

National**Mayor Park introduces a new development plan**

Feb 27, 2014



Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon holds a press conference yesterday at City Hall to announce his plans for a new redevelopment project. [NEWS1]

Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon announced yesterday his plan to develop the capital by preserving and refurbishing current residential areas, rather than constructing new apartment buildings.

At a special briefing at City Hall, the mayor said he will discard the city redevelopment program officially known as the New Town project, which was pursued by former Mayors Lee Myung-bak and Oh Se-hoon. Instead, Park said he will initiate his own plan to support underdeveloped regions in Seoul.

Park added that his city restoration project will be jointly led by the government and the private sector, with a total of 1 trillion won (\$938 million) invested over the next four years.

 The Korea Herald

Old Haebangchon market seeks change through urban revitalization

2016-11-30 17:32

Located at the foot of Namsan, Shinheung market was once the center of the local knitwear industry in the 1960s. It had a vibrant and festive market atmosphere, and attracted people from adjacent towns. Over 20,000 people from across the nation flocked to the market looking for jobs up to the 1990s.

But the advent of shopping malls and the decline of the knitwear industry in the face of cheap Chinese products in the years that followed spelled doom for the old market located in the upper part of Haebangchon, Seoul.

These days, there are just three to four knitwear shops left. The number of residents in the area has also fallen to 12,000 people, with at least 15 percent of them aged over 65.

"The number of people wanting to rent a place to open a business (in Shingheung market) went down as its visitors drastically decreased. So we tried to renovate shops into houses so people could live here at a cheap price," said 74-year-old Park Il-young, who has headed an association of business owners at Shinheung market for over a decade.



The main entrance of the Shinheung market in Haebangchon, Yongsan-gu in central Seoul (Kim Da-sol/Th

"Businesses here have long been in trouble, I used to hardly believe that the market would be revived," he said, adding that 43 other members of the association also held the same view until two years ago when the city government came up with the city revitalization project.

In 2014, the Seoul Metropolitan Government selected Shinheung market as one of eight urban revitalization projects, including Seongsu-dong in Seongdong-gu and Changshin-dong in Jongno-gu. A project was initiated to transform the market into an art street for textile workers and young business owners.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government said that the area is being promoted by art workshops and revitalized by young businesspeople and artists. It said that the main goal of the project is to fully utilize the characteristics of Shinheung market and harmoniously unify residents and visitors.

"We will open an art market where residents' life and art can coexist to improve the general environment and atmosphere of Shinheung market. We are also trying to prevent the gentrification phenomenon here, as gentrification is a growing concern among residents of other parts of Seoul," said a SMG official.

In a bid to deter the displacement of poorer communities, increases in rent and property values, and changes in the district's character and culture, the SMG earlier this month signed an agreement with 44 business owners at Shinheung market to freeze rental fees there for the next six years. Through this measure, young artists or studio owners would be able to settle in the area with less burden and support revitalization of the town.



Cafe Orang Orang, located in the Shinheung market in Haebangchon, shows a minimal exterior, which blends the atmosphere of the old traditional market. (Kim Da-sol/The Korea Herald)

"I found Shinheung market an attractive place to open a cafe, not only due to the cheap rent, but also the exotic atmosphere that the old traditional market gives. The building was vacant for four years before I moved in, but I tried my best to leave the building as it is, to keep its unique characteristic," said Ahn Sung-hyun, owner of the coffee shop Orang Orang.

Seoul City is pouring 10 billion won (\$8.56 million) over the next five years to revitalize the town, with the help of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

From refurbishing old slate ceilings to installing more light stands inside the market to brighten up the place, an urban revitalization project task force has been discussing ways to revive the market with residents, following the first meeting that kicked off in March last year.

But city officials say that refurbishment is not the main objective of the revitalization.

"We can refurbish old buildings for now. But what happens after this project ends in five years? We are helping residents to be able to revive the town with constant talks and cooperation such as through ideas of creating town rules or installing a common lounge for residents. We are trying to lay a foundation for them to coexist from now," said Kim Dae-woo, an official from Yongsan-gu Office's city revitalization division.

Currently, a total of 583 members, including tenants, foreign residents, students and shop owners are part of a residents association.

"I personally believe strong bonding between residents will initiate people to help revive the area, while the young generation can give fresh ideas to promoting Haebangchon's Shinheung market," said Park Ki-dong, who runs a leather crafts studio in Haebangchon.

"When residents gather ideas to come up with plans to revive the culture and the atmosphere of the town, there will be a fruitful outcome for this urban revitalization project. It is something like the Saemaeul Movement, which is focused on creating a village community," said another resident Son Haeng-jo.

