

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

NGUYEN THE VINH

**BUILDING A STREAMLINED, EFFECTIVE, AND EFFICIENT
- ORIENTED URBAN GOVERNMENT TODAY
(THROUGH A SURVEY IN BINH DUONG)**

SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

1. Urgency of the topic

The renovation process since 2000 has led to strong urbanization in Vietnam. By the end of 2023, the urbanization rate reached about 42.7% and is expected to exceed 50% by 2030, with the number of urban areas increasing from 902 to 1,000-1,200 by 2050. The Law on Organization of Local Government 2015 stipulates urban management according to the urban government model to improve operational efficiency.

In contrast with the general trend, Binh Duong has gained a rapid urbanization rate, from 24% in 1997 to more than 82% in 2021. The Government has issued Decision 790/QĐ-TTg, aiming to turn Binh Duong into a centrally-governed city, focusing on sustainable development and technology.

Despite many efforts, Binh Duong still faces challenges in organizing the apparatus according to Resolution 18-NQ/TW, such as lack of determination to implement, overlapping functions, and incomplete legal basis. That is the reason why the graduate student chose the topic “***Building a streamlined, effective, and efficient - oriented urban government today (through a survey in Binh Duong)*** “ for his doctoral thesis in political science.

2. Research objectives and tasks

2.1. Research objectives

From a political science perspective, providing scientific arguments on the direction of streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Vietnam and viewpoints and solutions for building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government to meet the current requirements of national development.

2.2. Research tasks

To achieve the research objectives, the topic sets out the following tasks:

First task is an overview of the research situation related to the topic.

Second task , generalize the theory of urban areas and urban government, build a theoretical framework of urban government in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency.

Third task, clarify the current status of urban government construction in Vietnam (focusing on analyzing the case of urban areas in Binh Duong) - results and issues that need to be resolved.

Fourth task, propose viewpoints and solutions to promote the process of building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Vietnam today.

3. Research object and scope

3.2. Research subjects

Building a streamlined, effective and efficient - oriented urban government

3.3. Scope of research

- Research area: provincial-level urban areas nationwide, typically Binh Duong province with three main types of urban areas: provincial cities, wards of provincial cities and towns of districts. On this basis, propose suitable solutions to the practical requirements of building provincial-level urban management agencies today.

- Research period: from 2017 to present (ie since the 6th Conference of the Party Central Committee, 12th tenure issued Resolution No.18-NQ/TW “Some issues on innovation, reorganization of the political system to be streamlined, effective and efficient”).

4. Research methods

4.1. General methodology: Dialectical materialism, historical materialism of Marxism-Leninism. This methodology is used by the author throughout the thesis as a viewpoint and research methodology.

4.2. Specific research methods

The author applies various methods to analyze the development of urban government in Vietnam.

- Statistics and classification: Chapter 2 provides detailed information on the structure and characteristics of current urban areas in Vietnam.

- Compare: Comparing Vietnam's urban government with advanced urban management models of China, the United States, and the Federal Republic of Germany. Compare the organization and staffing of urban government between Binh Duong province and similar provinces in the country.

- Analysis, synthesis, generalization: Apply in the chapters to analyze published data, generalize theoretical viewpoints as the basis for solutions in the thesis.

- In-depth interview: Conduct interviews with leaders and experts in urban government agencies in Chapter 3 to collect information on building a lean, effective and efficient urban government.

5. Scientific and practical significance of the topic

5.1. Scientific significance

From a political science perspective, clarify the theoretical framework of urban government towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency in Vietnam.

5.2. Practical significance

Providing scientific arguments for building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Binh Duong province in particular and the country in general .

6. New contributions of the Project

- In theory: Specify the criteria for urban government in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency suitable to Vietnam's conditions, with the following criteria:

- + *Criteria for streamlining urban government*
- + *Criteria on the effectiveness of urban government*
- + *Criteria for the effectiveness of urban government*

- In terms of practice: The thesis proposes 4 viewpoints and 5 solutions to build a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government suitable to current conditions in Vietnam .

7. Structure of the Topic

In addition to the introduction, the thesis structure includes 4 chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview of research related to the topic

Chapter 2: Theoretical basis for building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government

Chapter 3: Current status of building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Vietnam today (Through a survey in Binh Duong)

Chapter 4: Viewpoints and solutions for building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government .

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE TOPIC

1.1. OVERVIEW OF FOREIGN RESEARCH WORKS ON URBAN AND URBAN GOVERNMENT

1.1.1. Urban research works

Entering the 21st century, global urbanization is taking place strongly, deeply affecting the economy, society and people's lives with two main trends: Economic growth and structural transformation and Development of satellite urban systems: Many countries build satellite cities to reduce pressure on central cities and improve traffic connections.

Many studies focus on the challenges and opportunities in the urbanization process, such as public service management, public order and security, and environmental pollution. Together, these studies highlight the need to develop smart city (SMCU) models that apply high technologies such as IoT, Big Data, and AI to solve urban problems.

