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- Alexandria
- Algiers
- Amsterdam
- Andong
- Athens
- Baghdad
- Baharat
- Barcelona
- Bordeaux
- Boston
- Bratislava
- Brussels
- Budapest
- Buyeo
- Chengdu
- Chiang Mai
- Cologne
- Cordoba
- Cracow
- Cusco
- Dijon
- Dublin
- Edinburgh
- Fez
- Florence
- Geneva
- Gongju
- Guadalajara
- Gyeongju
- The Hague
- Hanoi
- Helsingborg
- Hue
- Iasi
- Isfahan
- Istanbul
- Jerusalem
- Kaesong
- Katmandu
- Kazan
- Kiev
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- Kyoto
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- Lisbon
- Lutsk
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- Mexico City
- Minsk
- Montpellier
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- Nicosia
- Nis
- Norwich
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- Osmangazi
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- Ulan Bator
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- Xian
- Yangon
- Yangzhou
- Yogyakarta
- Zagreb
- Zhengzhou
- Zurich

## *Minsk ~Minsk Old and New~*

*Cover Photo: Modern View of the Historic Center of Minsk*

## *Candidate Cities for Hosting the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities*

*Hue (Viet Nam) and Yangzhou (China)*



# WORLD HISTORICAL CITIES

The League of Historical Cities Bulletin

No.52: September 2009

Protocol and International Relations of  
**Minsk - Old and New**  
 Minsk City Executive Committee

Minsk - Old and New-

Outline of Minsk

The City of Minsk is one of the oldest cities in Europe - its first written mention dates back as early as 1067 - before that of Warsaw and Moscow, Berlin and Stockholm.

In 1242, Minsk became a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and it received its town privileges in 1499. From 1569, it was a capital of the Minsk Voivodship in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was annexed by Russia in 1793, as a consequence of the Second Partition of Poland. From 1919-1991, Minsk was the capital of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

At present Minsk is a modern, dynamically developing city with the fast growing population that today equals to more than 1.8 million. It is the largest industrial and economic hub producing a quarter of the country's industrial production, a major cultural, educational and scientific center.

Heritages in the City

Along its more than 900-year history Minsk witnessed numerous devastating episodes that often left the site in ruins, and its citizens with no asylum. As a result, there have remained only a few old relics and monuments - it is first of all the Upper Town, the Low Market and the Trinity Suburb.

The city authorities attach great importance to the restoration of historical buildings. The administrative policy for conservation of historical architecture is based upon several legislative acts - the Law "On protection of historical and cultural heritage" of 1992, The Decree of the



Panoramic View of the Historic Center at Night

President of Belarus "On Development of the Historic Center of Minsk" of 2004, Complex Program of Reconstruction, Restoration, Renovation and Beautification of the historic center of Minsk for the period of 2004-2010".

The Historic Center of Minsk is included in the State List of Historic and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Belarus, along with 287 another objects of architectural, historical and cultural value situated in Minsk.

Restoration of Minsk City Hall

One of the examples of architectural restoration projects is the restoration of Minsk City Hall - the symbol of self-government granted to the City by the Magdeburg Town Privileges in 1499. Since the 15th cent the building suffered numerous reconstructions: in the 16th century it acquired the characteristics of the Northern European Renaissance style, in the 18th century it was rebuilt in Baroque and Classicism style.

During the Russian rule Minsk was deprived of its Town Privileges, and the building of the City Hall was utilized as the city theatre.



View of the Upper Market with the Minsk City Hall, nowadays Svobody square (beginning of the 19th century)



Festivities at Reconstructed Minsk City Hall

In 1851, the building was totally destroyed and only in 2004 the city got back its historic symbol.

### Minsk General Plan

The City's commitment to follow the course of sustainable urban development while preserving its architectural heritage and historic urban planning design is embedded in Minsk General Plan. It is the long term strategic plan which sets the main lines of the city's territorial growth and main aspects of protection and reconstruction of the historic nucleus.

According to this strategy, the main avenues of all districts will make up a structural and compositional planning frame of the city. By every line of the city territorial growth there is planned to establish one main avenue.

