from model regeneration areas and identify areas of improvement.
	• Conduct a full evaluation of urban regeneration projects by sector.
Stability 2021 – 2025	Revive the City and Build a Sustainable Platform for Regeneration
	• Conduct a full evaluation of urban regeneration projects by sector.
	• Prepare to develop strategic plans for 2035.

Four-step Process for Citizen Competence

Preparation

Publicise and share the necessity for regeneration

- Promote urban regeneration programmes ("Community Presentation at Your Doorstep", etc.).
- Carry out projects to enhance competency of citizens.

Planning

Select the revitalisation target areas and develop plan

- Identify target areas for urban regeneration.
- Prepare the draft plans and budget for urban regeneration.

Implementation

Establish a foundation to carry out urban regeneration programs

- Adjust/modify regeneration plan.
- Identify phases for urban regeneration plans.
- Prepare target areas for self-sustainability in urban regeneration.

Incorporate feedback and finalise draft regeneration plans

Self-sustainability

Sustainable operation and management

- Expand role of the private sector.
- Create models for sustainable urban regeneration.

To ensure that the public appreciates the need for urban regeneration, sustained engagement through consultation, pilot demonstrations and public education are carried out. This is especially crucial in residential areas. For this purpose, education programmes (such as an Urban Regeneration Academy) and projects suggested by residents are undertaken in neighbourhoods that have been proposed for urban regeneration.

During the planning stage, detailed Revitalisation Plans for designated areas are developed based on guidance from the Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan. The Revitalisation Plan reflects local characteristics and includes details on urban regeneration

projects, financing schemes to ensure viability, the implementation process and structure of regeneration projects, as well as a performance management framework. Further details may also be incorporated based on public feedback.

The implementation stage sees views collected from businesses and residents being incorporated into the plans. The initial focus is on programmes and activities to encourage the participation of relevant parties. This is then gradually followed by key infrastructure and hardware projects.

The self-sustainability stage is reached when non-governmental stakeholders (i.e. residents, small businesses, companies,

Ensuring Financial Viability for Urban Regeneration Projects

Funding from National Government, City Government and Private Sector

Initiate projects to boost local economy

Promote involvement of local communities

Build infrastructure and anchor facilities to enhance capacity for future development

activists, etc.) can continue with urban regeneration projects on their own to achieve the revitalisation goals. The public sector continues to monitor and assess outcomes, so as to provide help as necessary. For the regeneration of economic areas, capital raised through financing from private companies will be invested, while the regeneration of residential neighbourhoods leverages existing social economic assets such as community enterprises, social enterprises or cooperatives to further ensure sustainability.

A Collaborative Planning and Implementation Process

The SMG and LDG work together to oversee planning efforts. Urban regeneration organisations also provide support to local resident or programme councils and

help to monitor projects in each area. Such organisations include the Urban Regeneration Support Center, which facilitates communication between residents and the administration, and the Urban Regeneration Committee, an advisory council comprising experts and representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Seoul's urban regeneration process places great emphasis on communication between the public and the implementing organisations. This is mainly facilitated by the Urban Regeneration Support Centers, which offers a range of channels for the public to provide feedback. Other than individual suggestions, public input is also sourced from surveys and bulletin polls. The input is reviewed against the objectives of the Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan by planning experts. To ensure transparency,

Collaborative Approach to Urban Regeneration
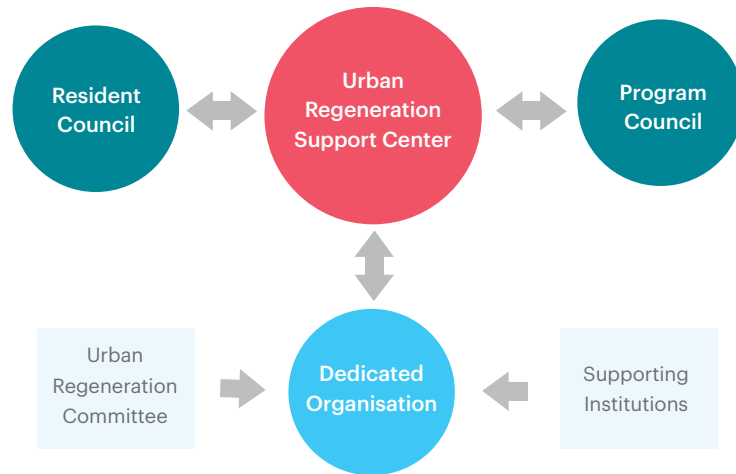
any input that is incorporated into the plan is announced online, or through the Support Center newsletter.

In addition to collecting and incorporating public feedback, SMG also provides professional support to help residents and local stakeholders in their decision making. Experts from different fields are assigned to provide consultation and gather input at resident meetings when issues related to regeneration are discussed. Upon request, the Urban Regeneration Support Center may also provide data, information, training, or financial assistance for ground-up projects by residents.

To create a more direct platform for residents to discuss or resolve local issues with the authorities, the Urban Regeneration Support Center organises roundtable sessions involving the national government, the SMG, the LDG, the Support Center, professional planners, residents and the private sector. The SMG's Urban Regeneration Headquarters

moderates these roundtable sessions, while local district governments help keep the development of the plans focused on addressing local needs.

Examples of Urban Regeneration Areas in Seoul

Two examples illustrate different types of urban regeneration in Seoul: Changdong-Sanggye, an area which was identified as an area ripe for economic regeneration; and Changsin-Soongin, which was a declining residential community in need of revitalisation.

Changdong-Sanggye: Creating a New Economic Hub in Northeastern Seoul

Background

Since national basic urban planning was established in 1990, planners have implemented a "one main centre, five sub-

centre and 11-local centre" model. Under the Seoul Plan 2030, this was restructured into a "three-main-centre, seven-regional-centre and 12-local-centre" model, allowing multiple functional centres to co-exist.

Taken together, Changdong in Dobong-gu and Sanggye-dong in Nowon-gu span approximately 970,000 square metres. The area is central to the four *gu* administrative districts in the Northeastern Capital district. Subway Lines 1, 4 and 7, the Gyeongwon Line and Dongbu Eastern Arterial Road serve the area, making it a bustling transport hub. This area has been identified as one of seven new regional centres.

While the area has been primed to be the new Northeastern regional centre, it is occupied mostly by apartment complexes and does not currently have a dynamic economy. However, given the area's potential to drive growth in the Northeast and its surrounding cities, it has been selected an economic regeneration area.

Vision: Changdong / Sanggye Neo Economic Hub

The vision is to revitalise the Changdong and Sanggye region as "the new economic centre for jobs and culture for the 3.2 million people of the Northeast." This will involve developing an industrial foundation to create jobs; constructing cultural, art and leisure facilities; and providing local and regional infrastructure to bolster employment.

Urban regeneration of the area will comprise three phases:

1 Phase 1: Ramp-up to form an interim business zone (2015-2018)

One of the major developments in the regeneration project is Platform Changdong 61—a large lifestyle and community space. The Platform was designed to improve the reputation of the area and stimulate regeneration, before construction of the KTX transport hub commences as part of Phase 3. Completed in April 2016, the Platform was

Location of new economic hub at Changdong/Sanggye.

Community spaces within Changdong Platform 61.

Concert performances at Changdong Platform 61.

constructed using 61 large containers on a deck above the parking lot of the Changdong transfer centre. The vibrant community space has three themed areas: music, lifestyle and community. The facility is on track to receive 100,000 visitors a year, drawn to the site by cultural events, performances, and other activities.

Other projects undertaken in Phase 1 include: selecting project entities for the Seoul Arena

multi-complex and cultural facilities, building a business start-up complex and improving streets and facilities within the area.

2 Phase 2: Car depot development and other core projects (2019–2021)

Phase 2 involves a number of core development projects including the Seoul Arena multi-complex and cultural facilities, a railway depot, drivers' licensing test centre

and a comprehensive freight distribution centre.

3 Phase 3: Building of the Transfer Center (after 2022)

After the completion of Phase 2, construction of the transfer centre will begin, extending the Uijeongbu-Suseo KTX line and part of the Uijeongbu-Geumjeong GTX line.

Participating Organisations and their Roles

There are many stakeholder organisations involved in the regeneration of Changdong/Sanggye. First, the Urban Regeneration Headquarters oversees the development of policies and planning, while the Northeast Project Group at the SMG Local Development Headquarters is in charge of urban regeneration in Changdong/Sanggye.

Second, the general administrative organisation under the Seoul Metropolitan Government leads a taskforce for Changdong/Sanggye regeneration, which comprises four LDGs—Seongbuk-gu, Gangbuk-gu, Dobong-gu, and Nowon-gu—and the Research Group for the four *gu* districts in the Northeast. The joint taskforce, a first for Seoul, was formed in 2012. From time to time, it consults with the Seoul Housing & Communities Corporation (a key SMG affiliate organisation which develops, sells and leases housing) to garner support for resident capacity building.

Third, the Integrated Implementation Council for the urban regeneration of Changdong/Sanggye coordinates, refines, revises and monitors the area's regeneration plans. The council facilitates communication and feedback between the national government, the SMG Urban Regeneration Committee, the Seoul Metropolitan Council, advisory committees, experts, resident councils,

project entities and relevant personnel, as well as individual programme councils.

Finally, the Urban Regeneration Cooperation and Support Center for the four *gu* districts in the Northeast was launched in June 2015, and has two roles. While its mandate is to support the urban regeneration of Changdong/Sanggye, it also collaborates with the four *gu* districts in the Northeast to help build ties for public-private governance between the city, local governments and area residents.

Changshin-Soongin: Revitalising a Declining Residential Community

Background

Since the 1970s, the local economy of the Changshin and Soongin area has been driven primarily by the sewing industry. However, it is an industry which has steadily declined since the early 2000s. A plan had been formulated to revamp the town as part of the Urban Improvement Promotion programme, but a sluggish property market and conflicts between residents stalled the project in 2013.

Home to 29,360 residents, the area currently serves as the hinterland for the fashion town in Dongdaemun. With living conditions deteriorating over the years, the area is in need of comprehensive regeneration to revitalise the local community and establish a more sustainable system of urban management. The areas of Changshin-1-dong, Changshin-2-dong, Changshin-3-dong, and the Soongin-1-dong area in Jongno-gu, Seoul, have been selected to undergo general neighbourhood regeneration. The selected *dong* have a combined area of 830,130 square metres.

Changsin-Soongin Urban Regeneration Plan



**Catalyst Projects
(12 projects at KRW 20 billion)**

*Total number of projects in Changsin-Soongin Project plan is 25

Improvement of residential environment e.g. safer alleyways, community spaces.

Revitalisation of local economy e.g. public co-working spaces, sewing museum, improvements to the quarry and its surroundings.

Utilisation of historical/cultural resources e.g. neighbourhood trail, Nam June Paik memorial space.

Strengthen resident capacity e.g. projects based on residents' ideas, ideas competition for residents, community learning space.

Collaboration Projects with Local District Government (8 projects at KRW 56.37 billion)

Green community project.

Seoul housing renovation project.

Energy independent neighbourhood project.
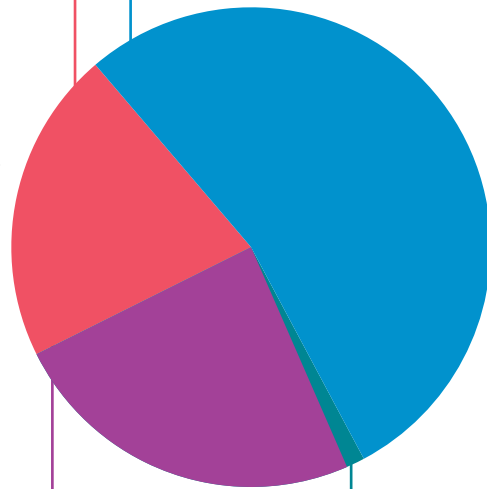
Collaboration Projects with Central Government (4 projects at KRW 24.24 billion)

Parking lots and cultural facilities for youth.

Undergrounding of power lines.

**Private Sector Projects
(1 project at KRW 120 million)**

"Hope in Home Repair" project.

Urban Regeneration of Changshin and Soongin

The urban regeneration of the Changshin and Soongin area comprises 25 unit projects, including several in collaboration with local government, central government agencies and the private sector. The regeneration strategy for the area aims to improve the residential environment, revitalise the local economy, and make the most of historical and cultural resources to promote regeneration and enhance resident capabilities.

To improve the local residential environment, safer alleyways, community spaces and public facilities have been built. To stimulate the local economy, money has been set aside to provide for public working spaces, employment assistance, a sewing museum, and improvements to the local quarry and its surroundings.

In March 2017, the Nam June Paik Memorial opened in a *hanok*[5] in Changshin, where the visionary video artist was born. Around the area, youth facilities have been set up to take advantage of this and other cultural resources. To improve resident capabilities, KRW 5 million has been set aside to fund projects based on ideas from residents, and KRW 250 million has been allocated to build a community learning space.

Urban Regeneration Projects in Changsin-Soongin

Sewing Museum	Nam Jun Paik Memorial Hall	Changsin 3-dong Public Facility

5   *A hanok is a traditional Korean house.*

Roles of Parties Involved in the Regeneration Project

Resident councils are actively involved in the regeneration project. About 300 residents participate in four resident councils in each *dong*. Their main role is to collect residents' views and discuss them with the SMG and its experts to help shape the regeneration plan. Following the completion of the regeneration project, these resident organisations would be responsible for local maintenance and management.

Participants were first recruited to become members of general resident councils in September 2014. In January 2015, each *dong* district held a general resident council meeting to elect representatives. Since then, the council member have met regularly and been actively engaged in urban regeneration activities.

Another significant stakeholder is the Changshin/Soongin Urban Regeneration Support Center, which oversees a number of tasks: conducting local surveys, collecting opinions from residents, supporting urban regeneration projects, implementing resident education projects, building and supporting governance, running promotional activities, while keeping relevant records and documents. The centre has developed a collaborative approach that allows it to stay close to local residents, resident councils, city and *gu* district administrative organisations, as well as planning experts.

Result: Successful Urban Regeneration through Effective Engagement and Communication

SMG's urban regeneration policy is an effort to shift from its past strategy of large-scale development to a new approach of regenerating urban areas in decline. While sound planning remains important, the key to successful urban regeneration in Seoul is good communication between the government and the public. Entities such as the Urban Regeneration Support Center have been set up to encourage and facilitate these vital dialogues, in order to bring the various stakeholders on board in the regeneration process and create consensus on the way forward. The process of engaging and communicating with residents and businesses on urban regeneration proposals will continue to be a priority in Seoul, and SMG aims to evaluate the outcomes of this approach in the future.

Singapore
Remaking our Heartland (ROH)

Introduction

Eight out of ten Singaporeans live in public housing built by the Housing & Development Board (HDB). Public housing estates have become a way of life and a part of Singapore's collective experience. Over the decades, HDB has developed 23 towns that may be categorised as mature towns for those developed before the 1980s, middle-aged towns largely developed in the 1980s, and young towns are those that were developed in the 1990s and after.

It is important that the built environment of public housing estates continues to be enhanced over the years, so that their residents can enjoy facilities comparable to those in newer estates. Continual and concerted efforts to rejuvenate HDB towns, in response to the evolving needs of residents, will ensure that public housing remain homes that Singaporeans can be proud of.

Besides the upgrading and redevelopment of individual housing precincts carried out on specific sites, HDB has drawn up a comprehensive blueprint to renew and remake the HDB heartland. This programme, called Remaking Our Heartland (ROH), will transform Singapore's public housing estates over the next 20 to 30 years.

Unveiled in Aug 2007, the ROH programme aims to transform young, middle-aged and mature HDB towns and estates into distinctive and endearing homes for Singaporeans while meeting the ever-changing needs of a diverse community. Particular attention is being paid to increasing the vibrancy of town centres.

Towns selected to undergo ROH were identified based on their potential for rejuvenation. This included opportunities to rejuvenate the existing town centre, provide more facilities for recreation and leisure, inject new housing developments and

Map Showing the ROH Areas
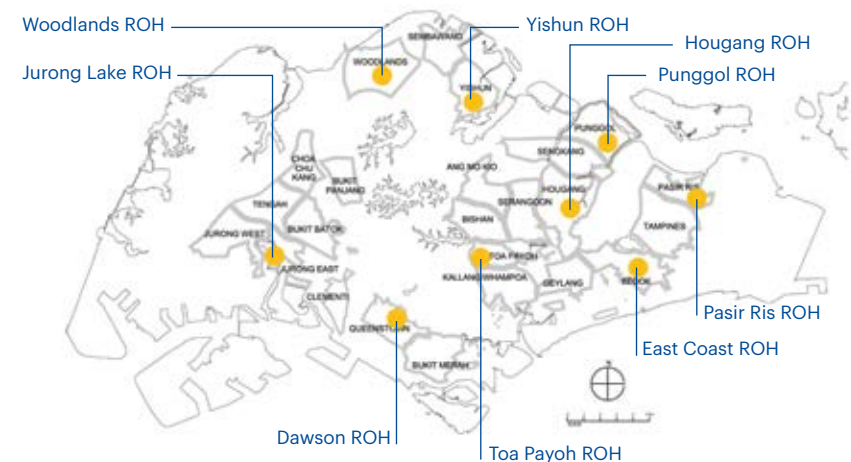
improve existing transportation, pedestrian and cycling networks. As the needs of residents evolve, HDB will review the renewal potential of other towns which have not undergone ROH.

To date, three series of ROH programmes have been launched: in 2007, 2011 and 2017.

The first series, Punggol, Yishun and Dawson estates featured the renewal of a young, middle-aged and mature estate respectively, under the three objectives; Realising the Vision for New Estates, Rejuvenating Communities in Middle-Aged Estates and Regenerating Old Estates.

For the second series, Hougang, Jurong Lake and East Coast were selected. The plans focused on four common themes; rejuvenating homes, town and neighbourhood centres, enhancing outdoor recreation choices, improving connectivity
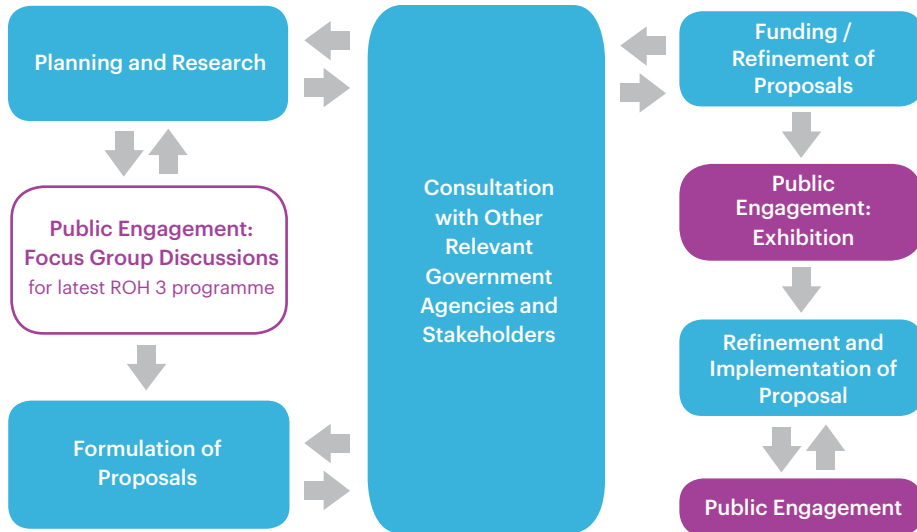
to activity nodes and promoting heartland heritage.

The latest ROH renewal plans, featuring Woodlands, Toa Payoh and Pasir Ris towns, were unveiled in April 2017. The plans focused on strengthening the character, community, and connectivity of each town.

Working with other government agencies such as National Parks Board (NParks), Public Utilities Board (PUB), Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), Land Transport Authority (LTA), National Heritage Board (NHB), Sport Singapore (SportSG), National Environment Agency (NEA), People's Association (PA) and other relevant agencies, HDB draws up plans under the ROH programme to improve the physical environment of its HDB estates.

Other than consulting the relevant government agencies, HDB also actively engages the public to seek their views and suggestions on the proposed plans. This is

ROH Workflow

Planning and Research

Public Engagement: Focus Group Discussions for latest ROH 3 programme

Formulation of Proposals

Consultation with Other Relevant Government Agencies and Stakeholders

Funding / Refinement of Proposals

Public Engagement: Exhibition

Refinement and Implementation of Proposal

Public Engagement

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Image courtesy of the Housing & Development Board.

done through activities like exhibitions, pop-up engagement sessions, and workshops.

Case Study:
Gateway to the East Coast

The East Coast area was selected for ROH in 2011. Well-established with many amenities, it is popular for recreational activities, and features key leisure destinations such as Bedok Reservoir Park and East Coast Park.

The rejuvenation proposals for the East Coast ROH fall largely within Bedok Town. There was scope to rejuvenate the town centre with a new mixed-use development integrated with a bus interchange, as well as to make the neighbourhood centres more vibrant.

Capitalising on the area's strengths and opportunities, the proposed vision is for East Coast to become "a well-connected gateway

4 Dimensions of Proposed Vision for East Coast ROH

PLAY
and relax outdoors

SHAPE
your physical environment

LEARN
about past and present

LINK
up for better accessibility
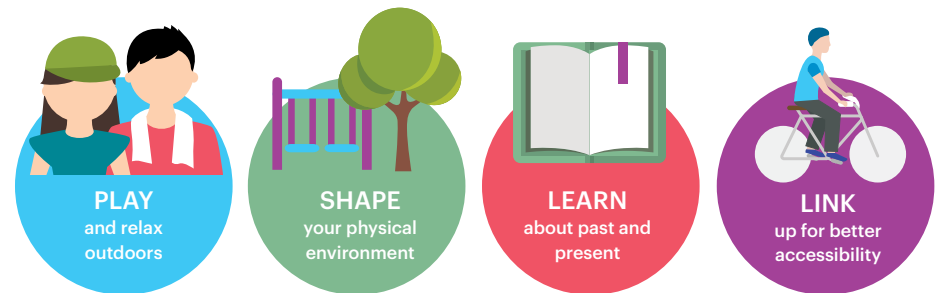
Key Proposals for East Coast ROH

Outdoor Play Corridor: A dedicated cycling and pedestrian path to connect Bedok Town Centre with East Coast Park and Bedok Reservoir Park, with various new recreational facilities and rest points along the way.

Active Water Edge: New facilities at Bedok Reservoir Park and enhancements to enliven the water edge along Sungei Bedok.

Town Centre Reborn: Transform Bedok Town Centre into a vibrant gateway hub.

Distinct Identity: Strengthening the sense of arrival from vehicular gateways, with better streetscape coordination, to enhance the character of the East Coast area.

Quality Living Environment: New housing developments, improvements to existing housing developments, and further rejuvenation of Neighbourhood Centres.

Down Memory Lane: A heritage corner and trail (i.e. Bedok Heritage Trail), with boards and signage at various points of historical interest.

Cycling Network: A comprehensive cycling network within Bedok Town to allow connectivity to MRT stations, workplace clusters, parks, schools and Neighbourhood Centres.

Improved DTL3: A new MRT line i.e. New Downtown Line 3 (DTL3), with three new MRT stations in the Bedok Reservoir and Kaki Bukit areas.

to the East Coast, with enriched identity, active communities and easy access to recreational destinations." To achieve this, nine proposals for East Coast ROH have been set out, framed along four dimensions.

Public Engagement and Consultation

In drawing up the rejuvenation plans, HDB actively engaged residents and stakeholders to seek their views and suggestions. When the plans for East Coast were unveiled in 2011, an exhibition was held to invite feedback from residents to help shape and remake the town into a home that they envision. Exhibition visitors were surveyed (both online and through written forms), to gather public sentiments on the new proposals and directions, to help planners understand which aspects of the plans were well received and those which required fine-tuning.

Building on this feedback, HDB and its partnering government agencies refined the proposals for East Coast ROH, to ensure that the eventual rejuvenation of the area would benefit as many residents as possible. The feedback gathered would also help to inform the planning of other HDB towns/estates.

