Policy Recommendations for Crime Safety Management in Urban Areas

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Abstract

To provide policy recommendations for local government organization in crime safety management services in urban areas. Design/Methodology/approach: The qualitative research collected data by conducting research studies from group meetings regarding obstacles and suggestions as a guideline for solving problems. SWOT Analysis and SOAR were used as a framework to set goals, vision, objectives, and strategy as well as integrate the stakeholder participation process in the forum to develop policy recommendations for crime safety management in urban areas. The key informants include Chiang Mai Municipality officials, provincial police station officer and tourist police in the area, teachers, academics, community leaders or community presidents and local police volunteers in Chiang Mai Municipality area. Findings: For local government organizations, developing a crime-free city is a complex and challenging problem. In this study, policy recommendations for crime safety management in urban areas were made which covers four strategic issues:

1) integrating cooperation for crime management, 2) increasing management efficiency through data mechanisms, 3) developing effective tools to prevent and suppress crime and 4) developing the environment to prevent crime. Originality/value: The value of the study were imperative to conduct a comprehensive examination of Developing a crime-free city was a process that must be carried out in a comprehensive manner and requires cooperation between the government, private sector, communities, educational institutions and related sectors. Local government organizations can execute all four strategies to improve, amend, and add to their own local development plans as well as a budget should be set and responsible agencies and supporting agencies creating a network of cooperation and concrete action guidelines.

Keywords: Policy Recommendations, Crime Safety, Local Government Organization.

Introduction

Urban areas with dense populations and complex economic and social dynamics. They are often the hotspots for a variety of criminal activities [1]. A survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) ranked cities as countries that have a high level of safety for their citizens. Thailand is ranked 43rd out of 60 countries with a score of 60.2 [2]. From the statistics, it also illustrates that Thailand does not have strong security measures, social inequality caused from the various crimes and accidents, and insufficient of the cooperation of the people. Therefore, managing crime at the local level is a multidimensional challenge that requires not only a passive response but also a proactive strategy. Since the causes of crime are complex and diverse. Preventive responses will be more effective if government agencies cooperate with all related sectors [3]. Handling these challenges, the role of local government organizations is an important issue because it is the key agency tasked with planning and executing a strategy that not only responds to security concerns but it also lays the foundation for long-term, sustainable community safety.

Chiang Mai Province, which is located in the northern region of Thailand, it is ranked as the 24th safest city in the world and 1st ranks in Southeast Asia with a safety index of 76.3 percent and a crime index of 23.7 percent in 2016. 2023 from the Numbeo website [4]. Especially in the Chiang Mai Municipality area, there has been coordination in the work of the agency with various sectors, especially security agencies, namely the police, the public sector, and educational institutions for the goal of developing a safe city. It is an operation based on different roles but with a common goal which is a horizontally independent relationships network and each organization has their own authority [5].

However, in order to provide guidelines and framework for operation of local government organizations for crime-free city administration, it is necessary to have tools that will be a driving mechanism at the local level which the office of the Higher Education Science Policy Council National Research and Innovation

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and the Thai Future Studies Institute Foundation [6] mentioned that "Insecurity in the city is an important reason to innovate together for developing and driving for safe city policies to achieve concrete results. Since policy is considered as a tool used to formulate guidelines for solving problems or developing or responding to fundamental needs from problem identification. Gathering information about problems, problem analysis, define goals, determine the scope and framework of the policy to be effective to correct, and solve problems that respond to the needs of stakeholders in the area which truly leads to uplifting the level of safety in the area [7,8]

This manuscript recognizes the critical need for effective criminal security management. Therefore, this article focuses on presenting a tool of policy recommendations for local government organizations in providing crime safety management services in urban areas using a case study of Chiang Mai Municipality in Chiang Mai province. It is a region that exemplifies both the challenges and opportunities in addressing urban crime safety. This will be a valuable initiative in enhancing the safety and security of urban communities. It provides policy recommendations and guidelines that can be used as a framework for other local government organizations who wish to improve crime safety management services in urban areas in a sustainable way.

Research Method

A qualitative research was used in this research. The researcher collected data by studying group meetings. The questions used are open-ended questions to get answers on various complex and in-depth aspects for respondents in providing their information or express their opinions about problems, obstacles, and suggestions as guideline for further solutions. This includes obtaining information to identify those involved in the issues who want to create a network that will lead to a forum to set goals, visions, and guidelines for joint urban development.

