

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

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

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

Personal information	
Name	Yoshi So
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Studio		
Name / Theme	Planning Complex Cities	
Main mentorv	Lei Qu	Spatial Planning and Strategy
Second mentor	Geertje Slingerland	Urban Studies
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The project's alignment with the Planning Complex Cities (PCC) studio is evident in its emphasis on civic engagement, exploration of spatial and institutional dynamics, and focus on community-led planning. Furthermore, the project aligns seamlessly with the studio's thematic focus on 'Planning as Critical Engaged Practice', evident in its emphasis on community engagement, everyday experiences and socio-spatial outcomes. The choice of the PCC Studio is underpinned by the project's commitment to co-production, the involvement of diverse stakeholders and the embodiment of the Studio's principles by considering both formal and informal institutions in urban development.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	The Identity of Spijkenisse, The (Hi)story of a New Town
Goal	
Location:	Spijkenisse
The posed problem,	<p>Groeikernen, literally translated as 'Growth Cores', were small towns designated by the national government from the 1960s until around 1985 to accommodate the expected population growth in the Netherlands. Around the late 1950's the Netherlands anticipated reaching 20 million people by the year 2000 (Faludi & Van Der Valk, 1990), which sparked the need for innovative solutions in urban planning.</p> <p>Historic cities, particularly in the Randstad, were struggling with overpopulation, raising concerns about the emergence of a large, unhealthy and unsafe urbanised area. To tackle this problem, a concept called 'bundled deconcentration' emerged. The approach did not involve densifying existing cities, but</p>

	<p>rather constructing buildings in more rural areas by expanding smaller towns into medium-sized cities at a distance from historic cities. These extensions were designed as low-rise suburban neighbourhoods surrounded by green space, and collectively aimed to provide one million new homes (Provoost, 2022).</p> <p>Despite the ambitious initial construction, the Groeikernen have experienced a decline in popularity due to diminishing social standards, resulting in a lack of civic pride and a negative image (Provoost, 2022). However, in response to the pressing need for housing in the Netherlands, the Groeikernen are poised for a resurgence. They maintain their growth mentality, aiming for substantial expansion by increasing density but also diversifying functions to create more employment opportunities and promote self-sufficiency.</p> <p>The research into the Groeikernen is significant, drawing parallels between past challenges and current housing needs. Learning from their experience is essential. However, within these redevelopment efforts, local identity is often neglected and the unique qualities of these relatively young cities are overlooked. Examining the history of these young cities is becoming increasingly important as a counterpoint to current urban planning practices used in these cities.</p> <p>Despite their youth, the Groeikernen have both tangible and intangible heritage (Provoost, 2022). Instead of exclusively drawing inspiration from larger historic cities, it is essential to recognise and celebrate their unique qualities. To ensure a holistic approach to redevelopment, it is important to understand both the 'planned city', which refers to the original ideas and design choices the Groeikernen were initially based on, and the 'lived city' that has developed organically over time, encompassing the stories and experiences of its inhabitants.</p>
research questions and	<p>This research will focus on one of the Groeikernen: Spijkenisse, a former fishing village south of Rotterdam, which underwent significant changes from 1958 onwards when it was designated a 'growth municipality' to accommodate the influx of people from Rotterdam (Ontwikkelingsprogramma Spijkenisse, 1958; Werkcommissie westen des lands, 1958). In 1977, Spijkenisse also became a 'Groeikern', which increased the need for urban development even more (Reijndorp, 2014). In just 30 years the population of Spijkenisse grew from 3,000 to around 70,000, making it a medium-sized city (Gemeente Spijkenisse, 1999).</p>

