

# Stakeholder Analysis in Urban Development in The Case of Sawankhalok City

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## Abstract

This study is a significant part of an action research 'In Searching for Appropriate Public Participation in the Medium Size Old City Planning Process in the Case of Sawankhalok City.' It discusses conducting stakeholder analysis for understanding of the roles, powers, interest levels, and the relations between groups of stakeholders, in the Sawankhalok City Development Participation Project supported by the Community Organizations Development Institute in Thailand. This research classifies three key groups of the stakeholders as: governmental offices, private sector, and civil sector. One of the governmental offices, the Sawankhalok Town Municipality Comment: Is this the full title of the governmental office?], has the major role in the city's development. It has the highest power to control the city's development direction, as well as the greatest interests and influence in the city's development. This research also found out that in the civil sector, both non-profit organisations and the people of Sawankhalok, have low levels of participation in the city development process. The study suggests that to create sustainable city development, an appropriate level of participation should be made available by enhancing the power and interest level of those in the non-governmental sector. Two suggestions are presented for short-term and long-term procedures. The short-term procedure is to encourage an atmosphere of city development participation by transforming the local government's role responsibility from being the main player to being a supporter. Such a change can provide more opportunities and encourage increased levels of interest in participation from the civil sector. After the transformation gradually changes and becomes a concrete value of the city development process, then the long-term strategy will be developed to empower the stakeholder's roles, their power, and their interests to the level of equality and equity. That implementation among all sectors can accordingly facilitate a level of city development co-creation that can raise the city development direction to that of a liveable and sustainable city.

## Keywords

City Development; Stakeholder Analysis; Medium Size Old Town; Sawankhalok

## 1.Introduction

Since 2007, more than half of the world's population has lived in urban areas, and this figure continues to increase (The World Bank, 2016). This phenomenon is due in part to the overall population growth within the world and increased rural-to-urban migration. This situation has affected many economic and social aspects, as well as the quality of life, of small- and medium-size cities (Sutiyyamanee, 2015).

Amidst rapid changes across the globe, a major challenge for medium-size old towns is to find ways to maintain their vibrancy in living quality, preserve their environments, and help ensure economic prosperity whilst becoming more sustainable. Those medium-size old towns are similarly losing their roles as regional economic centres for nearby small towns. Reduced economic opportunity has caused rural-to-urban migrations for young citizens (Ratanavaraha, 2020), and also caused their migrations from medium-size old towns to large cities. As a result, social cohesion, the transferring of local wisdom through the generations, and sense of community have all declined (Chimmachui, 2020). Moreover, the losing of landownership to outside investors to survive in this economic situation has also caused challenges. Architectural heritage is scarcely promoting survival due to the lack of conservation knowledge on how to suitably adapt heritage buildings to fit new uses.

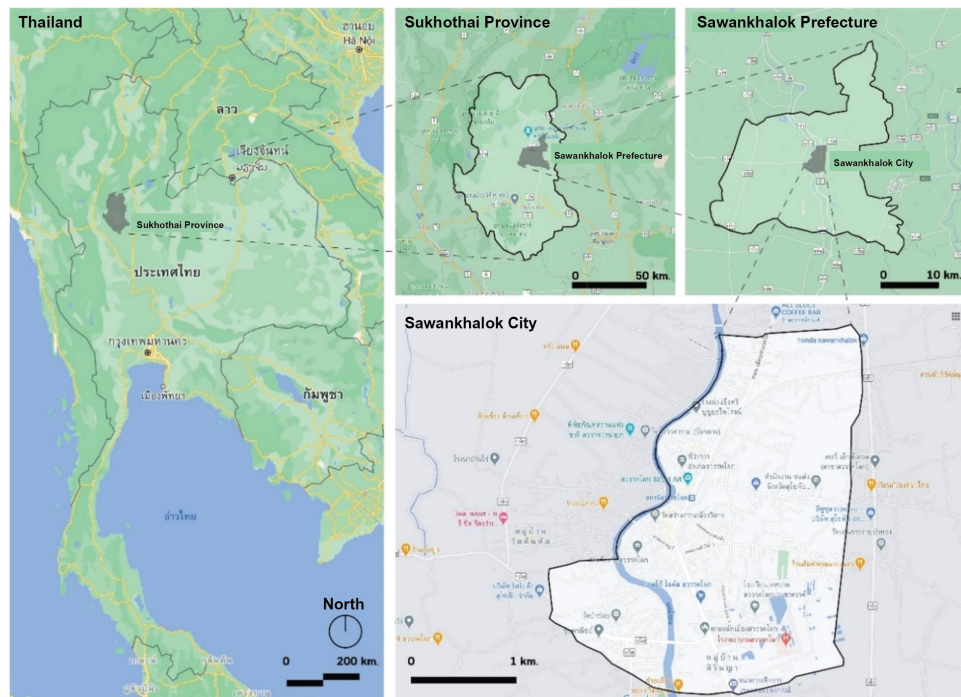
However, the study by McKinsey Global Institute [Please give the actual reference from the McKinsey Global Institute] (Polycephaly, 2017) highlights that there are hopeful futures for medium-size cities to engage sustainable development at best in next 20-to-30-year time because they are great in number and have less sophisticated political and management systems than major cities. (TerraBKK Knowledge Center, 2017) [The text highlighted does not appear within the reference given, so I have not been able to check what is meant or proofread it effectively].

Moreover, existing social capital and cultural capital are keys to urban development. Sentimentality to birthplace leading to future cooperation is also possible. Cultural heritage could advance greater opportunity in the contemporary future of such cities. Additionally, environmental capital is a resource for agricultural revitalisation. All of these factors could lead to increased sustainability in the future of medium-size towns (Kanchanaphan, 2015).

Sawankhalok is a medium-size old town in Northern Thailand with a long history. It has retained its heritage elements in both physical and cultural dimensions. In the past Sawankhalok was an official province with Phitsanulok county, and since B.E. 2476 (1933), it has been governed under Sukothai Province. Its importance as a node of economy and transportation can be seen through the existence of the Sawankhalok Station train terminal linking together Sawankhalok and Uttaradit Province. At present, Sawankhalok is governed as a municipality having 17,997 registered residents residing within its 6.45 km<sup>2</sup> area, with an average population density per km<sup>2</sup> of 2,790 people. Figure 1 shows the map of Sawankhalok and its geographical information showing how the North-South progression of Yom River cuts through part of the town. On the eastern bank of Yom River, there are more settlements than on the other side, and there are 11 registered communities either running local businesses or involved in agricultural production (Sukhothal Provincial Office, 2017).

