

Reinventing the Space In Between

Urban Lilong Community Design in North Sichuan Road District, Shanghai

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	iii
List of Tables	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Chapter1: Introduction	01
1.1 Background	01
1.1.1 East Asian Cities and Development	01
1.1.2 Rapid Urbanization in China	04
1.1.3 The Death and Life of Local Old Community	06
1.2 Thesis Overview	07
1.2.1 Shanghai Lilong Community	07
1.2.2 The Necessity to Preserve Lilong Community	10
1.2.3 Project Overview – How to Preserve Old Lilong Community	12
Chapter2: Literature Review and Case Study	13
2.1 Contemporary East Asian City and Urbanism Transformation	13
2.1.1 Built Landscapes	13
2.1.2 Universalizing	15
2.1.3 Uncharted Territory in China	16
2.2 Cognitive Mapping of Megacity by Ordinary People	17
2.2.1 Local People & Migrants	17
2.2.2 People Working in the City	19
2.3 Urban Community	20
2.3.1 Definition	20
2.3.2 In Between Community Lane Space	21
2.3.3 Whose City Is This? What Do People Want?	22
2.4 Case Study	23
2.4.1 Insa Doing, Seoul	23
2.4.2 Shinyo, Kobe	25
2.4.3 Tian Zi Fang, Shanghai	27
2.5 Conclusion	28
Chapter3: Context, Challenges and Opportunities	30
3.1 Understanding the Community	30
3.1.1 Document and Data Collection for Context Research	30
3.1.2 Site Visit and Interview	31
3.1.3 SWOT Analysis	32

3.2 District Context Analysis	33
3.2.1 Hongkou District	33
3.2.2 Transportation	33
3.2.3 History and Culture	35
3.2.4 Demography	36
3.2.5 Commerce	37
3.2.6 Conclusion: SWOT Analysis List for District Context	39
3.3 Community Site Analysis	41
3.3.1 Site Overview	41
3.3.2 Building Type Analysis	42
3.3.3 Circulation	42
3.3.4 Land Use and Activities	43
3.3.5 Environment and Public Health	43
3.3.6 Conclusion: SWOT Analysis for Community Site	50
Chapter4: Design Proposal.....	52
4.1 Assumption	52
4.2 How the Community Could Develop	52
4.3 Overall Strategies	53
4.3.1 Public Participation and Sub-neighborhood Control	53
4.3.2 Four Layer Planning Systems	55
4.3.3 Phasing and Design Interventions	58
Chapter5: Design Guidelines and Process Recommendations	72
5.1 Design Guideline	72
5.1.1 Introduction	72
5.1.2 Overall Vision	73
5.1.3 Community Design Guideline	73
5.2 Recommendations for Design Process	77
5.2.1 Introduction	77
5.2.2 Recommendations	78
5.2.3 Process Comparison	79
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Reflection	81
6.1 Opportunities and Limitations for Future Urban Community Design	81
in the Lilong Community	81
6.1.1 Community Participation	81
6.1.2 Information Openness & Resource Sharing Platform	82
6.1.3 Other	83
6.2 Old Lilong Community in New Urbanity	83
Bibliography	86

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 Shanghai Lilong Community Aero Photo	09
1.2 Typical Lilong House Plan	09
2.1 Comparison of Developer-Driven versus Neighborhood -Based Development	22
2.2 Shinyo Community Design-Policies and Process	26
2.3 Tian Zi Fang Photo	27
2.4 Tian Zi Fang Photo	27
3.1 Hong Kou District Location Map	33
3.2 Hong Kou District Public Transportation System	34
3.3 North Sichuan Road Urban Design Proposal, 2006	40
3.4 Community Site Location	41
3.5 Building Type Analysis	44
3.6 Alley Type Analysis	45
3.7 Circulation Analysis	46
3.8 Public Space & Facility Analysis	47
3.9 Commerce & Retail Analysis	48
3.10 Environment Condition Analysis	49
4.1 Sub-neighborhood Control	54
4.2 Ciculation System	59
4.3 Green & Open Space System	60
4.4 Commerce Network	61
4.5 Environment Management System	62
4.6 Master Plan	63
4.7 Community Plan	64
4.8 Public Corridor Vignette	65
4.9 Private Alley Vignette	66
4.10 Community Node Vignette	67
4.11 Community Park Vignette	68
4.12 Central Alley Vignette	69
4.13 Front Street Vignette	70
4.14 Programming Plan	71

LIST OF TABLES

2.1 Insa Dong Design Guideline-Method Matrix	24
3.1 Research Method for Site Visit and Analysis	32
3.2 Hong Kou District Residential Situation in 1949	36
5.1 Process Comparison	80

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Chapter1: Introduction

As one of the most emerging cities in East Asia, Shanghai is undertaking incredible urban transformations, including the addition of striking modern infrastructures and the disappearing of historical fragments. The focus of this thesis is Shanghai's old *Lilong* community, a crucial part of this city's irreplaceable memory. In order to address the interventions necessary for my design and research site - *Lilong* community, the context of Shanghai and related East Asia cities need to be understood. This chapter will explore the urbanism procedure and development history as well as issues relevant to this thesis.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 East Asian Cities and Development

As the world's largest continent, Asia has almost 60% of the total population in the world. Among that, 40% of the population lives in geographic East Asia. East Asia has some of the world's most populous places, with a population density of 130 inhabitants per square kilometer, which is about three times the world average - 45 inhabitants per square kilometer.¹ As the economy develops and urbanizes, large numbers of rural population are relocating into cities, therefore, high density and increasing population have become a main characteristic of contemporary East Asian Cities.

Looking at the East Asian cities from a social formation status, most of them are developed from their political center in classical feudal society time. The term "urban" actually has never been used in ancient time, instead, the so called "urban" today was developed and transformed from the definition - "City". Within the last several centuries, the imperial palaces in capitals

¹ Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, United Nations. World Prospects, The 2004 Revision Analysis Report. http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/WPP2004/WPP2004_Volume3.htm.

and government locations in many cities were regarded as the centers of society, no matter from the political stand or just spatial organization. These locations were the centralization of power and rights, surrounding by other public realms and the residential communities. The spatial configurations of these residential were also based on their social or political hierarchy. The areas that encompasses the imperial palace and its surrounding blocks within the highly defensive walls were defined as the “City”.

Within those cities, hierarchy was applied strictly. Spatial order is the most legible approach people used to follow the hierarchy rule. Being closer to the palace represents a higher social status. Of course contemporary East Asian cities do not apply hierarchical restrictions on urban spatial order in the same way, but the former hierarchical restriction did greatly influence the contemporary city pattern, especially the older cities. For example, Beijing and Seoul, more established capitals of East Asia, are both experiencing radical sprawling with their palaces as the cores. One thing that withstood time is that most people prefer to have their residential communities built close to the city center. Even in relatively young Asian cities, like Shanghai, one can find the strong impact of spatial hierarchy as well: As the data published by an international forum on city health and development in Shanghai in 2006 (“构建和谐社会：人口发展、人力资源能力建设与城市健康” 国际论坛) illustrates: the permanent population density within Shanghai’s inner loop is 24 times higher than the density within the outer loop² ; Moreover, a mainstream housing business website in Shanghai notes that the current housing property value within the inner loop is almost 10,000-2,0000 RMB per square meter higher than the ones around the city boundary³; Interestingly, there is even a popular proverb amongst the local citizens in Shanghai that states, “a bed in *Pu Xi* [main city area] is better than a house in *Pu Dong* [new district]”, This shows how important property location is in Shanghai people’s minds. Furthermore, in consideration for preserving the city political center as a local icon, many cities’

2 新华网. 上海：内环人口密度是外环的24倍. <http://view.news.qq.com/a/20061109/000006.htm>.

3 “上海最新房价行情”. <http://www.sskk.cn/pdwyxq/price.htm>.

new planning policy has to respond to the old city structure and spatial hierarchy.

Under strict social and spatial hierarchical context, there were barely any chances for public participation on city development process. People also were not aware of the importance of such involvement in the city development decision making process.

Now, after several rounds of world economic shuffling, East Asia has gained a rapid increase in its economic growth. Within the recent century, East Asia has undergone extensive development such as intense globalization and expansion of the built environments. Today, East Asia has achieved its status as the economic center of Asia, arguably even of the eastern hemisphere. As the developed western world slows its pace on urbanism, another trend of urbanism is happening in East Asia. For instance, many mega cities rise emerged abruptly during the recent decades with astonishing speed, such as Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, Beijing, and Taipei, etc. One pressing question is—Would they be developed as duplicates of New York, London, or Paris, or as another amazing fusion of their own characters with advanced transform into places that meet human expectations? Cities such as these would really attract the world’s attention.

However, up till now, the achievements of these emerging cities are not so optimistic. Increasing high density and strong impact of urban spatial hierarchy bring tremendous life pressure on people living in East Asian countries. Plus property values continue to rise as urban land develops. The idea of a livable city gradually turns into a wispy expectation flying far away from East Asian people. While they are struggling with housing issue and putting their whole savings to “gamble” on a tiny apartment in the city, the casual style of western life frequently appears on digital media, making East Asians desire single family houses with yard spaces, lots of democratic public realms, and large open creational spaces. The capita quantity of resources in

western countries is comparatively higher than in East Asian countries. However, ever since the pursuing of western living style becoming a trend, it has been many people's dream or life goal. In a sense, this living style becomes the symbol of high economic status. Only people who are wealthy can afford such dream house.

Many people acknowledge that imitating western living style is not realistic in such populous East Asian countries, but it is still very popular because western style has been associated as the modern model of an international aesthetics that many countries are pursuing. But, the real emerging issue is having appropriate approaches for East Asian Cities' future developments. To some extent, high density is not always a negative factor, contrary, it is a good catalyst for East Asian city to build livable environment or friendly social connections. It brings proximity to people's life, which is an element somehow western cities are still working toward. East Asian cities do have their own assets including humanized scaled streets, interactive experiences on the way to work, and convenient public transportation systems. Thus, exploring a suitable method for urban development in East Asian city is so necessary in order to create successful communities.

1.1.2 Rapid Urbanization in China

The emerging coastal cities in China are typical East Asian city cases. The characters described above are exist generically. China is a country with the largest population in the world and many people are living along coasts. Social formation today is much more open than it was before, but it is still under the government's strict control.

After China's reform and openness policy in 1987, economic developments became the

main goal for cities. This is, especially true for coastal cities. They are taking advantages of the transportation of international trading. In this economic development upsurge, many government leaders regard the fast development of the urban built environment as a symbol of their achievement. The fact that land property does not belong to residents in China makes urban renewal and sprawl much easier than in other countries. Decision makers tend to have the notion that tearing down large amount of old communities, and build high-rises would look magnificent and that can become the local landmarks. Everything is done rapidly with the so called “China Speed”. Following such trend, many cities are top-down planned with large-scale blocks of great heights. Ethic and aesthetic standards are facing unprecedented challenges in these contemporary cities in China. Many unbelievable events happen in urbanization, for instance, housing dismantling starts when the residents who do not wish to relocate and are still living inside. These developers value the financial benefits over providing humane and quality residential districts; historic buildings are demolished unhesitantly if they obstacles of new development projects. City dwellers are not looking forward to these kinds of actions. Adversely, they are the unstructured uncharted territory that the decision makers use as their test models. In that situation, the decision makers still claim that they would like to hear and adopt the public suggestions for city development, though that is only a mean of political show. Public participation in city development is always very limited and superficial. Today China’s development is not proving her as an emerging powerful country, but a blind person rushing into the dead end of a dark alley.

It has been almost 25 years since China’s reform and openness policy was applied, more and more social issues are staring to pop out as the sequel of the untutored urban developing. For example, tremendous precious cultural heritages are demolished and old cities are losing their identities. The newly built urban fabric is in a non-humanized scale, abandoning the previous proximity and interactions. Automobiles are widely used to replace walking and biking. Local

residents, as the real masters of the city, are moving out of their previous livable communities into new high-rise apartments, closing their doors, leaving the old community houses for the low-incomes and migrants. This urbanism process is over-emphasizing on how to manipulate all the other things to serve humans' modern material life and vanity, while neglecting the interactions with other elements in the world, such as connections with environment, other species, and different classes of people. Compare the current urbanization to the previous great construction period a century ago, the Industrial Era has more serious environmental and public health issues. Actually many western countries acknowledge that they paid too much during the Industrial Era and only gained short-term benefits. In addition, that experience should be a lesson for current urbanism, keeping in mind of what could actually be a long-term promotion for the city.

1.1.3 The Death and Life of Local Old Community

Urban communities are important but threatened components of Chinese cities, as we have discussed above. For new residential areas, high-rise condominiums are built to reduce the building coverage and density on the ground level, which is a new urban design method used to make land use and modern infrastructure more efficient in mega cities within China. However, for the existing old communities, whether they should be replaced by new residential areas or be preserved and renovated, has become the concern of all the social classes, including the government, the developers, and the local residents.

For most residents, old urban communities are homes they spent most of their life time in. Those are the only properties they own within the city and the only places they may be able to contribute or participate in urban developments. Old urban communities are distinctive and meaningful places for residents, which is opposite of what first class people see, slums that are

made with bad quality bricks. Simultaneously, for the government and developers, old urban communities also have complicated meanings. They are sometimes negotiating chips, but sometimes business obstacles during their real estate transaction. But respectively speaking, the death and life of old communities are undeniably much more crucial to local residents than to the government or developers.

Moreover, looking at this issue from a macroscopic view, old urban communities are usually the cradle of local culture and the crystallization of people's wisdom. As Allen Jacobs once argued, an old urban community is a necessary part of a city. Having spatial diversity and reasonable range of rent rates can meet the demands of different merchants and tenants. Thus, an old community is a good place for adopting mix-use, cultivating diverse cultures, and bringing people together.⁴ Using the form of a Chinese urban community as an example, the *Hutong* community in Beijing and the *Lilong* community in Shanghai are both the creations of local residents. They were invented not just for living, but also tactfully responded to local climates, local cultures, and local living habits, which the current new residential areas cannot even catch up with. Spatially, the functions of these old communities served the local residents' life well. Characteristically, these old communities are precious urban components that provide legibility and identification for the city image.

1.2 Thesis Overview

1.2.1 Shanghai *Lilong* Community

In central area of Shanghai, there are large amount of old *Lilong* communities. A *Lilong* community is the most typical and characteristic residential form in Shanghai. One succinct description of the structure of old *Lilong* communities in Shanghai is as follow:

⁴ Jacobs, Jan. *The death and life of great American cities*. NY: Vintage Books, 1961.

Lilongs, the small court-yard housing is named after the principles of circulation in their urban organization: “*Li*” means neighborhood, “*Long*” means small lanes. A *lilong* settlement generally varies in size from 0.35 to 5.0 hectares. Its housing units are two or three stories high, attached side by side, having one side lane at the front and another service lane at the back. The whole settlement has a couple of main lanes, used as the major circulation passages, which are accessible from the commercial streets. The side lanes, leading to each housing units, connect to the main lanes. The clear, rational structure of a *Lilong* settlement give a high degree of security and quietness to its internal living environment, contrary to its noisy urban surrounding dominated by commercial developments. The front housing units along the perimeter of a *lilong* settlement are generally converted to shops which maintain the continuity of commercial activities along the streets. Some housing units inside the settlement have also integrated small-scaled, home-based businesses to provide the daily amenities of the entire community.⁵

Similar to the other old urban communities in other East Asian cities as we have discussed above, currently large amounts of old *Lilong* communities in central Shanghai are threatened and waiting for decision makers to render decide their destines.

