



# Rama IV Land Sharing

CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE HOUSING IN ASIAN CITIES SERIES • JUNE 2021

**Thep Prathan was a thriving, well-developed and fully legal land-rental community in the heart of Bangkok, on the Rama IV Road. After a series of suspicious fires burned down much of the community, an equally suspicious attempt to evict the people and grab their valuable inner-city land ensued. In the course of negotiating a way to stay in the same place, the people invented the land sharing strategy. This project became Thailand's first successful land sharing project, even though it took so long to negotiate and build that several other projects that it inspired were planned and built in the mean time.**

- Project Rama IV Land Sharing
- Location Rama IV Road, Klong Toey District, Bangkok, Thailand
- Size 850 households
- Finished 1999
- Type Redevelopment of an old community in the form of rental apartments that were built on a portion of the land they used to rent, under a land sharing agreement between the community, the private company that leased the land and the public land owning agency.

## CONTEXT, PROCESS AND PARTNERS

### Land sharing in Bangkok:

By the 1980s, there were about a thousand low-income informal communities in Bangkok, and a quarter of them were under threat of eviction, to make way for various commercial developments and urban infrastructure projects. Development pressure on land in the city was heating up, and conflicts between the housing needs of the poor and the development needs of the city were increasing. The losers in those conflicts were almost always the poor, who lost their housing, their support systems and their access to nearby jobs with eviction. When poor communities did manage to hold on to their inner-city land, a kind of stalemate ensued: the land owners (whether public or private) couldn't develop their land while the squatters stayed, and the squatters couldn't invest in better houses since their tenure was so insecure.

Land sharing is Bangkok's home-grown strategy for resolving these conflicting claims in a compromise solution which allows both the land-owner and the community people to benefit. After a period of negotiation and planning, an agreement is reached to "share" the land, where the settlement is divided into two parts. One part (usually the less commercially viable part) is given, sold or leased to the community people for rebuilding their houses, in a more compact arrangement, and the rest is returned to the land-owner to develop. There's no rule about how the land is divided: how much land the people get and how much goes back to the owner is all worked out during the negotiations.

At the core of a land sharing negotiation is the ability to translate the conflicting needs and conflicting demands of owners and occupants into a compromise which takes a concrete "win-win" form and is acceptable to all parties involved - not to any abstract policy or set of regulations. Land sharing is also a way of dividing the cream of urban prosperity a little more equitably: the community people may end up with less space than before, and the land-owner may get back less-than-all of the land, but the trade-off is that the poor can stay where they have been living and working, get secure land and decent housing, and keep their community and support systems intact. And the land owner saves the time, cost and loss of face of a long eviction litigation and finally gets to develop the land. Even the government benefits, with an added stock of secure housing it didn't have to pay for, to meet the city's urban poor housing needs.

Land sharing is a long and complicated process, and it doesn't work in every situation. Behind a successful land sharing scheme there must be a very strong community organization. Often, the involvement of a skillful intermediary is crucial. But there are a growing number of cases where informal communities faced with eviction have successfully bargained to rebuild their community on a portion of the land they already occupy. The land sharing approach was first invented in the Thep Prathan community (Rama IV) in Bangkok, in 1980, though by the time the project was finished, more than two decades later, several other land sharing projects had been completed. This case study describes that project.

### The community:

In the 1860s, King Mongkut (Rama IV) had a road built in what was then the eastern hinterland of Bangkok, linking Chinatown with Klong Toey District. In a watery city where people and goods moved around on boats, via canals and rivers, the Rama IV Road was Thailand's first real road, and it cut through farmland, fruit orchards, canals and swamps. The Thep Prathan community began to form a few decades later, when a group of people began renting plots of vacant land in one area along the new road. The land belonged to the Crown Property Bureau. The early residents were mostly farmers and fishermen. They began the arduous process of filling in the low-lying, swampy land, and a community began to take shape. In 1939, the Thailand Tobacco Monopoly built a big cigarette factory on land to the north of the community. Lots of poor migrants came to work in that factory - and other places in the area - and moved into Thep Prathan, where they rented small plots of land, built houses and raised their families.