HDB's engagement with the public did not stop there. Progressive public updates were provided at various stages of progress, and public feedback continued to be gathered through exhibitions and events. In 2012, more exhibitions were held to give the public an update on the rejuvenation plans for Bedok Town Centre, as well as to mark the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Bedok Interchange Hawker Centre. Subsequently in 2015, HDB celebrated the completion of the Bedok Interchange Hawker Centre, taking the opportunity to keep the public updated on the other East Coast ROH proposals beyond the Town Centre.

Such engagement efforts have helped to sustain the public's involvement and interest, as well as to ensure that plans drawn up earlier were still relevant to residents and stakeholders. At each of these exhibitions,

Residents and stakeholders were actively engaged to seek their views and suggestions.

Mini exhibition that HDB held for proposed works to the Neighbourhood Centres in Bedok.

Movie screening at revamped Bedok Town Square.

Residents sharing their views on the activities they hoped to see at the new plaza.

visitors were surveyed to gather feedback on the progress of the ROH programme in the town.

A Project Working Committee (PWC)—comprising representatives from grassroots organisations, shops, the Town Council and HDB—was formed to work with design consultants on detailed upgrading plans for Bedok Town Centre and each of the Neighbourhood Centres.

Residents' feedback given through PWC members was taken into consideration when detailed plans and designs were drawn up. For example, in the proposals for one of Bedok's Neighbourhood Centres, HDB's consultant proposed to have benches integrated with bicycle racks. However, during one of the engagement sessions, PWC members asked that the bicycle racks be relocated, as they were concerned that when cyclists park the bicycles, the seats may jerk and cause discomfort to the people on the benches. The consultants then arranged for bicycle racks to be installed separately.

A mini exhibition on the proposed design for the enhancement works was held to showcase the proposed upgrading works and to gather feedback from residents & visitors. PWC members, along with the design consultants and HDB representatives, were present to explain the upgrading proposals to the public.

Place Activation Initiatives

Town plazas are important in enhancing community bonding and place identity. To inject more vibrancy into the town centre, Bedok Town Square was officially opened in May 2016 as a new community space. The plaza was designed to nurture a sense of place identity and belonging among residents, and to promote active and cohesive communities. As of 1 May 2017, 34 events have been held in Bedok Town Square, reaching out to approximately 31,000 residents.

A key feature of the ROH rejuvenation plans, the Bedok Town Square is well-integrated with surrounding developments such as the Bedok Mall and the integrated transport hub, the hawker centre and the upgraded pedestrian mall. A Heritage Corner is located by the town square, for residents to learn about the distinctive identities and heritage of the various communities in East Coast.

To ensure that activities held at Bedok Town Square meet the needs of Bedok residents, a local town plaza Activation Team (AT) was formed with agencies like PA, National Arts Council (NAC), grassroots and the Bedok Town Centre's Merchants' Association. HDB worked closely with the AT and grassroots members to plan and implement place activation initiatives, such as movie screening, dance activities and bazaars.

Through pop-up public engagement sessions and stakeholders' engagement workshops, the community's views were sought on the town square's unique theme and character, as well as experiences and opportunities it could offer to residents.

The pop-up public engagement sessions attracted some 1,000 resident participants, with many sharing that they hoped to see outdoor movie screenings, mass exercise activities and performances held at the plaza. The AT has taken these views into consideration, and will work to ensure that programmes, activities and communications are aligned with the community's aspirations.

The engagement process has given residents a sense of ownership and involvement regarding the future of the town plaza as a community space. This will help instil a sense of town identity and community belonging among residents.

Engagement for the First and Third Series of the ROH Programme

Even before East Coast ROH, extensive public engagement had been carried out for the first series of ROH programme. For example, following the exhibition for the first Punggol ROH exhibition in 2007, further public events and competitions were held to update the public on its progress and to sustain interest.

In May 2008, HDB organised the "Shaping My Punggol" Exhibition to showcase ROH updates for Punggol. It featured the Punggol Story, the Punggol Waterway Concept and key milestones since the plan's unveiling. During this event, two exercises involving private consultants and the general public were launched:

a) Punggol Waterway Landscape Master
   Plan Design Competition (for professionals)

This competition sought ideas from design professionals to realise the vision of "Green Living by the Waters" along the Punggol Waterway with new sustainable development concepts and features.

b) "Call for Ideas" Exercise

This engagement exercise sought ideas from the community to help shape development along the Punggol Waterway, build public support and encourage a greater sense of ownership of the ROH plans for Punggol.

As part of the engagement, school workshops were conducted, to share the ROH plans and gather fresh ideas from students.

In December 2008, HDB held a "Punggol Waterfront Housing Design Competition" to garner fresh ideas for waterfront housing. The winning design created by

Focus group discussion with students.

Group8asia and Aedas was adopted for the first waterfront housing parcels: Waterway Terraces I & II. These were launched in 2010 and 2011 respectively and completed in 2015. The design of these first waterfront housing parcels sets a benchmark for other housing developments along the waterway.

Engagement for the Third Series of ROH Programme

For the third series of the ROH programmes in Pasir Ris, Toa Payoh and Woodlands, HDB adopted a ground-up approach by consulting the residents the early stages of the planning. Residents from the three ROH towns were invited to participate in focus group discussions. A total of 11 focus group discussion sessions were conducted, involving some 400 residents and community stakeholders from the three towns. Residents—some as young as 17 years of age; others up to 81 years of age—participated in the sessions, putting forward their own ideas on what they would like to see in their town.

Early engagement allows opportunities for co-creation of ROH proposals with residents and stakeholders.

Such focus group discussions helped HDB refine the plans for each town, ensuring that the improvements would benefit residents of all ages. The finalised plans took into account the local context, distinctive character and specific requirements of each town.

Public engagement continues to play a key role in HDB's efforts to rejuvenate Singapore's housing estates. It is vital that the rejuvenation plans implemented are relevant to the residents, and take into account their views and suggestions. As part of the ROH programme, more public engagement sessions will be held, to keep residents abreast of ongoing progress and future plans.

Town-Level Rejuvenation

Seoul's Local Community Planning

- Seoul Community Plans incorporate unique needs and characters of local neighbourhoods.

- The Community Plans serve as coordination platforms for different layers of urban plans, as well as various government departments at the city and local district levels.

- Citizen Groups are recruited to participate in the local community planning process, balancing the government-led plans with a bottom-up approach.

Seoul's Strategic Urban Regeneration Plan

- Urban Regeneration Plan addresses areas of urban decline, in the context of slow growth environment in Seoul.

- The Plan emphasises sustained public communication and engagement, and the need for urban regeneration through consultation, pilot demonstrations and public education.

- Urban Regeneration Support Centers are set up by SMG to offer a range of channels for the public to provide feedback on urban regeneration plans.

Singapore's Remaking Our Heartland (ROH)

- ROH aims to rejuvenate young, middle-aged and mature HDB housing estates through continual and concerted efforts, in response to the evolving needs of residents.

- Inter-agency coordination is key to the preparation and implementation of integrated plans that build on each town's distinctive character.

- HDB has increased the emphasis on public engagement over the three ROH programmes announced so far. Focus group discussions were conducted in the early stages of planning for latest series of towns, to help HDB refine the plans according to community needs.

CASE STUDIES

Neighbourhood-Level Planning

Neighbourhood planning is one of the most impactful platforms with which to involve communities in shaping their built environments. The scale of a neighbourhood—larger than individual households or apartment blocks, but smaller than a city—allows for more intimate exploration of local issues with residents, while providing scope for members of a community to meaningfully relate with each other over common interests and concerns.

Both Singapore and Seoul have introduced dedicated programmes for neighbourhood-level planning. In Singapore, residents have been given an increasingly active role in influencing how mature public housing towns and estates—originally planned and implemented by the government—could be improved, based on local needs. Programmes like the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP) and Building Our Neighbourhood's Dream! (BOND!) have been introduced to encourage residents to actively participate in realising their aspirations for their neighbourhoods.

Seoul's approach focuses not only on physical outcomes of neighbourhood-level improvements, but also the nurturing of social bonds as part of the neighbourhood-planning process. For example, the cornerstone of Seoul's *dong*-level Community Planning process and its Residential Environment Management Programme (REMP) is the creation of a core group of residents who will be actively involved in, or even lead, local planning processes. Through community-building efforts, these residents will eventually sustain neighbourhood rejuvenation efforts beyond the official programme's lifespan.

Seoul
Dong-Level Community Planning

Background

The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) had established a variety of platforms—such as the Urban Regeneration Plan (URP) and the Resident Self-governing Committee (RSGC)—for residents to gather to address local concerns. However, these arrangements had some drawbacks: the scope of the programme was often too broad for meaningful community engagement, and the plans drawn up were too technical for the public to understand. The extent of resident participation and their decision-making powers were also limited.

To overcome these issues, *Dong*-Level Community Planning was introduced in 2015 to provide a platform for residents to freely discuss their local agenda and develop solutions specific to each *dong*. To support such activities, each *dong* office, the front-line administrative agency in the neighbourhood, had to build a close, cooperative relationship with its residents. The goal of *Dong*-level Community Planning is more than just to fix existing issues—it is to enhance the local community's capabilities.

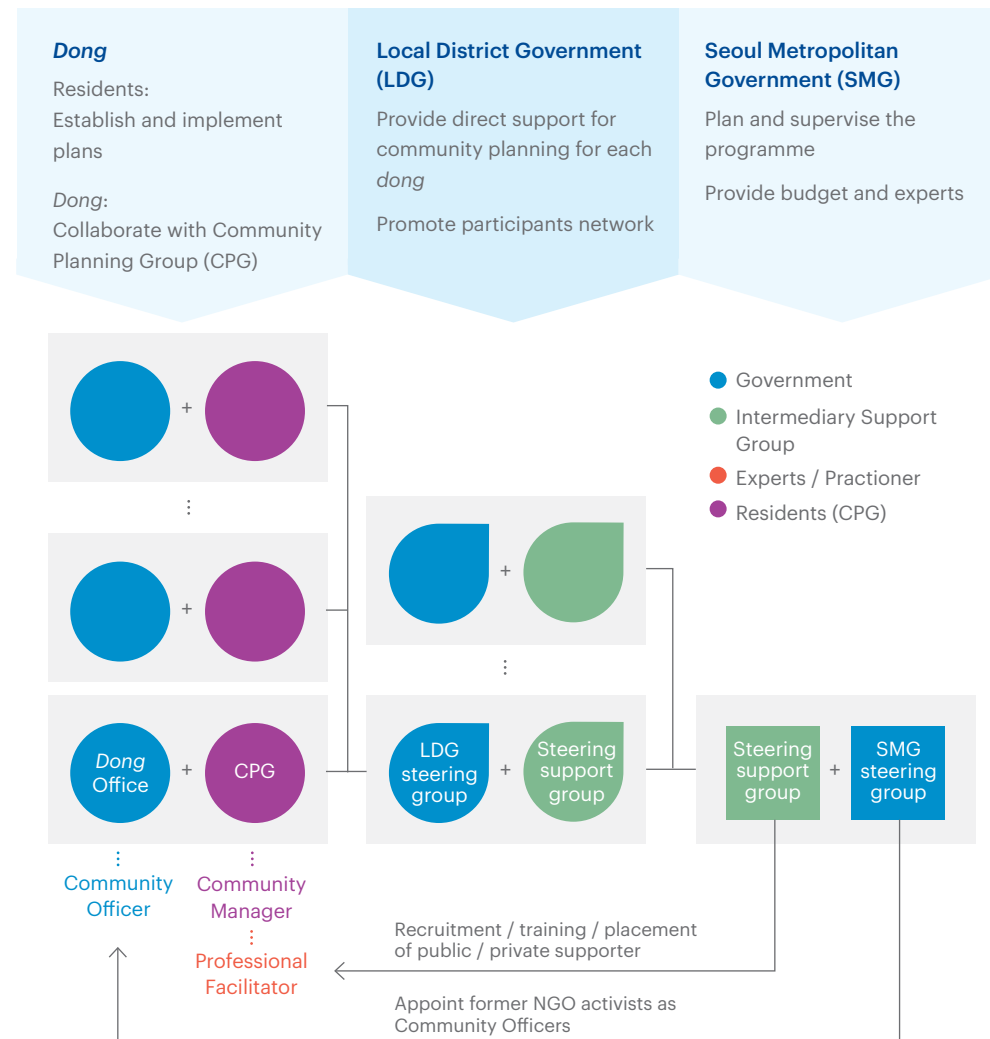### Executing *Dong*-Level Community Planning

The SMG initiated the *Dong*-Level Community Planning process as a pilot project. A city-wide selection committee, comprising LDG public officials and planning experts from the private sector, was tasked with selecting *dongs* suitable for the community planning process. Selection was based on community-planning needs and the level of interest of each respective *dong* office. Each selected *dong* would receive KRW 8.5 million (USD 7,500) to implement plans generated from the process. Planning and execution was to take 18 months. In 2015, 14 *dongs* from four LDGs were selected to try out this process.

How *Dong*-Level Community Planning Works, and Who Participates

Under the programme, the SMG provides funding and the necessary professional expertise to the LDGs and monitors all projects. Administrative steering groups from both the SMG and LDG work with a Community Planning Group (CPG) from each *dong*. The CPG is a voluntary organisation of 100 or so residents, who draft and implement the *dong*-level community plans by themselves. The SMG also engages non-government activists as "Community Officers", assigned to each *dong* to support the community planning process closely, to coordinate between the CPG and *dong* office and resolve conflicts within the CPG.

Roles of Participants for *Dong*-level Community Planning

Dong

Residents:
Establish and implement plans

Dong:
Collaborate with Community Planning Group (CPG)

Local District Government (LDG)

Provide direct support for community planning for each *dong*

Promote participants network

Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG)

Plan and supervise the programme

Provide budget and experts

- ● Government
- ● Intermediary Support Group
- ● Experts / Practioner
- ● Residents (CPG)

Dong Office + CPG

LDG steering group + Steering support group

Steering support group + SMG steering group

Community Officer / Community Manager / Professional Facilitator

Recruitment / training / placement of public / private supporter

Appoint former NGO activists as Community Officers

Dong-level Community Planning Process

Preparatory

4 months
- SMG establishes the community planning process (select *dong*, hire experts, and allocate budget).

Organisation

5 months
- SMG and LDG establish Community Planning Group (CPG) through meetings with residents, and create sub-groups in CPG based on local issues.
- Planning experts provide basic training for CPG members.

Planning and Decision-Making

6 months
- CPG conducts survey of local communities, identifies agenda, draws up plans.
- CPG conducts town hall meetings involving at least 1% of residents to share ideas and carry out prioritisation of local agenda.

Implementation

6 months
- CPG discusses Action Plan in greater detail.
- CPG secures funds for implementation in addition to initial grant of KRW 8.5 million from SMG.
- Residents undertake required actions directly or through partnership with LDG.

Monitoring

1 month
- SMG conducts review of all activities carried out over the 18 months or so.

Members of the Community Planning Group engaged in discussion session facilitated by Community Officer in Yangpeong-dong.

Creating a *Dong*-Level Community Planning Group

In July 2015, Community Officers dispatched to 14 *dongs* met with resident leaders to explain the *Dong*-Level Community Planning process, determine a local agenda and set up a CPG. Promotional posters and banners were put up on every street corner. Leaflets and application forms were distributed to households. While many applicants who joined the Group were referred by their neighbours (44%), a substantial number of applicants (23%) did so in response to the promotional campaign. This reflects the residents' strong desire for community-level participation.
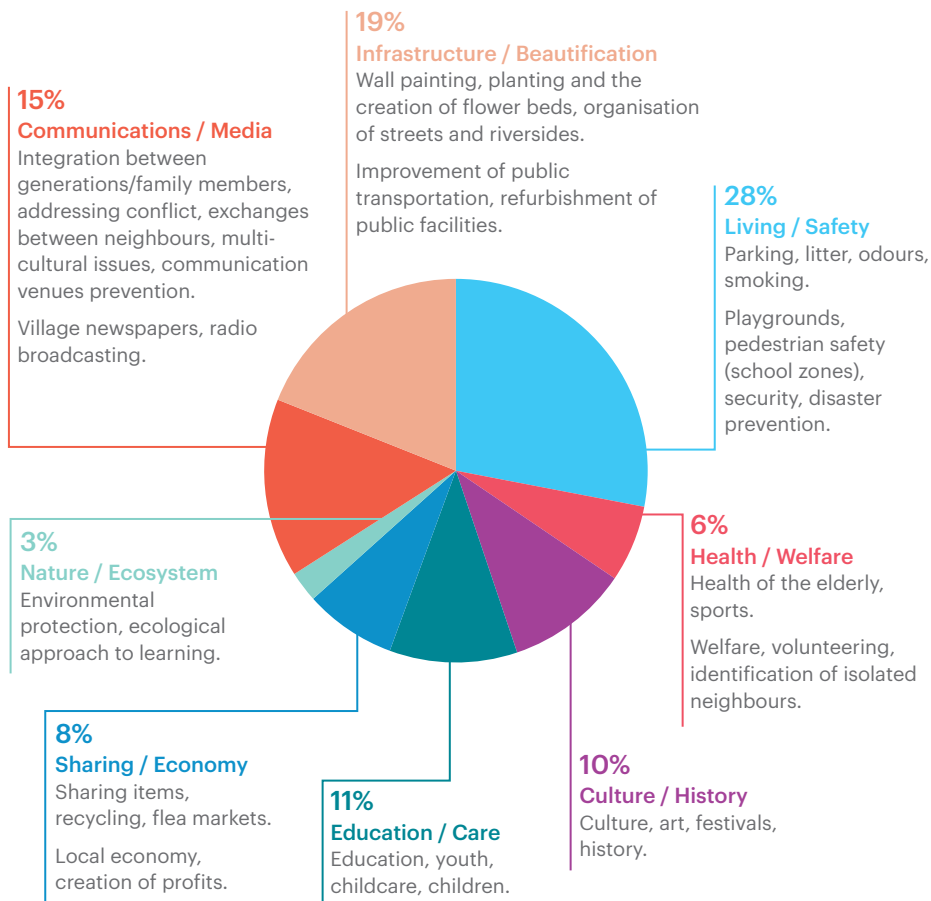
On average, each CPG consists of 75.6 persons, lower than the 100 persons indicated in the SMG guidelines. Nevertheless, this was deemed to be sufficient for community-planning purposes. The CPGs were also more inclusive, with more women and young residents volunteering, compared to previous community initiatives which tended to attract more males and senior citizens.

Establishing *Dong*-Level Community Planning

Instead of a traditional, professional planner-led process, in which a vision is followed by the development of action plans, the 6-month *dong*-level planning process generated a vision based on action plans which had already been developed according to local needs. The CPG's first activity was a site study to investigate the status of local communities, local issues and resources. Based on the results, each subdivision under the CPG established a planning agenda and drew up relevant action plans. Once these agendas and action plans had been detailed, the entire CPG gathered to determine the vision of the community-planning process.

The CPGs from the 14 participating *dongs* came up with 158 agenda items and 235 action plans. The action plans were categorised under eight subject headings which include: living/safety (27.7%), urban infrastructure/beautification (18.7%) and communications/media (14.9%), among others. Agenda items affecting the daily lives of residents accounted for 61.3% of the plans.

Categorisation of Action Plans by Subject

19%
Infrastructure / Beautification
Wall painting, planting and the creation of flower beds, organisation of streets and riversides.

Improvement of public transportation, refurbishment of public facilities.

15%
Communications / Media
Integration between generations/family members, addressing conflict, exchanges between neighbours, multi-cultural issues, communication venues prevention.

Village newspapers, radio broadcasting.

28%
Living / Safety
Parking, litter, odours, smoking.

Playgrounds, pedestrian safety (school zones), security, disaster prevention.

6%
Health / Welfare
Health of the elderly, sports.

Welfare, volunteering, identification of isolated neighbours.

3%
Nature / Ecosystem
Environmental protection, ecological approach to learning.

8%
Sharing / Economy
Sharing items, recycling, flea markets.

Local economy, creation of profits.

11%
Education / Care
Education, youth, childcare, children.

10%
Culture / History
Culture, art, festivals, history.

Town Hall Meetings

Since the outcomes of *Dong*-Level Community Planning could affect an entire community, there needed to be broad consensus that could also reflect the views of those who did not directly participate in the process. The CPGs published brochures so residents could view the plans in advance, and distributed them through town hall meetings.

The town hall meetings were organised in a festive manner for residents to enjoy, instead of being narrowly focused on the process. During these town hall meetings, a video clip of the planning process was presented, and members of the subdivisions also explained to residents what had been planned.

In the town hall meetings of mid-2016, residents in 11 *dongs* voted to endorse their respective planning agendas. Some 7,730 residents, accounting on average for 2.7% of the total population in each *dong*, cast their votes. While this participation rate is not high, it is unusual to see this degree of consensus among Seoul citizens on matters other than political elections.

Outdoor town hall meeting held in Banghak 3-Dong.

Residents attending town hall dialogue in Nowon-gu Sanggae-1-dong.

Implementing the Plan

Notably, the activities of the CPGs' various subdivisions were sustained by new participants in the action phase of implementation, which took place from June to November in 2016. With SMG support largely discontinued at this stage, there was a slight dip in CPG subdivision activities in each *dong*. Nevertheless, the continuity was sustained and the vitality of the activities did not wane. Interestingly, Siheung 5-Dong saw a sharp increase in the number of CPG meetings held during the action phase.

Securing resources was key to implementing Community Planning outcomes. The CPGs from various dongs secured budgets for 167 action plans (69.3%) through a variety of means, including funding from the SMG and LDGs.

Some of the projects implemented include a sidewalk expansion, child-safe routes to school, and a no-smoking campaign. Overall, 80.9% of the action plans were implemented: a significant result, demonstrating that by having residents initiate these plans themselves, the community had improved its capacity to solve problems.

Outcomes of *Dong*-Level Community Planning

Between September and October 2016, a survey of 665 residents from 14 community planning groups was conducted. Of the respondents, 63.2% were generally satisfied with the planning process, and 57.3% indicated interest to participate again.
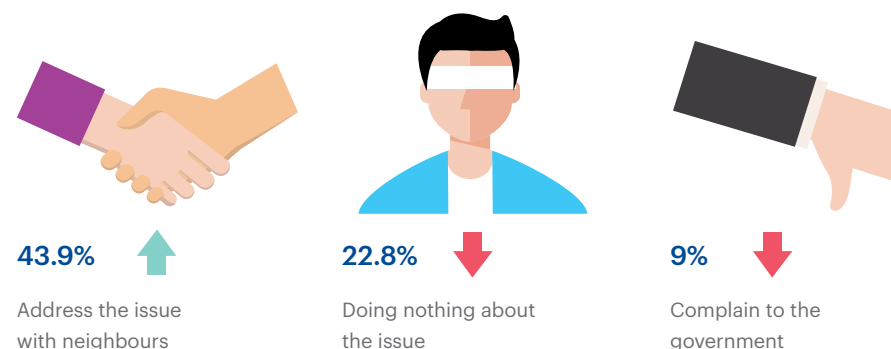
The survey results showed that the Community Planning process had helped improve the level of social support among neighbours, and had enhanced the willingness and confidence of the community to solve local problems without turning to the government. In addition, the relationship between *dong* offices and local residents had improved significantly: responses indicating that "the two parties trust each other" increased from 40% in earlier surveys to 65.4%.
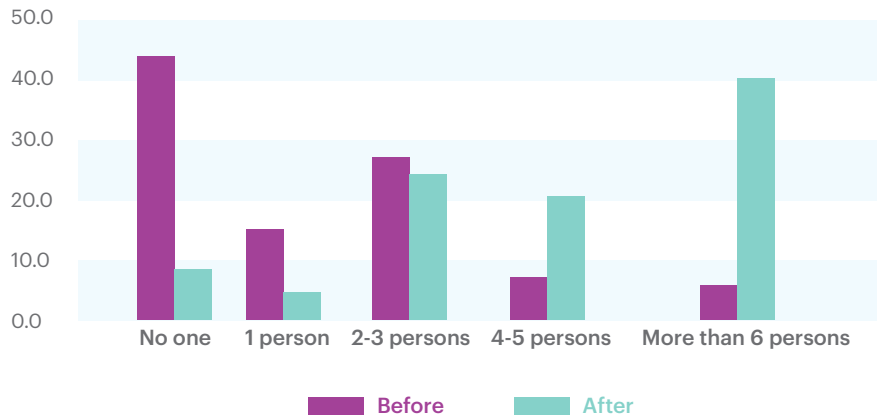
Impact of *Dong*-Level Community Planning

Level of Social Support Amongst Neighbours

How many neighbours do you talk to on a regular basis?
(indication of social recognition)

44.3%
No. of people who answered 'at least 11'

How many neighbours could you turn to for support in times of trouble?
(indication of social support)

35.5%
No. of people who answered 'no one'

33.3%
No. of people who answered 'at least 6'

Approach to Addressing Issues in Daily Life

43.9%
Address the issue with neighbours

22.8%
Doing nothing about the issue

9%
Complain to the government

Social Support (persons)

	Before	After

To gauge the level of private-public cooperation more accurately, a ladder of participation[6] survey was conducted, according to the six stages of the community planning process—Mobilisation, Informing, Consultation, Placation, Partnership, Delegated Power. Residents were asked which best described their degree of participation. After the *Dong*-Level Community Planning, participants who described their participation as "mobilisation" (residents attending town hall meetings but not involved in actual decision making) decreased by 37.9%; responses for "partnership" (residents having the ability to affect decisions made by the *dong* office) went up by 37.0%. This shows a significant impact of the community planning process in encouraging participation.