For old *Lilong* communities and their small alleys, I attributed them as the “In between spaces” within the recent urbanized context in Shanghai. Spatially, it is an intermediate place within the city that provides chances for diverse activities to happen, regardless of public or private affairs. On top of this, these are dark spaces away from the city’s modern neon light pollution and it is where illegal business and crimes may happen. In terms of location, *Lilong* community is situated at a very awkward position in central Shanghai. It is the middle ground between traditional culture and modern life. It also has a mix of native Shanghainese cultures

⁵ Qian,Guan. “Lilong Housing, A Traditional Settlement Form”, McGill Student Research, <http://www.mcgill.ca/mchg/student/lilong>.

and new migrant cultures. (Because of its low rent, it is being rented to many migrants today). Moreover, due to the large floating migrant population, many *Lilong* communities in Shanghai are regarded as informal residential communities because they do not have certain amounts of long-term living residents. This makes them hard to administrate, making it difficult to trace the demographic records and assign environmental maintenance. For the upcoming sustainable society, it is especially hard to apply sustainable green infrastructure system to old *Lilong* community, because there are incredible amounts of work on discussing and negotiating that between the home owners who usually do not live in the community and the changing tenements who temporarily live in the community houses.

Therefore, whether these old *Lilong* communities should be conserved or not has become a focal topic during the urbanism procedure in Shanghai.



Figure 1.1 Shanghai Lilong Community Aero Photo
Source: Shanghai : the architecture of China's great urban center. New York : Abrams, 2008.

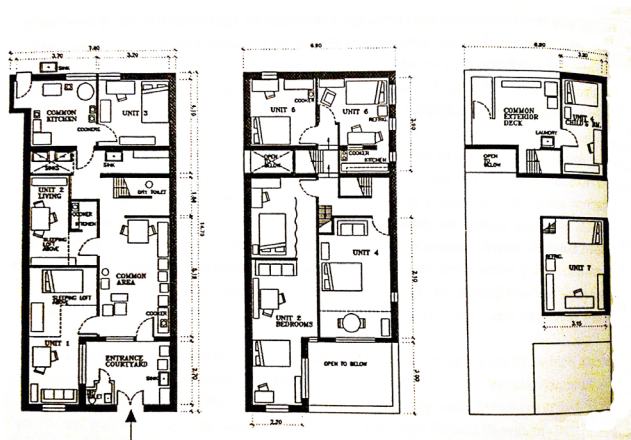


Figure 1.2 Typical Lilong House Plan
Source: UBC. Community or Commodity? A Study of Lilong Housing in Shanghai. 1994.

1.2.2 The Necessity to Preserve *Lilong* Community

Formerly, *Lilong* communities were main components of Shanghai's urban fabric. They were precious legacy of Shanghai's history providing this city with rich cultural references and social life resources. As Shanghai grows, many of the *Lilong* communities still kept their original architecture forms.

Facing urban sprawl and development, many old *Lilong* communities close to the city center have already been demolished or transformed into city commercial areas, even neighborhoods that have been preserved architecturally, such as *Xin Tian Di*. *Xin Tian Di* used to be an old *Lilong* community close to city center, but now has become a new tourist landmark in Shanghai. The city helped relocate all the residents inside the community, salvaging the old *Lilong* community from decay and revitalizing it with a new modernity. This project preserved original walls and tiles, providing tourists the unique feeling of walking through bustling Shanghai streets in the 1920s and 30s, while inside the buildings, a stylish international gallery, a trendy haute boutique, a theme restaurant, a fashionable cafe or a bar may be housed. After being built, it quickly attracted lots of foreigners and visitors coming in for high consumption recreation. Even though this is a commercially successful case of old *Lilong* community transformation, it cannot be applied to so many old urban *Lilong* communities, the native dwelling culture cannot be preserved by replacing the original living function with commercial businesses.

Regarding the dwelling culture, *Lilong* settlements have created a unique type of atmosphere, which is indigenous for living behaviors - a frequent and strong social interaction allowed by the built form. The allocation of at least one courtyard and a portion of usable open space for each family, and by allowing a spatial fluidity through them, daily communication can be conducted while doing housework. The pleasure of socializing can take place in an elastic way,

such as in the courtyard, in the lanes, etc.⁶ Moreover, *Lilong* community's land-consuming and low-rise pattern feature can help the community achieve high density, enabling more residents living close to city center. When buildings go lower, the building distances can keep narrower once it can assure appropriate sun lighting condition. Based on my study of several typical *Lilong* communities in Shanghai's central city, the Building Coverage Percentage of old *Lilong* communities could achieve 60%-70% high while the Building Coverage Percentage of new residential areas could only be almost 20%-30%.

Within recent years, the government and the city are exploring methods for the renewal of old *Lilong* communities in Shanghai. Especially after the new property law was announced and put into effect in 2007, it extremely difficult to relocate so many communities to new public houses, so the government actually has the willingness to preserve and renovate the old communities⁷.

In sum, based on the discussion above, whether it is cultural, social, or the political concerns, it is necessary to keep the old *Lilong* communities in Shanghai.

But how do we start? Right now, there is no precedent in Shanghai, though so many assumptions and discussions are occurring within the professional design fields. Therefore, my thesis is going to take on this first step, and try to contribute some ideas for the renovations of old *Lilong* communities.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ See上海市政府. 虹口区十二五规划.30-31.

1.2.3 Project Overview – How to Preserve Old *Lilong* Community

The community I worked on is located in the *HongKou* District in Shanghai. It is a typical *Lilong* community in Shanghai's old residential district. Since this community is pretty close to North Sichuan Road, a famous commercial street in Shanghai, new planning and urbanism are starting in this area for district renewal, and imperil the existence of the community. My goals for this thesis are looking to:

1. Figure out how to use design and management strategies to reinvent the outdoor *Lilong* space, ameliorate environmental qualities and public health conditions.
2. Encourage communication between old residents and migrants, establish connections between old community life and modern city life.
3. The ultimate goal is to transform this old *Lilong* community into a friendly living community for current city life that also fit Shanghai's context.

The methods are to use professional planning process to reinvent the community space organization, apply small design interventions to community environment for achieving large radiation effect, test community public participation, and recommend bottom-up community design process for future use.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Case Study

In the process looking for literatures and case studies, I searched for three main categories of resources. The first one is the literatures written by design professionals on contemporary East Asian urbanism. It helps me get the knowledge about how professional people, especially the ones from western countries, discuss and criticize the rapid urban transformation on the other side of the world. After experiencing urbanism in previous decades, the design professionals in western countries have lots of reflections from their urban developments and opinions for future urban design. The second category is the literature that has collected diverse people's voices on East Asian urbanism. It can provide me the information about how normal urban space users look at fast urban transformations. The third one is about design process-how does urban community design project realize in different context.

2.1 Contemporary East Asian City and Urbanism Transformation

2.1.1 Built Landscapes

In contemporary Asian cities, the new built landscape is competing with the former livable space, occupying central urban areas gradually. As Peter Rowe describes in his book, *East Asia Modern*, "They (city) are dotted with tall buildings, extensive arrays of steel, glass and concrete, as well as architectural trappings of contemporary life, like department stores, retail malls, financial districts, pedestrian streets, subways and neon-lit entertainment districts - all now seemingly produced effortlessly, in spite of the varied mechanisms of power, politics, relative economic circumstances and other social relations."¹ Building more and more super Mannhattans is becoming a goal which most Asian cities are pursuing for. For instance, central Shanghai, has even more skyscrapers than Manhattan does, however, it is still sprawling.

¹ Rowe, Peter. *East Asia modern: shaping the contemporary city*. London: Reaktion, 2005. 32-33.

Though those newly built Mannhattans are the paradises some people are dreaming of, simultaneously, they are the hell many people are struggling in. Right as the famous Chinese writer, Ding Lin, describes in her prose, *Manhattan streets at night*, “If you love him, send him to Manhattan, if you hate him, send him to Manhattan.”² In megacities, the impacts from positive or negative factors can easily be amplified under the dissembling of glaring light. The size and scale effect is fascinating but also terrifying.

In professional field, there are louder opposite voices protesting that over urbanization is not an appropriate or healthy way to help cities or human society getting progress. Peter Rowe’s book, *East Asia Modern-Shaping the contemporary city*, documents the urbanizing trajectories of East Asian cities, including Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, Taipei. He describes that the overall effects of those transformations is to produce controversial urban landscape of narrow structures placed side by side, sometimes the ethic and aesthetic value are even not very well considered. Here urbanism is interpreted a “transformation”, Rowe’s discussion emphasizes that urbanism does not equal an excellent step towards better future.³

After getting used to hear so much complimentary on urbanizing construction in my country, Rowe’s critique pushes me to regenerate my views on urbanization. “The urban architectural appearance varies widely in East Asia, however, in some cities, most notably in China, there is a jarring, outlandish, downright ugly, or “over-the-top” aspect to parts of the urban landscape.”⁴ It’s not so often seen that a scholar criticizes a phenomenon with so strong antipathy. What does built landscape mean to city for contemporary and a long term? How much is too much? We need a discreet decision for our offspring.

2 丁玲. 曼哈顿街头夜景. 杭州市: 浙江教育出版社, 1991.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid. 34.

2.1.2 Universalizing

Urbanism process makes the cities resemble anywhere else in the world, going back to the universalizing tendency of modernization. The similar appearances make people lost. It's hard to define what time the city is, and how it was like a decade ago. In Kevin Lynch's word, modern cities are losing their identity and legibility. "The very word 'lost' in our language means much more than simple geographical uncertainty; it carries overtones of utter disaster".⁵

In his book, *The Image of the City*, he states "In the process of way-finding, the strategic link is the environmental image, the generalized mental picture of the exterior physical world that is held by an individual. This image is the product both immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience, and it is used to interpret information and to guide action. The need to recognize and pattern our surroundings is so crucial, and has such long roots in the past, that this image has wide practical and emotional importance to the individual".⁶

However, opposite to Lynch's narrative, modern cities are universalizing people's immediate sensations to varies cities, also losing the environment features which can recall people's memory of past experience.

The first round of urbanization shuffled the world's city images, made the main cities in developed countries being labeled with the era their urbanization took place. While celebrating the massive development moments, they lost the identity which indicates those cities may have experienced thousands of years history, for instance, the cities in Europe.

⁵ Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960. 4.

⁶ Ibid.

Peter Rowe writes by citing Lynch's idea in his book: "Cities throughout the world can be characterized by answering 'What time is this place?' referring to the era or eras during which most city building took place."⁷ New York is an early twentieth-century city, with a lot of nineteenth-century technology, while many cities in Europe were defined in the nineteenth-century. The defining moments of most East Asian cities have occurred later than 1960s. For example, Tokyo and Seoul were well defined in the 1960s and 1970s, while Taipei, Singapore and Hong Kong are of the 1970s and 1980s.

And then, what should we do? Strip off the former label and stick a new one every time a new round development starts? That's the reason people lost in the cities. We want a self-renewable city which can always bring us freshness and surprise, but also keep the marrow and its personality, not totally a refurbished product.

2.1.3 Uncharted Territory in China

The master planning in China is a pursuit of the symbols of progress. When people are still struggling with the limited resource, the planning for the places Chinese people belong to is still speaking for the social priority. That is one of the reasons cause the malformed value of society and the crazy expectation of western life. Peter Rowe analyzed:

Modern urbanization in East Asia has occurred largely under the aegis of borrowed Western planning models and practices, with some modification and adaption to meet local circumstances.....More or less from the onset of the communist regime in China, physical master planning, with standards promulgated from on high, has been derigueur throughout the country, closely following the orthodoxy of ring-radial roads, green belts

⁷ Rowe, Peter. East Asia modern : shaping the contemporary city. London : Reaktion, 2005.34.

and core-periphery, as well as satellite modes of physical planning, initially adopted from the Soviet Union. After moments of substantial cultural rupture with the past, as occurred in East Asia, the justification of the expressive transition and, therefore, a middle-ground position, might also be expected to lose a deeply felt relevance. Urbanistically, in terms of the shape, appearance, layout and experience of cities, the answer is probably no, particularly if East Asian cities have positive experiential traits, substituting and even defying Western categorizations through proclivities like juxtaposition and contraposition rather than by graduation and finely of “one in the many” rather than “one and the many”, or of resorting to properties of organism rather than those of stricter hierarchy. It is, after all, all in the eyes of the beholders and where they come from.⁸

2.2 Cognitive Mapping of Megacity by Ordinary People

2.2.1 Local People & Migrants

Tsung-Yi Micheele Huang’s book, *Walking between slums and skyscrapers*, shows cognitive maps of Asian mega cities (Hong Kong, Tokyo and Shanghai) drawn by different social characters, and tells very realist stories of their life. It gives readers a larger platform for getting a sense of how different people regard their urban life in megacities.⁹

During the urbanism transformation, local residents have lost their living space, they are forced to relocate, giving up their former neighborhood connections. In Chinese culture, neighborhood connection is crucial for people’s daily life, as a traditional proverb says, “A near neighbor is better than a distant cousin.” However, that tradition was destroyed by the modernism shift.

⁸ Ibid. 153-157.

⁹ Huang, Tsung-yi Michelle, *Walking between slums and skyscrapers: illusions of open space in Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Shanghai*. Hong Kong : Hong Kong University Press, 2004.

Their former houses are replaced by high-rise condos. Everybody closes their front doors to keep safe, communities are classified by social hierarchy. A little step over the boundary can become the powder hose of serious social conflicts. “Outsider” is a sensitive word to local people. They image the potential dangers and stressful competitiveness “outsider” brings to the city, and carefully defends themselves.

They not only find themselves resettled to the periphery of Shanghai but also entitled to a smaller place than before. The supposedly compensatory replacement for demolished housing sometimes could be both smaller and more jam-packed than the original one. Instead of achieving the goal of renewal by thinning out the over-crowded housing, such relocation policy actually entailed high-density redevelopment and concentration of population.¹⁰

Migrants are a group of people who are pursuing something in the city. Mega city is the global place they think where can realize their dreams. They are willing to loss a little bit pride to integrate into the local society. They try to learn local languages to overcome the distance imposed by time and space, in order to establish closer connections with native people, but that relation is still not the intimacy they are yearning for. “.....Their yearning for intimacy appears to be doomed, and despite their knowledge of the city, these walkers are disoriented in the city.”¹¹

For China, one of the most prominent conflicts right now in Mega City is between peasant worker in city and local city dwellers. Duanfang Lu states the complex and subtle relation in the city in her book, *Remaking Chinese urban form: modernity, scarcity and space*, “The mobility of rural

¹⁰ Ibid. 114.

¹¹ Ibid.

migrants and their substandard living condition created both real and arraigned threats to the city dwellers.....”She quotes Henri Lefebvre’s saying “If space as a whole has become the place where reproduction of the relations of production is located, it has also become the terrain for a vast confrontation.”¹²

This serious social conflict is caused by various factors, but how to create the space which can ameliorate is one of this thesis’s tasks.

2.2.2 People Working in City

People living in cities have their own social characters. They work on different positions in different professional fields. Their sensitivity on objects and things varies, but whether their views on city developments vary is a question. In Huang’s book, he narratives the conversations happened during his interview with other workers in city.