As for the key informant selection, the researcher used a Purposeful selection method, which consisted of 1) 3 Chiang Mai municipal officials with executive roles, 3 policy-level officials, and 3 operational-level officials. 2) 4 officers from Chiang Mai Police Station, Mae Ping Police Station, Chang Phuak Police Station, and Bhuping Police Station and 2 Tourist Police from Tourist Police Station under Tourist Police Division 2, Chiang Mai Province. 3) 1 Professor or Academic. 4) 26 Community leaders or Community presidents and 10 local police volunteers. The selected sample is characterized as "Information-Rich Case", i.e. it has a very in-depth level of information to study and can best reflect reality which will have implications to the main purpose of the study in order to obtain key informants that best suit the purpose of the study.

Subsequently, the information obtained from group meeting and brainstorming meeting was compared between individuals and prioritize the importance and characteristics of the information in various aspects. The data that has been prioritized characterized are then compared with relevant documentary data no matter concepts or theories, and then systematically analyzed together to lead to the linking of the data, shows the relationship of data, which is a descriptive data analysis and content analysis that will lead to study responses that point to the networking and preparation of policy recommendations and measures for developing crime-safe cities for local government organizations.

The process of making policy recommendations was the process of data and setting goals obtained from reviewing relevant strategies/plans, analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis). SOAR is used as a framework to set goals, visions, objectives, including strategic formulation, stakeholder engagement processes that linked to opportunity promotion and strengths development, weakness improvements, dealing with obstacle and using opportunities to reduce weaknesses.

Results and Discussion

Reviewing of Chiang Mai Municipality's crime safety management operations

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Based on the review of the Local Development Plan for the fiscal year 2023-2027 under the Development Strategy for Enhancing Order and Safety that has been implemented to strengthen safety within the area in Chiang Mai Municipality, the main responsibilities offices are Municipal Secretary's Office, Technical Office, Education Office, and Strategy and Budget Division who coordinated and integrated work with the projects specified in the Local Development Plan Development Project (2023 - 2027) of Chiang Mai Municipality related to crime safety management, including:

The Hearty Green Kiosk Project aimed to allow people to participate in preventing danger to themselves and others by reporting incidents through the Green Kiosk which will be implemented in 2023 at 23 locations.

The Chiangmai Smart Security Project to raise the standard of safety in life and property of citizens and tourists, the goal is to install 110 CCTV cameras with a complete set of equipment, including face detection cameras, plate/license plate cameras, emergency notification kiosks, renovation of control rooms within the CCTV control center, and personnel training.

Projects related to the maintenance of CCTV systems and the control systems in order to be able to use it effectively.

As for the development of infrastructure improvements, it was linked to environmental safety improvement. There were projects under the infrastructure development strategy such as the installation of lighting and expansion of public electricity zones within Chiang Mai Municipality, urban landscape decoration project to improve the landscape within Chiang Mai Municipality to be beautiful and orderly, project to improve sidewalks and walkways, and project to improve roads and drainage. The project mentioned was to improve sidewalks to meet standards and to provide convenience and safety for people in traveling. The lighting installation and corridor improvement project has been set by the Chiang Mai Municipality to cover the entire area of Chiang Mai Municipality.

From the information presented above, it can be seen that Chiang Mai Municipality's operations focus on infrastructure development and technology support such as CCTV cameras / Hearty Green Kiosks to play a role in the ability to create the confidence and support the living in a safe environment.

Problem reviewing, environment analyzing, goal setting and expected outcomes

Problem reviewing and requirements

From the meeting of the group of key informants, problems in the area were found: 1) the urban landscape in some areas was not tidy, so there was a need to improve the wasteland/risk areas and organize the city beautifully so that security can be taken conveniently and quickly. 2) Electrical lighting was insufficient and not covered in some areas, so there was a need for installation of electrical lighting coverage and maintain it so that it can be used normally to reduce insecurity problems in life and property. 3) CCTV cameras were also not covered community areas along the alleys where tourists walk all the time. Since there was insufficient budget to support the purchase of CCTV cameras, so there was a need for budget planning for the next fiscal year to cover the expansion of the area and the number of CCTV cameras to be comprehensive. 4) The majority of crimes found in the community were due to conflicts and drug problems. Key informants demanded that security measures be increased, monitored, and reduced areas at risk of crime occurring. In addition, public participation in surveillance should be encouraged.