This year, residents and artists who have studios in Haebangchon hosted the 11th Haebangchon Festival. They not only sold their art projects but helped old residents to sell Korean traditional food such as gochujang, or red pepper paste.

But opinions are still split among some residents over the city-led urban revitalization project.

According to a Yongsan-gu official who declined to be named, struggles remain between residents and tenants over property value.

"There is always opposition when discussion unfolds. Some old residents would rather have the city government reconstruct the whole town, instead of revitalization. Some also did not really like the idea of the rent fee freeze, because they wanted to sell property in the area at a high price and leave this old town," said him.

"Haebangchon is a geographically difficult place to go under reconstruction. But many old residents seem to still have a lingering wish to have their old town reconstructed with clean buildings," he added.

By Kim Da-sol (ddd@heraldcorp.com)

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Urban Planning News

Five Locations Selected for "Seoul Urban Renewal Pilot Project"

12/31/2014 SMG 2235

The Seoul Metropolitan Government selected five locations, totaling 2,853,000m2, for the "Seoul Urban Renewal Pilot Project," through votes collected by district. These are places with fragile living conditions, such as weak infrastructure and safety measures that require urgent urban renewal, including Jangwi 1-dong, Seongbuk-gu, where the New Town restrictions were removed, and the area surrounding Seongsu 1, 2-ga, Seongdong-gu.

< Rejuvenating Old and Deteriorated Areas and Reinvigorating Local Economy through Urban Renewal By Neighborhood Regeneration >

The "Seoul Urban Renewal Pilot Project" focuses on urban renewal by neighborhood regeneration in order to improve the living conditions for day-to-day life, securing the infrastructure for basic living and thus reinvigorating the local economy.

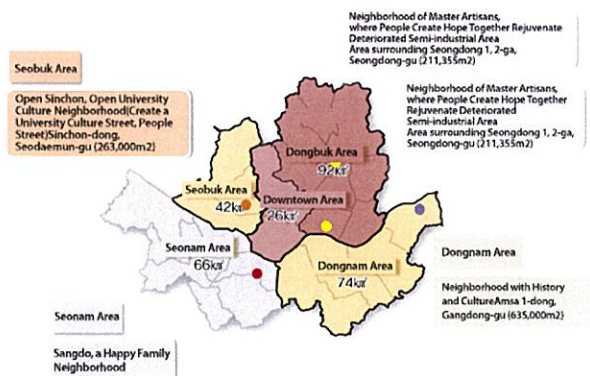
By focusing on urban renewal through neighborhood regeneration, instead of at a larger scale, the Seoul Metropolitan Government aims to realize both the "rejuvenation of old and deteriorated areas" and "reinvigoration of the local economy. "Urban renewal through neighborhood regeneration" differs from an economy-based urban renewal, as the latter focuses on assigning new functions to the city and creating a basis for employment in connection with repairs and developments of industrial complexes or harbors.

< Participation of Local Residents and Districts, Maximum Financial Support of KRW 10 billion (City:District, 9:1) per Place over 4 years >

The Seoul Metropolitan Government announced its selection of locations for the "Seoul Urban Renewal Pilot Project," in October 2014. A total of 15 projects from 14 districts applied, and five finalists were selected.

- ① The area surrounding Amsa 1-dong, Gangdong-gu (635,000m²)_“Neighborhood with History and Culture, Made by Residents.”
- ② The area surrounding Seongsu 1,2-ga, Seongdong-gu (886,560m²)_“Seongsu, the Neighborhood of Master Artisans, where People Create Hope Together.”
- ③ The area in Jangwi 1-dong, Seongbuk-gu, where New Town Restrictions were Removed (318,415m²)_“Urban Renewal in Jangwi, a Friendly and Generation-Gap Free Neighborhood.”
- ④ The area surrounding Sangdo 4-dong, Dongjak-gu (750,000m²)_“Sangdo, a Happy Family Neighborhood.”
- ⑤ The area surrounding Sinchon-dong, Seodaemun-gu (263,000m²)_“Open Sinchon, Open University Culture Neighborhood.”)

An assessment committee made up of experts in areas including construction, urban planning, transportation, history and culture, as well as city council members, selected the five areas through ① application screening, ② on-site evaluation, and ③ a final assessment. In particular, the committee focused on the willingness of districts to improve the area and the feasibility of such while assessing the ▲trade off of the pilot project, ▲capacity of the district to carry out the project, ▲ interest and participation of residents, ▲ ripple effect of the project, ▲ and the level of deterioration of the neighborhood.