	<p>This project will use Spijkenisse as a case study to research its identity and explore ways to implement it in the city's revitalisation. The research will delve into concepts such as place identity, the planned and lived city, and heritage as a vector. Additionally, it will examine participatory processes in urban planning and how they can be used to incorporate this identity in the revitalisation.</p> <p>The study aims to answer the research question: How can the identity of Spijkenisse be captured through a participatory process and enhanced in its revitalisation?</p> <p>To achieve this, the following sub-question must be addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the history of Spijkenisse influenced its identity? 2. How do individuals in Spijkenisse presently experience their city? 3. What is the desired future for Spijkenisse?
design assignment in which these result.	<p>This research aims to provide a multifaceted understanding of Spijkenisse's identity, with the final aim of informing and influencing its revitalisation. The intended outcomes of this study are manifold and include an historical overview, a collection of stories, workshops and a future scenario for Spijkenisse. The following sections articulate the intended outcomes for each phase of the research.</p> <p>HISTORICAL OVERVIEW The first output of this study will be a comprehensive overview of the history of Spijkenisse, mostly drawing from the literature and archive research. This part will go into the history of Spijkenisse, mostly looking at the planned city.</p> <p>STORY COLLECTION To capture the lived city and the intangible heritage, a collection of stories will be made, enriching and informing the historical overview. This story collection is a mix of past and present experiences and memories. By incorporating the perspectives of local residents, this method not only consolidates information but also empowers the community by providing them with a platform to express their views.</p> <p>WORKSHOP & FUTURE SCENARIO</p>

	<p>As mentioned earlier at least one co-creation workshop will be held, which is also considered an output in itself. This workshop will help the inhabitants to articulate their personal dreams for their city, and involve and empower them in the decision making process.</p> <p>Informed by the historical overview and the story collection, in the co-creation workshops, local inhabitants will create possible future scenarios for Spijkenisse.</p> <p>DESIGN OUTPUT</p> <p>The design output focuses on the neighbourhood scale, while also considering the city and regional scale. This approach ensures reproducibility for other New Towns and acknowledges that inhabitants have the most knowledge and opinions on how to revitalise at the neighbourhood scale.</p> <p>The scenarios will be informed by recurring themes in the literature on place identity and New Towns, as well as input from the inhabitants. These themes include spatial elements such as public space, green infrastructure, connection to the 'mother city' and employment, and the spatial composition of the city as a whole.</p>
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Process

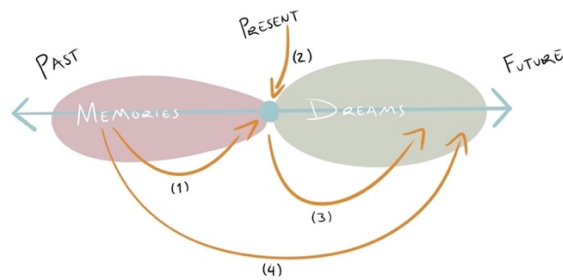
Method description

This research will go into the identity of Spijkenisse and how to use this identity in possible revitalisation. This chapter presents the methodology and methods that will be used to capture the identity of Spijkenisse and make a step towards the implementation of this identity in further redevelopment. The methodology integrates qualitative and participatory research approaches to identify both tangible and intangible elements that shape the city's identity. It examines both the 'Planned city' and the 'Lived city' using historical documents, literature, and storytelling as primary data sources.

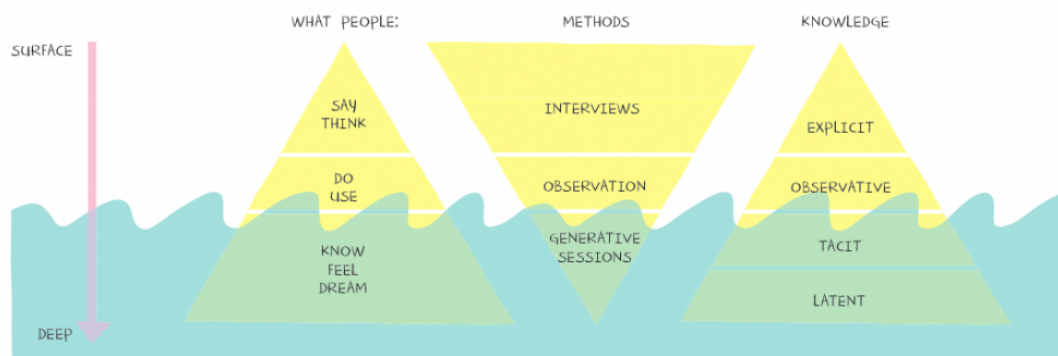
Research Design

The main research question of this research is: "How can the identity of Spijkenisse be captured through a participatory process and enhanced in its revitalisation?"

