



# INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION

A Critique on "The Next Hutong" by MVRDV

ARC2013Y - Integrated Urbanism Studio III  
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An aerial photograph of a city campus, likely a university, showing various buildings, streets, and green spaces. A white location pin is placed in the center of the image, marking a specific point of interest. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, black font.

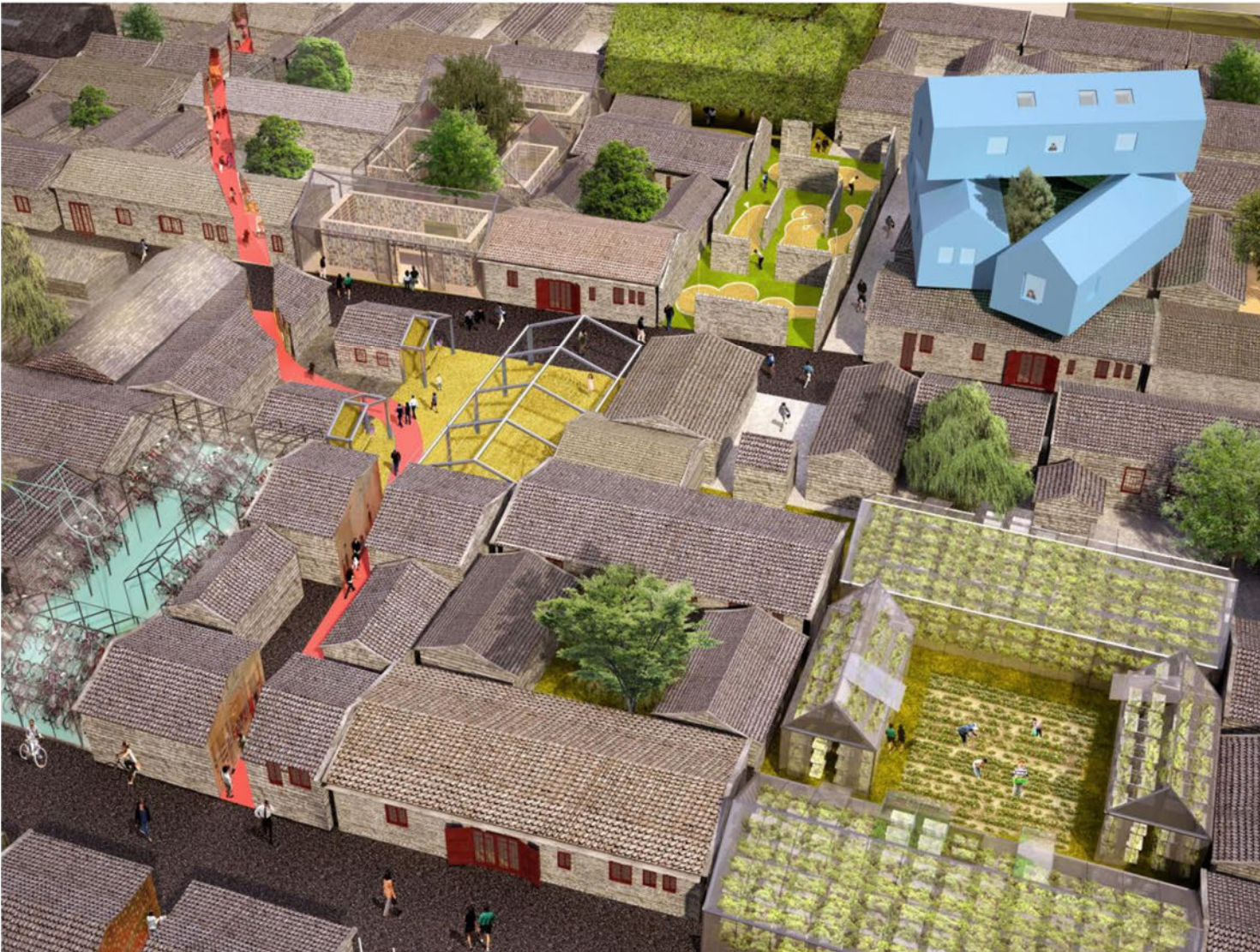
**Chapter 1 : Introduction**  
**Master Plan & Research Analysis**

# "THE NEXT HUTONG" - MVRDV

A Dutch-based architectural & urban design practice, MVRDV, has taken it upon themselves to reimagine the Chinese Hutong. The practice has set out to define its future and envision "the next hutong", one that is "monumental, dense, green, mixed, and individual".



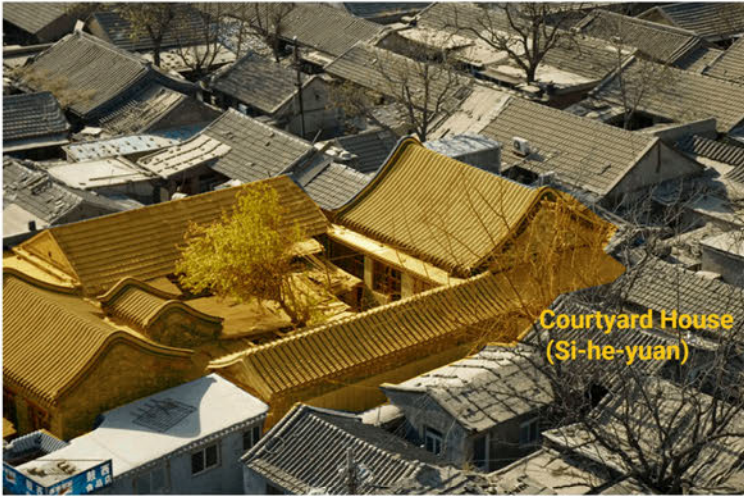
Mixed Hutong  
Masterplan Overview



Aerial view of "The Next Hutong", showcasing the different intervention: The Arcade Projects, The Facility Projects, The Green Projects, The Vertical Projects

# WHAT IS & WHY HUTONG?

Hutong is a narrow lane, alley, or small street between rows of single-storey Siheyuan (courtyard houses) dwelled by Beijingers in the past. When viewed from the air, the interlaced lanes resemble a maze or a chessboard with delicate gardens, fine rockeries, and ancient ruins which make them a wonder in the world.



Aerial View of Courtyard House & a Hutong



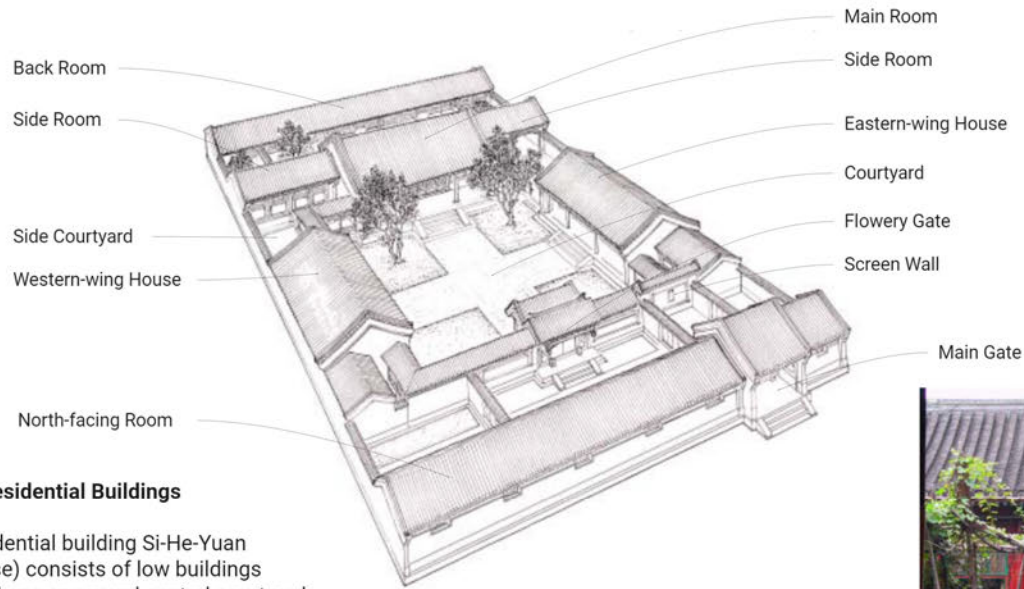
A bird's-eye view of the Hutongs show the criss-crossing grid that is formed collectively. It is a relatively organized structure of the city's town planning.



When the Mongols conquered Beijing in the 13th century, they built streets called Hutongs. Along these streets, people built clan courtyards with high walls and gates for protection. Hutong lanes provided shelter from wind and gave a strong sense of privacy.

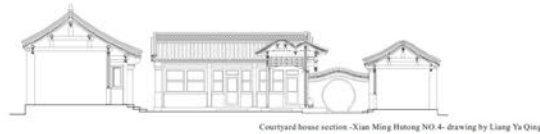
# WHAT'S AROUND HUTONG?

For centuries Hutongs have been the standard form of settlement for Chinese populations that moved from the countryside to the growing cities. Courtyard housing were found adjacent to the Hutongs.



## Courtyard house/ Residential Buildings

- Traditional residential building Si-He-Yuan (courtyard house) consists of low buildings grouped around one or several central courtyards.
- It housed one family
- Timber framed, with brick walls and tiled roofs.
- strict restrictions on height, design, colour and decoration in imperial times
- no residential building of more than 1 storey was permitted near the city wall.



ZHENG FANG (MAIN BUILDING)



GATE



GATE DECORATION DETAIL



YING BI (SHADOW WALL)



MEN DUNR (STONE CARVING)

# WHAT'S AROUND HUTONG?



## Extension

As a result of increase in population, extensions were built by the local residents in order to increase the living area.



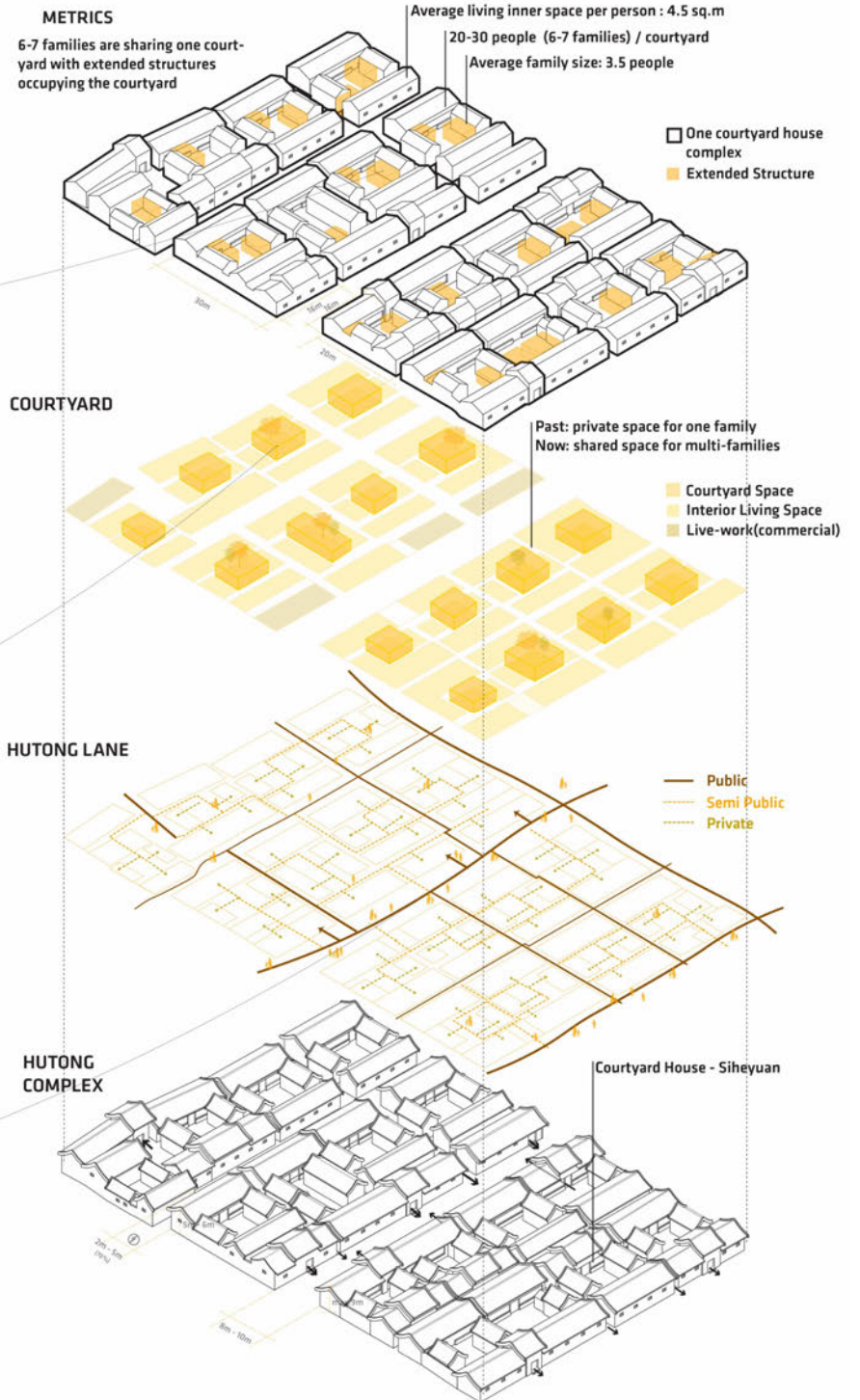
## Courtyard

Various usage within the courtyard house



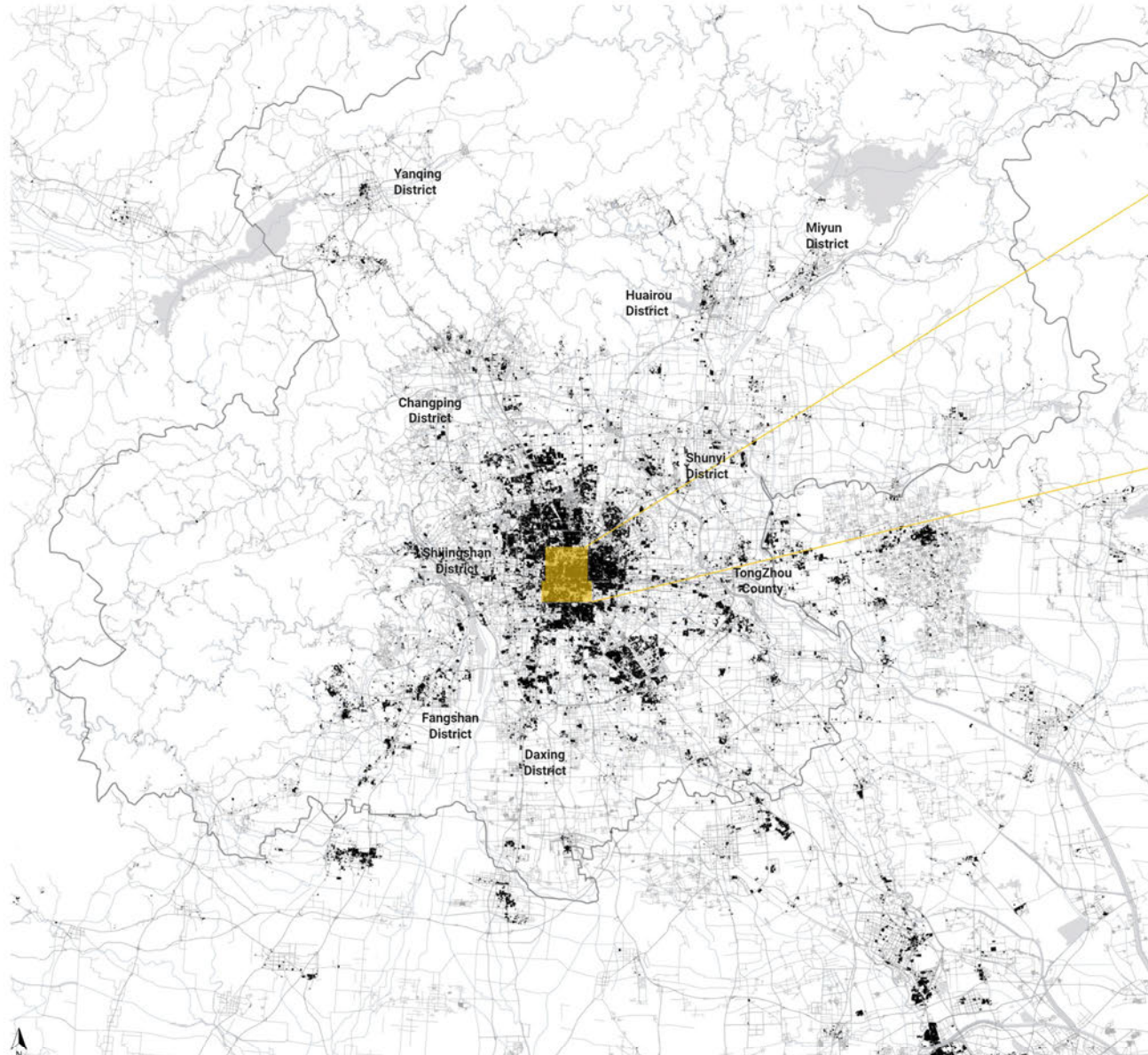
## Hutong

Narrow Hutong road, the old Hutong courtyard houses and the new buildings (with more stories)

