

A MODEL OF INTEGRATED BEACH RESORT DEVELOPMENT: Sustainability and the role of corporate social responsibility

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ABSTRACT: This research focuses on integrated beach resorts in Southeast Asia. Integrated development arose as a response to the earlier, ad hoc, forms of development, which were generally found to be unsustainable. A tentative model of integrated development, based on the beach resort at Nusa Dua, Bali, as proposed two decades earlier, is taken as the basis for the development of a new, more robust, Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development (MIBRD). To achieve this, the case of Laguna Phuket, an integrated beach resort in Phuket, Thailand, is compared with the earlier model and updated data from its original case, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia. The MIBRD incorporates several clarifications and inclusions such as the addition of zones of informal commerce, golf course and second homes that were not in the earlier model. The business district, which was previously not differentiated, is now categorized into a Residential Business District (RBD) and a Commercial Business District (CBD). Analysis of informal commerce at both Nusa Dua and Laguna Phuket provide new perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), specifically between informal and formal commerce in these two cases. CSR is identified as a major force in shaping the overall resort landscape and the resort's sustainability. **Keywords:** Beach resort, integrated development, sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, Southeast Asia.

RESUMEN: Esta pesquisa se centra en estancias de baños integradas en el Sudeste Asiático. El desarrollo integrado surgió como respuesta a las formas de desarrollo *ad hoc* anteriores, generalmente consideradas insustentables. Un modelo experimental de desarrollo integrado, basado en la estancia de baños en Nusa Dua, Bali, tal como propuesto dos décadas antes, se toma como base para el desarrollo de un nuevo y más robusto modelo de estancias de baño (MIBRD – Modelo de Desarrollo Integrado de Estancias de Baño). Para conseguirlo, el caso de Laguna Phuket, una estancia de baños integrada en Phuket, en Tailandia, es comparado con el modelo anterior y datos del caso original, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, actualizados. El MIBRD incorpora varias aclaraciones e inclusiones, tales como la adición de zonas de comercio informal, campo de golf y residencias de vacaciones, que no están incluidas en el modelo anterior. El área comercial, que previamente no fue diferenciada, está actualmente clasificada como área comercial residencial (RBD) y área empresarial y comercial (CBD). El análisis del comercio informal, tanto en Nusa Dua como en Laguna Phuket proporciona nuevas perspectivas sobre responsabilidad social empresarial (CSR), más específicamente entre el comercio informal y formal en estos dos casos. La responsabilidad social empresarial es identificada como una gran fuerza en el desarrollo del paisaje global y sustentabilidad de la estancia.

Palabras-chave: estancia de baños, desarrollo integrado, desarrollo sustentable, responsabilidad social empresarial, Sudeste Asiático.

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RESUMO: Esta pesquisa concentra-se em estâncias balneares integradas no Sudeste Asiático. O desenvolvimento integrado surgiu como uma resposta às formas de desenvolvimento ad hoc anteriores, geralmente consideradas insustentáveis. Um modelo experimental de desenvolvimento integrado, baseado na estância balnear em Nusa Dua, Bali, tal como proposto duas décadas antes, é tomado como base para o desenvolvimento de um novo e mais robusto modelo de estâncias balneares (MIBRD – Modelo de Desenvolvimento Integrado de Estâncias Balneares). Para o conseguir, o caso de Laguna Phuket, uma estância balnear integrada em Phuket, na Tailândia, é comparado com o anterior modelo e dados do caso original, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonésia, atualizados. O MIBRD incorpora várias clarificações e inclusões, tais como a adição de zonas de comércio informal, campo de golfe e residências de férias, que não estavam incluídas no modelo anterior. A área comercial, que não foi previamente diferenciada, está agora classificada como área comercial residencial (RBD) e área empresarial e comercial (CBD). A análise do comércio informal, tanto em Nusa Dua como em Laguna Phuket proporciona novas perspectivas sobre responsabilidade social empresarial (CSR), mais especificamente entre o comércio informal e formal nestes dois casos. A responsabilidade social empresarial é identificada como uma grande força no desenvolvimento da paisagem global e sustentabilidade da estância. **Palavras-chave:** estância balnear, desenvolvimento integrado, desenvolvimento sustentável, responsabilidade social empresarial, Sudeste Asiático.

