FOR URBAN VIC TEAM

Village in the City transformation in Shenzhen China
FREEDOM VIC FOR URBAN VIC TEAM

Village in the City transformation in Shenzhen, China

Studio Design as Politics

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Cover:
Photograph of VIC in Shenzhen
(by the author)

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Mentors:
Main mentor: Prof. Dr. Wouter Vanstiphout
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This graduate project is called “Freedom VIC for Urban VIC Team”, which is dealing with the Village in the City (VIC) transformation in Shenzhen China, focusing on the transformation of VIC (the “ghetto” area), in Shenzhen’s current society.

This project derives from the current situation that there are 251 VICs in the inner city of Shenzhen, and those areas are always be regarded as a negative place, “ghetto” place from official perspective. As a result, government always make “Top-down” transformation in VIC area which aims to improve the physical qualities in VIC but erase all the values of VIC.

Therefore, the project is aiming to find out better approach for VIC transformation by finding both the negative and positive values of VIC from social, physical and cultural aspects.
THESIS STRUCTURE

CHOSE
chose and describes the context of my ghetto

BREAK IT DOWN
dissect the ghetto in much more layers, show the position and problems in the ghetto

DESIGN
design my ghetto strategize my design
VIC in Shenzhen
Shenzhen – A fast magacity growing within 30 years
Two worlds in Shenzhen

VIC Observation
What is VIC?
VIC Growth Process
Official VIC Transformation
VIC’s Physical Values
VIC’s Social Values
VIC’s Actors
Problem Statement
Aim
Project Objects

Freedom VIC
Vision
Tissue
Section
Public Private Relationship

The Build of Freedom VIC
Game Rules
Game Process
Game Result

Conclusion
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1. VIC in Shenzhen
Shenzhen – A fast megacity growing within 30 years

Full of all the gifts for new urbanity, proximity to Hong Kong, only 20 minutes train ride away, the former conical protectorate could enable it to become the China’s global city.

The city population expanded 400 times in size
Shenzhen reached a population of 8 million and an average GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of 20 billion US dollars in 2002, the population has grown 400 times and the GDP has grown 500 times in 22 years.
The political and geographical advantages
The Shenzhen miracle is partly due to China’s open door policy. It also has benefited from a good location neighboring the well developed free trading port city of Hong Kong.

The effective city planning
The constant updating of Shenzhen’s master plan, which allows the city to adapt to its high speed urban growth, has been a great contribution and driving force to the city’s overall development.

The Honor form UIA
As a model of fast developing urban planning and construction, Shenzhen’s master plan earned a honorary mention of the Sir Patrick Abercrombie Prize during the 1999 Beijing UIA world congress.
Shenzhen claim itself 55 million square meters of building within one year in 2003.

Compare to the situation in Netherlands it is 2X of the issued building area (27 million) in whole Netherlands in 2003

30X floor area of the entire long-term ambition of Amsterdam-Zuid Axis project.
Two worlds in Shenzhen
There seems two worlds in Shenzhen, the spectacular dreamed world, the ugly grimy world.
The spectacular world which roughly repeat the Soviet grids, and be filled up with all kinds of skyscrapers, which officially envisioned to produce a contemporary garden city before, while the other one irritatingly inject disorder to the surrounding make-believe city.
2. VIC Observation
What is VIC?

