

Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Case studies and Expert papers

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



URBAN MAESTRO is an initiative of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), University College London (UCL), and the Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA).

Based on work undertaken by:

UN-Habitat: Frederic Saliez, Cecilia Bertozzi, Emilia Syvajarvi

BMA: Kristiaan Borret, Frederik Serroen, Simona Paplauskaitė, Colm Mac Aoidh

UCL: Matthew Carmona, Joao Bento, Tommaso Gabrieli, Terpsithea Laopoulou

More information about the project and can be found on the project website:

www.urbanmaestro.org



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

BELGIUM

- Community Land Trust Brussels / *Verena Lenna*
- Vlaams Bouwmeester / *Joao Bento*

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Subsidy programme for design competitions in the Czech Republic / *Josef Morkus*

DENMARK

- Applying land value capture tools: Lessons from Copenhagen and Freiburg / *Nicholas Falk*
- Innovative Financing models for Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Real Estate Development / *Graham Squires*

FINLAND

- Architecture Driven Learning in Basic Education in Finland / *Jaana Räsänen*

FRANCE

- Grenoble Public Space Programme / *Tommaso Gabrieli*
- Les Grands Voisins / *Aurore, Plateau Urbain, Yes We Camp*
- Samoa Ile de Nantes / *Hélène Morteau*

GERMANY

- Biennial Baukultur Reports / *Reiner Nagel, Michael Lesch, Frauke Schacht*
- Concept Tendering Procedures / *Robert Temel*
- International Building Exhibition (IBA) / *Lena Hatzelhoff, Jan Schultheiss*

ITALY

- Co-City Torino / *Giovanni Ferrero and Alice Zanasi*
- Milan REFLOW / *Lucia Scopelliti*
- Promoting urban co-governance / *Alessandro Antonelli, Elena De Nictolis, Christian Iaione*

NETHERLANDS

- Citymaker-Fund / *Hans Karssen, Theo Stauttner, Jan-Jaap Gerritsma*
- Marineterrein: slowly-growing living lab / *Marieke Berkens*
- Panorama Lokaal / *Joao Bento*
- Q-teams / *Sandra van Assen and José van Campen*

NORWAY

- Oslo waterfront regeneration / *Heidi Bergsli*

POLAND

- Warsaw city architect / *Monika Komorowska, Wojciech Kacperski*

PORTUGAL

- BIP/ZIP Programme / *José Luís Crespo, Lucinda Caetano*



SPAIN

- La Marina de València / *Amparo Tarazona Vento*

SWITZERLAND

- Baukollegium Zurich / *Joao Bento*

UNITED KINGDOM

- Marketizing Design Review / *Matthew Carmona*
- Place Alliance / *Matthew Carmona*
- Place Standard / *Joao Bento*

EUROPE

- EU Mies Award / *Anna Ramos and Ivan Blasi*
- European Prize for Urban Public Space / *David Bravo*

WORLD

- Analysis of the Global Future Cities Components as Governance Tools for Urban Projects / *Pinar Caglin, Ban Edilbi, Jean-Paul Hitipeuw, Yelda Reis*
- Citywide public space inventory and assessment tool / *Joy Mutai*
- Kigali Yacu, Our Kigali / *Liliane Uwanziga Mupende*
- Participatory design for child-friendly space improvement in Dhaka, Bangladesh / *Sohel Rana*
- The use of soft-power tools in urban governance towards higher quality environments in South Africa / *Karina Landman*

Masterclass results:

- Petite Île / CityGate II
- IBA Thüringen
- Co-City Torino
- Room for the River

INTRODUCTION

As part of the documentation effort, Urban Maestro has selected a series of experts who have had first-hand engagement with one or several innovative practices for the governance of urban design, either as practitioners, politicians, academic evaluators or as reviewers.

The authored 'expert papers' that are presented in the following pages were drafted between 2020 and 2021. They do not necessarily represent the views of the research team or any of the institutions that have contributed to Urban Maestro but reflect a diversity of viewpoints on the complex reality of soft-power interventions in the governance of urban design. They greatly contributed to build a common understanding of innovative practices supporting the quality of urban environment in European cities.



● Full case study

Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Community Land Trust Brussels

providing affordable qualitative
housing (BE)

Verena Lenna

Researcher at Community
Land Trust Brussels (CLTB)

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS	3
2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE	5
2.1. Holding land in trust for the common good.....	5
2.2. Governance of the CLTB.....	6
2.3. Funding and allied financial mechanisms.....	7
2.4. Building homes, building communities: the role of the design process	8
2.5. Responsibilisation.....	10
3. KEY INNOVATIONS.....	12
4. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION	15
5. CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND MAIN ISSUES	17
6. IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS	18
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	20

INTRODUCTION

A Community Land Trust is an organisation whose mission is to acquire real estate assets and to protect and develop them on behalf of local communities and for the common good. While the majority of CLTs are mostly concerned with the production of affordable housing, productive activities can also be organised as part of CLT projects as a system allowing for the reduction of the costs of said real estate assets.

The Community Land Trust of Brussels was the first to be established in continental Europe. One of its peculiarities, when compared to other forms of CLT worldwide, is the importance of the participatory approach and associated design process that is at the core of the realisation and sustainability of the projects. Such an approach is crucial to the success of the model on numerous levels: from strengthening the sense of community of the involved inhabitants and local organisations, to making them responsible for the proper maintenance of the buildings and their living environment. While homeownership per se increases the chances of emancipation of the concerned individuals and households, the participatory and generative approach that lies at the core of the CLTB's modus operandi enhances the capabilities of the involved inhabitants and communities while fueling inclusive dynamics and social cohesion. As a result, the social justice and overall quality of life of the neighbourhoods and of the cities where the projects are realised are substantially increased.

1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

Despite being the region with highest GDP, Brussels¹ is the Belgian region with the highest concentration of poverty with 1/3rd of the population earning less than 60% of the average national salary.² Wealth polarisation is increasing and has been made even more visible by spatial segregation. In a city where renting an apartment means investing 40 to 60 % of one's salary, low income households are almost obliged to move to wherever living and housing costs are lowest, especially in the *croissant pauvre*, an area situated between the canal and the north-north west of the agglomeration and which mostly concerns the municipalities of Molenbeek, Anderlecht and Schaerbeek. Very often this means adapting to a housing supply that is inadequate in numerous respects: houses are often unsafe and very small,

¹ What is known as Brussels is in fact an agglomeration of 19 municipalities forming the Brussels Capital Region. The BCR is surrounded by the Region of Flanders.

² Source: [Risque de pauvreté ou d'exclusion sociale | Statbel \(fgov.be\)](https://www.statbel.fgov.be/fr/themes/indicateurs/risque-pauvrete-exclusion-sociale)

especially for the numerous families that tend to concentrate in these areas. On the other hand, social housing is far from being a solution: only 8% of the housing supply is social housing and 44.000 households are on the waiting list, with half of the population fulfilling the income requirements to have access to social housing. For many households—numerous families, precarious and fragile individuals, immigrants—to buy a house would be cheaper than the overall cost of renting a house throughout their lives. Additionally, becoming homeowners would reduce their precariousness both on a material and a psychological level and would thereby increase the chances of their emancipation, not to mention the social cohesion this would produce in those neighbourhoods where the inhabitants would have the chance to finally settle, thus creating those links and interconnections so crucial for social inclusion.³

The cherry on top is that the administrative borders of the Region of Brussels do not allow this agglomeration to expand: in other words, land in Brussels is extremely scarce and extremely precious. This does not impede the realisation of speculative projects, or the abandonment and neglect of many housing units that remain empty, until the owners are finally forced to sell them in order to avoid further loss of value and the progressive decay of the quality of life of the neighbourhoods where they are situated. Under these conditions, the right to housing stated in the twenty-third article of the Belgian constitution is far from being fulfilled.

In an attempt to provide an answer to the long lasting housing question, throughout the last four decades a number of local and community-based organisations and other actors, beyond merely protest and activist groups, combined their solutions, innovations and expertise, until they finally had the chance to discover the Community Land Trust model, and to learn more directly about it by visiting the CLT of Burlington, Vermont, in the United States. Upon their return in Europe, a platform of local organisations supporting the creation of a CLT in Brussels was established and a feasibility study was financed by the Brussels Region to verify the existence of the conditions required for the sustainability of the model. By the end of 2012, the Community Land Trust of Brussels was created and by 2013, the Region officially recognised the organisation with two prototype projects undergoing realisation.

³ Granovetter, M. (1973). The Strength Of Weak Ties. American Journal of Sociology 78, 1360-80.

2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

2.1. Holding land in trust for the common good

The CLTB has a dual juridical structure that is comprised of a non-profit association and a Foundation of Public Utility. Its purpose is to acquire real estate assets and protect them for the common good. The FPU acquires and manages land and buildings, while the association develops them and guides the prospective inhabitants and other users throughout the entire process leading to the realisation of their projects: from the first informative sessions to the support provided to the community projects initiated by the inhabitants. Furthermore, stewardship is a pillar at the core of the CLTB *modus operandi*, as the inheritance of the spirit that compelled the first intentional communities to experiment with alternative ways of managing land and property and communitarian forms of living, during the times of Henry George and Ebenezer Howard.

The CLT model allows the realisation of a large variety of projects, from housing to productive activities, while potentially addressing a diverse public, not necessarily only those with a low income, although originally CLTs were created with the purpose of supporting underprivileged and excluded communities.⁴ In the specific case of the CLTB, the organisation explicitly decided to realise mainly housing projects for low income households, although more recently new collaborations are allowing them to further experiment with the capacities of the model in relation to other activities. Given that the Region mostly funds the organisation and the projects, the choice of dedicating most of the effort to the realisation of affordable housing allows the resources received from the public authority, together with those of donors and other sources, to be given back to the community. To operate for the common good however is not only about such a redistributive mechanism. The peculiar characteristic of CLTs and what allows them to maintain the affordability of their housing units in perpetuity, protecting them from speculation, is the separation of the ownership of the land from the ownership of the housing units or of any other built asset on that land. As such, the Trust is the owner of the land, while the inhabitants and other users are the owners of the built assets. The land cannot be sold, which means the homes will be cheaper because the cost of the land is not included—in fact, households and other owners can only sell the walls of their homes and buildings, so to speak, adjusted only in order to take into account the physiological

⁴ Davis, J.E. ed., 2010, *The Community Land Trust Reader*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

increase of living costs. More precisely, the resale price (RP) of a new housing unit is defined using the following formula:

$$RP = IC + (Inv-Am) + 25\% PV + FCLTB$$

To the initial cost (IC) paid by a household to buy a housing unit, the net value of investment (as the difference between the initial investment and subsequent amortisation, Inv-Am), 25% of the plus value (as the difference between the market value of the housing unit at the moment of the first purchase and at the moment of the resale, including land cost) and the operating expenses of the CLTB Foundation (calculated as 6% of the PV) have to be added. The operating expenses have to be paid by the household to the FUP. In other words, the first owner gains around the 25% of the plus value, while for the new household the price will be around the initial cost of the housing unit increased by 31% of the PV (25% +6%). The remaining 69% is retained by the FUP being related to the increase of land value, as the cost of land being excluded from the sale and resale acts. On the other hand, inhabitants acquire a 50 years of surface rights (droit de superficie) by paying 10 Euros per month to the FUP, which is the owner of the land, given that it holds the land in trust, on behalf on the community.

By excluding the cost of land from any transactions, (a) speculative dynamics are thus avoided, (b) homes are cheaper than on the private market, and (c) their affordability can be preserved in perpetuity. For each CLTB project, the land is held in trust by the FUP, with the common areas and infrastructure (such as stairs, corridors, meeting rooms, gardens, etc.) co-owned by the households while the housing units are privately owned. As such this is clearly a quite mixed ownership condition, compared for example to cooperatives, where in general the households and individuals involved are shareholders of a collectively owned, all-inclusive property.

2.2. Governance of the CLTB

The non-profit association “Community Land Trust – Brussels” is in charge of the daily management of the real estate assets owned by the Foundation. It also hires staff responsible for the installation and follow-up of the housing projects as well as for supporting the household buyers and the movement’s activities.

The General Assembly takes the most important decisions and elects the non-profit association’s directors. It has a tripartite structure that assures an equal distribution

of decision-making power. For example, the one-third of “Residents” is elected by the occupants of an accommodation or premises on a CLTB plot of land, with each category having a seat dedicated to the candidates awaiting housing, which is appointed by them. The “Civil Society” third is elected by the active members who do not benefit from CLTB housing or premises. Lastly, the government of the Brussels-Capital Region designates the remaining one third of “Public Authorities”. The CLTB is committed to ensuring that the interests of all of its development actors are represented within its Board of Directors as well—therefore, the board is also comprised of residents, locals and members of civil society alongside the representatives of public authorities. Furthermore, it is one of the General Assembly’s tasks to suggest those candidates that will represent the community in the future, alongside existing inhabitants and the civil society, in the board of the Foundation of Public Utility, while the Region elects its own representatives to the board.

2.3. Funding and allied financial mechanisms

The Region mostly funds the Community Land Trust of Brussels, but additional funding is collected every year thanks to donations and partnerships built into the framework of larger projects and collaborations at the national, European and international levels. In addition, for every project, initiative, or community project initiated by the inhabitants, and for any specific task set out to be accomplished by the organisation, the CLTB seeks out the appropriate calls and available opportunities from the range of regional initiatives and policy frameworks. Amongst others, *Contrats de Quartier*⁵ (Neighbourhood contracts), for example, often foster the ideal conditions to acquire land at a low cost or to realise facilities, such a community garden or a kindergarten. Established in 1993, *Contrats de Quartier* are urban renewal and regeneration interventions that address the issues of specific areas of the city. Defined as agreements amongst the Region, the municipality and the local community, they are realised within a limited amount of time and a given budget. Among the priorities, these actions aim at increasing the social cohesion and improving the quality of life of a neighbourhood by making possible the realisation of new social housing, renovations and the creation of local facilities. Given that they typically concern the oldest areas of the city where the urban fabric tends to be crowded and housing conditions are often unhealthy, *Contrats de Quartier* are also meant to attract developers and further investment into these areas. For this reason, land and buildings can be acquired at a very low cost or through

⁵ [Contrats de quartiers durables](#)

emphyteutic leases⁶ and the housing units thus realised will have to address mostly low-income households.

Finally yet importantly, the inhabitants contribute to the realisation of these projects by purchasing their housing units. In most cases, a loan is necessary in order to provide the required amount of money. While households are free to choose any credit or financing institution, low-cost loans are made available by the *Fonds du Logement*,⁷ a public utility cooperative operating in the framework of the Regional policies and with the support of the Region in order to support the housing related expenses of low and middle-income households. With an interest rate of around 3%, the FdL⁸ is an invaluable partner in the realisation of CLTB projects by making loans accessible to low income households, which would otherwise be mostly impossible with other credit institutions or banks.

2.4. Building homes, building communities: the role of the design process

The households that are interested in becoming owners of their homes through a CLT project are asked to become members of the CLTB. Defined in the Code du Logement as an actor at present, the CLTB prioritizes low-income households; however, this does not impede any other individual from becoming a member of the CLTB and of its large community. The threshold for having access to homeownership is the same established by the Region for having access to social housing, which means that potentially half of the population of the Brussels Capital Region could have access to CLTB's housing units. Within that threshold, four different categories of income have been defined by the CLTB and approved by the Region, as the prices of the housing units will reflect the diversity of incomes of the households—the lower the income, the lower the price. Each project is in fact a unique combination in terms of household compositions and income groups, with as much equally distributed as possible among the four aforementioned categories. While it is not possible to provide the details of the calculation in this paper, it could be said that for each project, the CLTB establishes a programme that determines the revenue category for each apartment. The sum of the prices of all housing units should make the project financially viable, by matching the capacity of inhabitants to pay the cost of their housing units and the hypothetical conditions defined by the Fonds du Logement.

⁶ Generally speaking, in an emphyteutic lease, the owner leases land or property to the lessee for a period of up to 99 years. Unlike a conventional lease, the lessee agrees, over the period of the lease, to add construction or improvements to the property so as to increase the value at the end of the lease *

period. The lessee often benefits from such an arrangement by getting a reduced rent — the big drawback, however, is the property and all of its improvements revert to the lessor at the end of the emphyteutic lease period.

⁷ [Fonds du Logement | Prêt hypothécaire bruxelles](#)

⁸ [Fonds du Logement | Prêt hypothécaire bruxelles](#)

Number of bedrooms	Household categories			
	A	B	C	D
Studio	133.342 €	115.836 €	98.329 €	80.823 €
1	150.346 €	132.124 €	113.901 €	95.679 €
2	193.207 €	169.865 €	146.522 €	123.180 €
3	238.426 €	210.322 €	182.217 €	154.113 €
4	270.519 €	239.240 €	207.960 €	176.681€
5	334.704 €	297.075 €	259.447 €	221-818 €

A table with the maximum prices of housing units per category (data 2020).

By becoming members of the CLTB, the future households are enrolled in a waiting list. As soon as the availability of some land or of an empty building allows to realize a new project, a participatory design process starts, with the purpose of defining the architectural programme of the building. For the interested inhabitants, a series of meetings and *ateliers* or Archi Labs are dedicated to defining the architectural programme of the project while introducing topics such as the energetic sustainability of the housing units and the proper maintenance of the living environment. Guided by the CLTB's architects, the inhabitants learn how to read an architectural plan and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of exemplary projects, in terms of spatial organisation, architectural and technical solutions, while preparing to design their future homes and to identify the spatial requirements of both their apartments and the common spaces. By learning about the spatial qualities of the building that will be renovated or of the site where a new building will be realized, they come to terms with concrete aspects such as the number of squares meters actually available, special adaptation for disabled individuals, the accessibility of an interior courtyard, the dimensions of corridors or the presence of shared terraces. Additionally, given the importance the relationship with the neighbourhood has for the success of the model, the inhabitants are also guided to discover their future neighbourhood and to imagine how the project could contribute to its liveliness. All these elements are jointly discussed and negotiated, in order to fulfill everybody's needs and rights. In this way, individual projects and expectations are redefined within a larger collective endeavor. If community land trust projects are bundles of rights by definition –given their tripartite governance structure- they are also bundles of uses. Or, in other words, the bundle of rights implied in the governance of the CLT can only be fulfilled by a well-balanced bundle of uses. This requires proper spatial choices, in terms of squares meters, but also the morphology of apartments and of the common spaces.



The inhabitants and a CLTB's architect during an Archi Lab meeting. Ph: CLTB

The outcome of such an orchestration of needs and spatial possibilities is a *Cahier des charges*, a booklet describing the architectural programme and the needs expressed by the potential future inhabitants and neighbours. Because the projects are publicly funded, a public call for projects has to be launched. The proposals have to take into account the recommendations of the *cahie des charges* and need to be revised and evaluated by a special committee, including candidate owners, residents of other CLTB's projects, neighbours, and local community-based organisations. Criteria and tools of evaluation are each time validated by the committee. The selected project must fulfill the budget requirements and the architectural specifications of the *cahier des charges*.

As soon as the project and architectural studio are identified, the *Comité d'Attribution* selects the households that will inhabit the project, by matching their position in the waiting list and their needs –for example in terms of the number of bedrooms- with the architectural programme and the income diversity characterising each project. Each household is free to accept or refuse the housing unit proposed by the *Comité d'Attribution*, without losing its priority on the waiting list.

Subsequently, a dedicated workshop allows the selected inhabitants to directly interact with the architects in order to further adjust the project to their needs. Sitting around a colourful table, while drinking coffee, inhabitants share their specific dreams and expectations about their future homes and about the spaces of their cohabitation. The community of inhabitants and users of every single project literally starts to take shape during those meetings.

It is only at the end of these iterations that the project can be officially submitted to obtain the building permits. In parallel with the unfolding of the construction works, households are asked to participate in other project-specific meetings, dedicated to envisioning, organizing, and structuring their common life project and the proper maintenance of their apartments and living environment.

2.5. Responsibilisation

The participatory process of design allows not only to realise everybody's desires but also to become aware of and share responsibilities so that the apartments and common and semi-public spaces could be properly maintained. For many inhabitants, their CLTB home is the first they own after having moved many times, searching for more healthy and adequate housing conditions. To become homeowners is the occasion to settle, to live in the same house and in the same neighbourhood probably for a long time, fueling the sense of belonging of concerned

individuals and families no less than the social cohesion of an entire city. Therefore, for many, this will also be the occasion to learn about the proper use and maintenance of the heating system in a passive energy building or, for example, to organise for better managing the garbage. The participatory process organised during the construction works and dedicated to the selected group of inhabitants allows them to agree on the use of common spaces, their accessibility, and mode of maintenance. For that purpose households are suggested to create a common pot that will allow paying for the maintenance costs of the common spaces and infrastructures.



The courtyard of Le Nid project. Rendering: LOW A

In the perspective of organising the cohabitation and distributing responsibilities, space matters. In addition to common infrastructures, CLTB projects are usually characterised by the presence of shared, semi-public spaces, such as interior courtyards and multifunctional spaces, conceived for the inhabitants but also the neighbourhoods and the local organisations. These polyvalent spaces are key for the liveliness of the projects, for giving the possibility to the newcomers to meet their neighbours and create new relationships, thus fueling a sense of community and the emergence of spontaneous forms of collaboration and reciprocities. This reinforces the community and improves the urban commonwealth that require clear agreements and appropriate spatial conditions. Amongst others, the design and the morphological choices concerning the built structures, the open spaces and the surrounding neighbourhood are crucial for the distribution of tasks and the orchestrations of all different activities in different moments of the day and the week.

It is, in fact, during the Archi Lab meetings that the inhabitants discuss the accessibility to their courtyard and its management. To establish a community garden means to allow neighbours to access it at different occasions and timing. Similarly, a co-working space would result in an interweaving of semi-private and public dimension. This programme should match safety requirements and the actual capacities and willingness of inhabitants to assume the tasks required for maintaining the good quality of their living environments. A successful project is not only a project that fulfills the desires and needs of its occupants but is also a project that contributes to the good life of its neighbourhood. This is only possible and sustainable in the long term when its inhabitants and users are capable of taking care of it under the appropriate spatial conditions.

3. KEY INNOVATIONS

In the landscape of European policy and practices regarding the creation of affordable and social housing, the CLT model, and in particular the Belgian variation in Brussels, is innovative on numerous levels as explained in the following paragraphs.

Affordability in perpetuity. The land tenure system implemented by the model allows the affordability of the built assets to be maintained in the end. As explained in paragraph 2, this is due to the combination of two elements: the separation of the ownership of land from the ownership of the built assets and the tripartite form of governance that impedes any exclusive decision concerning the real estate assets and the functioning of the CLT.

Home ownership for low-income households. The idea is that this may contribute to at least a reduction of the precarity that stems from the inaccessibility and scarcity of the housing offers, which forces households to move very often or to adapt to unhealthy and inadequate housing conditions. By becoming homeowners, low-income households have the chance to increase their stability and to save their money by investing it in the purchase of their homes. In addition, this limited capital can be inherited by their children, thus also increasing their chances of emancipation. As the economist Thomas Piketty once observed,⁹ in times of scarce

⁹ Piketty, T. (2013), *Le Capital au XXI^e siècle*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris

or absent economic growth, the possibility of relying on limited capital can truly make the difference in terms of social mobility.

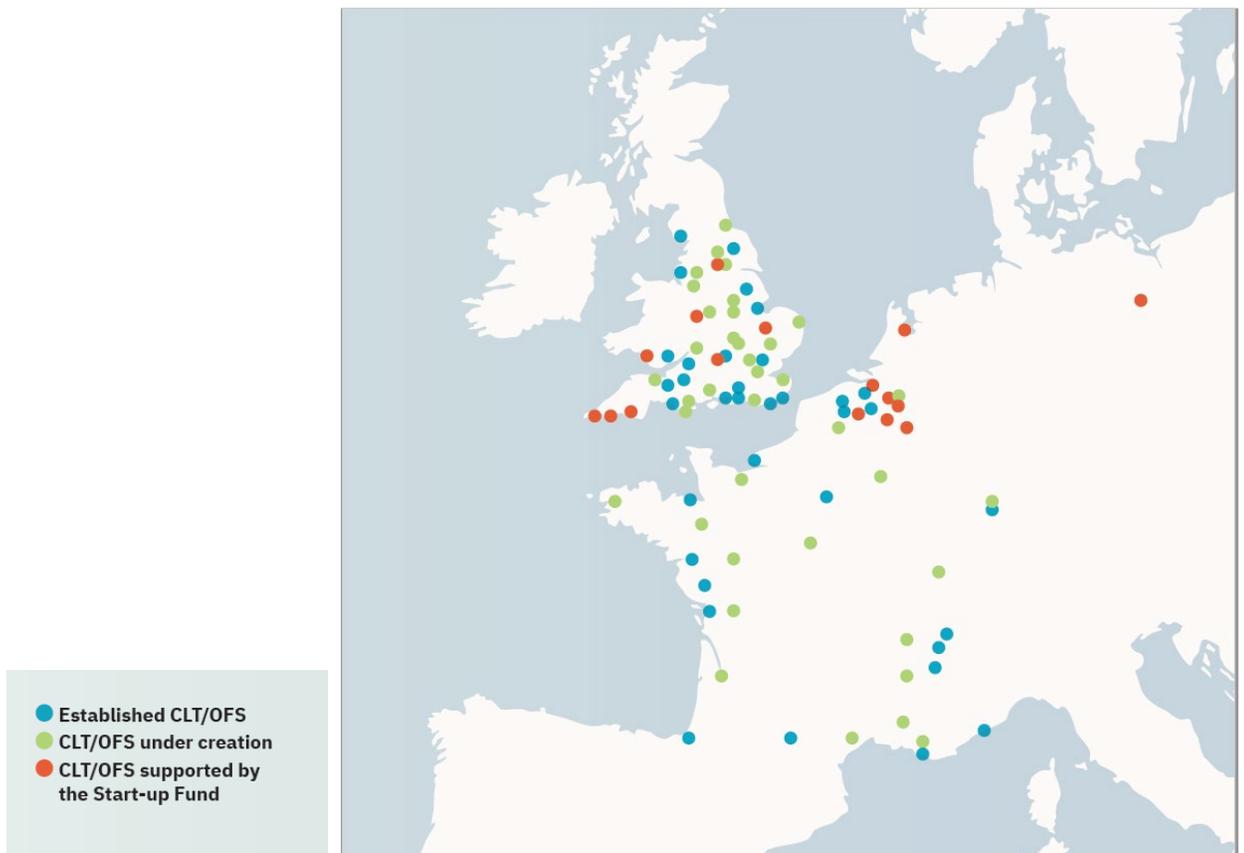
A participatory design process for the realisation of affordable housing. The participatory approach to the realisation of affordable housing is innovative by definition. Traditionally, the vast majority of affordable and social housing was in fact realised according to a principle of standardisation that was intended to provide an answer to the housing question and provide homes to the greatest number possible. Despite the emancipatory intention, such an approach proved in fact to be a failure for a number of reasons. Amongst others, the incapacity of the public authority to properly maintain the buildings and, related to that, the de-responsibilisation of the inhabitants.

Quality of the living environment and value preservation. The overall quality of life and of the living environment of CLTB projects are the result of two factors. The first is the capacity of each project to actively engage in the life of the neighbourhood where they are realised, for example by organising activities that may involve local associations and inhabitants, such as a community garden; or by providing spaces specifically conceived to host the activities of a given local association. In many cases, the relationship with the local community starts being established even before the realisation of a given project, during the temporary occupation phase which may precede the beginning of the construction and/or renovation works. The second factor is the capacity of the inhabitants to properly maintain and take care of their living environments. For this reason, the participatory process of design characterising the CLTB's modus operandi is crucial; among other purposes, it aims at increasing the responsabilisation of the inhabitants by making them more aware and by informing about the proper way of maintaining their homes and the living environment. In this way, the value of the built assets is maintained and the investments of everyone involved—the inhabitants, the CLT as the developer of the projects and the public administration—are protected.

A reinterpretation of the redistributive role of the public. By being embedded in the tripartite governance model of the CLT, a public authority has the chance to re-define and experiment with their role. Its traditional distributive capacity and role are in particular redefined in the direction of a safer and more just scheme—*safer* because the value of the financial and real estate assets devoted to the realisation of the CLT's projects are protected from neglect and abandonment given the engagement of the inhabitants who are responsible for taking care of their homes. What are being distributed are not only financial resources but also responsibilities, which is seemingly more just because within the Trust the public is only one of the three parties involved in the decision-making processes. Amongst others, this avoids any unmotivated disposal of real estate assets, eventually for the benefit of all

concerned communities. The sale of public property, far from fulfilling the general interest, over the years has only diminished the economic capacities of States and public administrations.

Application in other countries. Although based on the past theories underpinning the “Garden City” movement, the Community Land Trust model was implemented in the US and it is there that the first projects were realised. The first Community Land Trust, *New Communities*, was established in 1969. Decade after decade, the model has been gradually improved, although every single project represents a quite unique assemblage of actors, forms of funding, urban conditions and architectural solutions. Today, there are 277 CLTs in the US and 255 in the UK, while in Europe the Community Land Trust of Brussels was the first to be implemented. However, from the beginning part of the energies of the team have been also dedicated to the cultivation of new partnerships at the local as well as European levels. The direct and indirect campaigns, the numerous awards and recognitions, but most importantly the efficacy of the model in addressing the housing question with a holistic and traversal approach have abundantly helped to heighten its adoption and as such many CLTs are currently being established across Europe.



CLTs across European countries and United Kingdom. Map: SHICC Interreg project

A generative approach to social cohesion. Stewardship and the common good lie at the core of the CLTB's modus operandi and can be found expressed in any of the organisation's undertakings: from the general assemblies to the intensive participatory design processes projects; from the informative sessions to the support and guidance provided to the inhabitants, even after their projects have been realised. Through a very diverse range of activities, the CLTB provides endless opportunities for encounters and cross-fertilisation, for inhabitants and for community-based organisations. As a result, numerous community projects have been created, initiated by the very inhabitants and developed with the help of the CLTB and of other local organisations. Independently from their specific content, these projects are highly emancipatory, giving the possibility to those involved to prove and further develop their entrepreneurial capacities. While fulfilling the relevant needs of the communities they address, these projects increase the chances of recognition and emancipation of the participants. The consequence of such a generative capacity of the CLTB and of each single CLTB project is an overall increase of inclusive dynamics and social cohesion: not only in the neighbourhoods where the projects have been realised, but more pervasively, as a result of a growing number of individuals and communities whose capabilities are enhanced.

4. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

At present, the CLTB is completing several projects in the Brussels Region¹⁰, which differ significantly in terms of their number of households and involved actors. Three projects are already inhabited, representing a total of 48 housing units, inhabited by a highly diverse range of households in terms of both income and composition: from large families to single mothers, and from disabled individuals to pensioners. For many of them, becoming homeowners represents a point of arrival following a long quest that has been aimed at finding some semblance of stability alongside healthy and just living conditions.

The first CLTB project to be inhabited was l'Ecluse, which was inaugurated in 2013. In this case, the CLTB simply became the new owner of the building while the housing units had been ready to be inhabited since the beginning. For this reason, the move-in of the inhabitants went quite smoothly. Nevertheless, the CLTB took care of supporting them in the process of learning about the co-ownership model,

¹⁰ A constantly updated map of the projects can be found here [Housing projects - \(cltb.be\)](http://cltb.be)

about living together and the proper maintenance of their housing units and common spaces.

In September 2020, two prototype projects have been inaugurated: Le Nid, a renovation project for seven households in Anderlecht and Arc-en-Ciel, a newly realised project in Molenbeek for 32 households. Both cases allowed for experimenting quite intensively with two variations of the participatory approach and design process of the CLTB. While in both cases, the inhabitants were involved in several workshops and meetings as part of the design process, with these two projects experimenting with two different formulas in terms of contracting authority (*maitrise d'ouvrage*). In the case of Le Nid, this consisted of establishing a civil society entity, with the inhabitants ultimately being responsible for carrying out the real estate project until the end of the renovation works and the creation of the co-ownership. The inhabitants and the CLTB were thus jointly clients and owners and they shared the responsibility of supervising the construction works. While this implied certain heavy responsibilities, through such a process the inhabitants ultimately had the chance to learn and become aware of the complexities, both material and procedural, hiding behind the realisation of new housing units in the BCR. The CLTB team, however, realised that a similar approach is too demanding and not very sustainable for numerous households that do not have the possibility to engage so intensively. The case of Arc-en-Ciel, is therefore much softer and more approachable for many households, given that the role of the client was attributed to the Fonds du Logement that took care of developing the project, while the inhabitants were simply regularly informed about the progression of the works. As soon as they were ready, the Fonds du Logement sold the turnkey apartments to the households. Arc-en-Ciel in fact provided the blueprint for the current procedure.

Both cases proved the relevance of the spatial choices, and the pre-existing morphological conditions in the case of Le Nid, to be quite effective in predisposing a rich interweaving of users and communities, thus serving the needs of both the inhabitants and the neighbours and contributing to the overall quality of life for the common good. Following the specific indications of the cahiers de recommandations, in both projects the interior courtyards, the community gardens, and the community's multifunctional spaces have been designed and planned for a regulated accessibility, thus allowing them to host a variety of activities, while respecting the actual capacities of the inhabitants to take care of them and their need for safety. The apartments have been designed to respond to the specific needs of households and the presence of physically impaired people among them substantially contributed to the design of adapted housing units. The variety of spaces allowing casual and daily interactions between the inhabitants is intended to provide the conditions required for living together, while fuelling daily reciprocities and exchanges.



Rendering of the project CALICO, proposed by Bruxelles Logement.

In terms of concept, partnership, funding mechanisms and approach to social cohesion matters, the CALICO project, which will be completed by September 2021, can be considered another prototype. Centred on the concept of care, this project aims at realising a supportive living environment and at promoting well-being and care as attributes of the daily living. Partially funded by European funds, in the framework of the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) programme, this project addresses the housing needs of fragile and fragile individuals, dealing with ageing related issues or special moments in their lives, such as the moment of giving birth or the moment of death, or of gender and migration issues. Therefore, the building realises the architectural programmes of three different partners: Pass-ages, Angela D and the CLTB, each of them managing a specific part of the building. This project will provide 34 housing units, a semi-public garden and collective spaces for the inhabitants and the neighbourhoods, a birthing centre, and a retirement home.

5. CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, AND MAIN ISSUES

Land scarcity. If land is a scarce resource, in the BCR it is even scarcer due to the administrative limitations, which impede any further expansion of the Brussels' agglomeration. Additionally, in most of the cases, the available plots within the Region are not very large, not to mention that land tends to be highly expensive, especially in some part of the Region. Therefore, the realisation of new projects is challenging, in particular as far as large-scale projects are concerned. While the acquisition of new land at the borders of the Region could perhaps increase the manoeuvring space for many actors, programmes and planning needs,¹¹ the CLTB could in fact provide an ideal land tenure model allowing the prevention of speculation and the realisation of ecologically sustainable scenarios.

Intensity of the participatory process. Engaging the prospective inhabitants in the intensive participatory process required for the realisation of every project can be challenging. The appropriate timing and duration of this phase is crucial and needs to be accurately established in relation to the unfolding of other tasks and phases, so that downtime and the related loss of enthusiasm could be substantially reduced. In addition, the organisation and intensity of the design process should take into account the actual availability of the inhabitants, given that the CLTB team is

¹¹ <https://www.lecho.be/economie-politique/belgique/bruxelles/bruxelles-veut-acheter-des-terres-agricoles-pour-nourrir-sa-population/10267051.html>

constantly evaluating and adapting the timing and procedures of the design process to the specific conditions of each single project and their inhabitants, although unexpected events and blockages may arise at any time. As a result of this constant monitoring process, in comparison to the first pilot projects, the length of the participatory process has been considerably reduced. Additionally, a group of members and prospective inhabitants are trained on basic architectural and technical aspects in order to proactively support the team during the early phases of the design process by collaborating on the learning activities. Furthermore, in order to preserve the participatory approach while taking into account the actual availability of the households, the participatory process has been divided into two different moments. A first phase aims at dealing with the architectural choices and precedes the call for projects; a second phase is devoted to better understanding technological issues related to the maintenance of the apartments and other cohabitation-related matters, and will unfold during the realisation of the construction or renovation works. In this way, the completion of the project and the activities preparing the inhabitants to their cohabitation should end approximately at the same time, thus avoiding the decline of enthusiasm and any increasing downtime.

Upscaling while maintaining an effective participatory approach. The participatory approach of the CLTB involves the inhabitants, local organisations and the dedicated CLTB team in a quite intensive process. While being crucial to the responsabilisation of the inhabitants and for creating a greater sense of community as explained in the previous paragraphs, it could prove challenging to maintain the same quality and intensity in the case of large scale projects. At the very least, this would imply the involvement of additional team members in order for the workshops and support activities to be properly and effectively organised. While at present this does not seem to be an urgent concern, given the aforementioned limitations concerning a physical upscaling of the projects, the consolidation and training of a dedicated group of inhabitants and members may provide a valuable support, while contributing to the empowerment and feeling of recognition of those involved.



The courtyard of the project Arc-en-Ciel. Ph: Tim Van de Velde

6. IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS

To conclude, there are a few considerations of the impact of these projects, given that only a few CLTB projects have recently been completed. Therefore, at this time, it is only possible to suggest at which levels it would be interesting and relevant to evaluate their impact and effectiveness.

The first is the empowerment of the individuals and communities involved in the realisation of these projects. Their stability, sense of security, and sense of belonging gained from finally having the opportunity have their own homes is presumably something that can be measured in terms of well-being and capabilities concerning not only the parents, but also their children. More specifically related to the participatory design process that characterises the CLTB, the second would concern the capacity of the inhabitants to properly manage their living environments in the medium-to-long term, thus maintaining the quality of their living environments and preserving their value, for the benefit of all involved parties, also in relation to their responsabilisation, and their autonomy, specifically in terms of assistance provided by the CLTB team once the project has been completed.

The third, strictly related to the second as has previously been explained, is the capacity of these projects to imbue effectively a new life into the neighbourhoods where they have been realised. Given the densely interwoven fabric of relationships each project should be able to establish with a neighbourhood and its inhabitants and with local community-based associations, in the future it would be helpful to develop certain appropriate indicators allowing to grasp the actual impact of the CLTB's projects, in terms of their quality of life, social cohesion and environmental awareness.

Given the holistic approach of CLTs and the CLTB in particular, it will also be interesting to evaluate the impact of these projects regarding their capacity to implement and contribute to the development of economic and ecologic models focusing on circularity and a human-centred approach to development, such as the Donut economy, Community Wealth Building and other forms of New Municipalism, which are currently being experimented with in a growing number of cities.

Finally, a relevant level of impact of the CLTB and CLT projects is that of the transformative movement they fuel, influencing policies, land tenure systems and design approaches. The scale of the projects at present is still small and the number of housing units provided by the CLTs is still very limited: a drop in the ocean, as many pointed out. However, on the other hand, the growing number of CLTs and other similar land tenure models, of studies and initiatives focusing on the dissemination of the model and its variations, seem to suggest that interest in the model is growing exponentially. This is a movement able to have an impact on mentalities and on the possibility to envision a radically different future. What could seem out of reach today could then perhaps be realized in a not so distant future, under different cultural conditions and political frameworks.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://cltb.be/en/>

<https://youtu.be/HIJ9uhduSBI>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Verena Lenna, Researcher at Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Vlaams Bouwmeester

Flemish Government Architect (BE)

Joao Bento

Researcher of Architectural
Policies, University College
London - Bartlett School of
Planning

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2.1. Background	3
2.2. The Flemish Government Architect.....	5
2.3. The Flanders Architecture Institute	6
3. OBJECTIVES.....	8
4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	9
4.1. The FGA position and operational structure	9
4.2. Instruments.....	14
4.2.1. Support and guidance to public builders.....	15
4.2.2. Contributing to vision formation and reflection	20
4.2.3. Communication strategy	23
4.3. Selection procedure.....	25
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	26
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	26
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES.....	27
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	28
9. EXAMPLES	30
10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	34
KEY REFERENCES	36
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	37

1. SUMMARY

The Flemish Government Architect (*Vlaams Bouwmeester*) is an independent expert appointed by the government as a public official tasked with promoting the design quality of the built environment. Leading a small team and assisted by an expert group, they deliver this mission through a variety of informal design governance tools in three ways. Firstly, by providing support and guidance to public developers in order to raise the quality of public buildings in Flanders. Secondly, by contributing to the development of a long-term policy vision and reflection across the fields of architecture and urban design, in collaboration with various administrations and external stakeholders. Thirdly, by fostering a place-making culture through different informational and persuasion tools.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1. Background

Since the beginning of the nineties, the Flemish government has been developing policy initiatives to promote and raise awareness on the value of architecture and urban design. One of the first initiatives associated with this vision was the publication of “Architecture in Flanders Yearbook” in 1993 (Ibelings, 2009, p. 16). Since then, the Department of Culture supports this biennial publication providing an overview of recent architectural designs and public spaces together with essays on relevant issues and developments in the fields of architecture and urbanism in Flanders¹ (Schreurs, 2000, p. 63). In 1994, in addition to the financial support for the Belgian participation in the Venice Biennale (where Flanders and Wallonia have taken turns exhibiting from the early 1990s), the Flemish Arts Agency has begun to provide subsidies for the local activities and projects of individuals and organizations in the fields of architecture and design (Bento, 2012, p. 39).

According to Liefoghe (interview, 2020), the architectural policy initiatives within the cultural field were a continuation of a bottom-up movement focused on architecture

¹ To prepare the Architecture Yearbook, a group of national and international experts was appointed to make a meaningful selection of buildings and public spaces for inclusion in the publication.

and public interest in architecture developed by several cultural organizations throughout the eighties, in particular the activities of the former Architecture Museum Foundation (S/AM) in Ghent.² Despite its brief existence (1983-1992), S/AM played an active role in promoting architectural awareness and the work of young Flemish designers to professional audiences and the general public through a wide range of initiatives and events (Sterken, 2016). In addition, the Flemish international arts centre 'deSingel' started to include architecture exhibitions in its pluriannual program in 1985 (ibidem). All these cultural initiatives, together with the architects' association, helped campaign for an agenda setting of the development of a public policy on architecture in Flanders. Therefore, in Liefoghe's view (interview, 2020), the government policy in the nineties followed and institutionalized a "dynamic that was already in the making."

Another important step in the development of the Flemish architectural policy was the preparation of Antwerp in the lead up to its recognition as the European Capital of Culture for 1993. According to Van Den Driessche (interview: 2020), one year before this international event, the government promoted several architectural competitions, design workshops with architectural schools and numerous other related initiatives. Additionally, in that same year, with the constitutional reform of May 1993, Belgium formally became a federal state, divided into three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and the Brussels Capital Region) alongside three communities (The Flemish, French and German communities, respectively).³ The intention of improving the spatial quality of the built environment to raise citizens' quality of life was a policy ambition of the Flemish government, where architecture and urban design began to be incorporated as a theme in public policy discourse. According to Ibelings (2009, p. 10), the idea of raising the standards of public architecture was, in part, a way of demonstrating "what the region was capable of achieving and what it had achieved."

From the planning side, the adoption of the new 'Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders'⁴ in 1997, the preparation of which started in 1992, also represented an important milestone. Although Flanders had regional plans since the 1970s, there was a need for an overarching spatial vision that would coordinate the desired future spatial planning in Flanders. One innovation was the introduction of the concept of 'spatial quality' as one of the two principles of the new 'Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders' (Schreurs, 2000, p. 63). In this context, the provincial and local administrations should pay explicit attention to issues of spatial quality when assessing plans and

² According to Sterken (2016, in addition to the *Stichting Architectuur Museum - S/AM*, Ghent also hosted the *Architectuur als Buur*, the heritage association *Interbellum* (which focused on modern architecture), the monographic publications in the series *Vlees & Beton* (published by the Architecture & Urban Development research group of the University of Ghent) and the Centre for Architectural Studies

(CAO) at the Saint-Lucas Institute, which organised exhibitions and issued a newsletter.

³ In 1993, Belgium's political landscape was transformed when, as a federal constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of governance, it was divided into three highly autonomous regions – the Flemish Region, the Brussels Capital Region and the Walloon Region – and three language communities: the Dutch-speaking region of Flanders in the north, the French-speaking Brussels-Wallonia region in the center and south, and the German-speaking cantons in the east. For more information see: www.belgium.be/

⁴ In Flemish: *Ruimtelijk Structuurplan Vlaanderen*

projects. In practical terms, however, the effects of such a broad statement were seen more as a change of mentality rather than having any actual consequences on the ground as the structural plan did not offer any design criteria that urban planning officials could use (Ibidem).

2.2. The Flemish Government Architect

Despite the government's initiatives to promote better built environments, there was little evidence of higher standards in public buildings in the nineties (Liefoghe & Van Den Driessche, 2019, p. 3). The need to raise the demands of public clients when commissioning public buildings was first noticed in the Architecture Yearbooks, since only six public buildings were included in its first editions. According to Els Vervloesem and Sven Sterken (2004), until the end of the 20th century, Flemish "government commissions were regarded as infrastructural undertakings and implemented with the logic of an engineer. Government bodies chose an architect not based on their competence but more for their ideological or community background." In this context, several authors have drawn attention to the lack of architectural awareness of public clients and consequentially the low design quality of most public buildings in Flanders, as a result campaigning for the launch of an architectural policy similar to those in neighbour countries, such as in The Netherlands and in France (Ibelings, 2009).

According to Schreurs (2000), it was the continuous criticism of the quality of public buildings in Flanders that led the Minister of Finance, Budget and Health Policy, Wivina de Meester, to take the first steps towards the development of a Flemish architectural policy. In 1995, partially influenced by the example of The Netherlands, that had a Chief Government Architect, the minister announced the intention of establishing a similar position in Flanders to promote a culture of best practices by demonstrating its commitment to quality through its own buildings and to place design quality as a corporate aim across public administration (Ibelings, 2009)⁵. As de Meester (2000) pointed out in an open letter: "the layout and design of the living environment are an important cultural expression; it is very important that the government as client sets a good example and stimulates the private sector to also strive for optimal architectural, urban development and landscape-architectural quality."

⁵ In an open letter to the Flemish Government Architect published in an architectural magazine, Wivina de Meester (2000) refers to the two important moments that substantiated her decision: "The city of Antwerp organized an important

'Process Congress' in April 1998, in search of a possible practice for 'urbanity and quality.' In June 1997, on the initiative of the Dutch Presidency of the European Union, policy officials came together to reflect on architecture and policy and to formulate recommendations."

In 1997, two years later, the position of the Flemish Government Architect (FGA) was formally announced and its mission defined: 'to stimulate and inspire Flemish architectural awareness, in order to increase the cultural responsibility among the authorities, the relevant industry and the public' (Schreurs, 2000, p. 63). To do so, the FGA was required to develop a long-term vision on the quality of the built environment and to provide support to regional government in preparing and implementing an architectural policy that promote high quality environments in Flanders. In addition, the FGA would provide advice and monitor the implementation of the building policy for the Flemish government's own buildings, in order to ensure buildings of high quality and to fulfil an exemplary function in Flanders.

After a period of recruitment by a professional agency⁶, Bob Van Reeth was appointed the first Flemish Government Architect in January 1999. Considered one of the most prominent Flemish architects, Bob Van Reeth would benefit from his high moral authority and powers of persuasion to be accepted throughout public administration (Ibid.). As Liefoghe (interview, 2009) mentions: "the nomination of Van Reeth as the FGA embodied an ambition from the government side, it was a clear public statement."

Since the beginning of his mandate, Bob Van Reeth, who fulfilled this function between 1999 and 2005, began to receive numerous requests to provide design advice on projects and participate in competition juries. In this framework, he decided to set up a 'quality chamber' to provide continued advice on projects and comprehensive consideration to architectural policy on government buildings. This initiative would lead to the development of the *Open Call*, a method of selecting architects for design assignments requested by public bodies, which would become one of the FGA's main policy instruments and one with a visible, demonstrable impact on the ground⁷ (this will be further examined in following sections).

2.3. The Flanders Architecture Institute

Besides leading by example, there also was a political commitment to fostering a design culture and raising public awareness on the value of well-designed environments. Inspired by their Dutch neighbour that had established the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI) at the end of the eighties, the government decided to establish the Flanders Architecture Institute (VAI) in 2001. Based out of

⁶ According to Wivina de Meester's (2000) open letter, the government hired the head-hunting agency Heidrick &

Struggles to seek out potential candidates, both at home and abroad, for the position of FGA.

⁷ The Open Call was inspired by the model that exists in The Netherlands, managed by the Dutch Government Architect, where once a year architects used to be invited to apply for consideration for public commissions.

the international arts centre 'deSingel' in Antwerp, VAI is solely dedicated to the promotion of an architectural culture in Flanders, and therefore is responsible for delivering the cultural dimension of the Flemish architectural policy. As the former Minister of Culture, Bert Anciaux, succinctly formulated in 2002:

“my architectural policy is (...) in the first place a consciousness-raising policy: inviting people to take a good look at that physical, designed environment, getting them to think about the influence that this has on everyday activities, bringing them into contact with good examples, and convincing them that the choice of good architecture is good not only for themselves but for the whole community.” (Anciaux, 2002)



Fig.1 – Joint policy memorandum of the FA and the VAI (2009)
(Source: FGA website).

Since 2002, the VAI is responsible for the publication of the aforementioned Architectural Yearbooks, which intend to highlight Flemish architecture and to inform a broader public about it. Besides the yearbooks, VAI also organizes exhibitions and other activities that are aimed at making the general public more aware of architecture and urban design. More recently, the Flemish government entrusted VAI with responsibility for the Flanders Architecture Archives, which had previously been taken care of by regional and provincial authorities. In this sense, VAI manages a constantly growing collection of architectural archives, which it subsequently conserved, interpreted and made accessible to anyone interested.⁸

Although VAI is a private yet government-subsidised body, like others in similar positions, it has to navigate the balance of retaining its independence as well as maintaining a functional link with the administration. The current FGA sits on their executive board; although the VAI's financing comes from a different department—the Ministry of Culture. At the same time, VAI takes on a great deal of the outreach work related to the Bouwmeester's vision, bringing this vision to the public at-large via exhibitions, events, and so on. Sometimes they also collaborate to deliver policy statements, like the 'Flemish Architecture Memorandum 2009-2014,' which was published in 2009 and signed by the two institutions (Fig. 1).

⁸ The Flanders Architectural Archives are managed by the VAI.
For more info see <https://www.vai.be/en/>

3. OBJECTIVES

According to the Flemish government's 'concept note' on the role of FGA,⁹ the aim of the FGA is "to promote the architectural quality of the built environment, conceived as a synthesis of qualities in the field of urban environment, use and experience, image value, construction technology, energy and cost management, integral accessibility, etc." (Flemish government, 2020). Departing from this holistic notion, the mission of the FGA is made tangible by "assisting clients in public and public-private projects in the field of designing and realizing buildings, public space, landscape and infrastructure" (Ibidem).

To carry out their evident mission, the FGA should focus on two main tasks:

1. Provide support and guidance to public developers (in the broadest sense possible) with a view to improving the quality of building projects and plans. This support should aim to increase the competence of the involved building owners and designers, with a view to improving the design quality of building projects and plans within their budgetary margins, but also in regards to the search for an optimal price-quality ratio for public design assignments. This means that role of the FGA is essentially that of guiding, inspiring and initiating, but never acting as a substitute for the public client (Ibid).
2. Vision development and reflection on architectural quality, high-quality design and construction in today's society. Within this second task, the FGA defines an agenda of activities and research studies that may contribute to the development of a vision and knowledge on the design of the built environment. This research should be application-oriented in serving this function of vision formation in the expertise domain of the partnerships alongside the formulation and implementation of projects.

From the government's perspective, both tasks reinforce each other: "concrete projects feed the vision formation, while insights/visions can in turn be tested or demonstrated through concrete projects in the field" (Ibid.). In order to perform these tasks efficiently, the FGA should expand its operation, reach and impact through a 'network approach' (e.g. local quality rooms, organizing training and coaching sessions, offering guidelines, etc.). In addition, the FGA handles a few other additional assignments:

- Communication and awareness raising;

⁹ In January 2020, the statutes and mission of the FGA's 'concept note' (in Flemish *VISIENOTA*) were revised by the Flemish Government in view of launching the new FGA.

nomination procedure for the 2020-2024 mandate. Available at:

<https://vlaamsbouwmeester.be/sites/default/files/uploads/Visienota%20Vlaams%20Bouwmeesterschap.pdf>

- Advising on bottlenecks and gaps in the regulations, in relation to design quality in the broadest sense;
- Providing opportunities to young designers.

To maximize its impact, the FGA employs several communicational tools to raise awareness and call attention to the specific value of creating better places for different clients and in an attempt to engage them in the process. In this context, the FGA assumes a proactive role as design champion, placing design quality on the agenda and campaigning for excellent public commissioning, a high quality building culture, sustainable urban development, etc. as a means to deliver on the aspirations enshrined in its mission statement.

4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

4.1. The FGA position and operational structure

Looking at the Flemish administrative structure, the FGA is placed within the Chancellery and Foreign Affairs Department, under the political responsibility of the Minister-President of Flanders. The reason for being located so near to the cabinet in a department with a transversal policy domain and not in a sectoral policy department, such as environment or culture domain, is due to the cross-cutting nature of architecture and the built environment. As Leo Van Broeck (interview: 2018), former FGA, argues:

“There is no single Minister that is not doing something in, about, under, around or with building and spatial planning. It would be a handicap, to have a competent team that is supposed to work around everything that has to do with spatial planning and development, and building, that would work only for the Minister of Environment or only for the Minister of Culture. So, it has to be a transversal taskforce.”

Considering the great diversity of projects and types of public developments (e.g. care, economy, housing, education, culture, heritage, area development, etc.), the

FGA can offer support to all public departments, regardless of who takes the initiative for this (Flemish government, 2020). To do so, the FGA is required to provide an accessible platform to all sectors and agencies that develop activities in the field of the design and construction of buildings and infrastructure. In addition, the Flemish Government (and each minister) can ask the FGA to address specific *ad hoc* assignments.

Regarded as the cornerstone of the Flemish architectural policy (Ibelings, 2009, p. 8), the FGA occupies a leading role both as a person and as an institution, the latter comprised of three elements: the FGA (the person who is appointed to the position), an expert group and the FGA's team.

Flemish Government Architect (the person)

The FGA is appointed as a contractual staff member for the duration of their mandate as an advisor to the entire Flemish government. Although the position is administratively located within the Chancellery, the FGA is expected to work as an independent expert and advisor to the entire Flemish administration, namely to provide solicited and unsolicited design advice—both as an institution and as a person—to the various departments and agencies of the public sector (Flemish Government, 2020). In this framework, he or she bears full final responsibility for the substantive operation in general, the realization of his/her 'multi-year program', and the various activities and action programs in particular. In this framework, the question of their independence from the public administration is considered a crucial element for their role as FGA. As Leo Van Broeck (interview: 2018) argues:

“The position of a Government Architect should by definition be independent (...) with the right to speak freely and give opinions on what is better, without having the power to decide; and second, the duty to provide advice if one of the Ministers asks for advice.”

This means that the FGA has the right to provide unsolicited advice and express their opinion about certain projects or developments but the FGA also has the obligation to formally provide advice when requested. As was seen in the previous section, the tasks of the FGA are fundamentally informal in nature, such as providing support and advice to public clients, developing policy visions and reflections on architectural quality, etc. This means that the FGA does not have any formal powers under the umbrella of their competences, such as managing public building projects or making decisions on planning permits. Being able to influence others without formal authority is a challenge, but at the same time, it provides the FGA with more freedom to contact various stakeholders, express opinions, and select themes for

public debate, etc. As Leo Van Broeck (2018) explains about his role as a former FGA: “I have no decision power. But you could turn it into a joke, you could say that I’m allowed to speak about everything because I have nothing to say. So, it’s the right to contradict the government, because my job is to speak from a position of professional competence.”

This independent status gives the FGA the “*freedom of saying the truth, even if the truth is annoying, or inconvenient*” (Ibid.). Despite the liberty to express their viewpoint to different public bodies and communicate it to the press, in practical terms, the FGA tends to assume a hybrid position: one of an independent voice but with a neutral stance. In other words, the FGA express its opinion without political interference but also addresses the issues from a technical and professional point of view. This is critically important in relation to projects of a wider dimension or public interest as it may raise or affect political sensitivities if the FGA were to strongly criticize a project without any proper justification. This combination of attributes is crucial to the FGA maintaining their professional status and to be able to reach and influence public clients in order to raise the quality of their commissions.

As a contractual staff member of the Flemish government, with the exception of the substantive responsibility outlined above, the FGA falls under the administrative authority of the leading official of the Chancellery Department. This means that the FGA organizes their activities in line with the administrative, financial-legal and deontological framework and organizational culture of the Flemish government. In view of the FGA’s special role, the Flemish government grants a delegation to the FGA for the duration of their mandate and within the annual operating credit for the FGA, which in turn he/she may delegate to the FGA team coordinator (see below). Nevertheless, this delegation can be reviewed and withdrawn at any time (Flemish Government, 2020).

Expert Group

Considering the increasing complexity and diversity of issues within their current work mandate, the FGA may ask for the advice of a multidisciplinary expert group for justifying certain strategic choices, decisions and important projects. This expert group is composed of a maximum of four experts from different fields that together may provide input and substantive support to the work of the FGA (the expert group meets around six times per year). Furthermore, it can be tasked with leading the response to a strategic task/request if there is the risk the FGA’s impartiality may be compromised due to a conflict of interest (Ibidem).

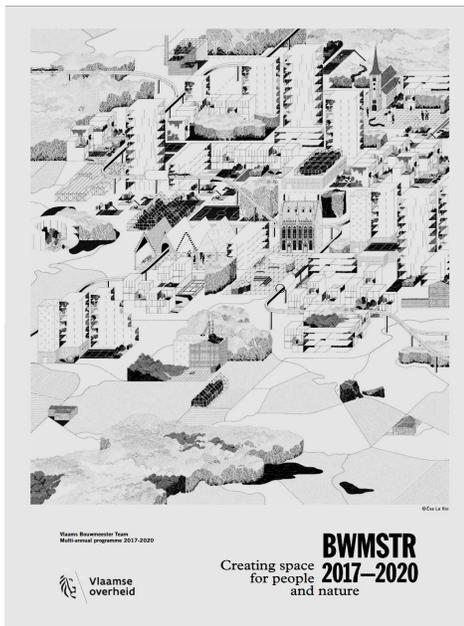


Fig. 2 – FGA multi-year program for the 2017-2020 period (Source: FGA website).

At beginning of their mandate, the FGA defines a job profile for the members of the expert group and an open call is launched by the government. After the selection process, alongside the advice of the FGA, the group of experts is nominated by the Flemish government. Its members do not receive the status of being a civil servant and are remunerated from the operating resources of the FGA.

The FGA's team

To accomplish its mission, the FGA has a team of fifteen people assisting with the operationalization of the various instruments at the FGA's disposal. Most of the team has been part of the FGA office since its inception, allowing for the preservation of knowledge across different FGA mandates (Van Broeck, interview: 2018). The team is composed of a group of public officials specialized in good public commissioning with broad experience in relation to architecture and urban development. They are responsible for “substantive advice and administrative-technical support for both policy and project-related subjects” (Flemish Government, 2020). Although the team works under the leadership of the FGA, it has a management coordinator for administrative and organizational tasks as well as the duty of independently representing the FGA in meetings and projects.

Multiannual program and formal reporting obligation

At the beginning of their mandate, the FGA has to develop and define a multi-year program based on other related policies of the Flemish Government (e.g. Schools of Tomorrow, Policy Plan Space Flanders, the Flemish Energy and Climate Plan, etc.). This multi-year program should be elaborated in consultation with all relevant administrations and departments, as well as with the professional field. The program is then submitted to the Flemish Government for approval (Ibidem).

According to the FGA ‘Concept note’ (2020), the multi-year program also forms the basis for determining the necessary expertise for selecting the members of the expert group referred to above. The FGA should use the multi-year program to define an annual action plan every year, which, in addition to the concrete content of the multi-year program, also includes a link between predicted actions and resources. The annual action plans are submitted and ratified by the expert group and then communicated to the Flemish Government. The FGA then reports periodically to the Flemish Government and the expert group, with each FGA providing an evaluation report at the end of their mandate (Ibidem).

Theme	General aim	Specific objectives (summarized)
Open Space	To promote the view of open space as a public good to be preserved for the future, but also made accessible to people today. To protect and create open space networks with a social agenda by reducing spatial claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acquire insight on the interplay of open space & urbanisation ▪ collaborate for more continuous open space across boundaries ▪ actively support an open space policy ▪ promote projects related to densification and core strengthening ▪ generate support, raise awareness and ensure communication with all levels of government and with the general public
Housing	To address the housing problem (spatial congestion, car-dependent mobility, large energy consumption per house) by improving housing quality through a project-based approach and by initiating research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promote an increase in scale in residential design as an alternative to individual commissions ▪ support housing associations and the private sector in building sustainable and affordable housing ▪ support a professional rental sector with more collective housing ▪ promote a location-driven housing choice, with living and working more attuned to each other
Heritage	To promote a more active, responsible attitude towards cultural heritage, focused less on what has been inherited and more on what should be passed on to the next generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ advocate a workable balance between heritage value, residential quality, energetic performance and economic feasibility for any renovations of social housing ▪ promote change-oriented construction, particularly for public buildings ▪ to inform public officials and other interested parties about good examples
Public Principal-ship	To have public organizations and local authorities that are familiar with the entrepreneurial logic of construction and the real estate market, and which can efficiently negotiate with private parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assist public principals in creating various forms of 'negotiated urbanism' ▪ promote a project structure that involves additional private parties, within the framework of public-private partnership projects ▪ continue and enhance existing research on public-private collaborations
Regulations	To have a set of regulations that function as a proactive quality tool, one that leaves scope for creativity within the design process and is flexible and future-proof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to specify more explicitly the intentions and results that the regulations aim to achieve, so that solutions fully or partly outside this scope can be admitted if they fulfil the intentions and are deemed desirable by the involved authorities & stakeholders ▪ to delve into the underlying mechanisms of legal and financial factors in land uses, and highlight them, in order to tackle our use of space in an integral manner
Cross-border collaborations	To promote a broader vision for the whole area of the Meuse-Scheldt-Rhine Delta (Eurodelta), along with a collaborative, cross-border approach to its challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to work closely and consult with other Chief Government Architects of the region ▪ to place a focus particularly on the Brussels metropolitan area and its infrastructure ▪ to enhance structural collaboration between Belgian and Dutch authorities in particular
Contributing to architectural culture	To initiate and facilitate various exchanges so that architectural and spatial policy in Flanders remain in touch with developments at home and abroad in the broader architectural field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promote knowledge sharing, debate & broad communication ▪ collaborate with the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam ▪ raise awareness among policymakers on the importance of fair fees and a healthy business climate in architecture ▪ create synergies with design education & research ▪ have a structural collaboration with the Department of Culture on the theme of commissioned art

Table 1 – FGA multi-year strategic goals for the 2017-2020 period (Source: FGA, 2017)

4.2. Instruments

To deliver on its mission and assignments, the FGA employs several instruments addressing the strategic objectives defined in their multi-year program and annual action plans, which are periodically evaluated within the professional field and referred expert group. Within the different instruments, the Open Call (in Flemish, *Open Oproep*) is the most important tool used by the FGA to support public clients in raising the quality of public developments (Kroese et al., 2009). Considered an alternative selection process that places less of a burden on the designers, as will be detailed below, the Open Call is a procedure that enables public principals to select designers for commissions in the fields of architecture, urban design and landscape architecture.¹⁰ According to Schreurs (2000, p. 63), the Open Call procedure is the most visible activity of the FGA and the one that gives legitimacy to its existence.

Besides supporting public clients, the FGA also contributes to vision formation and reflections on architecture and spatial design. Within this area of work, pilot projects are the main instrument used by the FGA to connect design research with a policy-preparing approach for the realization of reference projects and to address urgent issues. Both areas of work are associated with a broad communication agenda through symposia and publications to raise the awareness of politicians, stakeholders and the public in order to move further beyond standardized regulations as a means to achieve place quality (Fig. 3).

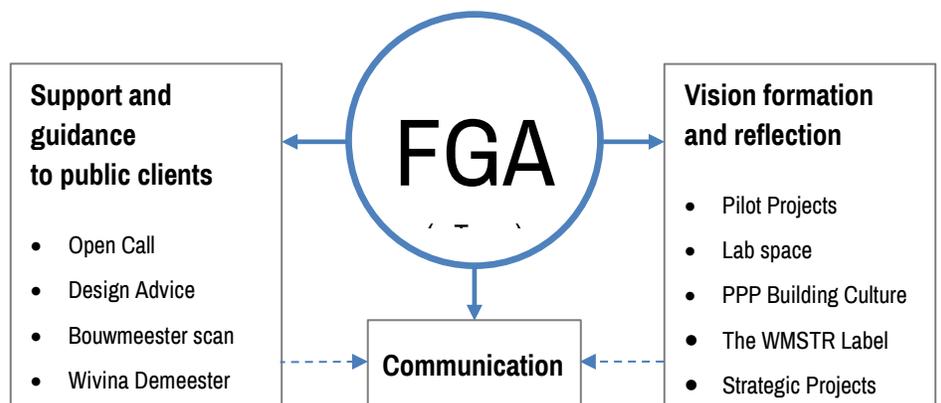


Fig. 3 – The FGA's three main lines of action and instruments.

To help describe its various focal areas and range of instruments, this section will make use of the FGA presentation booklet (2019), recently published on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, that structures the FGA's activities around three main

¹⁰ <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/en/instruments/open-call/more-info>, viewed on 23/04/2020

lines of action: 1. Support and guidance; 2. Contributing to vision formation and reflection, and 3. Communication. This threefold structure will be used to describe the FGA's diverse range of informal tools and initiatives.

4.2.1. Support and guidance to public builders

As was pointed out in Section 3, one of the FGA's main assignments is to provide support and guidance to public developers with the objective of improving the quality of building projects and plans. To achieve this, Bob Van Reeth, the first FGA, established the Open Call procedure to help public clients in selecting designers for architectural and urban design commissions. Besides the Open Call, the FGA also assists with other procedures, such as taking part in juries, providing design advice to municipalities, setting up quality monitoring boards, etc. According to the Flemish Government 'Concept note' (2020), when supporting and assisting public clients, the FGA should pay attention to the following set of principles:

- The FGA's supervision should always be focused on the type of project and the needs of the client;
- The role of the FGA is essentially to guide, support and inspire public developers, which means that the commissioning and final decision ultimately remain with the client;
- Under no circumstances should the FGA take over the client's role in design assignments;
- The FGA should provide guidance during the concept phase, namely: thorough brainstorming about the contract resulting in a solid specification, a responsible pre-selection of possible design offices, and a thorough evaluation of the design proposals, aimed at a high-quality realization of the contract and a widely supported award.

Open Call

As referred to above, the Open Call represents the most important tool and activity of the FGA and their team, that which makes "the existence of the institution most clearly visible and justifies its existence" (Ibelings, 2009, p. 64). Coordinated by FGA team, the Open Call is an innovative method of selecting designers for public commissions based on a two-phase design competition principle that complies with public procurement law and European competition rules. The Open Call is a procedure divided into 10 phases, wherein the FGA team starts by assisting public

clients in drawing up a project definition before bringing them into contact with a range of designers via a biannual (twice per year) call for public commissions.

Since it was first established in 1999, almost 700 Open Call projects have been launched in Flanders and in Brussels (Liefoghe & Van Den Driessche, 2019). In its different editions, the Open Call commissions have covered a wide range of building projects and urban development plans in various fields (education, culture, housing, etc.) with different scales, ranging from subsidized housing and public buildings to infrastructural works, such as bridges and roads (Ibelings, 2009).¹¹

The Open Call is free of charge for all public and semi-public organizations in Flanders, including regional public services, city and municipal authorities, as well as housing agencies, non-profit organizations in the care sector, etc. (Liefoghe & Van Den Driessche, 2019). According to the former FGA (Van Broeck, interview: 2018), in general, half of the commissions originate from small local authorities, usually medium-to-large-sized districts, and the other half from the Flemish government.



Fig. 4 – Open Call 0229 bridge in Vroenhoven (Source: FGA, 2019 © Stijn Bollaert)

Despite the 20 years of experience preparing the commissions and organizing the procedure that leads to the selection of the designers, the Open Call represents a heavy workload for the FGA and their team (Ibelings, 2009, p. 64). In order to optimize this process and its main phases, the Open Call procedure has been restructured several times although its main structure has remained the same.

¹¹ For a full list of projects see:

<https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/en/instruments/open-call>

Currently, according to Liefvooghe & Van Den Driessche (2019, p. 16), the procedure is comprised of the following 10 phases:

1. *The contracting authority consults the FGA* – Usually the initiative comes from the public client-side, who consults the FGA about the possibility of selecting a designer for a project through the Open Call procedure. The concrete challenges of the project and the client's ambitions in terms of quality are discussed and only then will it be decided if the Open Call is the most appropriate procedure;
2. *FGA and the contracting authority sign a cooperation protocol* – A cooperation protocol is signed by both parties, specifying the slight adjustments to procedure, available resources, the number of designers who will participate in the second phase of the competition, the timing and the fees for the designers, the awarding criteria and jury composition, etc.;
3. *The FGA's team assists the contracting authority with developing a well-structured project definition* – With the help of the FGA's team; the public client formulates a project definition, which contains the desires and ambition of the client, the functional requirements and specifications, etc. If necessary, external experts may be called in to contribute to the project definition;
4. *FGA launches a call for tenders* – Twice a year, usually in January and July, the FGA launches an Open Call for designers gathering several public commissions. The list is published on the Tender Bulletin, in the EU Official Journal and on the FGA website, where candidates may access all of the available information about the project, like its construction budget, timing, remuneration of the designers, etc.
5. *Design teams apply with a portfolio and a short motivational text* – National and international design teams can apply, individually or in collaboration, for one or more design assignments. The digital applications include a portfolio of three relevant projects and a brief motivational text reflecting on the contents of the assignment;
6. *The contracting authority selects the design teams together with the FGA* – For each project, the FGA makes a qualitative pre-selection of ten design teams ensuring that this selection includes a diverse range of design approaches, a mix of young and established practices, national and international teams, etc.¹² The public client then selects from a minimum of three up to a maximum of seven teams from this preselection (with an average of five), who are invited to work out a draft design.

¹² Besides being published in the Flemish Tender Bulletin, the Open Call is published in the EU Official Journal, which enables any designer from the EU to apply for one or more public commissions in Flanders.

