STUDY ON THE MECHANISM
OF URBAN PLANNING INFORMATION EXCHANGE
TO ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN
URBAN DETAILED PLANNING IN VIETNAM –
TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper explores the extent of the current mechanism to access urban spatial planning information of community in urban detailed planning projects (UDPPs), the constraints on urban planning information accessibility in Vietnam context to challenge the community participation for sustainable development. The research is based on an analysis of the planning information sharing content found in four UDPPs in Vietnam and interviews with 20 key informants. The research identified that the urban spatial planning information for the community is limited and difficult to access, and the planning information exchange process is one-way flow, authority-controlled and non-transparent. Besides, the lack of human resources and technological application provide a challenging context for involving the community in UDPPs. The paper concludes by proposing several recommendations for improving the urban planning information exchange process and technological tools that should be applied to foster community participation in Vietnam's urban context, towards sustainable development.

Keywords: urban planning information; urban detailed planning projects; community participation.

1. Introduction

1.1. *The context of urban planning and the requirement of community participation in urban planning process in Vietnam*

Urban planning (UP) plays an important role in the socio-economic development of each country, especially in Vietnam. UP is the priority task for implementing socio-economic strategies locally and nationally [1, 2]. In the context of sustainable development and ensuring equity democracy in society, the role of the community and their participation are increasingly being emphasized in UP. According to Aprodicio Laquian "... the best plans must reflect the expectation of the people – to ensure that those affected by the planning project will have chances to involve in the decision-making and interests negotiation processes among stakeholders. The community's agreement and commitment will increase the sustainability of the urban planning project" [3].

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In Vietnam, the Ordinance No. 34/2007/PL-UBTVQH11 on "Implementing democracy in communes, wards and townships" issued by the National Assembly of Vietnam on April 20, 2007 [1, p3] has stipulated that people have the right to know, participate and supervise the strategies and planning processes related to the common development of the community, for the common benefit of society. In addition, the State's legal documents also stipulate many contents related to community participation, such as all urban planning projects need to be consulted with relevant organizations and individuals, and the requirement to organize community consultation for the formulation of urban detailed planning projects (UDPPs) [4, 5]. Among different levels of urban planning in Vietnam as city/master planning, district planning/zoning, detailed planning (DP), the DP is the basic and important level for formulating new construction investment or urban upgrading projects. Many problems in the renovation, relocation, compensation and implementation of construction investment projects are related to the DP phase and the process of urban planning information provision and exchange. To ensure publicity and transparency in the urban planning process is also a critical matter of concern.

To mobilize the community participation in the DP process in Vietnam, it is necessary to study the mechanism of planning information sharing between stakeholders and the community to improve the quality and effects of urban planning processes, while ensuring democracy at grass-root levels in cities of Vietnam.

1.2. Different types of detailed planning and current mechanism of planning information exchange

According to the Updated Law on Urban Planning (2020) [4], DP is formulated for the area regarding to the requirements of urban development, management, or construction investment needs (Article 18). Based on the goals of DP and subjects of the planning process to be affected [6], the DP can be classified into four types as Type 1: Detailed plan for new construction urban areas; Type 2: Detailed plan for improving and renovating existing urban areas; Type 3: Detailed plan for conserving and renovating urban heritage areas and Type 4: Small urban upgrading projects that are derived from current requirements of the local community and initiated by the community.

The DP process in Vietnam includes three main phases: Phase 1 is to formulate an urban DP task and this phase should be conducted for a month; Phase 2 is to formulate, appraise and approve the detailed plan and the total time for this phase should be six months; Phase 3 is to manage the implementation of the detailed plan (Fig. 1). The plan and regulation announcement should be carried out within 30 days [1, 4]. The key stakeholders involved in the DP process are the investors, consultant
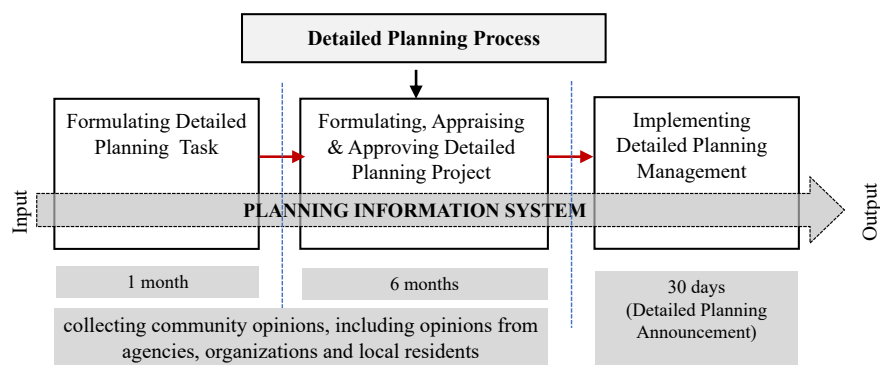