The analysis of the stakeholders involved in the urban planning of Sawankhalok is an important element of this research project, namely searching for appropriate participation patterns in the medium-size old town planning of Sawankhalok. The project aims to set up goals for town planning based on important situations within the city (Wijitporn & Tansukanun, 2021). Stakeholder analysis is a key way to understand and recognise the local mechanisms and stakeholders involved in the participative town planning processes funded by the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) in Thailand in collaboration with the Community

Architects Network (CAN) and active citizens of Sawankhalok. It is used to suggest participatory processes in town planning and development that can be replicated in medium-size old cities elsewhere.



**Figure 1** Location and Boundaries of Sawankhalok City.

Source: adapted from Google Maps

## 2. Literature Review

There are two major theories pertinent to this research which are Action Research (AR) and Stakeholder Analysis (SA). While AR is a key for operating research in all dimensions, SA helps to frame analysis of possible involved stakeholders.

### 2.1 Action Research

According to the Action Research Model discussed by MacIsaac (1995), four basic principles are as follows:

- 1) Plan is a process used to decide what to aim at, plus which procedures and elements to undertake, as well as for evaluation of the project. Planning is also used to provide a working framework for all members of the project.
- 2) Action is to act on what has been initially planned. However, changes and amendments are possible in response to real-life situations occurring, as long as the objectives remain the same.
- 3) Observe is to document data and make sense of what happening as results in order to evaluate the project for future studies.
- 4) Reflection is the way in which analysis from the past information, observation and outcomes could help design the future plan.

## 2.2 Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis was undertaken to better understand the characteristics, standing points, needs, interests, roles and powers of involved actors. The relationship amongst the identified stakeholders is included in this analysis.

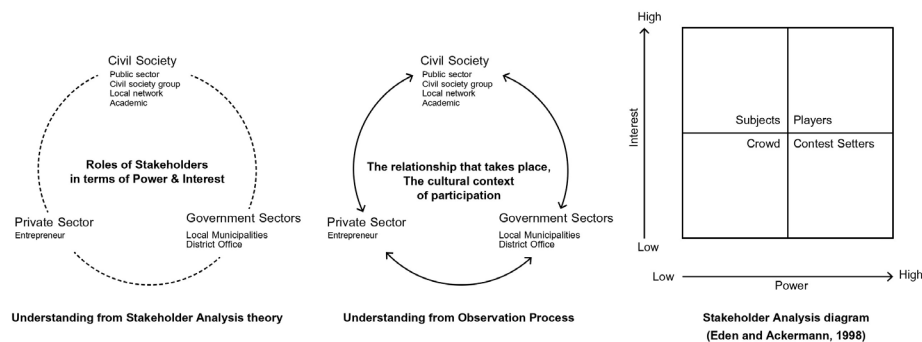
There are five steps for taking stakeholder analysis to develop efficient plans for activities and policies (Tangsiriphat & Tangcharounsatie, 2013). These are:

- 1) Make the objectives and study framework clear to build better understanding of the study topics.
- 2) Identify stakeholders involved.
- 3) Collect information from relevant stakeholders, i.e. their interests, roles, and their aims in being involved in the project.
- 4) Study the relationships between all involved stakeholders.
- 5) Estimate the powers that each individual stakeholder may exercise in the project

Accordingly, the first three steps employ a qualitative approach, therefore these steps involve Action Research in conducting participatory processes. For the last two steps, the theory of interest and influence analysis by Bryson (2004) and Eden and Ackermann's theory of power and interest analysis (1998) are employed to help identifying the roles of stakeholders. These are as follows:

- 1) Low interest - Low power; this first group are 'Crowd', playing a follower role in the project. They are therefore considered as secondary stakeholders.
- 2) Low interest - High power; these are 'Contest Setters' because their power could make changes. However, due to their having low interest, they should not play a decision-making role. Instead, they should support those who have high interest to engage in decision making processes. This group are considered as a primary stakeholder having the high influence in development projects.
- 3) High interest - Low power; this group should play a leading role considered as 'Subjects' to development projects. With regard to direct impact, they do not have the power and/or authority to drive the decision-making processes. Therefore, ideally, they should work closely with the low-interest-high power group who facilitate development projects. This group is considered as an Indirect Primary Stakeholder.
- 4) High interest - High power; the role of this last group is 'Players' because they have both the interest and the power to make changes in development projects. They are therefore both primary and key stakeholders, the most important group amongst all the groups.

For the stakeholder analysis undertaken in this paper, we have used information from three levels of development plans: national, provincial and local. Utilising our professional judgment and ample past experiences of development projects in the study area, we have critically analysed development plans and activities to provide some suggestions regarding stakeholder involvement in future development plans for Sawankhalok.



**Figure 2** Principles of stakeholder analysis based on relationship, influence, power and interests of stakeholders in city development.

### 3. All-dimensions of Participative Development Projects

The research was undertaken from January 2017 to December 2017, employing Action Research as the main approach. Its objectives were to foster participative development projects with both public and private sectors. By following Action Research (MacIsaac, 1995), the process is comprised of the following four steps:

The first step was 'Plan' and the second was 'Action' which were conducted through workshops with Sawankhalok's volunteering groups (active citizens). This group included the Community Network of Sawankhalok, Dance Club, Pitak Pracha Kudham Center, Tai-ji-kong Club, the Department of Public Health of Sawankhalok Town Municipality, Kayak Club, Elderly Club, Health Volunteer Group, Thai Medicine Club, the Sawankhalok Green Trading Group, the Sukko Samosorn group, the Sawankhalok Students' Council and the Abbot of Wat Sawankharam. [Comment: For the highlighted text, which words for the names of the groups shown should start with capital letters?]. All selected participants were chosen, and the workshops facilitated, by the community network of Sawankhalok and Sawankhalok's municipality. The intention of such workshops was to encourage citizen participation in site surveys and public meetings to identify local problems, and increase their involvement in planning development projects and engagement in local projects. Our hypothesis was that the local groups would understand local problems and challenges better, so they would play an essential role in improvement of developing work plans and project development. The contribution gained from citizen participation may be efficiency in undertaking proposed projects and the evaluation of those projects where possible. These were in line with the concepts of Rural Development Participation by Cohen and Uphoff (1977). Five activities were carried out during several workshops. These were:

- A site survey and public meeting to exchange ideas, understand context and identify problems to help determine what should be done for developing Sawankhalok.
- Small working groups were formed from specific groups of people working towards particular issues based on their interests.
- Public hearings held to receive general ideas, aspirations and comments from the wider public.
- Workshop preparation to study possibilities to approach various local issues raised during the previous activities.
- The workshops were undertaken to create development plans and build better levels of understanding for members of the general public and involved stakeholders.