7. *The contracting authority informs the designers* – In a first briefing session, the public client explains the ambitions and constraints of the project to the selected design teams. After receiving all of the necessary information, a site visit is arranged and the teams can ask questions about the assignment. A second briefing session is arranged with the client in order to address any additional questions;
8. *The design teams submit a proposal* – The designers deliver a first draft design with a vision of the assignment in words and images; the detail of the material varies according to the project. The FGA delivers the designs to the client and to the other jury members.
9. *The designers present their vision to the jury* – The design teams present their proposals to the jury, which includes representatives of the public client and external experts chaired by the FGA. Usually, other competent administrations affected by or involved with the specific project are invited to participate as advisors (e.g. a heritage committee). The jury can interact and posit questions to the designers.
10. *The jury selects a winner and the contracting authority awards the assignment* – After a debate among the members, the jury ultimately evaluates the proposals and selects a winner. A report is then written down and the winning design team is invited to the final contract negotiation for developing the project.

After the Open Call is concluded and the contract is signed between the designer and the public client, the draft design of the winning proposal will then be fully developed in accordance with the specified terms of the contract. To guarantee the design quality follow-up of the project, the public client can still ask seek further advice and expertise from the FGA or the external jury members.



Fig. 5 – Open Call 1202 Parkloods Spoor Noord Antwerp (Source: FGA, 2019 © Stijn Bollaert)

Design advice

Besides the Open Call, the FGA also provides design advice to public developers, which includes the entire Flemish Government, public or semi-public clients, provincial and local authorities or other public authorities. The FGA does not provide advice to private companies or individuals. For projects of strategic importance, the FGA often takes the initiative themselves and addresses public clients in order to assist them in their assignment (Flanders, 2019).

Bouwmeester scan

The *Bouwmeester Scan* is an analysis tool available for local authorities who want to work towards a more sustainable and better use of space. The scan maps the spatial and policy strengths and weaknesses of a given municipality and provides a concrete agenda of projects and interventions. The scan assists municipalities in the transition to a high-quality living environment, linked to a more caring and sustainable approach to the environment and natural resources.

Prize Wivina Demeester

The 'Wivina Demeester Prize for Excellent Commissioning' is a biennial award for inspiring commissioning in the realization of urban, landscape and architectural projects in Flanders, which is not only focused on overall design quality but also in the exemplary commission process developed by the client.¹³ Initiated in 2003 by the first FGA, the prize is jointly awarded by the Flemish Government and the FGA.

Master's Test

To promote opportunities to young designers, the 'Master's Test' challenges public clients to provide young designers and artists with the opportunity to carry out their first public contract. Under the guidance of a project director appointed by the FGA, the most innovative of solutions can be implemented following the approval of a jury. Through this selection procedure, smaller contracts are awarded to the designers through a negotiated procedure without publication (Ibidem).

¹³ In its eighth edition (2014), the FGA prize was restructured and given the name of the former Flemish Minister of Finance

Wivina Demeester. Previously, this prize was named the 'Bouwheer Prize' and the 'Bouwmeester Prize.'



Fig. 6 –'Gravel bins' installation in Ghent by ROTOR (Source: FGA, 2019 © Johnny Umans)

4.2.2. Contributing to vision formation and reflection

The second main assignment of the FGA is to contribute to the development of Flemish architectural policy, vision formation and reflection on relevant themes connected with the FGA's area of work/expertise that may inform stakeholders and provide knowledge about the design of the built environment. Within this area, the FGA's most important instrument are the 'Pilot Projects' that link research with design with the objective of policy-preparation for the realization of concrete pilot projects, developed in collaboration with different stakeholders. According to the Flemish Government's 'Concept note' (2020), when developing initiatives within this strand, the FGA should pay attention to the following set of principles:

- The FGA should always work in consultation and collaboration with other involved sectors and actors;
- The research is application-oriented in serving the function of vision formation in the expertise domain of the FGA, alongside the partnerships, project formulation and project implementation; with particular attention being paid to the issues that are put forward from the public commissioning and architecture field;
- The vision development is fed both simultaneously from the top-down and bottom-up by consultations and feedback from experts and stakeholders. Furthermore, it must represent an opportunity to realize the involvement of the professional field.

Pilot projects

Initiated in 2011, the 'Pilot projects' are an instrument that connect design research with a policy-preparing approach where alliances are established with different stakeholders to enhance reflection and extend any impact. They are intended to produce new insights into current approaches to spatial and social challenges that are considered to be 'urgent' and may require 'out of the box' thinking with a focus on the realization of high-quality exemplary projects (Flanders, 2019). According to Ahmed Kahn (interview, 2020), the introduction of the 'Pilot Projects' by Peter Swinnen (the third FGA), was a practical method of promoting cross-sectoral and network collaboration in order to critically review existing working methods and frameworks, which would counterbalance the FGA's activity that was mostly focused on the Open Call.

The proposals or suggestions for initiating 'Pilot Projects' can be formulated by the FGA themselves as well as by potential partners of both a public and private nature, with a social purpose. To provide some examples, the 'Healthcare' Pilot Projects (2012) responded to the aging population and the need for new models for healthcare provision; the 'Collective Living' Pilot Projects (2013) developed scenarios and methodologies to re-think and reconsider the current trend in housing production in

light of an increasing need for housing within a limited available space; similar to what took place in the 'Back in Circulation' Pilot Project (2014), it was investigated how underutilized and polluted industrial estates can acquire a new meaning within spatial, urban and social development in Flanders¹⁴ (Ibid.).

Although the 'Pilot Projects' are based on collaboration among several partners, according to the FGA website, the management of each edition is assured by a steering group composed of key stakeholders on the topic, external experts and the FGA, who maintains an overview and monitoring of the entire process.¹⁵ Each pilot project's process usually includes the development of five exemplary projects, which are selected and decided between the different partners through an open call. The limited number of projects is also a deliberately choice in order to emphasize the importance of a realization process in the short term.

According to the FGA website, the 'Pilot Projects' consist of the following components/phases:

1. Protocol-based commitment between strategic partners;
2. Composition of the steering group;
3. Prior design research;
4. Scouting potential public, private or public/private builders with relevant project proposals/expressed social ambition (via call);
5. Judging by a steering group, the selection of five pilot projects/developers;
6. Composition of five project teams (designers + clients), launch of a master plan (potential impact on design level implementation);
7. Realization phase (building), quality control by master plan designers.

The above components provide a basis that can be adapted for each pilot project, which means it can be tailored to stakeholders' demands and challenges. In particular, the accompanying portion following the master plan will have to be tailor-made and managed in practice. Nevertheless, agreements in this regard must be laid down in the protocol at the start of the process.

In addition to the above, each edition of the 'Pilot projects' is documented and broadly communicated, both internally and externally, in accordance with the agreements that have been or will be made between the co-initiators. Usually, a communication plan is carried out for each pilot project involving the main partners, as well as about the learning process through symposia and publications, and a

¹⁴ For more information see: <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/subsite/terug-in-omloop> (accessed 16/11/2020)

¹⁵ For more information see: <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/pilootprojecten>

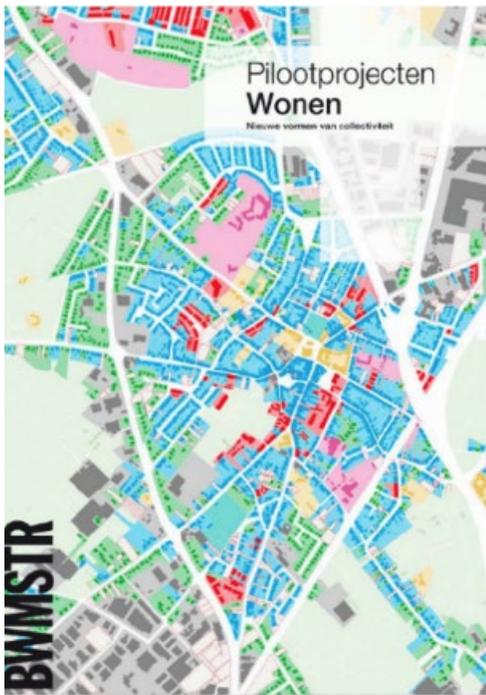


Fig. 7 - Publication of the Pilot Projects 'Collective Living - Phase 1', 2013 (Source: FGA website)

follow-up process is planned with the partners to coordinate the development of the master plans and projects (Flanders, 2019).

Lab space

The 'Lab space - a laboratory for complex spatial issues' is an open partnership between the FGA and the Flemish administration responsible for spatial planning. Depending on the theme, the partnership may be expanded with other administrations, experts, relevant organizations and actors. In this context, the 'Lab space' is a spatial-strategic framework for design research and critical analysis within which, together with various partners and actors, concrete study paths on urgent social issues are set up. Several studies have been developed within this framework, of which several examples are:

- 'Metropolitan Coastal Landscape 2100' which investigated development possibilities for the coast up to 2100, in the context of a changing climate and socio-economic context;¹⁶
- 'Energy landscapes,' which looked for strategies that can integrate renewable energy into our landscape in a sustainable and innovative manner;¹⁷
- 'Metropolitan Landscapes,' which, together with the competent partners of the Brussels Region, explored the guiding role of 'open space' for the metropolitan area of Brussels and its hinterland;¹⁸
- 'Low countries 2030-2100,' in collaboration with the Netherlands, is a joint exploration of spatial potential and metropolitan conditions in the long term¹⁹ (Flanders, 2019).

PPP Building Culture

As in most countries, public-private partnerships (PPPs) are increasingly adopted for the realization of public construction, infrastructural projects, and community facilities in Flanders. To promote spatial and other related social gains in PPP projects, the Flanders Participation Company, the PPP Knowledge Center, and the FGA developed a project seeking to identify the spatial and social gains within PPP. Based on a survey and workshops with stakeholders and experts, a state of

¹⁶ <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/ontwerpend-onderzoek/labo-ruimte/metropolaan-kustlandschap-2100>

¹⁷ <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/labo-ruimte/energielandschappen>

¹⁸ <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/labo-ruimte/metropolitan-landscapes>

¹⁹ <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/labo-ruimte/lage-landen-2030-2100>

affairs was drawn up and a recommendation note was handed over to the professional field and policy managers in 2016 (Ibid.)²⁰.

The BWMSTR Label

Every year, the FGA team searches for strong spatial concepts and integrated research questions that can make a positive social difference in Flanders. In this context, once a year, the *Bouwmeester Label (BWMSTR Label)* seeks innovative and policy-relevant ideas from research and design practice, supporting unsolicited research in its early phase. The laureates receive a modest budget to further develop their project into a file that can be accessed by policy makers and various administrations.²¹

Strategic Projects

The FGA team also provides guidance on a number of strategic projects, either on its own initiative or at the request of partners. For example, in collaboration with several partners in the Brussels Region, an intensive process was undertaken surrounding the development of the Reyers site. In collaboration with the (former) cabinet of the Minister of Administrative Affairs Geert Bourgeois, the AFM Facilities Department, the Department of Administrative Affairs and the Flanders Participation Company, a design study was carried out for the renovation of the Ferrari site in the Brussels North district, framed in a long-term vision for the administrative buildings of the Flemish government in Brussels. The FGA also took the initiative to undertake a study assignment to develop future scenarios for the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (Ibid.).

4.2.3. Communication strategy

Transversal to all the above activities and instruments, the FGA employs communications-based strategies to achieve their goals, namely to promote a culture of best practices and raise design aspirations across governmental sectors. Besides the communicational activities developed by their team, the FGA usually collaborates and works together with other partners (e.g. the Flanders Architecture Institute) to communicate specific themes. The FGA also actively contributes to the wider

²⁰ For more information see: <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/pilootprojecten/pps-bouwcultuur>

²¹ For more information see: <https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/nl/instrumenten/bwmstr-label>

debates on topical issues through participation in and on national and international conferences, publications and other initiatives.

Bouwmeester Office

The FGA office (Atelier Bouwmeester) is where the FGA's team operates and where all *Open Call* juries take place. The Atelier is located in the roundabout of the Ravenstein Gallery in Brussels, a location which prominently makes the spatial policy of the Flemish government and the work and efforts of the Team FGA particularly visible, for both partners and stakeholders and for the general public. Within this space, workshops and public receptions substantively linked to the operation of the FGA Team are regularly organized. The Atelier also includes a gallery for small, limited-duration exhibitions.



Fig. 8 - Workshop 'Metropolitan Coastal Landscape 2100' /Source: FGA, 2019 © Nik Naudts)

Debate and publications

The FGA team regularly publishes publications that disclose the results of their operations and activities to a target audience. The FGA also frequently writes articles about current themes in the professional world of architecture, urban planning and spatial planning on their website or in specialized magazines, which are supplemented by targeted interventions in the general press to actively put themes and projects on the agenda. As Lisa De Visscher (2019) states: "a master builder or a quality chamber are powerful means of stimulating a critical climate. They contribute directly to the debate and their first task is to have a continuous discussion about

architectural quality with clients and government administrations.” This means that besides supporting public clients, the FGA is entrusted with the mission of advancing the Flemish government’s architectural policy, which imbues them with the legitimacy necessary to promote and foster discussion and debate and to have a strong voice within the public administration, the professional media, and the industry.

International cooperation

The FGA also pursues an international cooperation policy, namely through their participation in several conferences abroad. In 2012, the *Vlaams Bouwmeester* team was present at the International Architecture Biennale in Rotterdam, and in collaboration with the Flemish Architecture Institute (VAI), it provided the Flemish contribution to the Venice International Architecture Biennale.

4.3. Selection procedure

The FGA’s appointment is the result of a demanding procedure and each has a mandate of five years (Leo Van Broeck, interview: 2018)²². After a public announcement open to all, candidates are required to describe their vision for their tenure as early as their first application for the post. The first shortlist is determined by an independent jury representing various strata of the built environment disciplines, including both practitioners and academics. Shortlisted candidates move on to the next stage where they are presented with a fictional problem akin to what a Bouwmeester might face, and as such are asked to present their solution in a few different formats, including presentations and writing, within a short amount of time. A final stage then includes interviews with ministers who will ultimately have the final decision. The whole process is entirely anonymous, in that at no stage does a candidate know who their competitors are (Ibidem).

Nevertheless, according to Olivier Bastin (interview: 2018), one of the factors that has been most crucial to the success of the FGA is the fact that most of their team has remained the same since the office’s inception, thus allowing for the preservation of knowledge across various Government Architect mandates.

²² The first FGA was Bob Van Reeth (1999-2005), who was followed by Marcel Smets (2005-2010), Peter Swinnen (2010-2015), Stefan Devoldere (acting position; 2015-2016) and Leo

Van Broeck (2016-2020). In August 2020, the Flemish Government appointed Erik Wieërs as the new FGA for a period of five years (2020-2024)

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

Although the FGA's mission is defined by statute, they do not have any formal (regulatory) tools at their disposal. As referred to previously, their mission is delivered through several informal policy tools in order to help others realize spatial quality projects, to launch innovative research projects, and to participate in public discourse by guiding clients in selection procedures, entering into alliances and responding to current themes. Nevertheless, as noted above, one of the FGA's tasks is to provide advice about sticking points and gaps in the regulations in relation to spatial quality. In this sense, the FGA regularly supervises whichever sets of regulations have an impact on the built environment, so that the position may function as a proactive quality tool that leaves enough scope for creativity within the design process. In this context, the FGA can ask for specific advice from a group of experts in the review of building regulations or other spatial design legislation. Nonetheless, the advice provided about the regulatory framework may or not be followed by the government, which usually also consults with other development actors and stakeholders.²³

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

As explained above, the FGA does not have any decision-making powers when it comes to urban development projects as well as allied financial mechanisms that may influence how certain public or private investments are made. Rather, their work is accomplished by providing support and persuading public developers to pay attention to design quality, which indirectly will improve the overall quality of the public buildings and developments. Nonetheless, as explained in section 3.1, the position of the FGA and their 15-person team are employed and paid for via public expenditure. In addition, besides a specific budget for current expenses, the FGA has an annual budget of more or less €400.000 to promote studies, initiatives, pilot projects, etc., and is also allowed to enter into specific partnerships with other

²³ Within the architectural sector, the representation of the Flemish Architects and the supervision of the profession are

ensured by the Order of Architects and other professional organizations.

stakeholders (e.g. universities) to maximize the outcomes and scope of the initiatives (Ibidem).

7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

The appointment of the FGA expresses a government's commitment to promote better places. However, the FGA's influential capacity and ability to have an impact have limitations as they rely only on 'soft power modalities' to convince others to raise design standards and dedicate enough time and resources for good design to flourish. The built environment is a cross-sectional policy domain, involving different decision-makers at various sectors and levels of public administration, as well as a wide range of private development actors, which means that it will take time to reach a desirable societal change that values design quality. Considering this long-term ambition, the FGA and their team must demonstrate their added value as a key player in the wider design governance system as a complement to the formal regulatory system, so that their position and institution are not seemingly lost amongst political alternation or economic crises.²⁴

Related to the above, the FGA must also identify the right balance between their independent status and their governmental appointment throughout their mandate. Although one former FGA (interview: 2018) argued that he had "the right to speak freely and give opinions on what is better, without having the power to decide (...) even if the truth is annoying, or inconvenient," this represents a continued challenge. On one hand, the FGA is appointed as a contracted staff member for the duration of their mandate by the government (See section 4). On the other hand, the FGA has the status of being an independent expert entitled to provide solicited and unsolicited advice on the quality of public projects, given that they are allowed to make public statements in an apolitical and neutral manner. Considering that an FGA's recommendations are non-binding, FGAs tend to provide unsolicited advice and public statements when they want to raise or criticise certain issues, although they must also be sensible when it comes to "which battles are worth fighting" so it will not

²⁴ In 2014, the Flemish government announced the replacement of the FGA by a board of five part-time experts: "When the mandate of the current Flemish Government Architect has expired, we will set up a Bouwmeester College with an advisory role in the Department of Spatial Planning." It

consists of five part-time expert architects with a temporary mandate and (partly) co-elected by the architectural civil society." This led to national petition against the abolition of the FGA signed by more 2500 people. Source: <https://architectura.be/nl/nieuws/6606/eerste-reacties-op-afschaffing-vlaams-bouwmeester>

create too much hostility among the ones they intend to influence, among which includes governmental bodies.²⁵

Regarding equality issues, in general terms, the FGA promotes the development of better public buildings (e.g. a public school or a library) and improved public open spaces (e.g. a renewed park or infrastructure), which allow for a better quality of life for all citizens and especially those hailing from socio-economic groups which cannot easily access high quality environments. Within the Open Call procedure, the FGA also seeks to guarantee a proper balance between the firms selected in the first phase of the competition, making a qualitative pre-selection of ten design teams and ensuring that it includes a diverse range of design approaches, a mix of young and established practices, national and international teams, etc.

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Although similar bodies may exist in other jurisdictions, a key innovation of the FGA is its broad mission to promote design quality through a ‘soft power’ approach. As noted previously, the FGA does not have any ‘decision making power’ over the development process, which distinguishes them from the ‘city architect’ position that exists in many cities across Europe. This entails that the role does not have formal competences within the spatial planning framework or development control mechanisms conferred by planning or building regulatory frameworks. Rather, the FGA is equipped with a wide range of informal (non-statutory) instruments to support and assist public developers, contribute to vision formation and reflection on urban design, as well as to influence and persuade development stakeholders, other interest groups, and the community to raise their aspirations about the quality of the built environment.

Although the FGA is administratively placed within the Chancellery Department, they are expected to work as an independent expert and advisor to the entire Flemish administration. As was seen in the previous section, this independent status presents some challenges within the wider design governance system. Nonetheless, this “in-and-out” position near to the cabinet offers the FGA the legitimacy to connect

²⁵ In 2015, Peter Swinnen, the third FGA, was dismissed by the Flemish government before the end of his mandate as a result of an audit report. Some news agencies and newspapers

also reported the government’s dissatisfaction with the critical positions the FGA held about certain public projects. For a recap see: <https://www.demorgen.be/nieuws/ontslagen-vlaams-bouwmeester-peter-swinnen-was-geen-onbesproken-blad-bef63b67>

with and work across the whole government, public administration and agencies of the public sector. Compared to their Dutch counterpart, the FGA also represents the innovative nature of providing support to public clients, both at the regional and local levels, as well as housing agencies, non-profit organizations in the care sector, etc. This is mainly done via the aforementioned Open Call, within a top-down and bottom-up perspective, but also through other assistance and advice tools as described in section 4.

The FGA design governance instruments also present some innovations. The Open Call procedure is considered to be less burdensome for designers compared with the traditional design competition process. Based on a two-phase design competition approach, only the teams selected for the second stage of the Open Call (five out of the initial ten) will have the opportunity to develop a design proposal, which avoids all of the applicants investing in a great amount of resources in the first phase of the competition. The 'Pilot Projects' also represent an innovative method of connecting different stakeholders in order to carry out urban design research, ultimately fostering a co-design approach and collaboration about complex spatial issues.

Over the last 20 years, the FGA and their team have been able to affirm themselves as an institution (Ibelings, 2009). Despite some uncertainty in 2014,²⁶ the FGA team has remained untouched and their main mission maintains the same remit. The FGA has also been able to successfully implement the Open Call procedure with a high rate of realized projects. Considering that public clients are not obliged to follow this procedure, it demonstrates that the Open Call is an efficient support service for selecting designers for public commissioning. As an example, despite the City of Antwerp having its own city architect, this local council "often makes use of the Open Call procedure due to the quality of all of the professionals involved" (Ibelings, 2009, p. 67).

About its impact, in a book about the first 10 years of the FGA, Hans Ibelings (2009, p. 17) observes that the current policy implemented in Flanders has been successful with mounting evidence testifying to that fact. One of the visible results would be the high-quality public buildings that received commissioning support by the FGA (ibidem). According to information on its website, in the twenty years it has existed, the FGA has launched 40 Open Calls, the last being in July 2020, which in total amounts to 688 projects. From this number, 303 projects have been or are being realized, 198 were cancelled, with the remainder still in the making, ranging from small schools to medium-sized public offices to urban planning frameworks. Another direct impact has been the vast amount of publications produced by the office, from the 'Pilot Projects' to research projects and other initiatives.

²⁶ See Note 24.

According to Liefoghe (interview, 2020), the FGA's task of providing support has also had an indirect yet positive impact on how public clients undertake and deliver public commissioning. In fact, the Open Call also provides a capacity building activity for all participants, mostly for the principals that represent the public clients. The different stages of the Open Call procedure function as an intensive workshop for the principals, enhancing their skills, competence and knowledge. Another indirect impact has been an enormous driver promoting Flemish building culture and the public awareness of the government's responsibility in improving the quality of the built environment. In part, this has been the result of the FGA's continued activities focused on persuasion and awareness raising, such as the provision of awards, interviews, lectures and debates across Flanders.

9. EXAMPLES

Although the FGA and their team have several instruments at their disposal, the Open Call has remained their main tool for supporting public clients across Flanders and Brussels (Fig. 8). To illustrate some of the Open Call projects, six examples of different buildings projects and plans will be provided below.

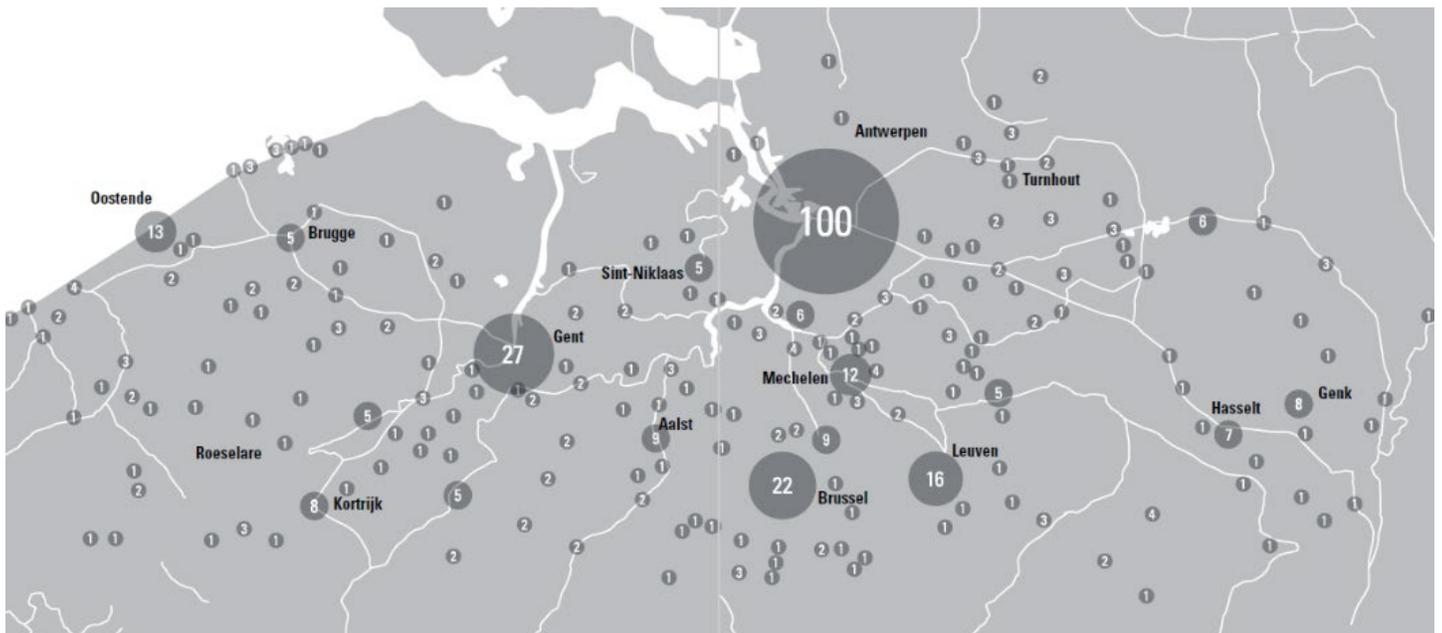


Fig. 9 - Distribution of the Open Call projects between 2000–2013 (Source: Flanders, 2013, p. 15)

1. Saint Ursula Primary School

Open Call: 04 Project: 08

Location: Laeken (Brussels)

Designers: Tom Thys and Adinda Van Geystelen

Year: Award: 2004 - Realization: 2009



Fig. 9 – Saint Ursula Primary School @ Jan Kempeneers

2. Theatre square Antwerp

Open Call: 06 - Project: 11

Location: Antwerp

Designers: Studio Associato Secchi-Viganò

Year: Award: 2004 - Realization: 2009



Fig. 10 – Theatre square Antwerp @ Stijn Bollaert

3. Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum and Documentation

Open Call: 13 - Project: 01

Location: Mechelen

Designers: AWG Architecten

Year: Award: 2008 - Realization: 2012



Fig. 11 – Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum and Documentation, Centre on Holocaust and Human Rights © Stijn Bollaert

4. Master plan and image quality plan for the centre of Retie

Open Call: 16 - Project: 20

Location: Retie

Designers: BRUT

Year: Award: 2009 - Realization: 2012



Fig. 13 – Masterplan © BRUT, LAND, Mint, O2 consultation

5. Residential care centre Sint-Truiden

Open Call: 18 - Project:14

Location: Sint-Truiden

Designers: Van Belle & Medina architects

Year: Award: 2010 - Realization: 2016



Fig. 12 – Residential care centre Sint-Truiden © Tim Van De Velde

6. Waalse Krook Media Library

Open Call: 18 - Project: 01

Location: Ghent

Designers: Cousse & Goris architecten, RCR Aranda Pigem Vilalta arquitectes

Year: Award: 2010 - Realization: 2016



Fig. 14 – Waalse Krook Media Library in Ghent © Tim Van De Velde

10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The appointment of a Chief Government Architect (*Bouwmeester*), or similar governmental unit, is a practical method for the government to implement a public policy on architecture and provide leadership on design governance. Acknowledging that the state is one of the major clients of the construction industry and one of the largest property owners, it should set an example by promoting good practices as the owner, developer and user of public buildings. As has been seen, the FGA has been entrusted with promoting design quality as a cooperative aim across the various agencies and departments of the Flemish government. Through the Open Call and other support tools, the FGA has been able to influence public clients in raising design standards of a wide portfolio of public buildings and developments from different sectors and levels of public administration.

With a reduced team and budget, the FGA assumes a proactive role as an agent of change promoting new concepts and ideas. Taking advantage of their partnerships and collaborative agreements with different stakeholders, the FGA has been developing an innovative design research agenda on relevant topics, thereby producing new knowledge and evidence about design processes and the built environment. In addition, the FGA and their team has been promoting a place-making culture through the awarding of best practices and other persuasion-related activities directed towards development actors, specialized audiences and the wider public in order to raise awareness about the value of design quality.

This means that by setting up a Chief Government Architect team, or a similar governmental unit equipped with a similar set of informal design governance tools aimed at promoting design quality, the government established the institutional framework and resources to inform, influence and support development actors in achieving better places, complementing the traditional “command and control” functions of the state. Through the employment of a wide range of informal cultural and quality delivery tools, this small institutional unit can pursue a national/state design agenda with a medium and long-term view, delivering a vision on the direction that society in general and development actors in particular should take.

Regarding its transferability, the FGA position was established in 1999 following inspiration by the Dutch government’s establishment of their own government architect. Ten years later, this position was also created in the Brussels-Capital Region followed by several other Belgian cities. In 2009, Ireland established the position of the ‘State Architect,’ although with slightly different competences and, more recently, Sweden has appointed its first ‘State Architect’ (Bento & Laopoulou, 2019). Independently of the name and tools at hand, the position of ‘government

design champion' has started to be transferred and transposed to other contexts and thus institutionally adapted to the various administrative frameworks, political and historical paths regarding the governance of urban design.

KEY REFERENCES

- Adams, D., & Tiesdell, S. (2013). *Shaping Places*. Routledge.
- Ancieux, B. (2002). Forward. Em *Jaarboek Architectuur Vlaanderen 2000-2001 (Flanders Architectural Yearbook 2000-2001)* (Vol. 5, pp. 8–9). Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.
- Bento, J. (2012). *Survey on Architectural Policies in Europe*. European Forum for Architectural Policies.
- Bento, J., & Laopoulou, T. (2019). *Spatial design leadership: The role, instruments and impact of state architect (or similar) teams in fostering spatial quality and a place-making culture across five European states*. Government Office of Estonia.
- de Meester, W. (2000). Afscheidsbrief aan de Vlaamse Bouwmeester. *A + bimonthly magazine for architecture, urbanism, design, visual arts*, 1, 65–67.
- De Visscher, L. (2019). Over een kritisch architectuurklimaat “We beginnen veel te laat met het ontwikkelen van een kritische geest”. *Architectuurcultuur in Vlaanderen*, 9–10.
- Flanders. (2013). *Open Call: A public principal's companion* (Vlaams Bouwmeester Team).
- Flanders. (2019). *Team Vlaams Bouwmeester—Presentatie*. Flemish Government Architect.
- Flemish government. (2020). *Vision note to the Flemish Government: Flemish Government Architect (Visienota aan de Vlaamse Regering: Vlaams Bouwmeesterschap)*. The Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Culture, ICT and Facility Management.
- Ibelings, H. (2009). *Designing for the Public. Flemish Government Architect 1999–2009*. SUN Architecture Publishers.
- Kroese, R., Meijer, F., & Visscher, H. (2009). *European Directive for tendering architectural services; a too strict interpretation by Dutch Local Authorities?* 13.
- Liefooghe, M., & Van Den Driessche, M. (2019). *Open Call. 20 Years of Public Architecture (Visitor's guide)*. Atelier Bouwmeester.
- Schreurs, J. (2000). A look at Flemish architectural policy, An inspectorate in the making? *Archis*, 5, 61–65.

Sterken, S. (2016). Ghostwriters of the Young Flemish architecture. Marc Dubois, Christian Kieckens and the Architecture Museum Foundation, 1983-1992. Em *Autonomous Architecture in Flanders. The Early Works of Marie-José Van Hee, Paul Robbrecht & Hilde Daem, Christian Kieckens and Marc Dubois* (Voet, Caroline (Editor) ; Vandermarliere, Katrien (Editor) ; De Caigny, Sofie (Editor) ; Schrijver, Lara (Editor), pp. 76–87). Leuven University Press.

Vervloesem, E., & Sterken, S. (2004). *Flanders Architectural Yearbook 2002-2003*.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Joao Bento, Researcher of Architectural Policies (UCL – Bartlett School of Planning)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Subsidy programme for design competitions

in the Czech Republic (CZ)

Josef Morkus
Ministry of Regional
Development

Josef.Morkus@mmr.cz

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
3. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	7
4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	10
5. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	11
6. CHALLENGES AND OTHER ISSUES	11
7. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	12
8. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION	13
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	17
KEY REFERENCES	18

1. SUMMARY

The programme “Support for architectural and urban competitions” subsidizes a portion of the costs of prizes in design competitions for public buildings, public spaces and planning documents. This programme is organized and funded by the Czech Ministry of Regional Development and is applied in the whole of the Czech Republic.

The programme was originally prepared by the Spatial Planning Department of the Ministry, albeit now the responsible department for the programme is the National Programmes Administration Department. There is a close cooperation between the ministry and the Czech Chamber of Architects, especially with its working group for competitions.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

There are several ways to select the author of a building, urban or public space-related project. For smaller projects, the procurer can choose the author directly, but for projects that are more expensive complicated methods are necessary as laid down by law. Typically, there should be a public tender that is either open to anyone or open only to a set amount of invited candidates. There is also the possibility to organize an architectural or urban competition, generally called a design competition, followed by a subsequent tender in which only the best candidates take part. The use of design competitions is not obligatory in the Czech Republic, regardless of the financial or spatial volume or the type of project. On the other hand, the procurer can employ their use in any case where they find it to be a suitable mode.

In 2015, the Ministry of Regional Development asked EEIP, a company that specializes in economic analyses, to study the economic impacts of current architectural practises in the Czech Republic¹. This analysis was also intended to identify ways to increase the quality of the practices of design and planning. It recommended the use of design competitions, evaluating the economic viability of tenders, and not selecting a supplier solely based on which offered the lowest price. One of the main results of this analysis was the recommendation to increase the use of design competitions.

¹ www.eeip.cz/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/151120_Arch_praxe_MMR.pdf

In 2015, the government also approved the long prepared Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic,² which became the most important stimulus to launch the subsidy programme. The Architecture and Building Culture Policy forms a vision and defines the aims and goals targeted to raise the quality of the built environment. These aims are supported by certain measures, of which two are directly linked to design competitions:

- Organize architectural and urban competitions for important public spaces funded from public budgets (responsible: local governments),
- It is recommended to use architectural competitions when preparing major buildings funded from public budgets (responsible: local and regional governments).

Based on a literature review and on the “architecture think tank”³ held annually, it is evident that architectural and design competitions have a positive impact on the quality of architecture not only in terms of its appearance, but more importantly on its general sustainability over an entire life cycle.

The design competitions provide several benefits compared to other methods of selection for projects and their authors:

- selection based on an idea for a future solution,
- possibility to compare a larger number of designs,
- equal opportunities for participants, including young architects,
- a primary evaluation criterion is quality, not just price,
- can reduce costs associated with the project and its construction,
- cooperation with the expert jury,
- transparent process,
- excellent opportunity to publish and mediate results.

There are of course some drawbacks of this mode compared to other modes of selection, among others:

- it takes more time (on average 3 to 4 months, not including preparation of the competition),
- it is more expensive (additional costs for prizes and organization of the competition),
- it needs more detailed preparation than other modes (which is actually not a drawback),

² https://www.mmr.cz/MMR/media/MMR_MediaLib/Územní%20a%20bytová%20politika/Územní%20plánování/Strategické%20dokumenty/2015_XII_31_Architecture_and_Building_Culture_Policy_of_the_Czech_Republic.pdf

³ Architecture Think Tank, in Czech “OTTA – Otevřený Think Tank architektů”, is a small conference organized by the Czech Chamber of Architects. There are several topics for each edition of this event, with one of them being architectural competitions. A conference on this topic is held annually, summarizes news in that area in the last year, and discusses possible ideas on its improvement.

- the work of most of the architects taking part in the competition is not paid (if there is no flat compensation for submitting a proposal),
- in some cases there is the risk of a non-objective decision by the jury.

Despite these drawbacks, there were no concerns about the increased use of design competitions. Architects are completely free to decide if it is interesting for them to participate in a competition and are not at all obliged to take part in a competition, if they do not agree with its rules. Municipalities who want to organize competitions know about the risks of increased costs, therefore, the Ministry of Regional Development decided to launch this subsidy program. According to the statistics, the estimated costs of a competition are 2 - 2.5% of the total investment costs for the construction, including the costs for awards and rewards, comprising 1 - 2% of the estimated investment costs. These values are also considered indicative in the Competition Order⁴ of Czech Chamber of Architects. Costs of the design competition include:

- awards and rewards for competitors,
- reimbursement of invited participants (if there are any),
- reimbursement of costs to jury and experts,
- preparation of competition terms,
- announcement of the competition,
- announcement of competition results, including eventual exhibition,
- penalty fees.

Before launching the program, a detailed study of the status of architectural and urban competitions in the Czech Republic was conducted. While the number of competitions has varied over the years, generally there have been between 20 and 60 competitions organized every year in the Czech Republic, with the number slowly increasing. Based on the data from the above-mentioned EEIP study, the number of competitions held in the Czech Republic is roughly comparable to neighbouring countries but lags significantly behind the European leaders France and Switzerland. If the data is adjusted according to GDP, the Czech Republic is easily comparable to Poland or Hungary, yet is again significantly behind the leaders, which have switched their positions, with Switzerland being the most active. Still, based on the EEIP study data, approximately 2% of public tenders (by value) are procured using a competition.

⁴ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/media/prilohy/soutezni-rad.pdf>

The analysis of the Ministry of Regional Development revealed that the average value of awards in a competition could range from between 10,000 to 20,000 EUR, with exceptions that range from 570 to 120,000 EUR. The average number of submissions in a competition is 30, but varies significantly from only a few competitors to 410 in the most popular competition. Tomáš Zdvihal has published a thorough analysis of competitions from 1993 to 2019 in the magazine ERA, 2/2020⁵. It revealed that:

- 86% of competitions were organized by public bodies, mostly municipalities (154 municipalities out of 6258 ever organized a competition, 62% of them only once), and only 14% by private bodies,
- 71% of competitions were open, 15% invited,
- 54% were project competitions, the other 46% were looking for ideas,
- 54% competitions were focused on new buildings, 46% on reconstructions.

This analysis also discovered a very positive fact in that 80% of competitions lead to a contract and 95% of these contracts are with the competition winner. From all analysed competitions, 33% were realized, 26% on the way to realization, 28% were not realized, and the state of realization of 13% is unknown. On average, it takes 4.5 years from the beginning of the competition to enter its subject into service, but this value varies significantly from 1.75 to 25 years.

The same analysis also identified the most frequent topics for design competitions in the Czech Republic:

1. Streets, squares (18%)
2. Planning studies, regulatory plans (15%)
3. Cultural and community buildings (10%)
4. Public art, statues, etc. (10%)
5. Offices, public administration (9%)
6. Parks, landscaping (8%)

It is evident that the share of public space, buildings and spatial planning documents is roughly balanced.

Most of the competitions were held in the two largest cities of Prague and Brno, followed by other important cities, yet single competitions were organized even in small towns and villages. The aim of the subsidy programme is to support especially these smaller municipalities with organizing design competitions.

⁵ <https://www.era21.cz/cs/clanky/clanky/2020-04-20-architektonicke-soutezeni-editorial-era21-02-2020/>

3. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION



Figure 1: Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic (2015) Front page of the subsidy programme, Copyright Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic

The works on the subsidy programme started in 2015. After all preparations, the Spatial Planning Department prepared a draft of the subsidy programme and consulted with other departments of the Ministry of Regional Development. Subsequently, consultations were held with the Czech Chamber of Architects and with the Ministry of Finance. Several modifications were made before the final version of the subsidy programme was submitted to the Ministry of Finance, who approved it on 22 August 2018. Following the preceding consultations, the approval process was smooth.

The subsidy programme, besides fulfilling the above-mentioned measures of the Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic, aims to:

- support the quality of buildings and the built environment,
- ensure better modes of selection for architectural and urban works,
- increase the number of architectural and urban competitions in the Czech Republic.

The intention of the support is to encourage a more frequent organization of competitions, especially in municipalities, which would not have considered organizing a competition without the programme.

The subsidy programme is a national subsidy programme, meaning no European funds are used and all resources come from the national budget of the Czech Republic. The programme has been designed for the 2019-2023 period; the first call for submissions was open at the end of 2018 with financing in 2019. The total available budget of the programme is quite low, given that 10 million CZK annually was expected for the programme, but the final yearly allocation is 5 million CZK, which equals approximately 190,000 EUR. The beneficiaries of the programme are solely those municipalities organizing an architectural or urban competition. No private bodies can be beneficiaries, even if they organize a similar competition.

The programme allocates 50% of the money for awards and rewards in the competition from the state budget, with a maximum 400,000 CZK per competition, which equals slightly more than 15,000 EUR. The subsidy limit per competition means that the allocation will not be exhausted by several significant competitions, but more competitions will be supported. If the amount for awards and rewards

in a single competition is higher than 800,000 CZK, the support is 400,000 CZK and the share of support from the state is lower than 50%.

The programme financially supports only awards and rewards, because its calculation is described in the Competition Order of Czech Chamber of Architects and therefore is fully transparent. There is no support from the programme for other costs of the competition, like the preparation of competition terms, the reimbursement of costs to jury members and experts, or the exhibition of submitted designs. The reason for this is that the beneficiaries could disproportionately increase the price of these costs to receive more funds from the programme.

The funding from the programme is ex-post funding, which means that at first, the municipality must pay all the costs of awards and rewards in the competition and later, if it fulfils the rules, it is reimbursed by the programme.

The call for submissions in the programme is announced annually in October or November for the following year. Submissions are accepted for approximately three months following the announcement.

The terms of the programme include the following rules:

- The competition must be open to an unlimited amount of candidates. Competitions where only a limited number of invited participants can take part are not supported. The reason is to make the programme as transparent as possible and support the participation of young architects.
- The purpose of the competition must be a project, not only an idea. The programme supports only competitions that lead to real results in the field.
- The competition terms must be approved by the Czech Chamber of Architects, which is responsible for the supervision of design competitions and checks their regularity.
- The competition terms must indicate the estimated cost of the project or the investment costs according to the planning documentation. The reason for this is that according to the competition order, the adequate sum for awards and rewards is calculated based on this data – for spatial planning documentation it is around 10% of the expected value of the documentation, while for buildings, depending on its complexity and expected costs, ranges from 0.05% to 2.25%, with the average being around 1%.
- The subject of the competition is quite broad, as the programme is intended for buildings or public spaces (including reconstructions) funded from public budgets and for concepts for future planning studies, municipal spatial plans or regulatory plans.

Each submitted request for support is evaluated and receives a certain number of points according to a clearly set rubric. These are the following criteria:

- the population of the municipality (the smaller the municipality, the more points it receives),
- monument protection of the area (points for a location in a monument protection area),
- allocated funds for the project (points if the municipality already allocated resources for the project),
- it is the first application by the municipality for the program (points if the municipality has never received support from the programme),
- number of applications in a given call (points for only one or two projects),
- date and time of application (if two or more municipalities receive the same points, the earlier submission is given preference).

If there are submissions for more support than the allocated money in the programme for the concerned year (usually 5 million CZK), the municipalities that fulfilled the criteria and have the highest points receive the support. If the resources are sufficient, all beneficiaries that fulfil the criteria receive the support. Typically, the allocated resources in the program are adjusted to satisfy all municipalities that fulfil the criteria. Non-successful municipalities can request the subsidy in the next call for submissions.

There are generally two people in the Ministry of Regional Development who (besides other activities) administer this programme (due to possibility for substitution/replacement) and one supervisor. The administrators do not interfere at all in the juries of the competitions nor supervise the competitions (that is the role of the Chamber of Architects). The administrators “only” verify the conformity of the submissions to the programme regarding the programme’s terms.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

Design competitions are regulated by the Public Procurement Act⁶ and architectural and urban competitions are regulated by the Competition Order⁷ of the Czech Chamber of Architects. Buildings as well as spatial planning documents are regulated by the Building Act⁸ and related decrees and norms. The subsidies are regulated mainly by the Budgetary Rules.⁹ Architectural and urban competitions are organized in the framework of the current legislation and the programme has no ambition to modify or supplement the legislation.

The Ministry of Regional Development organized two seminars for potential beneficiaries of the programme. For the next calls for submission, an online format for these seminars will be considered. Clear communication if and in what form will the call for submissions be opened is crucial to the success of the programme.

The programme is not the only supportive tool for design competitions. On its website,¹⁰ the Czech Chamber of Architects presents announced competitions as well as their results, publishes a yearly book summarizing the competitions, publishes guidelines and templates for the organization of competitions, trains professional juries, and provides further support for the organizers of the competitions.

The Ministry of Regional Development also supports the organization of competitions with other tools, especially through awards. It issues the Award of the Ministry for Regional Development for promoting quality construction through architectural competitions within the Czech Architecture Awards. The laureates in recent years included a reconstruction of a pub in a small village or the conversion of a cinema to a multifunctional hall with a café. Other awards issued by the ministry include the award for the best urban project within the Building of the Year Award or the Architect of the Municipality award, which appraises cooperation between architects and self-governments.

An important step to support the quality of projects was made in 2016, when the new Public Procurement Act¹¹ declared that, for larger architectural and building projects, the procurer cannot select a project solely based on the price criteria.

⁶ <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2016-134>

⁷ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/media/prilohy/soutezni-rad.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2006-183>

⁹ <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2000-218>

¹⁰ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze>

¹¹ Act No. 134/2016 Coll., Public Procurement Act, § 114 par. 3 let. b), <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2016-134>

5. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The tool itself is a financial mechanism intended to support municipalities in promoting better quality in the built environment. As mentioned above, the financial framework for the programme is 5 million CZK per year, which equals approximately 190,000 EUR. In 2019, eight projects (comprising 19% of all design competitions held in the Czech Republic that year) submitted a request for support with a total value of 2,119,000 CZK, which equals approximately 80,000 EUR. The average requested support was 10,000 EUR per project, ranging from 6,200 to 15,000 EUR per project. Five of these projects met the criteria of the programme and therefore 1,345,000 CZK, equalling approximately 51,500 EUR, was paid from the state budget. The allocation for the programme was not fully used, but the requested average amount of support per competition was in line with the expectations, although the total number of submissions and candidates that met the rules was below expectations.

6. CHALLENGES AND OTHER ISSUES

During the preparation of the programme, the most important issue was to allocate time resources for this topic within the Ministry of Regional Development. The main challenge was to analyse properly the needs of the beneficiaries by studying the design competitions from past years. There was not a crucial problem with approving the program, mainly because the overall allocation is low.

Sadly, there is not a common political agreement on the necessity of this programme. For 2020, the call for submissions was not open, partly because there was a need to lower the spending from public budgets, and partly due to the change in the department responsible for the program within the Ministry in 2019. Support for other areas, for example the fight against the bark beetle, was given priority. The main problem probably was not the total amount of money needed for this support, but the time needed to administrate the applications.

There is still a discussion if the call for submissions will be open again in 2021. Mainly the professional community (Czech Chamber of Architects) and part of municipalities support the programme. Hopefully the initiative of the department that was responsible for the initial creation of the programme will be strong enough to convince the decision makers about benefits of this programme.

There were requests to modify the programme and to open it up to a broader spectrum of beneficiaries. Requests for modification, which were not accepted, included:

- opening it to the city districts of larger towns as beneficiaries, not only to municipalities,
- opening it to invited competitions, not only to open competitions,
- opening it to idea competitions, not only to project competitions.

The following modifications to the programme will most likely be accepted:

- opening it to all public infrastructure, not only that funded from public budgets,
- the beneficiary must realize the project within 10 years,
- no bonuses for one or two submissions from one municipality,
- no bonuses for being financially prepared to realize the project,
- no need to submit a paper version.

The programme is completely neutral regarding gender, age, religion and sexuality. It prefers the allocation of resources to areas with cultural value (areas of monumental protection) and prefers smaller municipalities, although it does not exclude other municipalities.

7. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

It has been proven that the quality of built environment arises from a project's quality, and relatively it is believed that competitions support project quality. The key to innovation is a subsidy programme, which supports the organization of architecture and urban competitions. In this case, it is funded by the state, but similar tools could be organized at any governance level or by a non-profit organization.

This case proves that even the slightest level of assistance matters, and that a programme can be successful even with a limited amount of resources (in 2019, the support from the state budget was roughly 50,000 EUR). On the other hand, there is a need to secure enough time resources for the managers of the programme and to ensure that good and timely information on the programme is disseminated, as well as support provided to beneficiaries both on the technical aspects of the programme and on the topic of design competitions in general.

The intention of the programme was to expand the use of competitions, which does not seem to be evidenced from the short period the programme has been implemented for. On the contrary, a definitively positive impact is that the programme has contributed to the discussion on the topic and helped spread the information to a significantly broader audience.

Another expected result was to inspire smaller municipalities to organize their own competitions. In the 2019 call for submissions, three groups of municipalities submitted their projects: two small municipalities of one to two thousand inhabitants, two small cities of around five thousand inhabitants and four larger cities between 16,000 and 75,000 inhabitants. Thus, while small municipalities participated, they were not prevalent. Larger municipalities would presumably organize the competition even without the subsidy programme, but the subsidy could have supported this idea.

An important aspect of the programme is the need to keep it as transparent as possible. In the described case, it means supporting only competitions that allow the participation of any architects or studios or to set clear and exact criteria for the selection of beneficiaries.

8. Examples of implementation

In the 2019 call for submissions, a diverse array of projects applied for the support:

- two community centres,¹²
- the reconstruction of a cinema,¹³
- a project for a centre of a municipality,¹⁴
- a park by a theatre¹⁵ and a leisure zone by a river,¹⁶
- planning study for a square,¹⁷
- and a fountain¹⁸.

Five of them met the terms of the programme and should be realized in the near future.

¹² <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/komunitni-centrum-ricansky-mlyn>

¹³ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/rekonstrukce-a-dostavba-kina-a-uprava-okoli-ceska-kamenice>

¹⁴ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/centrum-obce-stredokluky>

¹⁵ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/divadelni-park-ve-zline>

¹⁶ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/odpocinkova-zona-cidlina-jicin>

¹⁷ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/centrum-stepnice-uherske-hradiste>

¹⁸ <https://www.cka.cz/cs/souteze/vysledky/vodni-prvek-na-hornim-namesti-ve-znojme>



Figure 2: HORKÝ, Jan (2019) Reconstruction of a Cinema in Česká Kamenice, received a subsidy from the programme in 2019, Copyright Jan Horký, <http://www.atelierhorky.cz/detail/6>



Figure 3: City of Česká Kamenice (2019) Photo of current state of the competition site from the Competition Specifications, Copyright City of Česká Kamenice, https://zakazky.ceska-kamenice.cz/document_download_7.html



Figure 4: REFUEL, s.r.o. (2019) Community centre Říčanský mlýn, received a subsidy from the programme in 2019, Copyright Refuel, <https://refuelworks.com/work/ricansky-mlyn/>



Figure 5: Říčany Municipality (2018) Photo of current state of the competition site from the Competition Specifications, Copyright Říčany Municipality, <https://www.e-zakazky.cz/stazenisouboru/8ca8cfb0-d6f0-4bfc-9481-66fd8dce3bec>



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

Figures 6 to 9: Community Centre in Horažďovice (2019), City of Horažďovice; competition was a candidate for a subsidy from the programme in 2019, Source: <https://www.horazdovice.cityupgrade.cz/index.php?p=vysledky>

Figure 6: Copyright Ondřej Císler (Aoc architekti), Josef Choc, Filip Rašek, Vojtěch Beran, Barbora Lopraisová, Jano Vyšný - 1st prize

Figure 7: Copyright JIKA-CZ s.r.o., Jan Kubát, Linda Boušková, Filip Musálek - 2nd prize

Figure 8: Copyright Norma architekti s.r.o., Jana Moravcová, Petr Bureš, Jan Skoček, Mikuláš Novotný - 4th to 5th prize

Figure 9: Copyright Caraa.cz s.r.o., Štěpán Kubiček, Martina Buřičová, Lenka Levičková, Oto Melter, Michal Slyusar - 4th to 5th prize

9. Key lessons and transferability

The subsidy programme for the support of architectural and urban competitions seems to have been welcomed in the Czech Republic, especially by the professional community (architects). It seems to be highly transferable to those countries that want to make use of design competitions more frequently, or simply to those who want to raise awareness of architectural and urban competitions. The tool must respect local conditions and legislation, but the system might work similarly in other countries without serious problems, as the principle is quite simple and is not site-specific.

The recommended approach is to not try to interfere in the design competitions, their processes, or their results, or to modify the way they worked without the subsidy programme. The programme simply focuses on the support of their use and has clearly defined and transparent criteria to assess whether the project should receive a subsidy.

These are the following recommendations for those who would like to transfer the tool to other countries:

1. The terms of the programme should not be too restrictive or difficult. If the terms are too restrictive, the impact of the programme will be lessened. If the terms, requirements and conditions are too difficult, the beneficiaries will not benefit from the programme either.
2. The subsidy programme should be evidence-based. It is necessary to study at least the amount of money spent on awards and rewards as well as the number of competitions held in recent years in order to set real targets. Do not expect revolutionary changes.
3. Co-operation with experts is highly beneficial, as it is prudent to leave the support and supervision of competitions to professionals (chamber of architects) and not interfere in their field of work.
4. Early communication of the subsidy and further support are necessary. It is crucial to share information about the subsidy and its conditions early on, so that any potential beneficiaries can have adequate preparation time. It is also necessary to provide training and other tools, for example awarding those demonstrating good practices.
5. Success depends on the will of individual people. If they are not willing to run and improve the programme, it will quickly disappear.

KEY REFERENCES

- Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic (2018) Podpora architektonických a urbanistických soutěží - Dokumentace programu 117D15, Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic, Prague, <https://www.mmr.cz/cs/narodni-dotace/podpora-uzemniho-planovani-a-architektonickyh-u/architektonicke-a-urbanisticke-souteze>
- Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic (2015) Architecture and Building Culture Policy of the Czech Republic, Ministry of Regional Development Czech Republic, Prague, [https://www.mmr.cz/cs/ministerstvo/stavebni-pravo/koncepce-a-strategie/politika-architektury-a-stavebni-kultury-ceske-\(1\)/politika-architektury-a-stavebni-kultury-ceske-rep](https://www.mmr.cz/cs/ministerstvo/stavebni-pravo/koncepce-a-strategie/politika-architektury-a-stavebni-kultury-ceske-(1)/politika-architektury-a-stavebni-kultury-ceske-rep)
- Czech Chambre of Architects (2019) Soutěžní řád České komory architektů, Czech Chambre of architects, Prague, <https://www.cka.cz/cs/media/prilohy/soutezni-rad.pdf>
- EEIP, a.s. (2015) Dopady architektonické praxe na ekonomiku ČR, EEIP, a.s., Prague, http://www.eeip.cz/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/151120_Arch_praxe_MMR.pdf
- ZDVIHAL, Tomáš (2020) 30 let soutěží v ČR, ERA21, 02/2020: 20-23, <https://www.era21.cz/cs/clanky/clanky/2020-04-20-architektonicke-soutezeni-editorial-era21-02-2020/>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Josef Morkus, Ministry of Regional Development CZ, Josef.Morkus@mnr.cz

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Applying land value capture tools

lessons from Copenhagen and Freiburg

Nicholas Falk

Executive Director and
Founder of The URBED
Trust

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. THE CASE FOR LAND VALUE CAPTURE (LVC).....	4
2. THE CHALLENGE OF URBAN FINANCE	7
3. LESSONS FROM GERMAN URBAN DEVELOPMENT MEASURES	10
4. LESSONS FROM DENMARK AND PUBLIC ASSET CORPORATIONS	15
5. LESSONS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES.....	19
6. CONCLUSIONS FOR POLICY.....	21

INTRODUCTION

How can communities harness the value of land to build better places? The high cost of land is often blamed for the shortage of affordable housing and social infrastructure, including a lack of green space in new developments. As such, it can lead to mushrooming tower blocks in a few small areas and ugly urban sprawl on the edges of towns and cities. Yet some cities, notably in Northern Europe, have avoided the excesses of housing price inflation, congestion and pollution, and thereby kept land costs down. They have instead invested in making active travel and public transportation more attractive than an over-dependence on private cars. In doing so, they have used proactive planning and brokerage skills to build characterful new settlements that are well-connected to existing towns and cities.

This paper summarises the theory of Land Value Capture (LVC) and its role in funding local infrastructure, with a brief review of the Dutch experience with new settlements, before moving on to case studies involving innovative projects in Germany and Denmark in order to draw general conclusions on the best methods and techniques for controlling and tapping into land values. Further references and examples are set out in Nicholas Falk's policy paper for the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) with eleven recommendations for applying best practices in the UK.¹

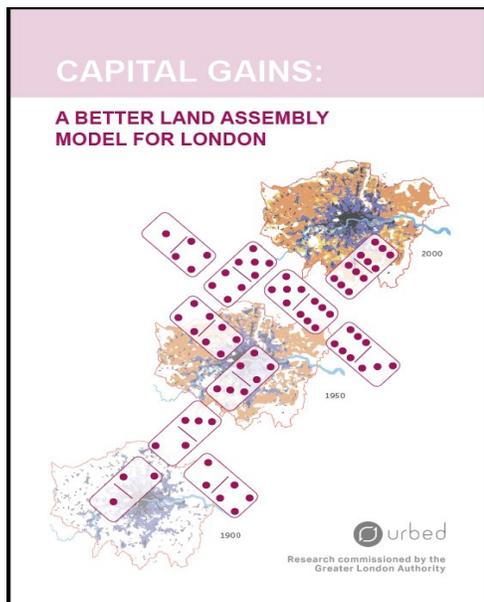
¹ Nicholas Falk, Sharing the Uplift in Land Values: a Fairer System for Funding and Delivering Housing Growth, TCPA 2019, [www, UK2070.org.uk](http://www.UK2070.org.uk)

1. THE CASE FOR LAND VALUE CAPTURE (LVC)



The basic principle behind LVC is that property values are created by rising prosperity, accessibility, and planning consents. Hence, it is only fair that the community enjoys a share, especially when it is government that funds and provides the improved infrastructure. Unfortunately, fierce and expensive disputes can arise that lead to long delays and blight—what economists call ‘free riders’ wait for values to rise before making their land available. This led the Ebenezer Howard, the English pioneer of Garden Cities, to propose using the ‘*unearned increment*’ to fund infrastructure in planned new settlements that combined the best of town and country.² Land assembly would form the basis of Britain’s Post-war New Towns programme, and the eventual hundreds of smaller examples that have been developed all over the world.³

Some on the political right argue that property owners should be free to do as they please with their land. However, values depend on demand, which in turn is influenced by locational factors such as infrastructure, which can be either innate or publicly provided. The value of a plot of land is a *residual*, which is the difference between the value of whatever use is permitted and the costs of development. Furthermore, social justice necessitates a certain level of control over the environmental and social impacts of development. So, although there will be resistance to sharing the uplift in land values from those who benefit from the current system, urban sprawl and poor design are not in the long-term interest of their countries and therefore LVC does not conflict with basic human rights.



There are three main ways in which government can capture land values (apart from relying on death duties and other forms of general taxation). The first is to **tax developers or house builders**. This has been estimated to account for about 10-15% of development costs in the UK, perhaps half of uplift in all.⁴ The criticism from the private sector is that negotiations deter development, with complex viability tests and evasion. A second way, proposed in the *Future of Planning White Paper*, is an Infrastructural Levy on the value of completed developments, in order to **charge those who benefit after houses have been built**.⁵ This is similar to the US system

² Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, 1902, Dodo Press

³ Robert Stern et al, *Paradise Planned: The Garden Suburb and the Modern City*, The Monacelli Press, 2013

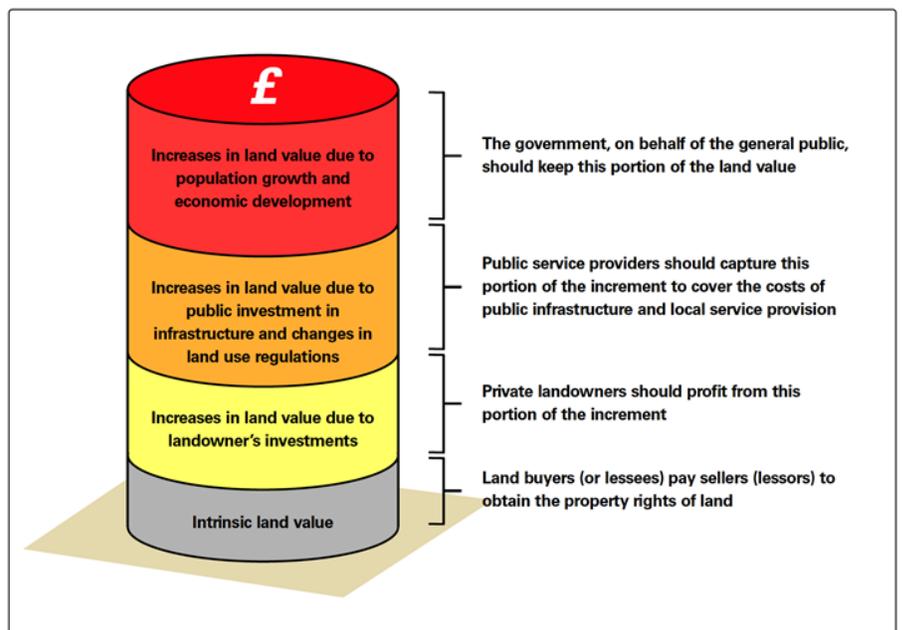
⁴ Tony Crook, *Capturing Increases in Land Value*, UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, 2020

⁵ *Planning for the Future*, 2020 www.gov.uk

of Tax Increment Finance, in which local authorities issue bonds based on the expected increase in property taxes after land is developed. A third, and possibly best, method is to **assemble the land** and take a share in the development. Our research report for the Greater London Authority used Dutch, German, French and US experiences on acquiring, incentivising and resourcing land assembly with case studies of exemplary projects.⁶

The images of the report covers show how London has grown like a game of dominoes—the highest land values (and hence potential for land value capture) can be found in locations on the edge of the capital city which are close to countryside yet accessible by adequate public transport. This trend was used to good effect in developing the railway lands at London’s Kings Cross and the port and gas works area in the London Docklands developments. Furthermore, this is the method used by leading world cities such as Singapore, and which is widely used in France through what have been termed ZACs (Zone d’Aménagement Concerté), where publicly acquired land is coupled with investment in transport.

An excellent and freely available book from the World Bank Group examined different approaches to funding transport projects with a useful pillar diagram that depicts how increases in land value should be divided up in order to achieve fairer and more effective outcomes.⁷ The researchers’ preference was for land assembly as the best means of raising finance for transport infrastructure.



The costs of infrastructure should be recovered through land value capture¹

⁶ Capital Gains: A Better Land Assembly Model for London, URBED with Dentons and Gerald Eve, 2018
www.urbedtrust.com

⁷ H Suzuki et al, Financing Transit Oriented Development with Land Values, World Bank Group, 2015

Despite its appeal, such an approach can be controversial. At a meeting of researchers funded by the European Union entitled PUVACA held in Sarajevo in 2018 where convincing presentations were given by cities such as Munich and Bordeaux as well as from the UK, there was clear resistance to the idea from former members of the Communist bloc.⁸ This is because there, private property is now regarded as unassailable. Yet, it is in fact in everyone's best interest to have good, adequate infrastructure. As such, some form of capturing the inherent value of land should win general acceptance, provided the case is well designed and actively promoted, for example through attitude surveys and discussions in the media. Land Value Capture is currently the subject of a major international research project conducted by the OECD to produce a 'global compendium' of land value capture techniques, and given increasing demands and falling tax revenues, this topic is likely to be of increasing public interest.⁹

As well as influencing the affordability of housing and the provision of infrastructure, the cost of land can influence design in four main ways:

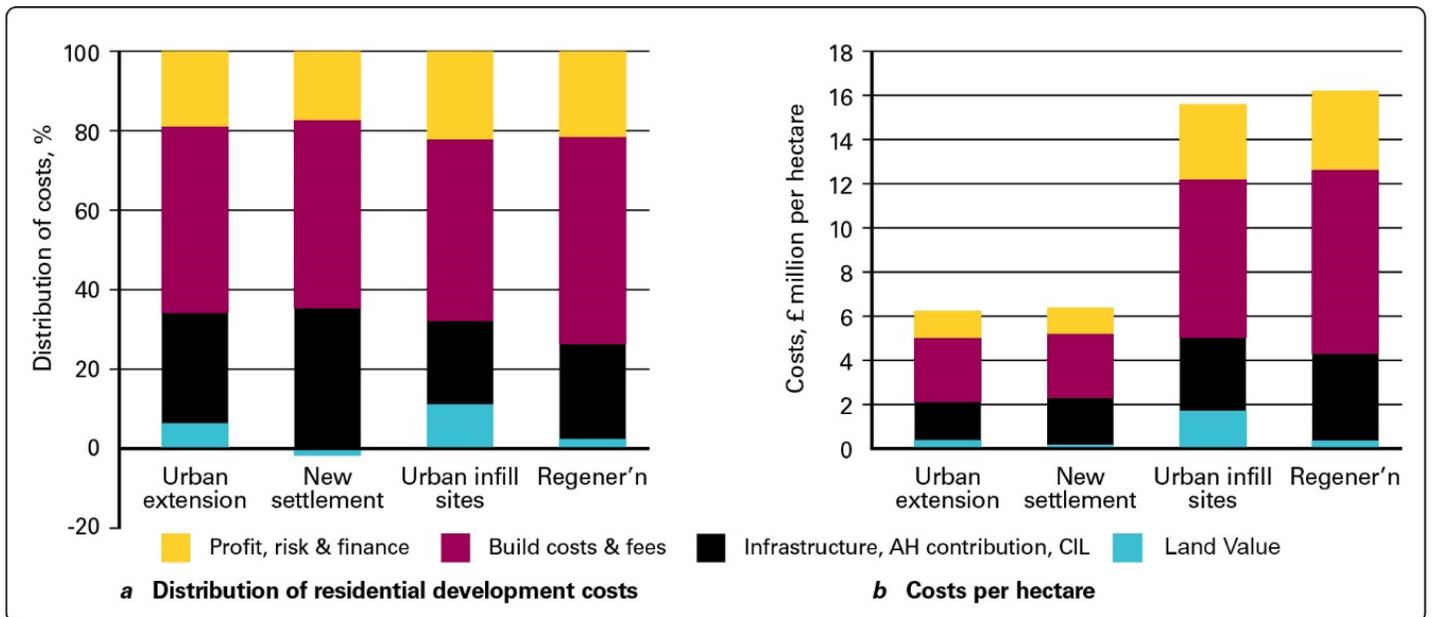
- Because land can represent such a high proportion of the cost of development (especially in high demand areas where developers compete for sites), quality and community benefits such as affordable housing may be sacrificed.
- Competition for sites may lead to concentrations or local monopolies. When only a few large developers control the supply, smaller builders or cooperatives find it hard to compete. Hence, both choice and the speed of development can suffer.
- Where housing price inflation is greatest and the supply of land is effectively monopolised, spatial inequalities will grow, alongside, for example, marked differences between different tenures and locations, which may ultimately lead to social conflict.
- Without adequate sources of local taxation, local authorities that lack the capacity to influence quality through land ownership tend to accept whatever is proposed. Even though poor quality may reduce long-term demand and hence economic growth, their powers of negotiation will be limited.

⁸ www.puvaca.eu (The Public Value Capture of Increasing Property Values)

⁹ Land Value Capture - OECD.org

2. THE CHALLENGE OF URBAN FINANCE

Before considering case studies, it helps to understand the impact land values have on development by drawing on the British experience. A common challenge for all cities is raising the financing necessary to meet demands for better transport, affordable housing, and more recent measures to tackle climate change. However, land and infrastructure can often cost as much as the construction of the houses on top of that land, particularly where new settlements are involved and there is a rapid rate of growth.¹⁰ The diagram depicts that, although the cost of land in greenfield sites can be lower, the profits from developing urban infill sites can be higher because the demand will be stronger and infrastructural costs can be shared. Incidentally, infrastructure can include green and blue open spaces, as well as social housing. The cost of land is often the only variable and as such should be the 'residual' or difference between the value of an approved scheme and the cost of delivering it.



In a rapidly growing historic university city such as Oxford, planning objectives or priorities may include supporting a knowledge-based economy, making housing more affordable, cutting/limiting unnecessary car use (and hence pollution), and reducing social divisions.¹¹ Planning policies will therefore seek to influence development and negotiate contributions. As earnings influence house prices and hence land values, there are issues of regional as well as local disparities and how

¹⁰ Source Pete Redman, Housing Futures for URBED

¹¹ Nicholas Falk, The Oxford Metro: Connectivity for a Smarter City, www.urbedtrust.org, 2020

far the burden should be borne by the young or the old, or shared between the house buyers and existing residents.

Taxes are always resisted, and often evaded. Hence eminent economists tend to agree that the 'least worst' taxes are those levied on wealth rather than on income, since they assist in the creation of fairer societies, accord with the principle of social justice, and avoid the *'corrosive effect of barristers and the limited ability of judges to appreciate, or even care about, the public interest.'*¹² Furthermore, charges on real estate, which are readily identified on maps or through aerial photography, are easier to recover than those on other sources of income which can be hidden or moved out of the country. If the proceeds from the charge are not frittered away on prestige projects or through corruption, it is possible to secure popular approval, for example by using bonds to fund new infrastructure using what in the US is called Tax Increment Finance (TIF).

Land value can then be captured from the expected increase in property taxes when development is successful. In North America, this is achieved through bonds raised by local authorities, where a vote is first taken on whether to issue a bond only after the viability of the project has been scrutinized, but before it has been offered up for subscription. To keep financing costs down, bonds need to be underpinned by land values, as both planning permission and the provision of infrastructure results in increased demand. In Europe, a similar role is played by state infrastructure banks such as Caisse des Depots in France, KfW in Germany and BNG in the Netherlands.

Here we concentrate on lessons learned from Northern Europe, with further case studies available in URBED's report for the Greater London Authority on land assembly.¹³ France, Germany and the Netherlands use spatial planning to locate major new developments where they can be coupled with infrastructural capacity, yet avoid areas of high agricultural value. In most of Northern Europe, to counter problems such as fragmented and problem sites, alongside sluggish owners or speculation, land for development is identified through a spatial planning process so that in long run it is public interest that prevails. Even in North America progressive cities such as Portland, Oregon promote intensification surrounding transit nodes as a means of containing urban growth rather than simply reacting to proposals from developers.