Figure 1. Detailed planning process as regulated in Updated Urban Planning Law

units, local management authorities, community, and community-based organizations. The stakeholders, their concerns, and their interests are differentiated from several types of DP. Based on Updated Urban Planning Law and Decree No. 37/2010/NĐ-CP, the task of collecting community opinions is required in phase 1 and phase 2, including opinions from agencies, organizations, and local residents. This task is carried out before an appraisal step to submit for approval. Planning information shall be announced in phase 3 [4, 6].

However, according to Doberstein [7], the process of mobilizing community participation and collecting community opinions in Vietnam is still based on the limited technical model which may be formalistic and less transparent. Briffetta et al. [8] and Obbard et al [9] also assumed that the Vietnamese urban planning process with community participation also suffers from inadequate staffing and experience, lack of monitoring and evaluation, poor coverage of baseline information, and finally the lack of transparency in the public involvement. Currently, community participation in urban planning is considered a mandatory administrative procedure to obtain approvals rather than an effective approach for urban planning formulation [1, 2].

According to the Updated Urban Planning Law, the consultation of relevant agencies, organizations, individuals and representatives of the community residents on planning tasks and projects is a mandatory requirement for planning units and project construction investors. Some important projects such as Hanoi Capital by 2030 vision to 2050 have conducted consultations with the community and experts. Official information about the Master plan of Hanoi capital city has been displayed on the website of the Ministry of Construction and two exhibitions have been held in Hanoi (from April 4 to May 1, 2010) and in Ho Chi Minh City (from June 27 to July 4, 2010) to collect people's opinions on the planning options. However, according to some architectural planning experts about the public consultation for the Master Plan Project, the content of the questionnaire is still too general with 2563 opinion votes/20,000 visited guests, it is not representative of the community's opinion in general.

The research of Hoang [10] on "*The quality of organizing and managing community consultation in urban planning in Vietnam*" has analyzed and clarified the advantages and limitations of the community consultation processes and contributed to theoretical principles and practical management of public consultation. However, the research has not given specific instructions on the process for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of collecting public's opinions in each specific type of planning as well the planning information sharing among stakeholders and the community.

Besides, Tran [11] conducted a study on "*The management solutions to strengthen the community's role in supervising construction investment projects*"The research analyzed theoretical and practical bases of community monitoring activities for construction investment projects, assessing of the current status of guidelines, policies and the actual situation of community monitoring activities. However, the research has only proposed general solutions on management mechanism and implementation method to enhance the community role in construction investment projects's monitoring. The solutions for effective mechanism of urban information exchanges, community's opinion collections and responses have not been mentioned yet.

Ta in her research on "*Urban detailed planning with community participation in Vietnam urban context towards sustainable development*" [1] also provides a theoretical model of community participation in UDPP in Vietnam's context and the mechanism of community consultation in dealing with UDPP at local level. However, the mechanism of planning information sharing and the facilitating of two-way flows of information have not been identified yet.

1.3. Research objectives

The main objectives of the research are to explore some critical issues as below:

- The characters of planning information and the current mechanism of information exchange in the UDPP.

- The challenges and limitations for a community to access DP information.

- Proposed solutions and recommendation to enhance information exchange during the process of formulating and approving detailed plans to promote community participation in improving their built environment.

2. Literature reviews

2.1. Communicative planning theory

"The theory of communicative action" is developed by Habermas [12], the most influential author of the second generation of the Frankfurter school of sociology and a progenitor of most modern flows in the theories of democracy (deliberative democracy). According to him, communication between individuals is the most important constitutive element of society. Society can't be understood without understanding communication among individuals. Communicative action as understood by Habermas includes establishing or happening social relations between two or more social actors and is directed toward mutual understanding and agreement.

Habermas provides a theoretical basis for a view of planning that emphasizes widespread public participation, sharing of information with the public, reaching consensus through public dialogue rather than the exercise of power, avoiding privileging of experts and bureaucrats, and replacing the model of the technical expert with one of the reflective planner [13]. Habermas has identified three types of communicative action: transferring of information, establishing relations with others, and enabling for expressing ourselves. The communicative approach has been used as a framework for collaborative/participatory planning in many developed countries.