Fifteen development projects were proposed with cooperation and support from civil society and the municipality. An initial aim was to cultivate cohesive working culture led by the civil groups of the local residents. The Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) provided seed funding for eight projects with a total overall budget of 400,000 THB. [Comment: is this figure meant to be 40,000 THB or 400,000 THB?]. Among the eight projects chosen were a Local Knowledge Centre passing wisdom across the generations, a Safe Food Production Campaign, a Healthy Space for All initiative, and special signage design to support local tourism. The second phase funded seven locally initiated projects with further support from the municipality. The total amount of funding was 3,629,000 THB. Recipients of that funding included the Sawankhalok Local Museum [Comment: Does it have a proper name?] and the creative market.



**Figure 3** Public participation processes.

For the third and fourth steps, Observation and Reflection were carried out while participating in project implementations and workshops and undertaking participant observations. Reflection, for instance, was conducted using the Retrospective Technique asking four main questions. These covered incentives to participate in the projects, expectations, factors contributing to outcomes, and lessons learned (Choocherd, 2005). The lesson learned session was designed to analyse four aspects of project implementation processes: people involved, techniques used, what is successful, and lastly what is not successful. This lesson learned session was conducted at CODI on 26th December 2017 with 20 people from Community Architect Network, CODI, volunteer groups, business experts, conservation experts, communication experts and design experts. Open discussions were encouraged via the use of a large flip board along with the use of sticky notes (see Figure 4).

From the lesson-learned process, future plans for participative activities, especially in terms of technical and management aspects, are made possible. These are important to create collaboration, and also empowerment, to both public and private sectors as well as civil society. Moreover, such participative activities could help identify gaps between collaborative works between the local municipality and civic groups to realise obstacles stemming from various actors involved and the bigger political situation. Furthermore, the limited budgets from the state to promote local projects in small- and medium-size cities tend to be inadequate. Therefore, networking with local sectors to co-develop projects based on mutual interests and benefits could reach to collaboration between private public sectors at provincial and even regional scale. Developmental projects with shared contexts in neighbouring cities would open more opportunities to obtain larger funding and eventually provide more impact relevant to SDG 17, Partnership for the Goals, which highlights collaborating with multi-levels to achieve sustainable development. With this in mind, the understanding and identifying of the roles of each stakeholder both directly and indirectly involved in development projects is taken as a key investigating point in this study to help expand both the quantity and quality of collaborations that can be achieved.

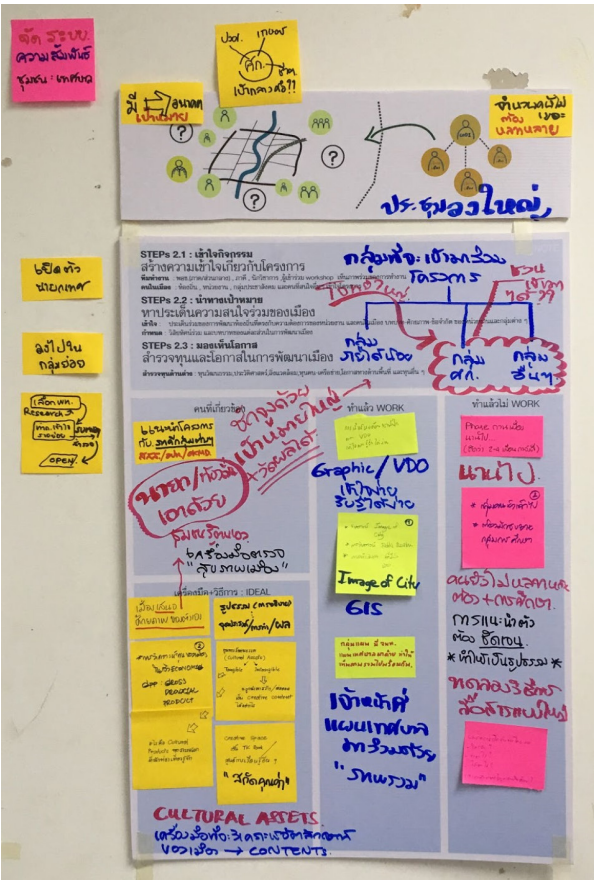
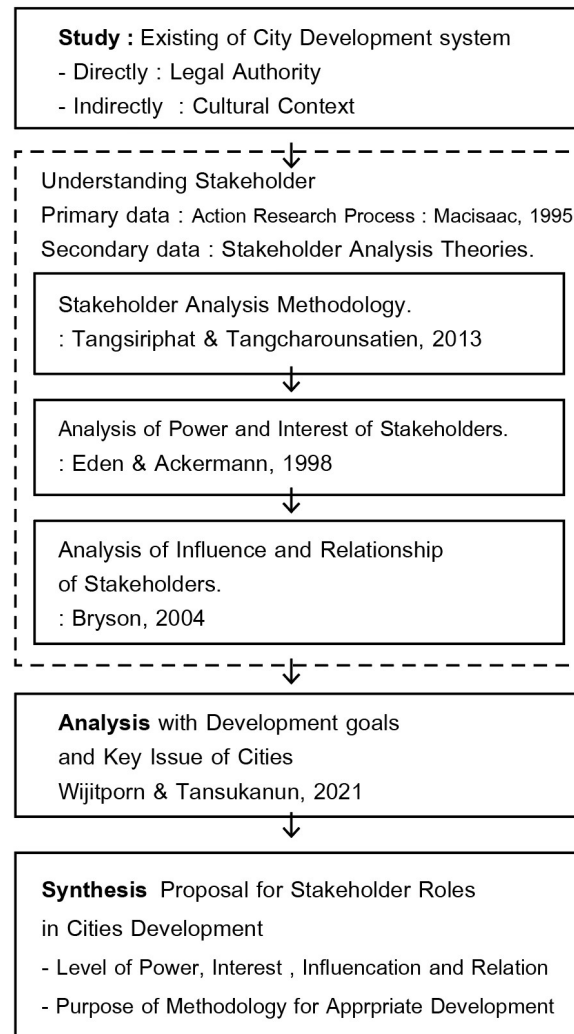


Figure 4 A tool of reflective processes.