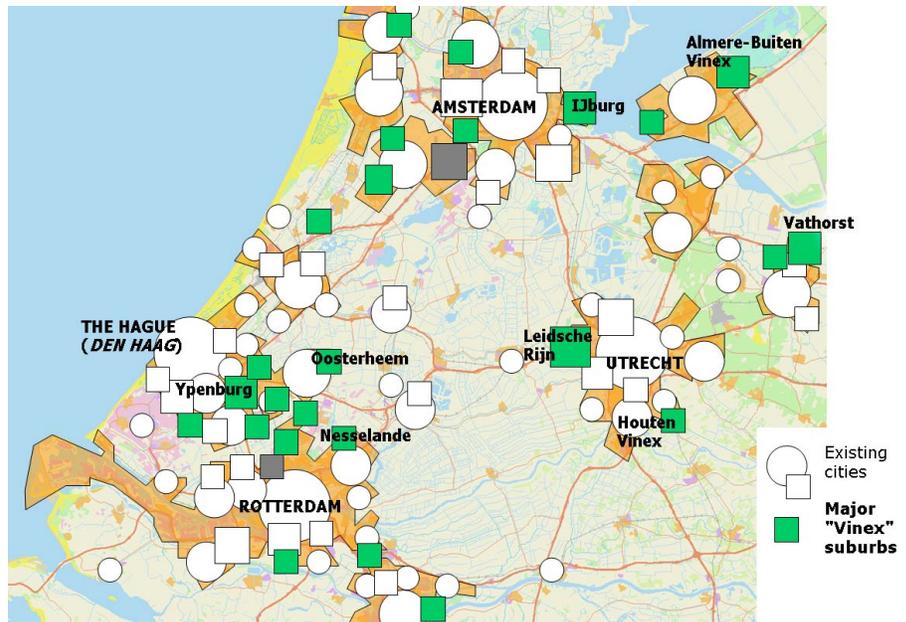
A particularly important model for securing quality design in new settlements can be found in the Netherlands. Case studies on the Dutch VINEX National Housing Plan, and on urban extensions in mid-sized towns such as Amersfoort or Houten, suggest

¹² E. g. Paul Collier, *The Future of Capitalism: facing the new anxieties*, Penguin, 2019

¹³ Nicholas Falk et al, *Capital Gains: a better land assembly model for London*, URBED Trust with Dentons and Gerald Eve, 2018 www.urbedtrust.com

that the better results they have achieved do not stem from exceptional designers or charismatic politicians, but rather can be owed to a planning process that drives land values rather than merely responding to them.¹⁴ This process involves a more collaborative approach to development, using financial tools and community engagement, as well as more building regulations that achieve higher standards of local infrastructure, such as energy and transport systems.

VINEX involved around a hundred urban extensions, which expanded the Dutch housing stock by 7.6% over a ten year period. The maps below depict how development took place around a ‘green heart’ on the edge of mid-sized towns and cities. Development was made viable through government support for land assembly and the availability of low cost financing from the Dutch state bank BNG for the installation of infrastructure.¹⁵ Dutch councils are able to transfer property rights to a public development agency under what is known as the **Building Rights** or First Choice model. The land is pooled and the original owners subsequently receive serviced land back in proportion to their original holding. While land value capture should be seen as just one of the tools required for quality growth, it is nevertheless a critical one.



VINEX settlements are built on the edge of towns and cities (source: Han Lorzing)

¹⁴ Peter Hall with Nicholas Falk, *Good Cities Better Lives: How Europe Discovered the Lost Art of Urbanism*, Routledge 2014

¹⁵ Nicholas Falk, *Funding Housing and Local Growth: How a British Investment Bank Could Help*, Smith Institute, 2014

Planning is controlled by democratically elected councils rather than left to the property owners or developers, who are required to conform to approved zoning plans and design principles, as the examples below from Freiburg illustrate. A review of social housing in Europe concludes that *'The German planning system is a mixture of plan and development-led approaches. It is characterised by hierarchical planning powers among the three levels of the government: the federal state (Bund), the local states (Länder) and the local municipalities (Gemeinde).'*¹⁶

Though Germany is a federal state, meaning that cities and regions have a greater degree of independence, local authorities follow a similar system in terms of prioritising the better use of *'poorly or under-used land.'* The German constitution, which was drawn up to prevent a return to dictatorship as mentioned previously, states that *'Property entails obligations. Its use should also serve the public good.'* Article 15 of the constitution further states that *'Land, natural resources and means of production may, for the purpose of socialisation, be transferred to public ownership or other forms of public enterprise by a law that determines the nature and extent of compensation.'*

As power rests with the municipality, public support is established before designation and land acquisition through a variety of forums. The master planner is typically selected following a competition in which the public can comment on or vote for their preferred scheme, and one of the short-listed designers must be selected to implement the plan. Because land values are 'frozen' after designation, there is less danger of speculation leading to an escalation of land values. This means that sales cannot be made at a higher price, and the local authority is effectively able to exercise Compulsory Purchase powers, (or what in the US is referred to as Eminent Domain, to convey the idea of a larger public purpose that prevails over private property rights).

Significant respect for human rights is enshrined in part of the constitution, called the **Basic Law**. As such it is the municipality, elected by the residents, that decides what land will be developed, not the property owners. The municipality not only decides what areas will be subject to the plans or **zoned**, but also specifies the **codes** or rules (as is being proposed in a government White Paper for the UK¹⁷). The German planning law, which is set out in the Building Codes (**Städtebauliche Entwicklungsmaßnahme 165-171**) not only allows for the speedy public assembly of under-used land, but also enables the municipality to recover the costs of land preparation.¹⁸ What is called **Unlegung** is a process for readjustment in which the municipality retains land equal to the increase in value subject to a cap of 30% on

¹⁶ Michael Oxley, The Future of Social Housing: learning from Europe, IPPR 2000

¹⁷ Planning for the Future, DHCLG, 2020

¹⁸ This information was provided by the legal department of the City of Freiburg thanks to help from the city's former director of development Wulf Daseking

greenfield land and 10% on inner city land. The municipality ‘pools’ the land and resells serviced sites to either the previous owners or small-scale developers, unless the landowner is able to undertake the agreed upon plan themselves and within a certain timeframe. The *Urban Maestro* paper on what is called ‘concept tendering’ lays out how the basic design principles are determined and set before bids are invited.¹⁹

Such a system enabled the City of Freiburg to develop the exemplary urban extensions of Vauban and Rieselfeld on the edges of the built-up area, linked to the rest of the urban area by extensions to the city’s tramways and possessing extensive greenery and community facilities such as shops and schools. Sites for housing were made available to building groups (**Baugruppen**), some 130 in all, which according to Wulf Daseking, the former development director, enabled a much greater diversity of designs and a more rapid rate of development to be achieved than relying on private developers.



Aerial view of Rieselfeld, Freiburg



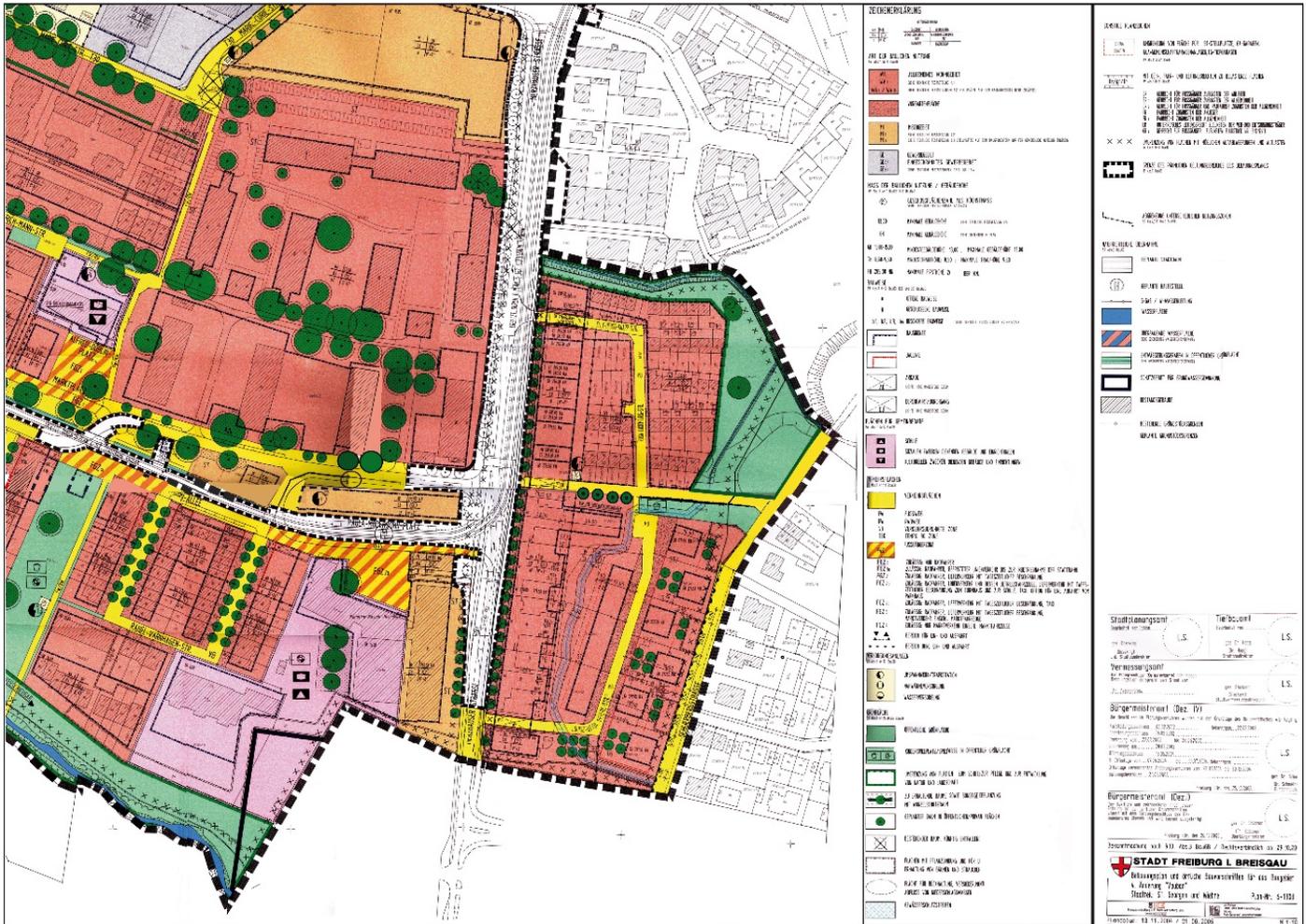
Housing built around courtyards in Rieselfeld

As Vauban had been used as a military site and barracks, the costs of the site’s reclamation were quite high. Development was undertaken by a group of green activists protesting against proposals for a nuclear power station. In the case of Rieselfeld, the main site was a former sewage works and water treatment plant, and housing has been developed in a manner resembling fishbone radiating from either side of a new tram line on the municipality’s initiative. The financing was gathered through a separate trust so that the municipality could recover its investment without any loss.

A notable feature in both schemes has been the provision of infrastructure, such as shops and schools as well as public transport, in advance of the housing, which make the new developments much more attractive to their new residents. Though the

¹⁹ <https://urbanmaestro.org/example/konzeptvergabe/>

developments are complex, the rules or codes in the Building Plan set out for Vauban can be listed on a single sheet of paper as the illustration shows.



Building Plan (Bau Plan) for Vauban where the basic design rules fit on one sheet of paper (Source: Wulf Daseking)

Freiburg has received groups of visitors from all over the world, and its model has been followed elsewhere. The design principles are set out in the *Freiburg Charter for Sustainable Development*, which a group from the Academy of Urbanism helped produce in 2012.²⁰ The most fundamental principle is the idea of a *City of Short Distances*, which involves confining new housing solely to extensions that are served by public transport. A similar system has also been used by the City of Frankfurt for an urban satellite of 6,000 units in Riedberg, which enabled the city to benefit from its investment in a metro. The city-owned development company there has also led the redevelopment of former industrial areas near the centre of the city at Rebenstock Park.

²⁰ <https://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/freiburg-charter/>

Whilst quite different as places, our case studies of both Freiburg and Frankfurt demonstrate that both cities follow similar planning systems.²¹ Researchers, such as Ed Turner who is also a leading Councillor in Oxford City, believe that *'a stronger, more active role for the local state, in land assembly and in development, would lead to more extensive brownfield development'*.²² This does not mean that people are passive, and indeed rather than focusing on halting development, efforts are instead put toward receiving the rights envisioned in the basic principles. The result is much greater variety and quality than relying on commercial developers, who have no long term interest in the quality of what is built and may simply hang on to the land to wait for its value to rise.

It is always difficult to transfer lessons between countries because so much depends on the context, culture, and/or social values. One book on why the Germans seem to do better concludes that Germany's economic success largely stems from a spirit of collaboration or culture, mutual obligation and shared endeavour: *'...slowly but surely. That is the German way. The nosy obsession with rules can instantly antagonise... yet has provided protection against sudden lurches.'*²³

After a period when house price inflation was largely avoided, rents on new lets have recently escalated in leading cities such as Berlin through a surge in demand. This is despite innovative attempts to build more homes using cooperatives based on the Freiburg model. The experiences with unaffordable housing have led to fierce debates over land expropriation, and the shifts in Berlin's fortunes underscores not only the need to plan far in advance, but also the importance of hanging on to sufficient land under public ownership to ensure development is kept in balance and to allow for periods of slumps or recessions as well as booms.

In conclusion, Germany, along with most of Northern Europe, has succeeded in improving the quality of neighbourhood design through a more proactive approach to planning and development. This in turn reflects the greater value most people place on the common wealth and on collective efforts or soft power. This is opposed to the value placed on individualism in Anglo-Saxon countries, where planning tends to be more adversarial and legalistic. The prevailing culture or set of values also may explain higher levels of productivity, private investment, and consequently economic growth. The distinctive financial mechanisms have helped retain a strong private rental sector and limited the displacement and inequalities that can be found in many Anglo-Saxon societies.

²¹ Capital Gains: a better land assembly model for London, URBED for Greater London Authority, 2018
www.urbedtrust.com

²² Ed Turner, Developing brownfield land: Arguments for a more active local state, Journal of Building Survey, Appraisal and Valuation, volume 5, number 3, 2016

²³ John Kampfner, Why the Germans Do it Better: notes from a grown-up country, Atlantic Books 2020

4. LESSONS FROM DENMARK AND PUBLIC ASSET CORPORATIONS

Copenhagen offers a contrasting model of land assembly, which has also resulted in high quality and affordable housing. Denmark, like the UK, is relatively compact, densely populated and surrounded by water. However, lacking natural resources, its early inhabitants, the Vikings set off to conquer other countries, with much of Eastern England having been covered for centuries by the Danelaw, and paid taxes to their countrymen remaining back in Denmark. However, Denmark, like much of Scandinavia, retained an egalitarian and farm-based culture while building up a large empire, which by the Second World War it had lost. It further suffered from economic decline so that Copenhagen in the 1980s was a pale shadow of the imperial capital it had been.

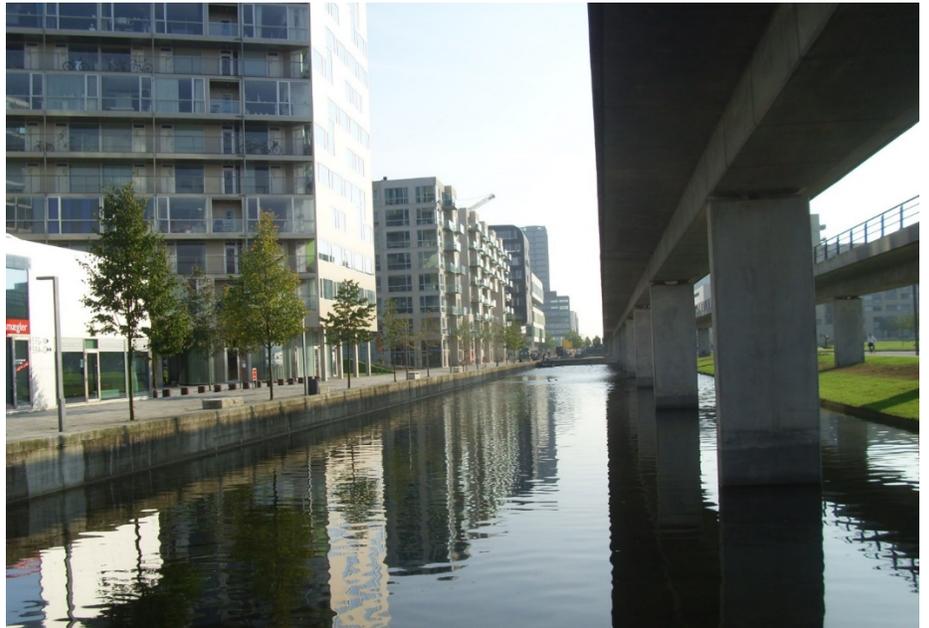
Like Germany and the Netherlands, Denmark has sought to make the best use of its limited land, to create efficient industries, which employ highly skilled (and well-paid) people, and to plough wealth back into its towns and city centres. Notably, in the past it had redistributed land to farmers to create a more egalitarian society. Economic success has resulted from an emphasis on design and craftsmanship, as well as on making people feel comfortable through coffee, cakes and woolly sweaters (or 'hygge')!²⁴ More recently, the country has invested in measures to promote renewable sources of energy, which has created a successful new industrial sector. Copenhagen's famous **Finger Plan** has concentrated development along transport corridors, with intensive agriculture situated in between.

Copenhagen is rated as one of the best cities in the world to live and work in by journals such as The Economist and Monocle. As is the case with Switzerland where housing demand is also very high, extensive use is made of cooperatives which make up 33% of households in Copenhagen, followed by 27% being private rent, 21% affordable rent, and only 19% owner occupied.²⁵ Having reversed decline, in 1992 the city and the Danish state set up a development corporation to take over former military land in Orestad, which is 7 minutes from the central railway station and 5 minutes from the airport. This linear town built along a new 'finger' has six stations on the city's first metro line, which has been funded from the uplift in land values. The planning system is collaborative rather than adversarial, and the masterplan was developed by a Finnish firm with the project managed by a team from Danish railways. Orestad has spawned some amazing and sometimes overpowering examples of contemporary architecture, such as blocks of apartments integrated with a multi-storey car park, or housing that seems to soar over adjoining land. By limiting plots to between 120 and

²⁴ Helen Russell, The Year of Living Danishly: uncovering the secrets of the world's happiest country, 2015

²⁵ Presentation by former City Architect for Copenhagen to the Academy of Urbanism Congress in September 2020

150 units, a great diversity of styles and uses has been achieved, with social housing being indistinguishable from owner occupied units.



Copenhagen's Metro was funded by land value uplift from the new town of Orestad



This block of housing was designed by the Danish firm of BIG architects

As well as contemporary design, another Danish innovation is the **Public Asset Corporation** (which is also used in Hamburg in Germany).²⁶ Copenhagen set up a

²⁶ Noring, L. (2019). Self-help for Cities. Land Journal , (January-February), 23-24.

company, now called *City and Port*, to pool all the publicly owned land in a partnership between the national and local government, with the municipality owning 51% of the company.²⁷ The company invests in the infrastructure necessary for sustainable development, and then sells off plots within a masterplan or development framework. This has the public purpose of funding infrastructure, so that land is sold for the best price and the surplus invested in public transport. One advantage is that the company retains its own freedom independent of political interference and shifts in policy, enabling it to weather property cycles and thereby create confidence in its plans.

A national law requires 25% of the housing to be affordable, of which a third in urban areas is social, and which is allocated and managed by the municipality. The cooperative tradition makes high density living attractive to young families. Co-housing, the principle of sharing some facilities including weekly meals, accounts for some 16% of housing nationally, and provides an attractive alternative to suburban life, especially in cities such as Copenhagen. Lower housing costs make it possible to spend more time with your family and to afford well-made products, thus boosting design and craftsmanship. The spirit of collaboration has extended to working with the neighbouring country of Sweden to build one of the longest bridges in the world over the Oresund, which has enabled people to live in one country and work in the other.

The company that developed Orestad went on to develop land that had been owned by the port, with a resulting partnership between the national and local governments having invested in the infrastructure needed for sustainable development, and then having sold off plots within a masterplan or development framework. By creating high density housing close to where jobs and services are located, the cost of living has been limited, which helps make Copenhagen one of the best cities to live in. The aforementioned cooperative tradition makes high density living attractive to young families. As also mentioned previously, a notable innovation has been the use of **Co-housing** in which groups of people share duties including eating together, which particularly appeals to elderly single people, but also parents with young children. Lower housing costs make it possible to spend more time with your family and to afford well-made products, thus boosting design and craftsmanship.

The principle of sharing land value uplift also applies to existing housing. For a hundred years, the Danes have distinguished between property taxes levied on the home and on the land it rests on, the latter of which goes to the government for

²⁷ Luise Noring has helped check the substance on land value capture, and more information is available in her web site <https://www.cityfinancelab.net/city-solutions-catalogue>

redistribution, while the former is retained by the local authority. The charge is proportional to their value (and is probably around three times higher than the equivalent Council Tax in the UK for a typical house). Thus, the tax rate on property and land values is 1.7% on average compared to the UK's 0.7%. Further research would be useful before firm conclusions can be drawn, but the Danish experience suggests that Land Value Rating or taxation is quite feasible as well as beneficial.

With relatively low land costs, more can be invested in the quality of the house and neighbourhood, so that much more use is made of renewable energy, especially through wind power, but also through higher standards of insulation such as triple-glazed windows. The development of Orestad with its iconic apartment blocks can shock English visitors due its contrast with neighbouring Copenhagen and relatively limited provision of cafes. Yet, as the capital is only a short train or bike ride away, surely it is better to design for the future rather than to try and replicate the past, and to fund rapid urban transit rather than rely on car-based sprawl?

As another example of how the system works, Denmark's 'second city' of Aarhus has a population of 330,000 with the municipality employing some 20,000 staff. The Council buys land for future growth on the edge of the city, and leases it back to the farmers until it is necessary for development, thus keeping land costs down. The *Expropriation Law* allows the state to acquire land in the public interest, such as for the construction of roads, schools and playing fields. The creative role of Aarhus is most evident in the way that housing and offices have been developed overlooking the harbour and along the route of the city's first tram line. The city has taken over the land from the port (which it already owned) at a negotiated price. It then drew up the masterplan and prepared the land so it could be developed as a series of parcels, benefitting from the views over the water. As well, the recently built tram lines are being extended further out to serve new settlements on the edge.

Taxes in Denmark are high, and the largest taxes are on income, which can take most of a person's salary. The municipality (like in Sweden) receives a share of the income tax paid by the people working in that municipality, and as such has a great incentive to ensure that the city prospers. Rates are split, with the larger half based on the amount of land used, and the smaller amount on the value of the buildings. This encourages good use of land, and there is less of a problem of developers or landowners sitting on land waiting for values to rise. It also supports a more collaborative approach to development, which is in line with Danish culture.

Land tax is payable to the local authority and county based on a thousandth of the land's value.²⁸ The tax first goes to the government, supplementing the income

²⁸ My informant was a city councillor in the Aarhus municipality

tax, which is then returned to the municipality based on a formula (like in Sweden). The result seems to be a much fairer society in which natural resources are used more carefully, with more rapid rates of development, and with much better social services in the towns and cities because the local authorities benefit from economic growth. However, problems are starting to arise as developers bid up the price of land, which is why land assembly a great deal ahead of development will be so important.

In summary, Danish cities reap the benefits from smarter urbanisation, and so can think at least 20-30 years ahead rather than worrying about the next government cuts. Furthermore, a high quality of life in an increasingly knowledge-based economy helps generate the kind of high paying jobs necessary to support a lifestyle that is leagues ahead of equivalent cities in the UK. Friendly groups of people help compensate for the cold and windy climate. With wider sources of funding, local authorities can employ a full range of experts, and hence secure higher standards of design, at least in the leading towns and cities. The success of Copenhagen in transitioning from a car-based society to one largely based on the bicycle and now a metro illustrates a more collective approach to solving common problems such as pollution and climate change. The use of a Public Asset Corporation to pool land secures collaboration within the public sector and enables a lead that can be given to the private sector who can then focus on building housing efficiently.

5. LESSONS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

While land value capture in Germany and Denmark has been greatly assisted by their systems of governance, much of the success has been in large part due to a more collaborative culture. Informal tools are used to engage communities and win support for innovation, so there is much less opposition than in the UK. A substantial policy paper on Land Value Capture for the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) brings together a summary of the literature, a range of case studies, and eleven recommendations for sharing land value uplift, along with extensive references.²⁹ The conclusions have been reduced to three fundamental proposals in this paper, based on what has worked well in Germany and Denmark.

The case studies explain the mechanisms or tools that can be used and their connection with urban quality. There are three innovative approaches that can be

²⁹ Nicholas Falk, Sharing Land Value Uplift: a fairer system for funding and delivering housing growth, TCPA 2019
<http://www.urbedtrust.com/wp->

used to raise funding from development that avoids having to wait for owners to die or protracted negotiations with developers.

Land assembly Owning a large part of the land to be developed is by far the best way of securing both quality design and higher density development surrounding new transport infrastructure. This can be achieved in a limited manner through the pooling of public land, as is the case in Copenhagen. Alternatively, the local authority can exercise their right to take over land that will be developed before reselling it to developers and retaining the roads and other public facilities, which requires legislation. This can produce much better designed public realms, and therefore far less space is given over to roads and parking. The German system, which is administered through the Building Regulations, also provides greater opportunities for self-builders and cooperative groups, or individuals who want to build innovative housing for themselves. It does, however, rely on local authorities having the ambition and capacity to be proactive and having a source of low cost 'patient' capital to fund assembly and the provision of local infrastructure.

Infrastructure levy A second way is to charge developers when housing is ready for sale or occupied, as is under consideration in the UK. This can generate a larger fund and incentive for development, especially if the charge is hypothecated and allocated for infrastructure, including social housing. It is relatively easy to administer in countries where the value of a house must be registered when it is sold, instead of relying on hypothetical calculations. However, quality depends on the effectiveness of design codes, and these could be hard to specify and apply unless the local authority owns the land and employs the necessary skilled staff.

A warning should be taken from the USA where building codes are often used to keep property values high by restricting the minimum plot size and therefore the range of people who can acquire housing in a new development. Additionally, a levy on new development may be ineffectual where demand is low, and also, it does not recover any of the increase in value from neighbouring property owners who benefit from improved infrastructure. This leads to the problem that economists call 'free riders,' where owners hang on until values have risen, which can lead to properties decaying with a resulting loss of value even where property values are high.

Land Value Rating The third and most innovative way, which avoids penalising the occupants of new homes, is to raise a levy on all those who benefit from new or improved infrastructure, with higher rates on larger properties and exemptions where values are low. Economists have argued for the use of either property rates or taxes to achieve a fairer society in all senses of the term and as a better alternative to a tax on transactions. This requires the regular updating of rateable values, which should now be quite easy to do by making full use of GIS and aerial photography, as well as computerised registers of property ownership. This seems to have worked well in

Denmark and some parts of the USA, such as in the State of Pennsylvania. A similar system is being tested in the Australian capital of Canberra. However, to be effective and avoid pitfalls such as speculation, such changes need to be part of a wider reform of the manner in which planning is undertaken.

Eleven proposals for sharing the uplift from land values were put forward for the UK in a paper for the UK2070 Commission,³⁰ and in the subsequent Policy Paper published by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA).³¹ They drew on what has worked in the past as well as research into best practices around the world. The proposals were discussed in a high level seminar at the London School of Economics (LSE) along with a paper from Professor Paul Cheshire, and received broad support.³² The proposals were targeted at the UK but could equally apply to any country that wanted to make local communities more independent and self-reliant.

The general principle is to increase the level of investment in infrastructure, which would include affordable or social housing, but to distinguish between Growth Areas, where land values are high but development costs low, and Regeneration Areas, where values are low and reclamation costs are higher. A charge on the value of completed developments would enable existing levies, such as Section 106, to be dropped, and funds raised against the prospective yield from housing development. This would be achieved by enabling trusted bodies to raise private financing for projects that will be self-funding over the long-term while producing short-term social and environmental benefits that command local support. The national government could then concentrate on regenerating cities and major towns that have lost their economic base by redistributing the proceeds of national taxes, including increased charges on real estate.

6. CONCLUSIONS FOR POLICY

In summary, three main approaches to Land Value Capture can be distinguished:

1. Taxing developers to recover the costs of infrastructure

³⁰ <http://uk2070.org.uk/2019/02/19/dr-nicholas-falk-publishes-making-fairer-places-a-think-piece-on-land-values-to-uk2070-commission/>

³¹ Nicholas Falk, Sharing Land Value Uplift: a fairer system for funding and delivering housing growth, TCPA 2019 <http://uk2070.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/LandValues.pdf>

³² See the discussion at <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lse/london/reforming-land-value-capture-to-improve-our-cities/>

2. Charging those who benefit through a levy on the sale of new homes, as proposed in the UK, or a charge on all property owners, as practised in Denmark
3. Assembling land for major developments as in the former British colonies of Hong Kong and Singapore, in London's Kings Cross and Docklands, and in urban extensions in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark

Experience in Germany, Denmark and other Northern European countries suggest replicable ways of going beyond planning to rebalance towns and cities and improve the quality of design. The case studies illustrate the importance of local leadership and a culture of entrepreneurial planners working over a number of decades to design and implement major schemes such as urban extensions. Analysing the ingredients of those success stories, the evidence demonstrates that land value capture mechanisms seem to work more effectively when the formal regulatory power allows the establishment of development frameworks, rather than having to respond to any proposal from a private landowner. However, there is also evidence that formal land value capture mechanisms work more effectively if combined with informal tools that engage the wider community in discussing the principles for development before the masterplans are commissioned. In this way, resistance to development can be largely overcome by soft powers of negotiation and persuasion. Moreover, by providing sites for cooperative groups and self-builders, a greater diversity of design is possible, and hence a more balanced community can be created.

The uncertain prospects due to the current coronavirus situation, climate change, economic depression, and political instability call for a different approach to development in order to rebuild local economies, create better places to live, and reduce environmental impacts. The power of GIS and information technology has enabled the consideration of a wider range of options in seeking to fulfil multiple objectives, which in turn should produce greater economic returns for all. The need to restore confidence and generate new sources of income for local government makes this a prudent time to apply the lessons on what works in building better, as well as more affordable, housing. As one can see, Land Value Capture has a crucial role to play not just in funding more affordable housing, but also in providing the infrastructure necessary to create better neighbourhoods.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Nicholas Falk, Executive Director and Founder of The URBED Trust

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Innovative Financing models for Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Real Estate Development

Professor
Graham Squires

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. A FOCUS ON PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPPS)	4
3. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPP) AND FINANCING	6
4. THE INTRICATE DESIGN OF FINANCE IN REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT FOR PPPS.....	7
5. ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE, AND PLANNING IN REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT FOR PPPS.....	8
6. SECTOR ASSET PREFERENCE IN REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT FOR PPPS	9
7. CONCLUSION: POLICY DRIVERS, BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES	10

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a momentum for places to generate new initiatives to help leverage private sector finance for real estate development, as well as meet the increasing demand for modern communications and services. Moreover, from the public sector there has been a greater use of financial instruments and mechanisms globally. Innovative finance for real estate development involves non-traditional forms of funding through private mechanisms, solidarity mechanisms, public-private partnerships mechanisms, and catalytic mechanisms. However, innovative finance for real estate development is not to be viewed as an alternative to traditional forms of finance but should be seen as complementary. Furthermore, innovative financing of real estate development are those measures providing financial support to address one or more policy objectives through the use of loans, guarantees, equity or quasi-equity investment, or other risk-bearing tools – that can be combined with grants and involve risk-sharing with financial institutions to boost investment in large infrastructure projects. Innovative finance approaches to development and PPPs have been increasingly used in the real estate and property industry. Moreover, the intense pressures from accelerating growth worldwide require innovative funding mechanisms to support sustainable development. In real estate development, innovative financing mechanisms have often been used in PPPs that provide transport and energy infrastructure.

2. A Focus on Public Private Partnership (PPPs)

A Public Private Partnership (PPP) is a public service or private business venture that is funded and operated through a partnership between the public sector (either central or local government) and one or more private sector companies. PPPs are recognised as a key element in a government's strategy for delivering modern, high quality public services and promoting competitiveness. The use of private financing in public projects is one element of PPP business structures and partnership arrangements. Others include joint ventures, outsourcing, and the sale of equity stakes in state-owned businesses. The introduction of private sector ownership into state-owned businesses can have a full range of possible structures. The structure could for instance be brought into existence through floatation or the introduction of a strategic partner. Either public or private sector interests can hold major or minor stakes in the PPP. The importance of PPPs to development finance is the amount of funds and policy support that is directed at the real estate industry in using this model of partnership.

PPPs are therefore a particular type of contractual arrangement between the public sector and private sector firms. They give the private sector a greater role in financing, real estate and maintaining public sector facilities, although the government retains a stake in the PPP Company. Under public private partnership arrangements the government is not liable to a fixed stream of annual payments. PPP is therefore an arrangement that can be financed via both public sector and private company sources. For instance, a partnership contract can be drawn up that recognises agreed government funding and private developer contributions to a project.

With the introduction of the private sector in PPPs, advantages for the public interest are maintained if fundamental government roles are made responsible and held accountable for. Fundamental roles for the government include being the principal decision maker between different competing objectives. This then allows the government to retain authority as to whether the objectives are delivered to the standards required. Most importantly the fundamental government decision-making should in theory ensure that the wider public interests are safeguarded. Public interest issues would be those such as putting in place regulatory bodies that remain in the public sector, maintaining safety standards, and ensuring that any monopoly power is not abused.

Budget overspend is often a feature of large scale Public projects. PPPs often deal with the need for either more accurate projections or improved finance methods in such projects. This is not to say that initial budgets are initially kept artificially low, but budget are often projected low in the first instance to ensure projects using public money win the bid and get the go-ahead in the first instance.

With public criticism of public sector overspend, some recommendations in re-thinking finance are the introduction of equitable due diligence in public finance as is carried out in private business. Moreover, there is a call to involve rigorous expert scrutiny not just at the point of purchase, but also throughout the life cycle of public sector finance projects. The recommendation to incentivise finance in the public sector is especially significant. Particularly as it is stressed that finance should not just be a 'sell off' by emphasising that public sector parties benefit from the innovative approaches developed by private sector partners in deals.

The complexity and intricacies of integrating private sector risk into finance has meant that more sophisticated PPP design structures have come into existence. One example being the use of government backed bonds on projects and partnership organisations. This finance approach is held with caution as the raising of finance through bonds issued by state-owned businesses or bonds guaranteed by government does not always offer best value. It is more cost-effective for governments to issue (non-guaranteed) gilt-edged securities (or gilts) to directly finance projects as they offer less guarantee and more risk but as a result can offer greater reward – therefore generating greater initial funds to finance the project. Avoidance in increasing the public sector borrowing is also enabled through the direct issue of government gilts into the financial market – rather than state-owned businesses issuing bonds for the direct financing of its PPP projects.

More generally, partnering in any form of finance is an attractive idea and in economic terms it helps to eliminate inefficiency as costs per unit of output are reduced. Furthermore in partnering, the decisions of an individual public sector authority or an individual contractor are less likely to maximise the value of output. Particularly when applied to decisions chosen on what to build, how to build it, and how long to spend on the project. Partnering also improves the dynamics of the market by putting the client more in control and improving the flow of information between the participants. Partnerships can also provide the platform to provide greater incentives to complete the contract on time, to budget and to the expected quality.

Contemporary issues surrounding the partnership industry involve the reduction in credit available to finance projects and the subsequent programme delays and new deals being signed. Many deals take a fall in direct correlation to credit and economic cycles. For instance, in a downturn in credit available, banks no longer feel

able to take on large chunks of debt, and the cost of finance can sharply rise. For further discussion, against this backdrop of a shrinking public purse and a tight financial market, is a focus on the critical finance decisions made by both public and private stakeholder partners.

3. Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and Financing

Partnership collaborations can be one of the most effective ways of financing major infrastructure. PPPs relieve public budgetary constraints in addition to the improvement of the quality of public services, whilst encouraging innovation and optimising risk transfer. PPPs incorporate a range of arrangements, from joint ventures and concessions, to outsourcing, and equity stake sales. The type of agreement will determine the level of involvement of the private sector organisations or the public sector partner, including whether this will vary over time and the exact roles of the relevant parties to use real estate development finance for PPPs. The financing of PPPs is more commonly used in countries with significant private-sector schemes having long-term liabilities that need to be matched to long-term assets. PPP initiatives funded by bonds are often index-linked, known as index-linked debt, and expose procurers to potentially higher inflation risk.

With respect to financing real estate development and the legal ownership of PPPs project land to develop on, there has previously been an assumption that the involvement in land-based activities guarantees investor protection, regardless whether or not they own the land. If investment finance cannot guarantee land ownership rights, this increases insecurity and the potential for ownership disputes thereby acting as a disincentive to investment and decreasing the likelihood that prospective investors will finance land-based projects. For financial innovation in real estate development, land ownership rights as part of the finance mix can play a part. Discussions of land readjustment finance and re-parcelling of land by a municipality to unlock fragmented potential sites in deadlock can help in this regard.

Public sector finance issues cannot be ignored in financing the development process, indeed there needs to be a strategy appropriate to the project, and one that

satisfies the criteria of both the investors and partners. Current government guidance for the public sector and similar organisations may influence the finance route, particularly where there is substantial public sector funding involved. There are also barriers relating to scale in finance, as proposed developments can suffer from high bidding costs, borrowing costs, and the need to comply with finance directives. Financial innovation in real estate development therefore can have some opportunity in PPPs, where large-scale projects often prevail where the private market cannot succeed alone, and partnerships can gain advantages in the finance process.

4. The Intricate Design of Finance in Real Estate Development for PPPs

Effective utilisation of financing real estate development for PPPs is integral to successful outcomes, particularly in the present climate of limited resources where investors are likely to be cautious. To deal with a more complex economic condition, the reality in financing real estate development has typically been a blending of loans and grants. Innovative finance, in part by blending grants and loans, is intended to share risk, and potentially provides greater flexibility and innovation. This is not always realised, for example the inflexibility of the original contracts during the operational period can result in one sector being burdened with a greater share of risk, potentially resulting in the public sector paying a higher risk premium.

Value capture mechanisms that capture real estate value increases due to investment in nearby infrastructure are being increasingly adapted at the core of PPP delivery models. Land value capture finance is used to recover the capital cost of real estate development in PPPs by capturing some or all of the increments in land value resulting from the initial outlay. Land value capture finance, to fund public goods by capitalizing on land rents, has a long tradition in public finance, as infrastructure development can stimulate further land development, economic growth, and increasing property values. Specific policy instruments for tapping into the wealth generation capacity of places are those such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.

Loan and bond instruments, whether in value capture or otherwise, are more often used in PPP real estate development to attract private investment in well-functioning capital markets, with bonds providing institutional investors, such as pension funds with both limited risk and stable yields. Some government loans, such as the subordinated loan, can enable governments to fill financial gaps formed between loans and equity. Subordinated loans can be repaid where project performance is as expected, and the outcome empowers the government to receive a share of on-going revenues as interest on the loans.

Some tax incentives are viewed as innovative finance instruments, particularly if they progressively encourage PPPs as part of the finance mix in real estate development. Spatially targeted tax breaks can help start-up businesses and expand existing businesses. Financial incentives range from business rate discounts to simplified local authority planning to reduce costs. Many municipalities compete for new investment in development by keeping land use taxes artificially low. Furthermore, selective tax waivers and other incentives aimed at investors, developers, and residents - can have a pivotal role in improving a place's physical and economic environment. These fiscal-based measures must operate within clear planning, regulatory and budgetary frameworks, particularly as the ways in which these measures operate will vary depending upon national and local taxation structures.

5. Issues of Governance, and Planning in Real Estate Development for PPPs

Land ownership has been recognised as essential to real estate development in PPP finance, and indeed some authors argue that fragmented landownership hinders the development process. For example, there can be complications with the finance for large development PPPs projects due to the contestation over Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO). Furthermore, the sale of surplus sites by the public sector to the private sector can be used to raise funds and fulfil other development objectives but will often be contested. Land with development potential can also be disposed of by issuing a public bond rather than for a direct payment. Where contaminated Brownfield land is present, particularly in prime locations without local government

ability to remediate it, the public sector can offer land to the private sector at below market rates or in conjunction with other incentives. This has given rise to 'brownfield entrepreneurs' who remediate such sites before they redevelop or market them for redevelopment.

Local authorities are well positioned to reduce risks and make projects more attractive for private investors to finance them, through locally relevant incentives; including development fees waivers, subsidized insurance, and property tax abatements. Real estate development finance for PPPs has seen some attempt at devolution of financial power from central to local government, and the decentralization of national development and related policies. Often, this devolved finance has involved more than the decentralization of the budget, by providing local authorities the capacity to engage in decentralized policies. As a result, rather than providing and regulating development, the public sector has increasingly become more central in enabling and stimulating development finance, changing its role from one of command to one of accommodation.

6. Sector Asset Preference in Real Estate Development for PPPs

The broader trend in real estate development PPPs is a shift in investor and developer preferences to mixed-use schemes. Such projects have been found to have lower levels of risk per unit of return and increased the opportunities for property portfolio diversification. As an asset, real estate has been recognised as potentially providing high rates of return on investment but poses high-risk due to the higher degree of uncertainty of property.

Real estate development in PPP projects are typically longer in duration and involve substantial amounts of capital. Consequently those investors that finance real estate PPP projects need an appropriate rate of return relative to the risks. Capital will be invested as the investor anticipates that the project will ultimately yield substantial returns and diversify risk. As institutional investors are often risk-adverse, they are likely to restrict their activities to places and sectors with which they are already familiar.

Despite the opportunities offered by innovative finance in real estate development for PPPs, it is clear that risk needs to be considered alongside the speculative financial returns on offer. Many financial tools in real estate development such as value capture bond mechanisms take on innovation risks with some sense of prudence. Although real estate development is generally perceived as high risk with low returns, it can provide an increased diversification thereby potentially enhancing returns. Furthermore, the developer profit motive will continue to drive development however the risk is managed. The result is long-term stable real estate development finance in PPPs that has the potential to benefit all stakeholders.

7. Conclusion: Policy Drivers, Barriers and Opportunities

In conclusion, agents for driving real estate development financial innovation in public private partnerships can be from key individuals and institutions. Financial leverage from public bodies, planning departments and entrepreneurial local authorities can all be substantial. Institutional financial leverage highlights the need for local authorities to work collaboratively to provide leadership in real estate development PPPs projects. For example, collaboration can aid real estate development finance for PPPs, by ensuring that resources are invested in such a way that they make the biggest impact. Furthermore, place based leaders can make a case to be awarded new powers to promote economic growth by setting policies to demonstrate that PPP initiatives and policy structures are sufficiently capable and 'robust' to deliver on their objectives. Innovative finance for PPPs in real estate development requires strong local and visible leaders in order to encourage independence and promote balanced and sustainable economic growth. The checks and balances that are promoted in the financial design beyond the tools and mechanisms will be critical to developing places of quality.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Professor **Graham Squires**

Professor Graham Squires is an International Economist, Geographer, and Planner with expertise in Property and Housing. Discipline focus has recently been on property in the development-planning nexus with respect to economics and the economy. Further recent studies include concerns of housing affordability, affordable housing, housing market resilience, infrastructure finance, real estate crowdfunding (FinTech). He covers mixed-method approaches using institutional qualitative and spatial-statistical quantitative techniques. Graham is President-Elect of the Pacific Rim Real Estate Society (PRRES), and council member of the New Zealand Association of Economists (NZAE). He is a Fulbright Scholar, CEO of The Property Foundation, and Member of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS).

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Architecture Driven Learning

in basic education in Finland (FI)

Jaana Räsänen

Architecture Education Expert
Commissioned by Archinfo
Finland

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM	3
Basic education in the arts: Architecture as an everyday environment and art of space.....	4
Basic education: The national core curriculum enabling architecture education	5
3. CASE EXAMPLES OF HOW ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION IS REALISED AT SCHOOLS	8
Case 1: Architecture as part of visual art teaching at school	9
Case 2: Workshops conducted by actors outside the school	11
Case 3: City planning as a multidisciplinary module in secondary school.....	15
Case 4: Architecture as an optional subject in primary school.....	17
Case 5: Cultural education plan for architecture	19
4. CONCLUSIONS	21

1. INTRODUCTION

In Finland, children's architecture education is based on the understanding that architecture as an art and an everyday environment refers to the built environment from its smallest details to the largest entities. It is provided as part of a basic education in the arts at two architecture schools and several visual art schools alongside basic education in primary, secondary and upper secondary schools. A worthy addition to formal education is that organised by daycare centres, children's cultural centres, youth clubs, museums and individual enthusiasts. As is clearly visible, the ways, content and methods of managing the teaching of architecture are as diverse as the actors in the field themselves.

This paper will concentrate on architecture education within basic education, compulsory for all children aged between 7 and 16. Firstly, I will shortly present the Finnish education system. Secondly, I will describe how architecture is viewed and taught in the field of art education. Thirdly, I will discuss how the national core curriculum for basic education enables architecture education for children and young people, and how learning through architecture supports the aims of basic education. As case examples, I will finally present five different ways by which architecture education is realized in primary and secondary schools.

2. ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Finnish education system consists of early childhood education and care, pre-primary education for 6-year-olds, compulsory basic education for 7-to-16-year-olds in comprehensive schools, preparatory education and training in general upper secondary schools or vocational institutions, and higher education in universities of applied sciences and universities. Alongside these, the system includes basic education in the arts in specialised art schools and liberal adult education in adult

education centres, folk high schools, summer universities, study centres and sports institutes.¹

In the context of architecture education for children and young people, basic education in the arts and compulsory basic education for all 7-to-16-year-olds play key roles, with those schools representing basic education in the arts being pioneers in developing methods and content, given that compulsory education reaches and affects everyone.

Basic education in the arts: Architecture as an everyday environment and art of space

Basic education in the arts (B.E.A) is provided primarily for children and young people on an extracurricular basis in specialised art schools and encompasses nine different art forms: architecture, circus, crafts, dance, media, music, literary art, theatre and visual arts. B.E.A is goal-oriented and follows an orderly progression from one level to another, thereby teaching children and young people skills in self-expression and instilling in them the capabilities necessary for vocational and higher education in their chosen art form. The Act and Decree on Basic Education in the Arts and the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in the Arts regulate the art schools' teaching activities.²

The 2017 National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in the Arts³ introduces architecture as an experiential art of space and as an ever-present built environment, the scale of which extends from individual objects to large entities. Additionally, it views architecture as a phenomenon that extends from the past to the future and from the local to global levels. The teaching introduces architecture as a field that broadly combines the perspectives of the arts and sciences, while the impact of architecture on society, nature and culture is examined from an aesthetic, ecological, and ethical perspective.

The core curriculum sets goals for four areas of expertise:

- environmental relationship
- built environmental literacy
- design and expression
- society and participation.

¹ <https://minedu.fi/en/education-system>

² <https://minedu.fi/en/basic-education-in-arts>

³ Taiteen perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet: <https://eperusteet.opintopolku.fi/#/fi/tpo/3689874/tiedot> & <https://verkkokauppa.oph.fi/EN/page/product/national-core-curriculum-for-the-general-and-advanced-syllabi-for-basic-education-in-the-arts-2017/245304>

The content of the teaching are selected from the following categories:

- own environment(s)
- current phenomena
- the world of architecture

Thus the purpose of architecture education for children and young people is to guide and encourage the students to strengthen their relationship with the environments that surround them, to deepen their environmental literacy, to improve their design and planning skills, problem-solving abilities and creativity, and to get them excited about development of the built environment while fostering an urge to participate in it. This art education approach also supports the implementation of phenomenon-based teaching and learning in basic education, aiming at transversal competence.

Today four schools, among the altogether 95 art schools in the visual field, offer basic education in the arts according to the general syllabus or the advanced syllabus of architecture. Two of these specialise only in architecture, while the other two also include other visual arts in their programme. Arkki, the School of Architecture for Children and Youth in Helsinki, follows the advanced syllabus curriculum (1300 hours) while Lastu, the School of Architecture and Environmental Culture in Northern Savonia, follows the general syllabus (500 hours). Alongside these two schools, the Jyväskylä Visual Arts School and Emil, the Visual Arts and Crafts School in Valkeakoski, follow the advanced syllabus.

The Arkki, Lastu and Jyväskylä Visual Art Schools are the Finnish pioneers in the development of architecture education for children and young people, having operated since the mid-1990s. As such, in the field of architecture, Emil is clearly a newcomer. In fact, the autumn 2020 term was the first term it offered architecture. Furthermore, the providers of B.E.A in architecture collaborate extensively in the field of basic education, and in addition to weekly classes for their students; they offer various short-term workshops and long-term courses to daycare centres, primary and secondary schools. Additionally, they arrange open workshops for the general public at various events and help drive the field's development in collaboration with other actors.

Basic education: The national core curriculum enabling architecture education

The Finnish National Board of Education published the latest National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in August 2016. This new curriculum aims to develop the school culture and promote education with an integrative approach. The aims of this are that pupils will come to understand the relationship and interdependencies

that exist between the different forms of learning content and that as such they will eventually be able to combine the knowledge and skills provided by various subjects in order to form meaningful entities and adapt and use them in collaborative learning.

The curriculum refers to the learning environments in spaces, locations, communities, and practices where studying and learning occur. A learning environment also includes the equipment, services and materials used; this expanded understanding of the learning environment supports architecture education.

The core curriculum describes seven transversal competence areas that epitomise education's aims and reflect the competencies needed in all life spheres. The competence areas, each of which is an entity of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and will, are:

- thinking and learning-to-learn (L1)
- cultural competence, interaction and expression (L2)
- taking care of oneself, managing one's daily life (L3)
- multiliteracy (L4)
- ICT competence (L5)
- working life competence and entrepreneurship (L6)
- participation, involvement and building a sustainable future (L7).

The lessons of all subjects and the multidisciplinary modules that integrate them must aim to develop these competence areas, four of which (L1, L2, L4, L7) link directly to architecture education's aims and content.⁴

Architecture education promotes design-thinking and problem-solving skills. By researching, analysing, brainstorming, and designing, one can learn about the creative processes underlying architecture alongside the systematic way of exploratory learning (L1).

Furthermore, architecture education strengthens the personal environmental relationship while multisensory observation and aesthetic evaluation of the built environment further help to experience everyday spaces as meaningful places. By understanding the phenomena of architecture and the evolution of the built environment, one can learn to verbalise its cultural and historical meanings (L2).

⁴ Eeva Astala, 2019. Tehdään kaupunkia! Arkkitehtuuri monialaisissa oppimiskokonaisuuksissa: https://opinkirjo.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Tehd%C3%A4%C3%A4n_kaupunkia_opinkirjo_pdf.pdf

Moreover, architecture education increases built environment literacy. By familiarising oneself with one's surroundings, its history, present and future plans, one can understand why our environment is created just as it is. In fact, learning to read and decipher messages from the layers of time, maps and design documents is part of multiliteracy (L4).

Finally, architecture education aspires to influence the development of the built environment. The participation of active and conscious citizens is therefore becoming increasingly important in urban planning. As well, housing and transport produce a significant part of an individual's carbon footprint. Thus, ecological thinking is central to architecture and land use in order to ensure a sustainable future (L7).

Architecture related topics are also addressed in many disciplines, most notably geography, social studies and the visual arts.

Geography teaches us about the interaction between nature and human activities and their connection to the state of the environment. Issues related to land use planning, construction management, urbanisation, environmental impact assessment and resident consultation are particularly relevant for sustainable development. As well, social studies addresses issues related to active and participatory citizenship, since a comfortable environment is created by the interaction of decision-makers, designers and citizens. A common language and understanding of the planning and decision-making processes is therefore a prerequisite for the dialogue. Moreover, visual art views architecture as part of a visual culture and an object of development, while multisensory observation, interpretation and valuation, and creative expression and design are part of the teaching.

Other subjects also have connections to architecture. Exploring the built environment can support the perception and understanding of phenomena related to, for example, mathematics, physics and chemistry. Ethics, philosophy and religion classes can lead to studying, for example, the meaning of architecture in the life of a human being, or sacred places and buildings of different cultures and eras. Meanwhile, health education discusses the impact of the built environment on human well-being. Clearly, there is enough to draw on from architecture, even for all subjects.

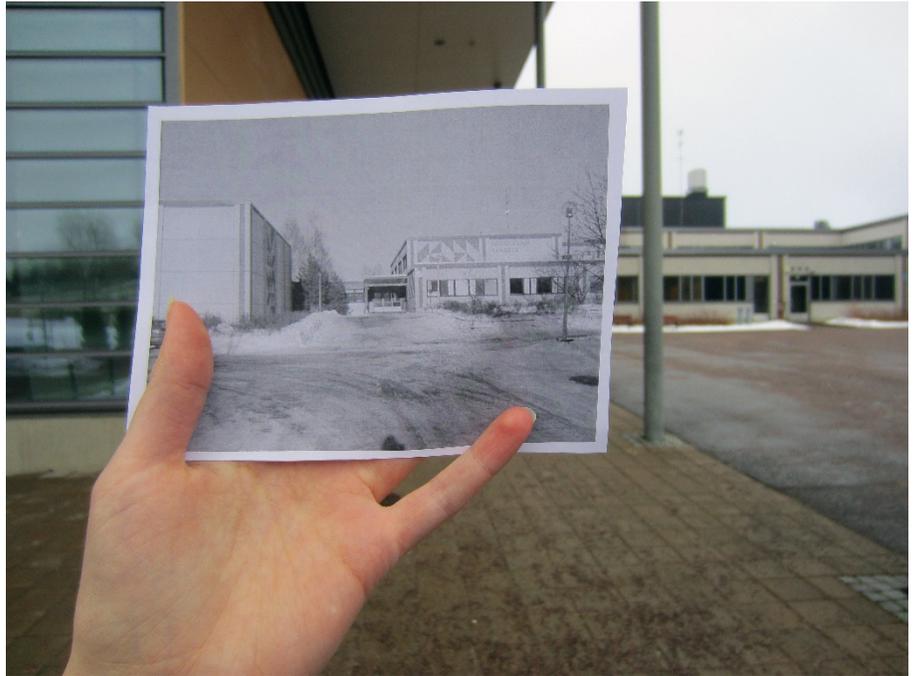
3. CASE EXAMPLES OF HOW ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION IS REALISED AT SCHOOLS

Architecture can be approached in many ways, and architectural education offers possibilities and means to different kinds of learners. One expresses himself best by words, another by drawings and a third by three-dimensional constructions. One finds the inspiration through literature and another through her own experiences. In school classes and workshops, I have seen pupils observing and documenting the living environment here and now, travelling in time both to the past and to the future, visiting architectural exhibitions and architects in work, telling stories and expressing great opinions, discussing architecture seriously, playing with space bustling and using their endless imagination. I have seen them planning and designing, painting, drawing and modelling interesting details and imaginary worlds, using many different materials. I have seen them formulating the environment for their purposes, building huts and other interesting structures at their own scale – and even taking part in real planning and designing of the environment together with architects.⁵ (Jaana Räsänen, 2006)

⁵ Play+Space=Playce, Architecture Education for Children and Young People. Architecture Education in Finland, s.16.

Case 1: Architecture as part of visual art teaching at school

In the elective course in the visual arts offered annually at the Pääskytie School, the key objectives are realised through the content found in the built environment as the core curriculum suggests. The course organised by the visual art teacher Titta Suvanto consists of three sections: “Learn the Language of Architecture,” “Design Your Own House” and “Examine a Topical Theme.”⁶



Peeks into architecture with an optional visual arts course at Pääskytie School: Alexandra explores change at school
© Titta Suvanto

Learn the Language of Architecture, held in the autumn term, covers the basic concepts of architecture and is taught through small exercises completed one at a time. Students observe spaces, search for the genius loci, study the effect of light in the room, produce various textures, solve structural problems, search for rhythms in façades, and focus on dimensions and scale. Having begun to master the basics of architecture, the students can continue their main task of designing their own houses.

⁶ Suvanto shares ideas and experiences about visual arts and architecture teaching on her blog:
<https://paaskytienkuvista.wordpress.com/about/>.

The starting point for **Design Your Own House** is to find a corner of the world where it would be fascinating to live, with the students searching for plots using Google Earth. Before deciding on where they should “settle down,” they study the natural conditions of the location, the prevailing culture, the living conditions, the available materials, and construction methods. Then, they imagine who the people living there are, how they live, and what they value. By this stage, the students have also considered the human life-cycle and the need for changes in living arrangements. This process continues by devising a layout and sketching proposals for the house. The final floor plans are scanned to a SketchUp-programme, which is used to complete the 3D-modelling of the buildings. The students then prepare their project portfolios as PowerPoint-presentations which are ultimately assessed by the group at the final presentation. Though it might be designed for a hypothetical scenario, each student's house is often a self-portrait and a representation of its time.⁷

Examining a Topical Theme in the spring term takes place outside the school. During this section, students photograph "lost places" and then exhibit them in the town library. They also analyse indoor air quality in kindergartens, and together with the children, design more cheerful appearances for the portable buildings that have been set up as temporary facilities, while also examining and photographing changes in their hometown's built environment.

During this course, students develop their skills in reading the environment as well as the management of dwellings and living situations, training their skills in 3D perception and modelling, while also cultivating their skills in problem-solving. Cooperation with local actors brings transparency to decision-making processes and enriches the range of visual art education options.

⁷ The first two sections lean on the ABCs of Architecture – Basic Concepts teaching publication that presents inspiring articles and task tips for teachers (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwYhOKq9ezGuTUNRSzNoa2htZms/view>).

Case 2: Workshops conducted by actors outside the school

The idea of the series of **City Agents** workshops was to determine how urban spaces could be explored and taken over temporarily to be used as learning environments. Artists from different fields who are interested in the built environment ran and organised the workshops for primary, secondary and upper secondary school students. The duration of the workshops ranged from two to six lessons in length.

The aim was to open up new perspectives and awaken the students' interest in the various phenomena within the built environment through artistic and creative processes. Teachers were also encouraged to approach architecture as a multidisciplinary theme. These City Agents workshops were launched as part of the **Children in the City** project supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture and coordinated by the Special Advisor for Architecture Education, Jaana Räsänen from Archinfo Finland.

Treasures of the Blocks took 5th-graders to the blocks surrounding the marketplace in the city centre. The pupils then observed the environment with all senses, drawing experiential maps on paper bags in which they also collected “treasures” they had found during the exploration. Afterwards, they used their findings to create a mind map of the blocks in the middle of the marketplace in order to stimulate discussion. Each group also introduced their work: How was their route? What did the treasures say about the block? Finally, the groups took the map apart and returned the treasures back to nature, or sorted them into the recycling containers. The pupils finally left the site carrying their paper bags.⁸

Light into Space introduced 9th-graders to the potential of using light art to liven up their academic environment. The students tested different kinds of lamps and lighting methods and then designed light installations in arrival and transit places. The students wanted to highlight their school's everyday spaces such as the entrance hall, main staircase, and assembly hall through their lighting designs, with which they

⁸ Class 5A from Snellman School in Kuopio participated in the workshop designed and directed by Architecture Educator

Mervi Eskelinen from the Architecture and Environmental Culture School Lastu. Video: <https://youtu.be/asPYnrHCgHc>.

created a festive atmosphere for the school's market day, during which the public also had a chance to enjoy the atmosphere the students had created.⁹

For **Spaces and Atmospheres with Textiles**, 8th-graders brought old sheets, clothes and garments to school. Their assignment was to use them to mark off spaces in an urban environment. Instead of built elements, the students chose as their starting point a group of trees in a park near their school. During the design process, they tested different textile treatments and determined how to bind separate sheets and clothes together and to the trees. As a final result, they took over the wintry park for a moment with their spatial installations and art pieces depicting their innermost thoughts. Finally, warm juice and cookies celebrated the final discussion and closing event in the darkening afternoon.¹⁰

Colour through Street Furniture guided 4th-graders to explore and assess the urban spaces built of grey concrete. After the study trip, the pupils designed colourful works of art and street furniture, including a book kiosk and a football goal, for the selected slot. They constructed the objects on 1:1 scale from corrugated cardboard and then carried the pieces to the location. Finally, the pupils discussed if and how the elements painted with basic colours affected the very grey urban space.¹¹

Environmental Art in the Spirit of the Place guided 9th-graders in exploring and photographing urban places in their hometown and making interpretations based on the pictures. The aim was to find thought-provoking spaces for which they would like to create environmental art utilising the existing elements and respecting the spirit of each site. After the inspirational tour, the students designed their art pieces in the local museum and presented them to others once in place. The works of art made from natural materials stayed *in situ* for two weeks. Ultimately, it was highly interesting to follow how the weather and passing time added a new dimension to their art. In the end, the students felt they had become more familiar with their hometown and especially certain locations.¹²

⁹ A visual arts group of 9th graders from Tesoma School in Tampere participated in the workshop designed and directed by Designer and Lighting Artist Reija Pasanen. Video: <https://youtu.be/50f4UDfhStI>.

¹⁰ A visual arts group of 8th-graders from Myllytulli School in Oulu participated in the workshop designed and directed by

Architect Tiina Sainila and Visual Arts Teacher Päivi Bräysy. Video: <https://youtu.be/VKC78Gznk2U>.

¹¹ A group of 5th graders from the Eläintarha School in Helsinki participated in the workshop designed and directed by Designer and Artist Päivi Raivio. Video: <https://youtu.be/S3d4eLg3vGo>.

¹² Students from Kilpinen School and Jyväskylä Christian School participated in the workshop designed and directed by Museum Lecturer Mirikka Vidgrén from the Alvar Aalto Museum.

Exploring the Garden City started with a walking tour, during which the pupils examined urban places from a perspective of greenness and attractiveness. They used self-made green stencils as an observation and documentation tool. Urban spaces were also taken over by placing plants in sites that seemed to miss them. These plants were accompanied by messages that encouraged residents to observe their environments, save the plants, take photographs of them in the nicest locations and share their photos through social media. Finally, the participants examined their pictures and discussed the changes brought about by the increased greenness.¹³



Urban space agents from Taivallahti School using the city as learning environment: experiencing and exploring, discussing and debating, measuring and designing – looking for genius loci. © Jaana Räsänen

From a Chair to a Square guided 4th-graders with exploring an urban square and its various elements through activity-based observation. The pupils used chairs to create a variety of imaginary situations, wherein they sat in a both large circle and small groups as if at a cafe. Additionally, they sat in pairs as if they were riding a bus and sat in a row like they were at a theatre or cinema. The portable chairs helped them to assess the proportions of themselves in respect to the square itself. In addition, the pupils measured the size of the square by forming a human chain. Once they had familiarized themselves with the selected place, they sketched ideas on

¹³ 7-to-14-year-old students of the Arkki, the School of Architecture for Children and Young People participated in the workshop designed and directed by their teacher Architect and

how to liven up the location. What could happen there? Is it good as it is or should something change? Finally, they discussed whether the square had become their place during the day.¹⁴

In the **Sound in the City**, students from the first year of upper secondary examined the soundscapes of different urban spaces and the effect of self-produced sounds. They recorded sounds in two spots at each of the four locations to compare the flow of sounds and the impact of acoustics and reverberation. Finally, they listened to the recorded soundscapes, examined the photographs and videos, and discussed the thoughts provoked in them by the process. Exploring urban spaces as soundscapes, instead of visual landscapes, offered a new perspective on everyday phenomena. In particular, the students gained insights into the impact of structures and materials on the acoustics and atmosphere of urban spaces.¹⁵

In the **Interpretations of Urban Space**, students from the first year of upper secondary examined architecture from a *genius loci* perspective and then looked for inspiring places in the downtown area. They explored the sites through a multisensory approach and by utilising the methods of site-specific theatre. Based on their experiences, the students drafted scripts for short performances inspired by the atmosphere of the places and then carried them out at the sites. The sources of inspiration included the gurgle of water echoing in an entrance passage, the dirty surfaces of a recess in a facade, and an abandoned janitor's apartment. The scripts also left room for improvisation.¹⁶

The project demonstrated that public space can open up an endless number of learning paths that one can follow depending on their interests. The shared experiences of public urban areas, like those described above, can be a starting point for most individual phenomenon-based and multidisciplinary processes.

¹⁴ The 4th-graders Estonian-language group of Latokartano School participated in the workshop designed and directed by Architect and Urban Activist Kadri Klementi from the Estonian Museum of Architecture. Video: <https://youtu.be/EdKUfOTJF44>.

designed and directed by Musician Petri Keinonen. Video: <https://youtu.be/Yh2qmknbl48>.

¹⁵ Students of the physics group of Kauriala High School's science line, from Hämeenlinna, participated in the workshop

¹⁶ Students of a fine arts group from Kallio High School in Helsinki participated in the workshop designed and directed by Actress Veera W.Vilo. Video: <https://youtu.be/1UgOa9b7JpQ>.

Case 3: City planning as a multidisciplinary module in secondary school



The students were open to making Vartiosaari more Urban as long as the greenery is maintained. © Eeva Astala

The **Dream Block** project linked subjects like social studies, geography, mathematics, visual arts, and the Finnish language into a multidisciplinary learning module. By imitating a planning and design process this project allowed the 9th-graders of Porolahti School to explore the developmental history and zoning situation of their local environment, analyse the current situation, and plan for the future. The project focused on the nearby *Vartiosaari* island, which had provoked a great deal of debate and had also been discussed by the City Planning Department.¹⁷

The process, realised during the autumn 2017 term, consisted of five phases:

- introduction
- research
- analysis and planning
- implementation
- presentation.

¹⁷ The project was implemented by Architect and Urban Planner Mari Jaakonaho and Porolahti school teachers Anu Ahlamo, Minna Lindblad-Hatamo, Mirja Marjala, Laura Niemi, Linnea Ojemark, Marjo Ollikainen, Terja Paatero and Laura

Parikka. The project was produced by Eeva Astala, the regional artist of the Arts Promotion Centre Finland. Architect Maria Isotupa from the City of Helsinki and Vartiosaari project acted as an expert.

The introductory phase encompassed the project's goals, schedule and the design process outline. Additionally, the participants learned about the principles of a sustainable city and the concept of scale. They also visited the City Planning Department in order to discuss the questions they had prepared in advance with design professionals.

During the research phase, the students first collected background material regarding the island's history and development. Then, they examined the current situation through the city plan and detailed planning maps and by observing and documenting the area. The students also discussed young people's opportunities to participate in and influence the planning of their environments. Finally, they discussed the elements that create the spirit of a place.

In the analysis and planning phase, the participants looked for reference sites based on the research results and considered the island's various interest groups. The students subsequently wrote insightful opinion pieces from the perspective of both current and future residents of different ages. The planning then continued by sketching the ideas for the block.

During the implementation phase, the students combined the best ideas into dream block plans presented as drawings and scale models as well as reports and efficiency calculations.

The presentation phase brought together the entire process and an exhibition compiled all the plans, while in the related event, the students presented their ideas to the city planners and decision-makers. Ultimately, the students wanted eagerly to protect the island's nature, though they also felt there would be enough room for new buildings. As such, their dream blocks were green and environmentally friendly.



The students were open to making Vartiosaari more Urban as long as the greenery is maintained. © Aino Salmi

The national core curriculum for basic education, aiming for transversal competence, emphasises phenomenon-based learning through multidisciplinary modules. As the exploration of built environments in cross-curricular projects supports the objectives of transversal competence in many ways, could these interdisciplinary projects linked to a school's activities bring the students' ideas and views extensively to city planners' attention?

Case 4: Architecture as an optional subject in primary school



Arkki's LEGO@City Planning event brought all the pupils of Puolimatka School to reflect on the elements of the built environment. © Jaana Räsänen

In August 2016, architecture became one of the optional subjects for 4th, 5th and 6th-grade pupils of Puolimatka School in Hyvinkää. During this 38-hour course in the spring 2021 term, the pupils will focus on the relationship between landscape, town planning and housing.

Having architecture as an optional subject was initially the idea of the school's principal Lasse Luostarimäki. He saw the potential of the built environment as a multidisciplinary phenomenon integrating the aims and content of various school subjects following the publication of the new national core curriculum challenging the schools and teachers to think differently.

Luostarimäki contacted Arkki, the School of Architecture for Children and Youth in February 2016 for their help and expertise: Could the idea be realised in cooperation? Arkki gave an affirmative answer, and subsequently asked other specialists¹⁸ to join the collaboration, and then applied for a grant to make it happen. The aim was to develop together with the teachers a programme that meets the

¹⁸ The project was realised in cooperation with Special Advisor Jaana Räsänen from Archinfo Finland and Regional Artist Eeva Astala from Arts Promotion Centre Finland. The experts

from Arkki the School of Architecture for Children and Youth were architects Niina Hummelin, Jere Keskinen, Pihla Meskanen and Teresa Winter.



Arkki's LEGO@City Planning event brought all the pupils of Puolimatka School to reflect on the elements of the built environment. © Jaana Räsänen

objectives of national and local curricula, integrates the content of different subjects from an architectural point of view, and acts as a wide-ranging learning entity.

In April 2016, an event was held where all the primary school pupils experienced a "world tour of architecture" in the form of an inspiring slideshow and a city planning workshop where the students were presented with a huge pile of Legos to launch the process of creating the optional course. The idea of learning through architecture excited and seemingly inspired both the pupils and the teachers alike.

The next step was to arrange training for the entire teaching staff which took place in May 2016. During the 6-hour-long training session, the teachers studied the basic elements of architecture, aspects of sustainable architecture and the meaning of architecture in society, alongside goals, content, and methods of teaching architecture education. The training session also pointed out the connections between the built environment and different school subjects and presented existing teaching material. Following the presentations and the discussions they raised, there was time to work on the themes in hands-on workshops. All of the ideas stemming from this training day were refined into a piloting curriculum that consisted of 12 content themes and an extensive array of methods ranging from writing and drawing to observation and photography, and from model building to dance and drama.

The schoolteachers and the experienced architect-teachers of Arkki realised the pilot phase during the August to December 2016 period in close collaboration with one another. This solution opened up the possibility for the teachers to learn more about the processes of architecture education. It was also a way to develop the aims, content, and methods of the course so that the school's staff could carry out the teaching in the future.

