PhD Dissertation Proposal

The Development of a Public Land Management Policy for Under-utilized Space in Bangkok, Thailand.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ETA	Expressway and Rapid Transit Authority
BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
PPS	Projects for Public Space
UEM	Urban Environmental Management
NSEDP	National Social and Economic Development Plan
NSEDB	National Social and Economic Development Board
FY	Fiscal Year
BOT	Build – Operate - Transfer
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
FES	The First Stage Expressway System
SES	The Second Stage Expressway System
RAE	Ram Indra At-Narong
ISO	Industrial Standard
ROW	Right Of Way
TSP	Total Suspended Particulates
OCMLT	The Office of the Commission for the Management of Land Traffic
DCP	Department of City Planning
PWD	Public Works Department
TAT	Tourist Authority of Thailand
BBM	Benefit Based Management
NGO	Non-Government Organization
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
MOSTE	Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment
MCDM	Multiple Criteria Decision Making
MS	Management science
OR	Operation research
SMART	Simple Multi-attribute Rating Techniques

CHAPTER 1
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

1.1   Introduction

Urban land management policy for under-utilized space has been the issue discussed among physical urban planners. The definition of under-utilized space includes urban voids, vacant land, which are the problems of city beautification (visual quality) and tidiness, in the meanwhile on the more positive side; those spaces are the potential of re-development project for economic, social, and environmental purpose. The complication of technical factors of planning itself has involved several decision-makings; started from determining of objectives, financial feasibility assessment, engineering design and selecting of construction technology, legislation matter, contracting, construction, and operation. The utilization of the spaces is not one of the main objectives of the planning project, so it usually is not indicated clearly in the policy level.

The examples can be given such as the expressway projects, which have been aimed mainly in order to solve traffic congestion problem. The expropriation of the land for expressway construction including the land within the right of way (ROW), under the elevated, flyover structure and ramp causes further problems such as the improper utilized space, trespassing of the squatters and narcotic users, illegal ownership and beneficiary. These problems have been discussed in the administrative decision-making only in responsible organizations. In this case, the main actor is Expressway and Rapid Transit Authority (ETA). It is a state enterprise, which was established by the Coup Decree of 290 on November 29, 1972. But the complexity nature of these under-utilized space confronts many involved stakeholders, not only the ETA but also the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and the surround communities. In addition, the aspect of legal issues of ownership and the publicly services are conflicting objective. Public policy decision-making process should not rely on only one actor and there should not be only one final solution.

> "Public policy issues are by their very nature controversial, and dealing with conflicting views is always difficult…Public policy is an identifiable course of action (legislation, regulation, ordinance, etc.) hammered out in the political arena through debate and compromise to maximize the satisfaction of relevant interests. …Public policy is based on debate and compromise--"[1]

In the broad sense, decision-makings in policy level of the responsible organization are not efficient, which we can observe from the exist problems. Government organizations do not have the same competence and reputation for attracting or making efficient use of individual skills as are usually attributed in industry. Also, the legislative process itself is not a model of efficiency (Quade, 1982). Relles et al (1982) cited in the 'Quantitative Methods'[2] that most decision makers in government, like most decision makers anywhere, are busy and frequently have to make difficult choices in a short period of time, which is rarely feasible to gather and analyze extensive data.

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[1] Indentify and Understanding Public Policy Issues. Website –
http://www.msue.msu.edu/msue/imp/modii/ii792001.html [April, 2002]

[2] Quantitative Methods by Daniel Relles, Arthur J. Swersey, James W. Vaupel, Michael Cohen, and Rechard Zeckhauser (Research in Public Policy Analysis and Management, Supplement 1, Page 79-102.)

Nature and characteristics of decision-making was explained by Koenig (1986) that decision-making encompasses a wide spectrum of human behaviors and their interaction with diverse, dynamic environment, it also abounds in variety of forms and processes. Decision-making of any importance or complexity may transpire according to a conceptual framework in which it is viewed as a process of several basic facets. They cover '*power*' or the capacity to focus on selected public problems, to deal with their essence, and to overcome obstacles and eliminate irrelevancies, '*gather information*' both empirical and intuitive/quantity and quality, and '*design*' or the capacity to formulate plans and models responsive to the problems being confronted and susceptible to effectuation.