For the novelist, the city transformation brings disasters to local culture, erases so many vivid characters in the city, and destroys the places which the beautiful stories can happen. Modern cities have no features or diversities. They are selling the soul of city for achieving the expected “beauty”.

“Walking on the street, what strikes people as most impressive are the pretty women, who unanimously model the latest fashion. Fashion makes these women resemble one another. It is not like before when girls on every street all look different. Each street has its specific

¹² Lu, Duanfang. Remaking Chinese urban form: modernity, scarcity and space, 1949-2005. London; New York :Routledge, 2006. 143.

pretty faces.”¹³ This local Shanghainese uses metaphor method to indicate her sadness for the universalizing tendency of modernization and the losing culture.

Photographers: “Mapping out the city with a private eye so as to reinscribe an authentic image of Hong Kong before it is lost forever.”¹⁴

Huang’s interviewees are limited, are not enough for deduce a conclusion, but we can see there’re certain amount of people really see the former urban life form as treasures, which somehow responds to the views of professional people we talked above.

2.3 Urban Community

2.3.1 Definition

Local community as a both independent and integrated cell in the city plays a complicated role in people’s everyday life, it is where the city blurs the boundaries of public space and private life.

In the book *Everyday Urbanism*, there is a chapter specifically discussing the definition of everyday public space. “Every day public spaces is where lived experience and political expression come together.....it exist in between past and future uses, often with a no-longer-but-not-yet-their own status.”¹⁵ In this book, Crawford does not give a clear definition that where the everyday public space includes, but local community is certainly existed as an important part of it.

13 Wang, Anyi. 长恨歌. 海口市 : 南海出版公司, 2003.

14 Cited by Tsung-yi Michelle Huang in “Walking between slums and skyscrapers”.

15 John, Margaret, and other. *Everyday Urbanism*. New York : Monacelli Press, 2008.28-29.

Local community could also be described as the “Third Space”, “.....instead of a space of representation, it is a space bearing the possibility of new meanings, a space activated through social action and imagination.”¹⁶

2.3.2 In Between Community Lane Space

In East Asian communities, various lane spaces are the most splendid places of people’s everyday life. Like roji in Tokyo, lilong in Shanghai, hutong in Beijing, and the lanes in among the hanok of Seoul, they all have long history, documenting the transformation of local people’s living habit, they all serve “universal” functions for the communities.

Although the special configurations of lane life in East Asia vary from city to city, in scale and modulation, all bring aspects of the traditional village to the city and appear intended to foster good relations among people living together in close proximity, returning to the overriding considerations of social proprietyThe Lilong or lanes of Shanghai imbue one with a moment of hesitation before entering and also often determinate within a relatively short distance.....Lilong played a host to a variety of community uses, ranging from neighbors gathering in the evening to children’s play and the staging of occasional festival events like marriages. In their essentials, though, they also provided gradation from the public life of the street to the privacy of the house, again, in a manner that facilitated proper use and conduct, by allowing residents largely to control and orchestrate their contact with visitors and strangers.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Rowe, Peter. East Asia modern: shaping the contemporary city. London: Reaktion, 2005.121-124.

2.3.3 Whose City Is This? What Do People Want?

Phiebe Wall Wilson talks his experience of a neighborhood place making in city of Pasadena in his article “A day in the life of a neighborhood place”. The following diagram shows the comparison of developer-drive versus neighborhood-based development. (Figure 2.1)

Whose city is this? It may be an easy question for most people in U.S., but in China, not so many people are really able to speak out. The prevalence, indeed dominance, of top-down urban planning in China, has tended to stunt the growth of highly articulated and well-organized bottom-up influences on local urban outcomes. In terms of caring so much what the government want, our focus should be switched to what the common people want. Getting to know different groups’ different demands may be helpful for figuring out a win-win method.

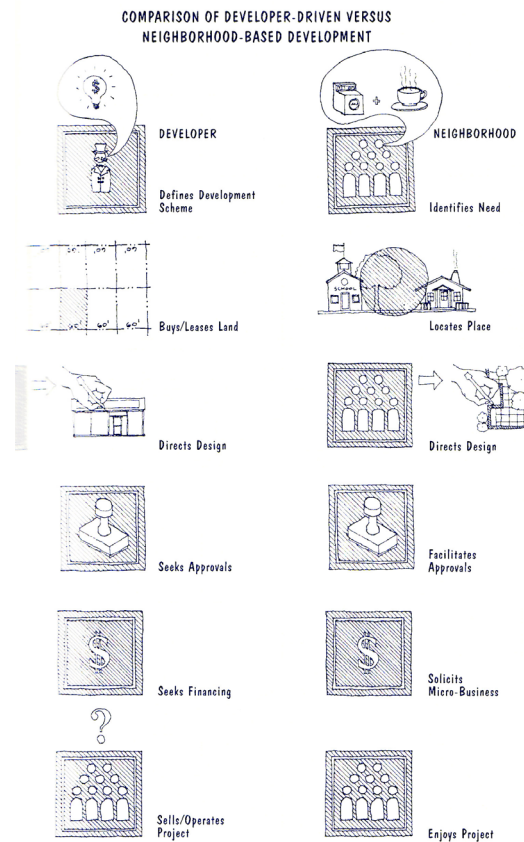


Figure 2.1 Comparison of Developer-Driven versus Neighborhood -Based Development
 Source: Everyday Urbanism. New York : Monacelli Press, 2008. 125.

2.4 Case Study

The cases I was looking for are all located in East Asian cities, due to my thesis project is located in Shanghai. They share similar cultures, density, and development history, thus, those cases can be used as precedents. I picked one case in Korea which worked on historical community preservation; one case in Japan which applied bottom-up design process--inviting community residents, local and international students participating into the old community renovating project; and another one in Shanghai which confirmed old *Lilong* community preservation project is feasible. Those cases are selected to support: my arguments about why old *Lilong* communities should be preserved; my test on bottom-up design process; and my design assumption--keep the residential function together with additional retails.

2.4.1 Insa Dong, Seoul

Insa-Dong is one of the largest communities in Seoul with historical characteristics. It is located in the central Seoul and between two previous places, Kyung buk palace and ChangDuck Palace. Also the main boulevard of Seoul, “Jong-ro”, is located next to this community. In 1920s-1930s, this community used to be an area royal families and politicians were living, but since 1980s, it has being gradually influenced by urbanization, high-rise office buildings and department stores were rapidly built. The traditional urban skyline was dramatically changed, especially after 2000.

In order to preserve the historic community feature, the city of Seoul, government and the Jong-ro Gu district promulgated a regulation in December, 1999, to prohibit over construction in this area. Meanwhile, Seoul Development Institute set an urban design guideline for Insa-Dong’s future development.

Three goals of the design guideline are set: preserve small retail shops and historical houses in this community; keep alley's former shapes and functions; also increase retails with traditional culture features to help revive this historic community. A matrix is developed to set clear guidelines and instructions for both private and public owners. (Figure 2.2) For the individual private houses owners, the building size of new development is restrictedly limited, and the government provides them funding to support the renovation of historic houses. The building usage and building façade facing the alleys are also restricted, prohibit entertainment business. For the public land, public streets and facilities are required to be improved to help establish community connections and provide open space for recreation. Except for that, a sub-district idea is developed based on this community's building and space typologies. For each tips, the design guideline gives examples as precedents.

Methods	Private sector		Public sector	
	limit	incentive	zoning	investment
Preserving small shops & traditional houses	large scale Development Guidelines for traditional homes	Easing the regulations of the coverage ratios Incentives for Traditional house Owner		
Keeping the alleys Shapes & street performance	Keeping the shapes of the alleys	No restriction for the minimum widths of the roads	Rezoning > 인사동길 > 태화관길	Enlarging public facilities & pedestrian roads Induce citizen participation
Increasing the traditional shops	Limiting the entertainment business	Incentive for traditional shops > 보조금융자 > 세금감면	Making a Traditional district	

Table 2.1 Insa Dong Design Guideline-Method Matrix
Source: provided by Hong, Keong-Gu

This is a typical urban design case in Asia. The project follows professional planning process, and the design guideline sets very detail requirements for specific objects. This urban design project is a case that Asian city starts introspecting its urbanizing development, trying to use design guidelines to instruct developments, preserve local precious historical pattern and legacy, prevent modernism's overwhelming. Although it is still a top-down planning project, the regulations and suggestions this project recommended introduce me a broad planning control method and push me to think of what interventions can be applied in historic communities.

2.4.2 Shinyo, Kobe

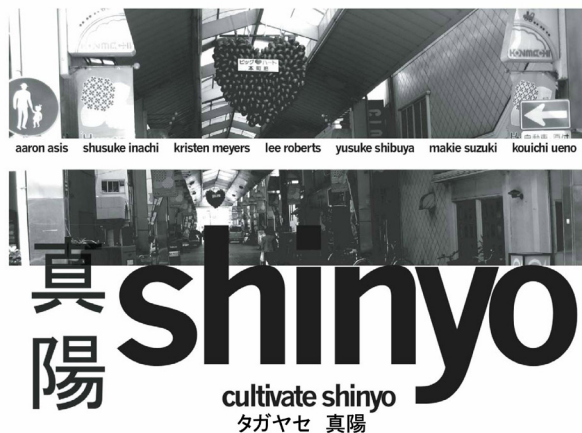
“Cultivate Shinyo” is also an urban design project in East Asian city. In recent years, Shinyo district in Nagata Ward of Kobe is facing lots of challenges: The retails are in decline which is reflected in empty store fronts and unsuccessful business; the former manufacturing industry used to support this district is diminishing; additionally, crimes and inconsiderate behaviors within the neighborhood are frequently reported by local residents, safety has become an issue that needs to be alerted.

Looking at Shinyo's context, this district has very similar social context as North Sichuan Road District. Shinyo district has over 1800 year history, with lots of historic houses left within the neighborhood. The social connections of local residents are missing and the migrant population is increasing. Moreover, unstructured traffic is another risk this district is facing.

This urban design project is proposed for achieving multiple goals by taking advantages of the site's uniqueness, and addressing the issues from both short-term and long-term visions. The design approach applied to this local community is to create a series of community nodes to

increase public realms, and to establish transportation network in order to draw people back to this district, so that the value of historic heritage, natural landscape and multi-ethnic culture can be more recognized by others. In terms of detail design strategies, this project proposed small-scaled quick-win interventions to encourage the community residents to participate into the community renovation.

This is a very community based bottom-up design precedent in East Asia. It offers a fascinating glimpse of how Japan is playing a role in global historical growth of public participation in local urban development decision. During this project, the design process and policy recommendations are clearly articulated for residents, community and government, so that it makes the cooperation efficiently. (Figure 2.3) It is a project done by an international design studio. There are not so many words narratives describing the project, but the diagrams show clearly how each phasing was going on, who participated into which phase and what their contributions were. It is a good bottom-up design process precedent study for my thesis.



Policies and processes

RESIDENTS

- Participate in identifying and creating nodes and paths

Local Organizations – Schools, market associations, multicultural organizations:

- Educate and motivate constituencies
- Identify organization priorities for social and physical improvements
- Identify nodes and paths that support association needs
- Support creation of nodes and paths that strengthen regional connections
- Work together with other organizations to further mutual goals
- Work with government agencies to communicate local priorities

Government:

- Outreach to community organizations and residents
- Provide incentives for private development according to planned guidelines
- Develop clear requirements for small-scale change
- Create mechanism for creation of local development corporations

Figure 2.2. Shinyo Community Design- Policies and Process

Source: UW+KU. Urban Space Design Charrette-Revitalizing Nagata, Kobe.2006.

2.4.3 *Tian Zi Fang*, Shanghai

Tian Zi Fang is a local project in Shanghai. It is an arts and crafts enclave that has developed from a renovated residential area in the French Concession area. It comprises a neighborhood of labyrinthine alleyways off *Tai Kang* Road. *Tian Zi Fang* is known for its harmonious combination of native residential form, structure with diverse retails such as small craft stores, coffee shops, trendy art studios and narrow alleys. It has become a popular tourist destination in Shanghai, and an example of local *Lilong* community's preservation--residential houses and business co-existing together. (Figure 2.4, 2.5)

The neighborhood was originally built in the 1930s as a *Lilong* community. It remained very local until about 2006 when it was slated for demolition to make way for redevelopment. At that time, lots of local business owners, residents, as well as a famous artist Chen Yifei who had a studio in *Tian Zi Fang*, were object to the redevelopment proposal, and worked together as a group, submitted a proposal to the local government to preserve the *Tai Kang* Road area and its traditional architecture and ambience.

Rezoning of *Tian Zi Fang* began in 2005/2006 with nearby art schools and studios, and later small international business owners found out



Figure 2.3 Tian Zi Fang Photo
Source: Tian Zi Fang. <http://www.tianzifang.cn/home#!prettyPhoto>



Figure 2.4 Tian Zi Fang Photo
Source: Tian Zi Fang. <http://www.tianzifang.cn/home#!prettyPhoto>

about *Tian Zi Fang* through the local grapevine. Its development began very slowly with local merchants, a New Zealand store, Japanese restaurants, and a tea house setting up in the district.

From the beginning of 2007, journalists, visitors and local residents began to visit the area and spread the word about a cozy little lane district that housed some interesting and creative businesses. Additional articles in both local and foreign media such as the New York Times helped increase awareness of this older and unusual community, that stood out among the more modern and commercial shopping areas of Shanghai. *Tian Zi Fang* today has more than 200 diverse small businesses.

Despite the businesses selling trendy foreign goods, the area does not have the look of having been overly beautified - electricity cables are still strung overhead, and air conditioning units are obvious on the outside of the buildings. The district is distinctly different from *Xin Tian Di*, another *Lilong* community redevelopment in the vicinity, in that it has managed to preserve its residential function, adding to its appeal.

This is a successful case in Shanghai that an old *Lilong* community is preserved from being demolished by the residents, local design professions' and artists' protesting effort. The success of this community's operating confirms the feasibility of the form that residential and commercial functions co-exist within an old *Lilong* community.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter documents the work I did before my thesis design work started. The opinions

cited and stated in the literature review part provide large amount of resources supporting my argument in Chapter One-why old *Lilong* communities deserve being preserved. Three case studies give me some ideas about how the similar projects are going on, which are supported by design professions in the places with similar context.

Chapter 3: Context, Challenges and Opportunities

3.1 Understanding the Community

3.1.1 Document and Data Collection for Context Research

This project is an urban design project, and therefore research into its context and site analysis involve information relevant to different fields, including history, culture, demography, transportation, commerce, environment, urban planning and design policy, and much more. In China, however, data and document collection is quite difficult, since much information is not accessible by the public. This is true even in the case of community design; although in China community design is considered a type of public project under government control, most of the relevant information and data resources are controlled by government departments and government-owned design institutes, which may not be published for public access, but parts of them can be requested for reading for professional research or education purposes with paper authorization.

