

Community Upgrading: from Cultural Creative Design to Community Building

Taking Example for Ding'aozai "Cat Street", Xiamen City

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Abstract—Faced with a series of mapping effects brought about by urban development, the existing regular community construction mode can no longer meet the new development needs. Taking advantage of cultural creativity to drive community building will become the latest trend of community development. In this paper, we take the Ding'aozai "Cat Street" of Xiamen as an example in the types of "residential housing mixed with commercial housing". From the current general situation of the community, the realistic difficulties of community development are summed up. Based on the perspective of design, the ideas and countermeasures for the transformation of Ding'aozai "Cat Street" are put forward. Finally, the feasibility of creating "Cat Street" by cultural and creative industries is verified through the actual design plan.

Keywords—community renewal; cultural creative design; community building

I. INTRODUCTION

Community is the basic unit of social organism, which is the epitome of macro society. It needs to meet many kinds of needs [1], such as people's living, cooperation and communication. Community building is the operation and creation of the community, and human practices in the community, including not only the construction of infrastructure, public services, but also the accumulation and innovation of spiritual civilization, such as life customs, cultural heritage, etc. To improve the quality of community living environment, we should adhere to the concept of "people-oriented", "safe and intensive", "ecological environmental protection" and "inheritance and innovation", perfecting the optimization function, improving the cultural taste, and integrating the cultural elements[2] according to local conditions. With using the idea of cultural creativity, they excavate the original local resources, combining local geographical environment, historical evolution, folklore festivals and local culture. And the community construction is also drive by using the thinking of creative design, which has attracted the attention of all walks of life.

II. ANALYSIS OF GENERAL SITUATION OF DING'AOZAI "CAT STREET", XIAMEN

A. Historical Development and Spatial Pattern

Ding'aozai "Cat Street" of Xiamen is a "residential housing mixed with commercial housing" street close to the west gate of Xiamen University. It has a new significance for the street graffiti on the street. Ding'aozai "Cat Street" belongs to the residents' committee of Xiaowo Community, Xiangang Street, Siming District, Xiamen. It can be seen from the map (Fig. 1) that it is located in the old town of Xiamen port, east to Xiamen University, and west to Xiamen University of Technology. Yanwu Primary School in the east of Ding'aozai "Cat Street", and Wuchi Park and Shapowei is in the north. On this street which is only 180 meters long and 15 meters wide, there are densely distributed residential buildings, schools, hotels, post offices, banks, fruit stores, farmers' markets, hair salon, photo galleries and food stalls, with many people in a continuous stream every day. In this old street, business is mostly concentrated in the upper and lower ends of the community, and the residential areas are in the middle, which presents a layout of "dynamic and static dynamic".



Fig. 1. Ding'aozai Community's u-shaped semi ring belt.

^a. Picture source: Xiaowo Community Residents Committee

B. Development Status and Population Analysis

1) *Development status*: The emergence of "Cat Street" can be described as a spontaneous community building behavior. In 2014, when the first "Cat Museum" in Xiamen was settled in Ding'aozai, in addition to the development of cultural and creative derivative products of cat theme, its owner spontaneously invited the art students from Xiamen University in to create a cat - themed painting on the wall of the community, hoping to create a special community with the theme of cat. With the spirit of volunteering, they use their own painting tools and paints in their spare time to put on the art coat for the lonely old street lane, which has attracted the attention of the media. The name "Cat Street" has become popular, attracting more and more tourists. In view of the problems such as small public space, aging infrastructure and inadequate cultural construction, the government fully respects public opinion and wisdom, and puts the comprehensive transformation of Ding'aozai community as a key action item. And it also give full support in concept guidance, fund matching and action guidance, so as to actively build a beautiful, warm, safe, harmonious and cultural active brand Ding'aozai. With the guidance and support of the government, "Cat Street" is developing more rapidly. The lonely street in the past has become an "online celebrity" street in "Fig. 2".



Fig. 2. Status picture of Ding'aozai "Cat Street".

a. Picture source: this is a photo taken by the writer

2) *Population analysis*: Residents: there are residential buildings in every area of Ding'aozai community. Most of the residents are middle and old aged people who have a deep historical complex for Ding'aozai. When there are not many businesses, their lives are very comfortable, the neighbors often have a chat in the center of the street, but the scene of life is completely different now. Although convenient for shopping, the noisy, crowded and commercialized street occupies their original living space. The residents expect the construction of "Cat Street" can be more systematic in the environment and community management, as well as make the original community culture be returned and promoted. And then they can truly share the benefits of "Cat Street", and actively participate in the construction of community.