< Different “Urban Renewal Models for Neighborhood Regeneration” for Four Areas to be Created and Applied >

The projects to be led by the five selected districts will begin in 2015. For each location, the Seoul Metropolitan Government will offer 90 percent and districts will offer 10 percent of the estimated cost (within KRW 10 billion).

The project funds will be invested in establishing a base so that the area will be sustainably self-rejuvenated and creating a local community. Moreover, the funds will be invested in people-centered, not facility-centered, rejuvenation projects, such as a strengthening of regional capacity, cultural renewal using local assets, reinvigoration of the local economy through creative job creation, and the establishment of a safer and nicer residential environment.

< Process Monitoring and Consulting, Focus on Strengthening Residents' Ability Is a Priority >

The Seoul Metropolitan Government will continue to monitor the entire process of the urban renewal project until its completion. Through consultations, regular city-district joint meetings, and advisory panels, the city government will fully support these urban regeneration projects in connection with local government and resident participation.

Moreover, the Seoul Metropolitan Government will develop educational programs tailored to the unique characteristics of each selected district to foster neighborhood leaders and activists and reinforce resident ability, which is the key to urban renewal. Training and educational sessions for residents will also be provided to increase resident understanding and participation.

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Urban Planning News

Onsite Mayor's Offices in 4 Urban Regeneration Areas

07/22/2016

SMG

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The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) will open onsite Mayoral offices in the four leading areas of urban regeneration from July 20 (Wed.) to July 26 (Tue.), 2016 to inspect the areas and listen to the opinions of residents.

It will be an occasion for Mayor Park Won-soon to communicate in person with local residents to encourage the participation of local residents in the urban regeneration project based on the performance of the project implementation so far, and to find out if there are any difficulties in finalizing the implementation of the project and what additional support the SMG needs to provide.

The four areas where the onsite Mayor's office will open are ▲Changshin and Sungin area, ▲Haebangchon area, ▲Castle Village in Haengchon area, and ▲Sansae Village (Sinsadong, Eunpyeong-gu area).

The Changshin and Sungin areas, where an onsite Mayor's office will open on July 20 (Wed.) at 10 a.m, is the first leading area of urban regeneration designated after the SMG changed the residential renewal paradigm from redevelopment through total demolition to urban regeneration by neighborhood unit. It is the area

in which the urban regeneration project is currently being promoted most actively.

The onsite Mayor's office will open in the Haebangchon area on July 25 (Mon.) at 8 a.m. The Haebangchon area is where urban regeneration is being promoted to revive stagnant local businesses by revitalizing the traditional Sinheung Market in cooperation with local residents.

The Castle Village in the Haengchon area is developing an urban agriculture profit model with resident participation based on the decision to transform the area into a "model neighborhood of urban agriculture," having collected the opinions of residents in the process of establishing the regeneration plan. The onsite Mayor's office will open on July 25 (Mon.) at 2:30 p.m.

Sansae Village is considered to be a model area of residential environment management project, as it actively promotes the regeneration project for outworn low-rise residential areas. The onsite Mayor's office will open on July 26 (Tue.) at 10 a.m to inspect the various sites of urban regeneration and listen to the opinions of residents.

The SMG plans to reflect the opinions of residents collected through this project in the urban regeneration vitalization plan currently being implemented, and will begin the public support project for urban regeneration in the second half of the year. Also, efforts will be made to discover business models that can be applied to the urban regeneration vitalization areas.

Mayor Park Won-soon said, "So far our focus has been on preparing the ground for a "Seoul-type urban regeneration", but now it's time to solidify the foundation." He also added, "In order for the urban regeneration project to succeed, the active participation and interest of local residents are essential. Therefore, we will make our best efforts to strengthen the sustainable competitiveness of the areas based on the outcome of the onsite Mayor's office, and achieve success in implementing the regeneration project".

Platform Changdong 61

A Door Leading to Tomorrow
"Platform Changdong 61"

The Center for Music and
Performance, The Space for
Culture and Arts

Living for Myself, Space for
Lifestyle

Sharing with Others, the
Space for Community

Information as of 21 Feb, 2017

Sharing with Others, Space for Community

The space for Community is where residents can create and host a program themselves. Anyone can join to create a new gathering and engage with others through this space.

■ Room for Workshop

This is an open space for regional residents to have workshops, meetings, and a place of education (Targeted to teachers and students).



Workshop for citizen participation

- Mining assets from 4 districts of Northeast
- Culture tour storytelling
- Academy for regeneration of the city
- Forum for regional cooperation for development

Culture school for residents

- Community class
- Cooking class
- Style class
- Photo Class

■ Young Adults Creative School

Young Adults Creative School is a program for young students who plan to have careers in the culture and art fields.