Instead of farming or fishing, the people now worked in factories or ran small businesses. Along the Rama IV Road, shops and commercial buildings sprang up. And behind those buildings, a thriving, fully-legal, well-developed, self-contained community grew, with tile-roofed wooden houses, a market, three schools, a cinema hall, a Buddhist temple, a health clinic, a petrol station, four banks and several small factories which produced such things as textiles and handcrafts. There were paved walkways and drains throughout, and piped water and electricity in almost every home in every lane. By the 1960s, the Thep Prathan community covered an area of 8.5 hectares. Some 1,250 families were living peacefully there, most under land lease contracts with the Crown Property Bureau. The neighborhoods along the Rama IV Road were also developing fast, and were almost unrecognizable from the sleepy, swampy orchards of earlier decades. Bangkok's meteoric growth was beginning, and Thep Prathan found itself in the middle of it.

### **Fire and eviction struggle:**

Then in 1966, there were several suspicious fires in the middle of the community - one right after the other - which spread quickly and burned a lot of the houses in Thep Prathan to the ground. They were suspected of being started by arsonists. In Thailand, where the law states that land leases become invalid after a fire, arson is a time-tested way for unscrupulous landlords to get rid of tenants and clear land for more lucrative development projects. After the fires, the Crown Property Bureau continued to collect rents, but wouldn't allow people to rebuild their houses, on the pretext that they wanted the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA) to first upgrade the community's infrastructure. The upgrading never happened, but a year later, the Bureau leased the entire 8.5 hectare site to the BMA. On the same day the BMA signed the lease, it sublet the land to one of the country's largest private developers, the Saha Krungthep Pattana (SKP) Company, without any other bidders, even though the company had been set up only a few months earlier, and even though most of the residents still had valid land leases with the Crown Property Bureau.

These fishy and patently illegal transactions were all done behind closed doors, and it was only a year later that the people in Thep Prathan understood that they were facing an eviction. In May 1968, the first 66 families were formally asked to leave and offered some cash compensation. Only a few families moved out, though. In 1969, another group of families got eviction orders from the BMA, claiming their houses were falling apart and were a blight on the neighborhood, even though the Crown Property Bureau had refused to allow them to rebuild after the fires. Most families just ignored the eviction orders and stayed put. Then in 1974, when the BMA's lease expired, the Crown Property Bureau leased the land directly to the SKP Company, giving it the legal right to collect rents from the community members. The company was now free to use whatever dirty tricks it could muster to clear Thep Prathan of its residents.

In the course of all these upheavals, many families had moved away, but a strong and determined group of more than 778 families remained. Even though their living conditions had become increasingly run-down and precarious, these families were united in resisting the company's attempts to evict them from their homes of many generations. The community members - and particularly the women - held almost nightly meetings to plan their strategies, and staged regular protests in front of various government ministries. The community's struggle began drawing media attention, especially when it came out that the SKP Company was paying less to lease the land than the people had paid before. With attention came new friends and supporters. Activists, social workers, journalists, human rights campaigners and government workers began joining the community meetings in Thep Prathan, bringing different expertise and ideas. Groups of students helped make posters and staged street dramas at the demonstrations.

But besides simply demanding their housing rights, the community members decided to use their newly-activated collective force to develop other aspects of people's lives in the community. They started by setting up a credit union and a housing savings program so that people could save to upgrade their houses later, when they got their land. They organized a day care center so the small children of working mothers could have a healthy place to stay and be well fed. They set up a fire brigade to put out any fires, a legal aid office, a mobile health clinic and an occupational training program so that housewives could increase their small incomes. They also coordinated with various government agencies to upgrade the community's walkways, drains and water supply systems.

### **Initiating the project:**

In 1980, the community committee, supported by various NGOs and community organizers, began to prepare a variety of proposals to "share" the land. Each proposal they presented to the developer and the Crown Property Bureau had decreasing amounts of land being kept for reconstructing the community's housing in a more compact arrangement, and increasing amounts being turned over to the SKP Company to develop. The negotiations went on for a long time. All of the proposals were rejected by the company, including their last one, which proposed a 50:50 land sharing ratio, in which the residents would rebuild their houses cooperatively on half the land, using their own resources. Even though the company said no, that 50:50 land sharing proposal provided a valuable lesson for future land sharing negotiations, by showing that asking to keep the most commercially valuable part of the site - as the Thep Prathan people did - would not help a community's chances of getting some of the land. Better to ask for the less viable land inside the community, away from main roads and valuable frontages.