INTRODUCTION

Beach resorts have been popular destinations for holidaymakers. Strong demand for this type of destination has encouraged investment by many entrepreneurs and organizations in beach resorts to leverage on their popularity with the tourists. While there has been careful attention to planning and design for individual hotel projects, frequently there has been little effective control of overall resort growth (Smith, 1991). To address problems pertaining to infrastructure development as well as social and environmental issues, integrated beach resorts have been proposed and built. Integrated beach resorts are planned environments with a number of hotels that share infrastructure, recreational features and other facilities. This allows for better developmental and operational control of the resort due to a central management system. Economies of scale may be achieved along with coordinated marketing of the resort as a whole. Careful planning and implementation of control measures have a significant influence on the resident community's economic and social sustainability (Smith, 1992).

The objective of this research is to define a more robust Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development (MIBRD) through comparative evaluation of an earlier model (Smith, 1992), based on the case of Nusa Dua in Bali, Indonesia, with the case of Laguna Phuket, Thailand. Laguna Phuket is a popular integrated beach resort along Bang Tao Beach in Phuket, Thailand. For the case evaluation, primary data were collected through field surveys. Secondary data were drawn from printed documents, maps and online websites.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Beach resorts are defined as geographic areas offering a variety of facilities, services and activities which are orientated towards seaside

recreation for the accommodation, use and enjoyment of visitors (Metelka, 1990). Beach resorts evolve from natural contexts through the expansion of accommodation and other recreational functions. With greater size they lose their natural characteristics and become increasingly urbanized (Smith, 1991). The development of beach resorts is often encouraged by governments as a means to generate larger foreign exchange earnings through the growth of their international tourism industry and a desire to improve the well-being of their citizens by providing more employment opportunities and better incomes (Wall and Mathieson, 2006; Pye and Lin, 1983).

Generally, there are two types of beach resorts. These are ad hoc and integrated. In the past, beach resort development has been characterized by careful attention to planning and design for individual hotel projects but with little effective control of overall resort growth. While there are often one or more plans for the overall development of resorts, these have in many instances not been followed. The typical ad hoc pattern for development has been the construction of a first hotel at a new destination, which, if successful in attracting tourists, is followed by the construction of more accommodation. This is primarily a serial development process of adding major resort facilities in an ad hoc, often poorly regulated, manner (Smith, 2010).

Assembling separate projects to achieve an acceptable, holistic and consistent overall resort quality is generally beyond the control of individual project developers and managers. In addition, these developers tend to have short-term investment objectives, which can be at variance with long-term sustainability. Frequently, overall coordination and regulation of resort development falls to the local government where conflicting objectives and limited scope for implementation of policy and physical planning results in far too many problems that remain unresolved (Smith, 2010). The general decline of cultural heritages, destruction of natural resources, exclusion of residents from coastal strips, erosion of social values and the non-realization of national economic objectives are all too common results of the ad hoc beach resort development process (Bosselman, 1978; Ghani, 1988; Ong, Storey and Minnery, 2011).

In contrast, integrated beach resorts are planned and centrally managed environments that cater to high-end demand. Typically there are a number of hotels, mostly beachfront, that share infrastructure and other features such as second homes, marinas, golf courses, convention facilities, retail and entertainment centers, training institutes and land- and water-based recreational facilities as well as utilities such as water supply treatment, waste water treatment and solid waste disposal. Central to the idea of these integrated projects is control of both development and subsequent operation. Integrated planning is pursued

to maximize demand attraction - normally high-end – while ensuring that incompatible uses are excluded. The aim is to maximize owner and operator business potential. Individual hotels are normally developed and operated by others, under the supervision of the resort's central administration. These integrated projects usually occupy large coastal sites where any existing residents are resettled outside of the integrated project boundary (Stiles and See-Tho, 1991; Smith, 2007).

Central management is also responsible for maintenance of common spaces and ensuring that only approved activities are undertaken. This typically limits the business activities to those specifically allowed for and on the terms permitted by the central management. In these integrated beach resorts, there is no unfettered access to the resort by the resident community for commercial purposes. This generally excludes the community from entrepreneurial and other business activities within the resort and forces these activities to areas around the entrances to the resort. This is unlike the situation in ad hoc resorts where the community has some freedom to pursue commercial activities directly with the tourists (Tan, 2004). While some individuals from the local community are employees of the integrated resort, the exclusion of local commercial activity creates tensions between integrated resorts and their resident communities. There is resentment on limited, if any, access to the wealth generated within the integrated resort (Smith and Henderson, 2008; Henderson and Smith, 2009).