Opinions on Guidelines for the Development of Safe Cities in the Chiang Mai Municipality Area

The opinions of key informants on guidelines for developing crime-safe cities can be grouped into three aspects: submitting the opinions and guidelines in terms of collaborative creation, effective tool development for crime prevention and suppression, and improve the environment as a guideline for making policy recommendations, as well as solving problems and supporting emerging needs, with details shown in Table 1.

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Table 1. Guidelines for Developing A Safe City in the Chiang Mai Municipality Area From the Opinion Group and

Small Group Meeting Small Group Meeting

Viewpoint of opinion groups	Comments
1. Cooperation	The group commented on recent operations and the potential of creating cooperation in each sector and said:
	"Municipalities and police officers regularly cooperate with the community."
	"Must have meetings, must listen to each other to discuss various problems/needs."
	• "Find the solution together, the municipality coordinates relevant agencies to take action."
	The opinion group related to the role of volunteers in driving a safe city includes:
	 "Must have volunteers in the community as the eyes and ears of the community police."
	 "Local police volunteers were good. Here we'were always working together with the police."
	 "If other areas do it, they must build strength from the community. Let community leaders/villagers have a role to play."
	 "Now there were only elderly people who volunteer, must allow young people /working people to join in."
	The opinion group of municipal officials and police officers on the guidelines for creating cooperation include:
	"About cooperation, with external funding, we will have more capacity to work."
	 "Cooperation is an approach that must be worked on regularly, must be coordinated to set goals and collaboration."
	 "Must make an MOU in order to have a concrete and structured cooperation."
2. Development of effective tools for crime prevention and suppression	The opinion group of the public sector and police officers on the need to expand the installation of additional CCTV cameras includes:
	 "Need to have cameras in the community, most of them are installed on the main street."
	 "Having cameras everywhere creates a lot of confidence, thieves won't dare to do anything if they see the cameras."
	 "In town the cameras were covered but in other areas they are not covered, need to install more cameras because it helps."
	The opinion group of municipal officials and educational institutions includes:
	 "First must check to see what the current condition of the camera is."
	 "Camera should be upgraded to be clearer, detect faces / license plates, it increases the efficiency of prevention."
	• "There must be information for planning, making the camera installation as effective as possible."

Viewpoint of opinion groups	Comments	
	 "Regarding the important information, we are working on a URC center, and if completed, it will be an important part in supporting urban development. 	
	The opinion group of police officers include:	
	"There should be a data connection center to retrieve the data."	
	 "Hotspot crime maps were also very useful in terms of security management." 	
	"Risk must be assessed at all times. Sometimes crime keeps changing, there must be information to keep up."	
	 "Now we'were making an MOU with the municipality on SOS signal tower in risky areas." 	
	The opinion group of people and tourists include:	
	• "Going to the mall, they have a QR code scanner to ask the staff for help with a breakdown, ask for a lifter. The QR will put on the wall for us to see which was very good. If deal with the security, I'll apply this to it."	
	"The group line was good, easy communication, must have good communication tools"	
3. Developing the environment to	The opinion group of police officers and municipal officials include:	
prevent crime	"Lighting was important. The environment must be improved not to be wild, the lights must be bright."	
	 "Urban planning was also important, how to plan?" 	
	• "If the city was in order, without isolated spot, will feel safe."	
	The opinion group of academics, educational institutions said that	
	"If there was a design for city development activities, it would	
	be good, designing them together."	
	• "Tourists must be able to do activities in the area, creating a sense of togetherness."	