Merchants: most of the merchants are foreign tenants. The business types are mainly clothing, cafes, lattices, food, fruit

shops and local special snacks. Because the street is located between the two universities, the main source is the students, and the other tourists are not many, so the shops in Ding'aozai are basically open in the afternoon. Although the popularity of "Cat Street" has attracted a large number of tourists coming from other places, the consumption situation is not optimistic. According to the survey, the merchants hope that "Cat Street" can do more publicity to attract more tourists, and eventually they can benefit from "Cat Street".

Tourists: after the "Cat Street" has become popular, a lot of young tourists often take photos by the graffiti wall. The only "Cat Museum" in the community has some cultural and creative derivatives on the cat theme, but it lacks the features of "Cat Street". Tourists had great expectations to visit "Cat Street", but they did not expect to finish it in less than an hour. Commercial brands are neither differentiated nor creative, nor do they feel the local culture of Taiwanese culture. The tourists expect "Cat Street" to be more "content" enabling people to feel the unique local culture, and there can be more things to see, do and buy on the "Cat Street".

III. REALISTIC DIFFICULTIES OF DEVELOPMENT OF DING'AOZAI

It was found by field visit that "Cat Street" has gained popularity through graffiti, it still cannot solve the needs and expectations among the residents, businessmen and tourists. In the present development, it encounters the following realistic difficulties:

A. The Style of Community Buildings Is not Harmonious, and the Living Environment Is not Ideal

There are the renovation design of community wall painting and some environment, for example, a cat sign was designed at the entrance of the community, and several cat painted sculptures were placed before the stone wall of street corner. However, the Ding'aozai "Cat Street" is a cluttered old community, with the light box wires and signboards hang around the "Cat Street". Because of the lack of early planning, the styles and levels of graffiti were uneven, which brought the popularity of "Cat Street" in the early stage. But it cannot promote the development of community in the later stage, which needs to be recreated and designed according to the actual situation of the community. Random street stalls, unregulated garbage piling and other problems are all important factors affecting the whole community environment in "Fig. 3", "Fig. 4", "Fig. 5", and "Fig. 6".



Fig. 3. Status picture of Cat Street.



Fig. 4. Status picture of Cat Street.



Fig. 5. Status picture of Cat Street.



Fig. 6. Status picture of Cat Street.

a. Picture source: this is a photo taken by the writer.

B. Commercial Activities Are out of Order and the Interests of Residents Are Harmed

The business signs hanging at random, the street stalls occupying on the road and the uncontrolled garbage stacking have become important factors affecting the whole community environment and the living space of the residents. As a "residential housing mixed with commercial housing" community, Ding'aozai has no clear zoning design in community planning. The various types of shops are mixed with the residential areas. And some business activities have obviously affected the daily life of the residents. How to make residents and businesses co-exist and make profits together is the second real difficulty in the development of "Cat Street".

C. Low Public Participation and Low Self-consciousness

The crowd structure of "Cat Street" is complex and there is no unified and effective consensus. The community residents feel helpless for the mess of businesses, the businessmen feel desolate and lonely for bad business, and tourists are disappointed by the monotony of the community. Finally, Ding'aozai community has not gained more interest because of the popularity of "Cat Street". The main reason for these problems is that all parties think from their respective interests and the relations and interests are not coordinated between the community, the residents, the merchants and the tourists. As a result, "Cat Street" members' superficial sense of public awareness, low public participation and weak neighborhood relationships are the third realistic difficulty in the development of "Cat Street".

D. The Policy System Is not Perfect and the Property Right Situation Is Complex

Owing to the historical problems of "Cat Street", the property rights and lease relationship are very complex, and the large-scale renovation of original buildings cannot be carried out. Aimed at the special situation of "Cat Street", the community residents committee has carried out slogans propaganda to promote the construction of a harmonious and friendly community with little effect. It is the fourth realistic difficulty in the development of "Cat Street" that how to promote the transformation and upgrading of the community as driven by cultural and creative design under the premise of not interfering with the property rights of the houses and rebuilding the buildings in a small scale, and promoting the transformation and upgrading of the community.