During my thesis research period, I visited Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning and Design institute, which has worked on the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Shanghai, and right now is working on the new urban design project in North Sichuan Road District. They provided me with the geography information of the central area of North Sichuan Road District, and recommended me to read several sets of planning documents during past several decades in their archive (unpublished), including Shanghai Metro Line 10 North Sichuan Road Station District Urban Design (上海轨道交通10号线四川北路站地区城市设计), Regulatory Planning of North Sichuan Road Underground Space (四川北路地下空间控制性规划), Planning and Design of the southern block of North Sichuan Road Greenbelt (四川北路大绿地南侧地块规划设

计方案)。 Also, the Landscape students in Tongji University have done an elaborate context research of North Sichuan Road District in summer 2009, their summer research report¹ includes the development history of the commerce in North Sichuan Road and the shipping industry of *Hongkou*, the using condition of green and open space in the central district of North Sichuan Road District, which is pretty helpful and crucial for my context research. Moreover, the result of new population census in 2010 has been published by Shanghai statistic bureau, which is accessible via their website², providing precious demographic data for community research.

3.1.2 Site Visit and Interview

In terms of applying multiple research methods to my site analysis, I used the very typical method observation as the basic method and several other methods. I used Taking notes, Photo Documenting, Diagram, Interview and Group Discussion, as secondary ones to support observation. My design object is the community I've mentioned in the previous section, which is consisted by both the physical environment and the environment behaviors, so my observation is focused on how a physical environment supports or interferes with behaviors between individuals or groups.

Before the observation, defining my personal vantage points is necessary, as a full participant, or as a secrete outsider, a recognized outsider, and a marginal participant. Simultaneously, I used photo documenting, mapping, interview, and diagram methods to help recording and analyzing the data I get from observation, in order to help myself to get a general idea of that community: how the everyday life goes on within the community, such as the residents' habits and community circulation pattern; how the administration and social events are organized in the community; and how they are changing as Shanghai's fast urbanism, what of the future

1 Pan, Yilun and others. "2009 Summer Practice Report". Landscape Architecture Department, Tongji University. Aug. 2009.

2 上海统计网, 统计年鉴2011, <http://www.stats-sh.gov.cn/data/toTjnj.xhtml?y=2011>, 20 Mar. 2012

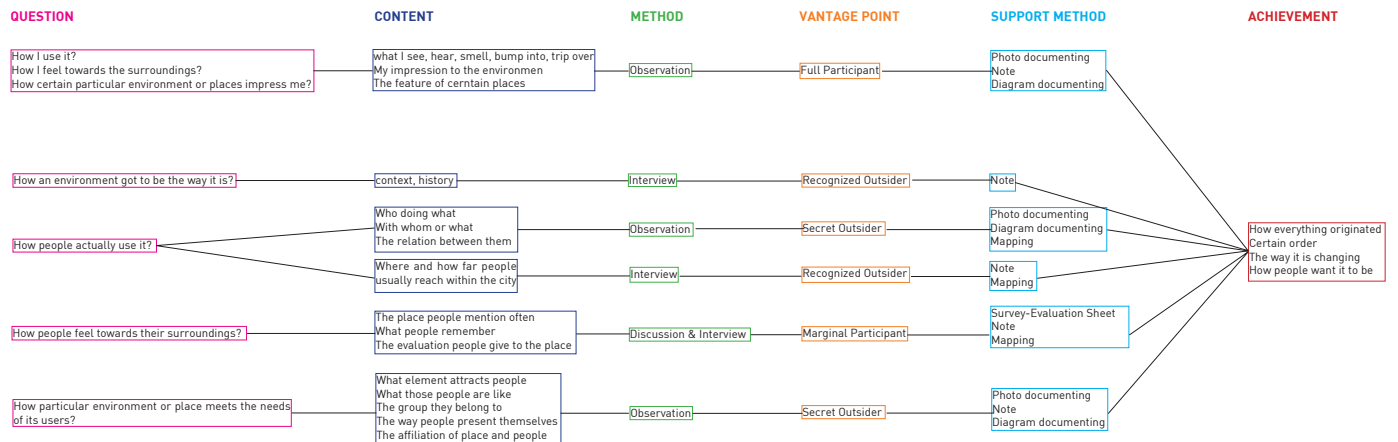


Table 3.1 Research Method for Site Visit and Analysis

the residents are expecting looks like. The expected final achievement is that I can get an understanding of the design related information of that old *Lilong* community and be able to analyze the issues and challenges for the following community design. The following diagram shows the method³ I used for site visit and site analysis. (Table 3.1)

3.1.3 SWOT Analysis

After researching the context of *Hongkou* district and the *Lilong* community, I summarize my research and analysis results as two SWOT Analysis Lists, the SWOT Analysis List of District Context and the SWOT Analysis List of Community Site. This method can help me rationally analyze the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of the community, clearly list out the issues need to be addressed, and the assets may help define the design goals as well. Additionally, comparing two SWOT Analysis Lists can help find out the hierarchy of the challenges and opportunities.

3 Study the method written by Zeisel, John. *Inquiry by Design*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.2006

3.2 District Context Analysis

3.2.1 Hongkou District

Hongkou District is situated in the northeast of downtown Shanghai, bordering on *Yangpu* District on the east, *Zhabei* District on the west, *Pudong* New Area and *Huangpu* District across the *Huangpu* River and *Wusong* Creek (Suzhou River) to the south, and *Baoshan* District on the north. The district covers an area of 23.46 square kilometers, with 10 sub-districts under its jurisdiction. It has being a part of Shanghai's urban core area since long time ago. (Figure 3.1)

3.2.2 Transportation

Located where land and water meet, *Hongkou* District is one of Shanghai's transportation centers. Historically, there used to be over 50 rivers and creeks passing through this area, today 15 main rivers still exist. Located near the intersection of Suzhou River and Huangpu River, *Hongkou* has Shanghai's largest harbor for passenger transportation, business, and trading, so it is described as Shanghai's shipping center and predicted as a district having large economy potential.

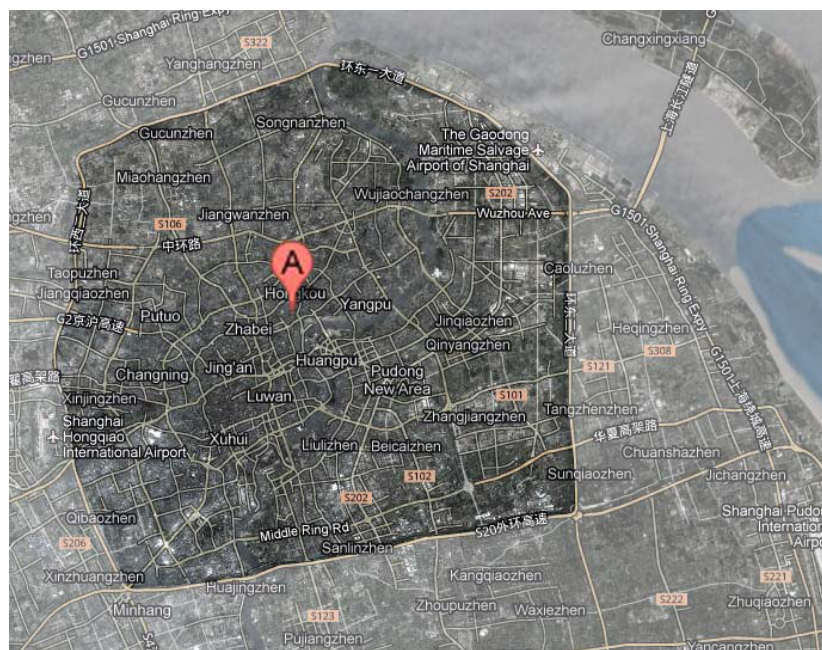


Figure 3.1 Hong Kou District Location Map

In terms of land transportation, *Hongkou* district is a node of Shanghai's road net and public transportation transfer center. Complete with Metro Line 3 and Line 4, as well as traffic arteries such as North Sichuan Road, *Wusong* Road, *Siping* Road, West Dalian Road, the Inner and Outer Ring roads, it's easy to get around from *Hongkou* to other districts in Shanghai. During the 11th "Five-Years-Plan"⁴ period (2006-2011), the Metro Line 8 and 10 and the *Hongkou* Football Stadium Transportation Hub Project have been done for further efficient traffic. The *Hongkou* Football Stadium Transportation Hub Project integrates transport functions with the development of service industries, which is destined to make *Hongkou* a key link in the future development in Shanghai.⁵(Figure 3.2)

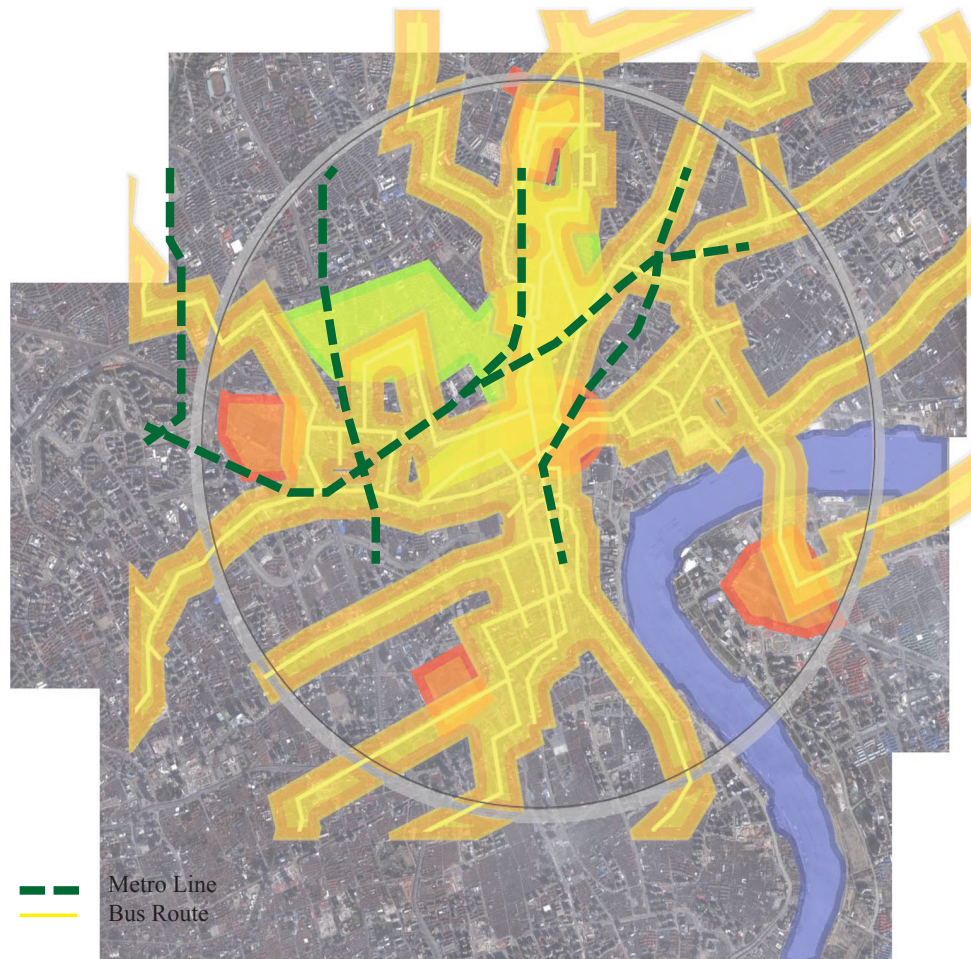


Figure 3.2 Hong Kou District Public Transportation System--20min Range

4 China's Five Year Plan is a series of social and economic development initiatives.

5 Culture China Site, <http://shanghai.cultural-china.com/html/History-of-Shanghai/Brief-Introduction/200811/27-2169.html>.

As Shanghai's transportation center, there are large amount of people passing through or stopping by this district every day, and the large amount of population flow brings lots of job opportunities. Therefore, *Hongkou* district is facing the challenge of the migrants population booming.

3.2.3 History and Culture

With its convenient traffic and superior geographic location, *Hongkou* district has being a central urban area with integrated functions of commerce and urban residence for a very long time. It is the cradle of Native Shanghai culture. In the last few decades, it has been the main residential district of local Shanghainese. Most of the land use is for residential communities. Today, *Hongkou* District has profound cultural heritage of 72 human cultural sights. Areas around *Shanyin* Road are particularly famous for being the former residences of many famous modern Chinese intellectuals. Besides, large amount of historical buildings are preserved in *Hongkou* with the traditional living habit inside of the old communities. *Hongkou* is like a live museum of Shanghai's native culture. In addition, its main business street, North Sichuan Road, is a bustling commercial street well known across the country.

In the recent decades, following the reforms and opening drive in China, particularly the founding of the shipping service cluster on the North Bund, *Hongkou* has attracted many overseas investors and expatriate professionals to settle down here on the merits of its fine transport infrastructure and profound cultural heritages, but most of them live in the central business area, where now many high rise condos are built. The central business area is like a new concrete oasis in *Hongkou*, being surrounded by thousands of old *Lilong* buildings, but at the same time, it has a strong tendency to erase the old urban pattern around and sprawl.

3.2.4 Demography

In 1949, *Hongkou* District is Shanghai's central residential area with large population and high social density⁶. (Table 3.2) Based on the census in 1949^{7 8}, the population structure at that time was comparatively healthy. Wealth gap between rich and poor people was not obvious, the friendly neighborhood support and the strong social connections were what people really keen on at that time.

1949 Residential Condition in Cental Shanghai:

	New Lilong Community, Apartment, Signle House	Old Lilong Community	Slum Houses
Area	1080,000 m ²	3120,000 m ²	500,000m ²
Ratio	23%	66%	11%

Table 3.2 Hong Kou District Residential Situation in 1949

However, based on the census data from Shanghai statistic bureau in 2010, *Hongkou* has become the slum community area with increasing social issues. Aging population over 60 years old is 20.62% of the total population, migrant population is already over 50% and keeps increasing.⁹ Meanwhile, the housing condition is not getting better. It is a quite common situation that the old residents and migrants are living in the same old *Lilong* communities, most of whose houses' owners have moved out, and the houses are becoming dilapidated because of lack of maintenance. As aging population and migrant population increase, large amount of new public facility and health caring services are immediately required, but the overwhelming communities are lacking the abilities. As the census data shows, in 2008, nine of the sub-neighborhoods

6 Social density is a measurement of population per unit area or unit volume.

7 王明琪. “虹口区适度人口规模研”. <http://www.firstlight.cn>.

8 陆震龙. “谈谈虹口区的人口、资源与经济的协调发展”. 《上海统计》 Dec. 2003.

9 上海统计网, 统计年鉴2011, <http://www.stats-sh.gov.cn/data/toTjnj.shtml?y=2011>

of *Hongkou* (total 10) have exceed their capacity, six of which even exceeded over 30%.¹⁰ Moreover, as the local residents moving out, the best factor that causes people to miss the life in old communities, the social connection and neighborhood support, is missing.

If we look at *Hongkou*'s demography from a macroscopical view, *Hongkou* district is divided into North half and South half by Shanghai's inner ring road, so the character of *Hongkou*'s demography development is greatly influenced by that geography feature, there is a large distinction between north and south. Most of the migrants settle down in the middle or north of *Hongkou*, and has a long-term living tendency. The birth rate of north is much higher than the average rate, and the education level in north is also higher because of the migrants are younger generation.¹¹ The community my thesis is working on has almost become a migrant's community.

3.2.5 Commerce

North Sichuan Road

The North Sichuan Road is an important commercial street in central Shanghai, and also the most prosperous and busiest street in Hongkou District. Before the Second Sino-Japanese War, once this road was called the North of the Sichuan Road. It runs south through the North Suzhou Road, passes through the *Hengbang* Road, and links *Shangyin* Road in the north. The shape of this road looks like the letter "S".

