



SIP Planning Awards

Honouring the Visionaries Who Shape Our Cities

About SIP Planning Awards

Great cities don't happen by accident — they are imagined, designed, and brought to life by passionate urban planners. The SIP Planning Awards exist to celebrate exactly that — the remarkable individuals and teams behind outstanding planning projects and plans, undertaken by urban planners and planning consultancy firms in Singapore and around the world.

More than just a trophy, the SIP Awards shine a spotlight on bold ideas, innovative solutions, and thoughtful designs that transform the way we live, work, and play. From reimagining neighbourhoods to masterplanning entire districts, the winning projects represent the very best of what our profession can achieve — and serve as an inspiration for the next generation of planners.

The SIP Awards are open to Singapore-based and international planning firms — a testament to the collaborative, borderless nature of great placemaking. Since its inaugural launch at the Spatial Planning Conference on 3 April 2008, the Awards have grown from strength to strength, becoming a highly anticipated highlight on the planning community's calendar.

As at 2025, SIP has proudly held nine editions of the SIP Planning Awards, and the excitement is already building for the 10th SIP Planning Awards in 2027. Stay tuned — more details are coming your way, and it could be your project taking the stage next!

SIP 9th Planning Awards 2025 Sharing Session #01 was held online on Thursday, 20 Aug 2026, through Zoom.

The event was organised by SIP CPD I and awarded 3 CPD Points for SIP members.

Celebrating Excellence in Urban Planning: Insights from the 9th SIP Planning Awards Winners

A Spectacular 9th SIP Planning Awards & Gala Dinner 2025

What a night it was! On 24 September 2025, the Singapore Institute of Planners rolled out the red carpet for the 9th Singapore Planning Awards Presentation Ceremony and Gala Dinner — an evening buzzing with energy, ideas, and well-deserved celebration.

We were deeply honoured to welcome Minister Chee Hong Tat, Minister for National Development, alongside the legendary Dr Liu Thai Ker and other distinguished guests. Adding an international flavour to the festivities were delegates from the Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP), the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, Planning & Development Division (HKIS-PDD), and fellow planners from Vietnam and Indonesia. Guests were also treated to inspiring presentations by renowned interdisciplinary urban planner Professor Herbert Dreiseitl and our valued sponsor, Esri.

A Record-Breaking Year!

2025 was a year for the history books. We received an unprecedented 114 project submissions from local and international firms — the highest in the Awards' history — along with 7 submissions for the Young Planners category. Talk about a vote of confidence in the planning profession!

After weeks of extensive deliberation through July and August, our hardworking judges awarded:

- 10 Gold Awards
- 9 Silver Awards
- 7 Bronze Awards
- 17 Special Mention Awards
- 2 Young Planners of the Year



source: SIP 2025

Milestones Worth Celebrating

The evening also marked two significant milestones for our growing international network:

- The renewal of MOUs with HKIS and HKIP
- The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Shanghai Urban Planning Trade Association (SUPTA)

It was a wonderful, enriching night — an evening dedicated to honouring outstanding achievements, fostering collaboration, and strengthening bonds within both the local and overseas planning community.



source: SIP 2025

Why This Sharing Session Matters

The Gala Dinner may be over, but the learning has only just begun! This first sharing session brings together the winners of the 9th SIP Planning Awards to share the stories behind their award-winning work — the challenges they overcame, the creative breakthroughs they achieved, and the lessons they learned along the way.

Here are the speakers of the first sharing session along with the summary of their presentations.



Sofian SIBARANI

Founder/Principal
URBAN+



Yixuan ZHENG

Senior Urban Planner
Urban Planning & Design Institute of Shenzhen
(UPDIS)



Huachen SHAO

Senior Architect
Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning &
Design Institute Co., Ltd.

BRONZE Award

Category 1: Excellence in Planning <5000Ha
Master Plan of Nusantara Capital City of Indonesia

GOLD Award

Category 4: Excellence in Urban Design,
Placemaking & Public Space
Quality renewal practice of urban villages in mega
cities — Comprehensive improvement plan of
Pingshan Village, Nanshan District, Shenzhen

GOLD Award

Category 5: Excellence in Urban Design, Heritage &
Conservation
Cultural Empowerment for Rural Revitalisation in
Langtou Village, Guangzhou, China

Master Plan of Nusantara Capital City of Indonesia

BRONZE Award

Category 1: Excellence in Planning >5000 Ha



Sofian SIBARANI

Founder/Principal URBAN+

Designing Nusantara: Lessons from Building a Capital City from the Forest Up

Imagine Being Asked to Design a Nation's Capital

How often does an urban designer get the chance to shape an entire capital city from scratch? For most of us, the answer is: never. Yet this is exactly the extraordinary journey Sibarani Sofian shared — the making of Nusantara, Indonesia's new capital city in East Kalimantan, replacing Jakarta as the seat of government.

But this is no ordinary city-building exercise. From the very beginning, the vision set the bar sky-high. In his speech at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week in January 2020, the President of Indonesia invited the world to bring its “best technology, innovation, and wisdom” to create a smart metropolis unlike any other.



A 2°C reduction in temperature through design



70% green area, only 30% developed



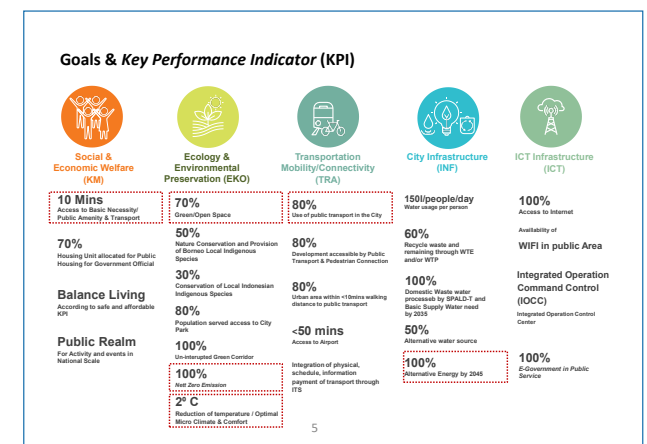
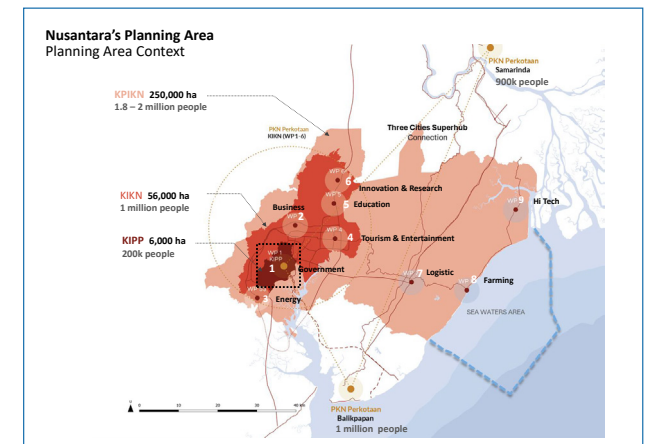
100% renewable energy by 2045 and net zero emissions by 2060