2.2. Concept of community participation and levels of urban planning information exchange

Public/community participation in urban planning is not a new topic. In fact, extensive literature on this subject already exists. For instance, the public was first involved in a federal program, the Urban Renewal Program, in the United States in 1954 [14]. As Rowe and Frewer [15] describe this concept, "public participation may be defined at a general level as the practice of consulting and involving members of the public in the agenda-setting, decision-making, and policy-forming activities of organizations or institutions responsible for policy development." In this study, participation is applied to urban planning and has a range of implications, from *informing* the public to *involving* citizens as stakeholders. Rowe and Frewer propose using three different descriptors to differentiate initiatives that have in the past been referred to as public participation, based on the flow of information between participants and sponsors.

2.3. Theoretical ground of community participation and information exchange in urban planning

The conceptual framework used in this study is established on Rowe & Frewer [15] when they differentiated levels of public engagement based on the flows of information between participants and sponsors. These are public communication, public consultation, and public participation. The term sponsor is used to refer to the party commissioning the engagement initiative, which will usually - but not always - be a governmental/regulatory agency or an investor.

In the public communication, information is conveyed from the sponsors of the initiative to the public. Information flow is one-way: there is no involvement of the public per se in the sense that public feedback is not required or specifically sought.

In public consultation, information is conveyed from members of the public to the sponsors of the initiative, following a process initiated by the sponsor. Information flow is one-way. Significantly, no formal dialogue exists between individual members of the public and the sponsors. The information elicited from the public is believed to represent currently held opinions on the topic in question.

In public participation, information is exchanged between members of the public and the sponsors. That is, there is some degree of dialogue in the process that takes place (usually in a group setting), which may involve representatives of both parties in different proportions (depending on the mechanism concerned) or, indeed, only representatives of the public who receive additional information from the sponsors prior to responding. Rather than simple, raw opinions being conveyed to the sponsors, the act of dialogue and negotiation serves to transform opinions in the members of both parties (sponsors and public participants). Information flow is a two-way flow (see Fig. 2).
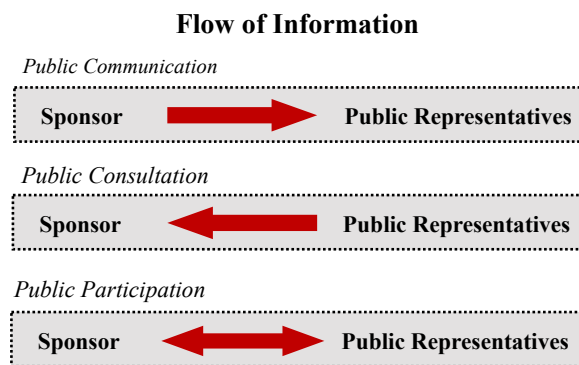
Flow of Information

Figure 2. Rowe & Frewer's concept of public engagement and flow of information

Based on Rowe & Frewer's concept, the research tried to analyze the information flows among the community and other stakeholders (project investor, project management, authority, etc.) during the process of urban DP formulation and implementation and highlighted the limitation and constraints in the process to improve the mechanism of information exchange in DP projects in Vietnam.

3. Research Methodologies

3.1. Research methodology

To achieve the objectives mentioned above, the following research methods have been used in the research project: data collecting and analyzing from four case studies in cities in Vietnam and in-depth interviewing of 20 key informants.

Data collection and analysis: to collect and analyze the secondary data from previous researches and documents; to review and analyze 67 websites of the City's People's Committees, Ministry of Construction, Provinces' Department of Construction of 22 cities grade I, II and special cities. Four case studies that were chosen for primary data analysis have covered all types of UDPP as:

1) UDDP of establishing detailed planning task for Phuoc Tan Ward, Bien Hoa city, Dong Nai province. In this case, the process of collecting community opinions through community meetings had been analysed and assessed.

2) UDDP No.1 textile factory's collective residential quarter in Hai Duong city on urban upgrading and on-site relocation solutions. The whole process of information sharing among local residents, technical experts, and ward's officers in different stages of issue-defining, appropriate solution seeking and construction implementation were recorded and highlighted to analyse and to seek for the good lesson learned.

3) UDDP and heritage preservation project of Hanoi Ancient Quarter toward sustainable development. The research team piloted the community participation and information exchange mechanism among local government, technical experts and the community. The tools for information exchange were tested and analysed.