Conclusion

The *dong*-level community planning process offered residents the opportunity and means to address their own local issues by themselves. The driving force behind its success was the effort of common citizens in each community.

The SMG is preparing to connect the community planning process with relevant policies such as Participatory Budget Systems and Urban Regeneration in 2017. The focus remains on building up residents' capabilities to cater to their local needs.

6   In 2012, Seoul was the first large local government in Korea to adopt a Citizen Participation Budgetary System. Of the approximately USD 20 billion in the annual city budget, citizens are now able to decide how USD 50 million should be utilised. In 2013, USD 42 million was spent on 120 projects proposed by citizens.

Seoul
Residential Environment Management Program (REMP)

Background

From the early 1980s to the 2000s, the rejuvenation of older, substandard residential areas in Seoul generally involved full-scale demolition of existing neighbourhoods, followed by the development of large-scale apartment complexes to increase urban housing capacity and promote economic growth. Urban redevelopment was based on a market-driven model: property owners, construction corporations and the real estate industry actively funded and shaped residential developments, with the government playing a facilitative role. This redevelopment approach had a negative impact on existing community ties and small businesses.

In recent years, Seoul residents have become increasingly involved in neighbourhood regeneration plans initiated by the government. Residents have come together to form communities on their own, even in areas where they had not engaged in collective action before. The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) has been supporting this ground-up interest by dispatching "urban regeneration activists" to designated programme areas. These 'activists' are from NGOs engaged by SMG to promote various support programmes, such as low-interest loans, consulting services, subsidised housing redevelopment and assistance schemes for house repair.

The Residential Environment Management Program (REMP) is a neighbourhood improvement initiative introduced by SMG to preserve, renew, or restore existing residential areas according to the community's needs. The initiative promotes social cohesion within the community through its restorative processes.

The REMP has replaced the approach of full-scale demolition and reconstruction as a means of urban redevelopment, while reinforcing other urban regeneration programmes that support participation from local communities. Since its launch in 2012, when legislation was passed allowing SMG to secure a budget for the initiative, the REMP has set the direction for how local communities can carry out urban regeneration in a sustainable manner.

Projects implemented under the REMP include: improving road conditions, building community facilities such as playgrounds and community centres, reconstructing physical infrastructure such as roads, water and sewage systems, setting up public parking lots, parks and closed-circuit television (CCTV) installations. By the end of October 2015, SMG had completed REMPs in 13 areas of which, 10 have newly-built public facilities managed by local residents.
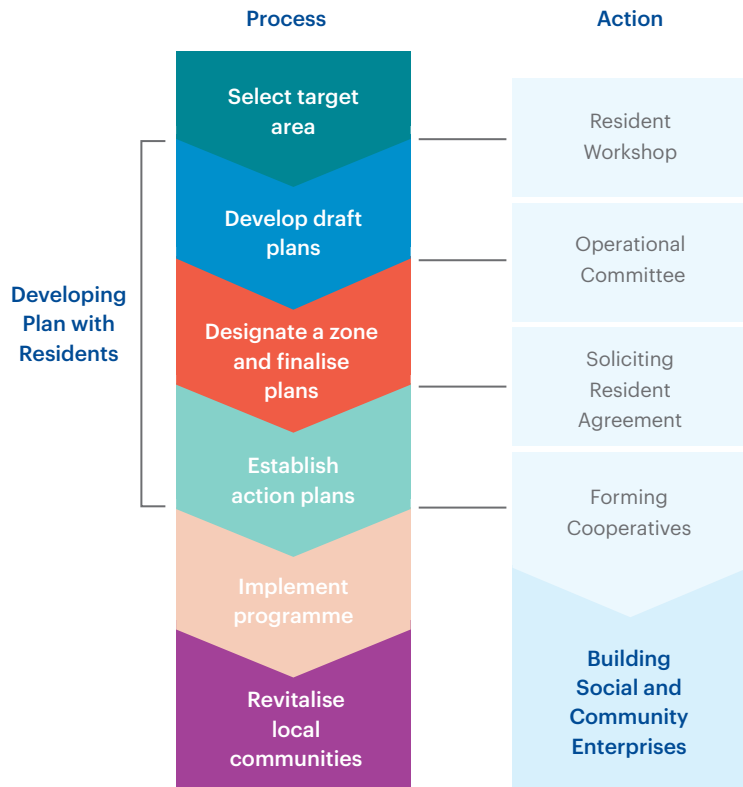
REMP: Process and Features

The REMP places existing residents at the centre of its three-step planning process:

1. Identifying areas in need of regeneration;

2. Developing a neighbourhood improvement plan with residents;

3. Executing the project.

After the proposed infrastructure projects have been completed, the REMP continues to support the community through organisations such as resident councils. Set up as part of the REMP process, resident councils involve resident representatives in organising activities for community participation during the planning process.

REMP Process

Process	Action
Select target area	Resident Workshop
Develop draft plans	Operational Committee
Designate a zone and finalise plans	Soliciting Resident Agreement
Establish action plans	Forming Cooperatives
Implement programme	Building Social and Community Enterprises
Revitalise local communities	

Developing Plan with Residents

Initiatives implemented under REMP

Infrastructure:
Roads, parks and parking lots.

Public Housing:
Combined with Community centres.

Public Amenities:
Community centres, public childcare centres, book cafés and gyms.

Loans to Improve Housing:
Low-interest loans for renovations and new construction by land/house-owners.

Improvements to the Environment:
Removal of boundary walls of developments, "Green parking" (shared parking between residents), green rooftops and street signage.

Safety Features:
CCTV, lights, security alarms and reduction of blind spots to improve safety.

Training and Educational Activities:
Training programmes on value of citizen participation and citizen engagement methods conducted by the Urban Regeneration Academy.

Form Resident Communities:
Resident councils, workshops with residents.

Target Areas and Implementation

Several types of areas are eligible for the REMP:

1. Areas with a concentration of detached or multi-household residential buildings, where non-residential land use is generally prohibited;

2. Areas where an improvement plan has been drafted or scheduled under other programmes without legally binding authority, or areas where an improvement plan is being promoted or drafted;

3. Areas where 50% or more of the land owners agree with the improvement plan.

Neighbourhoods submit their interest in the REMP for SMG's approval. The SMG prioritises areas where a large-scale redevelopment plan (such as new high-rise apartment complexes) has been cancelled, or villages with historically significant features (such as an ancient city wall).

As of August 2015, the REMP has been approved in 58 areas within Seoul, with 12 projects completed.

Locations of Neighbourhoods under REMP

Public-sector programmes completed:
13 areas

Public-sector programmes under construction:
7 areas

Projects under planning stage:
26 areas
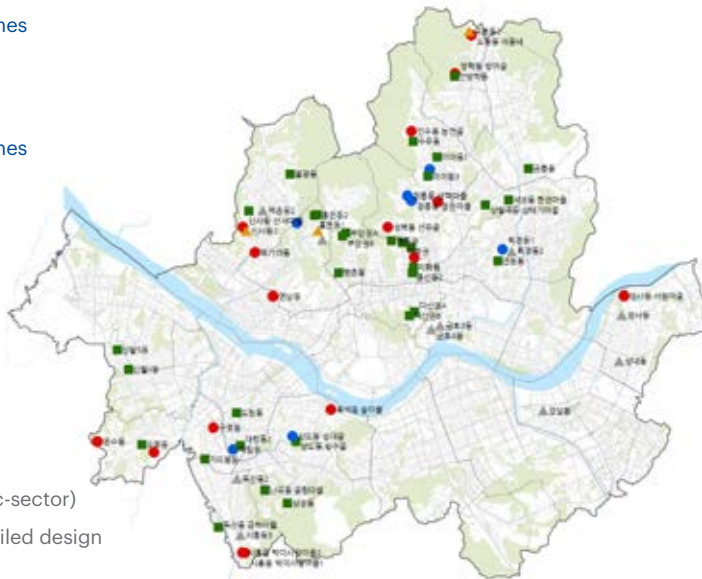
● Completed (public-sector)

● Construction/detailed design underway

■ Improvement plan under development

▲ Candidate area

Workshop conducted for REMP in Seonyugol, Seongbuk-Gu.

Case Study: REMP in Seowon Village

Located at the eastern end of Seoul, Seowon Village is an old, small residential area known for being an "idyllic village in the city". Spanning an area of 32,882 square metres, the village has 64 buildings and a population of 345 (156 households). The infrastructure in the village was developed as part of a settlement improvement program in 1979. Most of its residents have lived in the village since then, and have formed a closely-knit community.

After several decades, public infrastructure in the village needed improvement. There was enough road capacity, but not enough parking space. This led to drivers parking on the street, obstructing both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. While the two-storey pitched roof houses with private garden

yards gave the village a unique character, these yards were fenced off by dilapidated walls that were up to two metre is height, turning the adjoining streets into dark alleyways. The construction of the adjacent Amsa Bridge, which began in April 2006, had also degraded the living environment.

In 2009, the SMG launched a prorgamme called "Making Liveable Communities"—a public contest inviting residents to submit proposals to revive their neighbourhoods. The proposal from Seowon Village was eventually selected by SMG. While the "Making Liveable Communities" initiative has evolved into the present REMP, support for the revitalisation of Seowon continued through the programme's transition.

Han River

Amsa Bridge & Amsa IC
(under construction)

Seowon Village

Amsa ARISU Water
Treatment Center

Amsadong
Prehistoric
Dwelling Site

Amsa Historic &
Ecological Park

Seowon Community
Center and Playground

Symbolic
Street Gallery

Main
Entrance

Green Zone

New Access
Road

Seowon MalGil
Street Imporvement
Area

1 Storey
2 Storeys
3 Storeys
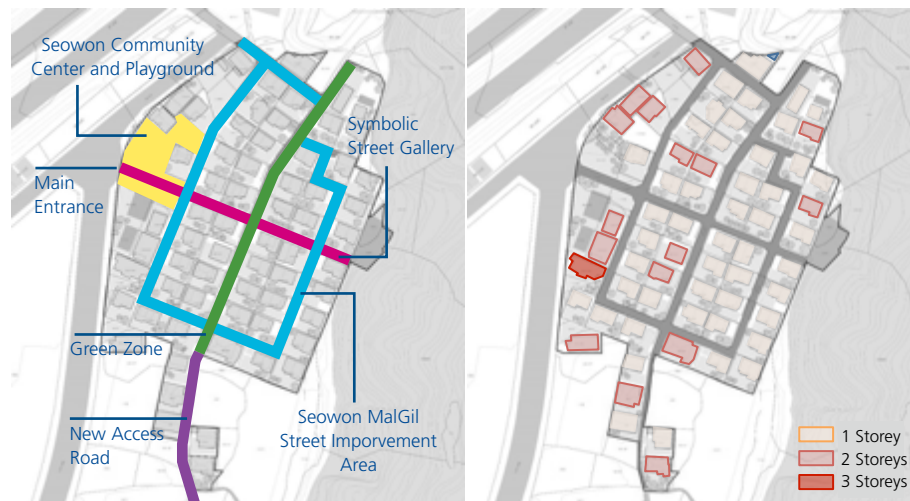
A Resident-Led Process

Seowon Village had earlier formed its own community organisation to address local issues, such as nuisances arising from the nearby construction of Amsa Bridge. When the REMP process was initiated, the Seowon community organisation, respected for its local knowledge and leadership, continued to play a leading role.

SMG planners and local district *gu* government set up preliminary meetings with the community organisation to encourage resident participation in the REMP and to gain a better understanding of local concerns. These preliminary meetings were followed by a presentation to all residents, to officially announce the programme and seek consensus to proceed.

Residents elected members of the original Seowon community organisation to the Resident Council, which would guide resident involvement and work with the local district government and city planners. The council was a rich source of local information for planners: they advised on the historical context and circumstances of the community, and gathered the opinions of local residents throughout the planning process.

With the Resident Council in place, workshops were held with residents to establish a plan. Developed and implemented by the SMG officials, these workshops also involved the local district government and relevant experts. The process consisted of:

1. Conducting a community survey;

2. Developing the community's future vision;

3. Holding workshops on design guidelines for parks, community centres, parking issues and residential properties.

The Seowon residents actively participated in the entire process: from the more abstract envisioning exercise to detailed aspects such as designs for public spaces and private houses. The workshops employed different methods (e.g., community mapping, envisioning games with visual aids and model-making) to help residents better understand the issues. Sensitive issues were presented to the residents for consensus and the outcomes incorporated into the plan.

"It takes a Village": A Collaborative Approach to Solution Making

The REMP process facilitated a collaborative approach involving both residents and public officials, to create unique solutions for neighbourhood improvement that were tailored to local needs. Possible solutions were assessed from both the professional and community perspectives. Rigorous debates were held among residents to establish community consensus. The following are examples of how issues in Seowon Village were addressed as part of the REMP process.

Public Parking

Early on in the project, Seowon Village residents explicitly demanded the provision of a public parking lot. One suggestion was to use a section of the northern road that would be left vacant after Amsa Bridge was completed. Another suggestion was to develop an underground parking space in the new green buffer zone.

The SMG reviewed these ideas from both technical and administrative perspectives. Public officials prepared easy-to-understand sketches and diagrams to discuss the issue with residents. Ultimately, neither option was included in the REMP. The first option was deemed to be impractical as the road space was too confined and locating the parking

New Children's Playground

New Seowon Community (and Senior) Center

New Community Park (Public Space)

New Landmark and Roundabout at the Entry

CCTV Installations

New Symbolic Mauel Gallery Street

Improved Green Zones

Improved Street Conditions at Seowonmal-Gil

New Access Road

REMP enhancement plans for Seowon Village.

lot there could adversely affect village traffic. The second idea was too costly and complex. The matter was deferred for consideration in the longer term.

While discussing parking issues, traffic problems on the section of the northern road was brought to the attention of the group. After discussions with a traffic expert,

a roundabout on the north access road was incorporated into the plan and eventually built to facilitate better traffic flow. Although the residents' suggestions were not taken up and parking issues remain unresolved for the time being, it was an opportunity for the community to understand how abstract planning considerations feed into implementation.

Breaking Down Boundary Walls to Create Shared Parking Lots

Most residents in Seowon Village parked their cars on the street, as their homes could not accommodate private parking spaces. However, street parking obstructed access for both vehicles and pedestrians and made the streets unsightly.

It was clear from the beginning that the residents wanted property boundary walls along the street to be demolished to create proper parking spaces. SMG officials proposed to transform the side-yards into parking spaces with a single car access point for two houses.

Most residents agreed to the proposal but wanted greater flexibility in the guidelines, to take into account individual circumstances while ensuring consistency in the overall design. City officials took heed of these concerns and incorporated such flexibility into the design guidelines.

Voluntary Height Restrictions

According to planning regulations, buildings in Seowon Village could be built up to three storeys (11 metres) high. During a design workshop, one of the residents suggested that buildings should be restricted to no more than two storeys. As most of the houses in Seowon Village are two storeys, increasing the height to three storeys could compromise the existing living environment by increasing the population and traffic volume, and limiting the amount of sunlight in houses and yards. However, other residents argued strongly that height restrictions were a violation of private property rights.

A town hall meeting was held for residents to vote on the issue. A surprising 85.7% of voting households agreed to impose a two-storey, eight-metre building height restriction. This demonstrated that the community, after sufficient discussion between residents and experts, had reached a consensus on their vision for the village.

Other Facilities
Letterbox, doorplate, garbage bin, etc.

Neighbourhood Building

Fence and Gate
Height, design, etc.

New Green (Shared) Parking Space

New Parking Space
Design, choice of materials, etc.

Front Lawn

Car Access Prohibited

Low and Open Fence
Height less than 1m

Hedge Plants
Height less than 1.5m

Low and Open Gate
Height less than 1.2m
Width less than 3.0m

below 0.5m
below 0.5m

Proposed guidelines for residential developments.

Construction of Public Facility
(Neighbourhood hall)

Street Improvement
(Green zone)

Individual Household Improvements
(Yards, walls)

Improvements in Seowon Village after implementation of REMP.

Conclusion: The Impact of the REMP in Seowon Village

Seowon Village witnessed a transformation of its roads and streets into safer, more open public spaces. Most of the high boundary walls were replaced with low see-through walls to reduce blind spots. With cars now being parked within the yards, the streets became friendlier to pedestrians. The lower walls brought greenery in the front yards into view which enhanced the overall appearance of the village. Social interaction between residents increased, as did security, thanks to CCTV installations. A community centre was constructed, to be used for festivals, neighbourhood meetings, exhibitions and other important community events. Residents now run and manage a small library in association with the children's playground. Through active community leadership and participation in the neighbourhood improvement process, the village was able not only to set a clear vision for itself, but also to cater to resident needs.

The REMP has brought about three distinct changes in the community. The first is the establishment of a Resident Community Committee—a formal operating organization with articles of association and a leader elected by the residents themselves. The committee runs the community centre, holds monthly neighbourhood meetings, discusses local issues and helps resolve disputes.

The second change is the catalytic effect of public improvement efforts: residents have increasingly and voluntarily improved their private houses and yards: since the REMP, the landscaping of 47 yards have been upgraded, with 15 repaired and renovated.

The third change is the residents' pledge to manage their residential environment on their own. Issues that citywide regulation could not easily handle—such as parking, waste management, road maintenance— have been set forth in a resident treaty to ensure compliance. This pledge requires mutual trust between residents; whether it is maintained will be a test of the strength of social capital in Seowon Village. This will be an interesting aspect of the REMP that the SMG will want to observe.

"

INTERVIEW WITH

YONGIM KIM
Resident, Seowon Village

Tell us about yourself.

I moved into Seowon Village in 2002. Before having children, I worked for over 10 years as part of the advisory staff to a company chairman. Now I work as an art director and English teacher. I started to participate in community work as the secretary for the Seowon Residents Community Committee (Seowon RCC), which was founded in 2011. Ever since residents settled in this area, there has been a local leader (known as a "*dong-jang*") who takes charge of resolving town issues. I became the resident leader in 2012. Nowadays, I work with the chair of Seowon RCC to manage and oversee issues arising in Seowon Village.

Why did Seowon embark on the REMP?

Seowon Village is located near military zones and green belts, so development has been very restricted. When it was time to improve its decades-old infrastructure, including waterworks, sewer system, parks and roads, Gangdong *gu* district suggested applying for the Residential Environmental Management Program (REMP).

At first, residents objected strongly because they did not trust the government. We formed a "Seowon Development Council", to have our own town representatives communicate with the government. After an in-depth discussion with officials, the Resident Council members made site visits to assess the pros and cons of the programme. When the members decided that the REMP would benefit the community, they took an active part in persuading the neighbours to participate. Council members not only persuaded fellow residents during monthly meetings, but also visited each household to listen to their concerns and explain the benefits of the programme. Eventually, all the residents agreed to participate in the REMP.

What was most impressive or effective about the citizen involvement process?

One of the most impressive things that worked for Seowon Village was that throughout the whole process, residents, experts and the local district *gu* government made decisions together. We, the residents, met among ourselves frequently to understand our various demands and to settle conflicting interests. This regular interaction was very effective in building a consensus.

The Resident Council had 34 official meetings among residents, ten workshops with the public officials and experts, and met with residents regularly through town meetings held twice a month to share updates on the progress. Community leaders played a significant part in facilitating successful citizen involvement. The council chair invested much effort and time to meet with public officials in-charge of the project, to make sure residents' decisions were implemented. The head of the town women's committee and the resident leader took pains to persuade residents to reach a consensus. Later, our town established "Seowon Community Committee"—an official non-profit organisation incorporating Seowon Development Council & the Women's Committee—to ensure effective operation of community works.

What factors led to the REMP's success in Seowon Village?

I think trust, a sense of community and good communication between residents were the keys to our success. Of them all, trust was the most important. Trust between the residents grew even stronger, as we took more pains to listen to each other's opinions and problems and tried to resolve these issues collectively as a community. Such experiences have served as the foundation for our community to actively and collectively participate in maintaining our town's environment, even after the REMP project's completion.

How can the REMP be improved?

It would be more helpful to the community if there was a channel to communicate regularly with the government and with experts, even after the end of the project. It's also important to find a steady source of funding to cover the expenses needed in managing the community and the environment. In our case, we receive fees from those who make advertisements or television shows in our neighbourhood to use as community funding.

Moreover, I am concerned how to keep engaging residents in community activities, because such activities require time, money and effort. So the long-term challenge would be to create an environment that encourages the young residents to participate on their own.

Why do you think citizen involvement is important in improving the residential environment?

Citizen involvement is crucial because residents are the ones who know best what the community needs. Without well-developed citizen participation, you cannot expect to see good outcomes.

At first, we tended to think of personal gain, instead of the benefits to the whole community. But as we tried to persuade people, we learned to talk to one another and began to analyse whether what we wanted was for ourselves or for the community. This process helped mature our communication. Logic and reason are not enough to determine what happens in a community. Some part of community work is governed by emotion. So without trust and an understanding of feelings, it is extremely difficult to reach a consensus. This is why community work needs time above all else. One reason why the Seowon REMP was such a success was that the citizen involvement was sustained over a long term.

I think citizen involvement has helped our residents become more affectionate towards our community and has increased mutual trust among residents. Such experiences motivate us to maintain the current environment and keep the momentum going.

Singapore
Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP) and BOND! Pilot Project

Introduction

Besides developing new homes and estates and towns, an important role of the Housing & Development Board (HDB) of Singapore is to refresh and revitalise homes and neighbourhoods. One initiative through which this is carried out is the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP), which focuses on precinct-level improvement works. First introduced in August 2007 as part of HDB's Remaking Our Heartland initiative[8], the NRP is a significant component of HDB's efforts to renew Singapore's older towns.

The NRP was initiated following recommendations from the Forum on HDB Heartware in 2007,[9] which called for greater flexibility in the provision of amenities, the optimisation of facilities across adjacent precincts and more consultation with residents. During forum discussions, participants had raised the need for greater local consultation on the design of the precinct and its facilities. A key feature of NRP is the active engagement of residents in shaping their living environment. Such engagement encourages greater interaction and participation among residents, offering them more avenues to suggest improvements for their neighbourhood.

As each NRP project comprises two or more contiguous precincts, facilities in adjacent precincts can complement rather than duplicate one another. This approach allows resources to be pooled in order to provide facilities that might otherwise be too costly to build.