#### 4. Methodology and Methods

To conduct this study on stakeholder analysis in the urban development of Sawankhalok City, three major steps were undertaken: (i) data collection, (ii) data analysis, and (iii) data synthesis (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5** Research framework.

The first step was to study the current administrative structure of Sawankhalok City as undertaken both directly (by rules of laws) and indirectly (cultural sensitivity). The identification of stakeholders in city development projects was undertaken through an action research approach whereby primary data were collected from the participation of the researchers with those city development projects. Secondary data, on the other hand, were collected by selective theories such as: stakeholder analysis in development projects (Tangsiriphat & Tangcharounsatie, 2013), the theory of levels of stakeholders' power (Eden & Ackermann, 1998), and the theory of relationship analysis of stakeholders (Bryson, 2004).

Second, data analysis is comprised of data obtained from stakeholder involvement related to development projects and the outcomes of those investigated projects in the city of Sawankhalok (Wijitporn & Tansukanun, 2021). This reflects the goals achieved in developing Sawankhalok city. Third, data synthesis was undertaken to suggest appropriate roles for stakeholders, levels of power, influence, and relationships amongst all involved stakeholders in development projects.



5. Stakeholder Analysis

This section discusses the background knowledge of the administration of Sawankhalok City both to portray existing mechanisms and management systems and to provide past developmental context of the city. Stakeholder analysis enables a better understanding of the actions from identified stakeholders, the knowledge of which can contribute to increasing efficiency in participatory processes in urban development projects in the future.

5.1 Administrative Structure of Sawankhalok City

Sawankhalok City follows the general Thai city administrative system whereby budgets from monies collected through tax collection and central policy are transferred to fund local policies and established local plans. However, there seems to be little clarity showing appropriate involvement from public organisations with regard to them taking actions and being involved in local development projects in Sawankhalok.

With regard to the local context, Sawankhalok as an old city involves a number of local groups from various religious beliefs, and local networks of entrepreneurs from the agricultural and tourism industries. Moreover, the network of Baan Mankong, the state-funded housing program, the student’s council, the local history and city conservation network, and health-concerned groups are all well established and able to engage in various development programs. All of these social networks and mechanisms have been engaged in the urban development of Sawankhalok in varying indirect ways. For examples, the establishment of a local museum in Sawankhalok, local bike tours in old city areas, a local market with a trash-free campaign, and eco-tourism are among local enterprises. Although these local-based initiatives gain certain levels of support from the local authority, actors involved in those projects have not been involved in planning, operating and evaluating processes to help enhance the levels of success in continuing successful projects.

5.2 Stakeholder Analysis in Urban Development Projects

As a result of our understanding of the administrative structure of Sawankhalok city, we have identified three main groups of both direct and indirect stakeholders. First, government agencies, i.e. Sawankhalok Municipality, district offices, and provincial government units. Second, private sectors, i.e. local enterprises and business networks at a provincial scale. Third, Sawankhalok residents, i.e. civil society and lay people.

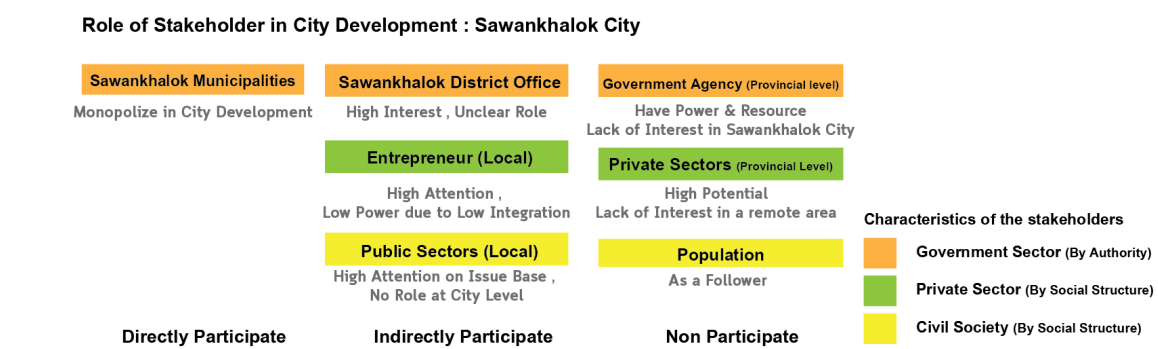
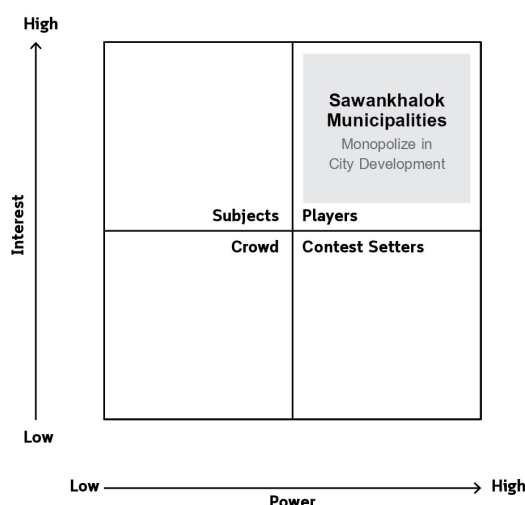


Figure 6 Role of Stakeholders in Development.

## 5.2.1 Government Agency

### (1) Sawankhalok Municipality

**Interest:** To promote the tourism industry of the city by building new city landmarks, including a tourist information centre and a pillar shrine within the city. The municipality is also attempting to boost up the local economy by conserving an old market and its surrounding areas by turning them into an historic tourist destination. In other words, there is more interest given to physically build than there is to educate local people and raise awareness of local wisdom and cultural capital in order to design development plans in a systematic way.



**Figure 7** Role of Sawankhalok Municipality in City Development.

**Power:** Sawankhalok Municipality has the manpower and adequate resources to work on the city and make relationships with local parties and residents. The main support from the municipality to the locals is from the city mayor himself, as he has been in the position for a long period. Therefore, he has been accepted by the locals and his influence on city development through his leadership has been manifested (see Figure 7).

