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URBAN GOVERNANCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT:
Solid-Waste Management in Two Municipalities in Thailand

by

Orathai Kokpol

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

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Abstract

Urban Governance and the Environment:
Solid-Waste Management in Two Municipalities in Thailand

Doctor of Philosophy, 1998

Orathai Kokpol
Graduate Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

This research addresses an effective approach to the understanding of urban government and its performance in dealing with urban environmental issues. Such issues as solid waste, and air and water pollution have direct impacts on peoples’ quality of life and livelihood, and tend to be politically sensitive ones that can mobilize or organize civil society to become more involved in municipal politics.

Focusing on the case of two municipalities (Chiang Mai and Hat Yai) in Thailand with different municipal performances on solid-waste management, and using a comparative analysis of their urban governance, the research argues that, while urban management and central-local relations shed light on the government side (i.e., both central and municipal governments), urban governance, or the relationship between the municipality and civil society, provides an important insight into the complex nature of municipal performance in dealing with solid-waste issues. It also reveals the dynamic, interlocking and interdependent relationship of key elements — municipal competency, the activity of civil society, the interaction between civil society and municipality, the central-local relationship and municipal performance.

While the research demonstrates the case for urban governance as an important factor in understanding municipal performance, effective urban governance, as illustrated by the
cases of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai, is not necessarily democratic (i.e., with transparency and active civic engagement) but rather highlights the importance of strong and popular leadership, financial resources, a local leadership coalition and a supportive relationship with the central government. These factors reinforce each other and are also influenced by the interplay of local socio-cultural, political and economic factors within each city. With respect to the debate on the nature and character of the state-civil society relationship, these findings reject the notion of good governance put forward by the World Bank and international donors, since the municipality-civil society relationships in Chiang Mai (a weak municipality and a strong civil society) and Hat Yai (a strong municipality and a weak civil society) tend to conform to the zero-sum game model illustrated in the urban research literature.

This research demonstrates the importance of the inclusion of civil society (both the changing character and composition of civil society, and civic engagement in municipal politics and administration) and local context into the analysis when examining urban government and its municipal performance, particularly on urban environmental issues. It means that understanding urban government and its performance has to go beyond management and central-local relations to include the government-civil society relationship and the contextual framework. This integrated approach should provide valuable insight into the complicated, dynamic and multifaceted nature of urban government and urban environmental issues.
Acknowledgments

On the long journey to complete my Ph.D., I am so fortunate to have numerous hands helping me pass through the many obstacles and tough times and to whom I would like to express my appreciation. Studying abroad takes time and therefore requires inordinate funding. In this regard, I am deeply appreciative of the generous financial support of CIDA who, under the Rattanakosin Scholarship, gave me the opportunity to study at the University of Toronto. I am also grateful to the Department of Political Science, Thammasat University, for relieving me from my work duties and giving me the time to complete the very demanding work of a Ph.D. program.

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Prof. Richard Stren. From the day I walked into his office in 1993 to the day I passed my oral defense in 1998, a thousand words could not express enough my appreciation of his valuable guidance, kindness and opportunities he provided. For Prof. Patricia McCarney, thanks for leading me into urban issues and governance concept and for giving me a positive spirit during my difficult times. I will always remember one afternoon in March 1998 when you gave so much of your time and sat with me to discuss point by point how I could improve this thesis. I am grateful to Prof. Virginia Maclaren for her time, clear guidance and valuable comments in strengthening this work. My thankfulness also goes to Prof. Victor Falkenheim, Prof. Graham White and Prof. B. Michael Frolic (of York University) in accepting to be members on the oral defense committee.

Data provides a crucial component to any thesis and this thesis in particular would not be possible without the cooperation of many municipal leaders and employees from Chiang Mai and Hat Yai municipalities who were supportive during my field research. I also would
like to thank more than 50 interviewees who contributed their time and knowledge. Certainly, I appreciate all the Chiang Mai and Hat Yai respondents who took the time and effort to answer my survey questionnaires. Thanks also to my research assistance, Kanitta (P’Nid), and field interviewers for helping me collect the necessary survey data and, for the most part, I thank Varaporn (P’Tuk) for her help on questionnaires and SPSS. I am very grateful to my four editors, Martine Johnson, David Barker, Peter Kohnke and Judith Kjellberg Bell, not just for their wonderful editorial work but also for their comments and encouragement.

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3.1 Regional Cities of Thailand

4.1 Chiang Mai Municipality

5.1 Hat Yai Municipality
## Glossary of Abbreviations

BMA  | Bangkok Metropolitan Administration  
CBO  | Community-based Organization  
CCC  | Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce  
CCLA | Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy  
CIDA | Canadian International Development Agency (Canada)  
CMM | Chiang Mai Municipality  
CMJPPSCC | Chiang Mai Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committee  
CPT | Communist Party of Thailand  
CTA | Chiang Mai Tourist Business Association  
DAC | Development Assistance Committee, OECD  
DANCED | Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development (Denmark)  
DEQP | Department of Environmental Quality Promotion, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment  
DOLA | Department of Local Administration, Ministry of the Interior  
EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment  
ENGO | Environmental Non-governmental Organization  
EPZ | Environmental Protection Zone  
HYM | Hat Yai Municipality  
GPP | Gross Provincial Product  
GDP | Gross Domestic Product  
GTZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (Germany)  
MEB | Municipal Executive Board  
MOI | Ministry of the Interior  
MOSTE | Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment  
NESDB | National Economic and Social Development Board  
NEB | National Environment Board  
NGO | Non-governmental Organization  
NIC | Newly Industrialized Countries  
NIMBY | Not In My Backyard  
OEPP | Office of Environmental Policy and Planning, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment  
OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development  
OUD | Office of Urban Development, DOLA, MOI  
PCD | Pollution Control Department, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment  
PCZ | Pollution Control Zone  
POP | People’s Organization for Participation  
PWD | Public Works Department, Ministry of the Interior  
SCC | Songkhla Chamber of Commerce  
TAC | Thaksin Architect Committee  
TEMCO | Thailand Exploration and Mining Corporation  
TIA | Tourist Industry Association of Songkhla  
UNCHS | United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
Thai Glossary

**Baht (Bt.)**
Thai unit of currency. For much of the 1990s until mid-1997, the value of CDN$1 was about 19 baht, and this study uses that rate for currency conversion. The baht was devalued in July 1997 and became unstable due to the economic downturn and financial turmoil in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

**Ka-na-te-sa-mon-tri**
Municipal Executive Board (MEB) or the executive branch of the municipality is composed of the Mayor and deputy mayors.

**Te-sa-ban**
Municipality

**Rai**
Thai unit of area; 1 rai = 0.16 hectares (ha.)
Chapter One

Introduction to the Research

I. Introduction

One weakness in the study of urban environmental problems in developing countries is the lack of a holistic view of the problem and solutions. This imposes a serious limitation on the search for an effective strategy to deal with the problem, since the urban environmental issue is complex and multifaceted. Urban environmental problems are a health issue as they threaten human health and well being, particularly among the poor. But they also have social and political implications, as they are inseparable from the issues of development and poverty. They pose a challenge to both national and urban governments with respect to the way in which cities are governed and developed. Worsening environmental problems, if not addressed, may lead to social conflicts and political unrest and, finally, to an imbalance of the ecosystem. Clearly, no single approach is sufficient to address all these aspects and propose viable strategies.\(^1\) An important goal of the present study is to address the environmental issue in a more integrated manner than has been done in the past.

Through the lens of an integrated approach, the research aims to contribute to the understanding of the connections among various aspects of the environmental issue and to provide an effective way of dealing with urban environmental problems in the context of one particular country, Thailand. In this chapter, details of the research project are discussed, beginning with its background and rationale, and including the research questions and theoretical assumptions. The chapter closes with a discussion of the method of inquiry.

\(^1\) See Patricia McCarney (1995) for various approaches to studying the urban environment.
II. Background and Rationale

Significance of the Urban Environment

As Michael Hough said in *City Form and Natural Process* (1984), "In a world increasingly concerned with the problems of a deteriorating environment, be they energy, population, vanishing plants, animals, or productive landscapes, there is a marked propensity to bypass the environment most people live in — the city itself" (Hough 1984, 5). Cities have not been well addressed in environmental terms because much of our environmental thinking has focused upon the natural environment, with studies abounding on air, lakes, rivers, oceans and fisheries, desertification and agriculture, forests, and wildlife. Many environmentalists have seen cities as unnatural forms of human settlement.

In recent years, governments, researchers and the international community have paid more attention to the environmental problems facing cities. Increasingly, it is realized that the world is becoming more and more urban. Half of the world’s population will inhabit urban areas by the year 2005 (United Nations 1995, 79). In the developed world, over 70 per cent of the population already live in cities. City dwellers are often at severe risk from a whole range of environmental problems, including poor sanitation and waste disposal, water and air pollution, inadequate housing and traffic congestion, all of which have direct effects on human health and well-being. Furthermore, it has come to be realized that global and local, rural and urban ecosystems, and environmental conditions are connected. Environmental degradation in cities has a major impact on the global ecological system, accounting for the bulk of global environmental destruction — for instance, ozone depletion, global warming, deforestation and poor disposal of hazardous waste. Industries generally locate in cities. Urban lifestyles often
involve profligate consumption. In addressing global environmental problems, many argue that action must be taken at the local level, following the slogan “think globally, act locally.” Environmental sustainability can surely not be achieved unless cities are included in environmental thinking.

Urban environmental problems are very harsh and seemingly intractable in most Third World cities. As a result of industrialization and rapid urbanization, many Third World cities have grown rapidly out of balance with their ecological surroundings. According to the United Nations, in mid-1994, 18 of the 22 mega-cities (having populations of 8 million or more) were located in less-developed regions. Asia had 12 mega-cities, Latin America was home to 4 (Sao Paulo, Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro) and Africa had 2 (Lagos and Cairo). By 2015, it is estimated that 27 of the world’s expected 33 mega-cities will be located in developing countries. By the year 2010, Bombay’s population is expected to have reached nearly 24.3 million and Shanghai about 21.5 million. In addition, Lagos, Sao Paulo, Jakarta and Mexico City are expected to attain populations of more than 18 million, and Beijing, Karachi, Dhaka, Calcutta, Tianjin and Delhi should grow to more than 15 million residents each if present growth trends are maintained (United Nations 1995, 3-6).

In itself, rapid urban change need not produce serious environmental problems. Such problems become particularly serious only where urban population expands rapidly, with little or no consideration for the environmental implications or for an institutional framework to address these (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992, 17). This is the case in most Third World countries where urban populations have expanded without an associated growth in the services and facilities essential for an adequate and healthy urban environment. As a result, most Third World cities are overcrowded with a disorderly growth of slums, congested with
traffic, poisoned by air and water pollution, dirtied by uncollected garbage, as well as lacking piped water and sanitary facilities.²

The impact of environmental problems is enormous in terms of health and safety, productivity, amenities and ecological value (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992; Leitmann, Bartone and Bernstein 1992; Shin 1994). Environmental degradation in cities is considered to be closely linked with the issue of health. As a report by the World Health Organization’s Commission on Health and Environment points out, four million infants or children die annually from diarrheal diseases, largely as a result of contaminated food or water (Hardoy, Mitlin, and Satterthwaite 1992, 22). Two hundred and sixty-seven million are infected with malaria each year and two million people die from it. Hundreds of millions of people suffer from respiratory and other diseases caused or exacerbated by air pollution (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992, 22). These environmental problems most affect the urban poor, who rarely live in healthy areas. For the poor, the household environment carries the greatest risk to health (World Bank 1993). Because of poverty, they cannot afford good living conditions, cannot get access to adequate land and clean water, and have no power to demand changes. To be poor means not only to lack financial resources but also to lack choices to determine one’s own life. At the same time, poverty can cause environmental degradation. Given the shortage of essential services like energy, water supply and waste collection or treatment, the urban poor inevitably exploit natural resources (such as wood and

² Several studies review the status of urban environmental problems facing Third World cities, including Jorge Hardoy, Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite (1992); McCarney (1992); and Josef Leitmann (1995). For particular cities, examples include Pedro Jacobi (1994) on Sao Paulo; Dhira Phantumvanit and Wanai Liengcharensit (1989) on Bangkok; Fernando Castaneda (1989) on Bogota and the Centre for Science and Environment (1989) on India’s major cities.
charcoal for cooking) and contaminate water and land by disposal of all kinds of waste in the immediate locale.

Urban environmental problems have ecological effects, such as land subsidence or saline intrusion from overdrawn ground water, waste loads affecting water bodies, increased flood risk, and marine pollution. According to Josef Leitmann (1995), overexploitation in Jakarta, Katowice and Tianjin has resulted in the salinization of groundwater supply, and has contributed to land subsidence. Marine pollution, caused by untreated sewage and industrial and vehicular emissions, is a problem in almost all coastal cities. It has been hypothesized that coastal pollution has had an adverse effect on fisheries, recreational opportunities and tourism (Leitmann 1995, 23-25). With these severe impacts, urban environmental problems should be considered major obstacles to the future progress of developing countries, obstacles requiring serious attention.

**Thailand: A Profile of Urban Environmental Problems**

Thailand, like other developing countries, is in the process of industrialization (Schlossstein 1991; Hewison 1992). Prior to 1997, Thailand’s economy was considered healthy with a rapid growth rate. Since 1960, the country had experienced substantial economic growth, with annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increases averaging 7-8%. Thailand’s per capita income of $1,840 in 1992 placed it in the ranks of lower middle-income countries. Although 60% of the population still earned its living from agriculture (Tonguthai 1993, 101), growth

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3 Since mid-1997, Thailand has faced an unanticipated economic crisis, caused by financial problems: a lot of non-performing loans of financial institutions, the unwise decision of the Bank of Thailand to defend the baht, and the decline of international reserves. The government’s decision to devalue the baht on July 2, 1997 sparked a chain of events including devaluation, a stock market crash, unpaid debt and an international bailout from the IMF. It is forecast that Thailand will experience negative growth, at minus 1 or 2 percent, for the next few years.
in the 1980s and early 1990s increasingly came from industry and services, which accounted for more than 80% of GDP (Muscat 1994, 293). Manufacturing outputs, formerly dominated by agro-industrial production and textiles, were increasingly diversified, with especially rapid growth in the production of construction materials, transport equipment, electrical appliances and components, and industrial machinery. Tourism, growing since the mid-1970s, overtook rice in 1982 to become the major foreign-exchange earner and in 1985 replaced textile products as Thailand’s largest source of foreign exchange (Troung 1990, 163-165).

Compared to other newly industrialized societies, such as the Asian Newly-Industrialized Countries (NICs), Thailand has a low level of urbanization (Komin 1989; Pornchochai 1993). According to the National Statistical Office, Thailand is approximately 27.13% urban. Of the total population in 1990 of 54,548,530, 14,798,903 lived in urban areas. Between 1990 and 1995, the average annual urban growth rate was 2.49% (United Nations 1995, 111). But the population growth rate for most urban communities in the country is expected to increase spectacularly in the near future. Within 15 to 25 years, about half the total population will reside in urban areas, and much of the country’s urban growth will occur outside Bangkok (Mekvichai et al. 1990; NESDB 1992).

Rapid economic growth and the unbalanced development pattern in Thailand (resulting in a marked disparity between urban and rural areas, as well as the primacy of a few major urban centres) have adverse impacts on the urban environment; and environmental issues, such as congestion, traffic jams, air pollution, noise nuisance, uncollected waste, water pollution, and the lack of recreational areas and green space, are magnified in urban areas. Of

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4 The 1990 urbanization level in some Asian NICs and South-East Asian countries was 94.1% in Hong Kong, 73.8% in the Republic of Korea, 49.8% in Malaysia, 48.8% in the Philippines and 30.6% in Indonesia (United Nations 1995, 81).
all Thailand's cities, Bangkok has the worst environmental problems. The capital city, Bangkok, is overcrowded, with a population in 1990 of 5.9 millions and an average annual growth rate of 3.19% for the period 1970 to 1990 (United Nations 1995, 7). Its urban primacy is clear: 57.6% of the urban population lives in Bangkok, which is also the centre for government and national administration, economic activities, industry, education, telecommunications, social service and public welfare. Almost half of the country’s GDP (47.6%) is produced in the city.

Since Bangkok has grown without control or planning, it suffers severely from many critical and interlocking social and environmental problems,\(^5\) such as air and water pollution, traffic congestion, flooding and land subsidence. These problems are very much interrelated. For example, the over-pumping of groundwater has caused land-surface subsidence. Land subsidence varies throughout Bangkok, ranging from 0.6 to 5.1 centimetres per year. The combination of a sinking city and heavy rains has resulted in frequent flooding. The 1982 flood caused damage valued at Bt6,000 million (CDN$330 million) (Phantumvanit and Liengcharensit 1989, 32). While the cost of the damage from the 1995 flood remains unknown, it has been called the worst flood in the history of Bangkok.

The costs of environmental problems are shocking. For example, a study by Rod Stickland (1993) puts the environmental cost of air and water pollution in Bangkok in excess of US$2 billion a year. Congestion-induced travel delays currently lose the city about a third of its potential gross city product. This equates to a loss of US$4 million a day. Atmospheric lead contributes to between 200,000 and 400,000 cases of hypertension and 400 deaths a year.

\(^5\) For more details of the urban environmental problems in Bangkok, see Dhira Phantumvanit and Wanai Liengcharensit (1989); Banasopit Mekvichai et al. (1990); NESDB (1992); and Rod Stickland (1993).
Lead in the air also reduces the IQ in children by an average of four or more points by the age of seven, with long-term implications for their productivity as adults (Stickland 1993, 5).

Because of the severity of the problem and the significance of Bangkok, that city's problems dominate most urban research on Thailand. These studies reveal that Bangkok's environmental problems are too complicated for short-term technical solutions. Proper solutions require a holistic approach and should tackle root causes, including the pattern of development, issues of politics and governance, and the weakness of the city government, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. The experience of environmental problems in Bangkok indicates that it is much more difficult to solve problems than to prevent them, and one solution frequently causes other problems or exacerbates a problem instead of solving it. The reversal of a deteriorating city environment is not only rare but costly. It is therefore necessary to develop preventive strategies.

Given the dominance of Bangkok in the urban research literature, other, smaller, cities have received relatively little attention. Jorge Hardoy, Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite (1992) argue that actions on environmental problems in Third World cities must include all urban centres. In the case of Thailand, even though Bangkok has the most severe urban environmental conditions, in the last few years environmental problems in other major cities have become increasingly serious and need to be addressed immediately to prevent further deterioration. For instance, adjacent to Bangkok, Nonthaburi, the country's second largest city with a population in 1992 of 250,104, shares various environmental problems with Bangkok, especially traffic congestion, air pollution and flooding. Nakhon Ratchasima, located in the

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6 For example, see Rudiger Korff (1986); Dhira Phantumvanit and Wanai Liengcharensit (1989); Anuchat Poungsomlee and Helen Ross (1992); Rod Stickland (1993); Ksemsan Suwamarat and Watana Luanratana (1993); Marc Askew (1994); and Douglas Webster (1994).
northeast region, is the country's third largest city, with a population in 1992 of 206,104, and is the main transportation link between the northeastern and the central regions. Recently, the Board of Investment has proclaimed the area an industrial promotion zone; this will accelerate the economic growth of a city already facing congestion and air pollution.

Chiang Mai, the country's fourth largest city with a population of 163,520 in 1992, already faces severe problems of traffic congestion, air pollution, waste disposal, water quality, and inappropriate land use. As the city is located in a valley in the northern part of Thailand, many of these problems, especially air pollution, will increase with the rapidly growing population. Chiang Mai has little industrial development. Tourism is among its major economic activities, leading to high demand for land for hotels and resorts.

Hat Yai, the country's fifth largest city, is located in Songkhla Province in the southern part of Thailand. Because the city is the centre of tourism and commerce in the southern region, most of its land is utilized for commercial or residential development. Its population was 151,981 in 1992. With its high rate of growth, the city is facing environmental problems, including air pollution caused by traffic congestion, and the deterioration of water quality. Most of the domestic waste water of the city of Hat Yai drains directly into two major streams, Klong U-tapao and Klong Toey, thereby causing deterioration in the water quality of these streams and of Songkhla Lake, the country's largest lake, into which they feed. The city also has a problem of drainage and flooding in the rainy season.

**Thailand: Political Aspects of the Urban Environment**

Thailand's urban environmental problems are not only increasing in severity, but also must be addressed in a context of increasing complexity. Currently, the issue of the urban environment
is associated not only with economic growth and quality of life, but also, in at least two respects, with politics. First, the rise of urban environmental problems reflects the inability of urban governments to manage the cities, and thus, at a deeper level, brings the effectiveness and legitimacy of the overall system of government into question. This raises the whole issue of decentralization and local government. Second, in recent years the urban environment has become a political issue involving conflicts among various groups over environmentally sensitive projects. It has also mobilized new groups in civil society, including Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), “Not in My Backyard” (NIMBY) groups and citizens’ groups. The political expression of citizens and the increasing presence of civil society in connection with urban environmental issues has become a new dimension in Thai urban politics. This makes the urban environment both a more complex issue for solution and a catalyst for political changes such as the decentralization of environmental planning and the improvement of municipal openness regarding popular participation.

Local Government in Thailand: The Municipal Government

The role of urban local government is fundamental to the question of sustainability (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992; Chowdhury and Furedy 1994, 20). It is argued by Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite, for example, that the severity of environmental problems in Third World cities reflects government failure to provide services. Furthermore, the competence of a representative municipal government is crucial to good environmental quality. The need to strengthen urban government has concerned both national and international agencies (Cochrane 1983; Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983; Rondinelli, McCullough and Johnson 1989; Peterson 1992). However, in the context of developing countries, strengthening local
government has had limited success unless central governments have decentralized political and financial power to the local level (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983; Dillinger 1994). Therefore, political decentralization and the strengthening of local government have to be addressed in tandem.

Thailand is a case in point. Municipal government has a major role in urban environmental management, since it is in charge of urban services, such as land use controls, waste-water treatment and waste collection and disposal, that have a direct impact on the city environment. Therefore, Thailand's increasing urban environmental problems — uncollected garbage, smelly and dirty canals and rivers, widespread slums and flooding — reveal the inability of municipalities to enforce regulations and to provide basic urban services. The constraints on municipalities under the current system of government are environmentally significant.

Municipal government is far from being local self-government, since the framework provided by the central government confines its ability to respond to problems at hand. The centre prescribes the organizational form, functions, sources of municipal revenues, and personnel administration. The creation of the central government, municipal government is supervised by the Ministry of the Interior, which also has the right to dissolve any municipal councils and to appoint municipal clerks. Moreover, municipal government lacks autonomy in managing the city. National public enterprises provide public utilities, such as drinking water and electricity and, for example, the National Public Housing Authority has authority over

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7 There are six types of local government in Thailand, and these can be divided into urban and rural local government. Urban local government includes the Municipal Government, the City of Pattaya, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), while rural local government contains the Provincial Administrative Organization, the Sanitary District and the Sub-district Administrative Organization.
public housing. Inadequate coordination among agencies constrains the municipality from addressing environmental problems. Municipal government also suffers from a lack of competent personnel, partly because its employees are subordinate to the national bureaucracy and have lower status than those in the latter. Furthermore, the central government approves all changes in scope of responsibilities and in sources of revenue.

Key elements of the national legislation governing municipalities have remained unchanged since its passage in 1953, in effect maintaining the obsolescence of the governmental system in the new economic and social environment. Limited municipal autonomy has led to inefficient delivery of urban services in fast-growing urban centres. The scale of the problems (for example, solid and industrial waste collection and disposal, traffic congestion, slums, low-cost housing, waste-water problems) exceeds the authority and capacity of the municipality to manage them effectively. To respond effectively, the municipal government has to be strengthened technically, financially and politically.

Recent years have seen various initiatives by the central government aimed at promoting decentralization and strengthening municipal government. These initiatives include supporting the development of urban infrastructure in Thailand’s regional cities, including Chiang Mai and Hat Yai (known as the Regional Cities Development Project); providing policy guidelines as well as technical expertise for municipal government development (especially in new areas of responsibility such as community development and urban environmental management); improving tax collection through the computerization of tax administration; and proposing, although not yet implementing, a plan to increase the tax revenue of all types of local government. In addition, the new Environmental Fund, raised
through gasoline taxes, provides more resources for local governments, NGOs, and the private sector (Maneepong 1994, 156).

Within Thailand’s central-local framework, not all municipalities fail to cope with problems. Some perform better than others. Research on local governments in Thailand has, for the most part, missed or overlooked such differences, since the predominant legal approach has tended to treat all municipalities as similar entities. This situation is changing; this thesis, like the work of Charas Suwanmala (1991), entitled “Central Control and Local Productivity: A Case Study in Thailand,” should advance our analysis of the actual differences in municipalities’ responses to environmental issues.

*Urban Governance in Thailand: The Emergence of Civil Society*

While much interest on the issue of local government in general and municipal government in particular in Thailand has focused on legal and technical aspects, and on the central-local relationship, the issue of urban governance has received less attention. According to Patricia McCarney, Mohamed Halfani and Alfredo Rodriguez (1995), “‘governance,’ as distinct from government, refers to the relationship between civil society and the state, between rulers and the ruled, the government and the governed” (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 95). “Urban governance,” as the term is employed here, refers to the relationship between the municipal government and civil society. Civil society is the arena outside the governmental boundary which includes individual citizens, popular organizations, the media, voluntary organizations, social movements, community groups, and academic and business sectors. Urban governance includes issues of accountability, electoral processes, and the participation
and empowerment of groups in civil society. The concept of governance will be explored in Chapter 2.

The relationship between municipal government and civil society has been expressed mainly through the electoral process. Local elections to municipal councils in Thailand have been held every five years since 1974 (Ruland 1992, 52). The nationwide voter turnout at municipal elections has been quite low — 46.53% in 1985, 48.79% in 1990 and 54.82% in 1995 (Division of Election 1991, 1996) — in contrast to the higher turnout at national general elections: 63.56% in 1988, 61.59% in 1992 and 62.04% in 1995 (Division of Election 1992, 1995). In the absence of local political parties in municipal politics, the electoral contest normally is confined to loosely structured local political groupings with no formal relationship to national political parties. Most of these local political groups become active only around the election period. Moreover, they are dominated by the upper and middle classes. Based on the 1990 and 1995 results, approximately 60% of municipal council members are business people (61.6% in 1990 and 61.9% in 1995) while about 10% are retired civil servants (10.05% in 1990 and 8.6% in 1995). Only 9.2% and 6.1% of elected members listed their occupation in 1990 and 1995 respectively as wage-labourers (Division of Election 1991, 1996).

Concerning other groups in civil society, one can observe changes in the structure and roles of civil society. Earlier in the development of Thai politics, civil society or non-bureaucratic groups (as commonly referred to in the Thai literature) played a minimal role in politics, especially under the bureaucratic polity8 (1932-1972). The student uprising in 1973 changed the Thai political context by opening political space for civic groups. Various kinds

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8 The Thai bureaucratic polity refers to the political system within which social groups and classes are politically inert and docile, while the bureaucracy has an omnipotent role in decision-making and policy formulation.
arose. In the mid-1970s, student groups emerged as a major force in Thai politics (Zimmerman 1974), to be replaced in the late 1970s by the business associations as the strongest of all the non-bureaucratic elements in Thailand. The number of trade associations and chambers of commerce rose rapidly as they became very active (Laothamatas 1992).

Another major player is the NGO movement, which by the 1980s had become a leading force in civil society. NGOs have grown both in numbers and in the diversity of their activities. NGOs undertake to strengthen community-based organizations, to educate the public about social and environmental problems, directly to alleviate the hardships of their target groups, or to strengthen the NGO movement itself.

Just as it has increased its role at the national level, civil society has also become more active in major urban centres. In recent years, with increasing environmental degradation and concern for the welfare and quality of life of urban Thais, participation in politics no longer tends to be confined to electoral processes and political groups. One frequently observes political expression expanding beyond traditional channels. Direct citizen action, through protests, publicity, campaigns, and debate in the media — against, for example, a land development project, a garbage landfill or incinerator site, or an expressway project — is increasingly reported in both national and local newspapers. Also increasing are conflicts among various groups over environmentally sensitive projects. In some cases, citizens’ concerns and local opposition are recognized and lead to peaceful solutions, such as setting up committees of public inquiry or suspending projects; in many other cases, however, ignoring

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9 For example, the prospect of a Doi Suthep cable car in Chiang Mai involved a continued controversy between tourism developers and local people. The project was intended to facilitate tourist access to Wat Phra That, a temple on the mountain. The project had passed all major government approvals but was not approved by local residents, who were concerned about impacts on wildlife, intrusion on the tranquillity and sanctity of the mountain, and inappropriate development near a holy shrine. Local opposition to the project, including university
public opinion and concern has led to riots and violence. In the case of the tantalum refinery in Phuket province, for example, local residents, whose concerns about hazardous materials and possible effects of pollution from the plant had been ignored, formed a mob, broke into the nearly completed plant and burnt it virtually to the ground (Boyle 1993, 77).

In this context of changing political expression, urban environmental concerns have significantly mobilized community-based groups, local NGOs and local residents' groups. These last, with their NIMBY stance toward environmentally sensitive garbage landfills and incinerators, are increasingly observed in the media. The deterioration of the natural environment and lack of services in low-income communities has given rise to NGOs and self-help community-based groups, including savings-cooperative groups, credit unions, housewives' groups and cooperative stores in major urban areas such as Bangkok. They have been especially evident in connection with public services that the state fails to manage effectively (Douglass 1992; Porio 1997a). Many community groups have mobilized against land evictions. For example, people in Bangkok's Bann Kua Muslim community are fighting against the removal of their community for an expressway by petitioning the national cabinet and requesting a public hearing. Other groups have taken development and welfare activities as their mandate. For example, in Wat Chonglom in Bangkok, households banded together to invest in a common walkway, to participate in community-based waste-collection services and to upgrade their settlement, by, for example, constructing a day-care centre (Ard-am 1991).

The rise of local expression on urban environmental issues in Thailand is inseparable from the growing worldwide concern for the environment. Global influences on the Thai professors, monks, students and residents, was mobilized. Articles and debate in newspapers were widespread. A letter of opposition was sent to the prime minister and governor and nearly 1,000 people staged a public protest. The provincial authorities finally decided to shelve the project (Boyle 1993, 79).
environmental movement have manifested themselves in several ways. For example, through the assistance and funding of international development agencies and international environmental NGOs (ENGOs), the NGO sector in Thailand, as it expanded and strengthened, became significant in moving engagement with the environmental issue to the local level and promoting the rights of local communities to protect their own environment. Many international agencies, such as the Danish DANCED, the Canadian CIDA and the German GTZ, encouraged the government to promote efficient urban environmental management in municipal areas. Because the media and advanced information technology are causing a globalization of information, global concerns for the environment can easily capture local people’s attention. Widespread environmental information and learning from experience with environmental distress or disasters elsewhere raises environmental awareness among local citizens.

The emergence of an active civil society, concerned with urban environmental problems among other issues, has several implications for Thailand. First, people are not politically passive, especially about the issues that affect their welfare and livelihood; therefore, it is risky to ignore their opinions or exclude them from decision-making, especially in terms of project implementation. It is increasingly evident that people have, to some extent, the potential, willingness and resources to alleviate the environmental pressure upon them. Second, Thai politics can no longer be validly described by the analogy to the bureaucratic polity. Despite its absolute power in decision-making, the state (especially the central government, but local authorities as well) no longer has the capacity to impose its will against societal resistance or without people’s consent. Since there are no institutionalized
mechanisms for including public concerns in the decision-making process, people affected by decisions have to seek other means to voice their concerns, such as demonstrations, media revelations, civic group formation and direct appeals to politicians (Lawson and Merkl 1988; Ginsberg and Shefter 1990). Establishing the relationship between the state and the people indirectly through voting at regular election times is insufficient. Finally, political expression by local residents over environmental problems in municipal areas is a recent but increasingly important phenomenon; our understanding of it is restricted mainly by the paucity of information, which takes the form only of news and articles in the media and lacks empirical and systematic analysis of the problems. This thesis is intended in part to contribute to a fuller description and analysis of the problem.

III. Purpose of the Research and Research Questions

In light of the political aspects of Thailand’s urban environmental problems, the question becomes one of how to deal effectively with the problems and improve the environment of cities. Although municipalities across Thailand generally operate within the same set of rules and protocols of the central-local government relationship, some municipal governments have succeeded, where others failed, in dealing with their urban environmental problems. The purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that determine the success or failure of municipal environmental management in Thailand. Municipal government is the focus of the research, and solid waste is selected as the key environmental issue to be studied. The central premise of the research, deriving from the governance approach to the urban environment, is

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10 There is the requirement to conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) on large environmental projects; however, EA documents are confidential. For details, see John Boyle (1993).
that the relationship between the municipality and civil society is a crucial factor in explaining
differential municipal performance.

The research involves three major areas of inquiry. One area concerns the
characteristics of municipal government: its administrative capacity to respond to problems,
its degree of local autonomy and its openness to people’s participation. The second area is the
nature and role of civil society in municipal areas with respect to environmental issues. In the
context of environmental pressure, the NGO movement and the changing social, economic
and political context of the city, it is interesting to see how the structure of municipal civil
society has changed and the extent to which it has become an active force in local politics. The
third principal area of interest is the interaction between municipal governments and civil
society through the electoral process and other means of civic engagement, the impact of the
environmental circumstance on this relationship and how this relationship determines
municipal performance on environmental issues.

Significance of the Study

As this research is the first to take an urban governance approach to Thailand’s urban
environment, it will fill a gap not only in urban environmental research but also in the field of
urban politics. The findings of the study will advance our understanding of the complexity of
the urban environmental issue as well as of the dynamics of municipal politics, a theme that
has normally received little attention from political scientists in Thailand. Furthermore, it will
provide empirical data for the policy debate over the urban environmental management
system.
IV. Theoretical Assumptions

This research investigates the central proposition that governance, or the municipal government-civil society relationship, is a crucial factor in explaining varied municipal performance on the urban environment, with particular focus on the solid waste issue. We would expect that different governance systems would lead to differential municipal performance.

The research is also concerned with those characteristics of governance which contribute to good performance or, in other words, effective governance. The literature seems to present two distinct theoretical assumptions. One is the notion of "good governance," which posits certain characteristics of the components of governance being associated with good performance. International donors in the 1990s, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), have been promoting good governance as a key part of their aid policies and development agenda (e.g., World Bank, 1992, 1994; UNDP 1996a, 1996b). Despite different emphases, "good governance" as proposed by international agencies and donors in essence seems synonymous with "democratic good governance". Its key characteristics include an efficient, transparent and accountable public service; the rule of law; broad participation; a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and freedom of the press and expression. In short, it proposes that good performance depends on a strong state, a strong civil society and the positive interaction of state and civil society. The theoretical basis of this assumption is drawn from Western experience, put forward, for example, in the work of Robert Putnam (1993). Even though the good-governance assumption is logically sound, some scholars doubt its applicability in the Third World context. As Adrian Leftwich argues, "the (World) Bank's analysis of governance is naïve because it entirely ignores that good
governance is not simply available on order, but requires a particular kind of politics both to institute and sustain it" (Leftwich 1993, 612).

This issue of applicability brings us to the second theoretical assumption which draws evidence from the Third World experience. The state-civil society relation is perceived as a zero-sum game — either strong state vs. weak society or weak state vs. strong society. Within this general view, there are variations. Joel Migdal (1988), through political and historical analysis, finds that the stronger social organization results in the weaker state capacity. In short, civil society impedes state capacity. Taking a society-centred point of view to explain a weak state, Victor Azarya (1988) and Naomi Chazan (1988) see the weakening of the state in Africa as a function of the detachment of social groups from involvement in state activities and suggest that the incapacity of the state is the end result of the disengagement of civil society from the public sphere. Instead of being a cause of a weak or a strong state, urban research on governance, best exemplified by the work of Mike Douglass (1992), Patricia McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez (1995), and McCarney (1996b), reflects the reality in most Third World cities that the rise of groups in civil society, including social movements, self-help community groups and the informal sector, is in fact a response to a failure of municipal government in urban service delivery. That is, weak municipal government may lead to a more active civil society.

Given these contrasting theoretical views, this research sets out not only to examine the explanatory potential of the urban governance approach but also to provide fresh empirical evidence from a developing country — Thailand —, contributing to the unfolding debate on the nature of the state and the complex relationships between the state and civil society, particularly at the local level.
V. Methodology

This research undertakes a comparative case study of two Thai municipalities which differ in their performance with respect to the urban environment. The case study is preferred as a research strategy here because of three factors: (a) the types of research questions; (b) the extent of control over behavioural events; and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary events (Yin 1994). Since the research question posed here is explanatory — why are some municipalities more successful than others in dealing with urban environmental problems in Thailand? — a case study is more useful as a research tool than a survey or an archival analysis would be. This line of inquiry is not amenable to experiment because it deals with a real-life setting in which a researcher has no control over the event. As the boundary between contexts and an investigated phenomenon is almost inseparable, the case study is advantageous in allowing the researcher to investigate the contextual conditions of the phenomenon, and to produce a holistic description and analysis. The case study is preferred to a purely historical approach because it investigates contemporary events (the time frame of 1990 to 1995) in which all key actors are alive. The case study can deal with various data-collection methods not available in a history, especially observations, surveys and personal interviews.

Furthermore, the decision to conduct a binary analysis — comparing two case studies with different performances — serves the purpose of this research in several ways. It not only increases our knowledge of the two cases through contrast but also can contribute to an understanding of general phenomena. An important point is that, as the main way of approaching the causes of observed phenomena (Dogan and Pelassy 1984), a comparison of cases can shed light on possible causal relationships between governance and performance in
such a way that similar factors can be logically eliminated while different ones can be captured as the explanatory factors behind differential performance.

The research was carried out in four steps: selecting an environmental problem to be studied; selecting cases; collecting data; and validating theoretical assumptions.

**Solid Waste: An Environmental Problem Selected for the Study**

As illustrated above, cities face many urban environmental problems, including traffic congestion, air pollution, water quality deterioration and solid waste problems. The study focuses on the environmental issue of solid waste, an issue chosen for four reasons. First, rapid expansion of urban population and city-based economic activity makes the magnitude of solid wastes a major urban environmental problem facing most cities in Thailand. Although municipal areas produce about 5,600 tons of solid waste per day, 1,100 tons are not removed and only 13% of solid wastes are disposed of in a fashion acceptable from a sanitary and an environmental point of view (Phantumvanit 1994). Municipal residents also regard solid waste as a severe environmental problem. A major survey on urban environment problems conducted by the Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University (1993) in five major cities, including Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Hat Yai, Chonburi and Khon Kaen, found the solid-waste problem ranked second to that of traffic.

Second, garbage collection and disposal is one of the most important services of municipal governments in Thailand. Unlike other environmental problems, including traffic regulation in municipal areas, where various governmental agencies share responsibilities, the collection and disposal of solid waste are the responsibility almost solely of municipal governments. The Municipal Government Act of 1953 mandates, as one of municipal
government's primary functions, the keeping of roads, sidewalks and public places clean, including the collection and disposal of refuse. Thus, investigation of the solid-waste issue as the central environmental problem should reduce the complexity of a comparative analysis, since the role of the central government and other government agencies is limited.

Third, the solid-waste issue is important not only in urban environmental terms but also in political terms. In recent years, one can observe citizens' groups increasingly mobilizing around the solid waste issue. The majority of these organizations are NIMBY groups which mobilize against specific plans to build garbage landfills or incinerators in their communities. Citizens' groups opposing garbage landfills or incinerator sites occur in many cities, for example in Chonburi (Matichon, August 1994), in Chiang Mai (The Nation, September 12, 1994; Siam Rat, September 13, 1994), and in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya (Matichon, December 5, 1994).

Finally, information on municipal performance with respect to solid waste, such as the City Cleanliness and Tidiness Competition, is readily available, thus facilitating the selection of two cases for study.

Case Selection: Chiang Mai and Hat Yai

The focus of the study is urban governance, or the relationship between urban government and civil society. As noted above, Thailand has three forms of urban government: municipal government (of which there are 145 units), the City of Pattaya (1 unit) and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (1 unit). To avoid a confusing discussion of the effect of different forms and structure on performance, the study project excludes the City of Pattaya and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. As the purpose of the research is to explain
differences in municipal performance on solid waste problems, the selection of cases is intended to maximize differences in municipal performance on solid waste and minimize differences in other aspects, such as population and socio-economic circumstances.

The two cases selected are the cities of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai (Map 1.1). These two cities differ strikingly in municipal performance on solid waste. During the period 1990 to 1995, Chiang Mai’s performance in dealing with solid waste was poor. The waste-collection services were frequently interrupted, particularly in August and September 1994, when the waste problem reached a crisis. A lack of available landfills stopped garbage removal for a month. Local residents heavily resisted the establishment of landfills and planned incinerator sites. Chiang Mai’s garbage crisis has engaged nation-wide interest in the waste issue as never before. At present, Chiang Mai is still struggling to find a solution to its solid-waste problem. During the same period, the city of Hat Yai, in contrast, showed much better performance in solid-waste management, as a result winning the cleanliness and orderliness contests run by the National Municipal League of Thailand and the Department of Local Administration (DOLA) of the Ministry of the Interior (second prize in 1993, third prize in 1994 and first prize in 1995 and 1996).

While varying in performance, these two cities have some similarities. Both are identified as regional cities according to the Regional Cities Development Project: Chiang Mai for the Northern Region and Hat Yai for the Southern Region. They are centres of transportation, tourism and commerce, but have little industry. Each city has a regional university: Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai and Prince of Songkhla University in Hat Yai. They differ slightly in terms of population: 172,714 and 157,069 in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai respectively in 1995.
Map 1.1: Kingdom of Thailand
Case study locations: Chiang Mai and Hat Yai
Field Work and Data Collection

Field work in Thailand was conducted between March and June 1996. Four types of data collection methods were employed in this research: personal interview, questionnaire, observation and document analysis.

Data related to the national context of general environmental problems, and to the roles of central and municipal governments and civil society in urban environmental management, were collected from official and unofficial documents and interviews. Included in the documentary survey are: (1) the National Environmental Quality Act, 1975 and 1992; (2) the National Environmental Policy Report; (3) the Municipal Act, 1953; and (4) the Public Sanitation Act, 1992. In addition, information was drawn from a number of research reports and documents produced by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE), the Ministry of the Interior, universities, the media, and research institutions (especially the Thailand Environmental Institute and Thailand Development Research Institute).

The formal and informal interviews include officials concerned with the administration of municipal affairs and urban environmental problems in both Ministries of the Interior; and of Science, Technology and Environment. The list of those interviewed is in Appendix A. I also participated in two seminars. The Division of Local Development (formerly the Office of Urban Development) in DOLA arranged one seminar for municipal planners, on the guidelines and procedures for developing a five-year municipal development plan and an urban environmental action plan. The other was the annual seminar on “National NGOs,” arranged by the Private and Government Cooperation Section of MOSTE. The aim was to provide a forum for NGOs working in the environmental field to exchange experiences as well
as to propose concrete measures to smooth out government-NGO relations in the area of environmental protection.

Data-collection methods in Chiang Mai included documents and personal interviews. Information on the city's physical, socio-economic and environmental conditions and municipal profile, as well as its waste problems, was obtained from annual municipal reports, five-year municipal development plans, and statistical reports of Chiang Mai province, as well as from research, seminar papers and articles produced by government, universities, the media, and research centres. Personal interviews in Chiang Mai involved the current and former deputy mayors, the Chairman of the municipal council, councillors, the municipal clerk and key municipal officers dealing with the waste issue. In addition, I visited both old and current disposal sites. Master’s theses of the Department of Political Science, University of Chiang Mai, constituted an important source of information on municipal politics.

Research undertaken to profile groups in civil society and their roles in municipal solid-waste management was limited to information gathered mainly though personal interviews. News reporters, university professors and municipal employees were important sources in identifying representatives of key civic groups for interviews. Chiang Mai has 21 community groups, recognized by the municipality. I stratified them into three categories according to their land status: seven squatters' communities, three rented-land communities and eleven suburban communities. I selected eight community leaders for interviews: five from the first category, one from the second category and two from the last category. I chose only two suburban communities because most of these were established only in 1994 and

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11 The current Mayor of Chiang Mai was away to attend the orientation for mayors in Bangkok, and the former Mayor refused to be interviewed.
1995. In addition, Chiang Mai has illegal slums not recognized by the municipality. From this category, I interviewed two community leaders on the suggestion of the People's Organization for Participation (POP), a local NGO working in Chiang Mai slums. From the business sector, I interviewed representatives of three groups: the President of the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce, the founder and former President of the Chiang Mai Tourist Business Association, and the President of the Tour Guide Association. The annual report of the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce is a useful source for their involvement in politics and the environment. I collected data on the role of the media, particularly the press, by interviewing two key journalists: the Northern Branch editor of the Bangkok Business Newspaper and the chief editor of the Thai News. The latter was also a radio host and was appointed a member of municipal development committee. For the role of the academic sector in municipal politics and the urban environment, I interviewed three key members of the Social Science Faculty, Chiang Mai University: the Dean of the Faculty, the former Director of the Political Science Department and a Law professor who was actively involved in NGO activities. The interviews also included the former Director of the Environmental Engineering Department who provided technical advice to the municipality on the waste issue. Despite the large number of environmental NGOs in Chiang Mai, I interviewed only leaders of groups which were actively involved in urban environmental issues, including solid waste. They were the YMCA for the Northern Development Foundation, the Walk For the Better Environment group, the For Chiang Mai group, and the Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy.

Data collection in Hat Yai relied on municipal documents and personal interviewing. Other sources provided very little research on municipal politics and the urban environment in Hat Yai. The principal documents for this municipality included annual municipal reports,
five-year development plans, and the urban environmental action plan. Data on waste management was gathered through personal interviews with the mayor, deputy mayors, city clerk and key municipal officers in charge of the waste issue. I also observed street cleaning and spent time visiting the current disposal site and observing its operation.

There is no written material on civic groups in Hat Yai. The data on these organizations were drawn from the interviews with (1) community-group leaders; (2) university professors; (3) NGO representatives; (4) leaders of business and professional associations; and (5) the media. From 25 community groups in the city’s four administrative zones, I chose eight leaders: three from Zone I, one from Zone II, and two from Zone III and Zone IV. For the role of intellectuals and university professors, I interviewed two professors from Prince of Songkhla University: the Director of the Faculty of the Environmental Management Establishment Program and a professor from the Administrative Sciences Faculty. Both provided technical advice to the municipality. Information on the NGOs with a concern for the urban environment in Hat Yai was drawn from interviews with the President of the Love Birthplace Foundation, who was also a university professor, and a key organizer of Bright World in the Birthplace. I gathered data on the role of the business and professional sector by interviewing three key businessmen who were involved in various business and professional associations (Songkhla Chamber of Commerce, Tourist Business Association, Alliance for Southern Thailand Developing Organization and Thaksin Architect Committee). For the role of the media in Hat Yai, I interviewed the Southern Branch Editor of the Bangkok Business Newspaper, Krungthep Turakit (a national newspaper), the Director of Business Market, Talad Turakit (a local newspaper), and the owner of Core Radio company (which produces an environmental program).
In both cities, due to time constraints, I gathered only limited information on informal waste activities. Reports on waste and recycling produced by the Pollution Control Department of MOSTE, provided some information. Personal interviews with garbage pickers or junk buyers were difficult to arrange in advance. I visited some large junk shops but the owners were normally not there. In Hat Yai, I interviewed a group of garbage pickers and one buyer whom I met at the disposal site. In Chiang Mai, I got information from the recycling waste buyer at the Hayya transfer station and few garbage pickers whom I encountered during my visit to some low-income communities. Community leaders also provided me with useful information about garbage pickers in their communities.

For individual residents in both Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, the collection of data on their attitudes toward, and their involvement in, municipal politics and waste management was through the administration of standardized questionnaires. The questionnaire, containing mainly close-ended questions, comprised six major sections: demographics; the urban environment; solid waste issues; attitudes toward and participation in municipal solid-waste management; political participation; and attitudes toward municipal government and municipal politicians. The questionnaire was translated from English into Thai and was pre-tested by 20 respondents in Pathumthani and Nonthaburi city municipalities in April 1996. The questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

The survey of public opinion was collected from a sample of approximately 250 in each city. The population used for the sampling frame was those residents of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai who were eligible to vote in elections (age 18 and over). The survey, carried out in May 1996 in Chiang Mai and in June 1996 in Hat Yai, was supervised by my research
assistant, who was well qualified in this field. In each city, local interviewers were recruited and trained to understand the questionnaire, to approach a target sample, to ask questions and to record the answers. Due to time and budget constraints, the sampling process involved a combination of probability and non-probability methods. To ensure the samples had representatives from different residential areas within the city, the population was first stratified into four city zones in Hat Yai or municipal districts in Chiang Mai. In each zone (Hat Yai) or municipal district (Chiang Mai), four or five major neighbourhoods were conveniently selected. Then, interviewers, who were instructed to promote variation in their samples (e.g., gender, age and status in the household), chose respondents in each neighbourhood. Despite each interview requiring about 30 or 40 minutes, the research assistant reported that respondents were cooperative in answering the whole questionnaire. This positive response might be a result of using local interviewers; furthermore, each respondent received a small gift for their contribution. The survey produced 245 and 264 respondents from Chiang Mai and Hat Yai respectively. The socio-economic background of sampled respondents of the two cities is presented in Appendix C.

The data from the survey questionnaires were processed by SPSS. As the research aims to compare public opinion between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai respondents, data in each city were organized into frequency and percentage distributions. Then cross-tabulations (between

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12 Time limitations obliged me to employ a research assistant to supervise the sampling. The assistant holds a master’s degree and has extensive experience in conducting survey research. I discussed with her the purpose of the survey, details of the questionnaire and sampling strategies.

13 I was concerned about respondents’ willingness to answer the questionnaire because of two factors: (1) it would take at least half an hour to answer the whole questionnaire, and (2) both Hat Yai and Chiang Mai were big cities where people tended to have busy lifestyles. I discussed this concern with some experienced researchers. Some suggested that giving small gifts might be the way to motivate respondents and to show the researcher’s appreciation. The gift I provided was a small wooden saucer which was not too expensive to distract respondents’ interest from the questionnaires.
cities and public opinions) were constructed to compare distribution between the two cities. The test of statistical significance was applied by using the chi-square (or $X^2$) test of independence. If the probability ($P$ or the observed significance level) is small (less than 0.05 for this study), the independence of two variables (cities and public opinions) is rejected. When $P$ is low, the difference between Hat Yai and Chiang Mai respondents has statistical significance.

**Validating Theoretical Assumptions: Possible Outcomes**

The central premise in this research is that governance can explain varied municipal performance in solid-waste management. If this is the case, the study should find that Chiang Mai and Hat Yai have different governance systems, as determined by three elements: the characteristics of municipal government, the nature and organization of civil society, and the municipality-civil society interactions. Regarding the characteristics of governance associated with good or bad performance, the two contrasted theoretical assumptions mentioned earlier lead to different possible outcomes.

If the good-governance argument proposed by international agencies, especially the World Bank, is relevant, we can expect that Hat Yai, a more successful case, should more closely approximate the characteristics of the good-governance model than does Chiang Mai, a less successful one. That is, (1) Hat Yai municipality should be more competent than its Chiang Mai counterpart in waste management; (2) the Hat Yai civil society should be more organized around the waste issue than its Chiang Mai counterpart; and (3) the municipality-civil society relationship in Hat Yai should have a higher degree than in Chiang Mai of
municipal openness regarding waste management, and a more active engagement of civil society in municipal waste issues.

Alternatively, if we follow the relationship between state and civil society, as suggested by Migdal and urban researchers on governance (such as Douglass [1992], McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez [1995], and McCarney [1996b]), despite their different explanations, we might expect that (1) Hat Yai municipality should be more capable than its Chiang Mai counterpart in waste management; (2) Hat Yai’s civil society should be less active and less organized around the waste issue than its Chiang Mai counterpart; and (3) the municipality-civil society interaction in Hat Yai should be a cooperative engagement of civil society in municipal-waste affairs, while one might expect either a disengagement or a confrontational engagement of civil society in municipal-waste affairs in Chiang Mai.
Chapter Two

The Research Framework and Literature Review

I. Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical background of the research project as well as the framework for analysis. The basic approach here is to search for major factors that influence the success or failure of urban governments in dealing with urban environmental problems. Given that focus, the study emphasizes three sets of factors. The literature on urbanization and the urban environment suggests two major perspectives — urban management and urban governance — to help explain municipal performance in dealing with urban problems, including urban environmental problems. While the urban management approach emphasizes the role of urban service providers and their institutional and managerial capacities in service delivery or supply, the urban governance approach is more interested in the demand side and the interaction between urban government and civil society in terms of accountability, responsiveness and participation. A third perspective, drawn from the literature on decentralization and local government, pays attention to issues of central-local relations and local autonomy as the factors having an impact on the performance of local government agencies. The chapter will start by investigating each of these perspectives, and will then develop the framework of analysis employed in this study.

II. The Urban Management Perspective

The concept of “urban management” has emerged as an important part of thinking on urban development since the 1980s. Its influence has overwhelmingly penetrated both practical and
academic levels. As pointed out by McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez, "the bulk of urban research and practice during the 1980s was dominated by the urban management perspective" (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 118). A major force behind its popularity was support from major international organizations, especially the World Bank.¹ Urban management was a focus for urban development assistance during the 1980s (Davidson and Nientied 1991; Stren 1993). The international agencies shifted from the more physical, shelter-related projects of the 1970s toward a more institutional approach in the 1980s and early 1990s (Stren 1993, 132).

The emphasis on institutional and managerial approaches to solving urban problems is justified, considering the environmental factors facing most developing countries by the end of the 1970s. First, in most developing countries very rapid urban growth posed serious problems for national and municipal governments (Cheema 1993; Devas and Rakodi 1993). Indeed, it is increasingly recognized that, if urban governments can respond effectively to growth, the outcome of urban growth is not necessarily bad and cities can contribute positively to national development (Cohen 1990; Stren 1993). However, Third World cities generally failed to meet the challenges of urban growth as the rapid rate of growth outpaced their institutional, administrative and financial capacity to cope (Devas and Rakodi 1993, 28).

As a result, inadequate urban services, such as housing, transportation, water and electricity; poor maintenance of urban infrastructure; the proliferation of slums and squatter settlements; and deterioration of the city environment all became the common scenario for major cities in

¹ The managerial approach had been the focus of most of the World Bank's publications throughout the 1980s; see, in particular, World Bank (1983a, 1983b, and 1991). The support for urban management by the World Bank is also reflected in the establishment in 1986 of the Urban Management Programme (UMP) which is a joint effort with UNDP and UNCHS.
developing countries. Thus, since the growth of cities is inevitable, institutional capacities had to be improved to solve urban problems and promote urban productivity.

Second, the late 1970s and early 1980s were for most developing countries a time of economic crisis: falling prices and export rates of primary commodities, but increasing prices for oil. With countries facing an intractable problem of debt and recession, the decade of the 1980s was one of structural adjustment\(^2\) that was intended to reduce the direct role of government, to cut public expenditures, to lower protection of inefficient industries, and to reduce subsidies for public services (World Bank 1983b). Such policies had adverse impacts on cities which consumed a large part of the investment resources and public subsidies. With cities facing scarcity of available resources from the government, their best strategy was to mobilize other financial resources (especially through privatization), to strengthen as well as to streamline the administrative system.

Finally, most developing countries embarked on some forms of decentralized programs. According to Dennis Rondinelli, J.R. Nellis and Shabbir Cheema:

\[\text{[A] large number of developing countries that are politically, economically, and ideologically diverse began decentralizing some development planning and management functions during the 1970s and early 1980s. They did so because of dissatisfaction with the results of national planning and administration and because the underlying rationale of international development strategies changed during the 1970s (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983, 2).}\]

As a result of such policies, local government institutions, either newly created authorities or older ones taking on new responsibilities, were in a very vulnerable situation (especially reflecting a lack of technical expertise and skilled staff, and weak administrative systems) particularly when dealing with urban growth challenges. Worse, central governments frequently had no intention of transferring power. Local institutions were created and new

\(^2\) For a non-technical review of structural adjustment, see David Glover (1991).
responsibilities devolved, but without adequate authority or resources to perform the job effectively.

Given the circumstances in which the new emphasis on urban management arose, the central question becomes one of what constitutes the urban management perspective. Conceptual discussion of the urban management approach hardly occurs in the literature. As definitions are normally broad, it becomes difficult to delineate the scope of the concept. For instance, according to Forbes Davidson, urban management is the activity of attempting to mobilize diverse resources to work in a cooperative manner in the fields of planning, programming, budgeting development and operation, and maintenance of settlement, in order to achieve the development objectives of city government (Davidson 1988 quoted in Sidabutar et al. 1991, 142). For Kenneth Davey, urban management is concerned with policies, plans, programs and practices that seek to ensure that population growth is matched by access to basic infrastructure, shelter, and employment (Davey 1993a, abstract). As defined by the World Bank, urban management comprises five main elements: (1) improving the management of urban institutions and intergovernmental fiscal relations, and reducing the public role in urban service delivery; (2) improving local resource mobilization; (3) strengthening the management of urban structure, particularly in regard to maintenance; (4) establishing regulatory frameworks that are enabling, rather than constraining; and (5) strengthening financial services for urban development (World Bank 1991). In his attempt to improve the definition of urban management, Giles Clarke focuses on four groups of urban management functions: (1) governance; (2) development policy and investment coordination; 3) management of assets and services; and (4) collective functions (Clarke 1991, 96-97).
Since urban management is an elusive concept (Stren 1993) which lacks definition and boundary, the literature in the field, not surprisingly, presents a diversity of components and addresses various issues ranging from narrow-technical to radical-political issues. In this thesis, the emphasis falls on providing the core features that distinguish urban management from other approaches to urban problems. As reflected in the literature, the main themes of the urban management perspective are shown in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: The Urban Management Perspective**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locus</th>
<th>Cause of urban problems</th>
<th>Key issues</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supply side</td>
<td>Institutional weakness and management inefficiency</td>
<td>1) Local government structure</td>
<td>1) Technical orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• municipal government</td>
<td>• to enforce regulations</td>
<td>• function</td>
<td>• management techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• parastatal field agencies</td>
<td>• to plan strategically and execute urban development plan</td>
<td>• jurisdiction</td>
<td>• technological change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to deliver urban services</td>
<td>2) Administrative capacity</td>
<td>• training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• capacity to collect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• inadequate sources</td>
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</table>

**Locus of the Urban Management Perspective**

In determining success or failure in dealing with urban growth, the literature from the urban management perspective puts most emphasis on the supply side; that is, on those state institutions responsible for providing urban services. Such institutions are by no means limited to the municipal government, even though it has been a prime focus of research since

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3 Narrow-technical issues refer to management techniques and technological improvement such as accounting, administrative procedures, tax collecting improvement and resources constraints, while radical-political issues include decision-making processes, central-local relations and accountability.
the late 1980s. Since, in most developing countries, major urban services, such as housing, water and electricity, have been provided by public enterprises, special bodies and central government departments (Sivaramakrishnan and Green 1986; Stren and White 1989), research on urban management could hardly have ignored their roles and, since its locus is largely government institutions, urban management is considered to be a state-centred perspective.

Causes of Urban Problems

In the analysis of urban problems, the urban management approach assumes the prime causes of urban misery to be weak urban institutions and lack of management capacity in responsible agencies. According to Kenneth Davey et al. (1996), urban institutions need three basic capacities for the effective management of cities: law and regulation enforcement; development planning and implementation; and urban services delivery and maintenance. However, as revealed by various case studies, these capacities are not in place in most cities in developing countries. The Special Region of Jakarta lacked an effective system of planning control and implementation, and also failed to respond to rising demands (Devas and Rakodi 1993, 17-20). The failure to establish local government on a sound basis, together with resource constraints, resulted in the deterioration of services in Dar es Salaam (Devas and Rakodi 1993, 20-22). The performance of Penang Island municipality suffered from a narrow revenue base and personnel problems (Davey 1993a, 10-11). Local government was also incapable of maintaining infrastructure in most large cities in Asia (Sivaramakrishnan and Green 1986). Various African cities commonly have problems in managing urban services (Stren and White 1989).

\[^4\] Such as the study of urban management in Nigeria by Adepoju Onibokun (1989).
Institutional weakness is identified as a major cause of urban environmental degradation in most developing countries. As argued by the UNDP:

Even if the policy, legislation and regulations are in place, the administrative machinery in many developing countries can implement policy only with difficulty...environmental agencies usually have poor powers of sanction, few staff relative to the scale of responsibilities, and few staff with good skill. And because of the dealth of data on environmental matters and the lack of training facilities, enforcement is haphazard (UNDP 1992, 52).

The incapacity of authorities to ensure that public behaviour respects environmental regulations, such as pollution control measures, land use control, sanitary standards, and so on, certainly has an adverse impact on the urban environment. Carl Bartone argues that enforcement is often the weakest link in environmental management, making environmental regulations ineffective in those cities where they are in place (Bartone [1991] quoted in McCarney 1995, 253).

**Key Institutional and Management Factors**

Viewing the urban crisis as a management problem, the literature extensively lists institutional and management constraints on performance which can all be grouped under three headings: the urban administration system, administrative capacity and urban finance.

*The Urban Administrative System:* This refers to the manner in which urban tasks are allocated among urban government institutions. Major issues are jurisdiction, function and size. The question of jurisdiction is acute in most developing, as well as developed, countries where urban management functions are the responsibility of various agencies and different levels of government.\(^6\) Fragmentation of authority and jurisdiction normally creates serious problems of coordination and duplication. Such circumstances also obstruct efficient

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5 Quoted in McCarney (1995, 252).
6 In the case of developed countries, see, for example, Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront (1992).
development planning and implementation, particularly in regard to tackling those environmental problems which do not respect boundaries and sectors (see, for example, Webster 1994). Focusing on these issues, Davey (1993a, 1996a) finds a great diversity in the distribution of urban tasks and resources among central government, parastatal bodies and local government. The role of municipal government varies from dominant to residual. He concludes from case studies that an urban area covered by a single jurisdiction is crucial to the ability of municipal government to provide trunk services and to plan and service development. In regard to size, he finds that small municipalities have obvious difficulties in deploying skilled personnel and equipment (Davey 1993a, 15-16).

Administrative Capacity: This involves the ability to deploy available management resources wisely to achieve the goals of an organization. This depends on several factors. Critical ones are internal structure and management processes, personnel and leadership.

- **Internal structure and management processes**: This factor concerns issues such as division of functions and responsibilities among departments; the relationship between legislative and executive branches, and also the chain of command; management techniques and administrative procedures for carrying out and monitoring activities; and availability of management equipment.

- **Personnel management**: This factor is the ability to attract, acquire, retain and develop capable staff with essential skills; to create a working environment to encourage commitment and innovation; and to maintain high morale (Norris 1996, 162). Personnel management depends on different variables: personnel structure, recruitment and selection processes, wages and compensation, human resources development, and career advancement, as well as a merit system of evaluation.
Leadership: This factor comprises such matters as leadership recruitment, the relationship between political and administrative leaders, and leadership and management styles.

These three factors are related. Although organizational structure and management processes can promote smooth operation and increase efficiency, the extent to which structure and techniques are utilized and exploited depends on the human factor. In the case of technological innovation, Ian Masser (1993) finds that the success of technological innovation depends on the capabilities of the technical staff involved; the degree of commitment among the non-technical staff whose work is affected by the new technology; national attitudes toward technological innovation; and the extent to which innovations improve established administrative procedures. William Dillinger (1994) argues that focusing on internal management procedures and techniques is an inadequate approach to effective urban management. He stresses the importance of motivation of individuals within and outside the organization, stating that, “to understand organizational results, one must understand the motivations of the myriad of individuals who play some role in the provision of urban services” (Dillinger 1994, 8). Davidson (1991) proposes an interesting argument. As a project consultant, he finds a reverse relationship between motivation of staff and performance. He stresses that “success can build up the motivation of staff and the popular and political support necessary to achieve more ambitious objectives” (Davidson 1991, 130).