Programme Features

A key objective of the NRP is to upgrade the quality of older HDB estates, bringing them closer to the standards of the latest HDB developments. This rejuvenates the estate while keeping the established communities intact. Blocks built before January 1996, which have not benefited from earlier upgrading programmes,[10] are eligible for the programme. The NRP budget of $4,700 per flat is fully funded by the government.
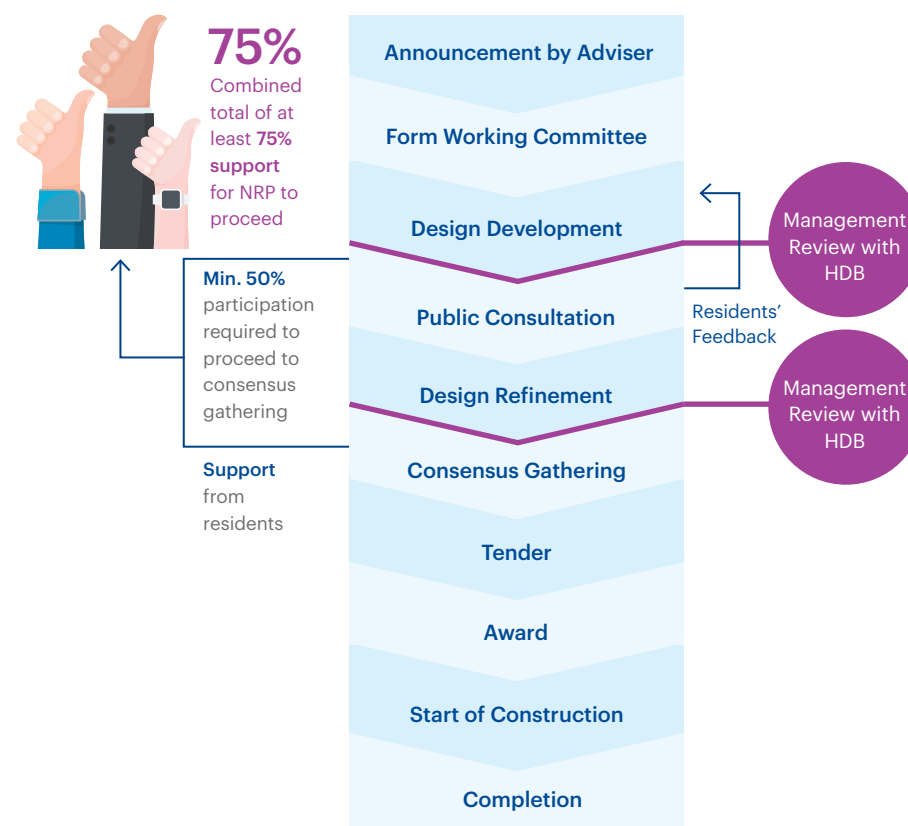
As a ground-up programme, NRP is implemented by the Town Councils (TCs), and overseen by HDB. The TCs determine the type and extent of improvements to be carried out, after consulting residents. HDB then reviews the design proposals to ensure that they are practical and functional. Some common NRP improvements proposed include: covered linkways, drop-off porches, playgrounds, fitness stations, jogging tracks, hardcourts and seating areas or study corners at void decks.

The NRP may also include the repainting of blocks, or repair works for spalling concrete, crack lines, apron drains and apron floors. These are integrated with the TC's routine maintenance programme, enabling the blocks and precincts to be more comprehensively enhanced.

Flowchart of NRP Process

75%
Combined total of at least **75%** support for NRP to proceed

Min. 50% participation required to proceed to consensus gathering

Support from residents

- Announcement by Adviser
- Form Working Committee
- Design Development
- Public Consultation
- Design Refinement
- Consensus Gathering
- Tender
- Award
- Start of Construction
- Completion

Management Review with HDB

Residents' Feedback
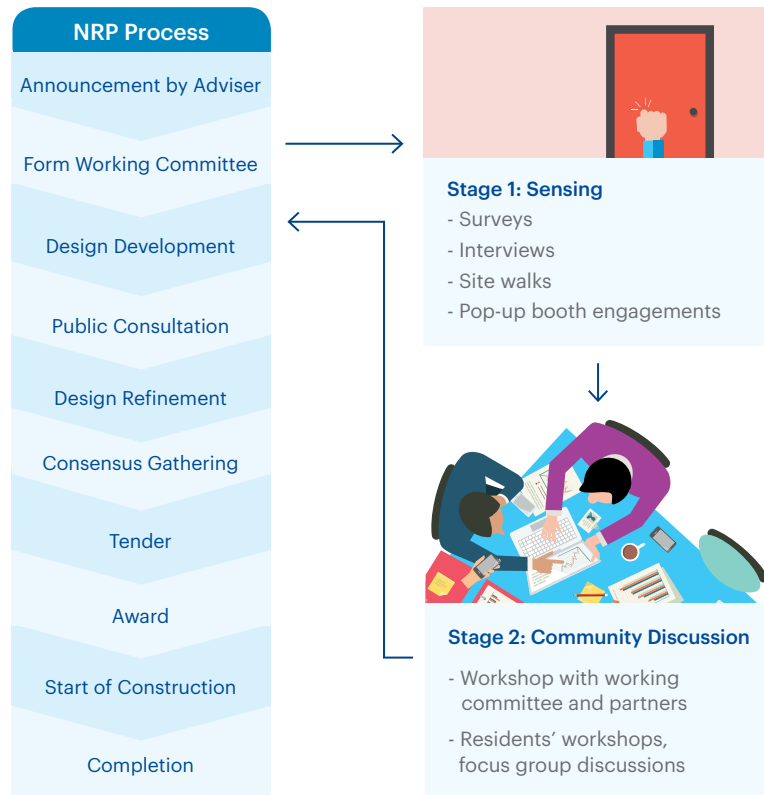
Management Review with HDB

The NRP Process

Once an NRP project is announced, a Working Committee (WC) is formed to oversee the project to completion. The WC, which is chaired by the Adviser to the Grassroots Organisation[11] or an appointed representative, comprises TC representatives, grassroots leaders from the Citizens'

Consultative Committee (CCC), Resident Committee members, a design consultant appointed by the TC, HDB officers and residents. The WC's roles are: to gather resident feedback on their preferences for improvements, explain the benefits of the NRP, and garner support for the design proposals.

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8   Please refer to Chapter 4.2 on more information about ROH.

9   The "Forum on HDB Heartware" was launched in Nov 2006 to engage residents for fresh views and ideas on ways to build strong and cohesive HDB communities.

10   Prior to the introduction of the NRP, there were upgrading programmes such as the Main Upgrading Programme (MUP), Interim Upgrading Programme (IUP) and IUP Plus to rejuvenate the older HDB estates.

11   The Adviser to Grassroots Organisations (GROs) is part of the set-up of the Peoples' Association and his role is to provide guidance to the GROs to help the PA achieve its mission of building and bridging communities to achieve one people, one Singapore (note: extracted from PA website on GROs).

Flowchart of BOND! Engagement Model together with NRP Process

NRP Process

Announcement by Adviser

Form Working Committee

Design Development

Public Consultation

Design Refinement

Consensus Gathering

Tender

Award

Start of Construction

Completion

Stage 1: Sensing
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Site walks
- Pop-up booth engagements

Stage 2: Community Discussion
- Workshop with working committee and partners
- Residents' workshops, focus group discussions

The TC then undertakes a consultation process with residents in two phases: Public Consultation and Consensus Gathering.

The Public Consultation phase is an active engagement exercise to gather resident views on the preliminary design proposals. It may be carried out through town hall meetings, block parties and mini-exhibitions, dialogue sessions, straw polls or other means. Feedback gathered in the course of public consultation is considered by the WC and, if feasible and if budget allows, incorporated in the final design proposals.

Once the design proposal is finalised, it is presented to residents at the Consensus Gathering phase for support. If at least 75% support from residents is obtained, the TC will proceed to call a tender to carry out the NRP improvement works.

As of 31 March 2017, 128 projects involving 186,000 flats across Singapore have been announced for the NRP. Of these announced projects, 71,000 flats across 47 completed projects have benefited.

HDB organised a World Café-styled focus group discussion with NRP working committee, grassroots leaders and various agencies.

In 2012, HDB explored the Building Our Neighbourhood's Dreams! (BOND!) project together with the NRP in Bukit Panjang. BOND! seeks to deepen existing engagements involving residents in deciding the type of community activities and infrastructural upgrades they would like to have. Under BOND!, residents are engaged to co-create infrastructural solutions and programmes that they believe would bring them closer to one another. BOND! also helps identify and nurture community "champions", who will go on to sustain the selected programmes or lead new ones in the longer term.

Case Study—Neighbourhood Renewal Programme at Bukit Panjang

Blocks 401 to 435 in Bukit Panjang estate, comprising a total of 2,709 flats, were selected for the NRP in 2012. Together with the NRP, HDB's Building Our Neighbourhood's Dreams (BOND!)[12] initiative was also piloted in the estate.

First, the HDB carried out a sensing survey to determine the residents' areas of interest. Understanding this would would inform HDB and the TCs on the community spaces and facilities needed to support the organisation of the community activities. The sensing survey was conducted through void deck booths, survey forms mailed to all households and online surveys. The survey results revealed that residents were most interested in the following themes, in order of priority: Clean and Green Environment, Healthy Living, Caring for the Needy and Elderly, Bonding over Food and Hobby Groups, and Preserving Precinct's Identity and Memories. The survey also highlighted the three most preferred items for the NRP: covered linkways, lift surveillance systems and drop-off porches for this project.

After the survey, HDB organised a World Café-styled focus group discussion with the NRP working committee, grassroots leaders and various agencies. This was to determine the facilities required, as well as the potential community programmes based on the

residents' interest areas. Representatives from government agencies, namely, the Health Promotion Board (HPB), People's Association (PA), the National Environment Agency (NEA) and National Parks Board (NParks) attended the discussion.

Following the World Café, HDB conducted a Residents' Workshop with residents who had indicated their interest to participate earlier. They elaborated on their interest areas, and the improvements they wished to make for their living environment. These in-depth discussions helped to prioritise the activities and facilities that residents desired as part of the NRP.

Besides the workshop discussion which was attended by 100 residents, HDB also put up notice boards at the void decks thereafter for the wider community to offer their suggestions for the NRP. This helped the team to reach out to another 500 residents and the ideas collected via the notice boards supplemented the ideas generated in the discussion.

At the workshop, the residents also deliberated over the design considerations and locations of the top 8 preferred NRP improvement works. Feasible suggestions were included in the work scope for the NRP. The initial NRP design proposal was then exhibited to residents to invite further comments and feedback. More than 70% of the residents indicated their support for the proposals during the Public Consultation. Following refinements based on comments and feedback during the Public Consultation, the final design was presented to the residents in a public exhibition at the Consensus Gathering. In total, more than 80% support for the NRP was garnered.

Of those residents who had participated in the Residents Workshop and open house, 97% said they were more excited about the upcoming facilities due to their participation; 62% felt that they had benefitted from the chance to have a say in their neighbourhood; 18% said they got to understand the concerns and ideas of other fellow neighbours; another 18% remarked that they got to know neighbours from the workshop.

Conclusion

Surveys carried out for past completed projects found that 94.6% of residents surveyed were satisfied with the NRP and expressed high satisfaction with the public engagement exercises conducted. In addition, residents were satisfied overall with the improvement works done, and with execution and housekeeping during the construction of improvements. A majority of the residents felt that improvement works carried out under the NRP had helped to create more opportunities for neighbourly interactions.

With an emphasis on active participation, the NRP helped to realise resident aspirations for their physical living environment while BOND! has instilled a stronger sense of ownership and helped strengthen communities ties. Its success illustrates the large impact that public engagement can have on residents' satisfaction with the environment they live in. This underlines the importance of continuing to actively engage residents in planning their neighbourhoods and finding opportunities to work with Town Councils, non-profits and grassroots to better involve the residents.

Neighbourhood-Level Planning

Dong-Level Planning

- *Dong*-level community planning was introduced in 2015 to develop solutions specific to each *dong* through building the local community's capabilities.

- The *dong*-level planning process generates a vision based on action plans developed by resident participants according to local needs, instead of a traditional professional-planner-led process in which the vision is followed by Action Plans.

- The *dong*-level planning process helped improve the level of social support amongst neighbours, as well as trust between residents and the local government.

Residential Environment Management Programme (REMP)

- REMP is a neighbourhood improvement initiative introduced by SMG to preserve, renew or restore existing residential areas according to the community's needs.

- Resident councils set up as part of REMP process involve resident representatives in organising activities for community participation.

- After completion of proposed infrastructure projects, the REMP continues to support the community through resident councils.

Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP)

- NRP focuses on precinct-level improvement works to provide greater flexibility and optimisation in provision of amenities across adjacent precincts.

- NRP encourages active engagement of residents in shaping their living environment through a process of public consultation and consensus gathering with residents.

- NRP creates opportunities for decision making at the local level, through implementation by local Town Councils, and setting up of working committees consisting of local advisers and grassroots.

Major Developments in Existing Communities

Major developments in cities can have a significant impact on existing communities in the vicinity. In such cases, robust public engagement processes help planners and developers to better understand and account for community needs. Collaborating with stakeholders early in the planning process can lead to greater shared ownership of project outcomes, more successful implementation and better results for all.

In Seoul, the Gyeongui Line Forest Park benefitted from a commitment to public engagement in the design and management phases of a major urban rejuvenation initiative. In Singapore, the Rail Corridor project has involved one of the most extensive public engagement exercises in the city-state. Our Tampines Hub, another example from Singapore, demonstrates how community input and an integrated, multi-agency approach can drive innovative development in a residential town centre.

Seoul
Gyeongui Line Forest Park

Background

The Gyeongui Line Forest Park area has been an important transport axis leading to and from Seoul, since the Joseon Dynasty. A major artery for industrial and economic growth until the 1950s, the name Gyeongui-Seon ("*seon*" meaning "line") was given to the railway line connecting Seoul and Shinuiju (in today's North Korea) in 1906. With the decline of freight transport in the 1980s, and the growth of commuter traffic due to new large-scale town developments in the north-western part of Seoul, the railroad's role has had to be reviewed.

In 1999, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Korea Rail Network Authority (KRNA)[13] announced plans to modernise Gyeongui-Seon, to relieve traffic between Seoul and the northwestern metropolitan area. The popular decision to convert the Gyeongui Line into a double-track underground route sparked discussions on how the space above ground should be utilised. A series of national debates concluded with the consensus to turn the space into a public park. In 2009, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) announced its park development plan as a basis for further engagement with stakeholders including the landowner KRNA, local district governments and local communities. Following an agreement in 2010, the Gyeongui Line Forest Park was developed by the SMG in two phases and completed in 2016 at a cost of KRW 45.7 billion (about USD 40 million).

Overview of the Park

Gyeongui Line Forest Park is 6.3 kilometres long, and covers an area of 102,008 square metres. It consists of seven park sites and four station building sites, with one site reserved for future development. The park is highly accessible: approximately 100,000 residents live within a ten-minute walk to the park, while up to one million residents live within a five-kilometre radius of it. Hongik University Station, the busiest station near the park, serves up to 150,000 passengers every day.

The park was developed in two phases. The first phase, covering a 0.76-kilometre long stretch, was completed in February 2012; while the second phase, covering the remaining 3.13 kilometres of the park, was completed in May 2016. Because each phase was carried out under a different Mayor, they demonstrated different approaches to implementation—the first phase being more focused on delivering project outcomes, the second focusing more on community engagement.

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13   *KRNA is the national railway operator in South Korea, and the landowner of railway land.*

Phases of the Gyeongui Line Forest Park project.

Phase 1: Government-Led Implementation

Objectives and Concepts

From December 2008 to February 2011, the SMG worked out a master plan for Gyeongui Line Forest Park, with four main objectives:

1. Develop the park to serve as a major greenway connecting the city centre with other green areas to the west of the city, namely Yongsan Park, Han River Park and the World Cup Park. The Gyeongui Park would also connect universities, sports fields and other surrounding amenities through a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths.

2. Integrate the park with adjacent communities, which used to be cut off from the railroad. Unique community spaces for each section of the park were planned and a wide range of programmes were proposed to rejuvenate existing neighbourhoods.

3. Reflect the historical and cultural value of the Gyeongui Line by creating landmarks along the park. This would also add rhythm and points of interest to the narrow, linear park.

4. Create opportunities for residents to be actively involved in the planning, building and maintenance of the park, including citizen-led management of the park.

The initial design of Gyeongui Line Forest Park divided the park into four sections based on local characteristics, ranging from historical to ecological areas.

Characteristic of each section along Gyeongui Line Forest Park.

Outcome of Phase 1: Insufficient Investigation and Engagement of Residents

An initial 27 months of planning provided the basic direction and detailed designs for the Gyeongui Line Forest Park. However, site studies and resident engagement activities were not comprehensively carried out. The construction of the underground line meant that thorough site investigations could not be conducted and design details could not be finalised until negotiations between the SMG and the KRNA were completed in December 2010.

The SMG-led planners did not establish a comprehensive system to engage and involve residents in the planning process. Resident engagement consisted only of a questionnaire and a basic survey, as well as one public hearing where design details were explained.

Inadequate site investigation and limited engagement had consequences which emerged only after the SMG, under newly elected Seoul Mayor Park Won-Soon, conducted a review of the Park's Phase 1 design, completed in February 2012. The review indicated that context and residents' input had not been taken fully into account: for instance, the provision of both walking trails and bicycle paths had left little space within the park to use for other activities.

Phase 2: Stronger Citizen Engagement and Design Improvements

For Phase 2, the SMG dedicated more attention to citizen engagement. Several platforms were set up to collect views from experts, park users and local residents, including public meetings, the Public Gyeongui Forum, and a user satisfaction survey on Phase 1.
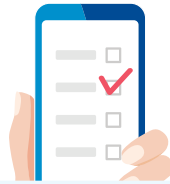
Recommendations Identified from Phase 2 Engagement
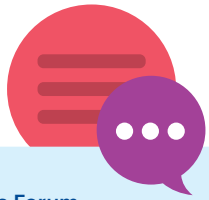
Gyeongui Public Forum

Historical and symbolic identity of Gyeongui Line.

Park development in line with changes in surroundings.

User Satisfaction Survey

All age groups favoured walking trails, green space and rest areas.

Users found the width of the walking trails adequate.

1

First Public Meeting

Park should mainly comprise walking trails and green space.

Bicycle and walking trails should be separated as overlap can pose safety issues.

2

Second Public Meeting

SMG should resolve noise issues in nearby residential areas.

Bicycle parks should be connected and access to them enhanced.

This engagement exercise helped the SMG identify three key areas for improvement. The first was to allow more flexibility in the park design by setting aside more open spaces for citizens to use for local festivals, cultural events, community activities and so on. Bike paths and new facilities were minimised; only basic infrastructure (pedestrian entrances, walking trails, safety facilities, or trees bordering trails) was provided. Other facilities for the park would be implemented incrementally, based on community needs and requirements.

The second improvement was to integrate the park with adjacent development projects. For example, the design for new station buildings called for extra space adjoining the park. Wider access points were introduced to enhance connectivity to surrounding areas. Alleyways previously cut off by the railroad were connected through the new park.

Park Development Strategy: Enhancing Integration with Surrounding Areas
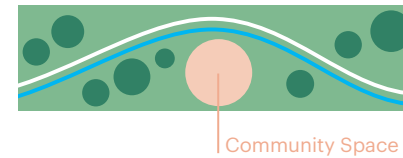
Planning and Design

Resident hearings, open design.

Park Construction

Park infrastructure, empty lots.

Water Path   Pedestrian Path
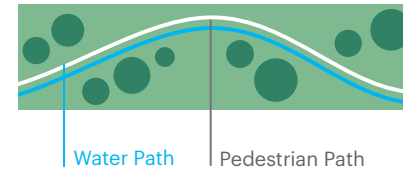
Management

Completion through citizen involvement, local festivals and cultural events

Community Space

The third insight was to enhance the ecological and historical value of the park. The improved designs integrated greenery and waterways with surrounding forest parks, and introduced streams, wetlands and ponds created with groundwater from the subway as well as natural water sources. These natural elements provided residents with places of relaxation.

The designs also incorporated the Gyeongui Line's unique historical character. With most of the tracks moved underground, it was impossible to preserve the full railroad. Nevertheless, innovative design approaches, such as refurbishing some railroad segments and platforms as park facilities, served to evoke memories of the old railway.

With more thorough site investigations and more robust public engagement, Phase 2 of the Park was better able to reflect the needs of resident users and express the distinctive identity of the former railway site.

Citizen-Led Park Construction and Management

Besides planning and design, citizens were also involved in several activities for the park's construction and management. A public park-naming contest was held in May 2012,

Gyeongui Line Railroad ➡ **Empty Railroad Site** ➡ **Gyeongui Line Forest Park**

Transformation of Gyeongui Line Railroad into Gyeongui Line Forest Park.

from which the name "Gyeongui Line Forest Park" was eventually adopted. A community preview of the park was held on Arbor Day in April 2012, which saw part of the park site turned into a community flower garden, helping to improve the environment in the neighbourhood during construction. Arts and cultural groups set up street markets after the park was opened, bringing local vendors and residents together.

This renewed civic energy motivated local communities to set up a new non-profit organisation to assist in managing the Park. Launched on the same day as the park's official opening, "Friends of Gyeongui Line Forest Park" comprises local residents, businesses, artists, civic groups and experts. During the park's opening ceremony in May 2016, the group offered activities focusing on citizen engagement and interaction, in lieu of the usual formalities. This proved to be a huge success, with some 12,000 citizens participating.

Private-Public Collaboration in Park Management

Following the Park's completion, the SMG established the Gyeongui Line Forest Park Council as an official park management body, with representatives from both private and public sector. It consists of a civic council overseeing the park's general management, and four local councils managing different sections of the park. Co-headed by the manager of the park office and a resident, the civic council's nine members include representatives from the local councils, city councillors, civil servants and experts. The four local councils, which collect resident feedback and facilitate collaboration with park management, are made up of some 40 members: local residents, shop owners, community activists and representatives from local schools.

The main focus of the Gyeongui Line Forest Park Council is to select and implement

citizen-centric projects. A rapid increase in park usage has created issues such as littering, noise, and damage to facilities. To address these issues, the Council sought citizen views to identify solutions. This led to a number of initiatives, including:

- "How to Use the Park"—a campaign promoting social norms for park use;

- "A Park for Trees and People"— educational eco-tours to manage and reverse the damage sustained in some park areas; and

- "Campaign for Interactive Communication and Culture for the Park"—an initiative involving local residents and businesses in civic activities such as recycling, traffic safety exercises at crossings and a conflict-resolution service.

Need for More Effective Citizen Involvement and Communication: Always-Market

Despite generally positive outcomes, Gyeongui Line Forest Park gave rise to some conflicts between the authorities and citizens over planned developments. In January 2013, when park design improvement efforts were still underway, civic activists, artists and residents came together to discuss how ground level space could be used for the benefit of citizens in the interim before development commenced. The group, later known as the "Civic Gyeongui Forum", proposed and was commissioned to run a citizen-led marketplace for social enterprises.

Always-Market, the group's venture on the temporary site, was a mix of social enterprises, a weekend flea market and a farmers' market. It soon expanded to include a book cafe, novelty foods, cultural events, performances, and workshops.

Always-Market quickly grew into a popular alternative to other public spaces in Seoul.

However, the Always-Market management were surprised in October 2014 when they received a letter from the Mapo District Office terminating their contract, even though they had been commissioned to operate until January 2015. They were told the marketplace had to close, because a development project was slated to begin on the site in 2016. Always-Market managers argued that an alternative site ought to be found, since the market space had come to be valued by citizens. Both Mapo-Gu and the KRNA—representing government ownership of the land—declined.

Always-Market responded by refusing to close down, resulting in a deadlock. It began an anti-development campaign, calling publicly for support based on the social value of Always-Market. In February 2016, the non-profit organisation Public Space for Citizens (PSC) was set up, backed by some 40 civic groups and 1,000 citizens supporting the Always-Market cause. PSC organised discussions, education sessions, a film festival and other cultural activities to oppose the new development. In the spring of 2016, however, Always-Market had to close and has remained closed since. In November 2016, the PSC issued a "Declaration of the 26th *Gu* District", claiming to be victims of gentrification.

