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DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN STUDIES  
LABORATORY OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

POST GRADUATE PROGRAMME

# **COOPERA(C)TION**

## **KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH**



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EDITION**

## **URBAN AGRICULTURE: STRATEGY FOR REVITALIZING THE PUBLIC SPACE IN HISORIC CITY.THE CASE OF TAOHUAWU HISTORIC DISTRICT, SOZHOU CHINA**

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**INNOVATIVE  
STRATEGIES  
FOR  
TAOHUAWU  
HISTORIC  
DISTRICT**

FEIRAN HUANG



# Abstract

Being as the last historic district without the intervention of planning, Taohuawu Historic District is facing serious challenge brought by the recent conservation plan done by the local planning bureau. Decrease of land use diversity, development of tourism related activities and massive demolition of heritages, all the actions taken by the plan, to some extent, make up the standard package for redevelopment in the historic district in China regardless the local characteristic and the need of the whole city. Actually, Taohuawu, a place with good-quality environment and high historic value, deserve more than "standard package ". On this account, innovative strategies for Taohuawu Historic district is need for, firstly, improving its habitability and, secondly, increasing the vitality in the neighborhood. However, this innovative strategy cannot work alone without some part of the existing plan. Both of them should work together on different aspect to make Taohuawu Historic District a better place to live, visit, work, study and leisure.



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# Introduction to Suzhou

## City History and Economy Condition

Locating in the Yangtze River Delta which is the one of the most developed area in China, Suzhou is a huge metropolitan city which has more than 10 million inhabitants in the metropolitan area and 5.3 million inhabitants in the city area by the end of 2013.



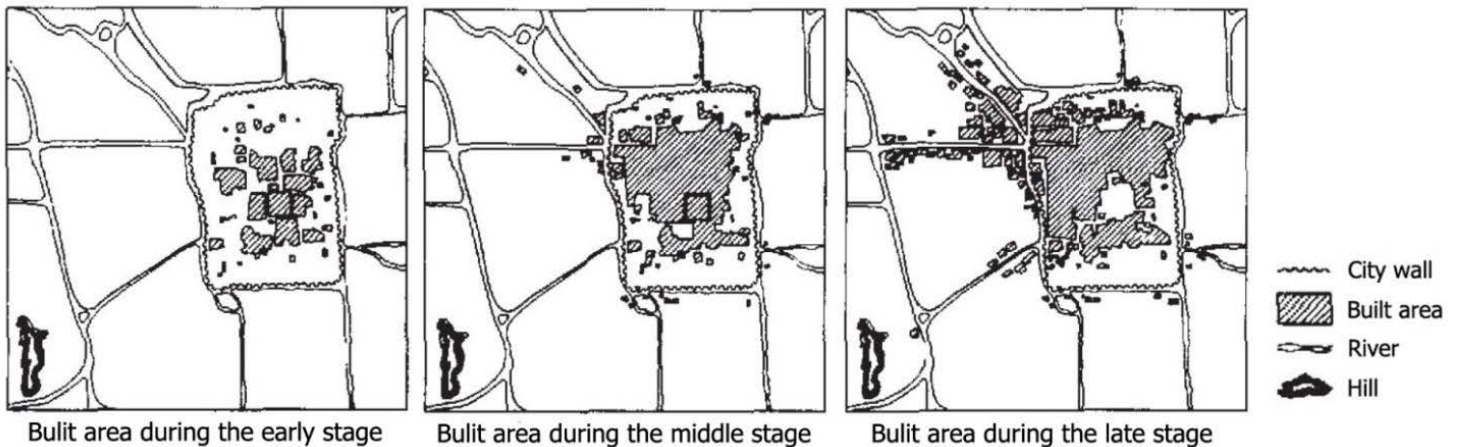
Location of Suzhou

Suzhou is one of the oldest cities in China which has more than 2500 year's history. The establishment of Suzhou City can date back to 514 BC. The construction of the city took full advantage of the existing water system and a very dense canal system was constructed inside the city as well. From the establishment of the city to the 5th century, Suzhou experienced a steady growth owe to its peaceful location and suitable environment for agricultural. After the completion of the Grand Canal which connects Beijing to the South part of China in 6th century, the cities long the Grand Canal experienced a significant growth because of the exchange of goods and people between north and south and the city of Suzhou was one of them. Through centuries of development, Suzhou



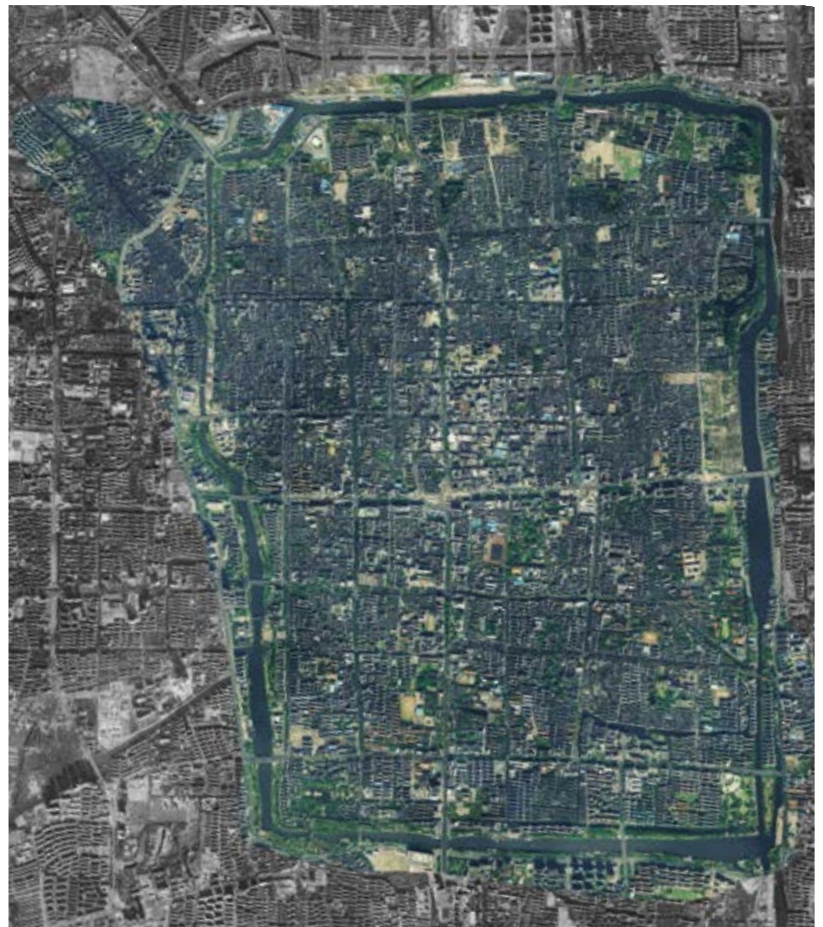
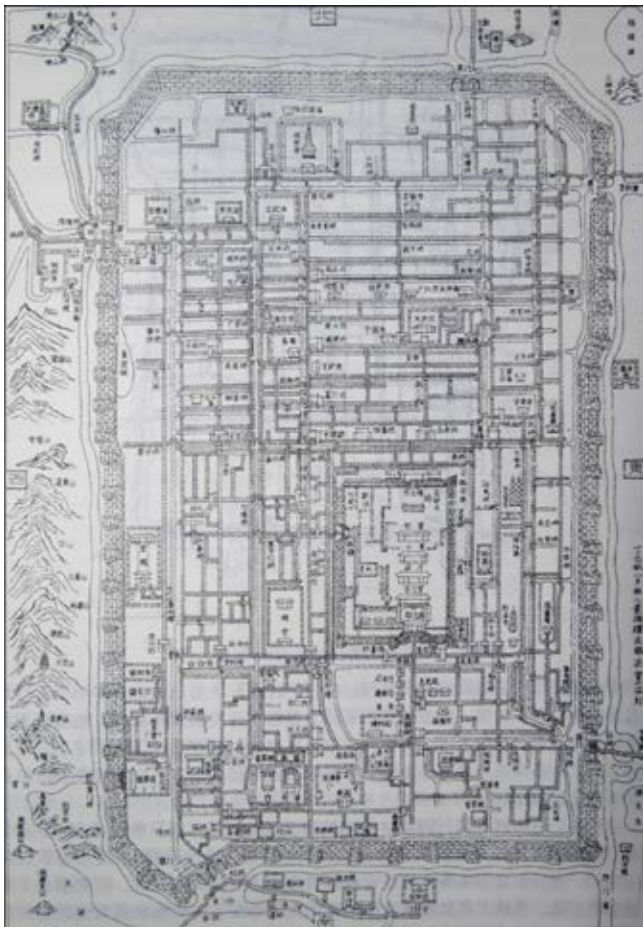
its surrounding area have become the most developed area in China.

According to the archeology research, the site of Suzhou city never changes since its establishment in 514 BC. All the building and construction are conducted on the original site.



Historic evolution of the city of Suzhou

During the 10th century, the urban form and morphology became mature and doesn't change much till today. The city map, Pingjiang Map, which was created during the 13th century is the oldest city plan in China. It shows the streets, canals, city gates, main landmark and their names. Comparing with this map with the Suzhou City today, the urban structure almost remain the same and some of the names of streets, canals, gates is still in use today.



Historic map of Suzhou in 13th Century (left) and the city of Suzhou today (right)

Compared with the other historic city in China, the city conservation of Suzhou is in a relatively good condition. However, Suzhou historic city is also under big threat of the rapid urbanization and the tourism and commercial development inside the historic city.



Suzhou is famous for its traditional gardens and canal-road dual system which is also called “double chessboard system”. The classical garden of Suzhou first appeared during the period when the city was established (5th century BC) and reaches its peak at 16th century. There were 160 this kind of gardens in Suzhou in the late 18th century and 60 of them remain till today. During 1997 to 2000, 9 of them have been listed as world heritage site by UNESCO.