Leadership is central to effective urban management. Good leadership often attracts quality staff. Leadership’s lack of commitment to change, however, can thwart the ambitious objectives of technical projects (Martin 1991). According to Davey (1993a), political and administrative leaders have to complement and support each other. While political leaders must address, with authority, vision and commitment, the overall challenges of city growth,
degradation and deprivation, the principal administrative officer needs the power and status to exercise clear managerial control, particularly over department heads, and to deter political leaders from excessive intrusion into managerial functions. In a comparative study, both Davey (1993a, 1993b) and David Pasteur (1996) find that a strong mayor has some advantages. Pasteur finds that strong mayors with single executive power who are elected at large (as, for example, in Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines) are more likely to generate major plans and policies for cities than are mayors with fragmented, or plural, executive power. In a plural executive system, such as practiced in Uganda and Zimbabwe, mayors rarely initiate major policies due to their lack of political leadership, a lack attributable to a limited power and a short term in office of one year (Pasteur 1996, 121-125). According to Davey, a strong mayor best provides public accountability and a strategic view of city needs and development. Furthermore, a strong mayor generally is in a stronger negotiating position because of his or her personal electoral mandate and the ability to deliver the municipal side of a bargain (Davey 1993a, 18).

_Urban Finance:_ The literature has focused on this issue, from management as well as decentralization perspectives. As a management resource, funding is central to the urban government’s ability to execute its responsibilities, including paying for effective administrators, financing investments and maintenance expenditures, and supporting debt servicing. The inadequacy of financial resources is a major constraint in almost every developing country (Montgomery 1989; Davey 1993a; Bird 1995). The financial problem of local government is inseparable from other issues of decentralization. Richard Bird well expresses the critical issue of matching: “The basic principle of effective local government may be thought of as the matching principle. Expenditure responsibilities should be matched
with revenue resources. Revenue capacities should be matched with political accountability. And benefit areas should be matched with financing areas" (Bird 1995, 19).

Concerning the financial problem facing urban governments, the literature addresses three major issues: revenue collection, cost recovery and revenue-raising power. Most urban governments in developing countries have generally low revenue-collection capacity. Davey and Nick Devas (1996) paint a gloomy picture of revenue collection in various cities, highlighting several factors contributing to this poor performance: central or state government restrictions, out-of-date tax registers and tax assessments, a large number of exemptions and reductions, inconvenient payment methods, lack of enforcement against defaulters, and corrupt revenue collectors. Good performance, for Davey and Devas, has three ingredients: political will, motivation of staff and a good administrative system (involving proper record-keeping and accounting systems, and so on) (Davey and Devas 1996). In a similar vein, Roy Bahl and Johannes Linn (1992) argue that most cities in developing countries have a severe problem with property-tax administration, including poor site and ownership identification, record-keeping and management, and tax assessment and collection. Collection costs are high, while collection efficiency is often low. In addition to improper tax administration and a shortage of skilled staff, collection suffers from weak legal capacity for prosecution, the lack of inducements necessary to stimulate collection, and the tendency of the powerful to escape paying taxes.

Inadequacy of funding further suffers from the weak link between the real cost and the charge for a service: consumers do not face the full cost of service provision. The principle of cost recovery hardly occurs in practice (Linn 1987; Bird 1995; Davey and Devas 1996). Failure to adopt full cost recovery has also led to the deterioration of the urban
environment in Asia, by preventing municipalities from recovering the financial resources necessary for the operation, maintenance and capacity for expansion of major services, such as water supply and treatment, and waste collection (Brandon and Ramankutty 1993).

The literature addresses the limited revenue-raising power of local government (e.g., Linn 1987; Stren and White 1989; Dillinger 1994; Davey and Devas 1996). As Linn expresses it:

[C]entral governments tend to retain the more elastic revenue sources, such as general income and sales taxes, for their own use, leaving the more inelastic revenue sources at the disposal of local government. Even for the latter revenue sources, many national governments restrict the definition of the tax base, the rates that local governments can charge, and the administrative leverage of local authorities in collecting revenues (e.g., penalties for nonpayment of tax) (Linn 1987, 253).

Inadequate revenues from local sources have left local authorities with no choice but to rely on transfers from central governments in the form of grants and loans. Depending on central grants certainly has some disadvantages, including reduced local control, a degree of unpredictability and the promotion of inefficiency (Davey 1993a). Therefore, weak financial authority has in turn weakened the ability of municipalities to respond effectively to urban growth.

*Proposed Solutions*

To deal with urban problems and overcome institutional weakness, the literature of the urban management perspective proposes various measures, which are variously technical, market-oriented and political strategies. The technically oriented strategy involves strengthening urban institutions by focusing on internal processes and management techniques, namely by developing new systems of planning and budgeting, reforming legal conditions and administrative procedures, setting appropriate and realistic performance standards, and upgrading systems through technological innovation such as computer-based information
systems. Among the recommendations concerning staffing are technical training, secondment of personnel from central governments, and personnel-system reform.

The market-oriented strategy mobilizes financial resources. It includes improving the system of revenue administration through tax mapping and computerized information systems, and also by revising tax or charge rates, privatization and cost recovery. Privatization involves reducing the government role through the participation of the private sector, particularly in the delivery of services, and it can take various forms. For example, Sandra Cointreau-Levine identifies four types of private-sector involvement in solid-waste management: contracting, concession, franchise, and open competition (Cointreau-Levine 1994). The benefits of privatization include enhancing efficiency and mobilizing private investment. Cost recovery and the polluter-pay principle are also recommended in the literature. Imposing user charges is a helpful strategy (Bahl and Linn 1992; Bird 1995) because it not only raises revenues but may also improve the efficiency of service provision. Moreover, charging allows price mechanisms to regulate consumers’ behaviour. For example, people will try to reduce the amount of garbage they generate if charged on a per-ton basis, and will tend to be economical in water consumption if charged a waste-water treatment fee calculated on the amount of water consumption. However, debate continues on the implications of privatization and user charges on the urban poor. Moreover, the empirical evidence of the value of adopting this strategy is inconclusive. Therefore, such a strategy is not universal and needs to be carefully designed to meet the particular urban circumstances. At the very least, privatization requires profound changes in the structure of service delivery, and also necessitates removing restrictions on the participation of the private sector.
The final strategy proposed is political decentralization. Since 1990 the urban management literature has become noticeably more involved in political issues. Specifically, it increasingly recognizes that strengthening municipal government requires fundamental changes in the whole system of government. Prescriptions for a strong local government — legal authority, clear responsibility, comprehensive boundaries, inter-agency coordinating mechanisms, financial resources, and local autonomy — depend on the central government’s willingness to devolve real power to lower levels of government. The literature of the early 1990s in particular calls for political decentralization as a necessary first step to effective urban management. Political decentralization will be explored further in the section on the third perspective — decentralization.

In conclusion, the mainstream literature on the urban management perspective sees urban problems — housing shortages, water and air pollution, environmental degradation, and so on — in institutional and managerial terms. Therefore, strengthening urban governmental agencies, especially local government, through administrative reform, technical training, financial mobilization and changing the structure of urban service delivery by privatization, are the major solutions considered in mainstream writings. Focusing on the role of state institutions as service providers and viewing the capacity of urban governments as the major determinant of effective handling of urban problems are at the core of the urban management approach.

However, the experience of many developing countries has proved the managerial and institutional perspective on urban problems to be too narrow to cope adequately with all the problems. The lack of the political dimension is the most serious limitation of this approach. To overcome this limitation, the scope of urban management expanded in the early 1990s to
encompass such political issues as central-local relations, local autonomy and the participation of stakeholders in urban management. The literature which addresses the political element in urban management includes, for instance, Davey et al. (1996), and the publications of the Urban Management Programme (Davey 1993a; Dillinger 1994; Schubeler 1996).

III. The Urban Governance Perspective

Since the early 1990s, the governance perspective has increasingly been adopted in development discourse, and the international development community has been promoting good governance as a key part of aid policies and development agendas (World Bank 1992, 1994; Leftwich 1993; McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 104-108; UNDP 1996a, 1996b). Leftwich argues that international donors’ interest in governance is due to four factors. First, the experience of structural adjustment in the 1980s reflects the significance of political factors such as political commitment and state capacity in policy design and implementation. Second, neo-liberalism, dominant in the Western ideological profile since the 1980s, leads to the assumption that democracy is necessary for a free market economy and that economic growth failed in most Third World countries as a consequence of such political factors as authoritarian rule and deficient democratic practices. Third, the collapse of communism in the late 1980s has enabled the West to impose the political conditionality of democratization on Third World countries, without being afraid of losing allies or clients to Communism, as had been the case in the earlier bipolar world of the cold war. Finally, indigenous pro-democracy movements in many Third World countries legitimize the international donors’ policies by supporting political liberalization (Leftwich 1993, 608-610).
In addition to the global context, the governance approach also enjoys popularity at a more local level. Research on issues of urban governance in developing countries is increasing, as is shown in, for instance, the volumes edited by McCarney (1996b), and Robert Wilson and Reid Cramer (1996). The attractiveness of the approach lies in its focus on urban politics, which offers an alternative avenue into the question of cities and how they are to be governed. As governance is a relatively new subject in urban research, debate on the concept and on the framework for its application continues. The attempt here is to explore what constitutes the governance perspective in the analysis of urban problems.

To understand urban governance, we must first look at the definition of governance itself. Governance is not a new term or concept in political and academic discourse. It generally refers to the task of running a government or any appropriate entity, such as an organization (Hyden 1992). But it is the World Bank who actually gave prominence to the term “governance” in the debate on economic development when its 1989 study “Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth” identified the crisis in Africa as one of governance (World Bank 1989a). Since then the term has become a leitmotiv of aid programs as well as in academic circles. Despite its popularity in the literature, the meaning of governance has become confusing, partly because of the variations in the ways the term is employed. In 1992, the World Bank defined governance as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development” (World Bank 1992, 3). Conceptually, for the World Bank, governance is broad, covering three aspects: (1) the form of political regimes; (2) the management of a country’s economic and social resources; and (3) the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions. Operationally, however, the Bank puts the
political aspect of governance outside its mandate, focusing on the administrative and governmental framework such as the rule of law, public sector management, and mechanisms of accountability and transparency. The Bank’s primary concern with governance is how to improve the operation of government; in other words, it is a call for good (or better) government. In this sense, the Bank’s usage of the term is narrow, equated with government. The Bank’s discourse has increasingly adopted the term “good governance.” For the Bank, good governance means a capable, accountable and transparent government. Therefore, it is not surprising to see some researchers, such as those writing in the *IDS Bulletin* in 1993 (Moore 1993; Lancaster 1993), using governance and good government as interchangeable.

Despite their similarity to the Bank in approaching governance in a normative manner, most Western bilateral donors define the term with a different emphasis. Focusing on the political agenda, governance for them involves the type of political regime (i.e., military/civilian, democratic/authoritarian), and good governance includes democratization (i.e., a transition to democracy along liberal lines), human rights and civilian freedom. The United States Government, for example, equates good governance with democracy and sees it as an end in itself (Lancaster 1993, 12).

From the academic perspective, governance has a more neutral meaning and tends to move away from the state-centred framework. As the political scientist Michael Lofchie pointed out, governance is distinct from government as it does not prejudge the locus or character of real decision-making (Lofchie 1989 quoted in Hyden 1992; McCarney 1996a). It means that the real political power in managing economic and social resources is not necessarily vested solely within the formal institutions of the state. It helps to broaden the concept of governance to include more than the state perspective. This provides a key
dimension in the current usage of the term, in which governance is not equated with
government, but has moved away from a state-centric perspective to include the people as a
major actor in the governing relationship. Major proponents of a broad meaning of
governance include McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez, whose definition, mentioned above,
encompasses the role of civil society and establishes the relationship between the state and
civil society as the focus of governance (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995). Some
international agencies also use this broad meaning of governance. Thus, the UNDP defines
governance as:

[T]he exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs. It is the
complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate
their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences (UNDP 1996a, 9).

The UNDP makes it clear that governance is broader than government, as “governance
encompasses the state, but it transcends the state by including the private sector and civil
society organizations” (UNDP 1996b, 3). The UNDP’s major purpose in supporting good
governance is “to promote constructive interaction among all three” (UNDP 1996b, iv).

Most urban researchers tend to employ “urban governance” in this broader meaning,
which includes the role of non-state actors, as well as their relationships with the
governmental agencies within the city context. According to Alfredo Rodriguez and Lucy
Winchester (1996) in their study of urban governance in Latin America, governance refers to
“the pattern of formal and informal relationships between the agents that operate within and
throughout a city, and how these agents make urban development decisions” (Rodriguez and
Winchester 1996, 29). Governance, for them, includes agents that function both inside and
outside the sphere of the state. They broaden the definition to cover non-state actors and also
informal relationships, which are a dominant element in the state-citizen relationship. For
Magda Prates Coelho (1996), urban governance concerns both technical and political aspects of governance, defined as "a governing process which is characterized by: (a) popular participation in the public sphere based on the rights of citizenship; (b) a modern and democratic relationship between government and civil society; and (c) bureaucratic-administrative efficiency capable of positively associating the technical with the political" (Coelho 1996, 42).

To clarify the state-civil society relationship that lies at its heart, key aspects of the urban governance approach are summarized in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: The Urban Governance Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locus</th>
<th>Cause of Urban Problem</th>
<th>Prescriptive Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Political issues</td>
<td>Effective Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>• access to and distribution of power and resources</td>
<td>1) Good governance model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• governing relationship</td>
<td>• Strong local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• nature and role of civil society</td>
<td>• high capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• political aspects of urban government</td>
<td>• openness (transparency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• linkage mechanisms and processes between urban government</td>
<td>• accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>• governing relationship</td>
<td>• Strong civil society participating in public affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• nature and role of civil society</td>
<td>2) Open and legitimate relationship between state and civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business sector</td>
<td>• political aspects of urban government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>• linkage mechanisms and processes between urban government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>• individual citizens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal sector</td>
<td>• individual citizens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Locus of the Urban Governance Perspective: Inclusion of Civil Society

Without a pre-determination of the locus of power, the notion of governance permits an incorporation of forces in civil society which are conventionally considered to be outside the political process. This is significant when applying the concept to the urban context. It offers an alternative to the management approach which prominently focuses on the government
side of urban development. As distinct from the management approach, governance has broadened the locus of urban research to include social forces or actors in civil society who are either beneficiaries of urban development or stakeholders in that process.

One issue that arises is why civil society matters in understanding politics and development at both national and local levels. Even though the idea of civil society has been discussed in social and political theory, there was little empirical application to developing countries where the role of state and authoritarian forms of government prevailed. However, the 1990s have seen a major upsurge of interest in the concept of civil society as contributing to understanding democratic transition, and consolidation and development in the developing world. This owes much to the rise of social movements against communist states in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, which became a source of inspiration to democratic movements in developing countries. Civil society is seen as playing a major role in bringing about the downfall of many authoritarian regimes or contributing to the process of political liberalization and democratization occurring in the Third World. From the development perspective, the interest in civil society shown by academics and the international development community also stems from economic factors which have political and social implications. The economic crisis, followed by structural adjustment programs involving, among other effects, the reduction of public expenditures and the decentralization of state functions, has resulted in reducing the scope of the state in the provision of public services. It forced people to withdraw their reliance on the state for resources and to depend more on

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7 The relationship between civil society and democratization is discussed by for example, Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillippe Schmitter (1986) in the case of Latin America and Southern Europe; Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle (1992); John W. Harbeson, Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan (1994), and Stephen Ndegwa (1996) in the African context.
their own efforts. This led to the growth of civil society which included the private sector, the voluntary sector and local self-help groups, replacing the state in service delivery and poverty alleviation. It contributed to a shift in the balance of power and social responsibility away from the state. This situation is also relevant in an urban context where local government is weak, lacking either the political or the financial power to act. In response, organizations in civil society expand and engage in self-help programs in order to meet their needs for basic services. It is this expansion of groups in civil society in response to the incapacity of state agencies, that provides the broader meaning of governance. As McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez point out:

> As we increasingly recognize that civil society organizes into new associational arrangements, often to pursue survival strategies in this changing state-civil society nexus, it becomes important to reconsider our thinking about government within a broader dimension. Hence the increased attention to the concept of governance (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 94-95).

While the literature recognizes the influence and contribution of civil society in the process of political and socio-economic development in the Third World, there is less agreement on the meaning of civil society. This leads to varied operational definitions of civil society in political and urban research. As civil society is seen from a political point of view, particularly associated with liberal democracy, the political science literature in developing countries tends to define civil society in relation to the state. In this literature, civil society refers to a segment of society, comprising autonomous groups, which interacts with the state. Such interactions can be cooperative or confrontational. Most of the essays on African civil society in the collection edited by Harbeson, Rothchild and Chazan (1994) are good examples of this tendency. For example, Aili Mari Tripp (1994) investigates women’s groups as a part of civil society in Tanzania because they engage politically with the state. Michael Bratton (1994) identifies the Christian churches in Kenya and the labour unions in Zambia as the
leading institutions in civil society in each country on the basis of their independence from, and their opposition to, the state. In a similar vein, in the Indonesian context, Arief Budiman (1990) identifies the press, business and the Muslims as the most influential sectors in civil society, since they influence state policies and resist state domination. For some scholars, civil society is more narrowly defined. According to Jean-Francois Bayart, civil society exists only in so far as it is conscious of its own existence and of its opposition to the state (Bayart 1986 quoted in Young 1994, 44). For Alfred Stepan (1988), civil society is distinct from political society in the sense that civil society interacts with the state but does not attempt to capture state power. Political society is not a part of the state, but includes institutions, such as political parties, the legislature and elections, through which social actors compete for political power. Since political scientists define civil society as groups engaging politically with the state, either to assert their influence in setting rules or to counterbalance state power, civil society tends to comprise a set of formal and organized intermediate civic associations such as the church, labour unions, women and youth groups, professional and business associations, and NGOs.

In contrast to the political science literature, urban research employs the term “civil society” in a broader and more neutral manner. Civil society refers to an arena outside the state sphere, comprising both organized and unorganized sectors, in which their existence and roles, with or without interaction with the state, have an impact on the functions of cities. These forces in civil society, as reflected in urban research, have engaged in the process of urban development in two capacities. First, they perform social and economic functions within the city. These refer to sectors in civil society which engage in city development as service providers, filling the gap left by the government. They include the private sector, the
informal sector, and community-based organizations and NGOs. It is clear from the literature that the government (including local authorities) is no longer the sole service provider in urban areas, since the private sector has an increasing stake in the cities (see, for example, Cointreau-Levine 1994; Batley 1996). The existence and role of the informal sector in the urban economy has now become well known (Economic Impact 1988; World Bank 1989a; De Soto 1989). As observed by McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez, in most Third World cities the bulk of housing, transportation, employment and trade occurs outside formal state institutions (1995, 102). For example, in Lima, Peru, 83% of markets are informal sector ones, 95% of public transport is run by the informal sector, and between 50% and 75% of the housing occupied by urban dwellers is informal (De Soto 1989). There is also an increase in community organizations acting for survival in the face of poverty. They engage in self-help programs and create social networks in order to meet their basic needs (Moser and Peake 1987; Schuurman and Naerssen 1989; Hasan 1990). NGOs are also blooming in the area of direct provision of social services and poverty alleviation programs such as health, education and vocational training in poor communities. The expansion of groups in civil society at least partly results from the state’s inability to provide basic services. As McCarney argues,

In response to state incapacity to address these local problems, organizations in civil society have entered the void, often out of necessity, and have organized to meet these un-met needs and demands. There are now organizations for squatter communities, tenants' associations, savings and credit associations, area development committees, security committees, women's associations, and even independent research and management advisory bodies (McCarney 1996b, 11).

Second, social forces in civil society also perform a political role in the city. They act in relation with the government to assert their demands and change the rules of governance. The literature on urban politics suggests that the urban political landscape includes not only formal organizations such as political parties, labour unions, and business associations, but
also the network of informal organizations of the urban poor. These groups in civil society, first organized around basic needs, have become better organized and more sophisticated, in the process becoming a major force in both national and local politics:

As a result of the trust they [associations or groups in civil society] have gained in their respective communities, their ability to organize their constituencies as political voice has also expanded. Therefore, these groups, together with other, more formal, private sector organizations, constitute an urban civil society which has increased its political and economic space and created a power block in the urban centres (McCarney 1996b, 11-12).

Various studies have reflected the political power of community groups or “urban social movements.” For instance, Alan Gilbert and Josef Gugler argue that, in many Third World cities, the most conspicuous political action of the urban masses has been the establishment of squatter settlements (Gilbert and Gugler 1982). Lisa Peattie shows that community groups in Peru are able to negotiate with the government in the formation of new settlements (Peattie 1990). According to Arif Hasan, community groups in Pakistan are able to lobby the state in various ways, such as persuading the government to build a post office and taking legal action to obtain gas connections (Hasan 1990).

Given this new urban setting, urban research and analysis can no longer bypass the critical role of civil society in shaping cities, if the urban dynamic is to be understood holistically. The governance approach leads us to view all actors, whether state or non-state, as major parts of cities. The interaction among these actors constitutes the central element of the urban governance perspective.

**Cause of Urban Problems: Political Issues**

The governance approach looks beyond the managerial to more political aspects of urban problems. In this perspective, urban problems are not necessarily associated with inadequate resources and institutional weaknesses but do involve the issues of access to and distribution
of resources and power in society. A lack of power implies a lack of access to the resources required to create a secure and fulfilling life. It is generally found that the poor as a powerless group suffer most in an urban crisis (see, for example, Campbell 1989; Leach and Mearns 1991; Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992). They have limited access to legal housing, and their settlements usually have the least adequate garbage collection service or have no service at all (Cointreau-Levine 1982). Furthermore, resources are unequally distributed to the urban poor. According to Bartone (1990), they are often left without services even when they are willing to pay for them, while the rich receive subsidized services (Bartone 1990, 7). In developing countries, attempts to improve access for the poor to urban services have not yet succeeded in the face of insufficient political will. In their analysis of urban environmental problems in developing countries, Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite point out that “most environmental problems are political and lack of services does not necessarily mean a shortage of resources but, more often, a lack of political will to set and pursue environmental priorities” (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992, 23).

With respect to the issues of access and distribution, the urban governance approach does not disregard the capacity of urban institutions so much as it maintains that focusing on such technical aspects alone is inadequate. Strengthening management capacity in no way guarantees a representative, responsive and accountable urban government. The urban governance perspective draws our attention to political issues around the governing relationship between urban institutions and civil society, such as legitimacy, public participation, accountability, transparency, decision-making processes, the electoral system, and political leadership. Experience in developing countries shows that both deficiencies in the democratic practices of urban institutions (including, for instance, being unmindful of
local needs, and the lack of public accountability and public participation) as well as the lack of political commitment and integrity among their leaders, can undermine their governing capacities to respond to problems or to implement appropriate policies and actions. For example, K.C. Sivaramakrishnan finds that the absence of public participation and lack of public accountability of parastatal authorities are reasons for resistance to attempts at cost recovery in India (Sivaramakrishnan 1992). Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite also point out that weak, ineffective and unrepresentative urban government is a major constraint in addressing the environmental problems of cities in developing countries (Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1992). The absence of consistent political will hampers the implementation of land-use planning in Jakarta, Indonesia, according to Douglass (1989).

As a major reason for the failure of aid programs, the World Bank cites the lack of accountability, of transparency and of the rule of law — in short, poor governance:

Programs for poverty alleviation and environmental protection, for example, can be totally undermined by a lack of public accountability, corruption, and the ‘capture’ of public services by elites. Funds intended for the poor may be directed to the benefit of special interest groups, and the poor may have inadequate access to legal remedies. Similarly, the enforcement of environmental standards, which benefit the population as a whole but which may be costly to powerful industrial and commercial groups, can be emasculated by poor governance (World Bank 1992, 10).

With its political analysis of the underlying causes of urban problems, including urban environmental problems, the governance approach sheds light on elements which may affect actual performance on issues. These elements include the organization and roles of civil society in shaping a city; the administrative capacity, as well as the political practices, of urban government; and the interaction of the civil society and the urban government through, for instance, channels of participation, systems of accountability and mediation mechanisms.
**Proposed Solutions**

As the governance approach focuses on political issues involving the state-civil society relationship in the analysis of development problems, one major challenge for governance is how to improve the relationship or create an effective governance process which contributes positively to institutional performance. The literature is not unanimous in proposing a solution, but the most prominent idea is the notion of good governance. Its popularity is due to the fact that the international donor community has established it as a central part of the aid policy agenda in the 1990s at both the national and local levels. As the World Bank points out, “these terms (good governance or good government) emphasize governance’s normative aspects and facilitate its use as a guide to aid allocation using criteria drawn from the political as well as economic dimensions of governance” (World Bank 1994, xiv).

What constitutes the good governance these organizations propose? The World Bank, as a pioneer in the governance business, argues that “good governance is central to creating and sustaining an enabling environment for development” (World Bank 1992, 47). For the Bank, good governance is synonymous with sound development management (World Bank 1992) which is “epitomized by predictable, open, enlightened policy-making (that is, a transparent process); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law” (World Bank 1994, vii). Emphasizing a political dimension of governance, some multilateral and bilateral donors link good governance with effective governance. 

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8 To eliminate the confusion in wording, the term “effective governance” is used in this study to denote a system of governance associated with good performance, while “good governance” refers to the specific system of governance which is proposed by the international development communities in order to achieve effective governance.
governance with participatory development, human rights and democratization. For example, the OECD suggested that good governance includes popular participation (empowerment of groups participating in public policy process), democratization (legitimacy of government, accountability to the people, free and fair elections, and a pluralistic civil society), the rule of law, effective public sector management and the protection of human rights (OECD 1994 quoted in Nunnenkamp 1995). Taking a similar view, the Council of the European Community identified elements of good governance as:

[S]ensible economic and social policies; democratic decision making; adequate government transparency and financial accountability, creation of a market friendly environment for development; measures to combat corruption; as well as respect for the rule of law, human rights and freedom of the press and expression (Denters 1995, 308).

The UNDP, in its recent publications on governance, considers good governance as the primary means for achieving sustainable human development. The core characteristics of good governance are participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision (UNDP 1997b, 2-5).

This review of the characteristics of good governance, developed by multilateral and bilateral aid donors, actually reflects a clear position among the international community that the democratic mode of exercising power is most effective in the management of a country’s socio-economic resources for development. Therefore, good governance is in essence equated with democratic governance, and democratic governance is equated with current Western institutional forms. Although the World Bank is primarily concerned with the economic and social dimensions of governance, the fact is that the implementation of good governance is basically political in nature. It requires both legal and political reforms. Furthermore, as Carol Lancaster suggests, the World Bank’s emphasis on information and open policy-making in
practice leads it very close to endorsing multi-party democracy and civil liberties (Lancaster 1993).

The good governance agenda is a part of aid policies directed not only to the national but also to the local level. The urban policy of international donors has begun to put more emphasis on governance-related issues such as decentralization, community actions and effective local participation (McCarney 1995). The UNDP also promotes local good governance, including strengthening local authorities, directly supporting organizations in civil society and promoting partnerships among stakeholders in a community (UNDP 1997b). Empowerment of the urban poor has become, as Shabbir Cheema⁹ argues, a focus of donors in the 1990s:

There seems to be general agreement that we must organize the urban poor at the community level to increase their capacity to make demands on the urban system, to safeguard their interests. That is the way the system, any system, works; the organizational capacity of the poor must be strengthened to put pressure from below, so that their interests are safeguarded (Cheema 1992, 27-28).

Some urban research also reinforces the idea of good governance at the local level. For example, the first international workshop on good local government, hosted by the University of Texas in 1994, identified six characteristics of good local government practice: participation, transparency, contestation, accountability, innovation, and results (Wilson 1996a, xi). Except for the last, these characteristics are similar to those of the good governance model. Moreover, the positive contributions of citizen participation and horizontal association to the working of democratic institutions at the sub-national level are well supported by various studies (e.g., Putnam 1993; Fox 1996; Morales and Jacobi 1996). For example, in explaining the differing performance of regional governments in Italy,

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⁹ Principal Technical Adviser, Bureau for Program Policy and Evaluation, UNDP.
Robert Putnam finds the density of horizontal associational life in society to be the most powerful explanation. He further argues that “civicness,” meaning civic engagement, political equality, trust and tolerance, contributes both to good government and to economic development. He concludes, “strong society, strong economy; strong society, strong state” (Putnam 1993, 176). Jonathan Fox shares Putnam’s view that a better organized civil society tends to have more effective governance processes. However, such a causal relationship, Fox argues, is not necessarily only one way but can be reciprocal: “participation forces in civil society encourage more accountable governance, while proaccountability elements within the state encourage more participation” (Fox 1996, 3). Both Putnam and Fox seem to argue that effective governance depends on both strong civil society and strong government.

Although the good governance assumption is logically sound at the abstract level and each element, such as citizen participation and accountability, has merit on its own, the question arises whether this model can work to produce good performance in the Third World context.

The empirical literature seems to provide little support to the good governance assumption. Good governance calls for both strong civil society and a strong state, arguing that civil society has to be strong to be able to engage in public affairs and to hold the government accountable for its actions; this contributes to effective, responsive and accountable government. The basis of this assumption can be drawn from the civil society argument which, as Michael Foley and Bob Edwards (1996) put it, is that “a dense network of civil associations is said to promote the stability and effectiveness of the democratic polity through both the effects of association on citizens’ ‘habit at heart’ and the ability of associations to mobilize citizens on behalf of public causes” (Foley and Edwards 1996, 38).
The authors distinguish two broad types of civil-society argument. The first, associated with the works of Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and Alexis de Tocqueville, emphasizes the ability of associational life in general and the habits of association in particular to foster patterns of civility in the actions of citizens in a democratic polity. The most recent and forceful empirical evidence of this version is the work of Robert Putnam on Italy (1993). The second type of argument, according to Foley and Edwards (1996), which is articulated by, for example, Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik, is most evident in the popular movements of Eastern Europe and the democratization process in Latin America where civil society is capable of energizing resistance to a tyrannical regime. It emphasizes the importance of civil society as a counterweight to the state.

The problem of the civil society argument, as Foley and Edwards point out, is that both versions present only a partial picture of civil society, focusing only on positive aspects. The civil society argument seems to ignore the fact that if the strong civil society can pressure authoritarian governments for change and thwart tyrannical regimes, it can also be used to undermine or oppose democratic governments. Regarding the postulation of the positive effects of associations on the work of democratic institutions, not all associations can make such contributions. That is why, for example, Putnam’s portrait of the civic community includes only apolitical civic associations, mainly cultural and recreational associations (such as hunting clubs, bird-watching groups, Lions Clubs and sports groups), excluding political associations and new social movements (such as citizens groups, NGOs and women’s groups) (Putnam 1993). The social capital and civicness that is beneficial to effective governance seems to stem more from non-political associations whose members cut across social cleavages.
The issue of the definition of civil society puts the civil society argument, and thereby the good governance assumption, in a more gloomy light in the Third World context. As mentioned, groups in civil society, discussed in the context of governance in developing countries, are political and heterogeneous, including both broad and parochial interest groups. Some are informal and some are organized along communal, religious and ethnic identities. They tend to proliferate as a response to economic hardship and feeble government. Civil society here may well be different from the kind of associational life which Putnam claims can positively contribute to the work of democratic institutions.

The strong society, strong state assumption is also weakened by the fact that, in some African countries, the expansion of social groups is part of a disengagement where people withdraw from the state activities and form their own public sphere (i.e., creating their own rules of resource distribution) such as communal and ethnic groups, black market and informal sectors. This process further undermines the state’s ability to control resources and to exert authority (Azarya 1988; Chazan 1988, 1992). The expansion of self-help groups is also true for urban dwellers (McCarney 1996b). The situation tends to reinforce Joel Migdal’s description of the state-society relationship as a zero-sum game: strong societies, weak states or weak societies, strong states. Similar to Putnam, Migdal’s interest is to explain different state capacities, referring to the ability to penetrate society, regulate social relationship, and extract and appropriate resources, in developing countries. In contrast to Putnam’s argument, Migdal finds that a strong, well organized and exuberant society weakens the state’s capacities. That is, strong society, weak state. He argues that the existence of numerous autonomous social organizations — families, clans, tribes, neighbourhoods and multinational corporations — which act as power centres operating
under their own rules, has impeded the state’s ability to expand its capabilities. For the state to be strong,\textsuperscript{10} Migdal says that societies must be weakened so that a new distribution of social control can emerge with the state at its centre.

In addition to the potential incompatibility between strong societies and strong states, some literature also questions the validity of other characteristics of good governance in relation to good performance. For example, Robert Jenkins (1995) argues that the successful management of the implementation of economic reforms in India is not achieved by means of transparent and accountable government, but rather through astute political manoeuvring by political leaders using political tactics which involve a lack of transparency.

While the international donor community considers good governance as a prescription for development problems, including urban issues, some advocates of governance, such as McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez, who first examined governance in an urban context, argue that governance is not simply a style of management aimed at increasing regime effectiveness but rather an altered analytical framework which signifies a recognition of the existence of a complex civil society and the magnitude of its impact on the process of urban development (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 128-129). Viewing governance in this manner, effective governance signifies for them “an open and legitimate relationship between civil society and the state” (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 96). Such legitimacy is derived from the dual relationship involving accountability on the state side and participation, empowerment and access on the civil society side (McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995, 95-97). The ability to understand this complicated relationship fully is significant in directing

\textsuperscript{10} Strong states, according to Migdal, are those with high capabilities to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources and appropriate or use resources in determined ways (Migdal 1988, 4-5).
The recognition of the role and capacity of civil society in the urban community can broaden approaches to problem-solving beyond the conventional emphasis on the role of state agencies. For example, in solid-waste management, the key environmental concern in this thesis, Christine Furedy (1990) draws our attention to the informal waste recycling done by waste-pickers who recover waste from street bins, by dump-pickers who scavenge materials from dumps, and by itinerant buyers who barter or purchase materials. She also argues for non-conventional approaches to solid-waste management, characterized by (1) assisting poor people whose livelihoods depend on waste to achieve safer working conditions and also more social acceptance for their work; (2) promoting the separation of wastes to facilitate more thorough or more efficient recycling; (3) developing community/private sector/municipal partnerships; (4) furthering environmental education; and (5) promoting pragmatic accommodation of informal activities in waste recovery and recycling (Furedy 1992, 43). In the Kampung Improvement Program (KIP), aimed at the improvement of low-income communities in Indonesia, project costs are shared by the government, communities, local governments and the private sector (Silas 1992; Porio 1997a). The prime example in Thailand is the land-sharing scheme within the Klongtoey Project in Bangkok; this scheme paved the way for a creative and successful partnership among NGOs, CBOs, landowners and government officials in the 1980s (Porio 1997a, 14-16). The project led to the establishment in 1992 of the Urban Community Development Office, which embodied the new style of partnership between government, business, NGOs, CBOs and the urban poor (Porio 1997a, 21-22).
In conclusion, the urban governance perspective offers a compelling alternative framework to urban problems. First, it moves away from a state-centric perspective by including civil society in the analysis of urban problems. It calls attention to the nature and role of civil society in the governing relationship at the local level — including the organizations of civil society and civil society's engagement with the urban government. This is what the urban management and decentralization perspectives do not do, or do not do as well. Second, the urban governance perspective allows us to reconsider the role of local government as a political body. In addition to the issue of its capacity, the extent to which local government is responsive, accountable and open to its constituencies is a critical issue in the governing relationship and central to the governance approach. Another major issue is the degree to which central government devolves power to local government; governance pays attention to decentralization. Third, since the urban governance approach focuses on the local government-civil society relationship, it pays attention to the mechanisms and processes that link local government and civil society.

IV. The Decentralization Perspective

Focusing on the issue of local government leads inevitably to one of its key prerequisites in many developing countries: decentralization. As shown above, both the management and the governance approaches have touched indirectly on decentralization and included it as a crucial element in improving the performance of urban local government in dealing with urban growth. What does the decentralization approach contribute to an understanding of the variation in local government performance? Before answering this question, the concept of decentralization and its application in a Third World context will be explored.
Defining decentralization is difficult, since the term can be used in a number of different ways and in significantly different contexts. In the classical meaning, deriving from English usage, decentralization refers to the territorial distribution of power. It entails the subdivision of the state’s territory into smaller areas and the creation of political and administrative institutions in those areas (Smith 1985, 1). Thus, decentralization may include both “devolution” to legally established, locally elected political authorities, and also “deconcentration” of administrative authority to representatives of central government agencies (Conyers 1983, 102). However, decentralization is by no means limited to territorial authorities by scholars such as Davey (1996b), who define it as a transfer of decision-making power. For Davey, another, third, form of decentralization is “delegation” of a specific function to a separate legal entity, such as a public enterprise (Davey 1996b, 263). In recent years, decentralization has not necessarily been associated with bodies within the governmental framework but has been, rather, employed more widely. Contracting service provision to private enterprises or involved communities is also described as decentralization, more specifically “horizontal decentralization.” The definition and typology of decentralization proposed by Rondinelli and his colleagues have been widely used to capture this variety. They define decentralization as the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to: (a) field units of government agencies, (b) subordinate units or level of government, (c) semi-autonomous public authorities or cooperation, (d) area-wide, regional or functional authorities, or (e) private or voluntary organizations (Rondinelli, Nellis, and Cheema 1983, 9). Their typology lists deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatization. By “privatization”, they refer to the transfer of responsibility for performing
functions to either voluntary organizations or private enterprises. Among the four types, devolution is the most decentralized form, since it requires the creation of an autonomous local authority with sufficient power — political, financial and legal — to serve the needs and demands of a constituency in a locality. Deconcentration is the least decentralized type, as in reality it strengthens the hand of central government at the local level.

The expansion of the meaning and scope of decentralization has reflected the manner in which the concept has been applied in developing countries. According to Diana Conyers (1983, 1984), the interest in decentralization in most developing countries began in the 1950s; however, this interest has tended to fluctuate, as countries have swung back and forth between centralization and decentralization. Moreover, decentralization policies in developing countries have been implemented with mixed motives and have served various purposes (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983; Davey 1996b). The first move toward decentralization in the Third World, which occurred in the mid-1950s, was closely associated with the transition from colonial status to political independence. According to Conyers,

[L]ocal level government was seen as a necessary part of the structure of an independent democratic government and, more specifically, as a means of removing some of the burden of providing local services from the central government while, at the same time, encouraging political education and involvement at the local level (Conyers 1983, 99).

The result of the policy was manifested in the expansion and development of local government systems in many countries, using an implicit model of a western system of field administration and local government (Conyers 1983, 1984). In the 1970s, during the second wave of interest, decentralization was widely adopted in the Third World. However, the concept was used extremely loosely, to cover many different kinds of institutional arrangements (Smith 1985, 185). Developmental rather than political or financial in purpose (Stren 1996b), decentralization was seen as a means of development administration
(Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983; Conyers 1983, 1984). As practiced in this period, decentralized policies involved not the promotion of local self-government so much as the expansion of central government in a locality and the mobilization of public supports in rural development projects.

Decentralization has been a limited success (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983; Smith 1985, Dillinger 1994; McCamey 1996a), in so far as the practice of decentralization under these first and second waves fell short of expectations. In most developing countries, deconcentration and delegation, rather than devolution, dominated decentralized programs. As observed by Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema, “relatively few developing countries have decentralized through devolution during the past two decades” (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema 1983, 20). In the view of Richard Stren, “for the most part, both rural and urban local governments had less power and autonomy in the early 1980s than they had had in the early 1960s” (Stren 1996b, 206).

In the 1980s and 1990s, by contrast, the continuing third wave of interest in decentralization has aimed at strengthening local government. The decentralization taking place on this wave can be expected to be more durable because: (1) it is heavily supported by international development communities; (2) it has been associated with pro-democracy movements or democratization in many developing countries; and (3) the decentralization reform involves not only government but also other groups in civil society (Stren 1996a, 1996b). In fact, decentralized policies have been implemented and have led to changes in the local government structure in many countries (Dillinger 1994; McCarney 1996a). As William Dillinger observes:

During 1980s, the situation began to change. Political decentralization is now, in fact, a very widespread phenomenon. Out of the 75 developing countries and transitional countries with populations greater than 5
million (World Bank 1992), all but 12 claim to be embarked on some form of transfer of political power to local units of government. The form and extent of decentralization varies. In parts of Africa, national governments are creating local political entities in territories that were formerly solely under the administration of central government... In Latin America, decentralization has meant a shift from centrally appointed mayors to mayors chosen by election... In some countries, political decentralization has been accompanied by increases in revenue sharing or by nominal changes in the legal definition of local functional responsibilities (Dillinger 1994, 8).

While it may be too early to evaluate the third wave, it is hard to be optimistic about the prospects for local government. As a Senegalese scholar says, “decentralization in centralized countries like Senegal is no more than a method of strengthening the state at the local level” (Stren 1996b, 207). Dillinger also views the widespread reform towards decentralization with caution, arguing that the motives behind it in most developing countries are political, with little concern for administrative reform; “decentralization now occurring is not a carefully designed sequence of reforms aimed at improving public sector performance” (Dillinger 1994, 9). Therefore, recent efforts at political decentralization in most developing countries bring structural changes but not improvement in the delivery of urban services (Dillinger 1994). In a similar vein, several case studies of local government and the experience of decentralization presented by McCarney (1996a) reveal some of the crucial or chronic problems associated with the mismatch between financial and functional authorities. For example, Diego Carrion notes that in Ecuador “decentralization is interpreted by the current central government as being a transfer of functions and duties, but without any commensurate transfer of financial resources and power” (Carrion 1996, 267). In Thailand, the central government has lacked the will to act upon a plan to restructure local revenue resources that has been in place since 1994 (Kokpol 1996).

Despite repeated failure in the application of decentralization in developing countries, the concept remains attractive and a critical issue in addressing the problem of local government. What does decentralization contribute to our understanding of the varied local
government performance? The following sections present key aspects of the decentralization perspective, summarized in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: The Decentralization Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locus</th>
<th>Key Issues</th>
<th>Proposed Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different levels of government</td>
<td>Transfer of power to urban local government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central government</td>
<td>Local autonomy</td>
<td>• Reform of government system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional or provincial</td>
<td>democracy and efficiency gains</td>
<td>• Matching principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>government</td>
<td>Central-local relationship</td>
<td>• Constructive central-local relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>legal perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special agencies</td>
<td>interorganizational politics</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Locus of the Decentralization Perspective: The Role of Central Government

In addressing urban problems, the decentralization perspective pays attention not only to urban government but to the whole system of government, especially the role of central government. Failure or success in urban service delivery, according to the decentralization perspective, is an effect not merely of technical aspects of urban government, but also of the distribution of the power to manage urban affairs between the central government and lower levels of government. Whether urban government agencies have enough legal, political and financial power to act effectively depends on the central government, of which they are a creation.

In this regard, proponents of decentralization tend to blame the unwillingness of the central government to devolve power for weak local government or the failure of decentralized policies. For example, K.M. Henderson (1967) asserts that the central decision-makers are unwilling to strengthen local government for fear of losing their power.
Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema (1983) argue that the weak political commitment of most national leaders and of many field officials adversely affects decentralization. As Dillinger (1994) argues, despite widespread initiatives in many developing countries, decentralization often appears to be merely an attempt by central government to push the political costs of government onto alternative levels of government, without actually relinquishing power. Therefore, explanations for the success or failure of local government cannot ignore the role of the central government.

**Key Issues: Local Autonomy and Central-local Relations**

When it views urban problems in terms of power sharing between central and local governments, the literature on decentralization addresses, among other factors, two major influences on the performance of urban local government: local autonomy and central-local relations. The World Bank has recently recognized both as important elements in strengthening local government. As Michael Cohen expresses this:

> [W]e know the attitude of central government to local government determines the performance of local government in many of its functions. Yet when we look at our own projects, there were very few cases where the bank took a serious position on central-local governmental relations, on the issue of central or local financial relations and autonomy. So we have made, as a precondition of our own support for municipal development—conditionality—that we have a serious dialogue on central and local relations (Cohen 1992, 14).

Decentralization advocates hold that political decentralization offers the potential of democracy and efficiency gains, where local government units receive a substantial degree of autonomy. Local autonomy refers in this context to the wide discretion and authority with which local government can carry out its own local affairs with a minimum of guidelines or decision-making rules imposed on it by the central government. Autonomous and democratic local government is believed to strengthen democracy, political accountability, political skills, and national integration. According to its advocates, it can bring government closer to
people, enhance local choices, ensure the legitimacy of decision-making, provide better services, stimulate local innovation, increase local service efficiency and promote responsiveness (see, for example, Maass 1959; Schmandt 1972; Hill 1974; Stoker and Young 1993). However, in no place in the world are local government authorities allowed to have absolute autonomy. Some degree of central intervention has to be maintained, so as to maintain minimal standards for services, and to protect citizens from the corrupt or irresponsible administration of local authorities (Smith 1985; Davey 1996b).

Against this ostensible autonomy, in reality most developing countries are witnessing the rise of central intervention in urban affairs, with an increasing erosion of local government’s autonomy in urban management. Such conditions are reflected in, for instance, functional fragmentation, financial dependence, suspension of elected bodies and excessive administrative controls. As various studies reveal, these circumstances impact adversely on the performance of local government in managing urban affairs. For example, rigid and highly formalistic procedures of central approval result in sluggish performance, delay implementation, discourage local innovation, and reduce responsiveness to local needs (Davey 1996b). According to Richard Batley (1993), the splitting of functions not only vertically (giving separate agencies responsibility for entire functions) but also horizontally (separating the central activities of policy-making, planning and strategy from local responsibility for implementation and maintenance) results in the limiting of local discretionary power and the weakening of institutional capacity. In fact, urban local government does not operate autonomously in dealing with urban problems (for example, it is dependent on central government for financing large infrastructure) and the central government has not only direct responsibilities in urban management but also power over
local government (such as the power to establish, intervene in and terminate local
government authorities). The interdependence and checks and balances between central and
local governments have significant implications for urban management and the performance
of local government.

The question then becomes one of how to approach the power relationship between
the central and local government and how it operates in reality. The study of central-local
government relations in general has been heavily influenced by a legal focus on the formal
relationships of power and influence between central and local government, expressed
through the main categories of central controls — legislative, judicial and administrative.
However, several studies point out that focusing on the formal relationship can be misleading
and incomplete, since central influences over local authorities can be indirect and informal,
through methods such as guidelines, informal communication, party and professional
linkages, and grants (Jones 1980; Goldsmith 1986). Moreover, the central-local relationship
is bi-directional, characterized more by negotiation, persuasion and dialogue than by
imposition of laws and sanctions. Therefore, local government authorities are by no means
the passive recipients of central commands (Smith 1985; Davey 1996b). An alternative
approach to the central-local relationship, called “interorganization politics,” is based on this
reality (Rhodes 1981; Smith 1985; Carmichael 1995). This approach argues that, within the
formal-legalistic framework, an extensive scope exists for negotiation, bargaining and
initiative. The relationship between the centre and local bodies is characterized by
interactions rather than controls. Rhodes (1981) identifies the central-local relationship as
complex interdependencies among levels of governments. Local governments vary in their
willingness to accept control as well as in their ability to resist central domination. Variation
in the degree of discretion results from the particular resources and conditions of each local authority. Types of resources which may strengthen the power of local authorities differ from country to country. The literature suggests that five major types of resources are crucial: finance, political access, political support, information (professional expertise), jurisdiction, and administrative relationship (Rhodes 1981; Smith 1985).

**Proposed Solutions**

From the decentralization perspective, strengthening local government demands the restructuring of the whole governmental system, with a clear division of functions, authorities and financial resources among levels of government (Dillinger 1994; Gilbert et al. 1996, 26-27) For example, Dillinger (1994) points out that the deficiencies in urban services in the cities of most developing countries reflect not only a weakness of municipal government but also the problems of the whole system of government. He proposes a restructuring of this system, on a principle of matching levels of government, responsibilities, authorities and resources. His proposals for reform include clarifying the division of functional responsibilities between levels of government, since doing so enables constituents to hold agencies accountable for specific functions and eliminates duplication. From the public economics perspective, he argues that responsibilities for discrete public services should be assigned to the level of government whose boundaries incorporate the beneficiaries. That level of government should then be assigned corresponding revenue sources with which to respond to demand (Dillinger 1994, 13).

Despite the desirability of local autonomy, some scholars, such as Davey, are pragmatic in accepting that central intervention is inevitable. Davey argues that “urban
management will continue to be conditioned by interplay between levels of government with much potential for confusion, delay and rivalry” (Davey 1996b, 279). Therefore, for effective urban management, he calls for the promotion of a constructive central-local relationship which includes two approaches. The first one involves making central control and supervision of local government a more positive and supportive process. This requires steps to prune controls, reduce delays, and to clarify performance standards and make their application predictable. It also involves central ministries in supervisory roles; these would, for instance, use their controlling powers to achieve performance improvement, and would be supportive of local government by mediating with other central agencies whose cooperation is needed. The second approach lies in the development of collaborative mechanisms for investment planning. Such a collaborative process, Davey argues, is also significant in dealing with environmental problems:

[...]strong cooperative framework is particularly necessary in addressing environmental problems, partly because pollution does not respect boundaries, and partly because changes in national legislation and policy are normally important in complementing local actions (Davey 1996c, 295).

In conclusion, the decentralization perspective on urban problems draws our attention to the role of central government and the central-local relationship, in particular where these determine the success or failure of urban local government. The literature on decentralization suggests that high central controls or low local discretion are associated with low responsiveness and low efficiency. The examination of the relationship between central and local governments is incomplete if attention is not given to the varying ability or power of local government to resist central directives or to bargain with the central level.
V. Framework for an Analysis

The three perspectives discussed above, although each is incomplete, are useful for understanding the overall performance of municipal government. The urban management perspective provides a valuable framework for examining the nature and operation of municipal governments. The decentralization perspective highlights the role of central government and the interaction between central and local governments. Urban governance is an advantageous perspective because it incorporates civil society into the analysis and brings attention to the dynamic of the state-civil society relationship in understanding performance. Since municipal performance results from a complex process involving a wide range of the internal and external factors found in the literature of the three areas, the study of municipal performance requires an integrated framework that merges the salient characteristics of the three approaches.

Governance as a General Framework

At the outset of this research on municipal performance and the urban environment, a choice has to be made between a framework which delineates the major elements, actors and relationships and one which identifies specific factors. The research framework as shown in Figure 2.1 is based on the urban governance perspective and incorporates the urban management and decentralization perspectives. Governance is a key perspective for two reasons. First, it provides a more comprehensive and realistic framework since it includes all major actors in an urban area, be they state or non-state actors, and it also addresses the interaction between their formal and informal relationships. In short, the urban governance analysis incorporates civil society, which coincides with the experience of cities in most
developing countries, including Thailand, and which the literature increasingly recognizes as an active element in urban environmental management. Second, the political analysis of urban problems proposed by the governance approach fits with the nature of urban environmental problems in Thailand. Recently, urban environmental issues in Thailand have increasingly been concerned with conflicts among various groups, including municipal governments, over environmentally sensitive projects. Important examples include the Doi Sutep cable car project in Chiang Mai in 1985, the tantalum refinery in Phuket in 1985, the resistance to a new dump site in 1994 and a waste-fueled electricity generator project in 1995 in Chiang Mai, and opposition to an industrial waste treatment plant in Rayong in 1995. These kinds of problems reflect the fact that not all urban environmental problems are solely technical management issues; therefore, strengthening local government purely for reasons of environmental management is an inadequate way to deal with the problems.

The framework I shall use in this thesis may be depicted visually. Figure 2.1 presents three main variables: performance, the relationship between the state and civil society, and the sociopolitical and economic context. Performance, defined as the failure or success of municipal government in dealing with urban problems, or waste in particular, is a dependent variable determined by the relationship between the state and civil society. This in turn is a result of the interaction between, on one hand, local government or the municipality in particular as a service provider and, on the other hand, civil society as the recipient and demander of services. However, neither these two actors nor their relationship operate in a vacuum, since both influence and are influenced by the sociopolitical and economic context. Their nature and operations are shaped by the interplay of socio-cultural, political, economic and physical factors, as well as by the central-local relationship framework.
The salient characteristic of this framework is the recognition it gives to the dynamic nature of the relationship among the variables. They reinforce each other, since performance is not only a dependent variable, but also an independent variable which, in turn, has an impact on the relationship between municipal government and civil society and on the sociopolitical and economic context. Feedback effects are important and can influence the future operations of municipal governments — a point increasingly recognized in the literature. For example, McCarney (1996b) sees the organization of groups in civil society as a response to the failure of municipal government in urban service delivery. The increasing impoverishment of the urban population and the state's failure to provide collective goods and services are cited as fuel for the growth of urban social movements in Latin American countries such as Brazil, Mexico and Colombia (Stren 1995b). The World Bank (1992) also observes that poor performance worsens the relationship between state and civil society. Such
an impact is shown, for example, in the case study of public transportation policy in Santos, Brazil, where public support for the municipality and the new system of public transportation disappeared when the quality of the service declined (Morales and Jacobi 1996). In contrast, success can strengthen local government’s capacity and earn it political and popular support for more ambitious objectives (Davidson 1991).

**Defining and Operationalizing the Research**

Given the general framework concerning the main variables and their interactions, the following section looks in detail at what constitutes each variable and what each variable means in the context of Thailand and solid-waste management. The framework provided by the three approaches discussed earlier, as well as conditions in Thailand, influence the choice of specific factors.

**Municipal Performance**

Performance here refers to success or failure in dealing with a solid-waste problem. Since the organization we are interested in is the municipality, which is a representative form of government, its performance, as illustrated in Figure 2.2 is indicated not only by its level of achievement in managing waste in a municipal area, but also by its responsiveness to constituencies on the waste issue.

The level of achievement in managing waste is reflected in the municipality’s effectiveness and formal recognition, while the responsiveness is indicated by citizen satisfaction. Effectiveness refers to the extent to which solid waste is well managed and cleanliness is maintained, through three services: road sweeping, garbage collection and garbage disposal. Indicators of effectiveness in this study include the frequency of road
sweeping, the percentage of uncollected garbage, the continuity of service delivery, the availability of permanent garbage disposal sites and the absence of complaints about the disposal site. There are actually several other indicators of effectiveness; the choice depends on their relevance in case studies and their direct connection with performance. For example, the amount of waste diverted from the landfill site by other disposal methods (e.g., composting and recycling) is a good indicator of effectiveness in waste management; however, it is irrelevant here because both municipalities under investigation — Chiang Mai and Hat Yai — rely only on landfill as the major method of waste disposal. Similarly, the existence of a waste management plan is considered as an indirect indicator of performance since its connection to performance depends on whether the plan is implemented.

**Figure 2.2: Municipal Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Percentage of uncollected garbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continuity of service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of disposal site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Recognition</td>
<td>Absence of complaints about sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizens'</td>
<td>Cleanliness awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perception of solid-waste problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Formal recognition is another indicator of performance. In Thailand, the Municipal League of Thailand and DOLA arrange the annual city cleanliness and tidiness competition. The award is considered to be prestigious since the municipality which wins the first prize for three consecutive years will receive an honour from the King. The screening and evaluating
processes are carefully designed in order to maintain the prestige of the competition. The success or failure of solid-waste management can be revealed by the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the services, as well as by their perception of the severity of the waste problem in the municipal area.

*The State-Civil Society Relationship*

The framework, following the urban governance perspective, assumes the municipal government-civil society relationship as both a cause and an effect of municipal performance in dealing with the waste issue. As this relationship is a key variable in this study, the question of how we explore it is important, since it is very complex, incorporating both actors and the channels or processes through which they interact. In this study, the municipality-civil society relationship consists of three components: the municipal government, the civil society and the interaction between municipal government and civil society.

*Municipal government:* As a key actor on the state side, a municipality is to be examined in terms of its relative strength as a strong or a weak municipal government. This concerns its overall capability or competence to achieve its policy goals on waste issues. Whether a municipality has a high or a low level of municipal competence depends on three factors: (1) managerial capacity, (2) political mandate and (3) municipal autonomy, as shown in Figure 2.3.

The importance of managerial capacity need not be argued further, as it has already been discussed in the section on the urban management perspective. In the context of solid-waste management, managerial capacity is investigated in terms of the waste services delivery system, the management of disposal sites, and the availability and management of

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11 Interview with the officers of DOLA who are in charge of the competition.
resources including personnel (garbage collectors and street sweepers), finance (a budget for city cleaning) and equipment (garbage trucks). The managerial capacity of a municipality in waste management also involves the issue of leadership (i.e., the power and competence of administrative and political leadership in planning, directing and supervising the operation of waste services). As a political organization, discussing the leadership or, particularly, the mayor’s administrative power is inseparable from the broader issue of political mandates or political support for political leadership. This point refers to the ability of a mayor to remain in power through the election process and the ability of his or her political group to secure a majority in the municipal council. Such mandates can strengthen the administrative power of the mayor since they reflect the credibility, trust and support that the mayor receives from constituencies. It also contributes to unity of command and the acceptance of municipal employees within the municipal administration, as well as to overall political stability and cohesiveness which, in turn, provides a favourable environment for the municipality’s long-term development, including the waste-disposal plan.

In addition to managerial capacity and the political mandate of the mayor, drawing from the decentralization perspective, the municipal capability in waste management is also related to issues of municipal autonomy. This refers to the freedom of a municipality from external controls, and a minimum of state intervention in local affairs. The higher degree of municipal autonomy reflects the greater capacity of a municipality in managing its own affairs, including the waste issue. In decentralization and local government theory, local autonomy is seen as a precondition for local self-government and contributes to strengthening local government. In the analysis of municipal autonomy, this research employs the
interorganizational politics approach to the central-local relationship. Therefore, the practice of the central-local relationship determines municipal autonomy.

**Figure 2.3: Municipal Government**

- **Capabilities of Municipality**
  - Strong vs. Weak Municipality

- **Managerial Capacity**
  - Waste services delivery system
  - Management of disposal sites
  - Availability and mgt. of resources

- **Political Mandate of Political leadership**
  - Leadership
    - Continuity of a Mayor in power
    - Majority in municipal council

- **Municipal Autonomy (Central-Local Govt. Relationship)**
  - Pattern of relationship
  - Grants and central intervention
  - Bargaining power

The first issue in our understanding of municipal autonomy is whether the pattern in these relationships, specially on waste issues, is characterized by controls or supports. Since central controls are inevitable, it is suggested that central-local relations should be as positive and collaborative as possible (Davey 1996b). The second issue is that of central grants, reflecting the dependency of a municipality on the central government, and the intervention of the latter in municipal affairs, especially involving waste issues. The more the central government intervenes in municipal affairs, the less autonomy the municipal government has. In Thailand, the central government intervenes because a municipality has problems it cannot solve by itself. In turn, frequent central intervention weakens a municipality's chance to develop local capacity to solve its own problems. The third issue in municipal autonomy is the bargaining power of a municipality, especially concerning personnel. In the case of
Thailand, according to Suwanmala, the bargaining powers of municipalities vary according to the significance of a city; local political stability and cohesiveness; local revenues; and active and credible local leadership (Suwanmala 1991).

Civil Society: The urban governance perspective recognizes the role of civil society in shaping the city, calling for an understanding of the characters and organization of civil society. As this study focuses on the solid-waste issue, civil society in this framework is to be investigated in terms of activities involving solid waste taking place outside the municipal sphere. Before discussing the measurement of an active civil society regarding solid waste, an operational definition of civil society is needed. In other words, what elements (or who) make up civil society in this study?

The definitions of civil society — for example, the non-state realm or the public realm between the state and the family — seem to provide little help in empirical terms. Civil society is not easily operationalized. As Bratton (1994) reminds us, civil society is a theoretical concept rather an empirical one, so empirical inquiry can only be applied to its observable dimensions. He further points out that, “although political resources, organizations and ideas may be observed, none alone can capture the quality and complexity of civil society as a whole” (Bratton 1994, 57). His argument actually reflects the weakness in current usage of the term, as civil society is defined as the realm of civic associations or voluntary organizations (see, for example, David Korten [1990] and Robert Putnam [1993]). Focusing on the organizational dimension of civil society has its roots with Alex de Tocqueville, who regarded “civil society as comprising a plurality of interacting, self-organized and constantly vigilant civil associations” (Keane 1988, 61). Its contemporary popularity is understandable, since it is relatively visible and concrete in comparison with
other dimensions. However, as Victor Azarya argues, a narrow focus on associations may neglect some other aspects of civil society that are no less important but are harder to concretize, such as activities of the mass media and intellectuals. He also sees the risk of leaving out a large number of people who do not tend to regard the formation of associations as the preferred means of solving problems (Azarya 1994, 95-96).

Recognizing the limitation of associations as an indicator of civil society, this study broadens civil society to comprise individual citizens, the informal (economy) sector, and both organized and unorganized groups. Groups chosen in this study include the mass media, academics, the private sector, community groups and NGOs. The reason we include individual citizens as a part of civil society in this study is exactly that which Azarya (1994) has pointed out; in focusing on associations alone the study would exclude a majority of people in both cities since the author’s survey shows that only 29.6% and 15.9% of respondents in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai respectively belong to civic associations.

In investigating waste activities outside the municipal sphere it is impossible to ignore the role of the informal waste sector. As Christine Furedy points out, in many Third World cities informal waste activities (waste recovery and recycling) bring both economic and environmental benefits. Informal waste activities provide sources of income for urban dwellers, including garbage pickers, itinerant buyers, second-hand marketers and various producers who use recyclable waste. Garbage picking is a survival strategy for the urban poor, especially street kids, women and elders (Furedy 1984, 1992). For cities and the environment, not only collected and managed waste, but also informal recycling has reduced the demand for energy, raw materials, fertilizers and foreign exchange (Chowdhury and Furedy 1994, 14-15). In the city of Bangkok, it is estimated that, in 1990, 1,500 people lived
and picked recyclable garbage in three dumping sites of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (Phetmak and Ongsutanasombat 1990, 30). In 1988, of 5,000 tons of garbage per day generated in Bangkok, about 1,400 tons were recycled through the informal waste activities of dump and waste pickers, waste buyers and waste shops (Phetmak and Ongsutanasombat 1990, 48).

As mentioned earlier, five types of group — the mass media, academics, the private sector, community groups and NGOs — are included in this research. They are chosen on the basis of their active and potential roles in urban environmental management, particularly on the solid-waste issue. The media have an important role in bringing urban environmental issues to public attention. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972), and Shaw and Shannon Martin (1992) argue that the media have the capacity to set agendas in political campaigning and in public attitudes toward issues. Leitmann (1995) observes that the role of the media varies according to the country’s political regime. In countries with less open political systems (such as China and Indonesia), the media are often reluctant to investigate and draw attention to environmental damage and its victims, while in countries with more openness (such as Brazil and India), there is more evidence of investigative environmental journalism in cities (Leitmann 1995, 33). Thailand falls in the latter group, having stood out as the country with the highest degree of press freedom in Southeast Asia and possessing a press that has more or less developed into a watchdog against wrongdoing (Komin 1995, 266). The media regularly carry stories on particular environmental problems such as traffic congestion, water pollution and waste, and sometimes become a major channel for people to express their demands and complaints.
Relatively few studies address the active role of the academic sector in urban environmental management. In the Thai context, defining universities as a part of civil society is controversial because major universities in Thailand fall under the administration of the Ministry of University Affairs. However, universities, as distinct from other governmental agencies, have gained considerable independence from the government. Many university professors actively criticize governmental policies and actions. Some form research centres and citizens’ groups which organize activities such as seminars and public hearings on local issues. These activities can serve as mechanisms to educate the public and to form public opinion on particular issues. Some professors participate in the activities of NGOs. The universities have a strong potential role in urban environmental management, since they possess a vast pool of knowledge and skills in this specialized field.

Several studies reflect the active role of community organizations, especially low-income groups, in urban environmental management. Both Denis Murphy (1990) and Douglass (1992) highlight the active role of community groups in Asia in organizing basic infrastructure, improving neighbourhood living conditions, staging protests, and lobbying governments for change. In the case of Thailand, Orathai Ard-am (1991) examines the experience of the Wat Chonglom community group in Bangkok in improving their livelihood through collective efforts such as investing in common walkways and participating in community-based waste-collection services.

Associated with the rise of community groups is the supporting and mobilizing role of NGOs. Gary Craig, Marjorie Mayo and Marilyn Taylor (1990) argue that the principal role that NGOs can perform is coalition-building to create linkages between the community and wider political processes. Many experiences in developing countries (for example, Turner
[1988] and Hasan [1990]) support this view. In Thailand, NGOs gained momentum in the late 1980s and quickly became very active, especially in environmental conservation and social development (Samudavanija 1995, 148). They are the leading voice of civil society in counterbalancing the government’s power. In the last five years, Thailand, especially in the big cities, has also witnessed the rise of local citizens’ groups, formed by local activists, mainly middle-class people. They express concerns about local affairs, including local culture and environment (Nicro et al. 1996).

