Attractiveness and Livability in New Urban Areas of Hanoi: When Their Public Spaces Are ‘Socialized’

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Abstract. After 1986, by economic reform institution and the end of State subsidization in housing development, the model of KDTMs (Khu Do Thi Moi - new urban area) is the result of transferring the housing supply part to the private sector, referred to as ‘socialization’, which has come to imply the individualization of responsibilities and the privatization of public goods. This model has shown a marked change in the ideology of creating neighborhood-level public spaces, in order to increase the attractiveness and competition in the real estate market. Perhaps this transfer is justified in the context of restricting the government's public funding to establish and maintain urban public spaces as well as the real need to create the attractiveness and livability of the KDTM project. Public spaces in KDTMs bear the additional economic role, creating a trinary political-economic-social system. The KDTM project owner has the role of promoting the creation of the public space system but has also given additional forms of ownership and management. The use of public spaces is divided into different levels bringing many identity creative imprints according to the context of each project. The process of socializing public spaces in KDTMs redefined the nature of public spaces in Vietnam’s urban residential areas.

1. Introduction

1.1. Situation and background
Public space is “the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds” [1], serves as a setting for community activities or public life, can be a magnet for a community organization, and provides a uniquely identifiable reference that reinforces a sense of belonging to a community [2]. Understanding public space has commanded the attention of a virtual army of scholars [3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9], have traced the functions and uses of public space and documented its changing functions and character. Achieving the vision of lively-safe-sustainable-healthy cities has become a general and urgent desire; thus, the importance of life in public space, particularly the social and cultural opportunities as well as the attractions associated with a lively city will be received attention [8].

Since 1986, by the end of the planned economy, Vietnam began to think about mobilizing resources in the private sector. Regarding the (re) creation of urban space, in the final report of the State-level Science and Technology Program (KC11) on ‘Improving the efficiency of urban management and construction’ (1991-1995) of the Ministry of Construction has raised the issue of “eliminating subsidies in urban public services, attracting financial resources of the State, the city itself, the international financial institutions, the government aid, the foreign investment, and private and
community participation” [10]. In other words, the State has shifted from providing accommodation for all to enabling people to take care of their accommodations to suit their needs and abilities. The State strongly encouraged the socialization of housing projects for citizens and supported investors with different benefits. This is an important premise in the socialization of urban housing development, which later became evident in transferring the housing production to the private sector. After Doi Moi, Vietnam has also launched a new strategy: project-based housing development, differences in the economic value of land, and the sharing of housing stock with the private sector [11]. After the first seven pilot KTDMs (Khu Do Thi Moi - new urban area) in 1997-1998 [12], this model was widely spread in sub-urban areas of Hanoi: agricultural areas were filled quickly by residential entities and became newly living areas of the Vietnamese city [13, 14]. In recent decades, hundreds of master-planned KTDMs were developed on the urban fringes of the Vietnamese’s cities, garnered a great deal of attention lately on the post-Doi Moi era [15], promoted as a new urban planning concept in the post-reform policies [16]. KTT model (Khu Tap The - collective housing) was created during the planned economy period 1954-1986 based on standardization, typicalization, and industrialization in construction provided by the State. Despite many efforts, the public spaces are still less attractive due to the repetition of architecture and unattractive activities [17]. For the KTDMs, the State ‘relies on’ project owners, private sectors, in establishing their adequate public spaces. That transfer of responsibility is often called ‘socialization’ in Vietnam. When comparing the public spaces in the KTDMs, we easily recognize the specific provisions about the users and activities from project owners for each public space, leading to skepticism about the privatization of public spaces that undermines the opportunities for free speech of residents [18].

