City Attractiveness Compass

; Attraction-Centered City Development Strategy

SFAC cordially invites global partners to engage in collaborative research.

1. Project Overview

○ **Project Title : City Attractiveness Compass _ Attraction-Centered City Development Strategy**

○ **Research Contents**

- Proposing **new directions for city development and cultural policy** from the perspective of Attractiveness, beyond the conventional scope and perspective of cultural policy.
- Defining the concept and **key components of Urban Attractiveness** as a new source of city competitiveness, and presenting a compass framework for the attraction-centered policy development.
- Presenting a **new cultural statistics system**—including big data on cultural activities—along with measures for the **digital transformation (DX) of cultural policy.**

Detailed Research Topics
① Concept and Elements of Urban Attractiveness
② Attraction of Seoul-ness
③ City Attractiveness Compass as a Policy Toolkit
④ New Cultural Statistics
⑤ Big Data for Analyzing Cultural Change
⑥ DX of Cultural Policy
⑦ Future Cultural Policy Directions

○ **Implemented by** : Policy Cooperation Office, Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture (SFAC)

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2. Research Background

① **The Importance of Urban Attractiveness for Human-Centered Cultural Policy in the AI Era**
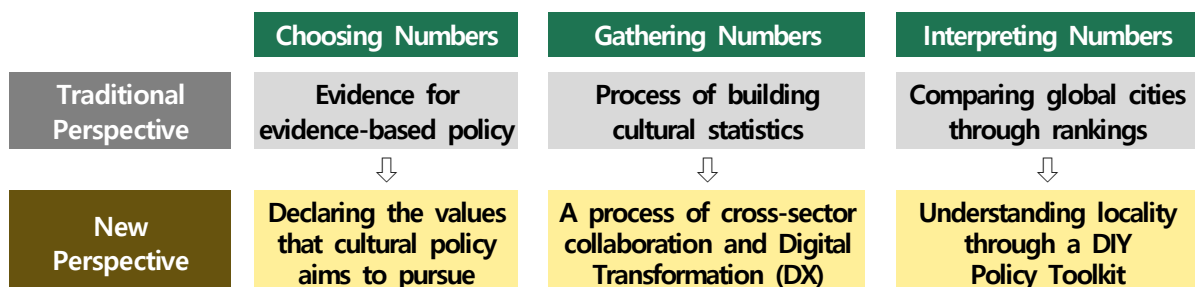
- In the age of AI and digital virtual civilizations, **human attractiveness**—which draws people into real urban spaces—has become all the more valuable.
- When the **<Power to be Loved: Attractiveness>** has become stronger than the <Power to Win: Competitiveness>, the locality and culture of a city are increasingly recognized as vital resources of attractiveness.
- In the system of the Affective Economy, where emotions are monetized, what matters most are the **Power to Enchant and the Power to Draw Footsteps**.
- Recent shifts in urban policy indicators **from Competitiveness to Attractiveness**, and their limitations shows the need to develop policy indicator systems to properly understand and manage Urban Attractiveness

- A new approach is required to define and measure Attractiveness—an **inexplicable allure** that is continually reproduced through public response, especially in the digital sphere.

		from a Competitive City	to an Attractive City
People	Citizens		
	Talents		
	Visitors		
Money	Invested capital	Livable City	Lovable City
	Consumer spending		
Footsteps	Online traffic	*Where will they be more drawn to?*	
	Offline visits		
Affections	Rational minds		
	Empathetic hearts		

② **The Need for Urban Policy Indicator Systems Aimed at Strategic Development rather than Ranking Comparison**

- Amid the dominance of positivist, evidence-based policy, the focus should shift from numbers used solely for quantitative analysis and ranking comparisons to a more meaningful use of the **processes of collecting and interpreting numbers.**

	Choosing Numbers	Gathering Numbers	Interpreting Numbers
Traditional Perspective	Evidence for evidence-based policy	Process of building cultural statistics	Comparing global cities through rankings
	⇩	⇩	⇩
New Perspective	Declaring the values that cultural policy aims to pursue	A process of cross-sector collaboration and Digital Transformation (DX)	Understanding locality through a DIY Policy Toolkit

- The need for new indicators that prioritize culture, locality, and attractiveness—**beyond the limits of ranking-oriented urban indices**
- There is a need to present a **<Comprehensive Urban Indicator Framework>** centered on attractiveness that transcends fragmented indicator systems in economy, culture, and tourism.
- Instead of global ranking comparisons, what is needed is a new statistical system that supports **DIY policy development through diverse locality profiling**.
- The need to move beyond KPI- and Infrastructure-centered statistics toward analytical frameworks for **understanding urban cultural change**, incorporating theories such as Urban Scene Theory.