Geographic definition

Surrounded by skyscrapers of urban areas, VICs are characterized by anomalous dense fabrics. They are informal settlements, as original villagers “illegally” construct houses for the floating population that migrate from rural areas, looking for temporary job in the city without permits to actually settle there as “citizens” (Lin, 2007).
Geographically, “Village In the City” (VIC) is a place characterized with anomalous dense fabric of spontaneous individual low-rise dwellings and surrounded by skyscrapers.
Peter Marcuse defines classic ghetto as the result of the involuntary spatial segregation of a group that stands in a subordinate political and social relationship to its surrounding society, the enclave as a voluntarily developed spatial concentration of a group for purposes of promoting the welfare of its members, and the citadel as created by a dominant group to protect or enhance its superior position. The author describes a new phenomenon, connected to global economic changes: the outcast ghetto, inhabited by those excluded from the mainstream economy by the forces of macroeconomic developments. The distinction among these differing forms of spatial separation is crucial for a number of public policies.
From Ghetto perspective
VIC is a poor densely populated post-rural area occupied by a low-income floating group linked together by economic hardships and social restrictions.
There are two important key words in this definition, “Post-rural area” and “low-income floating group” which spatially and socially characterize the VIC Ghetto. In the following chapter, I will elaborate more about these two words.
1980 The 1st SEZ

All VICs were once a ‘stand-alone’ farming village, a spontaneous agglomeration of individual low-rise dwellings until 1980, Shenzhen became the first Special Economic Zone (SEZ). At that time, Shenzhen is still a small fishing village with a population only 20000 and 1500 are floating people.

1990 Land Reform Movement

The becoming of SEZ brought a lot of open policy to Shenzhen, in 1987, Shenzhen firstly had the Land Reform Movement, and land became a trading element which could be traded on the market. Since then, enormous farmlands were occupied by investors.

1995 Collective Landownership

As urbanization touches the village, the authorities negotiate with the villagers and purchase their farm land at very cheap price. The villagers become the villagers lost their farmland, so they find a way to make a living. In the meanwhile, Shenzhen got its first leap in its history. The success archived by this first SEZ, began to attract more and more people to come.

Normal Villagers

Villagers Lost Farmlands

Villagers Lost Their Farmlands
Landownership

As urbanization touches the village, the authorities negotiate with the villagers and purchase their farmland at very cheap price. The villagers lost their farmland, so they were forced to find a way to make their living.

The GDP of Shenzhen got its first leap in its history. The success archived by this first SEZ began to attract more and more people to come.

2000 Mass Migrants

The following 5 years, Shenzhen came across its enormous migrants. Migrants contribute a lot in Shenzhen GDP development, in the meanwhile, the VIC villagers found opportunities in migrants. The ex-villagers began to grow “houses” rather than “crops”. They cooperate with investors to build illegal constructions and supply cheap renting houses to Migrants.

2010 SZ-HK Metropolis

After 10 years, the growth of GDP in Shenzhen went steadily, however, the migrants increased more dramatically. The latest statistics from Shenzhen Statistics Bureau shows that the floating population in Shenzhen reached 6487600, almost half of Shenzhen’s population, and 85% of them are living in VIC areas.
Collective Landownership

The occupied farmland became the city area; however, the left were still village area which means the left village area should still follow the collective landownership. The occupied farmland became the city area; however, the left were still village area which means the left village area should still follow the collective landownership. So here comes the “Post Rural Area”, a rural area surrounded by city, and still following the collective landownership.

According to Shenzhen VIC land regulation, every family would get a 10 * 10 plot for their own use to build their own house, however, it is forbidden to make any commercial profit from it.

If we take 100 * 100 as an example, according to the Shenzhen Building Law, the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) should be 1.2.
Illegal Constructions
In order to get the maximum profit from the left land, ex-villagers took up all the undefined empty spaces, and filled it up with illegal constructions, and make the FAR reached 4, which is the FAR for high rise communities in China.
In Shenzhen, the government encourages the developers to take part in the VIC renewal. For them, the issue of VIC is an urgent problem to solve, because the VIC standard is still far below the Shenzhen Garden city standard. The government even made a special department in the Urban Planning Bureau which only deals with VIC renovations.

However, it is not easy for a developer to get involved in a VIC renovation project, because of the huge amount of land compensation fee which has to be given to the collective. In this case the project failed to meet the high relocation fee, so that the financial towers which could not be built as planned.

This planning would completely replace the current Caiwuwei cheap housing. There are 3 towers for the collective relocation: luxurious residential, hotel, office and commercial.