- Providing special lectures for Art and Culture content
- Providing mentoring programs by professionals and experts in different fields



■ Urban Restoration Cooperation Support Center

The Urban Restoration Cooperation Support Center is an institution of the city of Seoul that supports urban regeneration projects throughout the regions.

- Cooperate with supporting centers from 4 Northeast districts to develop programs for community involvement
- Support economic type, urban restoration

projects and with cooperation from the 4
Northeast districts: Promoting studies of people
and governance

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Mayor's Hope Journal

Crime prevention through design

[Mayor Park Won Soon's Hope Journal 113]

03/27/2013

SMG

832



In 2010, I had the opportunity to stay for three months in the United Kingdom. As I was exploring cases of social innovation, I came across an idea of crime prevention through environmental design. Professor Lorraine Gamman at St. Martin's College of Art told me about Design Against Crime, a program carried out based on research on criminals' psychology and behavioral patterns.

One of the examples she gave me was to change the lights in a toilet to fluorescent lights. The bluish white light of the fluorescent fixture makes it difficult to find veins, thereby making drug injection impossible.

I thought it was a good idea. After I became mayor of Seoul, I decided to put into practice the idea of crime prevention through environmental design in two places: Yeomri-dong, Mapo-gu and Gongjin Middle School in Gangseo-gu.

< Yeomri-dong, Mapo-gu >

- A 1.7km-long crime-infested back alley turned into a community space for sports lovers (named "Salt Way")
- Six houses designated as Salt Way Watchers (identified with easily noticeable yellow gates and equipped with emergency bells and Internet protocol cameras)
- Walls or fences of houses painted with bright-colored paint and with pretty pictures hung with the participation of 30 households

< Gongjin Middle School in Gangseo-gu >

- Installation of cameras aimed at monitoring students' activities (different from surveillance cameras)

- "Stress zero zones" formed in several areas deemed to be crime-infested areas

- Application of color therapy to walls of corridors and stairs with the help of the country's leading art designers

According to a survey carried out recently by the Korean Institute of Criminology, the back alley in Yeomri-dong, Mapo-gu, which people used to avoid at night, showed a drastic change. The rate of crime and the level of fear felt by people decreased by 9.1% and 13.6%, respectively, in five months. At least 13.8% of the people said they have come to love the neighborhood more. In particular, the people there pegged the crime prevention effects of the 1.7km-long Salt Way at 78.6% and 83.3%, and they expressed satisfaction with such. As for Gongjin Middle School in Gangseo-gu where many students come from low-income families and education welfare indices remained low, a survey showed that the level of disorder among students and their fear of being exposed to crimes decreased by 7.4% and 3.7%, respectively, whereas 1.4% of the students said they have come to love their school life more. In fact, 27.8% showed greater attachment to school facilities than before.

Buoyed by the positive results, Seoul City plans to operate similar programs aimed at lowering the crime rate by designating three places (Myeonmok 4/7-dong, Jungrang-gu, Haengun-dong, Gwanak-gu, and Yongsan 2ga-dong, Yongsan-gu). We will expand the scope to parks, protection of women, and overall urban safety.

We also plan to launch the Crime Prevention Design Committee consisting of 14 experts, including criminal/behavioral psychologists, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) experts, police officers, and community designers with a view to making Seoul a safer place to live in for its citizens.

Professor Lorraine Gamman paid a visit to Seoul and noted that Seoul City's CPTED programs carried out with the participation of the people are more advanced than those operated in the United Kingdom. She promised to have an article concerning this published in an international journal.

Seoul City is making an international model for crime prevention through environmental design.



Seoul Mayor Park Won Soon after signing the agreement for crime prevention efforts with the prosecution

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Urban Regeneration

The Rebirth of a City: Changsin-Sungin Area Rejuvenation Project

02/01/2016 SMG 711

A major hub of Korea's garment industry and part of the local network of clothing production, distribution, and sales

Changsin-dong, surrounded by Seoul City Wall, is a place in Seoul that is full of cultural and historical energy.

The area began to attract more tourists after it was featured in numerous Korean films and TV dramas.

Residents and experts share their opinions on renewal and diverse communities engage in activities.

As new structures are constantly being renovated or demolished these days, there have been many arguments regarding the necessity of preserving the past.

As a place that still contains the joy, sorrow, and sweat of its residents' lives, Changsin-dong, located in Jongno-gu, is proof of the value in preserving the past. Once the site of countless clothing factories and a strategic center of the Korean garment industry, this neighborhood is infused with the lives of our ancestors. Changsin-dong is a repository of stories that have accumulated throughout Korea's history.