### **Apartments instead of on-the-ground houses:**

Once it became evident that the developer would not agree to giving the people enough of the land to build their own on-the-ground houses, the community people were more-less forced to begin exploring the idea of redeveloping their housing in the form of apartment buildings. In the beginning, nobody was too happy with the idea of living in an apartment, and preferred to build a house on the ground, even if the plot was very small. But after a lot of discussions, the people agreed to negotiate for apartment buildings, as long as they

could accommodate every single family in the community - including house owners and renters. A complete list of community members had already been prepared, so the number of units required was clear.

What was missing was a concrete plan. Nobody had a clear idea what the buildings might look like, or how the apartments would be designed. That's when a young architect named Somsook Boonyabantha, who was working for the National Housing Authority and had been joining the evening meetings in Thep Prathan, was able to help. She sketched a preliminary plan for four eight-story apartment blocks, with the apartments arranged along open corridors around internal courtyards, so all the apartments would have cross-ventilation. This rough plan gave the community people a much clearer idea what their future homes might look like. This was the plan the people used in their final, successful negotiations with the developer. And although the plan underwent many changes later on, after the developer and the Crown Property Bureau took over the project, the overall bones of Somsook's original concept and plan was what was later built.

### **The land sharing agreement:**

Meanwhile, pressure kept mounting on the company from the public, from local politicians, from the National Housing Authority and from the finance minister (who at that time sat on the Crown Property Bureau's board) to accept some kind of land sharing compromise. At the same time, the value of the land kept rising, and the profits to be made from developing the site finally prompted the company to sign a land sharing agreement with the Thep Prathan residents. That was in 1981, and it took another another four years of intense negotiation to iron out the details of the land sharing plan. Under the plan that was finalized in 1985, the 8.5 hectare site would be divided into two parts:

- 2.4 hectares (28%) would be kept for re-housing the Thep Prathan residents, in apartment blocks.
- 6.1 hectares (72%) would be turned over to the SKP Company to develop as a commercial center.

The land sharing agreement stipulated that on the 2.4 hectare part of the site, the company would build and pay for a total of 850 apartments for the residents, in four eight-storey blocks, with the lowest two floors to be used as commercial units. The construction costs would be cross-subsidized by the enormous profits the company stood to make in commercial developments on the rest of the site. The flats would be owned by the Crown Property Bureau, managed by the NHA and rented out to the residents individually, on 20-year renewable lease contracts, at rental rates that were the same as the NHA's subsidized rental housing.

This breakthrough was followed by years of delays and manipulations on the part of the company, and mistrust on the part of the community members. Construction of the new flats didn't begin until 1988, and the work kept being stopped - presumably because the company was having financial troubles. But members of the Thep Prathan community believed the company had agreed to the land sharing deal only as a tactic to get control over the entire site, and hoped that eventually it would be able to buy out all the remaining families. Year after year, agents hired by the company besieged community members with offers of compensation if they agreed to move out. Some families did take the money and moved away, but others moved in to take their place, and the population of the community actually increased. All of which was to create more troubles later.

The first two apartment buildings for Thep Prathan residents were completed in 1995, 14 years after the original land sharing agreement, and the first group of residents moved into their new apartments. The project dragged on still longer when some residents, fearful of being cheated, refused to move temporarily to a nearby site to make way for the construction of the third and fourth buildings. It wasn't until 1999 that the project was fully completed and all 850 families were living in their new apartments. In January 2000, 20 years after the land sharing negotiations began, the project was formally inaugurated by the Prime Minister - but not without protests by a group of Thep Prathan residents who claimed they had been unfairly left out of the project.