The research can be split up in three sections: past, present and future. Each section deals with different research questions that will be answered through different methods. This framework is based on the framework of the path of expression used by Sanders and Stappers (2012).



Methodological framework, adapted from the path of expression (Sanders & Stappers, 2012)



Methods that study what people Say, Do, and Make help access different levels of knowledge (Sanders & Stappers, 2012)

Past

In this section the central question will be: 'How has its history shaped Spijkenisse? (1) Answering this question requires both analytical and experiential knowledge. The analytical knowledge will be gained through archival research and literature research. The experiential knowledge will be obtained through the stories that people tell. As this is explicit knowledge, these stories will be gathered through interviews rather than generative sessions. The way in which storytelling plays a role in this part is through Story as Foundation, origin identity both as the 'core story'.

Present

The central question in this section is 'How do people currently experience their city? (2). It will look at experiences and stories, values and fears, using storytelling as the main source. These will also be gathered through interviews. Sharing experiences will help to access underlying needs and values, which will help in the next step of thinking about the future.

Future

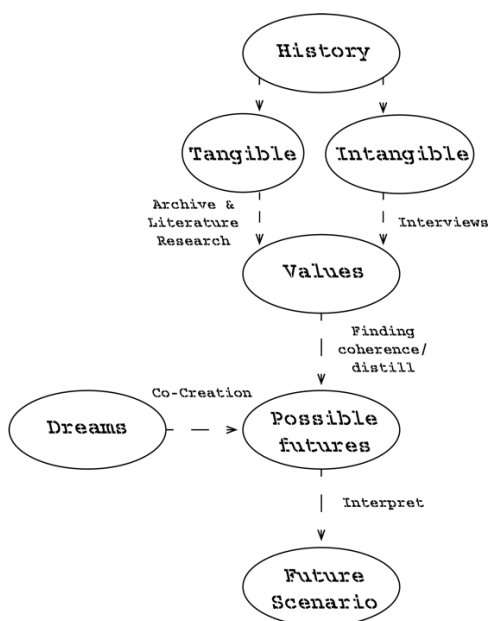
The final section will go into preferences and ideas for the future, asking locals what elements of the identity of the city they would like to see in future redevelopment (3&4). This

section will try to answer the question, 'Informed by its identity, what should the future of Spijkenisse look like?'

Because this is more implicit or tacit knowledge, for this section the method will be generative sessions like co-design workshops in which possible scenarios for Spijkenisses future will be created together with the participants. It will also be informed by the stories from the interviews, making use of story as a catalyst for change.

Participants or Sample

The target population comprises different residents, community leaders, local authorities, and experts in Spijkenisse. The research makes use of purposeful sampling, rather than probability sampling, to ensure diverse perspectives on the identity of Spijkenisse. Also it ensures that participants have a meaningful connection to Spijkenisse, know something about its identity and possibly have an opinion on how it should be revitalised. To account for the dynamic nature of identity, it is crucial to involve participants from various generations. The selection of participants also depends on the International New Town Institute's network in Spijkenisse.



Data Collection

An effective and ethical data collection process is fundamental to the success of this research. This section outlines the methods used to gain diverse and comprehensive insights into the identity of Spijkenisse, integrating archival, literary and participatory approaches.

Archive Research:

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the urbanisation and general history of Spijkenisse, archival research will be conducted. The history of Spijkenisse is well-

documented in the archives of the NAI and Voorne-Putten, as well as in the 'Oudheidkamer' at the local library and in the personal archives of locals. Archival research will provide insight into the planned development of the city, the designers' ideas for Spijkenisse, and how they were implemented.

