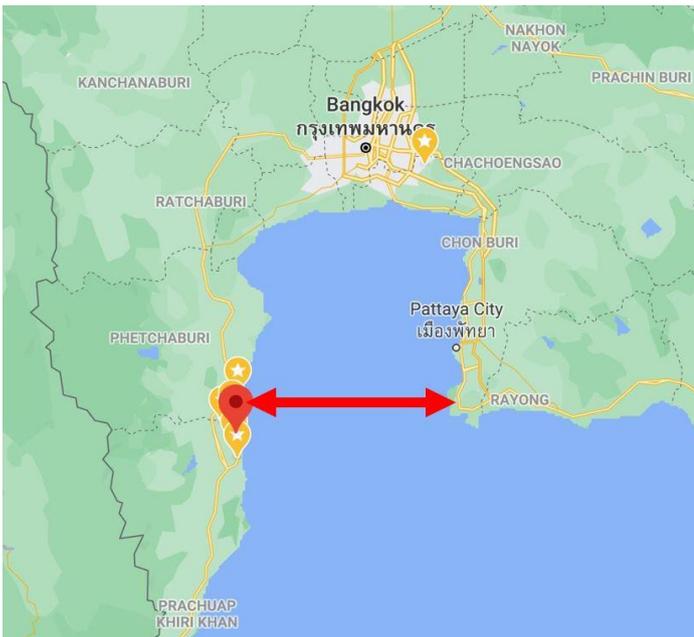


## Pattaya to Hua Hin bridge. Government discusses 900 billion baht investment



The government is looking into a so-called “Thai Bridge” that would connect Pattaya to Hua Hin, an investment estimated to 900 billion baht . The project would be part of the Eastern Economic Corridor development plan aimed at improving the transportation and infrastructure in Thailand.

The 900 billion baht investment would take 10 years to financially implement, according to chairperson of the government’s committee for the Mobilization of Economic Management Measures. The Centre for Economic Situation Administration has approved the investment project to move forward with a pre-feasibility study by the EEC’s policy committee.

“We have to admit that 900 billion baht is a huge amount of money, but it is reasonable when considering its final results. It is also cheaper than some other mega projects that are currently being accelerated. We also planned to hire local Thai people and buy local materials for the construction to reduce the cost as well.”

The bridge would join other mega-projects by the EEC like a high speed rail that will link the major airports in Bangkok... Don Mueang Airport, Suvarnabhumi Airport and U-Tapao Airport (south of Pattaya). The train is expected to travel at 250 kilometers’ per hour. Another project is the renovation and extension of the U-Tapao International Airport. The EEC says the project will bring in 60 million passengers a year and is expected to be in operation by 2024.

The 80 to 100 kilometer bridge will most likely connect Pattaya to Hua Hin (likely to be just south of Pattaya in Sattahip), but also connect many provinces in the South. The bridge would likely increase tourism in Hua Hin. Pattaya draws in a larger crowd than Hua Hin with 10 times more tourists than the southern district.

The bridge will also need to allow shipping to traverse the Gulf of Thailand to Laem Chabang in Chon Buri.

“In truth, the tourists want to travel to both cities, but they choose Pattaya first partly because Chon Buri has more attractions and more convenient transportation options. Many projects are also being built in Chonburi and the EEC in the coming future, such as a three-airport monorail and a city monorail which will potentially attract more travelers to the area, while none of the projects in the other tourist cities in the Gulf of Thailand were discussed.”