### **Project timeline:**

- 1870: Rama IV Road is constructed - the country's first proper paved road.
- 1900: The Thep Prathan community begins, on farmland adjacent to the new Rama IV road.
- 1939: Thailand Tobacco Monopoly sets up cigarette factory on adjacent land, draws many new workers.
- 1966: 3 fires burn down a large part of the community, but CPB continues collecting land rent.
- 1967: CPB signs contract to allow BMA to rent the land for development.  
BMA leases land the same day to SKP Company, without any other bids.
- 1968: CPB stops accepting land rents from occupants, even those with valid leases.
- 1969: CPB extends sublease contract to SKP Company from 4 to 8 years.
- 1974: BMA's lease to the land expires. CPB leases land directly to the SKP Company.  
SKP now has legal right to collect rents from occupants.
- 1978: Community starts to organize themselves, petitions prime minister and king to be allowed to stay.



- 1979: Community sets up Klong Toey Community Development Credit Union Cooperative, Ltd.
- 1980: SKP Company issues court-ordered eviction orders. People resist, some are arrested and go to jail. The struggle gets sympathetic press coverage, becomes a prominent story in Bangkok. Community proposes several land sharing plans - the last with 50% of the land kept for housing.
- 1981: Land sharing is agreed to in principal, but details not settled yet. Negotiations continue.
- 1985: Terms of land sharing agreed to: people stay on 28% of the land, in flats built by SKP Company.
- 1988: Construction of new flats begins by SKP Company. Work proceeds slowly, financial problems.
- 1995: First two apartment buildings are finished and people move in.
- 1999: Remaining two buildings are completed, and the rest of the people move in.
- 2000: Project is inaugurated by prime minister in January, amid protests by families not included.

#### Support groups and partners in the project:

- **Thep Prathan community** members were the main actors and decision-makers at every stage of the project: protesting, negotiating, planning and making sure the agreements were honored.
- **The Crown Property Bureau (CPB)** is the agency tasked with managing the enormous portfolio of semi-public land formerly belonging to the Thai monarchy. The CPB is a landlord for many low-income communities in Bangkok, and despite its focus on profiting from commercial development of its properties, the bureau has in some cases supported innovative projects to upgrade the housing of low-income communities on CPB land, as in the Rama IV land sharing project.
- **The National Housing Authority (NHA)**, Department of Slum Upgrading, assisted the Thep Prathan community only with some technical aspects of the land-sharing planning and negotiations.
- **Saha Krungthep Pattana (SKP) Company, Ltd.** or "Bangkok Union Development Company Ltd." is a large private-sector developer in Bangkok which is still around. As part of the land sharing agreement, SKP built and paid for the apartments, which remain under the ownership of the Crown Property Bureau.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT

#### Land tenure:

For decades, the residents of Thep Prathan were land tenants with legal lease contracts to the land, which belonged to the Crown Property Bureau. Until the 1980s, land rent was the most common form of tenure in Bangkok for low-income workers, who could always find a bit of land to lease inexpensively, and then build their own house on it. The Thep Prathan residents paid a monthly land rent of 2-3 baht per square *wah* to the Crown Property Bureau (which worked out to about about US\$1 per month for a house plot).

Then in 1967, after several big fires in the community, the entire 8.6 hectare Thep Prathan site was leased to a private sector developer for a nominal fee by the Crown Property Bureau, in spite of the fact that hundreds of community members still had valid lease contracts. During the long eviction struggle that followed, the residents were alternately squatters or sub-tenants of the Bangkok Municipal Authority or of the developer. Under the terms of the land sharing agreement that was worked out in 1985, the developer agreed to build and pay for 850 apartments, in four 8-story blocks, to house the remaining families, on a small portion of the site. Under the land sharing agreement, ownership of the apartment buildings remains with the Crown Property Bureau, the National Housing Authority manages the buildings, and the 850 families have 20-year individual leases (renewable) to their apartments, with monthly rental rates tied to the current rates for the NHA's subsidized rental housing in other parts of Bangkok.

## PROJECT FINANCING

#### Project costs and who paid for what:

##### Housing and infrastructure:

The SKP Company covered the entire cost of constructing the four apartment buildings, which came to US\$ 6.3 million. That included all the service infrastructure and amenities like playgrounds, markets and open spaces in the project. The construction costs were cross-subsidized by the enormous profits the company earned by developing the rest of the site, which in 1990 had a market value of about US\$ 16 million. Considering that the land rent the company paid to the Crown Property Bureau was only nominal, the US\$ 6.3 million investment in building the flats was essentially the total cost of acquiring a long term lease to such valuable land. The company thus obtained a prime commercial site for less than 40% of its market value.