A “10-minute city” — everything you need within a short walk



80% of trips by public transport



Part One: How to Plan — Let Nature Lead

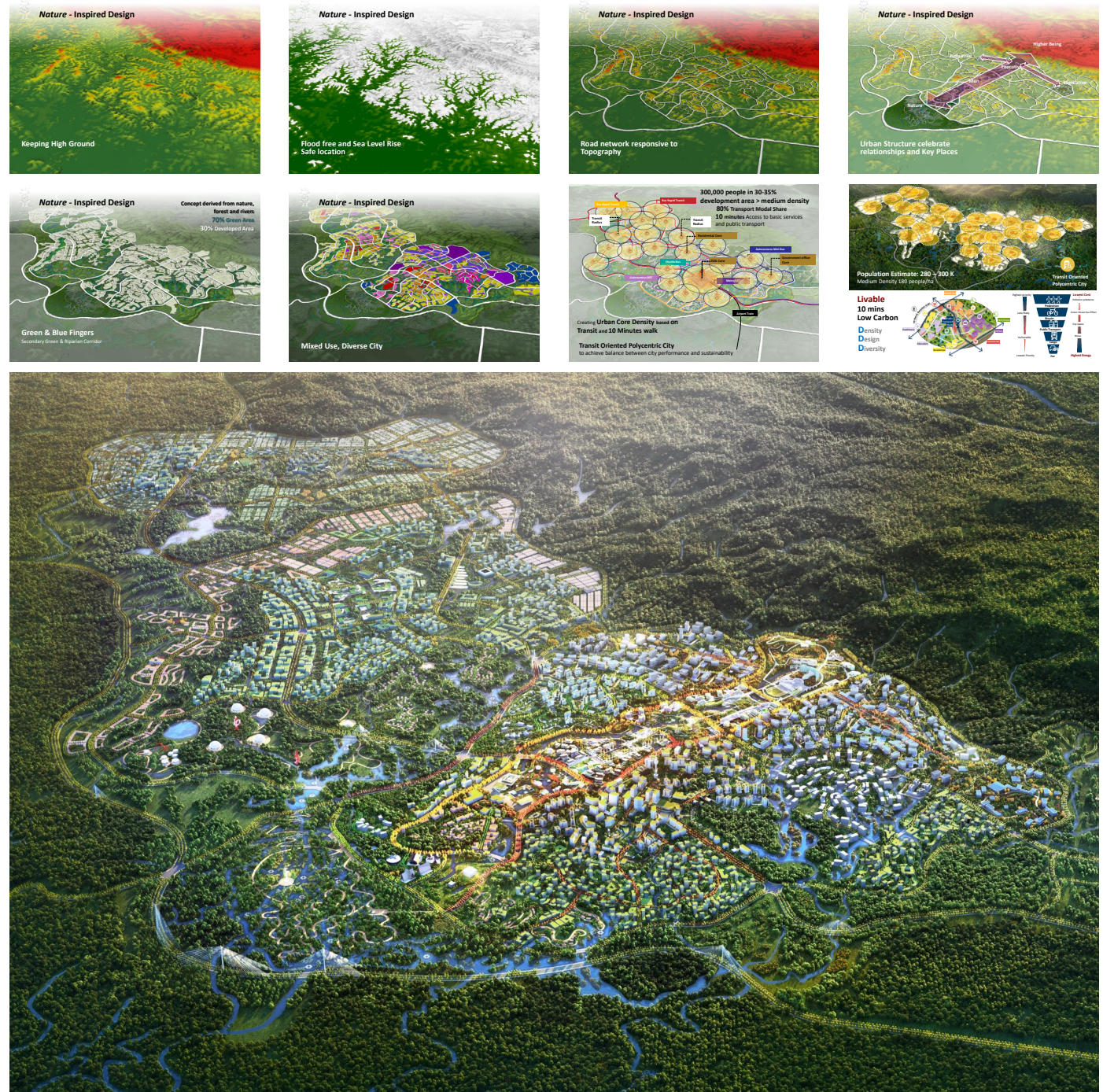
The team's first big decision was philosophical: rather than imposing a city onto the landscape, they let the landscape design the city. This “Nature-Inspired Design” approach shaped every major planning move:

Keep the high ground. Development was located on elevated, flood-free land, safe from sea level rise — resilience built in from day one, not retrofitted later.

Roads that follow the land. Instead of bulldozing a grid, the road network responds to topography, minimizing cut-and-fill and respecting the terrain's natural logic.

Green and blue fingers. The city form is derived from the forest and rivers themselves, with green corridors and riparian networks weaving through the urban fabric — protecting the 70% green target and conserving Borneo's indigenous species.

A polycentric, transit-oriented city. With around 300,000 people planned in the initial development area at medium density, the plan creates urban cores around transit — BRT, autonomous mini-buses, metro/LRT — so that density, design, and diversity work together to deliver the 10-minute, low-carbon, livable city.



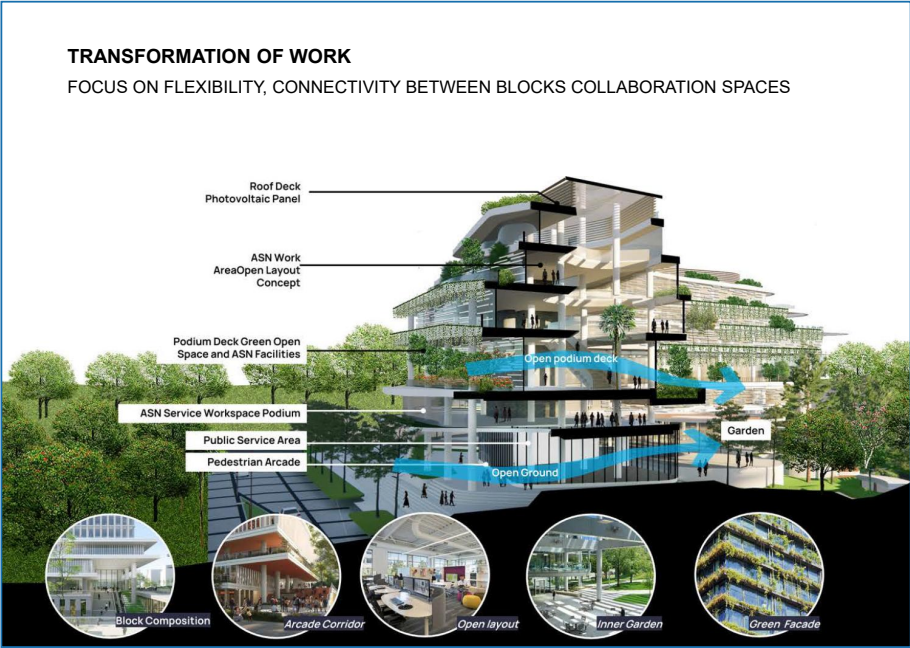
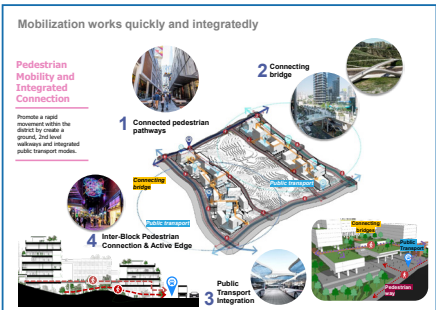
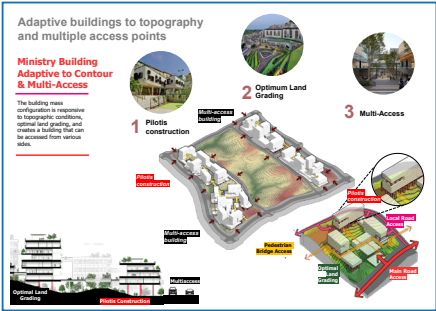
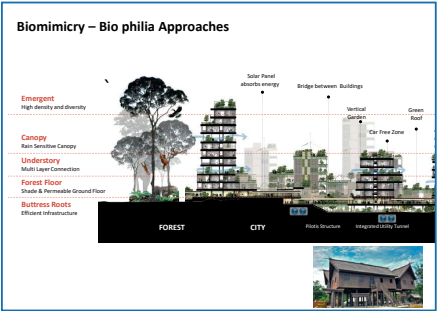
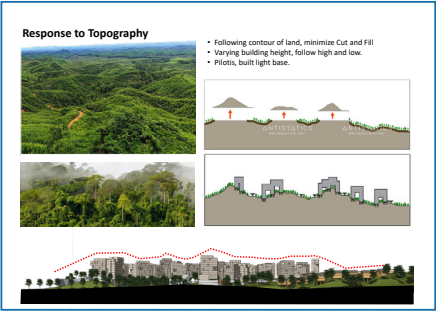
Part Two: How to Design — Learning from the Rainforest