1.2. Materials and methods
‘Socialization’ is a term that has been mentioned recently and particularly in Vietnam; that is, society ‘helps’ the State to perform some tasks that the government should implement. This is defined as the process of forming and developing social behavior standards and norms for each to receive and maintain the operational capacity to make society develop in a better direction [19]. This term has come to imply the individualization of responsibilities and the privatization of public goods [20], creating a new operating and management mechanism of several socio-economic activities based on the joint responsibility, in order to take advantage of social resources, serving the country's socio-economic development goals [21]. This process has shown a noticeable change in the ideology of creating public spaces, in order to increase the attractiveness in a fiercely competing real estate market which has started to be stabilized after the (re)forming and professionalized. Socialization is manifested in building community responsibility of all segments for the creation and improvement of a healthy and favorable economic, social, and ecological environment, together promote the social progress. This term is not in line with the State transferring its responsibility to the people, but the State and the people share responsibility in some areas for better social development. Thus, socialization means mobilizing all available and possible resources in society toward certain fields that were previously monopolized by the State. These resources are often located in the private sector, so in some cases, socialization is equated with privatization. Privatization of public spaces is a kind of public-private partnership whereby private entities and city officials negotiate directly with one another [22]. It can be in the form of buildings such as shopping malls, coffee houses, festival market places, fitness centers, themed historical destination, juice bars, pay-for-playground and the like - such spaces are loosely called ‘privatized’ because, although they are publicly accessible and support public life, they are private or public-private in ownership [23]. Public-private partnerships have emerged as a management model for several financial and structural reasons. Many municipalities are, and have been, experiencing budget cuts and cannot manage, maintain, and develop public spaces. Local governments find it necessary to partner with non-profit and private organizations to leverage their staff and capital. In addition to the criticism of privatizing public space, there are also positive points of view of privatization relates to management and quality improvement of public space. Recent privatization trends should not be seen as a threat but as a new form of public space development and management [24]. Another study also showed that people are satisfied with public
and privatized public open space features, with management aspects of the privatized public space higher than the public one [25].

For Hanoi, we pay attention to a study related to public spaces named ‘Redefining public space in Hanoi: Places, practices and meaning’ that develops a two-fold argument: (1) the transition of Vietnam towards political and economic openness fosters the formation and transformation of various forms of public space; and (2) Hanoi is a political arena where the State and citizens negotiate the meanings, power relations, and practices associated with public space [26]. KDTM area is considered as a result of the transformation of economic regimes and institutions related to land and urban planning, which is first implemented in Hanoi. We recognize that the problem of public spaces in KDTMs is currently under the influence of three subjects: (1) the government always wants to institutionalize, while (2) project owners want to commercialize, and (3) residents wants to democratize public spaces in KDTMs. The first research question is how public spaces in KDTMs are operating between the attempting of those actors, especially the intermediaries - the KDTM owners/investors that appeared by the ‘socialization’? Secondly, it seems that some public places in KDTMs are neither public nor private but exist in a ‘gray area between the two’. Thus, how this gray area is determined? Our third question revolves around the relationship between community organization in KDTM and the form and use of public space in modern society. A survey in 2018 was conducted on four important KDTMs of Hanoi with 213 ‘insiders’ interviewees randomly selected denizens (Linh Dam 47, Viet Hung 46, Van Quan 56, Ecopark 64) and 50 experts from universities, research institutes, enterprises, design offices operating in architecture, planning, and construction, including 29 experts currently living in different KDTMs in Hanoi. The survey aims to assess the attractiveness, livability, and the necessity of the constituent elements of KDTMs. In this paper, we only focus on analyzing information related to public spaces at four surveyed KDTMs. In order to answer these research questions, this article uses the following methods: (1) Literature review: this paper is based on desk study aiming at establishing the current background and context for the relationship between public spaces and development of KDTMs in evolutionary of Hanoi, identify practical examples, and establish critical issues; (2) Qualitative methods: After behavioral observations of the users and the use of public spaces, interviews were conducted with residents of KDTMs in the fields of public spaces quality to assess the conceptual relationship between public spaces and the development of KDTMs; (3) Quantitative methods: Survey in KDTMs for rating the level of resident’s satisfaction and understanding residents think and look forward to in public spaces of their KDTM; (4) Syntheses and comparison: Review the survey results to answer the research questions by comparing the results with the hypotheses, the information of different KDTMs.

