

## The Possibility of Renovation of Urban Villages in Shenzhen, China

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### 1. Introduction

In China, population concentration in urban areas has never slowed down in the 21st century. And one of the most serious urban problem caused due to this rapid urbanization among them is increasing informality of urban areas, often forming the areas similar to slums called “urban village” that are surrounded by formal and well-developed urban areas.

Therefore, urban villages are turning into new appearance through large scale redevelopment programs by not only government but also by private companies. Where are the original urban settlements of the Shenzhen people going? Are they completely being redeveloped?

This research aims to discuss the possibility of renovating urban villages, proposing an alternative way of improving the living environment of urban villages, by going through the process of incremental improvement of urban villages through the case studies in the selected urban villages located in the central districts of Shenzhen City (Futian District, Nanshan District, Luohu District), one of the most rapidly urbanizing cities in China.

### 2. The Transformation of Urban Villages Improvement in Shenzhen

The approaches to improve urban villages that has been implemented in Shenzhen City can be classified both by the degree of governmental intervention (larger or smaller) and by the style of development, clearance development and incremental development (Fig.1). Incremental development basically does not involve housing demolition for environment purification and landscaping projects. The earliest improvement of urban village in Shenzhen City was initiated by the people in Yumin Village in 2001, which inspired the awareness of improvement, but now the major improvement carried out in Shenzhen is government-oriented clearance development like Heyuan Area of Gangxia Village. On the other hand, incremental development with smaller governmental intervention, that is, improvement by the residents’ effort, are also being tried in several urban villages like Shuiwei Village and Guimiao New Village.

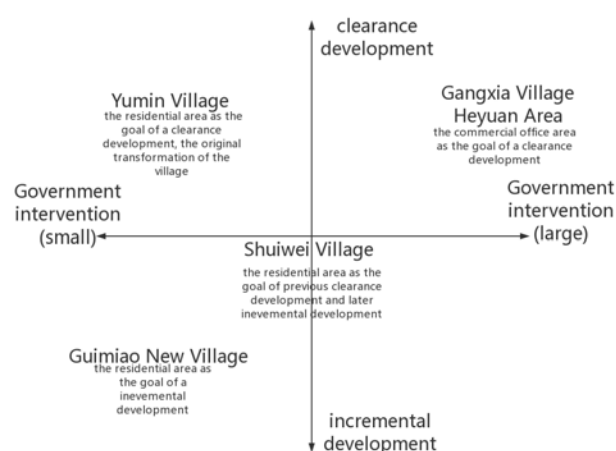


Figure 1. Classification of urban village improvement

### 3. Process of Urban Village Improvement

#### 3.1 Government-oriented Clearance Development: Heyuan Area of Gangxia Village

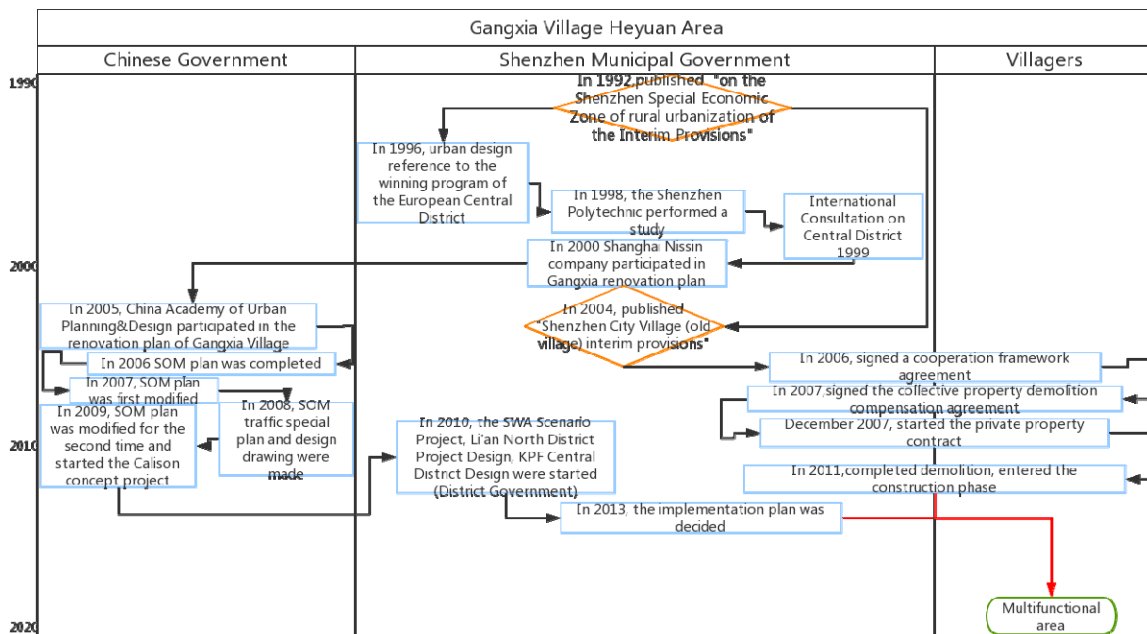
Gangxia Village is located in the southeast area of Futian District, divided into two parts:

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Heyuan Area and Louyuan Area by a street. And Heyuan Area covers about 23 ha. The total existing population of Heyuan Area is about 68,000 people, including the local population of 1,153 people, foreign population of 843 people and temporary population of 66,000 people.