Although the business sector, by nature, differs from community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs, it is increasingly recognized for its role in providing urban services, such as housing and transportation. As profit-oriented organizations, private enterprises can have advantages over government agencies, such as lower production costs, more efficiency in service delivery and greater capacity to maintain capital equipment (Chowdhury and Furedy 1994, 22-23). Many developing countries have experienced privatization of public services (Roth 1987). Private firms are active in the field of solid-waste collection, sanitation and environmental consulting. Antonio Fernandez (1993) shows the positive results of private-sector waste-collection service in Asian cities. In Thailand, the municipalities of Chiang Mai, Nakhon Pathom and Samutsakhon, for example, have contracted out some solid-waste collection. Privatization of municipal services as a central government policy was initiated in 1988. Business sectors also play a major role in the policy process at both the national and local levels.

The examination of all elements of civil society touches on a key issue within the framework of this research, namely, the activity or passivity of civil society. The determination of relative activity in civil society in this study involves the extent to which it
performs waste-related activities outside the formal municipal waste system. The higher the level of waste activities taking place within civil society, the more active a civil society is.

**Figure 2.4: Civil Society**

![Diagram showing Civil Society Activity or Passivity branching into Individuals, Informal waste sector, and Groups with subcategories: Waste reduction activities, Community waste activities, Amount of waste recycling, and Profile of groups involved in waste issue.]

Figure 2.4 illustrates three dimensions of an active civil society. First, it can be indicated by the number of individual citizens participating in waste-reduction activities (e.g., waste sorting, reusing, recycling, composting and exchanging), as well as in community waste activities (e.g., community waste campaigns and waste collection). Even though waste-reduction activities are individual actions and may be motivated by personal economic benefits (such as selling waste), the outcome of such activities is collective in terms of contributing to the good of the city's environment. It can relieve the municipal burden by reducing the amount of waste collected and disposed. Moreover, such activities reflect the capacity of civil society to solve problems on its own. The same argument applies to the second dimension of an active civil society in this study, namely, the informal waste sector. Garbage or dump pickers and junk buyers earn their living from recycling waste but their activities are collectively beneficial to the overall solid waste management system. The density of informal waste activities, indicating an active civil society, can be measured by the amount of recyclable waste traded through junk businesses. The last dimension of an active
Civil society is associations: the higher the number of civic groups dealing with waste issues, the more active is the civil society.

*Interactions between municipality and civil society:* Having examined the municipality side as the first element and the civil society side as the second, we may now look at a third element: the nature and characteristics of the municipality and civil society relationship itself. This involves three related issues: (1) municipal openness to civil society’s engagement, (2) the engagement of civil society in the municipal waste system and (3) the pattern or type of interactions between civil society and the municipality. Figure 2.5 illustrates how each issue is examined in the framework of this study.

**Figure 2.5: The Municipality-Civil Society Relationship**

- **Municipal Openness**
  - Participatory Channels
    - Decision-making level
      - municipal planning
      - municipal committees (waste)
    - Implementation Level
      - waste service provision

- **Degree of Civil Society’s Engagement**
  - Electoral Politics
    - Voter turnout and electoral competitiveness
    - Role of waste in electoral politics
  - Municipal Waste Issues
    - Individual citizens’ involvement
    - Civic groups’ involvement

- **Patterns of Civil Society Engagement**
  - Cooperative vs. hostile relationship
    - Individual Citizens
      - Positive or negative citizens’ engagement in municipal waste issues
    - Civic Groups
      - Protest and confrontation
      - Experiences of joint efforts
The first issue, municipal openness to civil society’s engagement in waste issues, refers to the extent to which a municipality provides opportunities to civil society to access information, to express its concerns, to exercise its influence and to be involved in decision-making processes. The degree of municipal openness can reflect the transparency of a municipality and can also serve as a method of accountability (i.e., providing civil society with an opportunity to check on municipal actions and decisions between elections). An open municipality requires the establishment of mechanisms and channels for people’s participation and involvement in municipal issues. Importantly, participation involves not only the quantity but also the quality of participatory mechanisms. The latter means that mechanisms and channels for participation have to facilitate some degree of citizen power. The literature suggests that the higher the degree of citizen power which the channels enable, the higher the degree of openness of the municipality (Arnstein 1969; Abbott 1996). Therefore, in determining the degree of openness in this study, participatory channels are to be examined at two levels: decision-making and implementation.

The more participatory channels created at the decision-making level and the more meaningful those channels are, the more open a municipality is. In investigating participatory channels at the decision-making level in the context of solid-waste management, this study looks at municipal development planning processes and municipal committees concerning waste issues. The municipal development plan is concerned with the overall city development in which waste management is a part. The plan can reflect the extent to which a solid-waste issue is a priority and how the problem is tackled. The planning process itself involves how and what issues a municipality sets as priorities. Therefore, the participatory channels created in this municipal planning process can indicate the opportunity a civil society has to influence
decision-making on solid-waste issues. The degree of municipal openness can also be reflected by municipal committees on waste issues. This involves the extent to which these committees include members of civil society.

Given the analysis of the opportunity which a municipality offers for civic engagement, the second issue in the investigation of the municipality-civil society relationship concerns the degree to which a civil society actively engages in municipal affairs. Measuring this in the context of municipal waste management, this study examines civil society's engagement in electoral processes and in municipal waste issues. The research includes citizens' involvement in electoral politics — the voter turnout rate and electoral competitiveness — because most Thais consider voting as a major way to engage themselves in politics and to keep politicians accountable for their actions. People vote in municipal elections from mixed motives which may relate to waste issues — for example, to approve or disapprove the incumbent mayor and the performance of his or her team on the solid waste problem. Voter turnout can be particularly linked to the waste issue if it plays a role during the electoral campaign. If waste is an issue in the electoral campaign, it can be assumed that waste is a motivation for voting.

In addition, the degree of civic engagement can be determined by the extent to which individual citizens and civic groups engage directly in municipal waste issues. The higher number of citizens engaging in municipal-waste activities (e.g., paying garbage fees, providing bins, asking for municipal support, making complaints and petitions, and participating in municipal projects) can indicate high civic engagement. Even though activities such as paying fees and providing garbage bins are required by law, there is no serious enforcement in practice. Therefore, engaging in such activities, like others, is
voluntary, depending on citizens’ own judgment. Active civic engagement in municipal-waste issues can also reflect the active involvement of civic groups, such as organizing a seminar or public rallies addressing their concerns on municipal-waste problems.

As the above investigation focuses on the degree of civil society’s engagement, the third issue here is to examine the pattern of the municipality and civil society interactions, which can imply the legitimate power of the municipality and trust in the relationship. It concerns the question of the dominant pattern in the way that civil society interacts with the municipality in the context of solid-waste management. Is it a cooperative or confrontational type? To determine whether the relationship is cooperative or confrontational, this study examines the manner in which individual citizens and civic groups are involved in municipal-waste issues. The relationship tends to be cooperative if a higher number of citizens positively engage in municipal-waste issues (e.g., by paying fees, providing their own bins and information, and donating money or equipment), while it tends to be confrontational if a higher number of citizens negatively engage in municipal waste issue (e.g., by complaining to the media, signing petitions and protesting). The character of the relationship can also be revealed by the interactions between civic groups and the municipality. It tends to be cooperative if (1) there is a low incidence of protests, confrontations and conflicts between civic groups and the municipality, and (2) there are joint efforts between civic groups and the municipality. When conflicts and confrontation occur frequently, hostile attitudes tend to develop which obstruct the cooperative working relationship. In contrast, the success of joint projects reflects the ability to work together and trust in each other.
The Socio-cultural, Political and Economic Context

The analysis of an open organization cannot ignore its context. Both municipal government and civil society are integrated parts of the socio-cultural, political and economic context. To understand their characteristics, roles and operations it is necessary to pay attention to the frameworks, constraints, pressures or supports which are imposed upon them by that context, which includes both the national and local levels. It is mainly the central government that determines the national framework in which a municipality operates. The importance of central government in shaping the municipality has already been discussed. Since the central government is fragmented, this study pays attention to the roles of the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) and its agencies, as the direct supervisor of municipal government, and to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE), as the main ministry dealing with environmental issues. In addition to its influence upon municipal government, the central government’s policies and the overall national context also have an impact on the city’s circumstances. At the local level, the city’s conditions — the economic, political, socio-cultural, natural and physical environments of the city — are closely connected with the municipality and civil society. The history, local culture and sense of unique identity are significant in creating an active civil society (Rodriguez and Winchester 1996). The rapid rate of urbanization puts pressure on the natural and physical environment of the city and a burden on the municipal government. The deterioration of the physical environment places the environmental issue on the political agenda and demands that the city takes effective action on environmental problems. Therefore, the connection of political, social, economic and natural/physical factors should be taken into account in explaining municipal performance.
VI. Conclusion

The main focus of this chapter has been the integration into the analytical framework of key factors and elements from three perspectives — urban management, urban governance and decentralization. The main features of the framework derive from the governance approach which, it is argued, is the most comprehensive of the three, as it includes not only local government but also civil society in the analysis of urban problems. Moreover, its political perspective is relevant to the nature of environmental problems in Thailand. To complete the framework for analysis, the urban management perspective contributes to our understanding of the managerial constraints of a municipality, and the decentralization approach sheds light on the constraints created by the central government. Finally, this framework also pays attention to the influence of national and local contexts. Although the research focuses on solid waste, only one of Thailand’s many environmental problems, we can expect that this research, because of its integrated framework, will capture and connect the multifarious aspects of the urban environmental problems facing municipal governments in Thailand.

As this research aims to investigate the potential power of the urban governance perspective in explaining the differing municipal performances between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai on solid-waste management, the framework developed in this chapter will serve as a tool for a comparative analysis of urban governance in these two case studies. Before describing each case in Chapters 4 and 5, and detailing the analysis in Chapter 6, Chapter 3 will provide an overall picture of the national context of Thailand as it involves the role and status of the municipality and the development of civil society within the national political-administrative structure as well as in urban environmental management.
Chapter Three

Thailand: The National Context

I. Introduction

Centralization having been the norm in Thailand for decades, the domination of the central government is reflected in the highly hierarchical and control-oriented governmental system, in which the territorial units are treated as the local agents of the national government. Because of the extensive role of the government in national development, the popular sector has had limited space. However, in recent years, this situation has started to change, in response to public pressure and to the rise of civic groups calling for a more decentralized system. This chapter will start by looking at the national governmental system and the legal framework within which municipalities operate. Then, attention will shift to the national urban environmental system, in particular, the major laws and governmental actors. The final focus will be on the rise of civic groups in politics and their role in the environmental system.

II. A Profile of Thai Government

*National Governmental System*

The administrative structure of Thailand is divided into three parts, the central government, provincial and local governments, as is depicted in Figure 3.1. Headquartered in Bangkok, the central or national government consists of three branches: the legislative, the judicial and the executive. Under the 1991 Constitution, the parliamentary system in Thailand is a

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1 The Parliament passed the new constitution in September 1997.
bicameral National Assembly. The House of Representatives is comprised of 360 members who are elected by popular vote and serve four-year terms. The Senate, comprised of 270 members, is appointed by the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Figure 3.1: The Administrative Structure of Thailand

The Prime Minister is the head of government. The cabinet is responsible for the administration of 16 ministries which are each charged with national affairs pertaining to their specialization. The central ministries consist of the Office of the Prime Minister and 15 other ministries: Defence; Finance; Foreign Affairs; the Interior; Agriculture and Cooperatives; Transport and Communication; Commerce; Justice; Education; Science, Technology and Environment; Public Health; Industry; University Affairs; and Labour and Social Welfare. All of them, except the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of University
Affairs, have field officers at the provincial and district levels. Each ministry is headed by a minister, aided by one or more deputy ministers who are normally elected politicians. The top civil service official in each ministry is its Permanent Secretary.

The Office of the Prime Minister ranks as a ministry and is largely concerned with formulating national policies. Under it are: the Budget Bureau, which prepares the national annual budget; the National Economic and Social Development Board, which lays out long-term national development plans; and the Civil Service Commission Bureau, which acts as the personnel department of the central government. One of the most influential ministries, the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) covers in its mandate a wide range of activities: rural and urban development, welfare administration, internal security and order, and land administration. Moreover, this Ministry also has authority to supervise the operation of territorial units in both provincial and local administrations.

The provincial level of government of Thailand consists of 75 provinces (Changwats), excluding Bangkok. Each provincial governor is a permanent official of the MOI, which has authority over the appointment, promotion, demotion or transfer of the governors.\(^2\) The governor has authority to supervise field representatives from central ministries as well as the local governmental units located within the provincial boundary. A province consists of districts (amphur), each of which is administered by a head district officer (nai amphur) who acts as field staff of the Department of Local Administration (DOLA) of MOI, and is subordinate to the provincial governor. Below the districts are subdistricts (tambon) and villages (muban). Members of the subdistrict elect its head (kamnan) from village

\(^2\) Since the issue of government decentralization gained momentum after 1992, there have been increasing demands to replace the appointed provincial governor with an elected one.
headpersons. A village headperson (*Pooyaiban*) is elected by members of the village. The head district officer is the superior of the subdistrict headperson (*kamnan*) who in turn supervises the work of the village headperson.

In this model of provincial government, political or decision-making power remains with the central government in Bangkok, with only administrative power being decentralized to the field staff at the provincial and district levels. Thus, in a real sense, the provincial government is the extension of the central government in localities. The central government appoints all personnel and provides the budget.

In addition to the provincial administration, Thailand has a system of local self-government. It was first introduced as an experiment during King Chulalongkorn's regime through the creation of Bangkok and Thachalom sanitary districts\(^3\) in 1897 and 1905 respectively. However, the local government was not institutionalized nationwide in Thailand until after the Revolution of 1932.\(^4\) At present, Thailand has six types of local government (Table 3.1), three of which are urban local government: municipal government, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)\(^5\) and the City of Pattaya,\(^6\) and the other three types are rural local government: the Provincial Administration Organization, Sanitary District and

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1. Their functions included refuse collection and disposal, local road maintenance and street lighting. The monarchy established another 35 sanitary districts. After the 1932 revolution, the sanitary district was replaced by the municipality in 1933 and was reintroduced in 1952.
2. The revolution of 1932 marks two significant changes in Thai politics: the replacement of absolute monarchy with the constitutionally based system of government, and the establishment of a democratic system of government.
3. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is a special form of local government exclusively for the capital city. BMA is not a part of the provincial government, having neither an appointed governor nor representatives from central ministries. The central government, through the Minister of the Interior, directly supervises the performance of the BMA.
4. The City of Pattaya is the special local government form which has only one unit. It was introduced in 1978 as the experiment of the city-manager form in Thai local government. The Pattaya city manager is a professional executive hired by the city of Pattaya council under a two-year contract. Except for this difference, the city of Pattaya is similar to those of the municipal government.
Sub-district Administration Organization. They vary in their structure, but are similar in their functions and sources.

Table 3.1: The Number of Local Government Units in Thailand, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Local Government</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Administration Organization (PAO)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Municipality</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Municipality</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-district Municipality</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Pattaya</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary District</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-district Administration Organization</td>
<td>2,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Government Bureau, Department of Local Administration (DOLA), Ministry of Interior (1996).

Despite the active development of decentralization and local self-government in Thailand, the domination and influence of the centre is clear. For example, the provincial government is actually an integrated part of the central bureaucracy. The provincial governor is a bureaucrat of the MOI; the remaining personnel of the provincial government are field staff of the central ministries. As a result, programs and administration normally respond to policies of central ministries rather than to local needs. Moreover, local government units, constrained by central controls, are far from being self-governing. The laws and regulations of the national government must authorize the establishment, elevation, and termination of local government units as well as changes in laws prescribing the functions and authority, as

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7 The sub-district administration organization, the smallest unit, is a most recent form of local government. It was introduced by the Sub-district Council and Sub-district Administrative Organization Act of 1994.
8 For example, the strong mayor in BMA, the city manager in Pattaya, the council and executive committee form in municipal governments and the commission form in sanitary districts. Also see Konggridhisukorn (n.d.), pp. 13-27; Kokpol (1996), pp. 145-149.
well as the sources of revenue, of local governments. As well, the centre exerts control over local politics, administration and personnel management. The MOI through the DOLA is the centre of national control and coordination of local government affairs. As representatives of the central government, and the MOI in particular, the provincial governor and the Office of the Provincial Inspector for Local Affairs are authorized to supervise the operations of all types of local government within provincial boundaries. The legal framework imposed by the centre on local government units will be explored in the case of the municipality.

_Municipal Government_

Municipal government is the general form of local government in most urban areas. Thailand has 145 (1996) units of municipal government. This form was created in 1933, the year after democracy's introduction in Thailand. Since a constitutional democracy was alien to the people, the 1932 Revolution Committee expected municipal government to be a major mechanism to promote political participation and to expose the new political system to the people. Therefore, municipal government was established not only to serve local needs but also to familiarize the people with the system of parliamentary government (Kongridhisuksakorn n.d., 16).

Each municipality is established, upgraded or terminated by royal decree, following a proposal of the Ministry of the Interior and cabinet approval. Once established, a municipality is placed in one of three classes of municipalities on the basis of population, population density and revenue capabilities. A city municipality (_Tesaban Nakhon_) must have at least 50,000 people and an average population density of 3,000 per square kilometre. There are nine city municipalities. In 1992 Chiang Mai and Nakhon Si Thammarat were the only two;
in 1995 another seven were elevated to that status: Khon Kaen, Nakhon Ratchasima, Nakhon Sawan, Nonthaburi, Yala, Hat Yai and Udon Thani. A town municipality (Tesaban Muang) must have at least 10,000 people and the same population density as a city municipality. There are 89 town municipalities. A sub-district municipality (Tesaban Tambon) is established in any urban community, according to the policy of the central and provincial governments. There are 47 sub-district municipalities.

*Functions of the Municipal Government*

As provided by the Municipal Government Act of 1953, each municipal government undertakes compulsory and optional functions which vary according to the class of municipal government, as shown in Table 3.2. With the long list of legally required functions, municipalities normally find themselves with inadequate resources to perform these duties. Therefore, they often cannot focus on needs that are locally crucial. Moreover, these municipal governments are prohibited from performing services not specified by law, even though these may be necessary to local needs.

A closer look at the key functions to be performed in a municipal area (Table 3.3) reveals few exclusively municipal responsibilities. These are predominantly “housekeeping” functions, such as garbage collection and disposal, sewerage, drainage, civil registration, firefighting facilities, and street cleaning and lighting. Other major development functions are either shared with central government agencies or performed by public enterprises.

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Table 3.2: Functions of Municipal Government in Thailand according to the Municipal Government Act of 1953

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of Municipality</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Subdistrict</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain peace and order</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain roads and waterways</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep roads, sidewalks and public places clean, including refuse and garbage disposal</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent and suppress communicable diseases</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide primary and secondary education</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide fire-fighting equipment</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide clean water supply</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide slaughterhouses</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain electricity and lighting</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain drainage systems</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain medical centres</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain public lavatories</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain maternal and child welfare</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide other services necessary to preserve public health</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide market, ferry and harbour facilities</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide cemeteries and crematoria</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote occupation for local inhabitants</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in commercial enterprise, including pawnshops*</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain public parks and recreation places</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide public utilities</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain hospitals</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain vocational schools</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide and maintain sports stadia</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve slums and keep city clean</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform other activities as ordered by the M. of Interior or stated by law</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from W. Tanrattanakoon, cited in Ruland (1992, 31).

Note: *The Municipal Government Act 1974 makes it obligatory for city and town municipalities to provide pawnshops, which are especially helpful for the poor in municipalities.

Even though maintaining order and policing is, legally, a municipal function, municipal governments in general have neither their own police forces\(^{10}\) nor authority over those operating within their jurisdiction. The provincial police authority enforces municipal

\(^{10}\) A few large municipalities including Hat Yai and Chiang Mai have small forces of municipal police (*Tesa-kit*) whose duties are to enforce municipal regulations, mainly in regard to urban order and cleanliness.
regulations and ordinances (Ruland 1992, 32) and is under the supervision of the governor and the Police Department in Bangkok. In functions shared with the central government, municipal governments perform minor roles. For example, in traffic management, municipal authorities provide a budget for supplies such as light signals to the provincial police unit. Also, municipal government provides only basic health services and primary education; in general, branches of the Ministries of Public Health and Education cover such functions more comprehensively.

Table 3.3: Functions of the Municipal Government, the Central Government and Public Enterprise in a Municipal Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Central Government</th>
<th>Municipal Government</th>
<th>Public Enterprise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ = perform, ° = not perform</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public peace and policing</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road construction and maintenance</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse collection and disposal</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street cleaning, lighting and fire fighting</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage system</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public health care</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job creation and economic promotion</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication and electricity supply</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic management</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use planning</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public housing and slum improvement</td>
<td>°</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water quality monitoring and waterway management</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public utilities are mainly provided by public enterprises. Most important, although water and electricity supply were once municipal functions, they have been transferred to public enterprises (Ruland 1992, 32). Of 138 municipalities, only 27 still operate their own waterworks (National Municipal League of Thailand 1995). With rapid growth, many large municipalities are facing problems of slums and urban poverty. Thus, large municipal governments include slum improvement and community development projects in their
functions. However, the provision of low-cost housing is mainly a responsibility of the Public Housing Authority. As a result of the fragmentation of functions, municipal governments are unresponsive to local demands and have extreme difficulty in coordinating with concerned central agencies (Hongthongkum and Pongpaew 1986).

**Figure 3.2: The Structure of Municipal Government**

![Diagram of Municipal Government Structure]

*Municipal Administrative Structure*

All municipalities adopt a unified administrative system which takes a parliamentary form which is almost identical to that at the national level. As is shown in Figure 3.2, the Municipal Council is the legislative body, while the executive body, or Municipal Executive Board (MEB), is composed of the mayor and his or her assistants. The provincial governor, with the approval of the municipal council, appoints council members to the MEB. The
number of council members and mayor’s assistants varies according to the class of municipality. Both mayors and assistants must be members of municipal councils who are elected by the people in the municipalities for a five-year term. Under the MEB is the municipal clerk (Palad Tesaban), the senior municipal employee in the municipality. Municipalities can be arranged in up to 12 divisions: Office of the Municipal Clerk; Internal Audit; the Municipal District (kwaeng); and the Divisions of Finance; Water Supply; Sanitation and the Environment; Medical Services; Sanitary Works; Public Works; Education; Technical Services and Planning; and Social Welfare.\(^{11}\)

**Municipal Planning**

According to the Guidelines of the Preparation of Municipal Developmental Plan (OUD 1991), a municipal government is responsible for a municipal long-range plan (10-15 years), a five-year plan and an annual plan. The process of planning is quite complicated. At the policy level, the municipal development committee is to supervise the preparation of the municipal plan as well as to approve it before submitting it to the municipal council and then to the provincial governor for final approval. This committee consists of the mayor (as chairperson), the deputy mayors, three members of the municipal council, the chief of the provincial office, the chief of the provincial local government branch, the deputy district officer, three to five knowledgeable citizens (selected by the mayor), a representative from the Department of Town and Country Planning, the municipal clerk, the deputy municipal clerk, and the director of Technical Services and Planning Division.

At the operating level, the municipal plan is divided into four sectors: economic development, social development, political and administrative development, and physical

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\(^{11}\) According to the Regulation of the Ministry of the Interior on the Municipal Structure of 1991.
infrastructure development. Each section is the responsibility of a subcommittee of three to six members who are appointed from the appropriate municipal divisions. Although municipal governments are formally empowered to plan their own localities, various factors limit their autonomy. The municipal plan has to harmonize with the provincial and national plan. Central control over local planning is exercised both through the provincial governor, who gives final approval to the formal plan (OUD 1991, 23) and through the four provincial officers who sit on the municipal development committee (OUD 1991, 14).

Municipal Finance

Municipal government in Thailand has very limited financial power. At present, the municipality has three sources of revenue. First, tax revenues are composed of locally levied taxes or duties (on houses and rents, on land development, on slaughterhouses and on signboards), shared taxes (automobile and vehicle tax, and rice tax) and surcharge taxes (on business, on entertainment or on liquor).\[^{12}\] Second, non-tax revenues consist of fees, fines and service charges. Third, special revenues include central grants, provident funds and loans. In practice municipalities are not financially self-sustaining under this existing revenue system. Locally generated revenues (locally levied taxes, fees and charges) make up only a small proportion, especially compared with revenue allocated from the central government (centrally collected taxes and central grants). For example, as shown in Table 3.4 the ratio of locally to centrally generated revenues was 23.49:73.20 in 1988; 22.99:74.49 in 1989; and 22.31:73.45 in 1990. Strikingly, locally generated revenue cannot even cover administrative costs, let alone other expenses (Pothipak 1991).

\[^{12}\] Shared taxes and surcharges are collected by the central government and allocated to municipalities.
Table 3.4: Types of Revenue of Municipalities and the City of Pattaya, 1988-1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Revenues</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally collected revenue</td>
<td>23.49</td>
<td>22.99</td>
<td>22.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally allocated tax</td>
<td>41.35</td>
<td>43.89</td>
<td>45.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central grants</td>
<td>31.85</td>
<td>30.60</td>
<td>28.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Pothipak (1991, 13).

Increasing locally generated revenues is difficult, since municipal governments in Thailand have no power to strengthen their financial base. All rules and regulations governing municipal finances are prescribed by the central government which, by virtue of the Municipal Act of 1953 and the Municipal Revenue Act of 1954, determines revenue sources, establishes the rates of taxation, approves loans, and fixes ceilings for fees, fines, licenses and municipal surcharges (Ruland 1988, 11). As well, municipal governments have limited borrowing power, and loans must be approved by the Ministry of the Interior. Moreover, on average the collection efficiency of most municipalities is far from satisfactory, since, for instance, tax information tends to be outdated and incomplete.

Faced with severe financial constraints, especially when financing large infrastructure projects such as waste-water treatment and sanitary landfills, municipalities tend to rely on central grants. At present, these take two forms: general and specific grants. General grants, accounting for 20% of total grants, are allocated on the basis of local population. Specific grants are the remainder and include, for example, grants for education, for developing local infrastructure and for specific projects. The educational grant is calculated on the basis of the number of students enrolling in municipal schools; and the grant for developing local infrastructure, aiming to equalize the differences among municipalities, on the basis of the
municipality’s estimated revenues. In regard to both types of grant, the higher the revenue (excluding grants), the lower is the amount allocated; to receive such funding, the municipality must have its proposal approved by the Ministry of the Interior. The Bureau of Budget and the Ministry of the Interior allocate grants for specific projects on a case-by-case basis, with projects responding to the central government’s policies receiving priority. In practice, however, municipalities with strong leadership and with good personal and political connections to national politicians and central agencies have better chances of accessing these grants (Ruland 1992; Suwanmala 1991).

Since grants for specific projects are unpredictable, municipalities can borrow money with low interest rates from the central pooling fund, the so-called “Municipal Affairs Promotion Fund.” All municipalities are required annually to deposit with the fund 10% of their own annual provident funds. The fund can be used only for investment purposes, and total disbursements from it must not exceed 10 times its total deposits.

In addition to inflexible revenue sources, municipal financial administration is further constrained by central requirements, such as a unified fund-accounting system and a surplus budgeting system. After being approved by the Municipal Council, municipal budgets must receive authorization from the governor. The use of provident funds also requires the governor’s approval. The money drawn from such funds has to be reimbursed immediately from the next budget.

The weak financial power of municipalities has long been recognized as a major obstacle to the development of local self-government and effective service provision.

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13 The Municipal Affairs Promotion Fund is administered by the Municipal Affairs Promotion Fund Commission which consists of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior (Chairman), the Director-General of DOLA, the Chief Director of the Local Finance Division and representatives of municipal mayors.
(Pipatseritham 1979; Hongthongkam & Pongpaew 1986; Charoenmuang 1997). In 1994 the Minister of Finance proposed a plan to increase the tax revenue of local government. The plan includes reducing the tax-collection fee paid to the Finance Ministry from 5% to 3%, levying a surcharge tax of 10% on tobacco, increasing the tax rate on car registration, improving property taxes, expanding revenue sources with a share in land transaction fees, as well as in royalties from minerals, petroleum, bird nests, fisheries and timber. Under this plan, the revenues of local government are expected to increase annually by Bt24 billion [or CDN$1.2 billion] (Bangkok Post 1994; The Nation 1994). Even though the Chuan cabinet approved it in principle in 1994, this proposal has yet to be implemented.

**Personnel Administration**

Although the personnel system for municipal employees is separate from the central bureaucracy, personnel administration comes under the authority of the Municipal Personnel Commission, which the Minister of the Interior chairs and which consists of the Permanent Secretary of the MOI, the Director-General of the DOLA and other representatives from such central agencies as the Budget Bureau. The office of the Municipal Service Commission is located in the Division of Local Affairs of the DOLA. There is also the Provincial Municipal Personnel Sub-committee, which is chaired by the provincial governor. Its function is to follow the personnel administration policies at a provincial level.

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14 Fees for small and corporate cars would be doubled. A new vehicle tax would be determined by the size and price of the cars. High tax rates would be levied on cars worth more than three million baht (CDN$150,000) and old car rates would be adjusted according to the condition of cars (The Nation 1994).

15 The change was aimed at eradicating loopholes in the existing system. Each province would be classified as having top, medium or poor economic status. Provinces with better and more developed economic conditions would have a higher property tax. Undeveloped land would be levied at a double rate (The Nation 1994).

16 It includes position classification, the determination of staff size, recruitment, transfers, promotion, training, disciplinary action and retirement.
The mayor, as the chief executive of the municipality, has the power to appoint personnel only to grades one through four, out of nine grades. Since key municipal employees such as the municipal clerk and division directors belong to the higher grades, conflicts between mayors and key personnel are common (Hongthongkum and Pongpaew 1986). Therefore, mayors often use personal or informal relationships to influence DOLA in the appointment or transfer of key municipal employees.

The quality of personnel is a problem for most municipalities, who have major problems in hiring professional and technical staff, especially engineers, doctors and land-use planners. Although pay levels often do not differ greatly between central bureaucrats and municipal employees, working with the municipal government is unattractive because of limited prospects of promotion, and the comparatively low prestige of municipal positions. Apart from technical staff, most municipalities are facing a shortage of labour at the street level, especially in the area of city cleaning (garbage collectors and drainage cleaners). Given the hardship and unpleasant working environment of such jobs, and competitive wages from the private sector, there are insufficient applicants to fill the jobs available and the rate of turnover is high, especially among good workers. In such circumstances, municipalities have difficulty in controlling the quality of workers and resort to keeping irresponsible workers. These factors have adverse impacts on the quality of services (Kit-tham 1991), such as slowing down garbage collection service and failing to achieve a city cleaning plan.

Political Participation

In Thailand, participation in municipal affairs is more or less restricted to the electoral process, which occurs every five years. Nationwide, voter turnout for municipal elections has
been 46.53% in 1985, 48.79% in 1990, and 54.82 in 1995 (Division of Election 1991, 1996), while the figures for national general elections are higher: 63.56% in 1988, 61.59% in 1992 and 62.04 in 1995 (Division of Election 1992, 1995).

Municipal councillors are not a highly educated group, especially in comparison to members of parliament. While more than 60% of municipal councillors (1,274 of 1,842 members) have an education below the level of a bachelor's degree (Division of Election 1991), approximately 72% of members of parliament have a bachelor's degree or higher.

In local politics, the electoral contest involves loosely structured local political groupings with no formal relationships, or only informal relationships, to national political parties (Wattanaporn 1985). Without the involvement of national parties, local political groups or politicians tend to emphasize short-term rather than long-term political goals. For example, instead of focusing on the city’s problems and the city’s long-term development plan, a political group in power tends to pay more attention to maintaining electoral supports such as responding to the personal demands of canvassers and key supporters. Since most local politicians (nationwide, 1,134 of 1,842 of municipal councillors in 1990) have a business background, most Thais believe that they tend to protect or further their own interests instead those of the people. The study by Jensakda Phumiboriraksa (1988) also finds that local politicians with a business background abuse power and focus on their personal interests more than those from other backgrounds. This is a reason why money and personal relationships play a bigger role in voters’ decisions than do political ideology and policies. Other civil society groups, such as business associations and NGOs, are generally small in number and lack institutional linkages with municipalities. An exception are community
groups, for the MOI instructs a municipality to establish community or slum groups in an urban area as a communication channel between the municipality and local people.\textsuperscript{17}

Except for elections, no channels for political participation are legally required. However, demands can be made through personal contacts (a popular means) and through petitions. Municipal planning processes also allow popular participation through questionnaires as a way to collect data on local needs and demands (OUD 1991). The appointment of three to five knowledgeable persons to the municipal developmental plan committee can also provide another channel for participation.

\textit{Central-Local Relations}

The Municipal Act subordinates the municipality: information, as well as decision-making and control processes, usually follows the chain of command down from the central government through the Ministry of the Interior and DOLA to the provincial governor and then to the municipality, as is depicted in Figure 3.3.

The broad powers of control and supervision that the Ministry of the Interior and the provincial governor have over municipalities include asking for reports on their affairs; requiring councillors and municipal employees to explain their actions; warning and advising; intervening in or even terminating municipal decisions; and vetoing drafts of municipal regulations. Moreover, the Act allows them to dissolve the municipal council and suspend or dismiss municipal mayors, deputy mayors and councillors.

\textsuperscript{17} Interview with the Chief of Community Work, Urban Development Office, DOLA on July 15, 1994.
In practice, these powers have rarely been used. Only three municipal councils were dissolved during the 1953-1958 period (Ruland 1992, 27). The governor in fact exerts influence over municipalities less directly than might be expected from a strictly legal point of view (Ruland 1992, 29). Moreover, central controls are exercised flexibly. Ronald Krannich finds that most municipal administrators, in getting things done, establish informal contacts with officials of superior government agencies (Krannich 1978, 1982). Ruland (1992) makes a similar finding in the case of Chiang Mai. Moreover, according to Suwanmala, municipalities remain free from central intervention as long as popular interests are not violated and central requirements are followed. He asserts that municipalities can also bargain with the central government in such areas as personnel administration and grant allocation. Such bargaining power is not equal, however, since municipalities with high revenues, well-known mayors, good personal connections, and stable municipal politics normally have a better chance of success in bargaining with the central government (Suwanmala 1992).
From this broad governmental system, the next section looks particularly at how functions and authority involving urban environmental management are allocated among different levels of governments.

III. The National Environmental Management System

Prior to 1975, Thailand lacked integrated environmental management systems and environmental policies. Responsibilities for environmental matters were fragmented among various ministries and agencies, each of which had its own mandate, specialized law and standards to implement and enforce. About eight ministries and more than 60 pieces of legislation addressed environmental issues. Without coordinating mechanisms, conflicts and overlapping jurisdictions frequently occurred; in the absence of an agency with a holistic view of the issue, the environment continued to degrade.

Facing political pressures for environmental conservation, the government under the leadership of General Thanom Kitikhachon established the Environmental Improvement Committee in 1971. It was replaced in the following year by the National Environmental Committee and National Environmental Administration Committee, for which the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board acted as committee secretary. However, the two committees could not strengthen the environmental management system, since they had no legal mandate over it.

The Environmental Act of 1975

The environment first entered the government agenda when Prime Minister Sanya Thammasak (1973-1975) included the conservation of natural resources and the environment
in his policy statements to Parliament. His government put such policies into practice by introducing the Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Act of B.E. 2518 (hereafter the Environmental Act of 1975). The Act established a central policy agency in charge of environmental management: the National Environmental Board (NEB), a permanent secretary-level board chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. Its mission included proposing national environmental policies and plans to the cabinet, giving advice and recommendations on environmental issues to the cabinet and other government agencies, and coordinating agencies on environmental matters. The Board's prime role was as an advisory body to the cabinet. Its operating unit, the Office of the National Environmental Board, remained under the umbrella of the Office of the Prime Minister after its creation in 1975. In 1979, it was restructured as a department subject to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy.

With the Board and the Office, the national environmental system in Thailand remained fragile. As an advisory board, the NEB lacked the supervising power to make its policies and recommendations effective. As they had before the NEB and the Office, agencies still worked within their own specific laws. The strength of the Office depended on the political motives of the cabinet and the ability of its own leader (the Secretary-General of the NEB) to coordinate concerned agencies (Suwanmongkol 1989). Since Thailand has emphasized achieving economic growth, the political will for environmental protection and improvement was weak during the 1980s, as was reflected in its budget allocation. Environmental programs received less than one percent of the total national budget (Suwanmongkol 1989, 38-39). The NEB office also suffered from personnel and budget
constraints, undermining its capacity to provide information to support decisions by top office and Board administrators.

**The Environmental Act of 1992**

Thailand’s economic prosperity during the last decade came with high environmental costs. Natural resources have been depleted; pollution problems have intensified; and the quality of life has deteriorated (Arbhabhirama et al. 1988; Rigg 1995). Conflicts over environmental issues have arisen and become hot political debates and, sometimes, lead to violence and confrontation (Hirsch and Lohmann 1989; Lohmann 1995). The increase in both the numbers and the overall membership of NGOs involved in environmental matters reflects the insufficiency of the current environmental management system. The problem was also recognized in the Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991), which stated the necessity to improve the management and administrative systems for natural resources and the environment through decentralization and greater public participation (NESDB 1987).

The environmental management system was restructured with the introduction of the Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality of B.E. 2535 (the Environmental Act of 1992). This Act differs from the previous Act of 1975 in the following points (Thailand Environment Institute 1995, 1-2), in that it:

- empowers the NEB to make decisions regarding environmental issues. The NEB’s status is strengthened from a permanent secretary-level board under the 1975 Act to a ministerial-level board chaired by the Prime Minister, and has the Permanent Secretary of
the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE)\(^\text{18}\) as a member of the Board and the Board’s Secretary.

- replaces the Office of the NEB with the three new departments attached to MOSTE: the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning (OEPP), the Pollution Control Department (PCD) and Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP).

- establishes environmental management and indicates, for the first time, how authority in this management is to be delegated from the national to the provincial and local levels.

- designates certain areas to become Environmental Protection Zones (EPZ) and/or Pollution Control Zones (PCZ). The 1975 Act had no such designations.

- requires the provinces with either EPZs or PCZs to submit an Action Plan for Provincial Environmental Protection. Other provinces may submit an Action Plan if they so desire.

- defines the environment to include both natural and man-made physical and biological surroundings. The 1975 Act provided no clear definition of the environment.

- establishes an Environmental Fund which did not exist under the 1975 Act.

**Major Governmental Agencies Involved in Urban Environmental Management**

The Environmental Act of 1992 has resulted in a more integrated system of urban environmental management as well as decentralizing authority in that management to local levels. Major agencies involved include the NEB, the MOSTE, the MOI and municipalities.

1) *National Environmental Board (NEB)*

Under the new Act, the NEB is empowered to be the key decision-making body on

\[^{18}\text{In 1992, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Energy was renamed Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment.}\]
environmental matters. Compared to the 1975 Environmental Act, the NEB’s status is strengthened by its upgrading to a ministerial-level board, chaired by the Prime Minister. The board also includes ministers of major ministries involved in environmental issues, and representatives from the private sector. The NEB’s authority and responsibilities have been broadened to include formulating national environmental policies, approving the national environmental plans, prescribing environmental quality standards, proposing to cabinet amendments to laws relating to improved environmental quality, supervising the enforcement of environmental laws and administering the Environmental Fund. The NEB is empowered to require government agencies and persons to deliver documents and can summon persons concerned to give explanations. To implement environmental policies and decisions, the NEB also has three new operational agencies under the MOSTE.

2) Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE)

The Environmental Act of 1992 establishes the MOSTE as the key ministry in environmental management. Its mission is to prepare propositions for the NEB and to implement NEB decisions. Three new departments in the MOSTE are shown in Figure 3.4. The Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP) is the agency mainly responsible for providing public education and information about the environment and for promoting both

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19 According to Section 12 of the Environmental Act of 1992, the NEB consists of the Prime Minister as the Chairman, a Deputy Prime Minister designated by the Prime Minister as the first Vice-Chairman, the Minister of Science, Technology and Environment as the second Vice-Chairman. Other members [ex officio] of the NEB are the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, the Minister of Transportation and Communications, the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Public Health, the Minister of Industry, the Secretary-General of the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Secretary-General of the Board of Investment, and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget. Also included as members are no more than eight persons qualified in environmental matters, of whom no less than half shall be representatives of the private sector. The Permanent Secretary of the MOSTE is also a member and the secretary of the Board.
environmental awareness among the populace and public participation in environmental management. This department does not deal exclusively with urban environmental problems but is also in charge of registering NGOs and promoting cooperation between them, the government and the private sector. Under the Environmental Act of 1992, which aims at greater participation of NGOs in environmental management, NGOs registered with the MOSTE earn the status of NGOs for purposes of environmental protection and natural resource conservation, thereby becoming eligible for governmental assistance, especially access to the Environmental Fund.

The Pollution Control Department (PCD) deals directly with urban environmental problems including water quality, air and noise pollution, and solid and hazardous waste. It is responsible for proposing policies, action plans and measures to curb pollution problems, monitoring pollution and for setting national standards on water quality, air quality and noise emission. The department has no authority to work in a specific province or municipality outside of a designated pollution control zone (PCZ). At present, there are 10 PCZs in nine provinces. According to the Director of the Pollution Management Coordination Division, PCD, a PCZ designation for an area with severe pollution problems makes solving these problems a high priority and gives the area access to all forms of governmental assistance, especially those involving finance, expertise, and administrative systems. The designation of a PCZ is a voluntary process. The PCD may informally approach the target area, or the target area may make a request to the PCD. If the area is interested in becoming a PCZ, the PCD and the municipality will together collect data and evaluate the circumstances of

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20 Interview with the Director of the Pollution Management Coordination Division, PCD on July 15, 1996.
21 However, the designation of the first three PCZs (Phuket, Pee Pee Island and Pattaya) was mandatory.
pollution in order to make a primary recommendation to the MOSTE. Once the area is proclaimed as a PCZ, the Environmental Act of 1992 requires local administrators to submit an action plan for pollution control to the provincial governor. The action plan will be included in the annual provincial environment management action plan. In both the MOSTE's budget allocation and NEB's approval of the grants or loans from the Environmental Fund, projects in the action plan of a PCZ tend to be given priority.

Figure 3.4: The New MOSTE Environmental Organization

Source: DEQP, MOSTE (n.d.)
Note: OEPP (Office of Environmental Policy and Planning), PCD (Pollution Control Department) and DEQP (Department of Environmental Quality Promotion)
The Office of Environmental Policy and Planning (OEPP) is responsible for proposing national environmental policy and preparing a national environmental plan for the NEB. The OEPP's planning process consists of a long-term environmental policy, which covers a 20-year period; an environmental quality management plan, which concerns a five-year period; and an annual provincial environmental action plan. To decentralize the environmental management system and promote greater regional participation, planning authority is delegated to the provincial and local levels. Responsibility for the formulation of an annual provincial environmental action plan rests with the provincial governor through his provincial office, which acts in cooperation with provincial representatives from ministries concerned with environmental matters, from local authorities and from local NGOs. The completed provincial environmental plan is submitted to the OEPP in MOSTE through the Ministry of the Interior. After NEB approves the plan, its funding is included in the MOSTE's annual budget.

Through the Office of the Environmental Fund, the OEPP also administers the Environmental Fund under the supervision of the Fund Committee and the NEB. The Environmental Act of 1992 provides for the Fund, a major innovation. The Anand Government established the Environmental Fund from the gasoline tax, endowing it with Bt5,000 million (CDN$ 263.15 million) in 1992. In 1996, the Fund totaled approximately Bt9,450 million (CDN$497.36 million), of which Bt3,400 million (CDN$178.94 million) had been already committed to support projects (DEQP 1996a, 22). The Fund is intended to support emergent environmental projects through allocating grants or low-interest loans to

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22 Interview with the Director of Environmental Policy and Planning on March 18, 1996.

23 Anand Panyarachun was the appointed Prime Minister from 1991 to 1992. His administration brought in the 1992 Environmental Act.
local authorities and NGOs, and low-interest loans to public enterprises and medium- and small-scale business entrepreneurs. The Environmental Fund Committee, chaired by the Permanent-Secretary of the MOSTE, gives priority to the support of large environmental infrastructure projects, especially those in EPZs and PCZs.

3) Ministry of the Interior (MOI)

Although the MOI is not a genuine environmental ministry as is the MOSTE, the MOI is critical to environmental conservation and protection. Established in the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1968-1910), it has become one of the most powerful ministries. Its responsibilities are very broad, covering all aspects of development in both rural and urban areas. Moreover, the current system of provincial and local governments has allowed the MOI to spread its tentacles all over the country. Accordingly, the MOI, especially its Department of Local Development (DOLA), has been assigned such major development projects as regional cities' development, land traffic management and the promotion of employment in rural areas.

A number of departments and public enterprises under the umbrella of the MOI are promoting good urban environments. The Land Department, by virtue of the Land Act, issues land property documents and manages the system of land tenure. The Town Planning Act of 1975 authorizes the Town and Country Planning Bureau to lay out and produce both integrated and specific town planning. The Department of Public Works is responsible for the design and construction of large environmental infrastructure such as waste-water treatment plants and waste disposal facilities. Such public enterprises under the MOI as the Regional

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24 Interview with the Director of the Office of the Environmental Fund on April 1996.
Water Authority, the Provincial Electricity Authority, the Public Housing Authority and the Expressway Authority also provide or manage variety of public utilities.

The DOLA is another powerful MOI department that is important in the system of environmental management. The Permanent Secretary of the MOI normally comes from among the key officials of the DOLA. The DOLA, through the Local Government Bureau, reviews and supervises local administration and, as already mentioned, takes care of municipal personnel and financial administration. As problems associated with urbanization have intensified, the DOLA has expanded its mission to include urban development. In 1981, the Office of Urban Development (OUD) was established within the DOLA to assist municipalities in dealing with such urban problems as pollution, inadequacy of infrastructure, and inefficient administrative systems.

The DOLA undertakes major urban development projects, including the Regional Cities Development Program, which has had definite environmental ramifications. This project is an attempt to diversify growth away from Bangkok to other major cities by injecting governmental assistance to selected cities. The central government has selected 12 municipalities for participation in the project: Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, Nakhon Ratchasima, Songkla, Hat Yai, Pitsanulok, Nakhon Sawan, Udon Thani, Chonburi, Ratchaburi, Suratthani, and Phuket (Map 3.1). To date most municipalities in the project have emphasized improving physical infrastructure, such as roads, ports, drainage systems; waste water treatment plants; slum improvements; and waste disposal systems. The OUD, as a

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25 The internal restructuring of DOLA in 1994 established the Local Government Bureau to cluster former divisions dealing with local affairs (Divisions of Local Government Affairs; Local Finance; Provincial and Sub-district Administration; and Office of Urban Development).
Map 3.1: Regional Cities of Thailand
project manager, takes care of administrative tasks, while the design and construction of these infrastructure projects falls to the Public Works Department.

The OUD, with assistance from foreign countries and such international organizations as UNDP, GTZ and DANCED, provides policy guidelines and recommendations for strengthening municipal capacities and for improving the efficiency of municipal services. The OUD’s recommendations have included privatization of municipal services, guidelines on the preparation of municipal developmental plans, and urban community development. The Division of Local Development (formerly OUD)\textsuperscript{26} distributes guidelines for improved urban environmental management and, from the beginning of 1996, has been advising all municipalities to produce an action plan for environmental management (DLD 1996a, 1996b).

As is seen above, the MOI has an extensive role in urban environmental management. While the Environmental Act of 1992 decentralizes authority from agencies in the MOSTE to both provincial governors and local administrators, nevertheless the national administrative system put both under the MOI. In fact the Act has led to major conflict between the MOI and the MOSTE over budget allocation for large environmental projects. As already mentioned, those projects have been under the responsibility of the Public Works Department (PWD), MOI. However, by virtue of this Act, the budget for those projects has to be allocated under the MOSTE. The Banham Cabinet (1995-1996) modified the Act by returning the allocation to the PWD. This conflict became a political issue when the former Minister of MOSTE (Suwat Liptapanlop), as an opposition party leader, accused the Prime Minister

\textsuperscript{26} In 1994, this Office was restructured to become the Division of Local Development, attached to the Local Administration Bureau, DOLA.
(Banharn Silpa-archa), who was also Minister of the Interior, of violating the Act in the non-confidence debate in 1996. Both modification and conflict also created confusion among municipal administrators preparing budgets.  

Working styles differ between the PWD, MOI and the MOSTE. The PWD has quite a centralized style. The PWD is normally responsible for the project implementation including design and the bidding for construction contracts, while the municipality that owns the project is only a participant in design and bidding committees. When the project is complete, the PWD will turn it over to the municipality for operation. The experience of many environmental projects under the PWD has been negative, insofar as these have been delayed and have also had technical and operating problems. Projects such as waste-water treatment and sanitary landfills differ from roads and bridges, in that they require both money and qualified personnel to maintain and operate, which an unprepared municipality could not afford. The style of MOSTE encompasses a more participatory approach. The municipality implements its own project, while the MOSTE provides technical assistance and personnel training. In this way, the municipality takes its own constraints into consideration during project design and has the opportunity to improve its own capacity to operate the system in the future.

4) Municipal Government

The consensus in Thailand is that municipal government is critical to urban environmental management. The practice of environmental policy occurs municipally, and municipal administrators actually deal with urban environmental problems. Prior to the Environmental

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27 This confusion is reflected by municipal planners who participated in the seminar on the guidelines and procedures for preparing a five-year municipal development plan and an urban environmental action plan.
Act of 1992, municipal government as the only locally elected institution close to urban people, performed various functions directly involved in maintaining and promoting a healthy living environment. In particular, the Municipal Act of 1953, underlying the establishment of municipal government, prescribes municipal functions. Even though this Act did not make explicit reference to "environment" in defining municipal responsibilities, the municipal functions which it made compulsory (Table 3.2) — keeping a city clean, providing garbage collection and disposal, and providing and maintaining roads, waterways and drainage systems, as well as other functions related to public sanitation — are among the basic components of the urban environment.

Moreover, two other specific pieces of legislation have charged municipal government with monitoring law enforcement and maintaining the city's cleanliness and public sanitation. The Public Sanitation Act of 1992 (replacing that of 1942), issued by the Ministry of Public Health, determines that local authorities have responsibilities to maintain the tidiness of the city, as well as to eliminate pollution problems in the community. By virtue of the Act, a municipality is authorized to issue its own regulations and measures regarding, for example, the prohibition of littering in public spaces, methods of, and fees for, garbage collection and disposal, and the control of some occupations such as hawkers or food vendors. The Maintenance of Cleanliness and Tidiness of the City Act of 1992 (replacing that of 1960) aims to prevent people from undertaking activities that pollute the city environment from the point of view of cleanliness and tidiness. The Act authorizes the mayor to enforce the law and includes penalties for violators.

In addition, the Town Planning Act of 1975 and the Building Controls Act of 1979 give the municipality a role in land-use protection. According to the Town Planning Act, a
municipal government is granted the right to prepare its own integrated as well as specific city planning. If this is a case, prior consent is required from the Board of Town Planning in Bangkok. An integrated city plan, once it is prepared by the municipality, must be forwarded to the Office of Town Planning, MOI, for consideration. Unfortunately, no municipality has ever prepared its own city plan. It is common to request the Office of Town Planning to prepare an integrated city plan. The Building Controls Act authorizes the municipality to issue building regulations for its own locality and to monitor building designs before granting building permits for their construction.

The Environmental Act of 1992 recognizes the critical role of municipal government in urban environmental management by strengthening its roles in environmental policy planning and implementation. The Act requires a municipality within a PCZ to formulate an action plan for pollution controls with assistance from the MOSTE; this is to be submitted to the governor who then incorporates it into the Annual Provincial Environment Action Plan. At present, plans are not limited to provinces with PCZs. Seventy-five provinces submitted plans to the OEPP, MOSTE in 1995 (DEQP 1996a, 49). Importantly, the Environment Fund provides a municipal government with a viable budget to support local environmental investment, especially in waste-water treatment and in garbage disposal systems.

Just recently, the MOI has brought the urban environmental problem into its own terms of reference. Starting in 1996, the MOI instructs that municipal government attaches a section on Environmental Development and Natural Resources to its five-year municipal development plan. The MOI advises the municipality to set up in its planning process an urban environmental committee, which is composed of three parties: municipal officials, provincial officials, and representatives from academe, NGOs and community groups. This
committee is responsible for formulating urban environmental management policies, and
determining guidelines and measures to curb problems, as well as for approving the finalive-year action plan on urban environmental management. The inclusion of civil society’s
representatives in the municipal planning process reflects the recognition of the significant
role of civil society in politics in general and environmental management in particular. This
will be the subject of the following section.

IV. Civil Society

The rise of civil society is a new phenomenon in Thai politics. Historically, citizens and
groups had a minimal role in political development, since the highly centralized state left
only limited space for the emergence of civil society. Some scholars argue that the state itself,
afraid of losing power, obstructed the development and political involvement of civil society
(Nakata 1990; Dhiravegin 1990). The state considered both challenges to state authority and
calls for the opening of political space to be unacceptable and easily labeled these as
“communist,” “subversive” or “alien” (Hewison 1996). In addition to state constraints, the
slow development of civil society is also related to Thai social characteristics and culture.28
Dominated by agricultural society, most Thais still maintain the traditional belief that politics
is a matter for the rulers. Suffering is a matter of karma, or deeds in past life. The citizen’s
right to control the state has not been promoted (Prasertkul 1996). Moreover, major Thai
values such as respect for seniority, compromise, the avoidance of conflict and open
criticism, and personalism are not conducive to the emergence of an active civil society.

Against these constraints, civil society has incrementally inserted itself into politics and has become a major force in Thai politics, particularly during the 1990s. The changes in the role and structure of civil society according to social, economic and political circumstances can be divided into four periods.

*Passive Civil Society (1932-1957)*

During this 25-year period, civil society was weak and played a minimal role in Thai politics. The revolution of 1932, instead of shifting power to the people through democratic processes and political institutions, in essence transferred power from the King to the educated group in the country — the bureaucrats. A large and strong bureaucracy became the locus of power in the new institutional arrangement and played a leading role in educating and mobilizing the masses to participate in politics. Since political power lay in the hands of the bureaucratic elite, both civilian and military, this period became known as the bureaucratic polity (Riggs 1966; Dhiravegin 1985, Part II). The strong bureaucracy had expanded to cover economic and social activities, and natural resources management. A docile, politically inert civil society facilitated the expansion of the Thai bureaucratic state. The majority of Thai people were uneducated peasants who took little or no interest in public affairs. The business sector, dominated by the ethnic Chinese who were poorly educated and confronted with a nationalistic policy, could only keep a low political profile (Laothamatas 1988, 451). The political parties, emerging as late as 1946 and only recognized as legal entities nine year later, in 1955, were fragile and lacked continuity due to frequent military coups.\(^29\) Party organizations could not be developed and political mobilization could be at best only ad hoc.

\(^{29}\) Between 1932-1957, there were six constitutions, nine general elections and ten military coups.
Only religious organizations and a few social welfare groups, formed by elite women, were allowed to exist during this period.

**Take-Off Period (1958-1972)**

Although civil society remained weak and was prevented from political involvement since the country was under military rule, there were signs of a demand for a change in its role. During this period, the country had experienced a massive economic and social transformation in which non-bureaucratic groups arose, including the business sector, wage labourers and intellectuals. Economic development made the business sector into an engine of growth in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite having no direct role in politics, the business sector developed a very close relationship with military and bureaucratic leaders in a covert and particularistic manner, including inviting the latter to join executive boards or to hold stock in companies at no cost (Laothamatas 1988). The industrialization policy drew peasants from farms to be labourers in cities. Since they were easily exploited by the capitalists, they could also be mobilized into labour unions. The expansion of educational institutions also resulted in the rise of students and intellectuals (Dhiravegin 1994, 179-181). Concerned with unbalanced growth, students and intellectuals began to form voluntary organizations working in rural areas, such as the Rural Reconstruction Movement and the Graduate Volunteer Program (Nicro et al. 1996). In 1969, the student groups formed a student federation and started to question the closed political system and to challenge the legitimacy of military dictatorship, particularly during 1971 to 1973. Examples included a protest against the bus-fare increase, a campaign against buying Japanese goods and a demand for a new constitution (Dhiravegin 1994, 184). The environment became a political issue in this period. The
students demanded an investigation into the use of government equipment by influential military officers for a hunting expedition into the soon-to-be established Thung Yai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary (Hirsch and Lohmann 1989). Such environmental incidents contributed to a rising political awareness among the population and dissatisfaction with the military regime which led to the student uprising in 1973.

**Heyday of Social Movement (1973-1976)**

In October 1973 the student movement changed the Thai political system in two important ways. First, this was the first instance of military power being successfully overthrown by popular forces led by university students in Thailand. Second, the event opened political space for groups in civil society. By early January 1974 there were estimated to be no fewer than 23 newly organized student, intellectual, business, or labour groups (Zimmerman 1974, 520). Labour unions and farmers’ groups began to assert themselves in the political scene. Strikes and mass demonstrations became commonplace. Civil society, led by students and intellectuals, became a major force in Thai politics. During the TEMCO movement of 1974-1975, they forced the government to withdraw mining concessions in southern Thailand (Hirsch and Lohmann 1989). Also, their success in inserting environmental conservation into the government’s agenda led to the establishment of the Environmental Act and the National Environmental Board in 1975 (Suwanmongkol 1989). Even though the influence of civil society was high, the state did not formally recognize its role. The proliferation of student and other groups, however, plunged the country into political turmoil, marked by conflict and violence (Basham 1993, 12-13), a situation which provided the military with the opportunity to regain power in a bloody coup in October 1976.
**Eclipse of Social Movement (1976-1979)**

Now little space existed for open opposition to government policy. The student movement was destroyed, and student clubs in the university shut down. Some student activists joined the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) in the forests. Some sought political asylum abroad (Dhiravegin 1994). While suppressing the student movement and other radical groups, the government promoted popular groups as a means to fight the CPT. As a result, popular groups such as the Village Boy Scout Group (*Glum Look-Sya-Chaw-Bann*), the Civil Protection Volunteer Group (*Glum Ar-Sa-Pong-Gun-Pai-Fai-Pola-Ruen*) and the Thai National Protection Volunteer Group (*Glum Thai-Ar-Sa-Pong-Gun-Chart*) became widespread around the country. Members of the groups normally had military-style training and were infused with a sense of national threats and dangers posed by communists. Although these groups declined as the threat of communism receded in the mid-1980s, however, as they were state-sponsored and espoused conservative values, their membership became an “available mass” for the state to mobilize against anti-government movements.

**Re-emergence (1980-1986)**

The semi-democracy regime30 reopened the political space for non-bureaucratic groups. This time the business sector became a major force in Thai politics. Anek Laothamatats (1988, 1992) argues that the business association replaced student groups as the strongest of all the non-bureaucratic elements in Thailand. Since the late 1970s, trade associations and chambers of

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30 Semi-Democracy refers to the unique political system between 1979 and 1989 in Thailand which was neither a democracy nor authoritarian. The 1978 Constitution prescribed the election of the lower house but did not require the prime minister and cabinet members to be MPs. In practice, the government came to power by competitive election but the ruling political parties in the Parliament invited military leaders, who did not run in the election and did not belong to any party, to serve as prime minister. The prime ministers under the semi-democracy regime include General Kriengsak Chamanan (1979-1980) and General Prem Tinsulanond (1980-1988).
commerce had proliferated and became very active. The number of trade associations in Bangkok rose rapidly from only 75 in 1975, to 124 in 1979 and 177 in 1987. The number of provincial chambers of commerce also increased significantly from only one chamber in each of four provinces in 1979 to a chamber in every province in 1987 (Laothamatas 1992, 7). The government also recognized the importance of the business sector and the necessity to establish linkages with it. In 1981, the government created the Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committees (JPPSCCs) at both the national and provincial levels (Laothamatas 1992). Such circumstance, scholars such as Anek Laothamatas (1992) and Ruland and M.L. Bhansoon Ladavalya (1993) argue that the pattern of the state-business sector relationship has shifted away from the bureaucratic polity toward liberal corporatism. Increasingly, business people also played a direct political role by pouring into the parliament and the cabinet. Their representation in Thai cabinets increased from 6.1% in 1977 to 45.9% in 1980 and 47.7% in 1986 (Laothamatas 1988, 454). However, some scholars, such as Chai-anan Samudavanija (1995) view the situation with pessimism. In his words, “we should not confuse more participation by the private sector in the decision-making process as a positive trend towards democratization. There is no evidence of political trickle-down effects where elite-level participation automatically leads to mass-level participation” (Samudavanija 1995, 239).

In addition to the rise of the business sector, Thailand witnessed the growth of local organizations. This resulted from the government’s policy, declared in the Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan, to focus on participatory rural development, so as to promote local initiatives and self-reliance and to develop local organizations. The Government established local organizations such as Village Committees and Sub-District Councils throughout the country. However, these local organizations, it was argued, were far from
representing local people’s needs and demands, since provincial governors and head district officers supervised their operations. This period was also considered as the beginning of the NGO movement in Thailand (Nicro et al. 1996, 2-20). As dissatisfaction with government work on rural development increased, more and more rural development NGOs were established. Their activities included strengthening grassroots organizations, educating people and alleviating the hardships of their target groups. International organizations such as the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Local Development Assistance Program of Canada advocated the funding of NGOs.

Active Civil Society (1985-present)

Since 1985, civil society has become a growing major force in Thai politics, its power made evident when the mass demonstration of civic groups against the appointment of General Suchinda as the non-elected Prime Minister led to the political crisis of May 13 to 17, 1992. This crisis reduced the role of the military in politics, while expanding political space for the popular sector.

NGOs, in particular, gained momentum and quickly became the most active and effective opposition outside the formal political process, especially in the area of environmental conservation and social development (Samudavanija 1995, 148). By the late 1980s the environmental situation in Thailand reached the critical stage of natural disasters and intensified conflicts among local people, NGOs, business interests and the government (Hirsch and Lohmann 1989; Bunbongkarn 1993; Lohmann 1995). Environmentally sensitive projects,

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31 See Poonsri Watjanapoom et al. (1986), and V. Surarerks (1986) for an evaluation of the rural development program in Thailand.
32 For example, a deforestation-related mudslide in Southern Thailand in November 1988 shocked the public as it took hundreds of lives and buried villages and farmland under metres of logs, uprooted trees and sand.
including dam constructions, reforestation with eucalyptus, and waste disposal sites, became a battlefield between village people and NGOs, on one side, and the government or the private sector on the other side (Wongkul 1994, 249-257). Demands increased for decentralization and for public participation in state-run environmental management. These circumstances left the government no alternative but to reform the system of environmental management; it did so with the 1992 Environment Act.

For the first time, the Act makes explicit governmental recognition of the crucial role of civil society, and of the necessity for effective cooperation between NGOs and the government, in environmental conservation and protection. The Act provides civil society with a legal basis for its participation in the national system of environmental management. At the level of policy, the new composition of the NEB includes at least four representatives from the private sector (Section 12). Section 6 guarantees citizens’ rights in the environmental context, including access to governmental information, eligibility for state compensation in case of damage arising from state-supported projects, and the right of petition against polluters. Moreover, Sections 7 and 8 provide for collaboration between NGOs and government agencies. Section 7 stipulates that any NGO that is non-profit, non-political, has the status of a legal entity and is involved in environmental activities, is entitled to register as an environmental NGO (ENGO) with the DEQP, MOSTE. At present, 65 ENGOs (1996) are registered with the MOSTE (DEQP 1996b). Section 8 entitles any registered ENGO to governmental support and assistance, including financial support from the Environmental Fund. According to the Director of the Environmental Fund, the Fund contributes about Bt100 million (CDN$5.26 million) per year to support NGOs’ activities and other environmental protection activities. To qualify for

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33 Interview on March 19, 1996 at the Office of the Environmental Fund, OEPP.
such grants, a project must emphasize people's participation and action orientation; it should also be incontrovertibly promoting environmental quality and have the potential to be replicated in other areas of the country.

In urban areas, Bangkok in particular, organizations of slum dwellers and squatters have been formed with the assistance of NGOs to fight against land evictions and to improve their living environment. This is particularly true of Bangkok. Some such groups have gained enough strength to present their demands to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (Douglass 1992). Outside the capital, the proliferation of community groups results from the government's policy of creating linkages between the municipal government and the urban poor. Arguably, these groups outside Bangkok are hardly independent representatives of the urban poor, since municipal government supervises their establishment, leadership recruitment and operation (Ruland 1992). Normally, municipal government employs them as a channel to mobilize popular support for municipal activities. In addition, despite the limited number of NGOs working on urban issues, during the past five years a number of civic groups, composed of middle class people with a concern for local issues, have appeared in several big cities — for example, Hat Yai Forum, For Chiang Mai Group, Love Nan City Group (Glum Hug Muang Nan) and Love Petchaburi City Group (Glum Kon Rak Muang Petch) (Nicro et al. 1996).