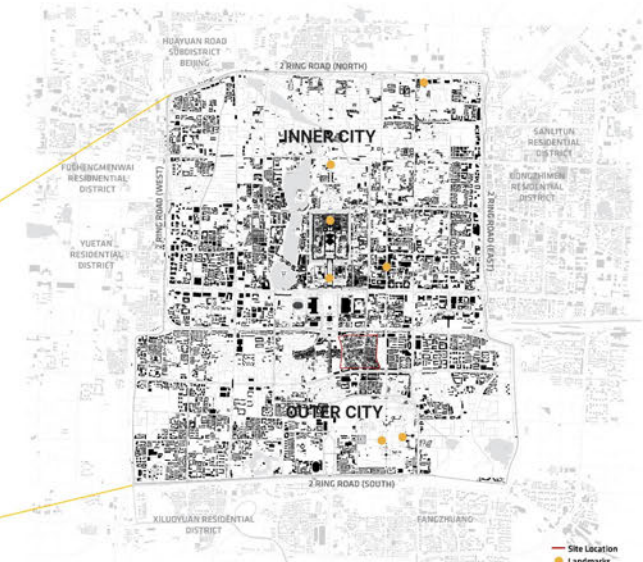


# WHERE IS HUTONG?

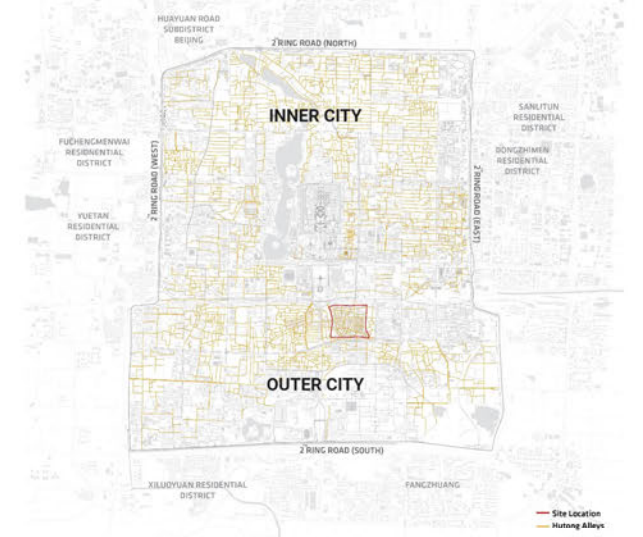
Beijing is located on a flat plain on 39.56 north latitude and 116.2 east longitude, with hills to the northwest. Several natural and artificial lakes and waterways within the central area are part of an ancient water-system bringing fresh water from Yu Quan Shan and providing recreational areas for the residential districts.



MAP OF BEIJING



MAP OF INNER & OUTER CITY OF BEIJING



MAP OF INNER & OUTER CITY OF BEIJING  
(LOCATION OF HUTONGS)



# HOW WAS HUTONG STRUCTURED?

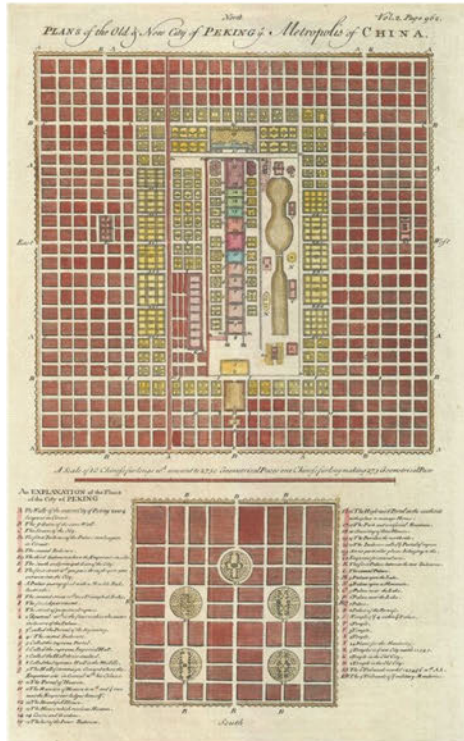
For centuries Hutongs have been the standard form of settlement for Chinese populations that moved from the countryside to the growing cities.

## INNER CITY

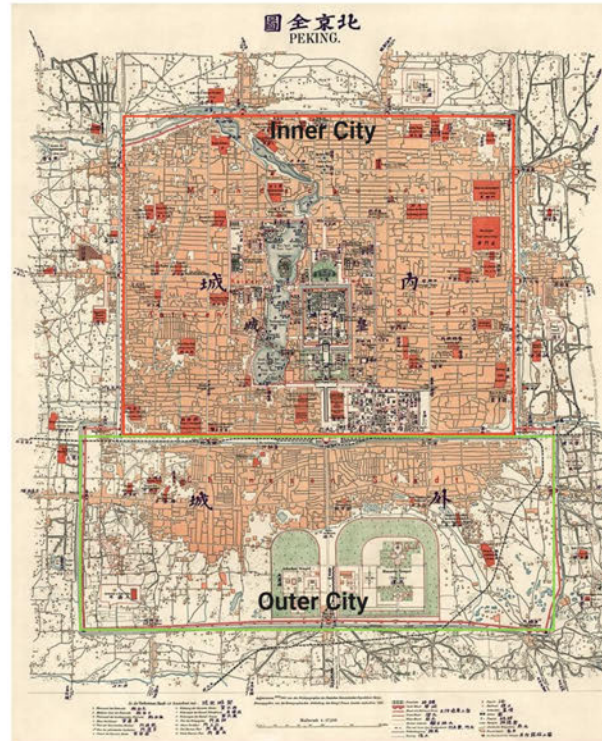
- Streets were laid out mainly on a grid pattern
- Mostly residential, with concentrations of large-scale courtyard homes of the upper classes

## OUTER CITY

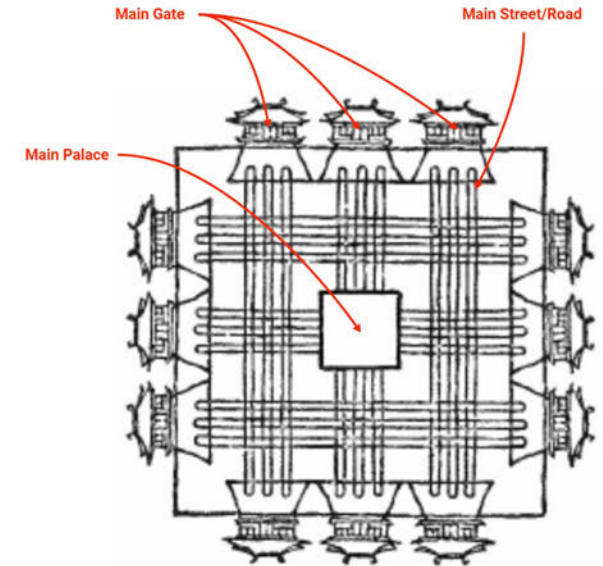
- not laid out along a grid pattern, so there are many crooked streets and narrow alleys
- smaller scale buildings
- traditionally a commercial area



1744 HARRIS MAP OF BEIJING/PEKING, CHINA



INNER & OUTER CITY



## URBAN STRUCTURE PRINCIPLE

Principles for ancient Chinese urban planning included a rectangular street grid with a palace in the centre, surrounded by temples and markets, and an auspicious number of 12 gates in different directions



## STREET TYPOLOGIES

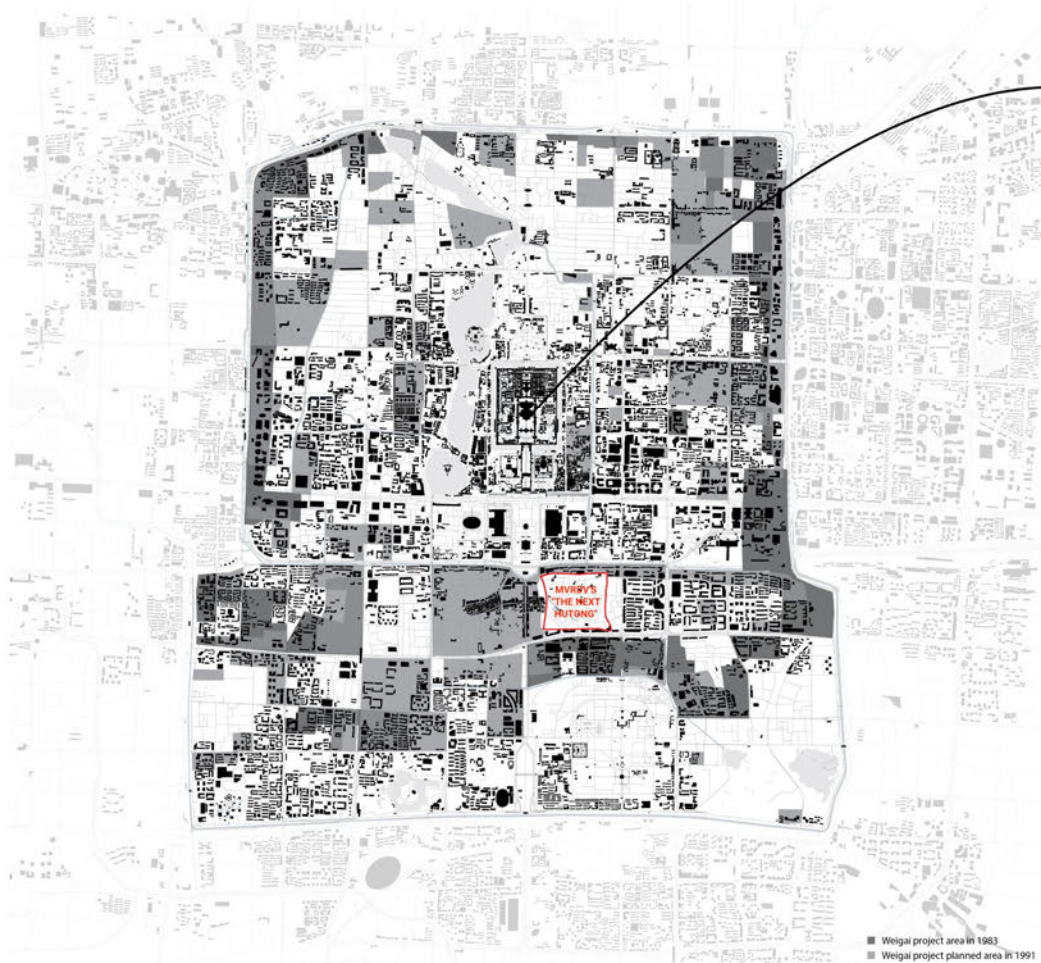
1. Big streets
2. Small streets (mostly ran North-South)
3. Hutong lanes (mostly ran West-East)

# EVOLUTION OF HUTONGS

The speed of the demise of the Beijing Hutong has been measured at 600 lanes per year

## Reasons:

1. Cultural revolution & natural disaster damage on the historic buildings
2. Housing Reform and Weigai System - densely populated housing districts were centuries old and lacking in maintenance. They need to be demolished and redeveloped
3. The Weigai project aims to demolish and rebuild old and dangerous residential structures.



MAP OF INNER & OUTER CITY OF BEIJING  
GENTRIFICATION RISK

The 'Conservation Planning of 25 Historic Areas in Beijing Old City' supplies official data analyzing the land use:

**Total size of the 25 protected areas:** 1038 hectares (10.38 square kilometers)

**The population:** 285,000 people (95,000 families)

**Population density:** 275 people / hectare



WEIGAI PROJECT AREA IN 1983



WEIGAI PROJECT AREA IN 1991

## PROJECTED INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION AT XIAN YU KOU JIE (MVRDV's Proposal Site)



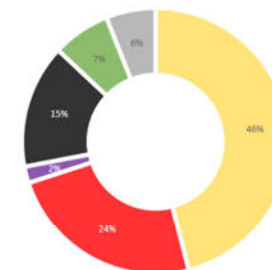
Phase 1: Commercial Development on edge



Phase 2: Partial Residential Development



Phase 3: Full Residential Development

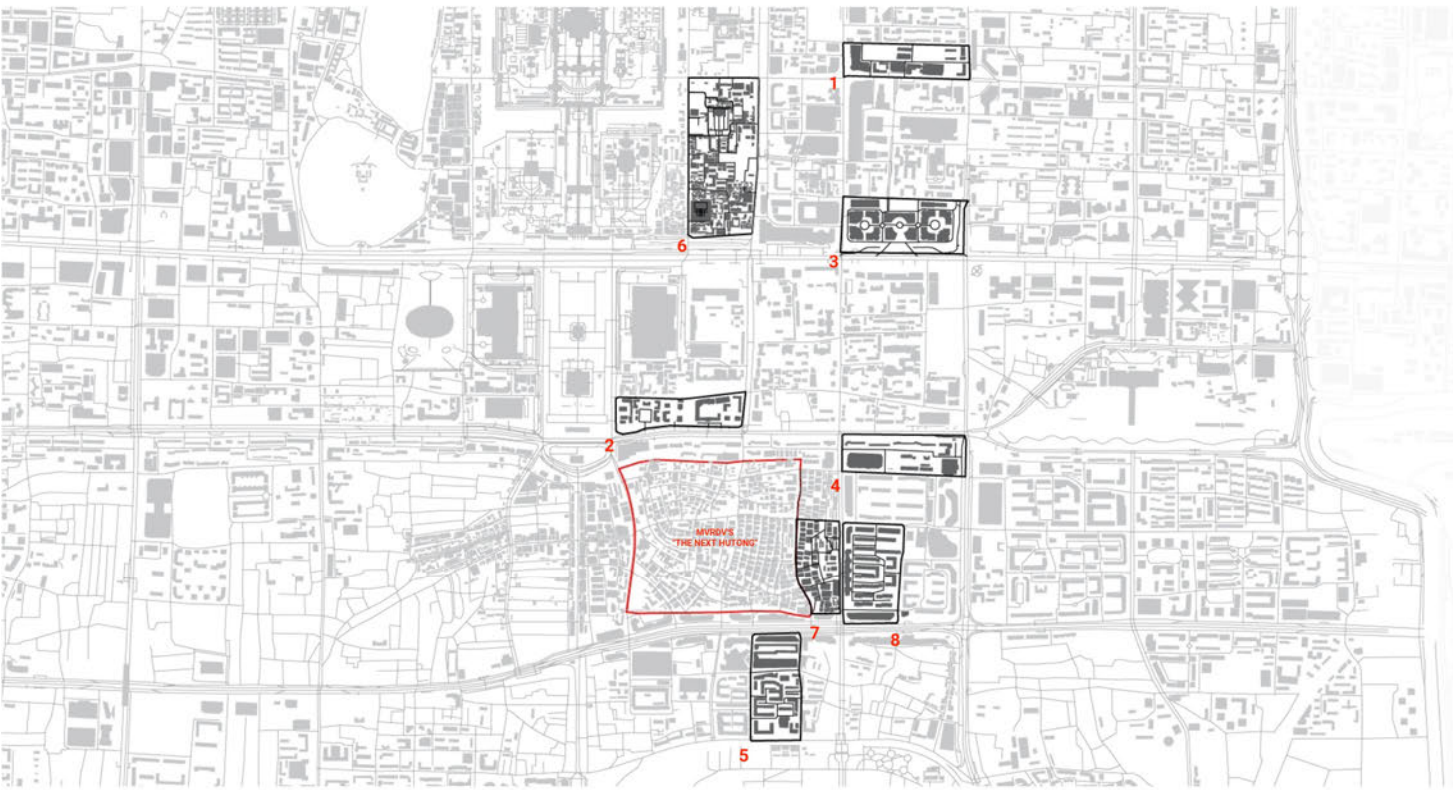


Current Land use	Area (Hectares)
Residential	490 ha (46%)
Commercial	247 ha (24%)
Industrial	17 ha (1.5%)
Road	154 ha (15%)
Green Space	69 ha (6.5%)
Other	61 ha (6%)