Shenzhen demography is composed mainly by the floating population, whose amount is far more than the registered population. There is a high demand of cheap housing in the city centre. The VIC serves as a starting step for the floating population to make a career in the city. Without the VIC serving as the cheap housing in the city centre, we assume that it is difficult to move forward.
Starting from 1995, VIC transformation has already begun for 15 years. In those plans, VICs were always erased by the office and residential towers, which is perfectly matched the point where the government think it qualified for Chinese global city.
The official tabula rasa transformation only aims to improve the physical quality, erased the existing values and social qualities of VIC, and lack of consideration of local needs.

Sources from Berlage Institute VIC research
VIC is a very dense area differs from the surrounding city. It occupies 10 percent of Shenzhen’s Floor Area, 1/5 of Shenzhen’s Construction Area, and 50% of Shenzhen’s Population.
Taking Nantou VIC for example, the FAR number is much larger than the normal city neighborhoods. Its population is even 25 times than normal city area. The average income of VIC inhabitants is only 1/3 of normal citizens. However, if we take VIC population into account, the economic potentiality of VIC is even 7 time of normal city area.
Ingenious small scale survival solution
VIC inhabitants have their informal way to survival in VIC area as well. They have different way to use the space and different material to build their space. All those informalities work as ingenious small scale survival solutions to solve the problems in side VIC.
A Place Full of Diversity & Vitality

Paradoxically, the impression of VIC was one of human scale, a feeling of place and space missing in the surrounding make-believe city. Some of those places even busier than the city centre in the weekends.
Photos from Urban China
Photos from Urban China
VIC’s Social Values- FP

The Gateway For FP
FP (Floating Population) coming to the city, start their life in the city. They usually follow the same track: Coming from rural area; Rent cheap housing in VIC; Buy a small unit; Rent out the small unit; Buy a villa. Most of them stopped in the second step, earn some money, and come back to where they come from. Only some tough ones come to the further steps. Therefore, VIC works as the “Gateway” for FP to start their life in the city.
VIC Inhabitants

The VIC inhabitants generally composed by two groups: the Ex-villagers, and the Low income floating group. The population of Floating group is 14 times of Ex-villagers. **Low income floating group**, is a group of people looking for temporary jobs in the city, but without permits to actually settle there as “citizens”. 13% of the low income floating population is high educated low income people, and 87% of them are rural migrants.

*Sources from Urban China & Berlage Institute VIC research*
Chinese landownership

In China, all the lands are belonged to the whole country, but the government helps to take care of them. The lands are divided into two types: the state owned land and the collective land. Normally, the urban land is owed by the state, where the land use right is transferable to developers with different time limits according to the programs. On the
other hand, the rural land is owned by the collective, with different uses which covers the Housing-based land (HBL), Farm Land (FL), Reserved Collective Land (RCL), and Land for Collective Development (LCD).

This created the dual land management between urban and rural. This is also the differentiation of VICs from slum areas.

Sources from Berlage Institute VIC research
BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Land ownership
Land use right

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Individual

LAND USE RIGHT
Can not be change or transferred

TYPE
House Based Land
Farm Land
Reserved Collective Land
Land for Collective Development

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Individual

LAND USE RIGHT
leased with in a time period
can be change or transferred

TYPE
Commercial 40 years
Residential 70 years
Office use 50 years
Mix use 50 years

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Land ownership
Land use right

Building
Individual

Land for Collective Development
Farm Land

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Individual

Land use right
Individual 70 years

Land for Collective Development

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Land ownership
Land use right transfer

Building
Individual

Land
Collective

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Individual

Land use right
have to be repaid for extension

70 years have passed

70 years have passed
BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Land ownership
Land use right transfer

