

RIVERSIDE REJUVENATION KEY TO BANGKOK'S FUTURE THRIVING COMMUNITIES VIA PUBLIC-PRIVATE-PEOPLE PARTNERSHIPS



Bangkok, Thailand – 30 March, 2015; As urban development thrives around the world, cities are doing their best to keep up with the growing demands of businesses and residents who are placing increased pressure on community leaders to provide innovative infrastructure through sustainable planning that provides economic growth. It is this delicate balancing act that is posing one of the most pressing questions for figureheads from government, business and society to find an answer – and fast.

New York's High Line, which originally opened to trains connecting directly to factories and warehouses in the city's booming era of development in the mid-1930s, was once considered a modern marvel of industrialisation. It effectively stood in ruins until 1999, when New Yorkers Mr. Joshua David and Mr. Robert Hammond saw an opportunity for a project that brought together the elements of innovative infrastructure, sustainable planning and economic growth, leading to the founding of the non-profit organisation, Friends of the High Line.

Mr. Joshua David was in Bangkok recently to share his extraordinary story of turning the High Line into a world-famous, dynamic, 2.3 kilometre public space featuring a myriad of gardens, walkways and vistas. It now attracts over 5 million local and international visitors each year, helping it top the list of quintessential New York experiences for both residents and tourists, and garnering support from major business figures and celebrities, such as Former Mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg and actress Sarah Jessica Parker.



High Line At The Rail Yards
Photo By Iwan Baan

Speaking at a meeting between private and public representatives during his visit to the Four Seasons Private Residences Sales Gallery which is situated on the banks of the Chao Phraya River, Mr. David observed there are many similarities between the High Line and Bangkok's own planned regeneration of the Yannawa Riverfront by the Urban Design & Development Centre (UddC).



High Line At The Rail Yards
Photo By Iwan Baan

"The success of projects like the High Line and those that UddC are currently working on relies strongly on public-private-people partnerships. In fact, without these relationships, there is simply no way a project like this can succeed. It's imperative to have people working together towards a common goal, which is to see the river once again brim with life and inspire optimism for the communities that surround it," he said.

Bangkok Rivers Partners (BRP) is one of the key groups committed to the marketing the Chao Phraya River as a destination for local and international tourism, attracting business, and increasing the riverfront asset value over time.

Mr. David Robinson, highlighted many examples of successful waterfront destinations around the world that have breathed new life into underutilized urban area, from which BRP draws its inspiration to market Bangkok's own projects.

"Iconic destinations like The Rocks Sydney, Southbank London, V&A Waterfront Cape Town, Marina Bay Singapore and, of course, the High Line New York, have been developed into world-class domestic and international tourism destinations and have had a strongly positive economic impact on their respective local communities. Our vision is that through projects like the Yannawa Riverfront regeneration, we can initiate something here in Bangkok, with a truly unique Thai flavor that will provide returns for businesses and communities and give travelers yet another reason to want to visit our incredible city."



This area named "Philip A. and Lisa Maria Falcone Flyover"

Thailand-based international real estate developer Country Group Development (CGD), one of the main private industry sponsors of Mr. David's trip to Bangkok, is also one of the key stakeholders with a vested interest in seeing the regeneration of the Chao Phraya River become a reality. CGD recently launched its first major development, Chao Phraya Estate, a 32 billion baht riverfront development which will feature Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok at Chao Phraya River and Four Seasons Private Residences Bangkok at Chao Phraya River. Scheduled for completion in 2018 and spanning more than 350 meters across 35-2-68 Rai, the low-density, mixed-use development is set to make a significant contribution to the revitalisation of Thailand's greatest urban waterway.

Ms. Kwanrudee Maneewongwatthana, CGD's Executive Director - Marketing and Communications, said one of the key elements of Chao Phraya Estate's design and layout was to ensure that it demonstrated the company's long-term commitment to the people of Thailand. "Our aim is for Chao Phraya Estate to not only redefine waterfront living in Bangkok and Asia, but to also make a positive, timeless contribution to the revival of the Chao Phraya River. After securing one of Bangkok's largest and last-remaining undeveloped parcels of riverside land in the CBD, our aim is to create a meaningful, luxury experience that is unmatched in the market. We have much passion and respect for our city's rich culture and history, and our desire to see it be renowned as one of the greatest urban waterways in the world," Ms. Maneewongwatthana said.

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Photo Caption (L-R): Joshua David, Co-Founder of Friends of the High Line; Kwanrudee Maneewongwatthana, Executive Director - Marketing & Communications, Country Group Development; David Robinson, Director of Bangkok Rivers Partners.

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About Country Group Development

Country Group Development PCL is the real estate arm of Country Group. Active across multiple sectors and markets, the company is able to enhance the value of its properties with superior design, intelligent development and efficient partnerships. Dedicated to enriching lives and inspired built environments, Country Group Development represents an unwavering commitment to quality in all aspects of a project. From concept to completion, its holistic approach unlocks value for both residents and owners.