

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION PLANS OF THE RATTANAKOSIN AREA, BANGKOK

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Abstract

The Master plan for Conservation and Development of *Krung Rattanakosin* as a policy plan was created by the force of the Rattanakosin Committee for main purpose of the celebration of the Bangkok Bicentennial anniversary in 1982. Later, numerous action plans were carried out following 20 conservation programmes of the master plan. This study consists of three main goals: an investigation the conservation bodies and the conservation plans of the Rattanakosin Area; a discovery results in evaluation of the conservation plans; and a discovery of the obstructions in plan implementation and suggestions.

The evaluation shows that conservation activities during plan-making period focused on the building restoration of the monuments, the landscape improvement, and the regulatory measures.

From the period of plan implementation until now, three of 20 programmes, including the Creating Cultural Plaza at *Wat Suthat Depvararam* and the Bangkok City Hall, Improving the *Phra Athit* Road Area, and Improving *Wat Depthidaram* and *Wat Ratchanaddaram* Area, shown good results. The assessment of six conservation activities shows that progressive activities include the governmental office relocation, the building restoration and construction, and the landscape improvement. Unprogressive activities include the regulatory measures, the building demolition, and the community orderliness.

Main obstacles and suggestions for plan implementation comprise of three issues. First, the governmental authorities are duplicating in the effort of when it comes to conservation; therefore, the collaborations to undertake the plans should be improved. Second, public participation is included in few parts of the plans. Thus every part in conservation bodies should be supported to take part in all processes of the plans. Finally, conservation plans comprise less incentive for the residents. Hence, conservation plans should pay more important parts in revitalising contemporary uses in the conservation areas.

Introduction

Forced by the Rattanakosin Committee, the Master plan for Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin was created in 1982. The master plan is the foremost plan of which 20 conservation programmes were applied to be the action plans and studies. Due to the revision of the master plan of 1994, less than 40 per cent of activities in conservation programmes have been applied during two decade of plan implementation. Hence, the question of why the plans cannot gain a success will be addressed in this study.

The study comprise of three main parts. First part is to investigate the roles of the Rattanakosin Committee that pays an important part in the conservation bodies and the conservation plans in the Rattanakosin area, including the master plan and action plans. Second part is to evaluate the implementation of conservation plans based on the revise plan of 1994. Final part is to discover of the obstructions and provide the suggestions for attaining a success in plan implementations.

The Rattanakosin Area: the Historic Core of Bangkok

Bangkok, the official name of which is *Krung Thep Maha Nakhon*, has been the capital of Thailand since 1782. The city has served as the centre of the government administration, economy, social, and culture. The *Rattanakosin* area is a historic core of Bangkok with its high values national monuments. Since the Rattanakosin area is the first settlement of Bangkok before it has been gradually growth covering the area of Bangkok Metropolitan as in nowadays, a number of governmental offices, academic institutes, commercial areas and also residential areas of various ethic groups have been still located in the Rattanakosin area. (Naengnoi Saksri 1991: 336) The Rattanakosin area has been characterised as comprising three concentric rings of settlement, which are the Inner Rattanakosin, the Outer Rattanakosin, and *Krung Thonburi*.¹ (Fig. 1)

1 The first is the Inner Rattanakosin, the area from the Chao Phraya River to the inner original city canal (Khlong Ku Muang Derm), covering the area of 1.8 square kilometres or 1,125 Rai. (1 Rai equals as 0.0016 square kilometre.) The second is the Outer Rattanakosin, the area in between the original city canal and the outer city canal (Khlong Ong Ang and Khlong Bang Lamphu). It covers the area of 2.3 square kilometres or 1,413 Rai. The third ring is the old capital of Krung Thonburi, the area on the opposite site of the Chao Phraya River covering the area of 1.74 square kilometres or 1,088 Rai.