This project illustrates how just one enthusiastic person, such as the principal of the Puolimatka School, can make a difference. With the help of the pedagogical material produced during the process, the teachers are now developing the course further. According to the principal, the optional subject of architecture will remain in their school's curriculum as he finds it necessary to learn about one's environment and that it is very easy to combine the aspects of architecture with various school subjects. In the 2021 spring term, the principal himself will lead the pupils into the world of architecture.

Case 5: Cultural education plan for architecture



In the urban space architecture workshop, the 5th-grade students of Jouppi School renewed the downtown area of Seinäjoki. Architect Mia Kellberg-Hakala directed the workshop. © Katariina Vestergård

A cultural education plan is a plan that details the systematic implementation of culture, art and cultural heritage in education. Concerning grades 1–9, it guarantees equal opportunities for all children and young people to experience their local culture in a versatile manner. In fact, about 20% of Finnish municipalities have drawn up a cultural education plan, with the local building culture included in most of them.

The cultural education plan of the city of Seinäjoki offers all 5th and 7th-graders in the area an exploration into architecture. As one of Finland's Alvar Aalto cities, it has the most excellent conditions for this.

All of the 5th-graders have the opportunity to participate in an urban planning workshop led by a local architect. During the workshop, the pupils use their imagination and creativity when re-designing and reconstructing the blocks of their hometown on a ready-made template of a map. In addition, they are encouraged to explore their surroundings and learn more about the world-famous architect Alvar Aalto and his portfolio with their teacher.

The 7th-grade students will also get to know Alvar Aalto and the Aalto Center in Seinäjoki via guided tours with the Seinäjoki-guides and Aalto-pilots. The students will then become acquainted with Aalto's production and its special features alongside the development and construction of the city of Seinäjoki. They will receive instructions on how to continue with the topic at school. Their task is to design and

build scale models of public buildings and then outline urban spaces. As well, with the Fine Arts elective classes, there is an opportunity to visit the city's zoning department.

Both entities engage young people with their local building culture and provide an opportunity for them to discuss issues related to the construction of the everyday environment. Packages also include architecture-related assignment proposals and useful links to various educational architectural materials that offer topics that cover a wide range of subjects.



On an annual guided tour, students of Seinäjoki secondary schools visit the Seinäjoki Aalto Center, designed by Alvar Aalto. The visits coordinated by the Cultural Services Manager Aila Taivalmäki are part of the City of Seinäjoki's cultural education plan. © Katariina Vestergård

4. CONCLUSIONS

Will every subject bring its own separate piece of information to architectural education in the future? Will visual art teaching at school stay alive and continue its struggle for good environments? Will architecture be a subject of its own? Do the future teenagers at secondary and upper secondary schools have a possibility to use at least one six week period for a larger integrated environmental and architectural project? We'll see... We can start with appropriate and inspiring additional education and by taking architecture near to the everyday life of teachers and students. Thus we can encourage teachers to explore architecture from their own point of view, relying on their own experiences, with the help of the already existing teaching material. (Jaana Räsänen, 2006)

The previous national core curriculum (2004–16) set the main emphasis on architecture within the visual art curriculum that divided the teaching content into four main courses, one of which was Environmental Aesthetics, Architecture and Design that was obligatory for pupils from the 1st through the 7th grades while being vocational for 8th and 9th-graders. It was disappointing to note however that there was no such compulsory course in the new core curriculum (2016–). However, the content and experiences from this time still comprise part of the teaching in many schools. As well, the current core curriculum also encourages or even obliges the use of phenomena from both nature and the built environment as sources of inspiration and starting points for artistic work. In fact, the visual arts comprise one of the subjects taught by all Finnish schools. Thus, architecture education is implemented to a certain degree at all of them. However, how extensively and deeply architecture is addressed depends on the teacher. The example offered by the Pääskytie School's elective course (Case 1) in the visual arts is certainly among the most comprehensive. Additionally, the City Agents workshops (Case 2) are further examples of inspiring short-term activities that create interaction between the schools and professional artists and architects.

Architecture can be viewed from the perspective of almost all basic education subjects, however getting grains of information from here and there is not enough. Fortunately, the current core curriculum, with its ideas of multidisciplinary modules and learning environments reaching out from schools, opens up the possibility of viewing architecture as a holistic and meaningful phenomenon that integrates various fields of science and art as well as everyday life. Multidisciplinary entities are now being developed actively, being implemented as week-long intensive courses, over six-week periods, or even as semester-long entities depending on the academic

level. Urban planning, as a multidisciplinary entity (Case 4) is a further example of an entity implemented over six weeks, while architecture as an optional subject (Case 5) represents an entity lasting the entire semester. The cultural path of architecture (Case 6), on the other hand, offers the opportunity to supplement the school's teaching with a study trip, artistic or architectural visit, or a workshop. In all of these, urban planning and exploration of the school and its immediate surroundings are at the very heart of the work.

The expanding understanding of the learning environment also binds the various actors in architecture and culture to the teaching even more strongly than before. With the support of the ministries, arts councils, foundations and other financiers, the actors in the field of architecture are eager to assist schools with achieving the aims set forth by the national core curriculum. The architecture schools for children and young people alongside the museums of the field are at the very forefront of this developmental endeavor. For example, Arkki, the School of Architecture for Children and Youth, is currently developing multidisciplinary learning through architecture in cooperation with classroom teachers in Taivallahti School in Helsinki. The results of this three-year-long project will be published in spring 2021. In the museum field, the Alvar Aalto Museum is cultivating a network of Alvar Aalto Schools around Finland, while the Museum of Finnish Architecture and the Design Museum have joined forces to establish a learning centre for architecture design at the New Architecture and Designmuseum in Helsinki. It is interesting to see how these museums will serve basic education in schools.

Lastly, teachers of the visual arts teachers treat architecture as an art of construction and an art of space alongside other visual arts. This approach is close to one of the specialised arts and architecture schools for children and young people. This is because one's artistic viewpoint is key when cultivating creative thinking, which is seen as one of the most important skills, associated with future planning. In certain contexts, such as multidisciplinary entities in basic education, one's neighbourhood and urban planning perspective are often emphasized. This is an important aspect from the point of view of developing participatory skills, as both creative thinking and participatory skills are needed when constructing a sustainable future in cooperation with the field's professionals and decision-makers. Also, it is absolutely vital to understand the interaction between people, nature and the built environment.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Jaana Räsänen, Architecture Education
Expert Commissioned by Archinfo Finland

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Grenoble Public Space Programme

experimental processes for improving
public spaces (FR)

Tommaso Gabrieli

Bartlett School of Planning,
University College London

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
1.1. Grenoble Metropolitan Region	3
1.2. Governance model: one vision, five principles	4
1.3. The experimental approach through the evaluation grid	4
2. THE OPERATIONS OF THE INITIATIVE	8
2.1. Urban acupuncture in the town of Vif	8
2.2. Phase 1: ambitious transformations	10
2.3. Phase 2: The 48 hour challenge	12
2.4. Phase 3: transforming ideas into reality	14
3. THE TOOLS BEHIND THE INITIATIVE: SOFT POWERS AND ASSOCIATED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS	17
4. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY	19
KEY RESOURCES	19

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyses an initiative of tactical and experimental urbanism based on temporary interventions in the town of Vif, in the Grenoble-Alpes Metropole, in the 2017-2020 period. It is based on public information from the metropolitan guide for public spaces and roads, alongside primary research information obtained via semi-structured interviews with the project manager, in order to unpack the institutional complexities and the professionals' experiences. This research describes and analyses the operations of the initiative and then assesses the key-drivers behind its operations. Furthermore, it has been identified that a combination of explorational and financial tools supporting citizen-led, temporary and incremental urbanism is a key-factor to the success of the initiative. This research also illustrates that the use of temporary interventions and the professional skills provided by motivated agents are also key to the efficient use of limited resources and for the implementation of urban transformations even with limited budgets.

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1. Grenoble Metropolitan Region

Grenoble is a French region with 1.5 million inhabitants and 49 municipalities. It is a dense region situated within the Alps, rich in minerals and sensitive to climate change with cold winters and very hot summers. It is also known for a local spirit of pioneering innovative ideas and a population which is generally strongly aware of ecology and environmentalism. As a result of this pioneering spirit, it was voted the capital of innovation in 2018 by Forbes as the region possesses a virtuous mix of excellence in education, research, industry. Furthermore, there is an important legacy of smart city initiatives and various energy projects and partnerships.¹

In 2015, a national law transferred the management of public spaces from the municipalities to the Metropole's administrative body, and therefore presented the challenge of transitioning from 49 cities with 49 different approaches to the creation

¹ For example, the EU ZENN project <https://zenn-fp7.eu/news/news/nearlyzeroenergyneighborhoodszennproject>

[.53d71f8313d6a4ffc7935c9.html](https://www.cityzen-smartcity.eu/.53d71f8313d6a4ffc7935c9.html) and the City-Zen project <http://www.cityzen-smartcity.eu/>
Grenoble has also been selected EU green capital for 2022. See <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/grenoble/>

of one single coherent, efficient, innovative vision for public spaces and urban planning.

1.2. Governance model: one vision, five principles

In order to tackle this challenge, through a process of co-creation among the 49 local administrations, the Grenoble-Alpes Métropole has defined five principles to be respected by any actor developing public spaces and roads in the metropolitan area since 2015. These principles, presented in the *metropolitan guide of public spaces and roads* and other additional documents, aim to serve the dynamism, the territorial attractiveness, and the energy and ecological transition of the Grenoble metropolis.

The five principles of the Metropolis presented in the *metropolitan guide of public spaces and roads* (henceforth *the guide*) are:²

- Sharing public space in favour of active mobility and public transport
- Strengthening the poles of life
- Guaranteeing the place of nature and take care of the environment
- Cultivating the diversity of territories
- Doing better, with less

1.3. The experimental approach through the evaluation grid

The approach of the guide is based on an experimental and design-led community participatory process for improving public spaces. Specifically, an evaluation system via a participatory and incremental process that gradually scales up temporary interventions was developed within the guide. This follows several steps: 1. the specific need/demand is identified by citizens and brought to the administration; 2. the public administration has a small budget (3 months/€3,000) and 3 months to deliver a temporary intervention; 3. a period of evaluation of the results of this first intervention follows that may lead to a second project with a higher budget (e.g. €20,000) and a longer testing period (1-3 years); 4. If successful, a permanent intervention may be put in place, drawing from a much larger budget (e.g. €200,000).

² <https://www.grenoblealpesmetropole.fr/483-guide-de-l-espace-public-et-de-la-voirie.html>

This initiative is managed by the Grenoble-Alpes Metropole and covers the 49 municipalities.

GRILLE D'ANALYSE ET D'ÉVALUATION DU PROJET D'AMÉNAGEMENT DE ...									
ORIENTATIONS DU GUIDE	LA PRIORITÉ	ENJEUX MÉTROPOLITAINS	PROBLÈMES À RÉSOUDRE ET BONNES IDÉES À RETENIR	ÉTAT DES LIEUX	OBJECTIF PROGRAMME : AMÉLIORATIONS ATTENDUES	AVANT-PROJET : AMÉLIORATIONS AFFIRMÉES	PROJET	RÉCEPTION TRAVAUX	ÉVALUATION
Partager l'espace public en faveur des mobilités actives et des transports en commun 		Réseau piéton pour tous (fréquentation et qualité)	Le cheminement piéton est très utilisé et jugé confortable.	1	3	3	3	3	
		Réseau vélo (fréquentation et qualité)		2	2	2	2	2	
		Réseau TC (fréquentation et qualité)		3	3	3	3	3	
		Mesures de réduction et d'apaisement du trafic motorisé (dispositif voiture partagée, plateau, chicane...)	Moins de trafic automobile lié à la dépose-minute, mais la vitesse de circulation reste supérieure à 30 km/h.	1	2	2	2	2	
Conforter les pôles de vie		Diversité des usages existants et probables (à conforter)	Nombreux usages.	0	2	3	3	3	
		Diversité des usagers (mixité générationnelle, sociale, de genre...)	Bonne mixité intergénérationnelle.		3	3	3	3	
		Santé : air et bruit	Ressenti toujours négatif par rapport au bruit : renforcer la haie le long du trottoir.	1	2	2	2	2	
		Risques : % zone perméable et % eau pluviale hors réseau	Les usagers sont unanimes sur la fraîcheur renforcée en été.	0	3	3	2	2	
Cultiver la diversité du territoire 		Information - Concertation		1	3	2	2	2	
		Patrimoine arboré métropolitain	Deux arbres de l'ancien alignement ont souffert durant le chantier : prévoir un décompactage du sol.	1	2	2	2	2	
		Patrimoine remarquable (bâti, historique, artistique, naturel...)		0	0	0	0	0	
		Caractère spécifique sur la métropole, attractivité (tourisme)		0	0	0	0	0	
Faire mieux, avec moins 		Cohérence du projet dans son contexte		1	1	1	1	1	
		Adéquation des besoins, solutions et moyens	Projet qui ne répond qu'en partie aux attentes des usagers.	0	1	1	1	1	
		Test et expérimentation		0	2	1	1	1	
		Richesses du site : conserver, valoriser, réutiliser, recycler	Bordures en pierre et terre végétale réutilisées. Utilisation du fraisat sur le stationnement.	1	2	2	2	3	
CIBLES AMÉLIORÉES (par rapport à l'état des lieux)				-	15	15	15	15	-
CIBLES DÉGRADÉES (par rapport à l'état des lieux)				-	0	0	0	0	-
TOTAL (le total de l'état des lieux n'est pas forcément à afficher, il sert surtout à calculer la capacité d'amélioration du projet dans la colonne suivante)				15	40	38	37	38	-
CAPACITÉ D'AMÉLIORATION DU PROJET					+25	+23	+22	+23	

Figure 1: An example of a completed rating grid

The central tool for the rating, evaluation and strategic development of urban projects is a multi-criteria and holistic tool aiming towards a common policy on public spaces within the Metropole. This tool is commonly referred to as *the grid*. Given that the administration is using an “incremental model” for projects involving public spaces, allowing for experimentation and testing through temporary projects, this *grid* works as a roadmap enabling project managers to follow a set of predefined steps over time, ensuring that the objectives of the initiative are fulfilled at each incremental stage.³ Therefore the *grid* is the fundamental decision making tool for the development of each public space.

Turning to the stakeholders, the *grid* is a unique available rubric, which provides analysis and monitoring for the projects. Completed throughout the life of the project, it allows the priority of the project to be kept in mind, while broadening the outlook on all the themes identified by the metropolitan-elected officials, in order to capitalize on the stages and maintain the capacity to improve the project. Through this *grid*, the project manager assists the project owners and stakeholders with defining the priority of the development and its major challenges. The project manager assesses the state’s site locations and their capacity for improvement through objectives, actions to be taken, and resources that can be mobilized. Thereafter, and all throughout the creation and later the realization phases, the *grid* makes it possible to analyse and assess whether the planned performance has been achieved while also verifying the adequacy between the problems observed and the solutions deployed in the field. The *grid* also serves as an evaluation tool supporting the quality and diversity of uses of the reinvested site as it makes it possible to concretely apply the recommendations of the *guide* in order to achieve the metropolitan area’s objectives such as 50% of the public space being dedicated to social intensity and local life and 50% being accessible by car, by 2030. The grid also allows harmonizing and improving the technical analysis of projects by validation bodies and offers support for decisions and arbitrations.

More specifically, the grid allows for:

- knowledge sharing by all stakeholders and actors involved in the project at all stages, in order to keep in mind the primary objectives, particularly when technical and financial constraints impact the project;
- revealing and putting a problem into perspective (like reapplying asphalt to pavement for example), which allows for a more complete and more relevant reformulation;

³ Specific objects and criteria can be found in the supporting documentation:

https://www.lametro.fr/cms_viewFile.php?idtf=2497&path=Dossier-guide-des-espaces-publics-fiches.zip

- taking into account the challenges and ambitions of the project, the means mobilized, and the dialogue between them;
- optimization of project capacity, not only in terms of functionality and safety, but also in terms of public space practices, mixed users, active mobility, health, nature, the environment, economic attractiveness, heritage, sustainability, and recycling;
- an arbitration of constraints, sometimes justifying favouring one program at the expense of another;
- good management in terms of public investment and anticipated operations, and through this achieving moderation on well-targeted projects;
- an evaluation, once the experience or project has been completed, by verifying user ownership in number and diversity.

The grid is structured into four main sections with a number of sub-columns, and the evaluation process is structured in six steps. When presented to the assessor, steps one through three would have already been completed in line with the *guide* for public spaces in order to provide fundamental information about any priorities and issues. The six steps to be taken are as follows:

1. The project stakeholders/leaders and the priorities of the project are defined. In figure 1, we can see that the priorities are defined in the second column, given the *guide* objects in column 1.
2. The major challenges for the project stakeholders/leaders and the planning issues are determined. In figure 1, in the third column, we see all of the categories of issues that are specified in the *guide*, with the ones relevant to the project colour-coded in yellow in column 3. The issues can be further described in the empty columns to the right, as in figure 1 we see a descriptive column in purple.
3. The existing conditions and inventory of the project site are evaluated by the assessor using specific criteria from the *guide* that are explained in the documentation of the evaluation *grid*. The marks range from 0 to 3 points: representing non-existent, to insufficient, satisfactory, and exemplary, respectively. In figure 1, this is in the first numerical column.
4. The programmed objectives are evaluated with the same numerical scale. The *guide* explains that the existing conditions and objectives should be evaluated independently; meaning that even if the pre-existing conditions

are insufficient, ambitious objects would receive a higher score. According to the *guide*, when the inventory depicts a low level of satisfaction, intervention into the public space is fully justified. When, on the contrary, the inventory depicts a level of high satisfaction, one must consider the needs of the project and, in all cases, aim for moderation. In figure 1, this is in the second numerical column.

5. Evaluation of the different stages of the temporary project. The same numerical scale is used to determine if a proposed temporary project's objectives have been achieved, then again during the monitoring phase, and finally following completion of the project. According to the *guide*, these ratings' function is to ascertain if the ambitions of the program are maintained and in the case of arbitration. In figure 1, these are in the last three numerical columns, respectively.
6. Final assessment. Given the highly specific criteria in the *guide* for each object in column 1, the assessor verifies if the objectives of the project have been achieved (quality of use of the site, satisfaction of the users, etc.) and a colour code is used to fill in the evaluation. For this colour code, green represents: objective achieved, yellow: objective to improve, and red: objective not achieved. Given the numerical evaluation in the previous columns, the capacity of the project to improve is calculated as a sum in every numerical column. Moreover, for each step from 4 to 6, a description of the improvements to be made and the ideas to be retained for future projects are written in the purple boxes in the central columns.

2. THE OPERATIONS OF THE INITIATIVE

2.1. Urban acupuncture in the town of Vif

The urban initiative that we are analysing is focused on the town of Vif and was led by the public space office in the Grenoble planning division. The general principle on which this initiative has been funded is one of experimental urbanism. In the spirit of the *guide*, citizen-led proposals, incremental implementation, and the related financial model enabled practical experimentation in public space projects, with the potential for scaling up opportunities and modifying them to better respond to users' needs.

The project manager (henceforth PM) leading the initiative was inspired by literature and cases of urban acupuncture/tactical urbanism, and is a follower of initiatives such as Stipo, Placemaking Europe, and the Creative Bureaucracy Festival.

“Urban acupuncture” is a socio-environmental theory combining contemporary urban design with the concept of traditional Chinese acupuncture, using small-scale interventions to transform the larger urban context. This term was originally coined by Barcelonan architect and urbanist Manuel de Sola Morales,⁴ and has recently been further developed by Finnish architect Marco Casagrande. This concept reflects a departure from large-scale urban renewal projects towards a more localised, cheaper, community-based approach. Tactical urbanism, also known as DIY Urbanism, Planning-by-Doing, Urban Prototyping, or Urban Acupuncture itself, is a related and similar idea albeit one that focuses more on temporary changes to the built environment, with the intention to improve local neighbourhoods and urban spaces. Often this approach refers to a city, organizational, and/or citizen-led approach to neighbourhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to catalyse long-term change. This movement was inspired by urban experiments including Barcelona Cicloviá and Paris-Plages, and is rapidly growing among the newer generations of urban designers and planners.⁵

Vif is a commune in the Isère department in South-eastern France, with circa 8,200 inhabitants. Vif was selected for this initiative because there was already a Metropole plan to limit car traffic in its small city centre, while improving walkability and cyclability. The area of intervention is the city centre, a small area with a perimeter of two kilometres, with very small roads, houses, shops, and restaurants. The PM explains that normally the plan for this urban transformation would be drafted between the implementation office and the public space office with a unique budget. Instead, in this specific initiative the public space office pushed for an experimental approach and used a specifically small budget, while keeping the other planning divisions informed with the view of using the experimental phase to inform the final permanent transformation. This initiative was organized over three different phases, with an envisaged time scale of three years.

⁴ See for example De Sola Morales, M. (2008).

⁵ See for example Houghton et al. (2015) and Lecoart (2020).

2.2. Phase 1: ambitious transformations



Figure 2: Phase 1 observations, modelling, consultations

Phase 1 took place between November 2017 and February 2018. It was led by Sonia Lavadinho⁶ (henceforth SL), who is a well-known urbanist that has worked on a number of projects in the Grenoble Metropole. Also involved were 15-20 key stakeholders: commercial businesses in the city centre, civil servants, elected officials, and children from local schools, in order to ensure maximum representation. This initial phase set the foundation for the entire project and was based on three concepts: inclusive citizen-led initiatives, mixed mobility, and urban acupuncture. SL had led a similar experimental approach focused on transport modes in Echirolles, another small town in the Grenoble Metropole.⁷

This phase was based on a number of workshops (3 X 2 day workshops, every two months) with walking observations, modelling workshops and discussions. SL pushed the participants to be ambitious with the suggested aspirations and suggestions for transformations. Although the evaluation grid was used as a tool, imagination was an important input through pictures depicting any hypothetical changes, and modelling workshops among the stakeholders, which enabled them to analyse its impact on various people and categories.

The PM explains “The conceptual idea was the same as that underpinning acupuncture: identify areas for transformation that can trigger further change. Sonia pushed for creativity and imagination, what would you like to see?”

⁶ <https://twitter.com/slavadi?lang=en>

⁷ See Lavadinho (2017).

« J'ai dessiné des cabanes dans les arbres, avec des cheminées s'il fait froid, un toboggan pour descendre des arbres et des échelles pour monter. Il y a aussi des toboggans et des balançoires pour jouer. »



Figure 3. Phase 1 involvement of school children.

School Children were consulted about their urban experiences and aspirations. One child wrote: "I designed tree houses, with fireplaces if it is cold, a slide to go down trees and ladders to go up. There are also slides and swings for playing."

The output of this phase was the selection of 10 areas of intervention and conceptual proposals for their transformation, based on the simple models created. The proposals were also visionary and described the aspired radical change that would result from the envisaged process of urban acupuncture. Visual images and pictures were also used to describe those visionary aspirations and the final outcomes.

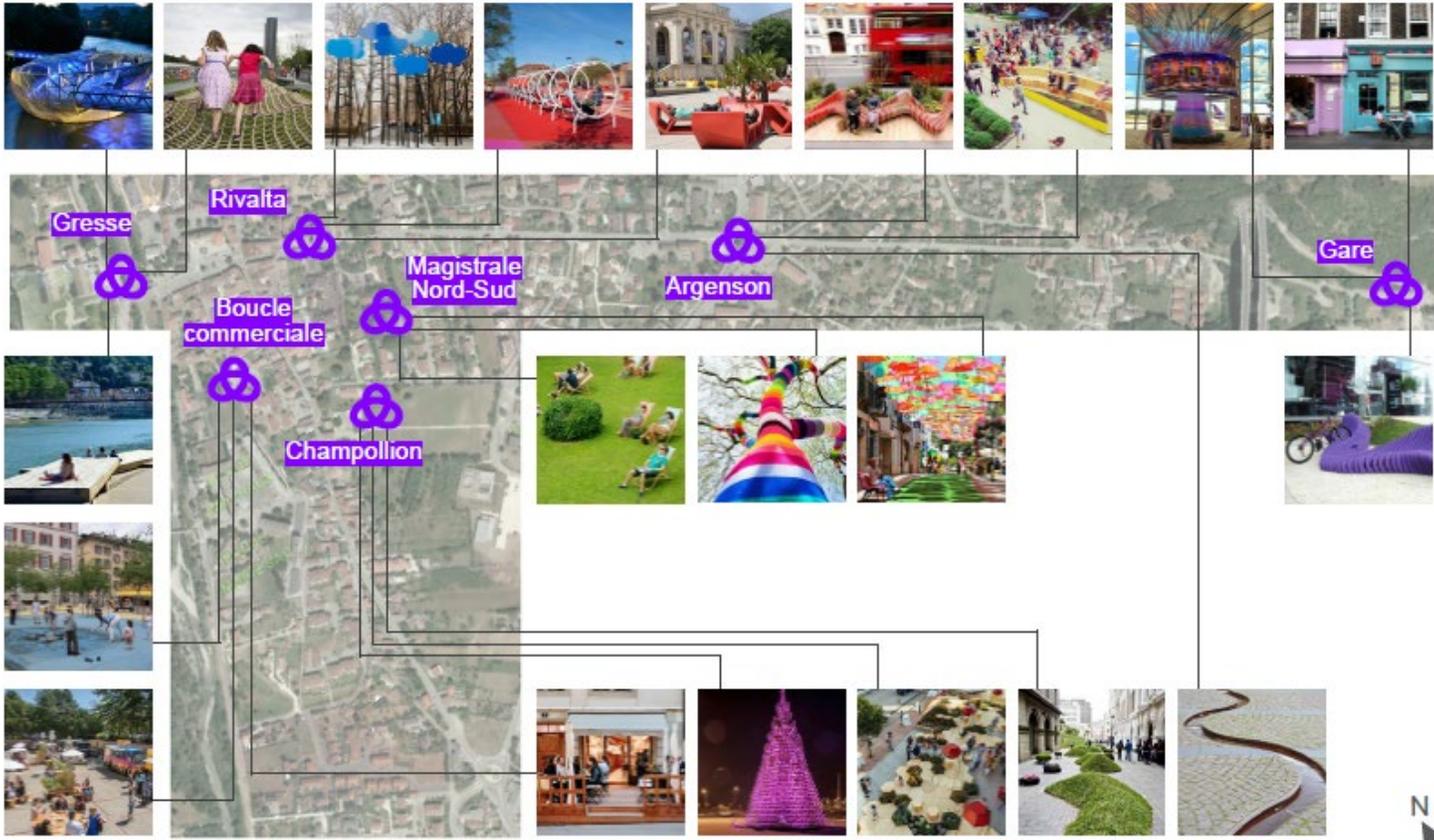


Figure 4. Phase 1 output: Aspired ambitious transformations for each proposed area of intervention.

2.3. Phase 2: The 48 hour challenge

Phase 2 took place over two days in May 2018 and was nicknamed the “48 hour challenge.” The PM, alongside the involved civil servants of Vif and SL, met with an urban designer/planner, selected through an open call, on a Tuesday afternoon in order to explain the concepts from Phase 1. The planner had no further involvement in the project, was paid a standard fee for two days of work, and was asked to produce some sketches for temporary interventions from the conceptual outputs of phase 1. The planner completed those sketches on the following day (Wednesday) and presented them to the aforementioned persons on Thursday morning, when they were collectively discussed, revised and completed. The final outputs of this phase were 10 sketches for each temporary intervention. This phase was not initially planned, but once phase 1 had been completed it became clear to Vif’s civil servants that it was necessary to have a more precise idea of the type of temporary intervention that could be implemented. Therefore, even if it was completed very quickly, this phase was crucial to the development of communications and negotiations between the PM and civil servants regarding how citizens’ urban aspirations can become implementable urban projects.

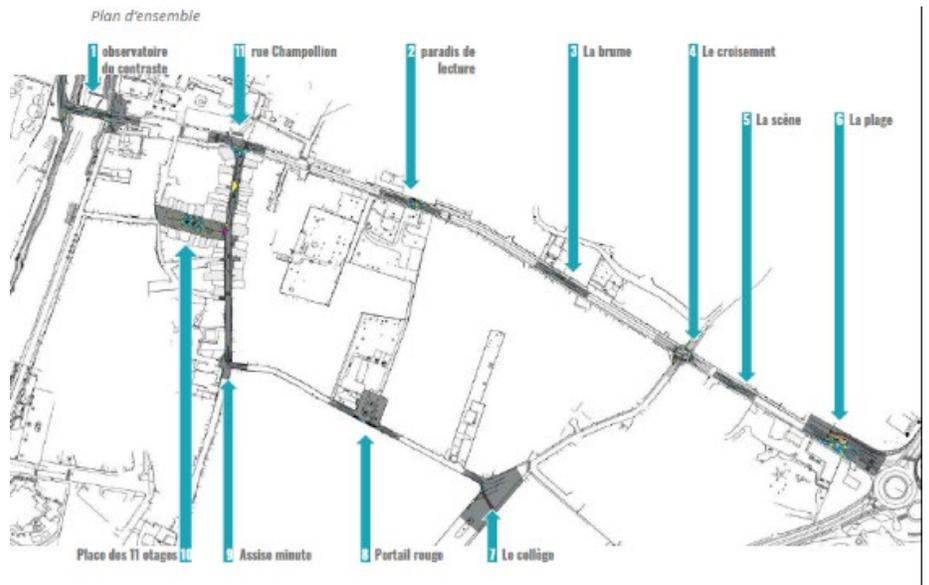


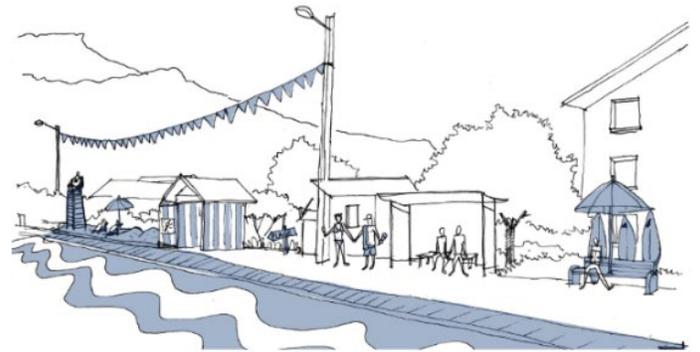
Figure 5. The area of intervention is small, with a perimeter of 2km. A concept for each area of intervention.

8/La plage
Expérimentation Rivalta



Figure 6. Phase 2 sketch: a bus stop becomes a "beach"

8/La plage
Expérimentation Rivalta



4/La scène
Expérimentation Rivalta

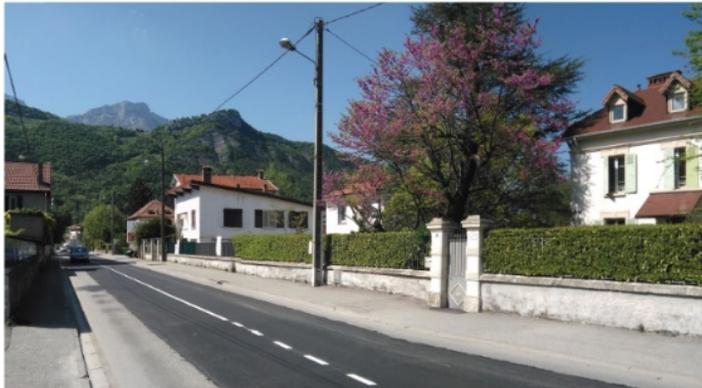
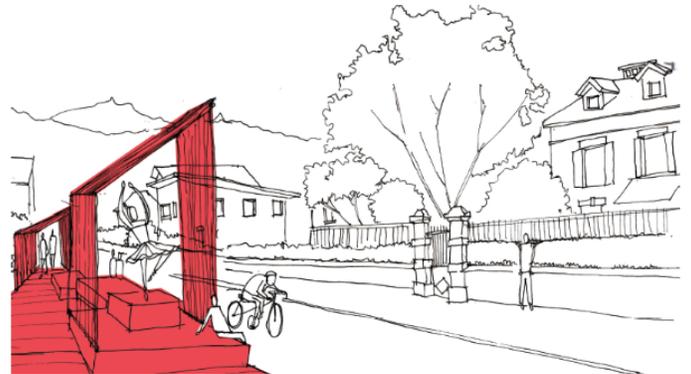


Figure 7. Phase 2 sketch: a road for motorists becomes a "stage"

4/La scène
Expérimentation Rivalta



2/Le paradis de lecture
Expérimentation Rivalta



Figure 8. Phase 2 sketches: A non-utilized green space becomes a "reading paradise"

2/Le paradis de lecture
Expérimentation Rivalta



Développement de la contrainte Vittoze | Atelier 3

Avril 2018

2.4. Phase 3: transforming ideas into reality

Phase 3 was led by the urban practice Alt.Urbaine (henceforth AU),⁸ which was selected via an open call. AU was tasked with transforming the sketches into a real, temporary project, including the production or commissioning of all necessary infrastructure. This phase started in December 2018, with the completion of all temporary interventions planned for April 2020, and a subsequent monitoring phase of 6 months.⁹ This phase cost €215,000 in total (including costs associated with labour and infrastructure), was focused on tactical urbanism and, naturally following the previous phases, it was based on citizen-led proposals, discussions, walking observations, and evaluations. In particular, it involved 183 hours of discussion with citizens and stakeholders, including local businesses and schools, and was structured into various types of workshops involving collaborative design, guided observations, and technical discussions with the administration and civil servants.¹⁰ The output of this phase consisted of a detailed proposal and the implementation of 10 temporary urban transformations with a focus on the sensory experiences of walking, cycling and meeting in public spaces.¹¹ The monitoring phase will follow for 6 months and will be based on the guide, and then a final decision on whether or not to maintain the temporary interventions will be taken.



Figure 9. Phase 3 develops the phase 2 sketches into implementable temporary interventions.

⁸ Based on experimental/tactical urbanism, the philosophy of the practice Alt.Urbaine is discussed in this online blog entry <https://medium.com/@alturbaine/lespace-public-de-l-exp%C3%A9rimentation-%C3%A0-l-%C3%A9mancipation-citoyenne-773357635013>

⁹ Because of the impact of Covid-19, the temporary interventions could not be completed in April 2020 and were instead scheduled for July 2020.

¹⁰ Alt.Urbain videos on walking observations/evaluations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCB0dDyAJ3M&t=2s> and on the consultation workshops <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7oasnFRiio>

¹¹ See Degen and Rose (2012) for a theoretical foundation of the approach.

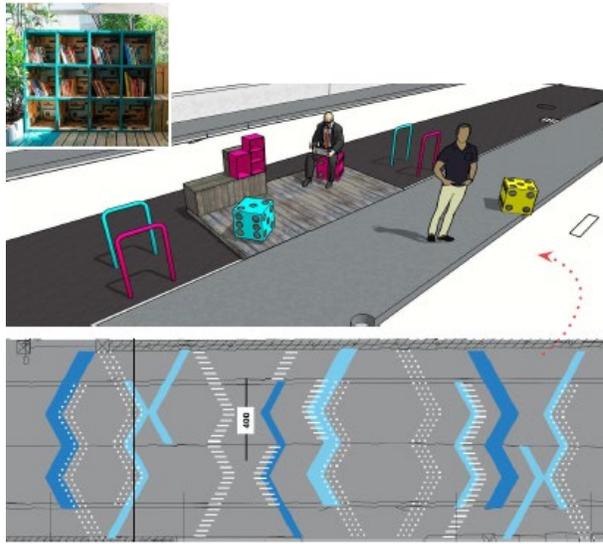


Figure 10. Le Mots Passants (transl. the passing words) (intervention 2 in Figure 11) offers a different experience of mobility and stationing/resting that takes advantage of a large area of pavement and is centred around a public bookshelf with books provided by the nearby public library.

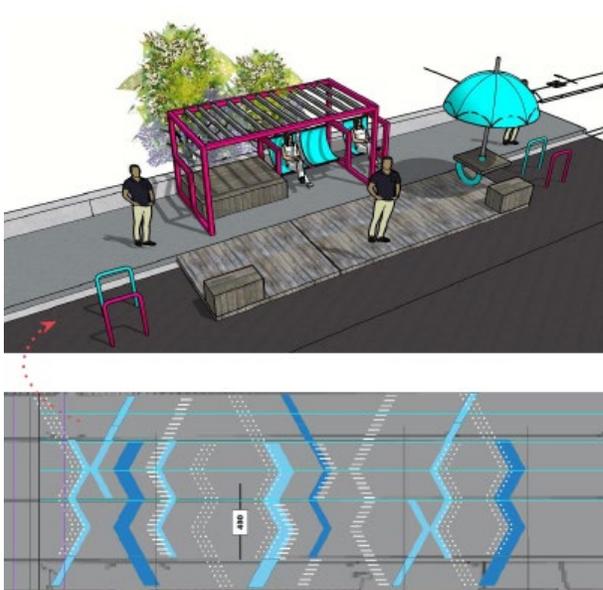


Figure 11. Le Halte Urbaine (transl. the urban stopover) (intervention 3 in Figure 11) offers a different experience of mobility and stationing/resting that takes advantage of a larger pavement area and is centred around a shady public urban lounge.

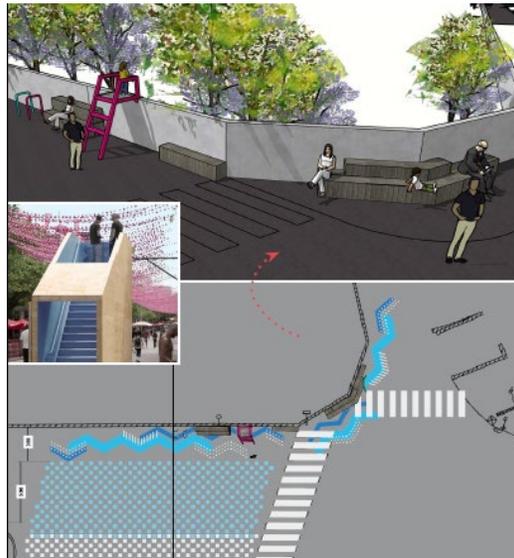


Figure 12. Le Perchoir (transl. the perch) (intervention 5 in Figure 11) offers a different experience of mobility and stationing/resting by a crossroad nearby a college, with a new sensory experience centred around a stair overlooking tall trees.

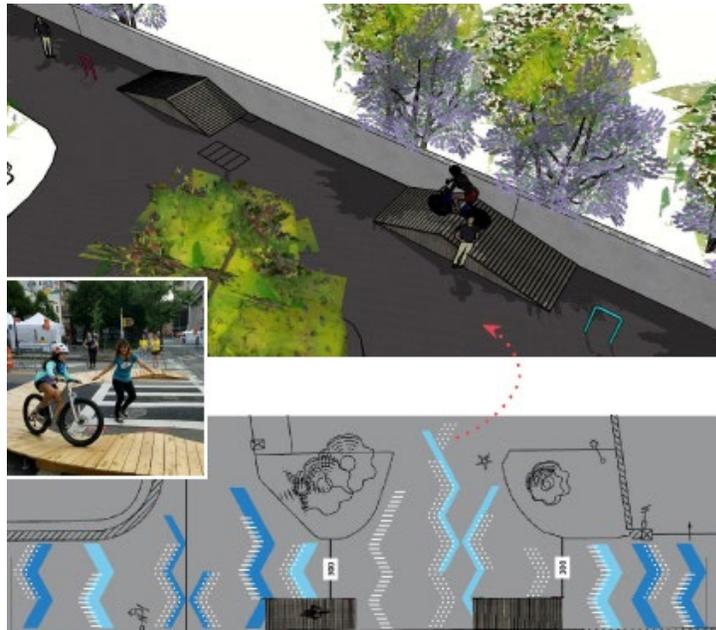


Figure 13. Le Pyramides (transl. the pyramids) (intervention 6 in Figure 12) offers a different experience without car-based mobility on the small road leading to the college, centred around cycling ramps that take advantage of the existing wider road space with car parks.

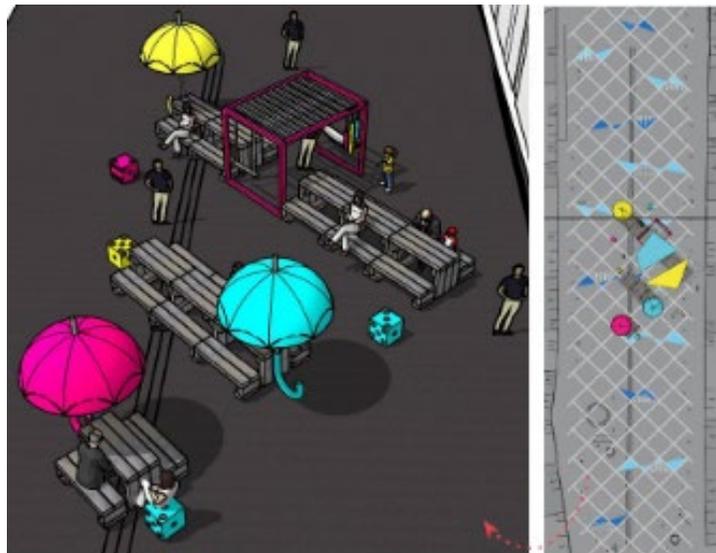


Figure 14. Le Grande Tablee (transl. the great table) (intervention 8 in Figure 12) offers a different experience of public space, stationing and walking centred around public tables on a central pedestrian road with cafes and restaurants.

BILAN

Coût total : 147 000 € HT
 dont 5% d'imprévus, hors prix de maintenance
 Budget initial : 150 000€
 Reste : 3 000 €

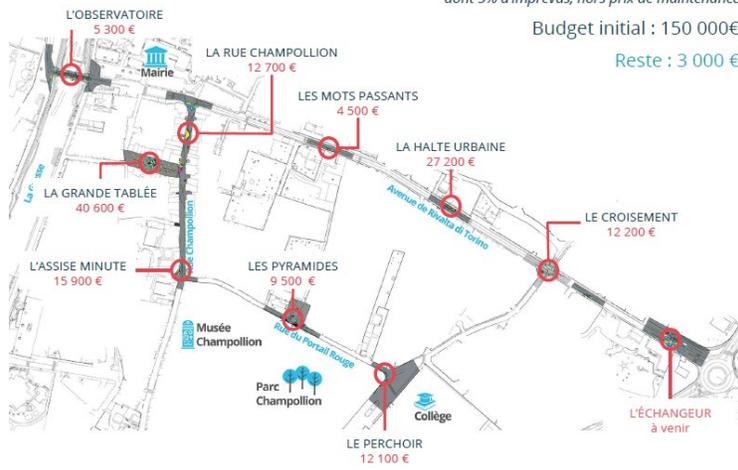


Figure 15. Breakdown of the infrastructural costs:

The PM explains that given the budget constraint of €150,000 for the infrastructure in phase 3, some projects could not be implemented and that, as such, priorities had to be identified.

3. THE TOOLS BEHIND THE INITIATIVE: SOFT POWERS AND ASSOCIATED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The PM explained that a cooperative interaction between the Metropole office for public spaces, who was managing the initiative, and Vif's civil servants, who had to facilitate and implement some of the transformations, was a fundamental ingredient to the successful development of the initiative. The PM clarifies that such cooperative interaction is neither obvious nor natural a-priori, due to various institutional and political reasons. First, it may be the case that the party ruling the Metropole may differ from the one governing the town where the initiative is to be implemented, and therefore the two administrations may have different agendas for urban projects. Secondly, a situation may arise wherein the local administrators do not want to implement certain urban transformations that might make them unpopular with certain voting demographics. In this respect, one anecdote from the PM is exemplary: the Metropole had the power to close some roads to car traffic, but the mayor would not pass the order to the local police on the weekend of the local elections, and the measure was instead implemented the following week. While the virtuous cooperation between project managers and the local administration is not obvious, the inclusion of different types of stakeholders—such as different categories of citizens, businesses and local civil servants—in every phase of the initiative was key to fostering cooperation and enabled the initiative to not be blocked by partisan discontent. In this respect, we notice that the carefully structured inclusive and consultative approach that the initiative used in every phase enabled the project leaders to successfully use soft powers of negotiation and persuasion with the local administrators.

It is also important to recognize that the initiative would not be possible without tools such as the guide for public spaces, the evaluation grid and the existence of a budget for experimental incremental interventions, as described in section 1 of this paper, as well as the agreement that some civil servants would spend 30% of their working time monitoring the project. Although in this initiative they were used in discretionary decision-making, we interpret those to be formal tools, as their use is prescribed by law. However, as already pointed out, these formal tools would not be able to solve the possible tensions that may arise between the project managers and the local administrations, given their potentially differing institutional and political agendas. From the research carried out through a semi-structured interview with the PM, it appears that the consultative approach that the initiative used in every phase was key to cultivating the necessary consensus for the initiative not to be blocked, as

well as to enable the project leaders to successfully use soft powers of negotiation and persuasion with the local administrators.

The primary research demonstrates that the financial model of the initiative also uses a virtuous combination of formal and informal tools. First, we notice that the experimental approach enables saving resources and/or implementing urban transformations despite limited resources. The total expenditure for the initiative was €280,000, where €147,000 is the total cost of the infrastructure and the rest is the fee for the external personnel, without accounting for the time of the various civil servants involved. The PM explains that the typical cost for a permanent major transformation of that area would be in the region of €2 million.

Second, we see that thanks to the framework in the guide for public spaces, the existence of a formal mechanism to allocate a budget to the experimental initiatives enabled this initiative to take place. The PM explains that this budget was separate from the budget for the implementation of permanent infrastructures and therefore was relatively easy to use for this type of experimental initiative. The PM adds that, in the region of Grenoble, a typical experimental initiative would cost around 10% of the cost of a permanent project.

More generally, we learn that the existence of an institutional approach where formal and informal approaches to urban planning co-exist is key to developing an institutional culture where initiatives like this one can flourish, be accepted and thrive. In this respect, apart from the guide for public spaces, another tool that was certainly critically important to this initiative being accepted and understood was the existence of a participatory budget. A participatory budget has existed since 2015 at the Grenoble city level, which has allowed residents over 16, collectives and associations to propose projects that enable the transformation of the city and improve everyday life.¹² The PM explains that although this initiative was not funded by the participatory budget, similar experimental initiatives have been launched in the City of Grenoble in recent years thanks to the participatory budget, meaning therefore that this initiative was welcomed. We also learn that the experimental framework of the guide and the culture of a participatory budget are tools that enable intrinsically motivated agents¹³ to work on urban projects by devoting their passion, competence, and creativity, practically for free, and therefore act as tools that imply an efficient allocation of talents and resources for projects with a public interest. Moreover, the consensual approach in which those tools are based enables soft powers of negotiation and persuasion to be exercised. In this respect, the PM explained that the tools created the conditions for creative bureaucracy¹⁴ to thrive.

¹² This is the list of all public space projects implemented with the participatory budget <https://www.grenoble.fr/1135-etat-d-avancement-des-projets.htm>

¹³ See Bénabou Tirole (2003) for a theory of incentives with this concept.

¹⁴ See Landry and Caust (2017) for this concept.

4. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

In conclusion, the research that has unpacked how this initiative developed across the three phases demonstrates that this initiative was facilitated by a virtuous combination of formal tools supporting an informal experimental approach, which in turn led to an institutional acceptance and the effective use of the informal experimental approach. For those reasons, and turning to questions of implementation and transferability, the experience of Vif indicates that a formal framework that institutionalizes temporary, incremental urbanism and participatory citizen-led initiatives can create favourable conditions for the use of a similar experimental approach.

KEY RESOURCES

Bénabou R. and Jean Tirole (2003). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation. *The Review of Economic Studies* 70:3.

Degen M. and Rose G. 2012. The Sensory Experiencing of Urban Design: The Role of Walking and Perceptual Memory. *Urban Studies* 49:15;
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098012440463>

De Sola Morales, M. (2008). *A Matter of Things*. Rotterdam, NAI Publishers.

Houghton K., Choi J. and Lugmayr A. (2015). Urban Acupuncture. *Journal of Urban Technology* 22:3.

Landry C. and Caust M. 2017. *The Creative Bureaucracy & its Radical Common Sense*. Comedia editions, Gloucestershire, United Kingdom.

Lavadinho, S. (2017), "Public Transport Infrastructure and Walking: Gearing Towards the Multimodal City", *Walking (Transport and Sustainability, Vol. 9)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 167-186. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2044-994120170000009011>

Lecroart P. 2020. Tactical urbanism: small-scale projects, paradigm shifts in Cities change the world. *Les Cahiers De L'insitut Paris Region* no. 176.
<https://en.institutparisregion.fr/know-how/urban-planning/cities-change-the-world/tactical-urbanism-small-scale-projects-paradigm-shifts.html>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Tommaso Gabrieli, Associate Professor in Real Estate at the Bartlett School of Planning, University College London

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Les Grands Voisins

initial intentions, real impact and beautiful
spontaneous moments, spin-off and
future prospects (FR)

2015-2020

“Fabrique de Biens Communs”
Former Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Hospital
72-82 avenue Denfert-Rochereau,
Paris (14th arrondissement)

Aurore
Plateau Urbain
Yes We Camp

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704





In 2015, we announced that we are “boldly and generously opening up a temporarily vacant space.”

At the time, we chose a name, *Les Grands Voisins*, where “Grands” stands for our ambition to share the values of hospitality and generosity, while “Voisins” represents its status as a place for exchanges and socialising, a time capsule to gauge, in reality, the degree to which the public meets and the extent of day-to-day solidarity.

Five years later, on the eve of the site’s closure, we gauged the reality of its impact, regretting certain things while appreciating the impact of the moments we experienced, especially the wonderful surprises. We can also explore the extent of the collective efforts. The experience has been good, possibly imperfect, but absolutely unforgettable. It is now up to each of us to seize what we have understood, learnt, shared, lived through and liked here. History will continue to be written and perpetuated elsewhere in the future.

Therefore, it is over to you!

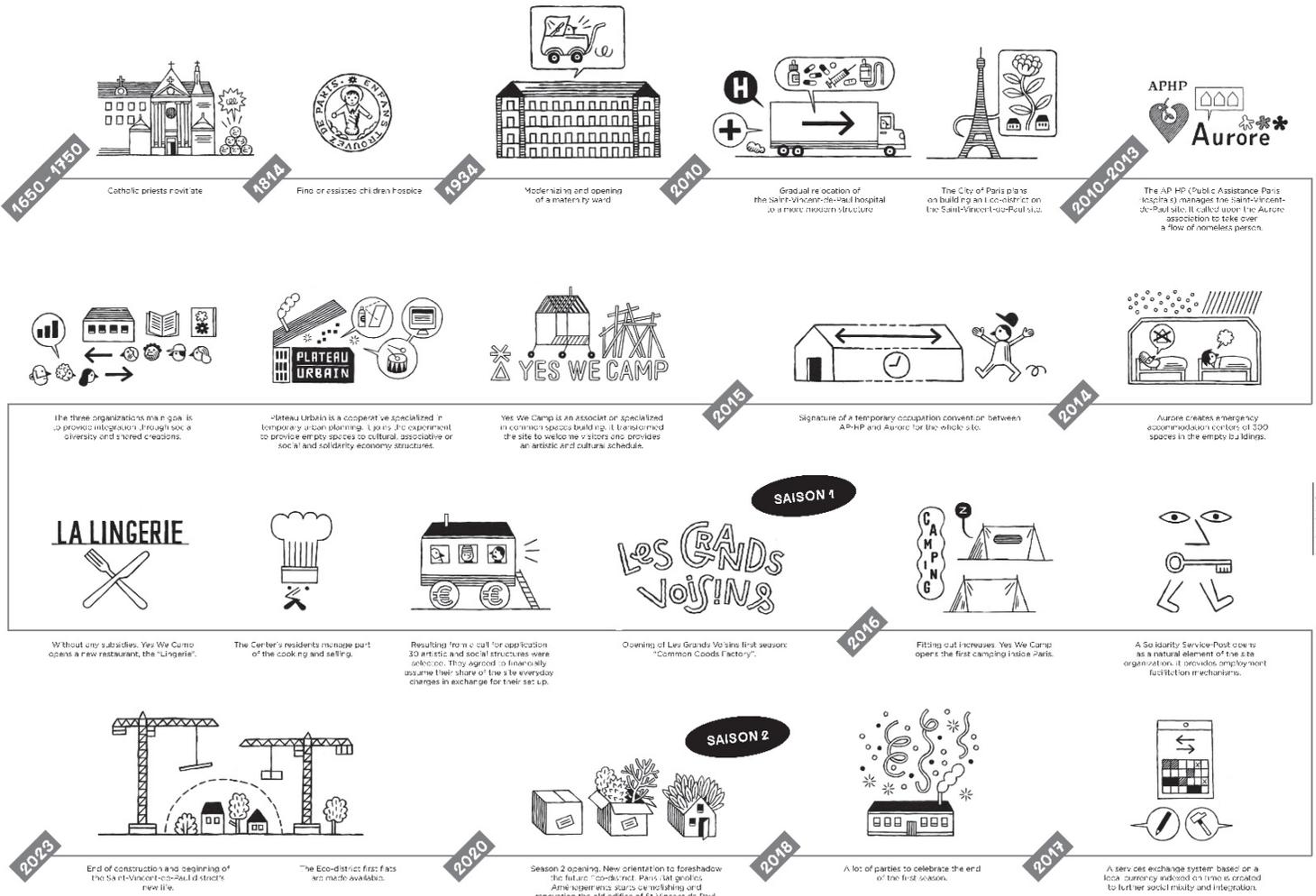
In a few pages, we want to take stock of our experiences over the last five years, from the points of view and perspectives of the three coordinators and site managers, while giving others the momentum and urge to get involved and to try to assist with identifying new ways of cohabiting in towns and cities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HISTORY OF THE SAINT VINCENT-DE-PAUL SITE	4
COORDINATORS OF THE PROJECT	5
1. FIVE YEARS OF COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE	6
1.1. Scope of the experience and associated challenges	6
1.2. Context, setup & partners.....	7
2. TEN ATTEMPTS TURNED INTO ACTION.....	9
1 > Making use of abandoned or long-unoccupied spaces	9
2 > Moving in and cohabiting.....	10
3 > Making space for socially and economically vulnerable people in the city centre.....	11
4 > Opening up the workplaces to emerging practices	12
5 > Providing a space for cultural and artistic experiences free of charge.....	13
6 > Encouraging interaction between different professional sectors and disciplines	14
7 > Providing structure for citizen involvement	15
8 > Making things work with what you have, in the time available.....	16
9 > Building a model for the economy and efficient management	17
10 > Passing on the experience and inspiring others	18
DISCOVERING LES GRANDS VOISINS.....	19
3. LOCAL IMPACT, CLUSTERING AND PROSPECTS	20
CONCLUSIONS	28

HISTORY OF THE SAINT VINCENT-DE-PAUL SITE

Illustrated by Jochen Gerner



TEXTES: JACQUES BENOIT

COORDINATORS OF THE PROJECT



Aurore association

Formed in 1871, Aurore seeks to host and assist socially and economically vulnerable people and those at risk of exclusion. The association's business focuses on three key missions: accommodating, caring, and positioning people in job opportunities. In 2019, 2,040 professionals and 843 volunteers assisted more than 50,000 people.

At the heart of the project: since 2014, the association has been the coordinator-in-chief of the whole site; it ensures general project co-ordination and has assumed technical and financial responsibility. It manages the day-to-day hosting and accommodation centres and helps those people being hosted with obtaining their independence, by offering job-positioning solutions.



Plateau Urbain co-operative

Formed in July 2013, Plateau Urbain is a co-operative that seeks to breathe life back into vacant blocks to enable the pursuit and continuity of associational, cultural, joint or young enterprise projects. It focuses on developing new kinds and types of uses for buildings, thereby making the most of long unused urban sites— the transition phase that precedes building refurbishment.

At the heart of the project: the co-operative helps with general co-ordination, coordinating the selection and management of the premise's occupants and supporting their relations. Additionally, it also contributes towards the technical coordination of the site.



Yes We Camp association

Since 2013, Yes We Camp has explored possibilities to build, inhabit and use shared spaces by proposing innovative, functional and inclusive facilities. Today, the permanent team includes about fifty people who share the same desire of contributing to a modern world.

At the heart of the project: the association assists with general coordination and is in charge of opening the site up to the public, including: artistic management, public communication, local partnerships, cultural programming, visual identity, the setting up of facilities in communal spaces, etc.





La Cafèt' Mobile: helping to create links on the site. © Yes We Camp

1. FIVE YEARS OF COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE

1.1. Scope of the experience and associated challenges

Les Grands Voisins is a unique experience, subject to the conditions associated with the ever-changing usage of temporarily vacant spaces, in order to meet fundamental needs: **housing, hospitality, sharing the living space and time, being human.** The former Saint Vincent-de-Paul Hospital, located in the 14th *arrondissement* of Paris, is one of Europe's largest temporary occupancy buildings for mixed, varied and public uses, occupies a 3.4-hectare plot. From 2015 to 2020, several million people lived, worked and shared this space, weaving other ways of living in the city together and offering new ways for solidarity and creativity.

The experience provides some kind of response to the issues present in a modern metropolis: how do we host and house the most deprived and provide them with a place to live in? How do we find affordable sites for them to launch their own business when the market itself makes this unaffordable? What new types of gathering, production and creation places can there be that would encourage voluntary and amateur involvement of citizen in a city that is ruled by experts and specialists? How to adapt our lifestyles and transform our towns and cities, while at the same time meeting ecological challenges?

1.2. Context, setup & partners

In December 2012, Cécile Duffot, the housing minister, called for a “solidarity shock” by asking several owners to mobilise and open up their empty buildings. In response to the appeal, **Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Paris provided the abandoned Saint Vincent-de-Paul maternity unit premises to its long-established partner, the Aurore association**, and did so absolutely free of charge where they installed the first two emergency accommodation centres.

In 2014, the City of Paris, soon to be owner of the site, suggested that the Aurore association takes on all of the 3.4 hectare site, and seek for transforming the area into a mixed district consisting predominantly of dwellings, coupled with a political desire to use the spaces for as many people as possible.

Under the urging of the 14th *arrondissement*'s civic offices, **the Aurore association** sought to diversify the occupancy of the buildings to encompass the social undertaking of various activities and nourish its existence. **The Plateau Urbain** co-operative assisted with the formalisation of an economic model that would fund the costs of managing the site, providing spaces for associations, small enterprise, artisans and artists in exchange for a contribution to the costs. **The Yes We Camp association** joined in the undertaking and conducting works to set up facilities and proposing the cultural programme, which would involve Parisians and the local community. Together, they would help to orientate the overall vision of the site: going from a disused hospital to an inhabited district.

From 2015 on, the common objectives were formulated: to encourage social mixity, favour the creation of urban commons, and propose new kinds of urban resilience. In October, the experience further acquired a name: *Les Grands Voisins*. An initial “prototype” phase, which would last until December, would enable the testing of several types of public cohabitation: residents of accommodation centres, occupants

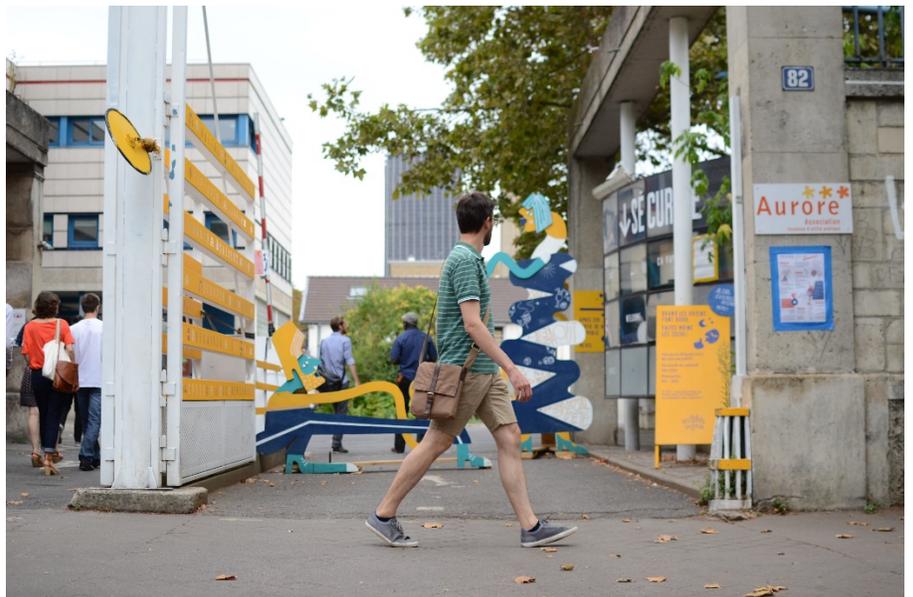
of business premises, “from Wednesday to Sunday” visitors and the protestors during the COP21 period.

Between 2016 and 2018, during Season 1, up to 250 association and entrepreneurial structures worked on *Les Grands Voisins*: nearly 1,000 people were accommodated there with up to 5,000 visitors hosted per day.

Season 2 saw the arrival of new owners, ***Paris & Métropole Aménagement***, the people responsible for the operational launch of the works to refurbish the Saint Vincent-de-Paul district. They joined forces with the Season 1’s operators to devise a communal project for cohabitation of the site and determine the overall *Les Grands Voisins* experience. The project was transformed and extended until October 2020, while the experiences on site will be used to prefigure certain uses of the future district.

2. TEN ATTEMPTS TURNED INTO ACTION

Les Grands Voisins transformed ten attempts of societal contribution into action and reality. Here is a summary of its five years, illustrated in figures and pictures.



Season 1 entrance located at 82 Avenue Denfert-Rochereau. © Yes We Camp

1 > Making use of abandoned or long-unoccupied spaces

3.4 empty hectares in the city of Paris made usable again: since 2012, the hospital's departments have been emptied out and remained wrapped in silence. The 19 buildings were to remain closed, unoccupied and guarded.

But seeing the efforts needed to discuss the *mêlée* of the political desires of various involved stakeholders and the time taken to design the future district, the spaces of this plot were temporarily offered to serve the needs of vulnerable people who needed a roof over their head, for professionals in search of a workplace, and for the locals and city visitors seeking to become involved in communal projects and simply enjoy a drink, chill out, exchange and have fun.



The residents of accommodation centre in action, Season 1. © Antoine Dogan

2 > Moving in and cohabiting

Nearly 2,000 people live and/or work on-site, including over 1,000 people in emergency accommodation. The site hosted several types of accommodation for vulnerable people and created conditions for social mixing, with a space open to the public, alongside mutualised services with activity centres, and housing for a few of the management teams.

For each of these aforementioned groups, the site became either their home or second home.

In the first five years, many communal spaces emerged and were affordable to a very varied public, thus toppling barriers between sectors and social worlds and leading to more human interaction. While the mix is not decreed, the experience has fostered favorable conditions for living together. This type of intermediate space offered a chance to escape the brutality of the street where fighting over the use of public spaces prevails, and enabled residents, occupants and locals to cohabit, and thereby meet and encounter some completely new faces.



The *Conciergerie Solidaire* team on a sidewalk maintenance mission. © Association Aurore

3 > Making space for socially and economically vulnerable people in the city centre

With several accommodation centres and numerous employment support mechanisms located on site, the concept of a place dedicated to the most vulnerable part of the society remains a structuring element of the project as the site is inhabited by real people.

Up to 600 people per night were accommodated in the first season.

Around 46,500 people were welcomed at the day centre for asylum seekers and refugees in the first two years of opening. The centre is open Monday to Friday during the day and helps to guide people towards the Reception and Situation Review Centres (CAES) or the conventional day centres and support mechanisms. The space also provides room to rest, bathe, eat and talk to one's family.

Some 150 vulnerable people are being recruited as part of the *Dispositif Premières Heures de la Conciergerie Solidaire*. Over 40% of these people have moved directly from the support mechanism into a job. The multitude of activities and the public's involvement creates great conditions for job positioning, with about twenty schemes or working positions having been developed.



Abacaxi, a leatherworker who uses vegetable-tanned and/or upcycled leather in her shop-workshop. © Pierre Duquoc

4 > Opening up the workplaces to emerging practices

A detailed survey of the nature of site use programme yields the following distribution: 37% of structures are devoted to work dealing with the arts, shows and recreational activities: 22% are devoted to service activities, 13% concern social action, 8% education, 11% the arts and crafts and industrial sector, 6% commerce and catering, and 3% are devoted to activities focusing on agriculture and the environment.

Workplaces are being offered to these structures at €250/m²/year including taxes, only considering the net surface area of the premises, in other words, one quarter of the usual rental prices in the 14th arrondissement. This encourages a return of production to the heart of towns and cities, maintaining artisanal, artistic and agricultural expertise embedded in a concept of re-use and respect for the environment. Over a hundred workshops, shops and workplaces were occupied by project coordinators having difficulty with affording a place through the conventional market.

Sales of €50 million were estimated across all of these activities in 2017 with just as much created in non-monetary benefits. *Les Grands Voisins* has served as a springboard for young structures in the test and initial phases, or for structures a little more mature in the consolidation of a viable economic model phase.



Carnival Sauvage at Les Grands Voisins in February, 2020. © Pablo Porlan - Hans Lucas

5 > Providing a space for cultural and artistic experiences free of charge

Over 300 cultural, educational and artistic events were offered free of charge to over 600,000 visitors per year.

Being multi-discipline and accessible to all, the programme ensures experimentation and creation, combining cultural events (concerts, festivals, exhibitions, shows, etc.), the usual welfare activities, classes in artistic practices and interventions, work in the crafts, and outdoor spaces. Some wonderful times that have livened up the experience would be: *Syrien n'est fait*, *Migrant'scène*, *Carnavals*, *Choc Thermique*, *48 Heures de l'Agriculture Urbain*, *La Petite Course CRIT*, etc.

The Les Grands Voisins scheme has always remained open to new proposals in order to remain dynamic, rich and dense. Every month, the planning meetings were open to any interested parties.



Adrien Collet, a string instruments maker and member of the Kacekode band that was born out of the meeting between musicians living in emergency shelters and occupants of the site. © Adrien Collet

6 > Encouraging interaction between different professional sectors and disciplines

Dozens of professional sectors represented:

The sectors of town planning, architecture, re-use, environment, catering, food, culture, recreational activities, arts and crafts, art, information, communication and education share and mutualize the spaces. Numerous players are involved in the experience: the people accommodated on-site, the associations, contractors, and district residents all enable numerous community projects. The general emulation of the place, the mutualisation of communal spaces and meeting places, plus the multitude of business profiles and sectors was the key element to promoting a pleasant and comfortable workplace.

The structures were established in such a way that they cooperate with and work alongside others on the site. These interactions lead to a multitude of human adventures, spontaneous encounters, exchanges of a variety of different expertise and skills, and are making for a true ecosystem.



Volunteer cooking the food during the lockdown period in the kitchen of the common restaurant l'Oratoire and distributing around 2500 meals per day. © Pablo Porlan - Hans Lucas

7 > Providing structure for citizen involvement

Over 5,000 voluntary workers have been involved over 5 years:

This experience was made possible thanks to the involvement of the numerous volunteers who sought to learn and develop their and others' expertise. The spaces, equipment and professional skills on-site assisted those volunteers with their mission, with those missions being varied and adaptable in order to meet everyone's needs and desires: help at the day centre for asylum seekers, bar service, catering, French classes, construction in the workshop, etc. In fact, many initiatives combine social work and specific training.

Additionally, the site hosted and supported a great number of community events.



Restaurant *Les Comptoirs*, The experience of complete co-operation between kitchen professionals and a team of non-professionals in integration, Season 1. © Yes We Camp

8 > Making things work with what you have, in the time available

Two years to five years: the re-signing of the agreement and a succession of three owners:

The time devoted to the experience was always in flux and the *Les Grands Voisins* project was ever-changing in its nature, harnessing reactivity, inventiveness and frugality in order to meet the desires of the community of inhabitants and locals, the needs of the district and its current ambitions, and social emergencies. After two full years focusing on the entire old hospital site, co-operation with future district planners has led to a reduction in usable spaces while also leading to the invention of new formats and uses for the 2018-2020 season.

Other changes took place in order to cope with the COVID-19 crisis by organising food aid campaign. Around **2,500 meals/day were prepared or distributed to socially and economically vulnerable people over the two months of the lockdown**, some of it until the end of summer 2020. *Les Grands Voisins* is pursuing plans for solidarity and inventing new uses for the available spaces: as well as catering in restaurants provided, a workshop producing masks and manufacturing 3D printing valves for the manufacturing of respirators is being set up.



Conseil des Voisins at the amphitheatre of Lelong building, Season 1. © Yes We Camp

9 > Building a model for the economy and efficient management

€2 million in annual management costs with a communal budget funded by the three steering organisations.

The change in the budget over the years has led to cash reserves being shared between the three steering structures while also pooling the financial risks. This was used to constitute a team of about twenty employees, representing a mixture of different professional profiles that would help to ensure the flexible and productive day-to-day management of the place.

The community stayed to be motivated by shaping a cultural and social agenda, dedicating time for the community meetings and such activities as shared breakfasts and meals.

Site management was divided into general board and different work groups on different subjects, in which all those concerned can participate: setting up spaces, social work, cultural scheduling, etc. The *Conseil des Voisins*, to which everyone is invited, was organised every two months to have exchanges on the project's latest changes and any other information. Furthermore, the three steering organisations attended weekly meetings so that they could remain reactive to the issues of the day-to-day management.



Signage design and objects for Les Grands Voisins presented at the "10 lieux infinis" exhibition at the Biennale Architettura 2018 in Venice. © Yes We Camp

10 > Passing on the experience and inspiring others

Dozens of similar experiences seen in finance:

The experience soon proved to not only be of interest to its users, but also to society as a whole, because of the positive impact generated. About fifty stakeholders attended one of our meetings with the desire to pursue this kind of projects in towns and cities with 700 to 8.6 million inhabitants in France, Belgium, Germany, and the USA. In addition, hundreds of requests were and still are being received for visits and/or participation in conferences on the part of public and private players (Ted X, MIT, Urban Maestro, Open Design Afrika Festival, Ashola Talks, Pavillon de l'Arsenal, etc.).

A number of distinctions have been awarded in recognition of this experience and undertaking, such as the International *Biennale Architettura 2018* exhibition in Venice "*Lieux infinis*", the Social and Solidarity Economy trophies awarded by the City of Paris and *Palmarès des Jeunes Urbanistes*.