Environmental Analysis, Targeting and Expected Results

This section utilized the SWOT Analysis strategic analyzing internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external factors which can be an opportunity or a threat. Once the weaknesses and threats were analyzed, a view of the potential risks that the organization will be evaluated. Since the goal was to drive the development of crime-safe cities at the local government organization level. It was necessary to understand in the environment the possibility of setting goals to achieve collaboration by collecting information from local development plans and listening to the opinions of key informants. There was a summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as follows:

Table 2. Environmental Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
	[W1] The financial allocation of Chiang Mai Municipality does not align adequately with its
safety in urban areas within the local development plan, and it is allocated a budget to facilitate their	development objectives, particularly in the
implementation.	, , ,
[S2] The leaders of Chiang Mai Municipality	[W2] The municipality was experiencing an
possess a well-defined vision and policy for	increasing elderly population coupled with a

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Strengths	Weaknesses
cultivating a secure city, aiming to build confidence among citizens and tourists.	declining birth rate, leading to a shortage of individuals available to participate as volunteer police officers in community safety efforts.
[S3] CCTV cameras have been installed in Central Business District (moat area) and the data has been linked to the security agencies for crime prevention and suppression in the area.	[W3] Lack of proper database system and necessary to develop Chiang Mai Municipality
[S4] Network partners collaborate to support the operational functions of the municipality.	
Opportunities	Threats
[O1] Chiang Mai Province has been selected as a pilot area in the National Agenda Action Plan. The advancement of Smart City initiatives has positioned Chiang Mai as a hub for digital technology development about security. [O2] Chiang Mai Municipality and safety agencies have prioritized the utilization of technology in the region in alignment with the digital government policy.	[T1] The immigration of individuals from diverse provinces and neighboring countries has led to a growing latent population susceptible to crime, communicable diseases, and epidemics. [T2] Today's social conditions were rapidly changing from economic to social. Consequently, there was a lack of awareness among individuals regarding their participation in public development.
[3] The Smart Safety Zone 4.0 project of the Royal Thai Police has been driven forward, resulting in the collaboration of various sectors. [4] Educational institutions engage in innovation and the development of creative solutions, actively supporting the city's endeavor to enhance safety and reduce crime.	исчеторинени.

Examining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the context of Chiang Mai Municipality serves as the foundation for establishing objectives. This involves proactively formulating strategic goals based on the alignment of strengths with opportunities. Simultaneously, the identification of strengths and opportunities guides the establishment of goals and desired outcomes during the plan's implementation.

Furthermore, defensive strategies are considered in situations of weakness combined with threats, as well as in situations of strength combined with threats. Corrective strategies are formulated in situations of weakness combined with opportunities. The outcomes of setting objectives and the anticipated results from the SOAR analysis are described as follows.

Setting Objectives

From the analysis of weaknesses, strengths, opportunities, and threats, it leads to the setting of strategic objectives as follows.

Proactive strategy: promotes opportunities and develops strengths, by promoting the advancement of efficient and contemporary cooperation and security technology.

Defensive strategy involves improving and correcting weaknesses by 1) Promoting and developing potential, creating youth participation, and 2) Promoting cooperation in supporting the budget

Preventative/improvement strategies - dealing with obstacles and using opportunities to reduce weaknesses, namely

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Foster the enhancement and evolution of work plans or local development plans to encompass security operations across cooperation, technology development, and the augmentation of organizational capacity to effectively support policy resources.

Propel knowledge dissemination and awareness-building to address the impacts of environmental changes and political economy, considering the spatial context to be well-prepared for managing the dynamics of crime.

Establish mechanisms for integrating collaboration across all sectors within and beyond the region in utilizing technology and innovation. Develop databases for planning and management, and build capacity to promote realizing crime-safe cities.

Innovate effective tools and cultivate an environment conducive to crime prevention and suppression.

Targeting and Expected Results

Drawing upon the Strengths and Opportunities Analysis (SOAR) data, constructive future goals have been formulated for the development of a crime-safe city. These goals aim to address crime rates, enhance public safety, and foster a secure environment for residents. The approach encourages active participation, datadriven decision-making influencing environmental design, and the advancement of technology and innovation for crime prevention and suppression. This creative approach is geared towards determining the envisioned future. The anticipated outcome is the assurance of city safety, bolstering the quality of life for both citizens and tourists. Success is envisioned through collaborative efforts and innovative mechanisms driving the implementation process.