Building
Individual

Land
Collective

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

Land use right
have to be returned to
the state

Sources from Berlage Institute VIC research

BUILDING OWNERSHIP
Land ownership
Land use right transfer

Building
farmer child inherits the building and the land

if no child, the collective takes it back

Land
Collective

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

Land use right
a citizen child inherits the land
use right till the time limit

VILLAGE IN THE CITY
LAND TRANSFERRING

Building
Individual

Land
Collective

Rural Area
land ownership: collective-owned
no time limit

Urban Area
land ownership: state-owned
leased within a time period

Developed Land
village company

Building
House Based Land
individual

Land for collective development

government acquired farm land
Villager’s Identity Transfer
VIC’s transformation is a non-architectural process, but it does influence the transformation mechanisms of the ViC. The government recently pronounced all ViC villagers to be ‘citizens’, meaning that the state wants farmers to lose their constitutionally guaranteed land rights in order that the current contradictions and tensions of urban development can be dissolved. Such a decree implies no farmland, no job and no possibility of operating a business, nothing for farmers to hand down to their sons.
It looks as though the government is seeking in this way to bring the transformation of the ViC under control. It is a matter of great importance for all parties, because it defines the limits of the land operation. In the past, villagers switched status in order to improve themselves by marrying a citizen, attending university, and so on, which could have positively influenced the future of China. But the reality today is that the villagers are subject to the political identity being thrust upon them in order to deprive them of their rights.

Sources from Berlage Institute ViC research
VIC’s Actors

Floating population has no demand for change because:
1) Comparing the living condition of their own house in rural area. VIC is much better in terms of infrastructure.
2) Since VIC is not the permanent place to live, they don’t care much about the environment.
3) They have no other choice for VIC is the only place in city they can afford to live. Since change always need to invest money, after renovation, they can not afford this place anymore.

Government want to involve because:
1) The physical condition of VIC is a shame for political achievement.
2) The low efficient land exploitation. If use the HBL to develop other program as commercial or industry. Government can get more tax and land exploitation change fee.
3) Large uncontrolled floating population bring a lot of social problems
4) degenerated villagers are the hidden trouble of society

The difficulty for government to involve is the money. Since the compensate for HBL and villagers’ house is huge amount of money. For majority Guangzhou’s VIC (large area, extreme high density), it is impossible for government to pay this money.

Citizens, needs new house. The land price in SZ, make house like a big burden for them.

Government have limit social houses.
Villagers are not interested because:
1) Majority of villagers are not live in VIC anymore.
2) They don’t have other work skill. House renting earns a lot of money.
3) They don’t have foresight due to poor education.

They want to change only when they are sure they will not lose any money in the process of renovation and after reconstruction they can easily earn more money.

Developer is interested in the high land value of VIC
The difficulties for developer is
1) Negotiating with so many villagers is very difficult.
2) The compensations for house and land use right fee are too big.
3) Government don’t trust them. Because in order to get balanced profit, the FAR need to be much higher than existing condition to meet the cost, which is very difficult to achieve better living condition.

Village organization want to improve the environment because they know cheap house rent is not the most profit way. Better environment can bring more profit.

The advantage of Village organization is :
1) Negotiation is not difficult, since villagers have stakes in the enterprise
2) Goverment trust enterprise and willing to give some preferential policy
3) Since the land use right still keep in village, enterprise only need to pay the compensations for house.

The only difficulty is the starting mondy is still a big amount of money, the village enterprise need to be quite rich.

Sources from Berlage Institute VIC research
VIC's Actors in Different Phases

Phase 1

Dual land ownership system and dual authority management

- No connection, no game

Phase 2

Infrastructure connection, VIC still have some farm land.


Phase 2

Infrastructure connection, VIC still have some farm land.

- Government reclaims come farmland, sell to investor. Through this process, government earns a lot.

Phase 2

Infrastructure connection, VIC still have some farm land.

- Villager and investor realize it's unfair. They directly negotiate with each other. Negotiation process educated villagers.
Phase 2

Infrastructure connection, VIC still have some farm land.

Villagers realize sell land is not the most profitable way. They began to cooperate with investor or build buildings to rent to investor.

Phase 2

Infrastructure connection, VIC still have some farm land.

Government aware itself out of the game. Then Government set law. Land use right transfer must through government. In return, government will leave 8-15% farm land as LCD (land for collective development) and more compensation.

