Contraflow Bike Lane and Bicycle Road in Chiang Mai Municipality by Nirandorn Potikanond **Chiang Mai Sunday Cycling Club**

1.Starting point :

- 1. Traffic congestion around the city centre esp. at traffic lights is causing very slow traffic and making the way to schools, working destinations, etc. difficult during rush hours.
- 2. Many roads were changed to one-way traffic and cyclists had to commute longer distances and compete for the road with faster vehicles.
- 3. Many former Bike-lanes in CM had been used as parking lots by cars and no legal action were taken by traffic police.
- 4. Bike-lanes on many roads were ignored to be used as they were used for parking.
- 5. Cyclist along Bike-lanes had to take more risk overtaking parking cars and being scared of vehicles coming from behind.
- 6. Due to the risks students and school children were not allowed to cycle as long as bike-lanes were not legally effective.

2. Institutional setting:

- Cycling Clubs in CM proposed three bike-routes, contraflow bike-lanes and a bicycle road on five strategic roads in the city center to the CM-traffic committee. They were accepted in September 2004 but denied by CM-chief police.
- Energy Office Region 1, Environment Office Region 1 and Health Center Region 10 supported the recommendations and suggested to launch trial of the recommended cycling routes to the mayor of CM-municipality and CM-chief police in 2009.
- The three cycling routes became effective in April 6, 2009.

3. Approach:

- 1. Forbidding the parking on right-hand side of four one-way roads. Introducing contra-flow bike-lanes to provide safety and convenience to cyclists. Certain sections of roads were implemented as a bicycle road with speed limit under 30 kph, one section was on a one-way road, another one on a two-way road.
- 2. Along three bike-routes on four roads, cyclists were allowed to commute two-way while motorized vehicles commuted one-way. Only on Ratcha Withi Road all vehicles were allowed to commute two-way.
- 3. One-way traffic for motorized vehicles but always two-way traffic for cyclists was applied (see next slide).



Traffic system: one-way roads with contraflow bike-lanes, 1.2 – 1.5 m wide on right-hand side

Traffic Rules:

Along traffic flow: cyclists share the road on the left side, other motorized vehicles travel at speed under 30 kph.

Bike-lane on the right-hand side allows only contraflow cycling.



5. Lessons:

- 1. Real cycling commuters said the bike-routes were quite safe when they returned contra-flow because they could see other vehicles commuting one-way along one-way road.
- 2. Cyclists had more confidence on contra-flow bike-lane than cycling along one-way traffic because they did not have other vehicles coming from behind.
- 3. In the beginning, bike-lane sign was installed to provide awareness of existing contra-flow bike-lane to other commuters.
- 4. Thailand only uses bike-lane signs which is always insufficient for safe commuting with drivers of all kinds of vehicles.
- 5. It failed to establish a working committee on sustainable biking infrastructure in Chiang Mai to discuss problems and to plan future extensions of bike-routes along city planning.

6. Transfer to other place, if

- 1. The implemented bike-routes with the applied traffic system is fully implemented with sufficient traffic signs.
- 2. Occurring of any shortcomings should be quickly solved by a working committee comprising cyclists representatives, traffic engineers, city architectures, local politicians, traffic police officers, and drivers of other vehicles.
- 3. It ensures that 90% of cars do not park on bike-lanes and keep speed limit of 30 kph on roads with cycling infrastructure.
- 4. Study conducted shows low traffic accidents on roads with cycling infrastructure.
- 5. Collected data shows good increment of daily commuting cyclists.