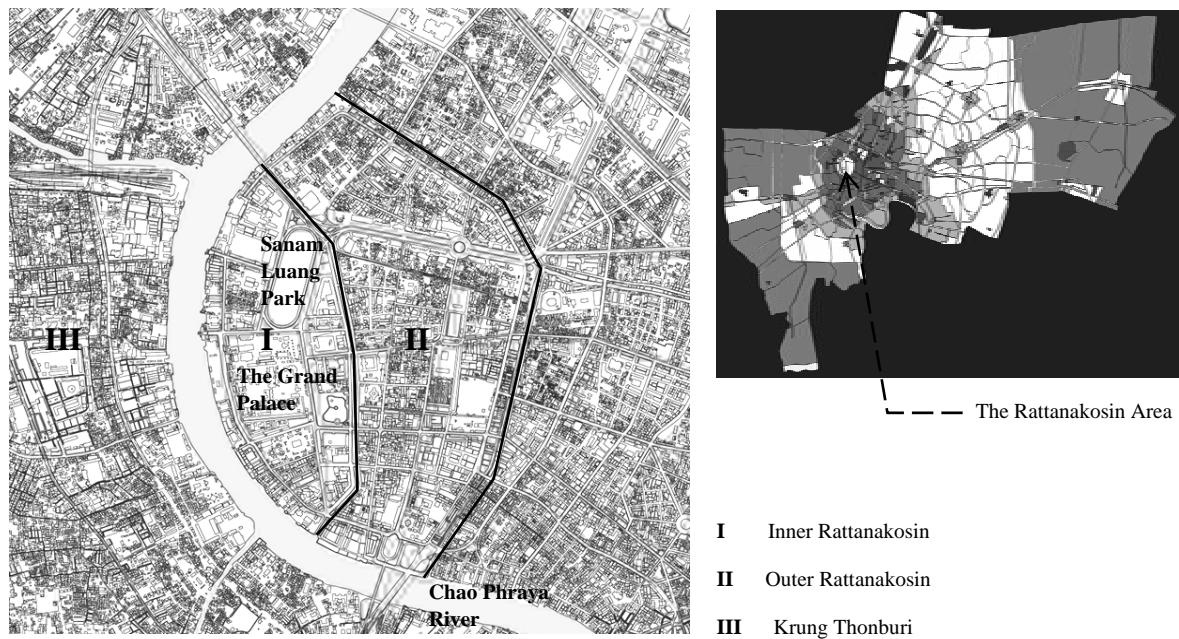


Figure 1: The location of the Rattanakosin Area

The Rattanakosin Committee: the Main Actor of Conservation Bodies

Faced with the dramatic situations, which lead to cultural, social and economic losses, the conservation in the Rattanakosin was initiated in the early 1970s by concerned academics and architects, who were the leaders of conservation movements for opposing the destruction of historic monuments during the high economy growth period. Significantly, the first conservation project was started in 1972 when the Arts and Environmental Protection Association created the project for improvement and conservation in the Rattanakosin area and purposed it to the government. Later, this conservation project was approved by the government and it was one in the Forth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1977-1981).

By 1970s, government authorities established two committees responsible for conservation projects. Firstly, “the committee of conservation in valuable buildings in Bangkok” was established by the Ministry of Interior in 1976. This committee had a responsibility to lay down policies and measures for conservation of the Rattanakosin area in order to prepare for the bicentenary celebrations of Bangkok in 1982. Secondly, “the committee of conservation improvement and restoration historical monuments in the Rattanakosin” was established by the Ministry of Education established in 1979. Main tasks of the committee are to designate areas of historical monuments for the urgency registration and to regulate the boundary of conservation district. In 1979, to avoid duplication of efforts between the committees, the National Environment Board, under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, combined both committees to be “the committee for Rattanakosin Island project”, later named “the Rattanakosin Committee”.

The Rattanakosin Committee hands over a great responsibility in conservation practices in the Rattanakosin area. The tasks of the committee include stating policies; conservation plans, building guidelines, infrastructures and services in the area. Besides, the

committee is responsible for stating implementation agencies, and controlling plan implementation. (Synchron Group Co. Ltd. 1994: 7-8) Due to the main task of the committee in creating the master plan for conservation in the Inner Rattanakosin, a design competition was held. Awarded proposals purposed by six design companies were adopted to be “the Master Plan for the Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin” in 1982. Apart from creating the plans, the committee has a responsibility to implement conservation programmes. Moreover, it works with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (the BMA) to approve all the blueprints of the buildings constructed in the Rattanakosin Area.

The committee comprise of the representative members from various government authorities that have accountability of conservation in the area. The head of the committee is the Deputy Prime Minister and the secretary of the committee is the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning. In 1997, the Rattanakosin committee was changed the name again to be “the Committee for development and conservation of the Rattanakosin and old towns”. From that period until the present days, its responsibilities were expanded to cover not only the Rattanakosin area but also old towns all over Thailand. (Fig. 2)