DISCOVERING LES GRANDS VOISINS

DÉCOUVERTE DES GRANDS VOISINS

LES BÂTIMENTS

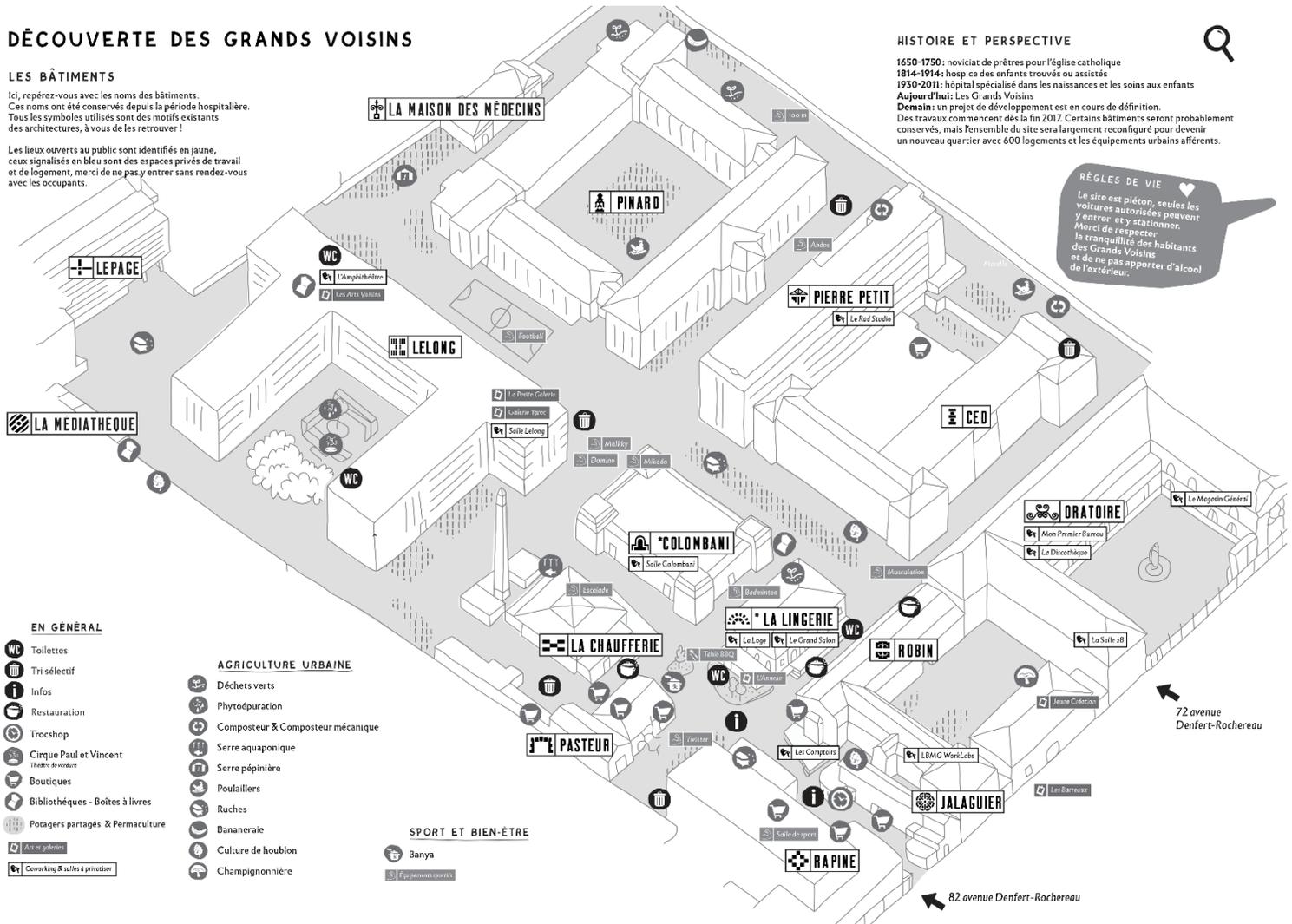
Ici, repérez-vous avec les noms des bâtiments. Ces noms ont été conservés depuis la période hospitalière. Tous les symboles utilisés sont des motifs existants des architectures, à vous de les retrouver !

Les lieux ouverts au public sont identifiés en jaune, ceux signalisés en bleu sont des espaces privés de travail et de logement, merci de ne pas y entrer sans rendez-vous avec les occupants.

HISTOIRE ET PERSPECTIVE

1650-1750: noviciat de prêtres pour l'église catholique
 1814-1914: hospice des enfants trouvés ou assistés
 1930-2011: hôpital spécialisé dans les naissances et les soins aux enfants
Aujourd'hui: Les Grands Voisins
Demain: un projet de développement est en cours de définition.
 Des travaux commencent dès la fin 2017. Certains bâtiments seront probablement conservés, mais l'ensemble du site sera largement reconfiguré pour devenir un nouveau quartier avec 600 logements et les équipements urbains afférents.

RÈGLES DE VIE
 Le site est piéton, seules les voitures autorisées peuvent y entrer et y stationner. Merci de respecter la tranquillité des habitants des Grands Voisins et de ne pas apporter d'alcool de l'extérieur.



EN GÉNÉRAL

- Toilettes
- Tri sélectif
- Infos
- Restauration
- Trocshop
- Cirque Paul et Vincent
Théâtre de verdure
- Boutiques
- Bibliothèques - Boîtes à livres
- Potagers partagés & Permaculture
- Art et galeries
- Coworking & salles à privilégier

AGRICULTURE URBAINE

- Déchets verts
- Phytoépuration
- Composteur & Composteur mécanique
- Serre aquaponique
- Serre pépinière
- Poulaillers
- Ruches
- Bananaeraie
- Culture de houblon
- Champignonnière

SPORT ET BIEN-ÊTRE

- Banya
- Équipement ouvert

THE BUILDINGS

Familiarise yourself with the names of the buildings. These names have been kept since the hospital period. All of the symbols used are based on existing architectural motifs; all you have to do is find them!

Places open to the public are shown in yellow, whilst those shown in blue are private workplaces and housing: please do not go there unless invited by the occupants.

HISTORY & PROSPECTS

1650-1750: noviciate of priests for the Catholic Church
 1814-1914: hospice for children
 1930-2011: hospital specialising in birthing and children's care
 Now: *Les Grands Voisins*
 In the future: a development project is under way

Works will begin in late 2017. Some buildings will probably be kept, but the whole of the site will be significantly reworked so that it becomes a new district with 600 dwellings and the necessary urban facilities.

RULES OF LIFE

The site is pedestrianised: only authorised cars may enter it and park in it. Please observe the peace of the inhabitants of *Les Grands Voisins* and do not bring alcohol in.



Point of view: festive weekend around the construction site organised with PM&A. © Retouramont

3. LOCAL IMPACT, CLUSTERING AND PROSPECTS

Bridges with the new Saint Vincent-de-Paul district

Even before our meeting, we shared similar ambitions: to respond to the challenges of living in the capital for underprivileged people, to build a city where they could live under future climatic conditions, and to cultivate a diversity of uses and practices.

At the beginning of the second season (2018-2020) of *Les Grands Voisins*, Paris & Métropole Aménagement (P&MA), the City of Paris and the civic offices in the 14th arrondissement had many reciprocal influences on one another, especially through the regular moments of exchange christened the “transition”, which nourished the debate and enabled the sharing of experiences.

Part of the urban development scheme was adapted following the common theme that was drawn from the Les Grands Voisins experience and the ambitions for the future urban project:

- a real economic dimension for “social and solidarity”
- serving as property that helps to kick-off local businesses with favourable rent
- integrating an emergency accommodation centre and a boarding house in the development scheme
- demonstrating the attractiveness of shops
- focus on the importance of communal areas
- the ambition to keep the experimental spirit at every stage of the project

Of course, the district’s ecological ambitions are at the top of the agenda, which will address some real challenges like: how to manage rainwater “at-source” and cultivate 4,000 m² of new green areas, re-use over 50% of the existing buildings and re-use the existing materials, and how to valorize the nitrogen and phosphorus from the urine, as already tested during *Les Grands Voisins*. Over and above delivering public spaces, ways of managing and living in the district are being questioned. The experience with temporary labour is inspiring P&MA to really consider how to set it up for this future ecodistrict: interactive dynamics (for example, with a panel selection of future tenants by landlords), the employment of a district manager and business platforms, the emergence of communal meeting places like La Lingerie, the L’Oratoire restaurant, and even the Pouponnière.

Where will the members of the community go?

Accommodation centre residents

The centres will move to other places and the people who have been hosted will receive guidance pointing them towards the right solutions. Before they arrive at the *Les Grands Voisins* site, some accommodation services have already moved several times. “Temporary” often refers to a group of places, which cater for the most vulnerable, people who are unable to find longer-term homes and workplaces, especially in the absence of general political backing. Following our exchanges with *Paris & Métropole Aménagement* and the City of Paris, we are proud to announce that the future district will integrate the construction of an Emergency Accommodation Centre (EAC) with about a 100 places and a boarding house with 25 places.

Users of the Day Centre for asylum seekers and refugees

The Day Centre will guide those being hosted through the different processes, dealing with the administration, and support in accessing the healthcare system and/or find somewhere to live, providing somewhere to rest, wash themselves, and charge their mobile phone to speak to their family abroad. A building located on Quai d’Austerlitz continues the welcome about 140 people per day and offers a day centre for families.

Occupants of offices, shops and workshops

All professionals had the possibility to rent places at a moderately priced rate under a fixed-term tenancy agreement. Some have been able to expand economically, becoming more structured and aimed at longer-term plans in the classic market. Others who were subject to testing activities seek to be placed in other temporary occupancy sites, shared office spaces or the artists’ workshops of Paris’ civic offices.

Some co-working structures continue to conduct their property search collectively in order to give them more weight and collective bargaining in their processes. Others, tempted by the *Les Grands Voisins* adventure, pursue with new temporary occupancy projects.

All professional structures are assisted with the property search for workshops so that everyone can put forward their objectives and their needs and thereby explore different options.



La Ressourcerie Créative, in Les Grands Voisins since the beginning of the project, is moving just a stone's throw away in the 14th arrondissement. © Yes We Camp



Camping Forum: meeting of about a hundred civil actors from the City of Tomorrow to explore the urban commons and their high value. © Yes We Camp

Similar projects in France and Europe?

Les Grands Voisins has demonstrated that temporary social and cultural occupancy and the transformation of society may be synonymous with attractiveness, progress, innovation and success.

The desire to pursue new projects together in Paris, the nearby suburbs or in France as a whole is clearly present. The co-operation between Aurora, Plateau Urbain, and Yes We Camp did not simply stop at the first test. Other experimental projects, varying in their scope yet similar in some aspects, are under way:

Les Cinq Toits, Paris (16th arrondissement)

Aurora under an agreement with Paris Habitat, Plateau Urbain and Yes We Camp.

Coco Velten, Marseilles

Yes We Camp under an agreement with Préfecture PACA, Groupe SOS and Plateau Urbain

La PADAF, Antony

Plateau Urbain under an agreement with LA CIPAV and Aurora.

La Bastion de Bercy, Paris (12th arrondissement)

Aurora under an agreement with the civic offices until 2024, and Plateau Urbain.

Les Ateliers Jean Moulin, Finistère

The new imaging, with Plateau Urbain, Brittany Regional Council, the town of Plouhinec and the communities of the towns of Cap-Cizun and Pointe du Raz.

Le Refuge, Paris (13th arrondissement)

Les Oeuvres de la Mie de Pain, assisted by Plateau Urbain.

Saisons Zéro, Roubaix

The Zerm co-operative, under an agreement with the town of Roubaix and Yes We Camp.

Other, similar experiences are being developed elsewhere: Hôtel Pasteur in Rennes, Le Tri Postal and La Serre in Brussels, L'Autre Soie in Lyons, Pépinière & Co. in Montreal, La Halle Papin in Pantin...

The European network STUN (Social Transitory Urbanism Network), launched by the initiative of Communa, brings together the communities of Yes We Camp, Free Riga, Alte Mu, Paradocks, Meanwhile Space and the Institute for (X). The ambition of the network, which seeks to be as open as possible, is to create a space for the exchanging the experiences between active players in the field of the temporary occupancy and to push for recognizing this experience as a tool for social transformation on a European scale.

Since 2018, the academic certificate “*Espaces communs*” has focused on further exploring thoughts for the “*Lieux infinis*” exhibition. It seeks to encourage clustering around shared places, with the players involved in the transformation hailing from various backgrounds and contexts (profiles, disciplines, sectors, professional maturity, etc.), all sharing the desire to be at the heart of the movement underpinning the opening up of this type of space, developing them and helping to define any thoughts on the subject while bringing them to fruition.

We would like to encourage communities, owners and decision-makers to promote the emergence and pursuit of similar projects on our shores. As such, we are trying to mobilise and motivate players in civil society to become more involved.



The “Voisins” creating their portraits, produced by Catherine Griss, a photographer that lives on site. © Catherine Griss

Societal perspectives

***Les Grands Voisins* is a way to demonstrate that it is possible to create responses to global crises through the creation of local, spontaneous solutions, creative, pragmatic islets, and lived-in and lively territories.**

Outlets cannot always be materialised within five years as experienced at the former Saint Vincent-de Paul hospital. Although mobilised, moved and contributed towards progress both here and elsewhere, efforts must be continued and the transition that we must all lead is immense. So, to all those who have the power to get involved, here, to scale and in perspective, are some of the challenges:

- **Over 4 million m² of office buildings are empty in Ile-de-France:**

There is space available and the temporary occupancy is gradually taking place. The signing of a temporary occupancy charter by about fifteen public and private partners on 26th August 2019 for *Les Grands Voisins* is one example of this type of action.

The challenge now is to prioritise the forms of general interest in view of the difficulties which numerous people encounter trying to find affordable living or working space in towns and cities. With every new situation, we must ask ourselves: can we allow ourselves to use additional time and space to meet the challenges of solidarity and ecology?

- **There are some 140,000 people with no fixed abode in France:**

That figure is taken from the last INSEE survey in 2012; however, it is far short of reality according to a few flash surveys conducted in Paris.

Emergency accommodation is essential for people who find themselves in a difficult situation. Their location in the city centre and connection to the environment are factors, which can and will structure their return to stability. Temporary accommodation is a useful solution albeit always a precarious one. Now, however, they are the only spaces possible, especially because of a reduction in the resources allocated. The establishment of fixed accommodation centres alongside the construction of social and communal housing in the city centre demand, more than ever, vision and political courage.

- **The average property price in Paris is more than €10,000/m²:**

Les Grands Voisins is in charge of day-to-day site maintenance, management, and upkeep, provided free of charge by the owner. There is no rent, in terms of any contribution to or refund of the speculative value of the property. Keeping spaces off the market enables new things to appear, making things work with what is already there, to allow innovation for inventing and adopting new ways of living in towns and cities, together with our combined efforts. What if we proposed 20% of premises at the original cost price, per territory?

- **Thousands of cases of discrimination are reported every year:**

Owing to the presence of businesses, accommodation centres and social services and public access, there are numerous people hailing from highly different worlds who cross each other's paths daily at *Les Grands Voisins*. The fact that they cohabit the same place and are considered a "*Voisin*" is a factor, which determines their quality of social support, degree of self-esteem and the elimination of any prejudices.

The pooling of knowledge, resources and moments that have been experienced helps propel this undertaking, as well as allowing us to appreciate differences by seeking personal enrichment. Beyond public spaces, how do we construct and maintain modern types of communal spaces in towns and cities? The challenge seems to transcend mere cohabitation with the new relationships that have been and are being forged.

- **Developments in the last few years have taken on new forms:**

Every year, *Les Grands Voisins* changes according to current affairs, demonstrating itself to be a real force for reactivity; for example, playing its part providing emergency accommodation in the context of the aftermath of the 2015 Bataclan shootings (engaged, militant events, the COP21 campsite, ...) and participating in different deployments during the lockdown and the ensuing COVID-19 crisis (food distribution, mask workshops, etc.). We are the 99%, the Gilets Jaunes, Extinction Rebellion—civil society is seeking to change words into action, into social and climatic justice. Simplifying the relationship with politics, involvement processes and the hosting of all initiatives are just some of the challenges associated with seeking to make spaces capable and available to those who would like to get involved.

CONCLUSIONS

The greatest risk to society would be to miss the opportunity to have tried.

We sense the looming pitfalls of developing “airport-cities,” with an increasing numbers of techniques, experts, screens, checks, a heightening attitude of “every man for himself” and the underlying mechanics of seeking zero risk. They produce not only additional costs in the long term, but also a disembodiment of practices, social fragmentation, permanent defiance, and a generalised sense of powerlessness.

So, as we have envisaged and realised here, there is a degree of urgency in ensuring that elsewhere, these groups, these ways of doing things and these places, self-managed, hybridized, emerging, unseizable, spontaneous, imperfect, and no doubt unforeseeable, are catered for, encouraged over time and supported by public bodies.

Let us use the “available” spaces to make them emerge.

We have a lot to gain if only we try to establish spaces of mutual trust, taking on the risks together, and try new, more sustainable, communal ways of living in the world.

Built inclusively, borne by civil society, these “infinite places” will reveal our collective ability to organize ourselves differently. They are powerful motors for the emerging social, cultural and ecological transition as, very often, they try to operate through joy, sharing, poetry and beauty.

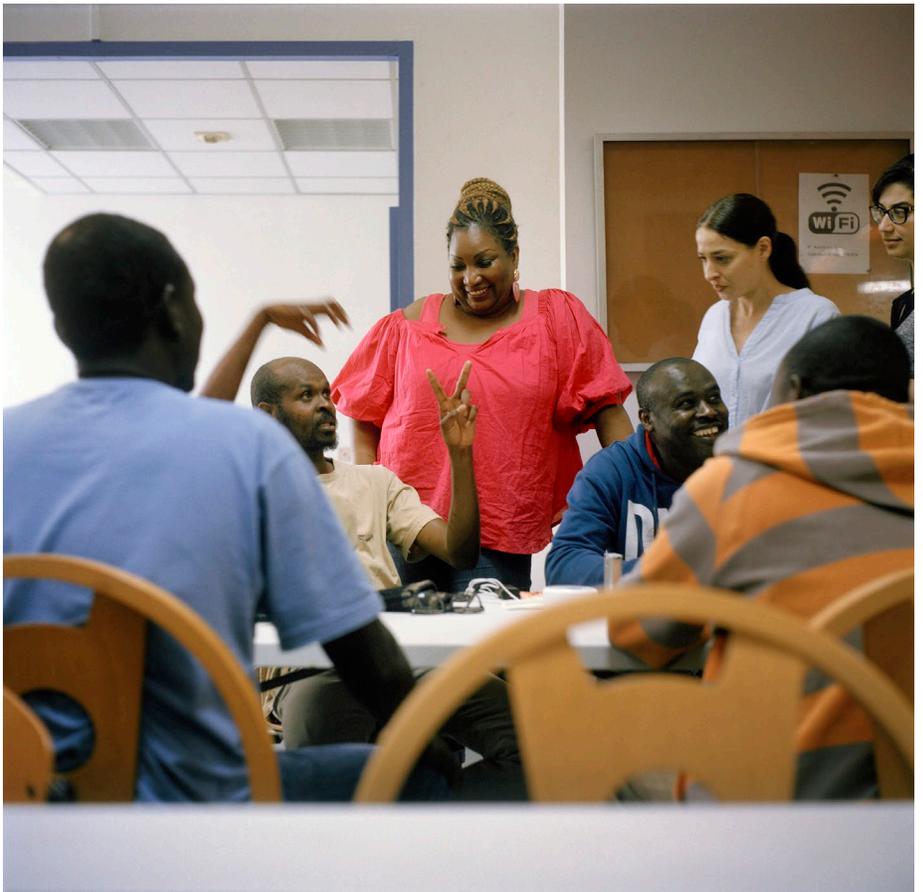
Takeaway world cuisine cooking at Ghada during “48 Hours of Urban Agriculture” event, 2020. © Loubiana, Pépines Production



The Pinard building, which hosted the associations Aurora and Coallia during the Season 1. © Clément Guillaume



La Lingerie on the market day. © Jelena Stajic



Reception day in the Rapine building. © Association Aurore



Hall of the Oratory's communal restaurant, where chefs and new cooks from integration programme meet. © Yes We Camp



Construction of furniture during the public workshops of the *Vendredi Chantier*. © Yes We Camp



Vertical Dance on the Lelong building. © Yes We Camp



A moment in the Pierre Petit accommodation centre. © Yes We Camp



The Traucco hut at the campsite, 2017. © Yes We Camp

3.4 empty hectares in inner city Paris made usable again for **5 years**.

2,000 people live and/or work on site.

1,000 people in emergency accommodation on site.

46,500 people hosted by the day centre for asylum seekers and refugees.

€250/m²/year including taxes for net surface area for workshops/offices in the heart of Paris.

Dozens of professional sectors represented.

300 cultural, educational and artistic events offered **annually** offered free of charge to over **600,000 visitors**.

More than **5,000 voluntary workers** involved over 5 years.

€2 million in annual management spread across a common budget shared by the **3 steering organisations**.

Dozens of similar experiences in France influenced by the project.

www.lesgrandsvoisins.org

www.facebook.com/lesgrandsvoisins

www.twitter.com/voisins_les

www.instagram.com/lesgrandsvoisins

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Aurore Association – Plateau Urbain Co-operative – Yes We Camp Association. (Project carried out with the support of the Paris City Council and the Île-de-France Region.)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

Translation from French to English: Brussels Bouwmeester
Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Nantes: from a creative to an experimental city

The example of the Île de Nantes
urban project by SAMOA (FR)

Hélène Morteau

Postdoctoral researcher,
Université Grenoble Alpes,
Pacte

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. BROWNFIELD SITES: DRIVERS OF EXPERIMENTATION ON THE ÎLE DE NANTES	3
2. THE EMERGENCE OF SAMOA AND THE INVENTION OF A METHOD	5
3. TOOLS AND GOVERNANCE TO SUPPORT THE URBAN PROJECT	9
3.1. The guide plan: early experiments	9
3.2. SAMOA, an evolving legal structure.....	11
4. THE “CREATIVE ARTS DISTRICT” CLUSTER, THE EMBODIMENT OF THE “CREATIVE CITY”	12
5. A SHIFT TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY URBAN PLANNING?.....	14
5.1. Change of course	14
5.2. Green capital and its offshoot, Green Island	15
5.3. Île de Nantes Expérimentations – Iltopia.....	17
6. WHAT SHOULD WE RETAIN AND WHAT IS TRANSFERABLE FROM THE NANTES EXAMPLE?.....	20
KEY REFERENCES	22

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this case study is to understand, through an analysis of the Île de Nantes projects, how the urban development agency SAMOA (Société d'Aménagement de la Métropole Ouest Atlantique) and its project management team¹ have been able to use governance tools to experiment in public spaces. Tracing the project's development since its inception reveals three distinct approaches: a public space approach that involves forming partnerships with cultural actors; a more traditional programming policy that provides for a project to establish a "creative cluster" of facilities; and, finally, a desire to develop the processes of engagement of and direct contribution by citizens (limited, however, to one area of the island). These three approaches are driven by clearly stated political impetuses (and are thus relatively top-down in nature, including in their participatory aspects).

1. BROWNFIELD SITES: DRIVERS OF EXPERIMENTATION ON THE ÎLE DE NANTES

Since the end of the 1980s and the closure of its shipyards, the city of Nantes has undergone a radical and continuous transformation, embodied by, among other things, the urban project launched on the Île de Nantes. This 350-hectare island, located south of the historic city centre, is surrounded by branches of the Loire river. Today, it is made up of three parts. Regional administrative and tertiary activities are concentrated in the east of the island, which is also home to a shopping centre and apartment blocks built in the 1960s and 1970s. The République district in the centre of the island is the former residential area for shipbuilding workers. Port and shipbuilding activities were carried out in the west of the island. In this district, now known as the "*Quartier de la création*" ("Creative Arts District"), there were many disused brownfield sites before events began to be held there in the 1990s. The Festival des Allumées is perhaps the most emblematic of that period: between 1990 and 1995, the Festival welcomed artists from six major foreign ports for six days, from six in the evening to six in the morning. The performances took place in hidden parts of the city and allowed the people of Nantes to discover the island's industrial

¹ The project management team for the Île de Nantes urban project changes approximately every seven years. Between 2003 and 2010, the project management was entrusted to

Ateliers de l'île and Alexandre Chemetoff. From 2010 to 2016, it was handed over to the Smets/uapS team, comprising Marcel Smets and Anne-Mie Depuydt. Since 2016 it has been entrusted for a period of eight years to a group led by the Atelier Jacqueline Osty and Claire Schorter.

heritage. Later, from 2005 onwards, many facilities were created on those sites: cultural facilities designed to showcase current and emerging music or contemporary art (such as Stéréolux, Tremolino and HAB Galerie), tourist facilities (the Dubigeon shipyard houses the Grand Éléphant and the Galerie des Machines), schools (Les Beaux-Arts) and business incubators in the vast field of cultural and creative industries (Karting, La Centrale, Labo Diva and L'Agronaute).

SAMOA purchased the sites from the Port Authority or from industrialists, enabling it to test and give a foretaste of initiatives while the urban project was being carried out, before repeating or even institutionalizing the exercise. The abandoned spaces, colonized by artistic endeavours, have become testing grounds for the urban project, thanks to a close partnership between three main actors: the city council, the urban development agency and cultural actors (in particular Jean Blaise² and the company La Machine).

Today, through the Arbre aux Hérons (Heron Tree) project, and almost 15 years on from the inauguration of the Grand Éléphant,³ the city seems to be perpetuating this way of doing things, at the risk of being less innovative and less concerned with current issues. The challenge for Nantes is no longer to reconquer the public spaces on its island, to attract more tourists or to make it onto the European map of "creative" cities. Its objectives now are to find new methods (less top-down, more bottom-up) and a means of inventing the city or even building it together with its citizens. Lastly, it needs to design the levers of the environmental transitions needed to guarantee its resilience.

² Jean Blaise is the artistic director behind several projects in Nantes and elsewhere in France. He was Director of the Centre de recherche pour le développement culturel (Cultural Development Research Centre) from 1987 to 1999 and founded the Festival des Allumées (1900–1996), Le Lieu Unique (2000) and the biennial contemporary art exhibition Estuaire (2007–2012). Since 2012, he has been director of Le

voyage à Nantes (The journey to Nantes). In 2002, he served as artistic director of the first Nuit Blanche in Paris.

³ The Grand Éléphant is a mechanical tourist attraction and mobile structure conceived by François Delarozière, founder of the company La Machine. It is 12 metres high, 8 metres wide and 21 metres long and weighs 48 metric tons. The inauguration of the elephant in 2007 coincided with the creation of the Parc des Chantiers, a 13-hectare public space located to the west of the Île de Nantes on the site of a former car park. L'Arbre aux Hérons is another François Delarozière project aimed at tourists that will complement the delivery of an urban project in Bas-Chantenay, located to the west of the city centre.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF SAMOA AND THE INVENTION OF A METHOD

Nantes, dubbed “the Venice of the West”, is a port and trading city that owes part of its wealth to triangular trade. The city grew during the 18th century on the back of the shipbuilding industry. Following the closure of its shipyards in 1987, the city suffered an unprecedented economic crisis. In 1989, Jean-Marc Ayrault was elected leader of the municipal council, with his first task being to make the city desirable to its inhabitants. To that end, the mayor surrounded himself with figures from the world of culture and gave them carte blanche. With the help of Jean Blaise, Nantes was then “gripped by culture”. Thanks to the *Festival des Allumées* (a forerunner of the Nuit Blanche in Paris),⁴ the city took centre stage and its residents were able to discover forgotten local sites. It was a first experience that gave birth to the special relationship that exists between the people of Nantes and culture and art in public spaces. It was the direct result of risk-taking and a political gamble.

A few years later, in the early 2000s, the Île de Nantes urban project began, led by Laurent Théry at SAMOA and managed by the Ateliers de l'Île de Nantes in the shape of Alexandre Chemetoff (renowned landscape artist and urban planner, winner of the Grand Prix de l'Urbanisme in 2000). Soon, a method and some unshakable principles were established: a belief in being governed “by the project and not by the rules”, as embodied in the guide plan, which promoted the preservation of the most remarkable buildings belonging to the city’s industrial-port heritage, a promise of public spaces that were as permeable as possible, reclaiming the banks of the Loire, an eclectic approach to construction and a requirement to use high-quality materials. **A two-fold experiment was being carried out, involving, on the one hand, the method chosen for the urban project and, on the other, artistic intervention in public spaces. The ambitions of the two sides aligned and fed into each other in what has often been described since as a collective “Nantes style”.** It was very much the site that made everything possible by adapting to the proposals of the cultural actors. Building on what was already there (landscape quality of the site, history, heritage and existing actors), the project gradually took shape within a framework of “revelatory urban planning” (“*urbanisme de la révélation*”) (Fromonot, 2011). That agility, which enabled the project to evolve, was what led to the opening of the Parc des Chantiers, roaming ground of the Grand Éléphant, and the Hangar à

⁴ The Nuit Blanche is an event, conceived for the city of Paris by Jean Blaise in 2002, in which cultural venues open their doors for an entire night once a year.

Bananes (Banana Warehouse), renovated in 2007 for the first edition of the biennial art exhibition Estuaire.

The example of the **Parc des Chantiers** is emblematic of this way of doing things. Alexandre Chemetoff retained the Dubigeon warehouses and gave prominence to their structure. He also preserved, to the extent possible, traces of industrial activity on the piazza (rails and the slipway). By creating gardens and footbridges along the banks of the Loire, he encouraged visitors to go for a stroll and renew ties with the river. As part of the project, François Delarozière⁵ designed and produced, in collaboration with Pierre Orefice, Les Machines de l'Île.



Parc des Chantiers. Garden of Journeys. 06/2009. © Jean-Dominique Billaud/SAMOA

The Machines de l'Île consist of several structures. The Carrousel des mondes marins ("Marine Worlds Carousel") was installed on the piazza of the Parc des Chantiers in 2012. Conceived as a nod to Jules Verne's adventure novel "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea", the Carousel displays dozens of mechanical marine creatures over three levels. The Éléphant had a different origin: François Delarozière initially created it as a performing machine for a Royal de Luxe show entitled "Visite du sultan des Indes" ("The Sultan's Elephant") in 2005. Through street theatre and ambulatory performances, public spaces were not only exalted; they became the central characters. François Delarozière then seized the opportunity presented by the urban project and proposed stationing the elephant in the Dubigeon

⁵ François Delarozière is the artistic director of the company La Machine, known in particular for having created the monumental Machines de l'Île in Nantes. He was also the

creator of some of the performing machines of the street theatre company Royal de Luxe, with which he worked closely until 2005.

warehouses and creating the Galerie des Machines. This museum was established in the warehouses and exhibits the prototypes spawned by his imagination. Thus, the performing machines became mobile structures that help to reveal public spaces and weave a narrative. In her thesis, Emmanuelle Gangloff (2017) describes how street artists have taken the city of Nantes and transformed it into a setting. She also highlights the shift experienced by these artists, who have become actors in the process of city-building and its manifestations.



Parc des Chantiers. Marine Worlds Carousel. 04/2017. © Valery Joncheray/SAMOA



Parc des Chantiers. The Grand Éléphant 06/2009. © Jean-Dominique Billaud/LVAN

Finally, she analyses the way in which **the city authorities have themselves taken the lead in launching urban scenography initiatives and projects**. That is the case with the city's Green Spaces Service, which works together with artists (Claude Ponty, Johann Le Guillerm, Jean Julien, etc.) and involves its gardeners and other workers in the creation of works of art. Urban life and culture beat to the same rhythm. In the Parc des Chantiers, SAMOA occasionally plays the **role of scenographer**, managing time and space. The agency works throughout the park on the links between artist, public and urban project by developing a scenographic modus operandi. Public spaces are viewed as reversible, with the potential to be transformed from time to time into a stage.

This approach has been replicated in different parts of the Île de Nantes and in the city centre. The biennial contemporary art exhibition Estuaire,⁶ founded by Jean Blaise in 2007, became a good reason to expedite work on the western tip of the island. The new public spaces designed by Alexandre Chemetoff in the **Banana Warehouse** were chosen to host the exhibition's monumental works. The agency's cause and those of culture and event management found common ground on the island. As a result, **the urban and artistic projects converged in the same places at the same time in a kind of synchronicity** (Morteau, 2016).



The Banana Warehouse promenade and the Anneaux de Buren (Buren's rings). © Marlène Page

⁶ <https://www.estuaire.info/en/>

3. TOOLS AND GOVERNANCE TO SUPPORT THE URBAN PROJECT

3.1. The guide plan: early experiments

Let us briefly reconsider what made these unprecedented partnerships possible. The experts agree that they can be explained by a variety of ingredients: the **trust** and **political continuity** of the city council, the informal alliance of individuals behind the urban and artistic projects and the spirit of the guide plan, which encouraged a kind of experimentation in the actors' actions.



Excerpts from the Île de Nantes guide plan. Source: SAMOA.

According to the project plan for the creation of the *zone d'aménagement concertée* (mixed development zone),⁷ the formulation of a guide plan for the Île de Nantes project was the hallmark of the approach taken by the Ateliers de l'Île de Nantes, which was responsible for project management. The guide plan was “the map of the island in a future state of completion, reflecting with equal care its **current state and a projection** of its appearance at a given future date”.⁸ The plan was a **living** tool of urban design. “More than an illustration of the project, it is an element of its method. It shows all the blocks, occupied and available, **sets the ambition and determines the constraints**. It depicts everything with the same precision: what exists, the likely hypotheses, the more forward-looking ideas; it is a **living document**”.⁹ It took into account all the sectoral policies of the city and the urban area and defined the framework for every action undertaken. The guide plan revealed the coherence of this complex territory by proposing to combine the old and the new, what existed and what was created. **It did not define rules or procedures**, but adapted to the initiatives that would be introduced there. It was a reference document that guided short-term action within the framework of a long-term vision for the territory. It was much more of a strategy than a plan in the strict sense of the word, which made it possible to involve a certain number of actors in the urban project without setting its contours in stone. More than a classic urban planning instrument, the guide plan kick-started open governance of the urban project.

Some observers¹⁰ have emphasized the qualities of such a tool, conceived as a challenge to the planning and rules that predominate in urban planning: the openness associated with the concept of an open block, the flexibility of evolving programmes (implemented by SAMOA in conjunction with the city authorities) and the negotiation of the scale of construction (which, in this case, made its way into the urban rules, the Local Planning Regulations). These elements are marked by an originality that is reflected in the design. Lastly, for Laurent Devisme, the guide plan's strength was above all **dependent on the contractual relationships** that were negotiated, namely the contract governing the **project management** of the public spaces (in order to test the concepts laid out in the guide plan), **but also an assignment to provide advice and assistance**. This assignment allowed the project management team (the Ateliers de l'Île) to participate in the work of the city's planning commissions and in the selection meetings for stakeholders/investors and

⁷ In France, a mixed development zone is where a public operation is undertaken to develop an urban space pursuant to the Urban Planning Code. Such zones were established by Town Planning Act No. 67-1253 of 30 December 1967 and are areas in which a competent public authority or institution decides to step in to develop land and construct facilities thereon, or arrange for that to be done, in particular land that the authority or institution has acquired or will acquire, with a

view to selling or ceding to public or private users at a later date.

⁸ Extract from the project plan for the creation of the mixed development zone, p. 36.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See the writings of Laurent Devisme: <http://www.popsu.archi.fr/sites/default/files/nodes/document/830/files/les-instruments-plan-guide.pdf>.

architects, contractors, etc. It was the sum of those prerogatives and levers of action that gave strength to the guide plan.

This tool, which could be replicated in other contexts, no longer exists. Nevertheless, it has left a legacy to SAMOA, which has indeed served as an ambassador for a kind of experimentation in how to carry out the urban project. It embodied – and still does – an “innovative *fabrique urbaine*” [this uniquely French term has been described by H  l  ne Noizet as “a socio-spatial process of development of ordinary towns and cities”], whether in its tools, its governance or its work. Its approach is always to take advantage of opportunities and external projects that arise, translating them in its own way in public spaces.

3.2. SAMOA, an evolving legal structure

SAMOA thus went from being a *soci  t   d’  conomie mixte* (part state-owned company) to a *soci  t   publique locale d’am  nagement* (publicly owned local development company) and finally a *soci  t   publique locale* (publicly owned local company). Those changes of status enabled it to take on new projects. Let us first look at the specifics of that model. In France, a *soci  t   d’  conomie mixte* (abbreviated to SEM) is a public limited company whose capital is held mainly by one or more public entities (namely, the state, a local authority or a public body; in the case of SAMOA, Nantes M  tropole is the majority stakeholder). That majority public shareholding is capped at 85 per cent of the total capital in accordance with the Act of 2 January 2002. At least one private entity, which may be another SEM, must have a stake in the company. **The SEM model is a guarantee for the public authority, as shareholder and contracting partner, that the public interest will effectively be taken into account in the company’s objectives and that the private company will be flexible.**¹¹ Indeed, SEMs are public limited companies in which the public authority must own between 51 and 85 per cent of the capital. The authority has at least one representative and half the votes on the board of directors.

Since its establishment, SAMOA has adapted its legal form to the needs of the project. It was set up on 2 October 2003 to lead, in the context of the development of the Nantes Saint-Nazaire metropolitan area, all urban development and renewal initiatives, actions and programmes on the   le de Nantes. By a decision of 18 December 2008, the SEM was transformed with effect from 9 February 2009 into a

¹¹ The legal regime for SEMs is determined by articles L1521-1 et seq. of the General Code on Local Authorities, as amended by Act No. 2002-1 of 2 January 2002 on the modernization of

local SEMs, and articles L225-1 et seq. of the Commercial Code resulting from the codification of the Commercial Companies Act of 24 July 1966. By virtue of those instruments, SEMs are subject to the rules of private law.

publicly owned local development company and then on 1 July 2011 into a **publicly owned local company**.

Publicly owned local companies¹² have characteristics that set them apart from other local public enterprises such as SEMs. The first advantage is **political control. In such companies, the local authorities are in sole command**. They hold all the capital and all the seats on the board of directors, which appoints and dismisses the managing director. SEMs must have at least seven shareholders, including at least one private entity. Having such control gives local authorities the assurance that publicly owned local companies will fully take on board their strategic and policy guidance. The second advantage is the time and money that can be saved as a result of their status. Considered to be internal operators, **publicly owned local companies do not have to be subject to competitive procedures** by their public shareholders, in full compliance with European Union law. The absence of such procedures means that significant time and money can be saved when implementing projects. Over time, the projects and jobs entrusted to the companies may evolve without affecting the nature of the contractual relations or the regime governing them. The status of these companies therefore allows them flexibility to respond more directly to the needs of the territories. It should be noted that this status is a truly atypical tool: it lies between private law (the Commercial Code) and public law (the General Code on Local Authorities). Publicly owned local companies are founded as companies, but operate within a clearly defined administrative framework.¹³

4. THE “CREATIVE ARTS DISTRICT” CLUSTER, THE EMBODIMENT OF THE “CREATIVE CITY”

The change in status described above entailed a change in functions that it would be helpful to explain in greater detail. According to one project manager at SAMOA, “we removed the ‘D’ for development in order to build Le Karting.¹⁴ In reality, SAMOA has no intention of managing office space or of building with a view to having its own tenants. A traditional developer seeks to buy land, divide it up, group it back together, develop it and sell it on to a property developer with a clear project, but we

¹² Sources: www.lesepl.fr and www.nantesmetropole.fr.

¹³ <https://www.lagazettedescommunes.com/111600/es-avantages-et-limites-des-spl/>.

¹⁴ Le Karting is a temporary facility created by SAMOA in 2011 that allows it to rent workspaces to companies in the creative industries on tenancies at will and at reduced costs. That enables it to attract and accommodate “creatives” on the island and makes the “Creative Arts District” cluster project that it has been running since 2010 a reality.

have been able to give ourselves the means to foster agility by having the right legal, institutional and financial framework” (Morteau, 2016).

In 2010, the team changed and injected fresh economic ambition into the project. Jean-Luc Charles took the helm of SAMOA and surrounded himself with a new urban project management team in the shape of architects Marcel Smets and Anne Mie Depuydt. Meanwhile, the city joined European creative city networks, namely the European Clusters for Cultural Enterprises and, subsequently, the European Creative Industries Alliance. Through its contact with those international networks and spurred on by an ambition to make culture an economic driver, the city identified the concept of the cultural cluster as the obvious choice for the western tip of the island and, with it, a new vision for the project. In the Creative Arts District, considered to be the showcase of the urban project, a large number of public facilities were built to receive students, academics and cultural and economic actors. The juxtaposition of those different actors and facilities in a small area created the friction necessary for life in the area and for the economic development of the small cultural and creative businesses that were set up there. Having a spatial arrangement that would create an economic and social dynamic: that was the challenge. In order to bring the cluster to fruition, the developer created a programme that provided for educational institutions (the school of architecture, the school of fine arts, the graphic arts centre, Halle 6 West of the University of Nantes and the school of design), project incubators (Les Écossolies, Le Karting and La Centrale) and cultural facilities (La Fabrique, Stéréolux and Trempolino). The brownfield sites still scattered throughout the Creative Arts District gradually became tools for economic development used by the developer to house **a multitude of companies and groups from diverse sectors** (cultural and creative industries, digital and health). In that second phase of the urban project, the developer no longer focused solely on public spaces, but also on facilities. The majority of the sites became part of the programme. **The developer systematized a way of doing things and, in contrast to the previous period when the site had made the programme, now it was the programme that made the site. It was a time of programmatic urban planning** (Fromonot, 2011).

5. A SHIFT TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY URBAN PLANNING?

5.1. Change of course

Having involved artists in the process of building the city and then creative businesses with the “Creative Arts District” cluster project, **since 2013**, SAMOA has been trying to open up the urban project to new stakeholders, including residents and users of the island, who have taken part, through a range of channels, in a **more participative urban planning process**.

This transformation must be interpreted in the light of changes taking place at the metropolitan level. Johanna Rolland, elected leader of the municipal council and president of Nantes Métropole in 2014 and 2020, has adopted a novel approach to citizen dialogue that enables her to engage with them extensively¹⁵ in all public policies: transport, gender equality, public facilities, schools, security, energy transition, etc. During an interview, a director at Nantes Métropole commented on this tipping point: “I don't know how, but they (referring to those taking the baton from Jean Blaise and SAMOA, etc.) are going to have to reinvent themselves. As I see it, the city authorities... Johanna Rolland needs to invent her system, and she is looking for one. We are still coming to the end of Jean-Marc Ayrault's system. The other system is not here yet. What Johanna Rolland is trying to do is to work, as in Barcelona, from the bottom up, together with the citizens. With the common people, with civil society.”

Little by little, “dialogue-based city-building” was introduced on the ground before being established in 2019 as a model to be followed by all the metropolitan services involved in city-building in the 24 communes of the Nantes metropolis. That made it possible to change the work culture within local government and publicly owned local companies such as SAMOA, which need to develop their methods. **Consequently, efforts are being made to reinvent cultural and urban development policies by supporting nascent artistic creation processes or by focusing on residents, participation and collaborative construction.** It is a methodology in transition.

¹⁵ According to figures reported in assessments drawn up by the *Pôle Dialogue Citoyen* (Centre for Citizen Dialogue), more than 200 processes were conducted to promote dialogue during the term of office (2014–2020) at the metropolitan level;

50,000 people took part in each *Grand Débat* (general debate), either in person or online, 87 initiatives concerned public policies; and 120 initiatives were implemented in Nantes' 11 districts.

Today, in the words of Laurent Devisme, “There is a need to be more modest and closer to everyday urban planning”.¹⁶ By looking at two examples of initiatives launched in public spaces, we will consider that shift and its consequences for the urban project on the Île de Nantes.

5.2. Green capital and its offshoot, Green Island

In 2013, Nantes was awarded the European Commission’s European Green Capital Award. SAMOA organized a series of event-based experiments in public spaces in connection with the conferral of this European prize, thereby reaffirming its ambition to act as a laboratory for experimentation in the Nantes metropolis. Taking advantage of the Green Capital event, it launched a call for projects aimed at exploring new ways of intervening in public spaces, namely through pop-up installations and participatory entertainment activities. Following the call, 80 proposals were received, around fifteen were screened and five selected for implementation in the various neighbourhoods on the island. These “stops”, which supplemented an existing series of emblematic locations, formed a temporary route, available from 15 June to 28 September 2013: the Green Island itinerary.¹⁷ A large proportion of the projects carried out were the result of collective efforts, either in their conception or in their realization on the ground. *Écoles supérieures* (specialist higher education establishments), sixth form colleges, associations, companies and residents contributed to the creation of these atypical installations, which “launched a movement in the area”.¹⁸ Examples included a collaboration between the Nantes *École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture* and the *École Supérieure du Bois* [an engineering school specializing in wood science and technology], which involved the installation of a fixed stage to host concerts, plays and conferences, and of street furniture that could be adjusted to meet different needs. Alongside it was placed a second installation: *L'Arche des Gallinacées*, an interactive henhouse. Another project, “*Aires de contes*” (“Storytelling areas”), was carried out in collaboration with the island’s residents and users. Writing and craft workshops were held to mobilize volunteers for the project. Five intimate spaces served as the backdrop for stories inspired by the island’s history and geography, and others shared by participants of the writing workshops. Not far away lay the *Écosphère* site, an experiment in a form of community gardening.

¹⁶ Remarks made at the Nantes Innovation Forum on 9 October 2020.

¹⁷ http://www.ustensiles.info/greenisland/ROADBOOK_GREEN_ISLAND.pdf.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*



Écosphère, Île de Nantes, summer 2013. © ECOS Nantes

This project, brainchild of the associations ECOS (an urban environmental laboratory) and CAMPO (a landscaping workshop), brought together a group of people of goodwill, attracted by the highly collaborative approach of this type of gardening.

An initial assessment was made of this **participatory exercise**.¹⁹ It was stressed that insufficient weight had been given to the entertainment dimension (to the benefit of the construction and installation dimensions) in the project leaders' budgets; that the interventions had, on the whole, cost more than expected; that **most of the "respondents" to the call for projects had not been residents, but voluntary sector workers, activists or even semi-professionals, often with a close connection to architecture and design circles; and that the engagement of residents with the activities had generally been disappointing.** Lastly, the predominantly event-based nature of the interventions had produced interesting images and communication materials, but had ultimately had **little real effect** on the planning process for public spaces. The experience can therefore be described as event-driven rather than participatory. It made it possible to bring public spaces to life and enabled SAMOA to draw conclusions about the constraints and requirements of participatory urban planning.

In the broader deliberative metropolitan context,²⁰ the Green Island experience allowed SAMOA to identify its own challenges: to involve residents on an operational level with the aim of creating a tangible impact on development projects. The

¹⁹ BOC and SAMOA, "Bilan de Green Island, série d'entretiens" ("Taking stock of Green Island: a series of interviews"), 2014.

²⁰ Shaped by public dialogue during public debates, meetings of citizens' boards, etc.

formulation of its doctrine with regard to participatory expectations was accompanied by a critique of **existing mechanisms of participation in use in the rest of the city, which were deemed to be, in turn, “procedural, cumbersome, unattractive and ineffective” and/or “marketing, overly focused on political or communication games”**. In an attempt to employ its own method, SAMOA launched the “Île de Nantes Expérimentations” programme.

5.3. Île de Nantes Expérimentations – Iltopia

The Iltopia project (a spin-off from “Île de Nantes Expérimentations”) was set up in 2017 in République-Les Ponts, a district in the west of the Île de Nantes, symbolic of working-class suburbia that was once inhabited by workers from the former shipyards. Until the urbanization of the 1970s, it was the only inhabited area of the island. A high proportion of its residents are in precarious situations and have modest incomes. The suburban landscape is run down and the housing rather old and cramped, with most people renting. The developer had previously had little involvement in this architecturally disparate suburb owing to a lack of impetus and a context in which land transfer is difficult and most of the housing stock is privately owned. At a time when participation by residents was being encouraged, “SAMOA saw this area as an environment conducive to **experimenting** with local participation” (Vigne, 2019). Taking the area as its starting point, the developer **sought to use an original method** to “empower” residents so that they might take ownership of the urban renewal project, and in order to build a “community”.

To meet those challenges, an agency contracted by SAMOA, What Time Is I.T., developed an original method: experiment management assistance. Headquartered in a former garage converted into a co-working space, What Time Is I.T. established the Wattignies Social Club, which became the “lifeblood” of the Iltopia project²¹ in the heart of the area. Led by the anthropologist Stéphane Juguet, the team completed the project in four phases. The first phase was **diagnosis**. Anthropologists, town planners and other experts analysed the characteristics of the population in the area and constructed sociological profiles. Building on that work, a series of so-called “outdoor” **encounters** was staged. The objective was to reach out to residents by initiating discussion about the development of the area at the school gates and in the streets, to inform them about the participatory project to develop public spaces. That approach sparked public debate in public spaces that made it

²¹ <http://www.ilotopia.fr/>

possible to sound out conceptions and wishes, but also to gather concerns and ideas to feed into project proposals. A third phase, devoted to the **organization of collaborative construction workshops** with residents, made it possible to identify the most appropriate proposals for the development of public spaces to be tested before a final decision was made. **Participatory construction sites** and prototyping measures were introduced in response to the ideas put forward by residents. Several proposals were implemented in the form of prototypes that gave temporary indications of a future townscape. Then, based on the three ideas considered to be “the most remarkable”, three construction sites were selected by the residents. The whole method was built around the concept of prototyping to “make the link between resident participation and development project according to the following theoretical sequence: communities > conceptions > identities > prototypes > development” (Vigne, 2019).

The limitations and ambiguities of the method were pointed out in a doctoral thesis (Vigne, 2019). They related mainly to a **criticism of the service provider’s method of consultation, which left little room for the voices of residents and failed to deliver on the promise of a genuine residents’ dynamic**. In addition, while SAMOA had hoped that, in developing public spaces with residents, attention would also be paid to the “hard” elements (such as parking and budget management), What Time Is I.T.’s input shifted the focus of the work more onto the “soft” dimensions, such as programming, activities, and equipping public spaces with various objects and tools. For Vigne (2019), that was partly because the service provider envisaged public spaces as “technical platforms”, such as one might find in the spheres of culture or event management. The prototypes were often treated as an end in themselves, when in fact their purpose was to foster the development of an urban planning programme in collaboration with residents.

Specifically, the “experiment management assistance” approach resulted in the opening of three citizens’ construction sites on Rue Biesse, the neighbourhood’s historic thoroughfare: the Square Biesse participatory site; the urban artwork on Rue Biesse; and the mobile “play” bus and its adjustable terrace in Place Wattignies. Around the terrace, which has become a meeting place, various activities have emerged, including a juice bar, a play area for young children, shared meals and an open-air classroom for migrants. This series of activities has breathed new life into Rue Biesse and helped to change the atmosphere of Place Wattignies. These sites have produced functional rather than spatial prototypes. However, they have helped to liven up the neighbourhood, develop neighbourly ties and create a brand image around the notion of a “suburban identity”.

Some temporary initiatives will be made permanent, including the decoration of the facades. Some shopkeepers have played along by taking the initiative to paint their

facades in the suggested colour scheme. Landscape architect Jacqueline Osty and town planner Claire Schorter, who head the team responsible for the final designs, have thus received the results of the experiments. These will have to be taken into account, but how they will be translated “when push comes to shove” remains uncertain for the time being and is subject to the outcome of a new citizens’ workshop “to collectively decide the future development of the square”.²²



Temporary constructions in Place Wattignies in 2018. © SAMOA



Signage on Rue Biesse. © Maison Mâj 2020

²² <https://www.iledenantes.com/atelier-citoyen-wattignies/>

The anthropologist Stéphane Juguët has drawn a number of conclusions from this experience.²³ In his view, the problem faced by the residents was the scant room for manoeuvre to experiment with practices and uses in public spaces. “Public spaces have become very normative and there is a need to reconcile public safety with an opening up of more spontaneous living spaces in which citizens' initiatives can blossom”.²⁴ **For SAMOA, this has been a learning experience on the road towards more participatory urban planning.** It is another “innovation” in the implementation of the Île de Nantes urban project and in SAMOA’s governance tools.

6. WHAT SHOULD WE RETAIN AND WHAT IS TRANSFERABLE FROM THE NANTES EXAMPLE?

For 20 years, SAMOA has had carte blanche to innovate with regard to city-building. Today, the matter extends far beyond this developer and the Île de Nantes urban project. The topic of “innovation” is seen as cross-cutting; it is more a question of “innovation by citizens for citizens”, in line with the stance taken by the Nantes metropolis when the city was named European Capital of Innovation in 2019.²⁵ Having tried to apply to the letter the template for creative cities (in particular by establishing the Creative Arts District cluster), the city authorities are turning to new, more participatory methods in the shape of dialogue with citizens. For its part, SAMOA has proposed, through the examples described above, its own participatory urban planning strategy. It claims to have a different way of doing things and is freeing itself from the rules and processes prescribed by the authorities. Moreover, it is simultaneously implementing another innovative city lab-style project, “Quartier Démonstrateur” (“Demonstration Quarter”), through which it exhibits, in public spaces, full-scale prototypes of products designed by partners and private companies so that they can then be tested by users. Thus, through these projects and tools, SAMOA covers a wide range of possible city-building experiments.

From the Île de Nantes example, we can take some transferable elements: political trust, daring, having faith in individuals who defend pioneering projects, and setting

²³ <https://www.demainlaville.com/ilotopia-chantier-participatif-utopique-nantes/>.

²⁴ Remarks made by Stéphane Juguët, as reproduced here: <https://www.demainlaville.com/ilotopia-chantier-participatif-utopique-nantes/>.

²⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/ip_19_5789.

up flexible governance mechanisms that are open to actors who do not subscribe to the traditional city-building model.

The Île de Nantes urban project is one of the largest in Europe. It has managed to stimulate interest and every year receives a large number of foreign delegations who come to draw inspiration from the “Nantes model”. The fact that SAMOA has been involved in European projects since its inception is a major factor underlying this international reputation. The tried-and-tested Nantes method of involving artists and cultural operators closely in the city-building process was devised on the Île de Nantes but stretches far beyond it. One of many examples is Rezé (a commune south of Nantes), which is the site of a transitional urban planning project: the Transfert project, carried out by the association Pick Up Production, which puts a new generation of artists with links to city-building in the driving seat. Outside the metropolis, the methods are discussed and appropriated, but hard to replicate. As can be seen from this brief analysis, these innovative methods are employed by individuals and groups in situ. It is possible to transfer methods, but difficult to do so with individuals, and even more so with contexts of action.

Key References

- Ambrosino, Charles, Emmanuelle Gangloff and H el ene Morteau (2020). *De la friche   la ville ou l'art de permacultiver les innovations urbaines : un jeu   la nantaise ?* [From wasteland to city or the art of applying permaculture to urban innovations: the Nantes style?], proceedings of CIST 2020.
- Ambrosino, Charles, Vincent Guillon and Dominique Sagot-Duvaurox (2016). *Genius loci reloaded, The creative renaissance of Nantes and Saint Etienne*, in Long, P., and N.D. Morpeth, *Tourism and the Creative Industries*, 8, London: Routledge, pp. 116–133. [\[Routledge\] \[halshs-01396835\]](#).
- Le « quartier de la cr ation » : un cluster en  mergence [The “creative arts district”: an emerging cluster], *L'Observatoire*, No. 36(1), 2010, pp. 63–68. <https://doi.org/10.3917/lobs.036.0063>.
- Blaise, Jean, and Jean Viard (2015). *Remettre le poireau   l'endroit* [Turning the leek right side up], interviews with St ephane Paoli,  ditions de l'Aube, from the collection *L'urgence de comprendre* [The urgency of understanding].
- Cloutour, Paul (2016). *Mon voyage dans les institutions nantaises, 1989–2014* [My journey through the institutions of Nantes, 1989–2014], 184 p.
- Devisme, Laurent (2007). *Gouverner par les instruments. Premi re approche : les  preuves urbanistiques du plan-guide* [Governing with instruments. First approach: the urban planning experiments of the guide plan], Popsu. <http://www.popsu.archi.fr/sites/default/files/nodes/document/830/files/les-instruments-plan-guide.pdf>.
- Devisme, Laurent (ed.) (2009). *Nantes, petite et grande fabrique urbaine* [Nantes, a small and large *fabrique urbaine*], Editions Parenth ses, from the collection *La ville en train de se faire* [A city in the making].
- Devisme, Laurent (2016). *Les formes technico-politiques de la strat gie m ropolitaine : l'exemple de la m ropole nantaise* [The technical and political forms of the metropolitan strategy: the example of the Nantes Metropolis] in G. Novarina, D. Lebras et al., *M tropoles en construction* [Metropolises under construction], Berger-Levrault, pp. 243–256.
- Dossal, Philippe (2015). *R enchanteur de ville, Jean Blaise* [Jean Blaise, reviver of a city],  ditions Ateliers Henry Dougier, 122 p.

- Fromonot, Françoise (2012). *Manière de classer l'urbanisme* [How to classify urban planning], *Criticat*, No. 8, pp. 41–61.
- Garat, Isabelle, Patrick Pottier, Thierry Guineberteau, Valérie Jousseau and François Madoré (2005). *Nantes, de la belle endormie au nouvel eden de l'ouest* [Nantes, from sleeping beauty to new Eden of the West], Paris, Anthropos/Economica, from the collection *Villes* [Cities], 53 p.
- Gangloff, Emmanuelle (2017). [Quand la scénographie devient urbaine : Nantes comme observatoire des fonctions du scénographe dans la fabrique de la ville.](#) [When scenography becomes urban: Nantes as an observatory of the scenographer's functions in the construction of a city]. Doctoral thesis in Urban Planning, Angers, University of Angers.
- Guidet, Thierry. *Repenser Nantes pour 2030* [Rethinking Nantes for 2030], Revue Place Publique, special edition.
- Jarry, Lucas (2015). *Le citoyen dans le projet urbain : Nantes, figure d'exemple* [The role of citizens in urban projects: Nantes, a case study]. Master's thesis in Architecture and Spatial Planning, ENSAN, Nantes.
- Molho, Jérémie, and Hélène Morteau (2016). *Du cluster culturel à la scène ? Glissements sémantiques dans le cas nantais* [From cultural cluster to the stage? Semantic shifts in the case of Nantes], *Revue de l'Observatoire des politiques culturelles*, No. 47, pp. 57–61.
- Molho, J., and H. Morteau (2019). *Le cluster culturel à l'épreuve du territoire : du concept à l'instrument d'action publique* [The cultural cluster put to the territorial test: from concept to instrument of public action], in Emin, S., and N. Schieb-Bienfait, *Scènes locales, clusters culturels et quartiers créatifs* [Local scenes, cultural clusters and creative arts districts], PUR.
- Morteau, Hélène (2016). *Dynamiques des clusters culturels métropolitains, une perspective évolutionniste : Analyse comparée de Québec (Quartier Saint-Roch), Barcelone (22@) et Nantes (Quartier de la Création)* [The dynamics of metropolitan cultural clusters, an evolutionary perspective: A comparative analysis of Quebec City (Saint-Roch neighbourhood), Barcelona (22@) and Nantes (Creative Arts District)]. Doctoral thesis in Spatial and Urban Planning, Angers, University of Angers.
- Morteau, Hélène (2019). *Repenser la dynamique des clusters culturels métropolitains : une perspective évolutionniste* [Rethinking the dynamics of metropolitan cultural clusters: an evolutionary perspective], in Emin, S., and

N. Schieb-Bienfait, *Scènes locales, clusters culturels et quartiers créatifs* [Local scenes, cultural clusters and creative arts districts], PUR.

Rataud, Sandra, and Francine Fenet (2018). *La prospective ouverte et délibérative à l'échelle de métropole nantaise* [Open and deliberative forward planning in the Nantes Metropolis], Horizons Publics.

<https://www.horizonspublics.fr/vie-citoyenne/la-prospective-ouverte-et-deliberative-lechelle-de-la-metropole-nantaise>.

Sagot-Duvaurox, Dominique (2010). *La scène artistique nantaise, levier de son développement économique* [The Nantes arts scene, a lever for its economic development], in *Nantes, la belle éveillée* [Nantes, the awakened beauty], Éditions de l'Attribut, pp. 95–107. <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00456982>.

Sagot-Duvaurox, Dominique (ed.) (2016). *Culture et créativité : les nouvelles scènes* [Culture and creativity: the new stages], in *Revue de l'Observatoire des politiques culturelles*, No. 47, winter 2016.

Terrin, Jean-Jacques (ed.) (2012). *La ville des créateurs* [The city of creators], Editions Parenthèses, from the collection *La ville en train de se faire* [City in the making].

Vigne, Margaux (2019). *Occuper les lieux – Occuper les habitants. Ethnographie de deux expérimentations institutionnelles. Bruxelles, Nantes* [Occupying spaces – Occupying people. An ethnography of two institutional experiments. Brussels, Nantes]. Doctoral thesis in Architecture and Spatial Planning, University of Nantes.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Hélène Morteau, Postdoctoral researcher,
Université Grenoble Alpes, Pacte

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Biennial Baukultur Reports

communicating high-quality planning and
impacting public discourse (DE)

Reiner Nagel
Michael Lesch
Frauke Schacht

Bundesstiftung Baukultur

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. TOPICS AND STRUCTURE	4
3. EMBEDDING OF EXPERTISE AND FORMATS OF PARTICIPATION	5
4. RESEARCH, DRAFTING & COMPILATION OF THE REPORT	7
5. KEY CHALLENGES	10
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	13

1. SUMMARY

The Baukultur Report is coordinated and published by the German Federal Foundation of Baukultur. The Foundation is an independent entity, whose purpose is to make the built environment a shared concern and promote Baukultur, given that it contributes significantly to the quality of life in both cities and the countryside. It was founded at the behest of private built environment professionals, who sought to give high-quality building design and construction a voice on the political level and prompt discussion amongst building professionals of various disciplines. Accordingly, the matters of concern go beyond architecture in a strict sense by also embracing engineering, urban design, and standards of good practice in planning and building in their totality – in a single word: Baukultur.

First, to retrace its origins: the German Federal Cabinet voted to pass the bill on establishing the Federal Foundation of Baukultur in 2006. After receiving broad bipartisan approval in the German Bundestag, the federal states also paved the way for the establishment of the Foundation, with its founding convention held the following year in Potsdam. Regarding federal agencies in the field of construction and spatial development, there is the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) and its subordinate, the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR). With 1400 employees altogether, their spectrum of activities ranges from managing federal buildings to conducting and commissioning research. While there is no other comparable institution on the federal level in Germany, there are some initiatives or institutions within the federal states concerned with various aspects of Baukultur. Today the Federal Foundation of Baukultur is partially funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and a friends' association counting more than 1300 members today. The Foundation currently has seven established posts and around the same number of project-based employees. It is not a grant-making foundation as it does not financially support other causes and projects, with its core mission being to shape and initiate public and professional discourse towards the goal of higher quality in the built environment.

The Biennial Baukultur Report plays a pivotal role in that regard and is the Foundation's central medium. Aside from the Report, the Foundation publishes collections of essays, handbooks – for example on brownfield development or Baukultur in education – and offers event formats like workshops, dialogues and salons. Each Baukultur Report is not only distributed and communicated to professionals and the general public, since as an official status report on planning and construction in Germany, it is also a political instrument. The Federal Foundation of Baukultur is one of the few institutions in Germany that is requested

and entitled to submit a report to the Federal Cabinet and the Federal Parliament through the relevant jurisdiction. Thanks to this right of submittal, the Baukultur Reports are dealt with by the Federal Cabinet and referred to by the Bundestag and the Bundesrat (see illustration 1).

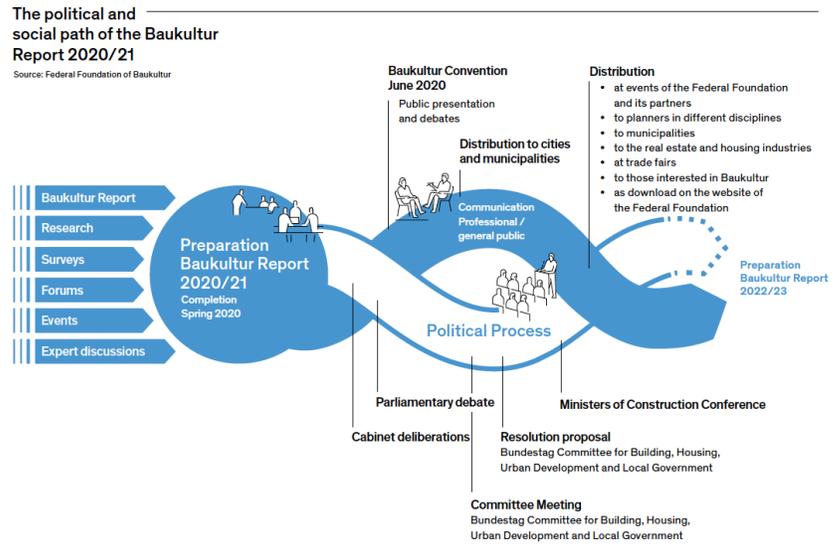


Illustration 1. The political and social path of the Baukultur Report

2. TOPICS AND STRUCTURE

The [Baukultur Reports](#) are official reports on the state of planning and construction in Germany, but additionally focus on a specific topic every two years. The first edition was published in 2014 and dealt with the growth of cities while its successor focused on the (re)vitalization of town centers and rural areas. Our built heritage and the challenges facing the future viability of our designed environment were the main concerns dealt with by the Baukultur Report 2018/2019 “Heritage – Presence – Future.” The current Baukultur Report 2020/21 “Public Spaces” centers on the significance those spaces bear for societal changes ranging from new forms of mobility to demographic transition and climate change.

While the topics under focus are changing, each report’s structure roughly orients itself according to a basic framework: In a broad sense, the first part deals with the current situation of Baukultur in Germany, while topics of prior Reports are revisited and new developments are highlighted. The first part serves the purpose of bringing up points of discussion, raising questions, and outlining current challenges. The second part demonstrates the ways in which these challenges were exemplarily met

and highlights best practices from all over Germany. It is structured in three focus chapters: the first one addresses the focus topic on an urban design scale: i.e. neighborhoods, town centers or open spaces. The second focuses on infrastructures while the closing chapter deals with how processes need to be set up in order to facilitate high-quality output.

3. EMBEDDING OF EXPERTISE AND FORMATS OF PARTICIPATION

As a communicative tool, its impact on the political level materially depends on the involvement of a broad array of stakeholders. The Baukultur Report therefore gathers and concentrates various forms of knowledge and insights from experts, citizens, public officials and private developers. Regular meetings with the Advisory Board of the foundation strengthen the profile of the Reports. Furthermore, a central discussion takes place with construction-related associations and stakeholders to inform them about the state of the Report and gather feedback for its ongoing preparation.

In addition to the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Board, the Federal Foundation is advised by an interdisciplinary advisory group of experts. For the first two reports, this group (“Begleitkreis”) consisted of the same personnel throughout the drafting of each report and regularly came together to discuss each’s advancements. This practice was altered with the 2018/19 Report, when talks on varying topics with ever-changing experts were introduced. For these expert talks, four to six specialists are invited, with the focused discussions with academics and experts offering the opportunity to delve more deeply into specific topics and have been shown to unearth countless valuable insights and guiding advice. For the 2020/21 Report, four of those expert discussions were scheduled – focusing on health, security, regulative measures, in addition to one taking place in cooperation with the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung) focusing on the general outlook on public spaces and public funding. These discussions in small groups have proven to be particularly rich in substance as some of the experts from different disciplines do not take Baukultur into consideration on a regular basis in their line of work. For instance, the experts invited for the discussion concerning health topics in the public space were a psychiatrist focusing on the effects of city life on urban inhabitants, a lighting designer, an engineer specialized in noise and vibration protection, and a climatologist. Over the course of these conversations, the diverse input prompted fresh thoughts and ideas as the experts

contributed their own unique perspectives. The extensive dialogues with police officers, lawyers or urban planners have been demonstrated to be a fruitful endeavor and invaluable in drafting each current Baukultur Report.

The Baukultur Workshops (“Baukulturwerkstätten”) play a central role in drafting the Report. The Federal Foundation of Baukultur organizes a series of these workshops, usually two to three a year, in different German cities to gather firsthand knowledge from practitioners and citizens. Those events are open to participation at no charge and draw a mixed crowd of approximately 80 to 200 practitioners from different professional sectors. Lasting for two days, the workshops offer a mixed program of lectures, talks and moderated worktables. These events are hosted in alternating German cities, depending on the topic. For the Baukultur Report 2020/21 “Public Spaces,” the first workshop dedicated to cycling mobility was hosted in Karlsruhe, which is renowned for its progressive transport policies. It was followed by a second workshop in the city of Kiel, which tackled the rejuvenation and revitalization of old industrial places and spaces. The subsequent three Baukultur Workshops topically followed the three focus chapters of the Report. In return, the outcomes were integrated into the content of the Report: issues of urban development and open spaces were discussed in the neighboring cities of Weimar and Erfurt, the event in Cologne focused on designing urban infrastructures while the final workshop in Ulm dealt with the relationship between public spaces, democracy and process culture.

The first day of the “Baukulturwerkstätten” generally has an emphasis on lectures, talks and guided tours of exemplary places in the city that should prompt discussion. The second day is dedicated to interdisciplinary discourse through worktables, which is the core format of the Baukultur Workshops. In general, two realized projects with high standards regarding quality and process culture are presented by their creators at each worktable and put up for discussion. Often, the sites have been visited the day before by the participants, but there are always examples from all over Germany to widen the scope and stimulate discussion. The concentration on positive examples highlights role models instead of demeaning projects that did not turn out well. Even in successful projects, there is enough to learn about how things should not be done. The challenges that have to be overcome are often substantial and include missteps and failures that can be insightful or instructive in their own right. What were the particular challenges in realizing the project? What kind of missteps had to be avoided? What can be learned and is transferable to comparable projects and environments? The concrete examples serve as an impulse, yet the goal over the course of each discussion is to arrive at a more abstract level directed towards recommendations for action. This often comes somewhat naturally as practitioners from other cities and professions share their relevant experiences and reflect on the conditions of successful planning. The discussions are moderated by the team of the

Baukultur Report and other staff members of the Foundation. Since internal staff members now handle the research and writing of the report, the substance of the debates themselves can be directly woven into each Report. For this purpose, the worktable discussions are audio recorded and subsequently evaluated. This process not only offers valuable insights into successful or particularly challenging projects, but also countless clues on where to dig deeper and focus the research. For instance, at the Baukultur Workshop in Ulm, an employee of the parks department of the municipality of Rastatt convincingly presented the argument that more efforts should be made to quantify the benefits of green and open spaces. When the local budget is negotiated on the municipal level, park departments are at a structural disadvantage, given that their budget allocations and items such as maintenance budgets and personnel costs often fall short. Allegedly, softer factors such as cultural and social aspects, image and location marketing, climate and health simply do not receive the same priority when it comes to financial resources as the traffic planning department. A more focused look into this topic unearthed a rich body of work on quantifying the value of public squares and green areas. This drew our attention to a freshly developed toolkit by the Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW), which allows the monetary value of public squares and green areas to society to be quantified and which will soon be made available to municipalities. Beyond such requests to deepen the investigation of certain topics, there are numerous concrete examples presented by the participants, which make their way straight into the Report to illustrate broader arguments.