**Rent for the apartments:**

The residents all have individual long-term (20 year, renewable) leases to their apartments with the Crown Property Bureau, and pay rents that are substantially lower than market rates. In 1999, the rental rate for the apartments was set at 1,000 baht (US\$ 33) per month, which was about a third or a quarter of the market rate for single room rentals in the Rama IV Road area at that time. Most of the families in the Thep Prathan community are happy with their apartments, which are bigger and brighter and cleaner than their old houses in the slum, and have no trouble paying the low rent. The Rama IV area is in the center of the city now, close to markets and transport systems and rich with earning opportunities. But for some poorer community members with irregular incomes or no incomes at all, the move from an informal slum situation into a proper formal rental arrangement has been a serious burden, and some have been forced to sell their rights and move back into informal settlements somewhere else.

**IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT**

The land sharing project at Rama IV allowed people who had lived for generations on the land, as insecure land renters and squatters, to stay in the same place and get secure land tenure and good housing in the form of rental apartments. While the land sharing agreement left the community members with only 28 percent of the land they used to occupy and involved moving from on-the-ground houses into walk-up apartments, the trade-off was that they could stay in the same inner-city place permanently and inexpensively, while the rest of the land could be developed by the private company. In the process, an extremely precarious slum that was facing eviction, was transformed into a proper, fully legal, fully thriving apartment community. It was a win-win project for everyone.

The Rama IV project was the first land sharing project in Bangkok, though delays and problems meant that by the time it was completed almost two decades later, several other land sharing projects had been planned and implemented in the city. The project was also the first land sharing project in which residents of an informal community moved into a block of apartments, instead of on-the-ground houses - a strategy that would be repeated in 1996 in the nearby land sharing project of Klong Pai Singto, in 2008 in the land sharing project at Borei Keila in Phnom Penh, and in 2020 in the land sharing project at Bor Farang in Bangkok. Rama IV was also the first land sharing project to be entirely built and paid for by the private sector developer which stood to profit so lavishly from developing the land that had been vacated by the community. Amid intensifying conflicts between slum dwellers and developers in Bangkok, the cross-subsidy strategy at Thep Prathan is a good model for other land developers, to include the poor as part of their development process.

For other slum communities facing eviction, the Rama IV project became another much-needed illustration of land sharing as a potential strategy to avoid eviction and redevelop housing, without displacing the people. It so often happens that as a city develops, the poor get evicted and banished to the periphery of the city, in a cycle of impoverishment that pushes them far away from jobs, schools, transport links and opportunities. The Rama IV land sharing project showed that urban development can successfully accommodate low-income urban housing, and showed that keeping low-income people in the city is good for the poor and good for the city, making for a more inclusive, equitable and healthy form of urban development. The unity and participation of the entire community was critical to the project's success. With some technical support from relevant agencies, communities can decide on the best terms for themselves, and can play a constructive role in the project's implementation.

**The role of women:**

One of the community leaders in the struggle to save Thep Prathan and to win the people's right to stay in the same place was a woman named Somporn Surarith. She was a doctor who ran a polyclinic in a shophouse on the Rama IV Road. Although she came from an affluent family, she was a tenant of the Crown Property Bureau, like everyone else, and was very much a part of the lively and varied Thep Prathan community that was being under threat. When the eviction struggle began, she emerged as one of the key leaders in the protests and in the negotiations to stay. Writing about the struggle a decade later, Dr. Somporn had this to say about the role the community women had played in Thep Prathan:

"In those early days of fighting against the eviction - those difficult, tear-filled days - it was as painful as childbirth. Every time we wanted to march, we had to pull the men by their ears to make them come join us. When we had to call emergency meetings late at night to plan our next actions, it was usually we women who attended. The men generally did not come. Sometimes they would come, but in small numbers. Our women went to jail, not our men! Perhaps it was better that way in the long run. I don't know. I always remember Mrs. Somsri. She has seven children, and her husband had abandoned her. Every day, she had

to sell fish in the market to provide for her family. Still, every time we had a meeting or an action, she was there, willing to help. Without Somsri, I don't think I could have fought all those years. Later, they came to make a Thai movie about Somsri's life. She often said to me during those days, *Somporn, it is we the women who must fight this evil eviction. We must fight for our children. We must give them a better life.*"