## World Heritage - Classical Gardens of Suzhou



Humble Administrator's Garden

Lion Grove Garden

Couple's Retreat Garden

Garden of Cultivation

Mountain Villa with Embracing Beauty

Master of the Nets Garden

Great Wave Pavilion

Historic evolution of  
the city of Suzhou



As for the canal-road dual system, it's a kind of unique and typical urban form in Suzhou historic city. Literally, it means that the canal goes parallel along the road and form a grid system composed by canal and road. During the ancient time, the major transportation means in the city was boat.

Master of the Nets  
Garden

Besides being as an important historic city, Suzhou is also one of the most developed and fast-growing city in the Yangtze River Delta. With GDP of \$224 billion and \$21,152 GDP per capita (China average \$6,807), Suzhou is also the most economically prosperous city in the region.



# Taohuawu Historic District

## Basic Information, Current Situation and Planning



Location of Taohuawu  
Historic District

Taohuawu is located in the northwest part of the Suzhou old city and it's the biggest historic district inside the walled city.

Inside Taohuawu Historic district, there are variety of functions including dwellings, factories, schools, commercial area, and green spaces. The built time of the buildings ranges from Ming Dynasty (16 century) to 1980s and some of them have very high historic value including the "Major Historical and Cultural Site Protected at the National Level, Province Level and City Level", and UNESCO World Heritage Site (Garden of Cultivation). Besides the historic monuments, the local dwellings, the water network, and the road system together form the special urban morphology. Therefore, the urban conservation and preservation should not only focus on the historic monuments, but also the urban special local urban landscape.

As shown in the map above, the target site is located in the centre place of Taohuawu District. The south border of the target site is the famous commercial street Xizhongshi, and the north border will be the main street, Taohuawu Avenue, according to the conservation plan.



Target site (in the red  
frane) in Taohuawu  
District (in color)



The target site is an old but charming neighborhood with high-quality of space and historic environment. With some proper restoration, it will be able to accommodate modern way of living and new activities.

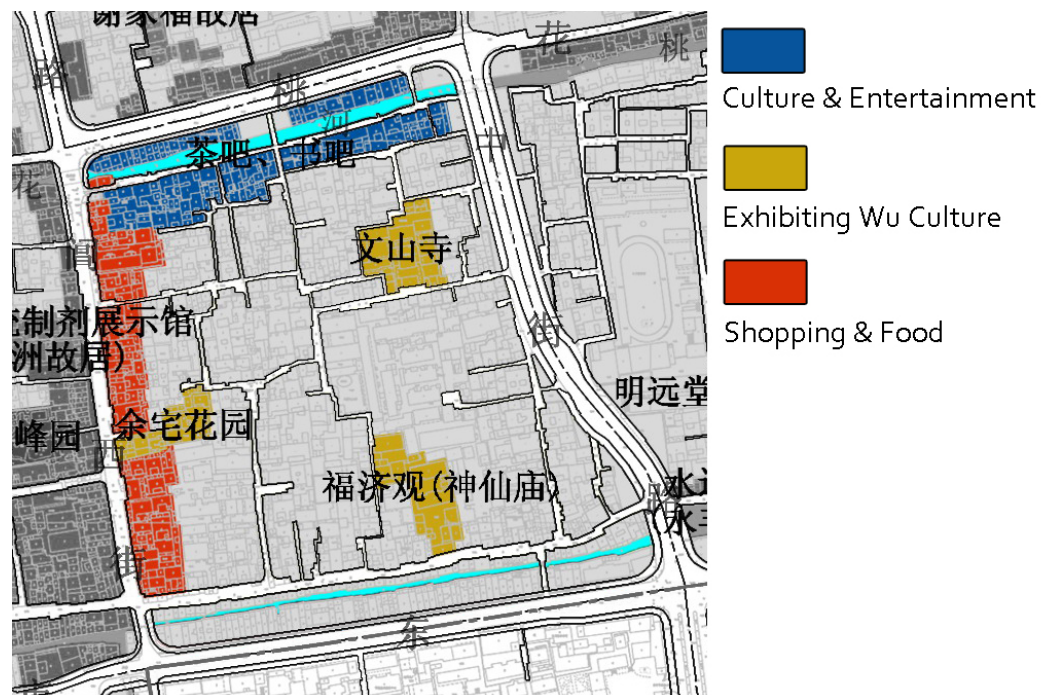


The current situation in the target site

However, developing tourism and commercial activities are often used as the solution for revitalizing and conserving the historic district in China. Shops, bars, restaurants, and other tourism related activities are added to the historic district of the city. This approach for conserving the historic city is also applied to Taohuawu Historic District in the conservation plan made by the local planning bureau.

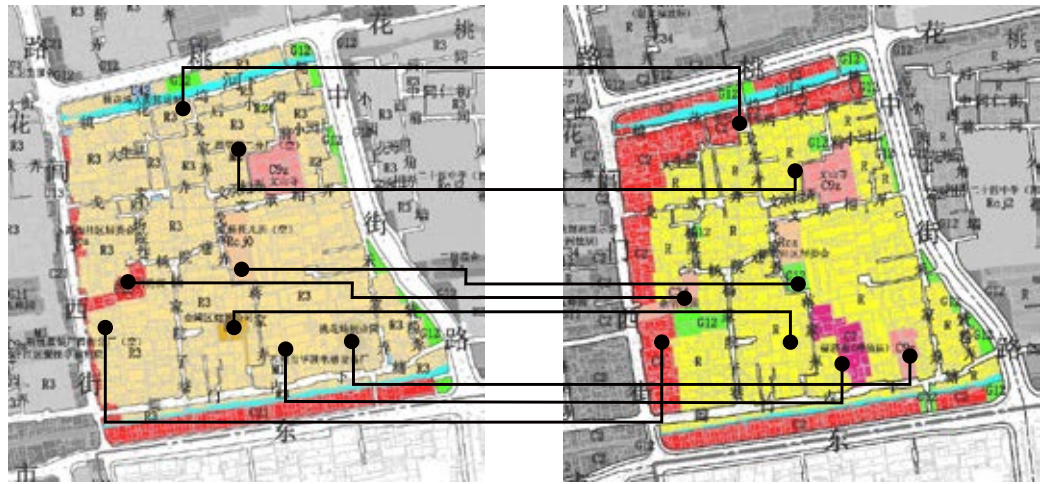
There are 3 key features of the conservation plan:

1. Large proportion of land will be transferred to commercial and tourism related area;



Details of tourism related functions

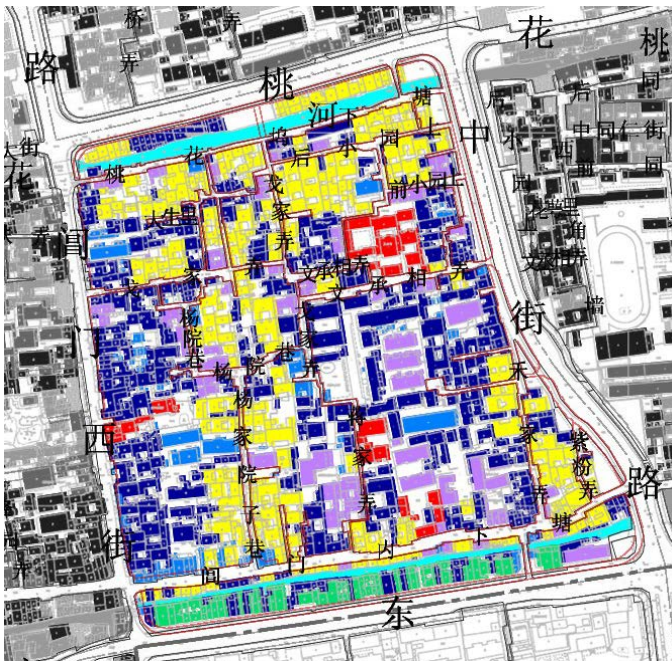




	Residential Area		Residential Area
	Commercial Area		Commercial Area
	Company's Dormitory		Green Space
	Green Space		Community Centre
	Kindergarten		Temple
	Temple		Retirement House
	Creative and Cultural		"Cultural Heritage"
	Manufactory		
	Utility Facilities		

Land use comparison before (left) and after (right) the plan

2. Massive demolition of the existing houses and rebuilding "fake historic buildings" to serve the new tourism related and commercial activities;