Thus, the science of policy analysis has been concerned by several disciplines, including political scientists themselves, economists, sociologists, planners, and public managers. Dunn (1994) introduced that the policy arenas have been situated the various areas of these followings; Energy and Environment, Education, Foreign Affairs, Urban Affairs, Health, Transportation, Criminal Justice, Employment and Labor, Social Welfare, Economic and Social Development, Science and Technology, and Communication. In addition, policy analysis is viewed as an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in the contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy relevant knowledge.

The methodology of policy and decision analysis has been widely discussed especially in the social research. It aims for explicit problem solving and contributes significantly and to the area of urban environmental management. Hale & Whitlam (1997) also mentioned that the process of problem solving is often viewed as intuitive – something that happens without explanation or undue thought, something that is shrouded in a kind of mystery.

1.2   Under-utilized spaces
Definition

'Under-utilized spaces' or 'urban voids' or 'vacant land' involve in these following aspects; urban ruins, function, people, city beautiful, identity, and publicity. There are a number of literatures define the meaning of *'Urban voids'*. Some of them emphasize on the urban space issue and the use of those spaces. The ownership of the space may not be significance. On the assessing of these literatures, they can be divided into types as followings;

a) Voids as the low quality of physical urban space – as indicated in Parole – a project of gruppo a12 :

> "The voids of the city are spaces which disrupt the urban tissue, leaving it incomplete and throw into question the use of those spaces. Sometimes called urban ruins, they are at the limit between private and public space, without belonging either to the one or to the other. Urban voids are containers of memory, fragments of the built city and the 'natural' environment; memories of the city which constitute a random, unplanned garden."(Parole - a project of gruppo a12, udo noll & peter scupelli)[3]

b) Voids as the 'lacking' phenomenon - as in Bo Grönlund's article ; "Filling the voids of urbanity" ; which they emphasized the meaning of the voids in term

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[3] Parole - a project of gruppo a12, udo noll & peter scupelli
http://parole.aporee.org/work/print.php?words_id=410 [March,2002]

of urban concept and the characteristic of 'lacking function', 'lack of aesthetic experiences' ,and 'lack of difference':

> "Voids - the word can refer to many different kind of phenomena, as we are not talking about voids in an absolute sense.
> 1) Lacking function. 2) Lacking people. 3) Lack of aesthetic experiences. 4) Lack of difference

c) Voids as the effects of the economic, politic, and culture - In addition, they also find out the root of the problem. The mechanisms, which create the urban voids, are listed in 3 sources ; economics, politics and culture.

> …and Having an urban concept - what mechanisms creates urban voids?
>
> A). Economics -Development of local small scale capitalism to global large scale capitalism (= standardization, repetition, large units, etc.) Unique human works often less profitable - and lose to global large scale capitalism when fighting for the same space.
> B). Politics - Development of local, small scale politics to large scale politics. (= standardization, repetition, large units.) Urban planning as planning to reduce difference (in the name of equality, etc.) The development of a welfare state based on taxation of labor (a system that kills private services.) The institutionalization of life and urban space through services decided and run from "above" and in a centralized way.
> C). Culture - Technical development and economic growth focused on individualism and "Gemeinschaft" leads to a car-dominated society with low population density and tree-shaped network of roads. Increase in time spent in the home, looking at TV, using services in the home instead of in the city, etc. Increased leisure time leads to increased consumption of "tourist" experiences either at very special urban places, or in "nature""
> (Filling the void of urbanity)[4]

It is interesting that the origin of the urban voids problem is from the other issues not only from the urbanization itself. Even the culture of a society is also assessed as one of the mechanisms that create voids.

d) Voids as the potential for urban re-development – Perera (1994) stated in his research about the potential of the voids to accommodate informal sectors.