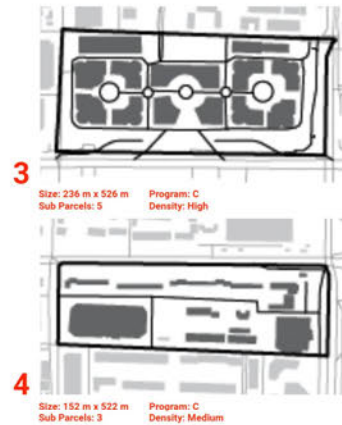
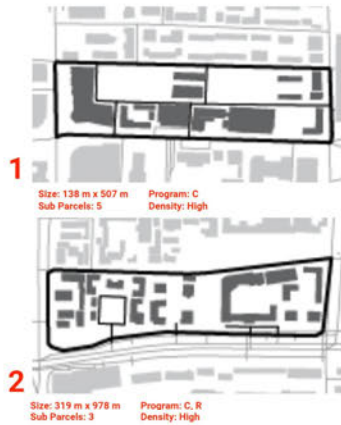
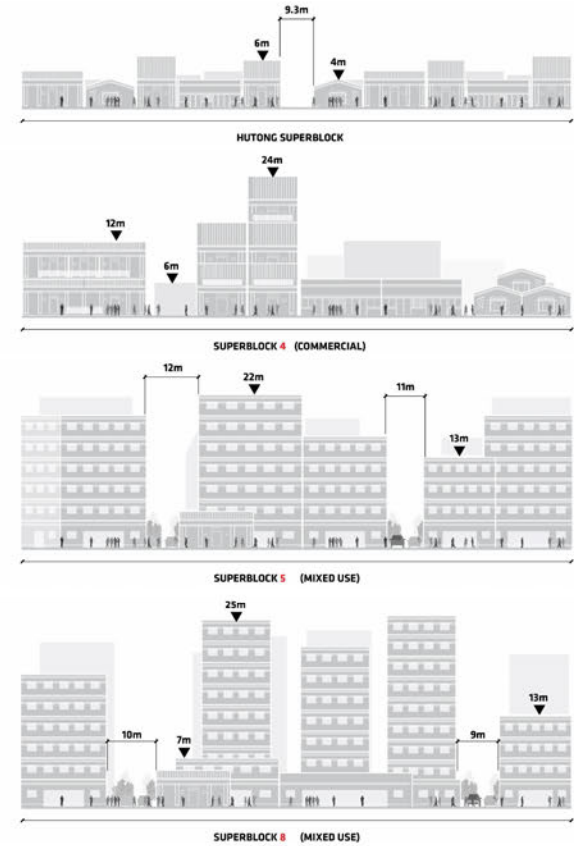
LANDUSE BREAKDOWN OF  
INNER & OUTER BEIJING

# HOW IS HUTONG STRUCTURED NOW?

Map of inner and outer city of Beijing showcasing the different sizes of the old and new superblocks.



INNER & OUTER CITY OF BEIJING



# RESIDENTS IN HUTONG VS THE REST OF BEIJING?

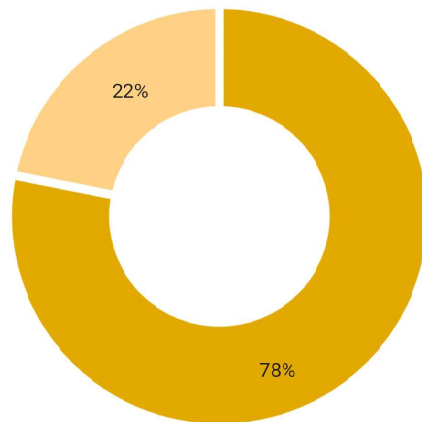
For centuries Hutongs have been the standard form of settlement for Chinese populations that moved from the countryside to the growing cities.

## POPULATION DENSITY OF BEIJING

In Beijing, the population totals to 17.4 million people.

A majority of the population consists of Registered Inhabitants at 13.6 million people (78%). The rest of the population is made up of Unregistered Residents at 3.8 million people (22%).

Total Population of Beijing: 17.4 million



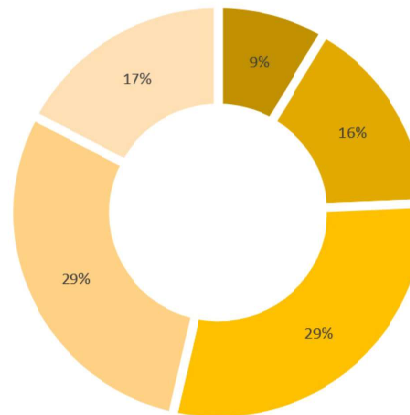
- Registered Inhabitants: 13.6 million
- Unregistered Residents: 3.8 million

## ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME

This is a graphical representation of the percentages of Beijing residents with varying thresholds of income.

The two largest groups have income ranging from 200,000 to 400,000 RMB and 400,000 to 600,000 RMB, which makes up approximately two-thirds of the population.

Annual Family Income of Beijing residents (Units: RMB)



### CAD

- >1,000,000 RMB > \$196,000
- 600,000 to 1,000,000 RMB \$118,000 to \$196,000
- 400,000 to 600,000 RMB \$79,000 to \$118,000
- 200,000 to 400,000 RMB \$39,000 to \$79,000
- <200,000 RMB < \$39,000

## FAMILY SIZE & LIVING SPACE

In Hutongs, the average family is 3.5 members and the average living inner space is 2 rooms per residential unit, which makes up to an area of 15 square meters.

Compared to China's national average of 20.23 square meters per person.

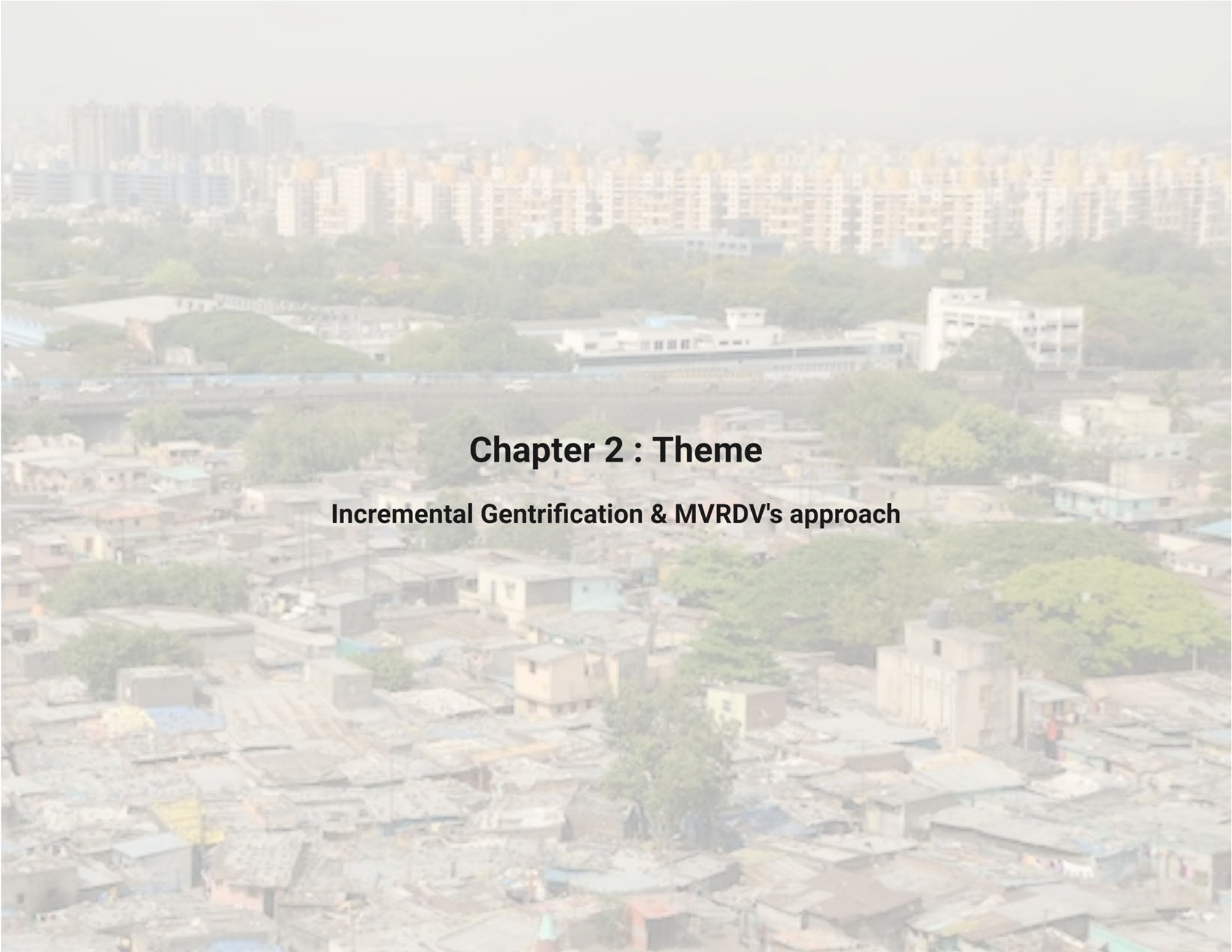


AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE: 3.5 Members



Images of the living space of the residents in the hutongs.

**Population Density of Inner City Beijing:** 235 people/hectare (23,500 people/square kilometer) - approaches the population density of Manhattan or the Ville de Paris)  
**Average Population Density of Hutongs:** 322 people/hectare (33,200 people per square kilometer)



## **Chapter 2 : Theme**

**Incremental Gentrification & MVRDV's approach**

# WHAT IS INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION?

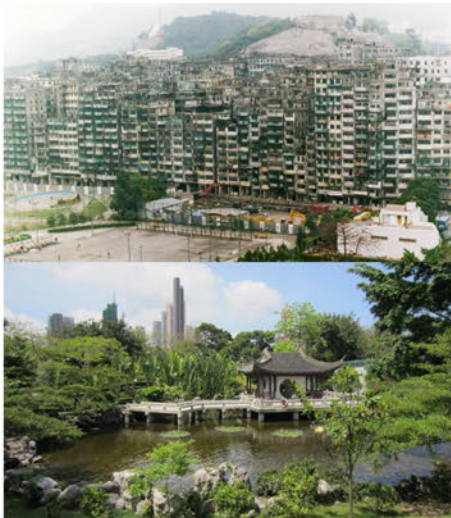
Incremental gentrification refers to the buying and renovation of houses and stores in deteriorated urban neighborhoods by upper- or middle-income families or individuals, raising property values but often displacing low-income families and small businesses.



# IS INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION GOOD OR BAD?

## Advantages

- ✓ Urban renewal contributes to better living environment
- ✓ Provision of food, retail outlets, and jobs
- ✓ Create new housing opportunities
- ✓ Promotes new urban activities, and events
- ✓ Enhances public safety
- ✓ Gentrification creates growth opportunities
- ✓ Reduce suburban sprawl within a community



Urban Colonialism on Kowloon Walled City, now Walled City Park. Displacement of slums to create a Park to boost tourism



Regent Park social housing demolition for "revitalization" and new development



Demolition of courtyard houses in XianYuKou as part of the "Weigai" system for commercial development

## Disadvantages

- ✗ Local Residents Displacement
- ✗ Changes cultural standards of neighborhood
- ✗ Increased property value, cost of rent & purchase
- ✗ Increased property value
- ✗ Privatization, gentrification is a process run by the private sector
- ✗ Changing Income Mix
- ✗ Potential of leading higher levels of community conflict



Commercial revitalization of Mars Bar on Second Avenue at First Street, East Village (2005, 2014).

## Examples of Incremental Gentrification

# INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION IN BEIJING

Most of the Hutongs and courtyard houses are located in the inner and outer city of Beijing where the property value have significantly increased in the past 50 years. Therefore, they are vulnerable to the private developer's interest in gentrifying them.

In response, the government have created a heritage conservation policy plan to protect the Hutongs and the courtyard house from demolition, as these structures are recognized as the core culture/feature of Beijing.



## Xinjian Village

Xinjian village, a once-teeming neighborhood of garment factories and migrant dwellings in Beijing that has been partially demolished as part of the housing crackdown Photograph: Tom Phillips



## Northwestern Beijing

Scenes of destruction in northwestern Beijing Photograph: Tom Phillips



## Sanyingmen

Scenes of destruction in Sanyingmen, a condemned migrant village in southern Beijing. Photograph: Tom Phillips



## Revitalized Nanluogu Xiang commercial district

Shoppers on Nanluogu Xiang. Photograph: kpzfoto/Alamy Stock Photo



A restaurant shut down as part of the "Great Brickening" – in which businesses were forced to shut storefronts were bricked up. Photograph: South China Morning Post via Getty Images



# INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION IN XIAN YU KOU JIE



Current Condition of Xian Yu Kou Jie



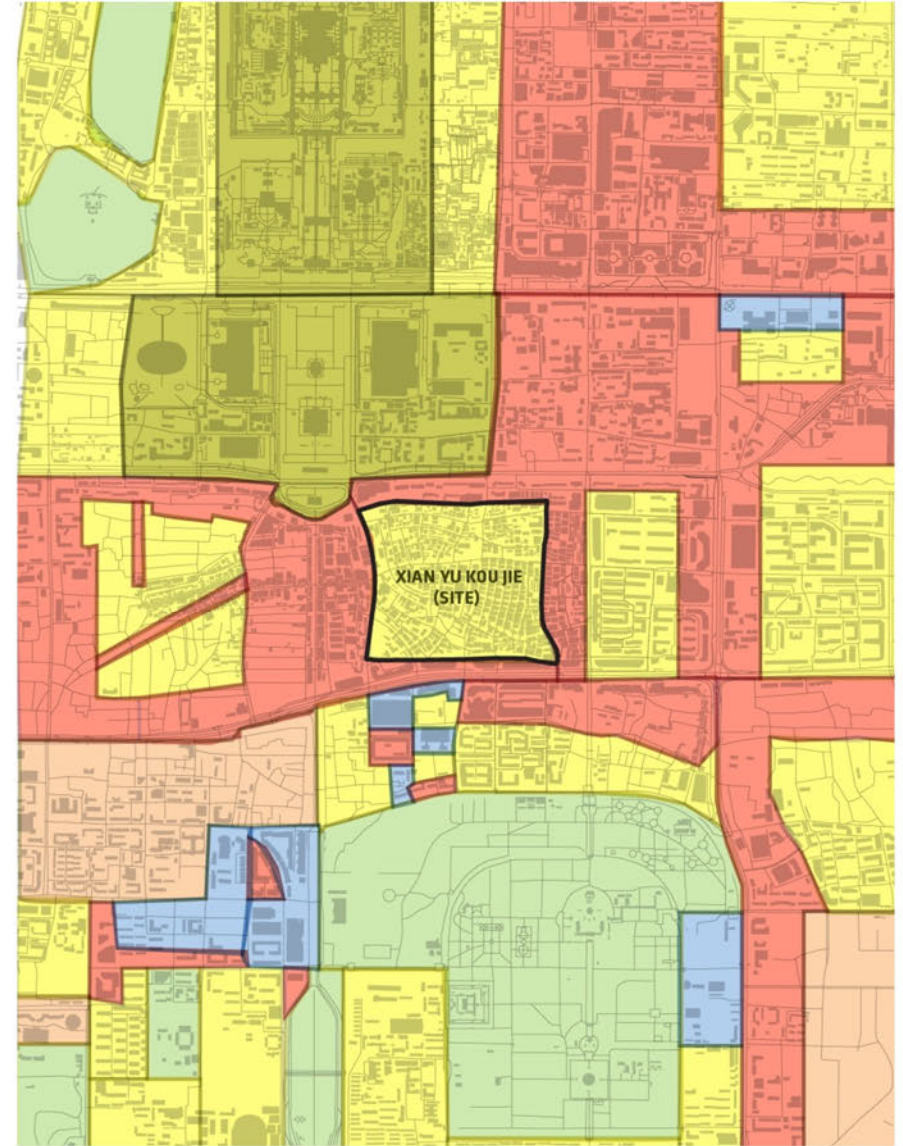
Phase 1: Commercial Development on edge



Phase 2: Partial Residential Development



Phase 3: Full Residential Development



## ADJACENT LANDUSE

Analyzing the adjacent landuse will have a better understanding of the projected demand of the current Xian Yu Kou Jie.