Historical and Cultural Background of Changsin-dong

Since the Goryeo Dynasty, Changsin-dong has been a place where commoners worked hard to make a living. Its current name was derived from two of the previous names for this area,

"Inchangbang" and "Sungsinbang," leading it to be called "Changsin" and "Sungin."

During the Japanese colonial period, Gwangjang Market in the nearby Dongdaemun area grew to become a large-scale dry goods market. And after Korea's liberation from Japan and the Korean War, refugees from all over the nation flocked to this area and built a shantytown, making it their home.

Changsin-dong Today

After the Korean War, Changsin-dong was flooded with refugees, who leaped at the chance to work at garment factories to earn a living. In the 1970s, garment factories that had been concentrated in Pyeonghwa Market, near Cheonggyecheon Stream, were relocated to Changsin-dong, leading this area to become a major hub of garment manufacturing in Seoul and, thereby, gaining a solid foothold in the fashion industry of nearby Dongdaemun. At one time, the number of clothing factories here, both small and large, amounted to over 3,000. Even now, many people in Changsin-dong earn a living working in such factories.

As the center of a production, distribution, and retail network in the clothing industry, Dongdaemun has certainly benefitted from the existence of Changsin-dong. As such, a cooperative system has been established between the two. When merchants in Dongdaemun finish their designs, they send them over to Changsin-dong for immediate production, allowing experts in the industry to create a finished product in only one day based on the speed and skills of the professional workers in Changsin-dong.

These days, a steady stream of motorcycles loaded with fabrics whiz along the twisted alleys that run up and down the hill on a daily basis. The clothing industry workers here now have between 20 and 30 years of experience, and many are now about to turn 60. They spent the prime of their lives making clothes in Changsin-dong. However, they are always proud to see the final products of their efforts—that is, clothes "Made in Changsin-dong."

Motorcycles are used to transport clothing and materials here because they are the most effective means of traversing the narrow,

twisting alleys of Changsin-dong, a neighborhood that has a lot more alleys than other places in Seoul. As a result, the streets are filled with the sound of motorcycles, loaded with fabrics or sewing machines, roaming the neighborhood. However, that sound, once so prominent, is now gradually disappearing.

Changsin-dong was once full of young people working as apprentices, but now there are none to be found. This is just one of the signs that the garment industry here is beginning to fall into decline.



Rescuing and Renewing Changsin-dong

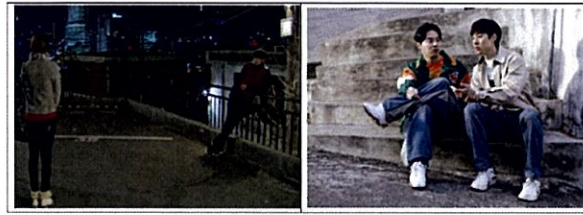
Rescuing and Renewing Changsin-dong

We could not sit idly by and watch a major industry collapse. Therefore, in step with the changes of our times, an urban renewal project was launched to transform Changsin-dong into a specialized district. Seoul Metropolitan Government selected Changsin-dong, located in Jongno-gu, as the third subject of its balanced development project.

Changsin-dong still preserves much of Korea's history, culture, and natural environment. Anyangam Hermitage, Cheongnyongsa Temple, Gwangjang Market, and Sinjin Market near Naksan Park, as well as the section of Seoul City Wall surrounding the neighborhood, are all promoting the cultural and historical vitality of Changsin-dong.

In particular, as the alleys and buildings on the steep hills of the neighborhood have changed little over the years, they have become popular filming locations for movies and television dramas. Owing to the recent surge in popularity of Korean entertainment content overseas (Korean Wave), the scenes of Changsin-dong in the film *Architecture 101* and the drama *Secret*

Garden are now attracting tourists to the area from all over the world.



Famous as a filming location for the drama Secret Garden and film Architecture 101

In the past, people believed that the best way to revitalize the local economy was to tear down old buildings and build new ones. In particular, that approach was seen as an effective way of improving the youth unemployment situation. However, we now have to realize that every single building we take down is a cultural asset that has value in both the present and the future and is an important part of the history of our country. However, instead of merely maintaining the condition of such buildings, we must pursue urban renewal that involves maintaining and repairing the buildings in line with the development of our society.

Even today, meetings and discussions are being held with residents and experts from public organizations about the renewal of the Changsin-Sungin area. In the past, the role of public organizations was to supervise and direct such meetings, but now they must support and fund the renewal project. Public organizations must actively facilitate and support urban renewal projects, and citizens must work together to revitalize the city.