Specifically, the authors have explored various aspects of urbanization and urban governance, such as :

- *Intergovernmental urban management* : Research by Curtis H. Wood (2005) indicates that the Kansas City area is moving toward intergovernmental cooperation in public service management and recommends increased intercity service agreements.

- *Challenges of urbanization* : Authors Brenner et al. (2011, 2012) emphasize that large urban formation brings many opportunities but also faces problems such as public service provision, crime, pollution, and effective governance.

- *Smart Cities* : Recent research on smart cities indicates that technologies such as IoT, Big Data and AI can help improve urban management, but also need to be applied responsibly to avoid potential problems.

- *New cooperative mechanisms* : Hongshan Yang's book "Urban Governance in Transition" discusses the development of active governance mechanisms to address current urban management problems, especially in China.

- *Weighing technology and practice* : Tan Yigitcanlar's (2021) study warns against the adoption of AI technology in local government and highlights the need for responsible urban innovation.

1.1.2. Research works on urban government

Currently, many cities in the world are making efforts to diversify their urban government organization models to improve management efficiency and

better serve the people. Researching modern urban government models is necessary for Vietnam to create a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government.

Austin Model of Urban Government: Frank Staniszewski (2007) emphasizes that mobilizing resources from residents is crucial for effective public service delivery. Citizen participation coupled with strong decentralization is key.

Urban government organization model in China: Li Hezhong (2012) describes China's five-level government system and the reform to abolish the prefecture-level administrative unit, emphasizing the principle of "province governing county".

Berlin after German reunification: Bernd Stöver analyses Berlin as a "3-in-1 city", showing closeness to the people and local autonomy through separate administrative structures.

The models of organizing a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in the world are very diverse, reflecting cultural, historical and geographical **characteristics. To build a model of effective** in Vietnam, it is necessary to carefully study the models and have a specific testing plan to assess feasibility.

1.2 . OVERVIEW OF DOMESTIC RESEARCH WORKS ON URBAN AND URBAN GOVERNMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF LEANING , EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

- *Urbanization in Vietnam* : Studies show that urbanization not only occurs in big cities but also affects rural areas, through spontaneous migration. Some typical works such as “Globalization and urban transformation in contemporary Vietnam” have clarified the relationship between urban and rural areas along with economic, social and environmental factors.

- *Local government*: Bui Xuan Duc's research raises the need for reform to improve the effectiveness of local management. Associate Professor, Dr. Vu Thu emphasizes that the organization of state power needs to be reasonably decentralized and democratically implemented.

- *Urban government* : Pham Hong Thai's thesis focuses on the organizational structure of the Urban government in large cities. Le Cam Ha and Nguyen Thi Thuy's research also affirms the importance of building the CQĐT in administrative reform.

- *Local studies* : Urban governance is a new topic, with many surveys conducted in major cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang and Thu Duc. The studies have shown the current situation and proposed improvements to achieve greater efficiency in urban management. Factors such as the leadership role of the Party and the participation of the people are also carefully considered.

1.2. 2. Research works on building urban government in the direction of streamlining , effectiveness and efficiency

Research projects in Vietnam on building urban government (UGO) towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency.

Urban government model: Author Viet Anh emphasizes the importance of innovating the relationship between government levels and political organizations to improve the effectiveness of urban management in Hanoi.

The process of building the Investigation Agency in Ho Chi Minh City: Author Long Ho proposed to increase autonomy and decentralization for the Investigation Agency to achieve efficiency in operations.

Theory on State apparatus organization: The article by Ho Tan Sang and Mai Thi Hong Lien focuses on establishing a reasonable mechanism to improve the effectiveness of the State apparatus.

The research topic of Dr. Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen points out the advantages and limitations in building urban government in Hanoi, and at the same time proposes solutions for administrative reform.

Piloting the CQDT model: There are many recommendations on cutting down the ward-level People's Councils in Hanoi, which puts pressure on other departments but promotes management efficiency.

Solutions to improve operational efficiency: Author Le Ngoc Duy presents solutions such as legal reform, adjusting the tasks of councils and committees at all levels, and improving staff capacity.

1.3. ASSESSMENT OF ACHIEVED RESULTS AND ISSUES NEEDING RESEARCH FOCUS

1.3.1. Achievements

Notable successes of these studies include: Providing comprehensive knowledge of urban planning, including theory and practice from international to local levels; Affirming the important role of a streamlined and effective urban area in Vietnam; Providing viewpoints, goals, principles and development orientations for urban planning in the provinces; Pointing out influencing factors and complex issues in the process of building urban planning; Proposing solutions to perfect the legal framework and development model Urban government in a streamlined and effective manner.

These studies not only have scientific value but also are important references in the development of urban government in Vietnam.

1.3.2. Issues raised for the thesis that need to be focused on research

Research on urban government construction in provinces in Vietnam, especially in the current context when the country is in the early stages of urban government construction with few specific research works.