Phase 3

VIC have no farm land. LCD and HBL are fully occupied by buildings.

- After reclaim all farm land, government feel no profit anymore and drop out from the game. Village organization and villager play different game. Floating population enter the game.

Phase 3

VIC have no farm land. LCD and HBL are fully occupied by buildings.

- Lacking efficient administration, villager extrude their house to extreme density. Large amount of floating population enter VIC without management. Poor living condition and high crime rate force government have to intervene to change the condition.
Conclusion of problem description

Although aroused by the historical problems in Chinese landownership, VIC accidently acts as a shelter and gateway for FP, works as a solution for enormous FP in the reality that most Chinese big cities are lack of social houses.

Moreover, the existing social and physical qualities also show us that VICs are valuable on many aspects we could learn from to create a vitality & diversity high density living place in future.

The VIC transformation is accompanied by a new human life profile in China. This is a non-architectural process, but it does influence the transformation process, but it does influence the transformation mechanisms of the VIC. The government recently pronounced all VIC villagers to be ‘citizens’, meaning that the state wants farmers to lose their constitutionally guaranteed land rights in order that the current contradictions and tensions of urban development can be dissolved. Such a decree implies no farmland, no job and no possibility of operating a business, nothing for farmers to hand down to their sons. They could be termed the victims of urbanization.
Problem statement

The government’s “Top Down” development & transformation rules only aims to improve the physical quality, erased the existing values and social qualities of VIC, and lack of consideration of local needs.
Aim

Find the value and qualities of VIC; promote and enlarge those qualities in order to improve VIC’s physical qualities as well as satisfy local needs
Project objects

Therefore there are basically two brief objects of this project.

First is to make a design of future VIC, which take the existing values and qualities of VIC, reinvent and rearrange them, to satisfy the local freedom needs.

Second is to make connections to current reality, which aims to connect the “bottom up” oriented design with the “top down” planning system, as the current top down planning system lack of consideration of local needs, this goal is like to build a bridge to the future VIC’s beautiful dream.
VICTIM

VICE TEAM
So my idea is turn the urban VICTIMs into urban VIC TEAMs by giving them POWER to create the future FREEDOM VIC
3. Freedom VIC
A Place Full of Mixture

The future VIC would be the place where the old meet new, big scale meet small scale, poor meet rich, FP meet local people, city meet village.

Sources from Urbanus
A place full of diversity, vitality
The place where all social groups can find their urban life to enjoy the living in this city, and contribute to the city.
POINTS OF I:

Small street & short blocks
Mixed scale
Various street life
Social group diversity
Self-organization
Buildings vary in age, condition and use
High dense population
The points of departure describe the quality I want to keep and avoid to achieve the Freedom VIC. This is like gene therapy. You keep the valuable gene; remove the gene which has disease in, and then you replace it with health gene.
In order to keep the GOODs and avoid the BADs on the lists of Points of Departure, the Freedom VIC’s vision needs new rules to guarantee its qualities.
Tissue is the basic pattern of previous VIC. Base rules on the tissue, can make corrections on original VIC, remove the dead ends, and generically improve the VIC’s physical quality. In the meanwhile, based on the original VIC tissue-grids, the public and private relationship will be proposed to avoid irresponsible spaces and new development method would also be proposed to fit in different building scales, and different way of cooperation.
The previous VIC building rules by government based on the grids of 10m*10m, and only use FAR and GSI to control VIC’s physical building quality, results a lot of undefined spaces which was occupies by villagers illegal constructions aims to produce more profit to rent cheap house to FP. Those illegal constructions then destroyed the planned grids pattern, and produce a lot of dead ends which later becomes the criminal and garbage dumping places.
The points of departure describe the quality I want to keep and avoid to achieve the Freedom VIC. This is like gene therapy. You keep the valuable gene; remove the gene which has disease in, and then you replace it with health gene.
The points of departure describe the quality I want to keep and avoid to achieve the Freedom VIC. This is like gene therapy. You keep the valuable gene; remove the gene which has disease in, and then you replace it with health gene.
Building Scales