Despite its high profile and increasing recognition by the state, weaknesses are apparent in Thai civil society. Suchit Bunbongkarn argues that the absence of linkages between civic groups and political parties reduced the groups' chance of developing into influential political forces (Bunbongkarn 1996). Moreover, as Brockelman (1989) observes, NGOs are not as powerful or effective in Thailand as in other countries. The strength of NGOs is fragmented and

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34 Interview with the Chief of Community Development Section, OUD in 1994.
tends to revolve around certain charismatic and influential leaders. This situation has led to a lack of coordinated action on pressing public issues (Brockelman 1989 quoted in Boyle 1993, 45). As well, the bargaining power of NGOs depends on their leaders who have public trust and a strong reputation. In this respect, NGOs share a weakness with other groups, including political parties, in that their continuity is endangered when leaders retire or move on to other pursuits.

V. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a panorama of the state and civil society in Thailand, as it relates to issues concerning the urban environment. On the state side, the central government relegates local-government units, municipalities in particular, to the bottom of the hierarchy, where legally the municipalities are placed under the supervision of the provincial governor and the DOLA, Ministry of the Interior. In practice, however, some room exists for bargaining and negotiation between the central government and municipalities, especially in the areas of personnel and grants. More specifically, municipal governments have gained some authority over the urban environment through passage of various laws, especially the Municipal Act of 1957, the Environmental Act of 1992, the Public Sanitation Act 1992, and the Maintenance of Cleanliness and Tidiness of the City Act of 1992. As well, with the Environmental Act of 1992, municipalities found themselves with additional linkages with the centre, especially through the MOSTE. In effect, these links give more flexibility to the municipalities by reducing their dependency on the Ministry of the Interior.

From the perspective of civil society, reviewing the evolution and overall movement of civil society shows how its nature and role were influenced by a dynamic social, economic and
political context. Of particular note is the replacement of student groups as the strongest civil force by business groups and NGOs in the 1980s and 1990s, respectively. One can also recognize divisions within civil society, including three main sectors: business, NGOs (including intellectuals) and low-income groups. NGOs and the business sector are relatively independent of the state and are often acutely aware of their political impact. As a result, they often become the principal vehicle for socio-economic and political changes, although NGOs tend to be relatively more active than the business sector in areas of social equity and the environment. On the other hand, popular and low-income organizations, who tend to be sponsored by the government and are bound by material needs, tend to lack effective (economic and political) power and therefore are more easily subverted by the government. The implications of this division within civil society and its relationship with the state for the politics of the urban environment will be examined in the following chapters.
Chapter Four

Chiang Mai Municipality

I. Introduction

Having established the national framework, the case studies of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai municipalities will now be presented, with Chiang Mai the focus of the present chapter. Many Thais once considered life in this city to be ideal — cool weather, serene atmosphere, natural beauty and the distinct Lanna culture — but things have soured in the last few years for Chiang Mai’s people. The city’s environment has deteriorated and, worse, the municipality has not coped with the urban environmental problems, especially in waste management, as was reflected in the garbage crisis in 1994 which will be examined in this chapter. The question arises of what has gone wrong with this city, and what has contributed to the municipality’s failure in curbing its waste problem. The following sections will explore various aspects of Chiang Mai city — the city’s background, its municipal politics, its civil society — and then will investigate the waste problem in Chiang Mai city.

II. City Profile

Historical Background

Chiang Mai is one of the oldest cities in Thailand. King Phaya Meng-rai founded it in 1296 as the capital of the Lanna kingdom¹, the richest and most powerful state in the northern region (Abhakorn and Wyatt 1995). Located in a fertile valley with Doi Suthep mountain to

¹ At present, the area of the Lanna kingdom includes eight northern provinces: Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phayao, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Nan and Mai Hong Son.
the west and the Ping River to the east, the city rapidly became prosperous and wealthy as a centre of government, economics and culture. During its 250 years of independence, Chiang Mai developed its own identity and distinctiveness, especially in its cultures, customs, languages, arts and styles of architectures (Narumitrekakarn 1994). The Burmese invasion of 1558 terminated Lanna’s independence. After 200 years of Burmese domination, King Taksin liberated Lanna in 1774. It became a Siamese vassal state and then, a century later, in 1892, an integral part of Siam. In the early period, the relationship between Lanna and Siam was distant and loose. The former provided royal tribute to the Siamese Kings. However, the situation began to change, especially under the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) who pursued a national policy of integration as a response to the threat of colonialism (Abhakorn and Wyatt 1995; Charoenmuang 1995a; Nathalang 1995). The 1892 administrative reform of King Chulalongkorn turned Lanna from a vassal state into a region, the so-called “Northern Region” (Monthon Payap) of the Siamese Kingdom. The power of Chiang Mai’s princes and local lords was curtailed and replaced by a central system of administration under the supervision of a royal commissioner sent from Bangkok. When the regional administration was replaced by the provincial system introduced in the reforms of King Rama VII, Chiang Mai became a province of Thailand.

The city is not only unique in its natural beauty but also, as a result of its long and great history, in its heritage of arts and culture, city landscape and ancient sites. The prosperity in the past and the durability of local distinctiveness contribute to a sense of pride among Chiang Mai’s citizens. This pride leads them to be sensitive toward issues threatening the survival of their local identity, as happened in the cases of the Doi Suthep cable car and the Ping River, situations that will be discussed below.
Population and Urbanization

At present, the province of Chiang Mai covers an area of 20,107.057 km² which makes it the largest province in the Northern region and the second largest province of the country. Its provincial administrative structure divides it into 21 districts and 3 minor districts. It has four types of local-self government: the Provincial Administration Organization, Sanitary Districts, of which there are 28, one Municipal Government and 17 Subdistrict Administration Organizations (Social Research Institute 1996, 2-2). Urbanization is low and concentrated in the municipal area. Of the total 1994 population of 1,547,085, only 26.23% resided in urban areas, and 40.64% of the urban population lived in the municipal area (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 511-2). The uneven distribution of population is also reflected in its density. The rate for the total province is 76.94 per km², while for the municipality and non-municipality areas the rates are, respectively, 4,751.82 and 586.36 per km² (National Statistical Office 1995, 5).

In addition to its registered residents, the municipality has to serve a high number of tourists and people from outside who come to work, shop, or study, since it is the main centre of social and educational as well as economic activities of the province and the northern region; this number is estimated to be as high as 400,000 persons a day (Department of Political Science 1994, 10). This unregistered population puts heavy pressure on the city’s infrastructure as well as on the capacity of the municipality to accommodate the rising demands, especially since these people do not pay taxes or fees for the services.
Social and Economic Development

The influx of population into the municipal area results from Chiang Mai’s socio-economic changes in the last three decades, during which time the province was transformed from an agricultural to a non-agrarian economy in which, by 1993, that sector contributed only 12.28% of Gross Provincial Product (GPP). The remainder consists of manufacturing (9.40%), construction (9.11%), transportation (7.58%), commerce (12.99%) and the service sector (26.36%), whose growth has expanded rapidly in this decade (National Statistical Office 1995). The service sector replaced agriculture as the dominant sector in the Chiang Mai economy in 1988 (Social Research Institute 1996, 2-6). With the GPP per capita of Bt37,781 [CDN$1,988] (in 1993), Chiang Mai province is ranked 20th in the country but first in the northern region in terms of economic growth (National Statistical Office 1995, 106).

In addition to its economic domination, Chiang Mai is the centre of virtually everything in the northern region, from education, communication, transportation, tourism, finance, property development, technology, government, local arts and culture to, recently, sports. The regional primate city of Chiang Mai is the responsibility of the central government (Charoenmuang 1993a; Apavatjrut 1994). Chiang Mai become a centre of higher education with the establishment of Chiang Mai University in 1964, the first regional university in Thailand. At present, Chiang Mai has three universities and five colleges, of which only the Mae Jo Agricultural Technology Institution is located outside the municipal boundary. In 1969, Chiang Mai was promoted for tourism and in 1977 the Chiang Mai airport was expanded into an international one to accommodate the rising number of tourists. Under the Fourth and Fifth National Social and Economic Development Plans (1977-1987), Chiang Mai was the only northern city to be designated a regional city, as part of the government’s
policy to decentralize economic activities away from Bangkok and to stem the flow of immigration into that city. The period of Chiang Mai’s most accelerated growth came under the Chatuchai government (1988-1991) which turned the city into a centre of business, commerce, services and tourism through its policies of tourist promotion and trade with Burma and Indochina. The number of tourists doubled within five years, from 1.2 million in 1985 to 2.9 million in 1990. Tourist-related businesses rose rapidly, including hotels, leisure, commerce, restaurants and handicrafts. There are 76 hotels, 17 resorts, 103 guest houses, 74 restaurants and 7 shopping malls (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 5-18). Except for resorts, most of these facilities are located within the municipality and its outskirts. Also booming were the property development and construction industries. The taxes and fees from land transactions in Chiang Mai created for the government an income of Bt1.04 billion (CDN$500,000) in 1990 while the figure had been only Bt160 million (CDN$8.42 million) in 1987 (Charoenmuang 1993a, 165).

However, Chiang Mai’s economic growth and development are concentrated exclusively within the municipal area. For instance, most hospitals, universities and colleges, factories, hotels, department stores, entertainment places, agricultural markets, banks and regional governmental offices are located in the municipal area. These factors not only pull a lot of people into the Chiang Mai municipality but also create various social problems, namely prostitution, AIDS, crime, street children, homelessness and slums. About 2,000 women work in the hospitality business, such as night clubs, bars, and massage

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2 In 1994, 19 of 42 hospitals were located within the municipality and Muang District (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 5-10).

3 In 1994, 405 factories (23.38%) are within the municipality and Muang District (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 5-15).
parlours and 581 people were already infected with AIDS in Muang District (CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996).

Urban Environmental Problems

Above all, the city of Chiang Mai is beset by severe environmental problems. The rapid economic growth and influx of people have arguably gone beyond the carrying capacity of the city. Certainly, the effects on urban geography, a key part of the environment, have been substantial. Chiang Mai’s centuries-old culture and identity have been eroded to their foundations, changing the once-quiet community into a chaotic, money-oriented commercial centre (Sirorattanakul 1995, 31). Land prices have risen substantially, particularly in the municipal area. The old Lanna-style city has slowly disappeared and been replaced by modern, high-rise buildings, either hotels or condominiums. Moreover, economic expansion without efficient management has come with costs, especially in the deterioration of the city’s environment. Inappropriate land use has damaged the old cultural image of the city as well as the landscape, especially through such projects as a high-rise hotel and an entertainment site located just adjacent to a holy Buddhist temple and beside the Ping River. The old city’s clay wall and its vacant lands along the canals have been encroached on and turned into shelters for the poor and hill-tribe immigrants. The municipal area contains some 17 illegal slums, with a total population of 4,000 to 5,000. Souvenir hawkers and food vendors occupy public pavements, causing traffic congestion and dirtiness.

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4 From 1987 to 1994, there were 47 registered condominium projects, and 129 high-rise building projects (Faculty of Social Science 1996, 4-19).
5 Interview with the Coordinator of the People Organization for Participation Group, on June 19, 1996.
Traffic congestion is another major problem in Chiang Mai. The road and traffic structure of this old city has not matched the rapid increase in the number of automobiles with the economic boom and the rise of consumerism. It was calculated in 1991 that the road surface within Chiang Mai municipality could carry 59,168 vehicles; but there were already 366,573 cars and motorcycles (Charoenmuang 1993a, 167). The traffic survey conducted in 1993 showed that the average speed in major routes of the city was below 15 km/hour. (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 4-25). Traffic congestion also causes air and noise pollution, especially from motorcycles. Because it is surrounded by mountains, which limit the city’s air circulation, air pollution is particularly severe in Chiang Mai, thus adversely affecting human health. The number of patients with respiratory problems has increased rapidly. From 1994 to 1995 as many as 457,213 people in the province became ill as a result of this problem (Faculty of Social Sciences 1996, 5-24).

Water quality in both the Ping River (Mae Ping) and the Mae Kha canal (Klong Mae Kha), flowing through the heart of the city, has been devastated by untreated waste water and garbage from households, restaurants and factories. Moreover, the land along the Ping River has been substantially violated, and often through legal loopholes, by the construction of high-rise hotels and condominiums, restaurants, and private houses, mainly owned by politicians and Bangkok business people intending to exploit the magnificent scenery of the river. Such encroachment has affected the ecology of the river. In addition to causing water pollution, garbage in Chiang Mai is made even more problematic by the lack of disposal sites. The city became known as “a trash city” when garbage was not collected for a month in
1994. This incident smashed the municipality's reputation and credibility.\(^6\) The garbage problem will be explored thoroughly later.

**Table 4.1: Interest in Urban Environmental Problems in Chiang Mai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Attention</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's Survey (1996).

**Table 4.2: Rankings of Major Urban Environmental Problems in Chiang Mai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban environmental problems</th>
<th>1(^{st})</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>2(^{nd})</th>
<th>3(^{rd})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste problem</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic congestion</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste water and water quality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slums</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public parks and tree inadequacy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's Survey (1996).

Given the city's rampant urban environmental problems, environmental awareness has not surprisingly risen among Chiang Mai citizens. The survey results, presented in Table 4.1, show that the majority of Chiang Mai citizens (90.2%) pay considerable attention to urban environmental problems. Table 4.2 shows garbage as the number one problem,\(^6\) Most local and national media covered the issue extensively, so Chiang Mai's garbage crisis was known nationwide. Chiang Mai citizens expressed their dissatisfaction toward the municipality by, for example, admonishing it through the media, putting garbage in front of the municipal office and complaining to the governor. Since the crisis was beyond the ability of the municipality to deal with, the DOLA had to intervene. This certainly eroded the credibility of Chiang Mai municipality in the eyes of the central government.
followed by traffic congestion, and air and water pollution. The severity of urban environmental problems today is considered by scholars as the result of not only the primacy of Chiang Mai city in the North of Thailand, but also of its weak and inefficient municipal government (Apavatjrut 1994; Social Science Research Institute 1996, Chapter 6). The nature of Chiang Mai's municipal government and local politics will be the focus of the next section.

III. Municipal Government, Municipal Politics and Civil Society

Despite the socio-economic circumstances of the city having changed dramatically in the last decade, Chiang Mai’s municipal government has failed to act forcefully in managing such rapid urban growth. The failure has worsened the problems, thereby leading to central government intervention and to the rise of groups of concerned citizens involved in such crucial local issues as land use, the Ping River, and garbage, for example. This failure has also brought change to the nature of Chiang Mai municipal politics. Before this issue is approached, this chapter will explore the municipal organization and administration.

Municipal Government

Chiang Mai municipality was originally the Chiang Mai Sanitary District, founded in 1915, with an area of 17.5 km²; it was elevated to a city municipality in 1935. It was the first such municipality and remained the only one in the country until 1992. At present, the municipal territory is 40.216 km², and covers 10 subdistricts in Muang District (Map 4.1). In 1995 the total registered population in the municipal area was 172,714 (CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 3/41-3/42).
Map 4.1: Chiang Mai Municipality
Municipal Organization and Administration

Figure 4.1 depicts Chiang Mai's municipal structure. The decision-making body consists of the Municipal Council and the Municipal Executive Board (MEB). As a city municipality, its council has 24 elected municipal councillors. From 1964 to 1985, one political group, the "Prachasanti," dominated the municipal council, winning 23 and 21 of 24 seats in the 1974 and 1980 municipal elections, respectively. However, between 1985 and 1995, the municipal council's members divided between the Prachasanti and the newer "Ananthaphum": 10 to 14 and 8 to 12 respectively in the 1985 and 1990 elections. In the election of 1995, a new political group, "Navarat Pattana," swept all 24 seats — the first time since 1974 that one political group has ruled the municipal council.

Figure 4.1: The Administrative Structure, Chiang Mai Municipality

![Administrative Structure Diagram]

Source: Adapted from CMM, Public Relations Section (n.d: 49).
During the Prachasanti’s overwhelming majority (1964-1985), municipal council was inactive, having few discussions. If there were any, such as, for instance, deliberation on the budget or on major public works projects, they were rather short, often lasting no longer than 30 minutes (Ruland 1992, 60). However, circumstances changed when the Ananthaphum won a normal majority and faced the Prachasanti opposition. According to former Prachasanti municipal councillors, the opposition had been very active on the municipal council (1985-1995) in exerting some controls by questioning decisions, requesting an additional session on particular problems and setting a non-confidence debate. The municipal meetings had been intense, normally lasting around half a day. If the mayor and his deputies did not answer questions in the municipal council, the opposition normally reported the problems to the local press; then the mayor had to answer to the people directly.

Executive Power

The executive power lies with the MEB (Kana-tesamontri), which consists of the mayor (Nai-yok-tesamontri) and four deputy mayors (Tesamontri). The mayor is appointed from among the councillors to be the top executive of the municipal administration. The mayor assigns each deputy mayor, also appointed from among councillors, particular responsibilities: Sanitary and Environment, Public Works, Education, and Administrative Affairs and Finance. During two terms of the Ananthaphum administration (1985-1995), the group’s leader, Vorakorn Tontranon, remained as Chiang Mai’s Mayor while the positions of his deputy mayors rotated among key Ananthaphum municipal councillors.

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7 Both of them are now municipal members under the banner of Navarat Pattana.
8 Interview with Thongchai Ramingwong, the former leader of the Prachasanti on June 26, 1996. He is now the speaker of the municipal council, under the banner of the Navarat Pattana.
Under the leadership of Vorakorn Tontranon, the executive power was, in practice, rather fragmented, since the mayor delegated full authority to his deputy mayors to conduct affairs in their assigned areas. The responsibility of the mayor, according to one of his former deputy mayors, was mainly to coordinate with higher authorities. This could be interpreted positively as a decentralized leadership style; however, without strong leadership on the part of the mayor to provide direction and guidance, this style presented some serious obstacles to achieving both horizontal coordination among divisions and unity of command. This decentralized style was further weakened by the frequent reshuffling of deputy mayors. In the last Ananthaphum administration (1990-1995), a deputy mayor remained in office on average for about two years. An exception was Watt Wibulsanti, who remained a deputy mayor for the two terms of the Ananthaphum administration.

**Municipal Clerk**

Directly subordinate to the MEB and at the head of municipal employees is the municipal clerk. It is noticeable that since the 1990s Chiang Mai’s municipal clerks have frequently been transferred. Most notably, the Ananthaphum administration (1985-1995) had three municipal clerks within 10 years (Table 4.3). Frequent transfers presented another leadership problem, involving conflict between political and administrative leaders. The clerk’s position has no fixed term, generally lasting about four years, depending on the Municipal Personnel Commission in Bangkok, which is in charge of municipal personnel management.

In the first term of the Ananthaphum administration (1985-1990), while Wanchai Boonyasurat served as municipal clerk, the political leadership had no conflict with the

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9 Interview with Watt Wibulsanti, a former Deputy Mayor in the Ananthaphum Administration, on June 21, 1996.
municipal administration. Actually, the mayor relied heavily on Wanchai\textsuperscript{10} since he was considered to be one of the most capable municipal clerks in Thailand and had already served in Chiang Mai municipality for almost 15 years. The problem in the administration arose in the second term, when Wanchai was transferred to the Nakhon Ratchasrima municipality simply because he had worked in the Chiang Mai municipality for such a long time. His replacement, Hmei-ing Amarakure, was also one of the top municipal clerks. She was one of the few female municipal clerks promoted to C9, the highest grade in the municipal bureaucracy, and she was also known for her integrity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Clerk</th>
<th>Duration (Years)</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hmei-ing Amarakure</td>
<td>1.6 (1992-1994)</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veree Thotanon</td>
<td>2.1 (1994-1996)</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanchai Boonyasuratna</td>
<td>July,1996-present</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Government Bureau, Department of Local Administration (1996).

In 1994, after only 1.6 years with the Chiang Mai Municipality, she was transferred to another municipality as the result of a conflict with the MEB under the Ananthaphum administration. The conflict started at the beginning of her work in Chiang Mai in 1992; the key issues concerned personnel administration, street hawking and city tidiness, and the building permits for a high-rise department store. She was accused of inflexibility, unresponsiveness and resistance to the MEB's policies, which delayed their implementation and operation. In addition, her gender was mentioned as an obstacle to a close working relationship with the MEB (Suphawasit 1993). The mayor requested that DOLA transfer her

\textsuperscript{10} Interview with the former Director of the Local Government Affairs Division, DOLA.
after only four months as clerk, but DOLA did not respond. The conflict also led to the rise of factions among municipal employees. Finally, the mayor used his personal relationship with a Chiang Mai MP, who was then secretary to the Minister of the Interior, to have her transferred. Her case was well known from newspaper reports, and when her transfer order arrived, the Love Good People Group (*Glim Ruk Khon Dee*) was formed in Chiang Mai to protest.\(^{11}\)

*Divisions in the Municipal Administration*

Within the administration, 10 divisions implement the MEB’s executive decisions as follows:

1) *The Office of the Municipal Clerk* is responsible for general administration, personnel management, elections, civil registration, tourism, pawnshops, disaster prevention and relief, and law and order;

2) *The Social Welfare Division* is responsible for social work, child and youth welfare and community development. The municipality has supported the establishment of 21 low-income community groups: for example, Ragaeng, Tippanert and Famai;

3) *The Education Division* is responsible for providing education in the municipal area. There are presently 11 municipal schools with 4,196 students and 207 teachers (CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 2/18);

4) *The Public Works Bureau* is responsible for public utilities (i.e., roads, bridges, public electricity) construction and maintenance, building control and city planning, traffic engineering, public parks, and sanitary works (garbage and waste disposal, and waste water treatment);

\(^{11}\) Interview with the President of the Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy, on June 18, 1996.
5) **The Sanitation and Environment Division** is responsible for public health services and promotion, sanitation and environmental health, garbage collection and the cleaning of public places;

6) **The Finance Division** is responsible for the development of financial resources and local finance management;

7) **The Technical and Planning Division** is responsible for municipal planning and budget preparation, legal affairs and public relations;

8) **The Internal Inspection Agency** is responsible for internal financial auditing;

9) **The Medical Services Division** is responsible for providing medical services to the general public through its own hospital and seven public-health centres (CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 2/19).

10) **Municipal District** (Kwaeng): the territory of Chiang Mai Municipality comprises four municipal districts that are also electoral constituencies: Nakhonping, Kawila, Mengrai, and Sriwichai (Table 4.4). Each municipal district has an office which is responsible for providing services in a particular area. So far, only some services are decentralized at a municipal district office; these include public works, finance and public health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal District</th>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Number of Councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kawila</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>41,803</td>
<td>24,428</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mengrai</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>43,708</td>
<td>13,987</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sriwichai</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>49,380</td>
<td>22,100</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhonping</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>37,823</td>
<td>13,121</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total municipal manpower is 1,697 employees, divided into 484 municipal employees (ME), 283 regular municipal workers (RMW) and 930 temporary municipal workers (TMW) (Table 4.5). The staff to population ratio improved from 1:109 in 1991 to 1:102 in 1995.

Table 4.5: Municipal Manpower Categories of Chiang Mai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>RMW</th>
<th>TMW</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Staff to Pop. Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995a</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>1,697</td>
<td>1:102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991b</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>1,479</td>
<td>1:109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Municipal Finance**

The financial status of Chiang Mai reflects the municipality’s rapid growth. Both total revenue and expenditure have tripled within a decade. Total revenue rose from Bt177,885,362.65 (CDN$9,362,387.50) in 1986 to Bt555,131,900 (CDN$29,217,468) in 1995 and total expenditure increased from Bt140,854,120.79 in 1986 to Bt548,052,340 in 1995. The expenditure per person in 1995 was Bt3,173.18 (CND$167). Table 4.6 shows that Chiang Mai municipality ran a budget surplus. However, Chiang Mai has the same weakness in revenue structure as other municipalities, since from 1992 to 1996 on average, only 15.99% was locally levied tax revenue, while the central contribution, either through centrally levied taxes (43.35%)\(^{12}\) or government grants (25.46%) constituted the largest proportion of revenues (see Table 4.7).

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\(^{12}\) Centrally levied tax is comprised of shared tax (19.81%) and surcharge tax (19.31%) in 1995.
Table 4.6: Revenue and Expenditure of Chiang Mai Municipality, 1990, 1992-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>236,748,187.89</td>
<td>396,689,368.14</td>
<td>436,481,325.35</td>
<td>477,266,292</td>
<td>555,131,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($CDN)</td>
<td>(12,460,430.94)</td>
<td>(20,878,387)</td>
<td>(22,972,701.33)</td>
<td>(25,119,278.53)</td>
<td>(29,217,468.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>189,679,340.97</td>
<td>393,748,578.96</td>
<td>369,503,604.19</td>
<td>426,071,835.43</td>
<td>548,052,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($CDN)</td>
<td>(9,983,123.20)</td>
<td>(20,723,609.41)</td>
<td>(19,447,558.12)</td>
<td>(22,424,833.42)</td>
<td>(28,844,860)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus</td>
<td>47,068,846.92</td>
<td>2,940,789.18</td>
<td>66,977,721.16</td>
<td>51,194,456.93</td>
<td>7,079,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($CDN)</td>
<td>(2,477,307.73)</td>
<td>(154,778.37)</td>
<td>(3,525,143)</td>
<td>(2,694,445.10)</td>
<td>(372,607.42)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) CMM, Budget Section (1993: 3/10).

Table 4.7: Revenue Structure of Chiang Mai Municipality, 1992-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Revenues</th>
<th>1992a %</th>
<th>1993b %</th>
<th>1994b %</th>
<th>1995b %</th>
<th>Average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locally collected tax revenue</td>
<td>14.77</td>
<td>16.98</td>
<td>18.53</td>
<td>13.69</td>
<td>15.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally allocated tax revenue</td>
<td>42.84</td>
<td>45.29</td>
<td>46.13</td>
<td>39.13</td>
<td>43.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central grants</td>
<td>21.41</td>
<td>22.23</td>
<td>22.61</td>
<td>35.60</td>
<td>25.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees and fines</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal properties</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10.39</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>5.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: a) CMM, Budget Section (1994).

Table 4.8: Expenditure Structure of Chiang Mai Municipality, 1992-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Expenditure</th>
<th>1992 %</th>
<th>1993 %</th>
<th>1994 %</th>
<th>1995 %</th>
<th>Average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central expenses</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative expenses</td>
<td>32.26</td>
<td>44.15</td>
<td>38.62</td>
<td>38.37</td>
<td>38.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment expenses</td>
<td>34.16</td>
<td>20.61</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>23.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special expenses</td>
<td>27.50</td>
<td>28.74</td>
<td>32.44</td>
<td>37.07</td>
<td>31.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: a) CMM, Budget Section (1994).
The municipality's expenditure presents a bleaker picture. As revealed by Table 4.8, on average during the 1992-1995 period, most spending (38.35%) is for administrative costs, while investment costs account for 23.46% of the total expenditure. As a result, the municipality tends to rely on central grants in funding investment projects, a situation which is reflected in the high proportion of special expenses (31.44%).

Channels for Popular Participation in Municipal Politics

As determined by the Municipal Act, the electoral processes every five years are the main channel for people's participation. Although Chiang Mai municipality has proposed other channels for more direct participation, these are not yet institutionalized. Since they are not legalized, whether they are offered and meaningful or not depends very much on the intention and style of the political groups and leaders in power. At the policy level, the municipality, in formulating the five-year municipal development plan under the Ananthaphum administration, attempted to ascertain citizen demands through questionnaire surveys,¹³ and the mayor appointed three knowledgeable citizens to a municipal development committee,¹⁴ as suggested by the municipal planning guidelines. They were a journalist, a university professor and a police officer. However, they were no more than a rubber stamp, having hardly any chance to voice their opinions.¹⁵ Planning processes were reformed when the Navarat Pattana took municipal office in 1996. In preparing the five-year municipal plan of 1997-2001, the municipality allowed greater citizen participation by inviting representatives

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¹³ In collecting data on citizens' opinions on, and demands for, the preparation of the five-year municipal development plan (1992-1996), the municipality distributed 1,200 questionnaires, which had 673 respondents (56.08%).

¹⁴ By municipal letter CM 5201/0915 (February 12, 1991).

¹⁵ Interview with Boonsom Panyasopa, the Chief Editor of Thai News and a former member of the Municipal Planning Committee during Ananthaphum administration, on June 16, 1996.
from business, NGOs, community groups, academe, the media and government sectors to join in one of five subcommittees that each addressed a section in the municipal development plan: infrastructure development, environmental and natural resources management, economic development, social development, and political and administration development. Ranging from 21 to 26 in membership, each committee was authorized to assist the Municipal Development Committee in determining policy guidelines, giving opinions and screening draft plans before presenting them to the Municipal Development Committee.16 After the draft was prepared, the municipality held a conference to present the plan to the general public and to create a sense of ownership of it among Chiang Mai’s citizens.17

In creating communication channels with the general public regarding day-to-day operations, the Ananthaphum executives and councillors established in the first term regular meetings with the group’s grassroots leaders and built up a street-level headquarters in each of the municipality’s four electoral zones where the issues, complaints and demands of local people were collected and forwarded to the municipal councils and executives (Ruland 1992; Ruland and Ladavalya 1993). Moreover, the mayor or deputy mayors, councillors and key municipal officers visited the city’s neighbourhoods weekly in order to listen to people’s problems.18 However, these activities ceased because the Ananthaphum was confident about the electoral support it had mobilized from low-income community groups.19 After assuming office, Navarat Pattana established a coordinating centre for local complaints and services

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16 The Chiang Mai Municipality Announcement in appointing the Municipal Development Subcommittee, at March 19, 1996.
17 Interview with Niwat Tontayanusorn, a municipal councillor and Chairman of the Municipal Development Committee.
18 Ruland (1992) and interview with Boonsom Panyasopa.
19 Interview with Boonsom Panyasopa.
within the municipality, under the supervision of a councillor. There, citizens' demands and complaints are collected and distributed to the city clerk’s office or concerned departments for response. The centre is also responsible for following up on the solution of complaints.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition, the Navarat Pattana executive team holds a monthly press conference, and issues a weekly news report, on municipal activities and responses to citizens’ complaints and demands.\textsuperscript{21}

\textit{Municipal Politics}

The weak municipal government and the deterioration of the city’s environment in the last decade has contributed to the new phase of Chiang Mai municipal politics, characterized by intense political competition and a high degree of involvement by civil society in municipal issues. Political competition is intensifying both in and out of the electoral season. The election neither limits nor ends the battle between political groups. As a result, municipal executives as well as the general public perceive many problems in Chiang Mai as arising from political motivations. Moreover, the Chiang Mai political scene is no longer exclusively the arena of political groups, given the rise of civic groups directly involved in municipal politics. Both political competition and civil society in Chiang Mai municipal politics will be explored in detail in the following section.

\textit{Municipal Electoral Competition}

Competitiveness in Chiang Mai municipal politics has become furious, following the expansion of the city and the severity of its problems. In the early period (1935-1953) the

\textsuperscript{20} Interview with a municipal employee working in the Coordinating Centre for Local Complaints and services on June 7, 1996.

\textsuperscript{21} Interview with a municipal employee, who is responsible for public relations, on June 7, 1996.
municipal council consisted of a combination of appointed and elected councillors, with
government officers and the local elite group dominating municipal politics. There was no
evidence of any political group before the 1958 election, in which the Municipal Act
prescribed an all-elected Municipal Council. The “Pattana Wiang Ping” was an early political
group which contested the municipal election and governed the municipality. Membership
consisted of local business people, members of the nobility and professionals, some of whom
were of Chinese origin. Pattana Wiang Ping disappeared when the military government
dissolved the municipal council in 1960.

Table 4.9: Political Groups in Chiang Mai and Number of Seats Won

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period /Election Year</th>
<th>Contesting Political Groups</th>
<th>Number of Seats Won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958-1960</td>
<td>• Pattana Wiang Ping</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No available information on other contestants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-1974</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No available information on other contestants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Palang-Chiang Mai</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pattana Chiang Mai</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fay-kaan-sib-rang-kaeng-kuan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ananthaphum</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Jan-long-tham</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kit-pra-cha</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ananthaphum</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ananthaphum</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Palang-khun-tham</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>• Prachasanti</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ananthaphum</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Navarat-pattana</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the municipal elections of 1964, the Prachasanti political group, a faction from
Pattana Wiang Ping, controlled the municipality until the 1974 election. In the 1974 and 1980
municipal elections, the groups running were so uneven in strength that the electoral contests could hardly be termed serious (Ruland 1992, 52). Prachasanti won an overwhelming majority of 23 and 21 out of 24 seats in the 1974 and 1980 elections respectively.

The municipal political scene started seriously to be in contest in 1985 when Prachasanti was challenged by a serious rival, the Ananthaphum group. While most of the Prachasanti team were middle-aged to elderly former municipal councillors with extensive political experience, Ananthaphum offered a new breed of young local politicians well connected to local business people and popular-based groups. As well, Ananthaphum was no novice in municipal politics: key leaders had contested the 1974 election with the Palang-Chiang Mai group, which had won no seats. They campaigned in the 1980 election within Ananthaphum, which won two seats.

Political competition between the two teams marked the 1985 and 1990 elections. The 1985 political campaigns included poster and leaflet campaigns, advertisements on radio and in local newspapers and door-to-door campaigns as well as public rallies. Both sides also made accusations of vote-buying. In the battle against the incumbent Prachasanti, Ananthaphum employed a very intense and aggressive campaign (Ruland 1992, 54). The outcome of this close race changed the face of the municipal administration. Ananthaphum won a majority of 14 seats and took control of the municipal administration, turning Prachasanti, with 10 seats, into the opposition. Despite the presence of another political group and independent candidates, the 1990 election again came down to a battle between Ananthaphum, which aimed at absolute control of the council, and Prachasanti, which expected to return to office (Niemtang 1993). The political campaigning was aggressive, intense and financially costly. Both groups advertised themselves with large billboards and
both used loudspeaker trucks to tour the city (Niemtang 1993, 18). The outcome disappointed Prachasanti who won only 8 seats, while Ananthaphum remained in power with 16 seats, an increase of two seats over the 1985 election.

However, political competition did not end with that election outcome. During 10 years of the Ananthaphum municipal administration, according to the former leader of the Prachasanti, the latter had played a strong opposition role by investigating and questioning major decisions, potential wrong-doing and problems. Such checking and questioning happened throughout the municipal session and disclosed much wrong-doing to the media. The opposition group also set up its own local newspaper, "Kao Siam," as a voice of the group's political activities, as a record of the administration's non-transparent municipal decisions and as a vehicle for citizens' complaints.

For the 1995 municipal election, political competition started long before the actual campaign period. According to an interview with the Deputy Mayor, the failure of Ananthaphum to manage Chiang Mai's problems had motivated many groups to run in the contest. However, even though there were many people interested in politics in Chiang Mai, only a few had political experience; and, given the limited number of experienced politicians, each group competed with the others in attracting the most promising candidates to join the team. Thus, several groups interested in running, including the Chiang Mai branches of the Palangtham and Democrat political parties, decided not to run because they could not attract good candidates.

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22 Interview with Thongchai Ramingwong, the Chairman of Municipal Council and the former leader of the Prachasanti group, on June 26, 1996.
23 Interview with Manut Sirimaharaj, the Deputy Mayor of the Navarat Pattana Administration and former member of the Prachasanti, on June 25, 1996.
In the end, three political groups ran in the 1995 election: Ananthaphum, Prachasanti and Navarat Pattana. The political campaign was intense, especially between Ananthaphum and Navarat Pattana. The result surprised even Navarat Pattana, who won all the municipal council seats. The Navarat Pattana core leader and the Deputy Mayor said that this absolute victory was not solely the result of a successful political campaign; the people of Chiang Mai were already tired of Ananthaphum and demanded a change.\textsuperscript{24}

As illustrated above, in the new face of Chiang Mai municipal politics, no political group is unbeatable. The poor performance of the group in power provides an opportunity for others to emerge, as happened with Ananthaphum in the 1995 election. Such opportunities certainly contribute to the dynamic and competitive atmosphere of Chiang Mai municipal politics. Since political groups are key players in municipal elections, the following section will look at the development of each one, including its strengths and weaknesses.

Profile of the Political Groups

The Prachasanti Political Group: The longest-standing political group in Chiang Mai municipal politics, its core founders were local nobility and retired government and military officers. Latterly, by the 1970s, the group had attracted a number of small business owners, newspaper reporters and members of the medical professions. The strength of Prachasanti depended on the experience of its members in controlling the municipal administration for more than 20 years. Most of its electoral contestants were well educated, with middle-class backgrounds. However, the group’s domination by retired bureaucrats and its lengthy tenure in municipal administration led to Prachasanti being perceived negatively in terms of its conservative style and lack of initiative. Moreover, as each member of the group was capable

\textsuperscript{24} Interview with Manut Sirimaharaj.
and highly individualist, Prachasanti also suffered from members splintering from it to form new groups. In the last election (1995), key members of the Prachasanti, such as Thongchai Ramingwong and Manut Sirimaharaj, defected to the Navarat Pattana. This may have caused the collapse of this long-established political group, since it won no seats in the 1995 election.

The Ananthaphum Political Group: The formation of Ananthaphum is very interesting. It was based on the right-wing popular groups fostered by the government from the late 1970s and early 1980s. The abbot of the San-pa-koy Temple, Phra-sri-tham-ma-ni-teh, had a major role in mobilizing all right-wing organizations in Chiang Mai, such as Navapon groups, Temple Youth groups and Village Boy Scouts, to form Ananthaphum. A very influential monk in Chiang Mai, the abbot had a lot of disciples. One, a major local businessman, Thawat Tontranon, became Chairman of Ananthaphum, while his son, Vorakorn Tontranon, led the team in the municipal election of 1985. Therefore, Ananthaphum had well-established connections with popularly based groups. Vorakorn Tontranon himself had led a number of organizations, such as a Navapon group, a Youth group, a Thai National Defence Volunteers’ group, a chapter of the Jaycees, and a Lions Club. Most of his team colleagues had similar backgrounds. All 15 councillors of Ananthaphum (1990-1995) belonged to one or more popular groups (Niemtang 1995, 85).

At the same time, Ananthaphum was under the patronage of a large local business group. The Tontranon family owned a variety of businesses, the most well-known being the

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25 Formation of right-wing groups was the military strategy to fight communists. These group members were indoctrinated with right-wing ideology and focused on royalty and on high respect being shown to the King, the Nation and the Religion.
Tontraphun department store. It also had close relationships with other Sino-Thai business families such as the Wibulsanti, the Chutima and the Osataphan (Niemtang 1995, 89-104). As a patron of the Ananthaphum group, the Tontranon family had a decisive role in it and Vorakorn Tontranon, its leader, centralized its administration. This gave the group a high degree of unity among members, as was reflected in the continuity of Vorakorn Tontranon holding the mayoralty for ten years. The group's unity was also due to personal relationships, especially among the core leaders, many of whom graduated from the same high schools in Chiang Mai — Mongford and Prince Royal; Vorakorn himself, and the core leaders who later become his deputy mayors, graduated from them.

The main strength of Ananthaphum, especially in 1985, was their image as young, clean and dynamic politicians, in contrast to Prachasanti. By the time of their total defeat in the 1995 election after a decade in office, their image had become the opposite: they were perceived as corrupt, incompetent and ignorant. The Ananthaphum policy toward the urban poor, which aimed to improve the well-being of low-income communities, gave the group support from these communities, in particular from squatters' communities whom the Prachasanti group had targeted to be removed. These became Ananthaphum's strong supporters, replacing right-wing popular groups in the 1990 election.

The victory of Ananthaphum in 1985 transformed Chiang Mai municipal politics from an elite-bureaucratic into a business-dominated regime. Despite having members with working-class backgrounds, the key leaders were mostly businessmen. The MEB under the Ananthaphum administration was accused of facilitating and protecting their own business

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26 Interview with Watt Wibulsanti, a core leader of the Ananthaphum and a former Deputy Mayor, on June 21, 1996.
27 Interview with a former community leader on June 14, 1996.
groups, and gaining benefits or commissions from activities such as street hawking on pavements and public spaces, issuing building permits and opening bidding projects to private tender. Another defect of Ananthaphum was the lack of competent personnel capable of dealing with complicated issues. Centralized by the leader and associated with particular business and community groups, Ananthaphum did not attract educated and competent members; only two Ananthaphum councillors (1990-1995) held a bachelor's degree (Worapong 1993, 99).

The Navarat Pattana Political Group: The most recent political group in Chiang Mai formed a year before the 1995 election. Except for five veteran municipal politicians, four being defectors from Prachasanti and one from Ananthaphum, the team brought new faces to politics, including that of the team leader. Dominated by business people and university graduates, the group had a middle-class background. Navarat Pattana’s total victory is due to a number of factors. First, the Navarat Pattana team became the favoured alternative when most Chiang Mai voters wanted a political change because of their disappointment with the Ananthaphum team, especially over the garbage crisis in 1994, a year before the election. Second, the group earned indirect support from some active civic groups who wanted to block the reelection of the Ananthaphum group. Moreover, the team’s composition allowed it to link with various strata of Chiang Mai society; despite being dominated by businessmen, the group’s members include a retired military officer, community leaders, leaders of Muslim groups and a former president of Chiang Mai University’s student organization (CMM, Public Relations Section 1995). After assuming municipal office, the Navarat Pattana group impressed people with its new approaches such as greater public participation in the
preparation of the five-year municipal development plan, a monthly press conference and weekly news releases, and an instantaneous response to citizens' complaints. However, this team's image of integrity suffered from conspiracies with organized crime and the Chiang Mai Night Bazaar extortion.28

Civil Society: Voting and Civic Groups

Voter Turnout

In addition to electoral competitiveness, another new dimension of Chiang Mai municipal politics is the emergence of an active civil society. Jurgen Ruland, conducting a study of political participation in Chiang Mai around 1985 to 1987, characterized the general public there as having "a low level participatory political culture" (Ruland 1992, 62). Political participation in municipal politics has grown in recent years and not only in the increasing competition in municipal elections. Now, the majority of Chiang Mai citizens have an interest in municipal politics. Our survey reveals that 78% and 73.5% of respondents pay considerable attention to municipal politics in general and the 1995 municipal election campaign respectively (Table 4.10). Moreover, the voter turnout rate has increased significantly. As shown in Table 4.11, the rate in 1985 was 37.50%, nearly 10% below the nationwide rate. The 1990 rate improved to 42.21%, while the 1995 rate increased dramatically to 53.54%.

What contributes to this rising voter turnout rate? One reason is the intense electoral competition, where political groups tend to employ aggressive campaigning and strategies to

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28 Extortion for money from traders and vendors around Night Bazaar and the murder of a Night Bazaar trader became a public issue in 1996. Among 12 suspects sent for trial in the Chiang Mai Night Bazaar extortion affair were Maj-General Intarat Yodbangtoey, the husband of the current deputy mayor, and Sarayuth Phuplab, the Chief of the Municipal Law and Order Section.
mobilize their own supporters to the polls. However, the intense political contest is not sufficient to explain the particularly high rate of voter turnout in the 1995 election. Many scholars and people I encountered during the field study in Chiang Mai agree that the public’s enthusiasm to cast ballots in the 1995 election was stimulated both by the Ananthaphum failure in managing the city, particularly in the garbage crisis in 1994 which directly affected people’s lives, and by the desire to purge the group from office. This issue will be explored below in the section on waste management. Nonetheless, the high public interest in municipal politics and the rising voter turnout rate can also be partially explained in relation to the active role of civic groups in publicizing problems, criticizing municipal actions and drawing public attention to municipal issues. The next section in this chapter addresses the role of civic groups in Chiang Mai’s municipal politics and the extent to which such groups are involved in urban environmental issues.

Table 4.10: Attention to Municipal Politics in General and to the 1995 Municipal Election Campaign, Chiang Mai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Attention</th>
<th>Municipal in General</th>
<th>1995 Election Campaign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much attention</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little attention and none</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

Table 4.11: Voter Turnout in the 1985, 1990 and 1995 Municipal Elections, Chiang Mai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Eligible Voters</th>
<th>Voter Turnout</th>
<th>Nationwide Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>98,258</td>
<td>36,846</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>102,073</td>
<td>43,091</td>
<td>42.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>104,715</td>
<td>56,069</td>
<td>53.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Profile of Civil Society

While Chiang Mai, as the primary city of the northern region, has been a centre of various kinds of civic organizations, such as social and religious groups, right-wing popular groups, business associations and NGOs, in the past these organizations rarely performed explicit political roles. Ruland described participation in municipal affairs as rather informal and particularistic, seldom affecting a large section of the public. Merchants, businessmen and hawkers were the most active in criticizing municipal actions and attempting to influence municipal decision-making; however, their motives were ones born of economic interest (Ruland 1992).

Civil society in Chiang Mai started to drop its passivity and become active with the popular uprising against the Doi Suthep cable car project in the late 1980s. This project, building cable cars to facilitate tourist access to Wat Phra That, a temple on the mountain, was not totally new to Chiang Mai’s citizens. Two earlier government attempts (in 1965 and 1969) to introduce the project failed in the face of protest from senior monks, MPs and local residents (Ong-sakul 1987). In 1985, with the strong support of the government and the Tourist Authority of Thailand, the third attempt was well prepared, especially to promote the project among local citizens. The opposition, led by environmental groups and intellectuals, gained strength with support from the Sangha\(^2\) and civic groups such as 140 temple youth groups in Chiang Mai province (Ong-sakul 1987). The protest strategies included holding informal discussions and conferences, conducting studies on the project’s environmental dangers, criticizing the project in newspapers, signing a petition to be sent to the provincial governor, and staging demonstrations. Faced with intense opposition from local people, and

\(^2\) The provincial organization of Buddhist monks.
in the context of national political instability, the cabinet decided to shelve the project in 1987.

As mentioned by Ruland, “the protest movement against the Doi Suthep cable car project had a lasting impact on ecological awareness and political participation in Chiang Mai” (Ruland 1992, 63). Since then, Chiang Mai civil society has been increasingly active, directly expressing concerns over problems such as the protest against high-rise building, the polluted Ping River, traffic congestion and street hawking. What constitutes Chiang Mai’s active civil society and how has it addressed these urban environmental concerns? The following section will investigate various sectors of the city’s civil society in terms of their political role, their involvement in urban environmental problems and their relationship with the municipality. The sectors are community organizations, business, the mass media, academe, the NGOs and the informal waste sector.

1) Community Organizations

In general, the nature of political competition makes community organizations in Chiang Mai highly politicized. Among the various sectors of civil society, community organizations have quite a good relationship with the municipality. In effect, municipal and community group leaders form a patron-client relationship in which the former satisfy the community group’s demands, in exchange for their support at elections.

As a centre of economic growth in the northern region, the city of Chiang Mai has become a destination for rural immigrants seeking work. The city has experienced a rise in numbers of urban poor, squatter settlements and congested areas. In early 1980, the municipality had 12 slums with a total population of 8,898 (Upapan 1992). Some of them
encroached on vacant public lands and historic areas owned by the municipality and the Royal Property Department. To improve the living environment, develop communities for low-income dwellers and create a channel of communication, Chiang Mai municipality, following the guidelines of the DOLA and UNICEF, established community organizations in congested areas. During the period 1984 to 1986, the municipality established four such organizations (Ra-gaeng, Tip-pa-nert, Hua-fay and Fa-mai), joined after 1986 by a suburban community. At present, the municipality has already established 21 community organizations with a total population of 16,270, of which seven communities were originally squatter settlements, three are located on rented lands and 11 are suburban communities (CMM, Social Welfare Division, 1995).

30 These are old communities, located within the inner zone of the city. Their early settlements were illegal because they encroached on vacant public lands such as those along the Mae Kha Canal and the historic old city wall. However, the authorities took no action. The communities expanded rapidly during the economic boom of the 1980s. Some residents have lived there for more than 30 years. Before being ratified by the municipality, some communities had experienced frequent evictions. I visited and did interviews in five communities: Tippanert, Hua-fay, Fa-mai, Ha-tanwa, and Song-pee-nong. All five are located in the Meng-ral Municipal District. In general, their physical environment is quite congested. The houses are in good condition; they have both running water and electricity. All the communities have concrete roads running through, except Hua-fay, which has only walk-ways. The Hua-fay community encroaches on the sides of the Mae Ka Canal, which is already polluted and smelly. Mosquitoes and flooding are problems here. Drainage is being installed in the Hua-fay community with support from the Life project (UNDP). As one of the two oldest communities, Tippanert has good infrastructure, including a drainage system which was financed by UNICEF. Before being ratified by the municipality, a loose organization already existed in each of the Tippanert and Fa-mai communities.

31 They pay rent on the land. Two communities, Ra-gaeng and Ta-sa-toy, are located on land owned by the municipality, and another one, Santitham, is on land rented from the Muslim mosque. Due to the Muslim mosque’s requests to terminate the rental contact, Santitham plans to be relocated soon.

32 Most residents own their land. These communities are mostly located at the outer zone of the city. Such a community typically covers a large area. I visited three suburban communities (Bann-to, Muang-guy and Pa-tan) but interviewed only two community leaders (Muang-guy and Pa-tan). The general physical conditions of these communities are good and not at all congested. Each house has an area for gardening. Some residents still earn their living as farmers, growing fruits and vegetables. In general, residents are a mix of local people and wealthy middle-class people who bought lands later and moved to the community. The Pa-tan community, established in 1995, is located along the superhighway, which drove up the land price. There are some 10 to 14 households that encroach on a part of the Pa-tan municipal crematoria area. The community uses the Pa-tan temple as its centre. The Muang-guy community, located in the Kawila Municipal District, was established in 1994. This community is more congested than that of Pa-tan. There are also big houses, two-storey townhouses, apartments and commercial buildings in the community, but the owners are not local people. The community leader, who is very active and devoted, said that the local people are not wealthy. Some of them work as wage labour on the golf course. There is also a small squatter settlement of 20 households in the community. Flooding and lack of drainage are problems in this community.
All community organizations employ the same two-part administrative structure: a community committee of 15 persons and a community advisory committee. The community committee consists of a chairperson and 14 committee members and comprises 8 sectors, as is shown in Figure 4.2. The advisory committee is generally appointed from well-respected people within the community such as temple abbots, teachers, municipal councillors, and retired government officers.

**Figure 4.2: The Structure of Community Organizations in Chiang Mai**

The community chairperson is directly elected by the community residents for a two-year term. Despite having no compensation, electoral competition for the post attracts many contestants, and electoral campaigning and mobilization are typically intense. Apart from the social recognition and prestige as a community leader, being a chairperson and committee member is politically significant, since the linkages between politicians and community residents are crucial, especially for mobilizing support at elections. Therefore, community

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33 Interview with community leaders in Chiang Mai.
leaders receive a lot of attention from politicians, political groups and parties at all levels during elections.34

Communities in Chiang Mai have similar activities, including the celebration of religious festivals and nationally important days, especially the King’s and Queen’s birthdays; community development (e.g., cleaning community areas, temples and drainage systems and dredging rivers and canals), campaigning against AIDS and drugs in the community; occupational training; and participating in activities arranged by the municipality, such as the Loy Kratong and Songkran Festivals. In addition, depending on the active role of community leaders and external assistance, some communities organize special-purpose subgroups, such as housewife groups, youth groups, funeral funds, credit unions, medical funds, and savings cooperatives. Funding of community activities has come from various sources, including donations by community committee members and private contributions from wealthy people in the community, politicians, abbots, and from international NGOs especially the World Vision Foundation. Some active communities such as Muang-guy have established a community fund. In addition, each year, community organizations can request funds for community projects, mainly concerning community infrastructure development, from the municipality, MPs35 and from provincial authorities. Just before leaving office, the Ananthaphum administration allocated a community grant of Bt20,000 (CDN$1052) to support activities of community organizations in the municipality.

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34 For example, both the Ananthaphum and Navarat Pattana had community leaders as members of their teams. Political candidates at both local and national levels typically approached community leaders to be canvassers for the mobilization of voters from their communities.
35 Each MP has a budget of Bt20 million (CDN$1.05 million) annually to allocate to projects within a constituency.
Every community, it has been found, can improve its environment through its own activities. The Fa-mai community has dredged the Mae Ka canal using volunteer community labour as frequently as three times a year. The Tippanert community committee has arranged cleaning campaigns twice a year, on Songkran Day (the traditional Thai new year) and on the King's birthday (December 5). A Buddhist ceremony is held in the morning, followed by a communal lunch and then cleaning of streets, drainage and the old clay city wall. Attached as they are to temples, the communities of Song-pee-nong and Muang Guy, Hua-fay undertake cleaning activities about three times a year on religious days and on the King's birthday. The Ha-tanwa community focuses its activities on the birthday of the King, from whom the community took its name. In such community cleaning campaigns, the municipality normally provides garbage trucks and equipment. The Mayor and councillors in the constituency also participate in the ceremonies and sometimes contribute money and arrange for food and drinks.

The relationship between the community groups and the municipality has been very good, characterized by mutual dependence. The municipality relies on community organizations to communicate news and information to their residents, and to relieve municipal burdens in the community areas. Since community development is a municipal responsibility, the organizations are crucial to the implementation of municipal policies. Moreover, the municipality can mobilize community organizations for mass support of major events, such as campaign rallies and city development projects. One community chairman mentioned that, without the cooperation of these organizations, the municipality would have difficulty getting people to participate in municipal activities. For their part, community organizations depend on municipal assistance in improving the physical environment and
quality of life. The municipality arranges for a mobile health clinic to visit every low-income community. For a squatter settlement, being established as a community by the municipality provides a form of land security. Generally, Chiang Mai lacks conflict, confrontation, or protest between the community and the municipality, since municipal response to the demands of community leaders has been positive, especially under the Ananthaphum administration.

Community organizations play a major role in Chiang Mai municipal politics. The support of community organizations, for example, is significant for a candidate in winning an election. The victories of Ananthaphum in 1985 and 1990 are a case in point. In 1985, afraid of land eviction under the Prachasanti, residents in squatter settlements cast their ballots for the Ananthaphum team, which promised no land evictions.\(^6\) In addition to keeping the promise, the Ananthaphum administration promoted the establishment of community organizations and maintained a close relationship with them, formally and informally; during the 10 years of this administration (1985-1995), the municipality established 19 such organizations. The growth of community organizations, it is argued, is based on political rather than administrative reasons (Ganhawiang 1992), rewarding the governing team’s canvassers as well as using municipal resources for political purposes. The Mayor, Vorakorn Tontranon, was very close to community leaders and impressed them by granting their requests not only on community but also on personal matters; for example, by joining community social events, arranging field trips for community leaders and finding jobs for their relatives. Most community leaders said without hesitation in interviews that Vorakorn Tontranon was easy to see in his office and provided a lot of assistance to communities.

\(^6\) Interview with the former Chairperson of Fa-mai community organization on June 14, 1996.
The 1990 electoral analysis of Manut Sirimaharaj confirmed the significant role of community organizations in elections, by showing the relationship between them and the Ananthaphum which gained its highest number of councillors in the municipal district which had the highest number of community organizations, as shown in Table 4.12 (Sirimaharaj 1994 quoted in Niemtang 1995). The total defeat of the Ananthapum team in the 1995 election does not discount the major role of the community organizations. As the key leader of Navarat Pattana mentioned, the support of community organizations remains the principal political base for candidates or political groups. The new municipal executive committee under the Navarat Pattana administration began to establish relationships with community leaders by, for example, hosting a community party in 1996 and visiting communities. However, the municipality has no policy to increase the number of community organizations.

Table 4.12: Number of Community Organizations and Number of Municipal Councillors in the 1990 Election, by Municipal District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal District</th>
<th>No. of Community Organizations</th>
<th>No. of the Ananthaphum Councillors</th>
<th>No. of the Prachasanti Councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nakhon-ping</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawela</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming-rai</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sriwichai</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2) Business and Professional Groups

There are a number of business and professional associations in Chiang Mai, such as the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce, the provincial branch of the Thai Federation of

37 Interview with Tongchai Ramingwong.
Industries, the Chiang Mai Tourist Business Association, the Lanna Hotel Association, the Association of Construction Materials Commerce and Transportation of Chiang Mai, the Chiang Mai Banks Club and the Lanna Architecture Committee. These organizations tend to overlap in leadership as well as in membership. For instance, the presidents of the Chiang Mai Tourist Business and the Guide Associations also belonged to the executive committee of the Chamber of Commerce. In general, the business sector takes a less explicit role in municipal politics, since their demands and concerns can be directly expressed at the central and provincial levels. However, in some cases business associations have taken an interest in municipal issues, especially in regard to urban environmental problems. In such situations, two business associations, the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce and the Chiang Mai Tourists Business Associations, usually represent the voice of the business sector.

*The Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce (CCC):* This is considered one of the major provincial chambers of commerce in the country 39 and the leading business organization in Chiang Mai. Established in 1977, the CCC has gained significant recognition from the central and municipal governments as the representative of the private sector. The CCC's executive committee is elected by members for a two-year term. The organization of the CCC comprises 13 sections: government coordination, tourism and environment, agriculture and related industries, commerce, planning and development, member relations, academic affairs and culture, construction and real estate, foreign relations, industry and handicrafts, trade exhibition, finance and investment, and special activities.

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38 Interview with the Acting Director of Social Welfare Division on June 26, 1996.
39 The Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce was a representative of chambers of commerce in the 8th Regional Area, selected to sit on the executive committee of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.
The CCC’s main activities are the promotion of Chiang Mai’s economic development and the provision of such services and support to members as trade missions and exhibitions abroad, a data centre, human resources’ development, coordination with the government sector and seminars on new business ventures and potentials. The CCC issues a monthly journal and a newsletter to members. In addition, the CCC engages heavily in influencing public policies that may impact on Chiang Mai’s economic development; thus, it has advocated, for example, the Chiang Mai-Lamphun twin-cities project, the feasibility study of Chiang Mai mass transit, and the quadrangle economic zone project between Thailand, Laos, China and Burma.40

Since the vast majority of economic activities in Chiang Mai involve tourism, the CCC inevitably pays attention to natural as well as urban environmental issues, especially city cleanliness and tidiness, tourist safety, the conservation of ancient sites, and traffic. Since 1992 CCC policy has emphasized that economic development must involve the conservation of natural resources and the environment.41 The Tourism and Environment sector of CCC’s executive committee is responsible for addressing environmental problems that adversely affect Chiang Mai’s tourism and economic development. In general, the CCC emphasizes the promotion of environmental awareness among businesspersons, investors and the general public. It has, for instance, organized reforestation projects, funded activities undertaken by educational institutions and NGOs to promote environmental awareness, and hosted seminars on the private sector and environmental conservation. It has also pursued a more aggressive advocacy, for example, protesting (for reasons of traffic and street vendors) the expansion of

pavement in the Night Bazaar area; pressuring the provincial governor to establish the provincial commission on arts and cultural conservation, lobbying MPs and the Minister of Transportation for substantial solutions to the traffic congestion in Chiang Mai (e.g., by constructing new roads and a mass transit system); and hosting a seminar on Chiang Mai’s garbage.42

The CCC clearly has political influence with the government on Chiang Mai’s economic development, including the city’s environmental problems. Mostly, the CCC employs this influence through established national and provincial channels. The provincial government established the Chiang Mai Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committee (CJPPSCC) in 1984 as a formal linkage between the government and business. Providing its deputy chairperson, the CCC employs this committee to channel concerns and demands directly to the governor, who chairs it, and to its remaining members, who include provincial officers of key economic ministries. In addition, as a member of the Provincial Development Committee, the CCC has influence over the formulation of the provincial plan. If its demands were not met at the provincial level, the CCC would also express its concerns through the Thai Chamber of Commerce, which is a member of the central Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister in Bangkok. The CCC also used Chiang Mai MPs to lobby the central government and made direct requests to the responsible authorities in Bangkok. The CCC’s involvement in municipal politics is a recent phenomenon, since it previously paid little attention to municipal government. It had no formal linkage to the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration (1985-1995). Its members and the municipal administrators knew each other personally and met at social

42 Interview with the President of the CCC.
events, during which demands and complaints could be made during conversation. The CCC also wrote letters of complaint when requested by its members. Many of the complaints concerned unfinished street repairs, or dust and safety issues during construction. The CCC presented some of its concerns about the city’s environment to CJPPSCC, to which the Mayor also belonged, although he rarely participated in meetings.

The CCC began to take an explicit role in municipal politics in April 1994 over the issue of pavement expansion around the Night Bazaar area. The Night Bazaar, in the centre of the city, is the well-known night shopping area for tourists. The municipality allows hawkers and vendors to do business on the pavement, for which they must pay fees to the municipality. However, the real price for such space greatly exceeds the one determined by the municipality. It was unclear who benefited from the difference in price when the municipality expanded the street pavement but it was suspected that the municipal officers concerned were benefiting at the cost of the general public who suffer from the terrible traffic and the untidiness of the city. The expansion was also considered unfair to the traders with shops in that area. To protest this municipal action, the private sector, led by the CCC and the provincial branch of the Federation of Industries, presented the governor with a petition protesting the pavement expansion, and invited the Director-General of DOLA to listen to the public himself. This action resulted in a working committee to investigate the issue and, in May 1994, the Ministry of the Interior ordered the municipality to demolish the expanded pavement (CCC 1994, 30-31).

In the 1995 municipal election, the CCC also encouraged its members and the general public to practice their right to vote. This action, according to the president of the CCC, was a matter of public relations to raise the voter turnout rate. Moreover, under the new municipal
administration of Navarat Pattana, the CCC adopted as its project the establishment of a formal linkage with the municipality through “the meeting with municipal councillors project.” The CCC took its first step in this project at the end of 1995 when it met with the mayor and the MEB to congratulate them on their election. The municipality also invited the CCC to join the municipal development sub-committees on infrastructure and economic development in 1996.44

The Chiang Mai Tourist Business Association (CTA): Like the CCC, the CTA is a business group that has an active involvement in environmental issues. Established in 1981 for the purpose of promoting tourism in Chiang Mai, the CTA changes its executive committee every two years. The president is elected for a two-year term, with a limit of two consecutive terms. The executive committee consists of representatives from five tourist business sectors: the tour companies, hotels, souvenir shops, tourist restaurants and the airlines. Approximately 500 tourist businesses belong to the CTA.

According to its founder and former President, at first the CTA focused on the promotion of tourism in Chiang Mai, especially the expansion of its market. Over the last five years, however, the CTA has emphasized the environmental issue, having increasingly realized that visitors to Chiang Mai no longer receive a good impression of Chiang Mai because of its environmental degradation. If the devastation of Chiang Mai’s environment continues at present rates, Chiang Mai’s tourist industry will be dead in the next five or ten

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43 The Chamber of Commerce has a similar project with MPs and Provincial Councillors.
44 The Chiang Mai Municipality Announcement on the appointment of municipal development subcommittee, March 19, 1996.
45 Interview with Rachan Veraphan, the founder and former president of the CTA on June 25, 1996.
years. The CTA's environmental concern includes the natural as well as the man-made environment, especially the deterioration of tourist places, the destruction of ancient arts and culture, and the deteriorating urban environment. In the early 1990s the CTA took its concerns about environmental problems to the government and presented its own views to the public through seminars and meetings arranged by NGOs and Chiang Mai University. It also acted aggressively; for instance, by collaborating with the CCC to protest against the Night-Bazaar pavement expansion in 1994 and by requesting the Parliamentary Committee on the Environment to investigate Chiang Mai's garbage crisis in late 1994.

The CTA's government linkages have been more to the provincial and national levels than to the municipality. As a member of the CJPPSCC, the CTA extensively used this channel to voice its environmental concerns to the governor and provincial officers and also went directly to the parliament and ministers, the direct channel made possible by the leader's personal connections. CTA's founder and former president, Rachan Veeraphan, belonged to the executive committee of the Democrat party, which led the national coalition government between 1992 and 1994. His active role in the environment was well known. Besides founding the CTA, he chaired the Chiang Mai provincial council committee on the environment, and served as CCC's vice-president for tourism and environment and as an advisor to the parliamentary committee on tourism.

Although the CTA had no formal connection with the municipal government, the leaders on both sides know each other personally, as a rule. The CTA made complaints to the municipality through personal meeting and letters; however, the response was

46 The number of days which a tourist spends in Chiang Mai is declining. Other neighbouring provinces such as Chiang Rai, are becoming popular. In 1995, Chiang Rai opened an international airport to facilitate its tourism.
unsatisfactory. In fact, the experience that the CTA's key leader, Rachan Veeraphan, had of the Ananthaphum administration was always confrontational. As a provincial councillor, he assisted Mae Hia's residents in negotiating with the municipality over the environmental impacts of the Mae Hia dump site and also led villagers to blockade the site against garbage trucks in 1989. Moreover, he was a key player in protesting the pavement expansion of the municipality in 1994.