Such relationships between the resort owners and management and the resident community are unsustainable. Recognizing this, management seeks to take community interests into their business considerations. Typically there is initiation of community-oriented projects with direct financial or other in-kind support by management. These bring direct benefits to the community. These are normally undertaken through organizations' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs that are initiated and implemented by the resort management. Often CSR is integrated into the organizations' mission and vision to cover financial, environmental and social aspects (Holcomb et al, 2007). Overall, CSR has two fundamental dimensions. One is the obligation of organizations to conduct their business such that they add value to society. The other relates to the responsibility to the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations of society (Bowen, 1953; Carroll, 1979 and 1991). While there is some debate on the business motivation for CSR, it is clearly voluntary (McWilliams and Siegal, 2001).

CSR is closely associated with sustainability and has the potential to enhance an organization's sustainability through its potential to improve business competitiveness. Tourism organizations that are recognized as socially responsible gain long-term benefit in their dealings with employees, suppliers and financiers (Hick, 2000). Significantly, cus-

tomers now tend to factor in CSR when making planning and making purchases (Ipsos MORI, 2009). Thus it is important that tourism organizations have positively effective and visible CSR programs, though not all organizations have taken CSR on board willingly (Porter and Kramer, 2006). As with other organizations, tourism and hospitality firms engage in CSR “mainly because they reap some kind of benefits from such engagement” (Branco and Rodrigues, 2007, p. 5). They are not the only beneficiaries of their CSR programs as other stakeholders also derive benefit from an organization’s CSR programs, along with the organization (Lantos, 2001; Logsdon and Woods, 2002). This is especially important in the case of tourism destinations because of the strong interaction and inter-relationship between tourism organizations and their host communities (Lund-Durlacher, 2011; Simpson and Wall, 1999; Swarbrooke, 2003).

METHOD

Tentative Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development (MIBRD)

Two decades ago, a tentative Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development (MIBRD) of the form of mature beach resorts commencing as integrated development was proposed (Smith, 1992). This was based on a study of the case of Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, and interpretation of the trends described in Smith’s (1991) model of ad hoc beach resort development. This tentative model had a planned core – the integrated resort - surrounded by unplanned resort functions, hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, business and residential areas. This was the projected outcome for beach resorts that followed Nusa Dua’s integrated planning approach. The MIBRD may be viewed as tentative as it is based on the literature and related to only one case. In addition, this model conceived some time ago, which presented the possibility of change in the case of Nusa Dua during the ensuing two decades. This suggests that further study of the evolution of integrated resorts in Southeast Asia is needed before a deeper understanding of this form of coastal development may be reached.

Approach for a new revised MIBRD

In order to test the accuracy, strengthen and revise the MIBRD, Laguna Phuket, a popular integrated beach resort located in Phuket, Thailand, was selected as an additional case for evaluation of the model applying case research method (GAO, 1993; Yin, 2002). Drawing on the research discipline of planning, case documentation, consisting of a land-use survey and analysis and interviews, were undertaken for this case. These were conducted over a number of field visits, up to January 2011 and included a major land-use survey in September 2008. The

land-use survey involved preliminary surveys in the field supported by secondary data from remote images (e.g. Google Earth) and other published land-use documentation. Field surveys involved walking and driving motorbikes around the subject area to observe and record the land-use as well as to collect images as references for further analysis. Verification of land-use obtained from remote images was undertaken as necessary. These served as sources of primary data. Published brochures and other documents, relevant statistics from the government of Thailand agency, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), and Internet websites were sources of secondary data.

Data were collected and analyzed using the earlier methodological framework (Smith, 1992). This was important so as to permit cross-evaluation between the two cases, Nusa Dua and Laguna Phuket, and the MIBRD. For example, land use data were collected with similar categories as with the Nusa Dua case so as to allow effective evaluation. Land-use classification was based on the original categories: sea, beach, hotel, non-hotel businesses, non-tourist residential and roads. Additionally, the business areas were analyzed for Recreational Business District (RBD) and Commercial Business District (CBD) function (Stansfield and Rickert, 1970). Similarly distinction was made between formal and informal commercial activity. Second homes, sometimes known as vacation residences, became a new category as did the major land-use of golf course.