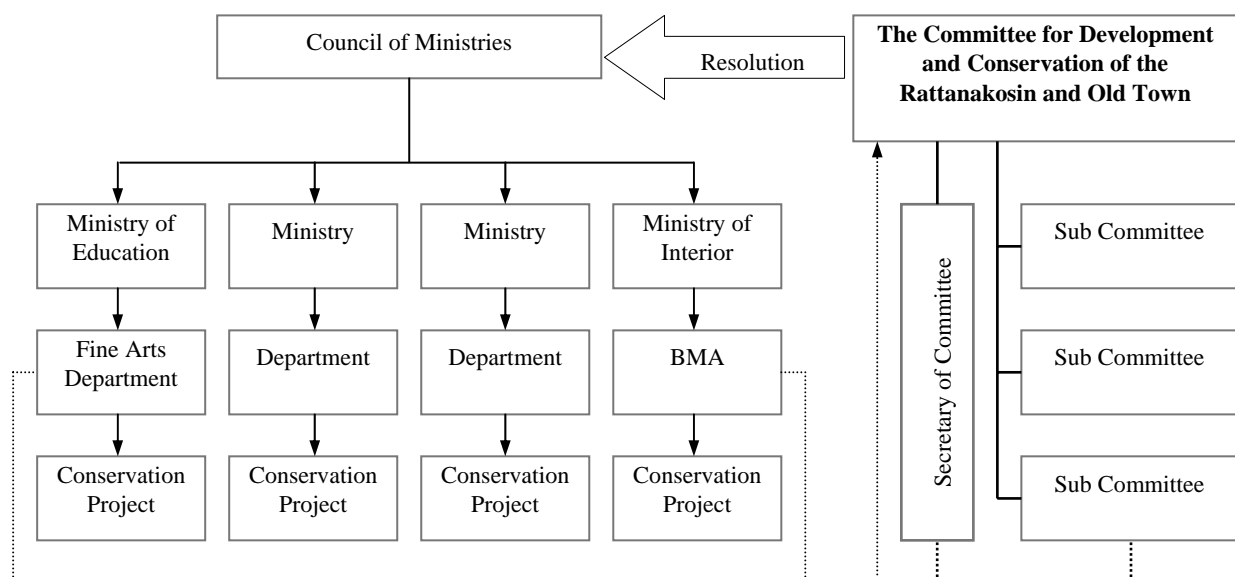


Figure 2: The conservation bodies of the Rattnakosin Area

Source: Team Consulting Engineering and Management, Co. Ltd. 2004.

The Master Plan of the Rattanakosin Area: the Foremost Policy Plan

The Master Plan of the Rattanakosin Area is a comprehensive plan that affects all district plans and local ordinances. The plan contains 20 conservation programmes². Each programme comprise of a) design concepts with rough images of the programmes, b) methods for plan implementation and responsible organisations, and c) terms of implementation and budgets.

² This study will evaluate the implementation of the conservation programmes of the Inner Rattanakosin, the Outer Rattanakosin. The programmes of Krung Thonburi are not included in the study.

The Master Plan of the Rattanakosin Area covers “a conservation area for enhancing Thai arts and culture” controlled by the Bangkok Comprehensive Plan³. (The BMA, 2006) It is important to note that the master plan protects “an urban conservation area”, which is “space” rather than “historic buildings”, which were what the conservation practices were former protects. Nonetheless, conservation concepts of the master plan still focus on restoring old valuable buildings, preserving areas around valuable buildings as green open spaces, and controlling the uses in the conservation areas. (Office of Environmental Policy and Planning. 2006:5).

Within the master plan, the conservation concepts follow the Regulations for Monument Conservation of 1985. “Conservation” was referred to the act of keeping and maintaining a monument in order no retain its values. This comprises protection, maintenance, preservation, restoration and repair. “Monument” was referred to immovable property whose age, architectural styles and historical evidence can be of value to arts, archaeology and history. This includes all antiques attached to the monument and site” (Dhanakoses, Ronarit 2003: 188).

Results from conservation concept appear in conservation programmes including clearance the areas for creating visual vistas to the monuments and preserving and restoring of the monuments that are registered as “national heritage”. Due to the control as “a conservation area”, the Master Plan of the Rattanakosin Area aim towards preserving the area only for the conservation function followed a modern zonal-planning concept. (Askew, Masc. 2002: 305) Traditional practices of land use banned caused the market places and local communities are purposed to demolish. (Fig. 3)



Figure 3: The conceptual images of the conservation programmes

Source: Office of Environmental Policy and Planning 2004a.

³ The Rattanakosin area has been identified as conservation area from the first comprehensive plan in 1960s when the BMA hire the foreign consultants created the plan.

Because of this concept, the master plan uses a comprehensive redevelopment and large-scale clearance scheme. It restricts to the preservation of a limited number of main buildings and monuments.