Conclusion

Gyeongui Line Forest Park is an example of successful urban rejuvenation. In 2015, Gyeongui Line Forest Park was ranked second by citizens on the list of Top 10 News in Seoul; it also won a Ministerial Award in the Parks section at the 2016 Korea Land & Landscape Design Competition. While citizen involvement was not approached in an organised, systematic manner at the

Always-Market operating on temporary site that is planned for developments.

Flea market, food and beverage stalls as well as performances at Always-Market.

beginning, resident feedback continued to be duly collected, distilled and integrated further down the line in the design process. The SMG's commitment to community engagement was demonstrated by its willingness to spend one and a half years longer than planned to engage citizens in a more comprehensive manner for the second phase. Input from both civic organisations and individual citizens have improved the park's design. The Park Council, a private-public collaboration, has been effective in maintaining and managing the park.

However, there is still room for improvement in community engagement. The Always-Market case suggests a need for new approaches to citizen involvement and

private-public collaboration, particularly concerning future developments, even as other issues begin to emerge. Gentrification is increasingly prevalent in all sections of Gyeongui Line Forest Park. As visitor-numbers increase, residential buildings are being converted to commercial facilities, resulting in a hike in property prices. More visitors could also mean more nuisance, inconveniencing local residents. These issues cannot be resolved through intervention or regulation by the public sector alone. The government will have to continually engage and work with residents to achieve a better balance between development and local community needs.

Singapore
Rail Corridor

Background

The Rail Corridor is a 24-kilometre long continuous strip of railway land spanning the north and south of Singapore. This strip used to connect Singapore and Malaysia. On 1 July 2011, the rail terminus shifted from Tanjong Pagar in the south to Woodlands in the north, and the railway system between the two stations ceased operations. The former railway lands, previously owned by Malaysia, were reverted to the Singapore Government.

Threading through a diverse range of landscapes, including residential, commercial, industrial and recreational areas, the Rail Corridor holds great potential in connecting communities, enhancing local features and inspiring discovery. Some one million residents live near the Rail Corridor. Thousands more work in the eight industrial estates and major business park along its route. There are also 58 schools, more than eight major parks and open spaces, and several sites with heritage significance in the Rail Corridor's vicinity.

LAND USE TYPES SURROUNDING RAIL CORRIDOR

24-kilometre stretch of the Rail Corridor.

Stretch of the Rail Corridor alongside the Pang Sua Canal.
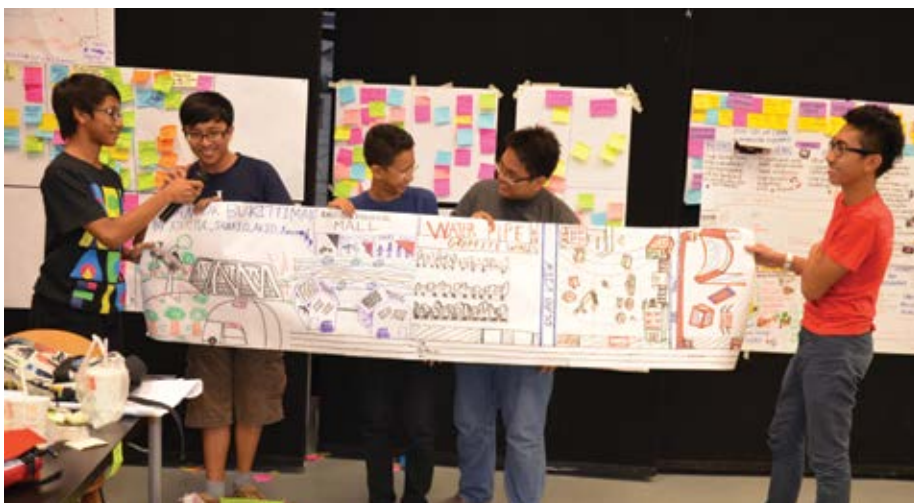
Engagement with students through visioning workshops.

Public Participation in the Rail Corridor Planning

Impetus for Engagement

The announcement of the railway's closure created significant public interest. In October 2010, the Nature Society of Singapore, a non-government organisation, submitted a proposal to the government, lobbying for a continuous "green corridor" be preserved

to prevent the Rail Corridor from being parcelled out for development and hence disappearing into the urban landscape. Citizens also campaigned online via initiatives such as the "We Support the Green Corridor in Singapore" Facebook page and dedicated blog posts, to garner support.

Noting the widespread public interest in the Rail Corridor's future, the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA),

Singapore's planning agency, saw an excellent opportunity to work with different stakeholders to plan for a unique community space.

Public Engagement Process

In terms of outreach, scale and approach, the Rail Corridor project is one of the URA's most extensive public engagement exercises to date. To create a shared vision for the Rail Corridor, URA sought ideas from diverse segments of society, including interest groups, nature and heritage enthusiasts, sports associations and event organizers as well as a wide spectrum of local residents, including the elderly, families and the physically challenged.

The engagement effort spanned five years, ranging from a national overview of how Singaporeans envisioned the Rail Corridor to detailed consultations with local communities living near the Corridor as to how they could develop a sense of ownership and actively contribute to future activities along the Corridor. Breaking new ground, URA engaged the public at a very early stage, even without a draft plan in hand. URA was determined to start with a clean slate so that they could truly co-create plans for the Corridor in close partnership with the community.

URA set three key objectives for the Rail Corridor's public engagement process:

- Foster a shared vision and ownership of the project through active community involvement and public participation in the planning process.

- Raise public awareness and get community buy-in for fresh, bold ideas to optimise land use while transforming the Rail Corridor into an inclusive community space, with greenery

and heritage as hallmarks of the Rail Corridor's unique identity.

- Strengthen community bonding through meaningful participation in a project of significance to all Singaporeans.

The public engagement strategy for the Rail Corridor comprised three phases:

First Phase: Soft Engagement (July to December 2011)

During the first six months after the former railway land was returned to Singapore, URA embarked on a soft engagement exercise.

From 1 to 17 July 2011, before track removal works began, the entire Rail Corridor was accessible to the public. This proved to be a popular move. A report in the Straits Times published on 3 July 2011 described the experience as "a scene Singapore has never witnessed; scores of people strolling along the railway tracks that run from Woodlands to Tanjong Pagar."

On 1 July 2011, a Rail Corridor website was set up to communicate directly with the public and to disseminate information quickly. The URA also hoped to gather ideas, offer the public a means to share memories of the railway, and educate the public on topics relevant to the Corridor. Despite initial concerns by the URA team, civic groups expressed support for the website, which received more than 1,000 hits on its launch day. An online forum was later added to let members of the public post and discuss suggestions or new ideas for the Rail Corridor. Some 500 suggestions were received over the six months via this platform and the "Rail Corridor" was adopted as the project working name.

The Rail Corridor Consultation Group (RCCG) was also convened in July 2011. NGOs

(Non-Government Organisations) such as the Nature Society of Singapore and Singapore Heritage Society, academics, and activists such as the founder of the "We Support the Green Corridor" Facebook page as well as Friends of the Green Corridor who would later rename themselves as Friends of the Rail Corridor, were brought together to contribute ideas and advise on how best to reach out to the public. They played a key advisory role at different stages throughout the engagement process.

It was clear from the feedback that URA had been receiving since July 2011 that many people wanted to contribute their ideas for the Rail Corridor in a more tangible way. Thus, to further encourage participation from the public, a "Re-Imagining the Rail Corridor" exhibition and a workshop by Friends of the Rail Corridor were held in October 2011. The URA also launched the "Journey of Possibilities" ideas competition on 30 November 2011. The RCCG members constituted the jury members of this Competition. More than 200 submissions from local and overseas participants were received by March 2012, of which 80 innovative entries were exhibited. Competition winners were invited to share

their proposals in an open public forum held in conjunction with the exhibition.

The general consensus from all the feedback received was that the Rail Corridor ought to remain a "green corridor" for recreational activities, although opinions differed on the exact form the Rail Corridor should take. Some suggested retaining it largely untouched as a nature trail while others would like to see it become a continuous 24-kilometre "bicycle commuter highway" or a venue for community events. There are also those who bemoaned the lack of amenities and had proposed that sensitively-designed developments be allowed along the Corridor to meet the need of users.

Second Phase: Active Engagement (2012 to 2014)

The URA broadened its engagement efforts from 2012 to 2014, reaching out to a more diverse range of stakeholders, including private sector event organisers, students and street artists.

On 2 March 2012, the Rail Corridor Consultation Group was expanded and re-named the Rail Corridor Partnership, to forge

Organised site visit to the Rail Corridor.

a closer collaboration between public sector agencies, interest groups, and individual members to support and promote the Rail Corridor as an inclusive community space.

To test the Rail Corridor's potential as a community space, event organisers were engaged and they were encouraged to use the Rail Corridor as an event venue. In April 2012, a fashion show, the Female and Nüyou Valentino Catwalk, was held as the first major event at the now disused Tanjong Pagar Railway Station. An 11-kilometre cross-country race called the Green Corridor Run was held for the first time on 27 Jan 2013, which turned out to be extremely

popular attracting more than 6,000 runners. Subsequent editions of the Green Corridor run attracted even more participants. Many other community events were also held along the Rail Corridor, including the Heritage Week events organized by the National Heritage Board at the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station and the Rail Corridor Resilience Trail commissioned by the Ministry for Culture, Community and Youth and the National Heritage Board as a trail walk for secondary school students.

Through a series of envisioning workshops, the URA reached out to more than 2,000 secondary and polytechnic students to find

Planning and Design Goals Distilled from Public Suggestions

out how the Rail Corridor could be relevant to the youth, and how it could foster a sense of place and memory in urbanized Singapore. Student proposals were exhibited to the public from 16 April to 15 May 2013.

In December 2013, URA collaborated with the National Arts Council and the local street artists to designate Rail Corridor space under the Commonwealth Avenue viaduct for street art. The space took on a life of its own as local street artists choreographed and activated the space with seed funding from the Arts Council. Several local and international urban arts events were held at the Rail Corridor Art Space, including Meeting of Styles 2014, Noise 2015 "Off the Rails Again" and Noise 2016 "Rail Collidoscope".

These engagements, which represented the hopes, aspirations, views and suggestions of the public, were distilled into a set of planning and design goals to guide the development of a Concept Master Plan for the Rail Corridor.

Third Phase: Feedback on Concept Master Plan (2015 to 2016)

On 18 March 2015, the URA launched the "Rail Corridor—An Inspired and Extraordinary Community Space" Request for Proposal (RFP), inviting both local and international design professionals to submit proposals to develop a Concept Master Plan and Concept Proposals to develop the Rail Corridor. The RFP winners were announced in November 2015 and their proposals exhibited to the public.

Meanwhile, URA made special provisions to reach out to different target groups for feedback on the winning ideas—particularly the majority of the Singapore residents who

might not have visited or been aware of the Rail Corridor even if they lived close by. URA simplified the winning Concept Master Plan, and exhibited it at community centres closer to residents who lived along the Rail Corridor. URA also conducted community workshops to gather these residents' views on the proposals. Seniors, young children as well as minority groups such as the physically challenged were invited to these workshops, and became "planners" for a day as they drew up master plans for stretches of the Rail Corridor where they lived, to illustrate how the Corridor could be inclusive and relevant to their needs.

This public engagement effort—of reaching out to the local communities along the Rail Corridor to gather feedback on planning proposals—was unprecedented in both extent and intensity. Questions posed to the communities during workshop included: "What types of trails and landscapes would you like to see along the rail corridor?", "What types of facilities and activities would you like to see at the node near your home?" and "How would you like to personally get involved and participate to realise some of the suggested ideas?"

More than 600 members of the public shared their views and suggested improvements regarding the winning designs. The eventual winning RFP consultants took the public feedback on board, to refine the Concept Master Plan for the Rail Corridor in 2016.

Looking Ahead

Following the public engagement and co-creation process, the URA began implementing small-scale projects to test some of the concepts that had emerged, to guide the future implementation of the Rail Corridor.

Engagement Profile:
Target Groups and Their Areas of Interest

Hobby Groups:
Gardening, dancing, etc.

Outdoor Groups:
Brisk walkers, cyclists, etc.

Persons with Disabilities:
Visually impaired, physically challenged.

Public Engagement

Families with Teenagers:
Family activities.

Families with Young Children:
Family activities.

Youth and Teachers:
Polytechnic and university students, etc.

Multi-generation Families:
Family activities.

Seniors (65+):
Active ageing, empty nesters, etc.

Test Track

It became clear through the community workshops held in 2016, that Singaporeans wanted the Rail Corridor to retain its signature rustic green character, while providing some amenities to make it more

accessible and inclusive to a wider segment of the population, particularly for the elderly, families with young children and the physically challenged. The URA has since constructed a 400-metre long test track on the Rail Corridor at Choa Chu Kang to test four different surface materials for their

400-metre long test track at Choa Chu Kang.

"look and feel" and durability. Since the completion of the test track in early June 2017, public has actively given feedback on their preferred surface material or how they can be improved for the future Rail Corridor trail.

Co-Creation Project—Access Parks

One of the design outcomes from the public engagement and refinement of the Concept Master Plan was the idea of an Access Park between the community and the Rail Corridor. These parks would provide "programmable" community spaces close to identified entry points to the Corridor. Local communities would be invited to contribute ideas and work with agencies to co-design and co-develop the park according to their needs. This, and other community-based initiatives, would provide a platform for community building that will strengthen social bonds and resilience in the communities adjacent to the Rail Corridor.

Implementation of a Four-Kilometre Signature Stretch

An exhibition was held in October 2017 to share preliminary design for the four-kilometre signature stretch, which is the first

phase of the Rail Corridor to be developed, and to demonstrate to the public that their feedback has been incorporated into the final plan. This four-kilometre section is located approximately midway along the 24-kilometre corridor, from the former Bukit Timah Railway Station to Hillview Road. The exhibition showcased the features and the characteristics of the four-kilometre stretch that will be implemented over the next few years.

Conclusion

The Singapore Rail Corridor is a good example of a major public space project where the planning vision and clear design objectives committed by the government provided the public with certainty that the strategy is to retain, if not enhance, the greenery and heritage values for public enjoyment. This in turn facilitated soliciting of ground-up views in a meaningful and constructive manner. The scale and depth of consultations also allowed the government to actively engage and collaborate with civil society and communities, and co-create an inclusive Corridor that will connect existing communities throughout its 24-kilometre length in a manner that its previous role as a rail line could not achieve.

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INTERVIEW WITH

TAN SEE NIN
Senior Director, Physical Planning
Urban Redevelopment Authority, Singapore

Ensuring Broad and Fair Public Engagement for the Rail Corridor

Co-creation means reaching out to develop a shared vision, and being inclusive so that as wide a segment of the population as possible can eventually benefit from our (the government's) plans—they are not just for those who are already familiar with the Rail Corridor, those who often have strong opinions about what can and cannot be done, or those who have already given voice to their views in the public realm. We need to hear more from others who are potential beneficiaries of the Rail Corridor but who may not even have visited the Corridor or voiced their opinions and suggestions for one reason or another.

Over several weekends in January and February, 2016, we conducted a series of community walks and workshops with a wide range of people, from the young to the elderly, families with kids and so on. On a number of occasions, we even brought in people on wheelchairs to explore a short stretch of the corridor.

After the walks along the Rail Corridor, we wanted the participants to share their experiences, and what they perceived and valued as important characteristics of the site that ought to be retained. When we talk about co-creation, what's very important is, first of all, to understand what do people care about in a place, and also whether there is broad consensus about what is important to everyone.

For instance, when we spoke to the Nature Society (of Singapore), they never did raise any concerns about safety, because they are used to being close to nature. But when we brought the elderly there, they saw all this tall grass around the Rail Corridor and were worried that something or someone might jump out at them from behind the vegetation. People

in wheelchairs had great difficulty negotiating the uneven earth trail and enjoying the place. In addition, while some people described the greenery as lovely and unique, others felt that the ubiquitous landscape could be monotonous and even a bit boring.

During the workshops, we discussed issues relating to security and accessibility, as well as how to strike a balance so that the Rail Corridor could be more accessible and welcoming to all while retaining its unique rustic character and charm. After a while, we got a clearer sense of what people valued, and what they are prepared to compromise. Their comments invariably pointed to how we could sensitively improve the Rail Corridor, so that it could become a more inclusive space for all. They also reaffirmed the importance of protecting the intrinsic qualities and attractiveness of the place, and where it might be necessary to give nature a helping hand to flourish.

On Co-creation and Reimagining the Rail Corridor

Artist's impression for Tiger's Garden by Oculus, an Australian landscape architecture firm.

The understanding of people's values about a place stood out with the Rail Corridor Ideas Competition—The Journey of Possibilities—held between late 2011 and 2012.

One of the winning proposals was to convert the Rail Corridor into a Tiger Enclosure! The "Tiger's Garden" was submitted under Extraordinary Ideas for a Public Space—one of the competition's five categories. The judging panel included renowned architect Khoo Peng Beng as Chairman and

members from the Rail Corridor Partnership. When it came to the final decision, it was very clear that everyone wanted the tiger idea to be number one!

Why did the Tiger's Garden proposal win despite being completely impractical? There was no way we would release tigers into the Rail Corridor. Practicality was not an evaluation criterion. To the jury, it was more important how people felt about the place and the potential it offered as an extraordinary public space. When one imagined tigers roaming about the Rail Corridor as exemplified in the submitted graphic, it sort of took one back in time as a child in one's own dream world, traipsing through a forest with a great sense of adventure, and immersed in romantic idealism of a wonderful place of surprise and discovery.

What we took away from this competition and subsequent engagement exercises were the values that people embraced: in this case, people wanted to retain a sense of mystique along the Rail Corridor; that there should always be elements of surprise, discovery and adventure; that it should not become a sanitised park or public space. These were to become the defining attributes of the Rail Corridor, and were eventually subsequently distilled in the form of the Planning and Design Goals in the RFP (Request for Proposal—An Inspired and Extraordinary Community Space) for the Rail Corridor.

In my view, co-creation of a public space can start by keeping an open mind to find out how people feel about the place, what makes sense to them, how it can meet their needs, and what role they can play to make the place a very special one for themselves and the community at large. There must be an emotional connection between the place and the community. Ultimately, the measure of success of a space, such as the Rail Corridor, depends on whether people, over time, will continue to see it as an endearing place to visit and enjoy; whether they will come with their family and friends and even bring overseas visitors to experience it as a unique part of Singapore.

Singapore
Our Tampines Hub (OTH)

The opening of Our Tampines Hub, Singapore's first integrated community and lifestyle hub.

Introduction

Singapore has developed a comprehensive system of community organisations and amenities integrated with the planning of public housing towns. These ranged from Residents' Committees Centres at the precinct level, to the Community Centres at the neighbourhood level. However, with an increasingly sophisticated population, there is a growing need for larger community developments to provide greater variety of services and amenities for the residents.

Our Tampines Hub (OTH) is Singapore's first integrated community and lifestyle hub. It is a town-level community node catering to the evolving lifestyle needs of over 220,000 residents living in Tampines and in the surrounding neighbourhoods in eastern Singapore. With a site area of 5.7 hectares and floor area of 120,000 square metres,

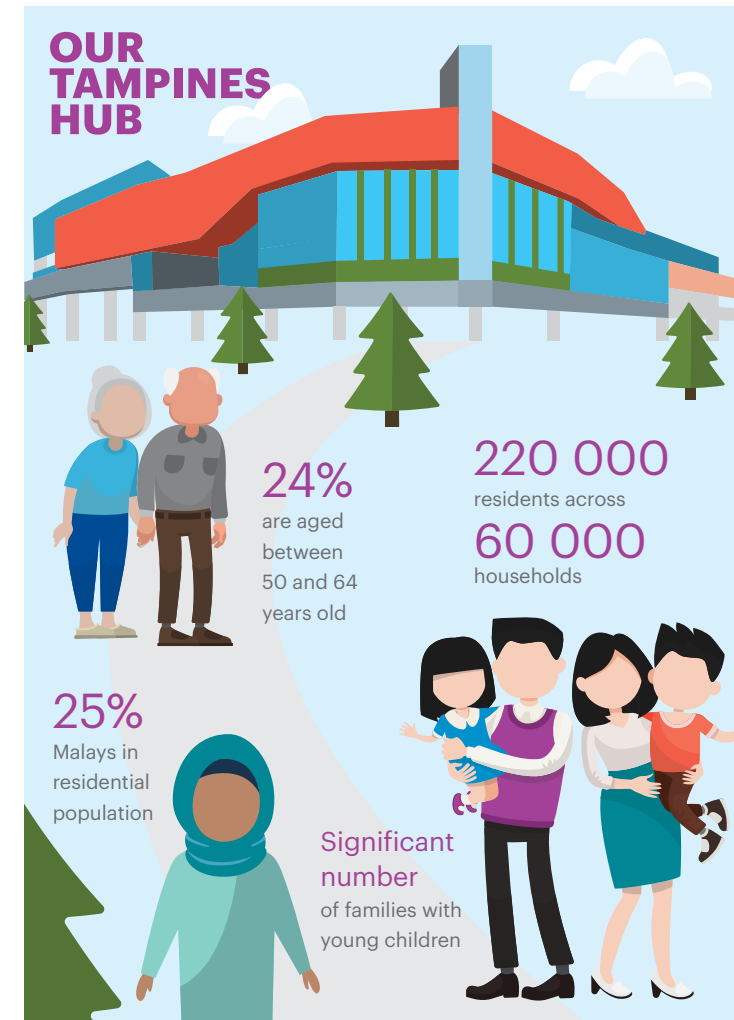OTH offers more than 30 community, sports, cultural, civic and lifestyle facilities. Through

integrated programming, OTH complements the People's Association's (PA) existing community facilities in Tampines Town. OTH also functions as a one-stop service hub for government and other municipal services.

A Multi-Stakeholder Collaborative Design Process

The development of OTH was guided by three principles: resident-centricity; optimisation of resources and infrastructure; and encouraging community ownership through resident engagement. Significant emphasis was placed on resident engagement during the design of OTH.

From 2013 to 2014, the PA reached out to 15,000 Tampines residents through surveys,

Demographics of Tampines Town

OUR TAMPINES HUB

24% are aged between 50 and 64 years old

220 000 residents across

60 000 households

25% Malays in residential population

Significant number of families with young children

focus group studies and house visits, to better understand what they wanted to see more of in their community, in terms of facilities and activities. Block parties, roadshows, circulated newsletters and social media were also used to create awareness and anticipation of the development of OTH.

To further engender a sense of ownership, members of the community were consulted and invited to vote for, the design of the OTH logo.

INTERVIEW WITH

SEAH CHEE HUANG
Director, DP Architects Pte Ltd
Lead Architect for Our Tampines Hub, Singapore

What is the Community Engagement Strategy for Our Tampines Hub (OTH)?

Our Tampines Hub was designed with, by and for the residents and community of Tampines. We used a "five-E" design process: **engagement, enriching, empowerment, empathise and evaluation.**

For the first "E"—engagement—we created opportunities for a two-way exchange to communicate regarding the development and its consequences for the residents, including possible temporary inconveniences. We met with residents to explain the values that OTH could bring in terms of facilities, programmes, and in turn, the richness it could bring to their way of life. We also established a variety of channels to reach out to as many of the residents of Tampines as possible. Our outreach was done at different levels and scales: from roadshows, newsletters, social media channels and websites, to block parties and even floor parties, particularly in areas more directly affected by the construction.

The second "E"—enriching—was about the quality of information and knowledge exchanged. A recurrent piece of feedback we received from different groups of residents was that they did not want to see yet another shopping mall. As a result, we modified some of our zoning to create more inclusive and accessible programmes on the first storey. A larger portion of space was also set aside as community spaces with less commercialised activities.

The third "E" was empathy. It was really through such engagements that we learnt to be more conscious of the daily needs of the community. This was particularly challenging, because Tampines is a huge community. However, this engagements helped the community to empathise with the planners' dilemma and to understand that "given this tight site, we can't have everything."

This is key towards a larger process of empowerment, which was the fourth "E". This was about the long term sustenance of such developments. It was about instilling ownership and encouraging more in-depth and continual community participation so that the community could take on the ongoing role as stewards of such spaces. The volunteers, who were enlisted from the community itself, helped co-create these spaces.