Hoping to achieve urban renewal, various citizen-centered communities have been established in the area.

Urban renewal policies aim to allow people to continue living in their communities and ensure that income is generated and distributed evenly to the people. Communities of volunteers created by residents and exchanges and collaborations with public organizations will transform Seoul into a more culturally vibrant and financially prosperous city.

Maintaining the foundation upon which people can make a living, breathing life and vitality back into the city's neighborhoods, and strengthening sustainable urban renewal are the main goals that we hope to achieve. The entire process of urban renewal, from planning to implementation, is carried out based on the participation of residents. This kind of regionally-centered renewal, which respects the unique characteristics of the area, is currently underway here in the Changsin-Sungin area.



Expected to revitalize Changsin-dong as the manufacturing base of Dongdaemun's fashion industry

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Urban Planning News

Haebangchon Shinheung Market Reborn as Art Market

07/29/2016

SMG

2752



Shinheung Market, located in Haebangchon, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, which was the center of the knitwear industry in the 1970s, will be transformed into an art street for textile workers and young business owners. The characterization of the area will be promoted using the art workshops of Haebangchon, revitalized by young businesspeople. An art market where residents' life and art coexist will also be created by improving the general environment of Shinheung Market.

Haebangchon (Yongsan 2 ga-dong area, Yongsan-gu; 332,000m²) is one of the targeted urban revitalization areas of Seoul, and the "Revitalization of Shinheung Market" was a project selected at the public briefing session for residents held in December 2015. The urban revitalization areas of Seoul receive public support of a maximum of 10 billion won for local competence reinforcement projects, expansion

of anchor facilities, and others during a period of four to five years.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) plans to improve the environment of Shinheung Market by the beginning of next year by investing a budget of one billion won. The old slate roofs, which were mainly responsible for the dull and dark mood of the market, will be removed to transform Shinheung Market into a market with a view of the sky. Also, the roads will be paved, drainage will be repaired, event and rest areas will be created, and design signs, lighting, and CCTV will be installed.

In addition to efforts for environmental improvement, various ideas are being discussed for revitalizing Shinheung Market with the active participation of the Residents Association of Haebangchon Urban Regeneration, a local resident organization. The market spaces will be rented to young artists, designers, workers of knitwear industry, and others at a low price, and they will participate in planning and running a market revitalization program through talent donation and others. The SMG will ensure that they are not driven out after having revitalized the area by controlling the increase of rent for more than five years, instead of supporting a maximum of 30 million won to building owners for remodeling of their building.

On July 25, 2016, Mayor Park Won-soon opened the Mayor's office in Haebangchon to gather residents' opinions on the urban regeneration plan for Haebangchon that will be established at the end of this year, and discussed detailed support measures for resolving pending issues of the area.

Mayor Park Won-soon said, "Shinheung Market, developed in the early 1960s in Haebangchon, a shantytown area, was home to ordinary citizens holding a memory of nearly 50 years." He added, "Haebangchon has recently become a popular area among young people; however, worn-out low-rise residential areas and Shinheung Market are problems that need to be solved. I will take this opportunity to listen to the various opinions of Haebangchon residents, and carry out the urban regeneration project based on those voices."

Communication & Innovations

For a Happy Community of 10 Million Citizens

01/12/2017 SMG 181

[Stories of Neighborhood Communities in Seoul]

Sansae Neighborhood transformed from an urban slum into a pleasant community thanks to support from Seoul and the participation of locals

Parents in Jeongneung come together to create a close-knit community with support from Seoul

Culture Curator Development Group, consisting of volunteers interested in curating Jeongneung, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site

Energy self-sufficient neighborhoods, bringing citizens together to tackle climate and environmental issues

Our Neighborhood Neungmal, a neighborhood magazine featuring stories of locals and the neighborhood

Toad Housing Project, renovating vacant houses

Small steps, big changes!

Koreans used to call their neighbors iutsachon, or "neighbor-cousins." People's neighbors may

not be related by blood, but the daily interactions they have naturally lead to family-like solidarity. This type of relationship with neighbors used to be common in Korea with the traditional housing and living arrangements.

Back then, fences were low, and main gates either did not exist or were never locked; and everyone in the neighborhood knew each other. As people began migrating to cities, and competition became necessary for day-to-day survival and the norm of the economy, people's warm memories of "neighbor-cousins" were forgotten, and the neighborly communities as we knew them began to disappear one by one.