3) The Mass Media

The media are very well represented in Chiang Mai province, which has 13 radio stations, 5 television stations, 12 regional offices of national newspapers and 12 local newspapers (CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 2/8). Given the city's economic, cultural, historical and tourist significance, Chiang Mai's problems have received a high degree of media attention nationally as well as locally. For instance, Chiang Mai's garbage crisis in August and September 1994 ran as a top story in every local and national newspaper and led to extensive discussion in newspaper columns and radio programs throughout Thailand. The garbage issue made headlines again in 1995 when local residents of the Hang Dong district and NGOs held a lengthy public protest against the Provincial Electricity Authority's plan for a garbage-fired plant. In 1996, Chiang Mai municipality received much publicity over municipal involvement in organized crime and the Night Bazaar extortion.

The press in particular have actively covered Chiang Mai's environmental degradation and municipal affairs. The press has not limited itself to reporting facts and presenting opinions but has, for instance, provided fora for different groups to voice their

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47 Interview with Rachan Veeraphan.
48 Interview with Rachan Veeraphan.
concerns and opinions about Chiang Mai’s environment. Newspapers such as Bangkok Business (*Krungthep Turakit*) has a column, "Jud-pra-guy", on the environment and quality of life issues. It also hosts a seminar or a forum for NGO, academic, municipal and government officers to discuss the problem, that is meant to present facts and to brainstorm for possible solutions. Chiang Mai issues already tackled in this forum include the Ping River, the expansion of the Night Bazaar’s pavement and the deforestation in Chiang Mai province. During the garbage crisis, the newspaper hosted a small forum and aired it as a radio program which people could phone. Moreover, the press is critical in pressuring the government for a concrete solution. The Ping River is a case in point: the local press kept the issue alive from 1991 until the Ping River committee was established in 1993.

The Chiang Mai press’s interest is not confined to the environment, as it has played an active role in Chiang Mai’s municipal politics. Over the last decade, newspapers have revealed scandals and conspiracies involving bribery and wrongdoing in municipal office over such matters as illegal construction permits, illicit commissions from bidders for municipal projects, extortion of street vendors and the conflict between the MEB and the municipal clerk. The Mayor sued a newspaper’s editor for having accused him of receiving kick-backs over bids for the construction of a garbage incinerator. In addition, the press is a major channel for the public to file complaints against the municipality. For instance, "Thai News," one of the oldest of the local newspapers, received at least 10 complaints daily, through letters, by telephone or in person. Such complaints were passed on to the municipal

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49 *Krungthep Turakit* is a national newspaper; however, it has a northern branch located in Chiang Mai. The branch is responsible for producing an additional edition of local news, attached to the main newspaper.

50 Interview with the chief editor of the Northern branch, *Krungthep Turakit* on June 12, 1996.

51 Interview with Insom Panyasopha, the Chief editor of *Thai News*.

52 Interview with the chief editor of the Northern branch, *Krungthep Turakit*. 
executive for response. If the municipality ignored them, then the newspaper felt it had to make them public.\textsuperscript{53}

In addition to the city’s many problems, the nature of its municipal politics means that municipal affairs receive a high level of publicity. First, the intense competition between political groups results in the employment of newspapers as political weapons. Each political group has its own local newspaper: the “Kao Sayam,” established in 1987, is a mouthpiece of Prachasanti, while the “Chiang Mai News” belongs to Ananthaphum. Having its own newspaper might be one reason why the Ananthaphum administration established no formal relationship with the media and held no press conferences on major political issues. Other newspapers attacked the Ananthaphum administration heavily.\textsuperscript{54} Second, a number of urban NGOs and concerned citizens groups, dissatisfied with the way the city is developed, have come to depend extensively on the media to voice their concerns and to draw local and national attention to problems. Often, especially since the early 1990s, media attention to, and coverage of, an issue has assisted civic groups to strengthen their status as they opposed the municipal government.

4) The Academic Sector

The academic sector is considered one of the most active sectors concerning environmental problems and city development. As the biggest educational centre outside Bangkok, Chiang Mai contains many higher level educational institutions: Chiang Mai University, Payap University, the Mae Jo College of Agriculture, and the Rajchabhat Institute (formerly the

\textsuperscript{53} Interview with Insom Panyasopha, the chief editor of \textit{Thai News}.

\textsuperscript{54} Interview with Insom Panyasopha.
Teacher Training College). The academic sector not only provides educational services but also checks and criticizes the government’s policies and activities.

Chiang Mai University, in particular, has a leading role, since it is Thailand’s first regional university and has a vast pool of knowledge and expertise relevant to the environment, politics and urban development. The role of Chiang Mai University in the urban environment and municipal politics has to be distinguished from the University as an institution, and from individual professors. The University is more or less restricted to educational and technical services to the public and community. The rise of environmental problems has prompted it to establish a Department of Environmental Engineering within the Faculty of Engineering and, in 1996, to offer an interdisciplinary graduate program on environmental management. Various departments also include environment-related courses in their curricula. In addition, the University’s faculties and departments undertake numerous research papers, conferences and seminars that contribute to local environmental and political issues. Moreover, the University conducts environmental studies for government agencies. For instance, the Faculty of Social Sciences, commissioned by the Chiang Mai Provincial Office, conducted a study of a potential operational plan and investment priorities to solve the environmental problems in Chiang Mai province. The Social Research Institute, funded by the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning, MOSTE, formulated the action plan on the urban environment and the green area in Chiang Mai city.

55 For instance, conferences and seminars were “Mae Ping” (1993) and “Status and problems of teaching and research on Local Government in Thailand” (1991) [by the Local Government Study Centre], “People’s participation in solving environmental problems” (1993), “Administration of Chiang Mai Municipality” (1996) and “Conflict on the garbage fuel plant” (1996) [by the Department of Political Science], “Cooperation between NGOs and the government in solving environmental problems in Chiang Mai” (1993) [by the Department of Laws]. Research on garbage was undertaken by Jareuk Thirawang (1989) Jarun Yasamuth (1992), Chalee Ong-la (1995) and research on environmental management and politics included Seksin Sriwattananukulkit et al. (1994) and Thanet Charoenmuang (1994).
Many Chiang Mai professors are major critics on urban environmental problems and enthusiastically express their concerns to the public and relevant authorities, either through the media or through seminars. Some of them organize independent study centres to investigate and publicize the issues. The Chiang Mai Urban Studies Centre (CUSC) is a case in point. Established by university scholars concerned with the rapid changes of Chiang Mai society, its objectives are to investigate the changes and problems of cities in northern Thailand; to disseminate information and studies to the public; and to present alternative solutions to cope with these problems. Its major publications include “Analysis of Developmental Planning Projects in Chiang Mai” (1992), “Chiang Mai in the Changing Current” (1992, 1994), “The Ping River in Crisis” (1993) and “I love Kyom: Trees and the Urban Environment” (1995). Some university professors also become leading figures in the organization of concerned citizen groups and in NGO activities.

The cooperation between the University and the municipality was minimal under the Ananthaphum administration. Since the 1980s the Environmental Engineering Department has maintained contact with the municipality (through the Municipal Clerk) in the form of information services and technical assistance on the waste problem and later on the garbage issue. However, according to Dr. Suporn Koottatep, the Department former director, at first the municipality paid little attention to technical opinions and advice until problems reached crisis proportions. Then the municipality started to follow technical advice. Dr. Suporn has been a consultant to the municipality on the issue of garbage disposal. Commissioned by the municipality, he is conducting site selection for the future municipal garbage site. The Navarat Pattana administration has reestablished the municipality’s relationship with the

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56 These publications are available only in Thai language.
University by inviting the professors to join various municipal development planning sub-committees. Such linkages are strengthened by the fact that some key Navarat Pattana councillors, including a deputy mayor, graduated from Chiang Mai University.

5) NGOs

Very few of the large number of environmental NGOs in Chiang Mai deal with the urban environment. Among these few organizations, three types can be identified. First, there are environmentally oriented NGOs which emphasize community development and the environmental issue. An example is the YMCA for Northern Development Foundation. Second are the NGOs which deal with the solid-waste issue. The Walk For the Better Environment group and the Recycle Paper For the Trees Project\(^{57}\) are cases in point. The third category consists of civic groups, urban middle-class in their orientation, which are concerned with specific, as well as general, local issues. This category includes the For Chiang Mai Group, Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy, and the Wiang Ping Citizen Council. This last type of NGO is considered to be the most active force of Chiang Mai civil society and to have provided the major critique of municipal actions which led to the NGOs' confrontational relationship with the Ananthaphum administration.

*The YMCA for the Northern Development Foundation (YMCA):* In 1989 the YMCA expanded its Chiang Mai mission to embrace environmental development. The YMCA initially focused on promoting the rural quality of life. Since rural and urban environmental problems are connected, it is also concerned with the city's environmental problems, particularly the deteriorating Ping River. In 1992, the YMCA launched a campaign over the

\(^{57}\) This group announced its operation on June 1996; therefore, it was not included in the study.
garbage problem in the Ping River, picking up garbage in the Ping River, and asking that foam containers not be used in the Loy Kratong festival. It collaborated with other NGOs on urban issues such as petitions to the Prime Minister about the Ping River crisis in 1993 and about the garbage crisis in 1994, and participating in urban environmental campaigns on Environmental Day. The continuing devastation of the city’s environment, especially the Ping River and the garbage crisis, has prompted the YMCA to restructure its organization to further promote urban environmental quality. Focusing on waste issues, the YMCA’s activities include recycling campaigns in schools (e.g., providing student leaders and teachers with training and equipment for recycling), and seminars for monks on garbage management. The YMCA registered as an Environmental NGO with the MOSTE in 1994.

It had no relationship with the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration; instead, the YMCA allied with other militant NGOs to confront the municipality on many issues. Under the Navarat Pattana administration, the YMCA changed its relationship with the municipality by, for instance, holding environmental campaign activities in municipal schools, entering into the joint project on recycling and meeting with municipal administrators. Except for campaigning in municipal schools, however, the YMCA has yet to implement other concrete actions in concert with the municipal administration.

*The Walk for A Better Environment Group:* Established in 1991, with a focus on the solid-waste problem, this group aims mainly at raising awareness in the general public of city cleanliness and good environment. The group launched its garbage campaign by convincing students to participate in picking up garbage from city streets. The project was very successful, becoming the group’s hallmark. The group has expanded activities to include tree
planting, an environmental camp for the children, and recycling and composting garbage. The group's activities have been conducted on a small scale. It has eight committee members and one coordinator. Apart from the President, a businessman, the remaining committee members in 1996 were teachers and university professors. Funding has come from various sources, such as the Thai-German Association, the Asia Foundation, the UNDP, and public donations. Nevertheless, the founder-president of the group has provided much of the operating costs.

The group had no linkage with the Ananthaphum group, although members knew each other personally. According to the president, the group approached the Mayor for support in launching the first campaign. He refused and did not participate in it himself, instead sending a deputy mayor on the first campaign. The group had no further contact with the Ananthaphum administration. Despite its focus on garbage, the group also joins with other NGOs on different collective issues.

The For Chiang Mai Group: The genesis of this group dates from the 1985-86 fight to stop the Doi Sutep cable car project. It was founded with 13 members, of whom 10 were university professors. Many of them have an educational background in architecture. Their protest took various forms, including hosting the people's forum, producing a study and campaign posters, writing articles, and using the media. Success came when monks participated in the protest. After the Cabinet shelved the project, the group members agreed that, in a period of change, Chiang Mai needed a group to inspect government and private decisions affecting the environment. With no structure and no formal organization, the group has undertaken both environmental awareness raising and protesting inappropriate

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58 Interview with Anandh Manmontri, the President of the Walk for the Better Environment, on June 19, 1996.
59 Interview with Sirichai Narumitrekakarn, President of the For Chiang Mai group, on June 18, 1996.
projects which have a major effect on the look of the city. It took a leading role in protesting high-rise buildings and tree cutting, and in campaigning for the strict control of signboards and street furniture. Among its activities in raising environmental awareness were a painting competition and a youth camp. The group’s project funding relies on its members’ contributions. The group has also collaborated with others on major issues such as the Ping River in 1993 and the garbage issue in 1994. The present leader of For Chiang Mai (1996) is also the founding president of the Wiang Ping Citizen Council.

The group had no linkage with the Ananthaphum administration, except through confrontation. It contacted the municipality once to pass on the Mae Hia residents’ complaints concerning environmental impacts caused by the municipal dump site, but the administration took no action. Over the Ping River and the garbage issues, the group allied with other NGOs in actions against the municipality. Direct conflict between the municipality and the group came over high-rise buildings and the removal of Kyom trees from the Sutep road. In 1989 the group led the protest against the construction of high-rise buildings which, it argued, turned Chiang Mai into an ugly concrete jungle, depriving the city of its natural charm and unique cultural features (Ruland 1992, 64). The group attacked the municipality for colluding with investors by issuing a large number of building permits for high-rise buildings. According to Surachet Niemtang (1993), members of Ananthaphum were major shareholders of some condominiums (Niemtang 1993, 29-30). The anti-high-rise movement was able to push the Ministry of the Interior to issue a zoning regulation restricting the maximum height of buildings within the city of Chiang Mai.60 In 1995, the Ananthaphum administration wanted to widen Sutep street where Kyom trees grew. The group organized a

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60 See details of the anti-high-rise building movement in Ruland (1992, 64-65).
protest against tree cutting or removal and proposed a street design which could conserve the trees. The municipality disregarded the proposal, as it did public opposition, and removed the trees at night.61

The Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy (CCLA): A concerned citizen’s group of 15 to 20 members, mainly university professors, it formed originally in 1992 to protest both the appointment of General Suchinda as Prime Minister and the May Massacre in 1992. Seeing centralization and the weakness of local organization as the root of Thailand’s political problems, the group has continued with activities aimed at empowering local organizations to cope with their own problems, at keeping local governments accountable to the public and at promoting decentralization. The group includes Chiang Mai and neighbouring provinces in its work. Among its major strategies are public forums and seminars and the extensive use of the media. Its issues include the campaign for an elected governor, the draft bill on the Chiang Mai Metropolitan Administration, the conflict between the Municipal Clerk and the MEB, and the Chiang Mai garbage problem.

Since it acted as a watch dog and policy inspector, the group’s relationship with the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration was not peaceful. The group raised the level of public concern by organizing a public forum on the topic of “the Ping River Crisis.” The high level of public participation in it led to the formation of the Committee on the Conservation of the Ping River and the Environment in 1993 (with financial support from the Asia Foundation). The CCLA’s President was also appointed to chair this committee. Their concern for the River drove the group and its allies to protest against municipal administrators’ issuing construction permits for the high-rise buildings encroaching along the

61 For details of the Kyom tree cutting, see Charoenmuang (1995b).
River, and to sign the petition to the Prime Minister, Chuan Leekpai, who then came to inspect the quality of the Mae Ping River by himself in 1993.

After the Ping River case, the group confronted the Ananthaphum administration again, in 1994, over the transfer of the municipal clerk, Hmei-ing. It presented a petition protesting the transfer order to the Minister of the Interior (Chavalit Yongchaiyuth). Later, on the garbage issue, the CCLA, on behalf of the network of NGOs, organized a public forum and again petitioned the Prime Minister. The CCLA most recently confronted the municipality over the Kyom tree removal from Sutep Street in 1995.

The Wiang Ping Citizen Council: Established in 1995, as a network of concerned citizens groups and NGOs, its main objective is to strengthen the people's power vis-à-vis the government. The leader of the For Chiang Mai group was appointed the Council's founding President. The President of the CCLA is the Secretary, while the vice-secretary is the president of the Walk for the Better Environment. In 1996 the Council had approximately 70 members, who each pay a lifetime membership fee of Bt300 (CND$15.79). The Council's activities include a people's version of the Chiang Mai 700th anniversary celebration, organizing the Environmental Day which the MOSTE funded, and a public forum on organized crime in Chiang Mai.

The Council's formation can be considered a major step in the development of a strong civil society in Chiang Mai. As its president expressed it, Chiang Mai's civil society in general has matured since the start of the 1990s; the general public has become more knowledgeable, which has raised their environmental awareness. Moreover, the government now tends to recognize the role of NGOs and citizen groups. These no longer protest in front
of the Provincial Hall or municipal offices; they are more often invited to participate in meetings or committees.\textsuperscript{62}

6) \textit{Informal Sector}

The informal waste sector is another element of Chiang Mai's civil society which plays a role in urban environmental management, especially on the solid-waste issue. Informal waste activities — waste recovery and recycling — can divert waste from landfill sites. However, its contribution has hardly been recognized in environmental terms, since activities of this sector are motivated by economic necessity rather than environmental awareness. The various actors involved in this informal waste sector in Chiang Mai can be roughly divided into two groups: garbage pickers and traders. Among garbage pickers, one can distinguish between street and dump pickers. The former refers to people who scavenge recyclable waste (e.g., paper, plastic and iron) from waste containers along streets and in neighbourhoods. They tend to be the urban poor, living in slums. The number of street pickers is unknown; but in one slum, 16 families were found to earn their incomes from scavenging.\textsuperscript{63} They can earn around Bt300 to 600 (CDN$15 to $31) a week.\textsuperscript{64} According to the coordinators of the POP, an NGO working in Chiang Mai slums, they have noticed that since 1994 more people have been

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
white plastic & Bt4.50-5.00 ($0.25) per kg. & colored plastic & Bt3.50 ($0.18) per kg. \\
paper & Bt2.3 ($0.15) per kg. & colored bottles & Bt20 ($1) per 100 bottles \\
aluminum cans & Bt10 ($0.53) per kg & crystal bottles & Bt80 ($4.2) per 100 bottles \\
copper & Bt40 ($2) per kg. & cardboard box & Bt2.80 ($1.5) per kg. \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{62} Interview with Sirichai Narumitrekakarn, the President of For the Chiang Mai Group and the Wiang Ping Citizens’ Council, on June 18, 1996.

\textsuperscript{63} Interview with Somkid Kumputi, a leader of the Central slum, on June 24, 1996. The Central slum is illegal, encroaching on the land owned by the Central department store, and has 51 families (182 residents). It has electricity but no running water. The majority of residents earn their living by garbage picking, as well as working as small vendors or as three-wheel car drivers.

\textsuperscript{64} Interview with three garbage pickers at Central slum, on June 24, 1996. Price of recyclable items are roughly as follows:
picking garbage for their living. This is particularly true for three-wheel drivers who are finding it difficult to earn income from carrying passengers; picking recyclable waste is an alternative source of income. Street pickers have no relationship with the municipality but their work is not welcomed by municipal workers who blame them for dirtying areas around waste containers while scavenging.

While street pickers are more visible, picking garbage at a dump site is no longer possible in Chiang Mai. Dump pickers are banned from the current landfill. In the past, there was a group of dump pickers who tended to be municipal workers’ relatives, at the Mae Hia municipal dump site. When the site was closed down in 1989, they followed the municipality to the new sites. However, their activities, such as burning garbage, led to concern from residents living around the sites. In addition to the environmental impact, the presence of garbage pickers was a part of residents’ complaints against the municipal dump sites.

The municipal garbage collectors are also involved in picking garbage for sale. According to Chalee Ong-la’s 1995 survey of garbage collectors, 67.03% of respondents sort garbage while collecting it and 32.97% of them sort garbage when dumping it at a site. Plastics, glasses, mirrors and bottles are among items being picked out for sale (Ong-la, 1995). This is also confirmed by the garbage buyer located at the Hayya garbage transfer station, who buys recyclable waste from 17 to 18 municipal trucks per day. This practice creates an extra income for garbage truck drivers and collectors of around Bt50 (CDN$ 3) per person per day. This extra income can be considered as an incentive for municipal

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66 Interview with a garbage picker at the Central slum, on June 24, 1996.
67 Interview with the garbage buyer at Hayya garbage transferring station on June 24, 1996.
collectors to stay on the job. However, sorting garbage for sale by municipal collectors is seen as reducing efficiency in waste collection. Moreover, the past experience shows that as municipal garbage collectors picked garbage, they usually hung bags of recyclable waste on the trucks. These bags sometimes dropped on streets and some waste items flew out because the truck drove too fast. This caused a lot of complaints, especially from residents along the streets leading to the sites. The municipality tried once to prohibit municipal collectors from sorting recyclable waste while collecting, but faced a protest from the collectors.\footnote{Interview with the garbage buyer at the Hayya transfer station. He says that municipal collectors protest against the municipality by stopping garbage collection for three days.} For the management of the current landfill site, the municipality cannot stop municipal collectors from picking recyclable waste but bags of recyclable waste are prohibited from being hung on the trucks. Every garbage truck has to be inspected at the checking point before heading to the site.

Apart from a group of people who pick garbage, the informal waste sector also involves a variety of traders who buy and sell junk and recyclable wastes, ranging from a small junk buyer who buys or collects materials directly from various sources (such as households and business) and a junk shop which buy tons of recyclable waste a day from garbage pickers, small junk dealers and the general public. According to the survey conducted by the PCD, MOSTE in 1994, there were eleven junk shops located within the municipality. They had a plan to form a “junk shop club” to fix standard prices for recyclable items (Toxic Substance and Solid Waste Management Subdivision 1994, 5-11). These junk businesses have no formal relationship with the municipality.
For the most part, as our investigation revealed, the city of Chiang Mai’s environmental decay is directly related to the rapid social and economic development in the last decade, brought about or exacerbated by the central governmental policies. Actually, such policies might be beneficial to Chiang Mai, if the municipality could efficiently manage city growth. In fact, as shown above, the municipality was financially weak and, worse, lacked strong leadership to respond decisively and swiftly to deteriorating environmental circumstances. The failure to safeguard the city’s environment has politicized Chiang Mai society, in turn making the municipality weaker and environmental problems tougher to solve, as the waste problem clearly demonstrates. The problem began with the municipality’s mismanagement and became an issue that transformed municipal politics. The next section will examine why garbage became a crisis in Chiang Mai.

IV. Solid Waste Management in Chiang Mai

The garbage issue has humiliated the municipality. In August and September 1994, the problem in Chiang Mai became national news when the municipality ran out of dumping sites. As a result, tons of garbage was abandoned on streets, in public spaces and in front of markets and temples — uncollected for a month until it rotted away. The crisis turned the image of Chiang Mai from “the rose city in the Northern region” into a trash city. Flooding exacerbated the problem to the point that the Provincial Public Health Officer warned people to be aware of communicable diseases. The garbage incident, together with the danger to public health, is now agreed to have been a major factor causing the tremendous defeat of the
incumbent Ananthaphum group in the 1995 municipal election. Questions arise as to what went wrong with the municipality’s waste management, and the extent of civil society’s involvement in waste issues.

**Municipal Solid-Waste Management**

Two divisions share the management of solid waste in Chiang Mai municipality. The Cleaning Section, Division of Sanitation and the Environment, handles garbage collection and city cleaning, while garbage disposal is the responsibility of the Solid Waste Disposal Section, Division of Sanitary Works.

**Garbage Collection and City Cleaning**

More precisely, the Cleaning Section is responsible for the collection of garbage, tree branches and excrement; delivering garbage to disposal sites; sweeping streets and pavements; cleaning public spaces; and for granting permits for signboards and advertising materials (CMM, Cleaning Section n.d.). The municipality has granted a private company a permit to collect excrement. The Section itself had 264 staff in 1995, the majority of whom — about half, as shown in Table 4.13 — were garbage collectors and street sweepers. The Cleaning Section’s budget was Bt46,936,840 (CDN$2,470,360) in 1995, while revenue from garbage collection fees was only Bt4,892,453 (Cdn$257,497). The Section’s expenses and revenues from garbage fees between 1993 and 1995 are shown in Table 4.14.

From 1994 onward there has been a noticeable reduction of staff, especially of garbage truck drivers and garbage collectors, caused by the semi-privatization of the garbage

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69 Scholars, journalists, business persons and the general public I encountered during my field research in Chiang Mai expressed this view.
collecting service. As a participant in the experimental national project on privatization of municipal services, the Chiang Mai Municipality has contracted with the G.B.C. Group Company Ltd. to provide garbage collection within two municipal districts, Sriwichai and Mengrai, for a period of five years (1993-1998). The company receives the remuneration of Bt14,799,300 (CND$778,910) a year with the addition of 50% of the garbage collection fees charged by the company within the assigned area. Garbage collection in two other municipal districts, Nakhonping and Kawila, and city cleaning of the total municipal area still remains with the Cleaning Section.

Table 4.13: Manpower of the Cleaning Section, Chiang Mai Municipality, 1993-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Personnel</th>
<th>1993a</th>
<th>1994b</th>
<th>1995c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Clerical</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Sweeping Machine Operators</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Truck Drivers</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12.35</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Collectors</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>40.50</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Sweepers</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>32.35</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspectors</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree sticks collectors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Truck Drivers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Pick up Truck Drivers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign board Inspectors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:  
a) CMM, Cleaning Section (1993).  
b) CMM, Division of Sanitation and Environment (1995:41).  
c) CMM, Cleaning Section (1995: 5).

Table 4.14: Expenses of the Cleaning Section and Revenues from Garbage Collection Fees, Chiang Mai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget year</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bt.</td>
<td>SCDN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>49,880,280</td>
<td>2,625,277.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>34,430,430</td>
<td>1,812,127.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>46,936,840</td>
<td>2,470,360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


70 This experimental project on privatization of municipal services has been initiated and directed by the DOLA.
Table 4.15: Area, Population, Manpower and Vehicles of Garbage Collection Services in the Chiang Mai Municipality, by Agency, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Agency</th>
<th>Municipal District</th>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
<th>Pop.</th>
<th>No of Households</th>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipality (a)</td>
<td>Nakhonping</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>37,162</td>
<td>9,802</td>
<td>48(c)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kawila</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>39,616</td>
<td>24,221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.B.C. Group Company (b)</td>
<td>Meng-rai</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>48,918</td>
<td>11,907</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sriwichai</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>40,114</td>
<td>21,546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>165,810</strong></td>
<td><strong>66,576</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:  
a) CMM, Cleaning Section (1995).  
b) G.B.C Group Company  
c) Number of garbage trucks was obtained from the 1995 MOSTE’s survey, provided by the Cleaning Section, Chiang Mai municipality.

In general, the experience of contracting out a garbage collecting service so far has not been successful. According to the evaluation survey conducted by the Municipality in 1994, the private service has not been more efficient than the municipality’s. The company’s performance has been far below expectations because it was new to the business, lacked experience and was not well equipped. At first, since the company had only four trucks, the municipality had to provide it with extra assistance, namely, advice, staff and equipment. As shown in Table 4.15, the company has since increased the number of its garbage trucks.

According to the Chief of the Cleaning Section, each municipal district, under the Municipal District Cleaning Chief, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of garbage collection and street sweeping for its own jurisdiction. However, coordination among municipal districts happens at informal meetings held at the main municipal office every

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71 Interview on the June 6, 1996 at the Cleaning Section, Chiang Mai Municipality. This man has been the Chief of the Cleaning Section for more than 15 years. He is considered to be the most experienced and knowledgeable in Chiang Mai garbage management. When there are complaints about uncollected garbage, he is the one who is directly blamed by the Executive Committee, instead of the Director of Sanitary and the Environment. However, a municipal officer commented that serving in a post in one place for a long time is not good because a person tends to maintain old styles of operation, and lacks opportunities to learn alternative methods from other places.
Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The participants include the Chief of the Cleaning Section, the four Municipal District Cleaning Chiefs and representatives from the private contractor. It should be noted that Municipal District Cleaning Chiefs report directly to the Chief of the Cleaning Section rather than to the Chief of the Municipal District Office.

In each municipal district, workers report at the office around 4.30 to 5 a.m. The Municipal District Cleaning Chief may arrange for new assignments or have a meeting which normally happens once monthly; otherwise, workers operate according to their own routine schedules. The street-sweeping machines and water cleaning of the city operate between 5 and 8 a.m. For garbage collectors and street sweepers, the working hours are 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. A garbage truck has a specific route, and normally has a driver and four garbage collectors. Solid waste is collected by two methods. The first is a door-to-door service; the other, a collection from garbage containers provided by the municipality in various spots. Garbage containers range from 200-litres oil tanks or plastic garbage boxes, located along streets and within communities, to larger containers, normally located in markets, shopping malls and schools. A large garbage truck delivers collected waste to a disposal site, while a smaller truck has to deliver garbage to the transfer point, at Hayya Crematorium, where waste is then loaded onto a large truck for transport to a disposal site. In general, a smaller garbage truck makes two trips a day, while a large truck makes three runs a day between the transfer point and the disposal site. The quantity of solid waste is approximately 250 to 300 tons a day, accounting for 80 % of the total waste generated in the municipal area. Therefore about 20% of garbage remains uncollected every day.\(^\text{72}\)

\(^{72}\) This is calculated from the accumulation of number of trips and capacity of garbage trucks.
Table 4.16: Municipal Performance on Garbage Services during the Ananthaphum Administration, 1990-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

In addition to the large amount of garbage left uncollected, the municipal performance in garbage collecting and city cleaning services is unsatisfactory in other ways. In our survey, a majority of Chiang Mai respondents (51.4%) state that the municipality performs poorly on garbage services, as shown in Table 4.16. Only 57.1% of the respondents rely on municipal services. As Table 4.17 shows, apart from depending on municipal services, 60.4% of respondents dispose of garbage themselves. Furthermore, 18.4% and 4.5% of residents use a community collecting service and a community collecting and disposal service, respectively.

Table 4.17: Methods of Household Waste Management in Chiang Mai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do it yourself</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal services</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community collecting service</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community collecting and disposal service</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

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73 This presents a discrepancy between the municipality’s claim on garbage collecting capacity and the survey data. While the municipality says that it collects 80% of the total waste generated, the author’s survey reveals only 57.1% of respondents rely on municipal services. Such a discrepancy may occur in two factors. First, in my opinion, the municipality does not update its information, especially after 1994, when the municipality faced frequent interruptions in providing the service due to lack of dump sites. Second, since the municipal service stops so frequently, some residents use other alternatives and become less reliant on the municipal service. The current municipality’s method of estimation does not directly reflect the changing circumstance. That is why the number of residents using the municipal service is lower than the municipality’s figure.
The garbage collecting and street sweeping services of Chiang Mai municipality have been under a number of constraints at least since the early 1990s. First, personnel are inadequate and have a high rate of turnover — generally, six months to a year. Most garbage collectors and street sweepers are temporary municipal workers. Since their wages are only Bt4100 a month (CDN $215.79), and their working environment is poor, they tend to move to other jobs. Moreover, the secondment of some 60 personnel from the Cleaning Section to other sections and divisions causes problems when the Section requests additional personnel.

Second, services are hampered by insufficient old garbage trucks. Of the 48 garbage trucks owned by the municipality, only 25 are in good condition and 7 of these are large trucks for transferring garbage to the site. There are only 4 garbage trucks with compressing devices (CMM, Cleaning Section 1995). Third, the efficiency of garbage collection is reduced by garbage sorting. The garbage collectors separate plastics, bottles, glasses, and paper for sale. Since in general people discard all waste in one container, collectors must spend time selecting sellable garbage, as well as stopping at a junk shop to sell recyclable garbage on the journey to the disposal site. Fourth, traffic often constrains garbage collection. Modern Chiang Mai developed from an old city whose narrow pedestrian streets had a lot of crossroads. As a result, traffic congestion delays the operation of garbage trucks. According to the Chief of the Cleaning Section, the municipality once tried to avoid traffic by collecting garbage at night. However, because people normally discarded garbage in the morning, prior to going to work, garbage was left out in containers until night time. As a result, the city

74 Interview with the Chief of the Cleaning Section on June 6, 1996.
75 Interview with the Chief of the Cleaning Section, on June 6, 1996.
appeared to be full of uncollected garbage containers, all the time. The MEB returned to collection during normal daylight working times.\textsuperscript{76}

The most important obstacle to effective garbage collection is the lack of a permanent dumping site, the problem that led to the garbage crisis in 1994. Although there is a temporary dumping site now, the site can operate only from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. in accord with the agreement with the village committee. As a result, garbage collection has to cease at 2 or 2.10 p.m., since traveling to the site requires up to 50 minutes. Moreover, on some occasions the service is interrupted by local villagers around the current disposal site blocking the site entrance to protest against the municipality. A municipal officer told me that this happened once in three months in 1996. Residents protest because the municipality has not yet fulfilled its promises to build infrastructure and to reduce the smell of garbage.

Constrained by its disposal site, the municipality attempted once to reduce waste volume by campaigning for garbage pre-sorting as well as providing garbage containers for different types of garbage — black bins for organic (wet) and green ones for recycling (dry) waste. The municipality also arranged light green garbage trucks for recycling garbage. This strategy was launched around April 1995, on a trial basis on four major streets: Chotana, Wicha-yanonth, Khaw-nawarat, and Charoen-muang. It, however, turned out to be a failure. The Chief said that people paid no attention to sorting garbage and discarded garbage without considering the types of containers. However, some others I interviewed said that it was useless to sort and discard garbage in different containers while the municipality put the two kinds of garbage in the same trucks. A university professor considered this project to be just a showcase. Garbage classification is not simple and requires more than just providing two

\textsuperscript{76} Interview with the Chief of the Cleaning Section on June 6, 1996.
different containers. The municipality should have taken other active measures to stir people’s interest in supporting garbage classification.77

*Municipal Garbage Disposal and the 1994 Garbage Crisis*

The Garbage Disposal Subdivision, Division of Sanitary Works, is in charge of the development of disposal methods as well as the maintenance and operation of municipal disposal sites. Prior to the establishment of this division in 1993, the Cleaning Section undertook garbage disposal. In the past, the municipality employed an open space in Mae Hia District as the dumping site. Since local villagers closed it down in 1989, garbage disposal has been an intractable problem for the municipality. It was a leading cause of the 1994 Chiang Mai garbage crisis and has adversely affected municipal performance on solid-waste management.

The garbage disposal problem in Chiang Mai has become increasingly complicated since 1989. At first, mismanagement and resource constraints, then politics and rising environmental awareness were involved in the problem. To understand its complex nature, the development of the garbage disposal problem can be summarized chronologically:

- Prior to 1957: The municipality used an open dump in an open area at the now municipal stadium. The area was about 7 rai (1.12 hectares).
- 1957: The municipality purchased two plots of land, of 75 and 57 rai (12 and 9.12 hectares respectively) in Mae Hia District, Chiang Mai and employed the 75 rai plot as a landfill. At that time, there was only 14 to 15 tons of garbage a day.
- 1960: To dispose of garbage, the municipality built the organic composting fertilizer plant in the Mae Hia Landfill.

77 Interview with a law professor on June 13, 1996 at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University.
1973: The fertilizer plant was closed down due to high operating costs. The municipality had to subsidize the plant at a level of about Bt3 million (CND$160,000) a year, a huge amount compared to the annual municipal budget of Bt50 million (CND$2.6 million). The municipality was then to employ a combination of open dump and burning methods. Later, burning garbage was cancelled because of complaints from residents around the site.

1982: The first sign of problems with the garbage site occurred when a group of residents in Mu 2, Mae Hia District requested that the landfill site be removed because of bad odour, flies, smoke and garbage pickers. The municipality then issued a call for a new site but, even though seven tenders were submitted, none met the requirements. For some bidders, the land price was too high. Locations were either too near community areas or too far from streets and the municipal area. Some sites were disqualified by the disapproval of Subdistrict Councils. There were also problems caused by local politics and realtors; for example, one realtor tried to prevent others from selling by giving wrong information to residents. In the meantime, the municipality tried to improve the environment of the Mae Hia landfill site, such as by improving the street to the village, replacing a wooden bridge with a concrete one, regularly conducting chemical pest sprays, and prohibiting garbage pickers from burning garbage in their search for valuable objects or materials.

78 It is said that there were a lot of flies around the community. When having a meal, residents had to eat inside a fly net to prevent flies from disturbing them or swarming foods.
79 There were garbage pickers living on the site. Most of them were relatives of municipal workers. Some were Mae Hia residents too. When the Mae Hia site was closing down, they tried to protest the municipality's decision to move it. They also followed the garbage to new dumping sites. However, the garbage pickers became a reason why residents staged protests against the new garbage site. The current dumping site has a strict rule of no garbage pickers.
1983 to 1988: In 1983, the municipality's jurisdiction expanded from 17 to 40 km², and the garbage in the municipal area increased substantially to about 102 to 105 tons per day. The municipality's attempts to obtain lands for garbage sites were fruitless. No tender submitted in three land bids (1983, 1984, and 1986) led to a deal. The municipality improved waste management by, for example, building a garbage transfer station, increasing collection fees, and studying the privatization of garbage disposal services, as well as by asking for foreign assistance, particularly from Japan and Germany. Wastewater from the garbage site contaminated underground water sources in the area, so the municipality installed a water main to the community.

January 1989: The Mae Hia Subdistrict Council, with assistance from the Provincial Council, advised the municipality to remove the landfill site within 100 days because of its environmental problems; otherwise, people from Mae Hia would blockade the site entrance.

March 1989: The Municipality contacted the Forest Officer about the possibility of using a degraded forest area for a permanent landfill site, and sought support from the governor, the DOLA and the Cabinet for this plan. Meanwhile, the municipality asked the Mae Hia Subdistrict Council for another 30-day extension by providing drinking water to Mae Hia residents, operating pest sprays more often.

May 1989 to 1994: In 1989, Mae Hia residents completely blockaded municipal garbage trucks from entering the site. The municipality tried to negotiate with the residents but without success. Garbage from Chiang Mai Municipality became so called "gypsy garbage," moving from place to place. Garbage lay uncollected in the municipal area and it had to be kept in garbage trucks or buried underneath all six municipal crematoria areas
until there were available dumping places. More than 30 places were used as temporary garbage dumping sites, for periods lasting from only a few days to nearly a year; these included, for example, military land areas, garbage sites of the neighbouring sanitary districts and municipality, and private lands with either old fish ponds or old soil pits. The reasons for moving from place to place were either that the areas were full of garbage or that residents surrounding the sites staged protests against dumping. Such incidents happened in more than ten cases. As people living around potential sites tended to protest, the municipality tended to keep a potential dumping site secret or to conceal garbage by, for instance, transporting it in general trucks with covers on them.

1994: The municipality dumped garbage in an old large laterite pit (a result of digging soil for sale) at Bann Kasert-Mai, Nhog-han Subdistrict, Sansai District, Chiang Mai. The dumping was frequently interrupted by complaints and protests from residents in the area. On July 22, 1994, Kasert-mai residents completely denied entry to municipal garbage trucks trying to dump near their home. The main reason was that the municipality did not keep its promises, especially to manage the garbage properly, thereby causing bad odour and flies. The municipality returned to dumping in municipal crematoria. As these were located in community areas, residents protested against dumping in them and in slaughter houses. Unfortunately, as the municipal administrators were away on a trip to China, no one was able to solve the crisis. Every garbage truck was loaded with garbage and, therefore, collection stopped altogether. The result was Chiang Mai’s nightmare: garbage on every corner, in front of every home, and down every street.

1994 to the present: After the crisis, many agencies — the governor, the armed forces and municipality — made concerted efforts to clear the city. In early 1995, the municipality
was able to obtain a old large laterite pit on public land in Bann Kakert-mai, Mu 10, Nhong-han Subdistrict, Sansai District, Chiang Mai. This time the municipality was very careful in managing the site. Applying a sanitary landfill method, the pit was lined with plastic sheets to prevent sewage from seeping into underground water. Garbage was covered by soil every day. However, this method was done without waste-water treatment, resulting in stagnant water on the sheet, which caused bad odours, becoming worse during a rainy season. As a result, villagers protested or threatened to close the pit down if no improvement was made. To obtain permission from the Village Committee and residents, the municipality, in addition to proper management, promised to compensate the residents by improving the road to the village, installing a water pipeline and electricity in the village, providing public health services and welfare cards to villagers, and by supplying cooking utensils for the village's housewife group. This garbage site was projected to last for two years, at a rate of 200 tons a day. The investment expense is Bt17,850,000 (CDN$939,473) and the operation and management cost is Bt15,650,000 (CDN$823,684.21). Therefore, the cost of garbage disposal is to be Bt223/ton (CNDS11.74/ton) during the operating life of the site.

While searching for day-to-day garbage dumping places, the municipality continued to seek a permanent landfill site. The municipality’s efforts focused on a sanitary landfill in two kinds of land — either military areas or degraded forest areas. The obstacles to obtaining a permanent landfill land were:

1) the agencies owning the lands did not give permission for their use;
2) potential landfill sites failed their environmental impact assessments;
3) residents in the areas protested against the plan, for various motives. One concerned environmental destruction; residents were afraid of following the Mae Hia landfill’s fate. The Mae Hia experience also destroyed the credibility of the municipality’s guarantee that the dump site would be environmentally safe. Residents also feared land devaluation brought about by the proximity of a garbage site. Political motives appear to have played a role, since the 1995 election was near. If the incumbent administrators succeeded in obtaining a site, they would improve their popularity. Therefore, some people, including Ananthaphum leaders, believed that frequent protests against municipal dump sites were a political ploy to discredit the incumbent administration (Sa-an 1994).

Apart from the municipal efforts, many agencies offered alternative disposal methods, none of which was successful:

1) The Cabinet, through the Public Works Department, MOI, allocated Bt360 millions (Cdn$18.9 millions) for building an incinerator at the Mae Hia site in 1994. It was expected to dispose of 60 tons of garbage a day. However, the plan faced serious objection from Mae Hia residents, and was aborted because the municipality could not find alternative sites to install an incinerator. Actually, the Mae Hia site already has a small incinerator, built by the Public Works Department. It was initiated by the King who contributed Bt6 million (CND$.32 million) for the incineration project, while the Municipality paid another Bt10 million (CND$.53 million). However, technical problems kept this incinerator from ever being used.

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80 I was told by a university professor that as Mae Hia was the garbage dumping site for 30 years, Mae Hia residents suffered very much. In addition to its low quality of life, they were humiliated and ridiculed by garbage. People called them “garbage humans” because of the odour and moved away from them when they discovered that they came from Mae Hia.

81 See Kamol Sukin (1994).
2) In accord with the policy of the Ministry of Interior to involve it in solving garbage problems in localities, the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) raised the idea of burning garbage to produce electricity. It was expected that 20 megawatts of electricity would be produced per annum, while burning would also relieve the garbage problems of municipalities and the Sanitary Districts. The PEA expected to charge Bt200/ton (CND$10.53/ton) for garbage disposal. Chiang Mai and Lamphun municipalities agreed to the project, because they had no alternative: the Director-General of DOLA strongly supported it (Chayabutre 1994). The Thai cabinet approved it in March 1995 with a budget from the PEA of Bt1,500 million (CND$78.95 million), claiming that it would dispose of 300 tons of garbage a day. The project was supposed to take two years to complete (1995-1996). At first, it was planned for an industrial estate in Lamphun Province. However, once the plan drew strong protests from local residents, who learned that lignite would provide 64% of the energy source (The Nation 1995), the PEA decided to move the plant to Chiang Mai. First, it was planned for the Nam Prae subdistrict in Hang Dong District, but faced villagers’ disapproval. Construction was then slated for a 60 rai-plot of land (9.6 hectares) in Bann Pong within the Hang Dong District, with support from the Foundation for Royally Initiated Project. Here another protest occurred, as villagers from Nam Phare, Bann Pong and Nong Kwai Subdistricts in Hang Dong District and NGOs united to show their opposition by signing names in protest, lodging the petition with the agencies concerned and the Prime Minister, and blocking the area. It was a prolonged protest with some violence (i.e., one protest leader was shot dead) and soldiers were posted to the area. It ended with the cabinet’s decision in

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82 PEA is a public enterprise providing electricity outside the Bangkok area and under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior.
January 1996 to postpone the plan until the PEA found a location that had the consent of local residents.

3) After the garbage crisis, the Chiang Mai municipality has received many proposals from private concerns. For example, a Japanese firm proposed to do recycling. G.A.S. International planned to classify and compress garbage for the municipality. The G.B.C. Group Company proposed to build a transfer station with a garbage compressing site and transport to the site. In this plan, the municipality would pay Bt400/ton (CND$20.05/ton), and, after a 20-year concession, would gain ownership of the facility. McGill Environmental Systems proposed to recycle garbage and turn it into top soil (Fahn 1995). However, none of these proposals was seriously considered by the municipality.

Currently, the municipality has developed a five-year action plan for solid waste (1997-2001), the only long-term plan of this kind developed in Chiang Mai since the closing of the Mae Hia site. The plan includes three major projects: purchasing a 200 rai (32 ha.) plot of land for a sanitary landfill site; constructing a transfer station with recycling and composting facilities; and improving the old Mae Hia garbage site. The plan also involves the improvement of solid-waste collection, by purchasing new garbage trucks, and the reform of garbage fee collection, by applying GIS methods. Following the plan, the municipality has

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83 The Meeting Report of the Municipal Garbage Solution Committee.
84 The municipality charges each household Bt20 per month (CND$1.05) for garbage collection. It is estimated that the municipality should earn a revenue of Bt14.4 million per year (CND$750,000) but the real revenue the municipality earns from garbage collection is about Bt5 million per year (CND$260,000). This discrepancy is partly caused by a lack of information. The GIS can enhance information on the city property map, for household locations and streets. Such information would facilitate the accurate estimation of garbage collection fee, the planning of an efficient method of fee collection and the monitoring of the fee collectors' performance. Chiang Mai municipality recently became a twin city with the city of Oshawa, Canada. One area of Chiang Mai's interests in Oshawa is GIS. I recently learned from the municipal computer officer that GIS may not be viable technology for Chiang Mai since it is too costly and too complicated for the municipality to handle at this moment.
already been allocated Bt120 million (CND$6.35 million) from the 1997 budget of the MOSTE for purchasing a plot of land. In an interview, the Chief of the Solid Waste Disposal Section indicated that the municipality is in the process of site selection. The study team from the Environmental Engineering Department, Chiang Mai University is to screen potential sites carefully, using environmental impact and the attitude of local residents as criteria.

**The Involvement of Civil Society in Waste issues**

To what extent do citizens and civic groups involve themselves in solid-waste issues in Chiang Mai? People’s engagement in municipal waste management is quite low. According to the survey result, shown below in Table 4.18, of the nine municipal waste activities indicated in the questionnaire;\(^ {85} \) only 2% of Chiang Mai’s respondents participate in between seven and nine activities, while the majority (65%) participate in from none to three activities. In addition, as shown in Table 4.19, most people tend to perform only the basic functions prescribed by the law, such as providing one’s own garbage bin (85.7%) and paying garbage collection fees (58.4%), and tend to be less involved in activities that require further effort and contributions. For example, 13% of respondents involve themselves in municipal campaign activities and projects regarding waste issues and 18% of them donate money to the municipality for equipment. It is a common practice in Thailand for the municipality to ask local wealthy people, business owners, and business and social organizations for contributions, especially for special events such as the King’s or Queen’s birthday celebrations and cultural festivals. These events attract tourists, and activities such as

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\(^ {85} \) Among 12 activities, posed in questions 29 to 40 of Section 4 of the survey questionnaire (Appendix B), there are 9 activities which are related to solid-waste management (question # 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, and 39).
cleaning up Chiang Mai are good for the city; therefore, the business community tends to cooperate. For some, a donation to the municipality gains them merit, despite it being less popular than donating to temples or hospitals and earning social recognition by doing so. Some business and social groups have their names on garbage bins.

Table 4.18: Level of Engagement in Municipal Waste Management in Chiang Mai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Participation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (0-3 activities)</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (4-6 activities)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (7-9 activities)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

Although people may be relatively uninvolved with the municipality on solid-waste issues, we found that a majority of residents participate in informal waste activities. The survey shows that 69.8% and 61.9% of Chiang Mai respondents sort garbage and sell used goods, respectively. Even though the municipality has no permanent recycling programs, as mentioned earlier, waste sorting for sale is a regular practice of municipal garbage collectors and street garbage pickers. Plastics, glasses, mirrors and bottles are among items being picked out for sale (Ong-la, 1995). Then, recyclable materials are sold to a variety of junk traders. It is estimated that these junk businesses buy 34.2 tons of recyclable waste each day, including paper, glass, iron, plastic, aluminum, copper, and old batteries (Toxic Substance and Solid Waste Management Subdivision 1994, 5-11). This means that the informal waste sector is indirectly beneficial to municipal solid-waste management by saving landfill space.

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86 Chiang Mai had recycling programs only on a temporarily basis including an experiment recycling project on April 1995 and recycling campaigns on special occasions.
Table 4.19: People’s Engagement in Municipal Waste Management by Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>N= 245</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide your own garbage bins</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(85.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain information concerning solid waste and cleanliness campaigning activities from the municipal government</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(73.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay garbage collection fees to the municipal government</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(58.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide information (e.g. answering questionnaires) or advice concerning solid-waste management to the municipality</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(29.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate money to municipal government for equipment such as garbage containers and garbage collection trucks</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in municipal campaign activities and projects concerning a solid-waste issue</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(13.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a complaint involving solid-waste issues against the municipal government through the media</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for municipal support (budget, personnel and equipment) in community activities involving waste issues</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign petition protesting particular municipal garbage projects</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

Few civic groups took a role in waste issues before the 1994 garbage crisis. At most, community organizations involved themselves in waste management by organizing community cleaning activities on special religious and national holidays. Walk for A Better Environment, established in 1991, was at the time the only NGO to deal directly with the waste issue, by, for example, walking to pick up garbage on streets and by campaigning for waste recycling and composting. The group has promoted recycling by placing recycling baskets at participating locations. From there, recyclable items are taken for sale by two garbage pickers to whom the group lent money to buy motorcycles for garbage pick-up. Moreover, the group provided small locally made incinerators to some low-income communities. From 1995 onward the group has emphasized composting of organic waste.

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87 Interview with Anandh Manmontri, the President of Walk For A Better Environment, on June 19, 1996.
The president employs his own restaurant (the J.J. Bakery in the Montri Hotel) to demonstrate that reducing organic waste through composting can reduce the amount of waste put out by his restaurant by 100 kg. a day. The YMCA focused its garbage activities only on the polluted Ping River. But the 1994 garbage problem prompted it to organize recycling campaigns and training for student leaders, for monks and for community leaders within the municipal area.

The 1994 garbage crisis transformed the garbage problem into a political issue that had citizens and civic groups intensely involved in municipal politics. The crisis aroused citizens’ environmental concerns so that their immediate response was aggressive. One newspaper reported that:

Local newspapers and radio stations had a field day reporting on the thousands of telephone calls made to the governor and also the mayor of the municipality. Running low on patience, residents called the highest ranking officials involved that were attempting to solve the problem. Frustrated citizens also turned to local radio shows to air their complaints, most of which revolve around the inefficient management of the municipality. Some local groups have begun campaigning for the public to put the waste in front of the municipal office, since the office has not come up with any solutions to solve the crisis. Residents have responded by putting their garbage along the office’s fence... Local politicians have been discussing waste management as never before... Before the garbage was removed by the military, politicians were under pressure from local commercial organizations such as the Bank Club, the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce and the Council of industry (Sukin 1994, C1).

Residents responded to the failure in garbage management through the electoral processes, voting out the Ananthaphum administration, one year after the incident. When interviewed, Chiang Mai people unanimously agree that the environment, especially garbage, significantly influenced how people, especially the middle class, cast their votes in the 1995 election. This opinion is confirmed by the survey results. A majority of respondents (46.5%)

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8 The garbage incident occurred just one year before the 1995 election; therefore, some interpreted the situation as a political move intended to destroy the Ananthaphum group. Because the uprising of Mae Hia residents was also a year in advance of the 1990 municipal election, there was at least some plausibility to the notion that the garbage crisis was significantly political.
rank the environment as the number one issue in the 1995 election campaign, as shown in
Table 4.20. Navarat Pattana group also used a garbage problem as an issue in political
campaign and placed the issue as the first of 12 platform policies requiring immediate action.

Table 4.20: Major Issues in the 1995 Municipal Election Campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Issues</th>
<th>Rank 1st</th>
<th></th>
<th>Rank 2nd</th>
<th></th>
<th>Rank 3rd</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic issue</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social problem</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security in life and property</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's Survey (1996).

Local NGOs had also put pressure on the provincial and municipal governments. In
1994, they united to organize a public meeting at the Buddhist Place (Bud-ta-satan) and a
civic forum on garbage at the Chiang Inn hotel. In addition, they petitioned to the governor
for the dissolution of municipal council. Since he did not respond, they presented another
petition to the Prime Minister when he came to Chiang Mai. This petition requested the
dissolution of the municipal council and the transfer of the governor because he failed in
supervising the municipality. The petition was not granted, but gained media attention.

Garbage also became a popular issue in seminars and conferences. For example, the CCC
hosted a seminar entitled "The garbage problem in Chiang Mai: the solutions." Its purpose
was to provide information on alternative disposal methods and to create a sense of
collectivity among citizens on the garbage issue. Key speakers included specialists on solid-
waste management from abroad and from the solid waste business, the Vice-Governor of
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and a professor from the Environmental Engineering Department.

In contrast, the municipality, the authority directly responsible, hosted no forums or conferences on garbage. Worse, the municipality paid minimal attention to forums on the garbage issue. The Mayor never participated in these discussion panels, despite being invited. He normally sent a representative. The president of CCLA expressed regret that “the municipal representatives participating in panels just gave excuses why the municipality could not solve the problem. There was never an occasion in which the municipality said that we should manage the garbage problem together. It was frustrating that the city was in a great crisis but the municipality was still not open to people’s participation.”

V. Conclusion

This chapter has presented a case study of Chiang Mai, in which special attention is paid to the city’s profile, its municipal politics and civil society, and its management of solid waste. The city profile reveals that Chiang Mai, as a regional primate city, has experienced rapid growth which has put tremendous pressure on its infrastructure and environment. The deterioration of the city’s environment has aroused concern among citizens and contributed to a distinct municipal politics, characterized by not only fierce political competition among political groups but also by the active involvement of the civil society, especially university professors, the media and NGOs. The profiles of political groups and civic groups have also been reviewed. Except for community organizations and the informal sector, the remaining

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90 Interview with Uthaiwan Karnchanakamol, the President of CCLA, on June 18, 1996.
civic groups had a confrontational relationship with the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration. The media, the press in particular, also play an important role in publicizing both urban environmental and municipal issues, thereby helping to politicize Chiang Mai society.

It is also argued that, after the 1994 garbage crisis, solid-waste management has become a major political issue which has effectively led to significant changes in municipal politics. For example, it helped to raise citizens’ interests in municipal politics resulting in the total defeat of the Ananthaphum administration. The study shows that the inefficiency of the Chiang Mai municipal government in managing solid waste was compounded by weak leadership, resource constraints, an old city structure and garbage disposal problems. Among them, the lack of efficient garbage disposal has been an intractable problem facing the municipality since 1989 and was a major cause of the 1994 garbage crisis. While the municipality failed to cope effectively with the solid-waste problems, the city witnessed an increasing involvement by civil society in solid-waste activities that took place outside the municipality’s controls. Chiang Mai has an informal system of solid-waste recycling, operated through the networks of municipal garbage collectors, garbage pickers and the general public, small junk buyers and junk shops. In addition, an increasing number of NGOs are also modifying their missions to include solid-waste management issues.
Chapter Five

Hat Yai Municipality

I. Introduction

The city of Hat Yai is an interesting case study; its distinct characteristics include a multi-racial and religious society, stable municipal politics, and a firm business orientation. It has one of Thailand’s strongest municipal governments, whose performance has received national recognition — especially in the area of waste management. It is worth investigating the factors that enable the municipality to deal satisfactorily with its waste problems. First, the city’s background and the nature of its municipal politics will be explored, so as to provide the specific, local context of its waste problems.

II. City Profile

Historical Background

Unlike other major cities in Thailand, such as Chiang Mai, Phuket and Songkhla, Hat Yai lacks historical significance. It started quite recently, in a relatively unpopulated area, from the two remote small villages of Bann Koksamutchun and Bann Hat Yai, in the Nua District, in the middle of the southern region. The area of the villages was formerly highland, covered mostly with forest. Only in the 1920s did this area experience rapid growth and become widely known to outsiders, its growth a result of railway construction and the work of city pioneers. The expansion of the railway during the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) to the major southern cities, especially those near the Malaysian border, and its becoming a

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1 See HYM, Public Relations Section (1995), pp. 8-10.
rail junction in 1917 changed this quiet area. Also in 1917, Nua district was renamed Hat Yai district. With the end of railway construction, construction workers, mainly Chinese immigrants, turned themselves into rubber planters and mining workers, adding to the population of the area. After WWII in particular, in response to the rising world demand for rubber and minerals handled through the British market in Malaysia, the outer lands of Hat Yai district were cleared for rubber plantations, which attracted labourers and traders into the city. Hat Yai became the centre for commerce, business and transportation in the southern region.

Hat Yai was also indebted for its prosperity to four pioneers — Jia-gi-si, Si-kim-yong, Phra Sane-ha-montri and Phra-ya Atta-kawee-sun-torn. They laid the city’s foundation since they were the large landowners and early land developers in Hat Yai. They had the vision to develop forest into residential lands, especially by building roads and constructing houses for sale and rent. Among their contributions are major roads in the centre of Hat Yai, such as Thammanunvithi, Sanehanuson and Niphat-uthit 1 to 3. These pioneers also facilitated the growth of the city by donating their lands or selling them at a low price to private and government sectors for purposes of social infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, religious centres and the University.

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2 Jia-gi-si, a Chinese railway surveyor, came to Nua district in 1912 and found Bann Koksamutchun a suitable site for settlement. He bought lands from local villagers and started to develop lands by building roads and houses. Later, he also donated lands to Hat Yai municipality for hospitals, a sport stadium and municipal schools. He was given the title of Kun-nipat-chin-nakhon, the founder of Chira-nakhon family. Si-kim-yong, a Chinese businessman, saw the business potential of Hat Yai. He was a developer of lands along the railway tracks and donated his own lands for private hospitals, schools and religious centres. Phra Sane-ha-montri was the first district chief of Hat Yai and became a large landowner. Phra-ya Atta-kawee-sun-torn was a public prosecutor at Songkhla city. Apart from being a land developer, his contribution to education was significant, especially in donating his land to the government for the Prince of Songkhla University in Hat Yai.
Many Thais believe that the lack of history makes Hat Yai people more dynamic and more easily accepting of new development; however, it is an obstruction in forming a group with a concern for the city’s well-being, as we shall see below.

**Population and Urbanization**

The city of Hat Yai is presently the most populated area in Songkhla province. Situated on the eastern side of the Malayan Peninsula, the province borders on Nakhon Si Thammarat and Phattalung to the North; Yala, Pattani and the Malaysian States of Kedah and Perlis to the south; and the Gulf of Thailand to the East. With an area of 7,393.889 km² and a population of 1,166,519 (in 1996), the province is divided into 15 districts, one minor district, four municipalities and 15 sanitary districts. The urbanization rate of the province is 32.81%, higher than the national level. Hat Yai municipality has a population density of 7,479 person/km². Despite that high density, Hat Yai is far from being a regional primate city, since only 12.67% of the province’s population inhabit the municipality. While Hat Yai is a centre of business and commerce, Songkhla, about 25 km. from Hat Yai, is the province’s administrative centre and port city. Both Songkhla and Hat Yai are included in the national Regional Cities Development Project. The Prince of Songkhla University has campuses not only in Hat Yai but also in Pattani. In addition there are many major other southern cities including Phuket, Nakhon Srithammarat and Ranong; Hat Yai is not predominant in its region, unlike the city of Chiang Mai.

Population characteristics are diverse in Hat Yai city; it has long been considered a pluralist society. Compared to neighbouring provinces which are dominated by Muslims,
Songkhla has a viable presence of Thai- and Chinese-speaking populations, while the native population still occasionally uses its own local southern language. In Hat Yai city, 70% of the population are Buddhists, and temples, mosques and places of Chinese worship mingle in the city.

Economic and Social Development

The economic growth of the province has relied on the agricultural sector, mainly rubber, and on the service sector, led by tourism. The GPP of Songkhla province in 1993 was Bt49,279,380,000 (CDN$2,593,651,578). Per capita income was 40,828, ranked 4th of the southern region but 16th of the country (National Statistical Office 1995, 108). Hat Yai has dominated the province’s municipalities in economic terms. It has advantages in being at the junction of major highways and railways in the south, and its international airport is one of the busiest provincial airports.

While Chiang Mai is an old cultural city with a history of 700 years, Hat Yai is a new city, only 80 years old. The recent growth of Hat Yai comes mainly from tourism and related service sectors including hotels, restaurants, entertainment and recreation, transportation, and currency exchange. In contrast to Chiang Mai, Hat Yai’s tourist attractions are shopping for smuggled goods (mainly by Thai tourists) and entertainment and recreation (particularly prostitution for Malaysia and Singapore tourists). It has two markets well-known for smuggled goods: Kim Yong, for groceries, and Santisuk, for electronic goods.

In 1994, Hat Yai city had 2,074,328 tourists of whom 764,227 (36.8%) were foreigners, mainly from Malaysia. At present, Hat Yai has 116 hotels, 69 tourist companies and 40 restaurants (HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 36-37). Since Hat Yai’s
tourist attractions, aside from smuggling, are entertainment and hospitality services, it has a large amount of prostitution, which Hat Yai citizens seem to accept. Increases in crime, drugs and AIDS are among the leading social problems of Hat Yai.

**Urban Environmental Problems**

Hat Yai is similar to other big Thai cities beset with the deterioration of the city environment. Waste water, for example, is a pressing issue. Hat Yai is a plains area, with two canals (*Klong*) passing through the city: the Toey and U-tapao canals. Floods occur frequently, caused by rainfall and an inadequate drainage system. Residential and industrial waste water drains into combined sewers constructed along street-sides and, thereafter, flows directly into the Toey and U-Tapao canals, which finally drain into Songkhla Lake. Discharge of waste water into the Toey canal, in particular, has created severe water pollution and environmental health problems in the city and in and around the Lake. The canal’s dark colour and strong odour are symptomatic of the severity of waste-water problems, which in turn impact on the aquatic ecology of Songkhla Lake. The water quality of the U-Tapao canal, which provides the raw water supply to Songkhla and Hat Yai cities, is also continually deteriorating.

In addition to waste water, noise and air pollution also contribute to the environmental problems of Hat Yai municipality and are increasingly severe. Air quality in the Hat Yai municipality, especially in the business and traffic-congested zones, is worsening and noise levels typically exceed the quality standard. Respiratory problems are increasing (HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996). Traffic is not the only cause of air or noise pollution, but the increasing presence of motor vehicles in Hat Yai arguably makes air and noise pollution in effect “traffic pollution.” The influence of traffic appears in much of Hat Yai’s
environmental degradation. For example, dust is a problem in the areas of congested traffic, due to the increase in motor vehicles and overall traffic. Our survey, as shown in Table 5.1 below, reveals that respondents ranked traffic as the number one problem in Hat Yai, followed by the waste problem. Even though the efficiency of garbage collection in the Hat Yai municipality has been improving, each day about 10% of garbage remains uncollected, and some of this has blocked street-side sewers.

Table 5.1: Ranking of Major Urban Environmental Problems in Hat Yai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Environmental Problems</th>
<th>Rank 1st</th>
<th>Rank 2nd</th>
<th>Rank 3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic congestion</td>
<td>129 48.9</td>
<td>49 18.6</td>
<td>34 12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste</td>
<td>69 26.1</td>
<td>107 40.5</td>
<td>51 19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air pollution</td>
<td>34 12.9</td>
<td>38 14.4</td>
<td>52 19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste water and water quality</td>
<td>24 9.1</td>
<td>49 18.6</td>
<td>94 35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public parks and tree inadequacy</td>
<td>4 1.5</td>
<td>7 2.7</td>
<td>12 4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slums</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 4.2</td>
<td>12 4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3 1.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 .8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's Survey (1996).

The decay of the urban environment led the MOSTE to designate the Hat Yai District, including the municipality, as a pollution control zone (PCZ) in 1992. The National Environmental Board has allocated Bt1263.34 million (CNDS66.49 million), in grants and loans from the Environmental Fund to support the municipality in projects undertaken in accord with the municipal action plan for pollution control. Some projects are still being implemented, including the comprehensive waste-water treatment plant (1995-2001), the clean-up of the present disposal site (1995-1996), and the construction of facilities for the incineration of infectious waste from hospitals (1995-1996). The noise and air quality

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4 Interview with the Director of Sanitation and the Environment, on May 21, 1996.
5 The Announcement of the National Environmental Committee, the fourth issue (1992).
monitoring station has already been completed. The municipality has also received a grant of Bt5 million (CND$260,000) for its environmental campaign and its awareness-raising projects.

