The Regeneration Planning For Urban Center Of Zhengzhou City

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Abstract

Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan Province, is located in central China with the total population of 5,000,000. In recent year, along with the economic booming all over the country, this city is also facing an unprecedented opportunity together with challenge in the field of urban development.

Five years ago, Mr. Kisho Kurokawa, a famous Japanese Architect designed a new CBD area in the east of Zhengzhou as the future urban center. However, what should be done regarding to the existing downtown had not been given equal consideration. For this reason, Tsinghua Research Group formulated a systematic regeneration planning for Zhengzhou old town, which include the revitalization for the present city center, and the environment improvement for the areas near the National Railway Station, etc.

KEYWORD: Zhengzhou City, Regeneration Planning

1. Background

Zhengzhou, located in the center of China, is the capital of Henan Province which has near 100 million populations. Early in 3000 years ago, the ancestors of Chinese people had constructed their first urban settlement in this area, and Zhengzhou, had ever been the capital of Shang
Dynasty, an ancient Chinese kingdom. Since the beginning of 20th century, due to the construction of Beijing-Canton Railway and Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway, Zhengzhou gradually became a pivot of China railway system. Beijing-Canton Railway, with the length of 2500 kilometers, is the most important transportation line which links the north China with south China. Lianyungang-Lanzhou Railway, which stretch form east China to west China, and extend to the vast central Asia which includes Kazakhstan, Russia, and reach Nordedam of Netherlands in the end, is called Euro-Asia Continent Bridge or New Silk Load, and is playing and will absolutely play more important role in the communication not only inside China but also in the world.

Figure 2  The Evolution of Layout of Zhengzhou City

Figure 3  The Old Center & New Center of Zhengzhou

Figure 4  The Master Plan of New Center by Kurokawa
In recent years, along with the economic booming of whole country, Zhengzhou City also faces a precious opportunity for urban development. In 2001, influenced by the success of Pudong New CBD Area in Shanghai, Kisho Kurokawa, a famous Japanese architect made a splendid plan for the new urban center for Zhengzhou City, which is outside original urban area and located in the east corner of this city. Since then, due to the active promotion of local municipal government, more and more residents and institutes moved into this district. However, what should we do for the existing urban center, which is, just let it deteriorate or try our best finding some way to promote its revitalization, become an urgent issue for local people and the entire urban planner in China.

In 2002, invited by the Municipal Government, the professors and students from Tsinghua University assumed the responsibility for formulating a new rehabilitation and revitalization planning for the present center of Zhengzhou City.

2. Present Status
The research area is the traditional and existing center of Zhengzhou, which encompass the Central Railway Station and Erqi Tower Area, the total area is around 30 hectares. Zhengzhou Railway Station is one of the biggest and busiest train stations in China. Everyday, there are more that 60 thousands of people travel to every corner of China form here. Just due to this reason, Zhengzhou becomes one of most
prosperous commercial centers and commodities bulk trade centers in whole China. However, this situation also impose much burden onto Zhengzhou. Too many travels, among them most are immigrant workers and farmers, has cause serious social and environmental problem. And due to the stretch of national railway on which there are frequent trains, Zhengzhou City is divided into four separate parts, thus it is rather difficult to solve the problem of linkage of local urban transportation.

Erqi Tower, the symbol of Zhengzhou City, located not far away from Railway Station, is the present commercial and public activity center of Zhengzhou. In this area, we can find many large scale department stores, each one's floor area has passed 50,000 square meters. In the end of 1990s, the local government had ever set up a development target, that is, they want to build Zhengzhou into the Chicago in the East Asia. However, due to the lack of comprehensive and integrated solution, the concentration of large scale commercial buildings has cause very serious traffic congestion onto this district. And, because of the chaotic parking of motorcars and shortage of organization of pedestrian, the shopping environment is becoming worse and worse.
3. Aim Of Planning

For the purpose, through the planning, we intend to reach the targets for this area as below:

A. Firstly, try our best to maintain the status of commercial and public activity center for this area, when it is facing the big challenge by the competence from the new CBD area which is planned by Mr. Kisho Kurokawa;

B. Secondly, effectively solved the problems of traffic issues both for train and motorcars, as well as pedestrian.

C. Take full advantage of the Erqi Tower, built a tourist and recreation center in this district with a satisfied nature and artificial environment.

4. Solution

Firstly, we will build a big “concrete slab” covering the tracks of Zhengzhou Station., so that, we could link the communication of the east city part with the west part. And, furthermore, we will construct a beautiful “Central Park” on this plank. We could find that, in most of metropolises around the world, there are always a “Central Park” in their central area, such as New York, Sydney, and in Sinjuku of Tokyo and Manila. However, in Zhengzhou, the
buildings are so crowded that you can’t find a single green land in its center. It is truly a pity. The construction of “Air fly Central Park” can improve the quality of local environment and it will be helpful to attract more real estate investment into this district and therefore, the government could get enough revenue to compensate the expenditure for the renovation work in the station area. Actually, covering the existing railway station and revitalizing the present urban center is not an original creative method, we can find that in many cities, such as Stuttgart, Paris, they have done or are doing similar things.
Secondly, with regards to the Area of Erqi tower, we will set up an outer Commercial Ring Path which escapes form the concentrated point of Erqi Tower. This point is, at now, not only a motorcar's traffic pivot, but also a gathering point of shopping people. Through the Outer Ring, we could draw the shopping customers away from the motorcars and provide longer shopping lanes. In addition, in this Outer Ring, we will arrange not only retail stores, but also entertainment facilities such as cinemas, coffee bars, etc, so as to create a comprehensive recreation circumstance. Certainly, in this process, we will also absolutely improve the landscape environment, by the arrangement of small gardens, fountains, and other urban furniture.

Though all of above integrated and comprehensive methods, we hope that we can realize our planning targets and maintain its traditional central status in whole city for this district.

(The research group members also include Prof. Zhao Bingshi, Prof. Zhu Zixuan, Associate Prof. Yu Xuewen, Assistant Prof. Zhong Ge, and many master course students. Thank them for their creative ideas, industrious works and providing of basic materials.)