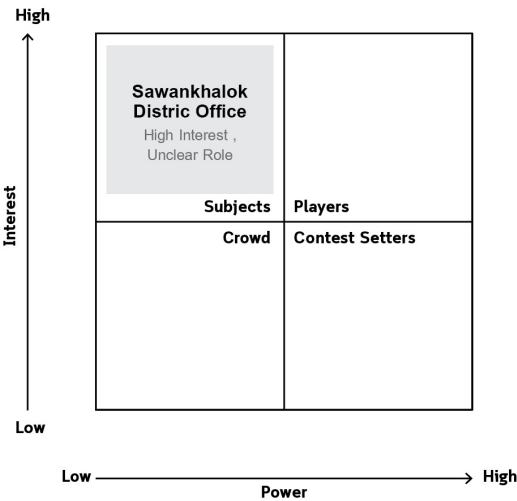
**Analysis:** The municipality has legal power on, and direct interest in, urban development projects via a top-down approach. It pays far more attention to building and infrastructure investment than cultural-related development initiatives, as is demonstrated by the high percentage of its budget allocation spent on physical development. It also seems that opportunities for networking and partnerships across stakeholders in urban development projects organised by the municipality are underutilised. This maybe because the long-term leadership tends to monopolise and influence the developmental direction of the city rather than open up the opportunities for new ideas from partnerships. For instance, the Sawanvoranayok National Museum, the state agricultural office at a district level, an oil factory, Sorn-thong, Sukhothai Airport and a network of local entrepreneurs are not part of many urban development projects related to them.

### (2) Sawankhalok District Office

**Interest:** The current head of the district office has his own interest in urban conservation and building conservation. At present, there are building conservation projects underway, including those for an old district office and the Sawankhalok Railway Station. These projects additionally involve the local university providing academic knowledge on conservation to collaborate with the district office. Moreover, a Friday pedestrianised

street and a Saturday farmers market in front of the district office are organised to help boost the local economy.

**Power:** The Head of the Sawankhalok District Office seems to have a close relationship with various local authorities; however, this situation does not help with regard to decisions made at policy level, nor aid the management of financial and human resources for city development projects. Rather, all resources held by the district office are for a more local governance (see Figure 8).

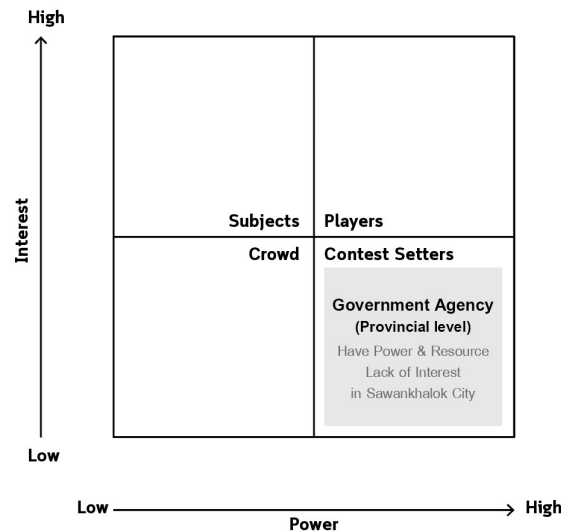


**Figure 8** Role of Sawankhalok District Office in City Development.

**Analysis:** The strength of the district office’s head can be seen as the glue connecting people and institutions to work collaboratively on city development projects. The only gap is a role as decision maker in policy making processes. Although building and city conservation projects have gone well, there is still a lack of further utilisation of such heritage capital for economic development and other opportunities. Most implemented projects seem to be merely event-based which contributes to only raising the general awareness of the locals. Key important issues at district and city levels still remain unsolved. Lack of master planning for city development and bureaucracy tend to allow the heads of district offices in the city to pay attention to their own personal interests rather than mutual goals set from the provincial development policy.

*(3) Government agencie at the provincial level*

**Interest:** There seems to be little interest shown in developing Sawankhalok City by government agencies at provincial level compared to other bigger cities such as Sukhothai and Srisat Chanalai. Due to it being remote from the financial and tourism centers of the province, the level of collaboration between Sawankhalok district office with government agencies at Sukkhotai provincial level is relatively low.



**Figure 9** Role of Provincial Authorities in City Development.

**Power:** With direct power from central government, government agencies at the provincial level tend to initiate bigger higher-impact projects aligned with central policies. Also, with access to state budget allocation, government agencies have direct financial support to channel to public services and welfare. Development projects from these agencies would have more negotiating power and budget to work with other stakeholders more efficiently than works from city-level agencies.

**Analysis:** There previously appears to have been no project from government agencies at the provincial level in Sawankhalok. This state of affairs results in less understanding of the local context of Sawankhalok from those agencies. Treated as a mere pass-by city, Sawankhalok is located midway between Sukkhothai and Sri Satchannalai, two major tourist and historic cities in Sukkhothai Province, and has gained a little attention. With a more integrated tourism development policy making a touring route linking Sukkhothai, Sawankhalok, and Sri Satchannalai cities, increased economic distribution to the locals of these cities will be possible.

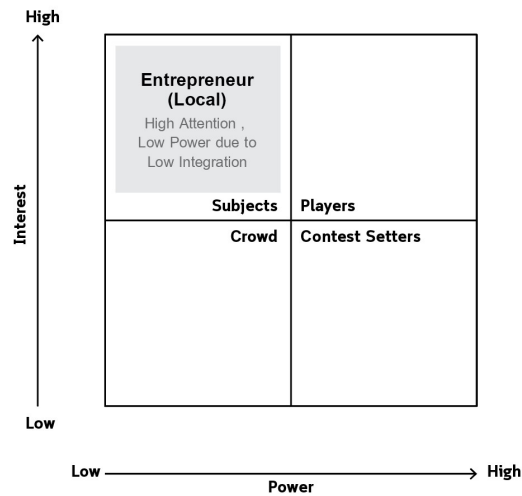
### 5.2.2 Private Sector

#### (1) Local small-to-medium businesses

**Interest:** Parties in the private sector, especially local small-to-medium businesses, are highly interested in city development projects that can help boost the local economy. They have a mutual interest in gaining income from more visitors coming to Sawankhalok, and there seems to be a loose network among local small-to-medium businesses that could be built upon.

**Power:** With a loose network amongst small-to-medium local entrepreneurs, they do not have collective power in influencing the direction of city development projects (see Figure 10).