The research focuses on several important issues: Clarifying the definition and characteristics of the urban management system in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency; Identifying the legal basis and factors affecting the construction of urban management system in urban areas of the province ; Establishing an assessment framework for urban management system in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency; Analyzing the current status of urban management system construction in Binh Duong province, pointing out current limitations and challenges; Providing viewpoints and solutions to improve urban management system in urban areas of provinces in Vietnam.

The research objective is to systematize the theoretical and practical basis of urban government in a streamlined, effective and efficient direction, thereby providing an overview nationwide and proposing appropriate solutions .

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES ON BUILDING A LEAN, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT URBAN GOVERNMENT

2.1. CONCEPT OF URBAN AND CURRENT STATE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM

2.1.1. Concept of urban area and characteristics of urban area

2.1.1.1. Urban concept

The concept of urban in Vietnam is not uniform but all aim at the development and management of human and economic resources in these crowded areas. Urban areas can be identified by: Structure , Administration or Urban identification criteria . Thus, the concept of urban areas can be given as follows: *Urban areas are the general name of cities, towns, and towns and are understood as places with dense population, the center of a territory with economic activities mainly being industry and services.*

2.1.1.2. On urban classification

According to Resolution 1210/2016/UBTVQH and amendments in Resolution 26/2022/UBTVQH15, Vietnamese urban areas are divided into five types with specific criteria as follows: Special urban areas ; Type I urban areas ; Type II urban areas ; Type III urban areas ; Type IV urban areas and Type V urban areas . This classification helps to clearly define the role and function of urban areas in promoting socio-economic development in each region.

2.1.1.3. Basic characteristics of urban areas

Cities around the world have common characteristics but also depend on each region and country. Cities all have main characteristics based on factors including: Location potential; Physical space structure; People; Administrative management; Science and technology.

In general, urban areas are centers of economic, cultural, educational and scientific-technological development, playing an important role in promoting investment and sustainable development. The attractiveness of urban areas to all segments of society is increasing thanks to these outstanding advantages.

2.1.2. Current status of urban development in Vietnam

After Doi Moi (1986), the urbanization process in Vietnam has been strong, especially in the period 2000-2010, with rapid growth. The period 2011-2020 witnessed the combination of economic development and urbanization, creating favorable conditions for economic restructuring towards industrialization. It is forecasted that by 2030 and 2050, the urbanization rate will continue to increase, with about 1,000 - 1,200 urban areas nationwide. However, the urbanization process still

reveals many problems such as regional inequality, low construction density, and difficulties in sustainable development. In addition, adaptation to climate change and imbalances in the real estate market are also major challenges that Vietnam needs to address to ensure effective and sustainable urban development.

2.2. URBAN GOVERNMENT IN VIETNAM

2.2.1. Concept of urban government

Based on research and experience in organizing government in urban areas of Vietnam through different periods and organizing activities of some cities in the world, we can give a general concept of CQDT in Vietnam as follows: *Urban government in Vietnam is the apparatus that operates and manages the work of the State in urban areas in centrally run cities/districts, towns, provincial cities, cities under centrally run cities/wards, and towns, including state power agencies (People's Councils at all levels) at the local level, executive and administrative agencies (People's Committees at all levels) at the local level, along with a system of subordinate administrative levels.*

2.2.2. Urban and rural government

The differences between rural and urban areas can be seen in many aspects such as economy, population and culture. Specifically:

- *Economy* : Rural areas are often associated with agricultural production, creating a close connection between people and land.
- *Population* : These areas are small in size, with low population density, often concentrated within specific administrative boundaries.
- *Culture* : Rural culture is greatly influenced by village conventions and customs. Neighborhood relationships are deep, based largely on blood and clan relationships. Community cohesion is high, social behavior is mainly based on customary law and rituals.

According to the Law on Organization of Local Government, both urban and rural governments have People's Councils and People's Committees. However, due to the characteristics of urban areas, the Law on Organization of Local Government 2015 stipulates that the People's Councils of urban areas are empowered to decide on issues related to planning, population management and organization of urban life. The People's Committees of urban areas are responsible for performing tasks related to urban management, such as capital mobilization and infrastructure development.

Therefore, the organizational structure of urban government is different from that of rural areas, with the People's Councils at provincial and district levels in urban areas having an Economic-Urban Committee and the People's Committees at provincial levels having a Department of Planning and Architecture.

2.2.3. The Party's policy on streamlining the political system towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

According to Conclusion No. 34-KL/TW, the Politburo set the criteria of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency as the goal for the innovation of the political system. Some localities have implemented this model with very different results such as: Quang Ninh: Implemented the consolidation of titles, significantly saving operating costs (202 billion VND) ; Long An: Expected to reduce the payroll significantly, saving about 127 billion VND per year ; Hai Phong: Has not completed the implementation and there are delays in the consolidation of agencies.

However, many localities have yet to demonstrate clear political, administrative or economic effectiveness from implementing pilot models. Time and reliable data are needed to assess the sustainable effectiveness of these measures. In general, there is not enough evidence to confirm the clear effectiveness of pilot models in localities, and there is a need for a set of criteria to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency more objectively.