Last but not least, there's evaluation. This is really about an ongoing process of taking stock. With projects of this nature that revolve around the everyday lives of a community, there will never be a perfect solution or design. Rather, there will be parts which will evolve almost daily. So, you need to continually review decisions made with stakeholders and the community, and then decide together how you can refine and improve.

How did you translate feedback into ideas for design?

Even before we started, the planners for Tampines already had five key threads of engagement: Creative Tampines, Green Tampines, Active Tampines, Learning Tampines and Caring Tampines. These cover many of the different facets of services and programmes already offered to residents. Hence, there was already a structure we could use to engage residents with, to address any queries or concerns the community might have, to develop ideas further.

The Re-imagining Tampines programme and its discussion on walkability laid a foundation for realising ideas: for example, while planned street works meant that the OTH would be surrounded on three sides by vehicular roads, the broader engagement, even beyond OTH itself, gave us the chance to review these plans with stakeholders. We managed to reframe the traffic assessment studies entirely and got approval from LTA (Land Transport Authority) to not cut a road through the OTH site, but instead to maintain a very friendly, accessible site that would link the hub directly to the central Tampines park. In this situation, the biggest winner was the community itself.

What does community ownership mean to you? What does co-creation mean to you?

Community ownership is about empowering the local residents to be accountable and responsible for decisions made. That means the

community takes charge of what they have. To some extent, this idea of ownership has to come together with co-creation, which means you collaborate with others to create something. You come together to give of your best, whatever your role is, to the whole process.

Co-creation requires alignment. It involves a larger team, all reaching out towards an aligned vision. It is through this process that you instil ownership. Because when you feel that you are part of the authorship—in this case, not just of the building but also of spaces and places—naturally, you will feel responsible for the things that you have created. With that comes a sense of responsibility: to say, okay, let's make sure that this is well taken care of, well run, well maintained, and that collectively, we can create programmes or systems to sustain these things that we created together.

Impact of Engagement

Feedback and suggestions from residents informed the design process, helping to shape the development around community needs and interests. For example, feedback revealed that residents did not want a standard competitive running track around the sports field, but preferred a rubberised track and distance markings to facilitate recreational jogging. This led to the development of a town square which could double up as a sports field. An elevated running track was later creatively integrated into the public walkway on Level Five of the development.

Public engagement also revealed that residents valued mobility-friendliness. OTH was thus designed with a highly porous ground floor, facilitating various forms of mobility, with more bicycle parking provisions than originally planned for. This also reinforced the distinctive identity of Tampines as Singapore's first cycling town.

A sheltered pedestrian street (Festive Walk) also runs eastwards and westwards through the heart of the hub, connecting residents from Tampines Central to and from the Central Park, further bringing

vibrancy to the area. OTH also adheres to the highest standards of Universal Design in incorporating access-friendly features site-wide, child-friendly playgrounds and railing design, and so on.

Public service at Our Tampines Hub functions as one-stop service hub for government and municipal services.

Stakeholder Coordination

Twelve stakeholder agencies were involved in the planning of OTH. Led by PA, the Hub had adopted a coordinated approach across various government agencies in its planning and development, to ensure the effective implementation of diverse resident

Resident Engagement in Numbers

8 Focus / Interest Group Discussions

870 Volunteers

15 000 Residents Engaged

12 Months Spent on Engagement

3 000 Residents Participated in Ground Breaking

5 Block Parties

10 Floor Parties

11 Road Shows

requirements that had been garnered during the course of engagement during the planning stage.

Moreover, this collaboration and coordination between multiple stakeholders has extended beyond the development stages. A key outcome of this inter-agency collaboration for OTH has been the setting up of the Public Service Centre—a centre which integrates the local service branches of seven government agencies under one roof for the

convenience of residents. The Centre also features an e-lobby that operates around the clock.

OTH also coordinates stakeholder programmes into an integrated framework to meet the diverse needs of the community. Programming is customised for different target demographics from families, youth and young professionals to the elderly and various ethnic groups.

The OTH Integrated Programming Framework includes:

- Synergising with programmes available at other community clubs;

- Hosting national and iconic sporting and arts events;

- Integrating with stakeholders' respective event calendars;

- Integrating with and piloting "Smart Nation" initiatives at the OTH;

- Shaping the behaviour and culture of visitors; and

- Seeking residents' feedback and perspectives.

Volunteer Management

A volunteer movement is important for sustaining on-going resident engagement. Involving volunteers promotes the exchange of information and ideas among residents, which in turn further improves OTH programming, facilities and services. As of April 2017, OTH had recruited 1,900 volunteers.

OTH has also been working with the Tampines Kindness Movement—the local offshoot of the Singapore Kindness Movement, a non-governmental organisation that promotes graciousness in society—to support volunteerism. This is being done by promoting ground-up initiatives by Tampines residents, and by facilitating volunteer contribution across different facets of its operations. Volunteers have been actively involved in the planning, organisation and participation

of all programmes and events at the Hub. They also help with the management and maintenance of the Eco-Community Garden, assist with operations at the Information Counter, administer customer surveys and provide assistance for various programmes and events. There are plans to train volunteers to be Hub guides for the Community Gallery and Visitor Centre, when these are ready, in late 2017.

Conclusion: A Collaborative, Multi-Stakeholder Effort for a Community Hub

The OTH was officially opened in August 2017. The successful completion of the first integrated community hub was not through the efforts of any single entity or individual, but through the result of multi-stakeholder collaborations involving residents, various public agencies and non-governmental organisations working together to address the diverse needs of Tampines residents. This enabled community spaces in public housing towns to remain relevant to people amidst rapidly evolving lifestyles. OTH will continue to engage with residents and visitors through a variety of channels and platforms, to ensure that facilities and programmes remain aligned with what people find useful or wish to see at the Hub.

Major Developments in Existing Communities

Gyeongui Line

- Gyeongui Line Forest Park is a 6.3-kilometre long linear park redeveloped from a disused railway line.

- The Park was developed over two phases, with the second phase focusing more on community engagement and collection of feedback to address design issues in phase one.

- Management of the Park was designed as a private-public collaboration, with Gyeongui Line Forest Park Council set up, comprising of representatives from local councils, city councillors, civil servants and experts.

Rail Corridor

- The Rail Corridor is a 24-kilometre long former railway line that used to connect Singapore to Malaysia.

- Diverse engagement activities organised by the URA, ranging from dialogues with NGOs, public exhibitions, community events, community workshops, and ideas competition.

- Public engagement began as a "clean slate", with the URA not having a draft plan in hand, and based on key objectives of fostering shared vision and ownership, raising public awareness and getting community buy-in, and strengthening community bonding.

Our Tampines Hub

- Our Tampines Hub is Singapore's first integrated community and lifestyle hub provides more than 30 community, sports, cultural, civic and lifestyle facilities within a site area of 5.7 hectares.

- Inter-agency collaboration between the 12 stakeholder public agencies ensured successful implementation.

- Extensive resident outreach was conducted through activities of various scales—including roadshows, newsletters, social media channels and websites, block parties—during the design and implementation process.

Community Participation and Ownership

Active community participation in neighbourhood improvements, and a sense of ownership of community spaces among residents, are outcomes that planners often strive to achieve. However, these outcomes require appropriate interventions. There may also be many barriers to progress: engagement platforms may be inaccessible or unattractive; financial constraints or a lack of administrative knowledge or a lack of suitable space may all hinder the implementation of community-initiated ideas.

This section includes examples in Seoul and Singapore where the respective governments had launched initiatives to facilitate more participation and cultivate a deeper sense of ownership within communities. In Seoul, the lack of physical space for community activities is a fundamental issue as most of the land in the city is privately owned. As such, the SMG (Seoul Metropolitan Government) has been focusing on making spaces available for communities through financially feasible and sustainable means. In Singapore, where public housing town plans provide well for community spaces, the focus has been on creating accessible engagement platforms to encourage residents to participate, as well as setting up programmes that offer the support needed for communities to revitalise their neighbourhoods.

Seoul
Vibrant Community Center (VCC)

Background

A community space is a place where residents meet and interact with one another, and take part in community activities. Recognising the importance of such spaces, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) had supported some 240 private community spaces as part of a Village Community policy, and created 20 public community spaces through the Residential Environment Management Program (see Page 97) by 2015. However, most of the privately-run community spaces have had to close because of soaring rents, and many publicly-run ones have been neglected due to lack of resident participation.

Vibrant Community Center (VCC) is an SMG project to create autonomous, resident-run community spaces in *dong*-office buildings. A *dong* office is a local administrative institution set up in each of Seoul's 423 *dongs* (neighbourhoods). Each *dong* office hosts a Resident Center, managed by a Resident Self-Governing Committee (RSGC). While RSGCs are legally recognised organisations, most lack the operational competence and commitment to run Resident Centers, which are managed instead by public servants.

The spaces under the Resident Center were used only for art classes or leisure activities instead of more meaningful community initiatives. The VCC initiative aims to address this by using *dong* offices as more accessible and active community spaces rather than just administrative facilities, in order to encourage resident autonomy and create capacity to sustain operations.

Building spaces in *dong* offices had to be significantly reconfigured to accommodate the new VCCs. These office buildings now house a range of functions run by different entities: the Resident Center by the RSGC; the *dong*-office administrative areas by public servants; and the VCCs. For the VCC initiative to succeed, cooperation between the different stakeholders is key.

The Participatory Design Process

In 2015, SMG selected four *dongs* to pilot the VCCs, based on the needs and capacities of their residents, the commitment of their respective *dong*-office leaders and their *dong*-office building conditions. A core planning group—the Public-Private Participatory Group (PPPG)—was formed for each VCC. Comprising resident volunteers, RSGC members and public servants, each PPPG's main role is to determine how best to design and manage their respective VCCs. The PPPG is also tasked with implementing a building management scheme. A community officer—the most senior public official for *dong*-level community affairs in South Korea—manages the project.

Appointed experts on participatory design, including social architects and shared space managers, support each PPPG's deliberations. They prepare communicative events, provide professional advice and resolve conflicts within the PPPG.

Having established the basic structure for the VCC initiative, the SMG and Local District Governments (LDGs) provide only indirect support.

Process of Setting up VCC

Preparatory	**2.5 months** • Select suitable *dongs* in which to set up VCCs based on onsite evaluations, public hearings and opinion gathering sessions.
Planning	**3 months** • Hold regular workshops to discuss spatial design and a management scheme.
Implementation	**2 months** • Construction. • Form Resident Manager Group (RMG) to oversee the daily operations of VCC.
Pilot Operation	**1 to 2 months** • Hold opening ceremony, and RMG starts to manage the VCC thereafter.

Most (82%) of the PPPGs' participants are residents, with an average of six to 25 resident volunteers helping to manage the VCC in each *dong*. Since the launch of the VCCs, the time spent by residents on helping to manage community spaces has increased by 150%, compared to the existing Resident Centers.

The VCCs have become truly vibrant, resident-driven community spaces, hosting community programmes ranging from flea markets and cooking classes to cooperative child care and jazz concerts, all run by residents.

Design workshops for Vibrant Community Centers.

Dobong-Gu, the northernmost *gu* in Seoul, is well known for its rich grassroots activities, with Banghak3-Dong being its most vibrant neighbourhood. The *dong*'s population of 31,000, 95% of whom live in high-rise apartments, hold occasional flea markets, garden parties and local festivals.

Although the Banghak3-Dong office is in an accessible location within the neighbourhood, its Resident Center had not been well used. Its main space—a lecture room—was unsuitable for most activities other than for cultural classes. An outside terrace has been closed due to safety concerns. The training room and kitchen, although in high demand, were located in the basement, making access difficult. The space was often fully booked for official meetings, leaving residents with little opportunity to use it for their own social activities.

The SMG-appointed design experts held several workshops to help Banghak3-Dong's 20-member PPPG create and manage a VCC. PPPG members were first introduced to the

dong-office building space. The group then discussed the goals of the VCC, as well as its spatial design.

Redesigning existing spaces is often a zero-sum game, in which one stakeholder gains at the expense of another. The design experts facilitated a participatory design process by offering good examples of similar projects, developing design toolkits and providing plan drawings that were easy to understand.

These design workshops helped the PPPG reach a consensus on a spatial configuration for the VCC. The office space was reorganised to create a comfortable working environment on the first floor, while the second floor, where the Resident Center was located, was redesigned as a multi-purpose space to cater to community needs, with a lounge, a childcare room and a kitchen with an open terrace, as well as a reconfigurable lecture room. These flexible, shared-space solutions helped increase community space in the *dong* office by almost three-fold from 84.2 square metres to 248.7 square metres.

Workshop for space design of Vibrant Community Center.

It was not easy to figure out how to initiate resident-led management of the VCCs. There were two main issues. Firstly, it was not clear as to who had the right to use the space, authorise programmes and determine the budget. A Resident Manager Group (RMG) had been set up to carry out the daily operations of the VCC, but the VCC's space was overlapping with the existing Resident Center managed by the RSGC, which did not want to give up its legal right to the space. Secondly, the residents needed to secure financial resources in order to manage the VCC sustainably and independently. And so, negotiations over these issues held up the implementation of the VCC for some time. After reviewing feasible alternatives and relevant ordinances, it was decided that the RSGC and RMG would form an official partnership, that would share the right to use and operate the VCC.

The PPPG held workshops to work out details such as the opening hours, the role of managers and operating regulations. They also identified three sources of financing: profit-making businesses, support from RSGC's fund and space rental fees. Unfortunately, it was not clear at the time that the third source of financing was prohibited by laws disallowing publicly-owned spaces from being rented out for profit.

After reaching agreements on the use of space in 2016, the RMG showed remarkable results. Comprising 25 managers (who are also resident volunteers) and 14 volunteers, each RMG staff member would work 12 hours a month, so that the VCC could remain open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on weekdays. An operational manual was drafted to spell out the roles

or responsibilities of various entities and set operating schedules. As part of the collaboration between RMG and RSGC, seven managers were appointed as RSGC members, with one being made chief manager to head the branch. This gave the RMG access to the RSGC's decision-making regarding the resident centre.

At the residents' request, the RMG ran community programmes on arts, culture, and humanities, and even operated a community radio station, with residents recording podcasts every Wednesday. They also held frequent small concerts, exhibitions, and potluck parties.

These efforts led to an enormous increase in the number of residents visiting: an average of more than 2,000 people visited or used the Centre each month, compared to just 916 in February before the VCC was launched.

Participation satisfaction has also been high. Respondents to an SMG survey felt that the VCC had contributed to revitalising and broadening their communities, and that resident-led management was working well. These encouraging outcomes have given the resident-led RMG a sense of accomplishment and ownership.

VCC Participant Satisfaction Survey Results

	Banghak3-Dong	Average of 4 *Dongs*
Does VCC create vibrancy in the community?	4.26	3.96
Did new residents participate?	4.43	4.02
Is VCC being operated well?	4.43	4.07
Is collaboration with RSGC appropriate?	4.30	3.96
Does the VCC manager want to keep responsibility?	3.61	3.56
Without SMG support, should VCC continue?	3.61	3.32

(Scored out of 5)

Source: Seoul Institute

Community activities held at the improved shared space (top) and outdoor terrace (bottom) of Banghak 3-Dong.

Conclusion

The VCC programme holds some important lessons for making a community space vibrant. Firstly, substantive planning and strong commitment can help bring out a deeper sense of ownership from residents. Despite long and difficult negotiations, the PPPG showed great determination in creating a resident-led community space. Secondly, involving residents in preparation of an appropriate spatial design and management plan is essential. Residents can contribute by highlighting issues not previously anticipated and help find feasible solutions that they can agree upon and act on. They can also uncover unexpected yet critical problems, and help find feasible solutions acceptable to the community. Thirdly, financial sustainability is crucial; inadequate operational funds will fundamentally limit the development of a community space. Finally, although the VCC relies on resident volunteers for site management, this may not be sustainable in the long term. The SMG recognises this problem as a future policy challenge for community spaces, and has developed a community asset strategy. This will be discussed in the case study on citizen-owned community spaces.

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INTERVIEW WITH

MIN-JU JEON
Director,
Seoul Community Support Center (SCSC)

Tell us about the Center.

The Seoul Community Support Center (SCSC) was founded in August 2012 as an intermediary organisation to implement the community empowerment policies of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG). We work with the SMG to provide support on-site. Our aim is to create communities where residents develop and shape their own plans according to their needs. To do this, we study and develop community empowerment policies, train community activists, develop and test programmes that support communities in Seoul and provide consultancy to intermediary organisations for *gu* district level governments.

What is the background behind *dong*-level community planning and Vibrant Community Center projects?

The main policy goal of the SMG is to help more residents experience what "community" is all about. By doing so, residents learn to settle issues they face on their own; they also enjoy the rewarding experience of renewing trust in their neighbours.

But residents alone cannot change their local community for the better. That's why we started promoting community activities through public and private partnerships at the *dong* level in 2015. The *dong* office is the forefront administrative body in direct contact with citizens. Through this platform, we promoted *dong*-level community planning and the Vibrant Community Center. *Dong*-level community planning allows residents in a *dong* area to discuss and resolve common local issues together. At the same time, the Vibrant Community Center provides residents with opportunities to create and manage their own community space.

How did you encourage participants to settle conflicting interests and reach consensus?

That's a tough question. There is no correct answer. What's important is that we listen carefully to what the conflict is about. Many conflicts are caused by a difference in attitude and culture arising during the course of communication, not by a difference in aim or goal. This is why it is important to offer training and classes to residents on what separates "difference" from "discrimination", and what cultural diversity and democratic discussions are about. The best thing is for residents to get to know each other over time, understand each other, concede, compromise and cooperate to settle their differences and reach a consensus among themselves.

But this is really challenging, which is why communication experts are brought in as mediators. Facilitators are brought in to help community planning; a shared-space manager is brought in to help the Vibrant Community Center ensure that decision-making processes are understood by all, and undertaken in a reasonable manner.

What was the most challenging aspect of the Vibrant Community Center programme?

The Vibrant Community Center programme allows residents, experts and the government to work together to transform part of the *dong* office into community space, which is then run by resident volunteers. First, residents have to find out how much community space is needed and if there is demand for it. The public officials then secure a space and provide a budget. Experts offer their insights to residents as they design the space and discuss how the centre should be run, while skilfully facilitating the views of both residents and public officials. The programme has been successful because all three groups were committed to their roles without any major issues.

It may sound simple, but the process is extremely challenging. Experts, in particular, need to be incredibly patient and sympathetic, because logic alone is not enough to help residents and public officials reach a consensus. I'm very grateful to the the shared space managers and social architects for their hard work.

What do you think are the most important elements when creating a resident-led community space?

Community space is more effective when residents are directly involved in the process of creating it. It's important for residents to know from the start that no one else will manage the spaces for them, so that they design a space that they can operate among themselves and set their own rules of operation for.

Residents should also take the lead in finding a sustained source of funding and the personnel needed to run their community space. They need to learn that ownership does not stop at generating ideas; they must be able to put their ideas into action. The commitment, courage and wisdom to invest time and effort to run a community space are the most important elements needed for ownership.

Seoul
Namuguneul: Citizen Ownership of Community Spaces

Background

Seoul supports community spaces in two main ways: one is by providing public-owned community facilities; the other is by assisting residents in developing their own spaces. The latter is more consistent with the current policy goal of empowering communities; residents have a stronger sense of ownership and are much more willing to be involved when they create their own community spaces, rather than when it is provided by someone else.

Between 2012 to 2015, Seoul supported the development of 240 citizen-led community spaces. However, high rental costs in Seoul make it extremely difficult to maintain non-profit community spaces, particularly since buildings cost several billion KRW or more.

Nevertheless, some profit-generating community activities have been able to sustain these centres economically in this high-cost environment, while continuing to empower the community and generating intangible social value. However, the economic value that these communities create still ends up with property owners instead of the community.

To address this issue, Seoul has adopted an experimental citizen ownership policy, which allows for shared ownership and management of community spaces. This safeguards public access to these facilities, and the proceeds that these "community assets" generate are returned to the local community.

Citizen Ownership of Community Spaces

Managed Jointly
with Citizens

Public
Ownership

Citizen
Ownership

Private
Ownership

Managed Directly
by Citizens
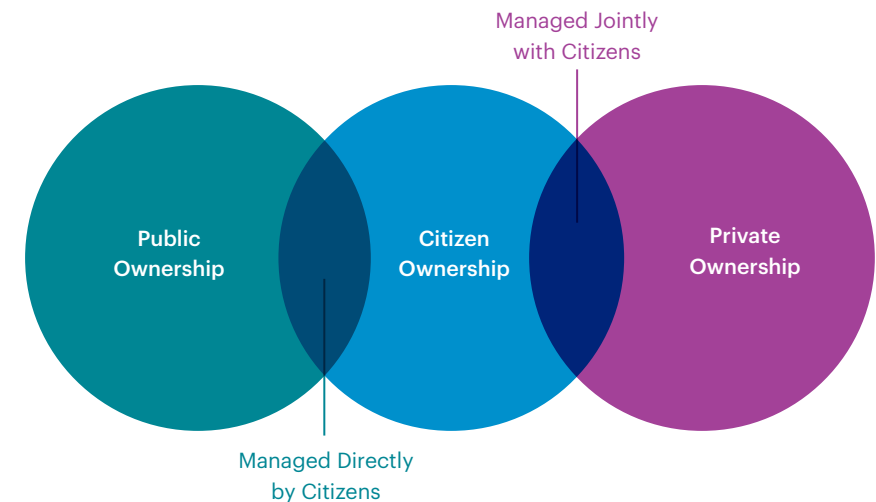
In 2016, the SMG founded the Seoul Governance Bureau (SGB) to promote private-public collaboration in city administration and identify innovative solutions to urban problems.

The SGB is based on the principle that public space is necessary to sustain civic society and local communities. As such public spaces should not be publicly or privately owned, but rather, be an asset shared by citizens.

To develop an appropriate citizen ownership policy for Seoul, the SGB set up an intermediary non-government organisation—the Citizen Common Ground Network (CCGN)—to engage citizens from the ground up.

SGB's plan was to set up a public trust that would manage funds contributed by individuals, businesses and institutions, to be used for the public interest. Legislation for the system was introduced in March 2015. The trust would then set up a Citizen Ownership Foundation (COF) to attract and manage other sources of financing, including public and private assets, as an investment platform for citizen ownership. The Foundation would be responsible for education, training and consultation as well as for the fair distribution of profits. The COF would be jointly funded and owned by the SMG and citizen investors, who would hold majority shares and be directly involved in fundraising and investment decisions.

Aiming to establish a public trust and the COF by 2017, the SMG launched a pilot platform named Fair Start: Campaign for Citizen Ownership. It sought to educate, train and recruit interested project teams and citizen investors. Fair Start also selected the first community asset to be subsidised by the public trust and owned by citizens.

Proposals submitted online were shortlisted by citizens and then submitted for review, during which the project teams presented their proposals to 100 citizen investors. Each proposal for citizen ownership was evaluated against a range of criteria, such as sustainability, feasibility and public good. Projects that received the most support would be selected. Through this process, Namuguneul—a shared house, community garden and local culture and arts space—was selected as Seoul's first citizen ownership asset.

Case study: Namuguneul—A Community Space Created by Residents

Namuguneul (meaning "Shadow of Tree") is a community space located in Yeomni-dong, Mapo-*gu*—one of the most active districts in Seoul in terms of local community campaigns and activities. Opened in July 2011 by local resident activists as a base for their community empowerment initiatives, Namuguneul consists of a public café and a meeting space used for community classes, concerts and club activities. It offers a convenient location for residents to meet and interact in daily life, resulting in a vibrant neighbourhood network over time.

Community activities at Namuguneul are organised by volunteer managers, based on residents' needs and interests. The space houses several arts and cultural clubs, and hosts evening music concerts and community theatre shows performed by residents, for residents. These have grown into a small annual community festival held each autumn.

Mothers in the neighbourhood started community childcare support groups to help each other and share useful advice. They monitor community playgrounds and hold events where children learn traditional

etiquette and customs from the elderly. These childcare initiatives have led to the setting up of a centre for mothers and a children's bookstore. In 2016, a childcare centre was opened near Namuguneul.