After Shenzhen City government published a policy “On the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone of rural urbanization of the Interim Provisions” in 1992, the city government tried to develop Heyuan Area as the central area of Shenzhen CBD business supporting functional areas which would provide service for financial, business, information, culture, exhibition and other industries in public central area. And based on “Shenzhen City Village Interim Provisions”, the local people and the government signed the cooperation framework agreement in 2006, starting the development project. The total area of the project is 15ha with the volume rate is 3.2. 590 houses with total floor area of 68ha was built for the 7,000 planned population (Figure 2).

Although the area is still under construction, but most of projects have been completed and the previous dirty environment have been improved. This area will provide an open space with a sense of friendliness and security for people in Shenzhen.



**Figure 2. Development process of Heyuan Area of Gangxia Village**

### 3.2 Incremental Development: Guimiao New Village

Guimiao New Village is located at the junction of Xuefu Road and Baishi Road in Shenzhen Nanshan District, adjacent to the Shenzhen University West Gate. The area is 20ha and the total population is nearly 16,000 people, among which 718 people are permanent residents. Indeed approximately 7,500 residents in the village are Shenzhen University students and graduates, who have actively participated in the improvement of the village. In addition, there are many businessmen moving into Guimiao New Village.

After the city government’s policy in 1992, Guimiao New Village first established the Commission. Then, due to the admission of a large number of college students in Shenzhen University, the main body of the economy has changed, the comprehensive renovation project

of building “students village” was started. They organized a volunteer group named SK Sunny in 2014, initiated an environmental protection activity in 2015, and established a business event in 2016 that led to the opening of Creative DreamWorks (Figure 3).

The area is still providing a comfortable living environment for students in Shenzhen University with its art culture.