Before Shanghai has been settled as a port city, the North Sichuan Road was only a secondary street linked the Suzhou River and the Baoshan Town (now is *Baoshan* District of Shanghai). During 1860s, there were several stores and a nice ice skating stadiums. After the completion of the construction of the bridge over Suzhou River and the *Wusong* Railway, more and more

10 陆震龙. “谈谈虹口区的人口、资源与经济的协调发展”. 《上海统计》 Dec. 2003.

11 Pan, Yilun and others. “2009 Summer Practice Report”. Landscape Architecture Department, Tongji University. Aug. 2009.

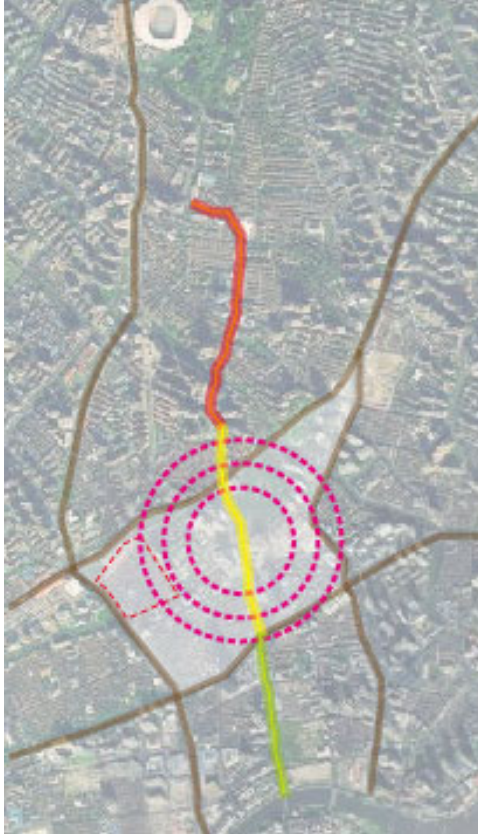


Figure 3.3 North Sichuan Road Urban Design Proposal, 2006--A Business Center and Three Parts with Different Commercial Orientations.

shops and inhabitants moved to this area. In 1877, the government started to pave the street, and in the same year, Gongji Hospital moved from French Settlement of the Bund to this area. Years later, with the construction of the road system, it grew up gradually. Firstly, it was named as the North of the Ferry Bridge. Then because of its connection with the Sichuan Road, it was renamed as the North of the Sichuan Road.

During 1920s, an increasing number of Japanese immigrated to this area. There appeared lots of Japanese stores, restaurants, tea houses, hospitals, schools and public facilities, such as Goumaizuhe (now is Sichuan Chinese traditional medicine Store), Fumin Hospital (now is the Fourth People's Hospital), North Japan

Xunchang primary school (now is the middle school attached to Education College), Neishan Hospital, and Japan Printing store. Even more, there was a Vegetable Market special for the Japanese immigrants. Because of the development of the public facilities around this area, from 1920s, the North of the Sichuan Road became the third largest street of Shanghai (after Nanjing Road and Huaihai Road).¹²

Since 2000s, North Sichuan Road starts declining. Competing with the new shopping centers nearby such as *Wu Jiao Chang*, the retails along North Sichuan Road aren't diverse and the facades are messy, businesses are not popular and attractive within young generation, and moreover, they don't fit the modern life style. The decline of North Sichuan Road greatly

¹² North Sichuan Road, Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Sichuan_Road_\(Shanghai\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Sichuan_Road_(Shanghai)).

influence the economic level of Hongkou District, together with the pressure from of large amount of old *Lilong* building, Hongkou is not a competitive district in Shanghai anymore.

Since 2006, a new urban design project has been started.¹³ This project tries to renovate this district by reorienting the commerce, developing the central area into business center, and by updating the transportation plan to correspond it. (Figure3.3)

3.2.6 Conclusion: SWOT Analysis List for District Context

● **Transportation:**

Strength - Being so close to Huangpu River and city center, *Hongkou* district has the geographic advantages of becoming Shanghai's water and land transportation hub or center.

Weakness – Large population flow brings safety issues.

Opportunities – The largest harbor along Huangpu River and the newly built *Hongkou* Football Stadium Transportation Hub will attract diverse investments, create large economy developing potential, and provide more job opportunities.

Threats – Heavy and unstructured traffic starts disturbing people's daily life and greatly threat people's safety.

● **History and Culture:**

Strength -- The large amount of cultural heritages help Hongkou keep Shanghai's city image.

Weakness – The old communities and old residents would not like to accept new culture brought by migrants.

13 Shanghai Tongji Planning and Design Institute. "Shanghai Metro Line 10 North Sichuan Road Station District Urban Design 上海轨道交通10号线四川北路站地区城市设计."

Opportunities – The large amount of Lilong community could promote Shanghai’s identity. Friendly neighborhood will establish people’s connection.

Threats – Competing with fast urbanism, historical features keep disappearing. The conflicts between local residents and migrants become severe.

● **Demography**

Strength—The large amount of old residents help keep the traditional living habit and local characteristics. The increasing migrants provide large labor supply for various business.

Weakness—The education level of large amount of aged people and migrants are not high, thus weak awareness of how to build better communities.

Opportunities—High density community can help establish urban proximity and activate the city space, bringing multi-culture.

Threats—Formal social connections in old communities are losing as the local residents moving to new residential areas. Large migrant population flow increases the difficulties of community administration. Increasing aged population and migrant population require a large amount of public services and facility supply.

● **Commerce**

Strength —The commerce in this district has long history and high reputation

Weakness – Most commerce are small business, and viability is weak

Opportunities— Adjust the business types, satisfy the demand of different classes of people

Threats— Commerce are not diverse enough, which can’t catch up with pace of the modern life

3.3 Community Site Analysis

3.3.1 Site Overview

The community I am working on is an old *Lilong* community, most of the people living there today are migrants, many of them are working in the video market next to the community. A few old residents are still living there, but only along the west alley. Spatially, this community is very separated with the outside city life. It is bounded by Baoshan Road in the west, new high-rise residential area in the east, and light rail in the north. The south edge has the potential to be a permeable edge, establishing the connection with other communities by sharing the same street as the entrance, but the iron gates make it impossible. (Figure 3.4) As the same as the other old *Lilong* communities, high density is a very evident feature of this community. Based on my calculation and estimate, this community's building ratio is about 65% , and building area is 73,960m² and the estimated population is almost 10,566. That mean each person only has 7m²



Figure 3.4 Community Site Location

living space. This is an estimation of current situation, while the density in this community was even much higher a decade ago.

3.3.2 Building Type Analysis

This community still keeps the traditional residential form and most of the historical Lilong housings. As shown in the diagram, there are four main types of buildings. The grey ones are the historical Lilong buildings, which are usually two to three story linear houses, with front or back yards, they are the majority. The brown ones around the historical Lilong buildings are the low quality concrete houses and temporary self-built structures constructed around 1990s. The others include the light blue factory storage space, and dark blue retail or market space. As the diagram indicates, the problem is that the characteristic historical housings are located in the middle of the community, however, cannot be easily seen or accessed by the people outside, therefore the culture value cannot be realized. (Figure 3.5)

3.3.3 Circulation

The alley network is the most crucial structure for Liling communities. This community used to have three north-south direction arteries and lots of east-west small lanes between each Lilong houses. It is a very expedite and interesting circulation structure: the alley network can bring residents to anywhere within the community efficiently with diverse choices; and people used to enjoy the fun brought by passing through small lanes which is distinctive from each other, being characterized by the users. However, nowadays this circulation network is totally broken. In order to prevent too much automobiles passing through the small alleys which bother people's daily life, concrete walls and iron gates are installed. The whole community is definitely divided into three unites, and the east-west alleys lose their functions totally. The circulation change also affects the land use around the community. The streets around the community become the major

routes instead of the three arteries: traffic nodes are switched to the backstreet, and the space along the east edge is heavily used by residents, as the community farm market, since it is easy to access. (Figure 3.6, 3.7)

3.3.4 Land Use and Activities

In such highly dense community, there's no park, plaza nor green space. The small alleys are generally the public open space serving for diverse functions, such as storing public facilities, community informational boards, private goods, hanging and drying clothes, meeting neighbors, kids playing. Since many alleys are blocked right now, the east and south edges of the community become the most popular places people meet and activities happen. In the daytime, retails and farm market occupy the whole street-that is the only social events that could happen in the community. (Figure 3.8, 3.9)

3.3.5 Environment and Public Health

Sine more and more migrants settle down and start their family here, the environment and public health issues start being concerned by both the local residents and migrants. During my interview process, some local residents were complaining that some migrants didn't have good health habit, littering everywhere, making the community environment messy. Some migrants plan to stay for long term living, especially the families plan to raise their kids in the community, are very worried about the environment and health issues such as food security, children's safety, noise, storm water contamination and garbage contamination. Right now, the resource I collected is not enough for supporting any argument about this community environment and public health's situation, but the photos taken during the site visit could show the current situation is not satisfying. (Figure 3.10) Moreover, the necessity of community open space is an urgent issue influencing the residents' mental health and social relation health.



Historical Houses



Old House Built in 1980s



- 3 Storey Historical House / no yard
- 3 Storey Historical House / with yard
- 2 Storey Historical House / no yard
- 2 Storey Historical House / with yard
- Yard
- Building Bridge
- Old House built in 1980s
- Factory / Storage
- Retail
- Video Market

Figure 3.5 Building Type Analysis



Ordinary Alley



Alley With Features



Alley Being Destroyed



Figure 3.6 Alley Type Analysis

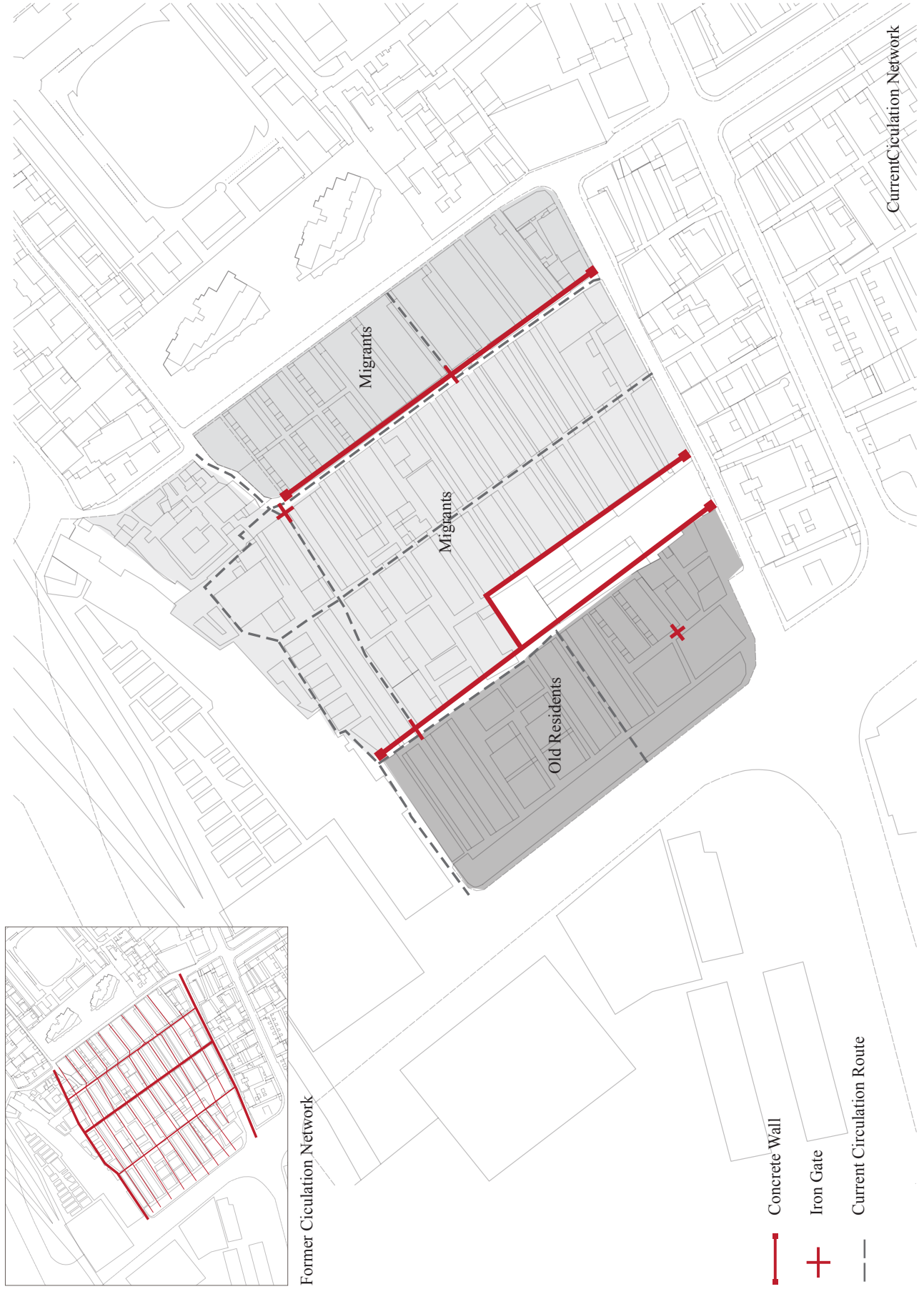
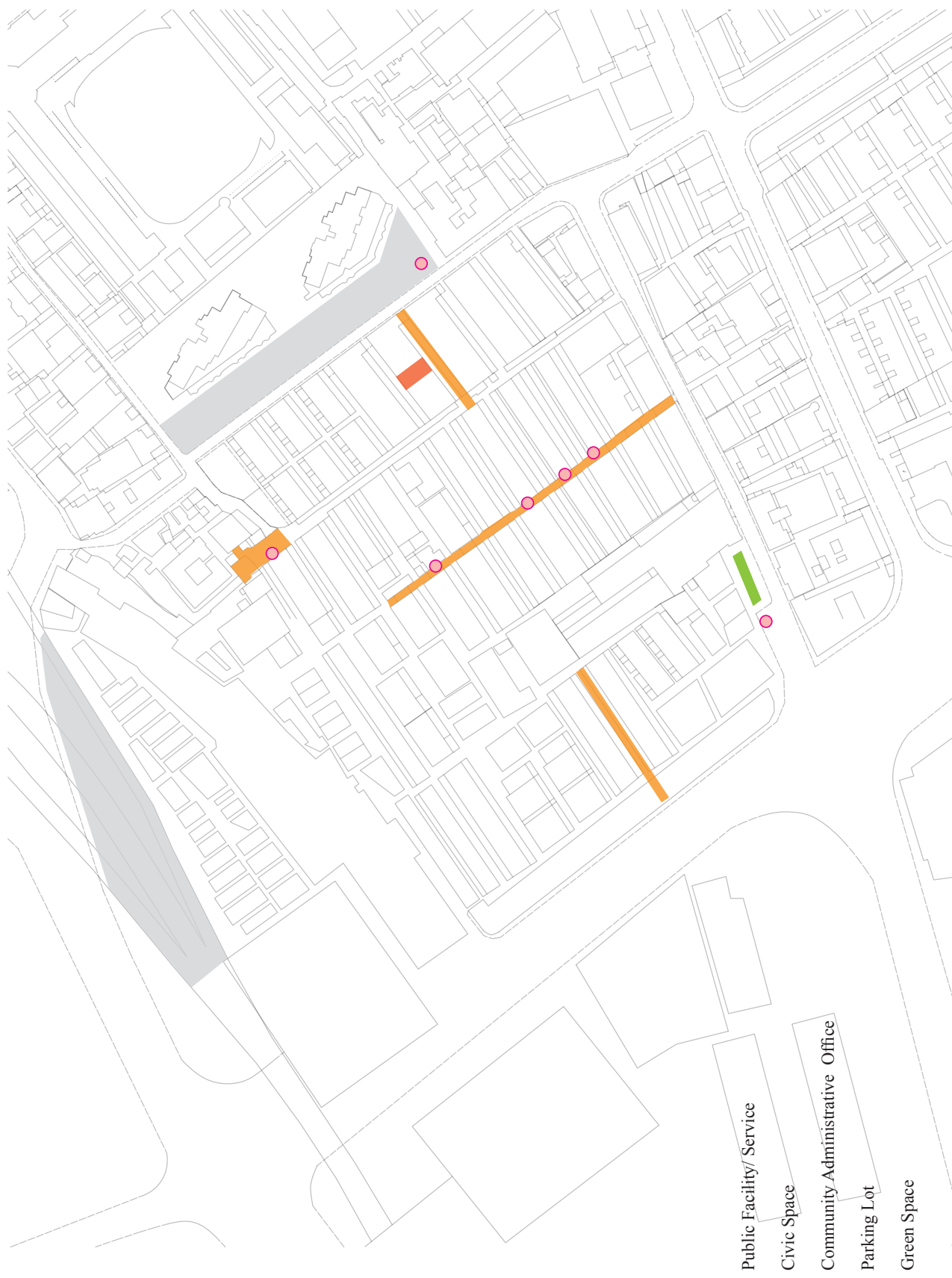


