

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information		
Name	Mia Zhao	
Student number	5481902	
Studio		
Name / Theme	Planning Complex Cities	
Main mentor	Gregory Bracken	Urban Planning
Second mentor	Marco Lub	Urban Design
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My research topic is on problems with urban village redevelopment in China, which is a very convoluted topic involving urban planning, governance, urban economics, participation, etc. The nature of this topic is in line with the working methods and resources of the studio Planning Complex Cities.	
Graduation project		
Title of the graduation project	From Peril To Promise: towards a socially resilient urban village, the case of Zanhualing in Dongguan	
Goal		
Location:	Dongguan, China	
The posed problem,	Local governments regularly expropriate the land of urban villages and convert it to state-owned urban land to entice market investment. Despite the variety of redevelopment modes, most current urban village redevelopment projects take a "demolish-rebuild" approach physically, without giving adequate thought to the complicated mechanisms underlying urban villages' environmental features and performances (Pan & Du, 2021). All of the strategies rely on a benefit exchange between the government, the developer, and the property owners (the "villagers") to reach the end goal, but it pays no attention to tenants or other non-	

property-owning citizens who may be affected by the outcome.

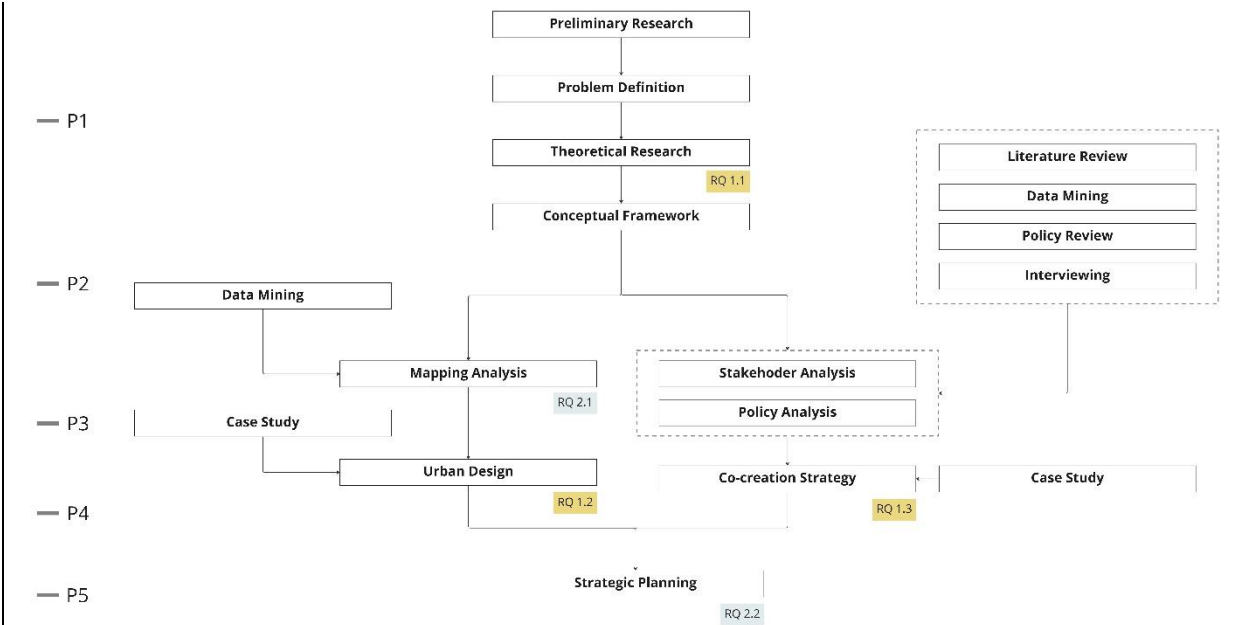
A lot of literature has been written about the development and redevelopment of urban villages (Hao et al., 2013; Kochan, 2015; Lai et al., 2021; Li et al., 2014; Zhou, 2014), but research on the social problems brought by current mode of redevelopment, which occurs frequently nowadays, is scarce.

In this research, I would like to focus on the challenges associated with the ongoing redevelopment of urban villages in China's cities. A number of intricately linked facts comprise the issues. I'd want to discuss them from two different perspectives:

The first one is the vulnerability of migrants in urban villages: Before a reconstruction, the tenants in urban villages are asked to leave in a short amount of time without neither consideration nor compensation. For example, in the case of Baishizhou, about 150000 tenants have to leave to make way for malls, hotels and high-end residential projects (Zhang, 2019).