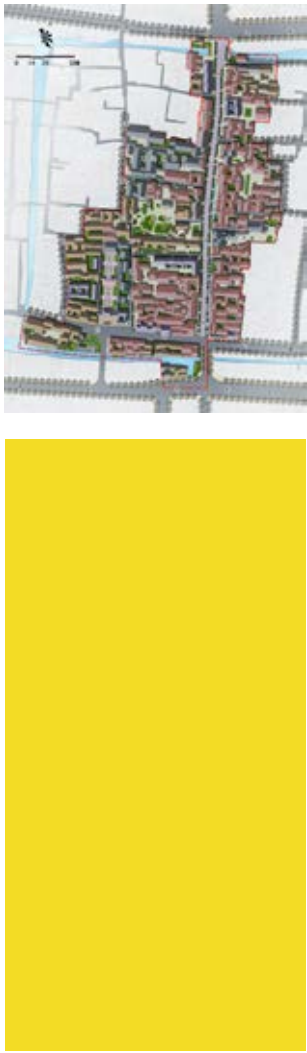
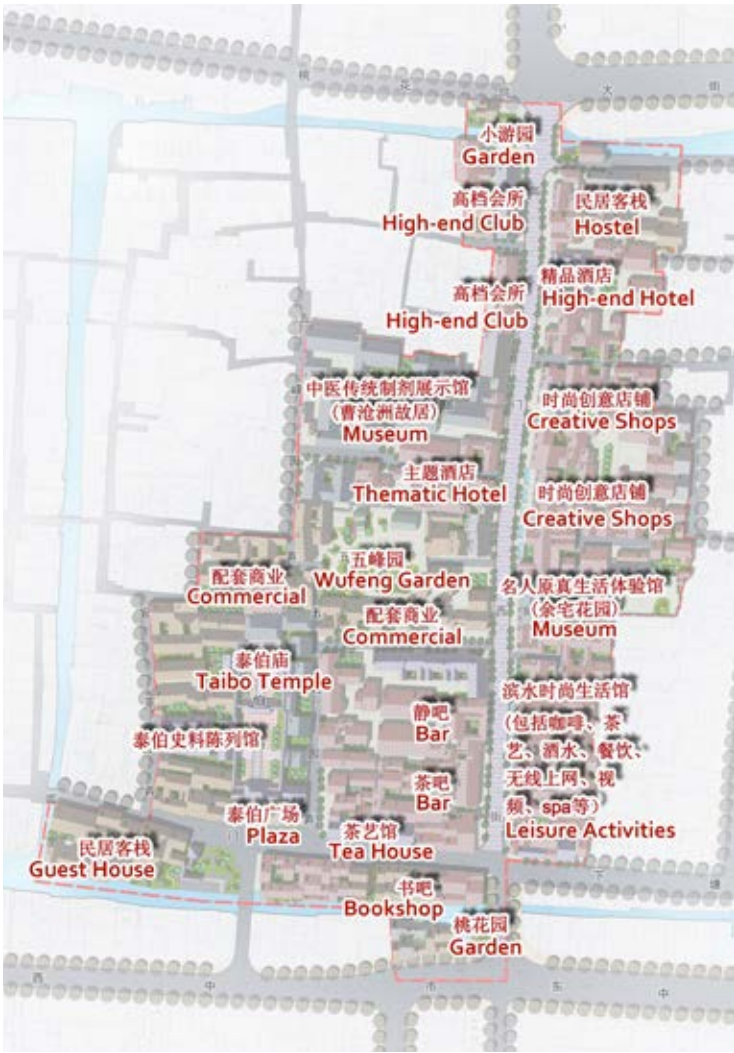


	Buildings to be kept				Buildings to be refurbished		Buildings to be demolished
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Refurbishment plan (left) and the real situation (right)

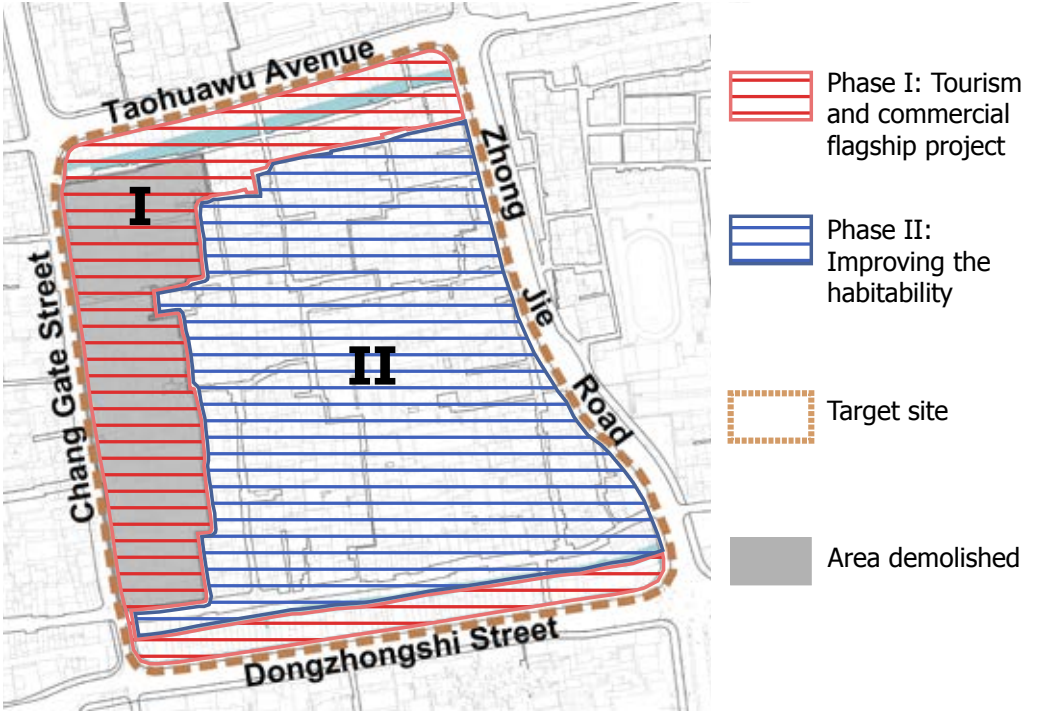


Detailed building function for the target site and neighbour block



3. Priority is given to the development of tourism and commercial development rather than improving the habitability which includes upgrading the sewage system and utilities (electricity, gas, waste management).

Planning phases of the target site



The standard way of conserving and revitalizing Taohuawu District offered a solution, but probably not the most suitable and considerable solution. Except the part related to new development for the tourism, the parts related to improving habitability are in detail and quite considerable. It includes the plan for the sewage, gas, electricity and telecommunication network and plan for the emergency occasion. However, the this part was put in the wrong phase and there are other problems were not addressed properly. The issue about the green and public space is one of the problems.



Neighbourhood lacks of vitality and the public green spaces are not maintained properly.

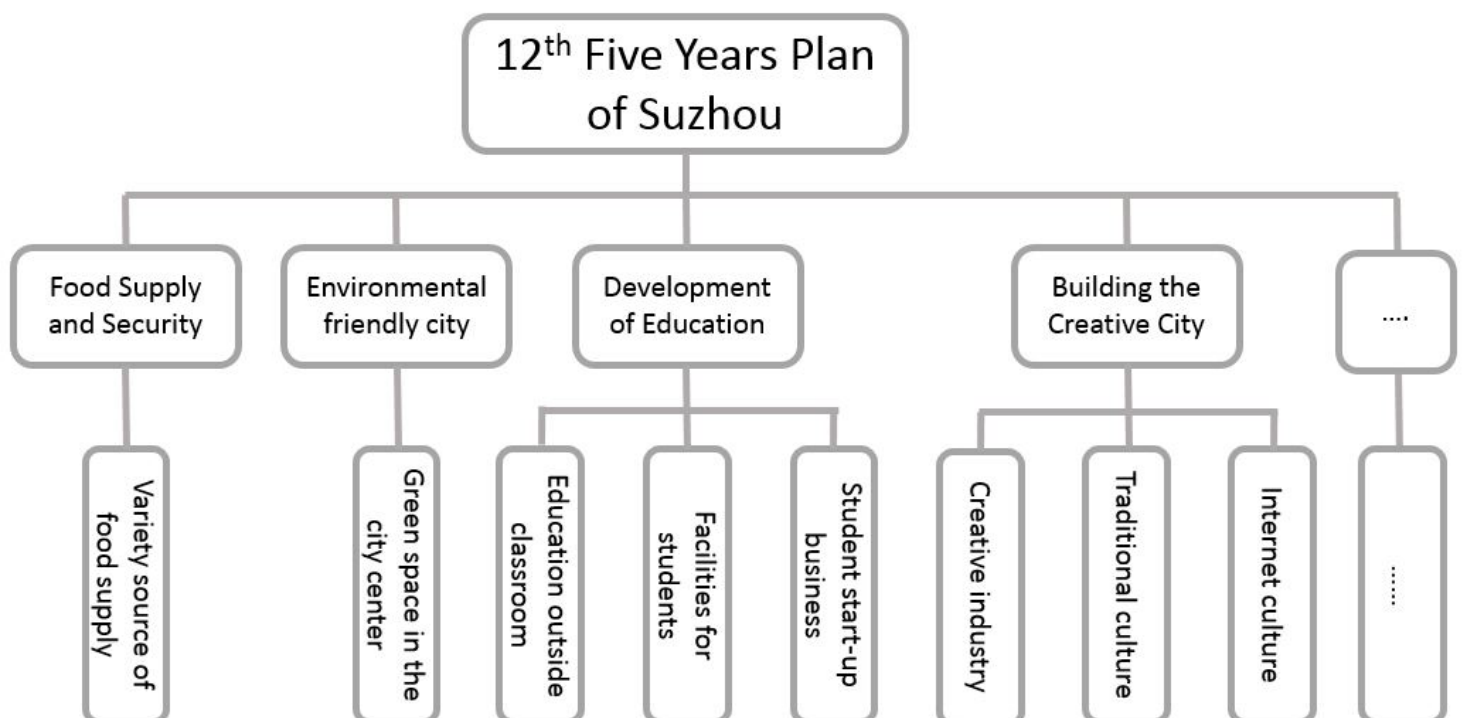
# Innovative Strategies for Historic District

## Improving Habitability and Innovative Way of Using Heritage

Such a place with good quality of urban space, high historic value and vitality in the neighbourhood, Taohuawu Historic District deserve more considerable treatment rather than prioritizing the tourism. Don't underestimate the value of the historic city by only adding activities related to tourism. It could also be an ideal place to accommodate certain kind of new activities which are needed by the city and planned to be put in the new area. On this account, it's important to first understand the development plan and needs of the city and adding new activities to the historic district accordingly.

Affected by the legacy of the plan-economy period, Chinese cities still have a development plan every five years, Five Year Plan, which set the goal for the development in the coming five year. The content of the Five Year Plan covers variety of aspects ranging from economic development to urban planning. Therefore, this could be a good angle to understand the need of Suzhou and its planning in the coming years. The following figure shows some of the relevant aspects which could be considered to produce this guidebook, "innovative strategies for Taohuawu Historic District".

