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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private e-mail address</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name / Theme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teachers / tutors    | Dr. ir. Luisa M. Calabrese  
                        | Ir. Leo van den Burg       |
| Argumentation of choice of the studio | The Design of the Urban Form Research Group investigates the dynamics that gave rise to existing urban fabrics on two levels. First, by studying (the sequence of) actual interventions and their implications for human activities. Second, by studying the dynamics of design processes before actual realization. As my project deals with understanding the inner city of Vlissingen, where the actual interventions seem to fail at present, it is best linked to this research group. Besides that, the relation between tangible and intangible structures, is of great importance for my project. My project involves factors as liveliness and identity (intangible) as important input for design of the physical urban environment (tangible). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of the graduation project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pull itself out of the prosperity dip and a new identity has not been found. Trends, such as new forms of socialization and shopping, contribute to the prosperity dip of the last years. The reason Vlissingen has not been as prosperous as the rest of the Netherlands since the Second World War, is the affected experience of the city in spatial, social and functional aspects. The city is decontextualized, which leads to the definition of three main issues:

1. deterioration of public space,
2. lost sense of citizenship (belonging and collective memory) and
3. lack of representativeness for business (especially in the leisure economy).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>research questions and design assignment in which these result.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Main research question**
Which spatial interventions could be implemented in the inner city of Vlissingen in order to make it a place of experience where prosperity can grow and a new identity can emerge, despite future changes?

**Sub-questions**

**Background**

1. What aspects help to define and quantify experience? How are these aspects interrelated?
2. What are the current approaches to the spatial, social and economic changes in mid-sized Dutch inner cities? How are these three aspects interrelated?

**Case of Vlissingen**

3. What is the urban form of the city of Vlissingen and what have been the contributing factors spatially, socially and economically in shaping this urban form in the past?
4. How can the current experience of the inner city of Vlissingen be defined and quantified?
5. What is the current social and economic structure of Vlissingen (regional and (inter)national) and what are the social and economic trends Vlissingen faces?
6. What can be a viable future role for Vlissingen in the regional and (inter)national system and what are possible scenarios for the inner city, with respect to its spatial, social and economic trends?

The thesis will be formed by both theory and context (Vlissingen). The thesis aims to contribute to both of these aspects. The thesis aims to revitalize the inner city of Vlissingen by creating a strategic plan and implementing design interventions in order to make it a place of experience where prosperity can grow and a new identity can emerge, despite future changes. This leads to the
context based design goal: a strategic plan an design interventions for the inner city of Vlissingen. The strategic plan and design interventions should revise the inner city, with respect to the city’s history and position in the region and taking relevant trends into account. Additionally, this thesis aims to contribute to the debate of the future of mid-sized Dutch inner cities in terms of spatial, social and economic transformation. From there the theory based design goal can be formulated as a strategic planning’s and design approach for the revitalization of Dutch mid-sized inner cities.

**Process**

**Method description**

**Diagram**

**Tools**

Theoretical review and literature review – The academic literature to be consulted will be from interdisciplinary fields related to city experience and the Dutch mid-sized city. The literature study will highlight these topics related to Vlissingen in a reflective manner. Noting the city of Vlissingen is decontextualized from its history, a historical study will be done to understand what made the city the way it is today.

Data review – To understand the actual situation and problems in Vlissingen, statistical sources and first hand data will be studied. By studying data over the years, trends will be detected. These will be used to form a framework that will enable scenario thinking.

Case studies – Case studies on different mid-sized Dutch inner cities will be done to gain knowledge about which spatial aspects create positive experience. Critical analysis will be used to create a design framework.

Analysis – To get a good understanding of the city of Vlissingen a lot of analysis has to be done. This analysis will be divided in four categories going through different scales and times: 1) Historical analysis, 2) Regional analysis, 3) Location analysis and 4) Spatial analysis. These activities mainly consist of mapping and sketching in order to explore typo-morphological conditions, land forms and other urban systems.

Site visit – Fieldwork has to be done to check present conditions. A site visit demonstrates socio-spatial conditions through observations, conversation driven...
research, information gathering and informal interviews. Spending time in the physical environment and building up informal relationships is crucial for direct input and to understand the different people in the city.

Interviews – As mentioned above, during site visits informal interviews will be done to get to understand the range of people in the city. Additionally, surveys with questions regarding city experience will be done to understand how visitors of the inner city experience their visit.

Scenario thinking – The urban challenges Vlissingen faces, have to be explored through experimentation. This is done by imagining (extreme) future conditions, in what-if scenarios. This will help opening up a process of discovering alternatives, seeing new possibilities, testing, selecting and evaluating. The scenario thinking is a tool to find the most reasonable concepts to address the various problems.