The ongoing redevelopment of urban villages also brings vulnerability for China's cities. Unaffordable housing has become a problem as a result of the massive investment in urban redevelopment to high-end residential projects. As the graphs below show, the rent for an apartment in Beijing is around half the average earnings of a government employee and much higher than the average wage of migrant workers. Furthermore, buying a new apartment is a significant financial strain for young individuals and their larger families. For young people to be able to purchase an apartment, they may deplete generations' worth of savings for a down payment and carry

	significant debt for decades. Housing costs have grown to be a significant concern for the young generation.
research questions and	<p>MAIN QUESTION</p> <p>How can the urban village be redeveloped to a socially resilient community?</p> <p>SUB-QUESTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is social resilience in the context of urban village? - How can governance facilitate the social resilience in urban villages? - How can urban design facilitate the social resilience in urban villages? - What will be the new roles of urban villages in city? - How does the planning of urban villages respond to their new roles?
design assignment in which these result.	
<p>A complete solution package, including urban design, policy recommendation, and participation strategies, will be offered with the goal of taking into account migrants and social resilience of urban villages. Further, there will be strategic planning for the numerous urban villages in the whole city to construct a more resilient city.</p> <p>Two scales are used to categorize the study questions.</p> <p>The first level is on a community scale, and firstly to explore the definition of social resilience in the context of urban village, then the task is to explore how can governance and urban design facilitate the social resilience in the context. To answer this, the policy recommendation, participation strategies and urban design will be proposed.</p> <p>On a larger scale of city, the first question is the role of urban villages in the city, the answer will come after the analysis of the city of Dongguan. The next question is about planning facilitating the new role of urban villages, so a strategic planning will be made to answer it.</p>	
Process	
Method description	



The methodology framework goes in two lines:
 The first one is the spatial aspect, mapping analysis will be used to analyze the data from data mining, and the outcome will be an urban design proposal.

The second line of research is about participation and empowerment. Stakeholder analysis and policy analysis will be used to analyze the data from literature review, data mining, policy review and interviewing.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

According to the Department of Urbanism, "*The Department enables staff and students to advance knowledge of sustainable and fair urban and regional development.*" My research on problems with urban village redevelopment in China identify issues including displacement of migrants, housing unaffordability. The issues are closely tied to injustice and unsustainability. With research and design, I hope to propose an alternative regeneration method for urban villages, in order to facilitate sustainable and fair urban development.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

Scientific Relevance

Housing is a major factor in consideration of the vulnerability, both for migrants and the city. For migrants, access to housing ensures their well-being in the city. For a city, whether it can provide its citizen with proper living spaces is a determinant for its development and competency in the long term. For example, the site in this project, Dongguan, plans to provide 50 thousand affordable housing for young talents to support its industrial development goal. Considering the limitation in land supply in Dongguan, urban village could be a solution for supplying affordable housing, as I did in this thesis.

Value capturing is a main cause of the current mode of urban village redevelopment. By upgrading the space quality and infrastructure supply, the government and the developers could create more market value in the urban village. Value capturing can be a good tool for government to create more revenue and is widely used around the world. What really causes the current plight in urban village redevelopment is the improper distribution of the extra value. The value increment should partly be used to upskill the migrants in urban villages so they will not get displaced after the redevelopment. In this project, I will create a new stakeholder participation scenario to make the process more just and resilient.

Professional Relevance

There are numerous urban village redevelopment projects going on in China. However, because of the discipline division of urban planning profession in China, most of the projects only focus on spatial upgrading. Issues including displacement of migrants and housing unaffordability are left unchanged. I hope to make use of the multi-disciplinary resources in the studio Planning Complex Cities and propose a comprehensive solution package in order to

solve the problem physically and socially and make the urban villages socially resilient.

Social Relevance

From social entities to key determinants, social resilience has been discussed a lot in sociology. Urban villages, a special urban phenomenon in China's cities, has been talked in both academic and public spheres. It was considered as an obstacle to urban development in the past. Nowadays, its value for cities has been gradually recognized by the public.

This project will be a combination of the two topics, exploring a method to promote the social resilience of urban villages and the city. In the long run, the proposal is envisioned to promote the awareness of the positive impact of urban villages and serve as an example for a more resilient and sustainable approach to future redevelopment.