ABSTRACT

Singapore is unique unto itself. There are few countries outside the communist block that have such extensive state intervention in land ownership and development. Yet it is an international commercial and industrial city where private capitalism is the engine for economic growth.

In Singapore, the public sector and the government are synonymous. The dramatic changes in Singapore's urban landscape are largely a result of both direct and indirect state action though planning, implementation and development. Therefore, an analysis of the pivotal role of the state is necessary for the understanding of Singapore's developmental process.

Government control in planning and implementation both influences and is influenced by economic forces. In the long-term, government's planning decisions influencing land-use and development patterns are generally based on long-range spatial demand forecasts, which in turn, are mainly based on the projected economic growth. In the short-term, government policy decisions are to respond to economic ups and downs that may not be foreseen, so that the correction will maintain the well being of the overall construction industry. This regulation in the short-term ensures that its long term planning decisions can be realized.

Sustained high economic is recognized as the key driving force in development. The private sector is highly responsive to profit making. Understanding this, the government acts as the catalyst that uses market forces during the boom period to fuel private development to further its own long term plans. Singapore's urban environment is a reflection of the needs of the rapidly growing economy and also of government action and private capitalist profit motives.

Hence, the primary aim of this study is to examine the extent of Government control in the development of Singapore's built environment in relation to economic forces, in particular, the economic cycle through the upswing of the early 1990s boom and the crash of the 1997 Asia-Pacific Crisis.