IV. ANALYSIS OF BUILDING THOUGHT OF DING'AOZAI "CAT STREET" OF XIAMEN

Combined with the above objective situation and problems, several communications has been conducted with the community residents' committees. Finally, based on the perspective of design, it is necessary to consider the needs and expectations of different audiences in the community from various angles. In the way of cultural creativity, design thinking and cultural creativity should be integrated into the community renewal to rethink the sustainable development of "Cat Street". The concept of "organic renewal" should be adhered to in the "Cat Street" building. The core is the building concept of "people-oriented space reconstruction and community activation"[3], defining the main objectives and establishing an autonomous organization. Under the premise of not large-scale transformation of the main building of the community, endogenous development is carried out to improve the basic construction of the community. They should maintain community characteristics, excavate its spiritual and cultural connotation, and carry out the brand design of "Cat Street" to increase its cultural value and brand effect in "Fig. 7". The participating enthusiasm of the public shall be motivated, and the cultural and creative design driven shall be used to form a new business sharing mode of the community.

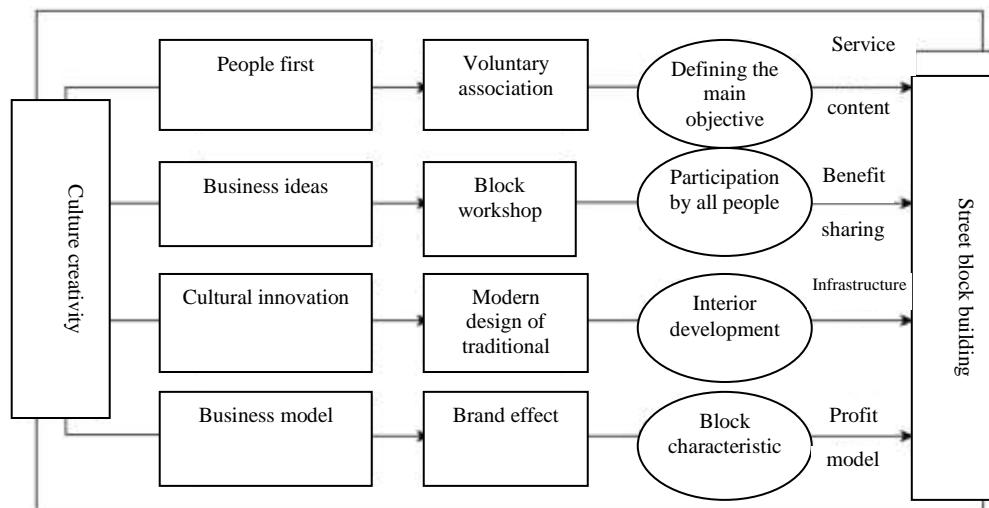


Fig. 7. Schematic Diagram of Cultural Creative Design Driving Community Building.

a. Picture source: it is drawn by the writer

A. Build a People-oriented Community Participation form and Enhance the Sense of Belonging of the Residents

According to the requirements and expectations of the residents' committee, merchants and residents, in this community building of "residential housing mixed with commercial housing", it is necessary to set up a community public governance organization with community membership as main. This is a non-governmental non-profit community member cooperative organization. The people of the community have the responsibility and obligation to participate in the construction of community. In this kind of small community, building community participation organization can enhance the trust and cooperation between people in the community and realize the common interests.

B. Using Cultural Creative Design to Activate Traditional Culture and Enhance Community Cultural Awareness

According to the field survey, 2/3 of the original residents of "Cat Street" know a lot about the traditional Taiwanese culture. Through cultural and creative design, it can activate and enhance the current communication of traditional culture. For example, the pavilion in the middle of community can be made into a "Sound of Taiwanese", which can not only enrich the cultural life of the old people in the community, but also let the tourists experience the local culture. Through the methods of flags being hung for outdoor publicity and creative design, it is also possible to combine the essence of traditional culture in South Fujian with the current socialist core values. The traditional Chinese culture can be disseminated in a simple and profound way, and it can also create a good effect on creating the community's atmosphere.

C. Driving Community Renewal with Cultural and Creative Design to Facilitate Community Benefit Sharing

In view of the commercial aging of "Cat Street" and its lack of characteristics, it should fully develop the intangible handicrafts of community residents, such as South Fujian's

"winding flowers" and "bamboo weaving". The neighborhood committees can set up the "Cat Street Creative Center" organization to invite designers to design product styles in the form of workshops, which can make people participate in the production of cat-themed handicraft products. And the products can be sold through the "Cat Street Creative Center" or community businesses. On the one hand, it allows residents to create value in their leisure time. On the other hand, it allows tourists to buy products with "Cat Street" characteristics, and increase the consumption experience for tourists. In addition, it can create a communication space for residents, tourists and merchants, which can enhance the interaction between the three parties and share the bonus of "Cat Street".