Although the master plan was created as a policy plan since the early 1980s; the plan was published in 1994 and presented at a public hearing in 1995. Later, the master plan was passed by the Council of Ministries in 1997. Its condition was changed to be a law that can legally force the local government to put into action. (Fig. 4)

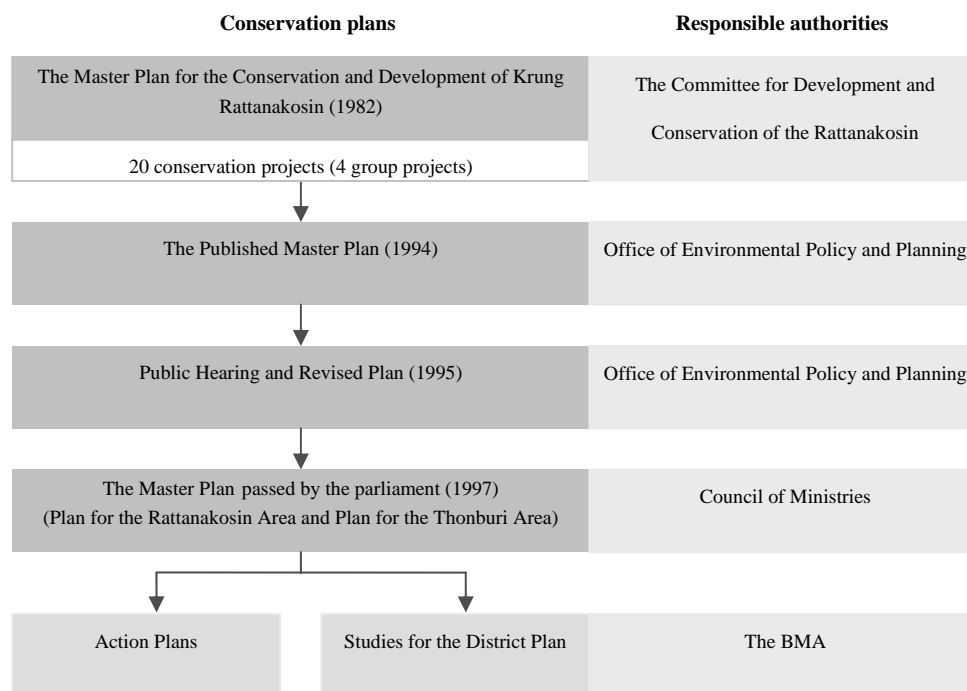


Figure 4: The conservation plans of the Rattanakosin area and responsible authorities

In 1994, the National Environment Board conducted the revise master plan. The revise plan shows the plan implementation during 1987-1992 and divides the plans into two groups. Group 1 includes programmes that are completely implemented (nine programmes). Group 2 contains programmes that are in an on-going process (five programmes) and programme those are included in the master plan (20 programmes) (Synchron Group Co. Ltd. 1994: 18-19).

Twenty programmes in the master plan are divided into three groups. Group 1 Group projects in the area of *Mahakan Fort*, *Wat Deptidaram*, *Wat Ratchanaddaram* and *Chedi Phukhao Thong* (the Golden Mount Stupa), Group 2 Group projects of water and street transportation in Inner *Rattankosin* and Outer *Rattanakosin*, and Group 3 Group projects in the areas nearby the *Chao Phraya River*. Along the plan implementation, some programmes can be applied to be action plans or studies. Currently, there are three action plans and three studies for district plans. (Fig. 5)