③ **The Need for Statistical Systems Driving Expansion and Innovation of Cultural Policy in the Digital-AI Era**
- The need to fully overhaul existing cultural statistics by **incorporating Big Data** on citizens' cultural activities and **Buzz Analysis**, to suit the AI era
- The process of building an urban attractiveness statistical system should be **leveraged as an expansion of cultural policy and a platform for cross-sectoral collaboration**
- The development of data-sharing platforms should be used both to foster collaboration across diverse policy sectors (e.g., smart city initiatives) and as a **catalyst for the Digital Transformation (DX) of cultural policy.**

3. Distinctive Features of the <City Attractiveness Compass>

○ **To provide not only statistical indicators of attractiveness but also strategic directions and a data toolkit for city attractiveness.**

- Aims to go beyond a ranking-oriented index, presenting an **integrated <Compass>** that unites the strategic goals and key factor management framework of an attraction-centered urban strategy.

Concept	City Attractiveness Compass = Statistical System + Data Toolkit + Strategic Directions						
Functions	**Statistics system**	+	**KPI system**	+	**Policy Direction**	+	**DIY Policy Tool-kit**
Components	**Attractiveness Indicators**		**Initiatives Outcomes**		**Trend Analysis**		**Interactive Data Platform**

○ **A Strategic Framework that overcomes the limitations of Infrastructure-centered Administrative statistics and presents trends and future directions of the ecosystem**

- Analysis should also extend from Attractiveness <Resources Mapping> to the Assessment of <Activities> that take place on top of them, and ultimately to **Changes in the <Levels> and <Flows> of Attractiveness**
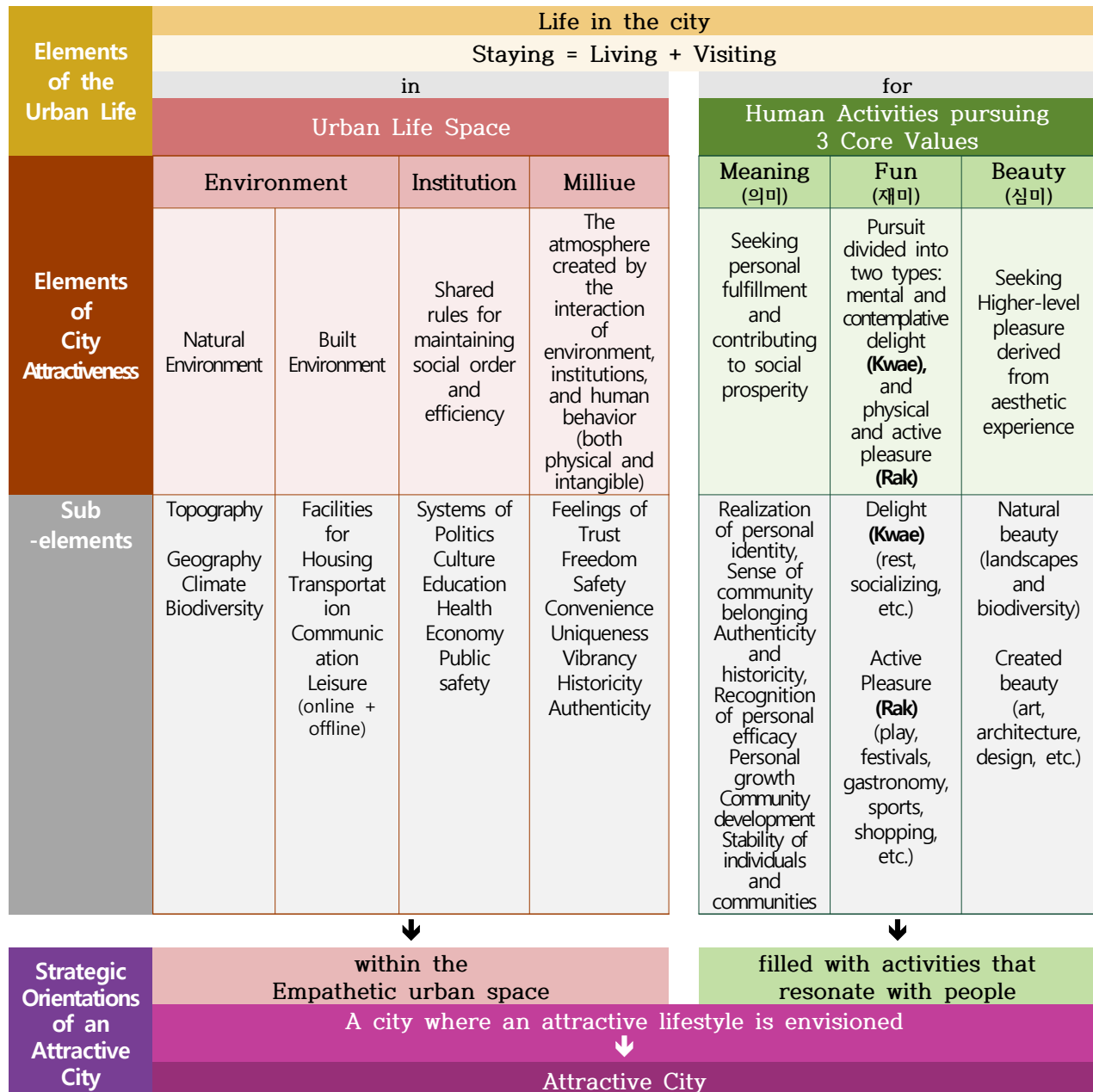
Stage of Attractiveness Analysis	Detailed Analysis Content (according to the draft framework)
④ Flow Analysis	-**Urban cultural attractiveness trends** (core attractiveness factors of the year)
	-**Changes in the urban cultural scene**(year-on-year)
③ Level Assessment	-**Popularity and evaluations** (integrating various tourism attractiveness and competitiveness rankings)
	-**Expressed attractiveness** (buzz volume & sentiment analysis)
② Activity Outcomes	-**Private-sector activities** (cultural market size, international awards, and levels of cultural participation)
	-**Public-sector projects** (number of cultural events and audience size)
① Resource Distribution Information	-**Milieu** (social trust, safety, etc.)
	-**Institution** (visa, security, education, health, etc.)
	-**Built Environment** (housing, transportation, communications, leisure facilities, etc.)
	-**Natural Environment** (topography, geography, climate, etc.)