Literature Research

In addition to archival research, literature research will be carried out to place the development of the city in a wider context, looking at the development of other (Dutch) New Towns and the planning principles that shape them. The literature research will mainly be done using the personal library of the International New Town Institute and Google Scholar. The keywords that will be used include 'Spijkenisse', 'Groeikernen', 'identity', 'history' and 'heritage'.

Interviews

In addition to literature and archive research, local residents and experts on Spijkenisse will be interviewed. The purpose of these interviews is not only to fill in possible information gaps in the archives, but primarily to capture the 'lived city' that has shaped its identity. Individual interviews with key stakeholders will provide a deeper understanding of personal stories, memories, and emotional connections to Spijkenisse.

Because general themes have to be found in these interviews and the research question is of an exploratory nature, the interviews will be semi-structured. This allows for flexibility, but still provides enough structure to find general themes.

The interviews will at least partially take place in the community centres in the different neighbourhoods in Spijkenisse.

Co creation:

To further explore the values of inhabitants, co-creation workshops will be held. The workshops will focus on the future of Spijkenisse, rather than the past or present, in addition to the interviews. As preferences for the future are more tacit knowledge, co-creation is important here. What the co-creation sessions will look like precisely, will also depend on the input from the locals during the interviews, but it can be assumed that the design decisions will mainly be on the neighbourhood scale.

Data Analysis

The research data analysis is a complex process that requires a balance between the participants' narratives and the planner/researcher/designer's expertise. To interpret Spijkenisse's multifaceted identity, historical records, literature, interviews, and co-creation workshops requires a comprehensive approach.

Interpreting Participant Stories:

The core of this research is based on the stories and experiences shared by the participants. Valuable insights into the lived city, perceptions, and aspirations for Spijkenisse's future are contributed by the participants through interviews and co-creation workshops. These

narratives, which are often rich in personal histories and emotions, form a crucial part of the data analysis.

The generative sessions are designed as co-creation workshops to gather information and instil a sense of ownership among the residents. Participants actively contribute to the creation of scenarios for Spijkenisse's revitalisation. In this context, the role of the planner, researcher, and designer is to facilitate and capture these ideas authentically. The aim is to ensure that the proposed scenarios reflect the genuine desires and values of the local community.

Incorporating Planner's Expertise:

Although participant input is valuable, it is equally important to consider the expertise of the planner, researcher, and designer. The planner is responsible for distilling, prioritising, and refining the outcomes of the generative sessions. This requires a careful assessment of feasibility, impact, and alignment with broader urban planning principles.

The planner analyses the project with a professional and objective perspective, taking into account factors such as urban sustainability, spatial design, and practical implementation. This expertise is essential in guiding the translation of community-driven ideas into viable and well-informed revitalisation scenarios.

Balancing Perspectives:

The success of data analysis depends on balancing the community's narratives with the planner's insights. The planner's role is to harmonise the participants' aspirations with the practicalities of urban planning, without overshadowing their voices.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent: It has to be ensured that all participants provide informed consent. It must be clearly explained what the purpose of the study is and how their information will be used.

Confidentiality: The confidentiality of the participants has to be safeguarded. If information is revealed during interviews and workshops, the participants' identity has to be protected and the information has to be anonymised.

Participation fatigue: In order to limit participation fatigue or distrust in future research, it is important to ensure that participation benefits the participant in some way.

Data Security: Data security measures have to be implemented to protect the collected data. This includes secure storage and restricted access to sensitive data.

Role of the researcher/planner: It is important to reflect on the role of the researcher/designer and how personal biases influence the outcome of the study.

Limitations

Sampling Bias: If the interviewees and workshop participants do not represent a diverse cross-section of the community, the findings may not fully capture the identity of Spijkenisse.

Subjectivity in Co-Creation and interpretation: Co-creation workshops may introduce a level of subjectivity. The interpretation of participants' ideas and the translation into revitalisation scenarios could be influenced by the researchers' perspectives, potentially impacting the outcomes.

Incomplete Historical Records: Depending on the availability and completeness of historical archives, there may be gaps in the understanding of the history of Spijkenisse. Incomplete or missing records could limit the depth of the historical analysis.