CASE – LAGUNA PHUKET, THAILAND

Phuket is widely known as the pearl of the Andaman Sea and promoted as a tranquil tropical islands with southern Thai-style hospitality. Located in the southern provinces, Phuket is the largest island in Thailand. According to data from the Tourism Authority of Thailand, in 2007, international visitors in Phuket increased 13.9 percent from 2006 to 3,283,410 in 2007 with domestic visitors rising 6.54 percent to 1,722,243. Thus international visitors dominate the tourist arrivals. While government statistics for subsequent years were not available, anecdotal data suggests strong growth of tourist arrivals in 2010 and 2011.

Laguna Phuket is located on the west coast of Phuket, occupying around 400 hectares of a former tin-mining site. The resort has approximately three kilometers of natural beach fronting the Andaman Sea along Bang Tao Beach. Developed by the Thailand-based Thai Wah Group, it is an integrated beach resort comprising of six luxury hotels. The integrated services include laundry, landscaping, transportation, waste treatment and disposal and maintenance. Shared facilities include an 18-hole golf course, luxury spas, commercial village and a corporate training centre. Based on earlier surveys and the main field

survey in 2008, a schematic land-use plan was defined (Figure 1). Subsequent visits and secondary data were later applied to the analyses.

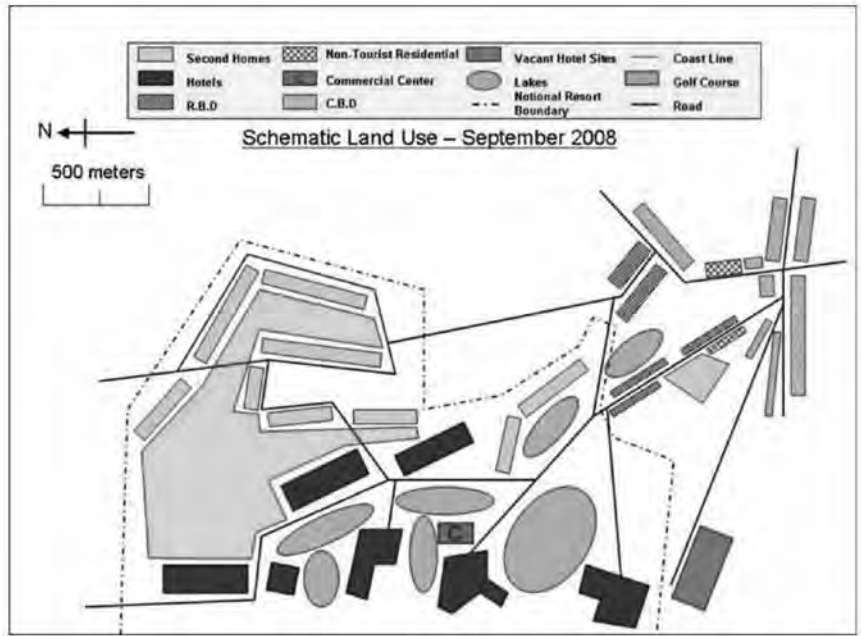


Figure 1: Laguna Phuket Schematic Landuse Plan

Source: Lim, Lim and Kieo, 2008.

The coastline is the demarcation that separates the integrated resort from the beach and contiguous sea. Based on the field surveys, the hotels operating within the integrated resort were Banyan Tree Phuket, Sheraton Grande Laguna, Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket, Laguna Beach Resort, Best Western Allamanda Laguna Phuket and Laguna Holiday Club Phuket Resort. These hotels were near to the beach and mainly located at the centre of the overall site. Several lakes situated among the hotels were the original ponds left from the earlier tin mining. A commercial centre was centrally situated, in the midst of the hotels and lakes. This commercial centre comprised of an information counter, a showroom for second homes at Laguna Phuket, a grocery store and some other shops selling clothing and souvenirs. The 18-hole golf course was located at the northwest of the site. Second homes were sited predominantly around the golf course.