Design exercises – Additionally, the project will be explored through design exercises in order to make thoughts and ideas explicit. Among other things, this will be done through, mapping, sketching and model studies.

**Tools linked to research questions**

1. What aspects help to define and quantify experience? How are these aspects interrelated?

   This question will be answered through theoretical review on the field of experience. The academic paper will partly answer this question and will be part of the theoretical framework. Additional case studies are necessary to find out which spatial elements can create a positive experience. This will eventually lead to design principles.

2. What are the current approaches on the spatial, social and economic role in the future of mid-sized Dutch inner cities? How are these three aspects interrelated?

   There are multiple approaches in literature on what the role of the future mid-sized Dutch city is. So theoretical and literature review on the mid-sized Dutch city will be the basis to answer this question. But also case studies and spatial analysis need to be done, to find what is generic for a mid-sized city and what is specific in the case of Vlissingen. A reference catalogue will give an overview of the approaches and generics.

3. What is the urban form of the city of Vlissingen and what have been the contributing factors spatially, socially and economically in shaping this urban form in the past?

   Firstly a historical study of the city is needed. To find out what social and economic factors played a role in shaping the urban form, literature review has to be done. To find how the urban structure and the skyline of the city have changed, location and spatial analysis need to be done. A timeline that shows the city’s prosperity and its effects on the urban structure and the skyline of the city will answer this question partly.

   Additionally an extensive analysis of the current urban form will be done to understand the different urban systems. An overview of the spatial strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities will be the outcome.

4. How can the experience of the inner city of Vlissingen nowadays be defined and quantified?

   This question will be answered through spatial analysis. But a site visit is crucial to check out the present conditions. Informal interviews and surveys will help to understand the range of people and how they experience the inner city of Vlissingen.
The experience will be mapped through different methods. A conclusion will be drawn of what are potential locations to improve the experience.

5. What is the current social and economic structure of Vlissingen (in the region of Walcheren) and what are the social and economic trends Vlissingen is facing? To answer this question a lot of data review needs to be done. For example on the age of the population, the households, the housing supplies and disposable income. Insight in all these topics and their developments, will be summarized in an overview of the various trends Vlissingen is facing.

6. What can be the role of Vlissingen in the future in the region of Walcheren and what are possible scenarios for the inner city, with respect to its spatial, social and economic trends?

The found trends will be translated in two extreme scenarios. These scenarios will be worked out on multiple scales. On city scale, to find out how the urban structure will change and on the inner city scale and the block scale, to find how the inner city experience will be effected. Through the scenario thinking possible future roles for Vlissingen in the region of Walcheren can be defined.
Literature and general practical preference

Experience


Mid-sized Dutch inner city


Reflection
Relevance

Social
The topic of this thesis is the revitalization of mid-sized Dutch inner cities. A lot of mid-sized inner cities at the edges of the Netherlands have difficulties in dealing with the global trend of internet shopping and new forms of socialization: many shops are closing and there is a sustained decline in the amount of visitors. In some of these cities these problems are bigger than in others. In Vlissingen this problem is bigger
than elsewhere, because the experience of the city is affected. As inner cities have many important functions, these trends can lead to multiple spatial, social and economic issues. That is why it is of great importance to deal with these trends when considering the future role of mid-sized Dutch inner cities.

**Scientific**

In literature a lot can be found about the future of mid-size Dutch cities, also in combination with the topic city experience. A lot of literature states that inner cities have to distinguish themselves, to maintain or become attractive. They need to be a place where one can be stimulated or surprised, see new things and gain unique experiences. Realizing an attractive inner city, is more and more determined by the offering of positive experiences. A positive experience ensures that one feels comfortable, consumes more and returns more quickly to the city centre. Yet, on how to create a positive experience not much research has been done. That is why I think this project can be an example for a lot of other cities.

As urbanism is a discipline that can generate social and economic opportunities through spatial interventions, this research will contribute to the debate of city experience in mid-sized Dutch cities by producing a framework of possibilities and opportunities for these inner cities. It is the job of the urbanist to manipulate the spatial conditions in a way these improve the social and economic environment of people. Thus, the topic can be seen as relevant and thereby as an offer of new possibilities and opportunities. I choose the inner city of Vlissingen to represent this project as an abstraction of a bigger scale.

**Time planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial phase</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduation orientation</td>
<td>research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem definition</td>
<td></td>
<td>reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theory paper</td>
<td>spatial design interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theoretical framework</td>
<td>evaluation of design proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contextual framework</td>
<td>scenario experimentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graphic visualisation and presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Note:** The table above outlines the time planning for the research project, detailing phases such as initial phase, research, reflection, and evaluation of design proposal, among others. Each phase is further divided into specific tasks like problem definition, theory paper, and scenario experimentation, indicating a structured timeline for the project.