4) UDDP in Thanh Hai ward, Phan Thiet city, Binh Thuan province. In this case, the characters of the DP process and information sharing mechanism are highlighted and analyzed. The level of information/data that the community accessed and information sharing tools are identified and compared.

In all 4 case studies, the research team has piloted the application of a participatory approach to the UDPP process, which enhances the two-way sharing of information between stakeholders and the community through community consultation.

In-depth interviews with key informants. The research also carried out in-depth interviews with four local staff at city and district level that were responsible for urban management in four cities that have the research case studies, eight urban planning experts, and eighteen residents from local communities in four case studies were interviewed to evaluate the information interaction among stakeholders and local communities, and to collect their opinions on the current situations of information exchange, the community's possibilities to access information related to UDPP, and effective solutions to improve information exchange mechanism in the UDPP process.

4. Results

4.1. Types of information in UDPP

In order to understand the mechanism of UDPP information exchange among stakeholders, it is very important to identify the information that is required or is produced during the planning process. Basically, there are two types of information in detailed planning projects.

Input information:

- Legal information: general plans, zoning plans that are approved and adjusted; urban development plans and programs; relevant construction planning standards and regulations, etc.
- Technical information: natural and geographical conditions, existing land usages, estimated future population, future demands, etc.
- Information related to the rights, interests, and responsibilities of the parties.

Output information:

- Technical information: Information on land uses, socio-economic and technical criteria of each plot of land, transportation system, technical infrastructure, other information...;
- Information on management: regulations on development control of the planning area such as regulations on urban architectural and landscape management of the area;
- Information on community rights, interests, and responsibilities of the community: Basic benefits that the community has when the projects are implemented in the economical, cultural, social,

environmental aspects; possible issues that will arise after the plans were implemented, the responsibility of the community in supervising the implementation, management, and maintenance of spaces and works related to the community's interests.

4.2. Public communication in current UDPP

It can be stated from the research that online newspapers and websites are effective tools to deliver urban planning information to the comunity. The urban planning products include two important information group: (i) the draft urban plans and (ii) the approved urban plans. Although all of these information are very necessary for the public to know, they are not regulated to be public in any legal documents. According to the survey results, only 12.12% of surveyed websites provide information on draft urban DP projects. Approved urban planning projects are available on 21 websites, accounting for 31.82%.

There are 51.5% of formal provincial/city websites that provided general reports of city or district detailed land use plan. Only 9.1% of the formal websites provided the existing land-use map documents. Both of this information are mandatory for publicity.

Currently, when conducting surveys on websites of the Department of Planning and Architecture of a number of big cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang city, etc., it can be seen that the portals have been opened. Almost city portals keep a section to introduce approved urban plans such as general plans, district zoning plans, some detailed plans. However, the information related to approved UDPPs for construction investment is very limited and difficult to access. At these portals, the interfaces have not been researched carefully so that residents can not directly make comments on planning tasks or planning projects. There is no reports summarizing the comments of the community, community representatives for the planning project.

Table 1. Urban planning information and levels of publicity

Types of information	Requirement of publicity	Number of websites	Percentage of publication on website
Information on draft urban plans	Public information is compulsory But public information on websites is not required	8/66	12.12%
Information on approved urban plans	Public information is compulsory Public information on websites is required	21/66	31.82%

Besides, DP information can be distributed to the community through other channels such as newspapers, local radio stations, exhibitions, etc. At the provincial level, over 50% of localities provide legalized urban planning information to the public. However, the information related to the draft urban planning, the compensation and resettlement plan, and the minutes of comments on draft urban planning projects which have not been approved yet are difficult for people to access.

4.3. Public consultation in current UDPPs

From all case studies, it can be stated that public consultation in UDPPs in Vietnam is performed through community meetings and questionnaire surveys to collect the community's comments on detailed plans.

Information is provided to the community in the style of descriptive maps as the current status of land use and construction works in the planning area, current technical infrastructure, drawings showing planning ideas on spatial structure, functional zoning, land use planning. Besides, a summary report explaining the project's planning tasks and a summary report explaining the main content of the planning project are included.

However, according to the surveys and interviews with the residents in the case studies, 87% of interviewed people assessed that the provided planning information was not adequate while the displayed and exhibited information was difficult for most of the residents to understand without detailed explanation from the consultants.