Policy Recommendations for Crime-Free City Development for Local Government Organizations

An analysis that uses the SWOT Analysis method to analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and SOAR Analysis which was used as a framework for consideration in formulating strategies, led to the preparation and development of policy recommendations for developing crime-free cities for local government organizations from the opinion of key informants consisting of Chiang Mai Municipality officials with executive role, policy-level officials, operational-level officials, police officers from Chiang Mai Police Station, Mae Ping Police Station, Chang Phueak Police Station, and Bhuping Police Station and 2 Tourist Police from Tourist Police Station under Tourist Police Division 2, Chiang Mai Province, Lecturer or Academic, Community leaders or Community Presidents and local police volunteers. Based on the comments received, there is a summary of policy recommendations for developing cities safe from crime for local government organizations, which aims to serve as guidelines and strategies for local government organizations to develop cities safe from crime by using effective measures that will lead to the goal of reducing crime rate, increasing public safety, creating safe environment for residents, participating in driving crime-safe cities with the data that leads to environmental design and the development of technology/innovation for crime prevention and suppression of which the mission, strategies, and activities/projects have been defined as follows:

Mission

Integrate cooperation to prevent crime

Keeping cities safe from crime with data

Designing the environment and infrastructure for a safe city

Develop technology and innovation for crime prevention and suppression

Strategies and Activities/Projects

Strategy 1 Integration of cooperation for crime management

Crime prevention training for the public sector

Promote cooperation between local law enforcement agencies and community members

Develop Youth participation programs

Project to develop the potential of community volunteers in crime prevention in the area

Creating an action plan for managing crime in urban areas

Seek external funding sources, grants, and partnerships with private organizations to complement existing resources

Strategy 2 Optimization of management by information mechanisms

Develop a central database that collects crime statistics, demographics, and other relevant sources, regularly analyze crime trends and patterns to identify hotspots and emerging threats.

Develop a data management and information sharing framework that will facilitate the secure storage, retrieval, and sharing of relevant data between law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders, promote cooperation with technology providers and agencies to create standards for collaboration.

Training and empowering personnel to use database systems

Establish a city information center used to support city planning and development.

Strategy 3 Developing effective tools to prevent and suppress crimes by

Assessment of the current technological infrastructure

Expand CCTV installations in high-crime areas and upgrade camera systems.

Existing closed-circuit to use high-resolution cameras

Development of face detection camera, license plate recognition system (LPR), emergency notification system, and Call for help Kiosks.

Creating a crime reporting system and victim support

Develop applications to support the prevention and suppression of crime.

Organizing training to educate personnel in the organization on how to use tools and technologies to support operations.

Strategy 4 Improving the environment to prevent crime includes:

Develop and implement urban planning guidelines that incorporate crime prevention principles by designing environments to ensure that covers the entire community, encouraging residents and businesses to maintain well-lit outdoor spaces.

Perform safety assessments of residential and commercial buildings in collaboration with security professionals.

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Promote activities/organize design competitions for the architects, urban planners, and landscape architects to take part in creating the innovative and safe public spaces that support natural surveillance, create social interaction, and a sense of belonging to the community and tourists.

Design and develop safe parks.

Discussion

To develop policy recommendations for crime safety management in urban areas to be the guidelines and strategies for local government organizations in order to develop crime-safe cities by implementing effective measures that will lead to the goal of reducing crime rates, increase public safety, and create a safe environment for residents through participatory mechanisms to drive crime-safe cities with the data that leads to environmental design and technology/innovation development for crime prevention and suppression. In this study, strategies for urban development are proposed in 4 aspects:

Integrate cooperation for crime management, which is an emphasis on strengthening and developing cooperation networks with the goal of the strategy being the cooperation of relevant sectors to drive efficient and creative operations of which White & Sutton stated that public safety originates from social relationships in the community [9]. The UNODC stated that participation and communication remain one of the most important tools for problem management [10]. Roman et al. pointed out that interorganizational cooperation and cooperation of the public sector play a role and are an important mechanism in planning and implementing comprehensive management of complex problems [11]. Similarly, Chitsawang, Chitsawang & Kor-Udom have proposed guidelines to promote the role of local government organizations in crime prevention, including setting clear policies from the government to encourage local government organizations to play a role in crime prevention that does not directly play role in crime suppression, allowing people to participate in policymaking in local development, including crime prevention and promoting the role of community leaders in working with local government organizations. Etc [12].