Sansae Neighborhood: An urban slum transformed by locals into a thriving community

Today, in 2016, the neighborhoods of Seoul are undergoing change once again. More and more people have been starting to organize and develop their neighborhoods, creating flourishing communities with the goal of reviving the old neighbor-cousin relationships. Located in Sinsa 2-dong, Eunpyeong-gu, the neighborhood of Sansae is a good example of this. Situated at the foot of Bongsan Mountain, Sansae was a poor and dilapidated neighborhood; over 80 percent of its houses were more than 20 years old, and the majority of the population was undereducated and old. To address this situation, Seoul subsidized the repairs of sidewalks, roads, and stairways throughout the neighborhood, and also created communal facilities and neighborhood shelters. In addition, locals participated actively in efforts to clean up the local slaughterhouse, abandoned houses, and waste depositories that had fallen into disuse over a period of three decades and created a 1,600-square-meter public vegetable garden. Locals today grow numerous types of vegetables and plants in this garden, of portion

of which they donate to welfare facilities in the area. Every Tuesday, the farmers cook a meal for local seniors and the local volunteers who work to keep the neighborhood clean.



It has become quite natural for the residents of Sansae to chat and work together every day, thanks to Sansae Nest, which opened up in October 2015. A communal space and hub of community activities, Sansae Nest features a book café and nursing room on the first floor, a study room for local teenagers on the second floor, and a communal guesthouse and other amenities on the third floor.

The residents of Sansae also gather together to repair and renovate worn-down houses. Participating locals first learn basic repair skills at the House Repair Academy, and then organize committees and task forces to carry out major projects involving insulation, painting, and other such repair and maintenance work. This program reduces the financial burden that locals would otherwise incur to renovate their homes, improves the neighborhood, and deepens solidarity.

Transformation of a neighborhood in the heart of Seoul

There are numerous neighborhoods in Seoul that boast remarkable histories, unique customs, and an active and living heritage. One such neighborhood is Jeongneung-dong.

Situated along the Namjangdae of Bukhansan Mountain, Jeongneung-dong's name comes from the fact that it is home to Jeongneung, the royal tomb of Madame Kang, the concubine of Yi Seong-gye, founder of the Joseon Dynasty. Divided up into four administrative units, the neighborhood is also home to Bukhansan Mountain, the tallest of Seoul's four major mountains (Gwanaksan, Suraksan, Dobongsan, and Bukhansan). Rising 936 meters above sea level, Bukhansan Mountain is home to a beautiful national park that draws visitors from across Korea all year round.

The lush green forest atop the mountain is also the perfect venue from which to enjoy the panoramic view of downtown Seoul. Renowned for its history, tradition, and natural beauty, Jeongneung-dong continues to inspire numerous artistic and creative projects. Architecture 101, a hit Korean movie that evoked memories of unrequited first love among viewers, featured Jeongneung-dong as an old and romantic neighborhood to which the main characters traveled by Bus No. 143. Jeongneung-dong was also home to Park Gyeong-ni, the revered Korean author, when she wrote *The Land*, a masterpiece of Korean literature. The area still serves as one of the two terminuses along the route of Bus No. 1, which has been running across Seoul for over five decades.

Home to a population of 100,000, Jeongneung-dong is larger than a small rural town. Yet most of the buildings in this old neighborhood are detached houses, row houses, and low-rise multi-household buildings. These days, redevelopment is a major issue affecting the lives of locals, not only in Jeongneung 1-dong, where the Gireum New Town Development has already been completed, but also in the three other administrative units of Jeongneung-dong. Nevertheless, the timeworn yet affordable

housing in Jeongneung continues to attract diverse groups of people, including immigrants and young people, while the new high-rise apartment buildings attract new families to the area.



A street festival in Jeongneung

In 2012, the diverse groups of residents in Jeongneung began to come together to work on neighborhood community projects. The pioneering figures of this movement were local parents who wanted to organize a community-wide joint daycare program for their children. As soon as Seoul included Jeongneung in its Neighborhood Community Program in 2012, locals set up a steering group and established several neighborhood businesses and facilities, including a café and art workshop.

This community-building movement began spreading throughout the neighborhood. Residents soon launched a group for the training of culture curators, organizing local volunteers to curate Jeongneung, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Based on their awareness of climate and environmental issues, some residents of the area began developing an energy self-sufficient neighborhood project. Locals also started publishing *Our Neighborhood Neungmal*, a magazine featuring a collection of stories of local residents and the history of the neighborhood. The neighborhood of Jeongdeun became a center for the conservation of old hanok houses, while Samdeok led the effort to renovate old houses with lawns. In addition, the Toad Housing Project was launched to offer vacant old houses to

young artists and entrepreneurs for affordable rents. These small and diverse groups and initiatives have begun transforming Jeongneung, bringing together former strangers as new neighbors, and growing through the efforts and willingness of residents to share and pool their resources.