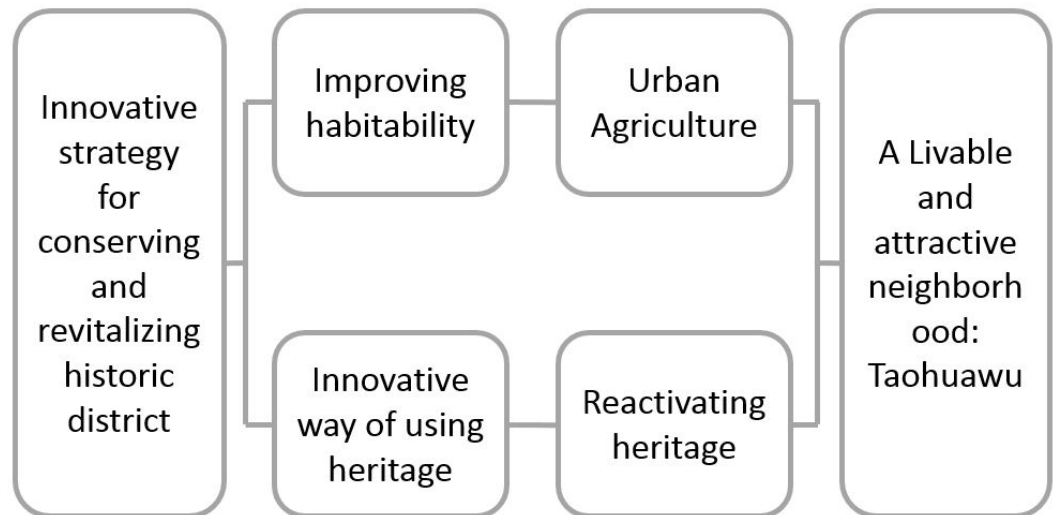
Relavant aspects in the 12th Five Year Plan of the city of Suzhou





According to the city's development plan and local needs of Taohuawu ,the guidebook consists of two important parts: 1) Improving habitability; 2) Reusing heritage in an innovative way.

Main content of the guide book



Although some plans regarding to improve habitability have already been presented in the local conservation plan which is mainly about sewage, utility and waste treatment, the issue about the improving vitality in the public space, managing green space and enhancing community belonging and communication are not addressed enough in that plan. Therefore, an innovative solution, developing urban agriculture, is proposed here to improving habitability in a different way.

As for reusing the heritage innovatively, other alternatives besides tourism related activities will be discovered to serve the emerging needs of the city.

# Urban Agriculture in Historic District

Improving green space and  
increase vitality in the neighbourhood

## Why urban agriculture in Taohuawu Historic District

Firstly, the residential area is lack of vitality which is mainly caused by the lack of green space. As for the existing public spaces, they are also lack of maintenance and the plants are dying and the plant bedding even became a place for throwing garbage. Additionally, the local residents also have the habits of growing vegetables which could be regarded as the awareness for urban agricultural activities. Therefore, with a bit guidance, the urban agriculture could be a suitable tool which functions as an aesthetic green space, place for neighbor communication and educating younger generation and supplementary to the local food supply.

## 1. Typology of urban agriculture

In order to integrate the agricultural activities into the urban form, there are two main forms of the urban agriculture which are doable in the Taohuawu Historic Area. They are **Productive Flowerbed** and **Potted Vegetable Garden**.

### Productive flower bed

The first type of urban agriculture is "productive flowerbed". It tried to reuse those public green space and transfer them to the vegetable gardens. Then, those vegetable gardens will be distributed to the local residents and let the local residents to grow vegetables and take care of those flowerbed.

How productive  
flowerbed may  
look like



### Potted vegetable garden

The second type is "potted vegetable garden". It refers to that the local residents use flower pots, wooden box and other containers to grow vegetables. This types of urban agricultural activities have already existed in Taohuawu Area. In order to make the place more beautiful and tidy, guidance on the shape, size, material of the containers and where should them be put should be provided to local residents.

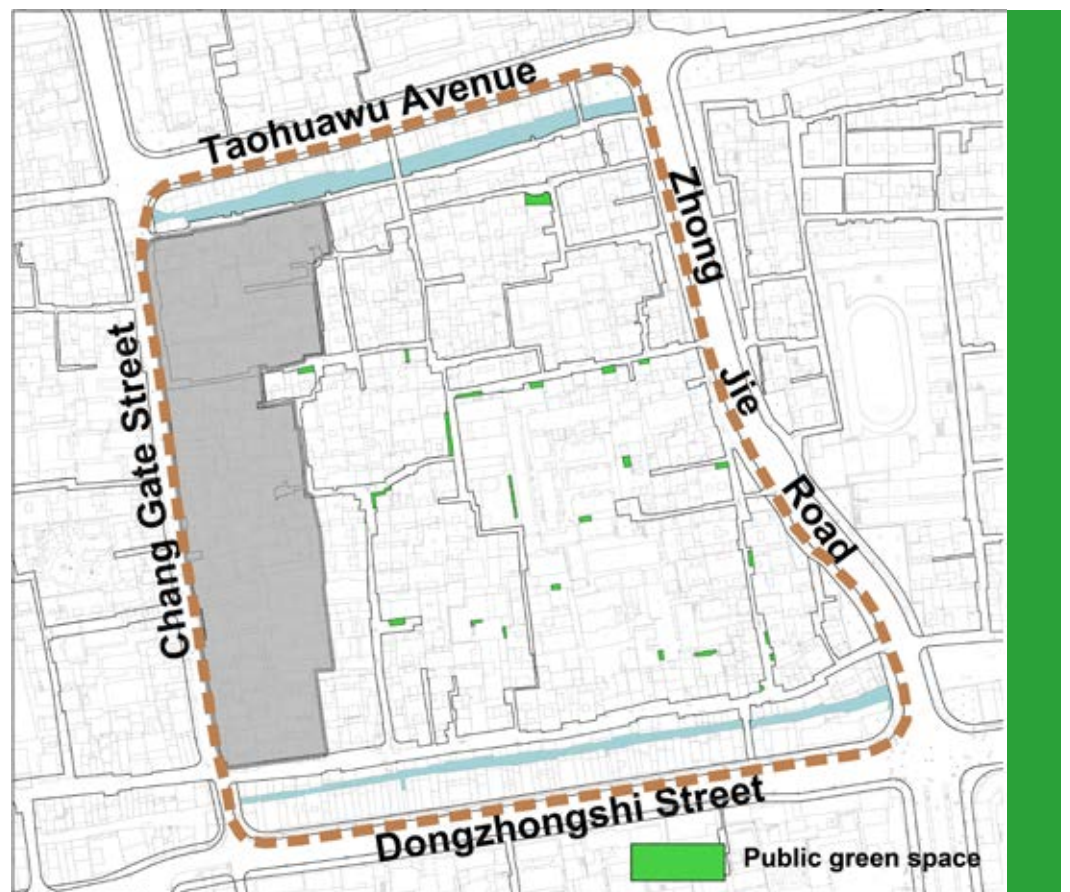
Local residents grow vegetables in their own flower pots



## 2. Managing the Productive Flowerbed

### Distribution of existing public green space

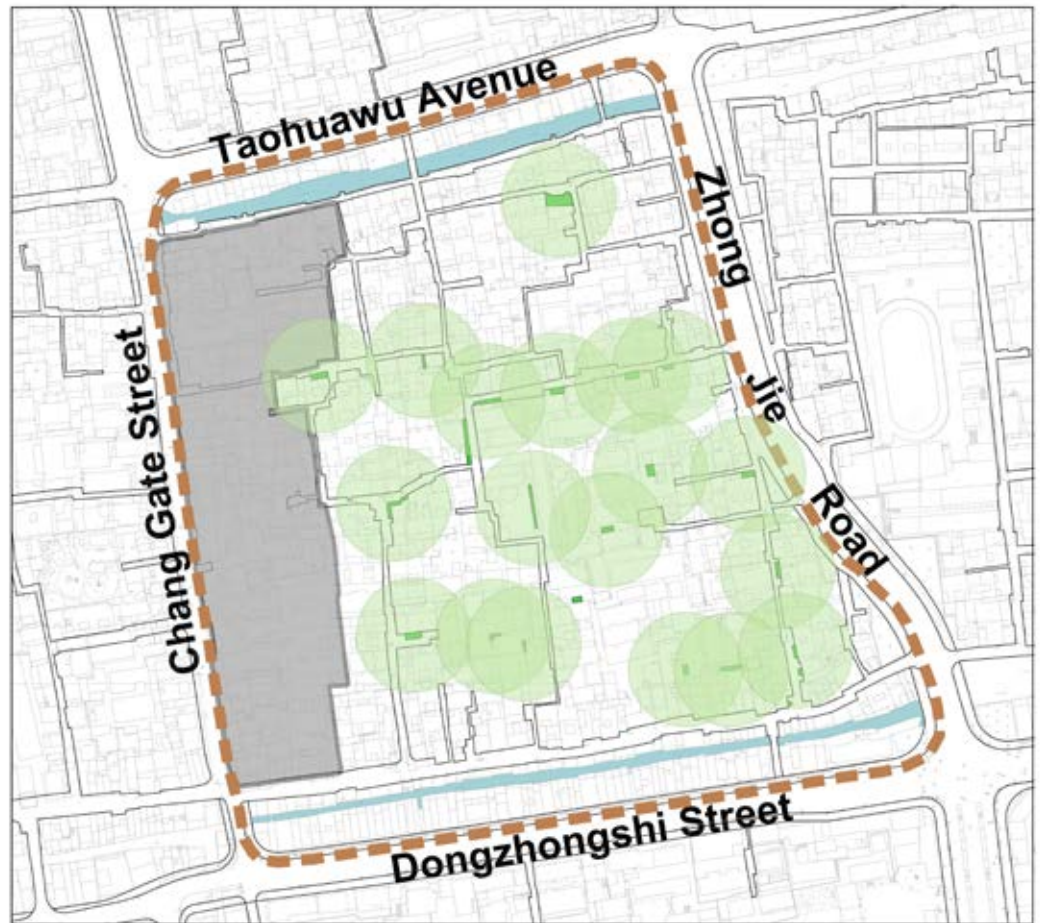
The public green spaces are lack of maintenance is mainly because that the existing green space is managed by the public sector. Once the public sector doesn't take care of the green space, no residents is responsible to them. Therefore, by transferring the green space to the vegetable garden and distributing them to the local residents, the residents are willing to take the responsibility to maintain the green space because they can have the agricultural products from the field. The map below shows the location of existing public green space needed to be assigned to the local residents.