Under the second round of the Regional Cities Development Project, Hat Yai has been undertaking projects to relieve environmental pressure, including, for example, improvements to the drainage system and to flood control, and the construction of a sanitary landfill facility.

III. Municipal Government, Municipal Politics and Civil Society

Municipal Government

Like the private sector, the municipality has been widely recognized as an engine of economic growth in Hat Yai today (Sothanasatien 1985). Hat Yai has one of the most efficient municipal governments in Thailand, as is reflected in its winning awards in various categories from the annual performance competition arranged by the DOLA and the National Municipal League of Thailand. Hat Yai’s prizes include, for example, first prize for the disaster prevention and relief service for three consecutive years (1994-1996), second prize for promotion of youth activities (1996), first prize for civil registration service (1996) and first prize for cleanliness and tidiness for two consecutive years (1995-1996).

Institutionally, Hat Yai developed from a sanitary district in 1928, through four upgrades, into a city municipality in 1995. In 1935, it was upgraded to a sub-district

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6 The Hat Yai municipality left the first round of the Regional Cities Development Project because its financial agreement with the central government was not settled. The funding for the first and second rounds of the Project is shared between the municipality and the central government.

7 Interview with the former Director of the Division of Local Government Affairs, DOLA.
municipality, covering an area of 5 km²; and in 1949, to a town municipality, covering an area of 8 km². As a result of continuing growth, the municipal area was expanded from 8 to 21 km² in 1977 (Map 5.1). Hat Yai gained its status of city municipality in September 1995. The municipality has 157,069 registered residents, and 38,579 households, with a population density of 7,479 persons/km² (HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 39).

*Municipal Organization and Administration*

The organizational structure of Hat Yai municipality is illustrated in Figure 5.1. Although more or less similar in organizational structure to other municipal governments, Hat Yai municipality is distinct in the continuity of its municipal executives — a continuity which makes Hat Yai the most stable and united municipal government in Thailand. Since 1953 the same political group has continually dominated the legislative body, the municipal council (Sothanasatient 1985, 109). From 1980 to 1995, in particular, the municipal council contained no opposition members: all 18 councillors belonged to one political group, the "Old" group (*Klum Kao*). As a result, the municipal council was passive in municipal decision-making. Typically, without discussion, council meetings were very short, usually lasting about half an hour. In the 1995 municipal election, Hat Yai municipal council changed, in that the Old group lost 3 of 24 council seats to the KrEtiphum group. Although no threat to the municipal administration of the Old political group, the three opposition councillors, especially the leader, have stirred the atmosphere of municipal meetings with

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8 This is the current Hat Yai mayor's political group. It is known as the "Old" group because it has been in municipal power for a long time.
9 Told by a municipal employee, Hat Yai municipality.
10 Having been elevated to be a city municipality in September 1995, the 1995 election was held on December 1995. The Hat Yai municipal council presently has 24 members.
Map 5.1: Hat Yai Municipality
questions, opinions and critiques. Municipal meetings last longer than before. For instance, the municipal executives faced 12 questions from the opposition at the first municipal meeting (February 1996), which lasted 5 hours (Krietiphum Newsletter 1/1996).

Figure 5.1: The Administrative Structure, Hat Yai Municipality

For over two decades, decision-making in Hat Yai municipality has lain with the Municipal Executive Board (MEB) and the mayor in particular. The present mayor, Kreng Suwannawong, has governed Hat Yai municipality since 1973. First elected as a municipal councillor, and then appointed as a deputy mayor, he was reelected in 1958 and continued to be a deputy mayor. In 1973, he was appointed to replace the mayor who left the post due to ill

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11 I observed the special session of the municipal council meeting on May 14, 1996, which dealt with borrowing money from the Municipal Affairs Promotion Fund to purchase lands in connection with the implementation of the water treatment project.
health. He has remained as mayor ever since and the leader of the Old political group. His ability to remain in municipal office for six consecutive terms, overseeing the progress of Hat Yai municipality, has earned him a national reputation and recognition from the public and the central government. He received an honorary Master’s degree in Political Science from Thammasat University in 1980 and was elected President of the National Municipal League of Thailand for three terms (1979-1980, 1981-1983 and 1984-1985). Prince of Songkhla University appointed him a member of its governing council. In 1992, he was appointed a member of the National Legislative Council (Wichaidith et al. n.d.). Under his leadership, deputy mayors remained unchanged until the 1995 election. Having a town municipality status, Hat Yai had only two deputy mayors until 1981, when it gained another deputy mayor, due to its high municipal revenues (Sothanasatient 1985, 120). Thana Phanmetha and Cha-wiang Na-pattalung were consistently deputy mayors under Kreng’s administration from 1973 to 1995.\textsuperscript{12} Thana retired and Cha-wiang was defeated in the 1995 municipal election. Another deputy mayor, Winun Tha-we-rat, the Mayor’s cousin, held the office from 1981 until his death in 1996. At present, Hat Yai has four deputy mayors, all novices in their posts. Krun Suwannawong, the Mayor’s older brother and an eight-term municipal councillor, is the deputy mayor for education. Prasong Suwannawong, the Mayor’s son, is the deputy mayor for general administration.\textsuperscript{13} The other two deputy mayors are Cha-lat Kirawanit, the mayor’s close friend, who is in charge of sanitation and environment; and Nien Chaipradith, a former municipal employee, who is responsible for public works.

\textsuperscript{12} Thana Phanmetha was the Hat Yai deputy mayor from 1957 to 1995.

\textsuperscript{13} The Mayor’s son contested the 1995 election but failed to get elected. When a deputy mayor, Winun Tha-we-rat, passed away, he was elected a councillor in the by-election on July 2, 1996 and was appointed a deputy mayor in place of Winun.
Although responsibilities are divided among deputy mayors, power is concentrated in the Mayor's hands. He handles most municipal activities by himself and directly supervises municipal employees. He chairs most municipal committees. According to a former Director of the Division of Local Government Affairs, "Kreng is a devoted mayor. He works as if he is one of the municipal employees who comes to office in the morning and leaves in the evening. Therefore he knows nearly all the problems occurring in the office." Moreover, he maintains his close supervision through the monthly municipal executives' meeting. At this meeting are deputy mayors, the municipal clerk, the deputy municipal clerks, the division directors and the section chiefs: here the mayor has the chance to give policy directions and to address his immediate concerns, as well as to follow up his prior demands. The role of the deputy mayors is less active. In a municipal question period, the mayor himself answers all the opposition's questions (Krietiphum Newsletter 1/1996). The mayor's strong leadership is beneficial in creating solidarity and unity of command in municipal administration and in promoting coordination among departments; however, it is seen in Hat Yai, according to the opposition leader, as the monopoly of power by the Mayor.

Directly subordinate to the MEB is the municipal clerk, the most senior municipal employee. Hat Yai has had noticeably few changes in the post of municipal clerk; this reflects

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14 For example, he heads the City Cleanliness and Tidiness Committee, the City Cleanliness Competition Committee, the Urban Environmental Management Committee and the Municipal Planning Committee.
15 Interview with a former Director of the Division of Local Government Affairs, on July 4, 1996.
16 This meeting is organized by the Technical and Planning Division, aiming to provide the forum for the municipal executives (from the mayor to section chiefs) to have direct communication and exchange their opinions regarding progress and obstacles in working. I observed this meeting on May 7, 1996. At the outset of the meeting, the mayor congratulated a municipal employee who got a promotion individually. Then he addressed his concerns including the residents' complaints on garbage collection and the ignorance of directors and chiefs in supervising their subordinates. After that it came to the turn of each deputy mayor and the municipal clerk to voice his concerns. Finally division directors reported on activities in response to the mayor's remarks.
the good relationship between the political and administrative leaders. As shown in Table 5.2, there have been only two municipal clerks in 18 years. As mentioned in Chapter 4, despite there being no fixed period, service in a municipal post lasts for more or less four years. However, Yong-yuth Wichai-dith was Hat Yai municipal clerk for almost 12 years (July 1978-December 1990). (He left Hat Yai for the provincial administration system in 1990 and is currently the governor of Trang province). He was a major force in the Mayor’s development of the city (Sothanasatien 1985, 175). In this, he contributed not only his management capacity but also his ability to coordinate with external government agencies - especially the Ministry of the Interior and the Budget Bureau. Such coordination allowed the municipal administration largely to by-pass the rigid bureaucratic processes usually involved in the central-local relationship.\(^{17}\) In his 12 years of municipal service in Hat Yai, he was recognized with seven double promotions.\(^{18}\) His replacement in 1990, Boon-song Trairattananat, was not totally new to Hat Yai, as he used to be a deputy municipal clerk in the municipality. In 1996 he had already served as the Hat Yai municipal clerk for almost six years and seemed likely to continue. His determination and commitment to keep the city clean, and his gentle manner, are beneficial in obtaining the cooperation of municipal employees, as well as external governmental agencies.\(^{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Interview with a former deputy district officer of Songkhla province.

\(^{18}\) With a standard performance, municipal bureaucrats are typically upgraded one level in a year. But those who have outstanding performance can be rewarded two levels in a year. This is called a double promotion.

\(^{19}\) While I was in Hat Yai Municipality in 1996, I saw him picking up litter by himself in front of the municipal office. He also paid attention to the city’s cleanliness and tidiness. I had the opportunity to join him at lunch outside the office. When he saw street vendors violating the law by putting garbage on the street, he immediately contacted the municipal police to check the site. I was told by several municipal employees that such an action was his common practice.
Table 5.2: List of Municipal Clerks, Hat Yai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Clerk</th>
<th>Duration (Year)</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yong-yuth Wichai-dith</td>
<td>12.6 (July 1978-Dec. 1990)</td>
<td>MA in Public Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boon-song Trai-rattana-nat</td>
<td>5.10 (Dec. 1990-present)</td>
<td>LL.B.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Government Bureau, Department of Local Administration (1996).

The administrative structure of Hat Yai municipality has the following divisions:

1) *The Office of Municipal Clerk* is responsible for general administration, personnel management, election, civil registration, tourism, disaster prevention and relief, and law and order;

2) *The Technical and Planning Division* is responsible for municipal planning and budget preparation, legal affairs, and public relations;

3) *The Public Works Bureau* is composed of four divisions. The Division of Building Control and City Planning is responsible for issuing building construction and restoration permits, and for initiating and enforcing city planning. The Division of Construction is responsible for the design and construction of municipal buildings, public parks and infrastructure including bridges, roads, sewers, and walkways, while the Division of Civil Works is in charge of maintaining municipal buildings and infrastructure, public parks and traffic arrangement. The Division of Sanitary Works focuses on the design, construction and maintenance of garbage disposal facilities and waste-water treatment;

4) *The Finance Division* is responsible for the development of financial resources and local finance management;

5) *The Education Division* is responsible for providing education in the municipal area, which at present has five municipal schools with 6,855 students and 379 teachers. In
addition to formal education, Hat Yai municipality provides informal education through a public library and a Driving Education Office (focusing on traffic and safe driving training);

6) *The Sanitation and Environmental Division* is responsible for public health and medical services and promotion, sanitation and environmental health, garbage collection, and cleaning public places. Hat Yai has 13 municipal health centres including a mobile public health vehicle;

7) *The Social Welfare Division* is responsible for social work, child and youth welfare and community development. The municipality has supported the establishment of 25 community groups (e.g., Chok-sa-man, Klong-rain and Tong-sao community groups);

8) *The Internal Inspection Agency* is responsible for internal financial auditing;

9) *Municipal District (Kwaeng):* The territory of Hat Yai Municipality consists of three municipal districts: Hat Yai, Sripuwanat and Hat Yai Nai. Each municipal district has an office which is responsible for providing municipal services in its particular area. So far, only some services have been decentralized to the municipal district office: public works, finance and public health. My observation indicated that municipal district offices have a minimal role in Hat Yai; most services and decision-making remain at the main office.

Total municipal manpower is 1,832 employees (in 1995): 311 municipal employees (ME), 287 regular municipal workers (RMW) and 1,234 temporary municipal workers (TMW). As shown in Table 5.3, Hat Yai municipal personnel has steadily increased in number, due to the rise in temporary workers, who constituted 67.4% of total manpower in 1995. The municipal staff-to-population ratio improved from 1:94 in 1991 to 1:86 in 1995.
Table 5.3: Municipal Manpower Category of Hat Yai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>RMW</th>
<th>TMW</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Staff to Pop. Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995 a</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>1:86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994 b</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>1,173</td>
<td>1,776</td>
<td>1:88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993 b</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1:91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 b</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>1,572</td>
<td>1:94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 

Looking at the distribution of personnel among agencies in Table 5.4, the Division of Sanitation and Environment has the highest number of staff, accounting for 40% of the total manpower in 1995. Most of them are temporary workers whose duties are street sweeping and garbage collection. The next three largest agencies are the Public Works Bureau (21.7%), the Division of Finance (14%) and the Office of Municipal Clerk (6.71%).

Table 5.4: Manpower of Hat Yai Municipality by Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of Municipal Clerk</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical &amp; Planning Division</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Division</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Bureau</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary &amp; Environment Division</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Division</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare Division</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat Yai Municipal District</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri-pu-va-nath Municipal District</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat Yai Ni Municipal District</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 

A major factor that enables Hat Yai municipality to carry a high number of personnel, especially temporary workers, is its financial resources. The municipality is regarded as having excellent financial status. The municipality’s revenues have grown rapidly,
quintupling within a decade from Bt140,270,286 (CDN$7,382,646) in 1984 to Bt730,306,877.72 (CDN$38,437,204) in 1995. In the last five year-period (1991-1995), as shown in Table 5.5, revenues increased: the Technical Service and Planning Division has estimated average growth to be 17.40% per annum (HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996, 62).

Table 5.5: Revenue and Expenditure of Hat Yai Municipality, 1991-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Bt $CDN</td>
<td>396,862,055.32 (20,887,476)</td>
<td>496,121,679.49 (26,111,667)</td>
<td>527,806,978.19 (27,779,314)</td>
<td>727,380,498.65 (38,283,184)</td>
<td>730,305,877.72 (38,437,204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure, Bt $CDN</td>
<td>368,792,199.22 (19,410,115)</td>
<td>469,200,709.15 (24,694,774)</td>
<td>500,771,645.17 (26,356,402)</td>
<td>700,019,155.42 (36,843,113)</td>
<td>625,647,484.98 (32,928,814)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus, Bt $CDN</td>
<td>28,069,856.10 (1,477,361)</td>
<td>26,920,970.34 (1,416,893)</td>
<td>27,035,333.02 (1,422,912)</td>
<td>27,361,343.23 (1,440,071)</td>
<td>104,659,392.74 (5,508,390)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The revenue structure of Hat Yai between 1991-1995 in Table 5.6 reveals taxes to be the main revenue source; however, on average only 11.74% of revenues comes from locally levied taxes, while 57.53% derives from centrally levied taxes. The major source of locally levied taxes is the house and land tax, while the main centrally levied tax for Hat Yai is the Value Added Tax (VAT). For example in 1995, 82.48% of locally levied revenues came from the house and land taxes and 88.01% of centrally levied tax revenues derived from the VAT (HYM, Budget Section 1996) The contribution from central grants to the total revenue was quite low, around 14% in 1991 and 1992. However, from 1993 onward, and particularly in

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20 Locally levied taxes include the house and land tax, the land tax, the signboard tax and the slaughtering tax. Centrally levied tax is comprised of shared taxes (VAT, liquor, rice and tobacco taxes) and surcharge taxes (vehicle taxes).
1994, the amount of central grants has risen substantially, as the municipality received a specific grant for infrastructure projects under both the second round of the Regional City Development Project and the municipal action plan on pollution controls.

Table 5.6: Revenue Structure of Hat Yai Municipality, 1991-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Revenues</th>
<th>1991 %</th>
<th>1992 %</th>
<th>1993 %</th>
<th>1994 %</th>
<th>1995 %</th>
<th>Average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locally collected tax revenue</td>
<td>10.92</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>11.38</td>
<td>12.83</td>
<td>11.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally allocated tax revenue</td>
<td>66.49</td>
<td>60.54</td>
<td>57.15</td>
<td>47.76</td>
<td>55.70</td>
<td>57.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central grants</td>
<td>14.17</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>20.98</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>24.09</td>
<td>21.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees and fines</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal properties</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5.7: Expenditure Structure of Hat Yai Municipality, 1991-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Expenditure</th>
<th>1991 %</th>
<th>1992 %</th>
<th>1993 %</th>
<th>1994 %</th>
<th>1995 %</th>
<th>Average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central expenses</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative expenses</td>
<td>37.85</td>
<td>28.02</td>
<td>35.06</td>
<td>27.65</td>
<td>28.72</td>
<td>31.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• personnel cost</td>
<td>16.14</td>
<td>15.17</td>
<td>16.85</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>15.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• supplies and materials</td>
<td>10.21</td>
<td>9.07</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>10.46</td>
<td>9.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• others</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>6.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment expenses</td>
<td>41.34</td>
<td>46.62</td>
<td>40.50</td>
<td>34.34</td>
<td>39.69</td>
<td>40.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special expenses</td>
<td>15.24</td>
<td>21.04</td>
<td>20.15</td>
<td>34.77</td>
<td>28.09</td>
<td>28.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The municipality’s total expenditures increased over the five years 1991-1995 (Table 5.5). The Technical Services and Planning Division has estimated average annual growth at 15.77%, which is less than the average annual growth in revenues of 17.40% mentioned above (HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section 1996). As a result, Hat Yai municipality had a budget surplus over the that period. The percentage structure of expenditure between 1991
and 1995, shown in Table 5.7, reveals that the bulk of municipal spending is represented by investment costs. The average annual investment cost for this period is 40.50% of the total expenditures. Next follows administrative and special expenditures, with annual averages over the period of 31.46% and 28.85%, respectively. About half of the administrative costs goes to personnel salaries and compensation.

*Channels for Citizen Participation*

In addition to indirect participation through a municipal election every five years, Hat Yai municipality offers channels for direct citizen participation at both at the policy and implementation levels. In practice, however, these channels have not yet reflected a high degree of citizen power.

In formulating Hat Yai’s five-year municipal development plan, the municipality follows the municipal development planning guidelines, recommended by the DOLA, for involving citizens in development. First, in preparing both five-year municipal plans (1991-1996 and 1997-2001), the municipality gathered information regarding people’s needs and policy priorities with 300 questionnaires. The respondents included business persons (30%), civil service and public enterprise employees (25%), students (10%), labourers and small vendors (20%), volunteers (10%) and others (5%). The municipality further follows the DOLA’s guidelines by appointing outside members to its municipal development committee. Thus, the Mayor appointed four knowledgeable persons from outside the municipal administration to the 1991-1996 Municipal Development Committee: three professors from Prince of Songkhla University21 and the Director of the Hat Yai Branch of the Tourist

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21 They were Supote Kowitaya and Wichai Karn-ja-na-suwan of the Administrative Science Faculty and Chakkrit Ka-nuk-kan-ta-pong of the Engineering Faculty.
Authority of Thailand. For the 1997-2001 Municipal Development Committee, the Mayor appointed five non-municipal personnel: two former municipal councillors,\textsuperscript{22} two university professors\textsuperscript{23} and a retired senior civil servant (a former deputy provincial governor).

According to Professor Supote Kowitaya of the Administrative Science Faculty, Prince of Songkhla University, who participated in both committees, his role in the formulation of the 1991-1995 municipal plan was very minimal. There was no meeting or discussion among committee members. The members, including himself, received the draft plan for consideration or further opinions. He advised Hat Yai municipality to have a concrete plan on urban environmental management, particularly on waste water and garbage problems, and to emphasize human resource development. This advice was reflected in the final plan. By contrast, the participation in the formulation of the 1996-2001 municipal plan was greater. The municipality arranged a meeting of the Municipal Development Committee at which much discussion occurred on the future of Hat Yai and how to achieve it. Most of the committee members were enthusiastic in expressing their opinions. Even after the meeting, most of them wrote further comments to send to the municipality.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition, in formulating the first five-year action plan on the urban environment (1996-2001), Hat Yai did as recommended by the DOLA, and set up an Urban Environmental Management Committee. It included three non-governmental members: the acting Dean of Faculty of Environmental Management, Prince of Songkhla University; the Chairman of the Ki Ji-ra-nakhon, a former Hat Yai mayor and a former chairman of municipal council, and Cha-wiang Nangattaya, a former deputy mayor, who was defeated in the 1995 election.

\textsuperscript{22} Ki Ji-ra-nakhon, a former Hat Yai mayor and a former chairman of municipal council, and Cha-wiang Nangattaya, a former deputy mayor, who was defeated in the 1995 election.

\textsuperscript{23} Supote Kowitaya of the Administrative Science Faculty and Pichai Taneerananon of the Engineering Faculty. Supote assisted Hat Yai municipality in organizing the successful seminar on waste water in 1991 and Pichai conducted a number of studies on the Hat Yai traffic problem.

\textsuperscript{24} Interview with Professor Supote Kowitaya on May 17, 1996 at the Prince of Songkhla University.
City and Environment Development Sub-committee of the Songkhla Chamber of Commerce; and the Deputy President of the Tourist Business Association of Songkhla Province. Their role was mainly to express their opinions and to comment on the draft of the action plan and then to give their approval.

In regard to people’s participation in implementation, Hat Yai municipality emphasizes the role of community organizations, having established 25 community organizations in the municipal area by 1996. As an elected body, a community committee is considered a representative of the people in its community. The committee chairperson is appointed to sit on a number of municipal committees, including the City Cleanliness and Tidiness Committee. The Mayor has a policy that municipal councillors must have constant meetings with community committees in their zone to hear about immediate problems and needs which are to be forwarded to the Mayor and deputy mayors for response. Moreover, in preparing the annual municipal budget, the municipality gives the community committee a voice in the community’s project priorities.25

In addition to the community committees, another channel the municipality provides is a petition desk. It is located in the municipal office for the public to file complaints, which are then forwarded to the concerned agencies. Yet another channel is direct contact with the Mayor. He receives about 10 letters of complaint per day, in addition to telephone calls and office visits. If at the office, the Mayor will take all calls and see his visitors personally.26 Since 1992, Hat Yai municipality put an emphasis on public relations, providing information about municipal activities to the public through the media. These include, for instance, the

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25 Interview with Kreng Suwannawong, the Hat Yai Mayor, on May 10, 1996.
26 Interview with the Mayor’s secretary, on May 9, 1996.
half-hour television program “Hat Yai Today” *(Hat Yai Wan-nee)* every Saturday and the 90-minute radio program “Beautiful Sky Clear Water” *(Fa Suey Num Sai)*. While press conferences are held only on special occasions, the municipality publishes an annual report on municipal performance, a municipal journal and an environmental newsletter.27

**Municipal Politics**

Hat Yai municipal politics are marked by the domination of a single political group which has held municipal office continuously since 1953. Municipal electoral competitions have never been intense, due to the lack of substantial opposition to the incumbents. Most alternate political groups have been ad hoc, formed only at the electoral period. Despite the increasing visibility of civic groups engaging in social and environmental problems in recent years, they remain weak and not yet able to be actively involved in Hat Yai municipal politics, given the strong domination of the incumbent political group. The following sections will first look at how electoral competition led to the domination of municipal politics by one group and will profile Hat Yai civil society, particularly those sections involved in urban environmental issues, and their political roles.

**Municipal Electoral Competition**

Hat Yai municipal elections can be divided into three phases. In the early period (1937-1974), the elections had a considerable degree of competitiveness. Some three to four groups and a number of independent candidates competed for council seats (Wichaidith et al. n.d., 3-5). However, the election results reflected the increasing domination of the Old *(Kao)* political

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27 The municipal journal *(Gun-chane Sarn)*, issued every two months, aims to provide general information on municipal activities while an environmental newsletter *(Ruk-Tin)* focuses on reporting the work in progress under the action plan on pollution control and providing environmental education to the public.
group which, after the 1953 election, not only maintained but continued to strengthen its majority on municipal council. In the 1958 election, the Old group won a majority of 10 seats; it achieved a larger majority in the 1974 election by winning 16 out of 18 council seats.

The strong domination of the Old group marked the middle phase, from the 1980 elections until 1990. Electoral competitiveness was low: the number of alternate political groups contesting elections decreased and none of them presented a serious challenge to the incumbent group. As a result, the Old political group emerged as the only group in Hat Yai municipal council after the 1980 election, having facing only one alternate team and few independent candidates. In the 1985 election, the city, which had been one constituency, was divided into three electoral constituencies. The total number of councillors remained at 18; however, under the new electoral system, people could only vote for six councillors. This election was a contest between the Old team and the New Development (Mai Pattana) group, led by the principal and owner of a private school who had failed to get elected in two prior elections. However, the Mai Pattana team, due to its lack of qualified candidates and strong canvassers, was not a serious alternative to the incumbents (Sothanasatien 1985, 111-112). The Old team achieved a total victory, winning all seats in all three constituencies. In the 1990 election, only Constituency III held an election: the other two constituencies had no other contestants except the Old team’s candidates. As a result, the Old political group won 12 seats by acclamation; it also took all 6 seats in Constituency III.

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28 After his defeat in municipal election, Chuchart Intalite, the leader of the Mai Pattana group, turned to the election of the Songkhla Provincial Council of which he became a member in 1988. He unsuccessfully contested the 1991 general election. He returned to municipal politics when the Mayor asked him to join his team in the 1995 municipal election. He is now a municipal councillor and the Chairman of Hat Yai municipal council.
After 15 years of the Old group's dominance in municipal politics and administration, the 1995 election marked some changes in the Hat Yai political landscape. Prior to the election, the political atmosphere was dynamic, and a number of factors encouraged challengers to compete against the Old group. First, the stakes were larger. Now elevated to a city municipality, Hat Yai council had 24, instead of 18, seats, divided into four constituencies. Second, the electoral law modified the voting age from 20 to 18 years. It was assumed that young voters would like a change, preferring a younger generation in municipal administration. This was thought to be detrimental to the Old team, most members of which were 50 to 60 years old. The Old group was aware of its own weakness and restructured its roster of candidates. New young candidates replaced some aging members. Third, there was a movement of political change in municipal administrations nationwide. As one of the elevated municipalities, Hat Yai's election was scheduled for December 17, 1995, a month after the nationwide municipal election day (November 12, 1995) which witnessed the defeat of the incumbent teams in many cities, including Chiang Mai and Songkhla.

Nevertheless, given the strong domination of the Old group and the influence of the Mayor, the 1995 election had only the Krietiphum group and 12 independent candidates competing with the incumbents. Unsurprisingly, the Old political group won again, with an overwhelming majority of 21 seats to 3. Yet, this electoral result has significant implications for the future of Hat Yai municipal politics. First, the Old group's loss of three council seats to the opposition can be interpreted as a sign of a decline in the Mayor (Kreng)'s popularity. In particular, one of the three failed candidates was his own son, who was also a teammate in

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29 There were three and nine independent candidates in Constituencies I and IV, respectively.
Constituency II. The opposition made stopping the inheritance of municipal power from father to son an issue in the campaign. Another unsuccessful candidate was long-time councillor and deputy mayor, Cha-wiang Na-pattalung. He ran in Constituency IV, the most vulnerable area for the Old team which lost two seats there to the Krietiphum. Second, the appearance of an opposition in Hat Yai municipal council has made the municipal management style to be more professional and open to the public. Now, information on municipal affairs flows out to the public through the opposition, the Krietiphum group, which issues a newsletter publicizing both the group’s activities in the municipal council (including its questions to the Mayor) and also complaint letters from the public.

While the Old group may still be unbeatable, and while the three opposition councillors may not have much direct impact on municipal decisions, the emergence of the Krietiphum as the alternative group has certainly brought a more dynamic atmosphere to Hat Yai municipal politics. It is interesting to explore the backgrounds and the strengths and weaknesses of each group.

Profile of Political Groups

Old Political Group (Klum Kao): It has no proper name. It is known as the Old or Kao group because it has been in municipal power for a long time. Some also call it Mayor Kreng’s group because Kreng has led this group since 1974. The strength of this group, enabling it to stay in power for a long time, is not a matter of policy or of links with popular groups or national parties: it is its ability to convince the key elite in Hai Yai society to join it. The group’s key early founders belonged to the local elite of Chinese origin, including Wichien

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10 His son was elected in a by-election in July 1996.
Kowitaya\textsuperscript{31}, Ko-mes Innawong\textsuperscript{32} and Thana Phunmetha,\textsuperscript{33} The group convinced Kreng Suwannawong (the current Mayor) to join it in 1958.

The participation of Kreng Suwannawong enabled the group to expand its base of support to the local Hat Yai people. Prior to the 1958 election, he was actually approached by many political groups, for what can be seen as two main reasons. First, he was a nephew of the most influential and respected subdistrict headman at that time, Von Thawerat\textsuperscript{34} in Hat Yai district (Sothanasatient 1985, 25). The endorsement of such an influential and powerful figure would bring a lot of support to the group from Hat Yai natives, especially those who relied on Von Thawerat’s patronage. Second, Kreng’s background as a large landowner and a cattle trader, as well as the subdistrict headman’s clerk, and Kreng’s large kinship, made him well-known and respected. In an interview, the Mayor said that many native Hat Yai appreciated his family. His family assisted them in difficult times and gave them lands so that they could earn their living.\textsuperscript{35} Therefore, it was no surprise that he was elected a municipal councillor, and appointed a deputy mayor, in his first election in 1958. He remained a deputy mayor until being appointed mayor in 1973. He led the Old team in the 1974 election in which it won 16 out of 18 seats.

Under Kreng’s leadership, the group gained strength until it became the single elected political group in Hat Yai municipal politics, prior to the 1995 election. One crucial factor underlining the success of the Old group is Kreng’s performance as the Hat Yai Mayor. That

\textsuperscript{31} He was a deputy mayor (1957-1958) and the Mayor (1968-1973).
\textsuperscript{32} He was a deputy mayor (1957-1958) and the Mayor (1958-1968).
\textsuperscript{33} He was a journalist and a deputy mayor (1957-1995).
\textsuperscript{34} I was told that this village headman (Von Thawerat) was very well-known and respected not only by Hat Yai people but also by senior governmental and military officers. The major military leaders at that time respected him by calling him a brother.
\textsuperscript{35} Interview with the Mayor.
Hat Yai has become a major city today is partly attributable to the active role of the municipality under Kreng's leadership. For instance, the municipality successfully lobbied various government agencies to locate their regional or provincial branches at Hat Yai by promising them free, or very low priced, land. Examples include Hat Yai hospital, the southern branch of Thailand's central bank and the Hat Yai airport (Sothanasatien 1985, 183; Wichaidith et al. n.d., 13).

Moreover, his distinguished performance and his continued support by the people of Hat Yai makes Kreng a strong leader, even in contacts with the central government. His decision to withdraw from the first round of the Regional Cities Development Project was perceived as a demonstration of his strength (Sothanasatien 1985). He also has good personal connections with higher level government officers in Bangkok. For example, the designation of Hat Yai as a Pollution Control Zone (PCZ) happened partly because of the personal tie between the Mayor and the Director of the Pollution Control Department (PCD). Born in Hat Yai, the Director is a brother of the Mayor's longtime teammate, Cha-lat Kirawanit, who is now a deputy mayor. This personal relationship helped to smooth the relationship between the municipality and the PCD. An officer at the PCD stated in an interview that while there is no political influence in the designation of a PCZ, his superior, the Director, does pay attention to, and gives advice on, the design of projects in Hat Yai. Therefore, the popularity and effectiveness of Kreng have been decisive in having the public vote for the Old group's candidates. In 1995, first time municipal councillors of the Old
group gave some confirmation of this, when they stated that joining Mayor Kreng's group was crucial in their winning the election.\textsuperscript{36}

In addition to its leadership, the Old group's composition is another crucial factor in its earning voter support. At least since the 1980s, the group has offered voters strong candidates representing the major forces of Hat Yai society. For Hat Yai natives, the group has members from the Suwanawong and Thawerat families and some local large landowners. Moreover, one of the Old group's members is a son of a five-time former Member of Parliament for Songkhla province. For the older generation of Chinese, the group included Ki Chira-nakhon, a son of Jia-gi-si, one of the four Hat Yai city pioneers, as a member and as municipal chairman until his retirement in 1995.\textsuperscript{37} For the new generation of businessmen, the group is able to recruit major figures in Hat Yai, including two former presidents of the Songkhla Chamber of Commerce. In preparing for the 1995 election, the Old group strengthened itself by recruiting younger candidates with university degrees\textsuperscript{38} to attract younger voters. Since the key elite have been pulled under the wing of the Old group, the opposition, such as the Krietiphum, has found it extremely difficult to recruit strong candidates to compete with the Old group. This is confirmed by the leader of Krietiphum.

\textit{Krietiphum Political Group (Klum Krietiphum)}: The group started just a year before the 1995 election as an informal group of friends, mainly business people, who shared the same concerns about the centralized nature of the governmental system, the lack of participation in

\textsuperscript{36} Interview with Prasert Mid-pun and Pipat Jyan-la-ong, Hat Yai councillors, on May 8 and 13, 1996 respectively.
\textsuperscript{37} He is currently a member of the Hat Yai municipal development committee.
\textsuperscript{38} For instance, Prasert Mid-pun (32 years old) is a Law graduate and has a law office in Hat Yai. Pipat Jyan-la-ong (32 years old) was graduated with a BA. degree in Agriculture. Kanchit Ta-nisa-ro (47 years old) holds a BA degree in Science. Prasong Suwannawong has a MA degree in Public Administration.
municipal politics, and the degradation of the city’s environment. The group undertook serious political activities only as the 1995 election approached, when it transformed itself into the Krietiphum political team.

According to Prayoon Wongprechakorn, the group’s leader, the main motive in forming the Krietiphum group to compete in the election was the long-time absence of political competition in Hat Yai. In the previous decade, only a few independent candidates competed against the Old team. Being monopolized politically for more than 30 years by the same group, Hat Yai city was under the domination of personal networks and a few influential figures. The Krietiphum aspired to become a new political forum for Hat Yai municipal politics.

The political platform of Krietiphum in the 1995 election emphasized a modern and hi-technology management style; administrative transparency, with high a degree of popular participation, and the city’s environment (the Krietiphum’s campaign leaflet 1996). However, it won only three out of 24 seats on the municipal council. The team’s major weakness was the candidates’ qualifications. Even though the team offered a young generation and a new breed of politicians, most of them were not well known to the people of Hat Yai. The team leader also admitted this defect by stating that his team had a problem finding strong candidates. Some promising ones were not ready or willing to contest the 1995 election. Some feared the influence of the Mayor. Some have business and personal ties with the Mayor.

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39 A candidate’s qualifications include: personal background, economic status, reputation, social involvement, education and political experience.
40 Interview with Prayoon Wongpreechakorn, the leader of Krietiphum, on May 9, 1996.
The election result seems to prove that a candidate’s qualifications are a decisive factor in Hat Yai municipal politics. The three Krietiphum candidates who were successful in this election are not new to people in Hat Yai. Despite having no political experience, the team leader, who defeated the Mayor’s son in Constituency II, is a young and well known businessman (48 years old) who was the former President of Songkhla Chamber of Commerce in 1984. He is also active in social activities as the Governor of the Regional Rotary Club, the President of the Samankun School Alumni and the President of the Samankun Temple Youth Centre. Since Constituency II is a main business area, dominated by the Chinese population, his background as a businessman of Chinese origin earned him some support. The other two successful opposition candidates were known to the people in Constituency IV since they contested unsuccessfully in the 1990 election (Division of Election 1991, 229).

Table 5.8: Major Issues in the 1995 Municipal Election Campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Issues</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Not Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic issue</td>
<td>111 (42.0%)</td>
<td>53 (20.1%)</td>
<td>44 (16.7%)</td>
<td>56 (21.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social problem</td>
<td>48 (18.2%)</td>
<td>87 (33.0%)</td>
<td>58 (22.0%)</td>
<td>71 (26.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security in life and property</td>
<td>41 (15.5%)</td>
<td>58 (22.0%)</td>
<td>71 (26.9%)</td>
<td>94 (35.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>52 (19.7%)</td>
<td>45 (17.0%)</td>
<td>61 (23.1%)</td>
<td>106 (40.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3 (1.1%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (1.5%)</td>
<td>257 (257%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

In addition to lacking strong candidates, the opposition team’s platform on the urban environment did not attract voters. According to the survey, 40.2% of Hat Yai respondents did not select the environment as an important issue in the 1995 election; only 19.7% ranked it as the number one issue, as illustrated in Table 5.8. Moreover, the Krietiphum team
suffered from the low rate of voter turnout, especially among the educated and middle class population whom the team expected to be supporters. For instance, of the total of 1,132 eligible voters at the Prince of Songkhla University, only 200 went to the polls.

_Civil Society: Voting and Civic Groups_

_Voter Turnout_

Both the domination of municipal politics by a political group and the low level of electoral competitiveness relate to the politically passive nature of Hat Yai civil society. The general public demonstrate a low level of political participation. Despite being interested in municipal politics, they are not, for the most part, active enough to go to the polls. According to the results of the author’s survey in 1996, as shown in Table 5.9, 88% and 76.1% of Hat Yai respondents paid considerable attention to municipal politics and to the 1995 municipal election campaign respectively. However, voter turnout at the 1995 election was only 36.83%, or 17.99% below the nationwide rate.

_Table 5.9: Attention to Municipal Politics in General and the 1995 Municipal Election Campaign_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Attention</th>
<th>Municipal Politics in General</th>
<th>Election Campaign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable attention</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no attention</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

The voter-turnout rate over time, as shown in Table 5.10, reveals that the low rate in 1995 is not unusual for Hat Yai, since over some two decades its highest rate was 55.22% in the 1974 election, a figure due to the country’s active political atmosphere after the 1973
student uprising. Since then, the decrease in voter turnout to about 30% has coincided with the low level of competitiveness and the domination of the Mayor’s political team in Hat Yai’s municipal politics. Both the lack of competition and the incumbent team’s dominance can be interpreted as an indication that the public in general is satisfied with the performance of the Mayor, for the reasons discussed above. Certainly, in the 1995 election no crisis or events increased the public’s motivation to cast their vote.

Table 5.10: Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections, Hat Yai Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Eligible Voters</th>
<th>Voter Turnout</th>
<th>Nationwide Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>24,913</td>
<td>13,759</td>
<td>55.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>45,262</td>
<td>14,570</td>
<td>32.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>61,127</td>
<td>20,688</td>
<td>33.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 (a)</td>
<td>24,130</td>
<td>7,829</td>
<td>32.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>89,254</td>
<td>32,876</td>
<td>36.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by-law 1996 (b)</td>
<td>14,551</td>
<td>4,605</td>
<td>31.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Division of Election, DOLA (1991, 1996)
   a) Only one electoral constituency held an election.
   b) The by-law election in July 1996.
   NA = not available

The low rate of voter turnout and low political participation can also be explained in relation to the lack of channels or mechanisms to mobilize people to greater participation in municipal politics. This partial explanation mainly involves the political activity of civic groups; more specifically, the extent to which they pay attention to local issues which are outside their primary focus and how they involve themselves in municipal politics. Political activity of civic groups can lead people to a higher level of participation. The following section will profile groups in Hat Yai civil society and will examine their political roles and concerns around environmental issues.
Profile of Civic Groups

Even though Hat Yai has a large number of civic groups, they play a minimal role in municipal politics and few of them are involved in the environmental issue. Most of them are institutionally weak. Their relationships with the municipality are mainly informal, particularistic and paternalistic. Since civil society is composed of various sections, each will be explored in terms of its concern for local issues, in particular those related to the city’s environment, and its political role.

1) Community Organizations

Among various sections of civil society, community organizations are the closest to the municipality since they are the municipality’s creation; it is a rather paternalistic relationship. The groups’ political role is limited to mobilizing voters and serving as a channel for policy implementation.

In 1996 Hat Yai municipality established 25 community organizations. The central government introduced a policy of improving the quality of life of low-income people in urban areas through their own organizations. Hat Yai municipality implemented the policy by launching the community improvement project in 1982. It established four community groups in the first year, that number rising to 9 and 17 at the end of 1983 and of 1984, respectively. From 1986 to 1987, the municipality established another seven and established the 25th in 1996. Prior to their becoming community groups, most of the communities were underdeveloped areas located at the city outskirts, while some were congested areas located at the core of the city. Whether in the outskirts or the core, these areas lacked both physical infrastructures and municipal services. The survey of environmental health conditions in Hat
Yai slums conducted by Narong Na-chiangmai⁴¹ in 1987, found that water supply was the most serious problem, since most households depended on private vendors. They also had problems of improper waste-water disposal, inadequate refuse collection and poor housing conditions. Most of those housing units were located on private land where rents were rather low (Na-chiangmai 1989). At present, observation of eight community groups suggests that the physical environment has improved with the construction of concrete roads. Most of the eight groups have electricity and piped water. Housing conditions are fine. However, some communities still have a problem of flooding and lack waste-water sewerage. Insufficient garbage bins and collection, and problems with mosquitoes still remain common among these communities.⁴²

The administrative structure of a community organization in Hat Yai conforms to the government guidelines, provided by the Office of Urban Development, DOLA.⁴³ This structure normally includes a community committee of 15 persons and a community advisory committee. The community committee consists of a chairperson and 14 committee members, divided into eight sections, as shown in Figure 5.2. It has a two-year term. A community leader in Hat Yai is not chosen by ballot; in general, the municipal community development office arranges a meeting of the community’s key figures, such as its natural leaders, the leader of the housewife group, and public health volunteers to select the community chairman.

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⁴¹ Narong Na-chiangmai, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, the Prince of Songkhla University.
⁴² I visited and interviewed community leaders of eight community organizations. Three communities are located in Zone I, including Back of the Central Stadium (Lang Snam-kila), In Front of Sena-narong Military Base (Na Kay-tahan Se-na Narong), and In Front of the Public Park (Na Suan-sa-tarana). In Zone II, I dealt with the Tong-Sia-Sing-Ting community organization; in Zone III with the organizations from two communities: Tong-sao and Klong-rain. Community organizations in Zone IV represented In Front of the Railway Station (Na Satan-nee Rod-fai) and Chok-sa-man communities.
⁴³ See Vorratnchaiphan et al. (1989).
In contrast to Chiang Mai, in Hat Yai the post of community chairperson is unattractive, given the hard work, the lack of compensation, and the low political competitiveness of Hat Yai municipal elections. As a result, most leaders are seniors who can afford the time and expense. Among the eight community chairpersons interviewed, five are over 60 years old and have been community chairmen since the establishment of community groups. Most of them are also the Mayor’s strong political supporters. Houses of chairpersons also serve as community offices.

**Figure 5.2: The Structure of Community Organizations in Hat Yai**

Activities of community organizations in Hat Yai are similar to those in Chiang Mai, including the celebration of children’s and seniors’ days and important national days, such as the King’s and Queen’s birthdays. In addition to entertainment, the celebrations include cleaning the community and dredging sewers within its area. In general, participation in community events is not very high. For instance, one community leader, representing an area with about 1,400 inhabitants, said that only about 30 persons showed up to one community cleaning campaign. The level of activity in a community organization depends on its leaders,
specifically their commitment and contribution to community work. For example, some
arrange community committee meetings every month while some have meetings twice a year.

The relationship between the municipality and community groups has been very good.
The Mayor, councillors and municipal administrators view community committees, and
community chairpersons in particular, as the representatives of community residents. The
Mayor has a policy of working very closely with a community organization. The municipality
has “the meeting with people project,” which is organized in every community group, once a
year. The project includes a survey of problems in a community (e.g., roads, drainage,
mosquitoes and garbage), done by the community committee and the municipal officers on
Monday or Tuesday; concerned divisions then send personnel to solve the problems. On
Friday morning the municipality and community residents participate in cleaning the
community, after which the Mayor, Deputy Mayors, and constituency councillors visit it in
the afternoon. Project activities also include providing public health services and distributing
bags of gifts to 10 low-income people, selected by a community committee.

In essence, these community organizations are far from independent. Since they are
established mainly for administrative reasons, community leaders are not equipped with
authority or resources to do more than participate in municipal activities or serve as a
communication channel between the municipality and community residents to inform the
municipality of problems in a community. Since they have no contact with external agencies
other than those, such as UNICEF, introduced by the municipality, they mainly depend on the
municipality’s patronage.
2) *The Business Sector*

As a business city, Hat Yai has a large number of business associations ranging from a regional business organization to clubs for small merchants. Since most of them are preoccupied with their own interests, as a rule they remain uninvolved in public issues, especially the deterioration of the city's environment. While some in the business sector can assert their demands at central and provincial levels, they tend to be less explicit in municipal politics. Where the sector does use relationships with the municipality, these are usually smooth and cooperative. Despite sharing a passive role in municipal politics, members of this sector vary in their interests and often differ in their connections with the municipality. The three business and professional associations discussed below illustrate such differences.

*The Songkhla Chamber of Commerce (SCC)*, established in 1983, is considered to be a major business association in Songkhla province. However, it is institutionally weak due to factions within the organization. Office-holding is temporary. The executive committee is elected by the members for a two-year term, after which the office normally moves according to the decision of the new President. This movement is symptomatic of weakness because it prevents the organization from being effective. The organization of the SCC comprises nine sections: foreign affairs, the wood-cutting industry, rubber, seafood processing, commerce, tourism and hotels, agriculture, fishery and law.\(^{44}\)

The main activities of the SCC concern the economic promotion of Songkhla province and include providing advice to members about economic activities, and coordinating with the government. In addition, the SCC advocates particular policies such as

\(^{44}\) From the list of the SCC's executive committee of 1994-1996.
the Triangle Economic Development project between Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The channels which the SCC employs to address concerns are at the provincial level and include the Songkhla Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committee (SJPPSCC), to which the SCC belongs, and personal contact with the governor.

In regard to the environment, the report on its activities between 1994 and 1996 shows minimal concern on this issue; mainly, the SCC participates in other organizations’ activities. The low level of SCC concern is largely because business in Hat Yai does not depend greatly on the beauty and health of the city’s environment, in contrast to Chiang Mai. However, there are some related urban environmental issues which the SCC pays attention to, including the safety of tourists, the crime problem and city planning. These concerns are addressed at the provincial level.

The relationship between the municipality and the SCC has been smooth and cooperative. The President of the SCC between 1994 and 1996 is a councillor on the Mayor’s team. The SCC supports the municipality in various forms; for instance, over the waste water problem seminar in 1990. The SCC also donates money and goods to the municipality; for example, in 1995 the SCC contributed 100 garbage bins to the municipality.

*The Tourist Industry Association of Songkhla (TIA of Songkhla)* was established in 1978 as the umbrella organization of various tourist business associations. Its objective is to promote the tourist industry in the Songkhla province and to coordinate with the government sector, especially the Tourist Authority of Thailand. The TIA of Songkhla consists of the Hotel Association, the Tour Guide Association, the Restaurant Club, the Retailers’ Club, and the
Federation of Tourist Businesses.\textsuperscript{45} The president is elected from among the members for a two-year term and appoints the executive committee. Since the TIA includes various factions with different interests, having it work together is difficult. Therefore, the activity of the TIA depends very much on the strong leadership and charisma of its President.

Activities of the TIA focus mainly on tourism, such as joining with the Tourist Authority of Thailand in developing new tourist places and organizing special events (e.g., Full Moon and Thai Fruits Festival) to attract tourists, especially from Malaysia and Singapore. The TIA does not yet have a policy on the environment,\textsuperscript{46} perhaps because the environment is not a primary concern of tourists who visit Hat Yai.

In regard to its relationship with the municipality, the TIA has been very cooperative about municipality’s requests, such as participating in various municipal committees and donating money or equipment. In general, the municipality is very helpful to the TIA and its activities, except when the TIA requested that the municipality turn a street into a Night Bazaar for tourists.\textsuperscript{47} In addition, the current Vice-President of the TIA is appointed by the Mayor as a member of the Urban Environment Management Committee. The relationship between TIA and the municipality is perhaps best characterized as cooperative.

\textit{The Thaksin Architect Committee (TAC)} is a southern regional branch of the Siam Society in Bangkok. Therefore, the groups’ membership is not limited to Hat Yai, but comes from all southern provinces. The TAC is concerned mainly with the development of the architectural profession, the provision of professional services to the public and with the conservation of

\textsuperscript{45} Interview with Vachira Sakuljakuporn, Vice-President of the Tourist Industry Association of Songkhla on May 16, 1996.

\textsuperscript{46} Interview with Vachira Sakuljakuporn.

\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Sawai Na-Pattalung, the Former President of the TIA of Songkhla, May 1996.
Established in 1986, its primary purpose is both to allow architects to meet entrepreneurs, contractors and suppliers and to allow architects and these groups to share up-to-date knowledge on architecture, construction technology and materials, environmentally friendly design and construction. At present, the TAC has about 100 members, who elect its President for a two-year term.


The TAC works very closely with the municipality in an advisory role; for instance, on the preparation of a specific city plan, the improvement of public spaces in the municipal area and the design of the municipal conference hall. The TAC and the municipality also worked together on improving the laws related to building construction. One factor that contributes to the good relationship between this group and the municipality is personal links. The former president of the TAC (1980-1982) is the Chief of the municipal architectural task force. The founding President (who now advises the TAC) used to be a municipal architect and is currently appointed by the Mayor as a member of the municipal committee on the urban environmental management. In addition, because the TAC is not a business group and does belong to the Siam Society,\(^48\) which has national recognition, including royal patronage, the municipality feels comfortable working with the TAC.\(^49\)

\(^{48}\) The Siam Society was founded in 1904, under Royal Patronage, as an organization for those interested in the artistic, scientific and cultural affairs of Thailand and neighbouring countries.

\(^{49}\) Interview with Somkriet Puprasert, the former President of the TAC.
In conclusion, except for the TAC, the business associations in Hat Yai have a minimal concern about the city environment, focusing mainly on their own interests. Members of the business sector (including TAC) have a good relationship with the municipality; however, such a relationship is rather informal and particularistic. Most of them know the Mayor personally. Some small business clubs invite the mayor to be their advisor. Therefore, their coordination with the municipality is generally started by personal contact with the mayor and, then, the formalities of coordination follow.\textsuperscript{50}

3) The Media

As a major city in the southern region, Hat Yai is the location for a number of mass media outlets which include seven radio stations, five regional television stations, two regional offices of national newspapers, and local newspapers. Overall, the media in Hat Yai has not yet been consistently active in covering the city's environmental and municipal affairs. This is partly due to the fact that Hat Yai is not a very politicized society and has no serious issues concerning the city's environmental problems and municipal administration.

The local press in Hat Yai pay little attention to the degradation of the environment or to municipal political issues; rather, the newspapers are dominated by local economic and social news, and by advertisements. A few papers have an interest in the environment. For instance, the Business Market (\textit{Talad Turakit}) newspaper regularly runs stories on urban environmental problems, such as the polluted water of Toey Canal; these stories include opinions and proposed solutions.\textsuperscript{51} However, such coverage in local newspapers cannot draw

\textsuperscript{50} Interview with Sawai Na-pattalung.
\textsuperscript{51} Interview with the Director of the Business Market (\textit{Talad Turakit}) newspaper.
much public attention, since local newspapers are not popular. They are generally not for sale and mainly rely on income from business advertisements.

Hat Yai rarely makes headlines in national newspapers. When it does, it is mostly over economic problems, such as the decreasing numbers of tourists from Malaysia due to fear of AIDS, and the Hotel Association protesting the price of drinking water. Some national newspapers, such as the Bangkok Business Newspaper (Krungtep Turakit), have offices in Hat Yai and some of them dedicate a newspaper insert to local issues. However, according to the editor of the Southern branch of the Bangkok Business Newspaper, Hat Yai is not the sole focus of this edition of local news since it covers all 14 provinces in the southern region. Moreover, while this insert covers local politics and the environment, the environmental problems in this region are very much dominated by the natural issues and quality of life of rural people.

While the press has been insignificant in drawing public attention in Hat Yai to environmental issues, the radio has become a major channel for raising people’s environmental awareness, due to the success of the Core Radio company. It produces an environmental program, “Bright World in the Birthplace” (Lok Sod Sai Ni Bann Ged), which has gained a lot of support from sponsors and from the public. Radio broadcasts, especially those produced by the Core Radio company, have led to the formation of an environmental network concerned with Songkhla Lake and a concerned citizens group. Both are detailed below in the section on NGOs.

For its part, the municipality employs the media as a channel for communication, not for debate or environmental activism. The municipality holds a press conference only on special occasions, mainly as good for public relations. In addition, as a part of its action plan
on pollution control, the municipality hosts radio and television programs to provide information on the environmental problems in Hat Yai and the municipality’s progress in dealing with them problems.

In conclusion, the media’s role in Hat Yai is more to report facts and news and present problems and less to scrutinize and criticize municipal policies and performance. This informational slant is due to the nature of Hat Yai society which is not politically oriented. Municipal political competition is low. Lacking opposition, the politicization of municipal issues, including the environment, is rare. Moreover, the total control of the Mayor and the solidarity of municipal employees makes it difficult for the media to search for information from inside sources.

4) Academics

Intellectuals and university professors play a passive role in municipal politics but an active role in the environmental field. In this regard, the key institution is the Prince of Songkhla University, which has two campuses. The Hat Yai campus hosts the two faculties on the environment: the Faculty of Natural Resources and the Faculty of Environmental Management, while the Department of Political Sciences is located at the Pattani campus.

In regard to the environment, the University provides various both educational and community services. For instance, the role of the Faculty of Environmental Management, according to its Acting Dean,\(^{52}\) includes providing educational services (e.g., offering a Master’s degree program), providing technical service to business communities (e.g., conducting a feasibility study and an EIA) and services to the community (e.g., organizing

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\(^{52}\) Interview with the Director of the Faculty of the Environmental Management Establishment Program on May 20, 1996.
seminars, giving advice to NGOs). In general, the Faculty is dominated by the concern for the natural environment and the well-being of rural communities. Interest in the urban environment is a recent phenomenon in the University, as it is in Hat Yai.

Since the University has a pool of knowledge and expertise relevant to the environment, administrative science and engineering, the municipality has depended on the University for technical assistance and advice. The relationship is cooperative. For instance, the Mayor appointed the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Management as a member of the urban environmental management committee. Professors from the Faculty of Administrative Sciences and the Faculty of Engineering are regularly appointed to join the Municipal Development Committee.

The case of how waste water in particular led to the designation of Hat Yai as a pollution control zone reflects the good coordination between the university and the municipality. The process leading to the designation started in 1990 when the Faculty of Administrative Sciences approached the Mayor to jointly organize a seminar on an urban issue. The municipality determined on the problem of waste water in Hat Yai municipality. The seminar was successful and gained much attention and support from the private and public sectors: MOSTE, DOLA, the Governor of Songkhla province, the University, the business associations, and the citizens. The mayor himself admitted that technical support from the University played a major role in convincing the government to support the waste-water treatment project.\(^{53}\) Despite this good relationship, the participation of the university professors in municipal affairs is sporadic, happening only when the municipality needs technical support.

\(^{53}\) Interview with the Mayor on May 10, 1996.
5) NGOs

With few exceptions, the environmental NGOs in Songkhla province are preoccupied with the natural and rural environment of forests, wildlife and fishery. Only in recent years has there emerged in Hat Yai a few civic groups concerned with local issues of Hat Yai and neighbouring areas. While the activities of these groups are not yet popular in the city, the organizations could be a starting point for a more active civil society in the future.

Among these groups is “The Love Your Birthplace Foundation” (Kong-tun-ruk-bann-ge). It was established in 1991 by a small group of university professors and small business people who shared the idea that the state cannot solve every problem and the feeling that they did not pay enough attention to local issues around them. Administered by the committee, the Foundation elects its President for a two-year term. At present, it has 200 members from many southern provinces. Its finances mainly come from members’ donations and fund-raising activities.

The primary objective of the foundation was to fund local projects undertaken by grassroots organizations. Later, the Foundation also worked on such projects as the survey of the polluted U-Tapao canal. In addition, the foundation provides funding for studies on particular environmental problems. The result of the studies is presented in the Hat Yai Forum. The scope of activities funded by the Foundation is broad, including local culture, community forestry, water pollution, and the formation of people’s organizations. The Foundation’s next project will involve the garbage problem, specifically collecting used paper from offices for sale.\(^\text{54}\)

\(^{54}\) Interview with the President of the Love Your Birthplace Foundation, on May 17, 1996.
Another civic group is "Hat Yai Forum," formed in 1993 and led mainly by university professors with assistance from the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation, a German international NGO. The forum also receives financial and informational support from the Love Your Birth Place Foundation. The purpose is to provide a forum for the general public and encourage their participation. The forum’s main activity is arranging group discussion on any local issues, such as elections, waste water, traffic congestion, education, and children. The Forum broadcasts on the radio every Sunday for two hours. The third Sunday of the month allows people to phone in with ideas and opinions. Ultimately, the Forum intends that the discussion and participation will lead to action; however, it has yet to achieve this goal. The Forum has no relationship with the municipality. Despite having been invited to participate, the municipality has attended the Forum only on a few occasions.55

The last NGO which deserves mention here is the Bright World in the Birthplace (Lok Sod Sai Ni Bann Ged). This public event is organized every year since 1990 to raise the environmental awareness of people about Songkhla Lake. It originally consisted of those people who cared for Songkhla Lake and were moved to meet by a program, produced by the Core Radio, on the Lake. The organizers of the event include NGOs, the University, governmental agencies, business companies and the Core Radio company. Each year, the venue of the event has changed. The first event occurred in Hat Yai (1990); and the fourth one, at the Prince of Songkhla University. Even though the event is not directly concerned with urban environmental problems, its activities include seminars, environmental drawing competitions, rallies and tree planting; all these may have had an impact on raising environmental awareness among the general public throughout the province.

55 Interview with the President of the Love Your Birthplace Foundation, on May 17, 1996.
In addition to the civic groups discussed above, there have also been attempts to form civic groups focused specifically on urban environmental issues in Hat Yai. This may be evidence of the rising environmental awareness in Hat Yai. Two are in progress: the “Bring Life to Toey Canal Club” (Chom Lom Keen Chiwit Soo Klong Toey), led by the Deputy President of the TIA of Songkhla, and Office of Urban Development and Environmental Promotion, which will address city-wide urban environmental issues; for example, city cleanliness and planning, and information services. Although the municipality may have to pay attention to the voice of NGOs in the future, they remain too weak at present to be engaged in municipal affairs.

6) The Informal Sector

Compared to other civic groups, the informal waste sector seems to be the only segment of Hat Yai’s civil society which has a direct role in waste management through waste recovery and recycling. Three key actors make up this informal waste sector: garbage pickers, municipal garbage collectors and junk traders.

*Garbage pickers:* No record exists of the people who earn a living from garbage throughout Hat Yai, but the present garbage site has about 200 garbage pickers, and approximately 1.5 tons of recyclable garbage are sorted there per day.\(^{56}\) Recyclables include bottles, cans, papers, plastic, tin and copper. Most garbage pickers are relatives of municipal workers. Access to the garbage site is not totally free, since a number of shelters for municipal workers and garbage pickers are located there; therefore, they know if strangers enter the site. (Some garbage pickers have their shelters in the garbage site; others have them outside.) The

\(^{56}\) I asked a municipal worker, who stayed at the garbage site, to give me a rough estimation.
monthly income per family from picking can range from Bt2500 (CND$135) up to Bt15,000 (CND$789), depending on the time and number of people working. Some of them work day and night. Some garbage pickers whom I interviewed said their work is not bad, and they have a lot of freedom with no fixed working hours.\(^{57}\) Sometimes they find a lot of valuable things in the garbage, especially in garbage from hotels.\(^{58}\) Sorted garbage is sold to junk dealers who come to pick it up at the site twice a month. The operation of garbage pickers, such as burning garbage, sometimes causes residents' complaints, thereby calling the municipality's attention to set certain rules, such as prohibiting garbage burning. Despite their underprivileged status, garbage pickers have their own ways of influencing the municipality. For example, according to the municipal clerk, if the municipality covers garbage with soil immediately after dumping, the municipality then will find punctures in the tires of garbage trucks; the municipality therefore allows garbage pickers to sort the garbage before properly disposing of it.\(^{59}\)

While Hat Yai has a group of garbage pickers at the dump site, the author observed no street garbage pickers during a month of field work in Hat Yai. This might be due to two factors. First, the efficient municipal garbage removal left almost no opportunity for garbage pickers to scavenge garbage bins and containers along streets, especially around business

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\(^{57}\) I interviewed a 50-year-old garbage picker who used to work as a municipal garbage collector. He quit the job and found himself to be better off as a garbage picker. He and his wife earned about Bt6000-7000 (CND$318-368) a month. I also found a young couple who picked garbage day and night, earning Bt15000 (CDN$790).

\(^{58}\) The group of garbage pickers whom I encountered at the dump site said that some garbage pickers sometimes found cash and golden bracelets in the garbage. Garbage from hotels is considered valuable. In the past some pickers paid money to the garbage truck drivers who delivered waste from hotels in order to have access to that waste. But the municipality prohibited such payment because it caused disputes among garbage pickers.

\(^{59}\) Telephone interview with the Hat Yai municipal clerk on May 19, 1998.
areas. Second, the buoyant economy in Hat Yai may provide job opportunities for the urban poor.60

Garbage Collectors: In addition to garbage pickers, municipal garbage collectors also sort garbage for sale while collecting it. According to a Hat Yai municipal worker, garbage collectors are better off than street sweepers because garbage collectors can supplement their income with gift money given by business owners whose garbage they collect, and with the sale of recyclable garbage. Garbage collectors are the first group who select garbage in good condition; pickers come after them. In an interview, an officer at the Department of Pollution Control commented that one reason that the Hat Yai municipality has not yet implemented a recycling plan is that it would have an impact on garbage collectors who gain some supplementary income from selling recyclable garbage.

Junk Traders: There is a variety of junk traders in Hat Yai. They include small buyers who buy recyclable items from various sources — households, business and markets — and sell at the junk shops. Some of these small buyers, known as saleng in Thai,61 buy various recyclable materials from households. Some are specialized buyers dealing with such material as cardboard and plastics.62 As for junk shops, according to the survey by the Pollution Control Department, MOSTE, Hat Yai has 29 of them (in 1995). Some specialize in buying only paper or glass bottles. Some buy paper, plastic, glass, bottle, aluminum,

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60 Compared to Chiang Mai, Hat Yai is not a primary destination for immigration in the southern region. Therefore, the poor are able to earn their living from working as construction workers, and petty traders (street vendors). When I visited some low-income communities, I learnt that some people work in the agricultural sector, such as workers in rubber plantations.

61 Junk buyers are known as “saleng” because they normally use saleng or three-wheel cycles as vehicles in buying recyclable and used materials from households. But now they are more often seen using motorcycles or small pick-up trucks as vehicles in buying materials.

62 I met a male buyer who bought cardboard from Santisuk market and sold it to a junk shop. He did this for 20 years and earned about Bt300-400 a day (CNĐS15.78-21.50). Another person I met was a municipal worker who collected used large plastic bags from a factory for his mother to wash, dry and sell.
copper, and brass (Toxic Substance and Solid Waste Management Subdivision 1995). As there are no recycling factories in Hat Yai, all recyclables are sent to Bangkok.

In short, Hat Yai’s civil society in general has played a minimal role in municipal politics and urban environmental management. This excludes the informal sector which helps to divert recyclable waste from landfill. Although NGOs are growing, this does not change the general profile of politics in Hat Yai; a politics characterized by strong leadership, decent financial resources, the domination of a single political group and a passive civil society. The next section will examine how these characteristics influence the performance of a specific service — solid-waste management.

IV. Solid-Waste Management in Hat Yai

In contrast to the Chiang Mai municipality where garbage has become a seemingly insoluble problem, Hat Yai has had success in curbing its garbage problem, as is reflected in the awards which the municipality has won in the City Cleanliness and Tidiness Competition: second prize in 1993, third prize in 1994, and first prize in 1995 and again in 1996. From the author’s observation, the business area appears very clean. However, some garbage remains uncollected around the city’s outskirts and residential areas; the Director of the Division of Sanitation and Environment confirms that the municipality can serve 100% of the business area but only 90% of residential and suburban areas. Most residents are also satisfied with the municipal performance on solid waste, since in the author’s survey only 9.8% of respondents indicated they were unsatisfied, as is shown in Table 5.11.