2. Definition of KDTM model and KDTM public spaces

2.1. Model of KDTM: the ambition to improve urban public spaces attached to housing development

In traditional village society in Vietnam, public spaces are most evident in sacred spaces: the construction of pagoda and communal home (‘đình’) played an important role in the ruler’s function as a mediator between the profane and spiritual worlds [26]. “Vietnam has little history of a public sphere or of public spaces, a social vacuum which has always been filled by the authority of the emperor/State with little place for Western-style public discussion or expression” [27]. Then, the modern planning of Hanoi, in all studies, was always considered to be deeply influenced by the Soviets in the period 1954-1986. In essence, urban construction is a high expression of State power and behavior to implement ‘five-year plans’ through the process of centralization in decision making and distribution of production forces [28]. The city is organized hierarchically based on the Soviet model ‘mikroraion’ [29] with four levels (Figure 1).

In this period, public spaces were established and managed by the authorities corresponding to each level. In the case of Hanoi’s inner city, from high to low, it would be city, districts, wards, and neighborhoods. The creation of public spaces will be undertaken by the State according to the urban spatial development plans in a manner that “urban constructions are concretizations of an urban ideology of élites” [31]. The administrative structure of the government also allows the State to intrude into public spaces. The State decides the location and supervises the design of official public spaces.
embedded with political ideologies [26]. Therefore, these public spaces have a clear socio-political role, which is strongly governed by the institutional system. Since then, the city often lacks the real sufficient quality public spaces that meet the diverse needs of users. However, since 1986, when the State recognized the role of the private sector in the field of urban space production, public spaces began to be differentiated. The State only dominates high-level, ‘representative’ and ‘symbolic’ public spaces of the city, the lower-level public spaces are ‘socialized’: transfer to the community or source from the private sector.

(1) **Residential area** - some houses surround a public space, usually the kindergarten, the playground. The distance from the house to this public space is about 2-3 minutes on foot, equivalent to 200-250m.

(2) **Micro district** (‘mikrograion’) - considered basic level - many residential areas surround a center, including public spaces that meet daily needs such as elementary schools, shops, canteens, sports ground, meeting house, clinic. The distance from the house to these public spaces is about 5 minutes on foot, equivalent to 400-500m;

(3) **District** (‘raion’) - also referred to as ‘inter-micro-district’ - many micro districts surround a center including public spaces for recurring needs such as theaters, cinemas, stadiums, health centers, hospitals. The distance from the house to these public spaces is greater than 10 minutes on foot or must use transportation.

(4) **City** - many districts surround an urban center with public facilities for city activities.

![Figure 1](image-url)  
**Figure 1.** The hierarchization of the urban organization according to the public space system [30]

Entering the 1990s, the governments created favorable conditions to develop housing and public spaces in the form of investment ‘packages’: KDTM = Technical infrastructures + Social facilities + Housing [32, 33]. While the technical infrastructure is still considered as ‘public space’ but mainly for the technical operation of the KDTM (transport, energy, public lighting, water supply and drainage, substances management, environmental sanitation), social infrastructure is the real public space (has direct users) for the social operation through public facilities, services (health care, culture, education, sports, commerce), open spaces (squares, parks, greenery, water surfaces), and urban administrative agencies [34]. Public spaces and facilities will be created as the components of KDTMs, either undertaken by the primary project owner or transferred to the other secondary project owner. In order to be self-contained, project owners must be responsible for setting up public spaces within the scope of their KDTM corresponding to the residential size and the area. The government encourages and possibly support project owners to implement inter-KDTMs-level or city-level public spaces.