Location of the existing public green space



The distribution of the green space is based on the mechanism of applying and approving. The residents living near the public green space are eligible for applying one piece of space to cultivate. By doing this, residents can take care of their vegetable garden easily and the gardens are also under the surveillance.



Residents living within 30m distance are eligible for applying land for farming

When there is no residents living near to the green space wants to apply land for farming, the residents which live a bit far from the green space could also apply land. The tenure of the green space is rental based which means the residents have to pay certain amount of money to rent a place to farm for a certain period. The rental fee is quite low, namely 5 RMB (about 0.8 EURO) per month, and the money is charged by the local community commission. The money is just a symbol of contract between the residents and local community commission that the residents promise to take care of the land. Considering the life cycle of the vegetation, the period of renting is 1 year, namely 12 months. The distribution of the public green space is managed by the local community commission. Some posters for publishing the related information including the location of the green space, who is eligible for applying, the money for renting and the period of tenure will be provided to guide the local residents. Examples of the poster will be provided in the later part which contains more information on implementation.

### 3. Potted vegetable garden

The amount of public green space which could be used for agricultural activities is limit and, on the other hand, the major form of urban agriculture here is the potted vegetable garden which means the residents grow vegetables in the flower pot and other containers.

In order to make the vegetable pots beautiful and tidy, the local residents could buy the containers from the local community commission with reasonable price or make pots by themselves.

For the self-made pots, their material, size and appearance should follow certain rules.

#### Material

Residents are encouraged to use timber to make the wooden boxed for growing vegetable and the pottery pot is also other good option. However, the material of plastic and foamed plastic are not allowed because they are not environmental friendly and good-looking.

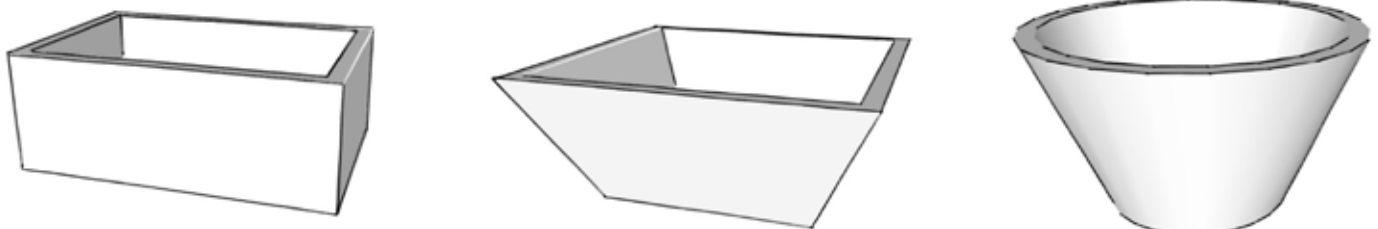


Materials for the vegetable pots

#### Shape

In order to make the pots looks tidy and planned, their shapes should look like the following three example. Grotesque shaped pots are not allowed.

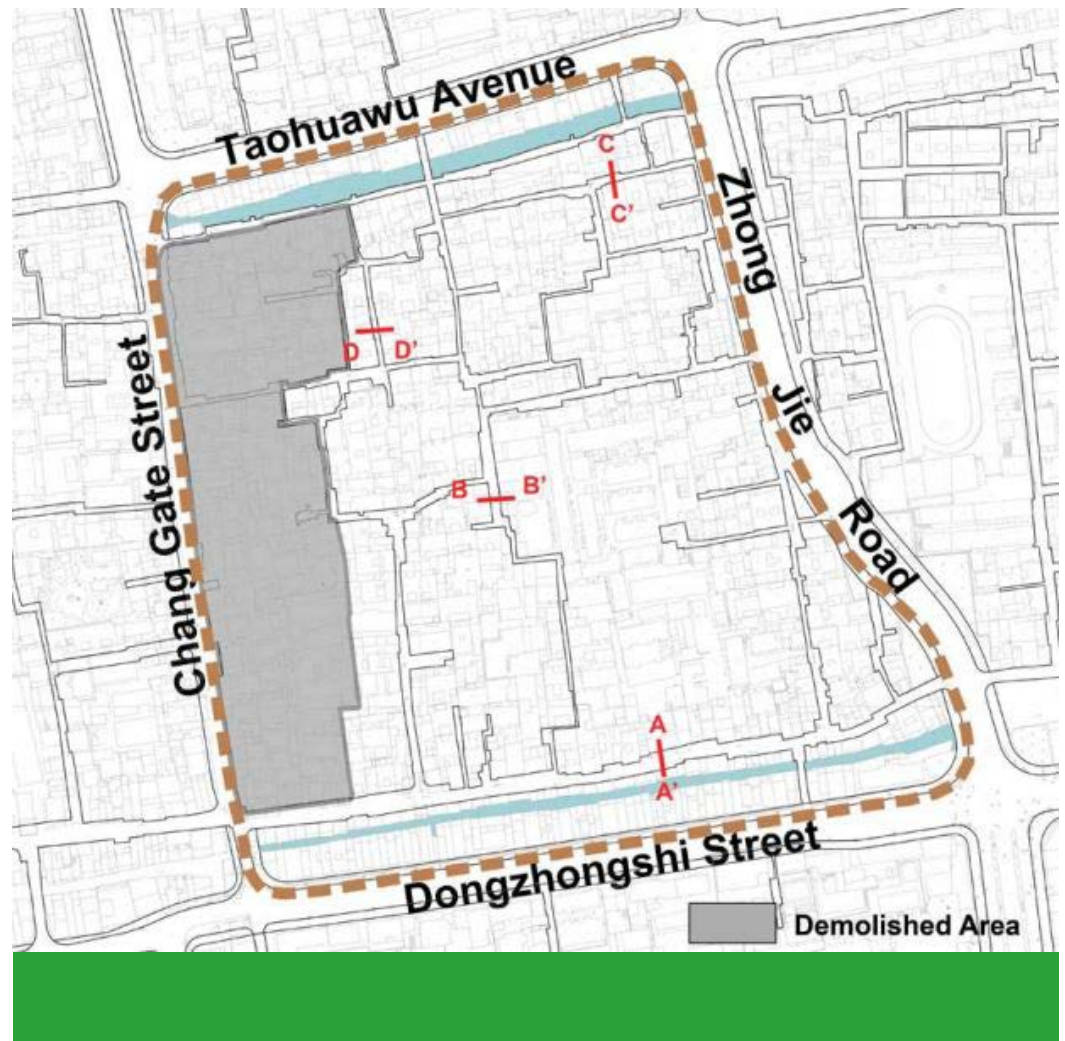
Possible shape of the vegetable pots



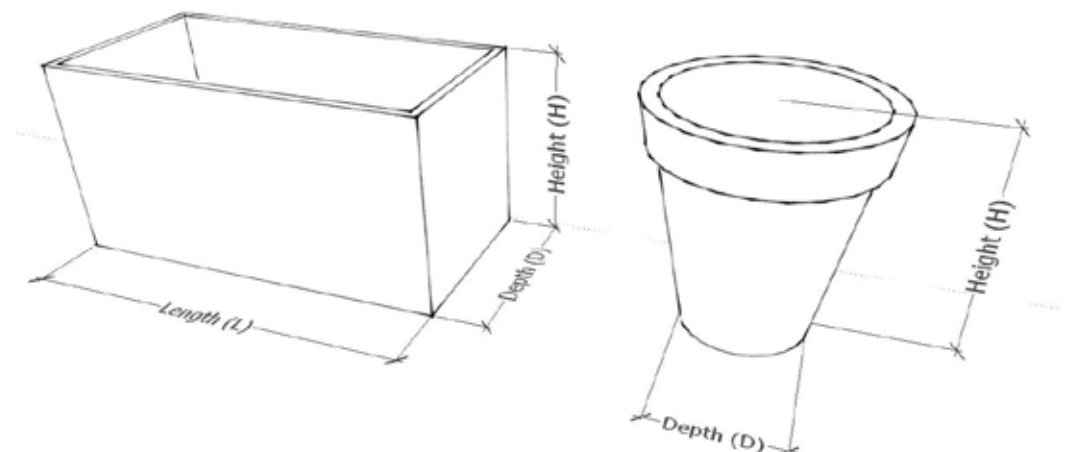
### Size and where to put the pots

The size of the pots and where to put the pots should also be regulated because if the residents put the pots anywhere they want or make the box quite big, it may block the way of pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, the size of the pots depends on the width of the road. How the vegetable pots are integrated into the space is the main concern of this part.

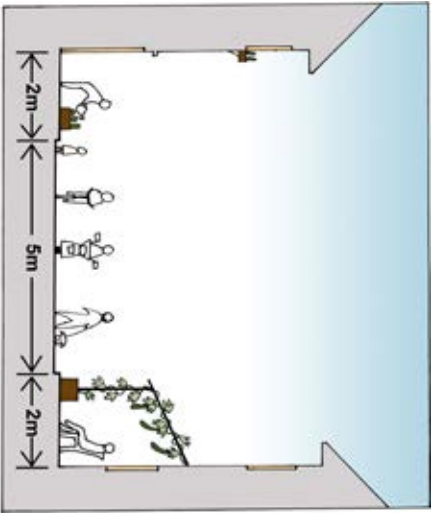
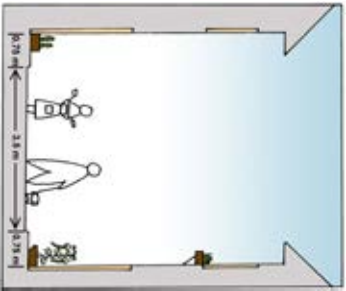
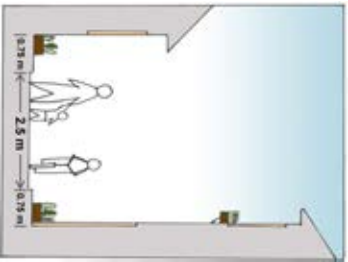
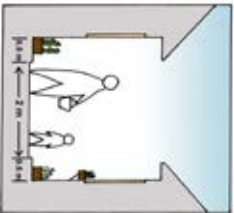
On this account, 4 roads with different width have been selected as the examples. The width of these four road are 9m, 5m, 4m, and 3m. They can represent the condition of most road of this block. In addition, because the residential area of Taohuawu are all pedestrian area, the usage of the automobile is not taken into consideration.