Here’s where the story gets truly inspiring. For the built form, the team turned to biomimicry, using the structure of the tropical rainforest itself as a design framework:

Forest Layer	Urban Design Translation
Emergent layer	High density and diversity
Canopy	Rain-sensitive canopies
Understory	Multi-layer connections between buildings
Forest floor	Shaded, permeable ground planes
Buttress roots	Efficient infrastructure

This thinking shaped the Government Core and Ministry District: buildings on pilotis that touch the ground lightly, massing that adapts to contours with multiple access points, ecological bridges reconnecting forest habitats, and permeable ground levels blending public, semi-private, and private zones into a vibrant, multilayered working environment. The district isn’t just green in colour — it actively restores biodiversity and forest cover.

The design also reimagines how government works: flexible workspaces, collaboration spaces between ministries, e-platform-based work culture, and seamless pedestrian and public transport integration — proving that urban design can transform institutional culture, not just physical space.



The insight: When KPIs seem to contradict each other (density vs. greenery, growth vs. conservation), the answer isn’t compromise — it’s a smarter urban model. Transit-oriented polycentricity became the key that unlocked balance between city performance and sustainability.

Part Three: Prove It — Performance-Based Urban Design

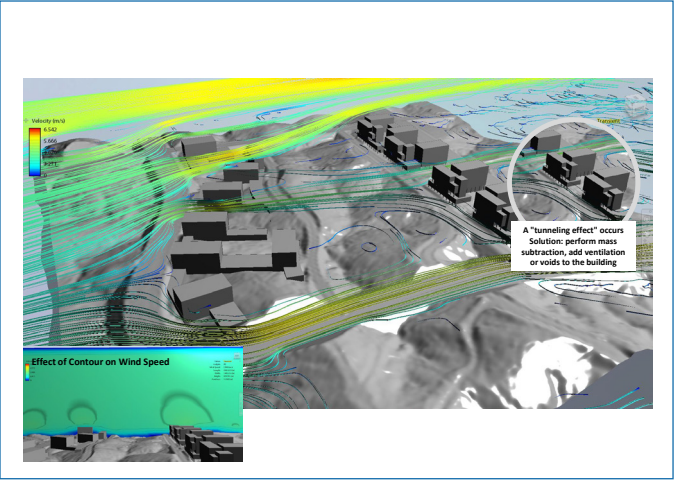
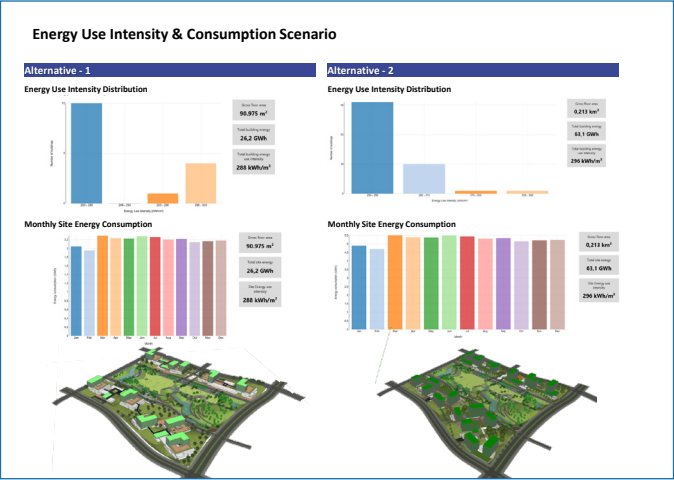
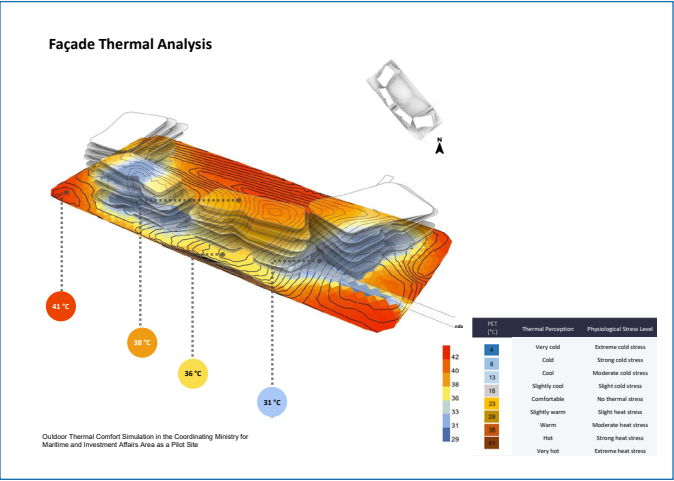
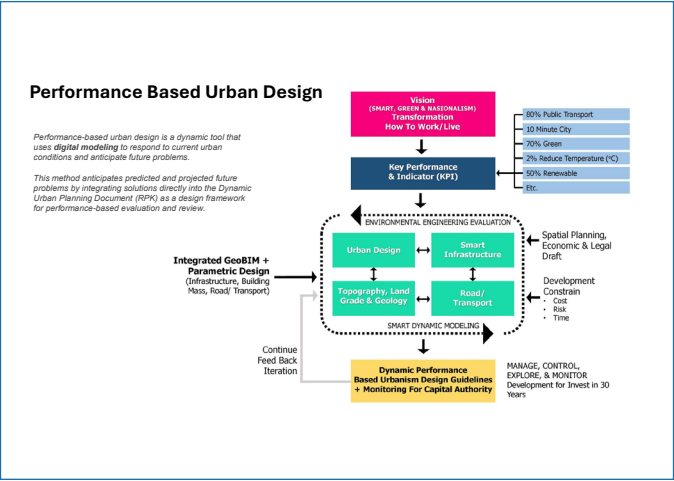
Perhaps the most forward-looking lesson: beautiful renderings are not enough. The Nusantara team embraced performance-based urban design, using digital modelling to test and verify design decisions:

Façade thermal analysis and outdoor thermal comfort simulations (PET) to ensure people are genuinely comfortable in the tropical climate

Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) wind studies to optimize natural ventilation and manage wind tunnel effects between buildings

Energy Use Intensity scenarios comparing design alternatives for real consumption outcomes

Crucially, these findings feed back into a Dynamic Urban Planning Document (RPK) — a living framework that anticipates future problems and evolves with evidence. And it's real: by November 2024, the Ceremonial Plaza, Coordinating Ministries Complex, and National Axis were rising from the ground.



Lessons Learned for Urban Planners and Designers



Vision needs translation

Bold political visions (“net zero,” “10-minute city”) only become reality when planners translate them into measurable KPIs — and then into spatial strategies.



Contradictions are design opportunities

70% green and a functioning city? Density and comfort? The tension between competing goals is where creative planning models are born.



