

## **Unplanned Nightlife within Public Space in Hat Yai, Thailand**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper attempts to explore the informal, small-scale leisure and nightlife district which was developed in the downtowns of Hat-Yai along these years. Basically, the urban-scape is occupied by rows of shop-houses and marginal urban spaces in downtown areas. The facilities available are mainly cafes, hotels, restaurants, nightclubs, street vendors and performance spaces developed largely without a large-scale design, planning or subsidy commonly found in the formal urban entertainment districts. The city centre which is dominated largely by resilience and flexibility of small-scale urban tapestry of activities which is totally different from that of the western urban theories available in planning studies. The unplanned urban activities which comprised of the diverse patrons from restaurants, cafes, street vendors and nightclubs that operates long hours, creating at different peak levels of uses; also generating a vibrant and diverse activities in the downtown. The contrast of the day and night activities is rather apparent especially during the day, the silent street only occupied by the “tuk-tuk” soliciting for passengers. The main street of the city centre fronting the Lee Garden Plaza Hotel and the axis to the Regency Hotel became the main central event venue for all kind of activities. Both the buildings and the streets along this avenue are converted into social ground during the night, where the place of chance bumps into unpredicted happenings. The paper also indicates the possibility of the district and its vitality that is lacking in the formal urban entertainment districts that may hold to its existence in the present economic demand. This paper also delves into the issue of creative place making that has been developed by the urbanites to revitalize the downtown.*

**Keywords:** *unplanned nightlife, public space, entertainment district, revitalization.*