4. RESEARCH, DRAFTING & COMPILATION OF THE REPORT

The basis for the first three reports was developed by external contractors in close cooperation with the Foundation. For the 2020/21 Report, its coordination, research and drafting were mainly conducted by an in-house team of four full-time employees devoted to the Report with further staff members contributing from their fields of expertise. Additionally, the gathering of qualitative data is systematized, with all expert talks and worktables at the Baukultur workshops being audio recorded and the data evaluated with the MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software. The whole of our literary and database research is also organized and evaluated using MAXQDA. Since the very beginning, the research for the report has been accompanied by commissioned specialist studies. For example, three studies were assigned during the preparation of the Baukultur Report 2018/19 “Heritage – Presence – Future”: one about the preservation of monuments in Germany and another focusing on building materials and material cycles, while the third supplemented the basis of the report

with information about construction in building stock, redevelopment and monument protection. Deemed beneficial, this practice was continued in the course of the preparation of the Baukultur Report 2020/21 “Public Spaces,” during which two studies were conducted by different research institutes – a real estate industry study on the feasibility of ground floor uses and a study on the function of public spaces in small towns and rural areas. The findings of the studies are always intertwined with the results of the general research. The studies add substance to specialized fields the Foundation’s staff does not cover such as law or economics for instance. The commissioning of highly regarded institutes and experts add force to the arguments in public discourse.

The development and commissioning of surveys also play a crucial role in that regard. The report offers facts and figures which are a part of the development of the Baukultur Reports. The results of public enquiries and co-operations with specific expert groups strengthen the contents of the Baukultur Reports. Since the first report, the Federal Foundation of Baukultur has commissioned a representative population survey every two years, with the surveys being conducted by established German market research and opinion polling institutes like ipsos Public Affairs or the forsa Institute for Social Research and Statistical Analysis. More than 1.000 respondents are surveyed to ensure representativeness. The general public is asked about their viewpoints, perception and attitudes towards the built environment. Furthermore, a municipal/urban survey specifically addresses cities and towns of different sizes. With the third edition, a survey by the chamber of industry and commerce representative of its members has been added to investigate the local economy’s perspective on public spaces.

Throughout the reports, infographics are employed to illustrate and express the results of the research, intended to make it easier for the reader to grasp the substance of a statement at a glance. The infographics are based on facts, figures and statistics researched during the writing of the reports or stemming from questions raised at our surveys and, after brainstorming and a brief sketch, developed with external graphic designers (see illustration 2). Beginning with the second report, one core illustration is chosen to vividly illustrate one or several crucial arguments of the Report. For the Baukultur Report 2016/17 “City and Village,” the Doughnut Effect was devised as its central graphic, which illustrates the increasing establishment of single-family housing areas and commercial sites on the edges of town leading to vacancies in the town centre. In contrast, the jam-filled German dessert Krapfen is presented as the ideal urban development pattern where the flavour is at its core. Spanning two pages, it is enriched with results from the population and municipal surveys and is complemented by infographics regarding land use in Germany (see illustration 3).

Elbphilharmonie cost increases and mood barometer

According to the Federal Foundation of Baukultur

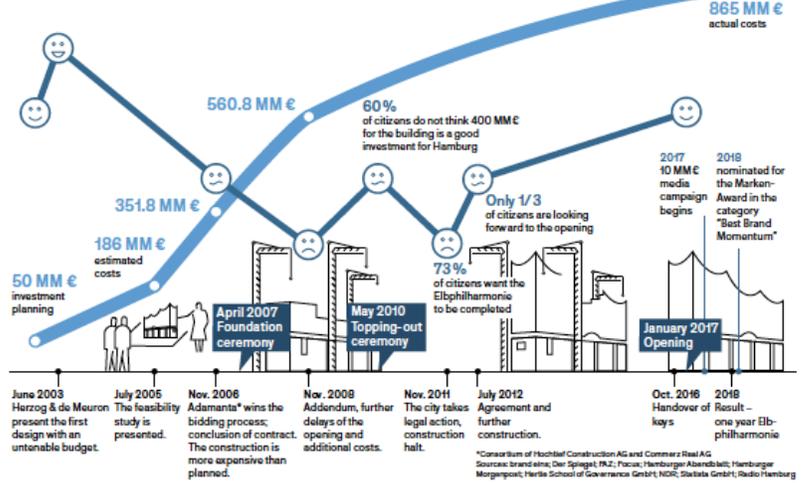


Illustration 2. Elbphilharmonie cost and mood barometer

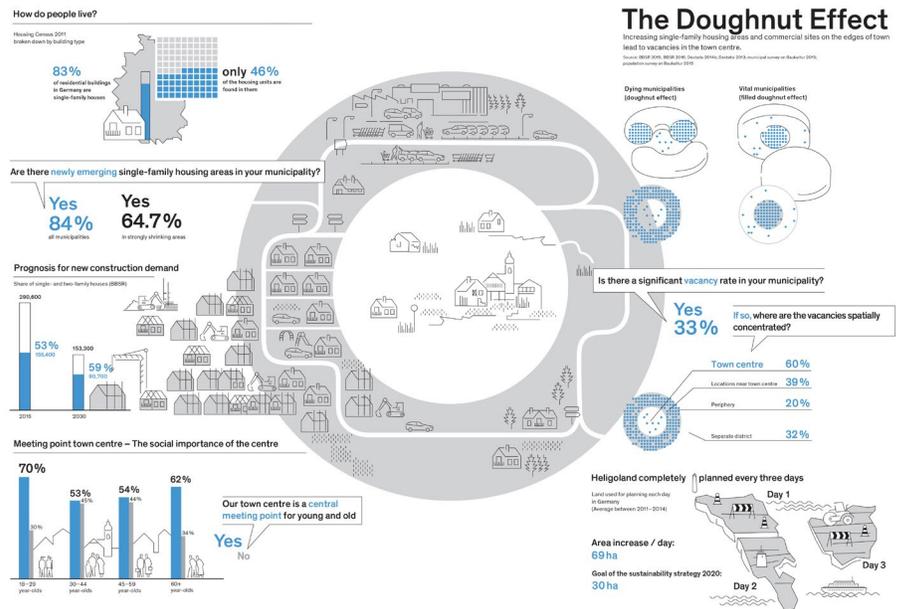


Illustration 3. The Doughnut effect

As a connected and supplementary element, project examples are presented in pictures and text. The Federal Foundation lives up to its communicational mandate by making use of good examples as inspiration and reference points. Based on research conducted throughout Germany, between ten and fifteen project examples addressed in the Baukultur workshops are selected and included in the Baukultur Reports as project descriptions, including the names of all protagonists. These descriptions are stepping-stones by which general insights and recommendations become concrete (see illustration 4).

Baukultur Initiates Processes
**Federal Garden Show in Heilbronn –
 Strategic Urban Development Based on Open Space**



When the city of Heilbronn decided in 2007 to organize the Federal Garden Show (BUGA) in 2019, it was already clear that what was desired was more than just a big, one-off event for garden lovers. What was instead supposed to be created on the decommissioned area of the inland port at the bend in the Neckar River close to the city centre was a new piece of the city with references to the river and new green spaces. In addition, the city had already purchased the fruit warehouse site on the rear side of the Central Station from Deutsche Bahn. An urban development competition followed in 2009, and was won by steidle architekten. A realization competition then took place on this basis in 2011, with the firms SINAI and Machleidt selected as the winners. Two port basins that had been backfilled in the 1930s were recreated as the Karlsee (Lake Karl) and the Flößhafen (Raft Harbour). Around the Flößhafen, three band-like sites are envisioned for construction, the eastern one of which was already part of the BUGA as an inhabited 'city exhibition'. For the BUGA, the western band was given a sea of grassy waves,

which was digitally modelled by Büro Loma and moulded in an automated process by GPS-controlled excavators. Thematic garden cabinets could be experienced on the southern subarea. The other green areas, just like the lakes, will be preserved after the BUGA. They include the bank of the Neckar River, which could be greened after a federal road was relocated to the industrial park on the eastern bank, and the Hafenpark, which is shielded from the active industrial operations on the Neckar Canal behind it by a wall made from uncontaminated waste material obtained from the soil remediation. With the twenty-three buildings in the city exhibition, a BUGA became a building exhibition for the first time. Based on the conceptual process, the plots were allocated in 2015 for the fixed price determined by appraisers, whereby investors could apply for many plots. Each architecture firm was, however, limited to a maximum of two buildings, which could also not be situated next to one another. The selection of projects was made by a jury, which took on the role of a building commission

and was also responsible for construction consultation in the further course of the project. A key issue was thus not only the architecture of the individual buildings but also structural innovations (construction method, materials, energy concept) and a functioning mixture of uses for an urban district of 800 residents. Until building approval was given, no sales took place, but only an awarding of contracts. What was created was not only Germany's tallest wooden building, but also two ensembles of buildings, a municipal children's house with a day nursery and flats for single parents, supervised living and an inclusion project, student flats and a boarding house, and owner-occupied apartments. As a whole, round half are rental units, whereby 30 per cent are subsidized. There is also a laundrette, gastronomy, a common area, and commercial spaces on the ground floor, which were used as exhibition spaces during the BUGA. That it was possible to complete an entire city district only three years after the call for submissions can only be partially explained by the deadline pressure resulting from the big event. Structured, short decision paths were ensured above all by the project steering of the BUGA association, which always brought architects, investors, and administration round one table for the planning sessions. The association kept its role as manager, moderator, and resolver of conflicts until Phase 8. The execution could also proceed smoothly because so-called Phase Zero had been in process since 2009: the concept for the BUGA had thus already been disseminated widely among the population by idea competitions, site tours, presentations, brochures, and an info box. For Heilbronn, the BUGA not only brought media attention and an increase in prestige but also released energies as an engine for urban development. The two other construction fields are supposed to be awarded soon, based on the tried and tested model.

Facts
 Planning and construction: 2009–2019 Area: 32 ha
 Project developer: City of Heilbronn Cost: 189.5 MM euros
 Planners: steidle architekten, Munich; SINAI, Berlin; diverse architecture firms with individual buildings More information in the project description in the appendix on p. 162



- BAUKULTUR AT A GLANCE**
- Big, one-off event as a starting point for urban expansion
 - Early citizen participation and extensive Phase Zero
 - Swift structural execution thanks to a consistent planning culture
 - Investors, planners, and administrators at one table
 - City exhibition with an urban mixture of uses
 - Allocation of plots based on a conceptual process
 - Courage for innovations in architecture and urban and open space planning
 - Larger share of subsidized housing



Illustration 4. Federal Garden Show in Heilbronn

5. KEY CHALLENGES

One of the main challenges in the compilation of the report is to ensure the participation of a diverse range of people. Practitioners and academics aside from the general public should be especially involved in this process, since given the Foundation's stated mission is to make the built environment a shared concern, it is important to also reach those citizens who do not interact with Baukultur on a professional basis. The biennial population survey makes sure that their voices are heard and represented in Baukultur. This is important since the perception of the built environment demonstrably differs between its users and creators – especially when it comes to their stylistic sensibilities. This should not be considered an obstacle that cannot be overcome, but rather it indicates the opportunity to enter into a productive dialogue. Therefore, the participation of the public should not be limited to solely being asked their opinion, but rather they should be more actively involved in sharing their ideas and formulating positions.

The main way in which the Federal Foundation of Baukultur organizes their active participation in the Reports is through the open Baukultur Workshops. The participants' backgrounds often lean more towards private and public sector built environment professionals than members of the public. One reason for this can be found in the particular topics being discussed. Events like "Public Space and Infrastructure" in Berlin in 2014 or "Infrastructure. Innovation. Baukultur." in Frankfurt in 2017 might sound interesting to professional engineers but do not hold the same appeal for the average citizen. Since then, the Foundation has had positive experiences with closely cooperating with local universities and more closely tailoring the topics at hand to local issues of concern in order to draw a more diverse crowd. The Baukultur Workshops organized in 2018 can serve as good examples. The Workshop in Karlsruhe dealing with cycling mobility was hosted together with the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. The approachable subject matter and the venue for the second day – the university facilities – drew a mixed crowd of students and residents and enabled a lively discussion at the worktables. The same held true for the Baukultur Workshop in the waterfront city of Kiel, entitled "New Places." With a slightly altered concept compared to former workshops, the aim was to search for future perspectives on three significant local sites for which the usages had changed over the course of time. This event was organized in cooperation with the city's urban planning department and involved numerous municipal employees. Moreover, the event was met with considerable interest from local citizens. Working on site plans, ideas were gathered and developed to inform the conversion and future usages of these sites. In the aftermath of the workshop, the city of Kiel established the "Verein für Baukultur Kiel," a registered association that is tasked with the mission of facilitating and deepening the dialogue on urban development with the citizenry.

It is not always possible to identify subject matters that are equally appealing to professionals and interested citizens. It is indeed a delicate balance, but the Foundation will continue to strive to further bridge the gap in the future. With the 2018 workshops attracting up to 200 participants each, the orientation towards the general public can be considered a success and a worthwhile endeavor. The language of the report also has attempted to abstain from technical language and is aimed to be as simple and accessible as possible. The public's perception of the Reports is overwhelmingly shaped by the focus topic it addresses, with the setting of the topic itself undoubtedly being one of the key challenges. The focus topic is always declared two years prior to each Report's publication. It is set by the board of trustees in close coordination with the chair of the Federal Foundation of Baukultur. In preparation, they are thoroughly discussed by its interdisciplinary advisory board, which is appointed to provide expert advice and guidance to the Foundation and is composed of academics and practitioners alike.

In terms of subject matter and content, it has panned out quite well with the four published editions of the Report. This cannot be taken for granted – it always demands both a good nose for future developments and a bit of luck. Over the course of two years, a lot changes in public discourse: While some issues simmer beneath the surface for a great deal of time, some seem to pop up and vanish in a flash. The subsequent issues of the rising costs of living in cities, strengthening rural areas or the future viability of our designed environment have not been matters of concern in German public discourse two years prior to the publication of the corresponding Reports. Societal developments like the massive influx of people and rising building costs in cities, rural depopulation leading, for example, to the establishment of a home (“Heimat”) division to the Federal Ministry of the Interior (since 2018 called: “Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat”) or the ecological/ environmental movement gaining momentum worldwide all occurred prior to the publication of their respective Reports yet all hit a nerve. While you certainly cannot predict how comprehensively a pandemic will alter public life around the globe, the question of how public space has to adapt to climate change and new forms of mobility have been widely discussed within the German public since the summer of 2019.

Communication and response

Total circulation of all publications 2018/19

67.900 copies
49.000 copies (2016–17)

Shipment of all publications within Germany 2018/19

> 25.400 copies

Members of the Foundation's friends association 2018/19

1.380 as of 31.12.2019
1.227 (as of 31.05.2018)

Speeches and participation in panels and juries – nationally and internationally 2018/19

157
141 (2016–17)

Number of press articles, references and interviews 2018/19

470
321 (2016–17)

Persons reached by cinema campaign „Baukultur-Clip“ 2019

19.172

Events organised 2018/19...

... more than **3.700** participants
... more than 2.700 participants (2016–17)

... with **279** experts and speakers
... mit 90 experts and speakers (2016–17)

... more than **90** partners and sponsors
... über 70 partner and sponsors (2016–17)

Website 2018–19

Monthly visitors (2019)
> 9.000
6000 (2017)

Downloads of publications, graphics, surveys etc.

27.759 thereof downloads of the Baukultur Report
6.116
> 1.900 (2016–17)

Social media growth from 12/2017 until 12/2019

Facebook subscribers
+ 116%

Twitter followers
+ 237%

LinkedIn followers
+ 100%

Federal Foundation of Baukultur nationwide

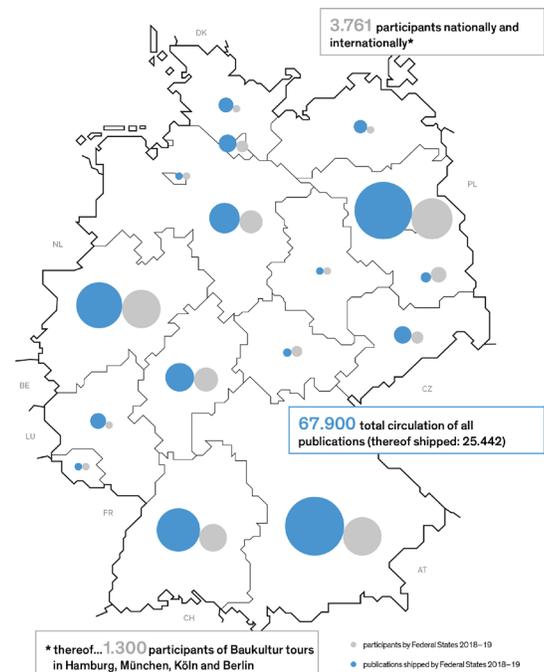


Illustration 5. Communication and response

The pandemic has also affected the public communication of the report, which goes along with both the challenges and opportunities. Generally, the Foundation's chair presents the current Report at countless events over the whole of Germany following its publication. With the organization and administration of public events not yet returning to normal, many events have either gone digital, been delayed or have been cancelled altogether. This also goes for the biennial Baukultur Convention that was postponed from June 2020 to May 2021. While usually following one report's publication the work on the next edition begins, it has been decided to alter the format this year in order to adapt to the unusual circumstances. For the first time, the Federal Foundation will organize a series of three expert discussions ("Praxisgespräche") in different German cities. There, a group of around 10 invited experts will discuss the Report's recommendations for action over the course of a day. The goal is to operationalize the general recommendations in more granular detail. Looking ahead this might also prove fruitful for future publications. While the Foundation's impact has proven hard to measure, the Federal Foundation of Baukultur does recognize a considerable growth in engagement with its products over recent years – a trend we strive to continue (see illustration 5).

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.bundesstiftung-baukultur.de/en/baukultur-report/about-baukultur-reports>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Reiner Nagel, Michael Lesch, Frauke Schacht - Bundesstiftung Baukultur

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Concept Tendering Procedures

Konzeptvergabe (DE)

Robert Temel
architecture and
urban planning researcher
and consultant

www.temel.at

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2. OBJECTIVES.....	4
3. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	5
3.1. The model.....	5
3.2. Qualities and criteria.....	6
3.3. Evaluation.....	6
3.4. Quality assurance.....	7
3.5. Bauträgerwettbewerb	8
3.6. Experiences.....	8
4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	10
5. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	11
5.1. Decision on land price.....	11
5.2. Non-fixed prices	12
5.3. Differences between fixed and non-fixed price procedures	13
5.4. Ground lease	13
5.5. Tübingen model.....	13
5.6. Lessons learnt involving private land	14
6. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES.....	15
7. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	15
8. EXAMPLES	16
8.1. Berlin, Blumengroßmarkt (wholesale flower market).....	16
8.2. Heilbronn, Neckarbogen.....	20
8.3. Tübingen, Alte Weberei (old weaving mill).....	24
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	28
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	28

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

The concept tendering procedure model is a further development of the traditional procedure for selling land in cities.¹ The traditional method typically used is the highest bidder procedure, i.e. a plot of land is offered on the open market without any conditions (except for those provided for by law, e.g. a development plan) and can be purchased by whichever buyer/bidder offers the highest price. The problem for the cities is firstly that they have no influence on the quality of the project that will be built on this land; and secondly that a high purchase price excludes a number of desired uses from the outset, e.g. affordable housing. This new tool termed the concept tendering procedure was first developed by innovative municipalities in the 1990s and had gradually been improved over the years by testing the conditions in procedures. The concept tendering procedures are almost always carried out by the city administrations themselves or by city-owned companies, with the departments tasked with carrying out these procedures usually being the departments of city planning, property management or housing administration. Financing of the procedures is provided within the budgets of the aforementioned, respective departments, which means in principle that the costs are passed on to the buyers. The costs may vary greatly, depending on whether a very simple procedure or intensive monitoring of the projects is carried out. However, since the concept tendering procedure does not result in the highest bids as the purchase price is usually fixed, the “losses” are of course relevant for the selling city. These lower revenues can be argued to be mitigated by the fact that, firstly, the quality of the newly emerging urban districts or individual projects is much higher as a result of these procedures and, secondly, affordable housing and other low-cost offers of use would be possible. Affordable housing, for example, would otherwise have to be supported by expensive subsidies.

¹ Cf. Robert Temel (2020): Baukultur für das Quartier. Prozesskultur durch Konzeptvergabe, BBSR: Bonn, www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/DE/FP/ReFo/Staedtebau/2017/baukultur-quartier/01-start.html?nn=438822

2. OBJECTIVES

This is why the model of the concept tendering procedure was developed in the 1990s in connection with the sale of land to building associations (cooperative housing projects). The origins of the concept tendering procedures lay in the planning and implementation processes associated with urban renewal, as such process and practices were widespread in small and large German cities in the 1980s—the focus at that time was not primarily on a technocratic process of design, but rather on aspects of citizen participation, self-building, high-quality design of public space, preservation of existing buildings, social mixing, and mixed use. The starting point for the new model was that building associations (cooperative housing projects) to which a city wanted to sell land should not have to compete directly with commercial developers. Therefore, the price was fixed and only building associations were admitted to the procedure—the only criterion left to decide which applicant could ultimately purchase the land was the quality of the bid. This model was later applied by numerous cities for sales other than those to building associations and was also generally applied by certain cities to all of their land sales. The aim being, on the one hand, to increase the quality of the projects built on such plots of land, architecturally speaking, and in terms of use, socially and ecologically; also at the same time, to influence the nature of these projects; and, on the other hand, to make less expensive projects possible, such as affordable housing. The processes applied here are a mixture between architectural competitions and procedures for selling land to building associations, wherein the demands concerning the concepts to be submitted are much lower; i.e. for example, no architectural designs are required, but only concepts of use or programs. A critically important effect of these procedures is that they may activate innovative actors of general interest and enable them to develop, test and implement projects that might not otherwise see the light of day. This activation is achieved by tailoring the framework conditions of the procedures to these actors and by limiting the costs of the plots of land through the specific approach of the concept tendering procedure. This immediately makes it possible for such innovative yet perhaps not otherwise particularly professional actors to compete with highly efficient commercial developers.

3. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. The model

The model for the concept tendering procedure is used very differently in various cities. There are some basic, traditional forms, but most cities adapt them to their specific conditions. One model utilised for a number of procedures is that of the city of Tübingen, since it has been successfully applied and utilised for decades. The special feature of the Tübingen approach is that, on the one hand, the procedure has a very low-threshold to participation and is open, so that as many actors as possible are encouraged to participate, and, on the other hand, it uses highly intensive quality assurance processes. Despite the diversity between them, there are certain similarities in the approaches used. For example, in some cities, the procedure is regulated by politically decided programmes and concepts, while in others it is adapted to each individual case without such a formal basis or is repeatedly applied as a standard model. The subject of the procedure is either the sale of land or the granting of a ground lease. As already described, the procedure is usually organised by departments of the city administration, and sometimes the procedures are linked to methods of public participation. In the procedure, occasionally only a single plot of land is sold, but often it involves several or even very many plots of land in an area of urban expansion. The concept tendering procedure is usually divided into two stages: the sales procedure itself and the subsequent quality assurance phase. Additionally, the sales procedure is also sometimes divided into two stages, and there is often a selection process regarding participants selection at the beginning, where a decision is made regarding who can submit a concept before the actual concept tendering procedure begins. A great number of the procedures begin with an information event, and on occasion a kind of market survey as well, in which demand is examined. As with any architectural competition, there is an opportunity to ask questions about the procedure and the site itself, which are answered by the jury. At the end of the sales process, the participants must submit a concept, which is usually pre-checked, and then evaluated by a jury.

3.2. Qualities and criteria

The required submissions usually include use concepts, social and ecological concepts, and often architectural concepts as well. In addition to the quality criteria, there is sometimes also a limited price criterion (i.e. a price offer is also evaluated) but the price is not the predominant criterion but rather is part of a secondary decision criterion. In fact, in many procedures the price is fixed and therefore not a criterion at all. Additionally, when defining the criteria, it has to be decided whether the procedure should be set up with a very low entry threshold, or whether higher demands such as those involving architectural designs should be made. The former has the advantage of being able to attract unusual, innovative and perhaps less highly professional actors to the procedure; while the latter has the advantage that the submitted concepts are more well-known and can therefore be better evaluated. As such, a balance must be struck between these two poles. However, it is clear from experience to date that the activation of innovative actors in particular is a key advantage of such procedures. For this reason, it can often make sense to dispense with particularly high demands on architectural designs in the sales procedure and instead use procedural methods of ensuring architectural quality in the quality assurance phase afterwards. The central means of evaluation in the procedure are of course the quality criteria which are applied to the submitted concepts and which must be defined on the basis of the objectives of the procedure. On the basis of these criteria, a decision must be made as to what requirements must be met by the submitted concepts, and corresponding competencies must also be anchored in the evaluating jury in order to be able to evaluate the submitted concepts according to the specified criteria.

3.3. Evaluation

There are two different methods for evaluating the concepts. Firstly, many cities evaluate the concepts quantitatively, i.e. there is a maximum number of points for each criterion, with the projects evaluated according to how well they meet each respective criterion, with the best project then being selected based on these points. From the perspective of quality assurance, a qualitative evaluation is more meaningful and which works like the judging of an architectural competition, albeit this qualitative method is used less often. Here, the projects are discussed by an interdisciplinary jury and put in a sequential order based on the overall consideration of all criteria. The decision is ultimately documented by means of a textual description of the qualities of the best projects, and not through quantification.

3.4. Quality assurance

Following the jury's decision, political confirmation of this decision is sometimes required. Subsequently, a so-called Anhandgabe (exclusive option period) is made, often formally or informally—i.e. the land is reserved for the winning project for a certain period of time. During this period, the project must be further developed, meaning above all, financing and planning must be pursued to the point where the project is ready for implementation. In many cases, the actual sale only takes place when the expected qualities are perceptible on the basis of this further development—for example, only after a building application has been submitted. Tracking the desired qualities in this second phase—the quality assurance phase—is crucial to the success of the concept tendering procedure. In fact, some cities invest a great deal of effort into this phase. One critical aspect of the concept tendering procedure is the question of how the qualities promised during the procedure can be guaranteed until implementation and eventually long-term use, along with the openness required to allow for the necessary changes that may arise in the years between a decision being made during the concept tendering procedure and its eventual implementation. This requires either correspondingly consistent, ongoing monitoring, or an examination at certain milestones, such as when the building application is submitted. The monitoring or examination must on one hand be based on the criteria of the concept tendering procedure, and on the important characteristics promised by the projects on the other. Quality assurance methods include contractual regulations (purchase, ground lease, and/or urban development contracts), with penalties if necessary, subsequent payment obligations and reconveyance clauses, safeguarding in the land register, application phases with a final review or commentary, design guidelines, management advisory boards and other accompanying bodies, coordination meetings in which the qualities of the projects are regularly discussed, etc. One essential instrument of quality assurance can be a ground lease contract in which the qualities and uses are defined.

3.5. Bauträgerwettbewerb

A special application of the concept tendering procedure is Vienna's "Bauträgerwettbewerb" (developer competition), which has been regularly applied since 1995. The City of Vienna owns a land fund for housing construction, which sells its plots of land exclusively through developer competition. The special feature here is that not only are plots of land sold at a favourable fixed price, but at the same time decisions are made on the awarding of housing subsidies. This means that the developers must submit detailed projects, which are then evaluated based on architecture, ecological and social sustainability, and rental prices. The best projects are able to not only buy the land, but also receive housing subsidies for their project, whereby strict checks are made in order to ensure that the promises made are kept. The buyers are usually, although not exclusively, limited-profit developers. In any case, they build exclusively subsidised housing on the land.

3.6. Experiences

While in the 1990s, when the first concept tendering procedures were used, the framework conditions were usually quite simple, now certain prerequisites for the procedures have emerged which are important to regulate.² These include, for example, a good definition of the objectives of the procedure, the requirements and quality criteria, and a sensible approach to quality assurance. The procedures should be as open as possible and as formalised as absolutely necessary. Whereas in the 1990s the aim of urban development quality assurance was the main focus when concept tendering procedures were used, in the last ten years or so the aspect of promoting affordable housing has gained in importance. As such, the requirements and criteria have changed accordingly. During this period, many cities have made their first attempts at using concept tendering procedures, and in some cases, the model has developed into a standardised procedure. Acceptance of the concept tendering procedure has increased significantly in recent years because political pressure on the topic of living costs has risen sharply and the concept tendering procedure is seen as a method for making affordable housing easier to achieve

² E.g. Architektenkammer Rheinland-Pfalz et al. (2019): Mehr Konzept. Orientierungshilfe zur Vergabe öffentlicher Grundstücke nach Konzeptqualität. Mainz; Hessisches Ministerium für Umwelt, Klimaschutz, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz (2017): Grundstücksvergabe nach der Qualität von Konzepten. Verfahren und Praxisbeispiele. Wiesbaden; Stadt Köln (2016): Leitfaden zur Konzeptvergabe städtischer Grundstücke. Köln.

again.³ This development means that, under the slogan of affordable housing, urban development quality criteria can be increasingly used instead of leaving urban development to the free market alone. Of course, it can be difficult to carry out such procedures at the appropriate level, especially for those municipal administrations that have reduced competences in urban planning over the past decades. Additionally, the emphasis in such procedures may vary of course, depending on whether a department for property management, urban planning and development or housing is in charge. However, the procedures have above all a correspondingly long-term and strong effect when they are not used only sporadically, but regularly and as a standard, meaning the actors can thus rely on such approaches and their regular occurrence. Only in this way can a correspondingly innovative and public-interest oriented actor landscape be maintained over longer periods of time.

³ Montag Stiftung Urbane Räume gAG (2016): Immobilien. Gemeinwohl gemeinsam gestalten. Forderungen und Projekte. Bonn.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

There are no formal procedures that are replaced by the concept tendering procedure, because land sales by cities are not part of their competencies. Fortunately, many cities still own land that they can make available for housing and other important uses. In the long term, this is best achieved if they do not sell the land (or only sell it to actors that would guarantee that the common good is assured in the long term), but grant it as a ground lease. There are, however, regulatory tools, which are related to the concept tendering procedure in practice, yet not formally. These are mainly found in public procurement law, urban planning and construction law. Additionally, formal planning processes almost always take place before the concept tendering procedure. Ideally, the approval of a project under construction law is closely linked to the concept tendering procedure, because at this stage, the quality of the project can be well assessed, and thus the conclusion of the sale should be made dependent on this step. Some cities link this formal tool closely to the concept tendering procedures, while others do not establish any direct links.

The traditional formal tools cannot achieve the level of quality control necessary to ensure high quality in urban design. One alternative could be for cities to develop and build the projects themselves, which is of course more expensive and does not benefit from the creativity of innovative actors. Furthermore, urban development contracts could be used, but these are initially a constraint imposed on the owner and therefore not the best basis for a development process determined by creativity. In contrast, for a long time direct awards have been the predominant method, however in times of increasingly high demands on public procurement law, this is hardly possible anymore. Ultimately, one could simply sell the land at the highest price and hope for the magical power of the free market, but in practice, the free market has often proven not to be a magical solution. Therefore, the concept tendering procedure was developed.

5. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The financial incentive of the concept tendering procedure is the purchase price for land, which is below full market value, hence allowing for higher quality of the development, architecture, use, etc. The price can be fixed by the procedure, or be open to bids, although the city typically receives less money for its plot of land than would be the case in an open market bidding procedure.

5.1. Decision on land price

The standard procedure that leads to the land price determination is the so-called "Verkehrswertgutachten" (valuation report) which has to be done by an independent, authorized expert. The "Verkehrswert" is the open market value. The valuation report can be made using three different methods:

- **Vergleichswertverfahren** (comparative value method) – based on a collection of purchasing prices in a region that is made by the committee of valuation experts (Gutachterausschuss);
- **Ertragswertverfahren** (income capitalisation method) – based on land price and building income value (derived from rent income and operating costs);
- **Sachwertverfahren** (property value method) – based on land price and construction costs, depreciated according to building age.

For land without any pre-existing construction, the Vergleichswertverfahren is the standard method. If the price is fixed, this price is usually the "Verkehrswert". Typically, municipalities in Germany have to sell land for this open market value "as a rule," but since market prices are usually very high in many cities, they often try to go below that value, and do so by pricing in benefits of the projects to be developed, e.g. a share of social housing, special architectural quality, uses that do not bring market rents, etc. There is no standard procedure for how to do this, and as such, the reductions differ from city to city.

Munich uses a so-called residual procedure to decide on the price, starting with an "ortsübliche Miete" (local custom rent) and then calculating how high the land price can be so that this local, custom rental price can be achieved. Since they have different types of housing with different target rents (social housing, reduced rent housing for middle class etc.), they can have different land prices in the same development area for the concept tendering procedures.

Vienna has a maximum land price that can be paid if subsidized housing is to be built on the land, with that price having been fixed, politically, for many years now; in fact, since 2018 it has been fixed by law, too. However, this fixed price was a problem for the last few years since no one wanted to sell land for subsidized housing anymore apart from the biggest landowners (e.g. the federal railways). Since last year, Vienna introduced a new category of land use designation, which is called "subsidized housing." Every new development plan including housing has to allocate at least 50% of it to subsidized housing, and for that, the fixed land price is mandatory.

The typical discount differs widely, as in the case of Munich, which had been looked into during the 2012-2014 period, the cheapest land price for social housing was €280 per m² floor area for social housing, then there were other subsidized housing types with prices between €375 and €675, and the market value for privately financed housing in that area was between €1,400 and €1,900. This was, of course, many years ago, prices in Munich are much higher now.

Typically, in a concept tendering procedure, no price negotiation takes place since the price is either fixed or determined through a bidding process, and qualitative criteria are determinant in the decision. Many examples have illustrated that a fixed price below full market value allows for developments and uses that would not be viable or possible with higher land prices, e.g. affordable housing; moreover, it typically attracts small developers and groups who have the flexibility to offer high-quality projects that can be tailored to the respective tendering, rather than larger developers who have less financial and product flexibility.

5.2. Non-fixed prices

If the price is not fixed in a tendering procedure, then the bidders are free to make whatever offer they want, but sometimes there is a fixed minimum price. In the concept tendering procedure, the price is of course never the only criterion, and therefore the offered prices are translated into points based on the relation between them (starting from the highest bid and giving fewer points to lower bids). These points are then added to the points received based on the quality criteria according to a certain criterion share. Usually, prices have a weight of 30 to 40% in the overall criteria.

5.3. Differences between fixed and non-fixed price procedures

In the examples examined, the price was fixed in Hamburg (for cooperative housing groups), Munich, Frankfurt, Stuttgart (for building associations), Hanover, Heilbronn, Tübingen and Landau (for building associations); and the price was not fixed in Berlin, Hamburg (for developers), Stuttgart (for developers), Münster and Landau (for developers). Sometimes, in the same area, some parcels are sold through a conventional bidding procedure, while other parcels with special requirements for social housing, and/or mixed use or other uses, through a concept tendering procedure with a fixed price. Likewise, sometimes some parcels in an area are sold at very strongly reduced, fixed prices, e.g. for subsidised social housing, and others for privately financed housing at correspondingly higher, yet also fixed prices. It also happens that the price is only fixed for certain typologies (cooperative housing groups), whereas it is used as a partial criterion for developers. There is no generally applied model, but there are many different methods.

5.4. Ground lease

The ground lease is usually set by a political decision, e.g. 2.5% in Frankfurt or 4% in Münster, but of course these are based on valuation reports, too. Ground leases have been an important topic in the public discourse for several years, since ground leases can contribute to affordable housing. At the time of my survey, not many cities had granted ground leases in concept tendering procedures, as in my selection there is only one example (Frankfurt am Main). However, this has changed in the last few years, since there are now some cities that are increasingly granting ground leases, alongside other cities that generally no longer sell land, but rely on ground leases alone. These cities do so in order to retain the land and thus have the long-term power to decide on land use. In addition, long-term specifications for the use of the land can be made in the ground lease contract, which is only possible for about 15 years in the case of purchase contracts.

5.5. Tübingen model

Tübingen has conducted numerous concept tendering procedures over the last 25 years, with one of them in particular dealing with private land owned by Aurelis, the land development company of the German federal railway company (Deutsche Bahn) and which behaves like a free market actor. Tübingen typically utilises a highly

sophisticated model for price definition that does not rely on a single expert but rather on an expert committee consisting of architects, developers, the administration, inhabitants, etc., who define a highly differentiated price model for each area based on its location, the area that can be built on in a plot, the type of housing, the obligation to include business spaces, etc. The prices in the Aurelis procedure (“Alter Güterbahnhof”) in 2015 were between €180 and €450 per gross floor area. Of course, in this case, the parcels sold in the concept tendering procedure represented only a small share of the overall area, perhaps 25%. The rest was sold directly by Aurelis with its standard bidding procedure.

5.6. Lessons learnt involving private land

Until now, such procedures have been seldom used on private land, but these may become more important in the future. We have witnessed some of the experiences in Vienna, and I know of two examples in Germany (Tübingen and Hamburg). Of course, the central question is if it is possible to force a private owner to engage in such practices, which may reduce revenue(s). The majority of such procedures take place in areas where the owner requires new development plans from the city, and that is the very situation wherein the private owner might be willing to offer something that is interesting/enticing for the city, e.g. concept tendering procedures for a share of their land. In some cases, concept tendering procedures were carried out on brownfield sites that initially did not belong to the city, but were acquired by the city through a “städtebauliche Entwicklungsmaßnahme” (urban development measure), developed, and then sold again through concept tendering procedures. An urban development measure, according to the federal building code (Baugesetzbuch), allows the city to acquire land at a low price under certain conditions and with a defined process, in order to then create building rights there and thus finance the infrastructural and developmental costs through the price difference. If no agreement can be reached with the owners, then expropriation is also possible for such urban development measures.

6. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

Important challenges for the use of concept tendering procedures are political support in the city government as well as acceptance in the city administration (urban planning vs. property management), legal difficulties (state aid law, municipal law, public procurement law⁴) and planning issues (quality assurance, possibilities for cooperation). Equality aspects tend to be better answered through the use of concept tendering procedures than through conventional procedures—after all, it is a firm goal of the procedures to significantly increase the circle of potential buyers of a parcel of land compared to conventional procedures. Additionally, concept tendering procedures not only involve commercial developers or municipal housing companies, but also cooperative housing projects, particularly innovative developers, social agencies, etc., which tend to propose projects and uses in which the aspect of equality plays a role.

7. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Concept tendering procedures have been highly successful at achieving higher quality in urban development and better uses of individual plots of land, including in new urban districts, and in making affordable housing possible. These achievements have been these procedures main selling points and why increasingly more cities have begun using this tool. Since the procedures not only demand architectural, social and ecological qualities, but also are usually centrally concerned with concepts for use, these procedures represent an excellent means for achieving mixed use in new urban districts. At the same time, they also contribute to a broader urban discussion on urban planning, often integrating participatory formats and activating new actors who are particularly innovative. However, they also require new, informal methods of quality assurance. In the future, concept tendering procedures will be increasingly used for the awarding of ground leases, and a new challenge will be to carry out such concept tendering procedures not only on municipal land but also on private land, since potential municipal land plots that can be offered for urban development projects are becoming increasingly more limited.

⁴ Weiß, Holger; Reuße, Bastian (2019): "Rechtliche Rahmenbedingungen der Konzeptvergabe". In: Quartier. Fachmagazin für urbanen Wohnungsbau, 4/2019, pp: 52–57.

8. EXAMPLES

8.1. Berlin, Blumengroßmarkt (wholesale flower market)

Early proceedings, public discourse



Integratives Bauprojekt am ehemaligen Blumengroßmarkt (IBeB), architects: Arge ifau (Institut für angewandte Urbanistik) and HEIDE & VON BECKERATH, photo: Robert Temel

As early as 2007, the Berlin Senate decided that the Liegenschaftsfonds Berlin (later Berliner Immobilienmanagement GmbH (BIM)) should offer plots through a fixed-price tendering procedure with concept criteria in order to improve the quality of life in the inner-city and strengthen cooperative housing projects and cross-generational residential groups. In 2011, the procedure for the Blumengroßmarkt represented a new model of the concept tendering procedure with a minimum price. Not least due to this procedure and the civil society initiative entitled *Stadt Neudenken*, Berlin reoriented itself shortly afterwards in 2012. Under the title “transparent property policy,” the city decided to cluster all city-owned plots of land into categories. Since then, a small portion can be sold by BIM through the concept tendering procedure.

Pilot project in the centre of Berlin

The tendering procedure for the Blumengroßmarkt, the site of which was mainly in possession of the state-owned Berliner Großmarkt GmbH, still took place independently of this new policy. On the one hand, it was an exceptional procedure—the city itself was not the owner, the location and programme were not commonplace, and the procedure was adapted several times during the process—but on the other hand, the result was exemplary. In the centre of the city, between Friedrichstrasse and Lindenstrasse, lies the hall of the Berlin Blumengroßmarkt, which had moved to Moabit in 2010. The area was thus freed up for a new design, with the hall itself purchased by the federal government for the Jewish Museum Academy. Three building plots around it were to be awarded through a concept tendering procedure.

From Markthalle 9 to the Blumengroßmarkt

The managing director of Berliner Großmarkt GmbH had already previously conducted a sale of the small Markthalle 9 in Kreuzberg not based on the best price, but according to usage criteria. This sale served as an example for the new area. In addition, the use of the hall by the Jewish Museum suggested a mixed use with an



Metropolenhaus am Jüdischen Museum, architecture: bfstudio-architekten, photo: Robert Temel



Metropolenhaus am Jüdischen Museum, architecture: bfstudio-architekten, photo: Robert Temel

all-round cultural focus. The procedure thus emerged independently of the cooperative housing tendering procedures that had already existed before.

Concept development in the district

Parallel to the vacancy of the hall, the district administration of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg commissioned a concept study for an art and creative quarter in 2009. The concept formulated guidelines for further development, which were partially adopted by the projects that were ultimately realized. The concept tendering procedure of Großmarkt GmbH started during the concept development, but the parties involved in the study were finally included in the procedure, with the shortlisted projects presented for public discussion at an exhibition in 2012. Due to the intensive participation of local actors, it was possible to deviate from the traditional route, for example with regard to cultural use and participation.

The tendering procedure as a training ground

In cooperation with the Liegenschaftsfonds Berlin, Berliner Großmarkt GmbH invited tenders for the “Checkpoint Art” tendering procedure for five plots of land around the Blumengroßmarkt in 2011. Initially it was only stipulated that there was a minimum purchase price and that concepts for use with a cultural focus had to be submitted. Central elements were the subordination of the price criterion, the combination of cultural uses with affordable living space, the decision by a committee of politicians and creative industries, the participation of the local population, and the use of the procedure as a “training ground.” After a total of 19 offers had been submitted by the end of 2011, a working group was formed to make a sales recommendation to the supervisory board of Großmarkt GmbH. This working group consisted of representatives of the Berlin Senate’s Departments for Economics, Technology and Research as well as for Urban Development and the Environment, the district, and the creative industries. At the beginning of 2012, the working group formulated evaluation criteria on the basis of which the participants revised their concepts. It was ultimately determined that the financing had to be proven during the procedure and that the buyers had to conduct an architectural competition later.

Long process duration

After two of the five plots of land were sold directly to the daily newspaper *taz* and the Berlin Medical Association, the decision regarding the remaining three plots of land in the concept tendering procedure dragged on until 2014 due to elections. This time

was used for clarification discussions with the bidders in the process, including contract negotiations. Finally, the three best-rated projects per construction site were once again put up for public discussion. Starting from the handful of targets established at the beginning, the procedure thus developed iteratively throughout the process and changed according to exchanges with the projects and the population, which represented a great deal of effort and commitment.

Quality assurance and participation

The architectural competition for all projects was abandoned in favour of a qualifying, cooperative planning procedure with the district, so that the architects of the projects worked together on their designs in order to achieve a harmonious whole. To this end, the architects met four times in a two year-period for all-day workshops with representatives of the district and the Senate, the local population, the redevelopment advisory board and three external architects. This procedure, as well as the ten-year usage requirements, was set out in detail in the purchase contracts. Prior to the concept tendering procedure and in parallel, the local population was intensively involved in the development of the cultural concept and the dialogue procedure based on it. The winning projects financed the “Bauhütte,” a project space in the adjacent Besselpark as a place for public participation and discussion.

Three outstanding projects for the neighbourhood

The three buildings resulting from the process each have a different focus between the cultural/creative industries and affordable housing: Frizz23 is a cooperative project for the cultural industries and integrates an educational institution. IBeB combines a cooperative, residential property and a social carrier as well as creative industries with business. Finally, the Metropolenhaus at the Jewish Museum also combines living spaces with commerce, with income from commercial rent supporting the cultural uses on the ground floor.

State of affairs

Following the 2016 elections, the coalition agreement defined real estate policy as an instrument of public services. Land would be allocated only by means of ground lease, while areas for residential construction would be allocated primarily to state-owned companies. Certain smaller plots of land would be allocated primarily to cooperatives and public welfare organisations.

Procedure at the Blumengroßmarkt

Verfahrensablauf beim Blumengroßmarkt



1st phase of the procedure

Call for tenders

Delivery of tenders

Working group: definition of selection criteria

2nd phase of procedure

Revision of tenders

Working group: Selection of best projects

Exhibition of best projects

Contract negotiations

Exhibition of winning projects

Supervisory board: awarding decision

Conclusion of purchase contracts

Cooperative planning procedure

8.2. Heilbronn, Neckarbogen

The new centre in the urban development concept

In the Heilbronn Urban Development Concept 2020, the conversion of the former industrial site of “Fruchtschuppenareal,” later named Neckarbogen, was initiated as an inner city development project. In 2004, the city council had decided to apply to host the Federal Garden Show 2019 (Buga), which was to be combined for the first time with a city exhibition. The *Bundesgartenschau Heilbronn 2019 GmbH* was founded for the development of the project, and intensive citizen participation accompanied the planning processes for over ten years.

The masterplan defines the urban mix

Based on the winning project of the 2009 urban planning competition, a masterplan with higher density was developed, which was finally approved by the city council in 2014. The plan provided for two water areas and a rigorous block structure in the middle of urban green spaces. Subsequently, a landscape architecture competition for the Buga followed in 2011, and by 2019, 22 buildings were to be completed on three of a total of twenty future building plots, as well as a youth hostel in the midst of the designed gardens. Following the Buga, the new district was to be completed. The guiding principles for the development were mixed-use, different residential typologies, and a mix of a large number of actors. A strong social and usage mix were to be achieved by means of different housing types, forms of ownership and property developers, as well as small-scale urban development. The city exhibition contained 51% rented apartments, 6% cooperative housing apartments and 43% owner-occupied apartments, with 40% of all apartments being subsidized housing. The defined goals included outstanding architecture and innovative construction technology from new building materials, intelligent living, contemporary mobility, and energy concepts as well as innovative use concepts.

Bringing the river back into the city

The Neckarbogen is located on an island between the Neckar River and the Neckar Canal, on the site of a former freight station with a river port near the main railway station and not far from the city centre. The area covers 40 hectares and is expected to one day accommodate 3,500 inhabitants and 1,000 jobs. The aim is to bring the Neckar River ‘back’ into the city, and free of car traffic wherever possible. In order to achieve this, a heavily trafficked main road along the Neckar Canal had to be



Apartment house, architecture: Finckh Architekten BDA, Stuttgart.



Children's house of the future, architecture: Finckh Architekten BDA, Stuttgart. Both photos: Bundesgartenschau Heilbronn 2019 GmbH – Gaby Höss

abandoned. The new, green district will be directly linked to the city centre by means of footpaths and cycle paths, and here, living and working, with commercial uses on the ground floor and recreational areas be located close together. The three building plots of the first phase are about 1.5 hectares in size each.

From market exploration to the concept tendering procedure

Prior to the start of the investor selection process, the city of Heilbronn conducted an expression of interest procedure as a reality check. With the help of a basic pamphlet and several informational events, information was provided on the essential framework conditions, achieving a result of the registration of 95 interested parties, all of whom were invited to individual meetings to discuss requirements and to field any questions they may have. In doing so, a fundamental, broad interest was demonstrated despite the demanding framework, for example with regard to the small-scale nature of the development. However, certain adaptations were also made: instead of the planned tall, multi-floor garages situated outside the area along the access road in order to achieve a “low-car traffic” district, collective underground garages were ultimately built in the area. Further on, the use of the site, in addition to the eventual architecture, was defined as a criterion for the tendering procedure. At the beginning of 2015, the city council laid down the conditions of the investor selection procedure, which included fixed prices for the plots and a selection process based on architectural quality, technical innovation and use. The purchase prices were ranked according to the location.

High demands on the submissions

The participants had to submit highly detailed architectural plans and a model in addition to their conceptual idea including a confirmation of financing. Their submitted concept should have addressed the types of housing they would offer as well as any special forms of housing (such as community or inclusive living), complementary uses, forms of meeting in the urban district, energy and ecological approaches, and mobility. The participants each named two priorities for specific locations in the area, so that the committee had the opportunity to, for the most part, freely situate the projects on the 22 plots of land. Developers could apply for several plots, but architects could only apply for a maximum of two, which could not be located next to each other in order to increase architectural diversity of the site. The projects were pre-examined and then assessed by the evaluation committee, whereby not only the respective concept, but also the “composition” of the entire development and the social mix were important bases for the decision. Accordingly, the criteria were not weighted, but the projects were evaluated holistically in



View of the Neckar bank and the city exhibition. Photo: Bundesgartenschau Heilbronn 2019 GmbH



Aerial view of the Buga area on the Neckar island. Photo: Bundesgartenschau Heilbronn 2019 GmbH

comparison. The evaluation committee consisted of members of the interdisciplinary building commission (six experts from the fields of urban planning and construction law, urban development, architecture and landscape architecture), which have accompanied the development over the long term, as well as representatives of the city council and the mayor.

Comprehensive documentation of procedures and results

After the recommendations of the committee, the city council confirmed the free of charge, exclusive option period for the selected participants. Only following the submission of the building application and after a positive recommendation of the building committee were the purchase contracts concluded. Following the judging process, the 85 submitted projects were presented to the public at a three-day-long exhibition and then published in a printed document. Due to the very tight time frame of three years from the tendering procedure to completion, there was a strong need for coordination, so weekly to fortnightly building coordination meetings began as soon as possible. Furthermore, changes to the projects required approval; in the case of small and medium-scale changes approval from Buga and the building commission was required, or in the case of large-scale changes, by the building commission and the city council. For those projects that could not be implemented, replacements were selected over the course of a coordinated succession procedure; in these cases, too, the city council ultimately made the decision. Such accession was necessary several times, but always led to good results, since the same requirements and criteria were applied as in the tendering procedure.

Quality assurance and coordination

The development was led by Buga GmbH and intensively monitored by the building commission, the municipal offices, and the city council. At the same time, all of the involved property developers had to coordinate with one another, with Buga moderating; for example, they had to coordinate on the joint construction of underground car parks, the planning of outdoor spaces, and the eventual energy supply. The architectural framework was disseminated in the form of a detailed design handbook, which had also been approved by the city council and which set out the specifications for building structures, roofs, building envelopes, ancillary facilities, and open spaces. Specifications regarding the individual submissions, their qualities and the timetable were laid down in the purchase contracts. All involved developers had the obligation to finish construction by the summer of 2018.

Highest quality at the highest speed

The city's exhibition in Neckarbogen set high standards for architecture and usage concepts, which moreover had to be realized in only three years. This was only possible through comprehensive communication, from the procedure regarding expression of interest to the monitoring by the building commission to the building coordination meetings, in which the majority principle applied. Overall, the procedure was a great success, so that a continuation of this procedure following the Buga can presumably be expected.

Procedure

Verfahrensablauf



Expression of interest phase

Basic document

Information for interested parties

One-on-one interviews

Investor selection phase

Registration for the procedure

Call for tenders

Delivery of concepts/designs

Preliminary assessment

Assessment committee

Locating of projects on parcels

Municipal council: decision on exclusive option period

Exhibition

Delivery of building request

Conclusion of purchase contracts

Building coordination meetings

8.3. Tübingen, Alte Weberei (old weaving mill)

Privileged cooperative housing projects

Since the mid-1990s, Tübingen has been regularly applying concept tendering procedures that are essentially open to everyone, even if one of their purposes has been to promote cooperative housing projects. Traditionally, developers only have a chance in cooperative housing project competitions if they act as so-called “anchor users” or offer a great deal of social housing. These tendering procedures are used in the context of large development areas, first as a so-called “Städtebaulicher Entwicklungsbereich” (urban development area) according to Baugesetzbuch (Stuttgarter Straße/Französisches Viertel), and later also via the city-owned urban development company WIT (Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Tübingen mbH), the latter also in the case of the Alte Weberei. Tübingen generally avoids greenfield developments; instead, converted areas are made usable. In the meantime, this model has also been applied to plots of land that do not belong to the city itself but rather to private owners. This is because, from the outset, Tübingen privileged cooperative housing projects since the city felt that these projects would be better able to implement the city’s urban development goals: mixed-use, high density and urban, high-quality public spaces, innovative mobility and citizen participation. The transition from the traditional highest bidder procedures to the concept tendering procedure took place because the advantages of quality orientation and participation were learned from urban renewal projects with citizen participation; and because the conditions of the Städtebaulicher Entwicklungsbereich as a financial “zero-sum game” for the city allowed for a moderate approach to the prices being charged.

Low-threshold access

Tübingen’s many years of experience with the concept tendering procedure is reflected, among other things, in the fact that formalities are kept to a minimum – the “tender documents” consist of several pages that are easy to understand even for laypeople. These documents are comprised of five informational sheets with general information, FAQs, a description of the procedure, the most important building rules/regulations, and the concept for energy. Additionally, there are a few plans with the urban development concept, a parcelling proposal and land prices, and an option form. There are no weighted evaluation criteria, albeit the submissions are decided on the basis of direct comparison. In addition to the option form, a short, written project description must be submitted.

Conversion area on the river

In the Lustnau district east of the city centre, directly at the confluence of the Ammer and Neckar rivers, the new Alte Weberei district with 800 inhabitants was created in two phases of construction up to 2016, on an area of around ten hectares which had previously been used by the textile company Egeria. Following the site's acquisition by WIT in 2008, the city of Tübingen launched a two-stage urban planning competition. With the help of citizen participation and several informational events, the winning project ultimately resulted in the development plan, which was approved in 2011. In addition, problems with soil decontamination and flood protection had to be solved.

Combination of existing and new buildings

The design envisages seven courtyards, consisting of multi-storey residential buildings and townhouses. In the south, towards the Neckar, the courtyards open up and are each closed off by the high point of a city villa. In the north, the courtyards are partly formed by terraced houses, with semi-detached houses situated at the transition to the existing, loose development. In the centre of the area, the former company's main building has been retained, which now houses an Italian restaurant. For the central areas on the square and along the Nürtingerstrasse, commercial use was specified for the ground floor, while a youth club remained on the Neckar side, as it had settled there during the period when the site lay vacant, supplemented by a municipal youth centre. One listed building from the old textile factory which possesses a striking tower has remained in the eastern part of the area and is currently being used for business purposes once again. The development plan also specifies design requirements, for example the shapes of the roofs.

Anchor users and others

There were two separate tendering procedures for the sale of land in the first phase: firstly, during the three-month-long procedure for the six courtyards, a so-called "anchor user" was selected for each case to build the common underground car park for each courtyard, to plan the common inner courtyard, and to take on other common tasks. The remaining plots were awarded in a subsequent five-month-long procedure. In particular, the Tübingen tendering procedures have always been carried out by the project development department, because WIT deliberately does not have its own personnel resources. Before and during the marketing process, several public events were held to present the area and the procedure. These included a "Stadthausbörse" (town house exchange), where cooperative housing



Panoramic view of Alte Weberei, Tübingen. Photo: Dktue, CC BY-SA 4.0



Aerial view of the Alte Weberei area in Tübingen. Photo: Dktue, CC BY-SA 4.0

projects could present themselves and look for new members. Then, individual builders, cooperative housing projects and developers applied with location priorities, since at that time of the procedure, there had been no parcelling out of the area. Individual interviews were held with all applicants, resulting in a profile for each project. The awards committee with about 15 members was comprised of representatives from all city council factions as well as the city administration and the city quarter. In a non-public meeting, the plan was decided on the basis of the profiles of all applicants for the area, with the plots of land allocated and options awarded for a period of six months. The projects were thus evaluated not only individually, but also in interaction with the others. The location and interaction of the projects were tested during the judging process on a large-site plan with magnetic maps. This allocation was also the basis for the parcelling.

Great demand

In the Alte Weberei, 80 groups, 40 developers, and 50 individual builders applied for terraced or semi-detached houses, which were finally given options for a total of 48 plots of land. The purchase prices were fixed and determined for each location by an interdisciplinary commission on the basis of situation, usability, area category and type of housing. In the subsequent option phase (up to four months free of charge, then 1%), the cooperative housing projects had to be completed, have developed an architectural design, obtained a building permit, as well as finalised the contracts and financing. Extensions of three to six months were common. During the construction of the projects, the public space was planned with the participation of the future residents.

Participation in the round table

Parallel to the development, planning and sales process, the “Lustnau Round Table” met for public participation over a period of three years. It served as an advisory committee for the urban planning competition and its further development, the development planning and the allocation of land, and solicited suggestions from the public into the discussion. Every two months or so, the local advisory council of Lustnau, the church, the local educational institutions, associations and business people, the district forum and residents had roundtable discussions.



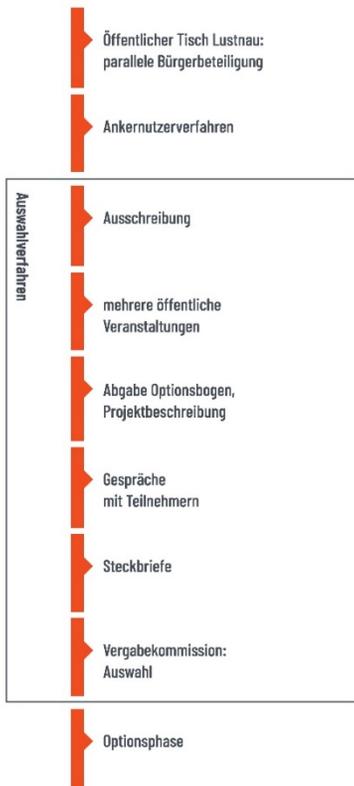
Industrial building of the Egeria company, Alte Weberei, Tübingen. Photo: WikiBilder1, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

A highly developed procedure

The Tübingen concept tendering procedure has been tried and tested for decades and is being continuously developed further. It is very low-threshold, open and transparent, and takes the interactions between all projects into account when deciding on selections. Over the years, certain requirements have been altered and reduced again, such as the integration of commercial spaces on the ground floors and the original collective garage concept. In the future, the focus will be more on the integration of commercial enterprises and low-cost housing construction. In addition, WIT has so far offered this form of project development as a service for a private owner to enable cooperative housing projects on their land.

Standard procedure in Tübingen

Standardverfahren in Tübingen



Public round table Lustnau: Citizen participation

Anchor user procedure

Selection phase

Call for tenders

Several public events

Delivery of option sheet, project description

Interviews with participants

Profile sheets

Awards committee: selection

Option phase

9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The sale of land at a fixed price according to quality criteria achieves higher urban development and better architectural qualities.

The departure from price as a (central) criterion allows for affordable living and other inexpensive uses.

Competition for use concepts and projects makes a significant contribution to the quality of new urban districts and enables mixed use and diversity.

Concept tendering procedures allow for a broader involvement of the urban population, the architectural scene, and innovative actors in urban development, as well as the integration of participatory formats.

The procedures allow the creativity and innovative power of many participants to be made fruitful and used, allowing for a beneficial competition of ideas.

In my opinion, the approach is essentially transferable to other cities and other countries. However, the prerequisite is that the city in question must either own land itself, which it can sell in this way or otherwise grant ground leases, or the city must be able to convince private owners to carry out such procedures.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/DE/FP/ReFo/Staedtebau/2017/baukultur-quartier/01-start.html?nn=438822

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Robert Temel, architecture and urban planning researcher and consultant

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

International Building Exhibitions (IBA)

an innovative and experimental
urban and regional development
instrument of excellence

Lena Hatzelhoffer
the Federal Institute for
Research on Building, Urban
Affairs and Spatial Development
(BBSR), Germany

Jan Schultheiß
the Federal Ministry of the
Interior, Building and
Community (BMI), Germany

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. IBA AS A UNIQUE URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT	3
2. IBA IN TIME AND SPACE – FROM ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITIONS TO EXPERIMENTAL FIELDS FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	6
3. IBA EMBEDDED IN SPACE AND PLACE – MULTI-LAYER SUPPORT STRUCTURES, PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND EXCEPTIONAL PROJECTS.....	10
IBA as major longer-term initiatives require multi-layer support structures.....	10
IBA as highly complex initiatives of excellence require professional management.....	11
IBA as “next practice” require exceptional projects.....	12
4. BEYOND TIME AND PLACE – SECURING IBA AS A HALLMARK OF BAUKULTUR AND PLANNING CULTURE	13
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	16

1. IBA AS A UNIQUE URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT

Cities and regions have always been changing. The speed and degree of that transformation today is particularly extraordinary, with fundamental changes when it comes to the climate, demographics, the economy, pandemics, urbanisation as well as digitalisation. As a result, urban and regional stakeholders must find answers and solutions to these dynamic and demanding framework conditions. In Germany, the highly diverse urban development format embodied by the International Building Exhibitions, or Internationale Bauausstellungen (IBA), has played a major role in facilitating these transformational processes. Following specific key themes, the IBA serve as laboratories to develop and test exemplary urban development solutions within a network of diverse partners within a certain period and in a spatially limited area. Moreover, the IBA are exhibitions intended to display these exemplary solutions and their impact on a city or region.

Over the last decades, the IBA format has attracted growing interest among urban and regional planners, as well as academics and other stakeholders in Germany and beyond. When examining the typology of tools for urban design governance drafted by Urban Maestro, the IBA format corresponds to the characteristics of the “Exploration” urban design tool:¹ IBA, as temporary laboratories for regional and urban development, involve and rely on different actors beyond solely urban authorities. Furthermore, the IBA aim to test new instruments as well as to find and identify new practices and processes in order to create qualities in urban or regional (built) environments and specific places.

To respond to today’s challenges, formal planning instruments often do not suffice. Apart from the relatively well-structured, well-developed and well-equipped formal planning system in Germany, informal instruments and approaches like informal collaborations, the participation of citizens as well as local and regional development concepts have gained further and further importance. This is because these informal instruments offer more flexibility and further possibilities to involve a wider range of relevant actors, thus opening up different and sometimes more innovative ways and methods to address specific problems at the local or regional levels.² As policy

¹ <https://urbanmaestro.org/tool/exploration/> (07.01.2021)

² DANIELZYK, R. And M. SONDERMANN (2018): Informelle Planung. In: ARL – AKADEMIE FÜR RAUMFORSCHUNG UND

LANDESPANUNG (ed.): Handwörterbuch der Stadt- und Raumentwicklung. ARL – Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung. Hannover, p. 963-974.

instruments, they directly support the implementation of future-oriented projects with new constellations of actors in a specific period.³

Among urban and regional development formats, the IBA set themselves apart because they are open, flexible and self-binding: they are always self-evident, and there is no organisation or institution to designate an initiative as an IBA. Moreover, IBA do not follow a standardized format with pre-defined requirements or specifications regarding organisational forms, topics or timelines. Therefore, former and present IBA not only differ regarding their themes and organisational structure, but also their scale and involved actors. Unlike standardised formats like garden exhibitions (e.g. Bundesgartenschau/the German Federal Horticulture Show (BUGA) or Internationale Gartenbauausstellung/International Horticultural Exhibition (IGA)), the European Capital of Culture or the European Green Capital, the IBA present an “open” and flexible format, with each IBA developing its own specific profile. However, while any IBA should be independent on an operational level, at the same time they should be formally linked to relevant actors at the local, regional or state levels in order to secure their “smooth” implementation. In addition, IBA always aim to combine bottom-up and top-down strategies.⁴

IBA also stand out and set high standards because of their geographical and content-related scale as well as their exceptional programmatic claims and quality goals: IBA always focus on a key theme that tackles specific local or regional challenges as well as issues of international relevance. In addition, as fields of experimentation and temporary laboratories, IBA help develop new and innovative solutions to challenges and problems that standard instruments or everyday practices cannot solve. Moreover, a central focus on quality standards derived from former IBA is just a hallmark of all IBA, as is the claim of significance beyond time and place. IBA also serve as an impetus for a specific region, city or place and have long-term effects on the local and regional planning culture and beyond.⁵

³ DANIELZYK, R (2020): Die Organisation des Außeralltäglichen. In: BUNDESMINISTERIUM DES INNERN, FÜR BAU UND HEIMAT (BMI) (ed.): Zur Zukunft Internationaler Bauausstellungen. Thesen und Empfehlungen von Beitragenden der Konferenz „Internationale Bauausstellungen — Anspruch | Alltag | Innovation“ 14. und 15. November 2019 in Berlin. Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat (BMI). Berlin, p. 12-13 (https://www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IBA_Arbeitsheft-Zur-Zukunft-Internationaler-Bauausstellungen_2020.pdf (07.01.2021)); Danielzyk, R. and M. Sondermann (2018): Informelle Planung. In: ARL – Akademie Für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (ed.): Handwörterbuch der Stadt- und Raumentwicklung. ARL

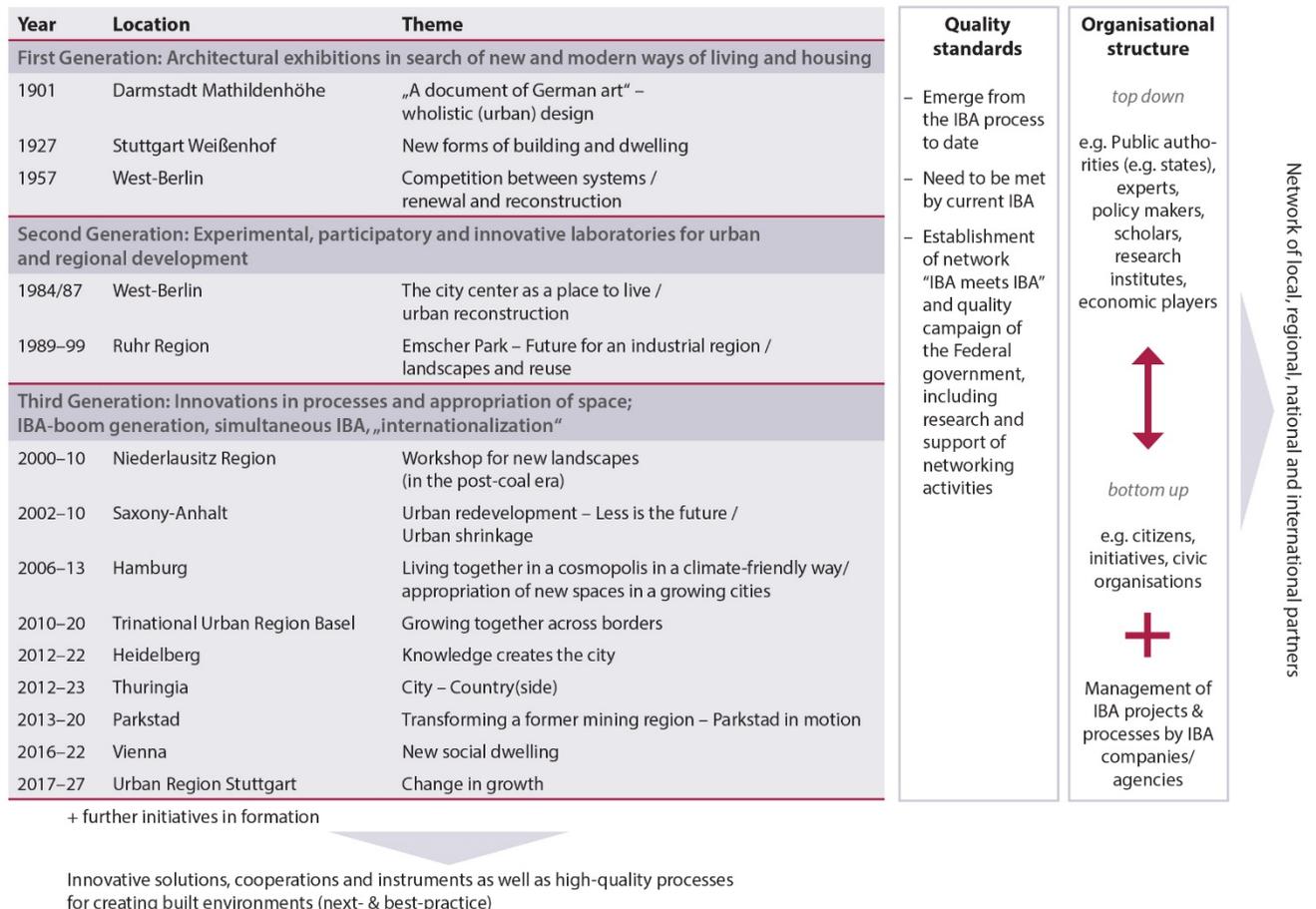
– Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung. Hannover, p. 963-974. (<https://shop.arl-net.de/media/direct/pdf/HWB%202018/Informelle%20Planung.pdf> (07.01.2021)); IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017): A memorandum on the future of International Building Exhibitions. Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI) (ed.). Berlin. (<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/themen/bauen/wohnen/iba-momerandum-internationale-bauausstellungen.html> (07.01.2021)).

⁴ Walter, J. (2010): Internationale Bauausstellungen als Instrument der Stadtentwicklung – Zum “Warum, Wann, Wofür” aus Sichte der Städte und Regionen. In: Internationale Bauausstellung IBA Hamburg GmbH (ed.): Netzwerk IBA meets IBA. Zur Zukunft Internationaler Bauausstellungen. Jovis Verlag GbH. Berlin, p. 56-63.; IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

⁵ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

IBA are always as good as their projects, which constitute the core of each IBA: the so-called IBA projects may take on a number of different shapes and appearances, and play a central role given that they address the key theme of an IBA in different ways: they may support the construction of an exceptional new building or an innovative and temporary intervention, as well as the approbation of existing structures. Different actors such as local initiatives, organisations as well as urban authorities or private-public partnerships implement these small and large projects. Moreover, all IBA projects should set examples and identify new ways stemming from thinking “outside the box” – and these innovative approaches should be highlighted at an exhibition at the culmination of each IBA and have an impact that goes beyond the course of an IBA.