Mixed cooperating method
New development based on tissue, can also supply opportunities to create mixture of different typologies and styles in order to maintain the VIC’s diversity and vitality.
Photo from exploratory testing at Neutelings & Riedijk - the production of choice.
Individual initiative compact using on the section is one of the characteristics we of previous VIC. It is the dimension which villagers used to create their “freedom” development. Rules based on the sections aims to reorganise the disordered public and private relationship in original VIC as well as propose these individual initiative compact using in Freedom VIC.
We found plenty of individual initiative compact using on section in previous VIC observations. It’s one of villagers professional field created by themselves under the condition of VIC’s high density living.
The original unorganized individual initiative compact using always result a lot of undefined places which later come into the criminal and garbage dumping places.
Public Private Relationship

The private public relationship needs to be redefined and reorganized in order to propose individual initiative VIC solutions.
Create two steps, 3rd Space and Limited Space from Public to Private in order to propose and reorganise cooperation between different related stakeholders.

3rd Space
Propose the cooperation between Villagers and Government to provide more public space (training centre, public library, etc.) in VIC in order to integrate different social groups and improve VIC spacial qualities.

limited Space
Propose the cooperation between Villagers and Developers to provide commercial public space (shopping, restaurant, etc.) in VIC in order to supply the needs of different social groups.
4. The Build of Freedom VIC
Grids Responsibility
Government will be responsible for maintain the main grids; and Villagers be responsible for maintain the sub grids to avoid irresponsible places.

No Cross Main Grids
The buildings can not cross the main grids in order to maintain original small streets and blocks form in VIC.

Average Height Limitation
The average VIC building height needs to be under 60m, in order to avoid the over exploitation.

Historical Street Height limitation
The buildings along the historical street needs to be under 11m, in order to make historical conservation and keep the spacial quality of historical street.

Development Right Transfer
The development volume can be transferred between different Villagers in order to maintain the high dense population and promote self-organization.

Bonus
If public space was built along the public accessible route, you can get building bonus on top, in order to propose individual initiative on section.
Sub Grids Exchange Public Space
The sub grids can be covered, but by return the same area of public space in order to propose mixed scales and avoid the lack of public space.

Parking Along Main Grids
The buildings with underground parking need to be located along the main grids in order to avoid traffic disorder in VIC.

Housing Program Percentage
The program percentage of Housing should be 20%-60% to maintain the program and street life diversity in VIC.

Parking Along Main Grids
The buildings with underground parking need to be located along the main grids to avoid the lack of social house and keep social group diversity.

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

- Small street & short blocks
- Mixed scale
- Various street life
- Social group diversity
- Self-organization
- Buildings vary in age, condition and use
- High dense population

- Criminal dead end place
- Over exploitation
- Lack of public space
- Disorder traffic system
- Irresponsible place
- Lack of social housing
Testing Location
Original Situation
The testing field is located in the centre of the VIC, contains a public square in the at the crossing of historical street, with a lot of individual Villagers houses surrounded the historical building, and an abundant old factory at North
Building Quality Evaluation
The building quality evaluation defines the buildings to be kept and demolished, it was made by Shenzhen government divided the existing building into Good (historical buildings and the buildings can still last for 20 years) and Bad (low quality and fire hazard buildings), according to the current situations of existing buildings.
**Tissue Fitting**

Adjust and fit the healthy tissue into VIC's existing morphology.
Define Responsibility
The Government will be responsible for the building and maintaining of Main grids in the tissue, and the Villagers will be responsible for the building and maintaining of Sub grids collectively.
New Building Rules
High rise and underground parking need to be along the Main grids and Public Square, and linking to public space.
Villagers Cooperation
Villagers can negotiate and choose their collective group by themselves, to decide the final plots
**New Development**
The VIC’s new buildings varies in different scales, typologies and styles, according to Villagers decisions.
Height & Program Requirement
The new development needs to satisfy certain requirements, the height limitation, housing program percentage, and social housing percentage.
Development Right Transfer
The Villagers can also transfer their development right to their neighbors.
Public Space Link in
The Villagers will cooperate with the Government to provide public space in order to get Bonus, and then all interior public space will be linked with the open public space.
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Divers 3 Dimensional Routes