Residents also come together to resolve economic issues and boost local business. Local flea markets are a regular occurrence, and community trucks have been provided for store owners to share. The community has also developed a community currency (called Local Exchange Trading System: LETS) for use by local residents and shops. Offered as vouchers, this local currency system was used by some 60 local shops by the end of 2016, and by all stalls in the nearby traditional market by February 2017.

To better organise community activities in the neighbourhood, Namuguneul established a cooperative in 2013 to manage the facility. Any resident who agrees with the aims of the cooperative can join; members jointly invest in and run the cooperative with a strong sense of responsibility and ownership. In 2016, there were 192 members—mostly local residents—including four space managers, 28 volunteers involved in operations, and 13 executives. Key decisions within the cooperative are made through voting, with voting rights accorded to all members.

Activities and Programmes Offered at Namugunuel

Arts and Culture

A diverse selection of arts and cultural clubs.

Residents' performance at evening music concerts and community theaters, with fellow residents as audience.

Small community festival every autumn.

Childcare

Neighbourhood-initiated community childcare for mothers to help one another.

Mothers monitor community playgrounds.

Mothers' centre and a children's bookstore.

Childcare centre within the vicinity of Namuguneu.

Boost Community Economy

Local flea markets.

Development of community currency (called Local Exchange Trading System: LETS) for use by residents and shops in the community.

Seoul's first citizen ownership asset—Namuguneul which functions as a shared house, community garden and local culture and arts space.

Community activities held in Namuguneul.

Financial Challenges of Operating a Community Space

Despite Namuguneul's success in activating the community, rising rentals threatened the viability of the facility. Each year, the property owner raised the rent (KRW 2.42 million per month in 2012) by the full 9% allowable under Seoul's law. This was high, relative to inflation of about 2% in the same period. Hence, the majority of profits generated by the community space ended up with the property owner. The turning point came in 2016, when the owner demanded that the premises either be vacated (as the five-year lease period guaranteed by law had ended), or for the monthly rent to be increased to KRW 3.5 million per month (with a corresponding increase in the deposit from KRW 30 million to 100 million).

The members considered several options. Moving to an adjacent location was not viable, as overall rents in the area had also increased. The members tried to raise additional funds through organising a fund-raising party, but collected only KRW 20 million, far short of the deposit needed to renew the contract.
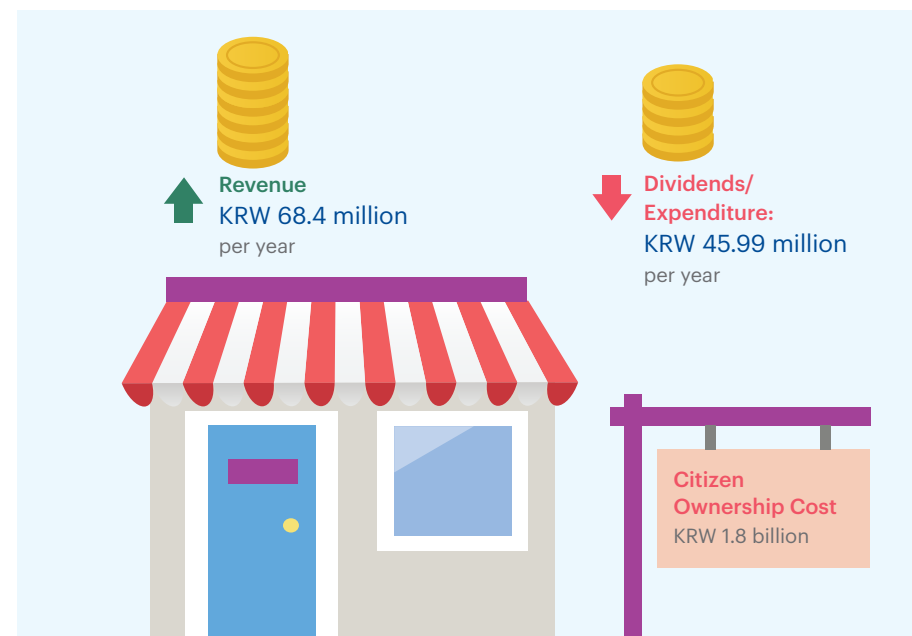
The timely introduction of the Fair Start campaign gave the community space a chance to secure its future. As part of its proposal for Campaign funding, the Namuguneul team found a suitable building in the vicinity and prepared a plan to turn the three-storey building into a shared community complex with a performance hall, community cafe, shared office, joint-management childcare centre, and shared housing. It also created new programmes, based on the existing activities, to ensure profitability and sustainability.

The estimated cost of the proposed relocation was KRW 1.8 billion, including KRW 1.5 billion for the purchase of the building. Of this, 20% was to be paid by Namuguneul, 35% through a loan from the Social Investment Fund, and the rest (45%) by the public trust and the COF under the Campaign framework. Namuguneul also promised that once it has been converted into a community asset, it would invest 10% of its annual profit of KRW 22.4 million as its contribution towards citizen ownership.

Given its track record and detailed proposal, the Namuguneul proposal garnered the highest score in the Fair Star review and was selected as the pilot citizen-ownership project.

As of mid-2017, the Namuguneul project is still underway. The Namuguneul cooperative has been saving its profits and improving its citizen ownership plan, while the CCGN has been working on establishing a public trust to raise funds. Namuguneul is set to become a citizen-owned community asset in 2019.

Namuguneul's Expenditures and Revenues

Revenue
KRW 68.4 million
per year

Dividends/Expenditure:
KRW 45.99 million
per year

Citizen Ownership Cost
KRW 1.8 billion

Policy Challenges for Citizen Ownership

While such efforts to create citizen-owned assets in Seoul are ongoing, challenges remain. The first is developing a financially sustainable model for community facilities. Support for citizen ownership is effective only when a community space is able to fulfil its financial obligations.

The second challenge is to amend the relevant laws and regulations to adapt to current circumstance. For community spaces to become viable assets, the law must guarantee a minimum lease period and rents at affordable levels. The SMG plans to lobby for the relevant ordinances to be revised by the National Assembly. Experts are also advocating the introduction of measures similar to the UK's system of lease periods, which is complemented with rent controls for properties of value to the community, and financial assistance for communities in London.

Lastly, there must be social consensus on citizen ownership. Seoul's real estate market is highly privatised. Much of the land is privately owned, and property rights are heavily protected, while public awareness and experience of citizen ownership are low.

Citizen ownership is not about curtailing the rights of property owners, but about creating a system in which those who contribute to community empowerment can share in the value and profits generated by their community. In this way, local identity and diversity are not only protected from gentrification and real estate market forces, but can be enhanced to contribute towards a more socially and economically sustainable city.

Singapore
Hello Neighbour: Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator Project

Background

Neighbourhoods are where homes are, and where communities are built. They are both physical and social spaces in which neighbourly relations—fundamental to strengthening social cohesion and social capital—are nurtured. How neighbourhoods are designed can affect the frequency and nature of our daily interactions with each other, and therefore has a significant impact on community building.

In 2012, Singapore's Housing & Development Board (HDB) initiated a collaborative study with the National University of Singapore (NUS) to review and distil good neighbourhood designs which have facilitated community bonding in the past. Working with the NUS Centre for Sustainable Asian Cities and Sociology Department, Faculty of Arts and Social Science at NUS, HDB also sought to uncover new design strategies to make our housing estates more community-friendly and neighbourly.

Key Research Findings

From 2012 to 2014, an extensive survey of some 2,200 residents in various precincts across mature, middle-aged and newer towns was conducted, along with several focus group discussions, to understand usage and interaction patterns, resident needs, and factors contributing to a sense of community.

The research study revealed that HDB precincts do offer multiple opportunities for neighbours to meet. Residents tend to encounter their neighbours incidentally, in places such as lift lobbies, linkways and void

decks. At the same time, they also meet convivially in 'third places' such as coffee shops and supermarkets.

The study also showed that residents who frequently use the amenities in their precincts registered a stronger sense of belonging and community. This strengthens the case for suitable design interventions to promote greater usage of estate amenities and enhance neighbourly interactions.

Design Typologies to Enhance Community Bonding

The research distilled nine design strategies and six typologies. Two design typologies were later tested and studied. One of these is the social linkway concept, in which supporting facilities and functions are integrated with linkways to increase the chances of interaction. This strategy is based on the insight that neighbours tend to meet and interact incidentally in unplanned places such as lift lobbies and linkways, especially during peak hours when there is a heavy flow of residents through these thoroughfares. At the moment, such places are primarily designed to be transitional, but they can be designed to promote more active social engagement.

The research also highlighted the importance of providing a one-stop community hub that can accommodate community activities as well as incubate ground-up initiatives, where residents can contribute to the community and influence decision-making. This led to the Neighbourhood Incubator concept. Since this approach requires strong community involvement, it was important to co-locate

Residents play an active role in shaping their community spaces through engagement sessions.

the incubator with Resident Committee (RC) centres.

Prototyping of Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator Concepts

To assess feasibility and effectiveness, HDB prototyped the social linkway and the Neighbourhood Incubator concepts in Tampines Central, in partnership with NUS, the People's Assocation (PA), the Town Council and other relevant agencies.

Participatory Planning to Engage the Community—"Hello Neighbour! @ Tampines Central"

Coined the "Hello Neighbour! @ Tampines Central Project", this test implementation was conducted from July 2014 to end 2015.

To realise these design typologies, HDB and NUS also tested a participatory planning approach. Residents and relevant stakeholders were engaged through several rounds of focus group discussions, in-depth

interviews and design workshops. These shed light on how the existing spaces were used, what social functions could be incorporated and how they could be better designed to encourage greater use and social interaction.

The engagement process saw more than 1,000 Tampines residents and stakeholders coming together to design their very own Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator, via pop-up booths, focus group discussions, design workshops, and interactive boards.

Survey results indicated that community participation in neighbourhood improvement works would help to improve the living environment, and that residents looked forward to opportunities to contribute improvement ideas for their estate.

Through these engagements, residents were able to play an active role in shaping their community spaces.

Implementing the Social Linkway and

Residents try their hand at handicraft at the "Art Link."

Voluntary gardeners cultivating plants for the Green Link.

Neighbourhood Incubator

The Social Linkway at Tampines Central Blocks 830 to 863 consists of four 'links': Green Link, Play Link, Learning Link and Art Link. It integrates a commonly-used linkway with adjacent supporting community facilities and functions. Residents were invited to co-build the Green Link and Art Link. At the Green Link, voluntary gardeners came together to adopt and grow plants on a trellis, while residents contributed to wall murals, art banners and sculptures made of recycled bicycles at the Art Link.

Precinct Spaces for Casual Daily Interactions between Neighbours

Note: Number of people indicates likelihood of neighbours meeting at each location.

Before and after: Learning Link at void deck of Tampines Central Block 839.

The Neighbourhood Incubator at Tampines Central Block 857 is designed as a multi-functional space. Equipped with movable stools, it can be easily converted for residents to participate in community workshops, or get-togethers such as potluck sessions and flea markets.

After the social linkway and neighbourhood incubator in Tampines were completed at the end of 2015, HDB conducted site surveys and interviews to assess their use and community interaction levels over a two-month period. Through a variety of analytical tools, including video data, they found that the new spaces enjoyed an average of almost 200 unique visitors per day. More than one in three of these resident visitors interacted with their neighbours, during which they spent

an average of 13 minutes per day in the new spaces—long enough for a chit-chat over a drink.
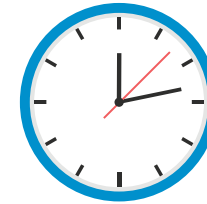
In particular, the converted void deck of Block 839, with its community café and library, was a rousing success. It attracted some 55 residents each day, each staying an average of 20 minutes at the cafe to mingle with their neighbours. The converted space also saw more ground-up initiatives organised by residents, such as pot luck sessions and cooking classes.

The neighbourhood incubator at Tampines Central has since become a conducive space for residents to meet and bond over community activities such as baking and balloon sculpting, which used to be held

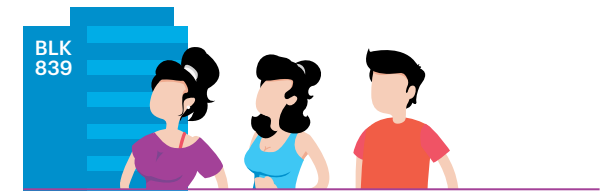## Outcomes of the Social Linkway and the Neighbourhood Incubator

200
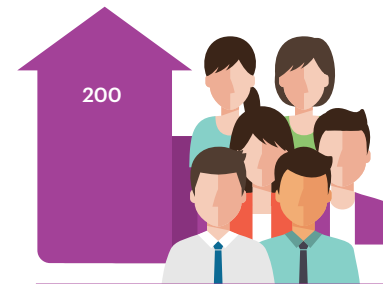
The new spaces registered an average of close to
200 unique visitors per day.

More than 1 in 3 users interacted with their neighbours at these new spaces.

BLK 839

The converted void deck at Blk 839 attracted some
55 residents each day.

Residents spent an average of
13 minutes per day at the new spaces.

Residents stayed for about
20 minutes at the café, mingling and chatting with their neighbours.

in enclosed spaces. Now more visible, the activities have also attracted greater participation from residents nearby, sparking conversations among passers-by.

Conclusion

In the process of co-creating their own neighbourhood spaces, the Tampines Central community has come together as one, to

building consensus on decision affecting their common spaces and in the process, foster a stronger sense of ownership. HDB is now looking into how the positive outcomes of these initiatives might be extended to other neighbourhoods and programmes. At the same time, HDB is also continuing to explore new design strategies to facilitate community bonding and shared ownership in HDB neighbourhoods.

"

INTERVIEW WITH

MADAM CHONG SOOK FONG
Chairperson of Tampines Palmwalk Residents' Committee

What motivated you to volunteer with the RC?

This is my fourth year acting as the Chairperson of Tampines Palmwalk RC. I started my volunteering experience in 2004 when my neighbour, who was a RC volunteer then, invited me to join to see how I might help the community.

As we grow old, we have more time to ourselves, but sometimes we have fewer friends. I felt the need to create more activities for the community and to make more friends in my late years. When you look around the neighbourhood, you find many elderly residents sitting at the corner, sometimes all by themselves. It's so lonely. I try to think of something to gather them together, so that we can look out for one another. I started to volunteer and got to know the residents here well. About four years ago I became the chairperson of the RC.

Tell us more about the creation of the Learning Link

I wanted to make the RC space more visible and useful. We were fortunate that the space identified by HDB for this project is well-located. Many people walk past here daily. When HDB found that the RC centre was scheduled for renovation, they worked with the PA to schedule the renovation and the work on the Learning Link project in tandem. The project gave me an opportunity to make this space and our RC activities more visible to residents.

Did you find the engagement process tedious?

The whole process took about nine months. If it were any shorter, it would have been difficult to achieve its desired outcomes. When the HDB team first came in, as this was never done before, we did not know what the project was about, and what they were trying to do with our place. As time went by, we gradually got the picture. If it were too rushed, it would have been messy and may not have worked well.

What were some challenges you encountered when engaging residents? How did you tackle them?

One challenge we encountered was the location of the RC office. It was not visible to residents; if you walk past here, you cannot see it. Now, with this coffee corner, the mini library and activity space, the outreach to residents is much better. The coffee corner is a highly visible, physical space that entices people to come in and interact. There is also a playgroup "Apple Tree" and children's playground nearby, where parents bring their children. The renovation also improved our signage, which has also helped with the visibility of this space.

We encourage people from all walks of life to participate in our programmes. While we had attracted the elderly, the young and homemakers to participate, we are also stepping up outreach to get working adults to be more involved in our activities.

It was challenging for us to learn about the details of space planning and construction. For example, the placement of "exit" signs, the location of piping, wiring systems, and power sockets meant that the RC had to work closely with SCDF (Singapore Civil Defence Force), the Town Council and other authorities. We relied on the professionals and experts in the project working group to guide us on these details.

What do you think contributed to the success of the project?

One success factor is collaboration. We worked with NGOs such as Kampong Senang, who helped organise events such as free haircuts for the seniors under the block and supported many community initiatives proposed at this space.

On the other hand, the RC also has a close working relationship with public agencies. Our project meetings involve a large group of people working together, with officers from PA, HDB, the Town Council and others. This close-knit relationship means that decisions are agreed upon and communicated clearly to different parties at the local level. If we have any issue to raise, we can reach out to the Town Council, which would then channel the case to the respective HDB liaison officer. In return, the public officers also seek the grassroots adviser's opinion on strategic matters.

I am also very lucky to have dedicated volunteer residents at the RC. In my RC there are 12 blocks comprising more than 1000 households. Each block has a volunteer who disseminates messages and event information to all residents by word of mouth when they meet in the lifts or through house visits. Besides block representatives, we also have other volunteers who takes care of the coffee corner and the community garden. These volunteers become familiar faces to our residents. This makes engagement and sustaining vibrancy at this space much easier.

Singapore
Community Participatory Programmes

Background

Shared public spaces such as HDB void decks and bus stops hold great potential as community spaces where different groups of citizens can interact. Despite this, they are often underused. Two recent programmes—"Our Favourite Place" by URA (Urban Redevelopment Authority) and "Friendly Faces, Lively Places" by HDB—support initiatives to enliven these public spaces. Our Favourite Place enlivens shared public spaces around Singapore, while projects implemented under HDB's Friendly Faces, Lively Places take place within HDB estates and as a means to ensure strong community involvement, a community match component was introduced. While projects implemented under these programmes vary in scale, each aims to make these spaces more useful, and to get the public more involved in their community.

Involving the Community to Enliven Public Spaces: Our Favourite Place

Our Favourite Place has its origins in a pilot programme in 2013, when URA worked with public and private organisations on a variety of pop-up installations. The well-received programme has since been formalised, and now welcomes proposals by Community Partners (Applicants) to transform public spaces into active community spaces which facilitate community interaction and create shared memories. Any public space can be activated—from vacant disused plots of land to public areas within commercial buildings.

Public piano movement "Play it Forward" along Singapore River.

URA supports these projects by providing: one-stop assistance with agency consultation and advice; up to S$5,000 for short term projects (six months or less) or S$10,000 for long term projects (more than six months) and matchmaking with potential partners (space owners or sponsors) to realise projects. Successful projects have created new public spaces and rejuvenated old ones, through innovative design and programmes.

Play It Forward SG

Play It Forward SG works with artists to transform unwanted pianos into art pieces which are placed in public locations for anyone and everyone to enjoy. After each edition of the initiative, the pianos are "played forward" to charitable institutions such as Chaoyang School (a school for special-needs children).

While the project first started out as a one-day event at URA's PARK(ing) Day, it has now become a successful project in its own right, with a number of editions throughout the year. Play It Forward SG pianos have been used for mini-concerts such the weekly Pianover Meetups organised by ThePiano.SG. It has also provided amateur musicians who do not own pianos with the chance to play in public.

Project Bus Stop

The innovative concept is meant to transform the bus stop, beyond its primary function of providing a place to wait for buses, into a rich experience for commuters. It is a good example of a project initiated by Singaporeans who wish to make a difference to the way our public spaces are used.

Project bus stop in Jurong East designed by DP Architects where commuters can enjoy free Wi-Fi, charge their mobile phones, download e-books and sit on a swing.

Art installations along Clive Street featured in the Project Oasis @ Little India by Little India Shopkeepers & Heritage Association (LISHA) and supported by Singapore Tourism Board (STB).

Installations at Little India

Inspired by Little India's rich culture and history, these installations at Hindoo Road and Clive Street in the Little India precinct are based on designs by Ms Marthalia Budiman, a participant in URA's "My Ideas for Public Spaces: Forgotten Spaces" competition held in 2015. The installations have rejuvenated previously unused vacant land.

Inspired by trees in the precinct, the eye-catching installation at Hindoo Road takes the shape of a tree with umbrellas forming its canopy. Providing shade to visitors, the installation blends functionality with design.

The installation at Clive Street is inspired by the history and culture of the location, which used to be active in cattle trading in the 19th century. The cattle-inspired art and bright colours bring out the precinct's identity, allowing visitors to better understand Little India's rich heritage.

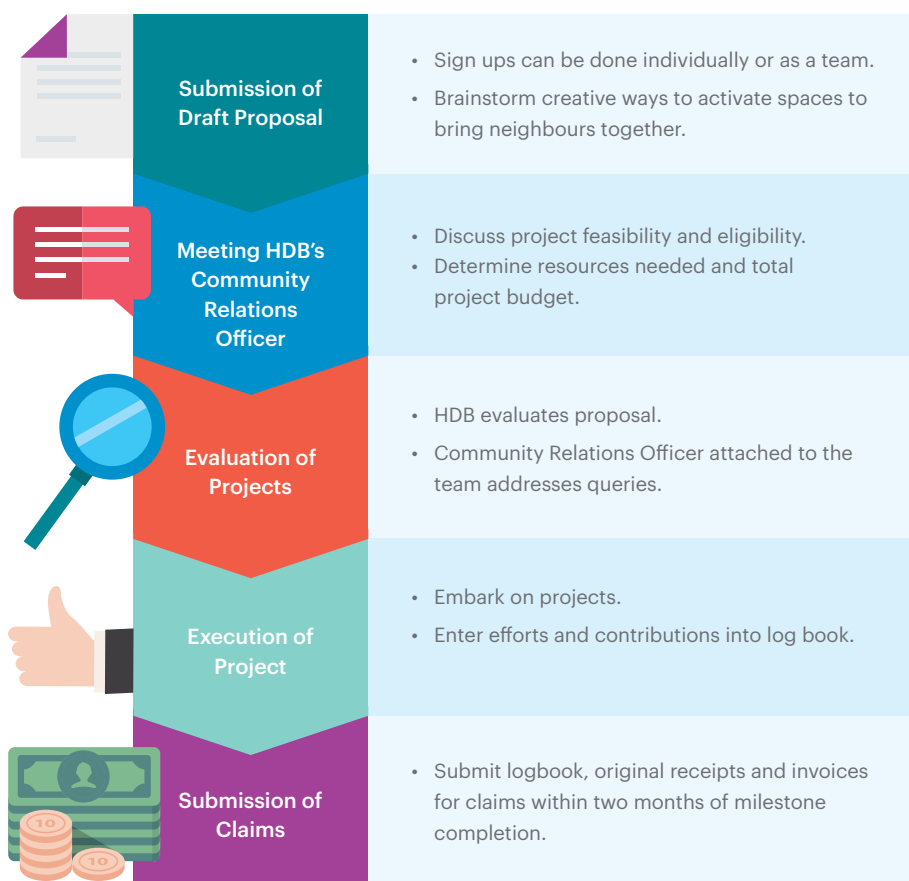### Fostering Vibrant Heartlands and Neighbourly Bonds: HDB Friendly Faces, Lively Places

The HDB Friendly Faces, Lively Places Fund is an expansion of the HDB's Good Neighbours Project. HDB is offering $500,000 to help residents carry out ground-up place-making efforts that can foster a stronger community. These projects can take place at HDB spaces such as the town plazas, void decks, precinct pavilions and roof-top gardens.

The fund is open to all Singapore Citizens and permanent residents, all year round.

There are three broad categories under the programme:

a) the Action Fund supports shorter term activities to bond neighbours, e.g., floor parties;

Steps Involved in Starting a Project under Friendly Faces Lively Places Programme

Submission of Draft Proposal
- Sign ups can be done individually or as a team.
- Brainstorm creative ways to activate spaces to bring neighbours together.

Meeting HDB's Community Relations Officer
- Discuss project feasibility and eligibility.
- Determine resources needed and total project budget.

Evaluation of Projects
- HDB evaluates proposal.
- Community Relations Officer attached to the team addresses queries.

Execution of Project
- Embark on projects.
- Enter efforts and contributions into log book.

Submission of Claims
- Submit logbook, original receipts and invoices for claims within two months of milestone completion.

b) the Project Fund supports projects of a larger scale which may involve recurrent activities such as monthly workshops; and

c) the Building Fund supports projects which involve physical enhancements to create HDB spaces conducive for community bonding.