2.2. *Competition between KDTMs via ‘socialization’ of their public spaces*

In the advertisements of KDTMs, in addition to the direct introduction to the house/apartment, project owners always mention the utilities attached to the house, including inside-of-KDTM public spaces or even outside-of-KDTM public spaces within reasonable distance to prove the superiority of real estate products. Those public spaces are ‘default’ as a kind of ‘added-value’ space. For public spaces in KDTMs, besides open spaces (greenery) and transportation networks, four other types of public buildings that are required to be included: (1) education - kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school; (2) health care - clinics; (3) sports - sports ground, (4) trade - market [34]. Therefore, KDTMs often add some appurtenances to diversify public spaces, increase the attractiveness and livability, especially focused on modern commercial spaces (supermarkets, shopping malls, convenience stores), indoor recreation spaces (combined with commercial or open spaces), dining space. These additional spaces often come together to create a complex that fully meets the daily needs of residents. Even these shopping - entertainment - eating complexes also play a crucial role in the KDTM, directly hitting the ‘materialism’ psychology of the consumer economy after a long period of hardship because of the war and state-planned/subsidized economy. Due to the land-use criteria, these complexes must be arranged in basements because of the lack of a legal framework for controlling the density of underground construction, creating bustling ‘underground cities’ different from the ‘quiet’ and ‘peaceful’ appearances on the ground. These complexes are also associated with a new type of public
space - the ‘square’ - a place to support significant events during festivals, promotional seasons. The public spaces in KDTMs are always highlighted by the labels ‘modern’, ‘comfortable’, ‘high-class’, ‘international’, to enhance the level of users through the presence of well-known domestic or international brands in the supply of goods, services and management, creating trust about the quality of space and service it creates. In the KDTMs model, traditional markets are almost eliminated from official commercial facilities. There has been a massive competition among KDTMs: their public spaces are also the trump card of project owners to create KDTMs’ identity. The public spaces have been commercialized, attached to, and promoted the project owner’s business activities. The market economy has made the commercial and service spaces become indispensable space at new housing projects in the city.

3. Diagnostic of questions concerning the operation of public spaces in KDTMs

Thus, besides the actual binary behavior socio-political, the public spaces in the KDTMs also have to shoulder the additional economic role to create a ‘trinary behavior’ political-economic-social. This formula related to the appearance of the third entity - the project owners (primary and secondary), leading to essential changes in the process of making and operating public spaces in the KDTMs.

3.1. Scenarios to create public spaces in KDTMs

According to regulations, each project is a private ‘territory’ of the project owner, where they take fully responsible to the city authority for all activities within it. The State considers that housing is a commodity and the project owner can gain profits from it. In vice versa, public spaces are ‘obligations’ and ‘attached’ to the sold goods. However, project owners think that public space is also a commodity. Therefore, the production of this ‘commodity’ is divided into two categories:

(1) Mandatory institutional public spaces: They provide public services, so regulated by the government to ensure accessibility to everyone. It is not very easy for the KDTM owner to get a quick return to make up for the initial investment. Many scenarios are implemented depending on the project context:

- Delaying the implementation for justifying reasons ‘residents are not enough to generate demand’. This scenario reduces the project reputation in the eyes of the community;
- Appealing to secondary project owners to participate in the making public spaces, in which the primary project owner’s contribution is the value of the land;
- ‘Returning’ to the city by linking these public spaces to the existent local system to take the State budget. The value of land is the financial contribution ‘duty’ of the project owner to the locality. Not all of them can ‘return’ because of the limited State budget;
- Asking for ‘privatizing’ public services by ‘luxurifying’ or ‘internationalizing’ to escape from the provisions of public services, outside the control of the government;
- Building more value-added civil public spaces to make up for the investment in compulsory public spaces - a ‘wisest’ way of handling, benefiting all parties: ensuring the government requirements, satisfying the needs of the people, promoting the project brand.