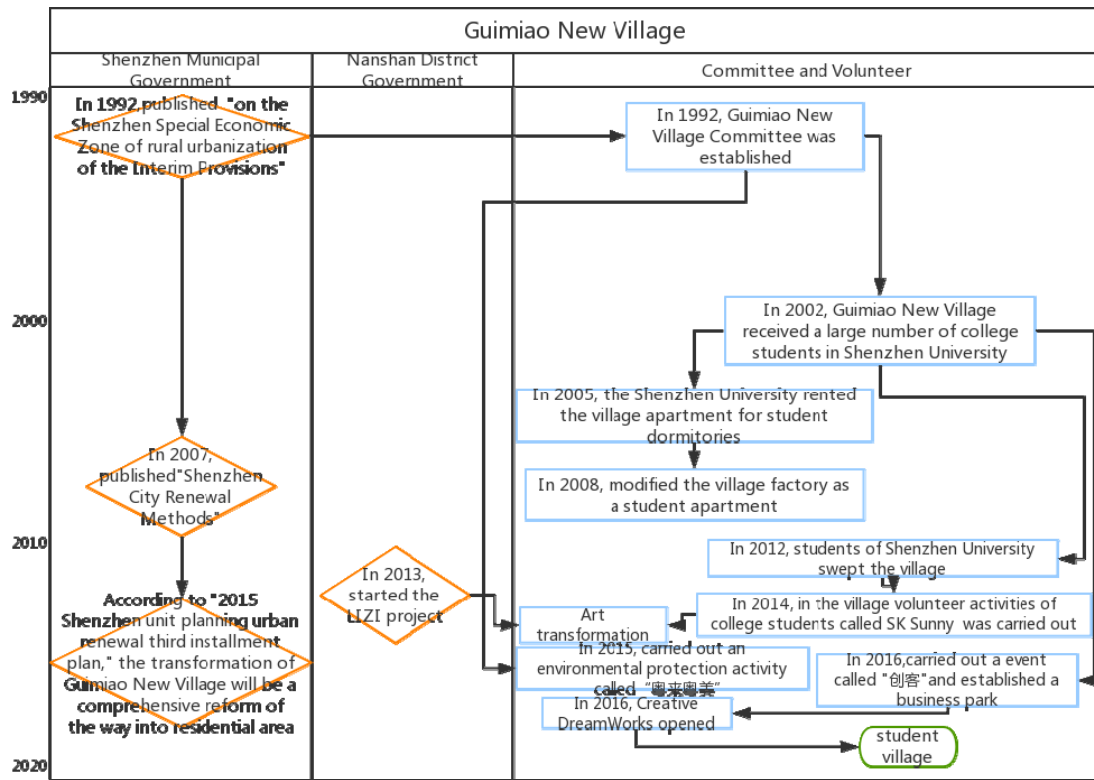


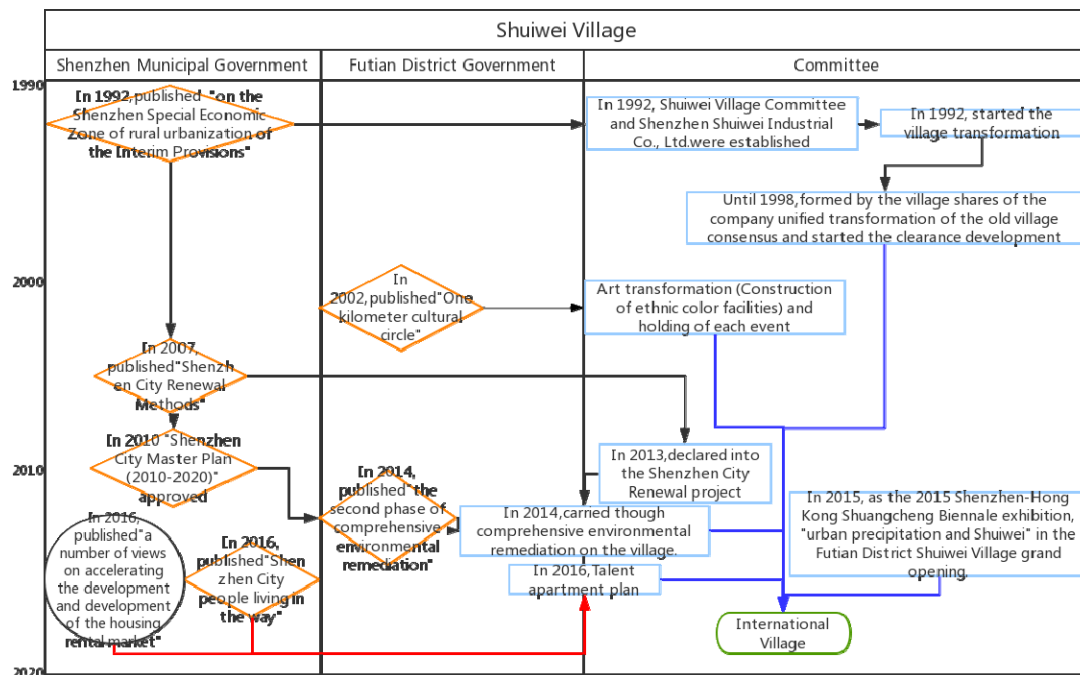
Figure 3. Incremental development process of Guimiao New Village

### 3.3 Incremental Development: Shuiwei Village

Shuiwei Village, with total area of about 66ha, is located in the south of the civic center, adjacent to Huanggang, Fukuda port and Guangzhou-Shenzhen high-speed railway. Its existing household population is over 1,400, and temporary population is over 30,000.

In 1992 to achieve the rural urbanization, through the consensus between the Commission and the residents to perform the transformation of the old village by the village joint-stock company. In 2002, due to the initiation of the “one kilometer cultural circle” activity, Shuiwei Village also carried out art transformation to respond to the activities. In 2014, Futian District, the district government invested nearly 80 million Yuan on the second phase of environmental comprehensive renovation project of Shuiwei Village. In 2016, the Shuiwei Village committee and the district government jointly started the talent apartment plan (Figure 4).

The village is an international village that provides an international community for the college students, businessmen in central area and foreigners with its local characteristic of the “Urban Village” and foreign atmosphere.



**Figure 4. Incremental development process of Suiwei Village**

#### 4. Conclusion

After Shenzhen City government published the policy “On the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone of Rural Urbanization of the Interim Provisions” in 1992, each village started study of transformation plan or established its own village committee. However this policy did not lead to the formal launch of the transformation plan. Shenzhen Urban Village transformation plan went into a 10-year idle period. After that, for a variety of reasons, such as in 2002 a large number of students flooding into the urban village and “one kilometer cultural circle” published, in 2004 "Shenzhen City Village (old village) interim provisions" published, the village leaders or the government began to realize that it's necessary to keep up with the rhythm of the times. And carried out various types of transformation activities. The direction of the transformation of the villages were determined according to each village's geographical location and the changes of population structure.

**Keywords:** Urban villages, Incremental development, Shenzhen

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