Depending on the character and intensiveness of the territories utilization there are defined 100-, 400- and 1000-meter planning frame areas, accompanied with the area adjoining the planning frame of 2500-3000 meters wide. The areas situated within the 400 meters zone along the both sides of the main avenues are recognized as the most suitable ones for the city life. They are to be filled with the social-purpose objects - offices, banks, restaurants, cafes, commercial centres, leisure facilities, scientific and educational institutions, etc.

Particular importance is attached to sustainable development of the city's historic areas. At present, it is mostly a dwelling and industrial zone. According to the new planning idea, the city centre can't be multifunctional. It is intended to change its social and economic designation, displace the industrial objects, changing it into a business and trading service centre with competitive economic entities.

Special emphasis will be given to the historical building up of the city centre reconstruction, its being filled with the social-purpose facilities. Owing to the General Plan realization there will be solved the most important problem of the city centre, being that of its isolation from the heavy traffic and the parking lots organization.

According to the General Plan, the city territory will be expanded by means of the suburb areas of the Minsk administrative district forming a part of it.

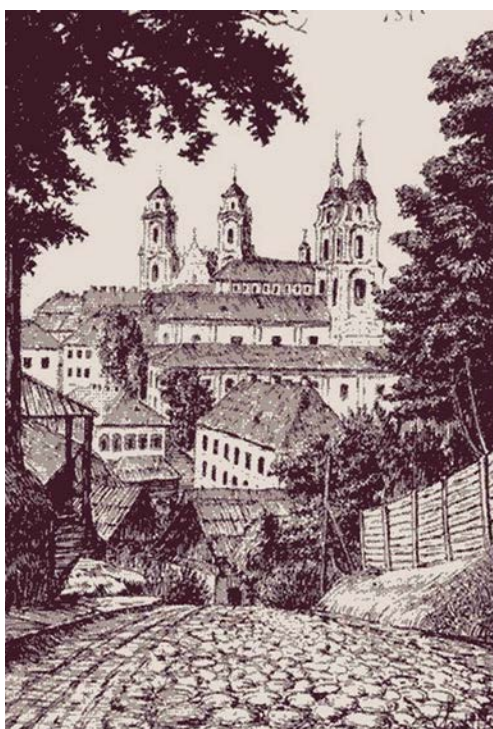
The territorial growth of the city is to be restrained by means of the inferior buildings breaking in the central and

medium parts of the city, interurban territory used more intensively and built up more densely, particularly, in the centre and within the one-kilometer zone along the main avenues, as well as through the industrial and storage areas making more compact.

### To Make the Urban Environment More Comfortable

The policy of the landscape and recreational areas use and development goal will be to make the urban environment more comfortable with water and green zones being harmoniously inserted into the city. The further planting of greenery in the streets and yards is to be carried out, new parks and public gardens are to be planted, further arrangements on the city areas irrigation by forming the second water and green semi-ring, that of Loshitsa, are to be undertaken. Further works on the river Svislach cleansing and the accomplishment of its embankment and along-going territory are also planned. Particular emphasis is laid on the local interurban recreation and green zones setting up.

The General plan envisages the active reconstruction of industrial areas aimed at a more effective use, a different purpose of some industrial buildings use as a result of the new technologies and power-saving systems introduction. The urban planning projects for rational and compact placement of small and middle-sized business, business-centers, Free Economic Zone "Minsk" and other commercial objects are being developed.



View of the Upper Market from the Trinity Hill  
(Painting by Yazep Drazdovich. 1919)



Hotel "Europe" in 1906 - 1908



Hotel "Europe" after its reconstruction  
in 2007



Modern View of Svabody Square with  
the Reconstructed Minsk City Hall  
(Photo by Oleg Grishin 2007)

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Historical Significance of the Restoration of  
Woljeonggyo Bridge in Gyeongju  
– Cultural Heritage Alive in Historical Cities–  
by Baek Sang-seung,  
Mayor of Gyeongju (Korea)

Gyeongju City is now carrying out a large-scale project known as "Re-creation of Gyeongju as a Historical and Cultural City" so to restore the cultural heritage in this historical city. This presentation will cover the restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge in Gyeongju, which will be conducted as one of the flagship projects of the broad scheme. During the presentation, the following topics will be discussed: History and Culture of Gyeongju, Re-creation of Gyeongju as a Historical and Cultural City, Historical Significance of the Restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge, Restoration Plan of Woljeonggyo Bridge, and Gyeongju: A Historical and Cultural City of Global Importance.