(2) Value-added civil public spaces: Those can generate a return. KDTM owners always try to maximize these spaces’ sizes due to the scale of the project and their ability. Although not a mandatory institutional public space, paradoxically, they appear in most KDTMs, even being prioritized to complete first.

3.2. ‘Insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in KDTM public spaces

The priority beneficiaries of the public spaces are the residents of KDTMs: (1) controlling access through the ‘resident card’; (2) prioritizing access through a ‘preferential card’ for some spaces. However, to ensure revenue, public spaces in KDTM often expand in size, even beyond the demand of its residents. So, these public spaces need ‘outsiders’ to use services, especially people in the surrounding neighborhoods, which are deficient in public spaces, leading to the extent of its influence beyond the KDTM’s territory. The local government has encouraged this trend because it reduces the burden of making public spaces. However, through the survey, the residents of KDTMs do not entirely...
support this manner. They think these public spaces are ‘belong to them’ and they even do not want to share use with other communities because they think that ‘outsiders’ will not be highly aware and ruin their living environment (because it does not belong to the ‘outsiders’) and their presence in large numbers will reduce the security and safety in KDTMs. It is also a legitimate need of the people who have previously received the promise of an ideal living environment from the investor. Thus, the openness of public spaces in the new urban areas has been divided into several levels: from the fully opened spaces regardless of everyone to fully gated spaces only reserved for ‘insiders’ or a particular group of ‘insiders’ through limited access measures. The public spaces of the more ‘luxurified’ KDTM are less open. It is creating gated-KDTM [14], contrary to the situations of ‘popular’ KDTM. If the conflicts about the beneficiaries between project owners and residents of KDTM are ignored, it is clear that the public space in the KDTM has contributed to improving the quantity and quality of the locality, helping the residents (inside and outside the KDTM) enjoy public facilities and amenities. As such, while the important question of identifying beneficiaries of these public spaces is left open, governments are always beneficial in limiting the social unrest caused by the lack of public spaces in the city.

3.3. Arising from ownership, accessibility and management rights on the public spaces in KDTMs

In the past, the management of public spaces in KTTs was mainly under the control of State agencies, characterized by burdensome administrative procedures, lack of management flexibility for market practices, and usage (Figure 2). Most of the public property investment comes from the State budget, through a legal representative agency, creating a heavy burden while not making a profit. At the same time, ownership, as well as management rights, become ‘ambiguous’ and the lack of awareness in the use of the people for this ‘common’ or ‘State’ property because they are not aware of their ownership.

![Figure 2](image1.png)  
**Figure 2.** Mechanism of supplying and operating public spaces in KDTMs (compared to KTT)

![Figure 3](image2.png)  
**Figure 3.** Additional variation in ownership and use of public spaces in KDTMs

The transfer of responsibility for investing in public spaces ‘accidentally’ transfers both the ‘ownership’ and the ‘management’ rights to project owners. The ‘access’ right to these public spaces thenceforth is also limited and regulated in different ways and levels of the management entity. These spaces are therefore designed, assigned function, assigned meaning, and managed access separately and appropriately. Public spaces are embellished with economic functions by the project owner, which reflects the level of attractiveness and attract customers. Besides, the conflict over the right to exploit public spaces between the project owner and the residents is often caused by the concept of common/private part in the KDTM. There are many different land use mechanisms and different entities participating in the process of making public spaces, resulting in different (common) forms of ownership, leading to the complexity in managing and operating these spaces (Figure 3).
The KDTM owners are setting the rules for public spaces within their territory because, in essence, it is their property. This mechanism provides alignment and maintenance for public spaces rather than ‘ownerless’ spaces (for everyone but belonging to no one), but it takes away the public sense of these spaces, turning them to semi-public spaces. The ambiguity between ‘public spaces of project (owner)’ and ‘public space for community local’, the complexity of ownership, use, and management among entities has led to a series of conflicts between the project owner and the people regarding the public spaces in the KDTM that require dialogue and community regulations. For example, the conflict in the common yard of HH apartment complexes in Linh Dam KDTM, when the project owner erected barriers to prevent motorbike access to ensure safety for users: residents feel satisfied, but the service owners are unhappy when they lose their current customer. Therefore, an hourly barriers agreement has been set up to ensure the interests of all parties. As such, social dialogue mechanisms are used to reach a common consensus in the operation of these socialized public spaces.