Miracle Workers of Neighborhood Communities

The Neighborhood Community Program has led to major transformations in the personal lives of residents as well. Koh Chang-nok, for example, was a typical middle-class family man who used to volunteer to serve as the representative of his apartment building. Thanks to the program, he mobilized the tenants of his building to cultivate a rooftop vegetable garden. Inspired by this experience, Mr. Koh has been working as a neighborhood consultant since 2013. He says he has met far more people in the last couple of years working as a neighborhood consultant than he had met in his entire life before he took this new position.

Kim Jeong-ho, who aspired to become a good father, realized that good parenting was a communal affair that required the concerted efforts of the entire community. Mr. Kim thus organized, along with other local parents, the Great Families of Jangan Neighborhood and applied for support from Seoul's Neighborhood Community Program. Having organized a number of highly successful neighborhood activities, such as the Walkathon into the History of the Neighborhood, Wednesday Playground, and Daddy Project, Mr. Kim has become a major role model not only for the kids but the entire neighborhood as well.

Mr. Koh and Mr. Kim are only a few of the countless examples of neighborhood residents who are finding new fulfillment and meaning in

life through the revitalization of the neighborhoods of Seoul. These everyday neighborhood leaders are transforming Seoul, a city of 10 million, into a better, more closely knit community.



Neighborhood consultant at the Seoul Community Support Center



Sports Play with Moms and Dads (Janghan Neighborhood)

A City of 10 Million: A Massive Network of Neighborhoods that Form a Community

The 25 self-governing boroughs of Seoul are divided into a total of 423 administrative units. The official statistics, however, fail to convey the active and thriving neighborhood communities of Seoul, whose origins can be traced back to the launch of the Neighborhood Community Program in 2012. This key policy initiative of Seoul encourages neighborhoods to solve their own problems by forming strong, tight-knit networks of relationships among the residents themselves. Through this program, any group of three or more residents, including nonprofit organizations and neighborhood enterprises, can apply for support from the city to carry out their communal initiatives and projects. Examples include the creation of public salons and spaces, joint parenting and daycare programs, consumer cooperatives run by residents, neighborhood enterprises that create jobs for locals, and neighborhood festivals.

As neighborhood communities began to grow, residents started learning not only how to

develop and implement their own project plans, but also how to decide what types of support they need from the city government. According to the requirements of local residents, Seoul provides a wide range of support for neighborhood initiatives in all phases of growth.

	
Outcomes of the NCP (2014)r	Town hall meetings for participatory local governance

Five years have passed since the Neighborhood Community Program was launched. In the meantime, Seoul, a city of 10 million, has become more active and prosperous thanks to the story-worthy efforts of countless neighborhood communities. From the beginning of the program to April 2014, a total of 9,834 neighborhood groups and organizations applied for support, and 3,230 of them received it. The program has definitely increased the number of gatherings and activities of small groups. In the program's first year, 56.4 percent of the applications were submitted by existing nongovernmental organizations. By 2014, however, the proportion of applications from such organizations had fallen drastically to 10.8 percent, with new local initiatives submitting the remaining 89.1 percent of applications. Most importantly, 65.4 percent of NCP-supported groups have continued to carry out their neighborhood activities even after they stopped receiving support.

Neighborhood-Building Citizens, City-Building Citizens

The program's dramatic evolution reflects its focus. First and foremost, the program supports

the initiatives of local residents. Participants of the program thus mobilize and dedicate their resources to the needs and causes they identify as necessary, during the periods of time they decide, and to the extent they want as well. Locals are encouraged to carry out the entire process on their own, from organizing public awareness campaigns to recruiting necessary members and workers and finding the spaces and raising the capital they need. This process itself serves to support community building and growth, with only minimal administrative support given where necessary.

In 2014, the Neighborhood Community Program thus began evaluating applicants through a process that the applicants themselves attended. Now that the program has entered its second phase, "co-governance" has become the central theme. Co-governance is an ideal of public decision-making that requires the substantial and active participation of diverse stakeholders in making policies for a given policy community. This ideal contrasts with the unilateral and hierarchical model of public decision-making that has so far been the norm. Seoul's Neighborhood Community Program will continue to support the solidarity and activities of neighborhood communities, enabling residents to transform their neighborhoods, citizens to create a more livable city, and tourists to experience exciting community initiatives and stories throughout Seoul.

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