Nature is the best consultant

From topography-led road networks to rainforest-inspired building typologies, context-driven and biomimetic design produces cities that are more resilient, more distinctive, and more loved.



Design for how people work and live — not just where

Nusantara’s government district shows urban design shaping collaboration, flexibility, and civic life.



Measure, simulate, verify

The future of our profession is performance-based. Thermal, wind, and energy simulation should be standard tools, not luxuries — and planning documents should be dynamic, not static.



Dream big, ground it in evidence

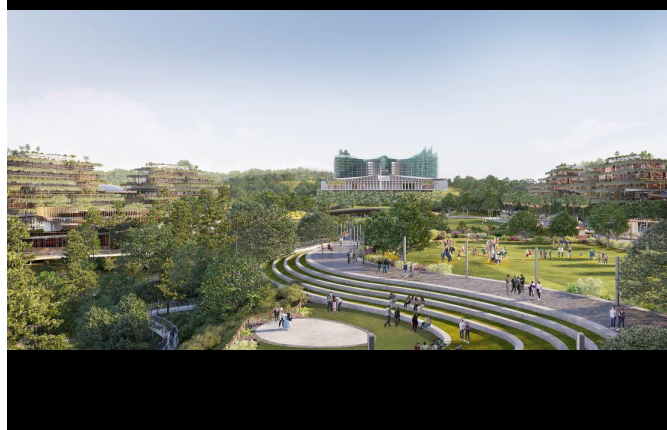
Nusantara demonstrates that visionary ambition and rigorous technical analysis are not opposites — they are partners.

Designing Nusantara is more than a national project; it is a masterclass for our profession. It reminds us that urban planning and design at its best is an act of optimism backed by science — listening to the land, honouring local wisdom, and daring to build a city where the forest and the future grow together.

Ceremonial Plaza & Ministries Complex



Ceremonial Plaza Amphitheatre



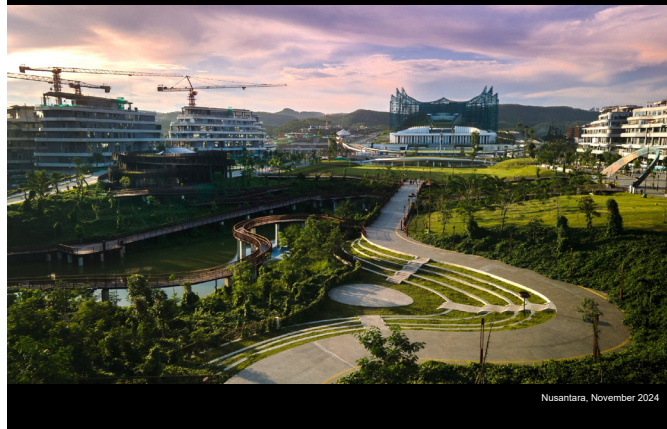
Coordinating Ministries Complex



Ceremonial Plaza & Ministries Complex



Ceremonial Plaza Amphitheatre



Coordinating Ministries Complex



QUALITY RENEWAL PRACTICE OF URBAN VILLAGES IN MEGA CITIES

Comprehensive improvement plan
of Pingshan Village, Nanshan District,
Shenzhen

GOLD Award

Category 4: Excellence in Urban Design,
Placemaking & Public Space



Yixuan ZHENG

Senior Urban Planner
Urban Planning & Design
Institute of Shenzhen (UPDIS)

From “Village in the City” to Talent Haven

The Pingshan Village story

Shenzhen is home to over 1,000 urban villages housing a staggering 10 million people — half the city’s population. These “islands of countryside within the city” are a unique by-product of China’s lightning-fast urbanisation: former rural villages engulfed by expanding city boundaries, where land remains collectively owned and villagers built dense rental housing for migrant workers. They are not slums — they are transitional urban spaces full of life, affordability, and heritage. But they also carry real challenges: safety risks, low-quality environments, inefficient land use, and isolation from the surrounding city.

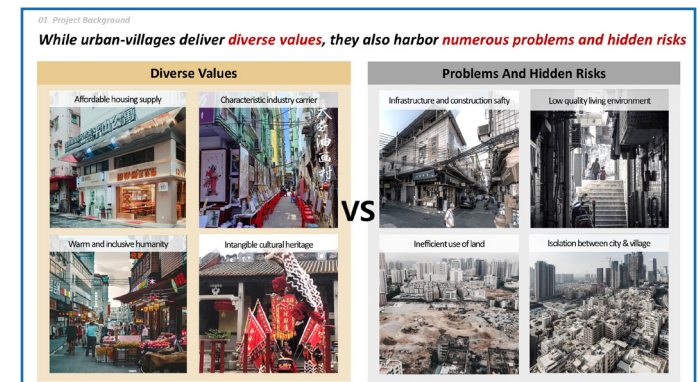
Pingshan Village, a 500-year-old settlement (founded in 1490) in Nanshan District’s University-Town Innovation Cluster, suddenly finding itself surrounded by the gleaming towers of one of the world’s fastest-growing megacities.

The big question the planners at the Urban Planning & Design Institute of Shenzhen (UPDIS) asked was refreshingly simple:

What kind of urban-village community do we want to build?

Their answer: *one that is livable, culturally compelling, economically dynamic, convenient, and inclusive.*

The urban renewal thus started through progressive renewal, diversified governance, and sustainable development, replacing the old “demolish-and-profit” model with a people-oriented, operation-first philosophy.

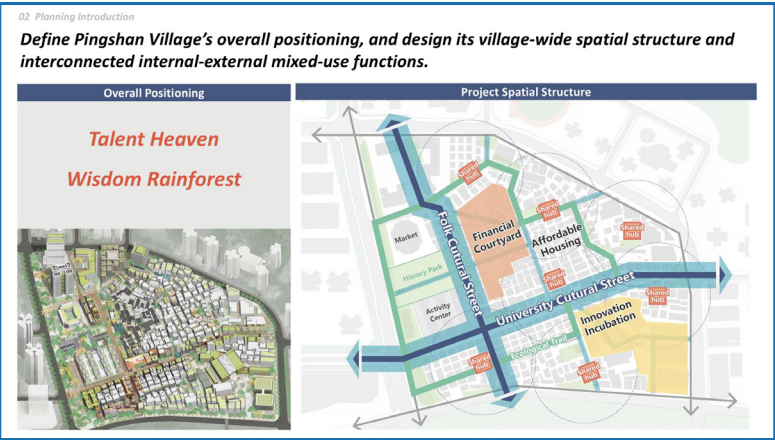
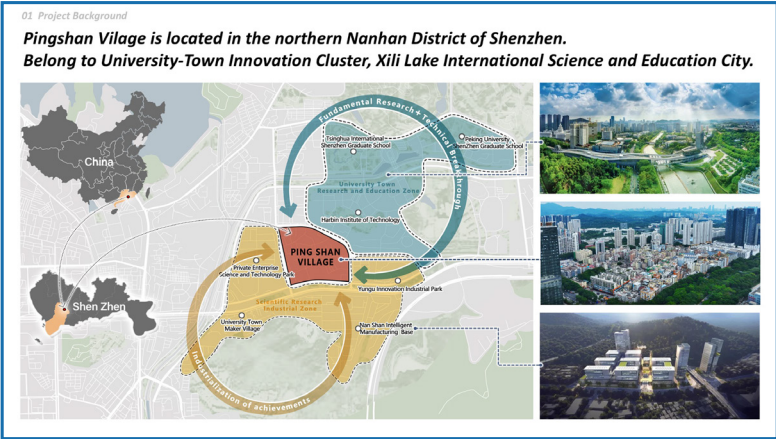


The Big Idea: People First, Operations First

Pingshan sits within Shenzhen's University-Town Innovation Cluster — surrounded by campuses and tech enterprises. Rather than the old model of “single-party investment chasing high profits and rapid returns” (often meaning demolition and displacement), the team embraced a new philosophy:

Progressive Renewal + Diversified Governance + Sustainable Development

Before drawing a single line, planners interviewed 300+ households, 50 alumni associations, and 70+ social organizations and enterprises, layering big-data analysis on top. The result? A bold positioning: Pingshan as a “Talent Heaven” and “Wisdom Rainforest”.