Location of the section examples



Dimension of the flower pot

	<b>A - A'</b>	<b>B - B'</b>	<b>C - C'</b>	<b>D - D'</b>
<b>Width</b>	9m	5m	4m	3m
<b>Section</b>				
<b>Suggested size for flower pot (mm)</b>	L: 600~900 D: 500 H: 300	L: 400~700 D: 300 H: 200	L: 400~700 D: 300 H: 200	L: 400~600 D: 250 H: 200

Example of the sections , suggested flower pots and suggested way of arrangement


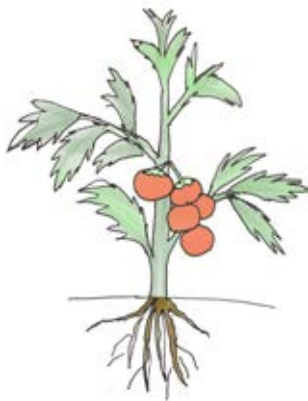
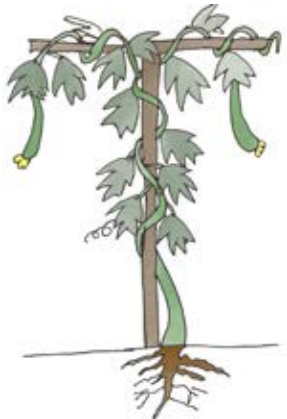


For the 5m-wide road, at least 3.5m-wide space in the middle should be left and the pots could be put in the rest space. In addition, some vegetable with vine could also be planted but the arrangement of the vine plant is different from that in 9m's case. For the 4m-wide road, at least 2.5m-wide space in the middle should be left and the pots could be put in the rest space. Because the space is narrow, vine plant is not allowed. Because the width of space for putting the pots is the same with that of 5m-wide road, the size of the pots is also the same with that of 5m-wide road. For the narrowest road, 3m-wide road, at least 2m-wide space in the middle should be left. The size of the pots should be small. The size provided here is the maximum size. Other pots which is smaller than this are also acceptable. Actually, the length (L) of the pots could various based on the residents' need. However, the depth (D) and the height (H) of the pot should be constrained because it may block the traffic way and view if D and H are not controlled.

#### 4. Selection of vegetable

##### Main typologies of the vegetables

Based on their appearance, the vegetables could be categorized into three main types: Herbal-shaped, Bush-shaped and Vine-shaped vegetable.

Herbal shaped	Bush shaped	Vine shaped
		
The herbal-shaped plant is usually quite short and the majority part of it is leaf. e.g. lettuce, cabbage	B u s h - s h a p e d plants looks like a "mini version" tree. The eatable part of them is usually their fruit. e.g. tomato, green peppers.	V i n e - s h a p e d plants have vines and climb. e.g. cucumber.

Typologies of local vegetables

##### Local vegetables

Considering the climate features of Suzhou, local residents are encouraged to grow local vegetables rather than the species from other place. It is easier for local species to survive and grow and local residents could also have better harvest.

The table below shows the major local vegetables that could be chosen for urban agricultural activities.

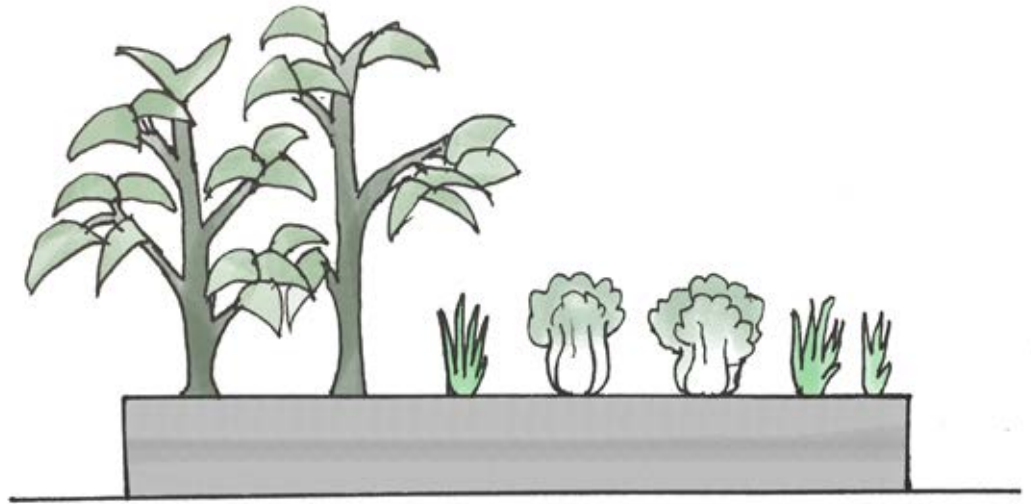




Broad bean	Eggplant	Garlic	Potato	Water spinach
Bitter gourd	Cucumber	Green vegetable	Lettuce	Tomato
Bean	Celery	Green onion	Loofah	Spinach

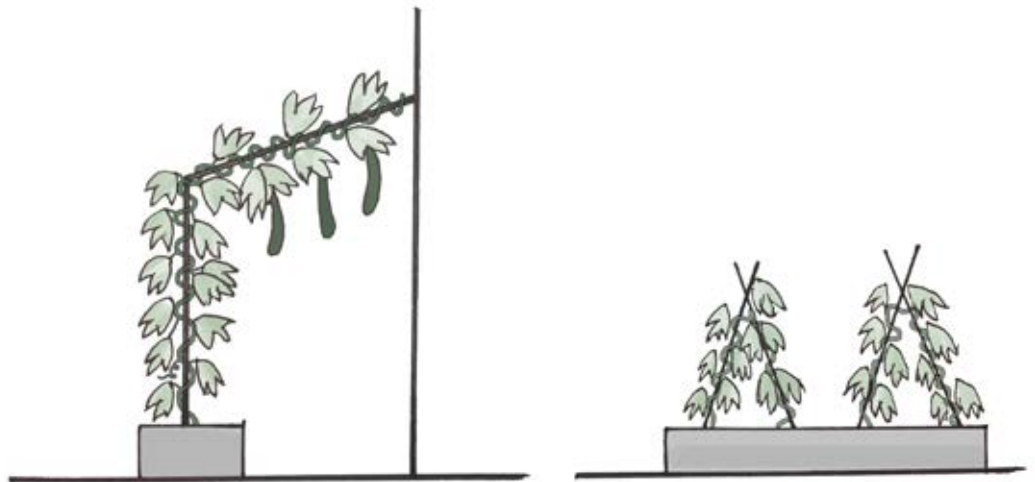
## Arrangement of vegetables

Physical arrangement: In order to create various agricultural landscape, the mix of different types of vegetables is encouraged. For example, the bush-shaped plants and herbal-shaped plants could be planted together which takes advantage of their height difference.



Mix of different types of plants

The arrangement of the vine-shaped plants is also various according to the surroundings. For example, the vine could climb along the stick and finally reach the wall where the space is wide enough (left figure). When the space is not wide enough, the vines should be arranged as the right figure.



Mix of different types of plants

Time arrangement: In addition, the plantation of the vegetable should also consider the time issue. For instance, the local residents are encouraged to grow the vegetables in season and it is better not to plant same species on the same field.

## 5. Implementation

This section mainly talks about how the message of urban agriculture could be delivered to the local residents. On this account, some examples of the posters which publicize the information will be provided.

Local residents could find the useful and general information on the poster and they can also go to the community commission for further consulting.



Do you live near this green space?  
Are you interested in farming?  
If the answer is "YES", just apply the agricultural space right now!



## Productive Flowerbed NO. 00X

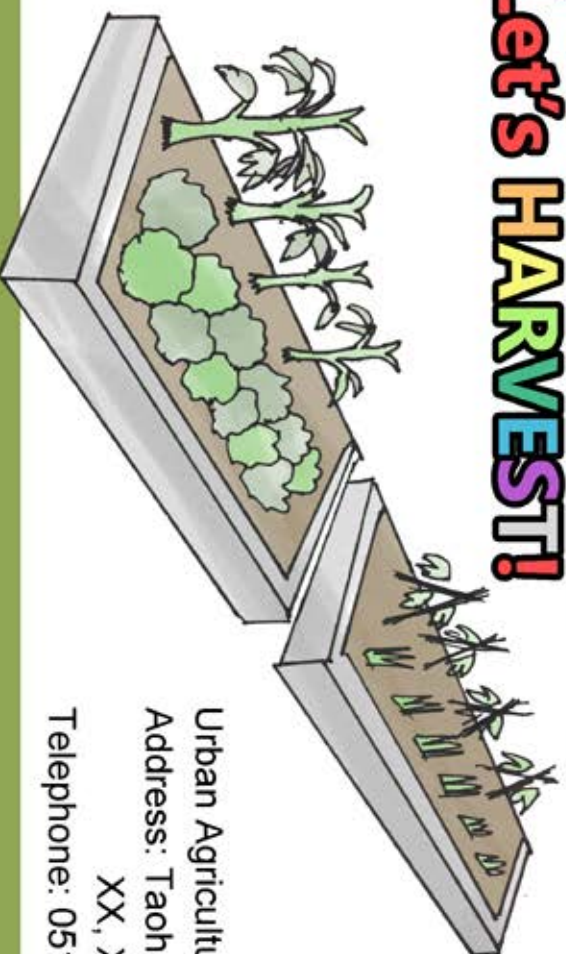
Area: xx m

Tenure period: 01/03/2013 ~ 01/03/2014

Rental fee: 5 RMB/ month



# Let's HARVEST!



Variety of vegetables to choose



Urban Agricultural Group

Address: Taohuawu community commission

XX, XXX Street

Telephone: 0512-XXXXXXX

Example of the poster about the productive flowerbed

For the posters about the productive flower bed, it should contain the following information:

1. Location of the green space;
2. The tenure period;
3. Rental fee;
4. Location of the community commission and the contact number

As for the poster about the potted vegetable garden, it should contain the following information:

1. Where and how to get the flower pots;
2. How to put them in a proper way.

Here is an example of the poster, and the the "Urban agriculture guidebook" refers to the part related to urban agriculture.