**Analysis:** The private sector has high potential to make positive changes in city development processes. Local, new-comer and large factory businesses always gain benefits from a good economy. However, without adequate cooperation through strong networking, city development policies directly of benefit to them seems to be impossible; therefore, collectivity amongst them would help to build up mutual interests and goals to drive city development project forwards.

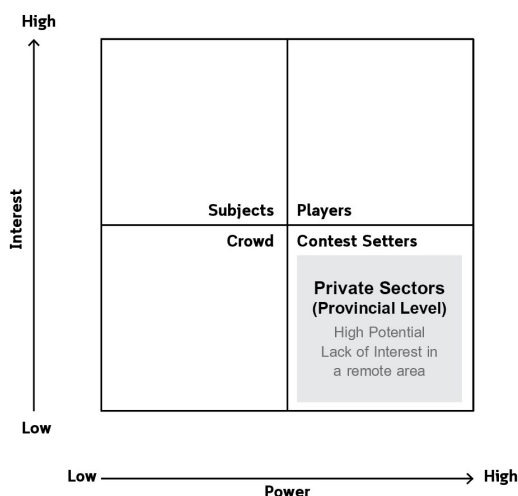


**Figure 10** Role of Local Private Sector in City Development.

(2) *private sector organisations at the provincial levels* (Sukkhothai Chamber of Commerce and Sukhothai Industry Council) [Comment: this text is confusing please, i.e. the Chamber of Commerce is not a private organisation. Please rewrite to make your intention here clearer. Thanking you krub]. They are non-governmental organisations

**Interest:** The Sukkhothai Chamber of Commerce and Industry Council is interested in guiding business direction and driving economic growth within the province. The current economic development of the province is intended to strengthen safe and clean agricultural products. In the past, a network of entrepreneurs in Sukhothai gave support to training programs and provided statistics data collection to inform policy making processes at the provincial level. However, Sawankhalok as a small-to-medium city was not in this loop.

**Power:** Those in the private sector, especially the Sukkhothai Chamber of Commerce and Industry Council, play only a supportive role to city development, and are not actively engaged in solving related problems related to the local economy. Nevertheless, these economics-related organisations still have some influence on guiding the making of economic policy at the provincial level (see Figure 11).



**Figure 11** Role of Provincial Private Sector in City Development.



Analysis: There is a gap where Sawankhalok still looks for opportunities to engage in activities provided by the Sukkhothai Chamber of Commerce and Industry Council in order to take on board suggestions for training programs, economic-driving activities and last, but not least, policies that promote economic development at local level. However, there seems to be some signs that local small-to-medium enterprises have come together as a network to negotiate and voice out their problems in order to be more involved in the general economic movement across cities in Sukkhothai. Therefore, it is suggested that if private organisations at the provincial level could connect to the local networks of small-to-medium enterprises from different cities, there would be more engagement and specifically-designed activities and policies relevant to shared local problems and appropriate to economic local contexts in each city.

### 5.2.3 Citizens

#### (1) civil society

Civic groups in Sawankhalok include its Organic Agriculture Network, a local wisdom network, a students' council, the Baan Mankong network (community network which works on appropriate housing for low-income people) [Comment: You could say what this is], the Healthy Citizens group, Rescue Sawankhalok group, Bicycle Club, Sukko Samosorn (an historical works network), a Green Trading Network, and so on. [Comment: If you have official names for these you should consider using them] they use these names in reality Although each of the civil societies has their own distinct interests and organise different activities to meet needs of their members, there are two major overlapping interests that stand out. These are historical matters and tourism.

Interest: The history of Sawankhalok is a mutually shared interest of the local civil societies. The locals are proud of the long settlement history of where they live and the heritage architecture in their old town areas. Sawankhalok's culture is manifested through local festive events that are part of the local cultural capital promoted via tourism activities. Apart from traditional economic activities focusing only on producing agricultural foods and products, cultural tourism has recently been under the spotlight as new economic opportunity for Sawankhalok. A network of local entrepreneurs agreed to set up a pedestrianised street and weekend market with an eco-friendly approach through introducing a trash-free campaign aiming to draw more quality tourists into the area. Agricultural tourism, with tourists visiting local farms and travelling round the surrounding areas using kayaks and bicycles, etc., is also emerging. Historical walks and bike tours in the old town areas visiting the local museum and Anatari (an old school) are also offered, for instance.

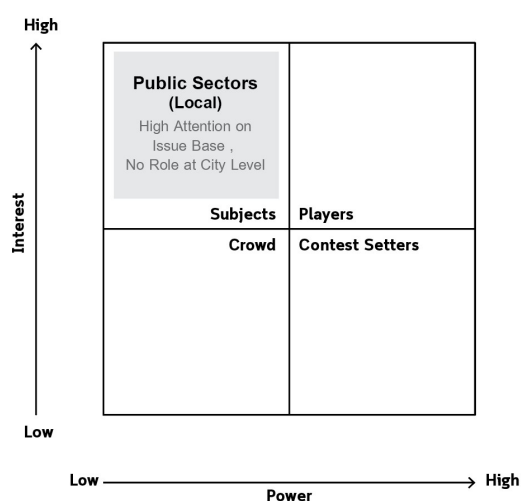


Figure 12 The Role of Civil Society in City Development.

**Power:** All movements and activities from local civil societies have minimal impact and little influence on the city's development policies and plans. There seems only to be an awareness of local wisdom, resources and heritage that has been raised among the local people. However, the desire of the local residents of Sawankhalok to take part in city development projects has increasingly been voiced, and this trend should be addressed in decision making processes at the higher levels.

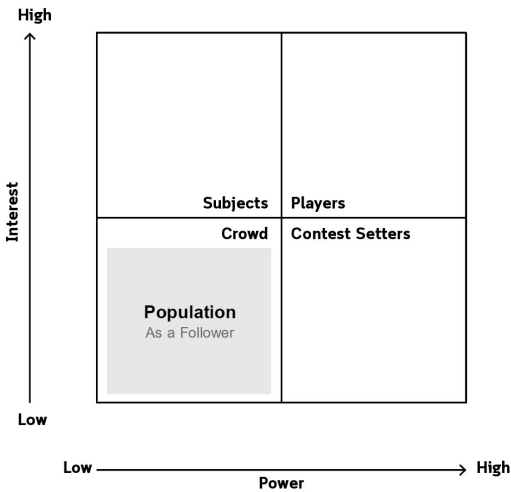
**Analysis:** With little unity in administration and a bureaucratic top-down approach to manage the city, civil society through various forms of civic groups, clubs, and networks may often have little chance to engage in city development policies and plans. Also, with an upcountry culture based on interpersonal relationships, civil society and the locals can only conduct cultural festive events which are now tending to be discontinued. Therefore, the role of civil society in driving city development is still limited. However, with the highest citizen participation theory, citizen control, empowering active citizens and civil society is a key to create participative policy making processes at the city level.