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63 Interview with the Director of Sanitation and Environment on May 21, 1996 at the Municipal Office.
Table 5.11: Municipal Performance Regarding Solid-Waste Management in Hat Yai, 1990-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>264</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

Such good performance raises the question of how solid waste has been managed within Hat Yai municipality and of the extent to which that success results from the involvement of the civil society in the waste issue.

**Municipal Solid-Waste Management**

Hat Yai municipality is responsible for garbage collecting and disposal as well as keeping the city clean; duties are divided between two agencies. The Cleaning Section of the Division of Sanitation and Environment is in charge of garbage and excrement collection and street cleaning. The responsibility for garbage disposal rests with the Division of Sanitary Works, newly established in 1993 within the Bureau of Public Works. To date, Sanitary Works has concentrated on on-going projects for both garbage disposal and waste-water treatment. The maintenance of a current garbage disposal site remains the responsibility of the Cleaning Section. The present site uses open dumping and, therefore, does not require technical personnel.

- *Garbage Collection and City Cleaning*

According to the municipality’s annual cleaning plan, the Cleaning Section’s responsibilities divide into seven tasks: streets and pavement cleaning, garbage collection, sewer and
drainage cleaning, market cleaning, garbage disposal, complaints, and evaluation and follow up. The volume of garbage in Hat Yai is about 200-230 (1995) tons a day. Given priority by the municipal executives, city cleaning and garbage collection in Hat Yai is not constrained by lack of personnel, trucks or other equipment. The section itself has 702 staff (1995). As shown by Table 5.12, the majority are street sweepers and garbage collectors, who account for more than 60% of the section's total staff. Table 5.13 shows that from 1990 to 1991 the budget of this section rose dramatically from 7.29% to 13.64% of total municipal expenditures and remains above 10% of the total.

Table 5.12: Manpower of the Cleaning Section, Selected Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Tasks</th>
<th>1993a</th>
<th>1995b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative officer</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street cleaning</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>34.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage collection</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>30.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewer and drainage cleaning</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market cleaning</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excrement collection and disposal</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage disposal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>543</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:  
a) HYM, Cleaning Section (1995).  
b) HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section (1996)

Table 5.13: Expenses of the Cleaning Section and Revenues from Garbage Collection Fees, Selected Years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget year</th>
<th>Expense Bt.</th>
<th>$CND</th>
<th>% of the total expenditure</th>
<th>Revenue Bt.</th>
<th>$CDN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>18,311,702.61</td>
<td>963,773</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>1,966,600</td>
<td>103,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>50,315,908.27</td>
<td>2,648,205</td>
<td>13.64</td>
<td>2,659,010</td>
<td>139,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>69,345,765.76</td>
<td>7,705,085</td>
<td>13.84</td>
<td>4,670,140</td>
<td>245,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>79,458,796.17</td>
<td>4,182,041</td>
<td>11.35</td>
<td>5,235,960</td>
<td>275,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>77,061,300</td>
<td>4,055,857</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>6,246,350</td>
<td>328,755</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


64 Interview with the Director of the Division of Sanitation and Environment and the Chief of the Cleaning Section.
Moreover, the municipality also has good and sufficient equipment, especially after being designated as a Pollution Control Zone in 1992. In 1996, it had 55 garbage trucks and three street-sweeping and cleaning machines. Half of its fleet of trucks have compressing devices or are large container trucks. Some of the trucks were purchased with specific grants, given from the Environmental Fund according to the municipal action plan on pollution control. Normally one truck has a driver and five garbage collectors.

Garbage service is either door-to-door or collection from garbage containers, provided by the municipality in various spots. Garbage containers range from oil tanks (200 litres) or plastic garbage boxes (located along streets within business areas), to large containers (6 m³), normally located in markets, shopping malls, hotels and schools. All trucks deliver waste to the dumping site which is about 12 km. away from the municipality. Each one-way trip takes about 30 to 40 minutes.

The garbage collection is organized into three rounds. The first round is a day operation, from 5 a.m. to 1 p.m., which collects garbage in residential and suburban areas. The second round is from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., collecting garbage left from the first round and other garbage upon request or in case of emergency. The night-time operation, from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m., collects garbage in commercial, business and traffic congested areas.

The street cleaning is also organized differently according to types of streets. For the main streets located in densely commercial and tourist areas, the street sweeping is operated over 24 hours in shifts: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., 5 p.m. to midnight and midnight to 7 a.m. For streets in less densely populated areas, the sweeping operates twice a day: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to midnight. And for general streets, sweeping occurs once a day, between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.
In addition to its comprehensive system of garbage collection and street sweeping, unity of command has also contributed to the success to date of garbage management in Hat Yai. As shown in Figure 5.3, specific garbage collection tasks are reported directly to the Chief of the Cleaning Section and, through the Chief, to the Director, while the responsibilities of street and drainage cleaning are divided into four zones, each managed by a zone chief. Evaluation and monitoring are very comprehensive and detailed: all Area and Zone Chiefs evaluate performance every week, while the Cleaning Chief and Director carry out a performance evaluation every month.

**Figure 5.3: The Administration of City Cleaning Works, Hat Yai Municipality**

- Chief of the Cleaning Section
- Chief Zone I
  - (1) the Area Chief of Street Sweeping
  - (2) the Area Chief of Drainage Cleaning
- Chief Zone II
  - (1)
  - (2)
- Chief Zone III
  - (1)
  - (2)
- Chief Zone IV
  - (1)
  - (2)

Source: Adapted from HYM, Cleaning Section (1996).

Before working hours, cleaning employees have to meet at the municipal office. This provides an opportunity for the administrators to have contact with the street-level employees. The Mayor normally visits these meetings once a month. The Director of
Sanitation and Environment frequently checks meetings himself, including night-shift meetings. He stated in an interview that during a meeting he adapts basic military training to discipline cleaning workers by such means as forming a line and exercising. Such training, he states, makes workers forget about personal problems and concentrate on work. The meeting is the place for giving instructions, warnings and punishment that arise from the public’s complaints.65

Overall, three main factors contribute to the success of Hat Yai’s cleanliness:

1) The Mayor and municipal administrators take the cleaning task seriously; this determination and commitment to garbage collection and city cleaning is reflected in the number of staff and the budget, as well as in the comprehensive operation and monitoring system. Facing the close attention of supervisors, cleaning employees also have the will to work hard. In addition, municipal administrators pay attention to the welfare and morale of the workers. The Director in particular is very close with street-level employees.66

2) The system has competent personnel and is well organized according to the needs of different areas. The adequacy and good condition of trucks and equipment facilitate the work of the employees. Before undertaking their responsibilities, workers are normally trained to use the equipment. Moreover, in regard to their welfare and morale, cleaning employees have formed “the Spirit Collection Club” (Chom-rom Ruam Nam-jai), which lends money to its members. The municipality also selects the “employee of the year” in order to encourage better performance.

65 Interview with the Director of the Division of Sanitation and Environment on May 26, 1996.
66 I was told by more than one of the municipal employees that the Director constantly comes to check night-shift meetings. He also pays attention to social and personal aspects of his staff, for example, organizing sports, field trips and parties; and arranging donations from municipal administrators for staff in case of accidents.
3) There is general cooperation in the city with the garbage system. Residents cooperate with the staff by putting out garbage close to collection time. The business community and social groups donate money and equipment such as garbage containers. The community groups and complaints from general public provide the municipality with ears and eyes to check on the performance of the workers.

- Garbage Disposal

Smoothly operating garbage management in Hat Yai is also due to the availability of a disposal site. The current disposal method is open dumping and occasional burning. The municipality has its own dumping site with an area of 135 rai (21.6 ha), located in Kuenlang Subdistrict, about 12 km. south-west of the municipality. It has been open for more than 20 years and 90% of its area has been utilized.

As an open dump site, the present garbage site has problems with flies, odour, and waste water. Yet, in general, the municipality has had no trouble with the surrounding residents except for an incident in early 1996. The Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO), located at the back of the site, was unhappy with the municipality’s ignorance of the problem of fire and smoke at the garbage site and led a protest which blocked garbage trucks from the site. However, the problem ended overnight when the Mayor readily promised the SAO that he would take good care of the problem. Since the fire was caused by garbage being burnt garbage to disperse flies and to search for valuables, especially copper, burning garbage is now prohibited.

As almost all the site area has been utilized, the municipality has many projects in hand to secure another garbage disposal site. First is the construction of a sanitary landfill
under the second round of the Regional Cities Development Project (1992-2001). The municipality has already procured a 517 rai (82.72 ha) plot of land in Na Mom District, 12 to 17 km. from the municipality. However, site construction, which is the responsibility of the Public Works Department, Ministry of the Interior, was delayed by protest from surrounding residents in 1995. The project is now in progress (1996). According to the Director of the Division of Sanitary Works, the residents allow the site construction but not the depositing of garbage. Meanwhile, the municipality has attempted to create a good relationship with the residents, such as by planting trees as a buffer zone and providing public health service to the community. The Mayor said that it is important that residents have confidence in the garbage disposal system. The new site has to be approved for safety, and guaranteed by the governmental agencies such as the governor or the Pollution Control Department, before it can operate.

In view of the delay in preparing the sanitary landfill at Na Mom District, the municipality decided to convert a project already under the action plan on pollution control into a project to clean up the present garbage site. It allocated a budget of Bt47 million (CND$2.47 million) to the clean-up. The site is then expected to be used as a dump site for another three to five years. Other projects in the action plan on pollution control include the construction of an incinerator for infectious waste and a campaign for environmental awareness. The incinerator will be located at the present garbage site, and there is a process of bidding for its construction. The campaign for environmental awareness has been implemented and includes a radio program, a video on urban environmental problems (which

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67 Interview with the Director of the Division of Sanitary Works on April 22, 1996.
68 Interview with the Mayor of the Hat Yai Municipality on May 10, 1996.
airs on TV channel 11, Hat Yai), an environmental newsletter “Love Your Locality” (*Ruk Tin*), issued every two months, and an environmental camp for youth and for environmental leadership training.

In addition to its own governmental project, the municipality also pays much attention to the recycling project that a private company proposed for Songkhla province. The company plans to build a recycling site on military land. The likelihood of the project going forward is high, since it is supported by both the military and Songkhla’s governor. The project was introduced to the public at a seminar (*Ruk Tin* 1996, 1[5]), and is already included in the Five-year Municipal Development Plan (1997-2001).

**The Involvement of Civil Society in the Waste Issue**

Given the activity of the municipality over the waste problem, one wonders how, and at what level, the general public and civil-society groups can involve themselves in the waste issue. In fact, citizens’ engagement in municipal waste management is low and concentrated on a few basic activities. As shown in Table 5.14, our survey in Hat Yai indicates that, of the nine waste-management activities listed in the questionnaire, only 3% of respondents did between seven and nine activities, while the majority (63.2%) did from zero to three. Given the politically passive nature of Hat Yai society it is no surprise, as shown in Table 5.15, to see, on the one hand, a low level of participation in activities which pressure the municipality, such as making a complaint to the media (5.7%), and, on the other hand, a high degree of participation in basic activities required by municipal laws such as providing a garbage bin (89.8%) and paying garbage fees (65.2%).
Table 5.14: Level of Engagement in Municipal Waste Management in Hat Yai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Participation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (0-3 activities)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (4-6 activities)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (7-9 activities)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

Table 5.15: Citizens’ Engagement in Municipal Waste Management by Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide your own garbage bins</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain information concerning solid waste and cleanliness campaigning activities from the municipal government</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay garbage collection fees to the municipal government</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide information (e.g. questionnaire) or advice concerning solid waste management to the municipality</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate money to municipal government for equipment such as garbage containers and garbage collection trucks</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in municipal programs and projects regarding a solid waste issue</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a complaint involving solid waste issues against the municipal government through the media</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for municipal supports (budget, personnel and equipment) in community waste activities</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign petition protesting particular municipal garbage projects</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

In addition to the systematic municipal waste management, the general public are also involved in informal recycling activities. The survey reveals that 62.9% of respondents sort garbage and 53.4% sell used goods. Even though the municipality has not yet implemented a waste recycling program, as mentioned, such activities are already undertaken by the informal waste sector network which includes garbage pickers, municipal garbage collectors, and junk
dealers. It is estimated that 15.74 tons of recycling waste are bought by these junk businesses each day (Toxic Substance and Solid Waste Management Subdivision 1995).

The involvement of other civil-society groups in waste issues is very low. As mentioned, no NGO or civic groups are dedicated to the garbage issue. Only community groups undertake activities for the city, typically, as we have seen, by organizing cleaning campaigns within their own communities every year and by joining with the municipality in city-wide cleaning activities. The business associations or enterprises do not have their own activities to address the waste problem but instead cooperate with the municipality by donating money and equipment such as garbage bins.

In conclusion, it is clear that in Hat Yai the municipality has played a major role in effectively dealing with problems associated with solid-waste management, while the contribution by civil society has been minimal. The municipality’s success results in large part from its excellent financial resources, which enable the municipality to have sufficient employees and equipment, especially garbage trucks. Moreover, Hat Yai is fortunate to have available landfill to dump garbage. Another crucial factor is leadership, which is made especially evident in the powerful mayor, who has shown a strong commitment to solving the solid-waste problem and has demonstrated effective supervision as well as foresight in securing disposal sites.

V. Conclusion

Hat Yai municipality presents a case for demonstrating the effectiveness of strong leadership. The success of Hat Yai municipality is clearly centred around its mayor, Kreng Suwannawong. He seems almost single-handedly to take control of major administrative
elements to produce effective performance. In municipal politics, he and his political group have maintained domination for nearly three decades. In municipal administration, he has almost total control of the municipality. His strong and active leadership, and extensive experience as a mayor together with viable financial resources, provide him with a greater capacity to command and to make possible the goals established by his organization. In his relationship with the general public, despite being perceived as a dictator or an influential figure by some, many Hat Yai residents agree that he has done a lot of good things for Hat Yai. Such a perception allows him to gain a considerable level of cooperation from the general public and major forces in Hat Yai society, especially the business community and academic sector. In central-local relations, the well-known mayor's strong personal connections and his ability to negotiate effectively with the central government has cultivated a relationship wherein his needs are generally considered. In general, intervention by the central government remains minimal, probably as a result of the mayor’s strong leadership, his strong connections and political influence, and the ability of Hat Yai to handle its own problems.

However, success or strength based on a single individual rather than a process or structure, of course, presents a weakness in itself. The mayor’s patriarchal leadership style has worked in the past and continues to work now, but whether it will work in the future is another question. The reason is that Hat Yai society is becoming increasingly sophisticated over time. Right now, the mayor’s power is starting to be challenged by newer forces, including the emergence of the Krietiphum group as an alternative political group in Hat Yai politics, and the formation of civil-society groups concerned with urban issues. It will be
interesting, therefore, to see how the Hat Yai municipality adapts itself to this changing context in the future.

Certainly, despite the unique characteristics of both cities, Hat Yai in this chapter and Chiang Mai in the previous one, their experiences provide valuable lessons for other municipalities. The comparative study of these two cases in the following chapter should shed more light on the major factors impacting on municipal performance in Thailand.
Chapter Six

Urban Governance in a Comparative Perspective

I. Introduction

The case studies of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai municipalities in Chapters 4 and 5 present a contrasting picture of municipal performance on solid-waste management. The question arises as to why Hat Yai’s performance is better. This research took as its point of departure the assumption that urban governance should be an important explanatory factor for municipal performance. To demonstrate this argument, this chapter is devoted primarily to an exploration of the urban governance system in solid-waste management in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai. The key issues are to what extent they are different from each other in the components of urban governance and what explains such differences. The findings will be inputs for the discussion of urban governance in the final chapter. But first, we begin the chapter by comparing various aspects of the performance of the two municipalities on the solid-waste issue.

II. Municipal Performance

It is clear from the outset that Chiang Mai and Hat Yai municipalities are different in their performance on solid waste. More precisely, Hat Yai municipality appears to be more effective than Chiang Mai in managing its waste problem, when they are compared across the three elements of performance employed in this study: effectiveness, formal recognition and citizens’ satisfaction.¹

¹ Discussion of measuring municipal performance is in Chapter 2, Section IV: Framework for Analysis.
**Effectiveness**

Hat Yai municipality is more effective than Chiang Mai in providing services involving waste management. From cursory observations, the streets in Hat Yai city are cleaner than those in Chiang Mai, especially in and around the business areas, as a result of the former having a 24-hour street sweeping system. Garbage collection service is more thorough in Hat Yai than in Chiang Mai, as the percentage of all garbage that remains uncollected is 10% and 20%, respectively. Moreover, according to the author's survey, 69.3% of Hat Yai but only 57.1% of Chiang Mai respondents receive municipal garbage collection services.

In addition, municipal garbage services in Chiang Mai have been hamstrung by the failure to secure a permanent dumping site and/or to search for alternative methods of garbage disposal since the closing down of Mae Hia dump site in 1989. One factor obstructing the municipality from obtaining a permanent landfill site is the past experience of Chiang Mai in managing landfill sites. The Mae Hia site as well as many other temporary sites faced frequent complaints from residents, which the municipality was unable to accommodate. This led to protests, resulting in closing down the sites. The lack of landfill capacity finally took its toll on the city by causing a garbage crisis in 1994 when the municipality ran out of dump sites and was unable to provide garbage services for almost a month. This incident is a clear indicator of poor municipal performance on solid-waste management. Even now, the future of garbage disposal in Chiang Mai is uncertain.

In contrast, Hat Yai municipality has its own permanent landfill site. Although it faced residents' complaints, these were fewer than in Chiang Mai and, importantly, the municipality readily responded to them. Moreover, the municipality has also palpable plans
— in terms of providing a landfill site, an incinerator for infectious waste and a recycling plant — for future disposal.

**Formal Recognition**

Differences in overall performance in maintaining city cleanliness can be partly extracted from the results of the annual nation-wide city cleanliness and tidiness competition arranged by the National Municipal League of Thailand in cooperation with the DOLA. In this competition, the Chiang Mai municipality was awarded only the second prize in 1988 and the consolation prize in 1985 and 1987. After its permanent disposal site closed in 1989, Chiang Mai municipality has not been awarded any prize in this competition. By contrast, Hat Yai municipality’s performance has been recognized by receiving the first prize in 1995 and 1996, as well as the second and third prizes for 1993 and 1994, respectively.

**Figure 6.1: Citizens’ Attitudes Toward Overall Municipal Performance on Solid Waste Management**

![Figure 6.1: Citizens’ Attitudes Toward Overall Municipal Performance on Solid Waste Management](image)

\[N = 505 \quad \text{Missing cases} = 4 \quad \chi^2 = 113.58 \quad (df=2) \quad P = .0000\]

Source: Author’s Survey (1996)

**Citizens’ Satisfaction**

The citizens whom the municipality aims to serve should be legitimate evaluators of its municipal performance, as a democratic institution and a service provider. Figure 6.1
compares citizens' attitudes in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai toward overall municipal performance on solid-waste management. It shows clearly that Hat Yai citizens are more satisfied than are Chiang Mai citizens. More than half (51.9%) of Chiang Mai respondents felt that their municipality performed poorly in managing the waste issue, as contrasted with only 9.9% of Hat Yai respondents. The remainder of Hat Yai respondents indicated that the municipality's performance is either excellent (22.5%) or average (67.6%), in contrast to only 5.3% and 42.8% for Chiang Mai respondents, respectively.

Figure 6.2: Citizens' Perception of the Degree of Severity of the Waste Issue

Moreover, Figure 6.2 shows the differences in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai citizens' perceptions of the solid waste issue in their own cities. Confiming the perception of poor municipal performance, 63.3% of Chiang Mai respondents stated that garbage is a serious problem in their city, as contrasted with only 27.7% of Hat Yai respondents. The majority of Hat Yai respondents (61.7%) perceived their garbage situation as only a moderate problem.

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\(^2\) The differences are statistically significant (P < .0001).

\(^3\) The differences are statistically significant (P < .0001).
This finding shows that the garbage problem in Chiang Mai city is more severe than the one in Hat Yai city. It is also confirmed by the fact that garbage ranks as the number one problem in Chiang Mai (Table 4.2) while it is ranked the second most serious problem in Hat Yai city, after traffic (Table 5.1).

Thus far, the three key elements assessed are effectiveness, formal recognition and citizens' satisfaction. These three elements of performance suggest that Hat Yai municipality is more successful than its Chiang Mai counterpart in dealing with solid waste. Given that both municipalities have similar structures, and equivalent legal authorities and revenue sources, what explains their different performance? We turn to this question in the next section.

III. Urban Governance in Comparison

A principal argument in this dissertation is that urban governance should play an important role in explaining the different municipal performances of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities. As set out in Chapter 2, urban governance, or the municipality-civil society relationship, has three components: the municipality, the civil society and the municipality-civil society interaction. The question here becomes whether Hat Yai and Chiang Mai are different in these components.

The Municipality

We begin our investigation of the urban governance argument stated above by focusing on the first component of governance: the municipal government. Of interest here is the municipality's capacity in dealing with the urban problem of waste management. In this
regard, we ask whether Hat Yai and Chiang Mai are different in their capacity or competency in achieving their policy goals concerning waste issues.

Measuring municipal competency, already elaborated in Chapter 2, is a function of three variables: managerial capacity, political mandate and municipal autonomy. Hat Yai municipality seems to have a greater administrative or managerial capacity than its Chiang Mai counterpart. Their differences involve the issues of resources, management styles and leadership less than those of overall administrative structure and division of functions and responsibilities, since the same municipal laws impose similarities in the latter as regards functions, municipal structures, size of municipal councils, and the municipal executive board (MEB).

One element placing Hat Yai ahead of Chiang Mai in terms of managerial capacity is resources. Hat Yai's advantages are reflected in Figures 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5, which show that the city is less populated than Chiang Mai city, but also has higher overall revenue and manpower to serve its constituencies than its Chiang Mai counterpart. As a result, it is not surprising to see in Table 6.1 that the expenditure and manpower per person ratios of Hat Yai municipality are significantly more favourable than those of Chiang Mai; for example, the 1995 ratio of municipal staff to population is 1:86 in Hat Yai as compared to 1:102 in Chiang Mai.

The greater wealth of Hat Yai municipality (relative to Chiang Mai) is even more evident in the case of solid-waste management. Constrained by financial resources, Chiang Mai's spending on city cleaning and solid-waste collection is far less than that of Hat Yai. Table 6.2 illustrates that on average between 1993-1995, both municipalities spent almost the same proportion of the total expenditure on solid waste management, that is, 12.1% and
12.49% for Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, respectively. In real terms, however, Hat Yai municipality's spending on waste management was almost three times that of Chiang Mai municipality in 1993, and nearly double in 1994. The gap was also wide in terms of expenditure on solid-waste management per person. For instance, the rate in Hat Yai in 1995 was CDN$25.82 per person, as compared to only CDN$18.81 per person in Chiang Mai.

Figure 6.3 Population of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai, 1991-1995.

Figure 6.4: Revenue (Million CDN$)

Figure 6.5: Manpower (persons)

Table 6.1: Ratio of Population to Financial Resources and Municipal Staff, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Hat Yai</th>
<th>Chiang Mai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure per person</td>
<td>209 (CDN)</td>
<td>167 (CDN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal staff</td>
<td>(staff) 1: 86</td>
<td>(staff) 1:102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.2: Expenditure on City Cleaning and Garbage Collection, 1993-1995 (SCDN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chiang Mai</th>
<th>Hat Yai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cleaning expenditure</td>
<td>% of total expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2,625,277.89</td>
<td>13.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>2,591,037.89</td>
<td>11.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>3,249,270</td>
<td>11.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's calculation (Tables 4.6, 4.14, 5.5 and 5.13)
Note: (a) Expenditure on city cleaning and solid-waste collection in Chiang Mai from 1994 onward includes both the budget of the Cleaning Section and the remuneration of CDN$778,910 per year paid to the G.B.C Group for garbage collection in two municipal districts (Sriwichai and Mengrai), under the terms of the five-year privatization project.

Not surprisingly, with its greater financial resources, Hat Yai municipality hires more personnel for waste management than does Chiang Mai and has a greater capacity for procuring equipment (such as garbage trucks and sweeping and cleaning machines) that is in better condition. For instance, as shown in Figure 6.6, there were 248 street sweepers and 239 garbage collectors in Hat Yai, as compared to only 88 and 196 in Chiang Mai. The gap widens significantly when considering the proportion of street sweepers and garbage collectors to the overall population. As shown in Table 6.3, there is one street sweeper for every 633.34 people in Hat Yai as compared to every 1,962.65 people in Chiang Mai. Similarly, a garbage collector serves 881.19 people in Chiang Mai, but only 657.19 people in Hat Yai. It seems without dispute that fewer personnel will be a principal reason for the poor performance in Chiang Mai since solid-waste services, such as street cleaning and garbage collection, are labour-intensive tasks. The shortage of operational staff was mentioned by the Chiang Mai Chief of the Cleaning Section as being a major constraint on the adequate provision of street cleaning and garbage collecting services. In addition, the efficacy of solid waste collecting services in Chiang Mai is also hampered by the inefficiency of the older and
lower-capacity garbage trucks, despite its having a higher number of trucks relative to Hat Yai. Chiang Mai had fewer than 10 of the more modern garbage trucks, which have a compressing device and can hold up to 10.00 m³ of waste and keep odours from leaking out. Hat Yai municipality, on the other hand, had 16 of them in 1996 (HYM, Sanitation and Environment Division 1996,11).

**Figure 6.6: The Number of Street Sweepers and Garbage Collectors, 1995**

![Bar chart showing the number of street sweepers and garbage collectors in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai in 1995](chart)

**Table 6.3: Proportions of Street Sweepers and Garbage Collectors to the Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Personnel</th>
<th>Hat Yai</th>
<th>Chiang Mai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) street sweeper</td>
<td>1: 633.34</td>
<td>1: 1962.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) garbage collector</td>
<td>1: 657.19</td>
<td>1: 881.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question then becomes one of why Hat Yai municipality has more total financial resources than its Chiang Mai counterpart. Despite having the same sources of revenue, the comparison of revenue structure between Hat Yai and Chiang Mai in Figure 6.7 shows that the revenue from centrally levied taxes makes a difference between these two cities. In 1995, Hat Yai municipality earned 55.70% of its revenue from centrally levied taxes, compared to only 39.13% in Chiang Mai. Since these taxes include, for example, business tax (VAT), entertainment tax, automobile and vehicle tax and liquor tax, the higher revenue from these taxes suggests that Hat Yai city has a more vibrant economy than that of Chiang Mai.
Figure 6.7: Revenue Structure of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai Municipalities, 1995

- centrally levied taxes include business tax, entertainment tax, automobile and vehicle tax, and liquor tax.
- locally levied taxes include property tax, slaughter house and signboard taxes.

Source: Table 4.7 and Table 5.6.

In addition to the availability of resources, Hat Yai municipality seems to be superior to Chiang Mai in terms of managerial capacity, as is evidenced by internal operation systems and leadership. On solid-waste services, the municipalities share many similarities, such as door-to-door refuse collection, the lack of permanent waste recycling or separation programs, the operation of the Cleaning Section in the Division of Sanitation and Environment, and the landfill disposal method. However, their differences remain significant. While Hat Yai municipality is the sole provider of waste services, Chiang Mai municipality has privatized refuse collection service in two of four municipal districts, giving a five-year contract (1993-1998), to a private company, G.B.C. Group Ltd.

Thus far, the experience of contracting out in Chiang Mai has been unimpressive. Except for the reduction in the number of municipal garbage collectors, as shown in Table 4.14, the privatization of the garbage collecting service has not resulted in improved efficiency for various reasons. First, the main problem of the private company in providing
adequate service is the shortage of personnel and the inadequacy of garbage trucks. On many occasions, for example, complaints or a strike by the G.B.C. Group's personnel required that the Chiang Mai municipality provide extra collection services in the two privatized municipal districts. However, doing so further diminished the already small number of municipal staff and garbage trucks in operation within the other two areas that are municipal responsibilities.

Second, the poor performance of the private company is also due to a weak enforcement capacity on the part of the municipality in monitoring the contract. Since the privatization of the refuse service was a pilot project, an efficient monitoring system is not yet in place. The inadequacy of garbage trucks on the road in the two privatized areas reflected such weakness. According to a meeting report of the municipal special committee on the garbage problem (11/1995), one member of the committee monitoring the performance of the private company found it difficult to check whether the private company did in fact operate the number of garbage trucks specified by the contract, because inspection could be done only on paper. Otherwise, it had to stop the service to do an accurate truck inspection.

And third, the failure of contracting out garbage collection service in Chiang Mai can reflect a deeper problem, that is, the ability of the municipality to settle the terms of a contract with a private company. As expressed by the former leader of the Prachasanti, the opposition group, the terms of the privatized contract rather favoured the private company. One major drawback of this privatized contract is that it has not encouraged the private company to increase service coverage and efficiency but rather reduce the costs of operation, since the major part of the compensation to the private company is fixed (CDN$778,910 per

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4 Interview with Thongchai Ramingwong on June 26, 1996.
year). However, municipal officers and a former member of the Municipal Executive Board involved in this privatization pilot project felt that they had nothing to do with setting the terms in the contract, since the arrangement for privatization was influenced by the Urban Management Office, DOLA. This reflects the weak position of the Chiang Mai municipality in the central-local relationship, which will be explored later under the issue of municipal autonomy.

In the last few years, Chiang Mai municipality has struggled in its attempt to ensure that there is no interruption in the daily service. Hat Yai municipality, on the other hand, has focused instead on improving efficiency and city coverage of waste services. The Chiang Mai garbage collection and street cleaning services operate only in the daytime. In contrast, Hat Yai initiated 24-hour services which are comprehensive and flexible in taking different types of areas and streets into consideration. For example, garbage pickup around business areas operates mainly during the night shift to avoid traffic as well as to increase efficiency due to less obstruction by vehicles and pedestrians. Such an operation, complemented by an effective monitoring and evaluating system, can improve the coverage of municipal collection service by up to 100% in business areas. In addition, Hat Yai municipality pays particular attention to its operational staff in terms of training and welfare, and recognition given by the executive officers as these are all considered major elements in improved performance. According to the Hat Yai Director of Sanitation and Environment, both the daily operational staff meeting, with the occasional visit by the mayor, and a few calisthenic exercises before working in the field are useful mechanisms in monitoring or supervising staff and creating the will to work. It is certain that the morale of the operation staff of Hat Yai exceeds that of Chiang Mai. In Chiang Mai, staff have a high turnover rate, receive many
complaints from citizens and face the pressure of limited resources. By contrast, their counterparts in Hat Yai receive awards for their performance, get direct personal attention from higher executive officers, and operate with adequate and well-maintained equipment.

Waste-disposal management is another area that reflects a difference in managerial capacity between Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities. Despite using the same disposal methods, that is, the use of open landfills and occasional burning, Hat Yai’s disposal site produced fewer environmental problems and consequently resulted in fewer residents’ complaints than in Chiang Mai. As illustrated in Chapter 4, the history of the Mae Hia site in Chiang Mai presents nothing less than the failure of the municipality to provide adequate waste-disposal management. In the early years, an organic composting fertilizer plant was closed down due to financial losses, and later the municipality’s investment in the incinerator located at Mae Hia site became yet another fiasco due to problems originating in its design and operation. Finally the mismanagement and unsanitary treatment of Mae Hia dump site, related to its low capacity and the negligence of municipal staff, created severe environmental and health problems, that is, polluted underground water, terrible odour and enormous numbers of flies. These problems eventually led to the 1989 protest by residents to close the site. This Mae Hia dump site incident has had a lasting negative impact on the credibility of the Chiang Mai municipality, especially as regards their promise or guarantee of an environmentally friendly disposal site to be built elsewhere. This lack of credibility partly explains why the municipality faced local protests over almost every site planned for waste disposal. Hat Yai’s disposal site also faced residents’ complaints and protests but the municipality was able to respond immediately to the complaints and settle the terms with the residents.
Since leadership is at the heart of an effective organization, in addition to resources and internal processes, the greater managerial capacity of Hat Yai municipality over its Chiang Mai counterpart is also a matter of leadership. It is highly evident that, during the decade 1985-1995, Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities presented significantly different leadership styles. Hat Yai’s mayor, who has been in office continuously since the 1960s, is well-known for his strong personality, outstanding political stature, expertise as a mayor and dedication to work. These attributes are reflected in his leadership and management styles of active involvement in municipal administration, close monitoring and a paternal relationship toward the staff. As a result, his decisions are authoritative in the sense that municipal staff at all levels respect them and try to fulfill their leader’s aspirations. One may argue that, since it approximates centralization, this kind of leadership style may not be an ideal one. However, in the case of Hat Yai, the strong and centralized leadership can get things moving and can strengthen managerial capacity in that it reduces conflict and creates a high degree of unity within the municipality. The styles of regular follow-up and admonition also keep municipal staff, especially division directors and section chiefs, motivated to get the job done.

In contrast, the Chiang Mai mayor, in particular during the Ananthaphum administration (1985-1995), played a relatively passive role. He was not actively engaged in municipal administration, which he entrusted to his four deputy mayors, each of whom had approximately only two years in office. Since the mayor as the head of the municipality was quite aloof from issues or problems facing the municipality, and municipal affairs were divisively administrated by deputy mayors, the question arose of the capacity of the municipality to respond swiftly to problems or issues, especially when they go beyond division boundaries, in a systematic manner. The solidarity and willingness to work among
municipal staff were further weakened by the sour relationship between the MEB and the head of municipal staff (the municipal clerk) in the second term of the Ananthaphum administration (1990-1995).

The leadership issues in Chiang Mai concerned not only the passive role shown by the mayor but also his lack of integrity and determination. A professor of Chiang Mai University describes the leadership style of the Ananthaphum administration as "pleasurism," referring to the style in which leaders emphasize making themselves happy on a day-to-day basis and enjoying the benefits of being municipal executives without any regard for the problems until they become too severe to handle. Such a leadership style, according to this professor, was ineffective in a city such as Chiang Mai which experienced rapid growth in the last decade. The Chiang Mai mayor and his associates were also criticized for running an openly corrupt system of urban management (Atkinson and Vorratnchaiphan 1996, 245). This lack of honesty certainly had a negative impact on the leaders' credibility and legitimacy in the process weakening their control over the municipal bureaucracy.

Such differences in leadership style are also confirmed by our survey. The comparison of people's opinions toward the mayor in the two cities shows a strikingly different picture. Asking citizens of each city to evaluate their mayor according to five characteristics of leadership — strength, integrity, capability, open-mindedness and trustworthiness, as shown in Table 6.4 — showed that most respondents in Hat Yai were favourable toward their mayor, while their counterparts in Chiang Mai were not. The majority of sampled residents in Chiang Mai appraised their mayor as having a low quality of leadership across the board. In

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5 Interview with Prof. Thanan Anumanrachaton, on June 13, 1996.
6 The survey question states clearly that the Hat Yai mayor is Kreng Suwannawong while the Chiang Mai mayor referred to is Vorakorn Tontranon. The differences are statistically significant (P<.0001).
particular, 62% and 62.8% of Chiang Mai respondents rated their mayor as corruptible and untrustworthy, respectively, as compared to only 21.3% and 24.3% of Hat Yai respondents.

Table 6.4: Public Opinion Toward the Mayor by Characteristics Deemed Significant for Good Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>High (%)</th>
<th>Moderate (%)</th>
<th>Low (%)</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Missing Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hat Yai</td>
<td>Chiang Mai</td>
<td>Hat Yai</td>
<td>Chiang</td>
<td>Hat Yai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong *</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorruptible *</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-minded *</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable *</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy *</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* statistically significant (p < .0001)

Source: Author’s Survey (1996)

Figure 6.8: Public Opinion Toward the Mayor (the high category from Table 6.4)

Figure 6.8 shows that a much higher percentage of Hat Yai respondents, as compared to those in Chiang Mai, rated their mayor highly in every one of the five leadership aspects. Not surprisingly, the data presented in Figure 6.8 also confirms the centralized leadership style of the Hat Yai mayor as his open-mindedness was ranked by respondents as the lowest among the five leadership characteristics. In the overall evaluation, as shown in Figure 6.9, most Hat Yai respondents (47.7%) consider their mayor as having good leadership qualities,
while the Chiang Mai mayor is regarded as mediocre according to the majority of Chiang Mai respondents (56%).

Figure 6.9: The Overall Evaluation of the Mayor

![Bar Chart]

N = 503    Missing cases = 6    \(X^2 = 75.32 \, (df=2)\)    \(P = .0000\)
Source: Author's Survey (1996)

Judged so favourably by the general public, it is hardly surprising that the Hat Yai mayor has been in municipal office for more than three decades. He is now serving his seventh consecutive term (1995-2000). His political group, the Old group or Klum Kao, has also been consistently returned to serve as the majority group in the Hat Yai municipal council ever since its establishment. This long-standing dominance reflects the high degree of political support given by the people through the electoral system. Not only has the public trusted him to be the mayor, it has also provided him with virtually no opposition in the last three terms (1980-1995). The situation is quite different in Chiang Mai. There is no evidence here of a mayor who can secure his power for more than two consecutive terms. Despite the long-standing domination of the Prachasanti group in the past, Chiang Mai municipal politics since the mid-1980s have become increasingly polarized and highly competitive, as indicated by the intense political campaigns and by the splitting of the municipal council seats between the Ananthaphum and Prachasanti groups in the proportions of 14:10 and 16:8 in the 1985
and 1990 elections, respectively. Even though Ananthaphum could claim victory in these two elections, and its leader took office for two consecutive terms, the political mandate and public trust were not as clear, given the presence of a considerable number of opposition members in the council.

When the situations in Hat Yai and Chiang Mai are compared in this respect, it is obvious that the confidence and continuation of the leadership and the impeccable popular support of the incumbent mayor in Hat Yai are more favourable for sustaining the long-term motivation of the leaders. That is, they may more readily set out a long-term plan for city development and concentrate their energies in putting it into practice, instead of aiming just at short-term political gains. In other words, continuity and the sense of having a secure place in office in the indefinite future motivates the Hat Yai leaders to think in terms of the future of the city and thereby launch plans which may not have direct or immediate impacts on voters; therefore, plans are made without being greatly influenced by political expediency (i.e. the need to get back in office). For example, Hat Yai decided to purchase a plot of land in the early 1990s in Na Mom District to be used as a landfill. Had they not decided at this time, the municipality could not have afforded it later, given the projected price of land. But this example reflects the kinds of practical decisions that can be made without reference to political expediency. The Hat Yai mayor has also undertaken (1996) a plan to lay out Hat Yai’s integrated city planning, which will benefit both the municipality and adjacent areas. At the same time, the continuity of leadership provides a stable environment for business investment and helps the mayor gain loyalty and compliance from his municipal staff. This factor may offer a better notion as to why the mayoral power in Hat Yai tends to be more authoritative than that in Chiang Mai.
The insecurity of power and a dynamic popular base made the Chiang Mai political leaders emphasize plans and activities which could produce visible and immediate results. This may explain why solid-waste management received a lower priority in the past, despite the early symptom of garbage sickness in 1982. The selection in Chiang Mai of infrastructure projects for the Regional Cities Development Project (a study done around 1983 and implemented in 1985) did not include waste disposal facilities of any kind.\(^7\) Eight out of the fourteen projects proposed involved bridge construction, and street and drainage improvement. Four projects involved the Mae Kha canal and the Ping river, and two were projects implemented in low-income community development. These facilities received a higher priority than the improvement of the dump site, since they were located within the municipal area while the Mae Hia dump site was not. Moreover, these projects would gain the immediate notice of constituents, while the improvement of Mae Hai would not. It was also true that a budget allocation to improve a street or to construct a bridge had more visibility and had more direct impact on voters than did spending on a new garbage truck or on proper waste disposal. Interestingly, in the 1990s when the garbage problem reached a critical stage, the issue was still a political victim, although for quite other reasons. Since the success in managing waste would have earned the incumbent team credit and political support, the competitive nature of municipal politics in Chiang Mai motivated the opposition forces to obstruct municipal efforts. This factor made a weak municipality even weaker and eventually led to the garbage crisis in 1994, which contributed to the total defeat of the Ananthaphum group in the 1995 election.

\(^7\) There were four cities participating in this first stage of the Regional Cities Development Project: Chiang Mai, Nakorn Ratchasrima, Khon Kaen, and Songkhla. Unlike Chiang Mai, the rest included a project to improve the waste management facilities in their proposal.
Another benefit which the Hat Yai municipality gains from having strong and consistent political support and stable leadership is credit and respect from external agencies, especially those of the central government. As the former Director of the Division of Local Government Affairs, in charge of supervision of local government, expresses it: "for mayor Kreng (the Hat Yai mayor), we make sure that what we introduce or bring to him is good." Such respect reflects the strong position of the Hat Yai municipality in its relations with the central government. This respect leads us to the issue of municipal autonomy within the centralized nature of the government system in Thailand. As illustrated, local government authorities, as the creation of the central government, have limited autonomy and operate under the same central-local protocols. In reality, however, some local authorities have greater autonomy than others, and surely greater autonomy is a reflection of a stronger municipality. Are Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities different in this regard?

Figure 6.10: Percentage of Central Grants to Total Revenue, 1986-1995

On the surface, Hat Yai and Chiang Mai should have the same degree of autonomy, given their overall significance, size and legal status. But deeper analysis suggests that Hat

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Sources: 1) Chiang Mai's data from Table 4.7 and CMM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section (1996, 169). 2) Hat Yai's data from Table 5.6 and HYM, Plan and Policy Analysis Section (1996, 41).

8 Informal interview with the former Director of the Division of Local Government Affairs on July 4, 1996.
Yai municipality has a higher degree of autonomy than its Chiang Mai counterpart. Central grants can imply the degree to which the central government involves itself in local affairs. Thus, as Figure 6.10 suggests, Chiang Mai receives a higher percentage of grants to total revenue than does Hat Yai for every year in the past decade except for 1994.

The substantial rise in 1994 in the provision of central grants to Hat Yai provides a very interesting picture of the central-local relationship. As noted in Chapter 5, the grant’s increase was partly a contribution from the environmental fund to support environmental infrastructure projects under the pollution control plan, a result of Hat Yai being designated as a pollution control zone (PCZ) in 1992. According to the 1992 Environmental Act, the Pollution Control Department (PCD) of MOSTE has the jurisdiction to work directly with PCZs such as the Hat Yai municipality in regard to environmental problems. Since the central-local relationship in Thailand is generally monopolized through the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), the established relationship with the MOSTE creates an alternative linkage to the central government for Hat Yai.

This move by the Hat Yai municipality is considered to be very wise, since it not only reduces the degree of an otherwise strong dependency on the MOI but has also proven beneficial to the municipality in dealing with environmental issues. The PCZ status also gave Hat Yai access to the environmental fund. Moreover, the partnership style of the PCD, MOSTE, which has technical expertise in the field, strengthens the capability of Hat Yai, since the municipality is responsible for the whole plan while the PCD provides technical suggestions and personnel training. This contrasts with the “we’ll do it for you” or paternal style of DOLA of MOI, as already illustrated in Chapter 3. Hat Yai’s Director of the Sanitary
Works Division describes the difference in styles: "the relationship with the DOLA, MOI is like working with a supervisor while the PCD, MOSTE is like working with a friend".\(^9\)

In addition to the lower central grants and a relationship with the MOSTE, the relatively higher degree of autonomy of Hat Yai municipality is readily apparent in a number of decisive actions such as its decision to withdraw from the first stage of the Regional Cities Development Project due to the inability to settle financial terms. This autonomy is also evident in greater bargaining power, enhancing its ability, for example, to lobby DOLA to retain capable staff, such as the municipal clerk, Yong-yuth Wichaidith, who had worked with the municipality from 1978 to 1990.

On the other hand, Chiang Mai municipality is relatively weaker in its relation to the central government as is reflected in the unsuccessful attempts of the mayor over one and a half years to remove the municipal clerk. The removal eventually occurred with intervening pressure from the Chiang Mai MP who was the Secretary of the Minister of the Interior at that time. Furthermore, the weaker autonomy of Chiang Mai municipality relative to Hat Yai is displayed by the higher frequency of central intervention in municipal administration and affairs; it can, in part, be due to its informal designation as "an urban laboratory" for the DOLA's experiments. Most new initiatives or pilot projects regarding urban development designed and undertaken by the DOLA\(^{10}\) were tested here. Of course, this experimentation reflects the significance of Chiang Mai municipality and the good intentions of the DOLA.

\(^9\) Interview with the Director of the Sanitary Works Division, Hat Yai municipality, on April 22, 1996.

\(^{10}\) For example, the five-year municipal development planning scheme, the improvement of low-income communities in urban areas project (the collaboration between the Office of Urban Development, DOLA and UNICEF), the pilot project on the privatization of municipal services, and the urban environmental management project (the collaboration project between the Office of Urban Development of DOLA and GTZ. The project report is found in Atkinson and Vorrratnaichiphan [1996]).
However, this technical assistance seems to have been fruitless since the municipality showed no sign of improvement. In some cases, Chiang Mai was left with additional and more severe problems, as illustrated in the case of the privatized garbage collection. The unsuccessful implementation of some technical assistance projects — for example, the urban environmental management project (Atkinson and Vorratnchaiphan 1996) — shows that Chiang Mai leaders had no real intention of implementing them but participated only because they were introduced to the projects by the superior agency, the DOLA. It was also in Chiang Mai that the municipality failed to cope adequately with its own affairs, thereby encouraging the central government to intervene in such issues as high-rise buildings, street expansion and the waste problem. On the latter issue, municipal leaders were seen as indecisive, having developed no definite plan to tackle the problem, partly because of their waiting for the DOLA's assistance. Eventually the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA), a private enterprise under the supervision of MOI, proposed a plant to generate thermoelectricity from garbage. But before it could be built the project was aborted — which actually worsened the waste problem by discouraging Chiang Mai municipality from seeking an alternative solution. Therefore, the Chiang Mai experience seems to fit the general argument that the more a municipality depends on the central government, the weaker it will be.

Up to this point, our discussion has concentrated on a municipality's competency. Indicators of municipal competence that we employed in this study — managerial capabilities, political mandate and municipal autonomy — all suggest that Hat Yai municipality is more capable or, in other words, relatively stronger than its Chiang Mai counterpart in providing adequate solid-waste management.
Civil Society

This section will examine the second component of governance: civil society. Governance includes civil society as a key actor in shaping city development and calls for the understanding of the role and organization of civil society. As this study focuses on solid-waste management, civil society in Hat Yai and Chiang Mai will be examined in its activity involving waste issues outside the municipal waste system. In this study, civil society includes individual citizens, the informal sector and civic groups. The more waste management activities these elements undertake within civil society, the more active a civil society is.

The examination of waste activities performed by individual citizens suggests an ambiguous picture. Although the survey results suggest that a greater percentage of Chiang Mai respondents involve themselves in all waste management activities being investigated in this study (Figures 6.11 and 6.12), the differences are minimal. Only in a few activities are the differences between these two cities statistically significant. Figure 6.11 illustrates that a slightly higher percentage of Chiang Mai respondents perform waste reduction activities on their own. For example, 70.5% of Chiang Mai respondents, as compared to 64.5% for Hat Yai, sort garbage. Reusing waste was equally significant, with 61.7% of Chiang Mai respondents and 58.8% of Hat Yai respondents participating. For composting, only 10.1% and 7.5% of respondents in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, respectively, participated. However, of these waste recycling activities, only the selling or exchanging of used goods and recyclable waste showed a significant difference between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, that is, 62.9% and 54.2% for Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, respectively.
Figure 6.11: Citizens’ Involvement in Waste Reduction Activities

* statistically significant \((P = .04)\)

Source: Author’s Survey (1996)

Figure 6.12: Citizens’ Involvement in Community Waste Activities

* statistically significant \((P = .0014)\)

Source: Author’s Survey (1996).

In a similar vein, Figure 6.12 compares the citizens’ involvement in community waste activities organized by various civic groups. The percentage of Chiang Mai respondents participating in such organized activities is slightly higher than for Hat Yai. For example, participation in waste campaigns involved 18.9% of Chiang Mai respondents as compared to 16.2% for Hat Yai. Of all the various activities, only those activities which involved
obtaining information on waste issues and waste campaigns showed any significant difference between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai (67.2% and 53.3%, respectively).\textsuperscript{11}

It is quite clear from Figures 6.11 and 6.12 that a majority of citizens in both cities involve themselves in individual rather than collective waste activities. Except from the economic benefits of individual activities, this is also due to the fact that collective waste activities such as participating in and organizing waste campaigns are more political and policy-oriented and require more effort and spare time. Most Hat Yai and Chiang Mai residents stated that they are not involved in community waste campaigns because they do not have time and, besides, nobody asked them to join.\textsuperscript{12}

Another issue is why there were significantly more respondents from Chiang Mai than from Hat Yai participating in the obtaining of information on waste campaigns and in the selling of used and recyclable materials. The former may be related directly to the active role in waste issues taken by civic groups in Chiang Mai — a subject that will be explored later. On the other hand, the significant difference in the selling of used and recyclable materials may be related to both the environmental concern over the waste problem among Chiang Mai respondents and the insufficiency of the municipal collecting service in Chiang Mai. Moreover, economic incentives for selling used materials may also be a factor since on average Hat Yai is wealthier than Chiang Mai. The author's survey finds that average monthly income of Hat Yai respondents (Bt11280 [CDN593.68]), is higher than that of

\textsuperscript{11} The difference is statistically significant (P < .01).

\textsuperscript{12} Of 111 Chiang Mai respondents who provided reasons, 52 stated that they did not participate in waste campaigns because nobody asked them to join; 51 stated that they have no time and 22 stated that they did not know about waste campaigns. In Hat Yai, of 147 respondents, 31 stated that they did not participate because nobody asked them to join; 60 stated that they have no time and 15 stated that they did not know about the waste campaigns.
Chiang Mai (Bt8046.3 [$CDN423.49]). Another factor that may encourage Chiang Mai respondents to be more involved in selling used materials is the activity of the informal waste sector, especially small waste buyers who buy recyclable waste and used materials directly from households.

Although the data on the number of people involved in the informal waste sector (i.e., garbage pickers and waste dealers) is incomplete, there are enough data to suggest that Chiang Mai has a higher density of informal waste activities than does Hat Yai. One key indicator is that the volume of recycled waste generated through this informal waste network in Chiang Mai, as estimated by the Pollution Control Department, MOSTE, exceeds that in Hat Yai: that is, 34.2 versus 15.4 tons per day, respectively.\(^{13}\) It is clear that economic necessity is a key motivation for actors in the informal waste sector, especially street garbage pickers. Although garbage pickers are prohibited at the current dump site, as shown earlier, since the early 1990s Chiang Mai has experienced an increasing number of street garbage pickers, especially among low-income people. This is partly due to the insufficiency of the municipal collecting service to remove all waste, which, on the other hand, provides an opportunity for low-income people to have access to waste in neighbourhoods. It should be mentioned that access to dump sites for garbage picking (if it is available) tends to be limited to only those people who have connections with municipal employees. In Hat Yai, since the municipality is efficient in garbage collection, street pickers are small in number.

\(^{13}\) PCD, MOSTE calculated these figures by (1) estimating the average amount of recyclable waste sold to a junk shop per day and then (2) multiplying this amount with the number of junk shops in each city. For the calculation of an average amount of recycling, MOSTE sampled several junk shops (6 of 29 shops in Hat Yai and 2 of 11 shops in Chiang Mai) and added up their combined recycled waste and divided this by the number of sampled junk shops.
In addition to a more active informal waste sector, Chiang Mai’s civic groups are also more actively involved in waste issues than their Hat Yai counterparts. Chiang Mai has at least two active NGOs dealing directly with waste issues. One NGO is the Walk for A Better Environment which launched its programs in 1991 with the well-known campaign — walking to pick up garbage from city streets. The group’s waste activities later expanded to include the promotion of waste recycling by providing recycling cages at specific locations, financing garbage pickers to pick up recyclable wastes, disseminating information on composting and demonstrating the viability of waste recycling and composting in business.

The other NGO is the YMCA which started to pay attention to waste issues in 1992 with their campaign to address the waste problem in the polluted Ping River. The 1994 waste crisis motivated the YMCA to include the waste issue in its mission statement. Its activities are mainly educational and include raising environmental awareness; providing training on waste management, especially recycling, to key leaders in civil society (such as student leaders, teachers, community leaders and monks); and building networks among them. The YMCA is also considering organizing and educating garbage pickers (saleng people) but it has yet to be formulated into a project. In addition, these NGOs and other citizens’ groups, including the For the Chiang Mai group and the Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy, have made concerted efforts to organize waste campaigns on World Environment Day. Such activities include, for example, hosting a forum and an exhibition, creating art works from waste, and campaigning in food markets to encourage the substitution of plastic bags with cloth bags. In 1996, two additional projects involving waste were launched in Chiang Mai by NGOs which aimed not only at waste reduction but also at financial mobilization (using generated income in funding NGOs’ activities). They are the Recycle Paper For Trees Project
initiated by the Forest-Loving Community Fund, and the Old Things Project organized by the Northern NGO Committee.14

The situation is different in Hat Yai where there are no NGOs dealing with waste issues. The Love Your Birthplace Foundation is considering collecting paper from offices for resale but this has yet to be put into practice. The work of NGOs in Hat Yai, as mentioned earlier, is primarily involved in raising environmental awareness in general, as well as natural environmental issues such as the conservation of Songkhla Lake. Actually, given the fact that waste is not a serious problem for a majority of Hat Yai residents, the situation is understandable. In Chiang Mai, the more active network of NGOs and citizens’ groups was clearly prompted by the increasing severity of the garbage problem in Chiang Mai and the failure of the municipality in dealing with garbage issues, especially after the 1994 garbage crisis. Moreover, the higher number of organized groups concerned with the waste issue in Chiang Mai may also have been facilitated by the relatively higher degree of associational life in Chiang Mai, as compared to Hat Yai. Although joining associations is not a way of life for a majority of people in either city, our survey reveals that a significantly higher number of respondents in Chiang Mai than in Hat Yai (29.6% and 15.9%, respectively) are members of a group or association.15

These findings lead us to conclude that overall Chiang Mai’s civil society is more active and organized around waste issues than that of Hat Yai. However, such a generalization may be misleading without emphasizing that there is a comparative difference

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14 The Recycle Paper for Trees project involves collecting paper from business offices and reselling them. The Old Things Project asks the public for donations of used household and office items, and then repairing them for resale.
15 The difference is statistically significant (P < .01).
between these two cities regarding the extent of activities and degree of involvement of the NGOs (including citizens' groups) and, to a lesser extent, the informal waste sector while the citizens, taken individually, are not much different between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai regarding involvement in waste management activities that take place outside the municipal system. Such observations suggest that active civil society (in this area at least) appears to be related to worsening waste management problems and the incapacity of the municipality to deal with the problem.

*Municipality-Civil Society Interactions*

We end our comparative analysis with the last component of governance: the interaction between the municipality and civil society. The issue is whether there is a difference between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai in terms of the nature and characteristics of the municipality-civil society interaction. As set out in Chapter 2, this interaction involves three elements. First, on the municipality side, is *municipal openness*, referring to the extent to which the municipality provides an opportunity or access through participatory channels for civic engagement in regard to waste issues. Second, on the civil society side, is *civic engagement* which involves the degree to which the various forces in civil society engage themselves in municipal waste affairs. Last is the question of the *dominant pattern of municipality-civil society interactions*. These three elements are closely related but are separated here for the purpose of analysis.

*Municipal Openness to Civil Society's Engagement*

Is there a difference between Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities in their degrees of openness? Our comparison begins with findings that suggest that in the last decade (1985-1995), the profile of participatory channels in both municipalities was quite similar and,
importantly, that they shared the same low level of openness; that is, their participatory channels did not reflect a high degree of citizen power. Actually, both municipalities provided more participatory channels at the implementation-process level than at the decision-making level, since the channels for civic engagement at the decision-making level were created solely to comply with central guidelines.

At the policy or decision-making level, both cities made room for people’s involvement in the formulation of the municipal development plan, which includes waste management. For example, during the formulation of the 1991-1996 five-year municipal development plan, Chiang Mai municipality appointed three non-municipal members to the municipal development planning committee, as compared to four in Hat Yai. In neither case, however, did the municipality make this participation a meaningful one, but rather treated it as part of the bureaucratic requirement. There was no recruitment process for these non-municipal members, who were generally chosen at the mayor’s discretion. Their opportunity to express ideas and opinions was minimal. The municipal development committee did not even meet in Hat Yai. What the municipalities needed most from these members was their stamp of approval rather than their advice or opinions. The only channel open to the general public in this planning process in both cities was through participation in answering survey questionnaires. In addition, Hat Yai municipality had a municipal directing committee on city cleanliness and tidiness, chaired by the mayor and including municipal councillors, community leaders, business people and leaders of major business associations. However, this committee had no significant role and it met only once a year. The non-municipal members were added in an attempt to create a more cooperative environment when the

16 They are neither municipal councillors nor employees of the municipality.
municipality approached the business and community interests for their contributions during the implementation process. In Chiang Mai, after the garbage crisis, the municipality established a special committee on the garbage problem which was chaired by the deputy mayor and included only municipal employees from the divisions concerned with solid waste issues.

While neither municipality enthusiastically sought citizens' involvement at the decision-making or policy level, they widened the opportunity for civic engagement in the implementation process, through a variety of forms. For instance, both municipalities approached the business sector and civic clubs, requesting contributions in cash or kind for the organization of public events (such as social and cultural festivals, parades, city cleaning campaigns and exhibitions), for special projects and for equipment for municipal services (such as garbage bins). Community organizations were generally requested to mobilize their members to participate in such events. In Hat Yai, the municipality facilitated such requests for contributions and cooperation from these organizations by inviting them to join municipal committees. As mentioned earlier, a case in point was the appointment of community leaders, major business enterprises and associations, and councillors as members of the municipal directing committee on city cleanliness and tidiness.

Chiang Mai municipality also conducted a "meet the people session"— an outreach program of municipal assemblymen and administrators to the city's neighbourhoods, designed to improve communication between the municipality and the citizens. These sessions gave people an opportunity to present their grievances to the municipality and to make demands and suggestions (Ruland and Ladavalya 1993). In Hat Yai, the "municipality meets the people" project was implemented in cooperation with community organizations.
The project included plans to improve community infrastructure and to provide health services to community residents (such as mosquito sprays, primary child care, and community cleaning). Actually, Hat Yai municipal leaders considered community organizations a primary channel for popular participation. The municipality constantly consulted community leaders about community needs (e.g., garbage bins and drainage cleaning) and allowed them to set preferred projects for their communities in the annual budget preparation. However, whether those projects would be implemented depended on the municipality. Forms of participation in implementation also included informing citizens about municipal activities so as to improve communication with, and gain cooperation from, the general public. Both municipalities had their own public relations section responsible for organizing press conferences, producing newsletters, press releases, municipal reports and radio programs, and receiving complaints and petitions from the public.

In conclusion, we find that Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities are not very different in terms of their openness to civic engagement. Both of them have a low level of openness which can also imply a low level of transparency. Interestingly, positive changes have recently occurred in both cities to open up the municipality — somewhat more in Chiang Mai and somewhat less in Hat Yai. In 1996, while formulating their 1997-2001 five-year municipal development plans, both municipalities improved their planning systems. Chiang Mai municipality actively sought expertise and people’s involvement by inviting community organizations, business associations, citizens’ groups, NGOs, university professors and media representatives to join the five sub-municipal planning committees. When the draft was finalized, the municipality also organized a forum for the general public to express their opinions on the draft plan. Chiang Mai also commissioned a university
professor to conduct a study on a landfill site selection. In Hat Yai, the planning process included the meetings and discussions of the municipal development committee, and the participation of non-municipal members on the committee was greater than in the past. However, Hat Yai’s planning process did not aim to increase the degree of citizens’ involvement but rather to seek expertise and technical assistance from outsiders. Thus, as seen in Chapter 5, non-municipal members on the planning committee tended to be university professors, professionals and retired senior civic officials.

One may ask what factors contributed to this higher degree of openness in municipal planning in both cities. A major factor seems to be the political change after the 1995 municipal elections. In Chiang Mai, the new municipal administration under the Navarat Pattana political group introduced participatory planning, while in Hat Yai, despite the continuing domination of the Old group in municipal politics and administration, the presence of three councillors from the opposition group, Krietiphum, contributed to gradual changes in the way the incumbent mayor and the Old group governed the city. This political change suggests that the degree of municipal openness is also related to the political role of civil society, which is the focus of the next section.

*Civic Engagement*

Given the fact that Chiang Mai and Hat Yai share a similarly low level of municipal openness, the examination now shifts to the civil society side. Is there a difference in the degree of civic engagement between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai regarding municipal waste affairs? In order to determine the degree of civic engagement, we look for differences between the roles of individual citizens and civic groups.
The investigation of the direct engagement of citizens specifically in municipal waste issues in these two cities shows a similar picture (see Tables 4.18 and 5.14). The comparison of survey results, shown in Figure 6.13, reveals in both a low level of citizens' direct engagement. In a range of nine activities, only a small percentage of respondents, 2% in Chiang Mai and 3% in Hat Yai, are highly engaged in municipal waste management (7-9 activities) while a majority of respondents in Chiang Mai (65%) and Hat Yai (63.2%) fall in the lower category (0-3 activities).\(^{17}\)

**Figure 6.13: The Level of Citizens’ Direct Engagement in Municipal Waste Affairs in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai**

![Chart showing level of citizens' engagement](chart.png)

Source: Author's Survey (1996).

While the majority of Chiang Mai citizens are not highly directly engaged in municipal waste issues, they are found to express their concerns on the waste issue indirectly through the electoral system. Chiang Mai has experienced the highest voter turnout in the history of Chiang Mai’s municipal elections, at 53.54%. It is agreed among journalists, academics and the general public that the waste problem was one of the key issues during the 1995 municipal election campaign. Chiang Mai’s garbage crisis occurred in the previous year, so the issue was still fresh in the public’s memory. Such political challengers as Navarat

\(^{17}\) The difference is not statistically significant \((P > .05)\).
Pattana placed the waste problem at the top of its policy platform. The survey also confirms the significant role of the waste issue in the election as the majority of Chiang Mai respondents saw the environment as the number one issue in the election (46.5%) and ranked the waste problem as the number one environmental problem in the city during the period 1990-1995 (55.5%). Therefore, it is very likely that the waste problem motivated people to vote in the 1995 municipal election, as the public used their votes as a means to keep an incumbent political group (Ananthaphum) out of office for its failure to deal adequately with this issue. In any case, the Ananthaphum group won no seats in this election.

Figure 6.14: Voter Turnout Rate in Chiang Mai and Hat Yai Municipal Elections, 1974-1995

The case of Chiang Mai confirms the general belief that most Thais consider voting as a principal channel of civic engagement in politics, and it leads us to pay attention to the role of civil society in municipal electoral politics in determining the degree of civic engagement. Comparison on this aspect shows that Chiang Mai's civil society is more involved in electoral politics than its Hat Yai counterpart. Figure 6.14, comparing the voter turnout rate of Chiang Mai (Table 4.11) and Hat Yai (Table 5.10), shows that from the 1985 municipal election onward, the rates in Chiang Mai have far exceeded those in Hat Yai. The gap is particularly wide in the 1995 election when Chiang Mai's rate was 53.54%, as compared to
only 36.83% in Hat Yai. As already suggested, the higher turnout in Chiang Mai was encouraged by poor municipal performance, shown especially by the 1994 waste crisis, and the desire to evict the Ananthaphum group from the municipal administration.

Table 6.5: Political Groups Contesting Municipal Elections, and Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Elections</th>
<th>Chiang Mai</th>
<th>Hat Yai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political group</td>
<td>Seats won</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Prachasanti</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ananthaphum</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Prachasanti</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ananthaphum</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Prachasanti</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ananthaphum</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navarat Pattana</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (a) In the 1985 and 1990 elections, Hat Yai council had 18 members.

In addition to performance, the voter turnout rate can relate to the degree of political competitiveness. It is not surprising to find that the municipal elections in Chiang Mai are also more competitive than those in Hat Yai. Looking at the contesting political groups, as shown in Table 6.5, the 1985 and 1990 elections in Chiang Mai were a furious battle between the Prachasanti and Ananthaphum groups and the 1995 election was an intense competition involving three groups — Prachasanti, Ananthaphum and Navarat Pattana. Each of these contests was close and difficult to predict because the strength of the groups was so even. Each employed aggressive and well-organized political campaigns and mobilization techniques. These factors have significantly contributed to politicizing Chiang Mai civil society and improving the voter turnout rate from 37.50% in 1985 to 42.21% and 53.54% in 1990 and 1995, respectively. In contrast, municipal elections in Hat Yai have been very
predictable. The domination of Mayor Kreng Suwannawong and his political group in municipal politics has been overwhelming. Political challengers, such as the Mai Pattana group in 1985, independent candidates in 1990 and the Krietiphum group in 1995, were never able seriously to contest the Old group. Such uneven contests in Hat Yai have probably resulted in low rates of turnout, that is, under 40%, since the 1980s.