IBA should always have an international dimension: their international scope extends to the relevance of its central theme and the resulting projects, the involvement of external experts and outstanding contributions from abroad as well as public relations and networking.⁶



Over the last century, the themes and scopes of the IBA have changed considerably, yet the search for innovative, high-quality urban solutions lives on (source: © BBSR and BMI).

⁶ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

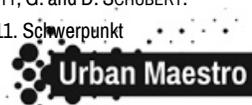
2. IBA IN TIME AND SPACE – FROM ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITIONS TO EXPERIMENTAL FIELDS FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IBA are widely recognised as a flagship of Baukultur and the planning culture in Germany and beyond. In their 100-year-long history, IBA have gained international acknowledgement and evolved significantly.⁷ In fact, IBA date back to the well-known “first generation:” Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt (1901-1914), Weißenhofsiedlung Stuttgart (1925-1927) and Interbau Berlin (1953-1957) mainly resembled architectural exhibitions in search of new and modern forms of living and housing, having focused on significant single buildings from well-known international architects.⁸

By the “second generation,” IBA had advanced to experimental, participatory and innovative laboratories for urban and regional development. The IBA Berlin (1979-1984/87) was the first to take on a broader scope and focused on urban repair and renewal based on tradition and the preservation of historical buildings and fabric. This IBA was supported by numerous local initiatives and stimulated a broad discourse about urban development: By developing and shaping the principles of “critical reconstruction” (in German: kritische Rekonstruktion) and “careful urban renewal” (in German: behutsame Stadterneuerung), the IBA Berlin marked a historic shift of paradigms in urban planning and architecture that is still detectable in Europe and beyond today. Solutions that the IBA Berlin developed under these laboratory conditions, like citizen-participation or the adaptive-reuse of old buildings and urban brown-fields, are now considered standard urban planning instruments.⁹

⁷ For more information about all former and present IBA, see: <https://www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/en/history/> (07.01.2021)

⁸ ALTROCK, U. (2011): Internationale Bauausstellungen im Wandel der Zeit. Ein Rückblick auf Veränderungstrends anlässlich des Abschlusses zweier IBA im Jahr 2010. In: ALTROCK, U., KUNZE, R., SCHMITT, G. and D. SCHUBERT: Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2011. Schwerpunkt



“Stadterneuerung und Festivalisierung”. Universitätsverlag der TU Berlin. Berlin, p. 51-62.; for more information on the history of IBA, see: DURTH, W. (2010): Eine Zeitreise durch die Baukultur. Zur Geschichte der Internationalen Bauausstellungen. In: INTERNATIONALE BAUAUSSTELLUNG IBA HAMBURG GMBH (ed.): Netzwerk IBA meets IBA. Zur Zukunft Internationaler Bauausstellungen. Jovis Verlag GbH. Berlin, p. 16-31.

⁹ ALTROCK, U. (2011); IBA ADVISORY BOARD OF THE BMI (2017); DURTH, W. (2010); see also: www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de (07.01.2021)



The IBA Berlin, aimed at "saving the broken city" through careful modernization, contextual additions as well as the conversion of existing buildings, wrote European urban history and set new guiding principles for urban development (source: © S.T.E.R.N. GmbH).

Subsequently, the internationally acclaimed IBA Emscher Park (1988-1999) in the Ruhr area widened the thematic scope of IBAs to landscapes and the regional level alongside addressing environmental, economic and housing issues as well as aspects of identity in this declining industrial region. Under this IBA's umbrella than 100 projects were implemented in a new 70-kilometre-long landscape park across 17 cities, with these projects aimed at demonstrating future development paths as well as preserving and creating new cultural identities for the region. For example, industrial monuments were re-used as places for culture and education, and traditional workers' houses were modernised and preserved, thus fuelling the debate about the conversion of industrial sites.¹⁰

Up until the end of the 20th century, the "second generation" IBA set high quality standards in urban development and pointed the way for all following IBA regarding thematic approaches and the implementation of projects with an international scope and attention. Since 2000, the "third generation" IBA have added their own characteristics to this legacy, with a widening range of tasks and topics as well as the likewise widening geographical scope of many IBA. As SIEBEL puts it: "IBA offer the possibility to create places that maintain their unique characteristics in the long run and that embody an exceptional attraction and publicity, in which the spirit of the responsible actors is tangible and anchored in the collective cultural memory over generations. However, the spaces addressed have increasingly become larger."

¹⁰ IBA ADVISORY BOARD OF THE BMI (2017); P. PINCH and N. ADAMS, N. (2013): The German Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) and Urban Regeneration: Lessons from the IBA Emscher. In: LEARY, M (ed.): The Routledge Companion to

Urban Regeneration. Routledge. London, p. 230-241; REICHER, C., NIEMANN, L. and T. SCHAUZ (2011): Die Festivalisierung der Internationalen Bauausstellung Emscher Park und ihrer Folgeformate im Ruhrgebiet. In: ALTROCK, U., KUNZE, R., SCHMITT, G. and D. SCHUBERT: Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2011. Schwerpunkt "Stadterneuerung und Festivalisierung". Universitätsverlag der TU Berlin. Berlin, p. 39-50.



The IBA Emscher Park aimed to provide an impetus for economic change in the Ruhr region using new urban, social, cultural and ecological ideas, preserving and reusing industrial culture, and implementing projects such as the Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex (source: © Thomas Willemsen).

Simultaneously, the intervals between each IBA have shortened and, for the first time, several IBA have been run in parallel – two in Eastern Germany and one in Western Germany: The IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land (2000-2010) induced a new interpretation and transformation of the mostly rural post-mining environments of the Lausitz region, while at the same time the IBA Stadtumbau (Urban Renewal) in Saxony-Anhalt (2002-2010) focused on shrinking small and medium-sized cities and was the first IBA to span across an entire state. Simultaneously, the IBA Hamburg (2006-2013) focused on urban development to connect the disfavoured parts south of the Elbe River with the city centre.¹¹ Currently, six IBA have taken place, and more initiatives have emerged – among them the idea of an IBA Africa supported by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).

The current IBA could be considered an “IBA-boom generation”: on the one hand, it is characterised by their simultaneous implementation and the fewer available resources at their disposal compared with former IBA. Thus, there is a notion of competition for important strategic themes among the initiatives as well as the urge to differ from one another. Moreover, the financial resources for the IBA are limited: in Germany, there is no single financial source dedicated to IBA, therefore IBA must pursue the traditional national funding options and as such need to attract subsidy programmes through high-quality proposals. On the other hand, IBA have taken on an increasingly international dimension: they have attracted a growing interest beyond Germany with other European countries entering into the dialogue. This has led to the active involvement of international architects and experts, an expanded reception and scope of themes as compared to earlier building exhibitions, and some IBA or IBA-projects have even resulted from bi- or trilateral initiatives, or have taken place abroad. For example, the IBA Lausitz implemented several German-Polish projects to help experience the border between these two countries that in some cases cuts through formerly united cities.¹² The IBA Basel was initiated by the Trilateral Eurodistrict of Basel, an organization of municipalities and cities located along or near the borders of Switzerland, France and Germany, to overcome existing administrative and planning barriers.¹³ While practice has shown that most planning instruments apply to limited territories, typically stopping at regional or international borders, in some cases, plans could be coordinated and made compatible. Moreover, the IBA Parkstad (2013-2021) in the Netherlands and the IBA Vienna (2016-2022) in Austria are the first IBA to take place outside Germany.

¹¹ DURTH, W. (2010)

¹² <http://www.iba-see2010.de/de/verstehen/projekte/projekt23.html> (07.01.2021)

¹³ NEUHAUS, G. and R. MARTI (2013): IBA Basel 2020: Zwischen Distanz und Kooperation. In: Stadtbauwelt. Vol. 197, p. 32-37 (https://www.bauwelt.de/dl/740141/bw_2013_12_0032-0039.pdf, 07.01.2021).

Furthermore, going beyond the material dimension of buildings, the newest IBA generation focuses particularly on innovations in processes. Thus, the thematic and conceptual emphases of some IBA and IBA projects have shifted from the mere production of space to the more abstract and complex appropriation of space. As ALTROCK (2011) states, IBA have evolved from building shows as exhibitions of “space-production” to “exhibitions of space-practices”¹⁴. Thus, temporary and performative dimensions through the involvement of artists or scenographers, or the staging of concrete places and their (re)interpretation, now constitute the conceptual core of many IBA projects. For instance, the projects of the IBA Thuringia, with its focus on urban-rural relations spanning across the whole state, mainly focus on the temporary and performative appropriation, reuse, and relabelling of vacant places.¹⁵ For instance, through civic engagement, an unused train station was transformed into a flexible space used both for a grocery store offering regional products, and as a meeting space. In the project proposal “Summer retreat Schwarza Valley”, a landscape which has offered an escape for urban dwellers since the 19th century, visitors can now get to know impressive yet derelict former vacation estates, indulge in the scenery and witness the successive activation of the landscape.



Abandoned train stations have become a typical sight in rural regions. As a project of IBA Thuringia, the former station in Rottenbach was revitalized and redesigned as a transport hub for buses, trains, cars and bicycles (image source: © IBA Thüringen, Thomas Müller).

In summary, while the IBA as an instrument has changed and evolved over time, some of its core features have remained: the IBA format has been marked by a great internal diversity, with each IBA having or having had its own focus, and each IBA having had a “tradition of quality” given that they fulfil the highest quality standards

¹⁴ ALTROCK, U. (2011)

¹⁵ ARCH+ (ed.) (2017): Stadtland – Der neue Rurbanismus. Arch+. Vol. 228.; INTERNATIONALE BAUAUSSTELLUNG

THÜRINGEN GMBH (ed.) (2017): IBA Magazin. Vol. 3 (<https://www.iba-thuringen.de/sites/default/files/artikel/downloads/IBA%20Magazin%20%233.pdf> (07.01.2021).

as shaped by former IBA. In fact, former and present IBA illustrate how several aspects regarding the formal integration and operational dimensions particularly contribute to successful IBA. These are displayed in the following chapters.

3. IBA EMBEDDED IN SPACE AND PLACE – MULTI-LAYER SUPPORT STRUCTURES, PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND EXCEPTIONAL PROJECTS

Since formal and informal instruments in urban and regional development can be seen as complementary to one another¹⁶, a successful IBA needs to serve both dimensions. The IBA as an instrument is informal itself, but it does rely on informal tools, concepts and strategies that span individual planning departments in cities and across municipal boundaries. Hence, for the successful implementation of an IBA, it is crucial to link it to formal structures, instruments and actors as well as to other relevant stakeholders in one way or another during the different phases of the IBA.¹⁷

IBA as major longer-term initiatives require multi-layer support structures

Various actors or stakeholders can be the main force behind an IBA, and an IBA is manifested through self-empowerment and an open space for discourse: in the case of IBA Emscher Park, the initiative was largely state-led,¹⁸ while a trinational organisation of municipalities in the region initiated IBA Basel. Often, “*key personalities and their vision and charisma as agents of change in complex and fragmented policy and political environment*”¹⁹ help develop and implement an IBA. However, for its setup, local initiatives and the engagement of local actors as well as

¹⁶ LAMKER, C. (2014): Die Dichotomie von formell und informell überwinden – planerische Instrumente als Bausteine strategischer Navigation. In: GROTHEER, S., SCHWÖBEL, A. and M. STEPPER (ed.): Nimm´ s sportlich –Planung als Hindernislauf. Arbeitsberichte der ARL 10. Verlag der ARL. Hannover, p. 143-158 (https://shop.arl-net.de/media/direct/pdf/ab/ab_010/ab_010_gesamt.pdf (07.01.2021))

¹⁷ GUERRA, M.W. and U. SCHAUBER (2014): Instrumente der räumlichen Planung und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Landschaftsstruktur in der Niederlausitz. Weimar.

¹⁸ P. PINCH and N. ADAMS (2013)

¹⁹ *ibid.*

external views and inputs are indispensable driving forces. For instance, formal and informal preparatory discussions among local and external experts as well as with the public are crucial to help identify and define the topics.²⁰ Thus, already at the very beginning of an IBA but also during its implementation, the combination of bottom-up and top-down strategies is essential. Therefore, as a major contributor to its success, an IBA should clearly communicate its main theme, specific projects and the underlying narrative to the public at large. As well, in order to foster public relations, modern communication and presentation strategies help obtain national and international attention. In addition, IBA should develop and utilise suitable tools and formats to encourage and enable the participation of local citizens and initiatives.

Moreover, IBA rely on political support at the city, regional and, in the case of Germany, state levels: they require long-term development processes that often span more than one political legislative period. Consequently, long-term political stability, consent and commitment are crucial for both the set up and implementation of the IBA and should be built up right from the very beginning of any IBA process.²¹ In Germany, since the states manage most EU, national and their own state funding programmes, their support and commitment are particularly important for allocating the required financial resources.²² In addition, IBA should involve private actors and the local economy in order to secure funding. Moreover, since IBA never emerge and develop in isolation, networking at all levels is crucial – from the neighbourhood, the city and the region to the state and beyond, with citizens, initiatives and organisations, authorities, policy makers, scholars and research institutes as well as economic players. All these stakeholders should be involved throughout the IBA process: to get it started and running, to fulfil the high-quality standards, and to ensure the implementation of its long and multifaceted format.²³

IBA as highly complex initiatives of excellence require professional management

When a city, region or state decides to carry out an IBA, a suitable operational and organisational body with the necessary management and communication skills must be set up. Typically, an IBA company (or agency) ensures adherence to high standards and fulfils the complex tasks required for the development and implementation of exceptional projects in a limited time frame. Furthermore, it is essential that the IBA company is independent in its finances, organisational forms

²⁰ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

²² IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

²¹ Walter, J. (2010)

²³ Ibid.

and thematic priorities. As a result, IBA companies usually have a quasi-corporate character and, in Germany, often take on the legal form of a limited company (GmbH), making it independent of the public administration. IBA companies may also take on other forms, such as registered organisations, or be integrated into other institutions. In either case, IBA companies should be set outside the established political structures and administration. As well, since they have neither dedicated financial resources of their own nor binding legal competencies, it is important to formally link and integrate relevant actors and “*thereby position[ing] [IBA] simultaneously inside and outside the state*”²⁴. This leads to a balancing act: it is always essential to weigh the independent and neutral position of an IBA agency outside the political and administrative system against the need to ensure the resources, support as well as collaborations required for a successful implementation. In any case, the city or region in which an IBA is situated should be a shareholder in the company. Moreover, external experts and relevant actors could be involved in the official bodies of an IBA agency, such as advisory boards or boards of trustees.²⁵

IBA as “next practice” require exceptional projects

At the core of each IBA are the exceptional projects that do not simply focus on buildings or built structures, but rather demonstrate innovative conditions, collaborations and instruments for shaping these environments. Moreover, they highlight the quality of these processes and often function as “next practices”: this is self-evident, for example, in the new standards the IBA Emscher Park set for industrial reconversion and the IBA Berlin set for careful urban renewal – approaches that are widely practiced today. Furthermore, IBA projects animate the main theme of an IBA and as such should always be of local and international relevance. Additionally, they address the specific local challenges while at the same time contributing to the international discourse. In addition, IBA projects should always take a participatory approach when it comes to the development and implementation of projects: while IBA often initiate external top-down interventions that are derived from the main theme, their projects should be qualified and implemented through bottom-up activities, initiatives and local partners as well. For instance, IBA can produce IBA projects by promoting existing local projects that contribute to the main theme. Thus, one main task of the IBA company is to launch and manage the participation process (e.g. through workshops and public discussions) as well as to ensure project qualification (e.g. through the use of instruments like international architectural and design competitions as well as feasibility studies). Moreover, IBA

²⁴ P. Pinch and N. Adams (2013)

²⁵ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017); Danielzyk, R (2020)

agencies serve as intermediaries between the various stakeholders described above—they build up the specific cross-sectoral networks of relevant actors to implement the projects as well as to attract and allocate public and private sector funds; in fact, professional fundraising is an increasingly important task because most current IBA no longer have their own budgets for project implementation.²⁶

During implementation, one main task is to oversee projects, their progress and their function as a next practice as well as how they interplay with the main theme. In Germany, where IBA do not have any legal planning competence, IBA agencies have to cooperate with local authorities to translate or integrate projects into formal instruments like development plans. As well, to ensure an independent and ambitious project qualification, IBA agencies typically do not implement projects themselves—rather, they function as enablers: they assist in getting them started and later monitor them critically while local or external partners are responsible for the actual implementation of the projects. Following the official closure of an IBA, the projects, initiated collaborations, and new planning cultures should have a lasting effect on their cities or regions and beyond.

4. BEYOND TIME AND PLACE – SECURING IBA AS A HALLMARK OF BAUKULTUR AND PLANNING CULTURE

As described above, IBA aim to achieve excellence and innovation. They strive to develop exceptional and new solutions to central and pressing issues facing cities and regions. Hence, IBA fuel and shape the debates and guiding principles surrounding future urban and regional development as well as the creation and evaluation of new instruments and planning cultures in significant ways beyond their time and place.

Why may a city or region want to develop and implement an IBA? There may be several reasons: an IBA is a very “open” and flexible format applicable to various local or regional contexts; an IBA offers the possibility to find and identify new solutions for current and complex problems that cannot be solved with traditional

²⁶ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017); Altrock, U. (2011)

instruments; and, importantly, an IBA helps generate and attract local, regional, national as well as international attention to urban and regional development issues.²⁷ At the same time, an IBA is always an experiment, and as such stakeholders starting and implementing an IBA need to take risks when it comes to individual projects or the whole IBA may fail, meaning the responsible actors may need to find ways to deal with those underlying challenges. Moreover, the IBA boom that has taken place since 2000 has led to an increasing shortage of, and competition for, resources: of money, people, themes and attention.²⁸ At the same time, it has become obvious that each IBA needs private and public funding, exceptional and highly qualified individuals, main themes of national and international relevance and the attention of the national and international public, experts and politicians.

This “IBA inflation” poses the question of whether current exhibitions still fulfil the high quality standards set by former IBA, and if they actually showcase next practices or simply constitute an example of best practices. As DURTH emphasises (2020): *“It is important to learn from the experiences that IBA made in the last century, but it is dangerous to measure current developments solely in regard to the success of the past.”*²⁹ In order to review the quality of each IBA, the transfer of knowledge and experience plays a crucial role. For the first time, all current IBA met on the initiative of the IBA Hamburg and established the “IBA meets IBA” network in 2007. Since then, this network, supported by the German federal government, has evolved and thrived. In 2009, it published a “Memorandum on the future of IBA” as a common basis for future IBA that describes features and quality standards for all IBA, as well as recommendations for the implementation of them.³⁰ Moreover, with the goal of helping to ensure the IBA’s quality, the German federal government started a state-led quality campaign for IBA. The government appointed an advisory board on the future of the IBA that revised the memorandum and added guidelines on important topics such as organisation, financing and projects in 2017.³¹ The government also initiated and conducted research projects to monitor and advise the learning processes on IBA. Finally, in 2019, the German government announced the

²⁷ Walter, J. (2010)

²⁸ Siebel, W. (2019); Durth, W. (2020): Die IBA als Treffpunkt, Werkstatt und Zukunftsentwurf. In: Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat (BMI) (ed.): Zur Zukunft Internationaler Bauausstellungen. Thesen und Empfehlungen von Beitragenden der Konferenz „Internationale Bauausstellungen — Anspruch | Alltag | Innovation“ 14. und 15. November 2019 in Berlin. Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat (BMI). Berlin, p. 6-7.

(https://www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IBA_Arbeitsheft-Zur-Zukunft-Internationaler-Bauausstellungen_2020.pdf (07.01.2021)) (quote translated by authors).

²⁹ Durth, W. (2020)

³⁰ IBA Advisory Board of the BMI (2017)

³¹ *ibid.*

establishment of an IBA centre of competence in the following years to develop the state-led quality campaign even further.³²

The following concluding remarks and lessons learned aim to nurture the debate about the quality standards of today's and future IBA:

- **IBA are never set or fixed, but always in motion and under development.** In order to measure the quality and success of an IBA as well as to ensure its transferability, it is important to understand IBA as representing a learning and developing system.³³ The quality standards established by former exhibitions should form the guiding principles for present and future IBA. At the same time, IBA, their circumstances as well as the background conditions for their implementation change constantly. Moreover, topics, networks of relevant actors, as well as planning processes themselves have become increasingly complex.
- **IBA consist of a strong network of innovative initiatives.** In light of the current "IBA-boom", it is recommended not just to focus on individual IBA, but also on their interlinkages and to go beyond measuring current IBA simply based on the achievements of former IBA given that they have been singular and locally confined events. This approach also allows for the innovative potential of today's heterogeneous initiatives to be fully utilized.³⁴
- **Not every initiative is an IBA.** As mentioned previously, IBA represent a very flexible and "open" urban and regional development format that attracts growing interest which has led to an "IBA inflation". However, not every initiative or project must be or can be considered an IBA. As such it is crucial that the key actors driving such initiatives evaluate early on if the IBA is the best instrument or if other formats would be even better suited to pushing their process forward. As well, when starting an IBA initiative, failure is a legitimate option, so the courage to give up may prove indispensable. For instance, there have been several failed attempts at establishing new IBA, among them in Berlin and in the Rhine-Main area around Frankfurt.

IBA as instruments to foster innovations in planning culture? IBA aim to create new instruments and ways to address current problems that cannot be solved with traditional methods. Whether an IBA in fact creates a best or next practice can be

³² For further information about the state-led quality campaign, see also: www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de (07.01.2021)

³³ IBA ADVISORY BOARD OF THE BMI (2020): Thesen zur Weiterentwicklung von IBA. Berlin (https://www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/IBA_Thesenpapier-IBA-Expertenrat.pdf (07.01.2021))

³⁴ *ibid.*

identified only ex-post.³⁵ That is to say, that instead of discussing the question about best or next practice, it may be more helpful to focus on the *alternative* practice that an IBA develops and tests. Then, only time will tell if the *alternative* practice becomes a *next* practice.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de

³⁵ Jessen, J (2020): Best practices oder next practices? In: BUNDESMINISTERIUM DES INNERN, FÜR BAU UND HEIMAT (BMI) (ed.): Zur Zukunft Internationaler Bauausstellungen. Thesen und Empfehlungen von Beitragenden der Konferenz „Internationale Bauausstellungen — Anspruch | Alltag |

Innovation“ 14. und 15. November 2019 in Berlin. Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat (BMI). Berlin, p. 6-7 (https://www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/IBA_Arbeitsheft-Zur-Zukunft-Internationaler-Bauausstellungen_2020.pdf (07.01.2021))

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Lena Hatzelhoffer, the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR), Germany & Jan Schultheiß, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI), Germany

**Internationale
Bauausstellungen**

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Co-City Torino

the city of commons and collaboration (IT)

Alice Zanasi
Giovanni Ferrero
City of Turin

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. URBAN REGENERATION IN TURIN.....	4
3. THE CO-CITY PROJECT	6
4. PEOPLE AND PLACES	8
5. KEY CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED	11
KEY REFERENCES	14

1. SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to give a brief account of a collective learning process; a process that implies the effort of both citizens' organisations and the city administration towards the definition of a collaborative field in the design and implementation of urban regeneration processes. This process is currently in progress in the city of Turin, Italy, thanks to the CO-CITY project, implemented between 2017 and 2020 and financed by the UIA initiative.

The European Union initiative *UIA - Urban innovative actions*, was launched in 2016 in order to identify and test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges and sustainable urban development.¹ Cities throughout Europe have been tasked with going beyond traditional policies and services and to be more innovative. The idea behind this initiative is to stimulate urban authorities to experiment with innovative and creative solutions, even if there is the risk of a failure.

The first call of the initiative finds the City of Turin at the right moment to test a new way to respond to the needs of its neighborhoods—especially the most deprived—with urban policies that rely on civic engagement and social innovation. Turin and other Italian municipalities, starting from the example of the city of Bologna, were have already begun to experiment with new tools—for example the pacts of collaboration between the administration and the citizens' organizations—and an innovative juridical framework: the notion of urban commons.² All of this comprised the starting point for the CO-CITY project.³

In the first part of this paper, we will briefly provide an overview of the background and context of the project, in the second part its implementation will be described, while in the third part certain examples will be given. Finally, in the fourth part, we will focus on the challenges that have been addressed and some of the lessons learned.

¹ Based on Article 8 of the ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

² The notion of “commons” has been studied by Garret Hardin’s famous *Tragedy of the Commons*, and by Elinor Ostrom’s Nobel prize-winning work on governing common pool resources. More recently, law scholars have studied urban commons from a new perspective, claiming that the “commons is less a description of the resource and its characteristics and

more of a normative claim to the resource. In these situations, the claim is to open up (or to re-open) access to a good - i.e., to recognize the community’s right to access and to use a resource which might otherwise be under exclusive private or public control - on account of the social value or utility that such access would generate or produce for the community” (Foster, Iaione 2016, 288). See also Mattei, Quarta (2015), Albanese, Michelazzo (2020).

³ For further information in English on the CO-CITY project see: http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/eng_version/project/index.shtml; <https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/turin>

2. URBAN REGENERATION IN TURIN

The City of Turin has long-lasting experience in the field of urban regeneration—in recent decades, it has been working to implement a set of policies, tools and frameworks in order to manage the city’s physical and social, cultural and economic transformations.

Turin’s awareness of the importance of regeneration was stimulated, in part, by the need to deal with the existence in the area of numerous abandoned industrial buildings and disused land, which called for a reimagining and reconsideration of the city’s identity. On the other hand, the Administration had to endure a crisis that took place in its various peripheral and inner city neighborhoods, also stimulated by the consequences of a financial crisis that has contributed to the spread of poverty. Between 2008 and 2013 the percentage of the city’s population living in absolute poverty—meaning those deprived of basic human needs—rose to 7%, while 14% lacked the income necessary to maintain an average standard of living and were thus defined as living below the relative poverty line. The current unemployment rate is 10% and has continued to rise at a faster pace than in other Italian cities.

This situation and the budget constraints for the social sector have forced the City to partially rethink their public service delivery, and their dialogue and exchanges with their citizens when it comes to urban regeneration.

A process of local dialogue and community engagement started at the end of the Nineties and developed through different urban regeneration programs that culminated, between 2007 and 2013, in the formation of eight community centers called Neighborhood Houses (*Case del Quartiere*), located in various districts of the city and which are constantly evolving to better respond to the needs of local communities.⁴ These Neighbourhood Houses comprise a network of multi-purpose hubs which work together to support community cooperation and civic engagement.

In 2014, a national debate on urban commons regulation started in Bologna and soon spread to several major Italian cities. In 2016, the Turin City Council issued the *Regulation on collaboration between citizens and the City for the care, shared management and regeneration of urban commons*, an instrument allowing for the



Photo 1. One of the street posters of the CO-CITY communication campaign.

⁴ For the urban regeneration processes in Turin see Cavallaro, Ferrero (2016). The Neighborhood Houses are community centers that host and disseminate socio-cultural activities, helpdesks, public events, etc. They are at the same time places to socialize and participate. They are typically located in public buildings and most also host a restaurant-cafeteria,

and are managed by various entities from the third sector. The most important funding source for their ordinary activities is a local philanthropic foundation (Compagnia di San Paolo) in agreement with the City of Turin. The Neighborhood Houses Network has an established agreement of cooperation with the City Administration, and they rely on a combination of public and private funding. See also Patti, Polyak (2017), Roman (2014) and: <https://encc.eu/network/members/rete-delle-case-del-quartiere>; <http://www.retecasedelquartiere.org/>

deeper involvement of urban actors—citizens and civil society, but also private actors and knowledge institutions—in the care and regeneration of urban commons. The aim is to encourage and sustain new collaborative forms of dialogue with civil society related to the management of public goods and the provision of collective services.

In 2017, the City of Turin undertook a project entitled *AxTO - Azioni per le periferie torinesi*,⁵ which sought to implement an integrated set of public interventions addressing the fragility of Turin's periphery linked to the economic crisis and the lack of resources. The AxTO project has been selected in the framework of the call for the regeneration of urban peripheries, issued by the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers. So far, AxTO has implemented 44 different actions (public works, services, socio-cultural initiatives).

The Turin social innovation ecosystem is represented in the *Torino Social Impact* platform,⁶ which was activated in 2017 within the European project *BoostINNO - Boosting Social Innovation* (financed by URBACT). It has an open structure for the aggregation and convergence of stakeholders in order to promote social impact while tackling in the most compelling urban challenges diversified manner. The long-term objective is to make Turin into an ecosystem for entrepreneurship and investments with a social impact and high technological level. It aims to support the growth of companies able to respond to emerging social needs in different fields and transform innovative ideas into services, products, and solutions able to create both economic and social value. Among its objectives is the development of a more collaborative, inclusive and sustainable economy.

Ultimately, in 2019 the social services of the City underwent a substantial reorganization, which has included the creation of new Social Inclusion Poles (*Poli di inclusione sociale*). In these new structures, various services from the third sector and the City administration will be integrated to better anticipate needs and provide support and integrated intervention for social inclusion.

This CO-CITY experiment stems from and builds on the ecosystem of policies, projects and actors that was developed in more than 20 years in the field of urban regeneration in Turin.

⁵ <https://www.axto.it/>

⁶ <https://www.torinosocialimpact.it/>

3. The CO-CITY project



Photo 2. The red chairs prepared for the kickoff event of Cumiana15 and the postcard of the communication campaign with the building before rehabilitation.



Photo 3. A community lunch in the street of the Barriera di Milano neighborhood.

The CO-CITY project is included among the 18 winners of the first *UIA - Urban innovative Action* call in 2016, which resulted in a 4.1 million euro grant from the European Commission. CO-CITY takes as its starting point the juridical framework provided by the *Regulation on collaboration between citizens and the City for the care, shared management and regeneration of urban commons* approved in 2016, and adopts the *Pacts of collaboration* between citizens' organisations and the City administration as a tool to foster and cultivate mutual trust between local communities and local institutions.

The project addresses the challenge of regenerating various urban neighborhoods and fighting social exclusion. In order to do so, it aims at transforming abandoned buildings, vacant land, and underused public spaces into *urban commons*: spaces co-managed by the community and the City administration. The commons are entrusted to the care and management of the citizens through forms of active participation, supported by the Neighbourhood Houses. The aim is to promote social mixing, community cohesion, social enterprise development and job creation so as to contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty and exclusion.

The CO-CITY project has been carried out by the City of Turin in partnership with the University of Turin (Computer Science Dept. and Law Dept.), the Italian National Association of Municipalities (ANCI) and the Cascina Roccafranca Foundation as the leader of the Neighborhood Houses Network.

The first step of the project was the public call launched in May 2017, which aimed at collecting proposals from citizens' organisations for pacts of collaboration, therefore communicating with target beneficiaries and adopting a participative approach. This public call laid down the conditions for the submission of proposals allowed in the co-design phase, which was meant to define and finalize the contents and activities of the pacts of collaboration.

Such a legal device was forged in order to facilitate the resolution of local communities' controversies and to admit proposals from city inhabitants without requiring a particular level of expertise, meaning accepting informal groups even if they were not assembled in formal organizations. Thanks to the public call framework, the City has involved urban communities starting from the initial phase of the regeneration process.

The proposals were to comply with one of the four types of measures encompassed by the CO-CITY project:

A. Peripheries and urban cultures. For proposals concerning the regeneration processes of abandoned buildings selected by the City;

B. Underutilized infrastructure for public services. For proposals intended to enhance and bring value to the use of urban infrastructure—such as public facilities, buildings, and libraries selected by the City—which have an idle capacity in terms of usage possibilities;

B. Schools. For the enhancement of the use of school/educational facilities outside of school hours as a proper civic space for local communities;

C. Care for public spaces. For care and co-management interventions of community gardens, green areas and other open spaces at risk of decay or under-utilization.

The City appointed a committee for the evaluation of the proposals for collaboration put forward by the various stakeholders coming from the various City departments relevant to the topics of the projects presented. The evaluation aimed to determine which proposals would have access to the co-design phase on the basis of the following criteria:

- positive impact on the socio-territorial conditions of the neighbourhood;
- ability to work in synergy and integrate other initiatives that are not exclusively local in nature;
- ability to generate working opportunities and foster active inclusion;
- financial and economic feasibility and sustainability;
- inclusiveness of the governance model;
- innovation and ability to develop generative social processes;
- replicability of the project.

The launch of the public call received a high response rate from the citizens' organisations: 124 proposals were received from all over the city, and 65 were admitted to the co-design phase, being selected based on the above mentioned criteria.

The co-design phase is a key aspect of the implementation of the CO-CITY project. Its goal is to define and finalise the content of the pacts of collaboration between the City and the proponents. It permits delving deeper into the proposals, bringing about changes that allow them to respond to the project's purposes and to fine-tune their economic and technical feasibility. This has represented the most crucial and longest phase of the project, given that it started in February 2018. Following the approval of the proposals, the co-design phase also involved the proponents, public officers, Neighbourhood Houses and whichever other organisations or stakeholders had an interest in contributing to the projects.

As a result, 46 proposals have been positively incorporated in the co-design phase and the pacts of collaboration were defined and signed, outlining the objectives of the collaboration, the scope of the activities, the spatial interventions, the roles of the partners, public works or equipment provided by the City, and the duration, governance mechanisms, responsibilities, insurance and liabilities. The City made investments in terms of public works regarding building refurbishment, spatial renovation and equipment provision, wherever it could be a key enabling factor for the co-management and co-production of innovative services.⁷

The project's implementation has been accompanied by a communications campaign both on social networks and in the streets, with posters prominently displaying portraits of people that have participated in the pacts of collaboration, with the claim "I take care of the city."⁸

The CO-CITY project and its financing were officially concluded in February 2020, although the process for the realization of its objectives is still ongoing and the co-management phase of the pacts of collaboration is in progress.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACES

The issues addressed by the signed pacts of collaborations can broadly be divided into six main topics:

1. *care for green areas and public space*: improvement of the quality of urban green areas with the adoption, restoration and maintenance of small gardens, playgrounds, portions of urban vegetation in public spaces, squares, streets, etc.;
2. *sports in public places*: promotion of sport and outdoor physical activities, especially for young people in marginalised areas;
3. *arts, culture, creativity*: improvement of the quality of urban areas through the use of creative tools, cultural installations and creative placemaking;
4. *socio-cultural animation*: stimulation of the integration and the participation of individuals to encourage development and integration of the local social life;



Photo 4. The arrangement of a flower bed in Don Albera square, in the Porta Palazzo neighbourhood.

⁷ The project investment in public works and equipment provision is 2.2 M Euro. Moreover, the City administration provides the payment of utilities (electric, water supply, and heating) for the whole duration of the pacts. Each pact is meant to be self-sustainable; investments in works and equipment alongside all the efforts put toward community

building, facilitation, mutual learning and training have to be considered during their start-up phase.

⁸ The photographer Laura Cantarella was in charge of the photographic campaign. The final exhibition, to take place in February-March 2020, unfortunately has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

5. *community welfare services*: provision of services and support to disadvantaged people such as the elderly, disabled, homeless and unprivileged groups;
6. *youth protagonism*: participation and socialisation opportunities for young people.



Photo 5. An evening event in the Neighborhood House of San Salvario.

The level of complexity, both in terms of the physical intervention necessary and of the activities proposed, has varied greatly among the proposals. One of the most challenging has been that regarding the complete refurbishment of a small, abandoned industrial plant (approximately 600 square meters in side), in the Borgo San Paolo neighborhood. The budget allocated for this undertaking was insufficient for both the initially designed renovation and the safety-guarantee needed for the rest of the building; therefore, it has been transformed into a “covered square” with a basement of the same size that has been refurbished yet still remains inaccessible due to safety concerns. This has also implied a redefinition of the activities initially presented by proponents, which had to be readapted and reconsidered together with the public administration during the co-design process that lasted over two years and which also witnessed a change in the initial group of proponents. The activities regulated by the pacts of collaboration include a mix of sports and cultural and community events and initiatives. The space will also be made accessible as a venue for other proposals from other local organizations, which can encompass a wide range of activities. The name of this space is *Cumiana15*.

The pacts also had different features, especially in the types of the actors involved and the partnerships created. *BeeOzanam*,⁹ a community hub located in a former industrial site in the Borgo Vittoria neighborhood, is founded on a wide and diverse partnership of structured social cooperatives and associations already active in the area. Their project has a multi-purpose aim, forming a bridge between the production of welfare services for the community, cultural innovation, and environmental sustainability. Additionally, a community garden has been created on the rooftop.

Falklab, located in the northern neighborhood of Falchera, stemmed from voluntary groups and associations mainly composed of teenagers that in the last years have been committed to the organisation of activities for young people living in this peripheral area.¹⁰ The former canteen of a school has been at the core of their after-school activities and summer camps, which has been transformed into a meeting place for people to gather together to play music or engage in other artistic activities and pursuits. With the CO-CITY project, this small building has been renovated and provided with energy efficient solutions. The pact of collaboration guiding this project

⁹ <https://www.beeozanam.com/>

¹⁰ <http://t.ly/81il>

has defined a new governance model, together with the District administration, local schools and the local public library.

Eleven different pacts of collaboration have been signed between community groups, the City administration and the City's schools administration to renovate school courtyards, provide equipment and regulate activities outside of school hours that are open to the rest of the neighborhood.



Photo 6. Painting works in The Hood, a basketball court and community place.

The care for green spaces lies at the core of the majority of the pacts of collaboration that have been signed: central and peripheral areas have witnessed the involvement of associations and informal groups committed to improving the quality of urban settings, enhancing local resilience and promoting sustainable lifestyles, thereby improving both the health and well-being of urban residents. Moreover, some pacts have focused on recreational and athletic activities in fragile and poor urban neighbourhoods, such as the renovation of a basketball court promoted by a youth association deeply rooted in the neighbourhood. The renovation has been accompanied by a street art intervention¹¹, which has helped to redefine the social perception of a deprived neighbourhood by giving a new character to the area. They decided to call it *The Hood*, as a tribute to the hip-hop urban culture.



Photo 7. Vegetable gardens maintenance begins.

Not far from *The Hood*, in the *Centro Interculturale* — a cultural hub managed by the City — a pact of collaboration with local NGOs is promoting intercultural dialogue, and under the arcades of a building that hosts associations and public services, another pact regulates street art interventions, maintenance and associated activities for homeless people.

Finally, the CO-CITY project has also supported the creation of the *Attrezzoteca*, a Library of Tools that allows for the free lending of tools for those people who operates within the pacts of collaboration. This Library of Tools is managed by four different Neighbourhood Houses so that the tools (from battery-powered lawn mowers to video systems, from portable gazebos to cargo bikes, etc.) are stored in different locations all over the city.

¹¹ <https://vimeo.com/370830717>

5. KEY CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The self-reinforcing cycle of socio-spatial polarization (i.e. segregation, marginalization, and exclusion of citizens from citizenship and participation, both physically and socially) is the issue identified by the CO-CITY project and addressed by its actions. The urban socio-spatial polarization has several interconnected dimensions that reciprocally and cyclically affect and reinforce each other:

1. local institutions: the reduction of public expenditure leads to the deterioration of living conditions. This feeds mistrust in local institutions that are decreasingly capable of responding to the needs of local communities through their welfare services provision;
2. spatial polarization: poverty produces deprived neighborhoods, which in turn exacerbate poverty. One visible sign is the presence of many derelict buildings. Around 6% of the about 1,600 buildings and about 1M sqm of land owned by the City are unused or underused and have no prospect of economic exploitation;
3. social polarization: poverty is linked to citizens' indifference, their lack of participation in civic life, engagement, sense of empowerment, and lack of interest and attention for urban public spaces;
4. social and spatial peripheries do not always coincide and poverty is exacerbated by a situation of social fragility and degradation.

Poverty is included in the definition of *lack of capacity*, which is not strictly related to the lack of an income. The quality of the urban space does not depend only on the amount of infrastructure and number of services, but on the relationships established between the material city and the people who live in it and on the concrete opportunities that the city offers to the people about "living" the city.

In order to address these challenges, the project encourages the generation of different changes both in the technical/administrative and relational/participative spheres, which are mutually reinforcing and interrelated:

1. *legal/administrative dimension*: the production of a new paradigm of collaborative administration based on increased mutual trust between citizens and the urban authority. Starting from the adoption of the Regulation on urban commons, a new normative basis has been developed that affects the functions and attitudes of the public officials in relation to the urban commons and the active citizens' requests and instances. This does, in turn, have an impact on the exchange, cooperation and definition of the roles of the participants in the shared care of urban spaces. What is particularly innovative is the administration's effort to build a *lean* infrastructure within the City's bureaucracy that is responsible for coordinating the efforts of different departments in order to encourage them to work in synergy on the collaborative proposals;

2. *polycentric urban welfare*: the spatial and physical polarization is addressed with the investments for the requalification of the urban assets and resources that will generate the polycentric and collaborative ecosystems that will enable collective action. This will be obtained thanks to the development and establishment of co-management projects in urban commons so as to test collaborative and innovative forms of polycentric “commons-based” urban welfare. This investment in the urban commons is a lever for addressing key urban governance issues and targeting vulnerable communities in the city;
3. *generative communities*: citizens’ organisations are identified, activated and enabled to develop ideas into sustainable social innovation practices, pilot projects and services to be developed in urban commons. Their knowledge, relations, resources, energies and skills are channeled for the creation of “generative communities” for the co-production of urban welfare services and the co-creation of innovative solutions to urban challenges;
4. *social inclusion*: a specific focus on the inclusion of those citizens in need as agents of change within the different actions of the project has also been considered. As such, they are integrated and involved in the projects activated in the urban commons. This is related to the city-structured social services in view of their complementarity with the urban regeneration policies: the protection and preservation of public spaces and local services being seen as urban common goods have had direct, positive implications for social inclusion.

The CO-CITY project first launched this innovative experiment by relying on the idea of distinguishing urban commons from other public goods and assets, and that this should be a value worth developing and disseminating. However, this required a strong learning effort from all of the involved stakeholders and parties, which sometimes led to misunderstandings, bottlenecks and extensive efforts to communicate new ideas and concepts.

A general accomplishment of the project that can be identified is the facilitation of the emergence and consolidation of new city makers and their networks that have started a collective learning process by understanding their capability to be engaged in urban social change. The preliminary effects can be also seen in the emerging changes in attitude of the public administration and the public officers that are starting to adopt and maximize a multisectoral approach to face the urban challenges that have transcended the traditional sectoral boundaries. In doing so, this project has fostered accountability across the various sectors of the public administration and also encouraged broader participation in the realization and governance of the pacts of collaboration. It is also possible to identify the efforts that the single public officers are putting towards the creation of partnerships with the citizens within the limits of their responsibilities, roles and competences. Yet, sometimes this perception of the citizens

seems to be compromised by the difficulty in identifying—among the various City departments—who is the real partner in the dialogue with them for the realization of the activities, thus requiring additional partnering efforts from both sides.

Many shortcomings have been evident during the implementation of the CO-CITY project, starting from the timing: the co-design phase and the approval of the pacts of collaboration have been a long and burdensome process, both for public officers and citizens' organisations. This situation can be attributed to a combination of controllable and uncontrollable factors. On one side, there is the lengthy nature of the bureaucratic procedures that has been detrimental given the creation of delays in carrying out the project's activities. On the other side, the project has been testing new procedures and processes that still need time for standardization and assessment in order to provide systemic solutions and changes. Nevertheless, according to the surveys conducted within the project's evaluation framework, the majority of both the public officers and the active citizens involved in the project implementation have positively considered the enabling role of CO-CITY¹² as a way to innovate policies and practices, unlocking the potential of urban communities.

¹² The CO-CITY project has been evaluated using the Theory of Change approach, in doing so describing how the intervention contributed to bringing about long-term changes. Both the active citizens and the public officers involved in the project have been administered questionnaires that registered

their positive perception of the enabling role of the project. See: http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/bm-doc/d-2-3-2_final-evaluation_report.pdf

KEY REFERENCES

R. A. Albanese, E. Michelazzo (2020) *Manuale di diritto dei beni comuni urbani*, Celid , Torino

http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/co-city/manuale_beni/index.shtml

V. Cavallaro, G. Ferrero (2016) *Nuove azioni di rigenerazione urbana a Torino*, *Trasporti e cultura*, XVI(45): 41-45

https://issuu.com/trasportiecultura/docs/t_c.45_-_periferie.web/59

G. Ferrero (2018) Interview, in P. Chirulli, C. Iaione (eds.), *La Co-città. Diritto urbano e politiche pubbliche per i beni comuni e la rigenerazione urbana*, Iovene, Napoli

S.R. Foster, C. Iaione (2016) *The City as a Commons*, *Yale Law and Policy Review*, 281

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2653084>

U. Mattei, A. Quarta (2015) *Right to the City or Urban Commoning? Thoughts on the Generative Transformation of Property Law*, *The Italian Law Journal*, 1(2): 303-325

<https://econpapers.repec.org/RePEc:iuc:rpaper:2-15>

D. Patti, L. Polyak (eds.) (2017) *Funding the Cooperative City. Community Finance and the Economy of Civic Spaces*, Cooperative City Books, Vienna

<https://cooperativecity.org/product/funding-the-cooperative-city/>

E. Roman (2014) *Neighbourhood Houses. Case del Quartiere (CdQ). Torino (Italy). EU-MIA Research Report*, International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin (ITCILO), Forum Internazionale ed Europeo di Ricerche sull'Immigrazione (FIERI), Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford

<http://www.eu-mia.eu/cases/case-del-quartiere-neighbourhood-house>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Alice Zanasi, Giovanni Ferrero (City of Turin, Italy)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Milan REFLOW

a case study of urban design governance
for the regeneration of traditional public
assets through a new management model
and the circular economy paradigm (IT)

Lucia Scopelliti

Head of Unit, Economic
development,
Municipality of Milan -
Expert at UIA

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
1.1. Milan's smart city strategy and urban regeneration governance.....	3
1.2. Circular Milan	3
1.3. About this paper	4
2. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS	5
2.1. Municipal covered markets: public assets to be renewed and enhanced ..	5
2.2. REFLOW project	7
3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	8
3.1. REFLOW's concept.....	8
3.2. Milan's pilot	9
4. INNOVATIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ASSETS.....	10
5. FINANCIALLY VIABLE OPTIONS AND MAIN CHALLENGES.....	11
6. SUCCESSES AND IMPLEMENTATION	13
6.1. The previous experience: Mercato Lorenteggio.....	13
6.2. The economic and financial plan	16
6.3. The public call	17
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	21

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1. Milan's smart city strategy and urban regeneration governance

In order to become competitive in an international environment, the City of Milan has decided to support urban development and offer better services by turning the city and its metropolitan area into a “smart city.”

Citizen mobility generates a wide range of problems that can be difficult to tackle as cities grow in size and complexity. Furthermore, large, growing cities also represent those places where inequalities are stronger and, if they are not managed correctly, their negative effects can exceed the positive ones.

This is why the city, as part of its smart city strategy, decided to invest strongly in urban regeneration governance, keeping in mind that growth should be accompanied by social innovation policies that avoid dangerous gentrification processes, prevent the emergence of social problems and guarantee social cohesion.

It should be underlined that a public administration, on its own, cannot simply transform a city into a smart city; its role consists of creating a favourable environment and promoting the required tools in order to help the best players, within its area, to work successfully towards common and shared goals, thanks to the right mix of **hard power** and **soft power** tools.

Indeed, while some projects can be directly promoted and implemented by the private sector, other projects necessitate a public-private partnership while in some cases financial support is necessary (i.e. where a financial gap has been identified because the public benefits strongly outperform the private benefits).

1.2. Circular Milan

In 2019, the Municipality of Milan set a series of clear targets in order to speed up the transition to a circular economy,¹ with the targets having been set at the micro and

¹ <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>

macro levels. The former concerns the policies of companies, while the latter focuses on citywide policies. **Milan's goals** include, among others:

- A 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and a 45% reduction by 2030 through the use of renewable sources for energy production, reduction of energy consumption and the electric transition of local public transport
- Limit the increase in urban temperature to within 2°C
- Achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2030
- A 42% increase in the population directly being served by public transport in the next 10 years
- Become a carbon neutral city by 2050
- Reduce food waste by 50% by 2030²

In recognition of its Circular Economy programme, in 2019 Milan was invited to join the Circular Economy 100 (CE100) network, operated by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation³ works with businesses, governments and academia to develop an economic framework that is restorative and regenerative by design. Since its launch in 2010, the foundation has placed the circular economy on the agenda of global decision makers in business, government and academia.

1.3. About this paper

This paper examines a case of urban design governance for the regeneration of traditional public assets: Milan's municipal covered markets, through a new management model and through a broader offer of functions that mixes commercial and socio-cultural purposes; moreover, it will be explained how Milan is testing an innovative circular economy paradigm within some of these markets, thanks to an EU-funded project entitled "REFLOW,"⁴ Furthermore, how city makers approached this multifaceted challenge will be described, such as how they have:

- Faced regeneration and connected expensive renovations costs for municipal covered markets;
- Developed a new management model and improved the efficiency of the process;

² https://www.c40.org/cities/milan/case_studies

³ <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org>

⁴ <https://reflowproject.eu>

- Made those markets more attractive and sustainable from an economic and environmental point of view, through a participatory approach.

In terms of urban design governance tools, this initiative encompasses more than one tool: the physical regeneration of municipal covered markets implies a mix of two strategies: analysis and ratings, in addition to considering the evaluation of different proposals and therefore different options. For the REFLOW activities, “Exploration” seems to be the main tool, referring to:

- Proactive engagement, such as design-led community participation;
- Professional investigation, such as research and on-site experimentation.

2. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

2.1. Municipal covered markets: public assets to be renewed and enhanced

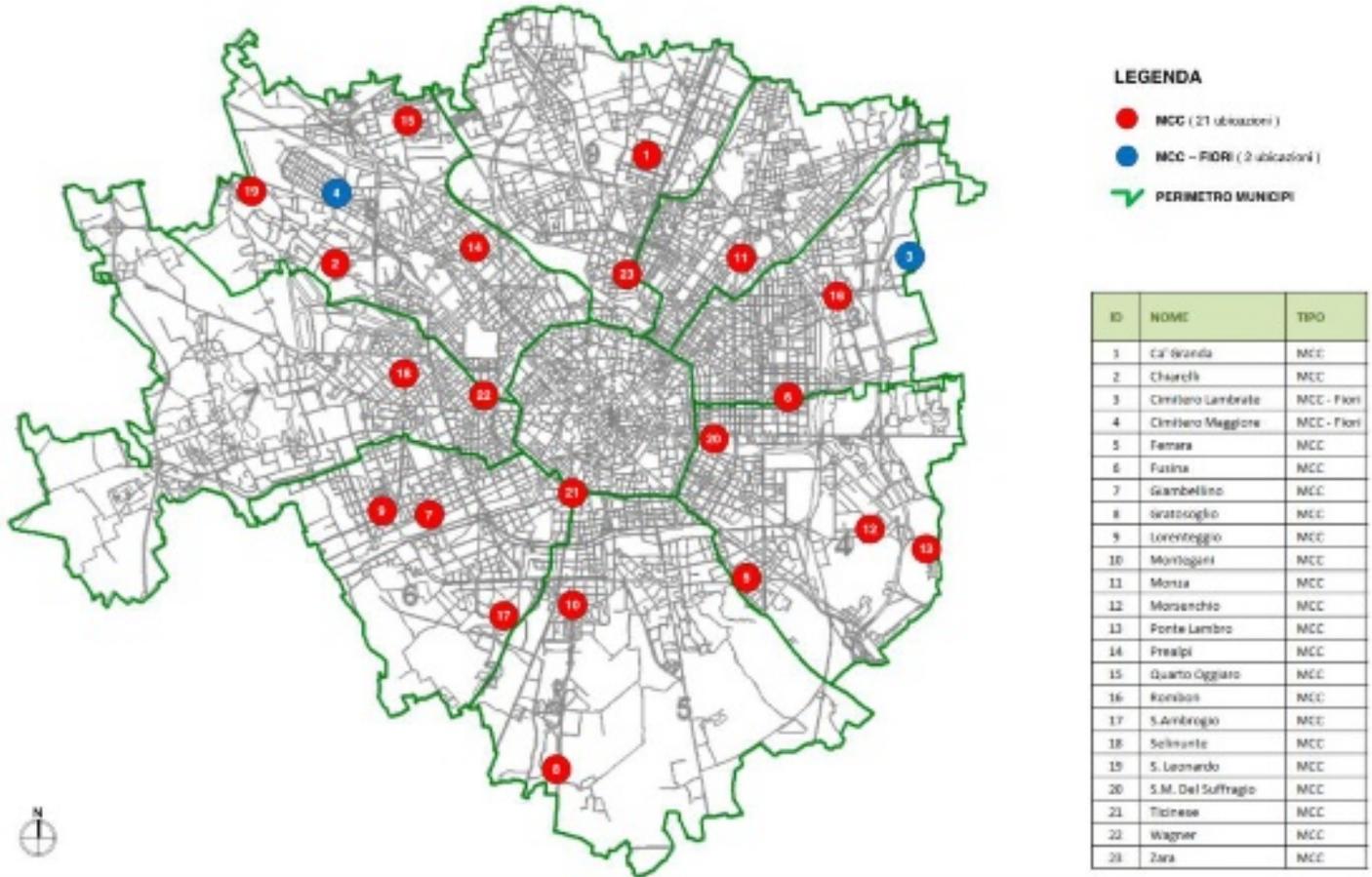
The City of Milan owns **23 markets** built from the 1920s through the 1960s as centres of commerce. Those commercial buildings were erected and given concessions at lower than market concession rates with the aim of moderating staple food prices to support the nutritional consumption of low-income citizens.

With the exceptions of two of the 23 markets, for which a unique concessionaire had been already identified for the management of the entire space, all the markets are normally managed directly by the municipality, who, on the basis of a short/medium-term concession, assigns commercial spaces directly to traders (about 215).

Due to the reduction of typical and atypical maintenance alike achieved in past years, as well as to the change in the buying habits of consumers and the increasing competition from viable commercial alternatives (i.e. commercial centers and on-line shopping) for food products as well, markets now suffer from high vacancy rates, decaying facilities, and declining community interest in neighborhoods.

The Municipality intends to revitalize those markets citywide, further recognizing that markets can represent a unique opportunity to contribute to the transformation of neighborhoods by supporting economic development and **social integration**.

What differ are those examples of cities, particularly in the European Union and the United States,⁵ that have successfully revitalized public markets, transforming them into attractions and amenities for **local communities** and visitors.



Municipal covered Markets in Milan

While the operating structures and governance models vary considerably, the characteristics of successful market revitalization projects include:

- Multi-functional facilities to support varied uses,
- Integration of both traditional and non-traditional vendors and services,
- Public programming that highlights market offerings, responds to community needs and/or provides local entertainment,
- Architectural design interventions and historic preservation of original structures that make the market facilities more interesting.

⁵ Some examples include the Mercato Testaccio in Rome, Mercato di Mezzo in Bologna, Mercato Santa Catarina in

Barcelona, Eastern Market in Detroit, and Pike Place Market in Seattle.

Milan's 23 markets differ from one another considerably. Indeed, while some are located in the central areas, others are located in suburbs characterised by unemployment, high percentages of the elderly, and a multi- ethnic presence. In addition, while some of these markets remain fully occupied, others have presented low occupation rates (less than 50%). Additionally, in terms of **restructuring costs**, there can be strong financial differences (from a few hundred thousand Euros to more than one million Euros). These strong differences require the definition of specific strategies for each market or group of markets. Indeed, it is a challenge to adopt a common revitalization policy mainly if the goal of the Municipality consists of making those markets into tools by which to achieve **urban regeneration** and **social inclusion**.

2.2. REFLOW project

In 2019, the Municipality of Milan was the winner of an H2020-SC5-2018-2019-2020 call, aimed at "Greening the economy in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," together with 26 other partners across Europe, including universities, public authorities, Fab labs, NGOs, and research bodies, led by the Copenhagen Business School as project coordinator.



REFLOW Approach: Sally Bourdon, Manuela Reyes Guerrero. IAAC

The name of the winning project was "REFLOW," whose acronym stands for **"constRuctive mEtabolic processes for material FLOws in urban and peri-urban environment across Europe."** The Municipality of Milan, specifically, had the possibility of launching a pilot, financed by the project, with a focus on its urban and peri-urban agri-food systems and within the municipal covered markets as its main field of experimentation.

The idea was to start from these symbolic places of city production/distribution for their evolution that integrates open innovation and the circular economy through the definition of new approaches and tools to support a transitional path towards more circular agro-food systems, thereby contributing to food security, sustainable resource management, innovation and job creation.

In this sense, REFLOW was the perfect opportunity for the local administration to engage in an already planned regeneration process and to be able to **leverage innovative dynamics** capable of going beyond mere environmental sustainability.

Indeed, the ambition was to draft and develop developmental policies for **public spaces** with the triggers stemming from the new paradigms of the circular economy as well as the opportunities offered by the "maker movement" that has been linked to the new, digital urban manufacturing.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1. REFLOW's concept

The vision of REFLOW is to develop circular and regenerative cities through the **re-localization of production** and the re-configuration of material flows at different scales. More specifically, it will use Fab Labs and makerspaces as catalysts of systemic change in urban and peri-urban environments, in order to reduce material consumption, maximize the multifunctional use of (public) spaces, and envisage regenerative practices.

Concretely, REFLOW aims at providing realistic best practices aligning market and government needs in order to create favorable conditions for the public and private sector to adopt **circular principles**. In order to provide concrete examples of how cities

can adopt a CE model and achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, REFLOW will create new Circular Economy business models (the Distributed Design Market model, On-Demand System, Corporate Hacking and the Corporate Pyramid) within six pilot cities (Amsterdam, Berlin, Milan, Paris, Vejle and Cluj- Napoca) and assess their social, environmental and economic impacts.

The project will make use of blockchain technologies in order to incentivize circular practices in local ecosystems and will further utilize data visualization tools in order to enable the continuous monitoring and optimization of “urban metabolic” processes and rapid interventions management. Networks of sensors, urban computing, and geo-localization will capture data ensuring accuracy, integrity and interoperability of relevant data infrastructures, while data visualization and standard templates will be available for effective communication, public consultation, and exchanges of experiences.

3.2. Milan’s pilot

REFLOW started in June 2019 and will end on 31st May 2022; the pilots’ activities started in autumn 2019⁶. The other Italian partners of REFLOW, in addition to the Municipality of Milan, are:

- Politecnico di Milano - Polifactory as a fab lab and Design Policy Lab;
- WeMake – fab lab;
- OpenDot – fab lab;

Municipal markets have been defined as “**places to co-produce circular solutions**” engaging citizens and companies. The pilot aims to support the city’s vision on circular food by providing sustainable solutions at the local market level. As such, the pilot will foster and test sustainable food logistics, develop market laboratories to disseminate circular practices, track the origin and quality of agricultural products and analyse the interrelations between rural and urban communities.

In a long-term view, the general objective is to develop a circular agri-food pilot project, connecting agricultural activities in peri-urban areas to municipal covered markets, developing different circular and technological solutions for sustainable food logistics

⁶ <https://reflowproject.eu/pilots/milan/>

and transportation activities, smart food transformation, distribution and conservation processes.

Testing this approach with selected pilot markets, the goal will be to extend the positive results to other municipal markets, following the notion of scalability. Five municipal markets have been identified for testing the Reflow project: Ferrara, Morsenchio, Ponte Lambro, Prealpi, and Ticinese.

In the short-term, REFLOW will contribute to:

- [Local Economy goal] disseminating and spreading circular practices in the agro-food field among the traders of the municipal covered markets, activating "market laboratories" managed by the three fab labs (Polifactory – OpenDot – WeMake);
- [Policy goal] enhance the municipal covered markets as community hubs for the neighborhoods in which they are territorially located;
- [Citizens awareness goal] involve citizens in circular agri-food chain issues and in the fight against food waste;
- [PPP] compel the business world to participate in the public and private partnership processes to enhance public spaces as drivers for the local economy in the peripheral areas of Milan.

The Municipality of Milan intends to enhance the great social and commercial heritage of the distribution structures that had been born in the 50s, and adapt them to **emergent consumption patterns** and lifestyles, through co-design labs with local public and private stakeholders, managed by Fab Labs with the goal of developing prototypical experiments in the local agri- food supply chain.

4. INNOVATIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ASSETS

The Milanese REFLOW pilot is strategically part of the **urban regeneration governance** designed by the city administration concerning municipal covered markets.

The administration has in fact decided to progressively alter the administrative and managerial framework of management of the 23 markets with a threefold objective in mind:

1. Increase management efficiency, decrease the bureaucratic burden and ensure a contemporary management model with respect for the new needs of citizenship;
2. Expand the range of functions found within the markets, from the mere trade of edible products to the possibility to sell cooked food; the objective pursued was to create hybrid functional forms that would also combine social, cultural and recreational functions with commercial functions;
3. Test a business model capable of relieving the administration from the burden of restructuring costs, and seek, within a public private partnership, an economically sustainable model that would transfer the renovation costs on to the new manager.

With those goals to be achieved, it is pretty clear that small and medium projects, like the ones mentioned above, can also play an important role in improving citizens' quality of life.

Unfortunately, it's also true that even if certain experiments dealing with the urban regeneration of small areas have already been implemented or undertaken by the City of Milan, the city or other local public authorities own numerous buildings, in both the town centre as well as in the suburbs, that are dilapidated or completely abandoned, thus leading to management problems (occupation/squatting, misuse, etc.) and often representing a barrier to the integration of local communities.

If so, a **new “formula”** for the management of municipal covered markets had to be identified and tested.

5. FINANCIALLY VIABLE OPTIONS AND MAIN CHALLENGES

In the framework of an initiative called “RICE,”⁷ where the European Investment Bank (EIB) provided multiregional assistance, the Municipality was able to perform a

⁷ <https://www.fi-compass.eu/mra/multi-region-assistance-mra>

feasibility study regarding the launch of an urban development fund which is useful for the financing of urban regeneration projects and to effectively develop **urban design governance**.

By taking into consideration the analysis of specific projects intended to assess the existence and characteristics of financial gaps and identify potential solutions, as well as on the basis of the priorities defined by the Municipality, the RICE project has been focused on the renewal of public buildings, such as the revitalisation of the municipal covered markets.

According to this feasibility study, a **Financial Instrument** (FI) supporting the different development strategies could be highly useful to facilitate the restructuring of the municipal covered markets, but it should also be highly flexible and be able to take into consideration the different needs that must be met and goals that must be achieved in terms of social impact as well.

It has been witnessed during the development of the study that the process of developing an FI as a city fund is not an easy task, as it requires specific know-how and adequate timing given that various stakeholders, such as administrative officers, political representatives, financial operators and technical operators are involved in the process. Furthermore, different decisions have to be made at the strategic city level regarding the specific sectors to be selected, the proposer's potential financial commitment, and advisor selection.

In the specific case of Milan, based on the strategy identified (Milan as a Smart City) and the urban regeneration goals selected, the market analysis conducted has demonstrated that there are various financial gaps. Projects that pursue social objectives can be financially viable (in terms of revenue generating capacity), but face difficulties in attracting finance from the market because they do not respond to market parameters (i.e. risk, return, pay back, etc.).

The market analysis also highlighted that there are two major types of **gaps**:

- Knowledge gap: beneficiaries, public administrations, industrial and financial operators very often do not have a complete vision of these projects, thus perceiving the project to be riskier than it is.
- Financial gap: the financial market is not yet ready to financially support projects that do not exactly meet standard parameters (innovation, duration, risk, return, guarantees, etc.).

Based on the analysis that has been carried out, two FIs have been identified to support the "border" projects in the Municipality of Milan for the selected sectors: a financial fund, which should support the long-term financing of projects (up to 25-30 years) and a guarantee fund which should cover the perceived risk by financial operators which is often higher than the actual risk.

Unfortunately, the redevelopment of the municipal covered markets, with the goal of a maximization of social functions and integration activities while denying the implementation of "speculative" projects, found little interest in investment among private financial operators due to the low yield and / or lengthy pay-back period. As such, the strategy had to be adapted.

6. SUCCESSES AND IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. The previous experience: Mercato Lorenteggio

The City of Milan had already implemented various minor regeneration projects in suburban areas of the city, among which include the historical Lorenteggio Municipal Covered Market which became a social integration centre, and the Cascina Nosedo farmhouse, which is being transformed into a place for innovation that will foster entrepreneurship and peri-urban agriculture.

In particular, Lorenteggio Market, a municipal covered market at the heart of the district of the same name, was the fulcrum and starting point of the regeneration process that has been based on culture and creativity, and which has inspired the city administration's policies in light of the results that have been achieved. The regeneration process has in fact transformed the market into **a hub for the local community**, producing significant social impacts.

In 2013, the traders already present in the market formed a consortium, which was awarded the first "pilot" public tender promoted by the Municipality.

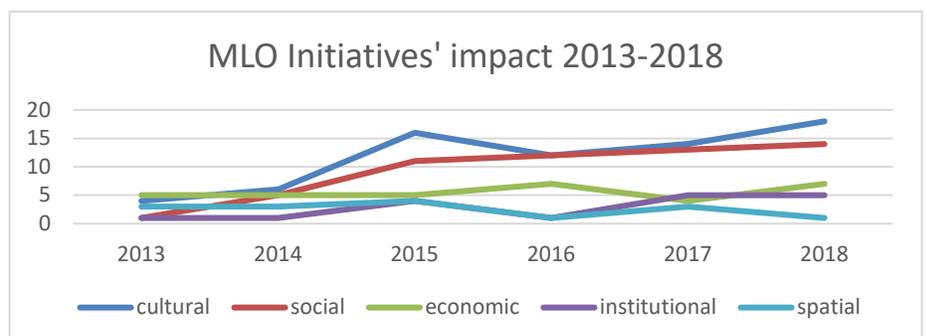
The purpose of the public tender, through a concession of use of the market, was the organization of a multifunctional structure which, in addition to carrying out the normal tasks of selling food products at retail, provided the sale of artisanal products and / or services, the production and processing of food products that were also to be eaten at the market and, finally, **aggregation / training activities**.

The essential elements of the winning application concerned:

1. Refurbishment process: the consortium leveraged its governance tools and innovation capacity and thereby produced a strong architectural project;
2. Relaunch of the Municipal Covered Market: identification of innovative strategies and services to attract new users and increase the degree of satisfaction of the current one; communication campaigns were planned.
3. Promotion: Cultural, aggregative and social cohesion activities aimed at configuring the municipal market as a central point for the Giambellino Lorenteggio district.

Studio G124 participated in the architectural project in which the architect Renzo Piano had been involved. The G124 managed to carry out a small architectural intervention regarding the back of the building, thus reconverting its internal functioning and prefiguring the role that the structure will have to play once enlarged. Thanks to a minor and short-term construction site, a portion of the wall that divided the building from a nearby park was demolished, thus opening a eliminating the previous separation and thus allowing the market to look out onto the green area. At the market's entrance, positioned in line with the internal corridor, a double door has been added which by itself has altered the hierarchy of the building's entrances. On the outside, at the new entrance, a rectangular platform was built for the use of the neighborhood associations and inhabitants.

This modest structure, designed to host the activities useful to reactivating the social life of the neighbourhood of Lorenteggio-Giambellino, also has a strong strategic value because, as part of the project's overall vision, it is located at the intersection between the new building that was be annexed to the commercial building and the path of services that connects the municipal market to the library and the "neighborhood house," The goal is that this architectural intervention, however small, can be a trigger for the entire urban mending process designed for the neighborhood.



Adapted by the author, from "MERCATO LORENTEGGIO: IL VALORE DI UN PROGETTO DI RIGENERAZIONE URBANA A BASE CULTURALE," N. Gelao 2017-2018.

The results of this process overall were extremely positive. Lorenteggio market was inaugurated in November 2015, redesigned and refurbished, in a great moment for the neighbourhood community moment:

- From 2013 to 2018, more than 90 initiatives were organized at the Lorenteggio Market (MLO), including individual events, ongoing activities, new services and awards obtained that led to around 2,000 people per day visiting or passing by the shops within the market.
- The cultural impact evidences growth until it reaches a peak in 2015, the year in which the funding for a call for ideas titled “Culturability” allowed for the articulation of a dense cultural offer in relation to city cultural circuits.
- The growing cultural impact referred to in 2017 and 2018 is differs from that of previous years, which leaves room for local skills and the sharing of intergenerational and intercultural knowledge and skills. The social impact leads to a growing trend thanks to the constant work of integration and dialogue with the different resident communities and the activation of neighbourhood services to improve quality of life.
- Spatial impact represents the highest point in 2015, which coincides with the large investment in reconfiguring the market as an attractive and pleasant place for the public and which is functional for traders. Subsequently, there were other less expensive structural interventions to underline the recognizability of MLO as a landmark.
- Since 2015, about 24 articles have been written about MLO and almost double the number of citations about it. Initially, the collaboration with Renzo Piano's G124 team brought him into the national spotlight and news.
- A total of 130 questionnaires were collected during the 2018 season’s events. The data confirms that the public of MLO is mainly comprised of 'young people' and 'adults and families.'⁸
- The turnover of retailers within the market has been extremely low.

In May 2020, a “Living Streets Lab” provided a golden opportunity to also test a tactical urban approach. The Living Lab was explicitly requested and funded by the market’s management and made use of a co-creation methodology, made possible even during the Covid emergency thanks to online tools and platforms, such as “Miro,” software for team collaboration. A tactical urbanism project has been developed wherein all of the furniture and furnishings are sponsored by the Lorenteggio Market, using vintage or previously used materials. Processes like painting using a waterproof varnish and smoothing OBS panels, ensure the outdoor location and uses of the furniture and furnishings. In accordance with the total renovation of the area, materials have been

⁸ <https://www.dynamoscopio.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/archivio-giambellino-Mercato-Lorenteggio-progetto-rigenerazione-urbana-a-base-culturale.pdf>

chosen for their high-tech properties for long-lasting sustainability. The completion will be conducted by the inhabitants, following a DIY modality.

Starting from MLO's previous experience, the city acted in two ways:

1. With the approval of the municipal council, it launched a process that excluded the municipal markets from the state property of the administration and therefore from the **unavailable assets** of the municipality.
2. Decided to launch a **public call**, based on an economic and financial plan, in order to entrust a concession of use of a first group of markets, looking for a private manager capable of covering the investments and restructuring costs, who would pay a fee to the administration in exchange for managing the public assets for a period of between fifteen and twenty years.