> "Urban Voids" are unutilized, under-utilized or abandoned land and premises which exist in urban areas due to outdated or defunct uses. Urban voids can even be created by identifying dilapidated premises which has potential to redevelop for new urban functions. The term should not be confused with open areas such as parks or side-walks which have specific functions assigned to them. As used in legal terms (e.g., null and void contracts – the contract exists but not effective), void means ineffective in urban planning context too." (Perera, 1994)

The M.I.T. Consultants Team (1994) also listed of the sources of convertible land for the public parks development of Bangkok. The study had looked to the potential and opportunity of the vacant lands in different ownership and gave some examples of the potential land as these followings;

- Disused housing and factories

- Storage facilities and waste disposal areas

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[4] Filling the void of urbanity - Århus School of Architecture: Conference Dec. 5 to 7, 1994 on The Information Society and the City http://hjem.get2net.dk/gronlund/Aarhus_void94.html [March, 2002]

- Interstitial spaces in industrial sites or new development not suitable for housing

- Land in abandoned areas

- Pond, or water retention areas

- Land created along canals and rivers

- Land along railways, roads and expressways, both old and new

Thus, in this study it will be defined as the 'convertible' vacant, unutilized, under-utilized, improper utilized, ruined, lacking of aesthetic experiences, and lacking of identity piece of land. Many factors and indicators have shown the significance relationship of utilization whether or not the space is utilized properly. The convertibility of the urban voids will be the importance issue providing the study the implication of utilization alternatives. The alternatives are opened wide and the study will focus on the decision-making process of how we should concern while utilizing those space in policy level.

1.3   Policy and decision-making process

Policy research takes place in and around the offices of decision makers (Putt and Springer, 1989). That is what goes on affecting citizens and consumers of the governmental programs. Putt and Springer explained the characteristics of policy research that they are human-center, pluralistic, multi-perspective, systematic, decision-relevant, and creative. And there is also the strong link between policy and decision making process as Bauer indicated that the term 'policy' be reserved for decisions (Bauer, 1970).

Murray M. (1986) gave the definition of decision-making that it is the process by which courses of action are chosen (from among alternatives) in pursuit of organizational goals. To be acceptable a course of action must satisfy a whole set of requirements or constraints. The decision-making process itself involves at least three major phases. These include: 1) Analytical phase, 2) Design phase, and 3) Choice phase. In addition, several analysts include another two phases, which are the threshold phase (pre-analysis) and implementation phase as the last phase.

Zeleny, M. (1982) divided the process of decision-making to a unity of pre-decision, decision, and post-decision stage. And Zeleny also stressed on the importance of new decision alternatives that 'making a decision often means inventing a new alternative.'

This decision-making process normally be generated as a governmental action but impacts to the third party actors, so called 'public', then it may become a 'public problem'. Especially, in the 'democratic' atmosphere, there has been considerable increases in the interest and involvement of citizen participatory in the process of decision-making process on public issues or at least, concerning the 'public benefit'.

There are a variety of theories and models related to policy decision-making. Some of them were made in a formal meeting, some had influent from interest groups, but plenty of them did not. The detailed reviewing each model will be discussed in the study. Especially, the lesson learned from the decision-making process of public agencies in land management policy for under-utilized space, which was identified as simple linear process and some involve non decision-making. They have faced some problems caused by the unpredictable factors during the process.