D. Using the Brand Design to Highlight the Community Characteristics and Maintain the Sustainable Development of the Community

Xiamen's "Cat Street" and Taiwan's "Monkey Cave" are named for many cats. There are the graffiti of cat's theme on the streets, making "Cat Street" famous. Through cultural and creative design, it can be created to a "residential housing mixed with commercial housing" community with sustainable development. And the brand design is an effective measure. The advantage of "Cat Street" lies in its geographical location, hot topics and quick fame. And its disadvantage lies in: there is no unified brand image, which cannot highlight the characteristics of the community; the community's visual space is messy, giving people dirty and bad experience; community building lacks overall planning and systematicness. The brand awareness of the community can be promoted through the building of visual image and community environment, the development of cultural and creative product and the design of "Cat Street APP".

V. BRAND BUILDING OF "CAT STREET" DRIVEN BY CULTURAL AND CREATIVE DESIGN

Through sorting out the existing problems and building ideas of "Cat Street", on the premise of not reforming the main

building of the community on a large scale, it is urgent to build a brand image of "Cat Street" with a distinction, and create a brand culture of "Cat Street" so as to form its popularity and reputation. According to the methods and steps in building, the countermeasures for the reconstruction of "Cat Street" include: connotation construction, excavating the spirit and cultural connotation of "Cat Street" to make it a cultural foundation to support its sustainable development; to make visual presentation, the design of "Cat Street" main signs and images, the establishment of color system and auxiliary graphics system, so that it has a unified visual image; application system includes creative design, visual design of community space and APP design of "Cat Street".

A. Connotation Construction

The connotation of "Cat Street" brand is to adhere to the "people oriented" life orientation and to excavate the local culture and spiritual connotation. At the same time, the concept of "Cat Street" is endowed with image. The planning and design of visual image of "Cat Street" is a visual level. The development of its visual image aims at giving the unified visual image of "Cat Street". On the one hand, it optimizes the visual experience of "Cat Street" in the crowded and old street space through a unified visual image. On the other hand, we should excavate the local cultural connotation of southern Fujian and combine the local culture with the brand concept of "Cat Street". So that it can become more local, and creating the characteristic cultural and creative tourism products of "Cat Street" in Ding'aozai can realize the hematopoietic function of "Cat Street".

B. Visual Presentation

1) *Visual construction of main symbol:* Logo is the core foundation of visual system, the concentrated embodiment of cultural system, and the identification symbol of "Cat Street". After a large number of investigations and visits in the early period, combined with the community characteristic of "residential housing mixed with commercial housing", they hope to create a visual image of the brand that combines traditional charm and fashion trend. The basic element of the logo is the "classis with ring-handle" in 'Fig. 8' on the traditional Chinese front door. In the design of this logo, the animal head appliqué is replaced with the cat's head, which is clever and interesting, not only embodying the characteristics of "Cat Street", but also having the implied meaning of protecting the community. The Ttaiwanese culture has the typical characteristics of marine culture. On this logo, the application of wave pattern not only has the attributes of the ocean, but also increases the decorative beauty of the logo in "Fig. 9".



Fig. 8. Classis with ring-handle.

a. Picture source: Network



Fig. 9. Main logo of "Cat Street".

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

2) *Visual construction of image system:* In the construction of image system of "Cat Street", we hope to create a personified cat image in the design, with the combination of flexible body and fashionable handwriting, easy and natural. At the same time, we change different props to form changeable dynamics and scenes, and create the unique style and image characteristics of cats in "Fig. 10", which is easy to arouse tourists' sympathy and have a happy interaction with cats. Especially during the traditional Chinese festivals, the cat image is combined with the traditional culture and customs of Southern Fujian. And designing different festival situations is of positive significance for creating a cultural life in the community and enriching the connotation of the community brand.



Fig. 10. Extension of "Cat Street" Image.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

3) *Visual construction of color system:* Color system is mainly divided into standard color system and auxiliary color system. Standard color is specially designed and selected. The special color [3] that can represent the image reflects the brand's unique spiritual concept and style through the visual transmission of color. The standard color of "Cat Street"

brand is extracted from the blue of the ocean culture and yellow representing the community's harmonious culture, which is used individually or in combination according to the use and design. The auxiliary color appears as an auxiliary form, which is a supplementary color for regulating the standard color, and is used to enhance the color gradation and achieve rich color effect. For example, in the design of publicity materials, the red and yellow are the main colors during the Spring Festival, which represent lively and joyful. The Dragon Boat Festival is mainly green, yellow and gold, while the Mid Autumn Festival is mainly yellow, blue and gold in "Fig. 11".