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Institutional
- Parks & Open Space
- Heritage & Culture

## PROJECTED INCREMENTAL GENTRIFICATION AT XIAN YU KOU JIE (MVRDV's Proposal Site)

# OBJECTIVE OF HUTONG CONSERVATION PLAN

The main objective of the Beijing Hutong Conservation Plan by THF and the Tsinghua University researchers is to provide a concrete proposal for the conservation and subsequent rehabilitation of three of Beijing's historical Hutong Quarters.



## BUILDING MATERIALS

Preserving a maximum amount of the authentic historical building materials



## TOWNSCAPE

Preserving the townscape and original historic setting of Si-He-Yuan type housing in the Hutong lanes



## COLLABORATION

Working with the existing residents of the community



## HOME OWNERSHIP EQUALITY

Retaining the current mixture of subsidized housing, private house ownership, commercial buildings and services



## TRAFFIC REGULATION

Better traffic regulation to ensure the safety of the pedestrians and bikers while providing vehicles for the tourists



## LIVING CONDITION

Bringing living conditions up to acceptable standards, to ensure the healthiness of the inhabitants

**MVRDV**

# **URBAN INTENSIFICATION**

# **HERITAGE CONSERVATION**

# **SUSTAINABILITY**

# **COMMERCIAL INTEGRATION**

A photograph of a traditional Chinese street scene, overlaid with a blue tint. The scene shows a street with traditional buildings and a modern building on a rooftop. The text "Chapter 3 : Urban Intensification" is centered over the image.

## Chapter 3 : Urban Intensification

Vertical, Dig, & Infill

# CURRENT HUTONG DENSITY AT AN URBAN SCALE

According to the research by THF and the Tsinghua University researchers, only 46% of the historic areas in Beijing Old City remain as residential land. Only the courtyard houses located in the inner part of the Xianyukou Site remained for residential use.

## Demographics Changes

- **1960s:** thousands of people lived in the remaining Hutong area
  - the population rapidly grew because of the growth of export industry.
- **1980s:** residents were relocated on the same site. (Weigai System enacted)
  - similar living space but minus any extensions or courtyard space that had previously been theirs.
- **Late 1990s:** relocation to the outskirts of the city (Weigai System enacted)
  - 200,000 families have been relocated - huge impact on the historic character of Beijing.
  - People moved into apartments or moved out to the suburbs or to other areas of China
  - Workers from other provinces rent the courtyard houses in Beijing

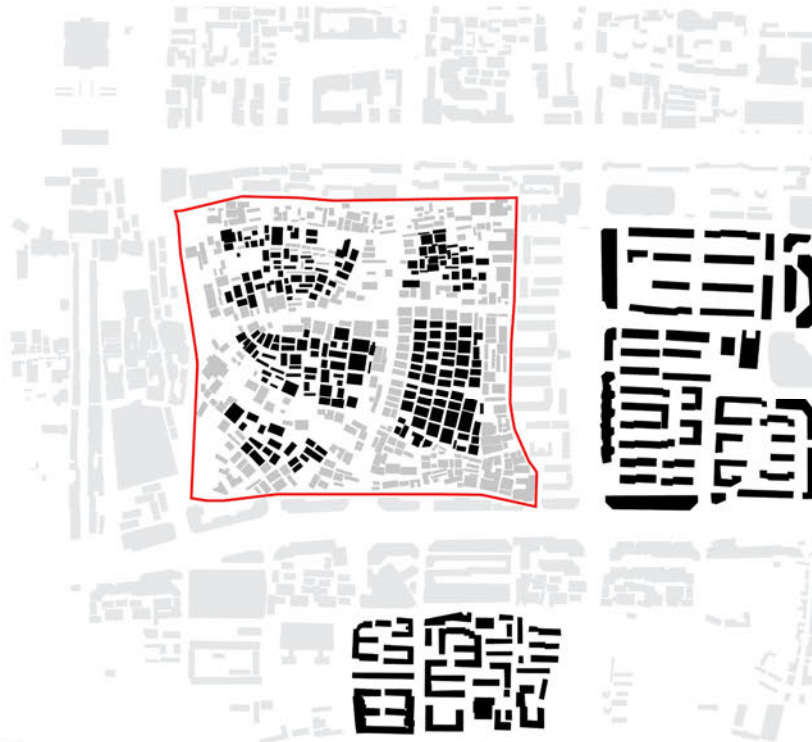


Hutongs and Courtyard Houses being Demolished because of the Weigai system



Original Hutong Area redeveloped into residential apartment community

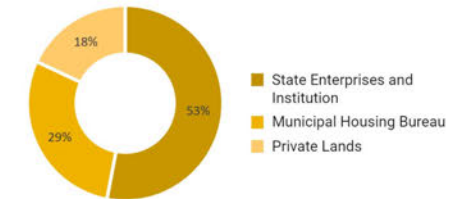
## Xianyukou Hutong Residential Land Use



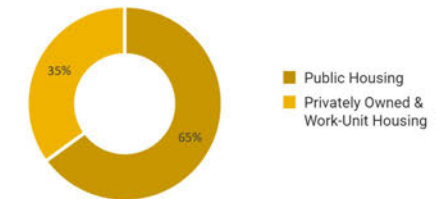
While commercial buildings are developed at the edge of the site, only the courtyard houses located in the inner part of the Xianyukou Site remained for residential use. Residential Apartments Complex are built in the surrounding lands which used to be Hutongs.

## Ownership

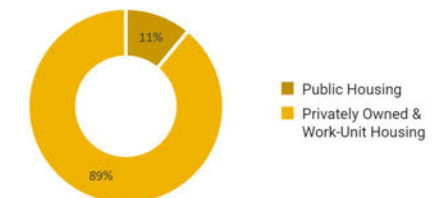
1982



2000: RESIDENTIAL HUTONGS



2000: COMMERCIALIZED HUTONGS



# CURRENT HUTONG DENSITY AT COURTYARD HOUSE SCALE

One of the main issues of the current Hutong and courtyard houses is the lack of living space. As more tenants move into the courtyard houses, the extended structures built by the residents, being unstable and not organized, causing congestion in the narrow lanes and safety issues to the neighborhood. Yet, people do not build upward because of the the height limits of the Hutong from ancient time .

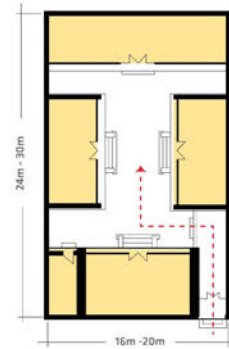
## RENTAL IN HUTONG

- Public Housing
  - Each family unit(20sq.m) pay 44.30 rmb (CAD\$8) per month
- Private owners rent out rooms
  - 400 to 800 rmb (CAD\$50 - CAD\$100) per month
- Work-unit Housing
  - 64 rmb (CAD\$12) per month

## RENTAL IN MARKET

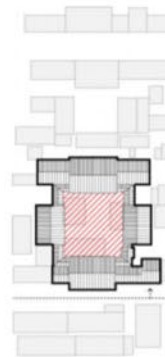
- Average: 2000 rmb per unit (15-20s.m) per month

## COURTYARD HOUSE TYPICAL SIZE

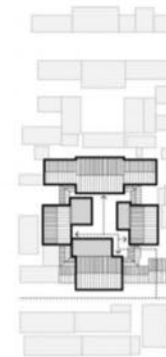


Area of a Courtyard house: 284 - 600 Sq.m

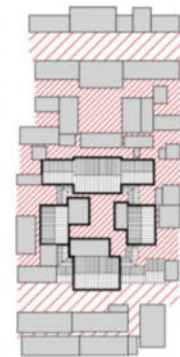
## CHANGES OF HUTONG



Qing Dynasty  
Each courtyard served single family



1960's  
Each courtyard was shared by multiple families



1960's to Present  
The edge between private space and public space was blurred

**Landlord**  
1 families / courtyard  
5-10 people / courtyard  
15sqm / person

**Tenants**  
6-7 families / courtyard  
20-30 people / courtyard  
4.2sqm / person

## INSUFFICIENT SPACE



Courtyard open space is occupied by extension buildings, blocking sunlight. Lack of space: average living space per family (3.5 members): 15m<sup>2</sup>. China's official average: 20.23m<sup>2</sup>/person



Courtyard house section -Xian Ming Hutong NO.4- drawing by Liang Ya Qing

Courtyard house section

## HEIGHT LIMITATION

All courtyard houses are one storey because before 1911, the courtyard houses only served one family and no residential building of more than one storey was permitted. (not taller than the walls of the Forbidden City) .



# THE VERTICAL PROJECTS

The Vertical Projects attempt to utilize vertical spatiality to allow residents and visitors have scenic views of the city and the hutongs itself.

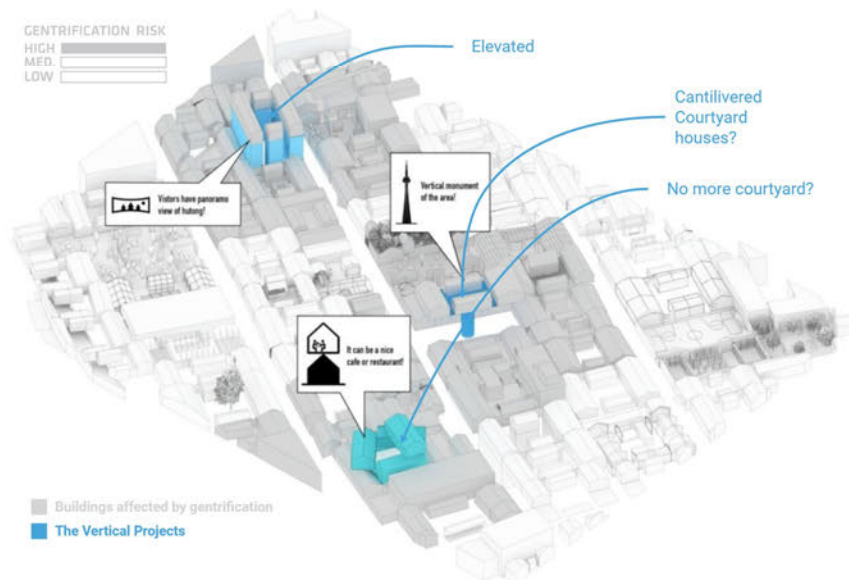


Courtyard Relaxing Space

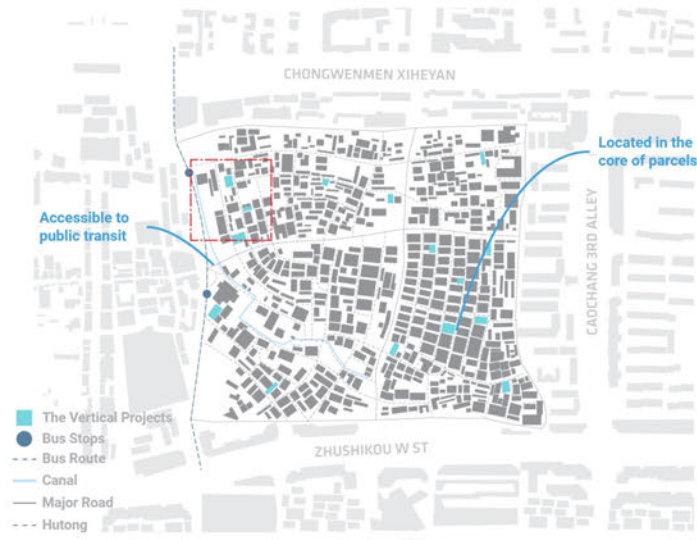
One storey houses

# CURRENT

Courtyard houses in the inner city of Beijing was restricted to be no more than 1 storey. Most of the houses are maintained with the height, being a feature of the Hutong.

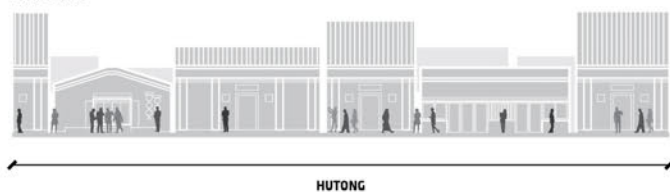


Masterplan (The Vertical Projects)



- ❌ Gentrification, increase the property value
- ❌ Unrealistic proposal of uplifted structure of the courtyard house, an attempt to expand the courtyard house and Hutong
- ❌ Elevated structures break aesthetic of low rises housing complex in the Hutong neighborhood
- ❌ Courtyard features and the sunlight to the courtyard are blocked by the additional structures.
- ✅ Potential to be the tourist attractions which can provide views of the whole Hutong.
- ✅ Bring in activities to the Hutong while maintaining the same footprint.

BEFORE



AFTER





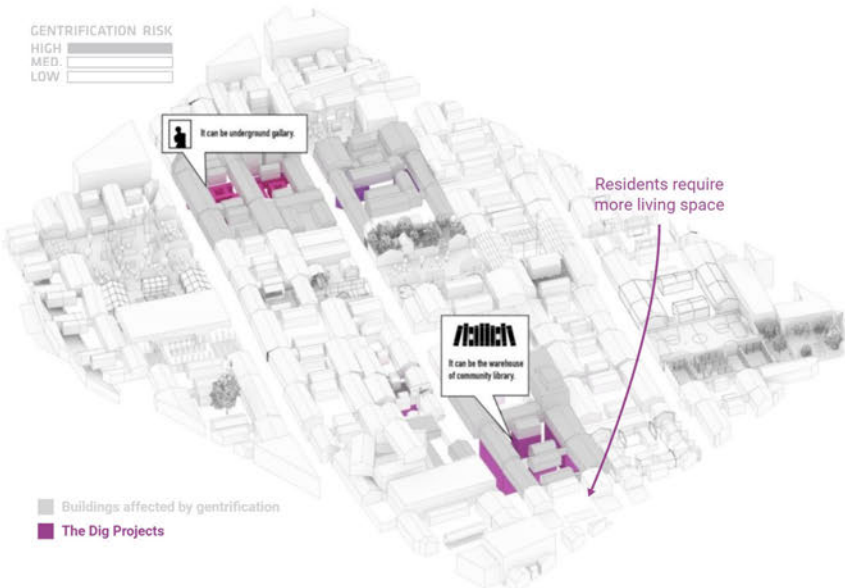
# THE DIG PROJECTS

The Dig Projects attempt to utilize vertical spatiality by occupying the underground rather than the sky with underground galleries and libraries

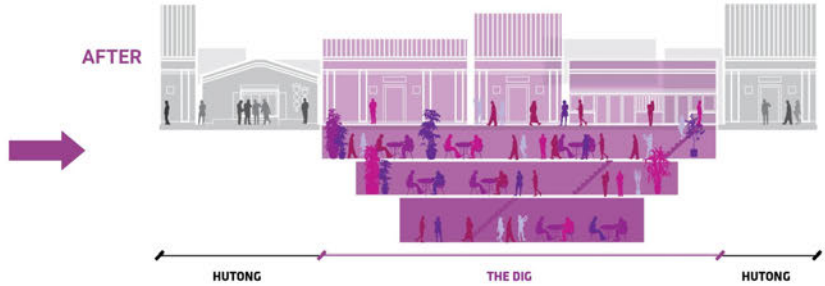
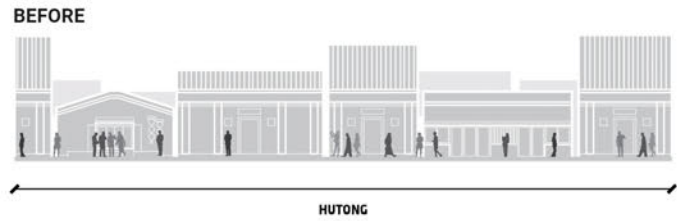


# CURRENT

Hutong courtyard house clad with grey bricks and red painted timber structure. Courtyard spaces are for private households.



- ✗ Removing the current courtyard and digging an underground courtyard poses many issues, such as construction management, safety and accessibility issues.
- ✗ The site lacks space and large glass and courtyard structures would waste even more space.
- ✗ It is expensive and structurally unfeasible to dig vertical space underground.
- ✗ Courtyards which used to be semi-private are turned into public space.
- ✓ Bring in activities to the Hutong while maintaining the same footprint.







## THE INFILL PROJECTS

The Infill Projects create housing extensions on existing structures in the Hutong so families can have more space and also rooms that can be at different elevations.