2.3. URBAN GOVERNMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF CONCENTRATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

2.3.1. Concept of urban government in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

According to the Vietnamese Dictionary, the terms “purity” and “cleanness” are defined to describe a streamlined government organization as a system that is balanced, adequate, and has highly qualified members. Effectiveness is understood as the correct and timely enforcement of laws, while efficiency refers to the results achieved compared to the resources spent. According to authors Ho Tan Sang and Mai Thi Hong Lien, the State and Government must operate effectively and efficiently to create development, serve the people and national interests, based on the principle of “few but good”. Author Dang Xuan Hoan emphasized that the Government needs to be compact, covering many areas of management without overlapping functions to ensure dynamism and efficiency in operations.

Although the authors have not yet proposed a concept of urban government in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency, they have presented its connotative signs. From there, associated with the concept of urban government, the author proposes the concept: *Urban government in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency is the apparatus for operating and managing the work of the State in urban areas in centrally run cities/districts, towns, provincial cities, cities under centrally run cities/wards, towns including People's Councils and People's Committees at all levels in the locality, which are reasonably organized, are constructive and*

developing governments aiming to serve the interests of the people, the nation and the people. From this concept, we can point out the differences between the current urban government and the urban government model in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency:

2.3.2. Specific evaluation criteria of urban government towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

2.3.2.1. Streamlining of urban government

- Main content includes: Reducing management levels: Reducing the number of unnecessary intermediary agencies, clearly decentralizing management; Optimizing human resources: Reducing payroll, eliminating redundant positions, improving the quality of the team through training and recruitment; Reforming administrative procedures: Simplifying processes, applying information technology to increase transparency; Improving operational efficiency: Encouraging responsibility and transparency in performing tasks ; Saving budget: Reducing operating costs and using financial resources effectively; Strengthening specialization: Developing specialized and capable units ; Promoting the role of localities: Strengthening the autonomy and responsibility of local authorities; Building a positive working environment: Creating a professional working environment and encouraging innovation.

- *Criteria for streamlining the government apparatus* : Simple and flexible organizational structure: Need to have few agencies, clear functions, avoid duplication and simple procedures; Optimized number of cadres and civil servants: Minimize the number and improve the capacity of cadres through training; Improved work efficiency and performance: Establish performance measurement indexes and apply information technology to the work process.

2.3.2.2. Effectiveness of urban government

- *The main content of the "effectiveness" of the government apparatus can be analyzed through the following aspects:* Legal effectiveness: Ensuring legitimacy and clear authority for government agencies and officials; Enforcement effectiveness: Ability to effectively implement policies and laws with fairness and consistency; Effectiveness in meeting people's needs: Governments need to listen and solve problems, provide effective public services; Management and coordination effectiveness: Good management of resources and activities between agencies in the system ; Accountability effectiveness: Agencies and officials must be responsible to the people, providing transparent information.

- *Validity criteria include:* Policy implementation capability: Ensuring clear policies are deployed and implemented ; Responsive and flexible: Ability to respond

promptly to social change and new needs ; Transparency and accountability: Need to operate transparently to enhance public trust and oversight.

2.3.2.3. Effectiveness of urban government

- *Main contents of efficiency:* Achieving goals and tasks ; Optimal use of resources; Timeliness and responsiveness ; Fairness and transparency; Serving people.

- *Effective evaluation criteria:* Optimize resources; Provide high quality services; Achieve expected goals and results .

2.3.3. Political and legal basis and factors affecting the construction of urban government in the provinces towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

2.3.3.1. Political basis for building urban government in the provinces towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

Resolution 18-NQ/TW: Consistent with the innovation of the political system, associated with streamlining payroll and reforming salary policy.

Resolution No. 06-NQ/TW: Orientation for sustainable urban development to 2030, focusing on developing modern infrastructure and high quality of life for urban residents.

The above viewpoints and resolutions create the foundation to continue building a modern, effective urban government that meets the development needs of society.

2.3. 3.2. Legal basis for building urban government in the provinces towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

Legal basis and system of organization and operation of urban local government in Vietnam, from the Constitution to related organizational laws. It emphasizes the role of the legal environment in building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban local government for socio-economic development. Including the 2013 Constitution and the 2015 Law on Organization of LUG, clearly defining the structure and functions of urban local government in urban areas.

2.3.3.3. Factors affecting the construction of urban government in the provinces towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency

In building a streamlined, effective and efficient public administration, the following influencing factors can be mentioned: Institutional improvement; Decentralization and delegation of power; Human resources; Technical infrastructure; Socio-economic conditions; Participation of people and businesses; Party leadership methods.