Over 80% of the people interviewed said that they are not fully informed and have difficulty accessing DP information in the area they are living in. Therefore, it is necessary to study the process and ways to provide more information, easier, more complete, and more widely on the websites of state management agencies. Research needs to closely follow the guidelines and programs of the State on developing the "e-government" model "one-stop-shop" to enhance the ability to provide information to the people, increase the capacity of the local people in accessing information, increasing transparency and accountability of urban planning projects.

4.4. Public participation in pilot UDPPs

In the UDPP's process with the participation of the community, the research team has increased the dissemination of information to the community and organized public consultation in various forms such as community meetings, community representative meetings, focus group discussions, community mapping, community interviews, community questionnaire surveys. The process that enhanced two-way interaction with the community is shown in Fig. 3.
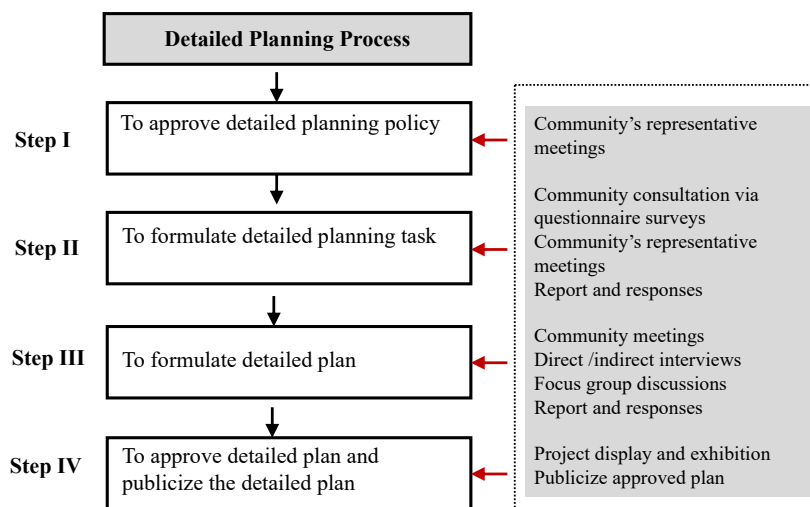

Figure 3. The pilot community participation process in the case studies

From piloting community participation in the UDPP's process and enhancing two-way communication with the community, it is noteful that the different tools applied in the process as community's representative meetings, community meetings, direct/indirect interviews, focus group discussions have established an interactive planning information system among stakeholders (the management agency investor, consultant, and community). Planning information was brought to the community,

especially increased interaction between the local authority and the community and between the consultant and the community. The information exchange mechanism has been improved and developed.

4.5. Assessment the changes of community's awareness and behavior when they were provided planning information and were consulted in the process of UDPPs

The survey results showed that 100% of people rated the socio-economic status, land use, and technical infrastructure as very important before proposing planning solutions and affecting the quality of planning;

After listening to the report on survey data, 64% of people indicated that they have a more complete and clear understanding of the current status assessment data and issues raised by the consultant;

Over 70% of the interviewed people found it is necessary to consult with the planning consultants, planning experts on the current socio-economic status, land use, and technical infrastructure status of the area, giving suggestions for proposed solutions for land use planning, traffic planning, and technical infrastructure planning. It is the fact that people are eager to participate in the assessment of the current status, identifying problems and development needs of the area;

Meetings to collect opinions from the people is the method that people choose the most when asked about effective ways to mobilize people's participation in the formulation of DP tasks and projects. Most of the people who attended the meeting highly appreciated the working approach and attitude of local officials when organizing the meeting, respecting and creating conditions for people to fully and enthusiastically participate. 96% of people are satisfied and very satisfied with the

Figure 4. Community meeting in the DP project in Hanoi Ancient Quarter, Hanoi city

Figure 5. Community mapping in DP project in Thanh Hai ward, Phan Thiet city, Binh Thuan province

Figure 6. Community consultation in the DP project in Phuoc Tan ward, Bien Hoa city, Dong Nai province

Figure 7. Community consultation in the DP project in Phuoc Tan ward, Bien Hoa city, Dong Nai province

meeting, which proves the consensus and spirit of the people's attitude when participating in DP (Figs. 4–7).

5. Discussions - Recommendations

5.1. Integrating the process of two-way information interaction in the UDPP's process

The essence of community participation in urban planning is the exchange and interaction of two-way information flows between stakeholders and the community [16, 17]. The establishment of a planning information database center of each province and city must be implemented first when activities related to spatial planning and construction investment begin. It is necessary to have an organization performing the function of being the information hub on construction planning at the provincial/city level, having the authorization to register, store, and publish information and results of planning implementation in the whole province or city.