Gyeongju is the old capital of the Silla Dynasty. With its 2,000 years of history, Gyeongju is the oldest cultural heritage city in Korea. It is located in the southeastern part of the Korean Peninsula in Northeast Asia. Gyeongju played the role of eastern terminal of the Silk Road, which was the channel of exchanges between the ancient Eastern and Western civilizations.

Gyeongju is the home of Bulguksa Temple (constructed: AD 751 to AD 774), one of the world's greatest temple embodying the Bulgukjeongto spirit of Buddha and Seokguram Grotto, the masterpiece of building art. The two historical sites were inscribed as World Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO on December 9, 1995.

Recognized as a representative historical and cultural site of the Silla Dynasty (B.C 57-A.D 935), the Gyeongju Historic Areas was also added to the World Cultural Heritage list on December 2, 2000. Yangdong Village in Wolseong, the old folk village of 15th Century of Joseon Dynasty, is also expected to be registered as Cultural Heritage by 2010. With all these and many other cultural heritage sites, Gyeongju is truly the greatest historical and cultural city in Korea.

The Historical and Cultural City project is an ambitious undertaking presently led by Gyeongju City. This project is aimed at highlighting the value of the city as eminent historical and cultural heritage, inheriting Korea's authentic spiritual legacies comprising Buddhism, Confucianism and Donghak (Eastern Learning), re-creating Gyeongju's image as an ancient capital where history and modernity coexist, and developing an international tourist destination utilizing historical and cultural resources. The outline of the project is as follows.

- Total of 3.5 billion dollars will be injected into this national vision and policy project for



Mr. Baek Sang-seung, Mayor of Gyeongju, at the Round-table Forum.

a 30-year's period from 2005 through 2034.

- Some 1.4 billion dollars will be injected into building infrastructure including restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge (Moon Spirit Bridge) and Iljeonggyo Bridge, Hwangnyongsa Temple (Imperial Dragon Temple) and re-creation of the ancient royal capital of Silla.

These are deemed essential for successful implementation of the historical and cultural city project.

Woljeonggyo Bridge was completed in 760, the 19th year of the reign of King Gyeongdeok, when Unified Silla was at the peak of its power. It was a passage connecting the royal palace and the capital city, and the bridge is Korea's oldest and only covered bridge built of wood and stone. The results of the excavations conducted in 1984 show that the bridge is measured in total length of 66 meters, width of 9 meters and height of 8 meters.

Records show that the bridge existed for at least 520 years as the bridge underwent a repair work in 1280. Based on these records, we can conclude that Woljeonggyo Bridge has great historical value. The bridge was built at the southwestern end of Muncheon Stream flowing along Wolseong (Moon Fortress), the royal palace of Silla, and was used as the main access to the royal palace.

Woljeonggyo Bridge is also a symbol of authoritarian monarchy of Silla. Combined with Wolseong, which came into existence earlier than the bridge, it was intended to symbolize the absolute power of an authoritarian monarchy and strong central governance. As the main passageway connecting the southwestern end to the northeastern end, the bridge played an important role in politics, military and economy. As a symbolic structure showing the advanced bridge construction technology, Woljeonggyo Bridge, together with Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto can be said to be the very best cream of Silla's culture. The Rationale for the Restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge can be explained as follows. It can be used as reference for cultural creation to enrich civilization through investigation of its remains, Woljeonggyo Bridge was found to be the

# Presentation at Round -table Forum

Review of the 11th Conference held in Konya, June 10-13, 2008

by Mr. Baek Sang-seung, Mayor of Gyeongju (Korea)



Monks of Mevlevi Order

largest bridge of Silla, which was built in the eighth century when the kingdom was enjoying the peak of its power. Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto were also built at that time. The reconstructed bridge will be useful research material contributing to creation of the future. The reconstruction will create a world-renowned site demonstrating public works technology of Silla. The old royal palace site of Silla will be brought to light through restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge as well as the moats and the Muncheon Stream which flowed along Wolseong, the Moon Fortress encircling the palace grounds. Silla history is about to be brought back from oblivion. The old road to be rebuilt to connect Woljeonggyo Bridge to Inyongsa Temple site and Iljeonggyo Bridge will serve as a meditation promenade, a window to the history of Silla. A special emphasis will be placed in the reconstruction on preservation and maximum utilization of cultural heritage.

