

Abstract

Role of Transportation Planning for Urban Regeneration Projects in Seoul

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Starting in the 1960s, the fast-growing economy in Korea had fueled the urbanization of Seoul for decades. However, the increasing population called for new housing development and transportation infrastructure. The Seoul Metropolitan Government had dealt with the growing demand by building high-rise apartments and undertaking a large-scale commercial redevelopment projects. In doing so, dilapidated houses were demolished and the existing inhabitants had been forced to leave and live outside of Seoul. Although those strategies produced an improved built environment, it created serious adverse effects including traffic congestion, the destruction of existing communities, and homogeneous urban landscape everywhere. Presently, however, urban regeneration comes into the spotlight among urban planners. This could, in theory, rehabilitate a declining area with a serious consideration of economic and social dimensions, as well as the physical aspect in any redevelopments.

In urban regeneration projects, the physical dimension is still a critical basis to rebuild a community and revitalize the stagnant economy of a decayed area. There is, however, no policy instrument and legal ground to invest in transport infrastructure in urban regeneration efforts. As a result, it is difficult to find completed pedestrian networks established throughout transit-centered areas or public open space

connected to transit stations and other key facilities.

Many different kinds of problems are prevalent in decrepit residential complexes such as inadequate pedestrian environment, narrow streets and illegal parking. In essence, we found that many of the problems for the old neighborhoods in Seoul stem from illegal parking. Problems with regard to pedestrian safety and the lack of public space for residents are largely derived from too many cars parked on the streets. While demand for parking has steadily increased, there is little room for supplying parking spaces in old neighborhoods. In particular, illegal parking creates a serious fire hazard since automobiles double-parked in narrow streets can block the fire lane. At the time of a fire, it is certainly possible that illegal parking can result in the loss of lives.

This study argues for a greater role of transportation planning for the urban regeneration projects in Seoul. We propose to apply the concept of 'Spatial Transportation Planning' for redevelopment projects around transit-centered areas. It requires the accurate prediction of travel demand for public transit and pedestrians to provide an adequate level of transport infrastructure. With the Spatial Transportation Planning, it becomes more feasible to set up pedestrian channels connecting ingress and egress of the core areas, elevated pedestrian decks above roadways, and facilities connecting the underground pedestrian spaces to the ground level.

We need a different solution for residential neighborhoods that suffer from an inadequate level of transport infrastructure. As noted, the essence of the problems is the shortage of parking space. This study proposes to draft the District Transportation Planning for every residential regeneration project, with a focus on parking solutions. We argue for introducing the 'Transportation MP(Master Planner)' so that the MP can provide guidance to creating a well-drafted and detailed transportation plan.

Most of all, the current legislation with respect to urban regeneration

does not allow investing in transport infrastructure, whereas authorizing financial assistance for smaller-scale programs such as establishing neighborhood-based enterprises or repair work for old houses. Therefore, this law should be revised so that the transport infrastructure can be improved.

We are confident that following the recipes in this study would lead to the successful urban regeneration of Seoul.



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