Moreover, educational institutions come to take part in local-based activities, especially relating to architectural conservation. Although these help to build local cultural capital in the city involving multi-level city development projects, these activities tend to be short-term and therefore not integrated into long-term planning and policies at present.

*(2) residents*

**Interest:** The only a mutual interest of Sawankhalok's residents seems to be their pride of residing in an historic town with a long-established local Thai culture. These residents tend to be passive listeners and recipients rather than active actors who voice out their needs asking for a stake to drive city development.

**Power:** The local residents of Sawankhalok have a good relationship with the municipality and they are also involved in civil society whenever possible. However, initiatives stemming from the local residents only by themselves are rare (see Figure 13).



**Figure 13** Role of the Public Sector in City Development.

**Analysis:** The majority of city development plans and policies in Sawankhalok tend to be from public authorities, in other words they are very top-down. The local residents often still do not have genuine interests, resulting in little chance to participate in city development processes. Nevertheless, city development initiatives

run through local temples and shrines can draw a certain level of attention from the public, i.e. a fund-raising campaign to build a local hospital. Therefore, the intent to create good karma is of interest to the local residents. Moreover, with a close-knit relationship between local authorities, civil society and the locals, collaboration and empowerment better development decisions can be made possible in Sawankhalok City.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1 Stakeholder Analysis in the Development Context of Sawankhalok City

The conclusion of power played out by involved stakeholders in the development context of Sawankhalok city can be seen in the stakeholder analysis diagram based on the work by Eden and Ackerman (1998) shown in Figure 14.

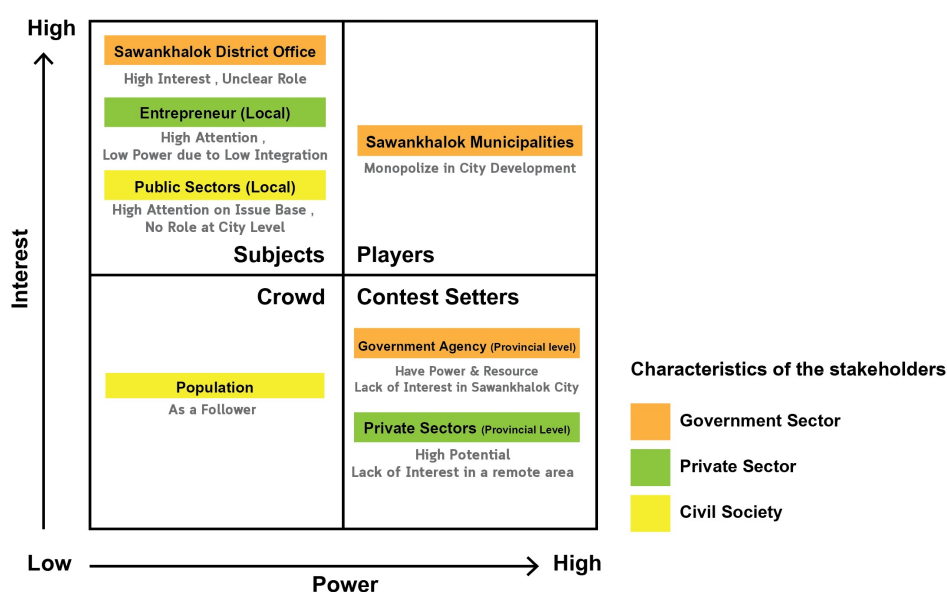
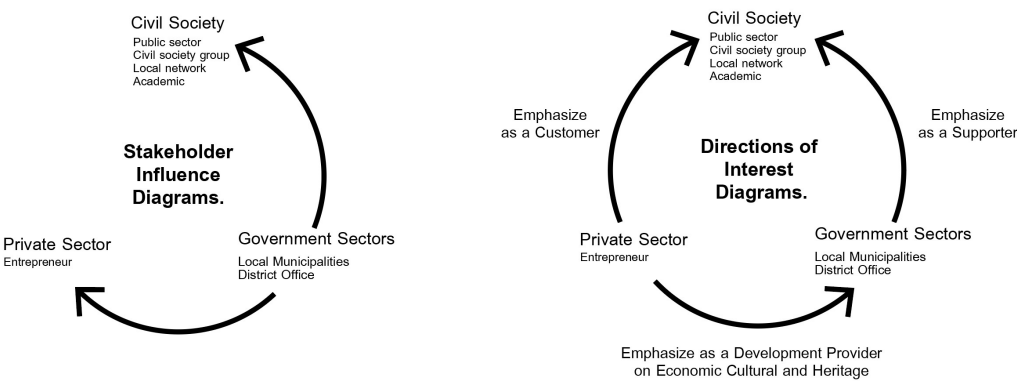


Figure 14 Role of Stakeholder According to Level of Power and Interest in Current Situation.

In this analysis, 'Players' is represented by the Sawankhalok Municipality which monopolises major development projects at the city level. While local entrepreneurs and other private sector players have great but diverse interests on city development, especially in terms of economic aspects, they still struggle with how to form mutual interests due to the fact that each local entrepreneur typically tends to only look at ways to promote their own business interests. Therefore, these local entrepreneurs and businesses are 'Subjects' who have scarce access to gain benefits from citywide economic development policies driven particularly by private sectors at the provincial scale. Moreover, local residents and groups of civil societies in Sawankhalok, the 'Population', tend to be located as 'Crowd' and as 'Followers' in the diagram (Figure 14) [Comment: Please state which figure]. This is due to their limited involvement with city development projects. Although they are keen to sustain their local cultures and wisdom, they are considered to have low interest and low power as stakeholders in the city's development.

Furthermore, government agencies and private sectors at the provincial level are the ones who have power but have low interest in the development of Sawankhalok. This is because there seems to be no clarity in the role that Sawankhalok should play at the provincial level on whether it should be an economic or tourist hub. If the Sukhothai authorities at provincial level could assign a clear role and aim for the city development of Sawankhalok, it should be possible to open up more opportunities for the private sector at all levels to pay more attention to engage in and support city development processes in Sawankhalok.

