

# CITY LIMITS

## CATEGORY

Design

## NEWS SUMMARY

Chinese models for urbanization take the world stage as residents, officials, and skaters keep optimism

## CONTENT

The world is watching as Chinese governments test large scale urban planning projects in an effort to ease complications associated with the countries massive urbanization. While a state urban policy plan is still in the works, developers, industry bosses, and local officials are taking the initiative and building their own dream cities. This Financial Times analysis looks at two contrasting models of urban planning being implemented in Changxing and Ordos.

Changxing, a city that began as a successful agricultural region two hours from Shanghai, has experienced positive, natural urban growth. FT attributes Changxing's steady growth to the city's liberal attitude towards the hukou registration system and to its proximity to the country's financial nexus.

In contrast, [Ordos](#) has become an analogy for China's over-zealous urban build-up. The Inner Mongolian desert city sprung up to accommodate over 300,000 people after the discovery of coal in the region but barely 70,000 now call Ordos home. In response, the government began moving hospitals and schools into the city, encouraging relocation. While Ordos has been dubbed a "ghost town" by most media outlets, numbers and facts differ from article to article. According to [recent coverage](#) of Ordos by independent documentary filmmakers, Ordos has growing numbers of residents who are happy to have fallen into lucky wealth, and the city looks optimistic.

As the completed Ordos infrastructure remains mostly vacant, one group of urbanites has taken advantage of the opportunity to make the space into their own playground: skaters. The video below is one of several Ordos skate videos to appear online in the past few years as skaters bring their decks to Inner Mongolia to explore fresh turf. Their videos provide a sharp contrast between the intention and result of this particular urbanization project.

## FURTHER READING

[Time Photos – Ordos, China: A Modern Ghost Town](#)

[New York Times – China's Great Uprooting: Moving 250 Million Into Cities](#)