Living far from the productive flowerbed?

Or don't have time to manage big piece of land?

Now we can grow vegetable in the



Pots are on sale in the local community commission office  
with reasonable price!

OR

If you like, you can DIY your own pots! Just read the "Urban  
Agriculture Guidebook for Taohuawu Historic Area" and  
you will find all the details you want to know!

Urban Agriculture Group

Address: Taohuawu  
Community Commission,  
XX, XX Street  
Telephone: 0512-XXXX  
XXXX



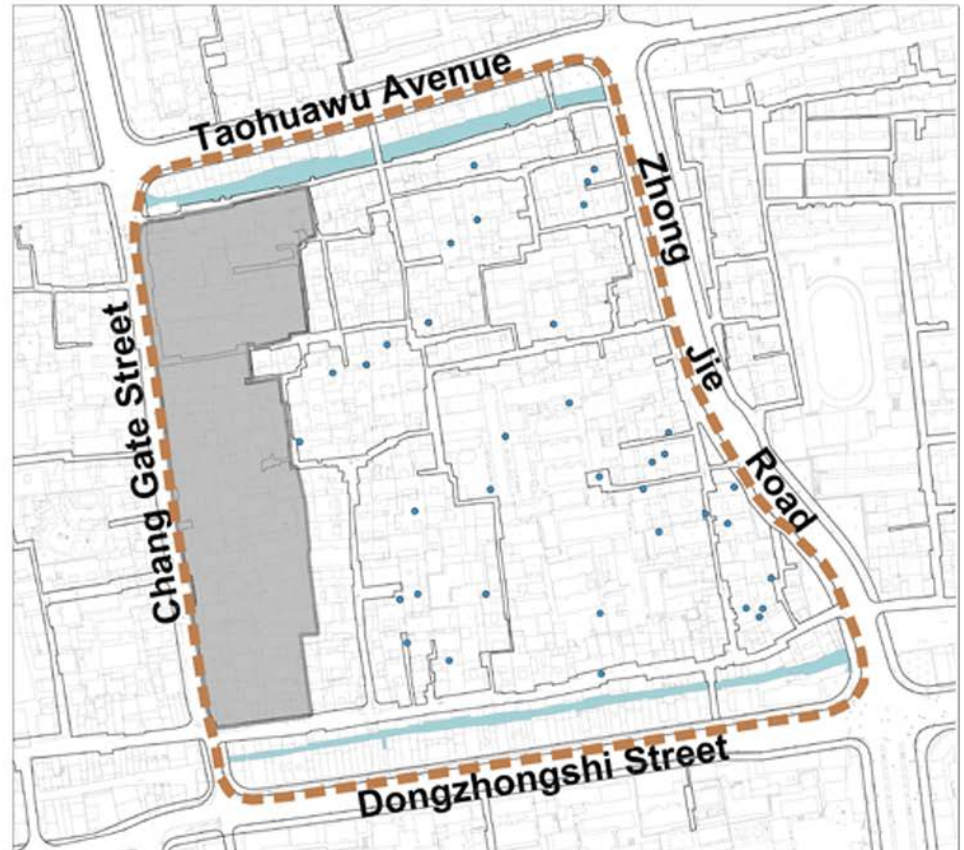
Example of the  
poster about the  
potted vegetable  
garden



Since the water resources is quite important to agricultural activities, posters about the water resource is also useful for local residents.

## Watering your vegetable garden!

Though we got tap water, we can still try to take advantage of the natural water such as canal and wells.



Maybe collecting rain water could be another easy and romantic way!

Urban Agriculture Group  
Address: Taohuawu Community  
Commission, XX, XX Street  
Telephone: 0512-XXXXXXX



Example of the poster about how to get water for farming

**In conclusion**, urban agriculture is used as tool to improve the habitability. It's a relatively low-cost and affordable strategy and also totally manageable by the local residents autonomously. Together with the plan which dedicates to improving utilities done by local planning bureau, the urban agriculture in Taohuawu could function well and make a better neighbourhood.

# Reactivating the Heritages

Let the historic district  
serve the new need of the city

Before we start to talk about reusing the heritage innovatively, it's necessary to clarify the term "heritage" mentioned in this context. In the "innovative strategies for historic district", it's not about the monumental one which usually has extraordinary historic value and need to be preserved carefully. The heritage mentioned in this context is the ordinary houses and built environment which consist of the important urban fabric or "historic surrounding".

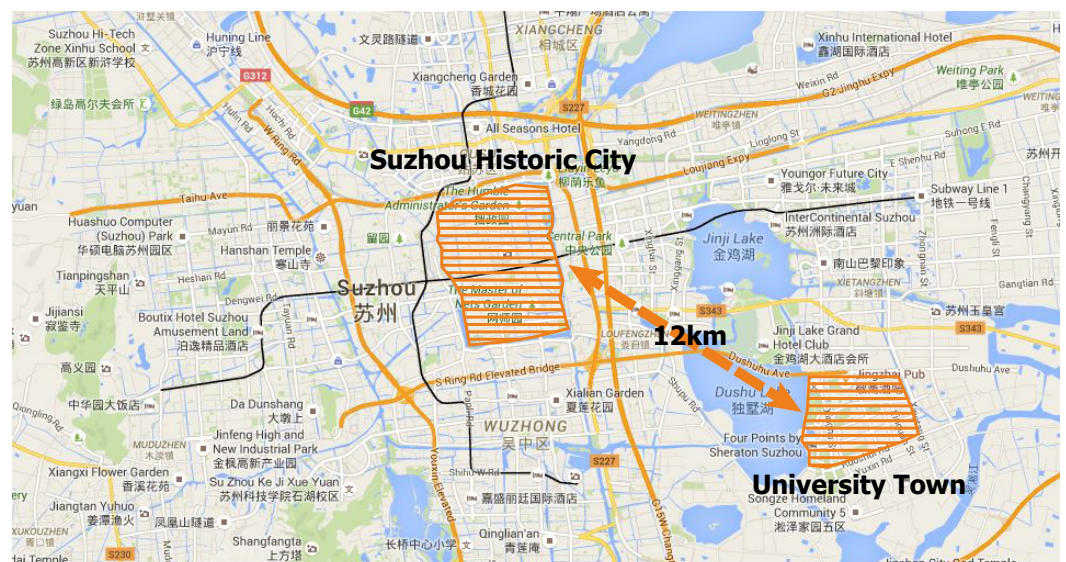
Instead of following the common path of reusing the heritage, which is commercialization, other alternatives should be also considered to meet the new needs for the city. Many buildings were already built in the new district which locates in the periphery of the city to accommodate the new activities. However, some of these activities could also be put in the historic city center and they could even function better.

Inspiring from the city development plan which emphasizes the importance of culture and education, the "Innovative Strategies for Taohuawu Historic District" will mainly work on these two directions, **CULTURE** and **YOUTH**.

## 1. Taohuawu for YOUTH

In the last decades, the city of Suzhou have invested enormously in the education aspect. New university town was built and many universities and research institution moved their campus into the university town.

Location of  
University Town  
and its distance  
from historic city





Although university students and staffs could have brand new facilities and buildings to use by locating in the university town, the relatively remote location of the university town also, to some extent, makes the students detached from the city life in the city center.

It's quite difficult to put the campus directly in Taohuawu Historic District because the universities usually have many students and volume of the historic buildings is also too small to accommodate educational functions such as classroom and lecture room. But, the size it's big enough for some other student related activities.

**a) Small exhibition room and working studio for architecture and planning students;**

Being as an architecture and planning students, one of the most important part of professional training is to develop the perception about space. However, living inside the new developed area which is full of gigantic structures, students will easily lose the sense about human scale. Therefore, it's quite necessary to put part of the professional training in the historic urban fabric which is more human scale.

Urban fabric of newly developed area (left) and historic city (right) in 500m x 500m square



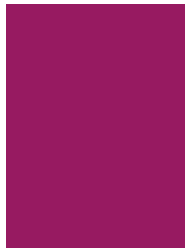
By locating working studio and small exhibition rooms inside the historic center, both students and citizens can get the chance to learn from each other. Students could understand more about the social aspects behind the architecture and urban design without always "living in an ivory tower". On the other hand, the citizens could obtain some basic knowledge about architecture, planning and, more importantly, the awareness for conservation and preservation.

Studying in a historic environment has countless benefits



### **b) Places for the students startup business;**

Nowadays, many universities in Suzhou are encouraging their students doing their start-up business during the university study. It's way for students to experience how to run a business and also help students to develop their own idea.



Student startup business is a good way to put ideas together and let students have more experience



However, student startup business also faces some challenges: students normally don't have places relatively small and manageable to put their business; the student business also detached from general public because of the suburbanization of the university town. On this account, putting student startup business in Taohuawu Historic District could be a relatively good solution. Firstly, the buildings inside Taohuawu is relatively small and it's easier to be managed by the students. Secondly, the relatively central location of Taohuawu also provides students a chance to do business to the general public.

