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Rethinking "Urban Wall" Design Guidelines of Administrative City in Sejong  
: Issues and Future Directions

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# Rethinking "Urban Wall" Design Guidelines of Administrative City in Sejong : Issues and Future Directions

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The ring-shaped public transportation axis of about 28km in length is the core of Administrative City planning, and it is a space to realize 'harmonious integrated image' which is the main goal of urban design of Administrative City. In order to create a harmonious streetscape and to provide a sense of unity, the National Agency for Administrative City Construction has designated the "Urban Wall" area along the ring-shaped transportation axis, strictly regulating the use and form of the building. Currently, the construction of the 1 to 4 neighborhood-zone Urban Wall area is almost completed, and the 5,6 neighborhood-zone is being planned.

Ten years have passed since the construction of the Administrative City began. The purpose of this study is to analyse the achievements and the problems of the Urban Wall design guideline and to propose its principles and directions in the future.

The first goal of designating the Urban Wall area was to create a lively street where people travel mainly by means of public transportation rather than private cars. Has this goal been achieved? It is difficult to judge whether Hannuri Street, along which the Urban Wall is constructed, is functioning as the central axis of public transportation according to the original plan purpose, since only part of the annular road is opened and the outer ring road is not completed, but the survey shows that people use cars the most to go to Hannuri street.

The majority of survey respondents said that the Urban Wall contributed to the formation of integrated image of the Administrative City. In this aspect, the Urban

Wall design guidelines seems to be effective. However, there is also the problem of producing a boring urban landscape while forming unity.

The space for the pedestrian is wide enough and safe in the Urban Wall area. The satisfaction of the walking environment is high, and it seems to have achieved the goal of creating a pleasant walking environment. However, when the ratio of empty stores in the horizontal wall section is high and the road on the rear side is more active, the horizontal wall has a limitation in making a lively streetscape.

The first problem with operating the Urban Wall design guidelines is that there is a conflict between the guidelines and development demand. Most of the commercial facilities and offices in the street wall section were built to the maximum building limits to maximize floor space. It does not protrude or retreat beyond the construction line. This creates a tedious and uniform street landscape. The building facade ratio is higher than the limit set by the District Unit Plan.

The second problem is that it is difficult to apply correctly the guidelines such as the height of the ground level, the three-tiered facade and arcades. At the construction site, the ground levels of the adjacent buildings are different or there is a slope, but there is no detailed guidance, resulting in unsatisfactory results.

Another problem is that there is a difference in the thinking of the various stakeholders. Expert group (Administrative City Advisory Group) has a positive opinion of the guidelines for the design of Urban Walls, and is also satisfied with the results. Citizens and practitioners were less satisfied. This tendency was also observed in the item adequacy survey of the Urban Wall design guidelines. It shows that practitioners are experiencing a lot of difficulties in applying the design guidelines. Also, it can be seen that the Urban Wall failed to gain the satisfaction of the residents.

Based on the results of the analysis of the administrative city Urban Wall guidelines, we have established three principles of formulating and applying the guideline for the future. In order for the Urban Wall area to work in accordance with the initial goal, the hierarchy of the street must be set appropriately before defining the form and use of the buildings. Since the horizontal wall forms the coherent background of the Administrative City, the principle of Urban Wall design should be maintained in the future. Finally, guidelines should be more clearly defined and applied after social consensus has been reached.

In accordance with the above three principles, we propose the future directions of the Urban Wall design guidelines as follows.

First, it's necessary to redefine the hierarchy and character of the street considering the traffic system and the walking network of the administrative city. The Urban Wall design guidelines should be established after setting the street hierarchy and defining the character of the space. The Urban Wall does not simply mean the street elevation or limited section of the buildings. The Urban Wall forms the place. We must first decide what the street space we want to be and how to create the physical environment to create a vibrant place.

Second, we should try to ensure diversity in different areas of the city, while seeking to create an integrated image. It is necessary to apply the minimum and clear guidelines to maintain the continuity of the Urban Wall area, but to apply different guidelines to the neighborhood zone and its subdivisions. The problems raised in the survey, such as tedious uniformity, monotonous facades, and ambiguous design guideline details, need to be improved.

Third, the system and procedures for operating and managing design guidelines should be improved. It is necessary to appoint a architect-coordinator for each neighborhood-zone or subdivision so as to set up the principles and directions for planning, to establish guidelines and, above all, to coordinate opinions during the application of the guidelines. In order for the Urban Wall design guidelines to work well, problems that may occur on the site should be reviewed and clearly defined. Detailed guidelines should be presented graphically for a clear understanding. In the planning process, it is necessary to establish a consultation process between citizens, practitioners and experts in order to form a social consensus on the direction of street making.

In this study, we have presented the guiding principles of Urban Wall design guidelines for Administrative City, but did not provide specific and detailed guidelines for the future. The follow up studies should be carried out to establish Urban Wall design guidelines of the 5,6 neighborhood zone.

**Keywords :**

Urban Wall, Administrative City, streetscape, design guideline, street hierarchy, diversity, architect-coordinator, public consultation