Group projects	Projects	Action plans and Studies
Group 1: Group projects in the area of <i>Mahakan Fort, Wat Deptidaram, Wat Ratchanaddaram and Chedi Phukhao Thong</i> (the Golden Mount Stupa)	1.1 Preserving and Improving the <i>Mahakan Fort</i>	The Action plan of conservation and development of the <i>Mahakan Fort</i> area
	1.2 Improving <i>Wat Deptidaram</i> and <i>Wat Ratchanaddaram Area</i>	
	1.3 Creating the Golden Mount Public Park	
Group 2: Group projects of water and street transportation in Inner <i>Rattankosin</i> and Outer <i>Rattanakosin</i>	2.1 Improving the Canals and Bridges for Water Transportation	-
	2.2 Provision Paths along the Canals: the <i>Klong Ku Muang Derm, Khlong Rob Krung, Khlong Lod</i> (North and South)	
	2.3 Preserving and Improving the City Gates, City walls and City Forts	
	2.4 Managing Orderliness of activities in the <i>Klong Ong Ang, Mouth of a Canal Area</i>	
Group 3: Group projects in the areas nearby the <i>Chao Phraya River</i>	3.1 Improving the <i>Phra Athir Road Area</i>	The Action plan of conservation and development of the <i>Pra Atit and Pra Sumane Area</i>
	3.2 Creating Visual Vistas of <i>Wat Bovorn Sathan Sutthavat</i>	The Action plan of conservation and development of the <i>Rachanavee Samosorn and Wat Bovorn Sathan Sutthavat</i>
	3.3 Improving the <i>Tha Phrachan Area</i>	A study for district plan of <i>Tha Chang - Tha Phrachan</i>
	3.4 Improving the <i>Rachanavee Samosorn Area</i>	
	3.5 Improving the Department of Internal Trade area	-
	3.6 Creating Visual Vistas of <i>Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmongalaram</i>	A study for district plan of <i>Tha Tian – Phak Khlong Thalad</i>
	3.7 Improving the <i>Tha Tien Area</i>	
	3.8 Improving the <i>Phak Khlong Thalad Area</i>	
Group 4: The other projects	4.1 Improving the <i>Prang Nara, Prang Phuthorn and Prang Sanphasart Area</i>	A study for district plan of <i>Prang Nara, Prang Phuthorn and Prang Sanphasart</i>
	4.2 Managing Orderliness of the Backward Areas of <i>Rajadamnoen Avenue</i>	-
	4.3 Creating Cultural Plaza at <i>Wat Suthat Depvararam</i> and the Bangkok City Hall	-
	4.4 Improving the <i>Bang Lamphu Commercial Area</i>	-
	4.5 Providing Infrastructures for the <i>Rattanakosin Area</i>	-

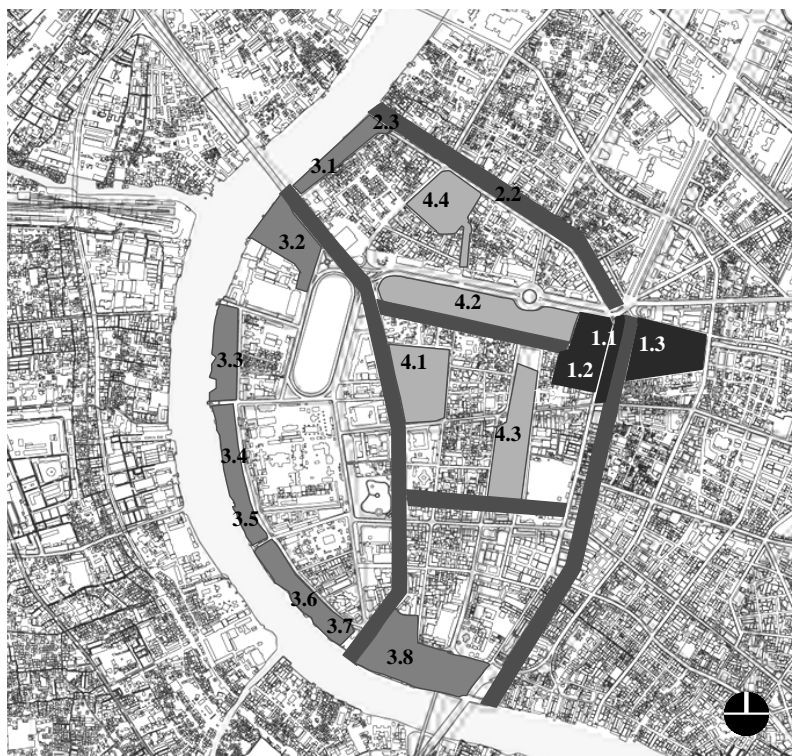


Figure 5: 20 programmes in the master plan.

The Evaluation of Conservation Plans

In this study, evaluation of conservation plans is divided into two periods. First is the evaluation of conservation practices during the plan-making period (1970s-80s). Second is the evaluation of the implementation of the master plan (1980s to the present).

The Evaluation of Conservation Practices during Plan Making Period

During conservation movements and creation of the master plan from the late 1970s to the early of 1980s, early accomplishments were projects of preservation and restoration the high value historic monuments. Nine programmes of preservation and repair monuments -- such as buildings in the Grand Palace, *Wat Phra Si Rattana Sasdaram*, *Wat Arun Ratchavararam*, and two programmes of reconstruction monuments, were carried out in the time of the Bangkok bicentennial celebrations in 1982. The other achievement was a programme of improving *Sanam Laung*, a major public park including relocation a weekend market to the northern suburb area of Bangkok in 1981. One of the effective tasks was to passage decrees on land-use regulation. In 1984 and 1987 the Ministry of Interior issued the Decree on land-use regulations of the Inner Rattanakosin zone, the Outer Rattanakosin zone. In 1992 a zone on the opposite site of *Chao Phraya River*, *Krung Thonburi* was issued a decree on land-use regulation.