Four winning strategies

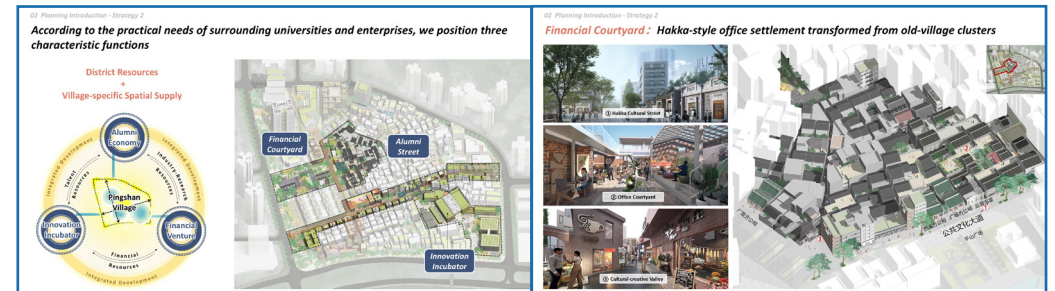
1. Refined design for diverse groups

No one-size-fits-all housing here. The team profiled four distinct tenant types and created customized residential products — over 5,500 fully-furnished apartments — plus public services infused with “human warmth, artistic ambiance and a tech-enabled feel.”



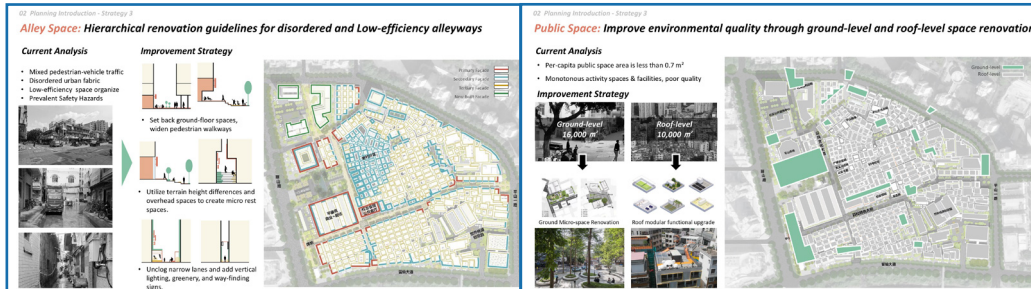
2. City-village industrial integration

Matching village spaces with district needs created a Financial Courtyard (Hakka-style offices in old village clusters), an Alumni Street (a hub now hosting 55 alumni associations and university exchanges), and an Innovation Incubator (a one-stop entrepreneurship centre in a repurposed factory).



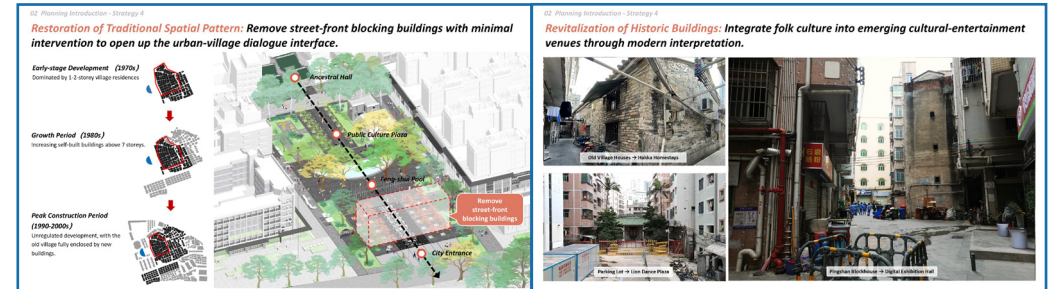
3. Public networks in high-density space

With less than 0.7 m² of public space per person, every alley, rooftop, and leftover corner mattered. Widened walkways, micro rest spaces, lighting,



4. "Darning" history and modernity

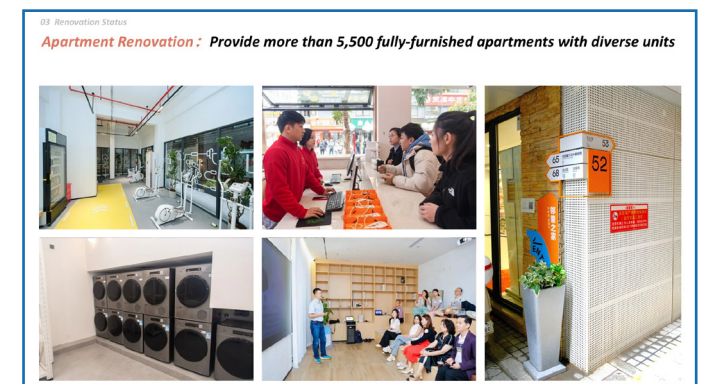
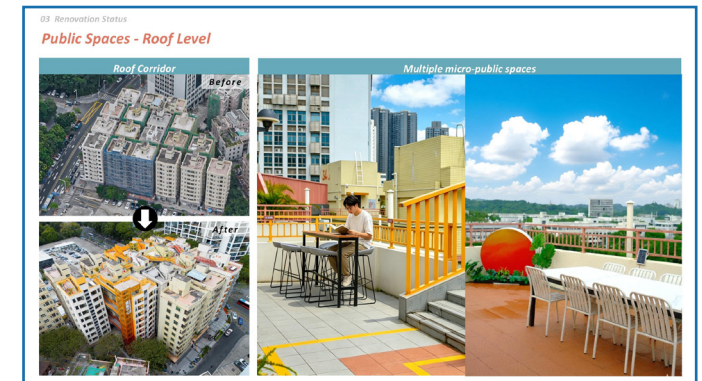
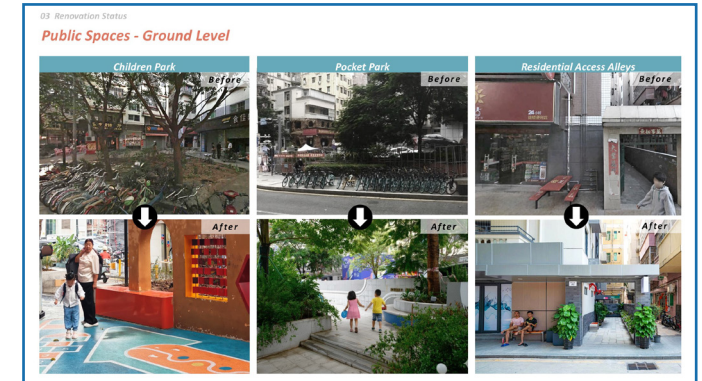
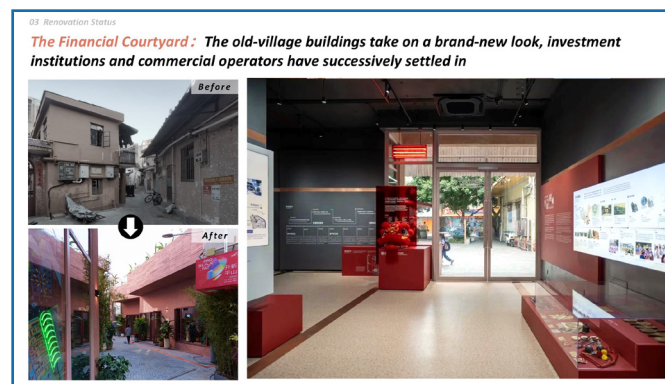
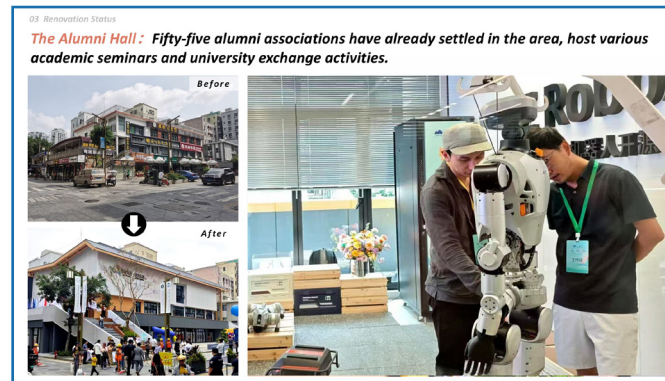
Like mending fabric, the plan carefully removed blocking buildings with minimal intervention to reveal the traditional spatial pattern, reopen the dialogue between old village and new city, and revitalised historic buildings as cultural-entertainment venues — 500 years of heritage, reinterpreted for today.



