



The development would offer a mix of apartments, shops and offices, all designed to accommodate multi-generational living | Photo source [Guallart Architects](#)

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A CONCEPT CITY DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND PANDEMICS



ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

A Spanish architecture firm has proposed a self-sufficient city designed to help people get through extended lockdowns

Spotted: Barcelona-based Guallart Architects has designed a concept city that could help people to weather the next viral outbreak. Their Self-Sufficient City design recently won a competition run by the local government of Xiong'an New Area, in Hebei province, China, to design new urban concept. The winning entry would be able to produce its own energy and food.

The Guallart team that developed the design were all working from home during Spain's coronavirus lockdown, and they included aspects they thought would make our lives better in the situation. This includes greenhouses on many of the buildings for growing food and small-scale "co-working digital factories" that would use 3D-printing and rapid prototyping to supply replacements for missing or broken items in the event of supply chain disruption.

The development would offer a mix of apartments, shops and offices, all designed to accommodate multi-generational living. Every household would have access to their own outdoor space and would come with space for remote working and 5G connectivity. Solar panels on sloping roofs would provide electricity and streets would be prioritised for pedestrians, cyclists and electric taxis, while drones would be used for deliveries.

The Self-Sufficient City was also designed to allow rainwater runoff from streets to be collected for reuse, and with green areas that have sufficient soil depth for planting vegetables – as well as everything a community needs to develop a thriving circular economy. [According to Guallart Architects](#), their proposal, "stems from the need to provide solutions to the various crises that are taking place in our planet at the same time, in order to create a new urban life, based on the circular bio-economy, that will empower cities and communities."

If the world is going to mitigate the effect of global warming, we are all going to have to live more sustainably. Which is why we at Springwise have seen an explosion in the use of design and architecture to deliver more sustainable cities and buildings. Some of the innovations we have seen recently include office space converted to an AI-managed vertical [indoor farm](#) and a design for a self-sufficient [floating house](#).

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Takeaway:

This type of sustainable design could not only help communities to get through pandemics, but to manage all types of natural disasters, including weather events caused by global warming. One important aspect of the design was the realisation of the importance of creating a nature-friendly environment, with birdboxes, shelves for swallows, green roofs and orchards planted with butterfly-friendly flowers on every building. The other important element is the project's size – at just four blocks square, the development allows people to both share and communicate more easily, creating not only a sustainable space but a sustainable lifestyle.