This study reveals that power relation among the stakeholders of city development in the past of Sawankhalok is one of imbalance. While absolute power is held by the local municipality, local private sectors, civil societies, and the residents have little or no power to influence city development projects (see Figure 15). In other words, it is scarcely possible to link city development by the legal power to development of the local culture in Sawankhalok.

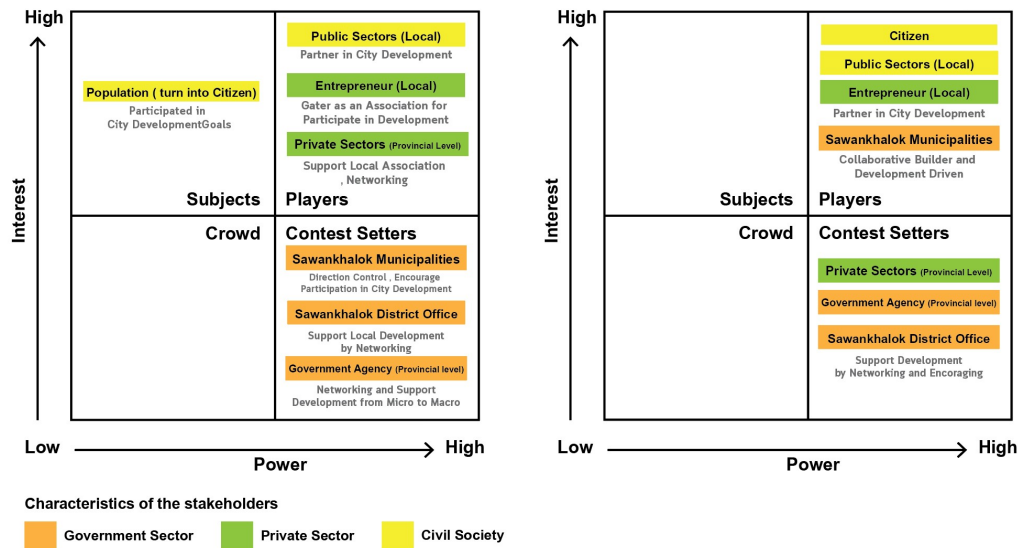


**Figure 15** Relationship and Influence of Stakeholders in the City's Development.

In terms of interests, the local authority still pursues public acceptance and attempts not to make arguments with its civil society and local residents. This is partially due to the fact that they have a close-knit relationship to each other and also because these people still hold voting power to support local politicians closely working with the local authority. Local businesses, on the other hand, would like to have support and policies that promote the local economy through cultural-based activities like local festivals and cultural tourism.

### 6.2 Recommendations on the Roles of Stakeholders in City Development

Through analysing the roles of stakeholders in city development in Sawankhalok city, we have gained a better understanding on what conditions are inappropriate to participatory city development processes. As the researchers, we consider that to encourage stakeholder participation in the city development, we should begin with shifting the statuses and roles of stakeholders based on their interest and power. Ideally all stakeholders in the local areas would have the highest-level interest, equal interest and power. On the, other hand, the stakeholders at provincial level should play a more supportive role thus giving long-term support to the city development processes (see Figure 16).



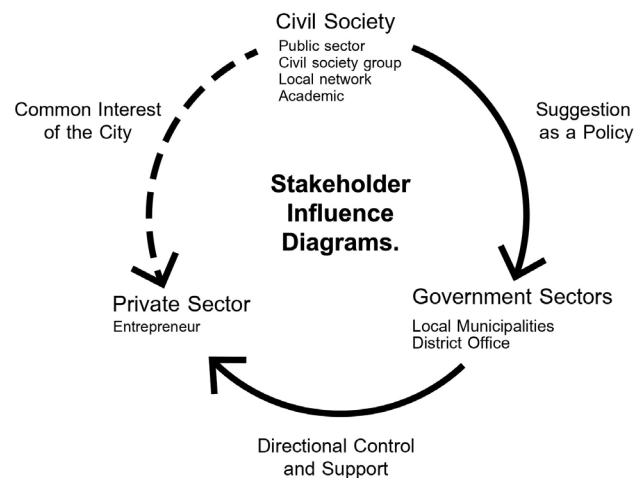
**Figure 16** Suggestions for Appropriate Levels of Power and Interest in Promoting Participation in the Development of Sawankhalok.

What is recommended for the short-term period is the shifting of the role of the municipality from being a mere player driving all city development to a supportive agent to open up opportunity for private sectors, civil society, and local residents to collaboratively initiate development projects. This would actually not reduce the power of the municipality. Instead, it would show its strength through creating city development partners by educating and empowering them to work in collaboration with the authority towards improved city development policies and projects. The role of each stakeholder could be incrementally changed towards to the same goal which is to encourage partnership in city development activities, plans and policies. The Songkra City's Lover, a civil society, is a good example of local residents and civil society in the medium-size old town coming together to work towards cultural and architectural heritage conservation and development. "Everybody in Songkha, regardless age and gender, should participate in suggesting ideas and sharing their experiences in order to create a better perception of their own city and make them proud to be Songkha residents. This would contribute to making them care more about cultural heritage and put forward local cultural conservation to become national and world heritage for all of Songkha's residents" (Songkhla Heritage Trust, 2016). With regard to city development, the city development companies established in a number of major cities in Thailand provide good examples of where successful local entrepreneurs can fully contribute to faster implemented development plans and projects. Moreover, with development partners from outside the city, a new working environment could flourish contributing to fast-forwarding more participatory processes for enhancing the long-term development of Sawankhalok city.

For a long-term recommendation, it is proposed that formal participation in city development at the local level should be promoted and should also be congruent with legal mechanism and tools. This means there should be a local development plan involving broader development mechanisms from provincial and regional levels. The set up of the city council should allow private businesses, civil society and local residents to participate in the making of city development plans and policy. Therefore, these groups should change from being informed to being active in collaboration, and becoming more engaged through empowerment, which would result in co-creation across all involved stakeholders.



All of the recommendations mentioned above can be put forward to build mutual interests and cohesive relationships that significantly contribute to achieving a clear direction for the development of the city of Sawankhalok responding to the real needs of all its residents (see Figure 17). It is proposed that such participatory city development processes could be replicated in other medium-size cities elsewhere in Thailand to boost their future inclusivity and sustainability.



**Figure 17** Appropriate Influences on City Development.

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## Author Contributions

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