2.4. EXPERIENCE IN BUILDING URBAN GOVERNMENTS IN THE WORLD AND SUGGESTIONS FOR VIETNAM

2.4.1. Experience in building urban government in China

China and Vietnam both applied the Soviet model in government organization. China is reforming by abolishing the prefecture-level administrative unit and adopting the principle of “province governing county”. Some provinces have tested new models to save resources and increase management efficiency. From the above comparisons, it can be seen that studying the Chinese model of public administration can provide valuable lessons for the reform of public administration and public administration in Vietnam.

2.4.2. Experience in building urban government in the United States

The Mayor and Council Model in the United States: Mayors are elected directly by voters, with greater accountability than in other models. Research on applying the US model can help Vietnam improve local government organization, increase democracy and efficiency. The models of local government organization in the United States contribute to creating an effective, accountable, and highly adaptive administrative apparatus, which can be a valuable lesson for improving the local government system in Vietnam.

2.4.3. Experience in building urban government in the Federal Republic of Germany

In Germany, the principle of decentralization: There is no supervisory agency from the top to the bottom, local authorities are proactive in performing their duties. Local governments have the ability to independently control human rights, organization, planning, legislation, finance and taxation. It is necessary to learn from the experience of the local governance system in Germany to improve the organization and management of local governments, especially to give greater autonomy to urban governments, in order to promote local economic, cultural and social development.

2.4.5. Experiences drawn from building urban government in Vietnam

- *Firstly* , different cities choose appropriate government models according to their geographical, socio-economic conditions and cultural characteristics.

- *Second* , Urban government apparatuses are often streamlined and have fewer intermediary levels to improve management capacity.

- *Third* , to avoid risks and develop governance systems, many international organizations have made recommendations along with architectural frameworks and sets of indicators to build sustainable smart cities.

Vietnam can study and apply successful models of public administration organization abroad to Vietnamese practice, such as applying the two-level government model and the administrative chief regime, along with decentralizing budget management to suit urban characteristics.

Chapter 3

CURRENT STATE OF URBAN GOVERNMENT BUILDING IN THE DIRECTION OF LEANING, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY (THROUGH RESEARCH IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE) AND PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

3.1. CURRENT STATUS OF URBAN AND GOVERNMENT OF URBAN CITIES IN BINH DUONG

3.1.1. Overview of Binh Duong province

Binh Duong is a province in the Southeast region, located in the Southern Key Economic Zone and bordering Binh Phuoc, Dong Nai, Ho Chi Minh City and Tay Ninh. The province has an urbanization rate of 84.4% with an upgraded infrastructure system. By 2030, Binh Duong aims to become a centrally-governed city, building a smart and sustainable city, aiming to become a leading innovation center in Southeast Asia. These achievements contribute to the rapid urbanization process and the modernization of urban administration to adapt to new development trends.

3.1.2. Urban development in Binh Duong province from 2016 to present

Binh Duong currently consists of 5 cities and towns in 4 districts, meeting the criteria of Vietnam's urban areas. The province is implementing the Binh Duong Smart City Project following the Three Houses model (State - Business - Scientist) to promote research and startups. Urban development management is implemented in sync with the National Urban Development Program, with the province currently having 1 type I urban area, 1 type II urban area, 3 type III urban areas, and 4 type V urban areas.

3.1.3. Current administrative structure in Binh Duong cities

3.1.3.1. Organizational structure and functions, tasks of People's Councils and People's Committees at all levels of urban government

- For People's Councils at all levels :

Provincial People's Council: The Standing Committee of the People's Council consists of 1 Chairman, 1 Vice Chairman and 2 members (Head of the Economic - Social Committee and the Legal Committee). Number of delegates corresponding to population criteria. Main tasks: Deciding on urban planning and development; Investment attraction policies ; Managing population and urban life ; Supervising and making collective decisions, exercising autonomy in managing urban issues such as traffic infrastructure, housing support for low-income people.

People's Councils at ward and town levels: Like the City People's Council, it consists of 1 Chairman, 1 Vice Chairman and 2 Members. Number of delegates from 25 to 27. Specific tasks: Issue resolutions and manage local budgets ; Supervise law enforcement and organize elections; Decide to dismiss delegates and handle illegal documents.

- For People's Committees at all levels :

Organize and operate according to the Law on Organization of People's Councils and People's Committees 2003 and the Law on Organization of Local Government 2015. The People's Committee leadership includes 1 Chairman, 2 Vice Chairmen and members. Duties of the Chairman of the People's Committee: Managing urban infrastructure, land and resources; Creating jobs, ensuring public order and traffic safety ; Managing housing and commerce, serving sustainable development.

3.1.3.2. Administrative management mechanism of urban government

- *Structure of the City People's Committee* : Chairman, Vice Chairmen (no more than three), and members from specialized agencies, military, and police. Be subject to direction and perform tasks according to regulations of the Central and the province.

- *Supporting professional agencies*: Including many functional departments such as Finance - Planning, Natural Resources - Environment, Urban Management, and other departments, each department has its own operating regulations.