Figure 3.7 Circulation Analysis



- Public Facility/ Service
- Civic Space
- Community Administrative Office
- Parking Lot
- Green Space

Figure 3.8 Public Space & Facility Analysis

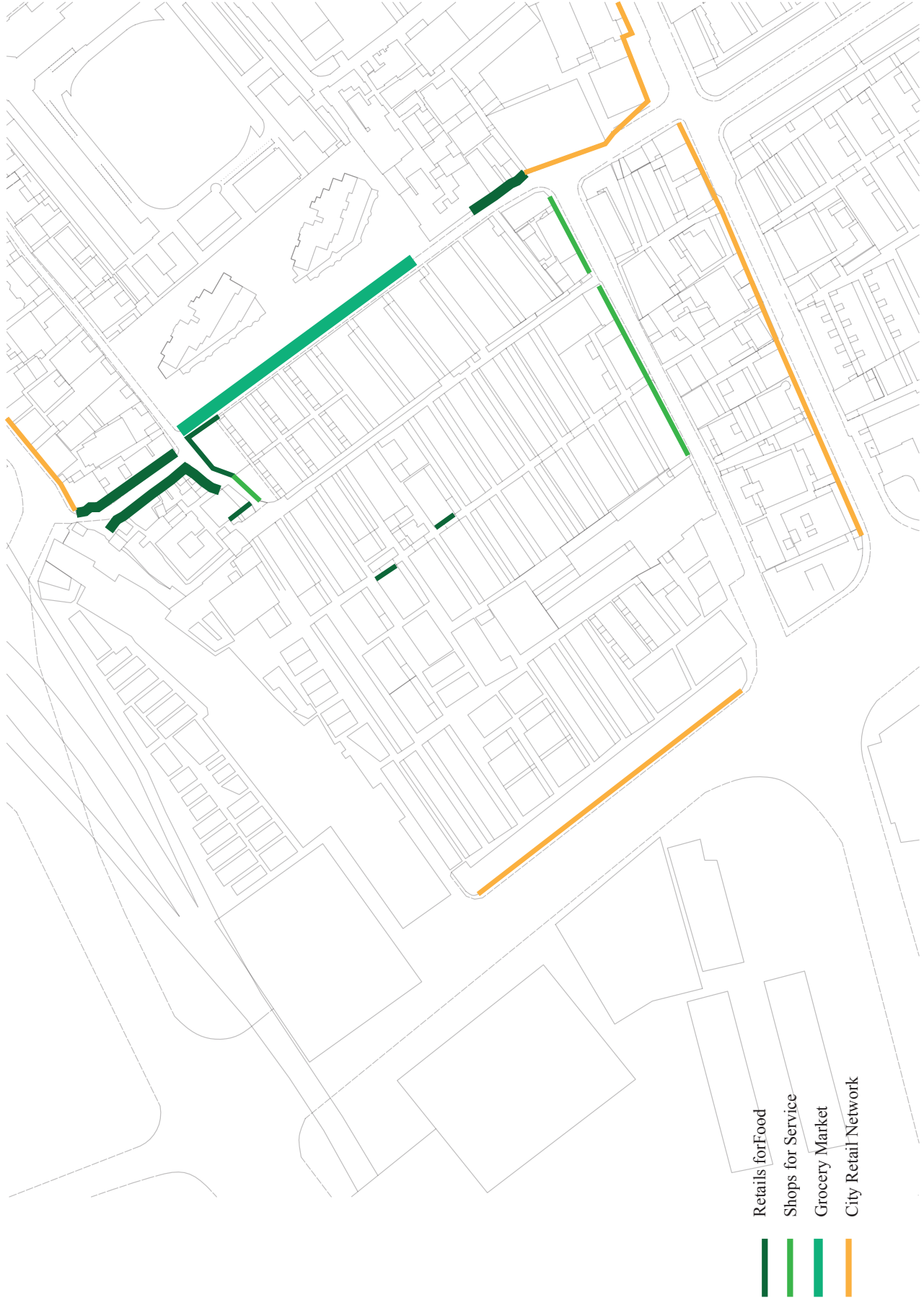


Figure 3.9 Commerce & Retail Analysis



Garbage



Stormwater & Sewage



Farm Market on Street



Figure 3.10 Environment & Public Health Condition Analysis

3.3.6 Conclusion: SWOT Analysis for Community Site

- **Building Type**

Strength —Lots of historical Lilong buildings are well kept.

Weakness – The edge space is bounded, the cultural value of historical buildings can't been seen

Opportunities— There's large potential to renovate the community and district, to let it become a historical preservation area has with high aesthetic and educational value.

Threats— The community will be quite possible being demolished during the fast urbanism.

- **Circulations**

Strength —Formal expedite and interesting circulation network

Weakness –Large amount of alleys are hard to manage, small scale alleys can easily be blocked, breaking the circulation network

Opportunities—Renovate the community circulation system into a very friendly walking system

Threats— Alleys keep losing functions and features, being greatly disturbed by auto-mobiles

- **Land Use and Activities**

Strength — Diverse behaviors happening

Weakness – No public park or plaza for social events, recreation and activities.

Opportunities— The highly dense community can bring proximities which encourage interactions in public open space

Threats— Public open space being occupied by self built structure and storage space

● **Environment and Public Health**

Strength — Parts of the residents have strong responsibility of the community environment

Weakness –Large migrant population flow makes the environment management very hard

Opportunities— The migrants with long term living plan can participate into the environment and public health administration, working together with the local residents

Threats— The public service, facility, administration supply can't catch up with the increasing demands

Chapter 4: Design Proposal

4.1 Assumption

The project is designed on the foundation of some assumptions. First of all, assume this old *Lilong* community could stay. As a matter of fact, there is a large possibility to preserve this community. As discussed in Chapter one, as the land value increase and the property law is announced, relocating so many communities becomes such a hard work to government, and during the city planning, the government indicates the willingness to renovate the old communities in central city. Additionally, the existing of *Tian Zi Fang* is a precedent which confirms that it is feasible preserve the of *Lilong* community in urban core area feasible.

Secondly, assume the migrants have the intention for long-term staying or settling down. During my site visit, I interviewed lots of the migrants living in this community, many of them have that intention but they cannot make sure they have that ability. The ones having families have especially strong intention for long-term staying, trying to provide their kids with better education opportunities.

4.2 How the Community Could Develop

This project is a test before I start my real professional career. In China, most of the projects are top-down planned, but as a future professional designer, I do realize how important public participation is. I am working far away from the community site during my thesis year, so the community participation cannot be realized during the thesis process, but I am looking at both from a professional view about how this community could be developed, as well as and from a bottom-up process view looking at how the community can participate into the design process.

4.3 Overall Strategies

In this community design project, I am not going to follow the typical professional community design process in Shanghai. As the designer of this project, I set my responsibilities as analyzing the design related issues, contributing the big planning concept, controlling this project's implementing direction, and suggesting small design intervention samples for community's reference. After coming up with the planning concept, the designer's work is more related with how to encourage and guide community residents contributing their ideas into the project and collecting their comments to adjust and refine the planning and design ideas. Therefore, within the whole process, the interactions between designer and community residents always exist, and more information from different people could be communicated.

4.3.1 Public Participation and Sub-neighborhood Control

Compared with the traditional design process, a sub-neighborhood idea is brought up before developing layers of planning systems addressing the community issues. It is being used as a principle encouraging and inviting the public participate into the community design process. After studying the former community structure, I divide the community into five sub-neighborhoods, each one has at least one cross road, so that it can create more chances for dwellers' meet up, and interactive activities. Assign different signage color code for sub-neighborhood identity, and that's easy for community administration. The following planning and design strategies could be under sub-neighborhoods' own initiative and control, and don't need to be accomplished in certain order.(Figure 4.1) A detailed recommendation will come at the next chapter which introduces how this process could happen together with the traditional design process.

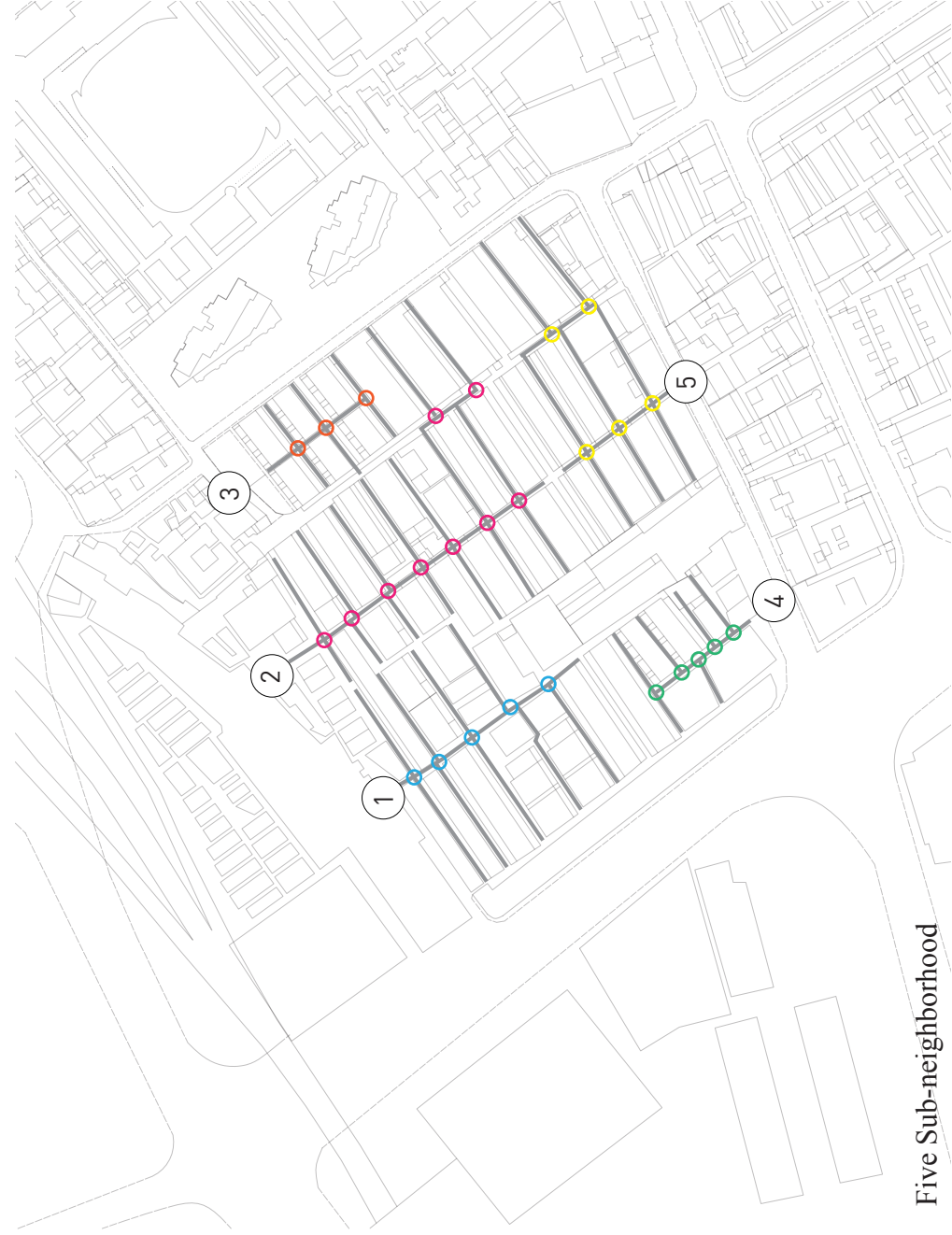


Figure 4.1 Sub-neighborhood Control

4.3.2 Four Layer Planning Systems

After project site research and SWOT analysis in Chapter 3, I summarize that there are four main issues with the old *Lilong* community:

- 1) **Lilong Buildings-** The historical buildings can't be easily accessed and the Architecture character and its value can't be seen and realized by people who are not living inside the community.
- 2) **Circulation-** The previous community circulation pattern is broken by the blockage structure such as concrete wall, iron gates and residents' self built structure.
- 3) **Land Use and Activities-** There are no public open space for this community's social activities, as a result people occupy the street space. Illegal retails and markets on nearby street are the main attractions.
- 4) **Environment and Public Health Concerns-** Unhealthy living habit, complains and arguments on environment issue between migrants and old residents, difficulties on environment management work.

In order to address those four main issues, four layers of planning systems are developed to ameliorate the current messy situation in this community. Simultaneously, taking advantage of the assets of this old community and the opportunities provided by its district context, which are summarized in previous SWOT analysis, there are great potentials to help this site to become a lovely community for both old and new residents.

➤ **Historical Core & Circulation System**

The blockage problem is the most serious issue of this community, since the former spatial and

social structure of old *Lilong* community are built on the proximity and adjacency that alley network brings. In addition, the historic core of this community can be devoured quickly if its value can't be realized.

Therefore, preserve the old buildings with classical Architecture characters as historical core. For the newly planned circulation system, one aim is to renovate the alley network. Removing the concrete walls and iron gates which block the alleys, three north-south alley arteries will be reused as main moving corridors, so as to make the alleys inside the community functioning again. Secondly, a new public corridor is created by connecting three main west-east alleys, and by extending it to connect the minor street on eastside, for the better community accessibility. The reconnection between east community and west community bring back the opportunity for socialization between migrants and local residents, finish the current east-west division. (Figure 4.2)

➤ **Green & Open Space System**

There used to be no green or open space in this community and the human activities are happening on the nearby street. For this issue, my strategy is to take the former factory storage space which is not really used, turning it into a large community park, which could be accessed by the residents in and outside the community. Set back the old houses along the backstreet, gain the pocket space as the community nodes at the end of three main north-south alleys, and also, decorating the new public corridor as green corridor to establish the green network.