Since its launch in May 2016, HDB has received 52 applications. Of these, 27 projects have been completed or approved; close to S$93,000 in funds has been disbursed or committed to project teams.

These projects have benefited some 9,400 residents, and generated almost 9,000 volunteering hours from the community. They have attracted matching support from the community worth over S$220,000.

Blooming in Harmony

An Action Fund project called Blooming in Harmony has reached out to 70 residents with craft activities such as flower arrangement, DIY composting and bookmark-making. These activities took

Welcome to Our Backyard! (WOBY!) initiatives at blocks 96 and 97 at Aljunied Crescent.

place at the void deck of Block 816 Tampines Avenue 4. The activities, facilitated by enthusiastic students from Chongzheng Primary School, helped highlight the importance of recycling and neighbourliness.

Magic of Kindness

Magic of Kindness was a successful Project Fund project held at a precinct pavilion near Ghim Moh Market. Families from different backgrounds were treated to a night of magic acts conveying the message of kindness. This project is a good example of residents contributing their skills to better their communities.

Welcome to Our Backyard (WOBY!) Co-Creation Workshop: The Upcycled Play Yard

Welcome to Our Backyard (WOBY!) Co-Creation Workshop: The Upcycled Play Yard was a Building Fund project. It involved 196 participants who helped to revitalise a grass patch between Blocks 96 and 97 at Aljunied Crescent. Residents co-created swings and gardens, transforming the previously empty space into an attractive Play Yard where

residents of all ages could interact and have fun with one another.

Conclusion

These community participatory programmes demonstrate efforts to empower the community in envisioning and creating projects that revitalise underutilised public spaces. Feedback from participants to date has been positive with most getting to know new neighbours and inspired to do more for their communities. Through this programme, it is heartening that many Singaporeans are stepping up to help realise the transformations they want for their communities.

With support from these government programmes, members of the community interested in bringing vibrancy to the spaces they hold dear are no longer held back by the financial costs of such activities. The success of these initiatives should encourage more people to step up and start innovative projects to create lively spaces for social interaction and to foster togetherness.

MIZAH RAHMAN
Director and Co-founder, Participate in Design

Participate in Design (P!D) is a non-governmental organisation in Singapore that facilitates public participation and engagement and promotes participatory design in education and practice. Mizah Rahman, co-founder of P!D, spoke to the research team about applying a participatory approach, akin to HDB's earlier BOND pilot project, for Tampines Neighbourhood Renewal Programmes (NRPs).

What motivated you to advocate participatory design in Singapore?

We started exploring the topic of participatory design six years ago, for our final year thesis in the School of Architecture at National University of Singapore (NUS). As aspiring architects, we often wondered: Who are we supposed to be designing for? Architecture school taught us design concepts and the use of materials, but not so much about the users of the spaces we design. We were interested in how we could get people involved. This prompted us to look for a different approach in architecture and design, one that challenges the more top-down approach in Singapore.

Why should people take an active role to participate in planning issues? How do you encourage participation?

People see a relevance because whatever happens in their neighbourhoods affect their daily lives. That is the key motivation we can tap on: people's desire to participate in issues they care about—whether it is gardening, cycling, or converting carparks into green spaces.

To spur participation, we provide accessible platforms to encourage conversations about the neighbourhood. We are keen to engage "extreme" users such as seniors and kids, who are typically not involved

in decision-making processes and are less likely to voice their concerns at town hall dialogues. On our part, we want to make participation a lot more fun and interesting, for example, making engagement a community event.

Our rule-of-thumb is always to make sure that a 12-year-old child would be able to understand the information that is presented. The main issues we had to tackle were: How do we de-mystify very complex issues so that the lay person can be involved in the conversation? How do we make it unintimidating for people to participate? To address these considerations, we set up a range of platforms: from informal, guerrilla-style pop-up events to capture input from people who might not have time, to more formal platforms such as workshops and walk-in conversations, where people who want to have more in-depth discussions can do so.

Where are some challenges you've faced in the process of engagement?

One of the biggest challenges we face is: how do we get people to shift their mindsets from simply "complaining" to "providing solutions" to issues? If residents have a good experience of the engagement process,

Pop up strategies to publicise engagement platforms and seek feedback from residents.

they would be good advocates for us when sharing their experiences with others. Another challenge has to do with how open our community partners (i.e., Town Councils, Residents' Committees, grassroots, volunteer wefare organisations) are when it comes to a participatory approach in design and planning. While some may be more open, others may not be so receptive. That makes it a bit more tricky for us when we try out different methods of engagement with residents.

Lastly, we also have to manage expectations, not only from residents but also our community partners. The truth is that we cannot engage 100% of the resident population. At the beginning of a participatory project, it is critical for us to establish the rules and expectations of what we can or cannot do. We always set a target number and range of demographics we want to engage so that we capture enough information. One of the litmus tests is when we keep getting similar feedback—that is when we know we have covered sufficient ground.

What has been the most interesting aspect of the NRPs?

One of the most exciting things about working on the NRP is that it is not just a visioning exercise—it is a neighbourhood planning project that

Pop-up stories at the neighbourhood market to reach out to local residents.

will definitely be implemented for residents. Hence, there is a lot of motivation for people to be part of the conversation and decision-making, because it will ultimately affect their lives. It also gave us greater confidence when engaging residents.

Beyond the hardware aspect, the NRP process also focuses on the software aspect, which includes creating greater awareness. One of the main briefs from the Town Council was for residents to know more about NRP and how the upgrading project can benefit them. For us, this involves an extensive and inclusive process, with elements of publicity, education and branding that we explore creatively, beyond just design. As funding is made available, there is more room to create awareness and get more residents involved. This also includes changing people's perception of the Town Council as a mere provider of municipal services such as waste collection, by highlighting its role in improving the built environment.

Were there any limitations as a result of the NRP being a government programme?

There were hits and misses. Some grassroots groups were more open and supportive, while others did not see the value of our involvement. We also wanted to test out participatory budgeting during the NRP process, for example, telling residents the cost of a playground so that they can decide whether to re-prioritise the funds to build something else. We felt this could be empowering for residents. However, the Town Council was not ready for this, as they did not typically reveal the budget to residents.

Broadly speaking, however, we had free rein to try out different ways of engaging residents—the Town Council and grassroots had never embarked on such a project before, and had no sense of what could or could not be done. They were more familiar with finding value using an approach based on designing with people, as opposed to one based on designing for people.

We hope that more partners will be as open-minded and supportive, willing to take risks and see the value of embarking on a participatory approach to designing spaces. It may take longer and might be a bit more expensive, but will lead to much more meaningful outcomes.

Community Participation and Ownership

Vibrant Community Center (VCC)

- VCCs are autonomous resident-run community spaces at *dong* offices.
- A Public-Private-Participation Group (PPPG) comprising of resident volunteers, Resident Self Governing Committee members, and public servants, is set up for each VCC to determine the design and management of the VCC.
- Experts facilitated the participatory design process to achieve consensus between stakeholders with different interests through flexible, shared-space solutions.

Namuguneul: Citizen Ownership of Community Spaces

- Seoul launched a pilot programme to facilitate citizen ownership of community assets, and address the challenges of maintaining non-profit community spaces in the high-rental cost environment in Seoul.
- Financial assistance for the community was provided through a public trust and a Citizen Ownership Foundation.
- Namugunuel is the first citizen ownership project in Seoul, and would be using the funds to convert a three-storey building into a shared community complex.

Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator

- Social Linkway and Neighbourhood Incubator are part of a collaborative study between HDB and the NUS to distil good neighbourhood designs that facilitate community bonding.
- Participatory planning approach was used to involve residents in the enhancement and activation of everyday spaces.

Singapore Community Participatory Programmes

- Our Favourite Place by the URA and Friendly Faces, Lively Places by the HDB support community-led initiatives that transform public spaces into active community spaces.
- Support from respective agencies come in the form of seed funding, advisory assistance, and "matchmaking" with potential partners to realise the projects.

6
PLANNING FOR COMMUNITIES, WITH COMMUNITIES, BY COMMUNITIES: LESSONS FROM SEOUL AND SINGAPORE

Seoul and Singapore are different cities. Their respective approaches to urban planning and community involvement have been shaped by different social, cultural and political contexts. Nevertheless, common lessons can be distilled from the experiences of both cities.

To frame these learning points, the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) and Seoul Institute (SI) research teams asked two key questions: How can governance and planning frameworks facilitate community involvement?, and how can community involvement processes generate better outcomes? The former captures useful principles in governance and planning systems that contribute positively to community involvement; the latter examines key ingredients for successful community involvement initiatives in planning and development.

Community feedback workshop held in Tampines (left).

How Can Governance and Planning Framework Facilitate Community Involvement?

The planning and development processes that had enabled rapid urban transformation in Seoul and Singapore since the 1960s were generally top-down in nature. A changing social context in recent years has prompted policy shifts to create more room for community involvement in both Seoul and Singapore. The experiences of both cities show that effective governance and community involvement are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In fact, good governance and planning can play an important role in creating more meaningful community involvement outcomes.

Stakeholder engagement for the Rail Corridor project.

Align Internal Stakeholders

Urban infrastructure and services in large cities like Seoul and Singapore are organised under the purview of various governmental departments and agencies, each with their own specific missions and targets. Inevitably, there will be differences in priorities and goals between agencies. Left unresolved, such inter-department and agency differences could make it difficult to address community needs that cut across functional domains. These conflicts could even compromise the goals of the government as a whole.

Creating a system that can resolve internal differences and align various stakeholders within government, is vital before citizens can participate in urban planning processes. Such coordination is especially crucial at the macro-planning level, where trade-offs are more substantial and complex.

Singapore's Master Planning process, for example, is coordinated through the Master Planning Committee chaired by the Chief Planner of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) with representation from various agencies, to resolve competing land use needs. This provides a basis for assessing and incorporating community inputs collected through various avenues, including focus group discussions and Draft Master Plan exhibitions, into the final Master Plan. Inter-agency coordination is also key to the success of more localised planning and development projects, such as the Remaking Our Heartlands programme and mega public developments like Our Tampines Hub. Effective coordination for local developments demonstrates, in a tangible manner, the government's commitment and ability to address community needs and inputs consolidated through engagement.

Similarly, the success of the Seoul Plan 2030 over previous Master Plans is not merely due to an expanded community engagement process. The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) sought to improve coordination for the planning process by appointing the Planning and Coordination Department and the Urban Planning Department as co-leads of the master planning process. Since the Planning and Coordination Department has greater authority overseeing most of the lower-level departments, this garnered a higher level of support for the Seoul Plan 2030 from the SMG's other divisions and subsidiary organisations. The Seoul Plan 2030 was also designated as an overarching plan for coordinating other subsidiary plans and policies. These measures ensured that the planning intentions in Seoul Plan 2030, including citizen input, would be followed through across different implementation plans.

Enhance Transparency and Access to Planning Information

Enhancing the transparency of planning processes, and ensuring citizen access to planning information, improves the quality of citizen participation. Transparency in planning helps provide assurance that basic public interests have been safeguarded. On one hand, transparency demonstrates that adjustments due to private developments are taken into account; on the other, it helps set the scope and expectations for community involvement initiatives. This engenders trust between the government and citizens, and facilitates more informed and constructive inputs from the community.

This principle applies to all layers of the planning process: from macro city-level planning to detailed local plans. In Singapore, making future development plans more

Citizen group meeting for Seoul Plan 2030.

transparent has been a key aspect of the Master Plan system since the Development Guide Plans were introduced in the 1990s. They allowed the public to voice possible concerns on future developments in their neighbourhoods, based on publicly-available information at the Draft Master Plan stage. Successful citizen engagement processes in Seoul were also enabled by making information available to citizen participants, to facilitate more informed decision-making. In Seowon Village, for example, residents were able to reach a consensus on the height limit of buildings for their neighbourhood, after information was provided on relevant planning laws and the implications of height limits.

Create a Structured Framework to Translate Feedback into Action

Urban planning is a complex process for large cities. The planning framework needs to be structured so as to ensure that feedback and ideas collected through engagement efforts are translated into action and not lost in the planning process. In pursuing more collaborative planning processes, the different roles of the many stakeholders involved needs to be clearly established.

The Seoul 2030 Master Plan's was conceived as a citizen-led process. However, the planning process was not an organic, bottom-up process. The extensive citizen participation framework had been designed by an Advisory Group of 33 members. This ensured clarity in the roles of the various stakeholders, including government officials, professionals, and citizen groups. This framework has helped guide the planning process towards desirable outcomes, despite the uncertainty of involving ordinary citizens.

At the organisation level, structural improvements are also important to ensure

that ground feedback collected does not get lost in day-to-day operations. Singapore's Land Transport Authority (LTA), for example, strengthened its communications department and created a community partnership division to ensure that public inputs are duly considered and do not end up in a "black hole". This made LTA more responsive to public sentiments in its transport planning work.

Create a System of Intermediate-level Plans as Part of the Urban Planning Framework

The relevance of urban planning to citizens increases as one moves down the layers of planning—from strategic metropolitan-level Master Plans to neighbourhood improvement plans. The relationship between the different layers of planning, however, may not always be well-established or well-articulated. This could lead to coordination issues during implementation, a limited understanding of macro-planning intentions among citizens, or even misalignment between strategic planning directions and citizens' needs at the local level. In addition, city-level master plans may not provide enough detailed scope to account for the needs of local communities in the overall urban planning framework.

The experience of both cities shows that incorporating more detailed district-level local plans within the overall urban planning framework creates better opportunities for community involvement. It also improves the overall planning system, by distilling macro-planning strategies into more concrete planning proposals. In Singapore, the Development Guide Plans of the 1990s, which divided the city into 55 planning areas, offered a way to articulate local issues and opportunities systematically, while providing meaningful platforms with which to engage the community and private sector.

Resident Environment Management Programme in Seowon Village led by local Resident Council.

In Seoul, the city government saw that even the unprecedented scale of community engagement process for the Seoul 2030 Plan was not enough to encompass the concerns of all residents. To provide due attention to local issues within each of the 116 local community planning areas, the Local Community Plans served as intermediate plans to coordinate between the overall Master Plan and the Urban Management Plans used for detailed implementation. This has helped to align macro-level plans, implementation plans and citizens' needs.

Work with Existing Resident Organisations

Well-established resident organisations often form the heart of the community. They anchor extensive networks within the community, and possess a wealth of knowledge on local neighbourhoods. Existing resident organisations are therefore important partners for community planning.

Both cities have established networks of resident organisations which planners can

work with on local improvement projects. In Seoul, the Resident Environment Management Programme in Seowon Village was successfully led by the local Resident Council, which played an important role in reaching consensus within the community for key neighbourhood decisions such as shared parking areas and fenceless front yards. The Gyeongui Line Forest Park community council, formed from existing community and resident organisations, will ensure the maintenance and continued vibrancy of the public space in the long term. In Singapore, the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme projects are led by the local Town Councils, with the active involvement of grassroots leaders within Residents' Committees.

However, existing resident organisations may not always have the necessary resources or expertise to carry out community planning. They may also face difficulties in attracting fresh participants. In such cases, other solutions could be explored to attract fresh community volunteers to work with existing organisations. For example, in

Seoul's Vibrant Community Center (VCC), the Public-Private Participatory Group (PPPG) provided a platform for interested volunteers to participate and work with existing community leaders in the Resident Self-Governing Committee (RSGC) in creating a resident-led community space, without requiring volunteers to join a formal organisation such as the RSGC. In the case of *dong*-level community planning, community officers played key roles in encouraging new residents to participate. On average, 83% of the participants were new residents; while 34% of them were in their 30s and 40s, a demographic which typically has a low participation rate in community activities.

How Can Community Involvement Processes Generate Better Outcomes?

Success in community engagement initiatives is not a given. To enable communities to play their part actively and constructively in planning and development processes, careful thought needs to be put into the engagement processes in order to generate positive, concrete outcomes. The CLC and SI research teams have identified some key areas which should be considered when preparing for communities to participate in planning and development processes.

Involve Experts in Community Engagement

While communities possess in-depth local knowledge that should be leveraged for in local planning and development, residents often do not have the technical skills to translate their knowledge into feasible solutions. Members of the community may also not be able to fully understand or foresee the implications of planning proposals.

Involving experts in community engagement processes can help bridge the gap between local needs on the ground and broader planning considerations which are more technical in nature. Experts involved in community discussions can also provide more objective and professional perspectives that balance diverse needs within the community, helping residents look beyond their own interests and achieve mutual consensus. The VCC programme in Seoul, for example, has social architects working with the community to propose shared-space solutions that address the needs and concerns of different parties. These solutions provide the basis for discussion and consensus among community stakeholders.

To better facilitate their involvement, experts and policy makers also need to be equipped with the skills to communicate effectively with the community. This is especially important in planning and development domains, for which details can often be too technical and abstract for lay citizens.

Recognising this need, Singapore's Office for Citizen Engagement (OCE) from the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) introduced the Citizen Engagement Seed Fund in February 2017 to catalyse innovative projects by public agencies' that involve deeper modes of engagement, as well as capacity building for communities and public officers. The Fund has since supported 11 projects; one of these involved the training of SportSG officers in ground-sensing, facilitation and community-building techniques, so that they can co-create programmes and activities with the community, starting with two sports centres, Heartbeat@Bedok and Delta Sports Complex.

Empower the People, Capability will Follow

Empowering communities calls for members of the community to be equipped with planning capabilities and other necessary skills. In addition, not all issues at the local

Dong-level Community Planning in Mangu-dong.

level require government intervention. Given the right skills and social connections, there is often scope for communities to develop their own solutions within the neighbourhood, for less complex day-to-day issues.

Seoul's approach to community development emphasises the importance of giving citizens decision-making powers and resources. By this, community capability will follow naturally, as residents learn to solve their own problems. For example, in *dong*-level Community Planning, the delegating of authority for certain community-level decisions to residents has led them to build up their community-planning capabilities. Although assistance from planning experts was vital, it was essentially a resident-led community planning process empowered to make decisions. Survey results for the *dong*-level Community Planning programme have shown promising results, with a 43.9% increase in problems solved through community initiatives.

Address Conflicts Between Residents through an Inclusive and Deliberative Approach

Community spaces are not just places where residents bond; they can also be where conflicts occur. Similarly, community planning processes should provide platforms for residents both to discuss their mutual interests as well as to resolve differences, before arriving at the planning proposal. This can be achieved by ensuring adequate representation of diverse interests within the community during engagement activities, and by putting in place a carefully-designed deliberative process. Parties involved should examine issues through a critical approach that defines problems, identifies priorities and allocates limited resources (such as land or funding) through mutual consensus. This will facilitate more informed decision-making among multiple stakeholders.

Engaging diverse stakeholders for the Rail Corridor project.

Seoul's community planning programmes demonstrate the benefits of this approach. Instead of curating community discussions to prevent potential conflicts, Seoul's processes typically encourage participants to examine the issues and consider the trade-offs in a transparent manner. By designing the participation process to uncover and resolve community conflicts through a deliberative approach, community planners can guide residents towards mutually-agreeable outcomes that are also often remarkably innovative in nature. For example, the multiple stakeholders for VCC openly discussed potential conflicts in setting up a new community space within an existing *dong*-office building, before agreeing on a shared space concept that accommodated the needs of all users.

Make Participation in Planning Processes Accessible to Everyone

Making it easier for people to take part in planning processes can help attract wider participation. More importantly, reaching out to the wider community for participation increases the diversity of participants. This lets planners incorporate perspectives that may otherwise be missing in the planning process and ensures inclusivity in planning outcomes. For this to happen, engagement platforms, methods and content should be made as accessible as possible.

The Rail Corridor in Singapore benefitted from the diverse range of engagement platforms set up by the URA. Singapore-based non-governmental organisation (NGO), Participate in Design (P!D), worked

hard to de-mystify the planning processes, which can be overly technical and abstract for laypersons to understand. P!D does so by developing engagement methods and content pitched to be simple enough for a 12-year-old child to understand—this helps to engage users who are not typically involved in decision-making processes.

Focus on Building Communities, Rather than Project Outcomes

Planning and development are not just about physical infrastructural outcomes. With the successful involvement of communities, planning processes can serve as powerful platforms to connect residents, building stronger social bonds and mutual trust. Physical improvement efforts are potential catalysts that can generate broader, deeper and longer term social benefits, and help make communities more resilient.

In Singapore, the HDB's Building Our Neighbourhood's Dreams (BOND!) initiative, introduced as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme (NRP), uses deeper engagement activities to identify the kind of community activities and infrastructure upgrades residents would like to see. The process achieved not just physical improvements, but also social outcomes: 18% of resident participants said they got to understand the concerns and ideas of other fellow neighbours; another 18% remarked that they got to know neighbours from the workshop.

Seoul's community planning programmes, often driven by social objectives, go a step further in using participatory planning as a tool to strengthen communities. *Dong*-Level Community Planning, for example, has been developed as a key programme of the Second Seoul Community Policy,

and conceived with long-term community building in mind. The process does not end with the implementation of projects developed by resident volunteers; instead it focuses on creating a system that supports community initiatives by establishing a core Community Planning Group. Pre- and post-programme survey responses from the community have reflected the positive social impact of the programme: 33.4% of respondents saw an increase in mutual trust among neighbours, while 25.2% indicated that they felt a stronger sense of community.

Namuguneul, the community asset project in Seoul, is a good example. Four years after the community took ownership of the place, it was nearly shut down because of gentrification of the surrounding area and rising rents. However, the community group didn't give up. They raised funds on their own, and applied for a citizen-ownership contest for new premises to move in to. The effort was successful largely because the residents' community spirit and planning capabilities had grown since the start of the project.

Planning for Communities, with Communities, by Communities: Lessons from Seoul and Singapore

How Can **Governance and Planning Framework** Facilitate Community Involvement?

How can **Community Involvement Processes** Generate Better Outcomes?

Create a System of Intermediate-level Plans as Part of the Urban Planning Framework

Empower the People, Capability will Follow

Create a Structured Framework to Translate Feedback into Action

Make Participation in Planning Processes Accessible to Everyone

Enhance Transparency and Access to Planning Information

Address Conflicts between Residents through an Inclusive and Deliberative Approach

Work with Existing Resident Organisations

Focus on Building Communities, Rather than Project Outcomes

Align Internal Stakeholders

Involve Experts in Community Engagement

7
CONCLUSION: IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO PLAN A CITY—TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE PLANNING APPROACHES

Citizen participation in planning may be motivated by a variety of factors: political objectives, ground-up demand due to perceived gaps in planning provisions, broader social change, or a genuine desire by authorities to improve planning outcomes by involving the community being served. Effective participation can foster greater trust, both among citizens and with the government. In certain cases— as demonstrated by Seoul's *Dong*-Level Community Planning process—it may even reduce the public sector intervention, by empowering communities to solve their own problems.

Seoul's and Singapore's experiences show that government-led initiatives and community-driven approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Good planning processes, featuring effective governance, structured frameworks and professional expertise, inevitably include efforts to encourage citizen involvement in planning. The public sector should prepare for more participatory and consultative processes to facilitate more concrete outcomes arising from ground-up inputs.

Ultimately, participatory planning should be considered within the broader context of planning in increasingly complex urban environments. Urban planning needs to incorporate diverse perspectives and encourage the cross-fertilisation of ideas to meet complex urban challenges that may not be resolvable by government action alone. To achieve this, urban planning and development should adopt an open, collaborative approach and bring on board various stakeholders—including community, businesses, civic groups and government—to forge a common and more resilient future for our cities.

Various stakeholders involved in the Rail Corridor Project (left).

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PLANNING FOR COMMUNITIES

Lessons from Seoul and Singapore

Seoul and Singapore have successfully redeveloped within a few decades since the 1960s under government-led initiatives. However in recent years, both cities are seeing a shift towards greater community involvement in their planning and development processes.

Planning for Communities: Lessons from Seoul and Singapore is the second joint research publication between the Centre for Liveable Cities and the Seoul Institute. The publication features case studies from Seoul and Singapore on citizen participation initiatives for planning and development processes from each city, and distills common lessons on how collaborative approaches with the community can generate better planning outcomes for everyone.

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