### Problems:

As the land sharing project proceeded, a growing number of families claimed they had been unfairly excluded from the project and should have gotten flats in the new buildings. The number swelled to about 200 families in 1995. Some said their names had been replaced on the list by outsiders, and some that their names had been removed from the list without explanation or notice. This is a problem that has been common to all land sharing schemes, especially those with a long history of fires and eviction and compensation. But the problem was more severe in Thep Prathan, because the project dragged on for nearly two decades. During that time, families got bigger and the number of migrant workers living in Thep Prathan also grew. So the number of slum dwellers claiming rights to the land increased considerably.

Finally, though, it was only the 850 families on the original list the community prepared in 1980 who got apartments in the new scheme. Among the others who could not move into the new buildings, some continued to squat on other parts of the original Thep Prathan community, or found other places to stay. To everyone's surprise, the commercial development of the rest of the site proceeded very slowly. The lease rights to that extremely valuable land changed hands several times, and almost a decade later, large portions of the site were still occupied by informal settlement.

Moving from an informal slum community into a multi-story block of apartments can be a real culture shock for many. The difficulties urban poor people face in adapting to a more formal way of life, in modern apartment buildings caused many unexpected problems. Delicate support support systems and relationships of proximity in the old community were broken up when people moved into units on different floors and in different blocks. The design of the new buildings did include some features which tried to reproduce amenities in the old community, like markets and playgrounds. But the building designs fell short of providing a sense of place, which allows the residents to maintain their sense of community, and problems of safety and vandalism cropped up right away. As Somsook Boonyabanacha put it, "People don't just need a place to live, they also need a place where they feel they belong. When it's done well, architecture can take into account people's way of life and accommodate it."

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

*This case study was drawn from the following articles on the Rama IV land sharing project. The first two can be downloaded from the ACHR website:*

1. *"Land sharing as an alternative to eviction: the Bangkok experience" was written by Somsook Boonyabanacha and Solly Angel in 1988. The article describes five of Bangkok's early land sharing projects, including this second one at Rama IV.*

[http://achr.net/upload/downloads/file\\_07012020155521.pdf](http://achr.net/upload/downloads/file_07012020155521.pdf)

2. *This report tells the Rama IV story in more detail, from the Thep Prathan community's perspective, and describes an early 50:50 land sharing plan the community proposed in 1980.*

[http://achr.net/upload/downloads/file\\_10052021151803.pdf](http://achr.net/upload/downloads/file_10052021151803.pdf)

3. *Another article by Dr. Somporn Surarith, in the Canadian Women's Studies Journal (Vol. 11, No. 2, 1990), about the role women played in the struggle to save Thep Prathan and negotiate land sharing:*

<https://cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/issue/view/516/showToc>

*For more information about other community-driven and collective housing projects in Thailand, that are supported by CODI and the Baan Mankong Program, please visit the English part of the CODI website:*

<https://en.codi.or.th/>

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## PHOTOS



▲ *The Rama IV Road, which was built in the 1860s to connect Bangkok's Chinatown to Klong Toey, was Thailand's first proper paved road. It cut through swamps and orchards.*



▲ *The Thep Prathan community was a lively and thriving community, with internal lanes that might have looked something like this.*



▲ *When the Tobacco Monopoly built a sprawling cigarette factory behind Thep Prathan in 1939, it drew many poor migrants who rented small plots and moved their families into the community.*



▲ *For eight decades, the Thailand Tobacco Monopoly's cigarette factory behind Thep Prathan was one of the area's biggest employers, until it closed in 2018.*