Therefore, it is proposed to establish a spatial planning information management center (referred to as Spatial Planning Information Center -SPIC) directly under the Provincial Department of Construction or the city's Department of Planning and Architecture. The center is a central hub for receiving information, storing and publishing information related to planning activities in the province/city. All planning information about construction planning projects that had or have been, implemented will be published on the website in accordance with the provisions of law (except for projects of special nature that need to be kept confidentially, national security are not allowed to be disclosed.

The planning consultancies and planning management units will be responsible for providing information to the SPIC at the steps shown in Figs. 8, 9.
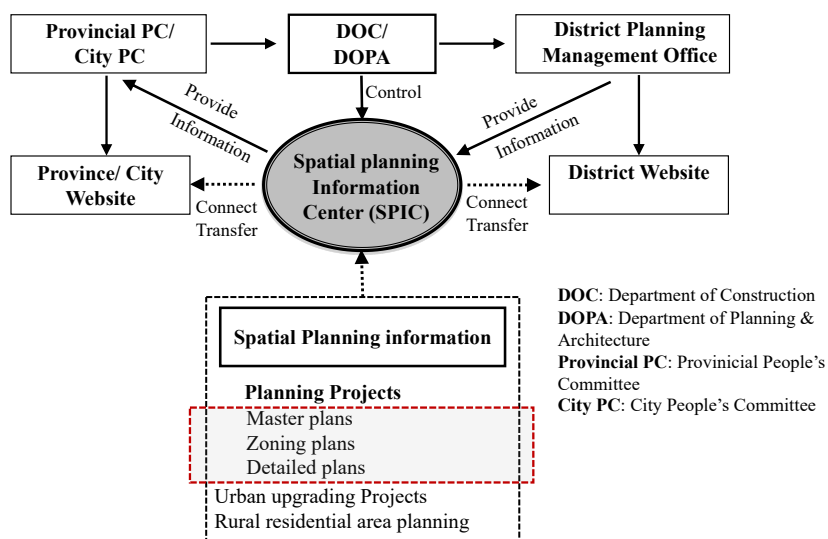

Figure 8. Mechanism of connection between SPIC and other agencies to increase the information exchange

In each UDPP, there will be an interface for people to comment directly through questionnaires and information exchange boxes. After the community's comments are collected and summarized by the planning organization, they will be published on the website for the community to understand. In addition, the results from community consultations via community meetings, seminars, focus group meetings will also be sent to the SPIC for updating on the website.
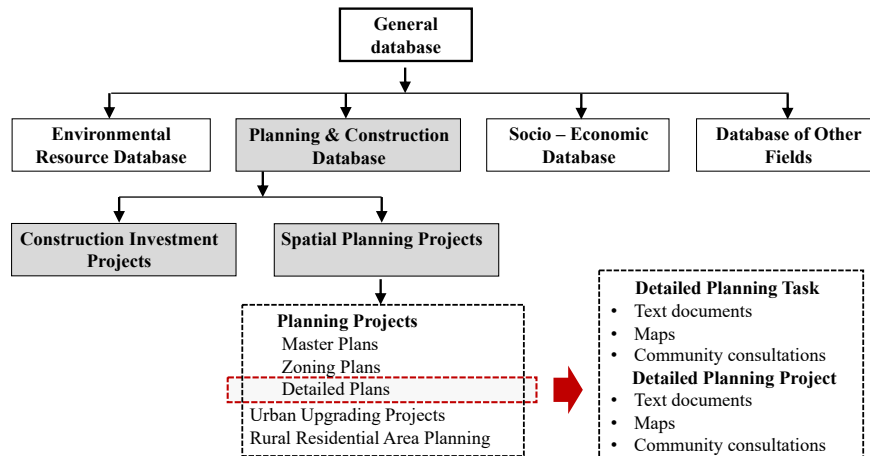
Figure 9. Diagram of spatial planning information that will be public on websites

The integration of two-way information interaction process in DP will be developed in the following steps:

Step I - Approval of DP policy: information related to DP will be added and updated to the planning information database system. The planning information database system is managed by specialized agencies of the province such as the Department of Construction (DOC)/Department of Planning and Architecture and (DOPA) is updated on the provincial web portal.

Step II - Formulating DP tasks: information related to the basis of DP tasks and draft DP tasks will be provided to the community. Public consultation and community representation will be conducted simultaneously in two forms: public consultation in the form of direct communication through the electronic information network interface and consultation with community representatives.