Does It Work? The Proof is in The Streets

The plan was built on listening: surveys of 300+ households, 50 alumni associations, and 70+ organisations, backed by big-data analysis. The result? A thriving **"Talent Heaven, Wisdom Rainforest"** — with a co-governance model targeting balanced revenue within 20 years.

Today, the main street sparkles with a renewed streetscape, investment institutions occupy the Financial Courtyard, alumni gather for seminars, rooftops buzz with activity, and cultural and folk festivals knit the community together. Crucially, the project runs on a co-construction, co-governance model — long-term operation, low-profit and sustainable, with balanced revenue and expenditure targeted within 20 years. Patience, it turns out, is a planning virtue.

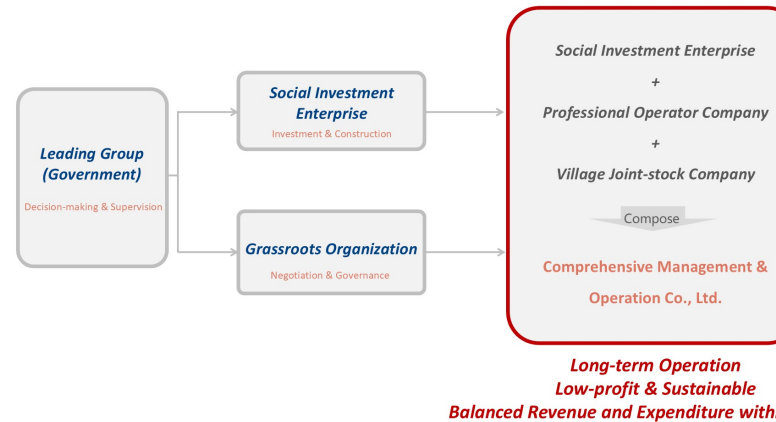


Pingshan Village proves that the future of urban regeneration in megacities isn't about erasing the past — it's about weaving old and new together with care, creativity and patience. For planners and designers, it's an inspiring reminder that our best work happens when we put people at the centre, embrace complexity, and design not just places, but the partnerships that sustain them.

Sometimes the smartest city-making means keeping the village alive.

03 Renovation Status

Community Operation : The project adopts a co-construction and co-governance mechanism featuring participation from multiple stakeholders.



03 Renovation Status

Reflection

Urban Planner:

- Fully respect and accommodate the real needs of end users with **human-centered** design.
- Abandon rigid standardized replication and adopt **site-specific, customized innovative design**.
- Beyond technical and aesthetic standards, the design empowers **sustained long-term value growth** for the community.

Institutional Model:

- Allocate public capital and market-oriented social capital in a coordinated manner, and build a **cooperative mechanism with clear rights, responsibilities and work division**.
- Form a joint development alliance consisting of government authorities and social organizations, **all participants shall act simultaneously as producers, consumers, investors and beneficiaries**.

Cultural Empowerment for Rural Revitalisation in Langtou Village, Guangzhou, China

GOLD Award

Category 5: Excellence in Urban Design, Heritage & Conservation



Huachen SHAO

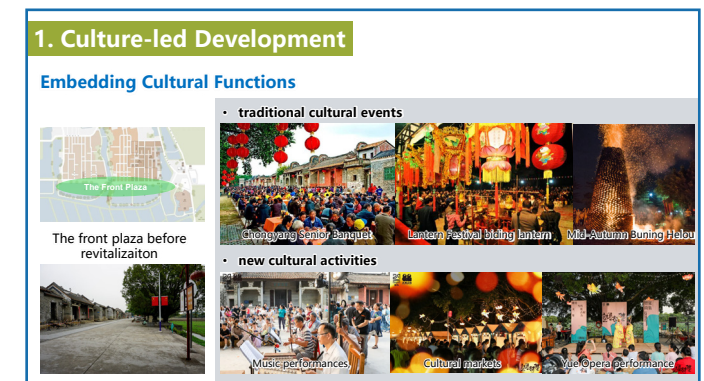
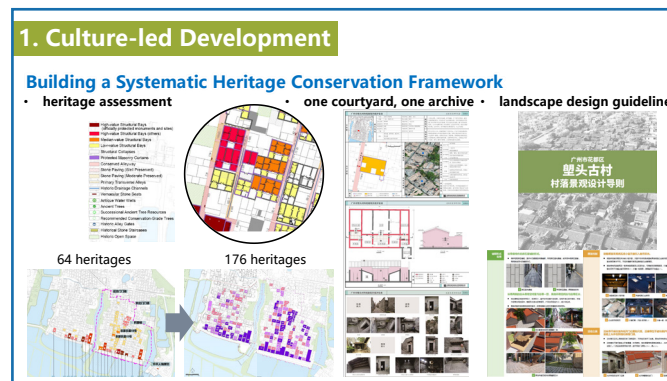
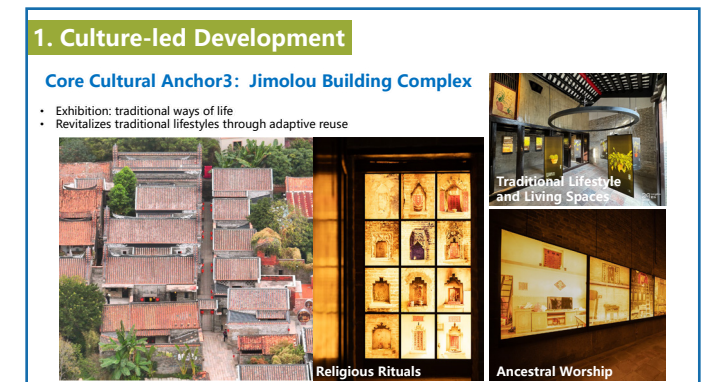
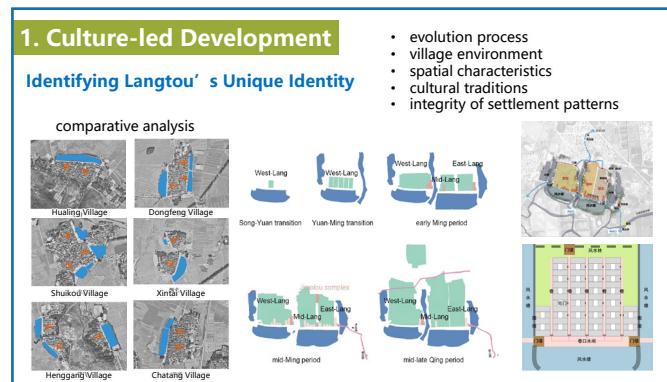
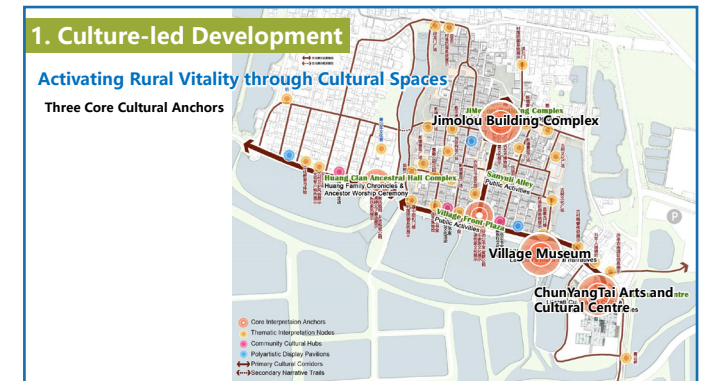
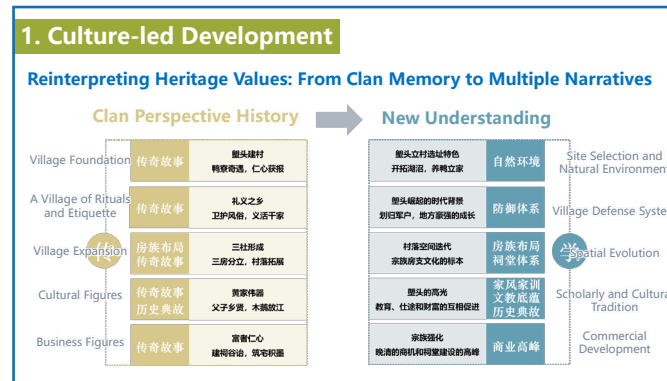
Senior Architect
Shanghai Tongji Urban
Planning & Design Institute
Co., Ltd.