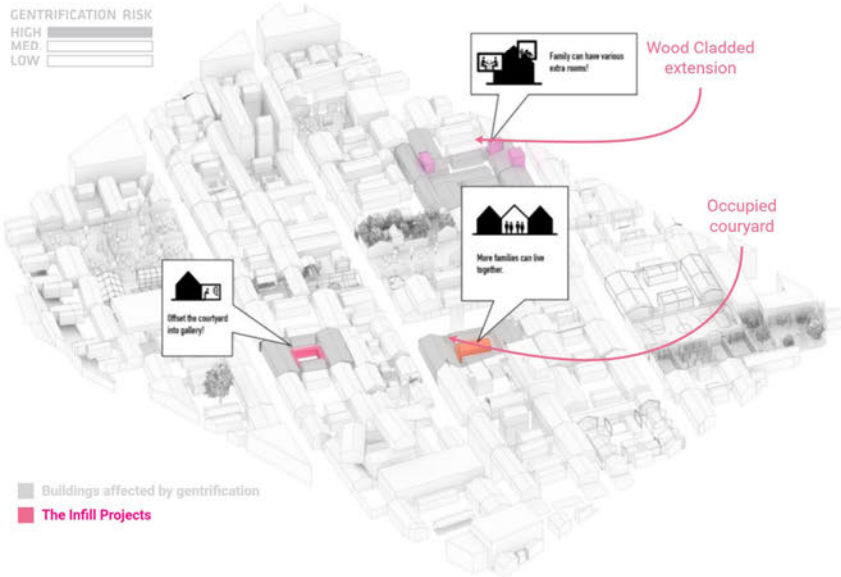
Courtyard House  
Extension for Storage



Extended Roof

## CURRENT

Lack of courtyard space due to the necessity of the extension for the courtyard house, such as kitchen and bedroom.



BEFORE



HUTONG



Masterplan (The Infill Projects)

AFTER



THE INFILL

- ✗ Neglects the traditional requirement or aesthetic of Hutong and courtyard houses, such as red timber structure, clay shingles, and grey brick facade
- ✗ Some courtyards are populated by the infills, which reduces the preexisting semi-public space.
- ✗ Increased density posing extra pressure to the existing infrastructure
- ✓ Proposed multiple stories extension in oppose to the current single storey house, which provides more living space for the local residents.
- ✓ Low gentrification, enhance the property value but provide better living space
- ✓ Organized and designed infill is better than the dangerous extended structures by the residents.

A photograph of a traditional Chinese courtyard. In the center, a large, leafy tree stands on a circular patch of grass. To the left, a two-story building with a grey brick wall and a tiled roof is visible. To the right, a single-story building with a tiled roof and wooden doors is seen. In the foreground, a man in a dark jacket is bending over, possibly tending to a small garden bed. Two children are crouching on the grass to the left of the tree. A man in a light-colored shirt stands near the building in the background. The overall scene is peaceful and well-maintained.

## Chapter 4 : Heritage Conservation

### Preservation, Interpretation

# CURRENT HUTONG ARCHITECTURE

The courtyard house has a history of over 2,000 years. It showcases unique characteristics of Chinese architecture. Preserving the traditional architectural form is significant for both keeping the identity of the old Beijing city and cultural inheritance.



## TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE

The courtyard houses demonstrate the aesthetic value by using traditional building techniques and materials such as stone base, red timber and clay shingles.



## VEGETATED COURTYARD

Vegetation in courtyard is an important feature that worths preserving



## DETERIORATED COURTYARD HOUSE

Due to lack of proper management and maintenance, facades of courtyard houses have started deteriorating.

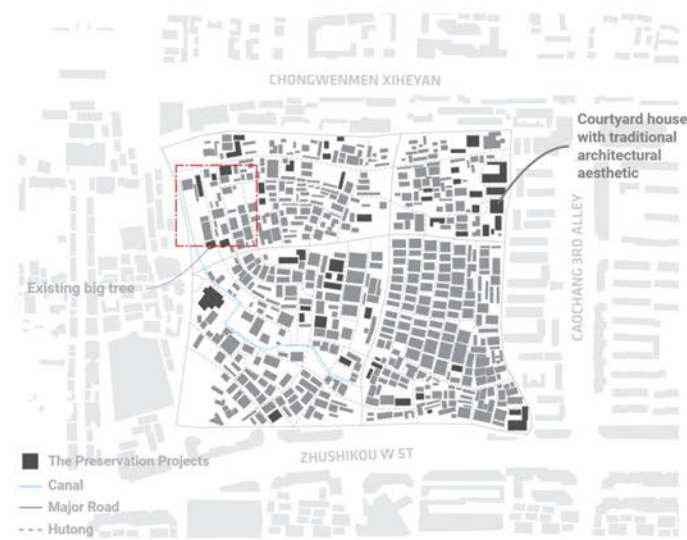
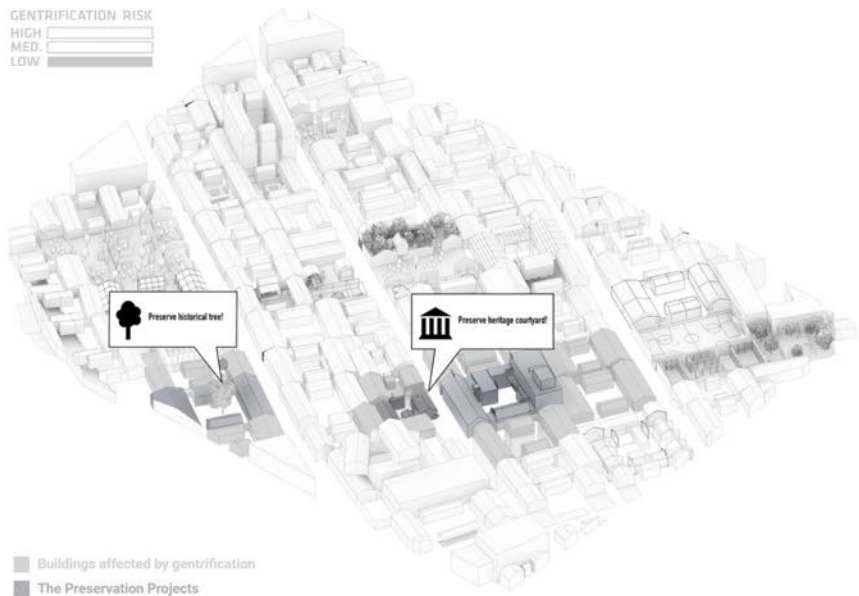


## THE PRESERVATION PROJECTS

The Preservation Projects intend to protect the historical elements of the Hutongs by preserving historical trees and heritage courtyards.

## CURRENT

The courtyard houses demonstrate the aesthetic value by using traditional building techniques and materials such as stone base, red timber and clay shingles.



Masterplan (The Preservation Projects)

- ✗ No density increase in the preserved courtyard houses
- ✗ The program does not contribute to the economic demands
- ✗ The sites are highly selective. It is difficult to define which houses have more aesthetic value
- ✓ Preserve the historical architectural form
- ✓ Preserving existing vegetation and landscape contributes to maintaining ecological diversity
- ✓ Reduce social impact or gentrification

BEFORE



HUTONG

AFTER



HUTONG

THE PRESERVATION

HUTONG



## THE INTERPRETATION PROJECTS

The Interpretation Projects intend to both regenerate and preserve the historical features of the existing structures within the hutong such as inserting glass houses into the ruins and keeping building silhouettes as memories.



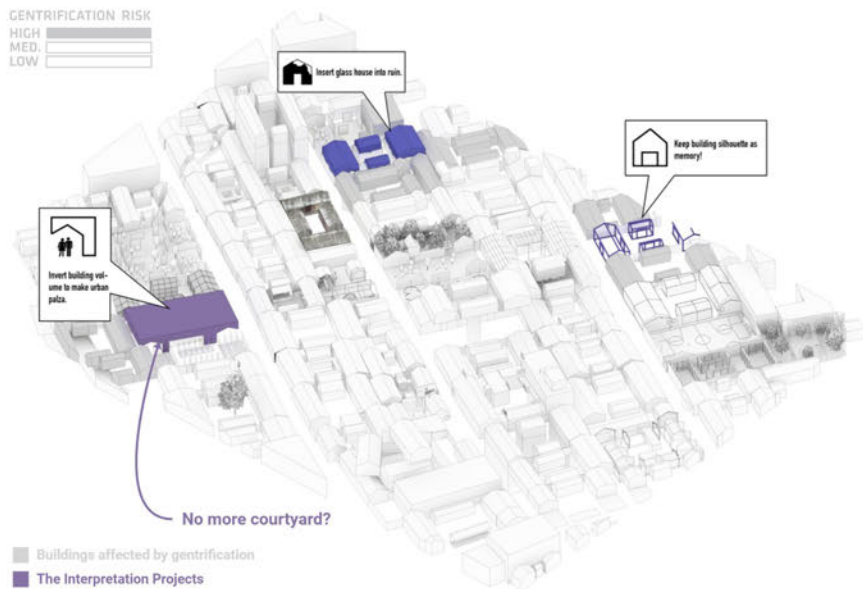
Deteriorating façade with minor repair



Damaged house

## CURRENT

Due to lack of proper management and maintenance, facades of courtyard houses have started deteriorating. The condition is not suitable for residents to live in any more.



No more courtyard?

BEFORE



HUTONG



Masterplan (The Interpretation Projects)

AFTER



HUTONG

THE INTERPRETATION

HUTONG

- ✗ Unique architectural design attracts tourism, triggering gentrification
- ✗ European-approach deculturates the Hutong
- ✗ Economically inefficient to build the structures
- ✓ Reduce the social impact that can be caused by demolition
- ✓ Preserve the traditional architectural elements
- ✓ Opportunities to convert the program to commercial use, bringing in more tourists



## **Chapter 5 : Sustainability**

**Sustainable, Green, & Water**

# CURRENT HUTONG INFRASTRUCTURE

Although there are very few green spaces in the Hutong area, a variety of trees can be found in the alleys and courtyards. There are currently no sustainable implementations found on the hutong sites. The present facilities of the hutongs consists of a common courtyard drain with a sewer connection. For the inhabitants, the kitchen areas have running water but inadequate drainage.



## SUSTAINABILITY

Few areas of green spaces are seen in the bird's-eye view shot of a hutong.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Current state of the waste management system in the Hutongs that need to be fixed.



Coal heating system



Shortage in Sanitation Facilities, each toilet is shared by 77 families on average



## FACILITIES

Simple solar shower system



Insufficient water supply, shared water tap



## WATER DRAINAGE

Inadequate sewage system



Residents are required to use the public toilets in the streets nearby where they would be regularly cleaned by pump trucks.





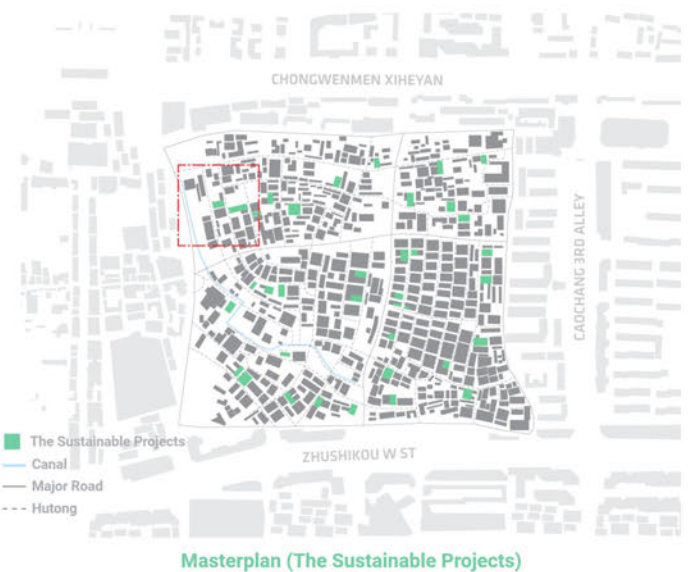
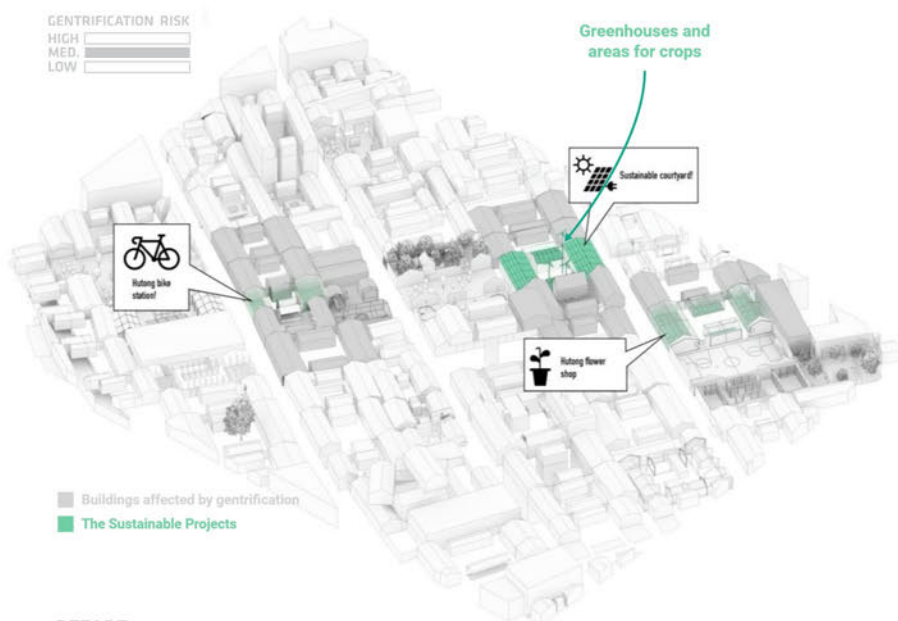
## THE SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

The Sustainable Projects create eco-friendly environments through sustainable courtyards, flower shops, and bike stations within the hutongs.

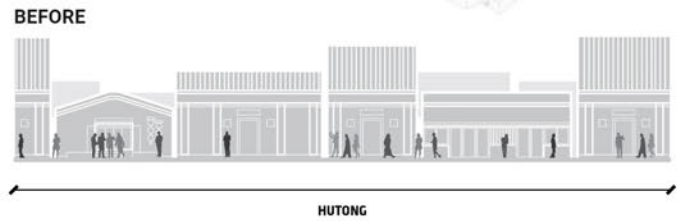


## CURRENT HUTONG COURTYARDS

Residents within the same courtyard house are interdependent to each other. In light of their interdependency, MVRDV's proposal of the sustainable projects utilize the idea by introducing green house and open farm land where local crops can be grown and harvested.



- ❌ High-maintenance costs of greenhouses and gardens
- ❌ Demolition of the courtyard houses
- ✅ Promotes eco-friendly and sustainable methods of living by creating sustainable courtyards and greenhouses
- ✅ Trees and green spaces improves air quality
- ✅ Enhances social interaction and involvement.
- ✅ Bike lanes promote environmentally friendly alternatives to buses, subways, and cars
- ✅ Operates all year round

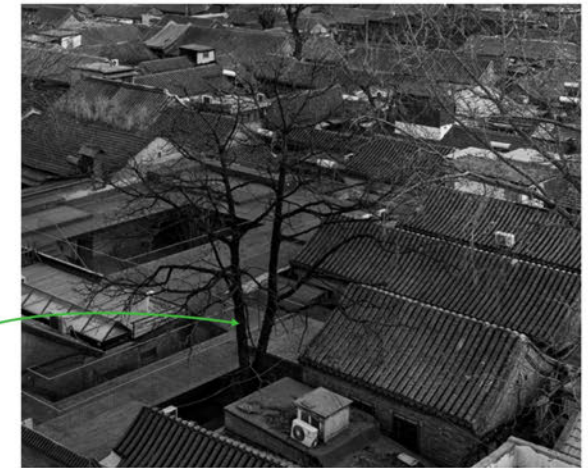






## THE GREEN PROJECTS

The Green Projects intend to create green areas for vegetable gardens, tourist routes, mini-golf courses, and bird gardens.



## CURRENT HUTONG COURTYARDS

There are very few green spaces found in hutongs but a variety of trees exist in the courtyards and lanes.