Through the excavation work and survey of the remains of the bridge for a period of two years from 1986 to 1987, we could grasp the whole shape and specification. In July 2005, reconstruction of Woljeonggyo Bridge was announced as a flagship project of the program to Re-create Gyeongju as a Historical and Cultural City. The budget was secured from state coffers and preparations continued. From 2006 to February 2008, the basic restoration plan was completed and feasibility study conducted. Implementation and action plans were set up for the reconstruction.

The ground-breaking ceremony was held in April 2008, and Woljeonggyo Bridge is scheduled to be completed by May 2010.

The restoration plan of Woljeonggyo Bridge, restoration of the bridge and adjacent areas, is a 16-year long-term plan. The first 4-year phase will cover the restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge. Restoration of Iljeonggyo, or the Sun Spirit Bridge, and the old road of Silla will be conducted in the 11-year second phase. The restoration and the bridge and adjacent areas is estimated to cost a total of some 52 million dollars, including about 3.3 million for the restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge. Woljeonggyo Bridge will be reconstructed on four remaining foundation stones (width 23m) that supported lower parts of bridge posts. Iljeonggyo Bridge will be reconstructed on three remaining foundation stones (width 23m) that supported lower parts of bridge posts. The old road linking Woljeonggyo Bridge to Inyongsa Temple and Iljeonggyo Bridge will be rebuilt to revive the main avenue of the ancient royal capital. We have site survey charts on Woljeonggyo Bridge and the adjacent areas. The restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge will carry true meaning only when the bridge keeps its original place. Secondly, we have conducted surveys on

stone remains. Surveys on the quality of stone, condition of damage and 3D scanning found that of total 1,136 pieces of remains, 613 pieces were reusable, 169 pieces were weathered and 183 pieces were cracked. Whether to reuse the stone remains will be considered from restoration perspective rather than reconstruction. The design plan for the restoration has also been drawn up. The design plan for restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge was finalized after a series of meetings with the experts advisory panel. The two-story structure will serve the south gate and an observation pavilion of the royal capital. The gate and the pavilion will be separated. Especially, the reconstruction will be carried out to express the cultural splendor of United Silla. This plan is further aimed at restoring the old road of Silla connecting Woljeonggyo Bridge, Inyongsa Temple site and Iljeonggyo Bridge. The essence of the reconstruction of Woljeonggyo Bridge lies in recreating the old road of Silla. Based on this restoration plan, a simulation of the reconstruction was generated.

The Historical and Cultural City Promotion Team of Gyeongju City will manage and operate the project, and the setup of a management system will be commissioned to an expert organization. Priorities will be placed on preservation of historical and cultural facilities when action plans are drawn up. An exhibition hall for the bridge will be created at the entrance building, and ancient event items will be developed in link with the royal palace. More efforts will be made for development of historical and cultural content covering the bridge.

Gyeongju City, as major undertaker in the restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge, has been consulting with the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea. The History and Culture City Task Force Team covers the planning and funding, and the Reconstruction Work Promotion Team is responsible for restoration works and technological consulting. Next is the simulation of the restoration of Woljeonggyo Bridge. The simulation was created by referring to the findings of the excavations and data collected from surveys, mock tests and experts opinions.

The City of Gyeongju is which we envision as historical and cultural city of global importance. You may feel the 1,000 years of history of ancient Silla vibrating in Gyeongju. History continues, and passes onto the next generations. Gyeongju will offer chances to experience sophisticated culture and arts and Gyeongju will be a city where everyone hopes to visit, stay in and revisit. We are also trying to make Gyeongju the most preferred place of residence that offers beautiful landscape and pleasant environment.

Gyeongju will be recognized as historical and cultural city of universal importance where 1,000 years of history and the future coexist.