With no cadastral data available, a notional resort boundary was delineated, which is a line that defines the integrated project site and includes hotels, lakes, commercial centre, golf course and second homes. The roads that are present in the schematic land-use plan are of three categories: a highway located outside of and some distance from the

site; two access roads, which connect the highway to Laguna Phuket; and internal roads within Laguna Phuket that connect all the hotels and facilities. The RBD that generally meets the needs of visitors is located along the access road leading adjacent to the entrance of Laguna Phuket. The Commercial Business District (CBD) that serves residents and other businesses is situated along the highway. Non-tourist residential zones are along the roads leading to Laguna Phuket, further from its entrance. A separate field survey recorded informal commercial uses immediately adjacent to the integrated resort and significantly on the beach between the resort and the sea (Smith and Henderson, 2008).

DISCUSSION

The construction of a resort attracts entrepreneurs who seek to establish businesses that offer services and goods to tourists and residents. At integrated destinations, such as found in the cases of Nusa Dua and Laguna Phuket, these businesses are excluded from the integrated project area and therefore are found immediately adjacent to the integrated resort boundary, normally at the vehicular entrances and along the beach. These businesses are divided into two clear zones: the RBD and the CBD. In contrast to ad hoc beach resorts where the RBD is located against the beach, in integrated beach resorts the RBD is inland and arranged along the main access roads used by visitors to the integrated resort. The CBD is sited on side roads (Smith, 1992). The RBD and CBD form a distinct zone of informal commerce immediately adjacent to the formal commerce within the integrated resort.

The integrated resort project boundary forms a sharp divide between formal and informal commerce, with the resort management permitting access for commercial activities within the resort to a limited and select few businesses. This exclusion of others had led in the past to a number of violent confrontations and blockades of the integrated resort by the resident community (ITG, 1992 and 1993). This period marked an extreme low point in relations between the resort's management and the local community. These events also received considerable international publicity that damaged the image of the resort.

Meanwhile there was expansion of informal commerce on the beach, outside of the resort. This was in addition to the informal commerce on the landside of the resort. Ad hoc structures were erected on the sand for shops, bars, restaurants, spas, tailors and other commercial enterprises to serve the needs of the tourists staying in the resort. Over time, this informal development intensified to such an extent that there was a complete wall of these buildings along the beach between the resort and the sea. They were served with ad hoc water supply and electricity generators, with wastewater flowing to the sea. Clearly these

businesses would compete with and divert revenue from similar businesses within the resort. Also the intensity of development and poor quality of the construction and maintenance detracted from the luxury image of the resort. Nevertheless, this commerce provided jobs for residents and added to local household incomes. There were a total of 64 informal vendors operating along the Bang Tao Beach area, outside the boundaries of Laguna Phuket, with six roving vendors, one fixed location stall and 57 permanent stalls (Smith and Henderson, 2008). Permanent stalls dominated the commerce.

The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 dramatically changed this beach-sited informal commerce. These structures were completely inundated with most being swept away. The aftermath of the tsunami opened the way for the resort management to work with the community to restore the commerce on the beach. Resort management provided support for the reconstruction and guided the design and layout of the structures so as to reduce the earlier intensity and low quality of development. Subsequently there were a total of 109 informal vendors, with nine roving vendors, two fixed location stalls and 98 permanent stalls. This represented a significant expansion of informal commerce, especially of permanent stalls by 79.1 percent, yet the overall visual impression from all aspects was greatly enhanced despite the additional number of stalls. Cooperation between the resort and the community had positive outcomes for both parties (Henderson, 2007).

This clearly was a successful CSR project that allowed more CSR initiatives by the Laguna Phuket management to proceed. Phuket Laguna now has a comprehensive CSR policy and programs that are focused internally (e.g. employees) and externally (e.g. resident community). These CSR programs mostly address community challenges though some are oriented to the environmental. Support is provided in a range of ways including cash donations, in-kind contributions and management and other expertise. Table 1 provides a sample of some CSR programs by three hotels within the integrated resort.