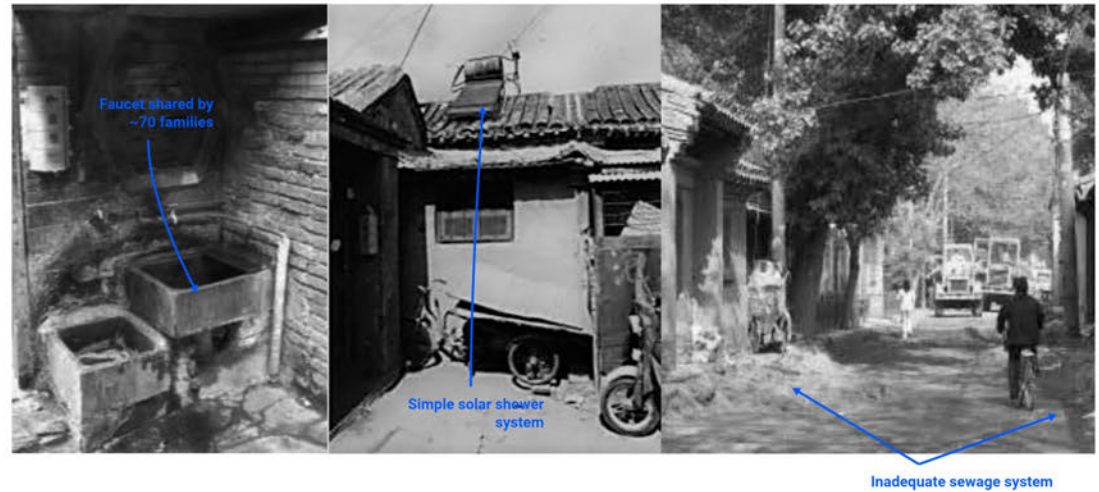


- ✗ Provision of open public green space to attract people into the site, a gentrification system
- ✗ Gardens are not functional in the winter
- ✗ Demolition of the courtyard houses to make space for public green spaces
- ✓ Residences are able to produce vegetables for themselves, rather relying on adjacent commercial suppliers
- ✓ Trees provide shade for hot and sunny weather
- ✓ Additional amenities for public use (ie. mini-golf courses)
- ✓ Trees and green spaces help to mitigate the effects of global warming and promote eco-friendly living
- ✓ Storm-water management in permeable surfaces may be adapted in green areas to resolve the drainage system issue
- ✓ Provides better accessibility for tourists



## THE WATER PROJECTS

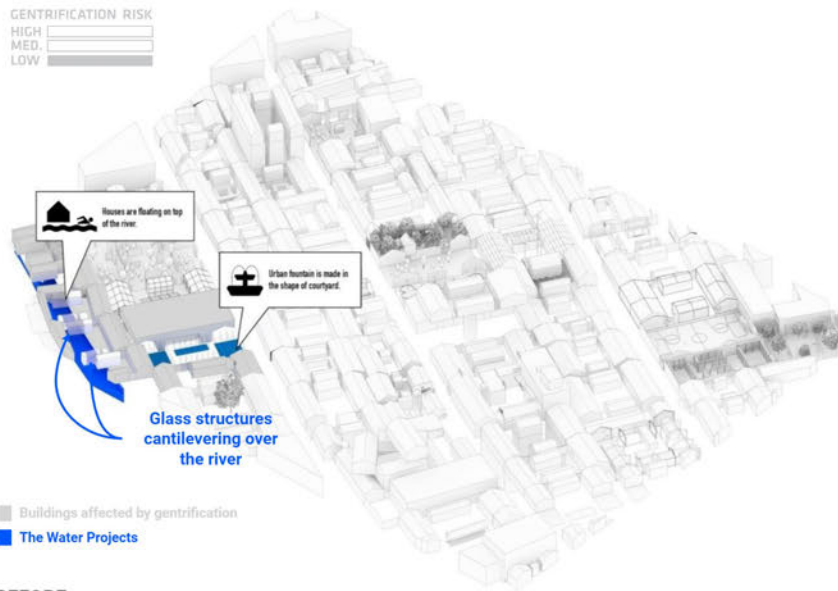
The Water Projects create moments utilizing water that include fountain areas and housing that float on top of the river.



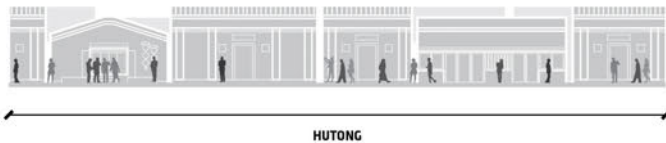
## CURRENT HUTONG INFRASTRUCTURE

Unhygienic and insufficient water supply and system for the courtyard house community.

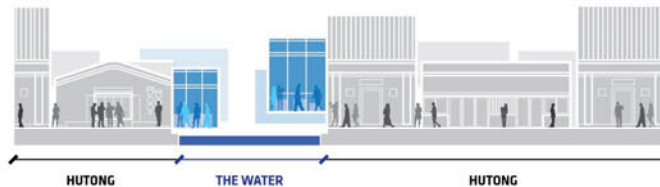
GENTRIFICATION RISK  
HIGH  
MED.  
LOW



BEFORE



AFTER



- ✗ Glass structure cantilevering over canal is expensive, unnecessary and visually making space even more congested
- ✗ Glass structures is unresponsive to the vernacular Hutong courtyard house design guideline
- ✓ Improves infrastructural systems by mitigating the current insufficient water management and unhygienic environment, such as the sewage system, washrooms, and drinkable water supply.
- ✓ Provides more space for inhabitants and tourists by utilizing space over the river
- ✓ Tourist attraction



## Chapter 6 : Commercial Integration

### Arcade, Edge, Facility, & Identity

# CURRENT HUTONG AMENITIES

Cultural heritage is one of the main features of Beijing city, making Beijing one of China's top tourist destinations. The conservation of the remaining historic areas is vital to Beijing's identity and for the city's long-term commercial interests.



## REPLICAS

While the Beijing government tries to bring back the Hutong courtyard house culture back, meaningless replicas are created

## TRANSFORMATION

Now, no more than 1,000 Hutongs remain and a majority of the existing ones have been transformed into tourist attractions associated with street food, shopping, and bars.



## ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

Some hutongs evolved into popular evening entertainment districts with many recently-opened bars, restaurants, and souvenir shops.



## RICKSHAW TOURS

A man is seen driving a rickshaw carrying tourists through the Hutong alleys



# THE ARCADE PROJECTS

The Arcade Projects create areas for leisure and entertainment by designing shopping streets inside the Hutong.



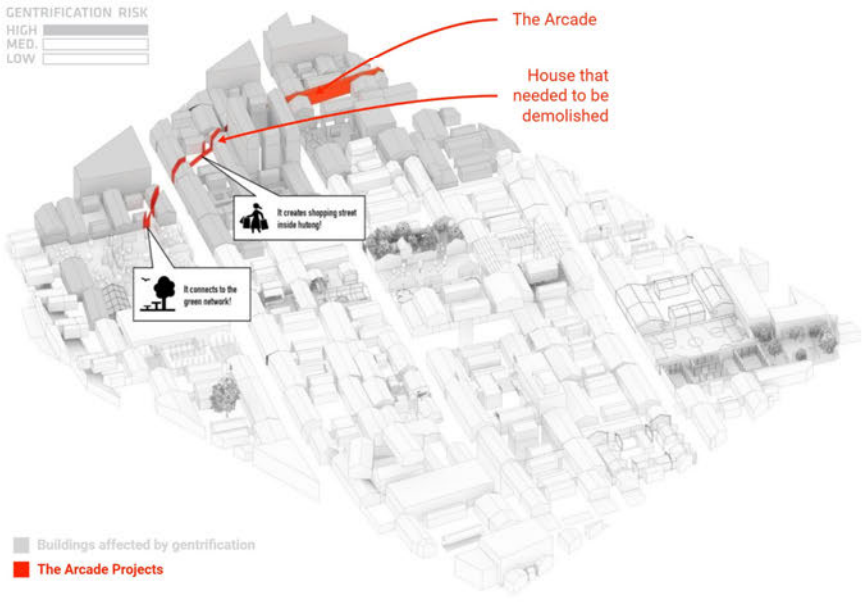
Social interaction between neighbors



Narrow inactivated Hutong

## CURRENT

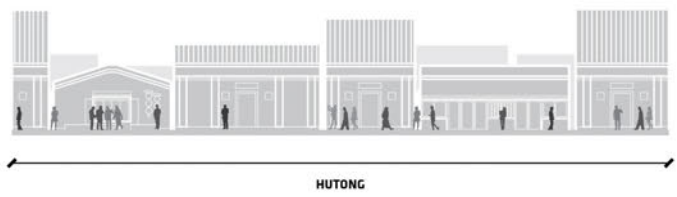
Quiet & peaceful night in Hutong, evening social interaction with neighbor from different courtyard house.



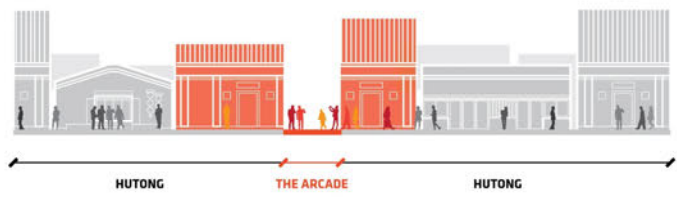
Masterplan (The Arcade Projects)

- ❌ Sound & light pollution to the local residents living in the courtyard house
- ❌ Demolition of the courtyard houses
- ❌ Commercial revitalization is crucial to the success of the gentrification
- ✅ Souvenir store, local food & beverage serve as tourist attraction
- ✅ Unique continuous boulevard circulation experience opposing the static Hutong street experience
- ✅ Increase these retailers' revenue so they can afford to maintain/renovate their courtyard house

### BEFORE



### AFTER





## THE EDGE PROJECTS

The Edge Projects address the narrow edge conditions of the hutongs by demolishing old buildings and widening the roads while maintaining the community elements of the hutongs.

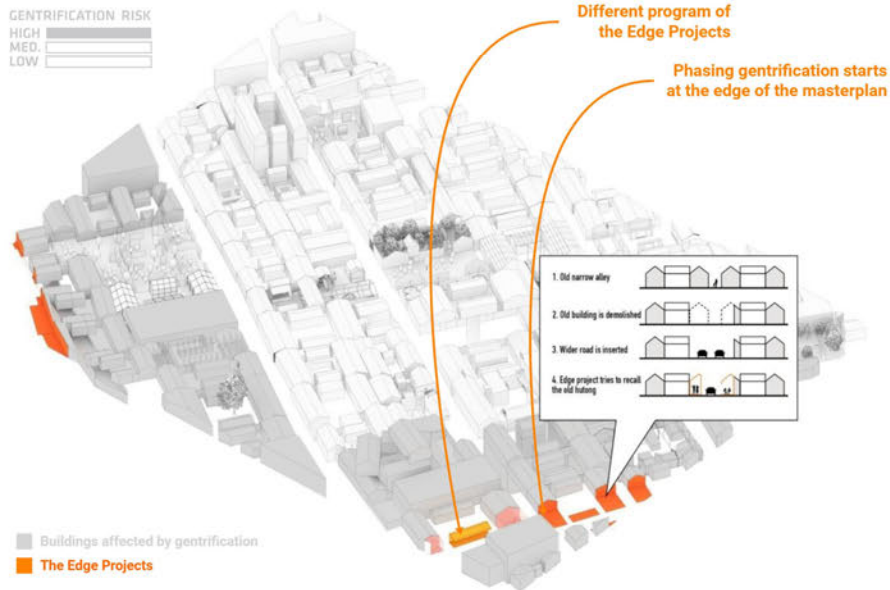


Back façade facing Hutong

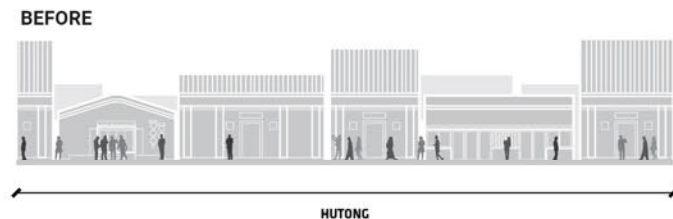


## CURRENT

Current back façade of the courtyard house facing the Hutong, making the Hutong nothing more than a street for circulation



Masterplan (The Edge Projects)



- ✗ Pro "Weigai" system, phasing gentrification starts at the edge of the masterplan, and to the inner core
- ✗ Sound & light pollution to the local residents living in the courtyard house
- ✗ Commercial revitalization is crucial to the success of the gentrification
- ✗ Demolition of the courtyard houses
- ✓ Increase these retailers' revenue so they can afford to maintain/renovate their courtyard house
- ✓ Widening of the Hutongs mitigates the safety concern of the old congested Hutongs
- ✓ Brings liveliness and activities to Hutongs that are unappealing



## THE FACILITY PROJECTS

The Facility Projects intend to create spaces for its inhabitants and visitors by providing various amenities such as a sports court, public library, open markets, and kindergartens.

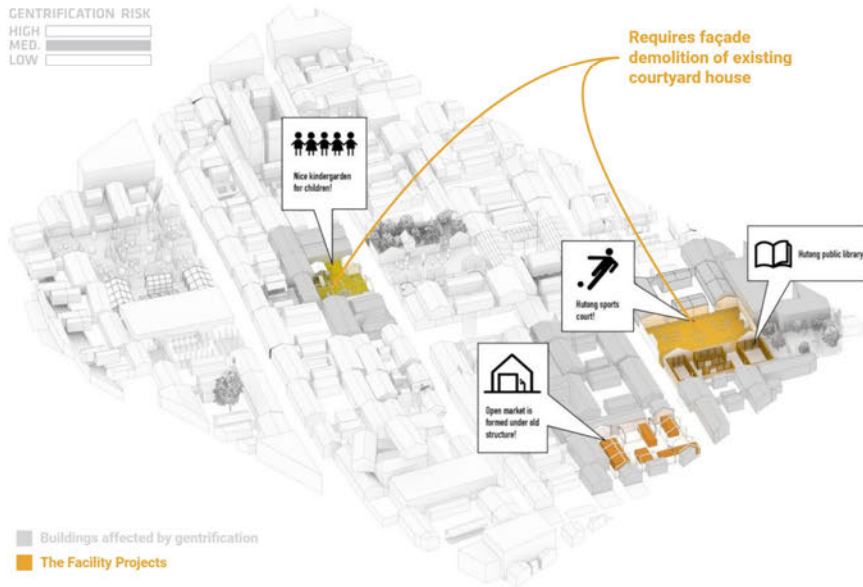


Deteriorate Building

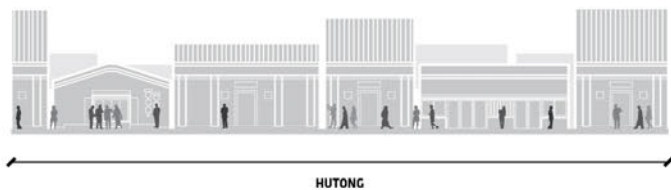


## CURRENT

Façade-less Hutong courtyard house buildings as a result of the lack of maintenance from the local residents.



Masterplan (The Facility Projects)



- ✗ Provision of public amenities is the early phase of gentrification
- ✗ European approach that deculturalize the vernacular Hutong courtyard house typology
- ✗ Proposed program of The Facility Projects not addressing the social needs of the Hutong Residents, ie public library and sports court
- ✗ Removal of large parcel of buildings for the sports court which heightens the issue of shortage in space
- ✓ Affordable heritage architecture renewal maintaining the certain elements of the vernacular design, without having to demolish the entire structure



## THE IDENTITY PROJECTS

The Identity Projects intend to create attractive architecture facing the major street to attract tourism. Architectural technique such as rasterized image printed on glass is used.



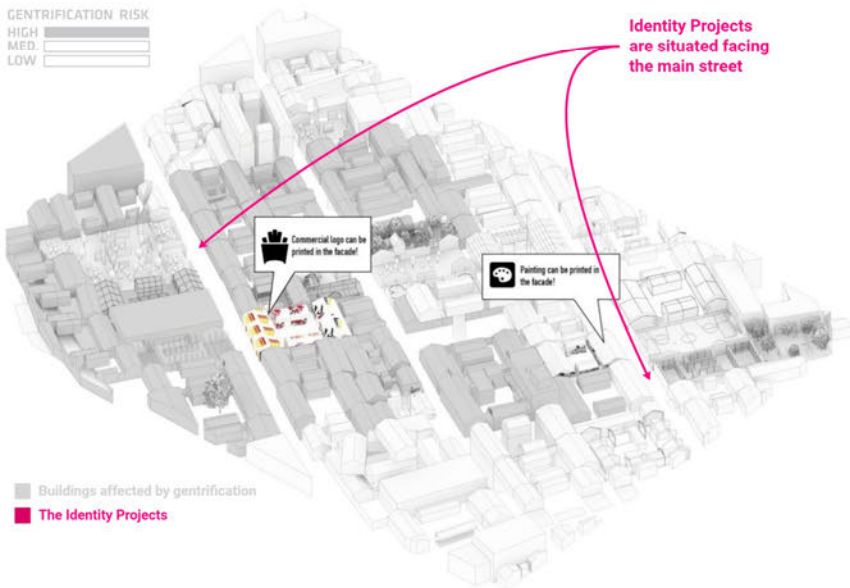
Facade facing main street



Deteriorating vernacular storefront

## CURRENT HUTONG STOREFRONT

Current façade of the Hutong courtyard houses that are facing the main street is unattractive. This is due to the lack of financial support/public subsidies for the local residents to maintain them.