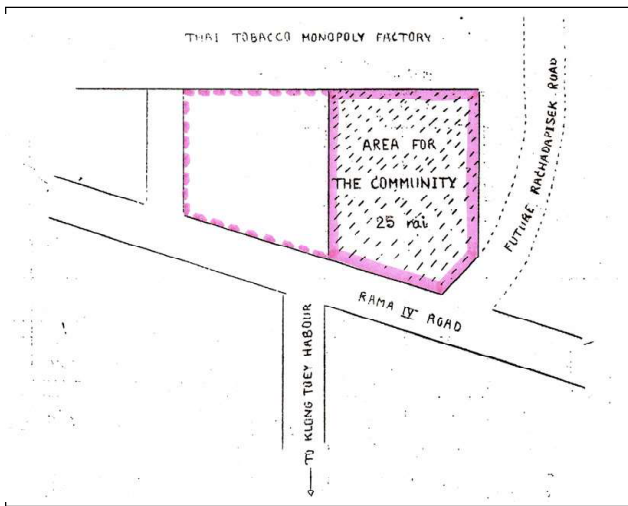


▲ *In 1966, several suspicious fires burned a lot of houses in Thep Prathan to the ground, and that was the start of the community's troubles.*

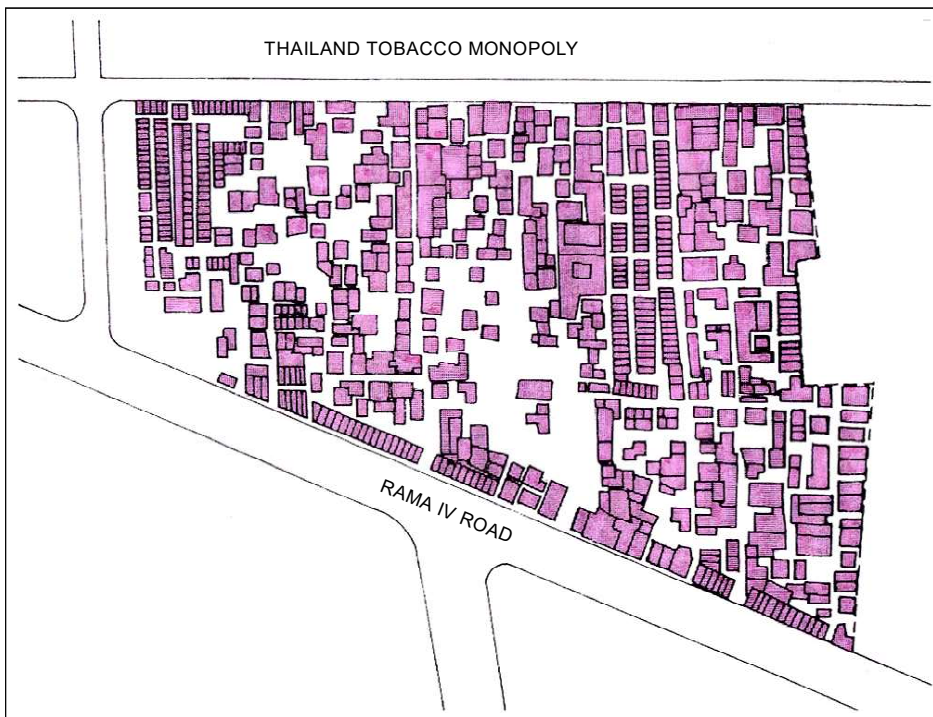


▲ *After the fire, the Crown Property Bureau wouldn't allow people to rebuild, and conditions in the community became increasingly slum-like.*