For the integrated resort overall, commonalities and differences between the cases of Laguna Phuket and Nusa Dua, on which the tentative model was based, were identified. Generally the spatial patterns are similar with common positioning within these of major programmatic elements. Differences are the absence in Nusa Dua of second homes as well as informal commerce along the beach. In the two decades since the author initially surveyed Nusa Dua, there has been no construction of buildings for informal commerce on the beach, though both cases have informal commerce inland. Nusa Dua has a stand-alone hospitality training institute and convention center. There are some differences in detail of location of specific elements between the two cases but these would be a result of case-specific geographical constraints. For

example, the location of commerce external to the cases and the residential areas is much influenced by the access road alignments. Also, Laguna Phuket has internal lakes and uses these for water sports with supporting infrastructure.

Following the evaluation of the tentative model with the case of Laguna Phuket, the earlier, tentative model was revised and strengthened to a more robust model. This revised model (Figure 2) is based on cases in two countries rather than one; hence making it more applicable universally, at least in Southeast Asia. The differences between the Nusa Dua and Laguna Phuket cases were also taken into consideration. The revised model incorporates the commonalities of the cases and additional features that were not in the earlier model. Informal commercial activities along the beach, golf course and second homes are included. Also the businesses are now categorized into RBD and CBD.

Table1: Sample CSR programs by selected hotels in Laguna Phuket

Hotels	CSR Programs				Collaborations	
	Description	Internal CSR	External CSR	One Off Event	Self Initiated	Type of Aid
Banyan Tree Phuket	Green facility designs		✓		✓	
	Fair labor practices and benefits	✓			✓	
	Seedlings Mentorship Program		✓		✓	
	Donations to support children of Child Watch		✓		✓	Monetary donations
Sheraton Grande Laguna	Green facility designs		✓		✓	
	Fair labor practices and benefits	✓			✓	
	"Health & Safety Week"	✓			✓	
	"One Night in May" fund-raising ball		✓	✓		Sponsorvenue
Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket	Green facility designs		✓		✓	
	Fair labour practices and benefits	✓			✓	
	Green MICE facilities and packages		✓		✓	
	Donations to Operation Smile		✓		✓	Monetary donations.
	'Be an Angel' Christmas fund-raising campaign		✓	✓		Donation of prizes
	Contributions of necessity items to the senior citizens by management team	✓	✓	✓	✓	Item donations

Source: Huang, Tan and Teoh, 2011.

CONCLUSION

This study has developed a revised Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development (MIBRD). The model presents greater detail through differentiating the business district into Residential Business District (RBD) and Commercial Business District (CBD) and the inclusion of golf course and second homes that were not mentioned in the earlier, tentative model. Informal commerce on the beach is also elaborated. The study allows greater understanding of the role of the larger community in shaping the greater resort landscape. It has been shown that there is a need to consider informal patterns of commer-

cial activities despite their seemingly temporary or transitory nature. The earlier model had ignored this despite it now having been shown to be a major resort feature that reflects complex socio-economic relations between the tourism sector and its host community, which shapes the physical landscape as well as the business landscape. Here, resort management relations with the resident community are critical to the sustainability of the resort; CSR becomes the bridge between the two stakeholders. Recognizing this, management has the opportunity to be proactive through Corporate Social Responsibility programs for the benefit of both their businesses and the community.

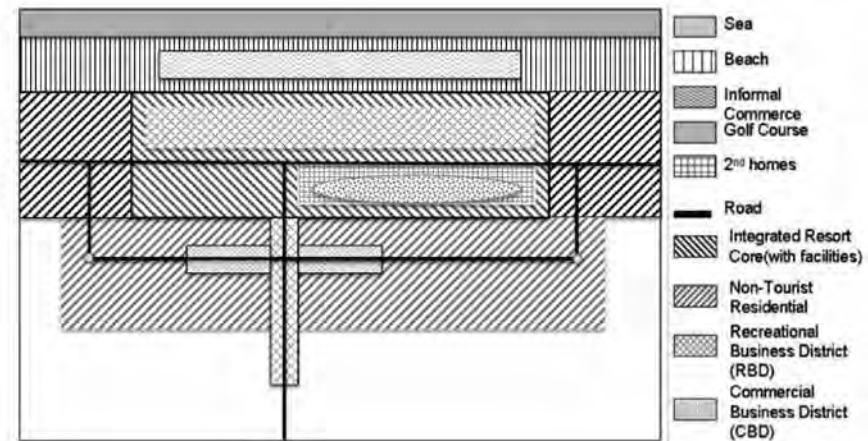


Figure 2. Model of Integrated Beach Resort Development

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