3.2. CURRENT STATUS OF BUILDING A STREAMLINED, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT URBAN GOVERNMENT IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE

3.2.1. Efforts to streamline, effectively and efficiently the administrative apparatus of Binh Duong province from 2017 to present

Perfecting the organization of local government: Proposing to continue perfecting the organization of state management agencies suitable for rural, urban, island areas and special administrative units.

Urban government model: Proposing to build a compact and effective urban government model through piloting urban governance solutions.

Direction from Binh Duong Provincial Party Committee: Emphasize the need to innovate and reorganize the political apparatus to ensure effective and efficient operations.

Implementing Resolution 18-NQ/TW: Identifying the implementation of the Resolution on political apparatus reform as a key task, accompanied by a clear roadmap.

Project 711: An initiative to reduce the number of public service units and strengthen the Party's leadership role in the provincial political system.

Specific results: Binh Duong province has reduced 27 public units compared to the set target and achieved initial results in the reform process.

3.2.2. Evaluation of the urban government apparatus towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency in Binh Duong province

3.2.2.1. Work to streamline the political system of Binh Duong province (including urban government)

As a result of the arrangement according to Resolution 18 of the Central Executive Committee, the province has reviewed and rearranged the administrative organization from June 30, 2017 to December 31, 2020 : The province retains 18 departments and 1 Industrial Park Management Board (reducing 1 Board), but reduces the number of branches and offices ; The payroll in the blocks is reduced from 27% to more than 31%. Specific payroll numbers: The party and mass organization bloc decreased by 342 (27.14%) ; the state administrative bloc decreased by 803 (31.09%) ; the commune level decreased by 1,156 people (30.32%).

Binh Duong has achieved remarkable results in organizing the apparatus according to Resolution 18. However, the training and development of cadres still needs to pay more attention to digital skills, foreign languages, and urban management knowledge to meet development requirements.

3.2.2.2. The current status of the effectiveness of the urban government apparatus in Binh Duong province

- Transparency and public participation: The indicators from 2017 to 2022 show: There is an increase from 4.33 to 5.95, showing more public interest; Publicity and transparency: The index fluctuates from 5.0 to 6.25, tending to stabilize after 2021; Accountability: There has been no significant improvement with the indicators remaining the same; Control of corruption: Significantly increased from 4.99 to 8.15 in 2020, but slightly decreased to 7.94 in 2022; Public administrative procedures: Increased from 6.97 to 7.63 before decreasing to 7.48 in 2022.

- Administrative reform to improve the effectiveness of urban government: Binh Duong has carried out many administrative reforms contributing to urban development. Administrative procedures have been simplified, but the level of service has not yet fully met the needs of the people.

- Application of science and technology in management: The province has focused on building e-government, investing in information technology infrastructure, creating favorable conditions for people and businesses.

- Public service provision: Urban development management is closely linked to the quality of life, from infrastructure, healthcare to education, all of which have been significantly improved. However, there are still some areas that need more investment.

- Digital transformation: Digital transformation efforts are taking place strongly at both provincial and ward levels, with high rates in many areas. However, there is still inconsistency between management levels, which needs to be further improved to better serve the needs of people and businesses.

3.2.2.3. Current status of administrative efficiency of urban government apparatus in Binh Duong province

- Socio-economic development results: GRDP grows continuously, with an increase rate of 6.91% in 2020 and 6.19% in the first half of 2024. Economic structure: Industry accounts for 66.94%, services 21.98%, and agriculture only 3.15%.

- Social security: Activities to care for the lives of the meritorious and the poor are effectively implemented.

- Environmental issues: Waste and wastewater treatment still faces many challenges, so there is a plan for a “Zero Garbage City” to raise awareness of environmental protection.

- Statistics and indicators: Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI): Binh Duong is in the leading group but has dropped in rank compared to the previous year. Administrative Reform Index (PAR Index): Reached 84.78 points, ranked 35/63, showing many issues that need improvement. SIPAS Satisfaction Index: Has an increasing trend until 2019, then decreased slightly; overall administrative services have improved significantly.

- Investment attraction: Binh Duong attracted foreign investment capital of 723.3 million USD in the first quarter of 2023, ranking second in the country in attracting FDI, showing the rapid development of the urban area here.

3.2. 3. Comparison of urban government construction in Binh Duong with some similar provinces

All provinces Dong Nai , Ba Ria - Vung Tau , Bac Ninh , Khanh Hoa All urban governments are organized in accordance with the Law on Organization of Local Government 2015. However, there is still a problem that the organizational structure of People's Councils and People's Committees between urban and rural areas is almost the same, causing cumbersome and ineffective management.

3.3. LIMITATIONS, CAUSES AND ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE SOLVED

3.3.1. Limitations on building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Binh Duong

The main limitations in building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Binh Duong can be listed as follows: These cities are undergoing economic, political, cultural and social transformation, leading to a clear difference in development compared to rural areas ; The organizational structure of local governments is still ineffective, especially in cities ; Merging and holding many positions concurrently causes difficulties in terms of functions, tasks and investment in infrastructure ; Pressure from population fluctuations and increased workload make it difficult for officials to manage ; Urban areas must have a management method appropriate to the complexity and high demands of the work ; The investigative agency needs to provide synchronous technical and social infrastructure services, but many areas such as waste treatment and traffic infrastructure are still weak ; Despite regular training, the professional capacity and responsibility of civil servants still need to be improved.