Enhancing management efficiency through data mechanisms that focus on the use of data to support assessment/analysis and support decision making in urban development with the strategy's goal to integrate data or create information database for crime-safe city management. This is in line with Wu et al. and Gracias et al. who stated that, in facing the challenge of sustainable urban management, big data-driven technology can be good solution/tool to address the dynamic challenges faced by urban areas [13,14]. Cities Alliance also points out that datasets development can be used to make decision based on the argument and having clear evidence about planning and decision-making in urban development. The availability of appropriate data at the local level can help city officials prioritize local development properly [15].

Developing effective tools to prevent and suppress crime, emphasizing on developing and expanding the scope of technology, especially CCTV and smart cameras including applications or communication channels that are effective and play a role in preventing and suppressing crimes with the goal that is, the assessing on technological infrastructure, expanding the installation of closed-circuit television systems, and the use of effective communication tools. This is consistent with the study of Cuevas et al. and Aballe et al. who have suggested that CCTV cameras are highly effective in preventing crimes, especially crimes against people and property by recording incidents that can help solve reported incidents of theft, finding the offender or suspect [16,17]. Moreover, a study by Piza et al. states that in addition to supporting the comprehensive use of CCTV for crime prevention, there is also a need to develop new high-quality technologies to achieve maximum efficiency in preventing crimes that are dynamically changing [18].

Developing the environment to prevent crime – Emphasizing the development of the physical environment, urban planning and design, as well as promoting participatory activities in environmental design where the goal of the strategy is the environment, local risk points are designed to be safe, which is consistent with the study of Lee et al. who emphasized that crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) has become a popular urban planning guideline to prevent crime and alleviate fear of crime

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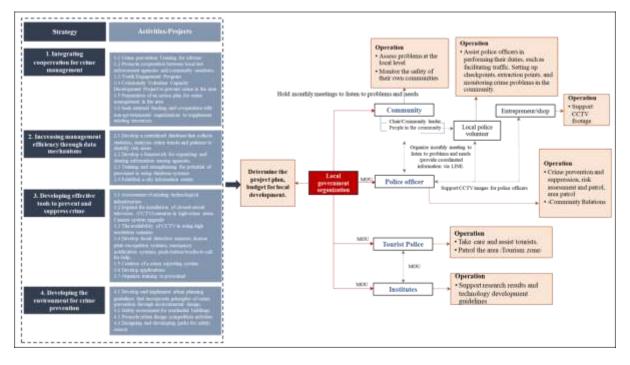
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through environmental improvements [19]. Similar to Navarrete-Hernandez et al., who has confirmed that one of the strategies widely used to reduce fear of crime is to restore the environment to safety [20].

Conclusions

For the local government organizations, keeping cities safe from crime is a complex and challenging challenge as safety is fundamental to the well-being of local residents. Developing crime-safe cities requires cooperation and a sense of community to contribute to the creation of sustainable safety conditions in which local governments play an important role in these processes. Local administrative organizations should have guidelines to operate within a framework that focuses on planning and setting guidelines to improve safety in the area by listening to the community opinions and requirements and combining them with urban development plan policies, raising awareness, building cooperation with the community, government, and private sectors, develop areas for safety purpose, improving infrastructure to create an appropriate environment for safety, together with using information technology and data to monitor the situation and plan safety management, as well as using CCTV systems and technology platforms to report crime data.

Therefore, developing a crime-free city is a process that must be carried out all-round action and requires cooperation between government, private sectors, communities, educational institutions and related sectors. Local government organizations play an important role in leading and supporting this process to ensure a safe and sustainable future for cities. In this study, the operation process in Chiang Mai Municipality area has been presented which can serve as a model for operations that the local administrative organizations can use to improve, amend, and add to their own local development plans which the budget, responsible agencies, and supporting agencies for each project should be specified in line with the urban development strategy in 4 aspects as shown in Figure 1.



Source: Pakachaivisitha [21]

Figure 1. Process of Operations for Local Government Organizations for the Management of Crime Safety in Urban Areas

The limitation of this research were the area of the study since this research was study only in one area which can be applied to that same area context, but in the different area context needed to be study further, and the communication in the research was only one way communication. Plus, there was a lack of emphasis

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on establishing an evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness and impact of the recommended policies over time, hindering the ability to measure success and make necessary adjustments.

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