

CHAO PHRAYA SKY PARK

RETHINK WASTED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR URBAN ADAPTABILITY

FINISHING THE UNFINISHED DREAM

Amidst the pandemic, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration opened its remarkable public space, the Chao Phraya Sky Park (CPSP). Left abandoned for almost 40 years, the halted infrastructure project has now been given a second life as the newest Bangkok landmark, the nation's first pedestrian bridge park across a river.

Situated in Bangkok's most significant historical area, the 360-degree view bridges the city's historic town and modern skyline at one glance. From vacant to vibrant, CPSP exhibits few possibilities for public green space in such a dense urban fabric to redefine their neglected infrastructure, the health of the citizens with the health of their city. By merging two juxtaposed sides of Bangkok and existing parks on both ends, CPSP shows the importance of much-needed public green space, walkability, creating low carbon-emission construction from adaptive reuse while restoring its citizens' physical and mental health. By utilizing the remains, CPSP has shown the countless future possibilities for placemaking that increase urban adaptability and all the city's abandons and wasted spaces that could not be left behind.

DESIGN WITH LIMITATION

Building an entire park on a 40-year-old abandoned, inaccessible Sky rail infrastructure is no easy feat. For on-site investigation, the landscape architects and architects team needed to estimate all dimensions and experience as if they were walking on the amputation structure due to inaccessibility. In addition, with weight limitations, the soil depth and the additional structure on the existing were critical concerns during the design process. Between the right of way of 8.5 meters, the design elements and construction process cannot disrupt or obstruct the parallel traffic on both sides. With space and time constraints, the designers built all bridge park structures with a module system of precast GRC blocks, saving both construction time and cost. These GRC blocks were assembled into various units, forming walls of diverse topography, planters, railing, seating, framing the whole walking and driving experience inside out and outside in.

BRIDGING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

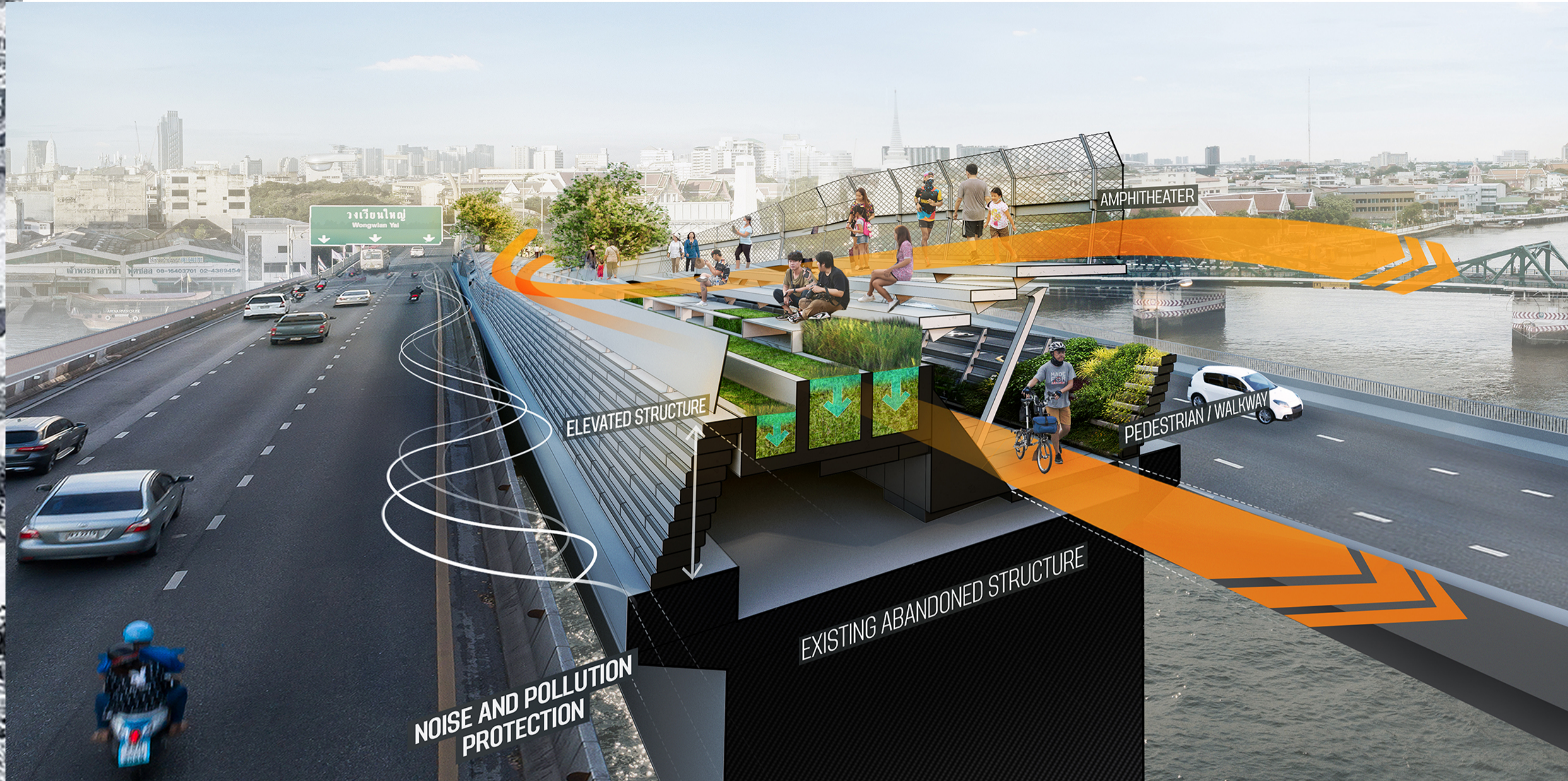
Left useless amidst the city's most significant historical area, the amputated structure is next to one of the nation's most important monuments: the Memorial Bridge (Saphan Phut). The first vehicle bridge across the Chao Phraya River is a tribute to King Rama I, the founder of Bangkok. Inspired by the elements of the Memorial Bridge, the team of landscape architects and architects decided that the new structure should not compete with its predecessor but rather respect it. Emulating the curves of the Memorial Bridge in a contemporary manner, the CPSP humbly weaves the slopes of its precedent counterpart to adorn the city's skyline in unison.