4. Let the public spaces in KDTMs be for all
The socialization - privatization of public spaces in KDTMs, along with the operational conflicts have led to doubts about the attractiveness of KDTMs through the quality and content of public spaces. Whether economic profits make these spaces pragmatic, and will the socialization/privatization of these spaces fade the emotions or sense of community?

4.1. What do residents think and look forward to public spaces of their KDTM?
For evaluation, we use a five-point Likert scale: from ‘1’ - strongly negative to ‘5’ - strongly positive, and ‘3’ is considered to be the midpoint. Thus, any value above 3 is considered a somewhat higher level, a positive answer, inversely, below 3 - a negative answer.

\[\text{Likert Scale: } 1 \text{ (Strongly Negative)} \rightarrow 3 \text{ (Midpoint)} \rightarrow 5 \text{ (Strongly Positive)}\]
Figure 5. Comparing the satisfaction level of each KDTM and 4 KDTMs in general about open space (upper) and service space, public utilities (lower)

Figure 6. Comparing the assessment of 2 subjects on the common types of public services and open spaces in KDTMs

Figure 7. Comparing the assessment of 2 subjects on the necessity of 7 common types of public services and facilities in KDTMs

We asked residents of four KDTMs to assess the satisfaction of the existing public spaces in their KDTM in two types: (1) Public open spaces (parks, gardens, squares, playgrounds); (2) Public service spaces (education, culture, trade, administrative management) (Figure 5). For open space, Ecopark is the absolute dominance (95% positive answer) compared to 40-50% of the remaining three KDTMs because this ‘gated’ KDTM considers the whole KDTM to be a ‘park’, limiting outsiders, limiting vehicles and speeds that make people feel safe inside. This difference is similar to the service space, public utilities. The overall average shows that about 60%, nearly 2/3 of the respondents expressed a positive attitude to both the quality of open spaces and service spaces, public utilities. It is a relatively ‘impressive’ figure showing that the majority of people have accepted these spaces. Residents indicated that the demand for natural or artificial open spaces was nearly equal, but the expert group more appreciated artificial open space. Both groups rated daily service spaces as important, while periodic service spaces were considered less important in the KDTM with the significantly lower scores (Figure 6). For the importance of the seven common types of public services and facilities in the KDTM, the responses of residents focused on two distinct groups: (1) The ‘important’ group: education, health, shopping; (2) The ‘quite important’ group: culture, sports, traffic, administration. The opinions of experts differentiate into more levels: (1) ‘important’ group: education, health, shopping; (2) The group ‘quite important’: traffic, (3) The group ‘neutral’: culture, sports, (4) The group ‘quite unimportant’: administration. There is a consensus among residents and experts that the most ‘important’ group includes education, health, shopping, despite the different priority order (Figure 7). For the necessity of privatizing community spaces for residents of KDTMs, experts expected more than residents (Figure 8). Thus, about half of the residents and experts want to have spaces for their ‘own’ in the KDTMs. This finding is also consistent with the survey results about the need to restrict ‘outsiders’ access to KDTMs (Figure 9). With the importance of the frequency of community interaction and activities organized in public spaces, both residents and experts shared the need to increase in the order (1) weekly, (2) monthly, (3) quarterly, (4) yearly. Residents seem to appreciate these activities more than experts. Both groups agreed that organizing activities by week were quite tricky for both organizers and participants, but it could be more feasible to organize monthly, quarterly, primarily by year (annual holidays, festival events) (Figure 9).
4.2. Discussion for future of public spaces in KDTMs
At the end of the survey, we asked people to contribute their ideas to enhance the attractiveness and livability of their KDTMs through public spaces. Selected from responses, visualizations of residents related to public spaces focus on the following opinions:

- Enhancing the security and safety of public spaces by lighting and limiting ‘outsiders’;
- Improving the quality of public spaces by adding greenery, water surface, improving environmental sanitation, collecting rubbish, maintaining physical factors;
- Paying more attention to specific users like children, the elderly because public spaces have not yet classified the users, leading to the insecurity, dangers when many users use at the same time;
- Adding schools, health services, markets, which are public services ‘of the State’ to ensure the accessibility of all residents besides chargeable ‘private’ services.

These needs are legitimate but put the project owners in a ‘difficult position’ from the perspective of harmonizing the institutional and economic role of public spaces in the privatized KDTM.

5. Conclusion
With the three research questions, we had relatively interesting preliminary insights, paving the way for the development of in-depth studies on the public space socialization process in KDTMs in Hanoi.

- Firstly, how public spaces in KDTMs are operating between the attempting of different actors? Perhaps the transfer of the role of making public spaces from the State to the KDTM project owner is reasonable in the context of the government’s limited public budget in establishing and maintaining public spaces as well as the desire to create attractive and livable KDTMs through their public spaces. The relatively high proportion of residents expressing a positive attitude, along with initiatives of project owners in each KDTM’s context, have shown the effectiveness of the socialization paralleling privatization of public spaces in the KDTMs that bring the sense of ‘belonging’ to residents, so they need to separate the concept of ‘public’ for anyone and ‘partly public’ for them only. No matter how the actors attempt to get their benefit, the most important thing is that the city will be supplemented with quality and enrich public spaces.

- Secondly, how ‘gray area between the two’ - some public places in KDTMs are neither public nor private - is determined? These are public spaces but not really for everyone, or, their owners can still impose the rules on it, creating additional varieties of the publicness in the movement of a market economy in Vietnam. Access restrictions are determined by spatial, ownership and management properties. The emergence of KDTM owner has created an intermediary level between the people and the government. This actor promotes the creation of public space systems and, at the same time, has generated more forms of ownership and
management from the identification of the investment entity. Public space gradually becomes a kind of ‘commodity’, and, depending on its nature, is decentralized according to different users.

- Thirdly, how is the relationship between community organization in KDTM and the use of public space in modern society? KDTM models are derived from economic reasons: those who can afford to buy houses in the KDTM will become a new community. The KDTM owner has to comply with the regulations on mandatory public spaces, resulting in the creation of additional facilities to compensate for the investment, leading to the typical types of public spaces being shopping-entertainment-dining complexes that play more socio-economic roles than ‘traditional’ (institutionalized) public spaces in the existing neighborhood. In vice versa, in the context of both the market economy and consumer society, especially in big cities like Hanoi, the shopping demand is also found necessary by the people equal to the needs of education and health. Thus, the production of commercial facilities needs to be seen as an important factor determining the attractiveness of public space in KDTMs.

The socialization of public spaces in KDTMs has redefined the nature of public spaces in Vietnamese cities. The change of urban spatial organization and operation ideology: from institutionalization to socialization/privatization/commoditization in the direction of the market economy have promoted the formation and transformation of the different types of public space, satisfying the need for interaction, sharing, meeting, entertaining, seeking the comfort of individuals in harmony with a new urban social community. The appearance of public spaces according to the needs of the subjects are considered civil/social spaces, or informal spaces to distinguish them from regular public spaces, in the sense of institutionalized ‘infrastructure’. The development of these new public spaces is associated with the initiatives of each KDTM. This implementation is encouraged because of enhancing the vitality and attractiveness of the city, which shows the most significant negotiation of spatial meaning.

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