

## Module 1: Introduction of Bukchon preservation project

#1

Hello, everybody.

I'm very glad to see you.

All Seoul, right?

I'm born in Seoul and for 20 years lived in Seoul.

I'm very glad to see you and I'm very great to introduce my city of Seoul.

Today I want to talk about Bukchon, the old city of Seoul.

#2

I worked at the Seoul Institute for 10 years. My major is conservation of heritages and I'm now trying to find out many heritages in Seoul.

#3

Bukchon is located at the heart of the historical downtown of Seoul.

It has both history of multiple layers of time and contemporariness as the place for daily life of the citizens.

Naturally, it is a place full of humane features, stories of the past and experiences of the old generations.

These are what makes Bukchon historically important.

In the city, much of its part were already demolished and redeveloped and no trace of the past can be easily found.

But Bukchon retains the old shape of the city, fortunately connecting us to the past.

Protecting such a place is very important  
in ensuring diversity, continuity and identity of the city.

However, today's Buchon wasn't built in one day.

Now I'll tell you about the success story of Buchon.

#### #4

In the 1970s, deteriorated downtown area was demolished  
to meet the new needs for modern urban life,  
such as sanitation, safety, functionality, beautification, and so on.

At the turning of new century, however  
an introspection was spurred about urban development policies  
to erase all the memories of the past centuries and at last lose the identity of Seoul.

Enhancing the competitive edge of cultural values in the city,  
a new approach was proposed to regain its historical value.

To break away from the old approach  
and preserve the historical and traditional values in downtown area,  
the Urban Development Council of Seoul proposed to the mayor,  
the city government should develop a new management approach for downtown area.

This proposal led to establish the first 'Downtown Management Plan' in 1999.

It was to enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness in downtown area  
by public-private cooperation.

In the frame of 'Downtown Management Plan',  
the city government was proposed to repair the traditional housings, Hanoks in Bukchon  
and if necessary, even purchase them.

The budget to preserve historical values of Bukchon should be restored  
by selling or renting them out.

It was also recommended that the city should provide financial support  
or tax benefit for the Hanok which it wouldn't purchase directly.

To compensate for Hanok preservation,  
it was suggested that the city government should execute streetscape improvement  
projects  
on small alleys in Buchon  
and provide public parking lots and other community facilities  
for the convenience of residents.

## #5

Bukchon was named after its location, a Village in the North of Chonggyecheon stream.  
Because of its location between Gyeongbok Palace and Changdok Palace,  
it was home to royal members and high-rank officials in the Joseon dynasty.

Not only its geographical location but also its topographical feature made  
Bukchon one of the best residential areas inside Seoul wall.

Bukchon on the slope of mountain has good natural drainage in monsoon season  
and faces to the South enough to enjoy the warm and bright sun light

even in cold winter season.

During the Japanese annexation,  
Bukchon along with Jongno was a symbolic place of Koreans  
on the contrary to the Namchon Japanese settled down.

## #6

The important elements forming typical Bukchon are Hanok itself,  
and narrow allies surrounded with Hanoks and with the people.

At first, a Hanok in Bukchon is an urban architecture in the 1920s~30s.

Different from a traditional Hanok made to the individual order by a house owner,  
housing companies purchased large plots of land in Bukchon  
and constructed small-and-medium-sized Hanoks  
to supply middle-income Koreans for installment sale.

On the point of architectural style, a Hanok in Bukchon was also differentiated.  
It was a new architecture built with modern materials, such as glass, tin, bricks etc.  
This introduction of new materials contributed to improving its performance.  
And the ornaments of a traditional Hanok were simplified and standardized  
to save the construction cost.

The space structure of a Hanok was modified,

appropriate to the densified Seoul in the 1920s~30s.

It was more compact but more sanitary,

keeping a court yard and its minimal functions necessary to an urban house.

## #7

The narrow alleys in Bukchon stretched along the streams.

Even though the streams were covered by roads,

they still run toward the south from the northern ridge.

An alley, with housings along it, was the venue of daily lives.

Children ran and played and neighbors talked each other,

while grains or peppers were spread there to let them dry.

An alley is truly a common yard shared by all the residents.

With memories of the olden days,

the alleys in Bukchon are still valuable as a landscape representing the history of Seoul.

## #8

If it were not people in Bukchon, it would be hard to call it Bukchon.

People in Bukchon is the most important element to bring Bukchon alive.

In Bukchon we can meet a lot of people;

A resident with enthusiasm for Hanok and Bukchon,

an artisan proud of Korean tradition, and a tourist full of curiosity about Korean culture.