Dependency on Participant Recollection: Interviewees' memories may be subject to recall bias, which could affect the accuracy of historical information or personal experiences shared during interviews.

Limited Generalisability: Despite the similarities between New Towns, the results of the study may be specific to Spijkenisse and not easily generalisable to other cities or contexts. The uniqueness of Spijkenisse's history and community may limit the wider applicability of the findings.

Resource Constraints: Depending on available resources, such as time and funding, the depth of archival and literature research and the number of interviews and workshops may be limited, affecting the comprehensiveness of the study.

Conclusion

In summary, this research methodology is designed to explore the identity of Spijkenisse in a comprehensive way, with the aim of integrating this identity into revitalisation efforts. By using a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and participatory research, the study aims to uncover both tangible and intangible elements that contribute to the unique character of the town.

The research design emphasises a participatory process involving a range of stakeholders, including residents, community leaders, local authorities and experts. Purposive sampling ensures diverse perspectives, while the integration of archival research, literature review, interviews and co-creation workshops provides a holistic understanding of Spijkenisse's identity.

Data analysis involves a participatory approach, combining different sources to construct a coherent narrative of the town's historical development and current identity. The historical overview, generated through archival and literature research, provides the basis for understanding the urbanisation phases of Spijkenisse.

The participatory elements of interviews, workshops and story collection empower the local community by giving them a platform to express their views. Scenario building, carried out in collaboration with residents, ensures that proposed revitalisation strategies are in line with real local needs and aspirations.

Literature and general practical references

Dutch New Towns: This section provides a general overview of how the Dutch New Towns were first conceived, their current problems, and the concepts of the 'planned' and 'lived' city, which are central to this research.

Faludi, A., & Van Der Valk, A. J. (1990). *De groeikernen als hoekstenen van de Nederlandse ruimtelijke planningdoctrine*. Van Gorcum, Assen/Maastricht

Gans, H. J. (1968). *The potential environment and the effective environment. People and Plans*, NY: Basic books.

Gemeente Spijkenisse, afdeling communicatie. (1999). *De wording van een stad, een halve eeuw bouwen in Spijkenisse (1947-1999)* Drukkerij Spijkenisse

Provoost, M. (2022). *Een onvoltooid project: Over de toekomst van onze Groeikernen*. NAI010 Rotterdam

Reijndorp, A., Bijlsma, L., Nio, I. (2014). *Atlas nieuwe steden: De Verstedelijking Van de Groeikernen*. Trancityxvaliz Amsterdam

Reijndorp, A. (2019). *Nieuwe Stad, een gebruiksaanwijzing*. Trancityxvaliz Amsterdam

Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed. (2019). *Opkomst en ontwikkeling van de bloemkoolwijk Het ontwerp van woonwijken in Nederland en de zoektocht naar identiteit*.

Toekomst Nissewaard. (n.d.). *Toekomst Nissewaard*.
<https://www.toekomstnissewaard.nl/home/default.aspx>

Werkcommissie westen des lands. (1958) *Ontwikkelingsprogramma Spijkenisse*

Place Identity: This section will explore the meaning of 'place identity' and will explain the interpretation that will be used in this research.

Ali, O., Mansour, Y., Elshater, A., & Fareed, A. (2022). *Assessing the Identity of Place through Its Measurable Components to Achieve Sustainable Development*. Civil Engineering and Architecture, 10(5A), 137–157. <https://doi.org/10.13189/cea.2022.101407>

Lynch, K. (1960). *The image of the city*. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA01382449>

Peng, J., Strijker, D., & Wu, Q. (2020). Place Identity: How far have we come in exploring its meanings? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00294>

Relph, E. (1976) *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion Limited

Heritage in Revitalisation: This section will go into how heritage has historically contributed to the regeneration of cities and how it will do so in the future.

Bosma, K. & Kolen, J. (2010). *Geschiedenis en ontwerp: handboek voor de omgang met cultureel erfgoed*. Vantilt Nijmegen

Crimson Urbanists and Historians & Rottenberg, F. (2007). *Wimby! Hoogvliet: Future, Past and Present of a New Town*. Nai010 Publishers.

