Urban Management to Reach Sustainability[1]

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Introduction

1. This introductory section will be dealing with the outcome, output, process, and input of the urban management as well as the forces that might affect them. The following section will be dealing with how to manage the city to reach sustainability.

2. The outcome of urban management is an increased welfare of the urban society:
   a) the welfare of the overall urban community
   b) the welfare of each individual group of the urban society – especially the poor
   c) the welfare of diversified culturally rich urban society
   d) the welfare of the future generations.

3. The increased welfare could be achieved through sustainable urban development:
   a) sustainable economically, i.e. urban economic output should be greater than its input, so that the overall urban community will be better off
   b) sustainable socially, i.e. the better off should be distributed equally among people with various social-political backgrounds, so that this will create social-political integrity and harmony as well as prevent/avoid possible social-political instability
   c) sustainable culturally, i.e. how to preserve valuable historical building/area/others, so that this will be better off for the diversified culturally rich urban society
   d) sustainable environmentally, i.e. the management should be concerned with environmental sustainability, so that this will also be the better off for the future generations

4. The output of urban management is a more livable city: i) to work, ii) to live, and iii) to play.
   a) how to manage the city to be more efficient, productive, and competitive so that this will be a better place to work
   b) how to manage the urban services to be more accessible and affordable to various groups of the society --- especially the poor, so that the city will be a better and safer place to live
   c) how to manage valuable historical manmade / built environment, so that this culturally rich city will be more attractive place to play as well as a valuable cultural heritage for the future generations

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    d) how to manage the natural environment of the city and its hinterland, so that the city will be more resource efficient, clean, and healthy place to live as well as a better off place for the future generations

5. The process of urban management is a continuos process: i) planning, ii) implementation, iii) evaluation & monitoring, and iv) feedback:
    a) the process consists of technical process and political decision making one
    b) the technical process involves multi disciplinary actors, e.g. those related to infrastructure management, finance management, etc.
    c) the political decision making process involves multi stakeholders, e.g. those representing government sector, private sector, community, etc.
    d) the process is a continuos communication within multi disciplinary actors, within multi stakeholders, and between the multi disciplinary actors and the stakeholders
    e) the process should be characterized by the existence of good governance, i.e. based on participation, transparency, accountability, law & regulation, equity, efficient & effective, etc.

6. The input of urban management or a pre-condition for a successful urban development management is as follows:
    a) the existence of political support and commitment among multi stakeholders: government, private, community
    b) the availability of supporting resources: i) law & regulation, ii) organization, iii) human resources, and iv) finance
    c) the existence of strong leadership

7. The internal and external forces may affect the urban management outcome / output / process / input:
    a) the external / global forces may create greater impact as the world becomes borderless, e.g. economic crisis, forest fire, sea pollution, etc.
    b) the internal / local pressures are getting stronger as the gap between the poor and the rich becomes more transparent in this information era
    c) urban management should be more responsive/sensitive toward these forces

8. With the above background, how could urban management reach sustainability will be discussed in the following section: i) how to manage the activity system (land and urban form), ii) how to manage the network system (urban infrastructure & services), iii) how to manage the supporting resources or the institutional system, and iv) how to manage the spatial system – city and its hinterland

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9. As most of cities in Asia-Pacific Rim face rapid urbanization with limited resources, so urban management on how to manage the activity system or urban land and urban form is very critical:
    a) how to identify city's competitive advantages and to actively market these to attract investment, so that the city will be sustainable economically
    b) how to have high density, multi centers with a lot of greenery, mixed land use, mixed groups of people, so that the city will create less traffic, less energy usage, less pollution as well as equal access for housing and job opportunity to various groups of the urban society

c) how to preserve urban heritage, so that combined with the city new development will provide attractive culturally rich city for the urban society as well as for the tourists

d) how to cooperate with its neighboring areas, so that it will optimize and synergize the advantages of these areas

10. Due to rapid urbanization and lack of financial resources, most of the cities are facing shortages of urban infrastructure and services as well, so how to manage the network system or urban infrastructure and services is one of the most important priorities in urban management

a) how to promote public transit, the use of clean energy, pedestrian facilities as well as to restrict car usage, so that these actions will provide equal, affordable, safe, efficient, and better access to various groups of the urban society

b) to manage and provide various economic and social infrastructure and services, so that the city will be more competitive in attracting economic investments as well as more livable for its people by providing equal and affordable services to various groups of the urban society

c) how to manage and recycle industrial, residential, and other urban wastes as well as to use wisely and efficiently non-renewable resources, so that these will create clean and healthy city for the urban society as well as for the future generations

11. One of the weaknesses in managing urban development, especially in developing countries, is how to manage the supporting system or the institutional system -- which in many cases are not existence or out of date due to rapid economic, social, and other changes

a) how to develop and enforce the needed law and regulations, so that the city will be a better place to work, to live, and to play

b) how to develop the needed institutions and the supporting skilled, clean, and capable human resources, so that these environment will enable for investments to come

c) how to provide the needed financial support, so that all good intentions could be realized/materialize

d) how to have a good and strong leadership as this is one of the key factors for a successful urban development management

12. In many cases, the network system (water supply, flood control, drainage, sewerage, transportation, etc.), the activity system (population and their activities/land uses), and the institutional system (local law & regulations, etc.) are beyond the city's authority to manage. So it is crucial how to manage the spatial system – the city and its neighboring areas; how to cooperate with its neighboring authorities to coordinate and integrate planning/management of the above systems (activity, network, institutions) to produce a win-win solution. It should be noted that this integrated development for a particular city may vary in scale, i.e. from local scale integration to regional, national, or global one.

13. With the above illustrations on how to manage the activity system, the network system, the institution system, and the spatial system, the city will be a better and livable place to live, to work, and to play. The urban management will reach sustainable development in terms of economically, socially-politically, culturally, and environmentally.

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