'Policy analysts and other public servants recognize the messy nature of their decision-making processes, but they continue to rely on models and methods of decision-making that reflect linear, rationalist approaches. **Figure 1** represents the steps that are generally accepted as an effective and efficient process for public policy decision-making. Some policy analysts acknowledge a mo dicum of non linearity in their process by making feedback loops explicit between steps. **Figure 2** shows this more interactive process model. Experience in the policy analysis arena, however, indicates that the process is much more messy and unpredictable than either of these diagrams can indicate.'[5]
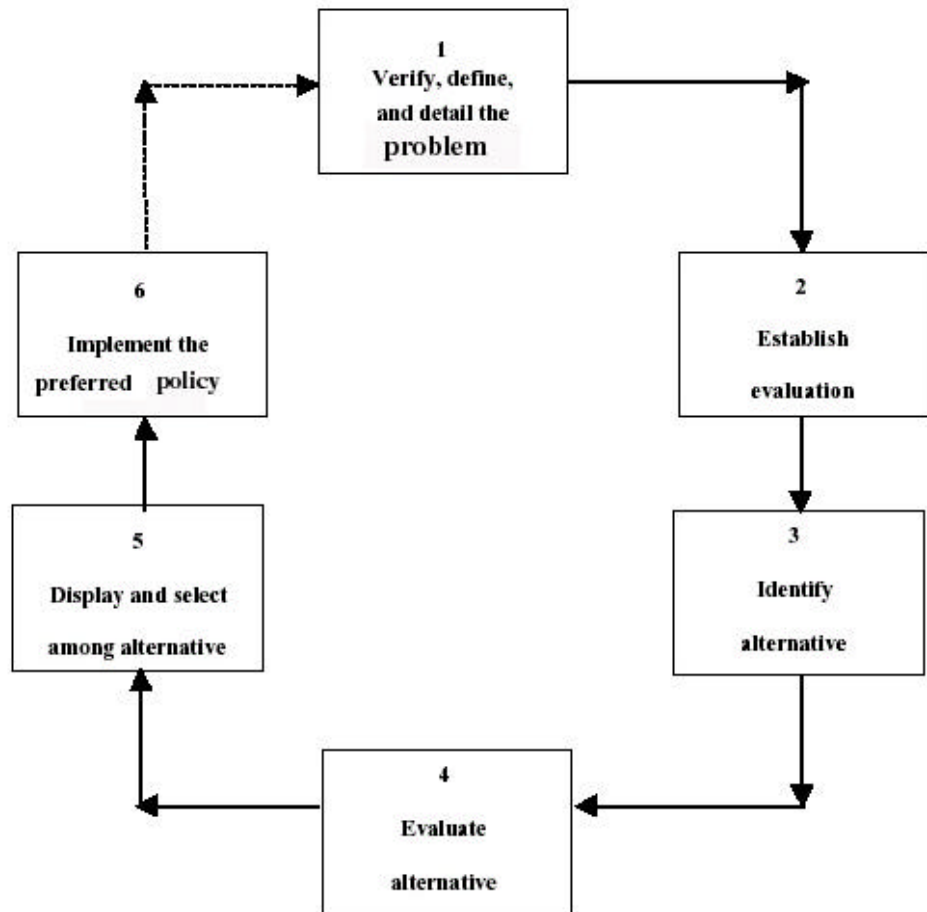

Figure 1: Shown the rational problem solving process (from Public Policy Decision-making, Patton.Carl V., 1993)

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[5] http://www.iig.ca.gov/allstates/GEoyang_Handout.pdf [Public Policy Decision-making - April,2002]
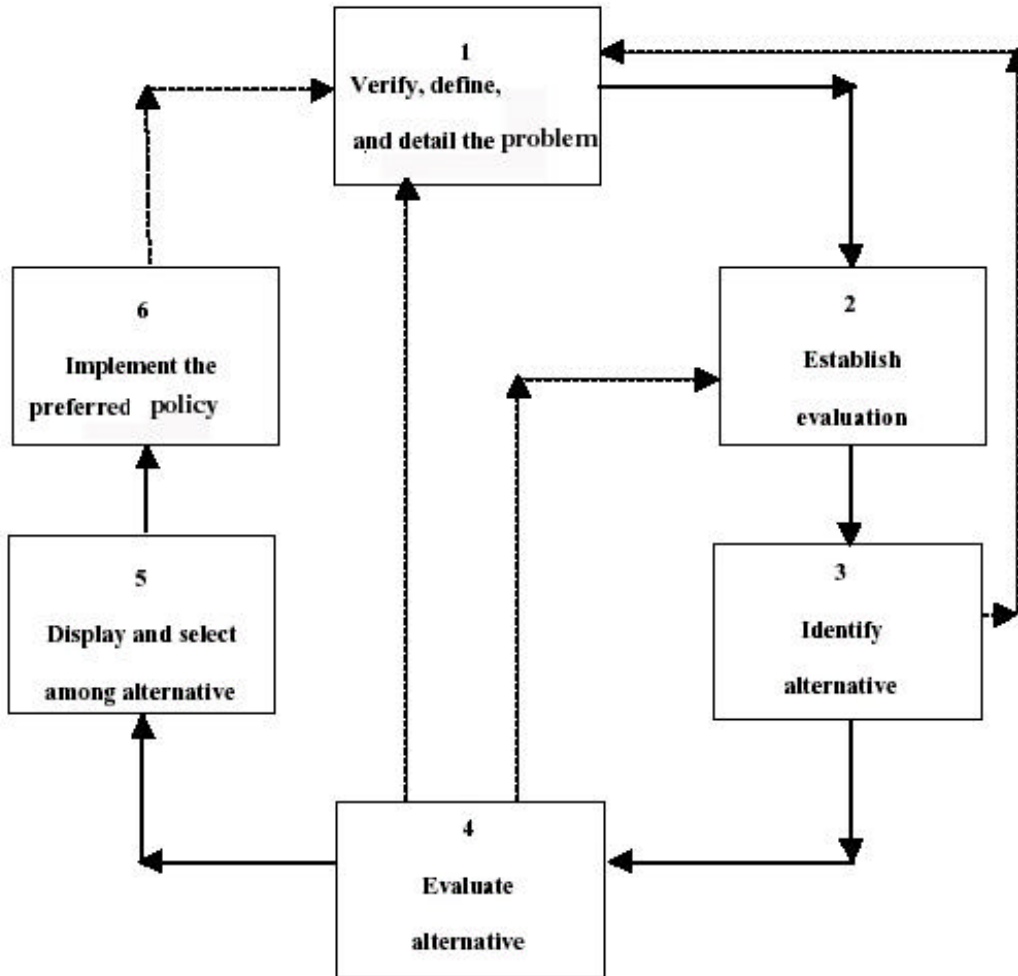
Figure 2: Shown a basic policy analysis process (from Public Policy Decision-making, Patton.Carl V., 1993)

