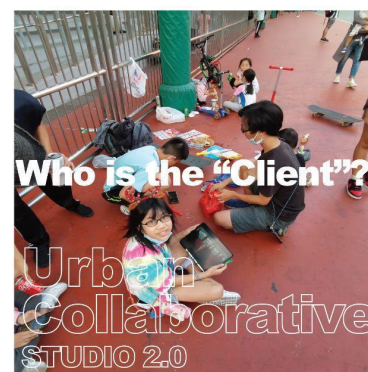




Urban Collaborative Studio (2022)

Studio Tutors: Jessica Cheung & Melody Yiu



This is a research+design studio built upon the foundation of fieldwork, community engagement and participatory design, with a focus on the issues of urban conditions in Hong Kong.

We believe in the local intelligence of residents in urban neighborhoods, for their resilience in adapting to adverse conditions and their innovation in solving daily problems of work and life. As a collective, it has the power to transform the local environment into a livable and sustainable place.

Working with local residents and businesses, NGOs and social enterprises, as well as the district government, the studio harnesses local wisdom and combines it with global knowledge to generate urban design proposals in a model of Urban Collaboratives.

Manifesto:

Urban Collaboratives can drive a sustainable living environment, united and happier communities. It gives voice to the people, especially the marginalized communities, to participate and respond to the scarce resources in a just and collaborative way. We want to discover, incubate, initiate, and foster more Urban Collaboratives to drive more impact in our neighborhoods.

Approach:

- Rethinking the role of Urban Designer - from spatial scale, urban form etc.
- Rethinking the way to deliver a project with the people
- Democratize Urban Design process
- Participatory Planning
- Crowdsourcing innovations
- Bottom-up resource sharing network
- Interactive governance

Studio Project: **The future of old-new towns as Urban Collaboratives**

To accommodate Hong Kong's rapid increase in population from 800,000 before the war to over 3,000,000 in the early 1950s, new satellite towns were planned in areas extending from the urban centre. The Kowloon branch MTR in the 1960s terminated at these new districts, with Kwun Tong to the east and Tsuen Wan to the west, which will be the sites for the studio project.

Since their conception more than 50 years ago, these “new towns” have now become vibrant urban cores with integrated functions beyond housing development. Different collaboratives and resource-sharing models can be found in these areas, which will be the core theme of this studio’s design investigation. What is the original concept of the ideal new town and how has it evolved? Furthermore, how can we envision the future for these areas in an Urban Collaborative model?

Methodology:

Stage 1: Investigate urban form and issues

Beginning with a “Boot Camp” exercise, students from different backgrounds will learn about the common language of urban design in spatial terms. Through the initial mapping of the basic UD layers (Road - Massing - LU/OS), the original master plan concepts of the two areas will be studied as a background, in preparation for fieldwork to investigate current-day urban issues. Additional mapping of site findings will be overlaid on the collective map base, for each group will begin to define a potential problem that their project will answer.

Stage 2: Strategize collaborative models and urban design framework

This stage will start with public engagement exercises with the key stakeholder according to each project group’s problem definition. Collaborative models in the area (such as time bank or resource sharing networks) are studied to become the basis for urban design proposals.

From the scale of the urban district, the project team will zoom in to look at a focus area of 3-5 hectares to propose an upgraded urban framework for the existing conditions. A design brief of projected population increase and general program requirements will be given at the beginning of stage 2, from which the team to integrate with engagement findings to propose a design strategy with a draft of the urban design framework.

Stage 3: Design spatial implementation of Urban Collaborative

Learning from the mid-term feedback on the strategies and framework, the project team will further develop the proposal in two reciprocal aspects: the design elaboration of a specific urban collaborative model, and spatial implementation in one location within their UD framework. The final design outcome should include a proposal envisioning a future collaboration on two scales: a refined UD framework of the study area and an urban space intervention that supports the proposed collaborative model.