Greetings from the Mayors of Candidate  
 Cities for Hosting the 13th Conference 2012  
 Hue (Viet Nam) and Yangzhou (China)

The Secretariat is pleased to inform that two cities have stood as candidate cities for hosting the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities which will be held in 2012. The Cities are Hue (Viet Nam) , member since 2006, and Yangzhou (China), member since 2009. In this issue, the Secretariat would like to introduce messages from mayors of the Cities. The host city for the 13th Conference will be decided at the Board Meeting of Directors 2010. If your city is interested in hosting future World Conference of Historical Cities, please contact the Secretariat at lhcs@city.kyoto.jp.

**City of Hue**  
 (Viet Nam)

**Phan Trong Vinh**  
 Mayor



On behalf of the leaders and citizens from the city of Hue - one of the historic cities in Vietnam, I would like to extend to you the warmest greetings. This land was originated back to 1307 when our princess Huyen Tran exchanged her marriage for it and this land was selected as the capital of Vietnam in three different times. During its development, the city has gathered the precious material and spiritual values which are, nowadays, expressed on such many areas as: literature, music, style, behaviour, custom, etc.. We are so proud of them and fully aware of the protection for Hue' characteristics, tradition and history.

To share experiences and study about the conservation and promotion of the heritages, especially our tangible and intangible World Heritages recognized by UNESCO: Hue Monument Complex and Royal Court Music, we found the League of Historical Cities as a family for sharings between its members. I think that the League's purpose: "forming this League is to contribute to the realization of eternal world peace so desired for the future of mankind by all people everywhere " is the connection of all the cities in their way to the sustainable development and the cooperation expansion outside their territories.

Since becoming the member in 2006, although the conditions prevented from participating to all the events of the League, Hue city has had access to many professional ideas and activities about heritage conservation as well as developing the friendship with other member cities. We understand the importance of all events, particularly of every World Conference to tighten the solidarity of the League of Historical Cities members. Therefore, we also understand that it's an honor to be selected as the host city for the next World Conference.

On behalf of Hue government and people, I would like to send to the Directors the message of giving our city this chance to host this important event so that we can contribute more actively to the League's development; on the other hand, we can introduce our cultural values, tradition, history and our hospitality toward friends. If being selected, Hue city government and people guarantee definitely about the all necessary preparations to make the Conference a success. I strongly believe that the 13th World Conference will make a breakthrough in mutual understandings on many fields between the member cities.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Directors and the Secretariat of the League of Historical Cities for their help in preparing documents to be candidate of the Conference. I wish to welcome the Directors, the Secretariat and all members to our city comprising one of the most important parts of Vietnamese history - Hue city.



Trang Tien Bridge - Huong River



Ngo Mon Gate



Thien Mu Pagoda

**City of Yangzhou  
(China)**

**Wan Yanwen  
Mayor**



First of all, please allow me, on behalf of the 4.6 million Yangzhou citizens, to express our cordial greetings and sincere respect to all of you.

Yangzhou is the only Chinese city that grows together with the China Grand Canal. It originates from the canal and prospers out of the canal. The long canal has created the elegant landscape of the city, produced several heydays of prosperity, and accumulated rich cultural heritage. In February 1982, Yangzhou was designated as one of the first batch of historical and cultural cities released by the State Council of PRC. In December 2006, the Slender West Lake and Yangzhou Historical District were put into the list of Chinese Applicants for the World Cultural Heritage Site List. In September 2007, Yangzhou became the shepherd city of the China Grand Canal's application to be a World Cultural Heritage.

The long traditional culture and well-preserved ancient cities are the treasures we are proud of. In September 2006, Yangzhou was awarded the "UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honor" for its outstanding achievements in the preservation of the ancient city and improvement of the human habitat environment. While building new urban districts so as to protect the old city districts, and paying attention to the harmony of the view space, building density and architecture styles of the new and old parts of the city, we are vigorously developing energy-saving and

environment-friendly industries, such as solar photovoltaic and LED industries, to build the industry system in accordance with the requirement of preserving the ancient city and carrying forward the delicate unique features of the city.