Fig. 11. Color extraction of Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn festival.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

4) *Visual construction of auxiliary system:* As an auxiliary visual element, the auxiliary graphic system is the expansion and extension of the visual elements of "Cat Street" brand, which is not only different from the main symbol, but also related to its internal. Therefore, the auxiliary graphic system is mainly based on the main logo, extracted and transformed from the connotation of Southern Fujian's marine culture. The elements of "wave" and "fish scale" are extracted and transformed into auxiliary patterns by geometric isomorphism, which make the traditional elements more modern and decorative in "Fig. 12".



Fig. 12. Auxiliary graphic design.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer



Fig. 13. Design of cultural and creative products of "Cat Street".

C. Application System

1) *Development and design of cultural and creative product:* The development and design of cultural and creative products are mainly used to solve the problem of lack of personalized goods in the community. On the one hand, it allows tourists to buy products that have the characteristics of "Cat Street", adding more consumption experience to tourists and benefited from creating value for "Cat Street". On the other hand, the output of "Cat Street" products can also greatly enhance its brand awareness and popularity. For example, for the design of mobile phone shell combined with the main symbol of "Cat Street", its logo is a relief three-dimensional modeling; and its ring can be movable with the function of use and enjoyment, which is also beneficial to the propaganda of "Cat Street". The design of "Cat Street" red bag emphasizes the combination of auspicious meaning and enjoyment. The design of badges and greeting cards are focused on the extraction of architectural culture in Southern Fujian. Especially, the refinement of window lattice elements in architecture is combined with South Fujian dialect to create the regional culture and characteristics. The design of the notebook is focused on the use function and design of regional culture, the back cover has a collection folder, easy to collect fragmentary pieces of paper and business cards. The interior pages are divided by wave lines to reflect the ocean culture. For mobile advertising - handbags and T - shirts are designed to use "Cat Street" cat's image, so that "Cat Street" brand is spread faster and more directly in "Fig. 13", "Fig. 14", "Fig. 15".



Fig. 14. Design of cultural and creative products of "Cat Street".



Fig. 15. Design of cultural and creative products of "Cat Street".

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

2) Visual design of community space



Fig. 16. Festival outdoor visual design.



Fig. 17. Festival outdoor visual design.

In view of the present situation that the community space old with the disorderly vision, the community space vision is optimized and a good community environment is created under the premise of a small transformation of the building. The main measures are: to create a unique "Cat Street" brand culture through space visual building, community guidance design and the design of "Cat Street Creative Center", and promote the sustainable development of "Cat Street". We choose the low-cost red retractable lanterns as a medium, and apply the "Cat Street" logo to activate the vitality of the community through a bright red. It can create a festive and lively community image, and continuously insert the brand image of "Cat Street". During the traditional Chinese festivals, different cats are designed according to the theme of the festival with different scenes to carry out a cultural marketing. For example, in the Spring Festival, we should convey the joyful and auspicious connotation in the design style; in the Mid-Autumn Festival, the unique folk activities of Southern Fujian were selected to increase its regional characteristics; in the Dragon Boat Festival, a festival atmosphere is created through the dragon boat race and eating the sweet brown in "Fig. 16" and "Fig. 17".

In view of the disorderly nature of real buildings on the "Cat Street" the community guidance design does not want to be guided by a vertical guide plate instead of a ground guide mark. A copper cat-claw pattern is embedded on the ground of the community. On the one hand, it meets the theme of "Cat Street", which is lively and interesting; on the other hand, it does not increase the visual pressure of community space in "Fig. 18", "Fig. 19" and "Fig. 20".

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer.

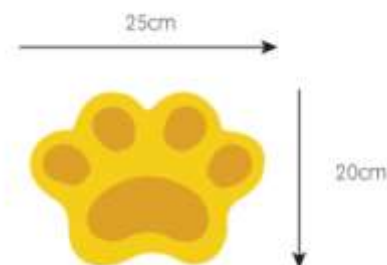


Fig. 18. Festival outdoor visual design.



Fig. 19. Festival outdoor visual design.



