The proposed greenbelt surrounding Beijing marks a unique transition between urban and rural landscapes. This outer ring surrounding the city is gradually being engulfed upon by new high-rise development. The exiling villages at its edges are increasingly deteriorating, inhabited by rural workers attempting to enter the city.

More specifically, the site between the Six Ribbons transport motion, the southern and the Three Rivers avenue since the threshold between urban and rural life. These river basins providing, creating a path out of the car marooned on transformer by regional factors, determined the physical form of the village. Today, this path is still evident in the housing and spaces and the larger urban areas now serve as primary districts. The dominant demographic of the site is rural migrant workers attempting to urbanize and farming seeking to turn the site into a public greenbelt.

The proposed for the site is to create an exchange between the local workers and urban amenities by creating a new village centered on new forms of high-density agricultural production. Sustainable farming of fruit, energy, clean water, and air is proposed within the greenbelt creating a productive space that blends into the site. New forms of farming and education are provided for migrants to increase their self-sufficiency and urbanization and exchange.

The physical form of the project begins by tracing the site with ribbons taken from the most polarized dimensions. These small-scale ribbons framed into the regional framework of the greenbelt allows to create into the new city grid of networks, and megacities. This framework is cut transversally by elevated irrigation channels that organize a series of vertical streams and punctuate into a public transit of major and minor axes. Existing buildings are given new public functions and fit into this transformative framework. The housing typology mirrors rooftop farming, greenhouse (high-tech) farming, photovoltaic (energy) farming, and living quarters around traditional spots. Three unique housing typologies are proposed to fill into these abiotic land parcels to receive conditions through valleys and hills—landmarks of the terraced forms in rural China. The transport station acts as a civic indicator of the project, housing a large greenhouse and learning center.
Project Principles

1. Transform urban and rural lifestyles.
The site acts as an incubator for the integration of urban and rural lifestyles. It situates a focus (living and working) on the interaction between rural and urban settings, where residents can experience the benefits of both.

2. Sustainable infrastructure.
The site is part of a larger system of sustainable infrastructure tied to the greenbelt, which has the potential to be productive – growing space to farm food, water, air, and energy. The site draws on the potential of the greenbelt, the park, and the water system, to maximize its potential. These systems are integrated into the housing typology at the unit, cluster, and neighborhood scales.

3. Station as collector and distributor.
The station is an essential exchange point, drawing and distributing traffic to and from the city and suburban areas. Parks, open space, trails, and local community. A market area linked to light industry mediates the space between the station and housing. The educational center and community center provide a local destination.

4. Reinterpretation of the land.
Formerly, a market area linked to the station and aligned with the Temple of the Sun. The conversion of this area and the repurposing of several existing buildings along it establishes a local public space and becomes the central amenity for the local community, consisting of schools, libraries, health care facilities, shops, and restaurants.

5. Reinterpretation of the land.
The site’s existing housing will be replaced with low-rise and high-rise housing, integrated into the grid of existing housing and organized into linear “ribs.” The housing typology allows for flexibility and growth, while providing density.

Sustainable infrastructures, i.e., biodiversity, are integrated into each unit.
6. Phasing and renewal.

4. Chaining of people entering the site

In the future, the bulk of these coming to the site will migrate legally. This site offers an alternative route for the urbanization of rural families. Through a process of "urbanization" - business education, light manufacturing and selling of products - the economic environment of the city will become available to the open market.

b. Phasing of the land and sessions - follow land vs. cultivated land

The land will be phased to allow for continuous production throughout the year. These plots will allow fallow plots to rejuvenate without the use of inorganic fertilizers. Furthermore, high-tech farming and greenhouses will allow for agricultural production during the winter, with an increase in light industry providing additional off-season means of income.

c. Phasing of construction

1. Take advantage of existing market demand for tourism by converting the site to a tourist zone.

2. Public housing units will be built for displaced residents, including public schools, hospitals, and other public services.

3. Farming and farming training will be offered to increase the knowledge and skills of the farming community.

4. After urbanization is complete and the influx of rural migrants stops, the entire site could be converted to an education system - i.e., ecology, farm camp, high-tech farming center.
Three housing typologies were designed to provide diversity and difference within a set structure. These housing typologies can be combined to create a series of hills (low density areas) or wedges (high density areas). Each housing typology integrates farming into the house design. Thus, even at the micro-scale, there is continuity in the tension between urban and rural. Furthermore, each housing unit is linked to a shared greenhouse that allows for agricultural production to flourish throughout the winter. These greenhouses are used to distribute water and treated water storage (electrically and water heating). The greenhouse also aids in temperature control through the housing units, forcing a continuous flow of air. By combining different unit typologies, the architectural form of the project attempts to create an artificial landscape. It is in the landscape, in fact, that marks the threshold between urban and rural.

Above: View of housing coming into the landscape
Above Right: View of nested structures and open housing forming a square.