The new VIC provides all kinds of functions in urban life, to satisfy the needs of different people, and provide a meeting place for different social groups.
Divers Funtions

The development volume can be transferred between different Villagers in order to maintain the high dense population and promote self-organization.
Process in 3D
Divers Events & 24 Hours Maximum Use

New VIC will be a place which can hold all kinds of events, and a dynamic place in 24 hours.
Stakeholder Relationship

All kinds of stakeholders could be involved and satisfied by the new development of VIC.
FP
Labor Force
cheap RENT HOUSING
low LIVING COST

CITIZEN
Normal Citizen
VIC's DIVERSITY & VITALITY
good location RENT HOUSING

GOVERNMENT
Policy Maker
VIC under CONTROL
historical area CONSERVATION

DEVELOPER
Money Holder
change VIC area into URBAN
FUNCTIONS
5. Conclusion
This project is triggered by the government “Top-down” VIC transformation rules which ignored the VIC’s value and local needs.

The transformation of VIC is accompanied by human life profile change in China. This is a non-architectural process, but it does influence the transformation process. With the government official plan, Villagers will be forced to have the “citizen status” upon them to deprive them of their rights be termed into urbanization victims.

In order to resisting on this, villagers extrude their houses rent them to floating population, the former penniless farmer becomes wealthy landlord. It is the outcome of a “win-win” situation, in which a large amount of cheap living space is created.

Then the reactions of resisting becoming victims accidently give a good answer for 8 million floating population in SZ. Therefore, once VIC was erased, this answer was erased as well.

It indicates the problem is that, the current VIC transformation rules is lack of consideration local needs and freedom.

So the goal the project is to find the value and qualities of VIC; promote and enlarge those qualities in order to create a “FREEDOM VIC”.

The “FREEDOM VIC” stands for the VICs which maintain the VIC’s value and qualities as well as can give freedom to local users.

It’s about how to make urban rules by learning form game rules which aims to create freedoms for the inner city VIC transformation.

In this project, RULES was set up for main the valuable VIC quality and avoid the negative qualities might happen in future. FREEDOMS was what derives the rules, was the destination the rules are aiming at.
 Freedoms always accompanied by rules, so on the way to become a freedom island, it always comes the question to find the balance between Rules & Freedom. This is also what I’ve learned by doing this project, in the urban development and planning discourse, specific freedom only comes along with specific urban rules. The way to seeking suitable rules weights the same, even more as the way to seeking the freedom in VIC transformation. Therefore, the work of me, as a urban planner in this project is to observe and imagine the beautiful fabulous freedoms in VIC’s future while line this beautiful vision with the current reality, to create a “carrier structure” which could make this vision realistic.

Come back to the Chinese context. A country defines itself economically as “one country two systems” also proves to have these two faces in urban development.

On one hand, cities with millions of inhabitants constructed almost literally according to the design models: demonstration of total control, astounding efficiency and incredible energy. At the same time, there are improbable examples of morbid growth in urban development which suggest the exact opposite: absolutely no control, guidance or design from “higher up”, purely pragmatic interventions.

This plan is intended to make a connection in between, which is to make urban rules take into consideration of freedom, and to keep the existing quality, promote and enlarge it to solve urban problems.

Those ideas behind the project are not only can be used in VIC transformation of SZ, but also contribute to the transformation in all other large scale Chinese cities, giving not only the majority favour but all kinds of sub-culture group (the “ghetto” group) a place to live, a place to lead their life and be able to contribute to the city.

“Freedom VIC” might be a start; we can get a “Freedom China” in the end.
Reference