Fig. 20. Festival outdoor visual design.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

"Cat Street Creative Center" setting is a major renovation project in this community renewal. The community creative center which is initiated by the residents' committee is a place for displaying community culture, the space of old objects and selling goods of "Cat Street Creative Center". And its aims are promoting the communication of community residents, merchant, tourists exchange and culture publicity of "Cat Street" brand in "Fig. 21".



Fig. 21. Store design.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

3) "Cat Street" APP design: The ultimate goal of "Cat Street" networking is to let the community "live" and become a place where everyone can share information. Users can learn about community history and culture, status, business activities, and recommend tour routes through this APP. It can also realize online shopping through the APP, providing convenient service for online sale of cat street cultural products. In addition, another main function of the APP is that it can facilitate the unified management of the community, timely exchange feedback information, and achieve online communication in "Fig. 22", "Fig. 23" and "Fig. 14".



Fig. 22. "Cat Street" APP icon.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

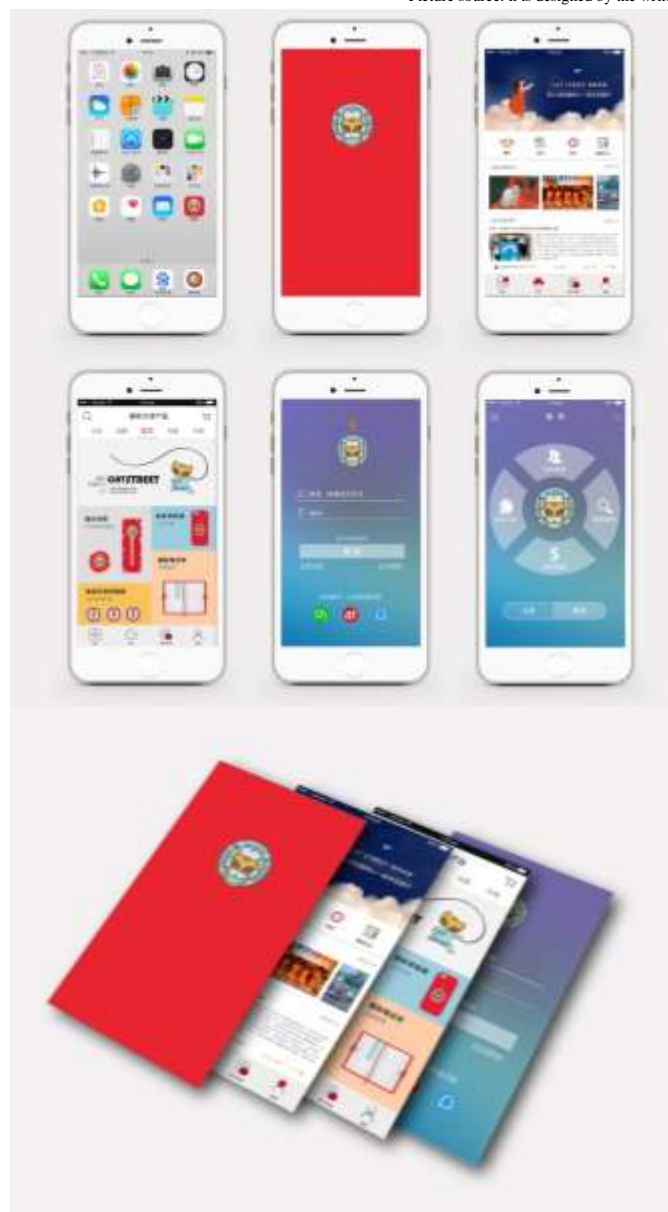


Fig. 23. "Cat Street" APP interfacial design.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer



Fig. 24. "Cat Street" APP operation flow chart.

a. Picture source: it is designed by the writer

VI. CONCLUSION

The community renewal and construction advocate "people first". The general method is to a large-scale and capitalized space reconstruction to release the productivity of the community land in order to improve the quality of old community and rebuild the space skeleton of the community. And the living environment of the residents can be improved. But large-scale transformation of space will damage the human-scale community structure and the richness of daily life, and deprive people of the sense of space and the opportunity for people to communicate freely in space. The residents are no longer the creators of their own lives. In most cases, they are spectators of the landscape society and consumers of the business world. How to realize the reservation of production space and living space? The solution to cultural and creative design is an effective way. From this perspective, the construction of "Cat Street" has special value. "Cat Street" brings culture to the community, brings interaction back to the community, and brings production to life. This series of return has improved the relationship and interests of residents, merchants and tourists. This is the case of community building of Ding'aozai "Cat Street" in Xiamen.

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