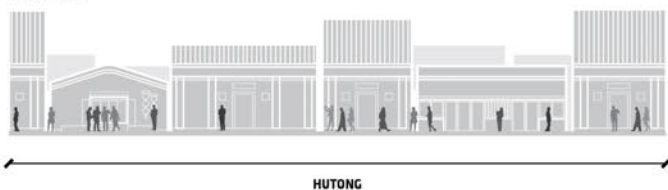
Identity Projects are situated facing the main street



Masterplan (The Identity Projects)

- ✗ Removal of vernacular Hutong Courtyard House design with an European cladding approach
- ✗ Pro "Weigai" system, providing commercial program within the core to initiate urban development
- ✗ Unique architectural design attracts tourism, triggering gentrification
- ✓ Unique architecture as an approach to boost tourism, and the economy of the local Hutong retails
- ✓ Location of The Identity Projects are placed along the Hutongs to attract tourists or visitors to the community

BEFORE



HUTONG

AFTER



HUTONG

THE IDENTITY

HUTONG



A street scene with wooden buildings, a red car, and people walking. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. In the foreground, two people are walking away from the camera: one with a red backpack and a white shirt, and another in a yellow shirt. In the middle ground, a red car is parked on the right side of the street. Several other people are walking in the distance. The buildings are made of wood and have various windows and doors. The overall atmosphere is bright and sunny.

## Chapter 7 : Accessibility

### Parking

# CURRENT HUTONG MOBILITY

Cultural heritage is one of the main features of Beijing city, making Beijing one of China's top tourist destinations. The conservation of the remaining historic areas is vital to Beijing's identity and for the city's long-term commercial interests.



## MOBILITY

Traffic congestion in Hutong, 1 lane for parking and 1 lane for car circulating, which leaves no room for pedestrian or bikers access



An inhabitant is seen walking through the Hutong



People relaxing outdoors alongside their birds



## RICKSHAW TOURS

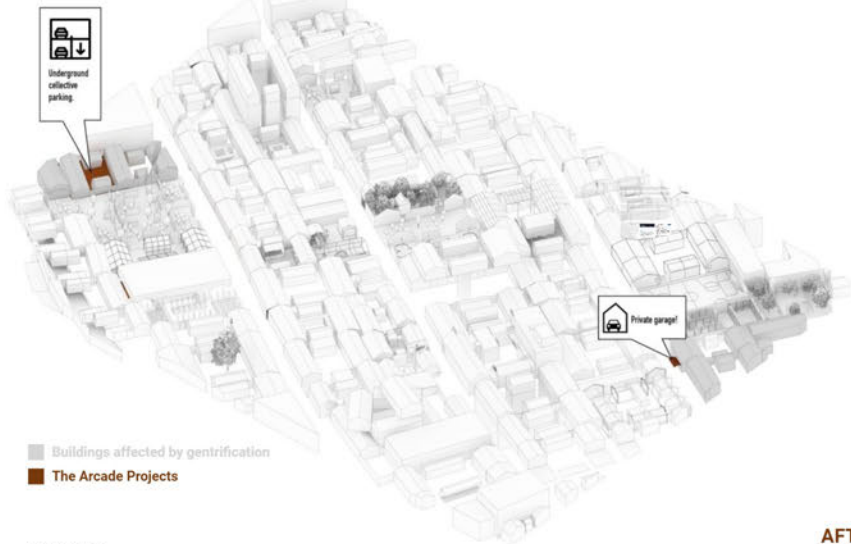
A man is seen driving a rickshaw carrying tourists through the Hutong alleys



# THE PARKING PROJECTS

The Parking Projects intend to create collective parking underground with private garage parking aboveground.

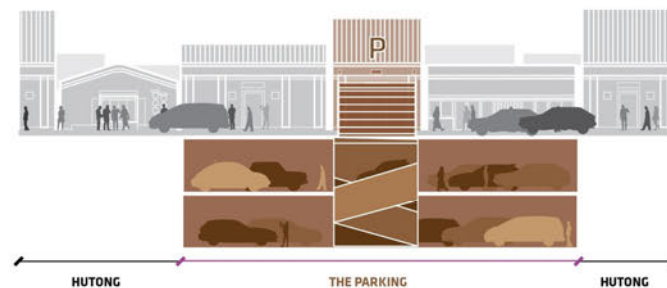
GENTRIFICATION RISK  
HIGH  
MED.  
LOW



BEFORE



AFTER



Car Access

Car Park

# CURRENT

Traffic congestion in Hutong, 1 lane for parking and 1 lane for car circulating, which leaves no room for pedestrian or bikers access.



Masterplan (The Parking Projects)

- ✗ Unrealistic location and approach of underground parking entrance in the middle of a Hutong.
- ✗ Encourages vehicle to circulate in the narrow Hutong lane, posing safety issues and traffic congestion.
- ✗ Provision of car park allows more arrival for tourist, triggering gentrification
- ✗ Vehicles will bring noise and air pollution to the Hutong area
- ✓ Hutongs would no longer be congested with traffic and parking. Space would be dedicated for bikers and pedestrians.
- ✓ New parking lot would allow tourists to access the Hutong more conveniently

An aerial photograph of a dense urban neighborhood, possibly a slum or informal settlement, with a yellow overlay. The buildings are closely packed, and the overall scene is dominated by the yellow color. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

**Chapter 8: Key Strategies**  
**Extracted Urban Social Strategies**

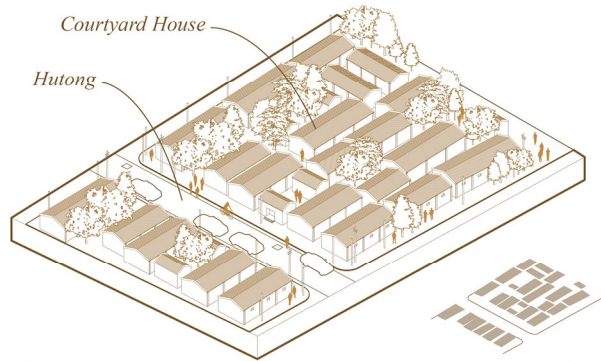
# **KEY URBAN SOCIAL STRATEGIES**

## **THF & TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CONSERVATION PLAN**

**The key strategies suggested by the THF and Tsinghua University researchers aim to minimize the social impact and maintaining the preexisting urban fabric of the Hutongs in Beijing. In doing so, their social space recommendations focus on the utilization of space rather than building new.**

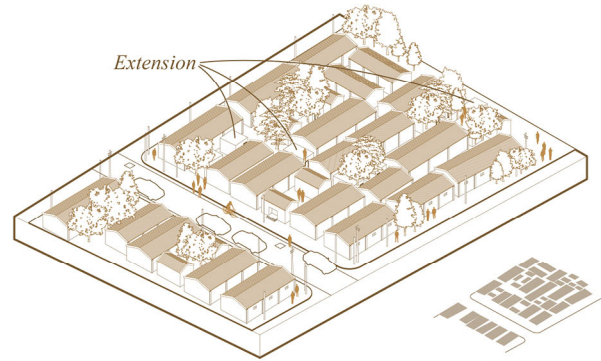
## **MVRDV'S "THE NEXT HUTONG"**

**While most of the proposed urban renewal encourage The selected key strategies proposed by MVRDV "The Next Hutong" focus on the enhancement of the public realm of these inactivated Hutongs by introducing various exciting programs. These programs have the opportunity to gather the Hutong community.**



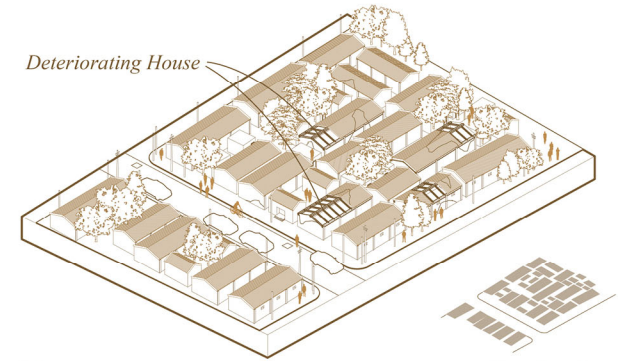
01

Figure Ground



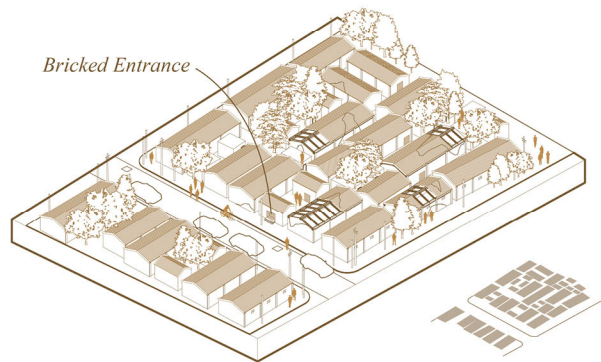
02

Figure Ground



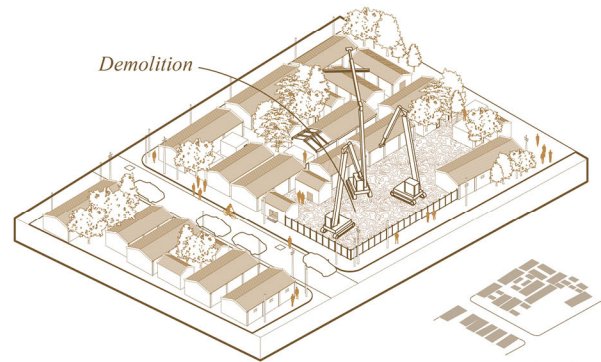
03

Figure Ground



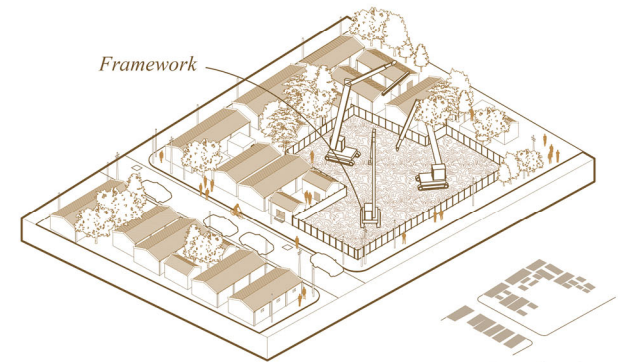
04

Figure Ground



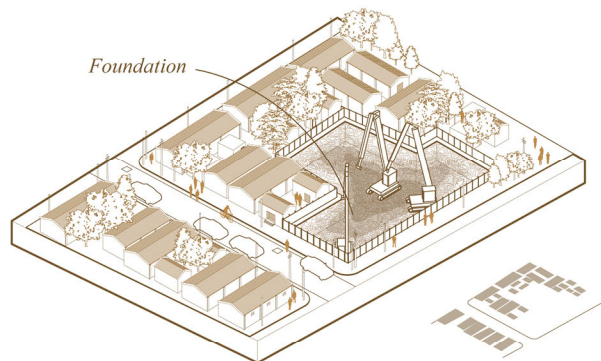
05

Figure Ground



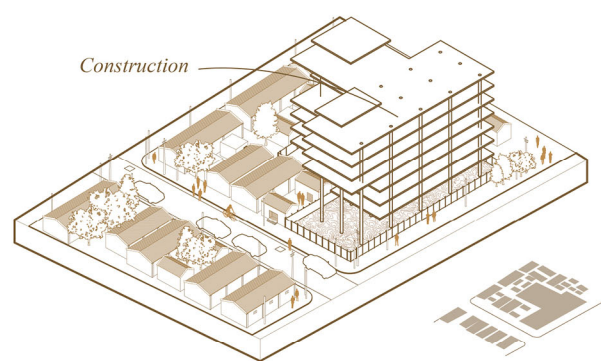
06

Figure Ground



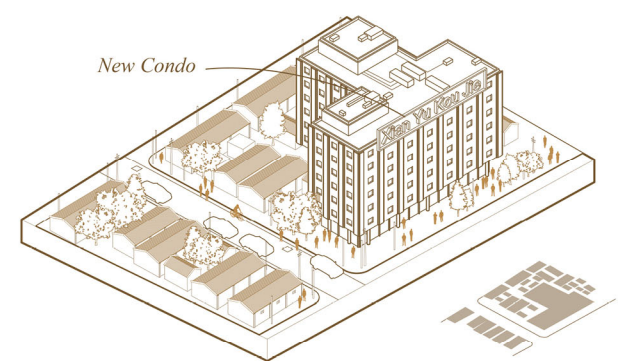
07

Figure Ground



08

Figure Ground



09

Figure Ground

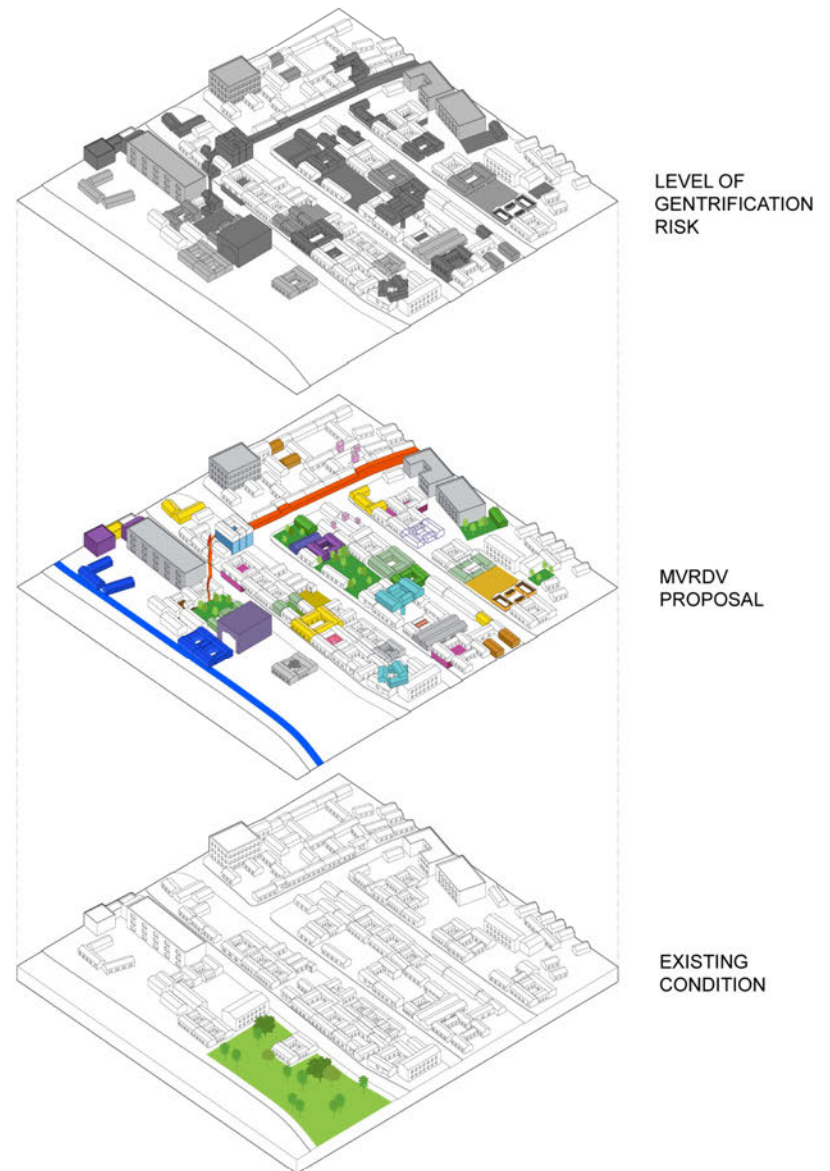
## The Next Hutong

MVRDV | Beijing | 2014

Andrew Lee - Bonnie Ho - Mavis Huang - Jue Wang

Series of axonometric drawing describing the sequence of incremental gentrification. 1) existing North West quadrant of the Xian Yu Kou Jie Hutong and courtyard house 2) Extensions of courtyard house were added by the local residents as a result of increase in population and family sizes 3) Deteriorating facade and structure as a result of lack of maintenance and lack of government subsidies 4) Vacant courtyard house as a result of the original local residents moving out and into the suburbs 5) Demolition of courtyard house as a result of vacant and unsafe land 6,7) Deep excavation and foundation for the new mixed use midrise 8) Construction 9) New mixed use consists of residential units on top and retails at grade