3.3.2. Limitations in building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government in Binh Duong

- *Organizational structure and urban government institutions* : Lack of clear distinction between urban and rural authorities ; Lack of Specific institutions influence resource allocation and sustainable urbanization rates ; Lack of clear mechanism on functions and personnel after merger causes overlap and inefficiency ; Facilities and personnel are not fully prepared, causing difficulties in operation .

- *Streamlining the urban government apparatus* : Localities are not determined to implement; Streamlining measures have not been widely implemented and have encountered many difficulties ; There are many difficulties in merging agencies ; Difficulties in selecting qualified leaders, concerns about controlling power.

- *Decentralization, delegation of authority and leadership capacity* : Unclear decentralization ; Limited finance and personnel ; Lack of proactive leadership .

- *Providing public services and urban infrastructure* : Lack of investment in urban infrastructure ; Limited public service resources .

- *Capacity of staff and civil servants* : Capacity does not meet requirements ; Lack of soft skills .

3.3.3. Issues that arise that need to be resolved

In the context of rapid urbanization in Vietnam, issues that need to be solved to build a streamlined, effective and efficient urban management system include: Determination from the Provincial Party Committee, People's Council, and People's Committee is needed to build a suitable model of the State Audit Office; Perfect the legal framework for the State Audit Office, ensuring a clear distinction between urban and rural areas ; Reform the State Audit Office apparatus through streamlining and rearranging functions . Promote staff training, apply information technology in management, increase transparency and people's participation in urban management; Invest heavily in urban infrastructure development, improve the quality of public services and environmental management; Need to attract private investment and manage resources effectively; Develop high-quality human resources for urban development needs .

Chapter 4

VIEWPOINTS AND SOLUTIONS FOR BUILDING URBAN GOVERNMENTS IN PROVINCES IN THE DIRECTION OF STREAMLINED, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

4.1. VIEWPOINTS ON BUILDING A LEAN, EFFECTIVE, AND EFFICIENT URBAN GOVERNMENT

4.2.1. Building a streamlined, effective and efficient investigative agency is objective, urgent and long-term, in line with the modern trend of the world, and has comprehensive significance in terms of politics, administration, economy and society.

- Politics and administration : Improve the organizational structure and state management ; Increase flexibility and speed in decision making, promptly respond to the needs of citizens and businesses.

- Economy : Create a favorable environment for business and investment ; Simplify legal procedures to save time and costs.

- Society: Improve people's quality of life through providing fast and effective public services; Encourage community participation in urban management.

- Long-term: A modern CDT is needed to face challenges such as climate change and environmental pollution, while implementing sustainable development policies.

4.1.2. Building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government must be consistent with the institution of the Communist Party of Vietnam leading the political system.

The Party's leadership over the local government and especially the investigative government . The mechanism of “the Party leads, the State manages, the people are the masters” is considered a key factor to ensure that the activities of the local government are in line with the will of the Party and the people. This leadership principle is defined in the 2013 Constitution.

4.1.3. Building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government must be in accordance with the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The construction of the state apparatus, including the investigation agency , must ensure constitutionality to maintain political stability and create a legal framework for reforms. The Constitution stipulates mechanisms to control power to prevent abuse of power in the government organization, thereby increasing the legitimacy and people's trust in the political system. In short, the development of urban government in Vietnam must be based on the Constitution to ensure legitimacy and sustainability.

4.1.4. Building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government must be consistent and synchronous in each locality and closely linked to promoting democracy and enhancing the autonomy of local governments.

- *Decentralization and delegation of authority* : It is necessary to enhance the scientific and rational nature of state management. Ensure accountability and resource provision to localities.

- *Check and monitor* : Strengthen inspection and supervision to maintain consistency in Government management.

- *Clearly define responsibilities* : Between the Government, ministries and local agencies to overcome overlaps in functions and tasks. In particular, emphasize the role of leaders in administrative agencies.

- *Urban government* : It is necessary to have a synchronous institutional system and complete organizational apparatus for effective implementation.

- *Cultural characteristics* : The development of urban government has its own characteristics due to wet rice agriculture, requiring time to adjust and improve.

- *Urban government model* : Requires a more streamlined and efficient government apparatus, with decentralization and delegation of authority to improve autonomy.

- *Be cautious in implementation* : Ensure stability for current government organizations when implementing the new Urban government model.

4.1.5. Building a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government must be suitable to the socio-economic development conditions and local characteristics.

- Building an IT system: Provinces are researching IT system projects suitable to local characteristics and conditions, with the goal of creating a streamlined organizational structure and reducing intermediate levels.

- Organizational structure: The organization of the investigative apparatus should reflect the characteristics and development level of each region, with a diverse and flexible structure.