The community's comments on the draft DP task will be synthesized, evaluated, and given to the community through the SPIC. The written approval of DP tasks will be updated to the SPIC to bring to the community.

The information interaction cycle is a transnational loop cycle, with two-way interaction so that information is always updated and corrected. The total time from the start of public consultation and community representation to collecting, summarizing, and evaluating results is 1 month.

Step III - Conducting DP project: the two-way information interaction process will also be carried out according to the same principles as in step II, but the information brought to the community will be associated with the contents that need to be carried out when conducting the DP project. The public consultation will be conducted on a larger scale and the time whole process (including information synthesis, explanation, feedback on public comments) is two months.

Step IV - DP project appraisal and approval: the information related to the planning product includes drawings, planning final reports, summary reports, and reports on consultation results. The community will be informed to the community through electronic information networks and local media. The output information on the approved DP project will be added and updated to the information database system and help the implementation of future construction investment projects (Fig. 10).

Table 2 shows the types of information, community interaction mechanism as well as the necessary skills that stakeholders should prepare.
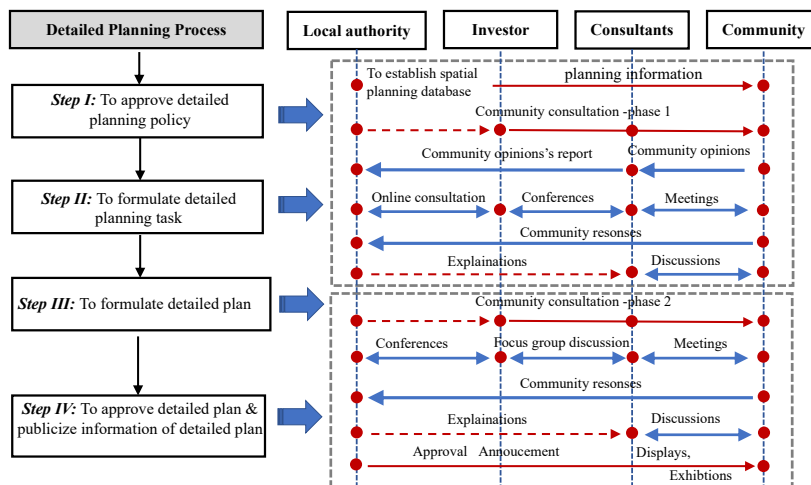
Figure 10. The integration of two-way flow of information in the UDPP process

Table 2. Types of information and community interaction mechanism in detailed planning

No	Type of information	Mechanism of information interaction	Required skills of stakeholders
1	Information to community	- Public social media (radios, televisions, internet, internet portals). - Display, exhibition.	- Community: skill to understand information and receive the information. - Consultant: skill of presentation, introduction clearly. - Management officer: skill of information management and distribution to community.
2	Information should be collected from community	Community surveys by questionnaire sheets, in – depth interviews, direct and in-direct interviews, online surveys. Organize workshops, quick design (character).	- Investors, consultants: skills on preparation, plan making for community surveys, opinion's collection, in-depth interviews. - Skills on data processing and analyzing, information assessment.
3	Information to community for discussion, negotiation	Community consultation: community meetings, focus group discussions, Stakeholder conferences.	- Consultants: skills on preparation, plan making for discussion, opinion exchange, negotiation. - Investor, management staff: skills on working with community, information exchange, collection, synthesis, response and accountability. - Community: skills on idea sharing, problem defining, discussion, negotiation

5.2. *Proposed steps of public consultation in UDPP process*

The community consultation is carried out in 6 steps as below:

Step 1. Preparation. The major tasks in this step are to select issues for public consultation, to hold meetings to identify the issues that need public consultation, to prepare detailed contents of community consultation, to identify tools for community consultation, and to make a detailed plan to mobilize the community to participate.

Step 2. Conduct community consultation. The series of activities are to inform the community of consultation meeting, to test the consultation tool and adjust if necessary, to conduct a training supervisory board to consult the community, 4) to carry out community consultation activities as planned.

Step 3. Processing and analyzing information and data. The information and data are collected and synthesized during the consultation process and are report.

Step 4. Feedback. The step to support the process of response, explanation and discuss to community.

Step 5: Adjust and supplement the content of the detailed urban planning according to the opinion of the community. This step to review reports from community consultation and to identify additional adjustments to the UDPP.

