

## Viewing From Above: What Figure Grounds Reveal About New Master Planned Cities

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This work uses figure ground drawings as analytical tools for understanding the spatial organization and footprint density of new master planned cities. There is literature that applies and contextualizes figure ground drawings as tools for the study of urban form, however their utilization is mostly limited to twentieth century modernist urban projects or older emergent cities. This thesis explores how figure grounds can function as an useful heuristic and analytical tool for investigating the built form of contemporary new master planned cities. Developers of master planned cities often claim sustainability and pedestrian planning as guiding values when formulating project plans. This thesis challenges these claims by showing that the design of these projects is often incompatible with the sustainability rhetoric used for marketing them. This thesis is largely comparative, and will focus on the relationships between different master planned cities, and the relationship between master planned cities and older emergent cities.



*Image: A portion of a figure ground of Astana, Kazakhstan made for this study.*