- Arrangement of specialized agencies: The number of specialized agencies that need to be controlled (not exceeding 20 units for the city and 12 for the district) and ward cadres not exceeding 25 people. Appropriate tasks need to be assigned.

- Effectiveness of the Urban government model: Implementing the Urban government model will make the government apparatus more streamlined and effective, helping ward-level administrative agencies proactively solve problems.

- Response ability: Investigation agency will be better able to respond to emergencies through proper decentralization and delegation of authority to facilities.

4.2. SOLUTIONS TO BUILD A STREAMLINED, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT URBAN GOVERNMENT IN THE NEXT PHASE

4.2.1. The Provincial Party Committee and People's Council need to have high determination in transforming the urban government organization model towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency.

Solutions to build effective Urban government model include: The Provincial Party Committee needs to quickly unify viewpoints and build a Resolution for the Investigation Agency; The political system needs to be reformed in the direction of streamlining, effectiveness, efficiency, enhancing the leadership role of the Party and state management; There needs to be a solid legal basis to implement the Investigation Agency model; Implement seriously, inspect and adjust the model according to urban practice.

4.2.2. Early identification of models and unified application of specific government apparatus organization models for provincial-level cities

- Organizational model: The traditional three-level model (province, district, commune) has become ineffective. It is necessary to build a streamlined, effective and efficient urban government model to suit management practices.

- Institutional improvement: Continue to research and adjust the Law on Organization of Local Government to unify models between urban and rural areas. Administrative reform is necessary to strengthen the management capacity of the government.

- Machine innovation: Merge departments and offices to reduce the number of agencies under the People's Committee. Propose new structures for People's Councils and People's Committees at city and ward levels to improve operational efficiency.

- Proposed specific model: Ensure there is a clear division of labor among the authorities. Enhance local government accountability and autonomy through decentralization.

- Public participation: Encourage public participation in decision-making processes. Proposal to study representative and direct forms of democracy.

- Overall reform: Clearly define the functions and tasks of the People's Committees at city and ward levels. Focus on applying technology in management and ensuring transparency.

4.2.3. Continue to perfect the institution on decentralization and delegation between local governments and governments of affiliated cities.

Decentralization helps to define the roles of different levels of government, thereby improving the efficiency of managing national and local issues. Thereby,

the investigative agency needs to have autonomy to attract resources and develop the economy and society.

The main contents of the decentralization of the investigation agency include : Autonomy of the Investigation Agency; Clear decentralization; Infrastructure and planning management; Population and social security management; Coordination mechanism; Community participation; Perfecting the decentralization mechanism.

4.2.4. Ensuring necessary conditions for an urban government model towards streamlining, effectiveness and operational efficiency

To develop e-government in a streamlined , effective and efficient manner, building a team of cadres, civil servants and digital government is essential. Conditions supporting the development of e-government include: Ensuring financial resources; Providing public services ; Building staff ; E-government and digital transformation .

4.2.5. Strengthen inspection and supervision work, coordinate with functional agencies to organize consultation, summarize and summarize experiences, and perfect the streamlined, effective and efficient urban government apparatus.

Inspection, supervision and interim and final reviews are important activities in the leadership of Party organizations and local authorities to build a streamlined, effective and efficient investigation agency . To ensure the effectiveness of this work, it is necessary to carry out specific tasks such as: Strengthening inspection, supervision and internal political protection, to prevent abuse of power and the pursuit of positions and power ; Building a monitoring mechanism from the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations ; Establishing a democratic mechanism for people in urban areas ; Continuing to improve the political capacity of cadres and party members and resolutely fighting against corruption .

CONCLUSION

The thesis studies the organization of the Urban government towards streamlining, effectiveness and efficiency in Binh Duong province, based on the dialectical and historical materialist methodology. Although it is impossible to survey all urban areas in the country, Binh Duong is chosen as a typical example, providing valuable lessons for urban government reform nationwide.

Research tasks of the thesis: Concept and functions of local government; Flexibility of urban government model ; Assessment of current status of organization and operation ; Identification of problems and solutions .

The thesis recommends strengthening the determination to transform the urban government organization model, clearly defining the model and perfecting the decentralization and delegation institutions. In addition, it proposes to strengthen inspection, supervision and mutual support between the proposed measures to ensure effectiveness in implementation.

The thesis provides insights into the challenges and opportunities in the process of urban government reform, emphasizing the importance of rational organization and social governance in Binh Duong.

LIST OF PUBLISHED SCIENTIFIC WORKS RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

1. Nguyen The Vinh (2022), “Local governance in the context of digital transformation in Vietnam today”, *Journal of Ethnic Studies* , (11), pp.37-42.
2. Nguyen The Vinh (2022), "Building urban government in Binh Duong province today", *Ho Chi Minh City Journal of Social Sciences* , (285), pp.15-25.
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7. Nguyen The Vinh (2024), “Building e-government version 2.0 - the driving force for smart urban development in Binh Duong province”, *Journal of Ethnic Studies* , (13), pp.142-147.