How Langtou Village Rewrote the Rural Revitalisation Playbook

A Village Worth Fighting For

Tucked into the hills of Huadu District, Guangzhou, sits Langtou Village — a designated Chinese Historic and Cultural Village whose founding legend begins, charmingly, with a duck farm. Over centuries, the Huang clan built a settlement of remarkable completeness: mountains at the back, farmland and waters in front, and a village core studded with ancestral halls, gate towers and scholar's study rooms. This was a place where farming and learning went hand in hand — a “village of rituals and etiquette” that produced officials, scholars and merchants in equal measure.

By the 2010s, however, Langtou faced the familiar story of rural China: an ageing population, empty houses, crumbling heritage and a fading sense of purpose. The question was not whether to revitalize, but how.



Three Ways to Get It Wrong

The planning team took a hard look at the usual toolkit and found each approach wanting:

- Government-led — great at infrastructure, weak at building community awareness.
- Capital-driven — profit-first, leading to excessive commercialization and "theme-park villages."
- Art-led — dazzling installations and festivals that fade once the artists leave.

Langtou needed something different. The opportunity arrived through an unusual partner: a philanthropic fund willing to invest patiently, without demanding a quick financial return. Together with Tanbu Town, the village and the planning team, a four-way "Langtou Experiment" was born.

Opportunities with Philanthropic Support

Planning Team

Tanbu Town

Langtou Village

Philanthropic Fund

Collaborative Exploration



Limitations of Conventional Approaches

Government-led approach

Limited community awareness-building

Capital-driven approach

Profit-driven development and excessive commercialization

Art-led approach

Short-term interventions without long-term sustainability



A New Approach Was Needed

Langtou Experiment

Langtou' s New Approach for Rural Revitalization

Culture-led Development

Philanthropy Empowerment

Heritage-led Spatial Regeneration

Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Langtou' s Goals

Community Revitalization

Cultural Continuity

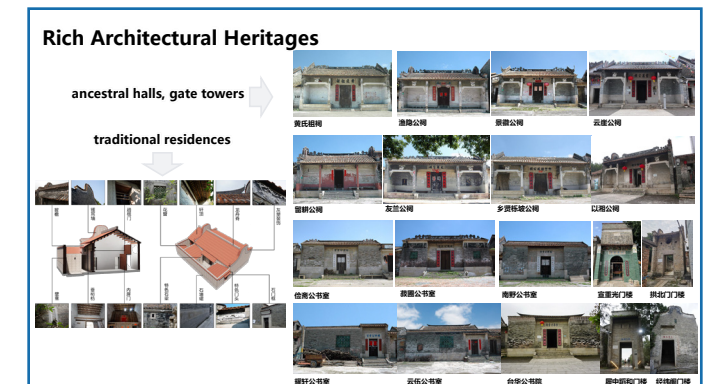
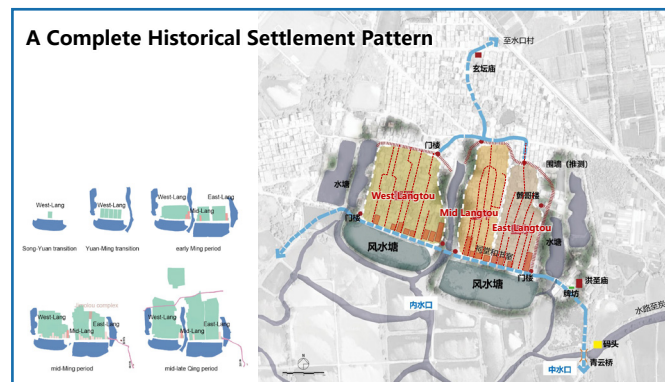
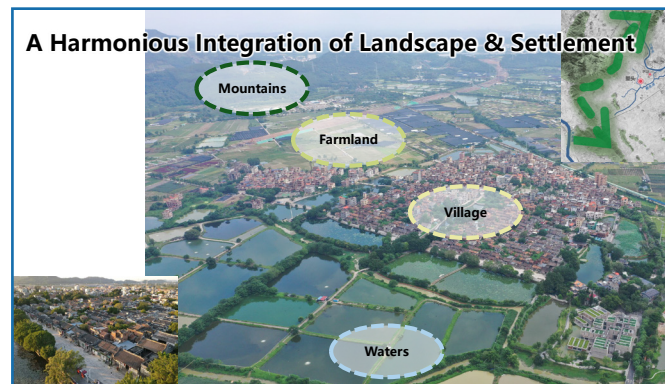
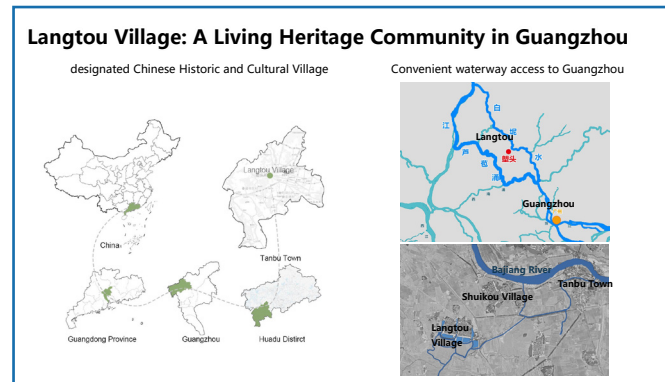
Ecological Livability

The Langtou Experiment: Four Pillars

1. Culture-led Development

Rather than treating heritage as a backdrop, the team dug into why Langtou mattered. Clan legends were reinterpreted through new lenses — site selection and natural environment, defence systems, spatial evolution, scholarly tradition and commercial history. A comparative analysis against six neighbouring villages sharpened Langtou's unique identity. The heritage inventory grew from 64 to 176 recognized assets, each courtyard given its own archive (“one courtyard, one archive”), supported by landscape design guidelines.