Since the space I use as new public park is previous underused as factory storage, the community population capacity will not decrease while the density is reduced. This stratege even can make

more building faces facing the open space, it means more ground level space will have the potential for retail business. In addition, the factory storage space with its concrete wall around it used to be the biggest obstacle in this community, dividing the community into east units as migrants' place and west unit as old residents' place. Replacing this obstacle with a community park where everybody could hang out may bring more chances for the communication and interaction between migrants and old residents, reduce their conflicts.(Figure 4.3)

➤ **Commercial Network**

Though this community is located in North Sichuan Road District, surrounded by large amount of commercial and retail business, there are only few retails selling affordable stuff for the low income old residents and migrants. This situation encourages more and more illegal vendors (most are food vendors) running business around the community, the environmental impact and food safety issue could seriously influence the residents' health conditions. Also, as discussed above, the illegal retails and market are the main attraction attracting the residents in this community hanging out on street, occupy public transportation space. It is very necessary to find appropriate place for setting the community's own affordable commercial network is very necessary.

In the plan, the commerce opened along the central alley and backstreet are mainly used to serve the community residents. The retails along the front street and around the community park are used to attract outsiders to stop by, walk through the community. That commerce network is designed to tie the commercial network in North Sichuan District. (Figure 4.4)

➤ **Environment Management System**

For the environment management, I took advantage of the sub-neighborhood idea. The whole community is divided into five sub-neighborhoods, so the small size neighborhood is convenient for self administration or management. After the division, the public realm, the cross road space of each sub-neighborhood, could be used as sub public services station, which functioning as garbage collection place and public restroom. This structure is easy for public services access, such as garbage truck, by coming via the three main north-south alleys, going out via front street or back street, without turning round in community alleys. (Figure 4.5)

4.3.3 Design Interventions

In order to implement the planning, smaller scale design interventions need to be applied. For the planning systems, I pick several places in this community as typical cases, showing people how it could be changed and how the design goal could be achieved gradually. Meanwhile, I provide design recommendations for similar community space change. (Figure 4.8-4.13) After that, a programming plan (Figure 4.14) is suggested, so that community residents can get clear ideas about where the design interventions are, what other activities they can add, and how design interventions respond to the master plan.

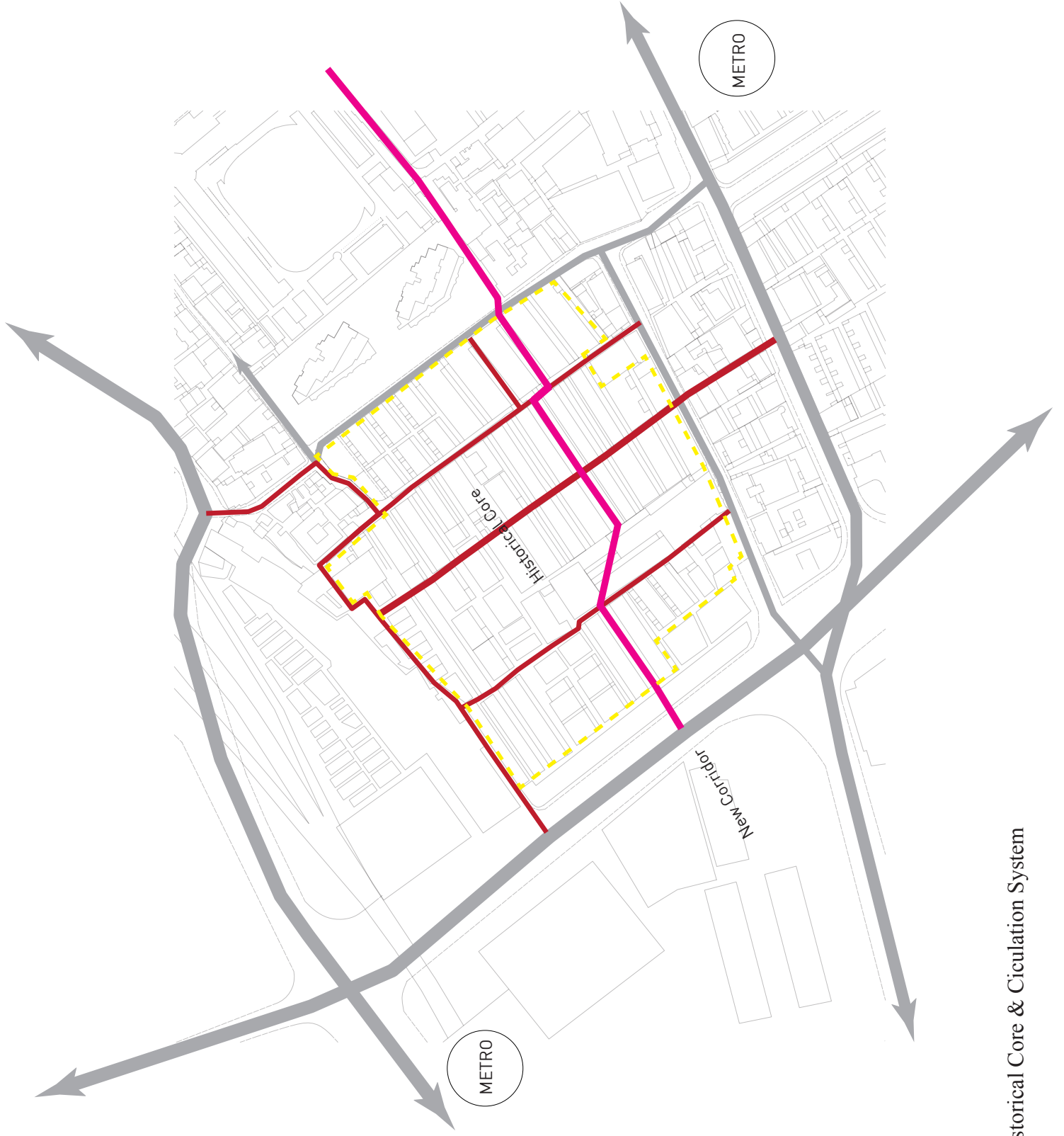


Figure 4.2 Historical Core & Circulation System



Figure 4.3 Green & Open Space System

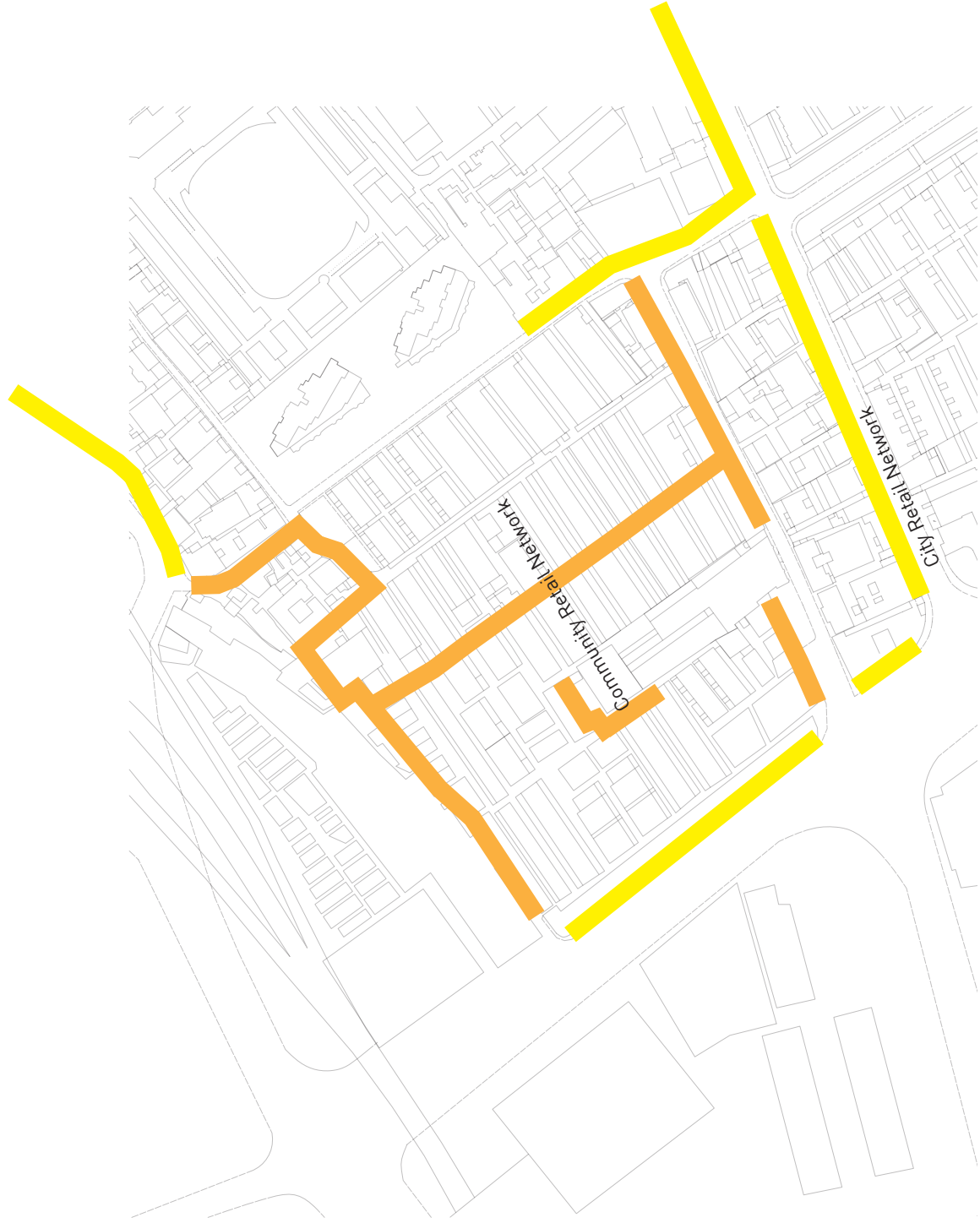


Figure 4.4 Commercial Network



Figure 4.5 Environment Management System

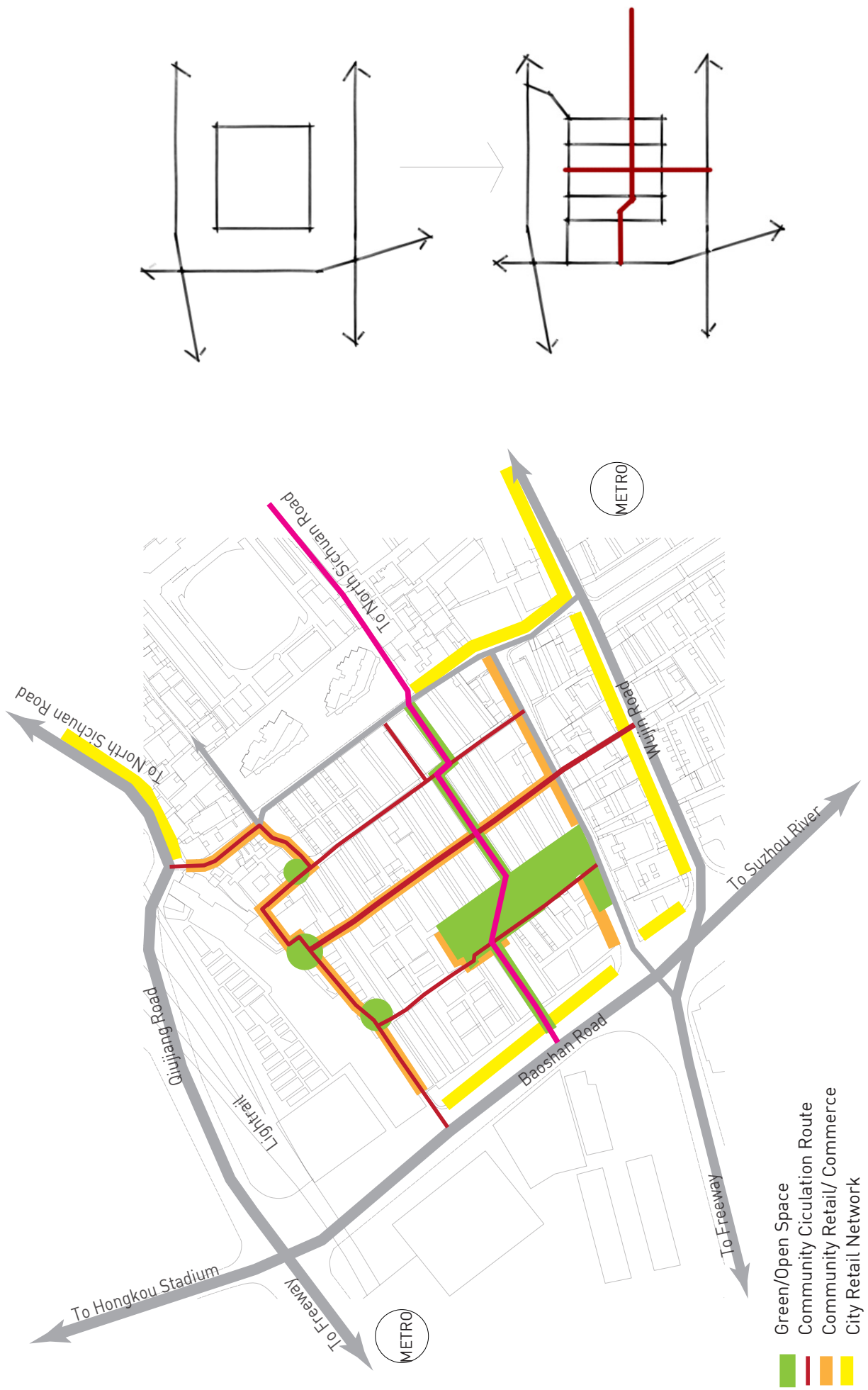


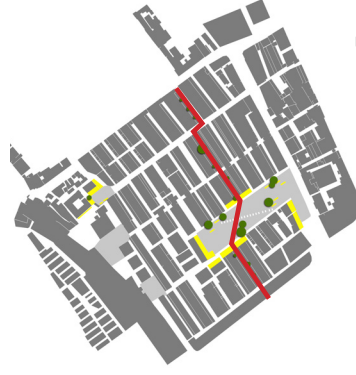
Figure 4.6 Master Plan



Figure 4.7 Community Plan



Current Situation



Location

Recommendations:

1. Remove the concrete wall at the dead end, use classical style stone archway instead
2. Use the same paving to connect public corridor (permeable material with stormwater basin if budget permits)
3. Signage
4. Green Buffer between pedestrian and residents' private door
5. Green canopy

Figure 4.8 Public Corridor Vignette



Current Situation



Location

Recommendations:

1. Stone gate with doorsill
2. Storage and parking management
3. Outdoor flower bed
4. Outdoor recreation intervention



Figure 4.9 Private Alley Vignette

Recommendations:

1. Set back the old house and temporary structure to gain the open space
2. Pave it as an integrated space
3. Make all the entrances legible/ with signage
4. Open ground level façade, use as retail
5. Outdoor seating and decoration
6. Garbage Collection Station



Location



Current Situation



Figure 4.10 Community Node Vignette

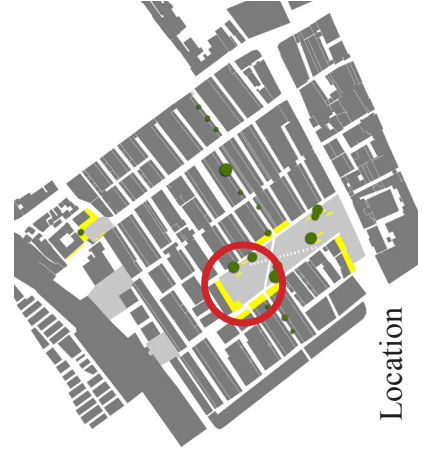


Recommendations:

1. Big open space for recreation and community events
2. Clear direction signage and guide
3. Retail and commerce around the park
4. Friendly feeling entrance invites outsiders
5. Safety at night (lighting & Guard)



Plan



Location

Figure 4.11 Community Park Vignette

Recommendations:

1. Clean the corridor (parking and storage management)
2. Walkable paving
3. Legible color code for each alley
4. Open façade as public-service places or retail
5. Outdoor seating under the building bridge, space used as civic-center



Current Situation



Location

Figure 4.12 Central Alley Vignette



Recommendations:

1. Traditional archway for community main entrance
2. Renovate the front street façade
3. Retail at the ground level



Location



Current Situation

Figure 4.13 Front Street Vignette



- Program Serves Community
- Recreation Area Serves Public
- Program Serves Public

Figure 4.14 Programming Plan

Chapter 5: Design Guideline and Process Recommendations

5.1 Design Guideline

5.1.1 Introduction

This community design guideline is going to set an overall vision and detailed design guidance for historical *Lilong* communities' preservation, future renovation and development. Also, I hope it could be used as a precedent, being applied to more old *Lilong* communities' renovation and development in central Shanghai, and helping building more livable urban communities to serve diverse populations and inherit the image of the city.