### **c) Co-working space for university students and general public**

Another trendy use of the historic place is the coworking space. It provides only students, but also general public a place to work together, communicate and share ideas. The typical case of coworking space is to reuse the abandoned industrial buildings which normally have large internal spaces. However, the relatively small local houses in Taohuawu also bring some challenges to reuse them as coworking space.

Examples of coworking space

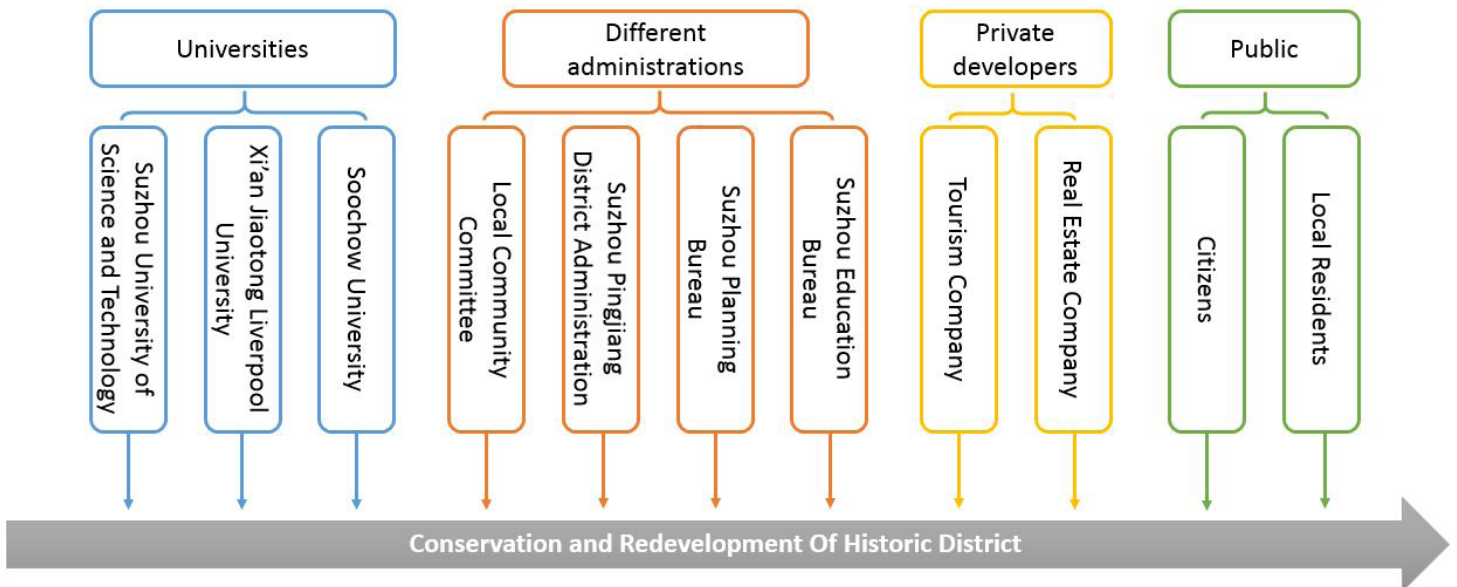




### Implementation: actors and stakeholders:

In the conservation and redevelopment process of historic city, the typical partners of development are variety of private developers such as tourism company, real estate company and shops. However, for this kind of developers, the profit they can get from the project is more important than the vitality and habitability of the place. Therefore, if the main development partners are the private developers, it's quite dangerous for the historic district. On the other hand, the idea ,“Taohuawu for YOUTH”, mainly target at students and young people. Hence, other actors like universities should also be involved in the development process.

Actors in the development process



## 2. Taohuawu for CULTURE

In the city development plan, building a creative and cultural city is also one of the important aspect. Being as a historic district, Taohuawu certainly could be a perfect place for promoting and preserving the traditional culture. Besides that, it could be a suitable place to accommodate some other kind of cultural related activities.

### 1) Taohuawu for traditional culture

**Suzhou Pingtan School:** Pingtan is a traditional musical art form originated in the city of Suzhou which can date back to Song Dynasty (13th Century). The Pingtan performers tell traditional stories in local dialect with some simple rhythm played by traditional instrument. This art form is still popular among the citizens and has been listed as intangible heritage by the city.



Suzhou Pingtan

Because of the high historic and culture value of Pingtan, local government has spent many effort to preserve the local art. One of the most effective measures is to establish schools dedicating to traditional art which can help to pass the skills to the younger generation. On this account, Suzhou Pingtan School was built in 2009 in the university town.



New campus of Suzhou Pingtan School in University Town



Being as a brand new campus, Suzhou Pingtan School in the university town certainly can provide the students and staffs bigger classrooms, offices and more open spaces. However, there are still countless benefits if the school can be put in a historic environment rather than in the new area with some “fake traditional buidings”. Although it will be difficult to put the school completely in the historic city, Taohuawu is still able to accommodate some of the educational function. By doing this, it can prevent the over commercialization in the historic district.

Taohuawu Wood Carving Painting: Making model (left), Printing (middle), and output (right)

**Taohuawu Wood Carving Painting:** Besides Suzhou Pingtan which is popular in the Yangtze River delta, the most locally identical traditional art of Taohuawu is definitely Taohuawu wood carving painting which has been listed as the national intangible heritage. Preserving the intangible heritage is not only about putting them in the museum and let the citizens to look at them through the glass, but also to let them become a part of our daily life. On this account, some studios doing and teaching the techniques of making wood carving painting could be opened in Taohuawu.

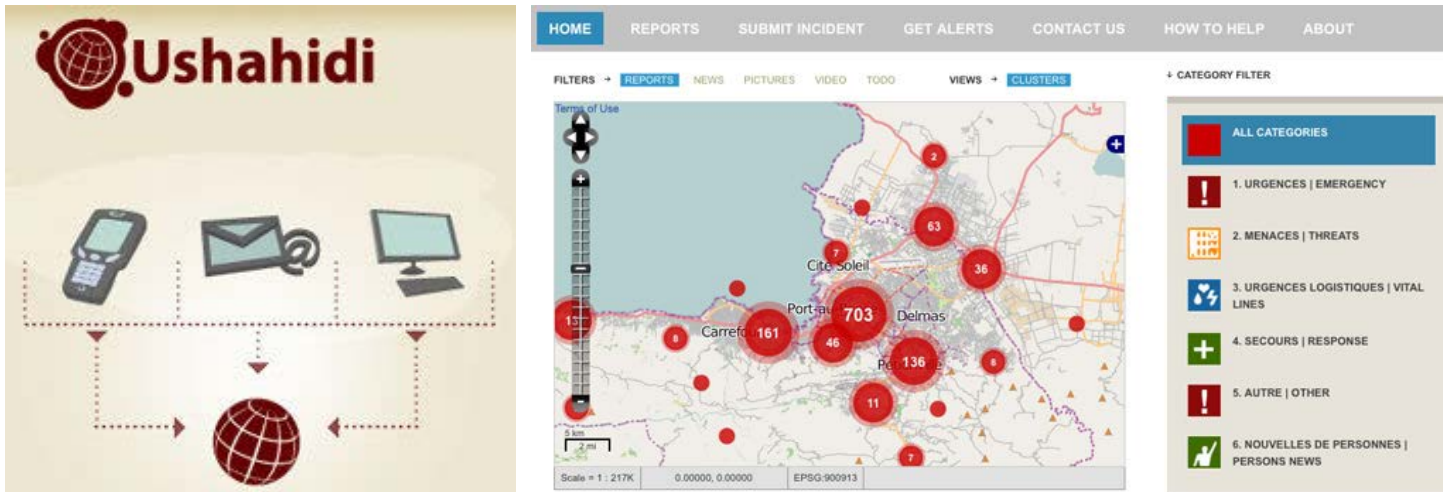




## 2) Taohuawu for new culture

**Ushahidi for saving the heritage:** Ushahidi is a non-profit software company that develops free and open-source software for information collection, visualization, and interactive mapping. The user of this open source platform can report the things happened around them to the center and the group in charge of operation will visualize the information, put it on the maps and share with the general publics. Although Ushahidi is commonly used for emergency cases such as violence and earthquake, it still could be useful for the preservation of the historic city in China.

Information flow of ushahidi and its interface



As mentioned before, the massive demolition in Taohuawu caused the permanent loss of the historic building and brought irreversible damage to the historic city. Many planners, scholars and architects expressed their opinion against this through different channel such as social media and many media also said we should save Taohuawu. Besides these, the involvement of the general public is also an important part to save the historic city.



Old houses in Taohuawu and the demolition

Ushahidi provides an opportunity for letting the public get involved in the protection of the historic city. For example, the citizens, scholars and planners can report the current situation of the old houses or news about the coming demolition of the historic buildings. By doing this, it can help, to some extent, increase publics' awareness about conservation of historic buildings and also let general public get involved in the conservation process. Therefore, offices of Ushahidi could also be located in the historic area.

# Conclusion

## Innovative strategies works together with the existing plan

The "Innovative Strategies for Taohuawu Historic District" is not totally criticizing and denying what have been done by existing plan because part of it is still quite useful for the neighborhood. In fact, it could better if the innovative strategies could work together with partial of the existing plan.

The part regarding to improving habitability, urban agriculture in Taohuawu, could be regarded as a supplementary solution to the habitability part of the existing plan done by the local planning bureau. On this account, the existing plan and urban agriculture could work together to improving the living quality of local residents. As for the part regarding to reuse the heritage, the "Innovative Strategies for Taohuawu Historic District" provides Taohuawu historic district another alternatives for development rather than prioritizing the tourism related activities. It could be seen as a trial to think "out the box" by adding new functions to the heritage such as educational and social function. But in reality, we should admit that any projects need some "money making" part to make the projects financially function that's why the private developers are needed in the process. On the other hand, other actors should also be involved to make the historic district not only a good place to visit, but also a place with life.



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