Even though the conservation tasks brought about the earlier achievements, oppositions to the Rattanakosin Master Plan from the citizens and professionals have been occurred. There are numerous conservation plans that caused negative consequences to the local residents' ways of life. The effects have not take place only in the earlier of the conservation tasks, but also until the present days. In 1990, architectural professionals opposed a demolition of *Chalermthai* Theatre for creating a scenic vista of *Wat Ratchanadda*. As following the land-use regulations, markets and commercial areas are controlled and some of them were demolished.

In sum, conservation activities during the plan-making period focused on the activities of building restoration of historic monuments, the landscape improvement for creating open spaces, and the provision of regulatory measures for the conservation areas.

The Evaluation of the Implementation of the Master Plan

Since the period of plan making until the revision of the master plan in 1994, the plan assessment report shows that conservation programmes under the master plan have not been success. Less than 40 per cent of activities have been implemented. (Team Consulting Engineering and Management, Co. Ltd. 2004: 103) Along two decades of operation, it is significant that only three of 20 conservation programmes in the master plan shown good results. The successful programmes include: Creating Cultural Plaza at *Wat Suthat Depvararam* and the Bangkok City Hall; Improving the *Phra Athit Road Area*; and Improving *Wat Depthidaram* and *Wat Ratchanaddaram Area*. Conversely, nine programmes have not be

seen the implementation.⁴ Based on the plan assessment report, progressive conservation activities comprise of the governmental office relocation; the building restoration and construction; and the landscape improvement. On the contrary, three unprogressive activities comprise of the regulatory measures, the building demolition, and the community orderliness. This following shows details of the evaluation of each activity.

Progressive Activities:

1. Governmental Office Relocation is one of activities that gain a completion. The programme that gains an achievement is a relocation of the Department of Internal Trade in order to use the area as recreation open spaces. To move governmental offices out of the Rattanakosin area is not only included in 20 programmes under the master plan, but it also involved in other conservation plans – such as the relocating offices of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Commerce.

A key reason for completion for this activity is a forceful decision of the government to move out governmental offices from conservation zones. However, there are many programmes that have not been in a success. Some relocation plans brought about conflicts with plans of governmental sectors. While conservation plans purpose to move out the offices, governmental office's plans still insist to use their areas. Examples of conflicts involve Office of the Council State and Office of the Maritime Promotion Commission. In some cases, although governmental offices have already moved out, the buildings have not been torn down; therefore, the following tasks, such as the landscape improvement cannot be implemented.

2. Building Restoration and Construction is an activity involved in almost all of programmes (17 of 20 programmes) and gain good results. In seven programmes, restoring and constructing buildings can be applied. The success depends on strong protection under the regulatory measures. During 1978-1982, 133 items of high value monuments including the city fort, city walls and city gates, high valuable buildings of temples, palaces and traditional shop-houses were registered by the Fine Arts Department (FAD) under the Ancient Monuments Act of 1961. Because almost buildings are belonging to the government, temples and the crown properties, the governmental authorities can carry out the programmes forcefully. Restoration programmes comprise of *Mahakan Fort* and *Pra Sumane Fort*. These programmes are under the responsibility of the BMA and the Fine Arts Department. Repainting shop-houses in areas of *Pra Athit*, *Tha Tien*, *Tha Phrachan*, *Prang Phuthorn*, and *Wat Su-that Depvararam*, were under the collaboration between the BMA, the crown properties (the land owner), local residents, and private sectors. Complete construction work is the construction of Cultural Plaza and underground parking in the area nearby *Wat Su-that*

4 Nine programmes that have not be seen the implementation include: Creating the Golden Mount Public Park; four Projects of Water and Street Transportation in the Inner and Outer Rattanakosin Zone; Creating Visual Vistas of *Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmongalaram*; Improving the *Phak Khlong Thalad* Area, Improving the *Prang Nara*, *Prang Phuthorn* and *Prang Sanphasart* Area; Managing Orderliness of the Backward Areas of *Rajadamnoen* Avaneue; and Providing Infrastructures for the Rattanakosin Area.

Depvararam and Bangkok City Hall. (Fig. 6) Because this programme is under the duty of the BMA and the area is belonging to the BMA. It is easily to be implemented.