Project Type	Icon	Level of Gentrification Risk
THE VERTICAL PROJECTS		HIGH
THE DIG PROJECTS		HIGH
THE INFILL PROJECTS		HIGH
THE PRESERVATION PROJECTS		LOW
THE INTERPRETATION PROJECTS		HIGH
THE SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS		MEDIUM
THE GREEN PROJECTS		HIGH
THE WATER PROJECTS		LOW
THE ARCADE PROJECTS		HIGH
THE EDGE PROJECTS		HIGH
THE FACILITY PROJECTS		MEDIUM
THE IDENTITY PROJECTS		HIGH
THE PARKING PROJECTS		MEDIUM



## The Next Hutong

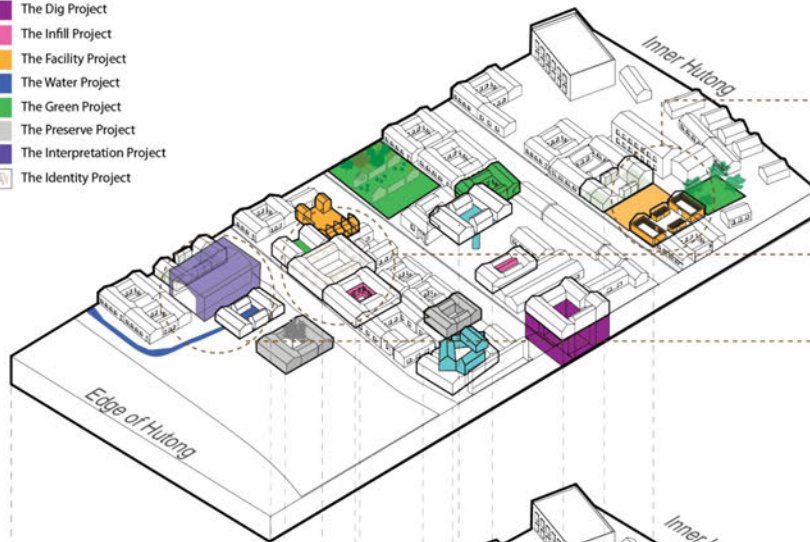
MVRDV | Beijing | 2014

Andrew Lee - Bonnie Ho - Mavis Huang - Jue Wang

A series of axonometric drawings on the left illustrates the thirteen projects proposed by MVRDV. By analysing MVRDV's design intentions and the context of the site, Xianyukou area, we assigned each project a level of gentrification risk, ranging from low to high, based on its impact to the neighbourhood. By comparing MVRDV's proposal with the existing condition of the site one can see how the area can be developed and changed by introducing the thirteen projects that are listed. By analysing the gentrification risk level of the projects and their distribution within the area, it is clear that MVRDV's proposal will convert Xianyukou into a neighbourhood with high gentrification risk.

## MVRDV - The Next Hutong

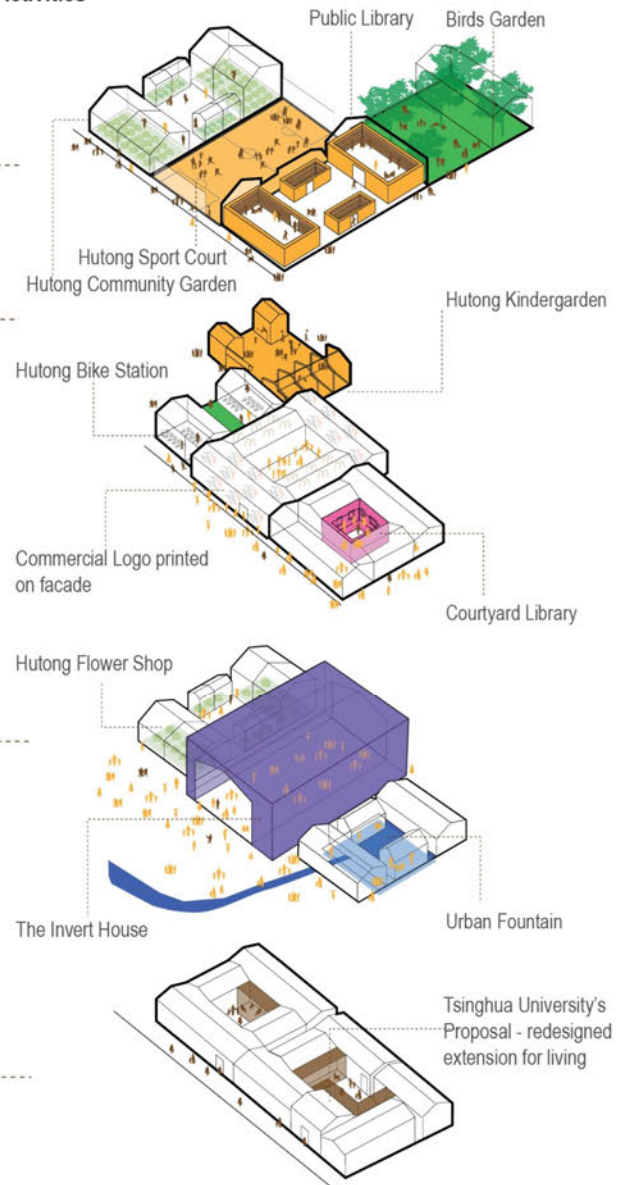
- The Vertical Project
- The Dig Project
- The Infill Project
- The Facility Project
- The Water Project
- The Green Project
- The Preserve Project
- The Interpretation Project
- The Identity Project



The Existing Hutong

## Project Activities

- Resident
- Tourist



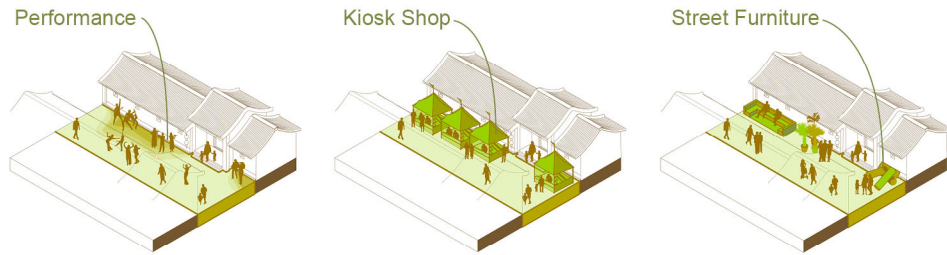
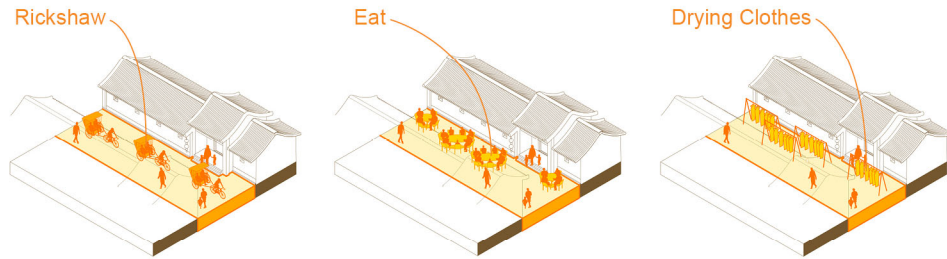
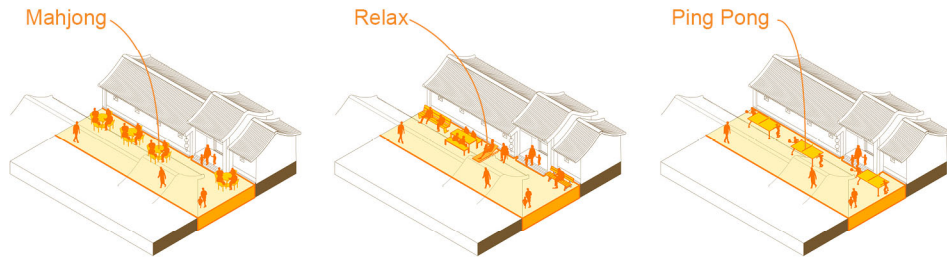
## The Next Hutong

MVRDV | Beijing | 2014

Andrew Lee - Bonnie Ho - Mavis Huang - Jue Wang

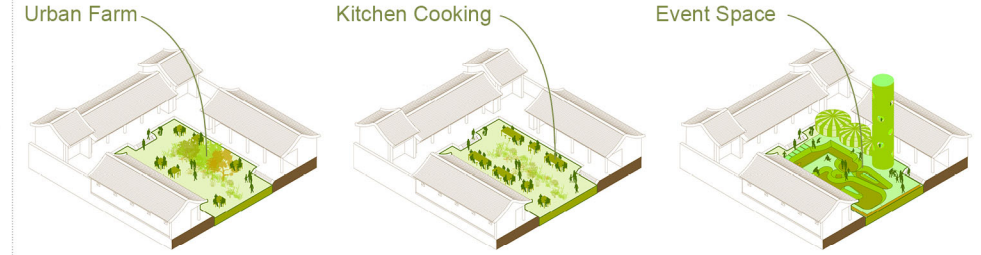
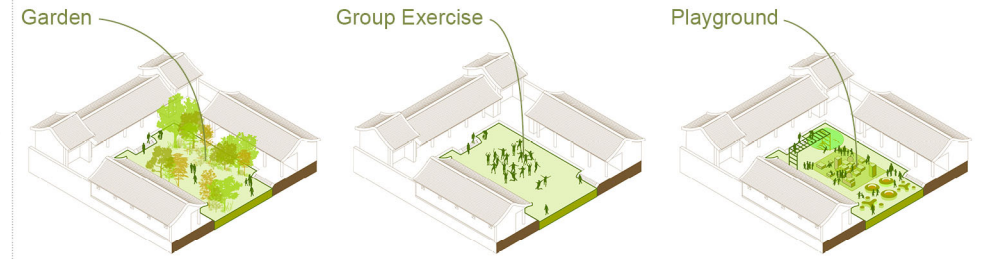
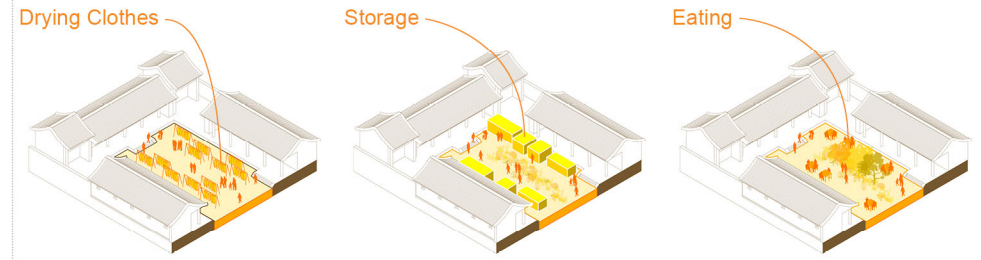
The Transect Axonometric drawings on the left demonstrate the Xianyukou Hutong's existing site condition and the MVRDV's proposed project of the Next Hutong. By calling up points of interest from the MVRDV proposal, activities are analyzed through the relationship between different proposed projects and difference in the user groups. Resident-focused projects are mostly located in the inner Hutong while the edge projects are more destined for commercial use, attracting more tourists. Comparing the MVRDV, Tsinghua University and Beijing Coseervation Plan proposed rehabilitation of courtyard houses with redesigned extension, mitigating the risk of gentrification and providing better living space for the residents.





■ Proposed by The Conservation Plan by THF & Tsinghua University students  
■ Proposed by MVRDV's "The Next Hutong"

### Hutong Renewal & Preservation



■ Proposed by The Conservation Plan by THF & Tsinghua University students  
■ Proposed by MVRDV's "The Next Hutong"

### Courtyard Renewal & Preservation

## The Next Hutong

MVRDV | Beijing | 2014

Andrew Lee - Bonnie Ho - Mavis Huang - Jue Wang

Series of axonometric drawings describing the key strategies of conserving and urban renewing the existing Hutongs and courtyard house. These selected strategies aim to preserve and respect most of the existing urban fabric of the Xian Yu Kou Jie. Orange represents the proposed conservation plan written and suggested by the THF and Tsinghua University researchers. The Green represents some of the key strategies from MVRDV's "The Next Hutong" proposal.



## **Chapter 9: Overall Critique**

# UNSUCCESSFUL



Though MVRDV's "The Next Hutong" proposal have the opportunity to significantly enhance the public streetscape and boosting local retail economy, it does not address the root of the Hutong courtyard house urban and political issues, such as lack of living space, the traffic congestion, and the physical/cultural heritage preservation of the Hutong courtyard house.

- ✗ Provision of public amenities is the early phase of gentrification
- ✗ Unique architectural design attracts tourism, triggering gentrification
- ✗ It is expensive and structually unfeasible to dig vertical space underground.
- ✗ Courtyard features and the sunlight to the courtyard are blocked by the additional structures above the original houses
- ✗ Proposed program of The Facility Projects not addressing the social needs of the Hutong Residents, ie public library and sports court
- ✗ Neglects the traditional requirement or aesthetic of Hutong and courtyard houses, such as red timber structure, clay shingles, and grey brick facade
- ✗ Demolition of the courtyard houses
- ✗ Removal of large parcel of buildings for the sports court which heightens the issue of shortage in space
- ✗ Removing the current courtyard and digging an underground courtyard poses many issues, such as construction management, safety and accessibility issues.
- ✗ Sound & light pollution to the local residents living in the courtyard house
- ✗ Pro "Weigai" system, phasing gentrification starts at the edge of the masterplan, and to the inner core
- ✗ The site lacks space and large glass and courtyard structures would waste even more space.
- ✗ Unrealistic proposal of uplifted structure of the courtyard house, an attempt to expand the courtyard house and Hutong
- ✗ Commercial revitalization is crucial to the success of the gentrification

- ✓ Reduce the social impact that can be caused by demolition
- ✓ Preserve the traditional architectural elements
- ✓ Opportunities to convert the program to commercial use, bringing in more tourists
- ✓ Improves infrastructural systems by mitigating the current insufficient water management and unhygienic environment, such as the sewage system, washrooms, and drinkable water supply.
- ✓ Proposed multiple stories extension in oppose to the current single storey house, which provides more living space for the local residents.
- ✓ Trees provide shade for hot and sunny weather
- ✓ Additional amenities for public use (ie. mini-golf courses)
- ✓ Storm-water management in permeable surfaces may be adapted in green areas to resolve the drainage system issue
- ✓ Provides better accessibility for tourists
- ✓ Preserving existing vegetation and landscape contributes to maintaining ecological diversity
- ✓ Promotes eco-friendly and sustainable methods of living by creating sustainable courtyards and greenhouses
- ✓ Trees and green spaces improves air quality
- ✓ Enhances social interaction and involvement.
- ✓ Bike lanes promote environmentally friendly alternatives to buses, subways, and cars
- ✓ Unique continuous boulevard circulation experience opposing the static Hutong street experience
- ✓ Increase these retailers' revenue so they can afford to maintain/renovate their courtyard house



# WORKS CITED

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & CHAPTER 2: THEME

Beijing Hutong Conservation Plan

Source: [www.tibetheritagefund.org/media/download/hutong\\_study.pdf](http://www.tibetheritagefund.org/media/download/hutong_study.pdf)

MVRDV - The Next Hutong

Source: <https://www.mrvd.nl/projects/210/the-next-hutong>

1744 Harris Map of Beijing or Peking, China

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Inner City & Outer City

Source: <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/371406300510326787/>

Measuring visual quality of street space and its temporal variation: Methodology and its application in the Hutong area in Beijing

Source: [10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.09.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.09.015)

## CHAPTER 3: URBAN INTENSIFICATION

Beijing Hutong Conservation Plan

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Beijing's Hutong

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Two Dimensional City

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## CHAPTER 4: HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Traditional Architectural Language

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Deteriorated Hutong Facades

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Siheyuan with Tree

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Damaged House

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## CHAPTER 5: SUSTAINABILITY

MVRDV - The Next Hutong

Source: <https://www.mrvd.nl/projects/210/the-next-hutong>

Historical images of Xianyukou Hutong in Beijing, China

Source: <https://dy.163.com/article/EKHF20FR05128EQR.html>

## CHAPTER 6: COMMERCIAL INTEGRATION & CHAPTER 7: ACCESSIBILITY

MVRDV - The Next Hutong

Source: <https://www.mrvd.nl/projects/210/the-next-hutong>

**Thank You.**