4. Draft Framework of the <City Attractiveness Compass : CAC> (as of October 2025)

○ **Concepts used to Define the <City Attractiveness Compass>**

Urban-life	◎**Life in the city** ≈ Staying = <Living> + <Visiting> ≈ Human activities pursuing <three core values> within the <Urban Life Space>
City Attractiveness	◎**City Attraction = The power to attract <Investors> + <Visitors> + <Relationship-based Populations> + <Creative Talents> + <Residents>** = <Inner charm (inherent value)> + <Outer appeal (magnetic force)> ◎**Perceived Urban Attractiveness** = <The attractiveness I personally resonate with> + <The attractiveness expressed or evaluated by others (e.g., Buzz)>
Sub-elements of Urban-life & City Attractiveness	◎**Elements of the Urban Life Space** = <Environment> + <Institution> + <Milliue> ◎**Environment** = <Natural Environment> + <Built Environment> ◎**Natural Environment** = <Topography> + <Geography> + <Climate> + <Biodiversity> ◎**Built Environment** = <Housing Facilities> + <Transportation Infrastructure> + <Communication Infrastructure> + <Leisure Facilities> ◎**Human Activities pursuing 3 Core Values** = <Meaning> + <Fun> + <Beauty>
Strategic Orientations of an Attractive City	◎**Attractive City = A city where an attractive lifestyle can be envisioned and realized within an empathetic urban space, enriched by activities that foster shared empathy among people.** ◎**Empathy =** the feeling of <accepting the world as sensed by others> + <having my own sensed world accepted>

○ **The Framework and Sub-Components of City Attractiveness Compass(draft)**

Elements of the Urban Life	Life in the city						
	Staying = Living + Visiting						
	in				for		
	Urban Life Space				Human Activities pursuing 3 Core Values		
	Environment		Institution	Milliue	Meaning (의미)	Fun (재미)	Beauty (심미)
Elements of City Attractiveness	Natural Environment	Built Environment	Shared rules for maintaining social order and efficiency	The atmosphere created by the interaction of environment, institutions, and human behavior (both physical and intangible)	Seeking personal fulfillment and contributing to social prosperity	Pursuit divided into two types: mental and contemplative delight (Kwae), and physical and active pleasure (Rak)	Seeking Higher-level pleasure derived from aesthetic experience
Sub -elements	Topography Geography Climate Biodiversity	Facilities for Housing Transportat ion Communic ation Leisure (online + offline)	Systems of Politics Culture Education Health Economy Public safety	Feelings of Trust Freedom Safety Convenience Uniqueness Vibrancy Historicity Authenticity	Realization of personal identity, Sense of community belonging Authenticity and historicity, Recognition of personal efficacy Personal growth Community development Stability of individuals and communities	Delight (Kwae) (rest, socializing, etc.) Active Pleasure (Rak) (play, festivals, gastronomy, sports, shopping, etc.)	Natural beauty (landscapes and biodiversity) Created beauty (art, architecture, design, etc.)

Strategic Orientations of an Attractive City	within the Empathetic urban space	filled with activities that resonate with people
	A city where an attractive lifestyle is envisioned	
	Attractive City	

5. Research Collaboration Proposal for Global Partners

Fields of Collaboration	Details of Collaboration
☆**Provision of Comparable Case Studies for inclusion in the research report**	▷To Share cases of **urban development strategies** centered on locality and attractiveness
	▷To Provide examples of **new cultural statistics** development
	▷To Provide examples of big data utilization and **digital transformation (DX)** in cultural policy, SFAC hopes to include case studies from global cities
☆**Review of the City Attractiveness Compass Draft**	▷To Reflect **experts' feedback** on the draft concept and framework of city attractiveness. (Expert opinions will be individually cited by name in the report.) ☞**https://brunch.co.kr/@seaokof/112**
☆**Pilot Comparison of City Attractiveness Factors (2026)**	▷To apply the framework to **profiling cities' key attractiveness** in 2026 — not for ranking, but for exploring urban attractiveness for new strategy development. SFAC hopes to invite **cities' data** for basic comparative analysis.

○ **For inquiries on collaborative research, please contact Hae-bo KIM(Advising Director, SFAC, sea@sfac.or.kr)**