

ABSTRACT

Title of Document:

MUSEUM AS A CITY REVITALIZATION
DEVICE: THE REVITALIZATION OF THE
CITY OF GWANGJU THROUGH THE HUB
CITY OF ASIAN CULTURE PROJECT

Yonghun Lee, Doctor of Philosophy, 2010

Directed By:

Professor Edward Larkey,
Language, Literacy and Culture Ph.D. Program

Many cities and countries have invested significant amounts of money in museums in the hopes that they will become a vital piece in developing the local economy, building of the city's image, operating as a destination for tourism, and revitalizing the entire community.

With this culture-driven urban regeneration in mind, another city redevelopment project is under way in the Republic of Korea. The Hub City of Asian Culture Project is being administered by the national government of Korea. It is the single largest cultural project in the history of the nation. The project aims to make Korea a leader in building cultural ties, to establish a center of exchange with the various countries in Asia, and to raise the overall quality of life of Koreans by transforming the city of Gwangju, the 6th largest city in Korea, into a culture city. This thesis introduces the Asian Culture Center of Hub City of Asian Culture Project, and its vision to revitalize the city of Gwangju, South Korea. It frames an inquiry about how the Hub City of Asian Culture project and the core facility of the project, Asian Culture Center can serve as a catalyst for revitalization of Gwangju. This inquiry has great significance since such a project has never before been carried

forward in Korea. The central government has committed great amounts of funding and will lead the way from the beginning to the end. No such projects were proposed previous to this announcement and if any others have been proposed since then, they are yet to be reported.

Therefore, my research and analysis of culture-driven (especially, museum-centered) urban regeneration of the city center of Gwangju will be of huge benefit for the current project, and furthermore positively impact other cities' redevelopment planning which have museums as their centerpiece.