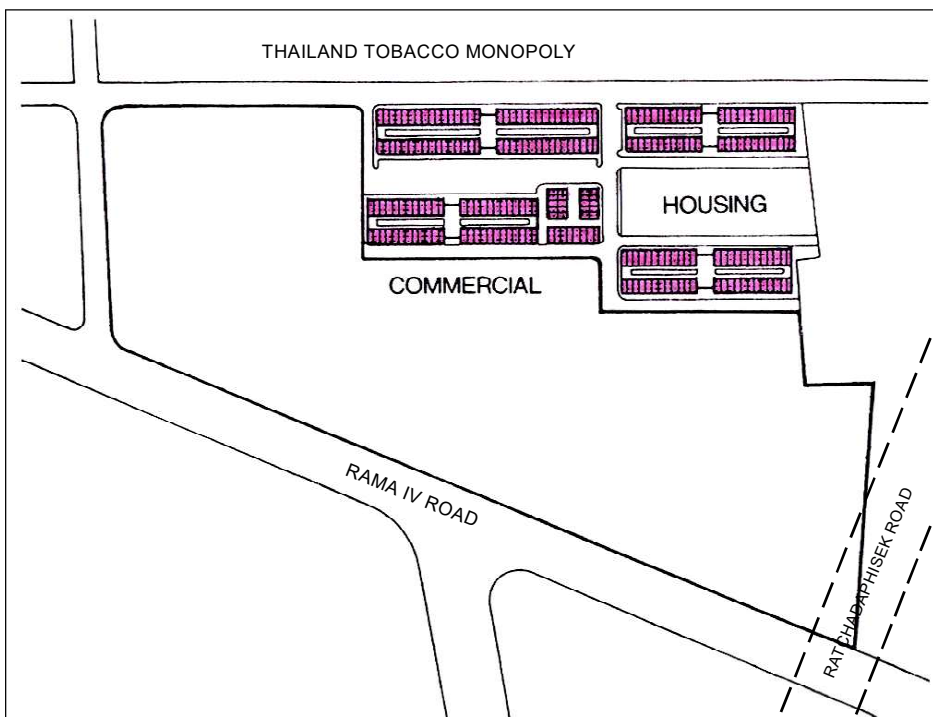


*This is one of the earlier land sharing plans the Thep Prathan community prepared and presented to the SKP Company, as part of their negotiations to stay on the land. In this plan, the people proposed to use half the 8.5-hectare land for rebuilding their houses in a more compact arrangement, and to return the rest to the company to develop commercially. The company rejected this proposal, as well as all the others before it.*



**BEFORE land sharing:**

Before the land sharing project, there were about 800 houses remaining in the Thep Prathan community, still tightly packed into the 8.5-hectare land, owned by the Crown Property Bureau.



**AFTER land sharing:**

As part of the land sharing agreement, 28% of the land (2.4 hectares) was used to build four 8-story apartment blocks to accommodate 850 families (*in pink*), while 72% of the land (6.1 hectares) was turned over to the private sector developer that had leased the entire site from the Crown Property Bureau, to develop commercially.





▲ *The two photos above were taken in 1996, when the first two apartment buildings in Thep Prathan had been completed and occupied, and the old community houses were being bulldozed to make way for building the second two buildings.*



▲ *These photos (above and right) were taken in September 1997, when work on the third and fourth apartment buildings was well along.*



▲ *This January 2000 photo shows the finished apartment buildings in the back, with remains of the old Thep Prathan community in front.*

▲ *In the design of the apartment blocks, the tall ground floor units went to families interested in starting shops, businesses and workshops.*





*The apartments are all entered from open corridors which surround internal courtyards. And all the units have generous balconies on the outside, with space for drying laundry and making for good cross-ventilation.*



*This photo shows the ground floor of the internal courtyards in the apartment blocks, where the families with shops on the outside have their "back sides" for storage, laundry and cooking.*



*A photo taken during the January 2000 inauguration of the apartment buildings at Thap Prathan, which became more commonly known as the "Rama 4 Land Sharing" project.*



*Here the Thai Prime Minister, Chuan Leapkai, is being shown into one of the apartments in the Rama 4 Land Sharing project, during the January 2000 inauguration.*



*A protest outside the January 2000 inauguration by Thap Prathan community members who claim they were unfairly excluded from the project.*



*A view of the completed apartment blocks in the Rama 4 Land Sharing project, taken from the land that would soon be totally redeveloped.*





▲ This is what the Rama 4 apartment buildings look like 20 years later, in 2021, with a covered children's playground and scooter parking spaces in the area between the apartment blocks.



▲ A 2021 photo of the community market that was built in the space between the apartment blocks. In the early morning and on weekends, the market is full of customers and produce.



▲ Here is a photo of what the Rama IV Road looks like today, in 2021, in the stretch that runs in front of the former Thep Prathan community (on the left).



▲ This gigantic commercial complex was partly built on the land the Thep Prathan community people turned over to the developer (the Rama IV Road can be seen on the right).



▲ Here is a satellite photo of the Thep Prathan community as it looks today, with the four apartment blocks where the 850 families were resettled inside the orange dotted line.