Yangzhou boasts well-equipped international conference halls and rich experience of holding international conferences. It had co-sponsored with UNESCAP to hold successful international experts conference. In recent two years, it has successively held the World Canal Cities Expo, with mayors or representatives of over 10 international canal cities such as Birmingham UK, Ismailia Egypt and Otaru Japan participated, having reached broad unanimous understandings and won great compliments from the participants. So far, 17 international cities and organizations have confirmed their participation in the 3rd World Canal Cities Expo.

The preservation and rejuvenation of historical cities is an ever-lasting worldwide topic. It is my sincere wish that the 2012 World Conference of Historical Cities could be held in Yangzhou. I'd also like to sincerely invite you to come to China's most vigorous Yangtze River delta to experience the fine integration of the tradition and modernity of historical cities, to appreciate the elegant and colorful cultures of the ancient city Yangzhou and to enjoy the delicious and healthy Huaiyang food which is one of the four Chinese cuisines.

The 4.6 million hospitable Yangzhou citizens including myself are sincerely looking forward to welcoming you in Yangzhou.



The 8th World Conference of Historical Cities held in Montreal (Canada) in 2003



The 9th World Conference of Historical Cities held in Gyeongju (Korea) in 2005



The 10th World Conference of Historical Cities held in Ballarat (Australia) in 2006



The 11th World Conference of Historical Cities held in Konya (Turkey) in 2008



Yangzhou State Guesthouse



Restored Ancient Street Blocks of Ming and Qing Dynasties

## Duongchan Apavatitrit Charoenmuang, Ph.d.

Researcher, Social Research Institute of Chiang Mai University, Thailand



Historic places are the charms of the cities. Visiting these areas is like walking through history books which refresh our memories. In addition, historic areas also function as open museums for residents and visitors to learn of life styles, culture and wisdom, and most of all, enable us to comprehend a livable living.

While many old areas in the city of Chiangmai which is over 710 years old have been demolished and replaced by new buildings and wide roads, Watket area on the eastern part of the Ping River has many old structures along the road. The residents are proud of their roots and still live in houses of their ancestors which are the mixture of Chinese, Lanna (name of independent Northern Thailand during 13th and 15th centuries), and colonial style architectures.

Since the 18th century, Watket was the first Chinese settlement in the city. This area prospered as the busiest business zone when waterway was the only safe mode of transportation for travelers and goods from Chiangmai to Bangkok two centuries ago. Christianity in the north also rooted in this area. As a result, there are colonial style architectures remaining in the area, many of which received the Best Preservation Awards from the Siamese Architects Association.

Since the northern railways reached this city in 1921 A.D., Watket area declined and became a quiet and little known residential quarter.

Because new economic activities do not occur in the area, the road is still narrow,

most buildings along the street are of human scale, elegantly decorated by wood carve and local elements.

The revitalization of this old area began in 1999 when an old Chinese style building in Watket Temple was almost demolished and replaced. A group of academics, local residents and the Tourist Authority of Thailand then organized several public forums and campaigned to raise the residents' awareness to appreciate the treasures of the area. From that point on, the momentum of preservation movement never stops. Not only old buildings are continuously preserved, but also the new ones are in harmony with the surroundings. The preservation of historic atmosphere has attracted more visitors and business and revitalized the area.

The charming Watket area is now threatened by a new revision of city planning which has proposed the expansion of 35 roads within the municipality. Six meters wide streets in this area are to be extended to 22 meters.

The engineer who initiated this idea believes that wide street would ease the traffic congestion and provide parking for businesses in the area. If the proposed idea is implemented, old structures along the street would be all demolished and the residents would be relocated.

The charm of this area will be gone forever. This is an example of the conflicting values of the residents and the Department of Public Works and City Planning which is a central government agency responsible for the city plan of Chiangmai.

The League of Historic Cities can play an important role in helping Chiangmai and other cities preserve their vulnerable historic areas.

Voices from this league, as foreign experts and tourists, will be an influential factor to policy makers at all levels. Sharing information of similar cases will also help the residents gain more experiences in negotiating with the government.

Cultural heritage is world's treasure. The League needs to address the value of the past and reminds local residents as well as the government about the danger of the materialistically oriented world at present.

# Conflicting Values in Chiangmai City

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## The 12th World Conference of Historical Cities in 2010

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Sarusawaik Pond / Uneme (Lady in waiting) Festival  
Photo : Courtesy of Nara City Tourist Association