1.4   Problems summary

In summary, the origin of the problem started from urbanization. The urbanized area of has expanded rapidly with an unplanned sprawl expansion along major transportation network, resulting in inefficient land use. The limited capabilities of the government sector, poor co-ordination planning and investments, and poor traffic management result more serious traffic congestion problems. The inadequate information, rapid growth, black box decision-making (intuition) reduced the quality of mega transportation projects. Singh (1994) also indicated in the case of Malaysia that increased urbanization has put pressure on the use of land and this has led to the problems of squatters, traffic congestion and increased land values, thus there are the policies of the NEP, NDP[6] and national development plans to reduce the imbalance by 'restructuring society'. The development created ribbon shaped pieces of lands; some of them become urban voids and locate the vacant spaces or improper utilized land in the urban area due to recognizing only the purpose of transportation resolution, which finally lead to urban

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[6] NEP – the New Economic Policy, NDP – the National Development Policy.

blight/urban decay (city beautification), deteriorated environment, social safety and low quality of life. (see Figure 5). Murray M. (1986) explained the behavior factors within organization that the black box approach is systems theory, which sees inputs first filtered through an abstract system of interacting parts and then ultimately converted into outputs, which in turn are transformed via a feedback loop into other inputs (see Figure 3). Lester and Stewart (2000) also discussed about the system model, which was originally developed by David Easton called 'Easton 's Model' (see Figure 4). They suggested that
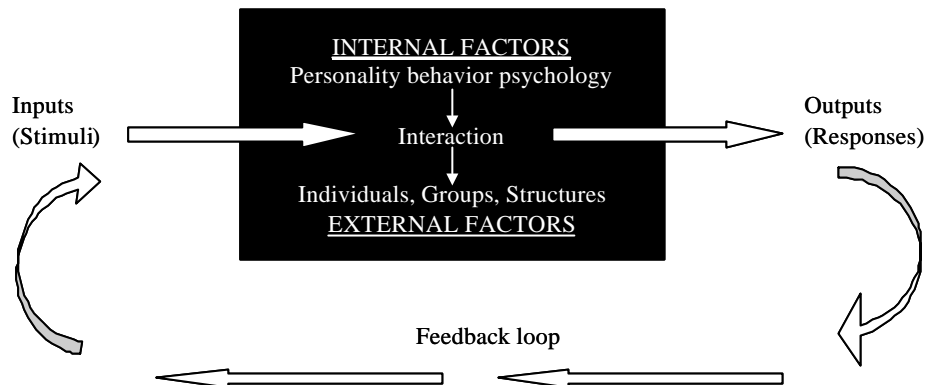
public policy formation is initially affected by demands for new policies or support for the existing policies, then the inputs (demands and support) are converted by the processes of the political system (legislatures, the courts, etc) into outputs (policies or decisions), and these in turn have consequences both for the system and for the environment in which the system exists. It works rather well in explaining the determinants of policy outputs among states.