Step 6: Report to the competent authority on the process of community consultation. Main contents of this step are to prepare reports on the process of community consultation, to assess the impact of community consultation, and to submit consultation reports to local authorities for consideration and decision.

5.3. *Proposal tools used in community consultation*

Some effective tools that should be used in community consultation to achieve fruitful results as below:

- *Community meeting*: is a meeting widely attended by the people in the community, often held several times in a project to exchange information to achieve the community agreement to come to a decision. The meetings provide chances for individuals in the community to exchange information with project staff, planers, architectural experts and decision-makers in the way that the community preferred.

- *Focus group discussion*: The purpose is to find out the experiences, opinions, and concerns of the community on a particular issue, to encourage members of the core group of the community to contribute ideas related to decision making, to make people aware of the problem that needs to be solved. Participants in the focus group meeting include people in the focus group, the core community group, experts, architects, project officers. Each group usually has from 6 to 12 people. The participation of each group member is considered equal. Groups should select members with uniformity, to avoid situations where some members dominated the meeting.

- *Collect opinions through questionnaire survey*: Basically, it is an investigation/survey activity to obtain information on the current state of the area from the community, to conduct surveys and evaluation the community's planning solutions, and determine the needs and desires of the community when the planning is implemented. Methods should be applied as i) Survey by postal mail to a predefined target group or to the entire population in the area; ii) Household interviews are also a way of surveying people.

There are closed questions and open questions. Open questions are used when respondents can give short or long answers, allowing them to express their opinions in their own words. In contrast to

open questions, close questions can help people understand and facilitate the interpretation of answers. Closed questions are often designed so that the responses are framed with choices such as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree.

- *Internet uses*: Planning information will be updated on the web portals of the DOC, the DOAP of the provinces and cities through the information database of the SPIC. In the construction planning information database, the following basic information items will be needed: 1) Construction planning projects; 2) List of construction investment projects; 3) Other contents.The information of the public planning projects that have been or are being implemented will be published in the section of construction and planning of the portal. For each strategic planning project, there will be two parts of information: 1) Information on the planning tasks; and 2) Information on the approved urban planning projects. The information is updated in the form of text and maps. In addition, there is a section on public consultation for the planning task, with questionnaire forms and summary reports on the collection of comments.

- *Community mapping*: This is a tool that is effectively used in DP projects to renovate, embellish or upgrade living quarters where the current information of the area is incomplete or not close to reality. assessing the current situation, determining the urgent needs of the community, and proposing solutions that are suitable for the community's resources. This tool is also particularly effective for small community-based renovation projects, and community's resources that are not meet the formal process requirement.

- *Workshops, quick design to propose ideas and solutions with community*: Organizing quick design workshops with community involvements is a short, intensive time design model (from 3 to 7 days) in which experts, managers, and community representatives can work together to provide planning solutions at the site where the plan will be implemented and allow the community to participate and interact with project's technical members.

- *Discussion and negotiations*: Negotiation is the basic tool to get the desired end from the other person. It is an interactive process of influences designed to be negotiated between parties with a binding interest. Negotiation is done when: Both parties have shared interests or both sides have opposing interests. Negotiation helps to reach a decision with a community consensus, reducing conflicts and contradictions.

6. Conclusions

It can be stated that the mechanism of planning information exchange among the authorities, investors, consultants and the community is an important factor that contributing to promote the participation of the community in the construction planning process. In developed countries, grassroots democracy has long been built and consolidated, in which people have the right to access information on planning and designing their living space and have the obligation and responsibility to contribute ideas, and to participate in the planning process to improve planning quality and demonstrate democracy and justice in society [18]. The strong development of a democratic society also contributes to the increased exchange of information between the community and the government and regulatory agencies. However, in Vietnam currently, most of the detailed urban planning information exchange mechanism is only a one-way information flow from the investor, project manager and consultant to the local people. The way of public consultation under the current Planning Law is still formalistic. The flow of information to be returned from the community is still very limited. The proposal of a planning information database management center – SPIC - at specialized management units as DOC of provinces and cities, DOAP of special cities under the central government will contribute

to enhancing the community's access to planning information. Integrating public consultation into the steps of DP formulation and appraisal process will promote information interaction between residents and managers, investors, consultants and other stakeholders. The research on applying tools to support community consultation that are suitable to geographical, economic, social and cultural characteristics will be an effective mechanism, contributing to enhancing the two-way information flows to the community. The feedbacks from the community to responsible agencies also helps the planning project achieve the purpose of "planning for community, with community, and by community", towards sustainable development.

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