Janssen, J., Luiten, E., Renes, J., & Stegmeijer, E. (2017). *Heritage as sector, factor and vector: conceptualizing the shifting relationship between heritage management and spatial planning*. *European Planning Studies*, 25(9), 1654–1672.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2017.1329410>

Participation: This section will go into the topic of participation, showing ways in which storytelling can be used as a planning practice.

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). *A ladder of citizen participation*. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>

Dunstan, G. & Sarkissian, W. (1994) *Goonawarra: core story as methodology in interpreting a community study*, in: W. Sarkissian & K. Walsh (Eds) *Community Participation in Practice*. Casebook, pp. 75–91 (Perth, Institute of Sustainability Policy).

Sandercock, L. (2003) *Out of the Closet: The Importance of Stories and Storytelling in Planning Practice*, *Planning Theory & Practice*, 4:1, 11-28, DOI: [10.1080/1464935032000057209](https://doi.org/10.1080/1464935032000057209)

Reflection

1. *What is the relation between your graduation project topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (Urbanism:), and your master programme (MSc AUBS:)?*

Relation to the Planning Complex Cities Studio:

The project aligns with the goals of the Planning Complex Cities (PCC) studio, as it emphasises civic engagement and explores the relationship between spatial and institutional factors. The exploration of institutional reasons contributing to the decline of Spijkenisse and other New Towns directly connects with the central objectives of the PCC studio.

In addition, my project aligns with the thematic focus of 'Planning as Critical Engaged Practice' within the studio. It emphasises the importance of community engagement and everyday experience in urban development. My research places emphasis on elements such as socio-spatial outcomes and design thinking, which is very much in line with the overarching aims of the studio.

My project aligns with the studio's emphasis on co-production, involving a diverse range of stakeholders in the planning process, and the strategies I employ, including community-led planning and collaborative action research, align well with the studio's emphasis on co-production.

The project embodies the principles of the PCC studio, which values attention to both formal and informal institutions. It engages with community perspectives, navigates institutional dynamics, and employs strategies aligned with the collaborative spirit of urban development endorsed by the studio.

Relation to Urbanism

By employing various methods such as historical analysis, storytelling, and co-creation workshops, my project thoroughly explores Spijkenisse's identity. This aligns with the primary objective of the Urbanism master track, which is to equip students with the academic skills required for critical analysis of urban environments and the development of sustainable, efficient, and livable solutions.

Additionally, presenting a strategy that can be adapted and applied to other New Towns within the Netherlands or on an international scale fits perfectly with the global perspective of the Master track of Urbanism.

Relation to the Master programme:

Engaging with the identity of Spijkenisse through a comprehensive methodology involving historical analysis, storytelling and co-creation workshops, my project fits within the broader scope of the Master's in Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences (AUBS) programme. The program not only cultivates analytical skills for a profound understanding of urban environments but also encourages the development of innovative solutions for sustainable and livable urban spaces.

Furthermore, my project's research-based and design-led aspects align with the program's emphasis on blending knowledge and skills from design practice and social sciences.

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

This research builds on the ongoing research of the International New Town Institute, mainly going into the topics of heritage and storytelling within revitalisation of New Towns, which has proven to be relevant internationally.

By emphasising participatory planning and co-creation, the project empowers the local community. Involving residents in shaping the future of their city fosters a sense of ownership and pride.

The exploration of Spijkenisse's identity and historical narratives preserves and celebrates its cultural heritage. This is essential for maintaining a strong sense of place and identity among residents.

As said, the strategies proposed in this project are not only tailored to Spijkenisse but also offer a replicable model for other New Towns. This has implications for urban planners, architects, and policymakers involved in revitalising similar urban developments nationally and internationally.

The combination of historical analysis, storytelling, and co-creation workshops presents a methodology rarely used in urban research. This approach may inspire further studies and research methodologies in the field of urbanism.