For almost a century, the Memorial Bridge has been one of the few spots in the city where Bangkokians and tourists—could adore the whole scenery of Bangkok with the Chao Phraya River. The Memorial Bridge has been given its place in the frame to be part of the picture. From the CPSP, pedestrians can enjoy a view with the Memorial Bridge in the foreground, overlooking Bangkok's postcard destinations panoramic. The Sky Park gives all Bangkokians a unique viewpoint to see the city's past and present at a glance.



LOCATION : BANGKOK, THAILAND
PROJECT TYPE : PUBLIC PARK ACROSS THE RIVER
PROJECT OWNER : BANGKOK METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION (BMA)

PROJECT LEADER : DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (BMA), CHULA UNISEARCH, CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY
URBAN DESIGNER : URBAN DESIGN DEVELOPMENT CENTER (UDDC), CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY
LANDSCAPE DESIGN : KOTCHAKORN VORAAKHOM (LANDPROCESS)
ARCHITECTURE DESIGN : CHAKDAO NAVACHAROEN (N7A ARCHITECTS)
CIVIL ENGINEER : PISITSAK SERKLIN, SUKKAWICH THEPCHANA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER : THUMMANUJN SUSUMPHAO, PH.D.
PROJECT CONTRACTOR : SGR ENTERPRISE COMPANY LIMITED
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION : CULTURAL TOURISM COMMUNITY KADI CHIN- KLONG SAN



**WIDENING SPACES
WHILE LENGTHENING
EXPERIENCES**

The Sky Park's design also opens up new and unique outlooks to admire the sunrise and sunset over the river, juxtaposing Bangkok's historic and modern skyline on each side. In addition, the crisscross design of the varying elevations of pathways ensures linear space visibility, promoting a safe environment where all visitors can see and be seen.



**FROM VACANT
TO VIBRANT.**

The CPSP opened during the first pandemic lockdown in Bangkok as a call for action that we need to further address public health together with public green space, climate crises, and how urgent we need to build our resilient cities.

Despite all adversities in making CPSP possible, the project is a big step forward in collaboration with all stakeholders, all professionals at par, urban designers, landscape architects, architects, and engineers. Solving the city's most pressing issues in a low-carbon context, CPSP offers the solution by reducing carbon emissions in the construction process with adaptive reuse. The bridge park also increases green space and walkability and enhances public health and climate resilience.

Completing an unfinished dream, the CPSP is an example of how we can adapt and healthily coexist with one another and our environment. With respect to limited resources, there are emerging possibilities to which we can reinvent our world to better adapt to climate change, pandemics, and other uncertainties that lie ahead. All by repurposing the useless and rethinking the conventional, as a result, we can move forward to create a better city with what we have and future countless abandoned infrastructures that should not be left behind.