Figure 3: 'The Black Box' A systems view of organization (Murray, 1986)
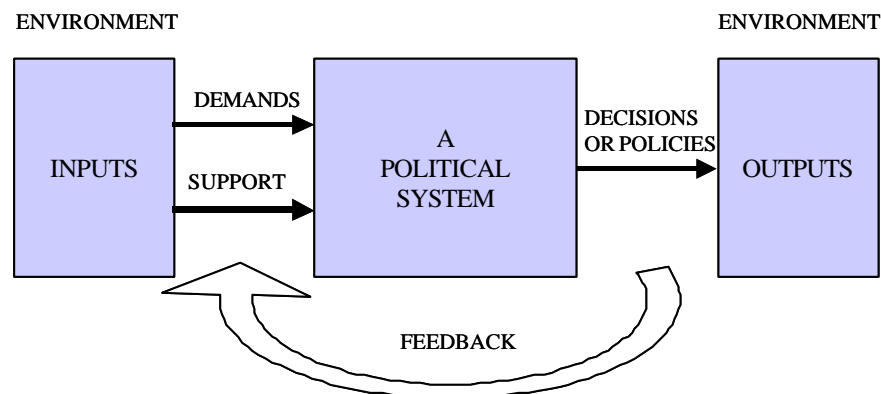

Figure 4: Easton's System Model : The Systems Framework

(Lester J. and Stewart J., 2000, Original source from David Easton, 1979)

Singh (1994) discussed about the importance of efficient land policy that in Malaysia case, land is a State matter, each State has the prerogative of drawing up its own land policy. The right of land being a State matter is provided in the Constitution, it provides for the establishment of a National Land Council comprising of State representatives with a Federal Minister as a Chairman. The main function of this Council is to formulate a

national policy for the promotion and control of utilization of land throughout the country in consultation with the federal and state governments and the National Finance Council.

1.4.1.   The nature of the policy problem

The policy study will focused on the followings;

      The problem   : the under-utilized spaces

      Facts   : Proper utilized land (benefits on social aspect, city beautification, quality of life, economic, environment)

      Values   : Role of the involved actors versus publicly service

1.4.2.   The nature of public own under-utilized land

Nature of why the under-utilized land is increasing relate to

- Black box public policy

- In-efficient decision making

- Poor land management

- Poor co-ordination

- Ignorance of public land owners/responsible actors
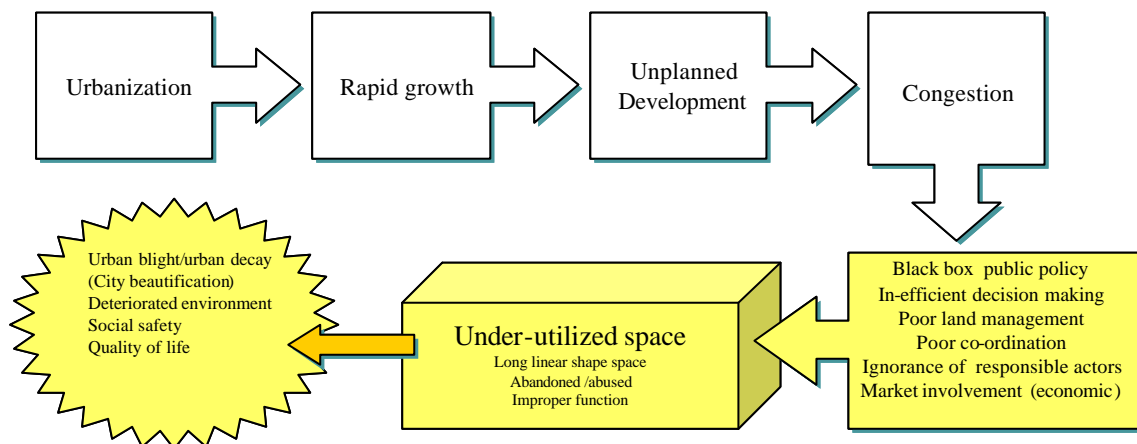
- Market involvement
  (economic factors)

Figure 5: Statement of problems summary diagram