

COMMUNITY ECLIPSE AND SHANGHAI'S LILONG

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid growth in the Shanghai (PRC) economy in recent years, many traditional residences, known as lilong, have been torn down in favor of modern buildings. The structure, long-term residency patterns, and alley-based culture of lilong led to the creation of a strong sense of community for residents. Many former lilong residents have relocated to newly built high-rise structures, as neighborhoods are destroyed. This paper assesses sense of community attached to two types of neighborhoods commonly inhabited by residents in Shanghai, using a combination of open-ended interviews and a metric of sense of community quantitatively derived from surveys. While results indicate this displacement does generate a sense of community loss this loss is largely mitigated because new residences offer superior facilities and greater quality of life.