Figure 6: The Cultural Plaza and underground parking in the area nearby *Wat Su-that Depvararam* and Bangkok City Hall

3. Landscape Improvement including the improvement of infrastructure, services and pavements, is involved in every programme. The assessment shows that almost successful programmes in landscape improvement are placed in public areas -- for instance, creating walkways along the *Chao Phraya River* in the *Pra Athit Road Area*, creating footpaths in *Tha Tien* and *Tha Chang* Areas. (Fig. 7) A public park in the *Pra Sumane Fort* is one of good practices in landscape improvement. It has been in negotiation between the FAD who takes a duty in reconstruction of the fort and the BMA who responsible for creating a park. (Fig. 8)



Figure 7: A walkway, a successful landscape improvement in *Tha Chang* Area



Figure 8: A public park in the *Pra Sumane Fort* in the *Phra Atit Road Area*

In contrast, the landscape improvement, which is applied in the areas of local communities with clearance programmes, has not been completed. For instance, the landscape improvement of *Tha Tien*, *Phak Khlong Talad* by clearing shop-houses and business from the *Chao Phraya* waterfront and replacing by recreational open spaces and paths along water ways can not be applied.

Unprogressive activities:

1. Regulatory Measures include environmental controls, activity and building construction controls, and traffic controls. In the conservation programmes, few regulation measures are included. Moreover, they have not achieved a success. Main factors caused ineffective in the regulatory measures are that to put controls to action need long-term period and good relation to other regulations.

2. Building Demolition is involved in almost all of conservation programmes but it has been rarely put into action. Main obstructions are that to demolish buildings depends on the collaboration between various actors, which are landowners, local communities, public sectors, and government authorities. Nowadays, numerous programmes involve the building demolition are opposed by the local residents. The revise plan reports that the governmental sectors try not to come into conflicts with the residents by applying the building demolition. (Team Consulting Engineering and Management, Co. Ltd. 2004: 104)

Consistent with conservation programmes, there are two main goals of the building demolition. First is to demolish buildings and communities that encroach on the historic monuments and sites -- for instances, areas of the city motes, walls, gates and forts. For example, the demolishing buildings in *Mahakan Fort*, *Wat Depthidaram* and *Wat Ratchanaddaram*, and the Golden Mount Stupa. (Fig. 9) The second goal is to clear buildings that obstruct visual vistas of the monuments and replace by open spaces. From this goal, a good implementation is the programme in the area of Department of Internal Trade, replacing by a public park and underground museum. Ineffective programmes include two areas nearby *Chao Phraya* River -- the Tourist Center of the BMA the *Bang Lamphu* area, and the *Ratchanavee Samosorn* belonging to Royal Thai Navy, in *Tha Chang* Pier. Some programmes brought about critics from the local residents. For example, the programme of *Wat Bovorn Satharn Sutthavat*, this involves the demolishing of the National Theatre.



Figure 9: The programme of demolishing buildings in the *Mahakan Fort* Area

3. Community Orderliness is included in few programmes in the master plan. In practice, to move local communities out of historic areas cannot be implemented effectively because of the opposition from the residents and professionals.

The community orderliness has been initiated when programmes in the master plan were applied to action plans and studies for district plans. When the programmes of the areas nearby the *Chao Phraya* River, which are A Study for District Plan of *Tha Chang - Tha Prachan*, and A Study for District Plan of *Tha Tien - Phak Khlong Thalad*, were applied to studies for district plans, several methods to persuade people to join conservation process were used. Within the studies, numerous buildings and local communities that purposed to be torn down under the master plan are lessened. Instead, the buildings purposed to be revitalised by programmes of community under the encouragement of the BMA.

In summary, for the evaluation of the implementation of the conservation programmes in the master plan, the activities involved in almost programmes and they can be implemented are the building restoration and construction and the landscape improvement. Activities involved in almost all of programmes but it cannot be unsuccessfully put into action is the building demolition. Activities involved in few programmes are the governmental office relocation, the regulatory measures, and the community orderliness. The governmental office relocation gains a completion while the regulatory measures and the community orderliness are not gain a success.

Obstructions and suggestions for Plan Implementation

In accordance with the study of the roles of the Rattanakosin Committee and the master plan of the Rattanakosin area, and results of the assessment of the plans as mentioned above, this following will show the obstacles in plan implementation including three main issues.

1. The governmental authorities are duplicating in the effort of when it comes to conservation.

The duplication in efforts of various authorities that work for the conservation plans, is mainly cause makes the plan's failure. According to the conservation bodies, it is a centralisation system that gathers many authorities working together, and the Rattanakosin Committee takes a duty as a collaborating agency. From the chart, it can be seen that the bodies are too board; consequently, the committee cannot hand over all task covering the conservation area.