In addition to the higher voter turnout in Chiang Mai, we find that while civic groups play no significant political role in Hat Yai, their Chiang Mai counterparts are highly engaged in municipal electoral politics, especially concerning political recruitment and mobilization. These roles seem to be associated primarily with mass organizations. As shown by one particular study, most Chiang Mai councillors between 1990 and 1995 belonged to at least one mass organization such as the Village Boy Scouts, the Thai Territory Defence Volunteers, the Youth Group, and other community organizations (Worapong 1993). Actually, one reason why councillors tend to be involved in mass organizations is that affiliation with them facilitates better mobilization of voters. One clear example is the victories of the Ananthaphum in 1985 and 1990 which, it is believed, were partly brought about by the support of mass and low-income community groups. Many Ananthaphum candidates were active in these organizations. Their leader, Vorakorn Tontranon, in particular, headed the Jaycees, the Village Boy Scouts and the Thai Territory Defence Volunteer group in Chiang Mai, as well as being an advisor to the Youth Group. In the 1995 municipal election, we also witnessed greater involvement of business associations and NGOs in electoral politics in their efforts both to encourage the public to go the polls and to campaign for a clean election, as well as condemning the popular practice of vote buying. It
is believed that this active role of civic groups contributes to the rise in voter turnout rates in Chiang Mai.

However, this is not the case in Hat Yai. Even though the seven councillors interviewed, including the mayor, are involved in professional organizations, sports groups and alumni associations, not one of them mentioned that mass organizations and their involvement in these groups have the sole political purpose of mobilizing voters. Actually, these groups have a very low profile in municipal politics. Only one councillor mentioned that being a member of the Lawyers’ Council, a professional association, provides an opportunity to enter politics.\(^\text{18}\) It is certain that the low level of political competitiveness in the city contributes to civic groups being relatively less politicized in Hat Yai.

Not only are Chiang Mai civic society groups more prominent in electoral politics, they are also more directly engaged in municipal affairs than their Hat Yai counterparts, in the roles of policy advocacy and public inspection. The main actors include NGOs, academics, the media, and, to a lesser degree, business associations. In the context of solid-waste issues, the 1994 garbage crisis had various groups in civil society intensely involved in municipal affairs. The NGOs and civic groups publicly criticized the municipality by organizing a public rally and a forum. They also petitioned the provincial governor and later the prime minister, demanding the dissolution of municipal council and the transfer of the governor. Local as well as national media intensively covered the story and the failure of the municipality which led to the crisis. Business associations and academic institutions employed less aggressive pressuring methods, including hosting seminars aimed at searching for garbage solutions and to make proposals as to how the municipality should go about

\(^{18}\) Interview with Prasert Mitpun, a Hat Yai councillor, on May 8, 1996.
solving the problem. Actually, the direct engagement of civic groups in the municipal waste issue is not unique. In the 1990s, the municipal political scene in Chiang Mai was no longer limited to political groups but included civic groups who were directly engaged in municipal affairs. This is most evident in the area of concerns over the urban environment. NGOs and middle-class citizens' groups in particular voiced their concerns over the city's problems, protesting aggressively against municipal actions which may have adverse impacts on the urban environment, and publicized these issues in the media to stimulate interest in local affairs. In the last few years, their active involvement has succeeded in raising public awareness on politics and urban environmental issues. They have also received recognition from the central and provincial governments, and have contributed to a number of changes and initiatives by the government to protect the city's environment and strengthen the civil society movement in Chiang Mai. The issuing of the municipal zoning regulations for high-rise buildings and the establishment of the Ping River committee are highlights of their success. Therefore, civic groups have become a major force in municipal politics which the municipality can no longer ignore. Thus, the new municipal administration of the Navarat Pattana invited these groups in 1996 to participate at the decision-making level as members of five sub-committees on municipal development plans. Such a move contributed to an increased level of openness, as already pointed out above.

Hat Yai civic groups, on the other hand, are not politically active and their actual ability to engage in politics is rather low. Despite being established for some time, the business associations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Tourist Industry Association, remain institutionally weak. They focus primarily on their narrow economic interests and their contacts with the municipality tend to be informal and particularistic. Open
criticism of municipal actions has rarely been the case in Hat Yai. It may be due to the media, which tend to be preoccupied by business news rather than the city’s environment or municipal politics. This relative lack of criticism reflects the less politicized state of Hat Yai society and the non-political nature of its civic groups. As a result, we are not surprised to find NGOs to be almost invisible in Hat Yai. Even though a few middle-class citizens’ groups have emerged in the last few years, their interests in city environmental issues and municipal affairs have been marginal.

This discussion on the degree of civic engagement shows that Chiang Mai’s civil society is more engaged in municipal waste affairs than its Hat Yai counterpart. We find that civic groups in Chiang Mai are more active between elections and their concern for solid waste issues is greater than in Hat Yai. Although Chiang Mai citizens are similar to their Hat Yai counterparts in their indifference to direct involvement in municipal waste issues, they are more engaged in the issue through voting, as suggested in the high voter turnout rate in the 1995 election.

**Pattern of Municipality-Civil Society Interaction**

The last element in examining the interaction between municipality and civil society concerns the pattern by which civil society interacts with the municipality in the context of solid waste management. Is it a cooperative or confrontational type of interaction? The study finds that Hat Yai and Chiang Mai are different in this aspect. While the dominant pattern is cooperative in Hat Yai, it tends to be confrontational in Chiang Mai. Such a difference is very much due to the ways in which civic groups in these two cities engage with their municipalities regarding solid waste issues. This will be explored later, but first we look at
the type and pattern of involvement by individual citizens in municipal waste management in both cities.

**Figure 6.15: Comparison of Citizens’ Engagement in Municipal Waste Issues by Activities**

![Bar chart showing comparison of citizens' activities in Hat Yai and Chiang Mai.](chart)

* statistically significant (*P* < .01)

Source: Author’s Survey 1996, Tables 4.19 and 5.15.

Although the survey results are inconclusive regarding the difference between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai citizens’ involvement in municipal waste issues, the tendency in Hat Yai is to a more cooperative interaction than in Chiang Mai. Figure 6.15 illustrates that only two out of nine activities show a statistically significant difference between Hat Yai and Chiang

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19 These nine activities can be divided into two categories: positive and negative engagements. Positive engagements include fee payment, providing own garbage bin, donating money, providing information and advice, participating in municipal waste programs, obtaining information and asking for municipal support. Negative engagements include making complaints and petitioning on waste problems.
Mai. One of these can be considered a positive engagement; that is, asking municipal supports for community waste activities. This activity involves a significantly higher percentage of Hat Yai respondents (20.80%) than their Chiang Mai counterparts (11.80%).\textsuperscript{20}

This can reflect a positive attitude among Hat Yai respondents toward their municipality. The other activity, a negative engagement type, tries to engage change by complaining about municipal waste problems to the media. Not surprisingly, we find contrasting results in which a higher percentage of respondents in Chiang Mai (12.70%) acknowledged involvement in such an activity than in Hat Yai (5.70%), given the greater waste problem in Chiang Mai.\textsuperscript{21} It also reflects the active role of the media in Chiang Mai, as compared to Hat Yai, in acting as a major channel for the public to file complaints against the municipality. Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 4, the active role of the media, and the press in particular, in Chiang Mai also results from the intense political competition between two principal political groups (Ananthaphum and Prachasanti) wherein each has its own local newspaper. The contrasting results between positive and negative engagement can imply a more cooperative relationship in Hat Yai than in Chiang Mai.

Other activities, although they are not statistically different, suggest a similar trend. We also see more Hat Yai respondents participating positively with their municipalities. For instance, 65.2% of Hat Yai respondents, as compared to 58.4% in Chiang Mai, pay garbage collection fees to the municipality. This may not be surprising, considering that a lower percentage of Chiang Mai respondents received garbage collecting service. While only 17.4% of respondents in Hat Yai participated in municipal waste projects, the percentage is even

\textsuperscript{20} The difference is statistically significant ($P < .01$).

\textsuperscript{21} The difference is statistically significant ($P < .01$).
lower in Chiang Mai at 13.9%. This figure is actually lower than the percentage of Chiang Mai respondents who participated in waste campaign activities organized by civic groups (18.8%). These figures may suggest that Chiang Mai respondents are more cooperative with civic groups than with the municipality. Even though the survey results do not show any significant difference between these two cities, they do coincide with the interviews given by key municipal officers. While cooperation from the public is mentioned as a factor contributing to the efficient waste collection system in Hat Yai, the lack of cooperation is seen as a factor relating to the lower performance in Chiang Mai.

The more confrontational relationship found in Chiang Mai is clearly confirmed by the interactions between the municipality and civic groups. While protests, open criticism, conflicts, and rallies against municipal actions seem to be the norm in Chiang Mai, they are rarely the case in Hat Yai. It is only recently that two actions against Hat Yai municipality occurred. Local groups outside the municipality organized both. One was a protest organized by the Subdistrict Administration Organization regarding the issue of fire and smoke produced by the municipal landfill site. The other was a protest organized by Na Mom residents against the construction of a municipal landfill in their community. The protest was over concerns for the potential environmental impacts from the site (e.g., smell, traffic and waste water) and the belief that urban people should take care of their own garbage by locating the dump site within the municipal area rather than in the rural area. This protest seems to suggest that Hat Yai is beginning to face a similar destiny as Chiang Mai and many other municipalities in regard to their search for a new landfill site. However, the absence of landfill sites will not create a serious waste problem for Hat Yai for the next three years, because Hat Yai is swiftly taking action to change its pollution control plan (funded by the
Environmental Plan) to include the clean-up of the current site as a way to solve the immediate siting problem. The project is now in progress.

The situation in Hat Yai municipality is less serious than the situation in Chiang Mai. With respect to the latter, the relationship between the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration and groups in civil society, apart from community organizations (established by the municipality), was not at all peaceful. As explored in Chapter 4, in addition to the local protest leading to the closing of the Mae Hia dump site and numerous other protests by local residents against temporary dumping sites, concern over the deterioration of the city’s environment also drove civic groups, mainly NGOs and concerned citizens’ groups, to confront the municipality on various issues. These included concerns over the polluted Ping river, the building of high-rises, the expansion of street pavement, the garbage crisis and tree cutting. One conflict after another inevitably contributed to the antagonistic attitude of both the municipality and civic groups toward each other.

Actually, the adversarial relationship between municipal leaders and most civic groups seemed unavoidable, considering the reaction of the municipality to concerns and the pressure methods employed by the groups. When the latter voiced their concerns, the municipality paid no attention and did nothing to accommodate their demands and suggestions. The mayor in particular kept aloof from these confrontations by not participating in any meeting or forum organized by civic groups or universities. Why did the municipality act in this fashion? One clear reason is that these citizens’ groups had no political significance in the eyes of municipal leaders at that time. For the groups tended to be ad hoc, composed of a very small membership from a middle-class background which was not a political base of the Ananthaphum group. For instance, only 13 and 20 members belonged,
respectively, to the For the Chiang Mai group and the Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy. These were mainly university professors. Another reason was that the municipal leaders were quite confident that the mobilization of voters through community organizations and other mass organizations would be sufficient to secure their next electoral victory. Thus, they maintained good relationships with community groups and mass organizations but not other groups.

The municipal leaders were wrong in underestimating the political potential of these small citizens' groups. The conflict and confrontation actually had a broader negative impact on the municipality than municipal leaders had anticipated. It surely weakened the credibility and legitimacy of the municipal leaders in the eyes of the public, as well as of the central government. Trust in the mayor was low. According to the author's survey mentioned earlier, Table 6.4 shows that the majority of Chiang Mai respondents appraise their mayor (Vorakorn Tontranon) poorly across five leadership aspects — strength, integrity, capability, open-mindedness and trustworthiness. The lack of integrity and trustworthiness are among the former mayor's worst characteristics, as 62.1% and 61.2% of respondents rated him as corruptible and untrustworthy, respectively. The low level of trust in political leadership is also partly owing to the various pressure techniques employed by civic groups. The groups chose to go public in expressing their concerns and demands through various means, including organizing public forums and hearings, submitting petitions to higher levels of government, especially to the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, publicizing the issue through the media and their own publications, preparing documentation, and organizing rallies and public gatherings. These methods reflect the purposes of these groups in educating the public, raising political and environmental awareness, as well as strengthening the civil
society movement. It is clear that these groups try to promote participatory democracy to the public as that form of urban governance which has not yet been well implemented by municipal leaders. It is also noticeable that Chiang Mai citizens’ groups have moved away from the traditional technique of utilizing personal contacts to more western and impersonal means of pressuring. This suggests the increasingly pluralist and sophisticated nature of Chiang Mai society, where established channels for participation in implementation are no longer sufficient, and where conflicts among civic groups and the municipality can no longer be brokered by traditional methods of personal ties and networks.

This is in contrast to Hat Yai, where the local power structure is less fragmented and personal contact still plays a major role in communicating and solving conflicts and differences between the municipality and civic groups. As confirmed by leaders of business associations in Hat Yai, concerns over city problems and unsatisfactory municipal services, as well as suggestions, tend to be addressed to the mayor personally because the major actors involved know each other very well. In such cases, agreement and understanding can be reached without the need for protests. Moreover, this personal network can be a channel to facilitate a more formal approach to cooperation between the municipality and some civic groups. Otherwise, it would be difficult for this cooperation to happen, given the low level of municipal openness regarding civic engagement. One example is the municipality’s collaboration with the Thaksin Architect committee. Its key leaders, who include current and former municipal employees, are close to the mayor. Other examples of joint efforts would include the seminar on waste water in Hat Yai municipality. It was started by two university

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22 Chiang Mai society has become increasingly more complex, as there is a greater range of different groups with different interests, values and needs. The population, grounded in a rich and long local history, are also exposed to non-local and alternative ideas.
professors from Prince of Songkhla University who personally approached key municipal officers and then the mayor to organize a joint seminar on city problems. The waste-water problem was selected, and the seminar turned out to be a success, with the active participation of the university, business associations and the general public. The participants also included the key senior officers from the DOLA, the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Budget Bureau, and the MOSTE. The consensus arising from the seminar and the technical support from university professors in the field of administration and waste-water management are both factors in strengthening the status of Hat Yai municipality in its contact with the central government — with the result that Hat Yai has been granted a large budget for water treatment facilities and has been designated as a pollution control zone. The latter, as already mentioned, contributes positively to Hat Yai municipality’s ability to create political commitment among various leaders as well as increase its capacity to deal with environmental problems, including municipal waste management.

Apart from personal contact or informal relationships, another factor contributing to the cooperative relationship in Hat Yai between the municipality and civic groups is the mayor. His charisma as well as his reputation create a situation in which civic groups and experts outside the municipality have no objection to giving their cooperation when the municipality approaches them for assistance. This factor in reverse also explains why citizen groups in Chiang Mai made no effort to collaborate with their municipality under the Ananthaphum administration. In addition to the latter’s different perspective, according to the key leaders of major citizens’ groups, the poor reputation of the mayor and his team, such

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23 Interview with the leaders of the For the Chiang Mai and the Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy.
as accusations of corruption, lack of transparency and incompetence, increased the reluctance of civic groups to have a relationship with the municipality.

Since cooperation in Hat Yai depends on personal relationships and the mayor's discretion, we see that not all civic groups have an equal opportunity to contact the municipality. It implies a lack of transparency, since the door seems to open conveniently to particular groups which have personal ties with the municipality, such as community organizations, a few business associations and a few university professors and professionals. Actually, it is an unequal relationship in which the municipality tends to be the dominant partner. For instance, business associations are approached only for their contribution to, and cooperation in, organizing social and cultural events. University professors or experts are contacted only when the municipality needs technical assistance. Non-municipal experts are asked to join a decision-making body because bureaucratic procedures require it. It is also clear that this cooperation in Hat Yai happens only occasionally, and at the initiative of the municipality. The survival of this type of cooperation reflects the less politicized role of civil society. Major groups such as business associations have little interest in municipal politics and the NGOs or citizens groups, which constitute most of the critics of municipal affairs in Chiang Mai, are very weak in Hat Yai municipal politics.

In conclusion, the data suggest differences in the type of municipality-civil society interaction between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai. While Chiang Mai politics are confrontational, in Hat Yai they are cooperative. However, it should be kept in mind that the cooperative relationship between the municipality and civic groups in Hat Yai remains asymmetrical. First, the municipality is clearly the dominant partner, as reflected in the vertical communications. And second, as a result of an unequal partnership, the cooperative
relationship tends to be selective, restricted to the groups which have personal ties and similar interests to municipal leaders. It is also interesting to note that the confrontational relationship in Chiang Mai reflects a changing character of civil society which becomes more complex (including different groups with different needs and values), gains more strength and demands a new style of governance (such as honest leadership and transparency through meaningful channels of civic engagement).

IV. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the differences between Chiang Mai and Hat Yai in their governance systems regarding the solid-waste issue, and we can summarize our analysis in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Summary of the Research Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance Component</th>
<th>Research Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Municipality</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Municipal competence in dealing with the solid waste issue | • Hat Yai municipality has greater administrative capacity than Chiang Mai.  
• Hat Yai political leaders have stronger political support and a more secure political power than their Chiang Mai counterparts.  
• Hat Yai municipality has a higher degree of municipal autonomy than Chiang Mai. |
| **Civil Society**                    |                                                                                                                                                  |
| • Activity of civil society in performing waste activities outside municipal system | • Chiang Mai's civil society is more active in participating in waste management taking place outside the municipal system.                     |
| **Municipality-Civil Society Interactions** |                                                                                                                                                  |
| • municipal openness                  | • Hat Yai and Chiang Mai municipalities share a low level of openness.  
• Chiang Mai's civil society is more involved in municipal waste issues than its Hat Yai counterpart.  
• Cooperative type in Hat Yai, confrontational in Chiang Mai. |
| • degree of civic engagement          |                                                                                                                                                  |
| • pattern of municipality-civil society interaction |                                                                                                                                                  |
On the municipality side, the research reveals that Hat Yai municipality is stronger — meaning more capable and competent — than its Chiang Mai counterpart in managing solid waste. The greater capability of Hat Yai lies in its financial resources, the powerful and popular leadership committed to the waste issue, municipal autonomy and support from the central government, especially the MOSTE. Such factors make it clear that municipal competence is not only a matter of technical factors but also a matter of politics, especially of political leadership and the relationship with the central government.

On the civil society side, that of Chiang Mai is more active and organized around waste issues than its Hat Yai counterpart. The investigation reveals that there is no civic group dealing with waste issues in Hat Yai while in Chiang Mai, civic groups, especially NGOs (the YMCA and the Walk for A better Environment), are the most active segment involved in waste issues outside of the municipal system. There is also a higher density of informal waste networks involving citizens in general, garbage pickers, municipal employees and junk traders in Chiang Mai than in Hat Yai. This is evident in that the former generates twice the volume of recyclable waste. The key factors that can help explain why there are more waste management activities undertaken by civil society in Chiang Mai include the worsening waste problem and the incapacity of the municipality to provide continuous waste services. Moreover, the social and economic context also plays a role since the more organized civil society in Chiang Mai is facilitated by a higher associational life and the participation of people involved in informal waste activities is related to the lower economic vibrancy of Chiang Mai as compared to Hat Yai.

On the interactions between municipality and civil society, the study finds that during the period 1990-1995, Hat Yai and Chiang Mai shared the same low level of openness, in
other words, a low level of political and decision-making transparency. Participatory channels were created during the decision-making process, including the municipal planning process and in municipal committees, but they did not present meaningful involvement. Wider opportunities for civic engagement existed at the level of the implementation process, such as participation in various cleaning projects, making donations, and providing information.

Given the closed nature of both municipalities, on the civil society side the research finds that, in the context of municipal waste issues, the majority of citizens in both cities shared a low direct civic engagement, but the majority of Chiang Mai citizens preferred to use voting as a way to keep the incumbent political group accountable for its failure in waste management. For civic groups, the waste problem as well as other urban environmental issues prompted Chiang Mai civic groups, mainly citizens’ groups, and academic and business associations, to engage directly in municipal politics by confronting the municipality. However, this was not the case in Hat Yai. This led to differences between the two cities in the pattern of interaction between the municipality and civil society. This relationship is seen as cooperative in Hat Yai since citizens and civic groups tended to cooperate at the municipality’s request. However, Chiang Mai seemed to be dominated by confrontation, as reflected by the frequency of conflicts, protest and open criticisms, particularly between the municipality and the civic groups. Such confrontational forms ofpressuring the municipality to act led to a hostile attitude between the municipality and civil society (except community groups) in Chiang Mai. In Hat Yai, the smooth relationship between the municipality and civic groups was facilitated by a high degree of trust in the municipal leaders and in the personal network cultivated by municipal leaders and the key leaders of civic groups, especially those from business and professional associations. The
personal network is found to play a less significant role in mediating conflicts between the municipality and civil society in Chiang Mai — a factor which may reflect the more sophisticated and complex character of Chiang Mai society as compared to that of Hat Yai.

This analysis leads us to the key questions in this study: to what extent do these research findings support the urban governance assumption? And what are the characteristics of an effective urban governance? We will address these questions in the final chapter.
Chapter Seven

Conclusion

I. Introduction

The central thesis of this research is that urban governance, or the municipality-civil society relationship, provides an important explanation for the variation in municipal performance. With this thesis in mind, the research explored two municipalities, Chiang Mai and Hat Yai, in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively, whose municipal performances in solid-waste management are significantly different. Then, in Chapter 6, we provided a comparative urban governance analysis, revealing that these two municipalities are relatively different in their governance components — municipal competency, activity of civil society, and the characteristics of municipality-civil society interaction — regarding solid-waste management. Given these findings, this final chapter turns to engage the central thesis, that is whether the research supports the urban governance argument. If the answer is positive, then what are the characteristics of effective urban governance,\(^1\) as illustrated by the experiences of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai?

II. The Urban Governance Argument

The research findings reveal that, in the midst of Thailand’s municipal uniformity, Chiang Mai and Hat Yai have distinct patterns of urban governance which contribute to the understanding of their differing municipal performances on solid-waste management. Such

\(^1\) Effective governance is used in this study to denote characteristics of governance associated with good performance, while good governance refers to a specific set of governance characteristics as proposed by the World Bank and other international donors.
evidence sustains the explanatory power of the urban governance approach. However, it is important to note that such an explanation is not developed as a causal or linear relationship between urban governance and municipal performance. Instead, case studies of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai suggest an interlocking, interdependent and dynamic relationship among the key variables investigated in this research: i.e., the municipality, civil society, interactions between the municipality and civil society, and municipal performance.

In Hat Yai, governance is characterized by a relationship of strong municipality versus weak civil society. On the one hand, the municipality is competent and capable of providing efficient garbage services (i.e., collecting garbage, cleaning city streets and securing landfill space). On the other hand, civil society, given the satisfactory garbage services, seems content and therefore finds it unnecessary to be active and organized around waste issues. Civil society also manifests a low level of political interest which is in turn reflected in the limited number of participatory channels offered by the municipality. Viewing performance as legitimating the municipality and thus strengthening trust in municipal leaders, civil society tends to interact cooperatively with the municipality’s requests. The cooperation tends to be asymmetrical, dominated by the municipality’s needs, and occurs only occasionally, for example when the municipality seeks electoral support, expertise and other contributions from civil society. Such interactions as electoral support for political leaders and cooperation from civic groups and experts further strengthen the municipality’s status in central-local relations. In addition, personal networks play a major role in mediating differences between the municipality and its civil society, with the mayor being at the heart of the governing relationship in Hat Yai. His popular support and
continuity as mayor for seven consecutive terms strengthens the unity and administrative capacity of the municipality.

In contrast, Chiang Mai’s governance under the Ananthaphum municipal administration presents a pattern of weak municipality versus active civil society, in which the municipality lacks competence and fails to provide efficient garbage services (i.e., the absence of landfill capacity and disrupted garbage collection). This failure, which has precipitated a chronic garbage crisis, in turn prompts civil society to be active and organized and to become more involved in waste management activities. And importantly, the failure also contributes to a politicized civil society which in turn brings pressure to bear on the municipality to deal with the waste management problem more effectively. Faced with a “closed” municipality and dishonest municipal leaders, civic groups often go public to express their views and to criticize the municipality, as well as petitioning the higher levels of government (provincial and central) to intervene. As a result, interactions between the municipality and civil society (particularly civic groups) tend to be confrontational and less cooperative, a situation which further weakens both the credibility and the legitimacy of municipal leaders in the eyes of the public and the central government. Going public in pressuring the municipality also results in educating the public, and in raising political and environmental awareness which in turn contributes to strengthening the civil society movement. This pattern of urban governance effectively defeated the Ananthaphum in the 1995 election, who were replaced by the Navarat Pattana.

It is interesting to note that the observed poor performance by the municipal government is not the end of the story in Chiang Mai. Instead, it has generated a positive chain of reactions: that is, the active engagement of civic groups (particularly citizen groups
and the media), an increasingly educated and politicized civil society, and the ability to keep the municipality accountable for its failures (removing Ananthaphum from office). It also leads us to speculate that Chiang Mai will move toward a more open municipality and democratic governance. However, whether this will lead to a strong municipality and better performance cannot be determined.

As reflected in both patterns of governance, the municipality’s competence in dealing with issues has a direct impact on municipal performance. However, as the comparative analysis reveals, the municipality’s competence to deal effectively with solid waste issues is also deeply influenced by both management and political factors. The latter concerns the municipality’s interactions with civil society (around, for example, issues of electoral politics, the legitimacy and security of political leaders, and the pattern of civic engagement) and with the central government on, for example, the degree of municipal autonomy which, in turn, is influenced by municipal performance. This interlocking interaction and the inclusion of political and management factors which influence how the municipality manages solid waste in both case studies explains why the impact of governance components on municipal performance could not be modeled by a causal equation in which each variable is an independent variable.

Moreover, the analysis of urban governance regarding the issue of municipal performance also sheds light on the dynamic changes taking place in municipal politics. Although the interactions between municipality, civil society and performance take place all the time, it should be kept in mind that the interlocking character of their relationships may not take effect immediately. It can take a long time to see changes resulting from these interactions. As we saw in the case of Chiang Mai, municipal waste management started to
deteriorate with the closing down of the Mae Hia site in 1989. It led to the formation of the Walk for a Better Environment in 1991 and was followed with the involvement of the YMCA in 1992. However, it was not until the 1994 garbage crisis that other civic groups and the general public were activated to place garbage on the political agenda and change the way the municipality managed the waste issue (such as formulating a long-term plan on solid waste management, following the advice of experts on the operation of the landfill site and monitoring the street-level garbage operation).

Whether the interaction will take effect in the short or long term will also be determined by the influence exerted by the sociopolitical and economic context surrounding the urban governance system in each city. For example, in the case of Chiang Mai, although the garbage crisis played a role in intensifying public frustration toward the municipality, we cannot ignore other catalysts and circumstances conducive to the rise of an active civil society. These catalysts and circumstances included the larger number of active citizens’ groups with urban environmental concerns (criticizing and demanding changes), the active role of media (publicizing the issue and exposing potential wrong-doing), and a pluralist and politicized society. In Hat Yai, on the other hand, changes in municipal politics will probably unfold at a slower pace since there is no crisis to trigger public anger. If there is one, we should not expect the same results as occurred in Chiang Mai, given the widespread indifference in Hat Yai of the civic groups toward urban environmental issues, an unpolticized business-oriented society, and the lack of certain catalysts such as the media and citizens’ groups to politicize the issue. In fact, Hat Yai does suffer from other environmental problems, especially traffic congestion and pollution which the majority of Hat Yai respondents ranked as the number one problem. Citizens complained about this issue
but there is no evidence of collective actions pressuring the municipality. In addition to sociopolitical factors, the economic circumstances also have an impact on municipal competence and civil society’s activity. For example, low-income people in Chiang Mai are more involved in informal waste activities, while in the more vibrant Hat Yai economy the municipality is provided with a strong financial base with which it can afford more staff and equipment. The local context can also provide insights into the differences in the governance systems of Chiang Mai and Hat Yai. Given the influence of local circumstances upon governance, we are led to speculate on whether it is possible to identify such a universal model of effective governance. This issue will be discussed in the next section.

III. Effective Urban Governance

Since the foregoing discussion on the different patterns of urban governance in Hat Yai and Chiang Mai confirms the legitimacy of urban governance as an important factor in explaining the differing municipal performances, we can now turn to the issue of effective urban governance, or those characteristics of governance contributing to good performance. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this research approaches that issue with two distinct theoretical assumptions. On one hand, the good governance assumption, as prescribed by the World Bank and international donors, postulates that good performance depends on both a strong state and a strong civil society. Civil society has to be strong and participate fully in public affairs in order to hold the state accountable and responsive, and the state has to be strong in order to be able to respond to the demands of civil society. On the other hand, literature based on Third World experience, despite variations in explanations, suggests that the nature of the state-society relationship is a zero-sum game: that is, either there is a strong state and weak
society, or there is a weak state and strong society (Migdal 1988; McCarney, Halfani and Rodriguez 1995; McCarney 1996b). Of interest here is the question as to where the research findings stand regarding these contrasting theoretical assumptions.

Table 7.1: Comparison Between Research Findings and Two Different Predicted Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance Characteristics</th>
<th>Research Findings (Hat Yai and Chiang Mai experience)</th>
<th>Outcome under the good governance model (World Bank 1992, 1994)</th>
<th>Outcome under the zero-sum game model (Migdal 1988; McCarney 1996b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>HY is more capable than CM.</td>
<td>HY should be more capable than CM.</td>
<td>HY should be more capable than CM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>HY is less active and less organized than CM.</td>
<td>HY should be more active and more organized than CM.</td>
<td>HY should be less active and less organized than CM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality-Civil society interactions</td>
<td>Both municipalities have a low level of openness or political transparency. HY civil society is less engaged in municipal affairs. The relationship is cooperative in HY but it tends to be confrontational in CM.</td>
<td>HY municipality should be more transparent and accountable and civil society in HY should be more engaged in municipal affairs than CM.</td>
<td>HY civil society should be cooperating with the municipality while CM civil society should be either disengaged or negatively engaged in municipal affairs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: HY = Hat Yai and CM = Chiang Mai

Our findings seem to be consistent with the zero-sum game character of the state-society relationship. Table 7.1 shows that the findings follow the predicted outcome of a zero-sum game (Migdal 1988; McCarney 1996b). Hat Yai municipality, as a good performance case, is characterized by a strong municipality and weak civil society. Moreover, it has a lower level of political transparency and of civic engagement in comparison to Chiang Mai. Except for the strong municipality, other key characteristics (the nature of civil
society, political transparency and civic engagement) of Hat Yai’s governance do not conform to the predicted outcomes under the good governance assumption.

What is the implication of these results for the notion of good governance? Before discussing this issue, it is important to note that, although the research findings seem to support an account of the character of a state-society relationship argued by Joel Migdal (1988), in fact they suggest a different explanation of state and society interaction. In Migdal’s argument, the state’s capacity to expand social control is impeded by the existence of numerous strong and autonomous social organizations which operate according to their own logic. In this sense, strong societies lead to weak states. In the cases of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai, the interaction goes in the opposite direction. Chiang Mai’s failure to provide efficient garbage management led to the rise of groups in civil society concerned with solid waste management that in turn put pressure on the municipality, while in Hat Yai, the municipality’s competence to manage waste effectively kept civil society apathetic and therefore uninvolved in waste issues and municipal politics. The different interactions between state and society may be derived from the fact that Migdal’s case studies tended to be new states, created after independence from colonial rule (such as Sierra Leone and India). These states attempted to establish unified control over a fragmented society, consisting of autonomous social groups (such as clans, tribes, religious groups and communities) which have their own structure of social control. In contrast, Thailand has a long history of state domination and Thai society is quite homogeneous,² tending to be organized hierarchically

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² Thai people form the large majority. There are also a number of Chinese, Moms, Malays and hill tribes. The country has seen the successful integration of ethnic Chinese into Thai society: adopting Thai family names, marrying across racial lines and receiving Thai education. Buddhism, the national religion, is the professed faith of 95% of people. There are also small groups of Muslims (4%) and Christians (0.6%). The official national language, spoken by almost 100% of the population, is Thai.
(for example, through patron-client relationships). As Chapter 3 describes, the extensive role of the state, its antagonistic attitudes toward active civic groups in the past, and uneven development as well as dominant social values, have resulted in the slow development of civil society. Only in the 1980s, as a result of rapid economic and social changes in the past three decades and political liberalization under semi-democracy, did Thailand witness the emergence of an autonomous civil society in politics at the national level and that was strongly influenced by business groups (in economic policies), media and NGOs (in social justice, rural development and environmental protection). Due to the legacy of a centralized state, urban politics outside of Bangkok has only in the 1990s begun to experience the formation of local concerned citizen’s groups actively voicing their concerns over the quality of life and the deterioration of the city’s environment. Chiang Mai seems to be a pioneer case reflecting such changes at the urban level. Such differences in the development of relations between the state and civil society shown in Thailand and in Migdal’s case studies can help to explain why the experience of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai (strong municipality leads to weak civil society for Hat Yai, and weak municipality leads to strong civil society for Chiang Mai) is different from Migdal’s argument (strong societies lead to weak states).

The fact that the emergence of autonomous civic groups is a very recent phenomenon in Thailand, particularly at the urban level, can also help explain why the research findings do not follow the predicted outcome of the good governance argument. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the notion of good governance is based on the role of a strong civil society, actively engaged in public affairs, which is able to hold a state accountable, thereby promoting effective and honest governance. This idea is supported by the case of regional government in Italy where, as Robert Putnam argues, the dense network of horizontal associations
contributes positively to the work of regional government and the economy. The situations in Hat Yai and Chiang Mai are different, in that a strong civil society or a dense network of horizontal associations, a key ingredient of good governance, is not the case. Civil society in Hat Yai is very weak and unorganized in relation to the municipality, and pays little attention to public affairs. For Chiang Mai, civil society (citizens’ groups and business associations) has just emerged as an active force in urban politics in the early 1990s as a result of the failure of the municipality to deal effectively with city development.

Actually, according to Putnam’s civil society argument, given the relatively higher degree of associational life and a larger number of active citizens’ groups, NGOs and business associations, Chiang Mai municipality should perform better than its Hat Yai counterpart. Since this is not the case, the civil society argument runs into another problem in the context of urban politics in Thailand. Civil society emerged in Chiang Mai not as a united force, but as divided by different incomes, interests and values; therefore, its ability to pressure the municipality (under the Ananthaphum administration) was rather weak. For example, the business associations give priority to city growth and economic development; their concerns for the environment are limited to the degree that they have a negative impact on the city’s economic growth. The business sector’s interest was therefore sometimes in conflict with concerned citizens’ groups and local activists who had an alternative view of the city; they tend to see uncontrolled city growth and Chiang Mai’s position as a regional primate city as core problems, and therefore campaigned instead for the preservation of local culture, a healthy city environment and participatory democracy. This sector is most vocal in

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3 The anti-high rise building movement is an example of the conflicting interest between the business community and the concerned citizens’ groups.
its ability to use the press effectively but tends to be limited to informal groupings of intellectuals and university professors who share similar ideas. Their ideas may be too idealistic for the popular sector, such as low-income community groups whose members are primarily concerned with acquiring and accessing basic needs. The low-income communities, especially squatter settlements and slums, as a result of poverty, land insecurity and material needs tend to survive by remaining under the patronage of politicians in exchange for votes (a form of patron-client relationship). In this sense they play a role in electoral politics by becoming a channel for voter mobilization; otherwise they keep a low profile on public issues. This fact explains why the municipality under the Ananthaphum administration paid little attention to the concerns of citizens’ groups, relying instead primarily on the electoral support of community groups. Despite that, as mentioned, the Ananthaphum group was effectively thrown out of office in the 1995 election. This is because of the growing controversy over the garbage crisis which was widespread and activated much public anger. As a result, a large number of people who had never voted in municipal elections in the past went to the polls this time.

Thus far, regarding the characteristics of effective governance, experiences from Hat Yai and Chiang Mai do not support some of the good governance assumptions put forward by the World Bank and other international donors. This can be explained by two factors. First, since the emergence of civil society is very recent in Thailand, both Chiang Mai and Hat Yai lack a strong civil society. Second, the organizations composing civil society, as suggested in the case of Chiang Mai, are divided by incomes, interests and values which in turn weaken civil society’s ability to pressure the municipality. Although the good governance assumptions involving civil society fail to explain why Hat Yai outperforms Chiang Mai, the
research instead seems to support accounts given in the work of scholars such as Adrian Leftwich (1993) and Robert Jenkins (1995) whereby they questioned the applicability of the good governance model in a Third World context. It also suggests that assuming a universal mode of effective governance may be unrealistic, since the effectiveness of governance systems in practice is also influenced by their contexts, or, in other words, the interplay of sociopolitical, cultural and political factors. This is evident in the shared frustration over the general ineffectiveness of the many imported Western ideas and models. For example, John Boyle (1993) found that the ineffectiveness of environmental assessment programs undertaken in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia is primarily due to the countering influence of local socio-cultural and political factors.

As these research findings show, a successful municipality may not necessarily be achieved by means of a strong civil society, active civic engagement and transparency. Given the experiences of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai, a capable and competent municipality is a result of a combination of management and political factors including access to resources, an effective municipal bureaucracy, the credibility, legitimacy and commitment of the leadership, and a stable and supportive relationship with its local constituencies and with the central government. Actually, among these various factors, four are crucial: strong and popular leadership, a coherent local leadership coalition, sufficient local revenue, and a supportive relationship with the central government. None of these factors is absolutely independent as they significantly influence and interact with each other. In addition, some are facilitated by the local context.

Leadership stands out as the most critical issue, since it is the principal link among the major ingredients for a successful municipality. As illustrated by the Hat Yai case, the mayor
and the positive relationship between political and administrative leaders lie at the heart of a municipal bureaucracy's effective implementation of its policies. The mayor is the crucial link between the municipality and its constituencies, and is the main element contributing to a cooperative relationship between the municipality and major civic groups; in other words, effectively forming a local leadership coalition. His political power (electoral support) and personal networks strengthen his position in connection with the central government.

Having found that strong leadership (the mayor) is a key factor in differentiating the more from the less successful municipalities is not surprising in the context of Thailand. Several Thai studies confirm the significant role of leadership in contributing to the strength and success of an organization. For example, Charas Suwanmala (1992), in studying the relationship between central controls and local productivity of municipalities, argues that strong and well-known mayors are usually highly respected by the central level and bring a relatively high level of local bargaining power to their municipalities in their relationship with the central government (Suwanmala 1992, 64). In the case of NGOs, Edgar Donner (1986) looks at the operation of the Population and Community Development Association (PDA) which made a major contribution to the success of family planning in Thailand. He finds that the PDA has an advantage in having a strong and devoted leader who can build up and sustain the commitment of the staff. The importance of strong and powerful leadership can be explained with reference to culture and persisting traditional values — paternalistic authority, hierarchical society, personalism and patron-client relationship — in Thai society (Girling 1981; Pye 1985; Nakata 1990).

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4 In the 1980s, population growth rate per annum in Thailand has dropped from over 3% to below 2%.
While strong leadership may be a common factor in Thailand, the effectiveness of a paternalistic Hat Yai mayor and the ability to form a coherent local leadership coalition through personal relationships, tends to be associated with a less complex and less politicized society where city priorities are less controversial and local social and political leadership tends to overlap. If a social and political structure is more fragmented, composed of various political and social groups with different interests, incomes and opinions, as the case of Chiang Mai illustrates, a local leadership coalition may not be so simply achieved by the mayor and a network of personal relationships. It may also require a process of clear procedures or mechanisms to guarantee that stakeholders or concerned parties have equal access to the decision-making process and that their concerns are heard. This variation in local context suggests that building a local leadership coalition (municipal leaders, community leaders and NGOs) must be approached situationally. This means that a municipality needs to be not only efficient but also sensitive. A sensitive municipality, for example, recognizes the changing working context and the composition of active civic groups concerned with how cities are managed. When the context changes, the municipality has to adapt and accommodate itself to these new demands.

As far as effective governance is concerned, this research rejects the good governance assumption and argues that its application (World Bank 1992, 1994) is limited in the Third World context by differences in socio-cultural, political and economic factors. Rather, the research findings seem to support the zero-sum game character of the state-society relationship as illustrated in urban research literature (McCarney 1996b), the rise of groups in civil society being a response to a weak municipality. In Thailand, the experience of Hat Yai and Chiang Mai suggests that a strong and popular leadership, good financial status,
coherent and well-functioning local leadership coalition (involving a cooperative relationship between municipal and civic groups' leaders) and a supportive relationship with the central government can differentiate the more from the less successful municipalities. Since this study is based on two large cities, and the local context seems to play a role in shaping the governance systems, more studies will be needed to account for the variation in the urban governance systems as well as the local circumstances that institute and sustain such systems.

IV. The Urban Governance Perspective, the Urban Environment and Thailand

This study demonstrates the case for urban governance as an approach to studying urban environmental issues in two respects. First, the inclusion of civil society in the governance concept has proven to be very useful, because it sensitizes us to the intricate nature of urban environmental issues by suggesting the dynamic interlocking relationship between civil society, municipal government and performance. The role of civil society is of particular importance in regard to such urban environmental issues as solid waste, and air and water pollution which have direct impacts on people's quality of life and livelihood, since these issues tend to be sensitive ones that can mobilize or organize civil society to become more involved in municipal politics. This mobilizing power partly explains why urban environmental issues are too complicated for the limiting technical approach of the municipality (i.e., urban management) to handle.

Second, the phenomenon of mobilization leads us to consider another advantage of governance as an approach to studying the urban environment. This research confirms the assumption of the governance approach that urban environmental issues are political. As our
case studies reveal, political factors such as the nature of electoral politics, leadership coalition, trust in municipal leadership, the composition and political role of civil society and pressuring strategies can influence municipal performance on solid-waste management.

This research also has implications in the study of municipal government and urban politics in Thailand. As a first attempt in using urban governance as a major approach to examining municipalities and urban environmental issues in Thailand, the research demonstrates its usefulness as it opens up new avenues. It leads us to the people (society) side of the picture. The conventional approach, which is dominated by a legal-institutional and state-centric approach (i.e., the central-local relationship) needs reappraisal. It tends to treat municipalities as similar entities and fails to recognize the differences in the way people in each city interact with their municipalities between elections, as well as in the impacts of local socio-cultural, economic and political factors on each municipality. In other words, it cannot capture the dynamic and complicated nature of municipalities and urban politics. As this research suggests, the nature and role of the state (both central and municipal governments) and society as well as their interrelationships change all the time, although laws and institutional arrangements are maintained. Moreover, understanding the differences in municipal performance is impossible without paying attention to the dynamics of municipality-civil society relationships. This is particularly true in dealing with such urban environmental issues as solid-waste management. It can become a politically sensitive and complicated issue, as the case of Chiang Mai well illustrates, and there is every indication that such problems will be a growing trend in other municipalities. Given the increasing role of civil society in urban politics, the governance approach and findings of this research can
shed light on new areas for possible study which otherwise tend to be ignored or that has received little attention in the past. They include:

- The changing attitude of civil society concerning urban environmental issues, and how this has had an impact on the organization and structure of civil society. This includes the activities of the informal sector. As this study suggests, faced with the problem of landfill siting, informal solid-waste management activities may provide an alternative way to reduce waste at source, which can prolong the capacity of the landfill site. Information on these activities is limited and needs further research.

- The interaction between municipalities and groups in civil society. This includes profiling and evaluating the effectiveness and the limitations of channels or linkages through which the municipality and groups in civil society interact in practice. Another issue is to search for the possibility of building an effective local leadership coalition.

While a political analysis of governance is useful, our findings indicate that success in dealing with urban environmental problems also requires administrative capacity, organizational strength and adequate resources which the governance approach does not address as well as does the urban management approach.

In closing, the research for this thesis was undertaken with the hope that the findings would contribute not only to the ongoing debate on strategies to improve municipal performance in Thailand but also to the wider theoretical issue of what model best provides a framework for understanding local government. It is the conclusion of this thesis that understanding local government and its performance has to go beyond state-centred perspectives (urban management and decentralization) to include civil society (governance).
and the contextual framework. This provides valuable insights into the complicated, dynamic and multifaceted nature of local government.
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Appendix A
List of Interviewees

Chiang Mai

**MEB and Municipal Councillors**

1) Manut Sirimaharaj
   - Deputy mayor on Medical, Health and Environment
   - Councillor (Navarat Pattana)
   - Former Councillor (1985-1995, Prachasanti)

2) Thongchai Ramingwong
   - Municipal Council Speaker
   - Councillor (Navarat Pattana)
   - Former Leader and Councillor of the Prachasanti group

3) Nivat Tanyanusorn
   - Municipal Advisor
   - Chairman of Municipal Development Plan Committee
   - Councillor (Navarat Pattana)

4) Watt Wibulsanti
   - Former Deputy Mayor under the Ananthaphum Administration (1985-1995)
   - Former Councillor (1985-1995)
   - Vice-president of the Ananthaphum group

5) Somsak Boontrakulpoontawee
   - Former Deputy Mayor under the Ananthaphum administration
   - Former Councillor (1985-1995)

**Municipal Employees**

1) Veree Thotanon

2) Somsak Larpadisorn
   - Chief of Solid Waste Disposal Section

3) Suwit Thammasithi
   - Chief of Cleaning Section

4) Chalaw Buntong
   - Acting Director of Social Welfare Division

5) Somsak Upapan
   - Community Development Officer

6) Supitphan Sithisarn
   - Public Relations Officer
**Provincial Government**
1) Boonserm Jitjensuwan  
   - Chief of Local Government Branch, Chiang Mai Province

**Business Associations**
1) Rachan Veraphan  
   - Former president of Tourist Business Association
   - Vice-president of Chaing Mai Chamber of Commerce
   - Provincial councillor
2) Danai Leosawathiphong  
   - President of Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce
3) Saowaluck Shimada  
   - President of Guide Association
   - Member of executive committee of Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce

**NGOs**
1) Uthaiwan Kanchanakamol  
   - President of Campaign Committee for Local Autonomy
   - President of the Joint Committee on the Ping River Conservation and the Environment
   - Secretary of Wiang Ping Citizen Council
2) Anandh Manmontri  
   - President of the Walk For the Better Environment
   - Vice-secretary of the Wiang Ping Citizen Council
3) Sirichai Narumitrekakarn  
   - Leader of the For Chiang Mai Group
   - Founding President of the Wiang Ping Citizen Council
4) Jitawat Kala  
   - Coordinator of YMCA for Northern Development

**Community Groups**
1) Sila Boonleid  
   - Chairman of Tippanert Community
2) Ounjai Suwan  
   - Former Chairman of Song-pee-nong Community
3) Peng Samana  
   - Chairman of Ha-tanwa Community
4) Chankaew Oungseng  
   - Chairwoman of Muang-guy Community
5) Pratib Boonlied  
   - Chairman of Hua-fay Community
6) Wing Meedech  
   - Former Chairman of Fa-mai community
7) Sunthorn Kitikaew  • Chairman of Pa-tan community
8) Jarus Narongchanchai  • Former Chairman of Santitham Community
  • Councilor (Navarat Pattana)

**Media**

1) Insom Panyasopha  • Chief Editor of Thai News
2) Dome Suwalai  • Editor of the Northern Branch of Bangkok Business Newspaper

**Academics**

1) Charkrapand Wongburanavart  • Dean of the Social Science Faculty
2) Thanan Anumanrajthon  • Professor of Political Science, Social Science Faculty, Chiang Mai University
3) Paisit Panichakul  • Professor of Laws, Social Science Faculty, Chiang Mai University
4) Suporn Koottatep  • Professor of Environmental Engineering, Engineering Faculty, Chiang Mai University

**Private Contractor**

1) Pinit Paetprasert  • Chief of Fee Section, G.B.C. Group Co. Ltd.

**Hat Yai**

**MEB and Municipal Councillors**

1) Kreng Suwannawong  • Mayor of Hat Yai Municipality
  • Leader of Old political group
2) Krun Suwannawong  • Deputy Mayor on Education
  • Councillor
3) Chalat Kirawanit  • Deputy mayor on Sanitation and Environment
  • Councillor
4) Chuchart Intralitre  • Speaker of the Municipal Council Councillor
6) Pasert Hmidbon
- Vice-speaker of the Municipal Council
- Councillor

7) Kanchit Tanisro
- Councillor

8) Kid Hirunchuha
- Councillor and Former Director of Sanitation and Environment Division, Hat Yai municipality

8) Pipat Jyalalong
- Councillor

9) Prayoon Vongprechakorn
- Leader of Kreitiphum group
- Councillor

Municipal Employee

1) Boonsong Trairattanart
- Municipal Clerk

2) Banjong Romsongha
- Director of Sanitation and Environment Division

3) Monkol Singkaw
- Director of Sanitary Works Division

4) Pannee Rong-ratanapong
- Chief of Cleaning Section

5) Parinda Chaiwiwatanapong
- Chief of Public Relations Section

6) Somkrieti Puprasert
- Chief of Architecture Section
- Former President of Thaksin Architect Committee

7) Chanporn Danpichitchok
- Chief of Plan and Policy Analysis and Planning Section

8) Nantakarn Katikar
- Chief of Sanitation and Environment Section

Business Association

1) Wachira Sakulchatuporn
- Vice-president of Tourist Business Association
- Member of Urban Environment Management Planning Committee

2) Sawai Na-pattalung
- President of Alliance for Southern Thailand Developing Organization
- President of Hotel Association
- Former President of Tourist Business Association
3) Charoen Limsakul

- Advisor and Former President of Thaksin Architect Committee
- Member of Songkhla Chamber of Commerce
- Member of Urban Environmental Management Planning Committee

**NGOs**

1) Prasat Meetam

- President of the Love your Birthplace Group
- Member of Hat Yai forum

2) Pannipa Sottipan

- Core Radio
- Co-organizer of Hat Yai Forum and Bright World in the Birthplace Event

**Academics**

1) Chatchat Ratanachai

- Acting Dean of Faculty of Environmental Management Establishment Program, Prince of Songkhla University
- Co-organizer of the Bright World in the Birthplace Event
- Municipal Committee Member on Urban Environmental Management

2) Supote Kovitaya

- Professor of Public Administration, Management Science Faculty, Prince of Songkhla University
- Member of Municipal Developmental Planning Committee

**Community Groups**

1) Oam Kongchanapal

- Chairman of Back of Stadium Community

2) Song Choy-songk

- Chairman of Front of Sena Narong Military Centre Community

3) Liam Keaw-chagwat

- Chairman of Front of Public Park Community

4) Kelyn Patîano

- Chairman of Klong-rian Community

5) Chong Suwannawong

- Chairman of Tong-sia-sing-ting Community

6) Somnyk Keaw-tanongk

- Chairman of Choksaman Community

7) Samart Kongsujarit

- Chairman of Front of Railway Station Community

8) Wisuth Kh-siri

Chairman of Ting-sao Community
Media

1) Manee Promkeaw  • Editor of Southern Branch of Bangkok Business Newspaper
2) Songchai J.Kamjorn  • Director of Business Market Newspaper

Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment

1) Director of Environmental Policy and Planning Division
2) Director of Environmental Fund
3) Director of Pollution Management Coordination Division
4) Head of Waste Utilization Section

Ministry of the Interior

1) Former Director of Local Government Affairs Division
2) Former Hat Yai District Officer, Songkhla Province
3) Former Deputy District Officer, Songkhla Province
4) Officer in charge of City Cleanliness and Tidiness Competition Project
Appendix B

A Survey Questionnaire on Urban Governance and the Urban Environment

Section 1: Demographics

1) What is your gender?
   1. □ male  2. □ female

2) How old are you? ......... years old

3) What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
   1. □ no schooling  2. □ primary school
   3. □ secondary/high school  4. □ certificate or diploma
   5. □ Bachelor degree in (please specify) .................
   6. □ Master degree in (please specify) .................
   7. □ doctorate degree in (please specify) .................
   8. □ others (please specify) .................

4) How long have you lived in this city?
   1. □ less than a year  2. □ 1-5 years
   3. □ 6-10 years  4. □ 11-15 years
   5. □ more than 15 years  6. □ born here ....go to question 6

5) Which city did you move from? ......................

6) What is your occupation?
   1. □ government officer  2. □ public enterprise officer
   3. □ business employee  4. □ business owner
   5. □ small business owner  6. □ professional
   7. □ wage labour  8. □ housewife
   9. □ student  10. □ farmer
   11. □ unemployed  12. □ retired
   13. □ others (please specify) ......................

7) What is your income per month? Bt .................

8) Do you have other supplementary jobs?
   1. □ yes (please specify) .................
   2. □ no
9) How many members in your household?

.................. 

10) What is your status in the household?
   1.☐ head of the household  2.☐ married partner
   3.☐ offspring  4.☐ others (please specify) ..................

11. What is your household’s total income per month?
   Bt .................. 

Section 2: The Urban Environment

12) How much attention do you pay to urban environmental problems in your city?
   1.☐ a great deal because ..................
   2.☐ some because ..................
   3.☐ very little because ..................
   4.☐ none because ..................

13. What were the three major urban environmental problems in your city during the last municipal administration (1990-1995)? (please rank in order of importance).

   Rank   Problem
   ......   traffic congestion
   ......   waste problem
   ......   waste water and water quality
   ......   air pollution
   ......   slums
   ......   public parks and tree inadequacy
   ......   others (specify) ..................

14) What are they today?

   Rank   Problem
   ......   traffic congestion
   ......   waste problem
   ......   waste water and water quality
   ......   air pollution
   ......   slums
   ......   public parks and tree inadequacy
   ......   others (specify) ..............

Section 3: The Solid Waste Issue

15) What is the current situation of the solid waste in your city?
   1.☐ very serious problem  2.☐ moderately serious problem
   3.☐ scarcely serious problem  4.☐ no problem...go to question 18
16) Which aspect of the solid waste issue does the municipality have to improve immediately?

1. [ ] cleaning streets and public spaces
2. [ ] garbage collection
3. [ ] garbage disposal
4. [ ] others *(please specify)*

17) What are major causes of the garbage problem in your city?

1. ........................................................
2. ........................................................

18) Have you ever sorted garbage before disposing or putting out for municipal garbage collection?

1. [ ] yes by sorting
   - 1. [ ] organic vs. recyclable garbage
   - 2. [ ] general garbage vs. glass bottles
   - 3. [ ] general garbage vs. plastics
   - 4. [ ] general garbage vs. paper
   - 5. [ ] others *(please specify)*

2. [ ] no because ........................................................

19) Have you ever reused goods?

1. [ ] yes, for example ........................................................
2. [ ] no because ........................................................

20) Have you ever sold or exchanged used goods?

1. [ ] yes, for example ........................................................
2. [ ] no because ........................................................

21) Have you ever used recycled products or goods?

1. [ ] yes, for example ........................................................
2. [ ] no because ........................................................

22) Have you ever *heard, known about or obtained materials and publication* from campaign activities (e.g. cleanliness, recycling or waste reduction campaign), environmental educational programs and public relations concerning waste issues organized by *the private sector* (including NGOs, business association, and other civic groups)?

1. [ ] yes organized by ........................................................
2. [ ] no because ........................................................

23) Have you ever *participated* in campaign activities (e.g. cleanliness, recycling or waste reduction campaign), environmental educational programs and public relations concerning waste issues organized by *the private sector* (including NGOs, business association, and other civic groups)?

1. [ ] yes organized by ........................................................
24) Have you ever been an initiator, an organizer, or a committee member of campaign activities (e.g. cleanliness, recycling or waste reduction campaign), environmental educational programs and public relations concerning waste issues within your own community?
   1. ☐ yes, please tell briefly about the activities ..........................................
   2. ☐ no because .................................................................

25) How do you normally manage waste from your household? (Please check all that apply)
   1. ☐ disposed by yourself by
      1. ☐ burying
      2. ☐ burning
      3. ☐ composting
      4. ☐ others (please specify) .....................
   2. ☐ community garbage collection service
      if yes, how much is the service fee? .......... baht per month.
   3. ☐ community garbage collection and disposai services
      if yes, how much is the service fee? .......... baht per month.
   4. ☐ municipal garbage collection service
   5. ☐ private garbage collection service, commissioned by the municipality
   6. ☐ others (please specify) .............................

*Section 4: Attitude and opinion toward and participation in municipal solid waste management*

26) How would you rate the municipal performance regarding solid waste management in the last municipal administration (1990-1995)?
   1. ☐ excellent because ..................................................
   2. ☐ average because ..................................................
   3. ☐ poor because ......................................................

27) How would you rate the municipal performance on garbage collection in the last municipal administration (1990-1995)?
   1. ☐ excellent because ..................................................
   2. ☐ average because ..................................................
   3. ☐ poor because ......................................................

28) How would you rate the municipal performance on garbage disposal in the last municipal administration (1990-1995)?
   1. ☐ excellent because ..................................................
   2. ☐ average because ..................................................
   3. ☐ poor because ......................................................
Have you or members of your household ever done any of the following activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29) pay garbage collection fees to the municipal government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if yes, how much? ................. bahts per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30) provide your own garbage bins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31) obtain information concerning solid waste and cleanliness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campaigning activities, publications, public relations from the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>municipal government</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32) participate in municipal programs and projects regarding a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>solid waste issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33) provide information (e.g. questionnaire) for municipal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>planning and administration regarding a solid waste issue.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34) donate money to municipal government for equipment such as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garbage containers and garbage collection trucks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35) ask for municipal support (budget, personnel and equipment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in community waste activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>36) participate in municipal decision-making such as a committee member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37) make a complaint involving solid waste against the municipal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>government through the media (e.g. newspapers, TV or radio)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38) make a complaint against the municipal government to higher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level of government (the provincial chief of local government branch, the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provincial governor, the ministry of Interior)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if yes, what was the response? 1.☐ positive 2.☐ negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39) sign petition protesting particular municipal garbage projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if yes, what was the response? 1.☐ positive 2.☐ negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40) join demonstration, rally or other citizen actions protesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>municipal projects.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if yes, what was the response? 1.☐ positive 2.☐ negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41) Have you ever discussed, complained, or asked for assistance regarding solid waste problems from any of following persons? *(please answer all that apply)*

1.☐ the Mayor and Deputy Mayors
2.☐ municipal councillors
3.☐ Municipal Clerk and municipal employee
4.☐ Members of Parliament
5.☐ others *(please specify)* ......................
6.☐ never because ................................... go to question 42

In your experience, who is the most able person to solve your problems?

1.☐ Mayor and Deputy Mayors
2.☐ Municipal Councillors
3. □ Municipal Clerk and municipal employees
4. □ Members of Parliament
5. □ others (please specify) ......................

In your experience, which is the most effective to address your problems?
1. □ personal contact (e.g. telephone, meet at home or office)
2. □ formal contact (e.g. fill out a complaint form or write a letter)
3. □ others (please specify) .................

42) Have you known any of the following persons personally (e.g. relatives, friends, business partners)
1. □ Mayor and Deputy Mayors
2. □ Municipal Councilors
3. □ Municipal Clerk and municipal employees
4. □ Members of the Parliament

Section 5: Political participation

43) How much attention do you pay to national politics generally?
1. □ a great deal
2. □ some
3. □ very little
4. □ none

44.) How much attention do you pay to municipal politics generally?
1. □ a great deal
2. □ some
3. □ very little
4. □ none

45) How much attention did you pay to the recent municipal election campaign (1995)?
1. □ a great deal
2. □ some
3. □ very little
4. □ none

46) What were three major issues in this campaign? (please rank in order of importance).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rank</th>
<th>issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.....</td>
<td>economic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....</td>
<td>social problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....</td>
<td>security in life and property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....</td>
<td>environmental issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....</td>
<td>others (please specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
47) Did you vote in the following elections? (please check all that apply)
   1. □ the 1995 national election
   2. □ the 1995 municipal election
   3. □ the 1990 municipal election
   4. □ the provincial council election
   5. □ never vote because ..........................

48) Which of the following groups, organizations or clubs are you a member of? If so, tell me how many of each type and reasons to join.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>groups</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>reasons to join</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chamber of commerce</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labour union</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business association</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alumni</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sport</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women/ housewife</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>youth</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public welfare</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social group</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental group</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community group</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others (please specify)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none because</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49) Are you a member of a political group and/or a political party?
   1. □ yes   1. □ political group (please specify) ............
   2. □ none because ..........................................

Section 6: Attitude toward the role of municipal government and municipal politicians

In questions 50 to 54, please express your opinion by mainly agreeing or mainly disagreeing with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>statement</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50) It does not matter to vote or not in municipal election. Nothing will be changed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51) Municipal government should give people more say in municipal decision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52) Garbage collection and disposal should be the municipal responsibilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53) Municipal government is a foundation for democracy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
54) Municipal government should have more local autonomy from the Ministry of the Interior.

In questions 55 to 58, we would like to know your feeling toward politicians who run the municipal government in your city.

How would you rate your former Mayor (1990-1995)? (Varakorn Tontanon in Chiang Mai and Kreng Suwannawong in Hat Yai)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorruptible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-mind</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

56) Which one best fits how you feel?
1. many politicians running the municipal government are corrupted.
2. not very many are corrupted.
3. hardly any of them are corrupted.
4. none of them is corrupted.

57) Which one best fits how you feel?
1. many politicians running the municipal government focus on their own interests.
2. not very many focus on their own interests.
3. hardly any of them focus on their own interests.
4. none of them focuses on their own interests.

66) How much of the time do you think you can trust the municipal administrators to do what is right?
1. just about always
2. most of the time
3. only some of the time
4. not at all

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.
Appendix C

Socio-economic Information of Survey Respondents

Table 1: Residence Areas of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Chiang Mai</th>
<th>Municipal District</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<table>
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<th>B: Hat Yai</th>
<th>Municipal Area</th>
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<tr>
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Table 2: Gender of Respondents

<table>
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<th>Hat Yai</th>
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<tr>
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<td>50.2</td>
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Table 3: Age of Respondents

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<tr>
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<td>18-25</td>
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### Table 4: Education of Respondents

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<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>92</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>.4</td>
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<td>.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>100</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>100</td>
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### Table 5: Occupation of Respondents

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<th>Hat Yai</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Government officer</td>
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<td>Public enterprise officer</td>
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<td>.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Professional</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>.8</td>
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<td>14.3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.1</td>
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<td>Housewife</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<td>.8</td>
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<td>-</td>
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### Table 6: Monthly Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Chiang Mai</th>
<th></th>
<th>Hat Yai</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>73</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>32.6</td>
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<td>22.9</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>10000 and higher</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>23.5</td>
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<td>14.4</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>264</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8046.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>11280</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table 7: Number of Household Members

| Number of Household Members | Chiang Mai | | Hat Yai | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|----------|
|                             | N  | %   | N   | %   |
| 3 and lower                 | 88 | 35.9| 65  | 24.6|
| 4 to 5                      | 108| 44.1| 125 | 47.3|
| 6 and higher                | 41 | 16.7| 72  | 27.3|
| No answer                   | 8  | 3.3 | 2   | .8  |
| **Total**                   | 245| 100 | 264 | 100 |
| Mean                        | 4.27|    | 4.79|    |
| Mode                        | 4   |    | 5   |    |

Table 8: Status in the Household

| Status            | Chiang Mai | | Hat Yai | |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|----------|
|                   | N  | %   | N   | %   |
| Head of household| 57 | 23.3| 66  | 25.0|
| Martial partner  | 54 | 22.0| 68  | 25.8|
| Offspring         | 108| 44.1| 106 | 40.2|
| Others            | 19 | 7.8 | 24  | 9.1 |
| No answer         | 7  | 2.9 | -   | -   |
| **Total**         | 245| 100 | 264 | 100 |

Table 9: Period of Living in the City

| Period             | Chiang Mai | | Hat Yai | |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|----------|
|                   | N  | %   | N   | %   |
| Less than a year  | 12 | 4.9 | 12  | 4.5 |
| 1-5 years         | 38 | 15.5| 50  | 18.9|
| 6-10 year         | 28 | 11.4| 30  | 11.4|
| 11-15 years       | 12 | 4.9 | 27  | 10.2|
| More than 15 year | 45 | 18.4| 48  | 18.2|
| Born here         | 105| 42.9| 97  | 36.7|
| No answer         | 5  | 2   | -   | -   |
| **Total**         | 245| 100 | 264 | 100 |