This community design guideline may conflict with the Shanghai Metro Line 10 North Sichuan Road Station District Urban Design to certain extent, especially at the argument of this *Lilong* community's preservation, but it could be used as a recommendation for Shanghai overall planning refinement and further consideration. Some design related issues may not be very well addressed at the current stage, but the design guideline still points them out for future regeneration.

In addition, the written guideline is a legible and understandable tool for community residents. It can increase the overall awareness of good design and involvement in community design process.

5.1.2 Overall Vision

The following priorities reflect the overall vision for this old *Lilong* community:

- Keep and ameliorate community's Shanghai character image with distinctive Architecture style; change people's discrimination of it as an urban slum community with messy self-built structures; let it become a community where people feel comfortable to stay and would like to revisit.
- Develop an inviting, convenient, pedestrian-friendly community with expedite and interesting alley network that contributes to a vital and attractive community.
- Create public green open space system within the community to enhance the community living environment, providing opportunities for public interactive activities and social events, encouraging the communication between local residents and migrants.
- Create good relationships between commercial areas, public service areas and residential areas, to increase the convenience for residents accessing all the services.
- Work to organize residents managing community environment and public health condition, set necessary sanitation stations, increase people's awareness of involvement in community management and corporation in community work, building a healthy community environment to attract residents for long term living.

5.1.3 Community Design Guideline

➤ Architecture Character

Lilong community is famous for its characteristic *Lilong* housing. The historical *Lilong* buildings are usually two to three stores high. The Architecture structure and settlements are invented by local residents, clear and rational, giving a high degree of security and quietness to its internal

living environment. The decorations on the building façade were initially influenced by the European style in foreign concessions during the World War II. *Lilong* Housing is the precious cultural heritage speaking for Shanghai's history. The design guideline aims to preserve the Architecture characteristics of *Lilong* community, highlight the community's image.

- Preserve the existing historical *Lilong* buildings in this community, remove the temporary structure around *Lilong* buildings which blocks the circulation built by residents illegally, repair the impaired structure.
- Renovate old *Lilong* building façade. Keep *Lilong* housing's architecture characters, using brick as façade material, red and dark grey as façade colors, repair the stone decorations on façade, remove unnecessary screen.
- Alien future building built in the future should alien with the existing *Lilong* houses, not occupy any alley space. The height should not exceed the three store *Lilong* house. The material and color code reference to the historical *Lilong* houses.
- Only permit small scale retails, residential and community services in the ground level of *Lilong* buildings. The users should not change the structure of the buildings.

➤ **Alley Network**

Same as the historic *Lilong* buildings, small alleys are another feature of old Shanghai *Lilong* community. Its scale is not suitable for automobiles, however, its strong connection could support creating a very pleasant pedestrian environment in community. The strategies in design guideline for alleys are to reconnect the broken circulation system, recover the former alley network, and encourage developing diverse alley characteristics to increase neighborhood identity.

- Remove or set back the structures blocked the alley, including the concrete wall and iron gate, leaving space to reconnect the alley network.
- Preserve the classic style community main entrance along community's south, east and east edges, and private housing entrance-Shi Ku Men, repair the decorations on the gate.
- Control auto mobiles passing through the community. Auto vehicles (only small cars) are allowed to pass community through the east-west central public corridor only at 10:00am to 3:30pm, after peak hour and before kid's going back from school.
- Alley signage system follows the classical codes, blue color, white front.
- Preserve the traditional paving style-stone path, select similar materials for new paving if necessary.
- If new alley is created, the scale of new alley should follow the former alley hierarchy.

➤ **Green and Open Space**

Lacking of green and open space is an issue the community residents are suffering from. They have to walk to the nearest public park for recreation or use the nearby street as their meeting place. Design guideline recommends adding green and open space into community. The community design should provide opportunities for special housing setbacks, community nodes, parks, plazas and landscape plantings along the alleys to enhance the living environment in community.

- Recommend the government purchasing the property of the nonuse factory storage space, used as large community park or plaza.

- Set back or remove temporary structure along the backstreet to gain space for community nodes. Encourage retails open around the community nodes.
- Plant green buffer and canopy along the central public corridor.
- Encourage Resident's private Landscape Planting in front of their home along alleys. The community administration office is suggested to provide supports and consult for residents' Landscape Planting.

➤ **Commerce, Retail and Public Service**

Commerce and public services such as community sanitation stations, reading room, meeting room, are very necessary public infrastructures for community life. In high dense community, set these services to be easily accessed by all residents and not to disturb residents' private life; But it needs design consideration of what type of business can satisfy residents' request, and attract outside consumers.

- Retails and commerce are recommended to be located along the south front street, east and west community edges, and around community park and nodes. Avoid too much retails in private alleys.
- Public services are recommended to be located along the central north-south artery, easy for residents' access.
- Three north-south direction arteries are suggested as public service routes. Public service cars could be permitted in community for only half an hour every time.

➤ **Environment Management**

Environment issue is seriously affecting residents' life quality in old communities. The design guideline offers methods or recommendations on how to manage the community environment.

- Assign signage color code for each sub-neighborhood, help the community determine each sub-neighborhood's administrative areas
- Set at least one sanitation station at the central cross road of each sub-neighborhood, including the garbage collection, recycle collection, and public restroom.
- Set stormwater basin in each alley for immediate stormwater drainage, preventing the alley being flooded in rainy season.

5.2 Recommendations for Design Process

5.2.1 Introduction

This is a master thesis project working far from the community site, public participation could not really happen during thesis time, but it is a chance for me to think of how a bottom-up community design process could be different from the typical top-down design process in Shanghai; and explore how the bottom-up community design could be accessible for public during every stage of the design process, and invite them to contribute their ideas, participate into the design built, and witness the project's completion and refinement.

As a matter of fact, for bottom-up community design, four groups of people will get involved

into the design process, designers, residents, community administrative office, and government, while in typical top-down design process, only government and designers control the whole project. Besides the traditional design work, designer is responsible for controlling the broad design idea and suggesting the process schedule during the corporation, while the other three groups could participate in at any time if necessarily.

5.2.2 Recommendations

The recommendation for design process is written for the three groups of people as followings:

➤ **Residents:**

- Participate into community meetings during every stage of the process and final design review, contribute information for community context and existing condition research during designer's site visit and interview, express demands and hopes for community design before the design proposal come out, and give comments and critics for final design product during design review.
- Contribute ideas for design and planning refinement, participate into the planning and design proposal approve.
- Contribute ideas for small scale design interventions, participate in design built process after the proposal is approved.
- Manage own living space, and participate into sub-neighborhood environment management after the project complete.
- Provide reflection for future project refinement.
- Help community environment maintenance and refinement for long term.

➤ **Community Administrative Office:**

- Organize community meetings, interviews and reviews through the whole process.
- Support the community design project and strengthen regional connection.
- Organize and develop the sub-neighborhoods, collect residents' feedback and comments, encourage residents to participate into design built process.
- Manage Community public service and environment.
- Work with government and other organizations for further mutual goals.

➤ **Government:**

- Provide data and resource for designer's project research.
- Outreach to community and residents, collect their voices during the whole design process, attend the community meetings and design review.
- Provide planning and policy guidelines for community design.
- Develop requirements for design chances within the community.
- Coordinate with community for further mutual goals.

5.2.3 Process Comparison

The following chart shows how the design process is typical in Shanghai, and how I recommend it could be ameliorate through a bottom-up process. (Table 5.1)

Bottom-Up Process		Typical Design Process
Community Visit & Interview		Context Research
Community Visit & Interview		Site Analysis
Community Meeting, Gathering Ideas	→	Challenges and Opportunities
Community Planning Review and Approve		Overall Planning Proposal
Community Design Review and Approve		Design Proposal
Community Coordinate, Clarify Responsibilities		Guideline/ Recommendations
Community Participation		Design Built
Community Reflection	→	Adjust Mater Plan

Table 5.1 Process Comparison

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Reflection

6.1 Opportunities and Limitations for Future Urban Community Design in the Lilong Community

6.1.1 Community Participation

Community participation during project design process was rare in China. One thing barriers public participation is that land property is owned by the government. Controlling the land development by the owner is uncontroversial to some extent, however, the particularity in China is that the owner is not the real user. In the past time, government never released the decision making right to citizens, but after the policy of reformation and opening, house property (not including the land) is permitted for citizens' purchasing and selling. Comparing to the situation that people had no awareness of getting involved in community affairs in the past, Chinese people now start to have a sense that they are the house owners and realizing they have the chance to speak out their ideas about their community built environment. The implementation of certain level democracy brings large opportunities for community participation in community design process. This is an issue depending on the transformation of social system and I can't foresee it from a designer's perspective, but it may bring limitations or opportunities for future democratic community design process.

The community participation part in my thesis could not be fully realized due to the time limitations of my thesis and my staying in the community. My recommendations for the design process suggest an agenda on when community could participate into design process and for what work they can engage in. But this agenda is based on two assumptions: the community could be preserved and the residents there have long-term living plan. The preservation issue is

related with the government decisions so that we can't address it from a designer's perspective. But it is another challenge to consider how to collect the public voice and invite public to participate into design process, in a community which has lots of flowing population who usually live there temporarily. Its success may require residents to have strong social responsibility- be willing to contribute their efforts and ideas, even though they only stay for a short time. This may require great education effort, time waiting, and self social value judgment, however, the realization of it can bring great opportunities for the improvement of this megacity's built environment.

6.1.2 Information Openness & Resource Sharing Platform

Information openness and the establishment of resource sharing platform is an immediate need for China's community design. Although some universities and professions in China are contributing effort to this work, its speed still can't catch up with the enormous urbanism speed. One reason influences this work is lacking of the accessibility to government-controlled information. As we know, good design is always foot on thorough understanding of site context, related information finding and accessibility is crucial. Moreover, experience sharing and precedents studying are usually good ways to learn assets from others, avoiding repetitive work. Actually, bottom-up community design projects are happening in China especially under the support from some international design workshops or school studios, just rarely. Also, many similar practices are happening in Japan, Korea, the countries with similar urban context. Establishing a resource sharing platform for community design could bring great ideas together and bring many advantages Asian countries can take of.

6.1.3 Other

Although in the context analysis part, many urban community design related issues are discussed, detailed investigations of some topics are limited, such as community environment and public health related issue, and the possibility for establishing sustainable green infrastructure in *Lilong* community. That is related to the resource limitation issue. A further detailed research can help old community design a lot especially when most of residents are aged people and migrants. Perception of what intangible heritages need to preserve in old *Lilong* community is not very articulated. There are lots of interesting folk art existed within old communities, and great space arrangement ideas for living in a tiny unit, which could be very excellent supplement to community's social life.

6.2 Old *Lilong* Community in New Urbanity

After discussing East Asian urbanism context in the first two chapters, and detail old *Lilong* community renovation design in the other chapters, it would be good to review the function of the old *Lilong* community for new urbanity in Shanghai even in Asian's context, and discuss the meaning of the thesis work.

When the emerging Asian cities are keen on constructing modern looking infrastructures, pursuing the so called international aesthetics by piling up high rise buildings, clearing up the city ground messy space, and lining up trees along the no-humanized scale street, they think they are creating global miracle, but as a matter of fact, they are creating a new modern looking city but absent of social sphere. Richard Marshall criticized in his book, *Emerging Urbanity: Global Urban*

Project in the Asia Pacific Rim, “these new Asian cities attempt to clean up the city, leaving out all that is organic about it; to include the messiness of life would weaken a project’s potential as a piece of global infrastructure and diminish the power of the global image”.¹ Actually, these global infrastructures are not bringing diverse pleasant city experience. Walking through the concrete forest every day, city dwellers are still missing the experience sharing a piece of fried tofu sold by the food truck on a messy street rather than having the delicate tofu in a five star hotel restaurant, and still enjoying running through small labyrinth like alleys rather than walking along a boring endless boulevard looking at the same trees aliened. Those tiny exiting moments often happen in livable urban places can never be replaced by luxurious facilities in giant concrete boxes.

On the contrary, old communities are the cradle for those diverse joyful social experiences. In Shanghai, most Shanghainese have their own distinctive stories about *Lilong*. It has many catalysts for organizing a livable community life, such as high density, adjacency, pedestrian friendly circulation network, interactive cross road space, which are the crucial elements design professions often suggest should to be brought into urban design projects.

Additionally, thanks to the old *Lilong* communities, so many migrants can find a “home” within this mega city. Those migrants are very important groups of people helping this mega city’s daily operation, and they become a kind of population this city is relying on. How to provide residential places for those new residents is very crucial to this city’s social life. Old *Lilong* community, or low-rent housing in the city, has the capacity to accept large numbers of residents, and has the potential to become livable communities in the cities for migrants’ long-term living.

1 Marshall, Richard. *Emerging urbanity : global urban projects in the Asia Pacific Rim*. London ; New York : Spon Press, 2003

In terms of considering what is the next step of new urbanity, it is true that thinking of new means to help people find their enjoyable city experience is worthier than spending lots of money and labor work to pursue a giant structure for binding people into the absent world. Instead of building more concrete boxes, think of how to take advantage of the assets and opportunities of existing urban communities. Bringing friendly community life back to both old residents and new residents might be another way for building global space. My thesis is a try of exploring the new means for urban development in China. Except tearing down all the “mess” in the city, there must be a better way to preserve the exciting moments of mess and improve the life quality in the city.

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