Within the conservation programmes, there are much more than 15 governmental authorities involved in the implementation. Thus, the authorities have not been working together consistently. The authorities that take part in every programme are the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning, which is the secretary of the Rattanakosin Committee,

and the BMA (the Land Readjustment and Urban Renewal Planning Division, Department of City Planning), which is a host in putting plans into action⁵.

To reduce the duplicating of the implementation, these two main authorities should be improved their collaborations with other sectors. Alternatively, the establishment of community-based organisation (CBO) will be a good new actor in the conservation bodies. (Yongthanit 2000) The CBO will be assigned as a co-worker to provide information and consultations of the plans to local people and also bring back the needs of the residents to the local government.

2. Public participation is included in few parts of the plans.

Since public participation includes in few parts of the plans, to apply conservation activities dealt with local communities has not been in a success. Without public participation the plans cannot be applied and be opposed by the residents. For solving this problem, the conservation in the Rattanakosin ought to follow the international conservation concept in historic towns and urban areas -- the Washington Charter⁶ to encourage the participant and the involvement of the residents. (ICOMOS 2006)

More recently, the Rattanakosin Committee and the BMA pay increasing attention to public participation. In the current plans, public participation methods are added as a new tool in order to solve problems in plan implementation. In the Strategic Plan for Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin and the Old Towns (2004-2008), a public participation plan was included as one of the three main plans. (Office of Environmental Policy and Planning 2004b: 28) In 2004 the Draft Plan of Public Participation for Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin (2004-2006) was created (Office of Environmental Policy and Planning 2004c). Furthermore, Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand of 1997 contains policy on arts and culture. It encourages the participation of Thai people in preserving and managing the cultural properties. From this law, a traditional community shall have the right to conserve or restore their customs, local knowledge, arts or good culture of their community and of the nation and participate in the management, maintenance, preservation and exploitation of national resources. (Office of the Council of the State 2006)

Even though there are numerous laws and measures that give the rights to Thai people in preserving and managing the cultural properties, the problems of the residents in the Rattanakosin area to take part in conservation are still remain. In many cases, the local residents in the Rattanakosin area have no property rights in lands or buildings; thus, they have few rights in the decision-making processes of preserving or enhancing the properties.

5 The authorities that frequency take part in the plans are the Treasury Department, Ministry of Finance, which takes a duty as a land owner in almost all of governmental areas and the Fine Arts Department, Ministry of Education, which takes a duty in preservation programmes. Other authorities are National Housing authority, Department of Lands, Department of Religious Affairs, Marine Department, Bureau of the Royal House Hold, Royal Thai Navy, Ministry of Finance, Department Operation Centre the Marketing Organisation, and The Crown properties.

6 International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, 1987

For this reason, the proper methods for the residents who have no property rights should be set up.

3. Conservation plans comprise less incentive for the residents. Instead, conservation tasks exerted significant effects of the residents' way of life.

As mentioned, conservation plans of the Rattanakosin area include less persuasion for the residents to follow the plans; on the other hand, the plans cause negative consequences to their living. Likewise, conservation programmes in the master plan focus on the preservation of historical monuments, townscape and controls of land use. The local residents take few chances to involve in conservation and gain less economic and social advantage.

At the present time, the concepts of “conservation” and “monument” are broadening. The rigid interpretation of cultural values has been changed. Social values and functional values –new functions or activities, such as tourism⁷, should be realised as well as architectural and historical values. In the change of conservation focus, the importance of management of heritage is currently high lighted and a broad consensus is being established that heritage belongs to the members of society. (ICCROM 2003: 2)

Thus, for revitalising the Rattanakosin area, which can be identified as “a living heritage” with increasing attention in “living” dimension, the traditional conservation efforts that brought negative impacts to the residents should be revised. Moreover, financial incentives to revitalise the investment of old communities, such as tax incentives, grants and public-private partnerships investment should be created.

Conclusion

From 1980s until now, the implementation of conservation plans of the Rattanakosin area has been applied; however, the assessment of the plans shows that some implementation has not been in a success. According to this study, the suggestions for solving the obstacles in plan implementation include: first, the collaboration between governmental authorities to undertake the plans should be improved. Second, the conservation plans should support every part in conservation bodies, which are the government sector, the local sector, the non-profit sector, the public sector, and the owner and stakeholder sector, to take part in all processes of the plans. Finally, conservation plans should pay more important parts in revitalising contemporary uses in the conservation areas.

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7 In the Rattanakosin area, the tourism is a growth industry. In order to serve tourism industry, there are a number of services and accommodation business in the area. (BMA 2005)

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