Three Core Cultural Anchors brought this story to life: the ChunYangTai Arts and Cultural Centre (exhibitions, village library, children's choir, community training), the Village Museum (turning academic research into public narrative) and the Jimolou Building Complex (adaptive reuse showcasing traditional ways of life). Crucially, the standard rural commercial menu — tea houses, homestays, camping — was deliberately expanded with Cantonese opera, lion dance, calligraphy societies, farming education and villager-run businesses.



2. Philanthropy Empowerment

The fund did more than pay for buildings. It provided resources (facilities, events, global networks), built capacity (self-governance, vocational skills, business creation) and cultivated awareness (community involvement, transmission of local knowledge, valuing heritage). Money became a catalyst, not a crutch.

2. Philanthropy Empowerment

Resource Provision

Developing Philanthropic Grant-Funded Cultural Facilities

Planning & Executing Event

Integrating Global Resource



Capacity Building

Cultivating Self-governance Competencies

Training Vocational Skills for Villagers

Fostering Business Creation Capabilities



Awareness Cultivation

Promoting community Involvement Ethos

Transmission of Local Cultural Knowledge

Valuing Cultural and Heritage Preservation



3. Heritage-led Spatial Regeneration

No bulldozers. Micro-renewal revived the village's historic spatial logic — lanes, plazas, water edges. A philanthropic pilot area demonstrated what was possible; then something magical happened: villagers began renovating their own houses, and a community-led renewal area emerged organically alongside it.

3. Heritage-led Spatial Regeneration

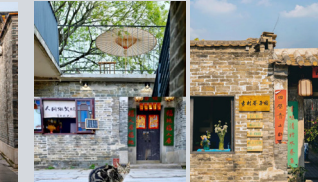
From Philanthropic Pilots to Community-led Renewal



Philanthropic Pilot Area



Community-led Renewal Area



4. Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Co-creation and co-governance were institutionalized through a Chief Planner system, offering villagers ongoing cultural, design and implementation consulting — from lighting schemes and wayfinding to individual house rebuilds and policy interpretation. Formal advisory opinions were issued for each intervention, big or small.

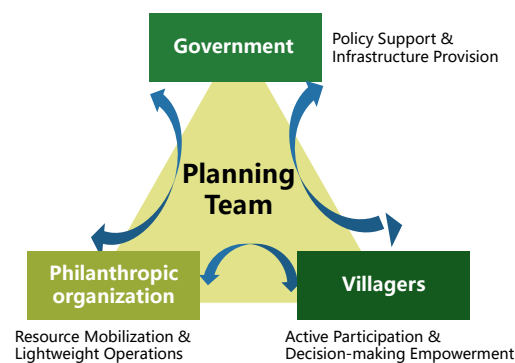
4. Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Collaborative Planning and Governance

• Co-creation



• Co-governance



4. Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Long-term Professional Partnership

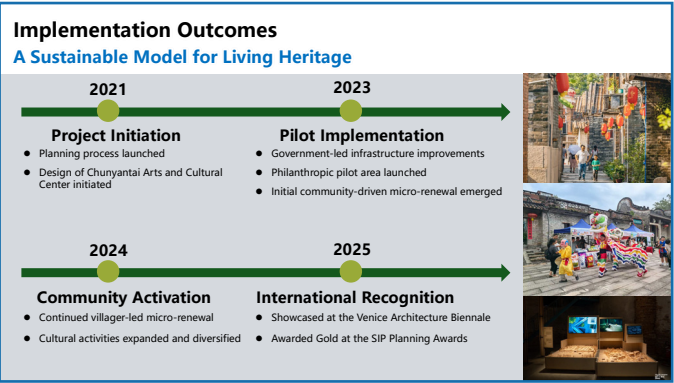
• Established the Chief Planner system



花都区鳌头村乡村振兴文化项目咨询服务意见书			
项目名称	鳌头村灯光工程	工作阶段	概念方案
项目类别	夜景灯光设计	设计功能	
保护区域	核心保护范围		
花都区鳌头村乡村振兴文化项目咨询服务意见书			
项目名称	边光第1号民居和益善第13号民居复建方案	工作阶段	
项目类别	建筑方案设计		
花都区鳌头村乡村振兴文化项目咨询服务意见书			
项目名称	文化市集概念方案	工作阶段	
项目类别	建筑方案设计		
花都区鳌头村乡村振兴文化项目咨询服务意见书			
项目名称	核心保护区景观概念方案设计	工作阶段	初稿
项目类别	概念方案设计	设计功能	公共空间
保护区域	核心保护范围		
花都区鳌头村乡村振兴文化项目咨询服务意见书			
项目名称	对鳌头近期修缮建设的意见与建议	工作阶段	
项目类别		设计功能	
保护区域			
咨询时间		总规划师	2023年11月14日
		队签字	

The Results Speak Loudly

From project initiation in 2021 to pilot implementation in 2023 and community activation in 2024, Langtou reached the world stage in 2025 — showcased at the Venice Architecture Biennale and awarded Gold at the SIP Planning Awards. More importantly, heritage moved “from static preservation to living culture,” and the village plaza once again hosts both traditional ceremonies and new creative markets.



Langtou reminds us that revitalization is not about building new things in old places — it is about helping a community rediscover its own story and giving it the tools to write the next chapter.

Lead with narrative, not masterplans

Langtou's breakthrough came from research — reinterpreting clan stories, mapping heritage, benchmarking neighbours. Identity is the foundation of any sustainable spatial strategy. Before drawing a single line, ask: what is this place's story, and who gets to tell it?

Design the funding model as carefully as the physical plan

Each conventional approach failed because of its incentive structure. Patient, mission-driven capital changed what was possible. Planners should actively shape governance and financing, not merely inherit them.

Pilot, then step back

The philanthropic pilot area was a demonstration, not the destination. Real success was measured by how many villagers picked up the tools themselves. Good planning creates the conditions for others to act.

Micro-renewal preserves what masterplans destroy

Reviving historic spatial logic through small, careful interventions protected the settlement's integrity while allowing modern life to flourish. Sometimes the best design move is restraint.

Stay in the room

The Chief Planner system turned a one-off commission into a long-term partnership. Continuous, accessible professional advice — right down to a single villager's house — is what keeps quality high once the launch ribbon is cut.

Culture is infrastructure

Libraries, choirs, museums and opera performances were not decorative add-ons; they were the engines of economic, social and environmental revitalization. Invest in them accordingly.

Measure what matters

Visitor numbers are impressive, but 200 villagers returning home is the real headline. Revitalization succeeds when people choose to stay.

SIP 9th Planning Awards 2025 Sharing Session #01 was held online on Thursday, 20 Aug 2026, through Zoom.

The event was organised by SIP CPD I and awarded 3 CPD Points for SIP members.

Stay tuned for the next SIP 9th Planning Awards 2025 Sharing Session.