6.2. The economic and financial plan

Through an economic and financial plan, a **minimum annual fee** to be paid to the city administration was set. On the basis of the data relating to the volumes of the properties and the costs of investments, the assumptions made on the nature of the revenues, the management costs and extraordinary maintenance interventions, the duration of the concession and the operational assumptions, municipal officers proceeded to identify the effective concession fee for the Municipality. This fee had to be capable of guaranteeing the economic-financial balance and a positive profitability, suitable for a cooperative subject with social impact purposes (i.e. lower than a level of profitability considered adequate for "normal" market operators, for operations of a similar risk level). The operation was structured by assuming the selection of a **single concessionaire** for each market, who pays a fee to the Municipality and manages the spaces by "renting them" to market operators, obtaining revenue that will cover the concessionaire's costs and concession fee.



Operation's structure

To determine the value of the annual fee to be paid to the Municipality, the real estate value of the commercial properties of the Milan Chamber of Commerce were surveyed in reference to the micro zones in which the markets are located had been used, and were multiplied by a rate of return of 5% in order to obtain the values associated with rent. During the development of the scenarios for the economic and financial plan, it became clear that a concession fee equal to the market value does not guarantee an **economic-financial balance** or positive profitability, at least in lines with the hypothesis of maintaining rental income in line with market values.

Therefore, the possibility recognized by the Chamber of Commerce to reduce the market value by 30% to reflect the conservational state of the real estate property has been applied. The reduction thus obtained on the average price made it possible to comply with an important evaluation parameter in the case of concessions: the current value of the reductions in the market rent must be lower than the cost incurred by the concessionaire for the interventions carried out.

Further assumptions in the economic and financial plan have been made:

- **Duration of the concession** of 20 years,
- **Duration of the restructuring works** equal to 12 months,
- Financial needs covered by **debt** for 70% and **equity** for 30% (excluding scenarios 3 and 4 for each market),
- A 15-year **loan** for two markets and an 18-year loan for the third.

In all three markets, the trade-off between the high concession fee for the administration and the containment of the price increase per square meter for market operators was evident.

Starting from these hypotheses, various scenarios were examined. The definitive scenario, which was used to determine the fee, assumes that the **"average" market value** of the Milan Chamber of Commerce is reduced by an annual fee for the refurbishment works to ensure the economic-financial balance and a return considered in line with similar transactions. Under this scenario, the monthly cost per square meter tripled. As such, assuming the number of stands and market operators is stable, this implied an increase of about 50% in terms of costs per stand or per dealer.

6.3. The public call

The first public call concerned three markets that would together serve as test cases: one in the city centre, in a middle-class area of the city; another in an area undergoing a strong gentrification process that has taken shape in the last 10 years; and one final market in a peripheral and popular area of the city.

Valid and evaluable offers have been submitted for all three markets, which "reassured" the administration on the validity of the legal model and the economic and financial plan. Moreover, in the case of two of the three markets, a consortium was created between the traders who were already located in the market and who proceeded to create a **single legal entity** that could take over the management of the entire market.

In a third case, it was an external entity that submitted the candidacy, guaranteeing favourable conditions and the type of "pre-emption" for the present historical traders who are still active in the market. It was interesting to note that the offers received fully answered the requests of the administration, in particular not only regarding the renovation works but especially when it came to a varied offer of additional socio-cultural services. The Municipality had also requested particularly challenging environmental impact standards.



Municipal covered market in "Wagner" square

The market placed in the area with a strong gentrification process will be the first to be refurbished and finalized. In this market it will be possible not only to eat and buy food, but also to attend events. The investment for the refurbishment and restyling is estimated to be three million euros: renovations started in October 2019 and should be completed by December 2020.

The project consists of 900 square meters of refurbishment (600 indoor and 300 outdoor) with the intention of transforming the market into a modern and eco-friendly structure that will also host a restaurant space. All of the kitchens will be visible so as to allow customers to observe the preparation and cooking of the dishes. The renovation works will favour environmental aspects: it will be the first plastic-free market in Italy, including organic plates and cutlery, with a structure constructed out of eco-sustainable materials, with tiles and coverings made from recycled materials. Additionally, particular attention will be paid to the efficiency of the material flows and to the reduction of food waste. The market will also “live” on the internet with a dedicated website and social media.

The market located in the most popular area of the city is also being tested in the REFLOW project;⁹ it was particularly appreciated for the participation and involvement of the shop owners in the engagement activities and in the willingness to participate in the first preparatory surveys for the analysis of metabolic needs.

In particular, the Milan Pilot of the REFLOW project started mapping and analysing the streams of agri-food products in five municipal covered markets. The analysis contributes to co-creating a catalogue of possible circular solutions scalable for the 23 municipal markets in Milan. Co-design workshops and prototyping experiments will form the core of the activities of the Pilot and will be organised physically within the markets in spaces defined as “market laboratories.” The first pilot year has been used to select the markets to be used as test-beds and to conduct surveys among the shop owners in order to identify their needs in terms of the “3Rs” approach of reduce, reuse, recycle,¹⁰ The first co-creation workshop is planned for November 2020.

⁹ <http://www.consorziomorsenchio.it/consorziohorsenchio/>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waste_hierarchy

7. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

In recent years, the city of Milan has seen a growing number of commercial realities born with the declared intention of improving the surrounding neighbourhood. According to the vision of these entrepreneurs, commercial activity and social functions strictly go together. This is why they are often referred to as "hybrid companies." The so-called "proximity shops," in addition to the exchanges of goods and services, offer something more: a new way of interpreting proximity. The policies related to food and urban sustainability present in the described case study, as well as the policies supporting trade and those related to infrastructural works, have the ultimate aim of outlining scenarios for the qualitative recovery of public markets, as well as in terms of social innovation. From this point of view, working on a double track proved to be crucial: by investing, on the one hand, in **"hard power"** tools related to restructuring, economic sustainability and management efficiency; and on the other hand, in the expansion of functions, integrating socio-cultural functions, with an explicit intent of social inclusion, thereby enhancing a paradigm of sustainability that means not only waste reduction, but also transforming from a linear productive process to a circular one.

It is still too early to be able to describe in concrete terms the innovative services that will be validated during the REFLOW process and the technological and social innovations connected to it. However, it is important to understand how a goal of **urban design governance** also needs to be pursued through **"soft power"** tools, otherwise it remains a half-completed process.

In terms of **financial models and instruments** within the urban development domain, there are projects that can produce the cash flow necessary to repay and remunerate the sources of funds. However, those projects find it difficult to access the private financial market for a variety of reasons, including matching between the cash flow generated by the projects and the repayment schedule requested by the financial operator, the weakness of the industrial operators, and a lack of expertise in the specific project typology of financial operators.

To effectively overcome those gaps, a variety of financial instruments should be implemented. Tailoring one financial instrument to a specific problem also means ring-fencing the associated risks and identifying possible co-investors more easily.

In the case of Milan, specifically, the trigger necessary in order to legitimize the creation of an urban development fund was missing. Other cities that have been studied by the city administration, such as London or the Hague, have been able to rely on a "special weapon," which in the case of Milan was lacking: London and the

Hague had been able to constitute the initial capital base of the fund by allocating a budget from EU **structural funds**, but in Milan's case this was impossible because the city does not act as a managing authority. The Greater London Authority, for example, leveraged an initial ERDF budget to attract the private capital that made it possible to establish an urban development fund that has now evolved into a "fund of funds."

In any case, the concession of use for a fee that must be paid to the administration has been determined in consideration with **an economic and financial plan**, and has proven to be an effective alternative and with significantly lower transaction costs. Furthermore, the city of Milan plans to continue with the design and pursuit of an urban regeneration process for the remaining markets by replicating and scaling the described project and by consolidating this **governance model**. The activities that will take place by 2022 under the auspices of the REFLOW project will be implemented and monitored according to a certain strategy, and also in this case, according to scalability and replicability, with a focus on the economic, social and environmental impacts.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://reflowproject.eu/pilots/milan/>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Lucia Scopelliti, Head of Unit, Economic development, Municipality of Milan, Expert at UIA

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Promoting urban co-governance

Towards just and democratic
ecological and digital transition
in cities (IT)

Alessandro Antonelli
Elena De Nictolis
Christian Iaione

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. EXAMPLES FROM ITALIAN CITIES AND MORE.....	3
2. ZOOM-IN ON ITALIAN EXPERIENCES.....	8
2.1. Turin (Piedmont, Italy):.....	9
2.2. Naples (Campania, Italy):.....	13
2.3. Reggio Emilia (Emilia Romagna, Italy):	15
2.4. Rome (Lazio, Italy):	18
3. CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	20

INTRODUCTION

The present work aims at analyzing the examples of some Italian cities that have been experimenting with new legal tools that allow for implementation of innovative forms of urban partnership to promote sustainable urban development. Turin (Piedmont, Italy), Naples (Campania, Italy), Reggio Emilia (Emilia Romagna, Italy), and Rome (Lazio, Italy) have implemented urban laws and regulations experimenting with different degrees of intensity forms of co-governance of the urban commons (and with the use of legal tools, including public procurement, to promote civic entrepreneurship and social innovation to address pressing urban policy challenges including digital transition, urban poverty, energy efficiency, and inclusive urban development). The Co-Governance refers to the presence of a multi-stakeholder governance scheme whereby the community emerges as an actor and partners up with at least three different urban actors of the so-called Quintuple Helix model of Innovation. We define urban commons to mean tangible or intangible socially constructed resources, assets, services, and infrastructure in cities. These can be publicly or privately owned. Either way, urban commons can provide access to critical goods and services and therefore guarantee fundamental rights—housing, food, etc.—to urban residents and generate added value for the local community. Within these initiatives and the partnerships that are promoted, a pivotal role is played by the Universities and the Research Centers that often appear as fundamental actors of urban innovation.

1. EXAMPLES FROM ITALIAN CITIES AND MORE

Starting in 2011, Italian cities have been experimenting with new legal tools that allow for the implementation of innovative forms of urban partnership to promote sustainable urban development. This showed an emerging interest in the topic of the urban commons, representing a form of collective sharing, management, production and ownership of critical urban resources, services and infrastructures (e.g., spaces, buildings and other underused assets). Much of the literature in this area has focused on institutional approaches through which city governments can govern urban commons with city residents and various other social and economic stakeholders. This literature is inter- and trans-disciplinary and contains many

different intellectual or conceptual strands. Academic literature on the urban commons indeed tends to be normative, either heavily theoretical or explicitly ideological. Many scholars writing about the urban commons are devoted to understanding the processes that result in collective action, or cooperation, in the governance of shared urban resources by NGOs or unorganized city residents¹. Some scholars define the commons not merely as shared resources but also as a process of social cooperation that reconfigures the relationship between city residents and city administrations². Within the literature on institutional approaches to the urban commons, Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione have argued that urban commons are goods—squares, parks, dismissed buildings, vacant lots, roads - that are part of the collective resources of cities and require a more open governance regime than currently exists in most cities³. Others conceive of the commons as an institutional arrangement defined by three different elements:⁴ a resource critical for the existence, survival or wellbeing, of a community, a collective governance resource management scheme⁵, and the active role of users in this collective governance scheme.

Apart from notable exceptions such as the work of Harini Nagendra and Elinor Ostrom and that of Amanda Huron, the scholarship on the urban commons is almost completely conceptual, lacking an empirical focus and failing to place under empirical investigation the many applied experiments conducted to date by policymakers. The scholarship on the urban commons also lacks a focus on the role of the commons to achieve stronger urban economies and more inclusive urban prosperity. An economic democracy perspective, as embraced here, advocates for expanding the access to power in economic institutions such as firms and corporations to employees through the diffusion of workers-owned enterprises or self-governed enterprises⁶, within an economic system based on solidarity and reciprocity⁷. An urban economic democracy approach implies a more intense or direct role for city inhabitants in the production and redistribution of the value produced by a vibrant and successful city economy. Urban policies that are directed

*Article note: This Article is the result of a collaborative work, although Introduction, Parts 1, 2, and the Conclusion are to be attributed to Christian Iaione; Parts 3 and 4 are to be attributed to Elena De Nicolis.

¹ Melissa Garcia Lamarca, "Insurgent Acts of Being-In-Common and Housing in Spain: Making Urban Commons?" In *Urban Commons Moving Beyond State and Market* 165 edited by Mary Dellenbaugh et al., Basel: Birkhäuser, 2015. See Also Alexandros Kioupiolis, *The Common and The Political. Commons, Communities and Counter-Hegemonic Politics for The Common Good: Rethinking Social Change* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).

² Christian Borch & Martin Kornberger, *Urban Commons: Rethinking the City* 169 (New York: Routledge, 2015).

³ Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione, "The City as a Commons", *Yale Law and Policy Review* (2016) 34.281.6

⁴ Tine De Moor, "Avoiding Tragedies: A Flemish Common and its Commoners under the Pressure of Social and Economic Change during the Eighteen Century", *Economic History Review*, (62) (2009).

⁵ Brett Frischmann et al, *Governing Knowledge Commons*, (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

⁶ Robert Dahl, *A Preface to Economic Democracy*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985); Tom Malleon, *After Occupy_ Economic democracy for the 21st Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 23.

⁷ Karl Polanyi, *The great transformation*, (Boston: Beacon press, 2010).

towards achieving such an economic democracy approach should aspire to uplift not just individuals, but entire urban communities, as argued by Richard Schragger⁸, and focus on stimulating the creation of community-based development institutions and enterprises that are interdependent and networked at the urban level⁹. As scholars who have studied the preservation of urban lakes in Bangalore¹⁰ and the housing commons in Washington DC¹¹ have shown, the city and the residents of cities can work together. When they do, they generate better economic and social outcomes for local communities.

We define urban commons to mean tangible or intangible socially constructed¹² resources, assets, services, and infrastructure in cities. These can be publicly or privately owned. Either way, urban commons can provide access to critical goods and services and therefore guarantee fundamental rights—housing, food, etc.—to urban residents and generate added value for the local community. We argue that the governance of urban commons can be enabled by city policies that stimulate collaboration and cooperation between several urban actors in order to enable or improve the enjoyment of benefits that flow from these efforts for a wider range of city inhabitants. However, we argue that city enabled solutions are valuable only when they generate public-community partnerships¹³ that recognize community stewardship rights (*i.e.* rights of use, co-management, co-production, co-ownership)¹⁴ and enable their economic self-sustainability. We define these collaborative and cooperative schemes as forms of “co-governance”¹⁵ of the urban commons.

The economic power of cities on the one hand and the impact of global economic phenomena on cities on the other are great concerns of urban analysis. Urbanization is an emerging trend, and it is both a potentiality and a factor of crisis. Urbanization

⁸ Richard C. Schragger, “The Political Economy of City Power”, *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 44, 91 (2017).

⁹ David Imbroscio, “Urban Policy as Meritocracy: A Critique”, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 38 79 (2015).

¹⁰ Harini Nagendra and Elinor Ostrom, “Applying the Social-Ecological System Framework to the Diagnosis of Urban Lake Commons in Bangalore, India”, *Ecology and Society*, 19 (2) 67 (2014).

¹¹ Amanda Huron “Conclusion: Keep Practicing.” In *Carving Out the Commons: Tenant Organizing and Housing Cooperatives in Washington, D.C.*, Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2018, 166.

¹² Michael J. Madison, Brett M. Frischmann and Katherine J. Strandburg, “Constructing Commons in the cultural

environment”, *Cornell Law Review* 95:657 (2010); Massimo De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia: On the Commons and the Transformation to Postcapitalism*, (London: Zed Books, 2017).

¹³ Christian Iaione, “Governing the Urban Commons”, *Italian Journal of Public Law*, 7, 1, (2015) 170; Christian Iaione and Elena De Nictolis, “The Role of law in relation to the New Urban Agenda and the European Urban Agenda: a multi-stakeholder perspective”, in *Law and the New Urban Agenda: A Comparative Perspective*, edited by Nestor Davidson and Geeta Tewari New York: Routledge, 2020.

¹⁴ Dan Wu and Sheila R. Foster, “From Smart Cities to Co-Cities: Emerging Legal and Policy Responses to Urban Vacancy”, *Fordham Urban Law Journal*, 47 909 (2020).

¹⁵ Jan Kooiman, *Governing as governance*, London: Sage, 2003; Christian Iaione and Paola Cannavò, “The collaborative and polycentric governance of the urban and local commons”, *Urban pamphleeter*, 5 (2015); Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione, “The City as a Commons”, *Yale Law and Policy Review* (2016) 34.281.6; Christian Iaione, “The Right to the Co-City”, *The Italian Journal of Public Law*, 15, 1, 80 (2017); Christian Iaione, Elena De Nictolis, Anna Berti Suman, “The Internet of Humans (IoH): Human Rights and Co-Governance to Achieve Tech Justice in the City” *Law and Ethics of Human Rights*, 2 (2019).

has helped populations escape poverty through increased productivity, employment opportunities, and large-scale investment in infrastructure and services. The United Nations (U.N.) estimates that 54% of the global population lives in cities¹⁶. Cities' roles are increasing from many standpoints. One of the main factors of cities' growth is economic. Cities are engines of both production and consumption of goods and services, and are a major source of economic production and growth. Eighty percent of global gross domestic product (GDP) is currently accounted for by cities, and their contribution to national income is sometimes greater than their share of the national population¹⁷. This might result in cities rivalling nation-states in power and influence¹⁸. By 2030, people living in large cities will account for as much as 81% of global consumption. By the same date, global urban consumption is expected to grow by \$23 trillion with 3.6% compound annual growth rate¹⁹. This growth in consumption will be likely concentrated in thirty-two cities²⁰. Public law scholars like Jean Bernard Auby²¹ highlighted that the renaissance of cities and the growing importance of cities in comparison to power of nation states²² is an important historical phenomenon. Political scientist Benjamin Barber has commented that one of the main differences between local and national politics lies in the pragmatic orientation of the governance approach that mayors adopt in order to solve problems of everyday urban life, often lacking at the national level²³. Moreover, as Porras²⁴ outlined, prominent legal scholars, proponents of localism, such as Frug, Blank and Barron, have situated cities and associations of cities as a new influential actor in the international policy making arena. Cities affirmed their status as sites of self-governing communities, an alternative to democratization beyond the state²⁵.

¹⁶ UN-Habitat, *Urbanization and Development: Emerging Issues*. World Cities Report 2016 iii (2016).

¹⁷ *Id.* at 31.

¹⁸ Robert Muggah & Benjamin Barber, *Why Cities Rule the World*, IDEAS.TED.COM (May 31, 2016), <https://ideas.ted.com/why-cities-rule-the-world/>.

¹⁹ MCKINSEY GLOBAL INST., *URBAN WORLD: THE GLOBAL CONSUMERS TO WATCH 4* (2016).

²⁰ Those thirty-two cities are distributed in the following way: twelve in the China region (Beijing, Chengdu, Chongqing, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, Nanjing, Shanghai, Shenyang, Shenzhen, Tianjin, and Wuhan); eleven in the United States (Atlanta, Georgia; Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Houston, Texas; Los Angeles,

California; Miami, Florida; New York, New York; Phoenix, Arizona; San Francisco, California; and Washington, DC); two each in Northeast Asia (Osaka and Tokyo, both in Japan), Latin America (Mexico City, Mexico, and São Paulo, Brazil), and South Asia (Delhi and Mumbai, both in India); and one city each in Western Europe (London in the United Kingdom), the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (Istanbul, Turkey), and Southeast Asia (Jakarta, Indonesia). MCKINSEY GLOBAL INST., *URBAN WORLD: THE GLOBAL CONSUMER TO WATCH 14* (2016).

²¹ 6 J.B. Auby, *The Role of law in the legal status and powers of cities*, 2 IJPL 302, 305 (2013).

²² Khanna has stated that we are moving into an era where cities will matter more than states P. Khanna, *Connectography: Mapping the future of globalization* (2016).

²³ B. Barber, *If Mayors Ruled The World* (2013).

²⁴ I.M. Porras, *The city and international law: in pursuit of sustainable development*, 36 Fordham Urb. L. J 537-538 (2009).

²⁵ I.M. Porras, *The city and international law: in pursuit of sustainable development*, *cit.* at 9, 537-538.

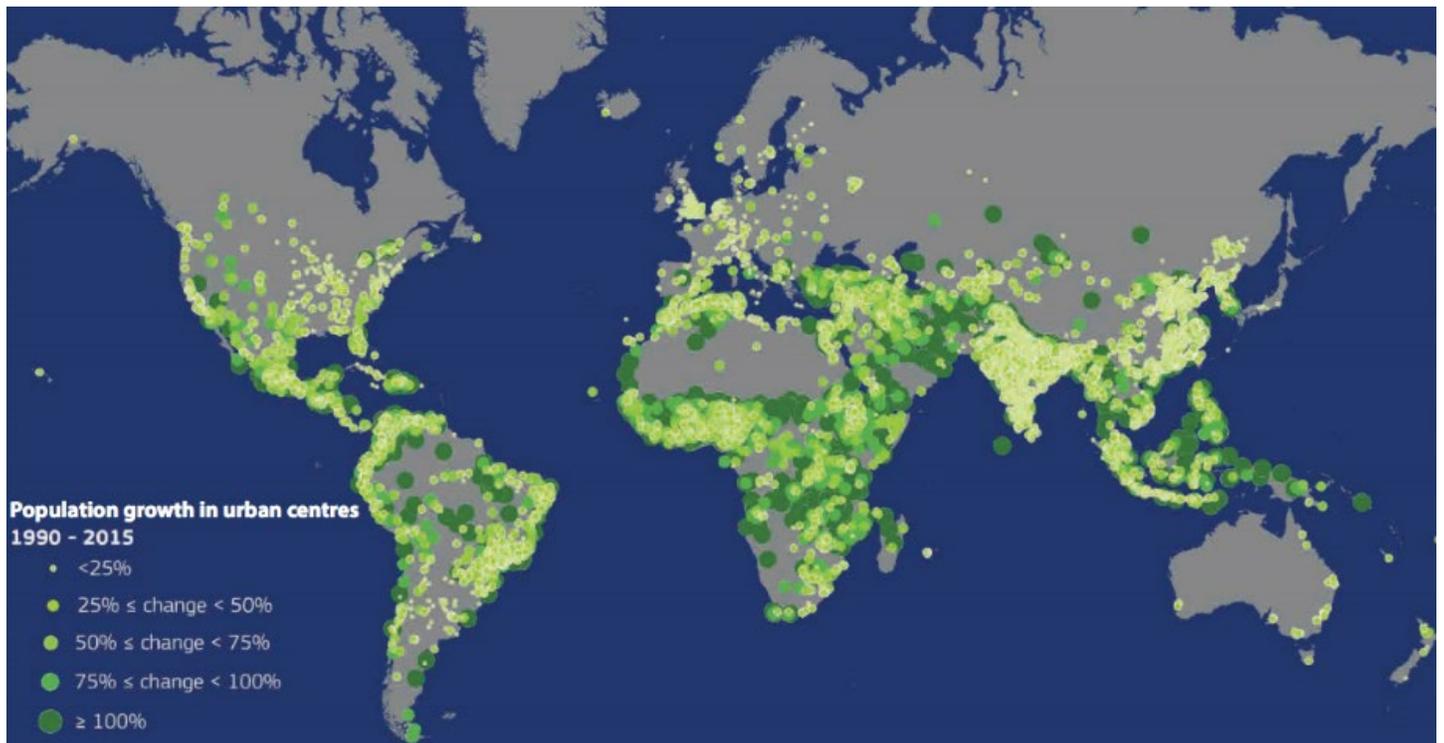


FIGURE 1: Population growth change in city urban centres between 1990 and 2015. Credits: JRC | Florczyk et al., 2019, <https://ghsl.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ucdb2018Overview.php>

The vision of the city enshrined in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) is that of a sustainable urban development that aims at ending poverty and achieving an inclusive urban prosperity²⁶, similar to the vision expressed by the U.N.'s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The NUA is closely related to the U.N.'s 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), although the connections between the two global agendas are only informal²⁷. This vision is expressed with a right to the city approach, when the NUA establishes that:

We share a vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all. We note the efforts of some national and

²⁶ G.A. Res 71/256, annex, New Urban Agenda (Dec. 23, 2016) [hereinafter New Urban Agenda].

²⁷ Sandra C. Valencia, et al., Adapting the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda to the City Level: Initial Reflections from a Comparative Research Project, 11 INT'L J. URB. SUSTAINABLE DEV. 4, 4–23 (2019).

local governments to enshrine this vision, referred to as ‘right to the city’, in their legislation, political declarations and charters²⁸.

The NUA brings opportunities and challenges for urban policy and practice in light of the implementation of SDG 11, “Cities and Communities”²⁹. The city model designed by the NUA is close to the urban model designed by the scholarship on the sustainable city. A key emerging feature related to the increasing relevance of cities at the global level is their capacity to foster multi-stakeholder urban governance or “urban co-governance” approaches to address complex urban challenges. This is reflected both in literature on urban co-governance and in the NUA. We advance the hypothesis that the right to the city approach, endorsed by the NUA through its sustainable urban development vision, can be locally implemented not just by including references to the “right to the city” in legislation³⁰ but also through urban co-governance. This entails the adoption of a multi-stakeholder approach stressing the role of public actors, private actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and urban citizens that the NUA foresees in some of its provisions. We will investigate how this approach can be implemented through the analysis of concrete experimentations carried out by Italian cities, which foresee a co-governance approach to realize a sustainable and inclusive urban development and support the creation of urban innovation partnerships that are multi-stakeholder (public-community and public-private community partnerships).

2. ZOOM-IN ON ITALIAN EXPERIENCES

Many EU cities have implemented urban laws and regulations experimenting with different forms of co-governance of the urban commons in varying degrees of intensity. The case of Italian cities gained prominence due to early and bold experimentations, chiefly the case of Bologna and its “Regulation for the care and regeneration of the Urban Commons”. Italy presents several cases studies that are particularly innovative, and some of them even inspired other European cities, in some cases in a sort of regulatory wave or regulatory race towards the urban commons. This results in a comprehensive and critical analysis allowing mutual

²⁸ New Urban Agenda, supra note 6, 11.

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/ (last visited Oct. 15, 2017).

²⁹ See Goal 11: Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable, U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEV. GOALS,

³⁰ New Urban Agenda, supra note 6, 11.

learning among cities, and a range of legal tools are emerging in this scenario at the global level.

For example, the Italian Code of Public Contracts approved in 2016 allows for administrative barter or social partnerships, with interventions pursuant to the principle of horizontal subsidiarity. Bologna pioneered model regulations for the co-governance of the urban commons, which is being replicated by many other Italian cities³¹. Naples has recognized a right to civic and collective use of the urban commons, while the city of Reggio Emilia issued a regulation for urban labs and neighborhood agreements. Milan has implemented a model based on concession of city-owned buildings for social use³².

Those cities, and many other European cities, are addressing this policy theme under the same normative framework and are experimenting with the use of legal tools, including public procurement, to promote civic entrepreneurship and social innovation to address pressing urban policy challenges including digital transition, urban poverty, energy efficiency, and inclusive urban development. In some of these cases, urban laws experimenting with innovative governance of urban commons, services, and infrastructure align with the NUA's principles, and their goals are supported by EU urban programs specifically designed by the EC to support urban innovation, namely the UIA and URBACT. Initiatives such as the UIA configure a body of law of urban communities at EU level, envisioning the legal challenges and possible solutions emerging from practices produced in cities during the current phase of change and adaptation.

2.1. Turin (Piedmont, Italy):

A regulation for governing the urban commons and an UIA project to empower urban communities to carry out sustainable governance of urban assets and services.

The Co-City Turin project³³ started with the approval of an adapted version of the Bologna Regulation for the urban commons, supported by the EU as a UIA project on public procurement innovation for urban renewal. The Co-City project initiated a discussion among legal scholars that raised crucial reflections with regard to the

³¹ Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, *The City as a Commons*, 34 *YALE L. & POL'Y REV.* 281 (2016)

³² The deliberation was approved in 2012. Milan assigned buildings to NGOs through a public call followed by the presentation of proposals by city inhabitants. The call evolved and currently stresses the role of the economic plan (which

must highlight the projects' sustainability as a key factor to be taken into consideration for the evaluation). See Aree Tematiche, COMUNE DI MILANO, www.comune.milano.it/aree-tematiche/spazi-per-attivita-ed-eventi/spazi-assegnati (last visited Feb. 16, 2021).

³³ Co-City – The Collaborative Management of Urban Commons to Counteract Poverty and Socio-spatial Polarization, URB. INNOVATIVE ACTIONS PROJECT, www.uiainitiative.eu/en/uiia-cities/turin (last visited Oct. 20, 2019).

legal nature of the pacts of collaboration within Italian legal frameworks, but also EU law.

The main distinction that emerged is between two approaches. The first one envisions the pacts of collaboration as a form of administrative action and therefore the public administration's power. According to this approach, opinions ranged over time from the qualification of the pact as an administrative agreement pursuant to Article 11 of Italian Administrative Procedure Act (approved through Law No. 241/1990)³⁴ on administrative procedure. A different position expressed during the meeting was to construe the pact of collaboration as a form of incentive under Article 12 of the Italian Administrative Procedure Act. A second interpretative option reads this legal innovation pursuant to the principles regulating public-private partnerships (PPP), or more generally the law on public contracts and therefore public procurement. An interesting stance under this approach would be that the pacts of collaboration for the urban commons should be reconceived as an implementation of a "social partnership" as a form of public-community partnership³⁵. Article 190 foresees two possible ways for implementing a social partnership, one where the city can issue a public procurement procedure dedicated to projects designed by citizens and projects initiated by city inhabitants. A second approach within this stance is that the legislation on social services and more recently the new "Code on the Third Sector," which regulates not-for-profit activities, might be relevant as well³⁶.

According to different positions, which emerged during a debate on the Co-City project held at the National Association of Italian Cities, the pacts of collaboration should not be conceived as a form of administrative action and therefore consensual exercise of authoritative activity³⁷. The public-private partnership or public contract legislation might instead be useful, but it should be reconciled with the true nature of this activity. It is an unprecedented form of institutional and public governance innovation, which is expressed through a non-authoritative activity of the city government. It sometimes might imply the need to deal with public procurement rules, but its legal nature should be further investigated. Its morphology is clear

³⁴ For the text of Law No. 241/1990 in Italian, see Nuove norme in materia di procedimento amministrativo e di diritto di accesso ai documenti amministrativi, NORMATTIVA, <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1990-08-07;241:vig>. For the bibliography, see, Vera Parisio, The Italian Administrative Procedure Act and Public Authorities' Silence, 36 HAMLIN L. REV.1 (2013). For an analysis of the administrative procedure act, see Aldo Sandulli, The Italian Administrative Procedure Act: Back to the Future, ITALIAN J. PUB. L. (2010); see also Raffaele Bifulco, The Constitutional Importance of Law 241/1990, 2 ITALIAN J. PUB. L. 359 (2010).

³⁵ The social partnership in the Italian legal framework is disciplined by Article 190 of the Italian Code of Public Contracts. See Italian Public Contract Code, AUTORITÀ NAZIONALE ANTICORRUZIONE at 217, [www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/MenuServizio/English%20section/ITALIAN_PUBLIC_CONTRACT_CODE%2015%20giugno%202018_sito%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.anticorruzione.it/portal/rest/jcr/repository/collaboration/Digital%20Assets/anacdocs/MenuServizio/English%20section/ITALIAN_PUBLIC_CONTRACT_CODE%2015%20giugno%202018_sito%20(2).pdf).

³⁶ Italian administrative law scholar Paolo Michiara sustained the position that it would be possible to frame the pacts using the several legal provisions disciplining the not-for-profit sector existing in the normative framework. Paolo Michiara, I patti di collaborazione e il regolamento per la cura e la rigenerazione dei beni comuni urbani. L'esperienza del Comune di Bologna, AEDON, May–Aug. 2016, at 14.

³⁷ Christian Iaione, The Co-City Journal n. 2, URB. INNOVATIVE ACTIONS PROJECT, www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/turin (last visited Feb. 15, 2021).

though: it consists of enabling the collective action and active citizenship of city inhabitants as a new way to govern urban assets, services, and infrastructure³⁸. The construction of non-authoritative (horizontal, collaborative, cooperative) relationships between the government and city inhabitants requires changes in the action of both public and social actors, as well as the private sector. The public administration must turn itself into a platform³⁹, acting as a facilitator that is willing to put in place the connection between different actors and resources. The civic actors – in Turin’s case, the “urban commoners” – are required to adopt a more political and entrepreneurial approach. This would imply that they are ready to manage a certain level of risk and invest time, thus behaving according to a model inspired by the idea of the “civic entrepreneur”. In fact, the first solution would not be consistent with the idea of a city administration’s activity as non-authoritative, as the regulation itself also declares that the collaboration between citizens and the public administration is realized through the adoption of administrative acts of a non-authoritative nature. An option could be to adopt a double framework, in which the sharing of governmental powers through public policy co-design precedes the formation of a public-public partnership⁴⁰ pursuant to the administrative procedure law or pursuant to the public contracts/procurement legislation and in general the EU legislation on the forms of cooperation between public authorities. Actually, city inhabitants sharing the right to co-decide policy and perform some public administrative work places those in a position that is substantially equal to that of traditional governmental administrative units. This would be the only approach that would truly recognize local communities as sovereign, social semi- public authorities (the so-called State-Community) co-governing the city with the State apparatus. The phenomena tackled by the Turin Co-City project, that of collective action for urban commons, is not only a prerogative of the city of Turin or other Italian cities, but it is happening in many cities in the EU and globally. One of the main contributions of the Co-City project could be precisely

³⁸ Christian Iaione, *The Tragedy of Urban Roads: Saving Cities from Choking, Calling on Citizens to Combat Climate Change*, 37 *FORDHAM URB. L.J.* 889 (2010); CHRISTIAN IAIONE, *CITY AS A COMMONS* (2012); Foster & Iaione, *supra* note 21; Christian Iaione & Elena De Nictolis, *Urban Pooling*, 44 *FORDHAM URB. L.J.* 665 (2017); Sheila Foster & Christian Iaione, *Ostrom in the city. Design Principles and Practices for the Urban Commons*, in *ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF THE STUDY OF THE COMMONS* (2019).

³⁹ As opposed to government techniques, governance strategies are characterized by equality, horizontality, and openness towards territorial communities, civil society, and the private sector, and are based on collaborations among various actors (institutional, social, knowledge, and entrepreneurial) to create partnerships dedicated to the shared realization of aims

of general interest. The strategy to which the partnership instrument responds is precisely that of abandoning the logic of the opposition between public and private interest, and between state interests and local interests, to create a network of alliances around public choice; in a word, to apply the principles and governance techniques on the issue of the urban commons addressing urban inequality. MARIA ROSARIA FERRARESE, *LA GOVERNANCE TRAPOLITICA E DIRITTO* 49 (2010). See also Christian Iaione, *La localizzazione delle infrastrutture localmente indesiderate: da soluzioni di government a soluzioni di governance*, *PER GOVERNARE INSIEME: IL FEDERALISMO COME METODO* 203 (2011); Christian Iaione, *La collaborazione civica per l'amministrazione, la governance e l'economia dei beni comuni*, *L'ETÀ DELLA CONDIVISIONE* 78 (2015)

⁴⁰ In a series of scholarly articles, one of the authors of this paper argued for the need to create public-civic or public-community partnerships as a policy and legal tool to ground cooperation between public administrators and social innovators through co-design processes to realize projects of general interest. See Christian Iaione, *Città e beni comuni*, in *L'ITALIA DEI BENI COMUNI* 127 (2012); Christian Iaione, *La città come un bene comune*, *AEDON* 2013, at 31; Christian Iaione, *Governing the Urban Commons*, 7 *ITALIAN J. PUB. L.* 170, 190 (2015); See also Maria Vit Ferroni, *Le forme di collaborazione per la rigenerazione di beni e spazi urbani*, *NOMOS* 2017, at 9.

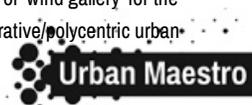
that of building a network of cities that are facing the same challenges through similar policy tools, thus promoting mutual exchange.

This section highlights that, through an empirical and normative observation of urban public policies in cities, we observe a dramatic increase in policy paths and tools to enable legal and administrative innovation for co-governance of urban resources and infrastructures. The above-described project represents the application of the Co-City methodological protocol to the City of Turin. The protocol is the necessary step to create the most favorable environment for innovation through urban commoning, by adopting the design principles of sharing, collaboration, and polycentrism. The key is to transform the entire city, or some parts of it, into a laboratory⁴¹ by creating the proper legal and political ecosystem for the installation of shared, collaborative, polycentric urban governance schemes⁴². The protocol was developed by LabGov within the framework of the Co-Cities project⁴³. The project is designed to test, evaluate, and refine the Co-City methodology through a scientific, multi-year project focused on collecting data on innovative public policies and local projects concerned with shared urban resources from over than 100 cities around the world; it investigates those new forms of collaborative city-making that are leading urban areas towards new forms of participatory urban governance, inclusive economic growth and social innovation. It is rooted on the conceptual pillars of the urban commons, and it comprehends a protocol, a methodology and five design principles that are in the process of being tested in selected European and American cities⁴⁴.

The Collaboration Pacts produced in Turin were analyzed (and their impacts evaluated) through the theoretical lenses of the Co-Cities project (Expert Analysis for the UIA Urban Innovative Actions Initiative⁴⁵). The Turin Co-City project is a unique policy experiment for regulating urban regeneration through collaborative processes because it faces the challenges posed by this policy area from the public procurement standpoint. The path chosen by other cities deals with the issue by granting civic use, or the exclusive concession of use, of city-owned buildings, or turning city administration into a platform enabling collective action for the urban

⁴¹ The idea is that the urban level is the best testing ground for democratic experimentalism. Democratic experimentalism, and the kind of innovations we propose, help to overcome political apathy, reduce the lack of legitimacy, increase political satisfaction and lead to more effective policies. See, e.g., Brigitte Geissel, *Improving the Quality of Democracy at the Local Level: German Experiences* (May 23-24, 2008), http://www.provincia.tn.it/binary/pat/link_home/geissel_Trento_08_final.1211796325.pdf (presented at "Quality of Democracy, Participation and Governance: The Local Perspective" conference at Trento, Italy).

⁴² The protocol works as a sort of 'wind gallery' for the experimentation of the collaborative/polycentric urban



governance scheme. The idea of the 'wind gallery' is inspired by the 'wind tunnel,' the innovative solution introduced by the Wright brothers that allowed them to successfully perform the first controlled flight at the beginning of the twentieth century. See 1901 Wind Tunnel, NAT'L AERONAUTICS & SPACE ADMIN., <http://wright.nasa.gov/airplane/tunnel.html> (last visited June 4, 2016).

⁴³ LabGov released an Open Book, the Co-Cities Report that is available at the following link [HYPERLINK "http://labgov.city/co-city-protocol/the-co-cities-open-book/"](http://labgov.city/co-city-protocol/the-co-cities-open-book/)

⁴⁴ The project is a joint effort of Rome-based LabGov (Luiss University) and Washington DC-based LabGov (LabGov Georgetown at the Georgetown University). See <http://labgov.city/> and https://labgov.georgetown.edu/co-cities_project/

⁴⁵ available at <https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/turin>

commons by aggregating civic and private resources in the city toward the goal of regenerating and co-managing urban public spaces and buildings.

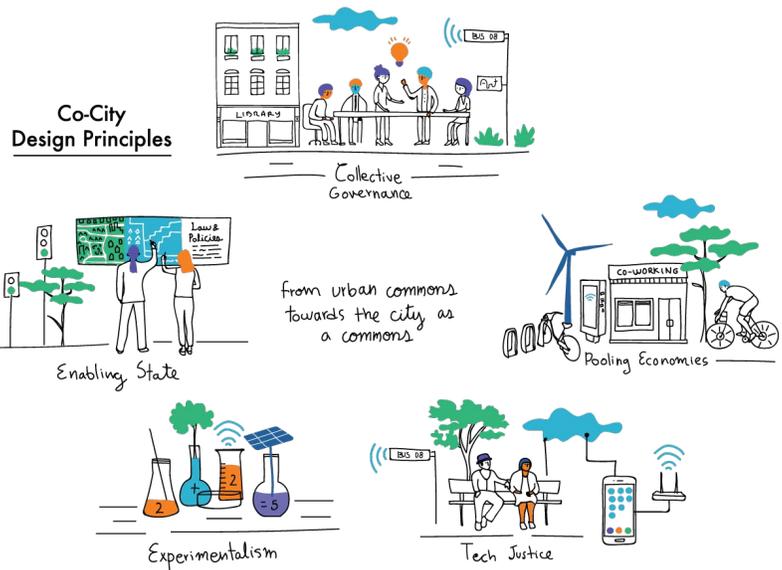


FIGURE 2: The Institutional Design Principles of the Co-Cities project. Credits: LabGov website <http://labgov.city/>

2.2. Naples (Campania, Italy):

Civic uses to regulate public-community governance of city-owned buildings and the URBACT Civic eState transfer network

The experience of Naples regarding urban civic uses is also of key relevance. Naples enabled autonomous civic actions to regenerate city-owned buildings and turn them into platforms for cultural and creative expression, self-organized and self-managed by NGOs and informal groups of citizens.

As anticipated, many experiments in this direction are taking place through innovative urban laws promoted in Italy, as well as other European cities. In some cases, the exemplary case studies of urban co-governance trigger a process of policy learning and mobility⁴⁶, supported by EU programs specifically designed for this, such as the URBACT program.

⁴⁶ Claire Dunlop, Policy Learning and Policy Failure: Definitions, Dimensions and Intersections, 45 POL'Y & POL. 1, 3–18 (2017).

The URBACT transfer network “Civic eState” is made up of Naples, with its urban civic uses policy; Barcelona, which is investing huge efforts in enforcement of the right to housing, autonomous local energy production, and commons-based governance of urban assets and infrastructures⁴⁷; Ghent, which promotes an overall plan to implement urban commons in the city, a “Commons Transition plan”; Amsterdam, which is devoting effort to implement a collaborative digital economy; Gdansk, which is willing to create a co-governance model for a city-owned building, a former college, based on a partnership among the city, NGOs, and city residents to co-create neighborhood services; Presov and Iasi, which need to improve the city residents’ awareness and the institutional capacity⁴⁸ of the cities regarding co-governance⁴⁹. The goal of the network is to extract the legal design principles of urban co-governance from the best practice of Naples’ civic use, provide the adaptation necessary to transfer them into different urban contexts and different policy domains, and develop a sustainability mechanism that sees an important role of finance and thus build an experimental civic heritage policy.

These projects teach that horizontal relationships between city administration and inhabitants require change in the actions of the actors involved⁵⁰. The switch toward a “platform state” and a form of civic entrepreneurship allows for the creation of innovative governance schemes that consist of “enabling the collective action and active citizenship of city inhabitants as a new way to govern, not just manage urban assets, services, infrastructure”⁵¹. It is therefore important to understand the connections that exist among different urban actors and analyze the role that new institutional mechanisms have in bringing them together to foster innovation. Among the instruments forged by the Civic eState Network, we can mention the Open Call for proposals that was replicated by the City of Ghent, Gdansk, and the City of Presov. In Presov, this call was the first creative design competition for the general public, aiming to re-imagine the “City Oasis”, a green area near the city center left to abandon.

⁴⁷ Ugo Mattei & Alessandra Quarta, Right to the City or Urban Commoning: Thoughts on the Generative Transformation of Property Law, 1 ITALIAN L.J. 303, 326 (2015).

⁴⁸ Xun Wu, et al., Policy Capacity: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Policy Competences and Capabilities, 34 POL’Y & SOC’Y 165 (2015)

⁴⁹ Christian Iaione, Pooling Urban Commons: The Civic eState, URBACT (July 16 2019), <https://urbact.eu/urban-commons-civic-estate>.

⁵⁰ Iaione, supra note 38.

⁵¹ Christian Iaione, The Platform State, in CO-CITIES OPEN BOOK (2018). Christian Iaione, The Platform State, in Co-Cities Open Book, <http://commoning.city/the-co-cities-open-book/> (last visited Feb. 14, 2021).

2.3. Reggio Emilia (Emilia Romagna, Italy):

A policy framework enabling Urban labs, Collaboratories, and a City Science Office acting an innovation procurement broker empowering co-governance of urban infrastructures. The example of the Coviolo Community wi-fi.

The city of Reggio Emilia put in place a policy strategy aimed at developing an inclusive, collaborative, creative city by relying on the enabling features of digital tools and infrastructures, coupled with urban renewal processes, cultural heritage preservation, and improvement of urban services. This approach is based on the promotion of co-creation and, ultimately, social-digital innovation. The city has put in place a wide variety of urban experimentations, both in the historical center and in the outskirts. Through the renovation of historical building complexes such as the “Chiostrì di San Pietro” (Saint Peter Cloister), the local community has co-designed an open laboratory that will serve as a social innovation hub, a center for dialogue and creation, where technological culture and open access to digital tools will facilitate knowledge production, sharing, and innovation. The project was carried out within an urban policy framework composed by policies such as the Regulation for Citizenship Agreements and the Reggio Emilia Collaboratory⁵², aimed at promoting civic collaboration and public-community partnerships for the co-governance of urban resources, services, and infrastructures.

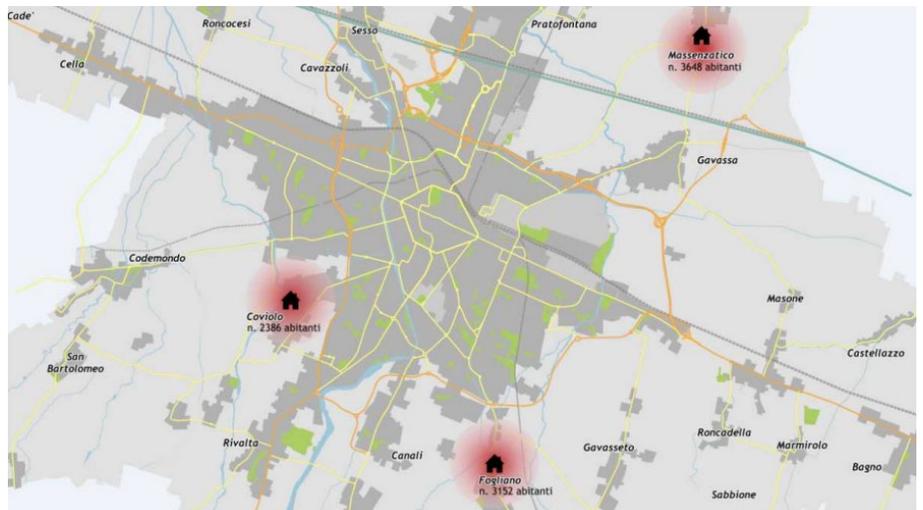


FIGURE 3: Social centers in the City of Reggio Emilia act as wireless connection' brokers and providers. Credits: Istitutional website of the City of Reggio Emilia
<https://www.comune.re.it/retecivica/urp/retecivi.nsf/PESDocumentID/D8CF7E0E9FFE9A32C12580060030E13D?opendocument>

⁵² The Reggio Emilia Collaboratory is a process promoted by the municipality of Reggio Emilia in collaboration with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and with the

scientific, strategic, and organizational support of LabGov. city and the social enterprise Kilowatt. Collaboratorio Reggio, COLLABORATORE REGGIO, <https://co-reggioemilia.commoning.city/> (last visited Feb. 14, 2021).

Similarly, the Coviolo Wireless Initiative⁵³, winner of the 2017 European Broadband Awards, has successfully developed Wi-Fi infrastructure in complex neighborhoods, extending Internet access to city inhabitants in underserved areas and providing social and economic development opportunities by turning the neighborhood community centers into hotspots and managers of the digital infrastructure.

These projects epitomize how a city's policies work toward the development of a technologically just city. Investing in access, participation, co-management, and/or co-ownership of technological and digital urban infrastructure and data, Reggio Emilia seeks to affirm the key role that digital tools play as drivers of cooperation and co-creation of urban commons⁵⁴.

Continuing in this direction, Reggio Emilia designed the ambitious plan of setting up a city-wide collaborative project to be managed by an Urban Science Office, that will act at the same time as a CSO, an innovation broker, and an innovation procurement broker. Its goal will be to involve quintuple helix actors – actors belonging to different categories (public local authorities and agencies, businesses and local entrepreneurs, NGOs and social actors, city residents and informal groups of social innovators, and knowledge actors such as schools and universities), pooling their resources and cooperating to carry out projects to improve the cities' services and infrastructures – to generate new neighborhood-based digital and social innovation solutions enabling free and fair access to management and co-ownership of social, economic, data, and digital infrastructures⁵⁵. The proposed solution is centered on the evolution of the local communities into active protagonists of the social-digital transition process at the neighborhood level. The bottom-up drivers of this transition will be the Neighbourhood Social Centres (NSCs), social and public facilities managed by NGOs that would operate at the neighborhood scale, thus building social hubs for digital transition and innovation (SDI)⁵⁶. The main expected result is the creation of an innovative network of SDIs that act as decentralized nodes, able to facilitate through specialized knowledge, training processes, continuous learning,

⁵³ Good Broadband Practice: Coviolo Wireless, Italy, EUR. COMM'N (Mar. 5, 2018), <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/good-broadband-practice-coviolo-wireless-italy>. See also Progetto Coviolo Wireless, COMUNE DI REGGIO EMILIA (Apr. 8, 2016), www.comune.re.it/retecivica/urp/retecivi.nsf/PESDocumentID/D8CF7E0E9FFE9A32C12580060030E13D?opendocument.

⁵⁴ Christian Iaione, et al., LAW AND ETHICS OF HUMAN RIGHTS).

⁵⁵ Elias Carayannis & David Campbell, Triple Helix, Quadruple Helix and Quintuple Helix and How do Knowledge, Innovation

and the Environment Relate to Each Other? A Proposed Framework for a Trans-disciplinary Analysis of Sustainable Development and Social Ecology, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 1(1), 41–69 (2010); Thorsten Barth, The Idea of a Green new Deal in a Quintuple Helix Model of Knowledge, Know-how and Innovation, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 1(2), 1–14 (2011); Julia Lane, Big Data for Public Policy: The Quadruple Helix, 35 JOURNAL OF POLICY ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT 3, 708–15 (2016).

⁵⁶ The neighborhood social centers are distributed across all neighborhoods in Reggio Emilia and are run by local NGOs and organize social and cultural activities and offer urban welfare services (wi-fi connection; care and management of green areas; community doorman). www.comune.re.it/retecivica/urp/retecivi.nsf/PESDocumentID/3DCDC814B444A3BAC1258488002BB62E?opendocument&FROM=Iprcss (last visited Jan. 25, 2021).

and constant supervision or valorization of the transition to the co-creation, co-management, or co-ownership of tech and digital services.

This threefold nature of the Reggio Emilia City Science Office is central, as it implies investing in collaborative dialogue processes matching digital and social innovators with the scientific world and innovation industry. A proper framework of legal tools, as well as an adequate level of economic resources, will derive from the adoption of innovation procurement strategies according to the EU directives on public procurement.

At present, the City of Reggio Emilia hosts a series of neighborhood Laboratories, together with the local actors of the Quintuple Helix, from which it will develop guidelines to allow the redesign of the regulation for citizenship agreement as a Climate Contract Law. Through this, the City of Reggio Emilia will equip its local communities and administration with concrete tools to achieve climate neutrality by enhancing proximity and social/solidarity economy within the City. The Administration is basing part of its policies on the needs that emerge from the different local labs and on the objectives set by the EU, in particular through the European Green Deal.



FIGURE 4: A functional division of the City of Reggio Emilia. Each cluster is co-designing solutions towards the climate neutrality of the city. Credits: Institutional website of the City of Reggio Emilia <https://www.comune.re.it/siamoqua>

2.4. Rome (Lazio, Italy):

Resource ecosystems and cultural heritage as a commons.

In the EU context, it is currently possible to observe the rise of radical democratic innovations at the political level. Social movements have started to propose a “rebel city” approach. In Rome, for instance, collectives have started a drafting exercise to produce a “Charter of Common Rome” identifying ten fundamental principles: 1) the inalienability of State-owned assets; 2) the introduction of the right to the “common use” of such assets; 3) the distinction between legality and legitimacy in order to filter cases that are grounded in urban informal, social and solidarity practices; 4) the direct reference to the constitutional principles that can protect this approach such as Articles 2, 4, 42, 43, 45 and 118 of the Italian Constitution; 5) the recognition that law can be produced by society; 6) the recognition of the right to autonomy as a right to self-organize and self-regulate but with the possibility to keep the door open to relations with others; 7) the need for a different bureaucratic approach towards experiences of self-management and solidarity that should be considered as social institutions; 8) the recognition of the urban commons (social spaces, virtuous associations, cultural centers, industrial reconvered assets and new forms of cooperative work) through a specific regulatory tool; 9) the recognition of the urban commons as functional to fundamental rights according to the findings of the Rodotà commission; 10) the recognition of the right to co-manage the urban commons and participate in decision-making processes related to them. As we have seen cities like Naples (or Barcelona) that declare themselves moving in the direction of dramatic change, in line with the right to the city tenets, this radical approach to the urban commons and the realization of the rebel city model has been transformed into a policy action.

The city of Rome is famous worldwide for its cultural heritage. By contrast, the social capital of the city is not so well known. Comparing Rome to the above analyzed cases is not easy, especially in terms of its size: single neighborhoods of the city are much bigger, in terms of numbers of inhabitants, than the whole city of Reggio Emilia, to give a measure of comparison. A great example of social capital and civic entrepreneurship comes from the most complex areas of the city. Three neighborhoods (Alessandrino, Centocelle, Torre Spaccata, from which the acronym ACT was derived) are experimenting with the management of local urban commons. Local civic energies were coalized towards the common goal of valorizing and preserving the cultural and natural commons constituted by the Archaeological Park of Centocelle. Through the application of the Co-City methodological protocol developed by Luiss LabGov⁵⁷ and the support to the R&I activities given by Italian

⁵⁷ See <http://labgov.city/> and <https://commoning.city/>

national agencies such as ENEA (the National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development, a public body aimed at research, technological innovation and the provision of advanced services to enterprises, public administration and citizens in the sectors of energy, the environment and sustainable economic development), or by the EU itself through the funding of the Open Heritage project (funded under the Horizon 2020 program), these actors were able to be recognized by the Council of Europe as a Faro Community⁵⁸. From this first step, they were able to broaden the scope of their activities, and have now created a Coop that provides neighborhood-based services and that is creating new local economies starting from the care of the urban commons. Another is represented by the NGO Agenda Tevere, which through the application of the Co-City protocol is now creating the first River Contract for the Tiber (the main River of Rome), an innovative governance scheme and model, and will further experiment thanks to the creation of a Participatory Foundation that is sponsored by the Regional government of the Region. In fact, through the Article 20 of the Regional Law n. 194 of 31 October 2019, the Lazio Region has decided to upscale the approach proposed by Agenda Tevere.

The experimentations were conducted through a methodological process centered on the implementation of the above-mentioned Co-city protocol, deeply grounded in the local context. This means that the standardization involved the process and the method, not the tools/instruments/output applied in the specific context. This represents a theoretical framework for the conceptualization of the pooling city, and suggests the main trajectories for the definition of the pooling city as a rights-based urban model/vision. A proposal to study/develop/adapt/test/measure should build on three main components: 1) the design principles to bring the Commons into the City and transform the City into a Commons, and their gradient; 2) the process to bring the Commons into the City and transform the City into a Commons. The local-experimental approach requires the necessity of a methodological tool that guides the action of local institutional actors for the development of an appropriate urban co-governance strategy; 3) the tools for pooling the city. The creation of a toolbox and/or a certifying voluntary standard-setting institution like those that work in the networked information economy (3GPP, Wifi Alliance, ETSI, WRC, IEEE, IETF and other standard setting bodies).

⁵⁸ The Faro Convention emphasizes the important aspects of heritage as they relate to human rights and democracy. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society. The Convention

encourages us to recognize that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The previous paragraphs illustrate how forms of institutionally-enabled co-governance at the city level might result in the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships to co-manage a building, provide a service or develop infrastructures for co-governance. While PPPs have by now become a common solution for public sector risk aversion and for its lack of resources, it is clear that sustainable innovation and smart city infrastructures require new types of partnerships, overcoming the public-private binary usually adopted to create partnerships, in order to experiment with and prototype tech-based or nature-based solutions for planning climate adaptation in cities⁵⁹. Especially when it comes to the inclusion of urban citizens and civic associations, innovative procurement practices hold the potential to experiment with new regulatory and governance solutions for the co-design, collaborative management, and implementation of urban regeneration projects, as well as service delivery. Finding the proper ways, methodologies, and rules to foster multi-actor cooperation such as public-private-community or public-private-people partnerships requires attention, competences, skills, time, and resources. Organization and process are essential. The literature on PPPs shows that the public sector lacks the skills, incentives, and resources to experiment and change its traditional system of service delivery through partnership with citizens and other civil society actors⁶⁰. Effective innovation requires risk-takers in public administrations who overcome barriers to change, curate new partnerships with different actors, develop new ideas for service delivery, and test innovative solutions coming from external actors. In many cases, especially at the city level, such public open innovation processes are supported by what we can generally call urban laboratories. “Collaboratories,” “Urban Innovation Labs,” or “Living Labs,” these environments generally act as intermediaries between public authorities, private actors, knowledge institutions, civic society actors, and citizens⁶¹. Innovation brokers therefore play an important role, not only because they produce knowledge and innovative solutions to local challenges. They often allow for the meeting and networking of multi-actors; they set up collaborative processes of design and implementation; they foster learning and skills development; and they provide the infrastructure necessary for the participation of civic society actors or citizens, through organization of meetings,

⁵⁹ Oliveira Cruz & Joaquim Miranda Sarmiento, Public-Private Partnerships and Smart Cities, 19 NETWORK INDUSTRIES Q. 3 (2017): “Regulatory Challenges for Smart Cities”; Ben P. Harman, et al., Urban Partnerships and Climate Adaptation: Challenges and Opportunities, SUSTAINABILITY GOVERNANCE AND TRANSFORMATION 12, 74–77 (2015).

⁶⁰ Shafiul Azam Ahmed & Syed Mansoor Ali, People as Partners: Facilitating People’s Participation in Public-Private Partnerships for Solid Waste Management, 30 HABITAT INT’L 781, 781–96 (2006).

⁶¹ Mila Gascó, Living Labs: Implementing Open Innovation in the Public Sector, 34 GOV’T INFO. Q. 90, 90–98 (2017).

assemblies, and workshops⁶². Collaboratories might be specifically valuable for smaller and medium-sized cities, or neighborhoods in large cities, and can complement ongoing city-wide or EU wide initiatives⁶³. When speaking of innovation in public procurement and social innovation, it is important to address the rise of new financing instruments aimed at investing in projects with a social impact: “Social Finance (SF) defines the set of alternative lending and investment approaches for financing projects and ventures, requiring to generate both positive impacts on society, the environment, or sustainable development, along with financial returns”⁶⁴. SF instruments are key tools for the development of the social innovation sector in general, and for urban co-governance projects in particular. Especially when it comes to addressing issues such as urban poverty, digital infrastructure, circular economy, renewable energy, and cultural heritage sectors, SF solutions might provide a partnership model that is able to have a real impact on local communities, bringing together local associations, citizens, and private and public actors. Finally, we can identify in these experiences a common pattern that is represented by the active role played by Universities and Research Centers as brokers of urban co-governance.

⁶² Shafiul Azam Ahmed & Syed Mansoor Ali, *People as Partners: Facilitating People's Participation in Public-Private Partnerships for Solid Waste Management*, 30 HABITAT INT'L 781, 781–96 (2006).

⁶³ *Urban Agenda for the EU: Pact of Amsterdam*, at 52, EUR. COMM'N (2016), https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf.

⁶⁴ Francesco Rizzi, et al., *The Structuring of Social Finance: Emerging Approaches for Supporting Environmentally and Socially Impactful Projects*, 170 J. CLEANER PRODUCTION 805, 805 (2018).

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Alessandro Antonelli - Teaching Assistant Law and Policy of Innovation and Sustainability, Governance of Innovation and Sustainability, Department of Law; Assistant to the Chair of Urban Law and Policy, Department of Political Science; Smart Cities, Department of Law; Research fellow of LabGov.City

Elena De Nictolis - Post-doctoral Researcher; Department of Political Science; Research fellow of LabGov.City

Christian Iaione - Professor of Regulatory Innovation, Land Use, Urban Law & Policy; Director of the MSc in Law, Digital innovation and Sustainability; Co-Director of LabGov.City; Deputy Director of Luiss BILL

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Citymaker- Fund

Financing done differently:
applying gentryfication on the
funding of area development
projects (NL)

Hans Karsenberg
STIPO

Theo Stauttner
Stadkwadraat

Jan-Jaap Gerritsma
Stadmakersfonds

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLACEMAKERS AND CITYMAKERS	4
PLACEMAKERS AND CITYMAKERS HAVE AN IMPACT	5
CITYMAKER-FUND AS INVESTOR AND MATCHMAKER	5
FORMAL STATUS	6
START IN THE PROVINCE OF UTRECHT	7
FINANCING DONE DIFFERENTLY	7
GENTRIFICATION WITH A SOFT EDGE: IS THERE A PATH FOR GENTLYFICATION?	8
COMPARABLE FUNDS OUTSIDE OF THE NETHERLANDS	8
GOVERNANCE AND THE ROLE OF THE ADVISORY BOARD	9
A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO REVENUES	10
FINANCING THROUGH OWNERSHIP – THE PRINCIPLES OF ‘FAIR-LEASE’	11
INVESTMENTS MADE POSSIBLE BY LARGE AND SMALL IMPACT INVESTORS	13
ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT	15
FUNDED INITIATIVE 1: HET HOF VAN CARTESIUS.....	16
FUNDED INITIATIVE 2: PARKHUIS AMERSFOORT	17
FUNDED INITIATIVE 3: STADSBROUWERIJ ROOD NOOT	18
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	18



Hof van Cartesius, Utrecht, the first case funded by the Stadmakersfonds

The Citymaker-Fund (Stadmakersfonds in Dutch) is an investment fund for placemakers and citymakers. The fund is a matchmaker between placemakers, citymakers and investors, and actively contributes to a lively and inclusive city by investing in initiatives with a social and reasonable economic return.

The fund assists initiatives by buying property or land, or by helping to finance the construction or renewal of buildings. To enable a social return and sustain it in the city, this fund places a low interest rate on loans. Additionally, the fund advises placemakers and citymakers on setting up feasible business models.

PLACEMAKERS AND CITYMAKERS



Placemaking is a common cause, which brings people together to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of their community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, “placemaking” offers a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize its value to everyone.

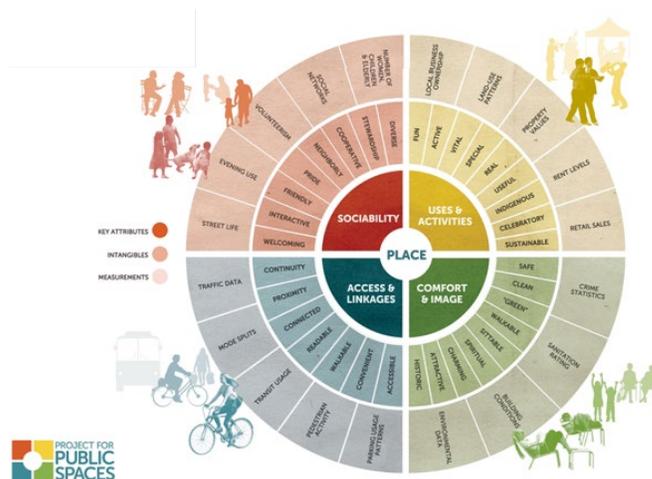
Placemaking taps into the fundamental principles espoused by William Whyte, Jane Jacobs, Fred Kent and Kathy Madden; the work of [Project for Public Spaces](#) over the past 40 years, and the work of global and regional networks such as [PlacemakingX](#) and [Placemaking Europe](#).

PlacemakingX (www.placemakingx.org) is the global network of leaders who together accelerate placemaking as a way to create healthy, inclusive, and beloved communities.

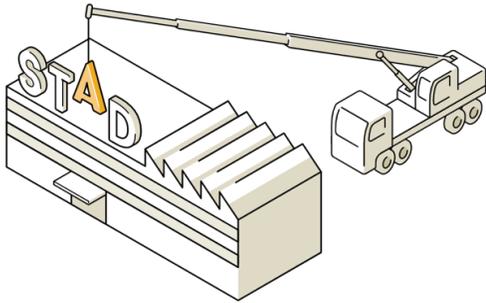
Placemaking Europe (www.placemaking-europe.eu) is a European network consisting of thousands of placemakers, connecting practitioners, academics, community leaders, market actors and policy makers throughout Europe when it comes to the field of placemaking, public space, social life, human scale and the city at eye level. The network cultivates and shares knowledge; develops, tests and uses tools; organizes the annual Placemaking Week Europe; exchanges ideas in working groups and through the leader networks; and actively shapes projects together.

Citymakers are placemakers with a social added value for the city and a financial model with a reasonable economic return. They combine the values of placemaking with areas and buildings that are under development.

What makes a great place? PPS.org



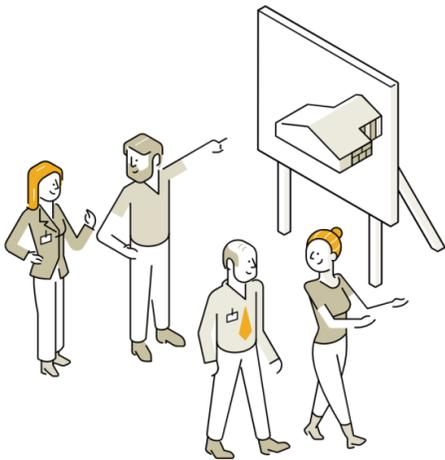
PLACEMAKERS AND CITYMAKERS HAVE AN IMPACT



Placemakers and citymakers confront major challenges to make cities sustainable, inclusive and attractive. They take action. They contribute to a better living and working environment. They start a circular hub, a public neighbourhood garden, an employment program for people excluded from the labour market, breathe new life into vacant property, or turn dull spaces into neighbourhood places.

Placemakers and citymakers are socially involved and include the community's participation. They create a diversity of values: social, sustainable, creative, artistic, but also urban, area and property. As such, they are passionate catalysts for new area development and placemaking.

CITYMAKER-FUND AS INVESTOR AND MATCHMAKER



With social impact as the key driver, a healthy financial model is necessary for the sustainable success of an initiative. However, for new players in the field, it is hard to obtain access to financing.

Placemakers, citymakers and funders who want to invest responsibly also find it difficult to find one another. As well, traditional banks and funders consider this small-scale and recent initiative to be vulnerable and are not immediately interested in a social return.

Furthermore, guidance and partial financial guarantees can help overcome concerns, alongside the increasing interest of private investors in initiatives that have an impact, so long as the investment is thoroughly guided. As one can see, the Citymaker-Fund is a matchmaker between citymakers and investors.

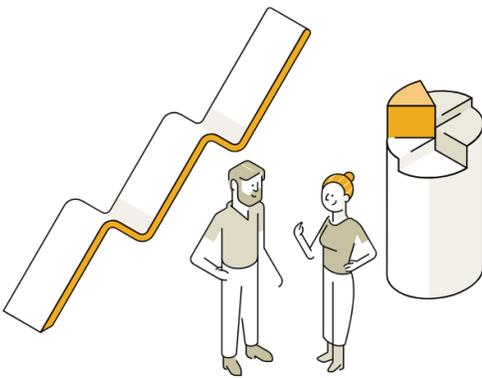
The fund actively pursues new impact investors through expanding its network, and these investors can choose to either invest in the whole fund and by doing so support its bigger goals or they can invest in specific regions and citymakers.

The fund is specifically targeted towards bottom-up driven area development by advising and guiding citymakers regarding a feasible business case. When a

citymaker has come to a business case that is approved by the Citymaker-fund, that 'stamp' can also be used to attract impact-investors.

We conclude that impact-investors are mostly driven by some sort of local attachment to the area where the citymaker is active. Once impact-investors have been identified, they can invest through the fund's infrastructure. As well, the fund's partnerships with other banks and funds make it easier to attract any missing equity.

FORMAL STATUS

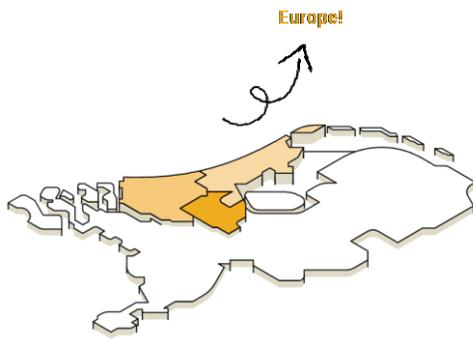


The Citymaker-Fund is an NGO ('stichting' in Dutch) with an independent board, having an advisory board with experts that represent the multiple disciplines that an urban-development fund must deal with.

Additionally, [STIPO](#) and [Stadkwadraat](#) are initiators that play an important role in the first phase of getting the fund started. They advise citymakers with the purpose of making them 'investment-ready.' Simultaneously, they judge citymakers' social impact and make that impact visible and measurable.

Most of the time the societal impact is the reason why it is not possible to pay commercial margins for citymakers. Making this impact visible and monitorable justifies having a socially responsible margin on the loans and helps sustain citymakers. Private and public investors are able to join the fund and invest along with private equity, thereby expanding the citymakers' scope. In this manner, it is possible to work together to ensure further social return in the city. As well, the initiators tend to help the Citymaker-fund grow to a fully independent organization.

START IN THE PROVINCE OF UTRECHT



The Citymaker-Fund has started funding its first initiative in December 2019 in the province of Utrecht. As the fund's first investor, the province of Utrecht provides the financial foundation for the Citymaker-Fund. As a result of investing in the city of Utrecht, the municipality also decided to cooperate as public investor. As well, the fund's partnership with the sustainability-oriented Triodos Bank has exponentially increased the amount of capital available for investment—the bank only invests in organisations that put people, the environment or culture at the core of their business. As such, collaboration with the Citymaker-Fund is in line with the bank's social goals.

The Citymaker-Fund has successfully funded its first three initiatives in 2020. After its launch in the province of Utrecht, the Citymaker-Fund now aims to expand to other provinces and cities in the Netherlands and grow into a national and European fund for Placemakers and citymakers.

FINANCING DONE DIFFERENTLY



An important problem within area development is the financing of projects, both with land and real estate projects as well as placemaking activities, and other initiatives focused on programming, activation and value creation in designated areas.

Whether it concerns residential or commercial activities, more economic interpretations or social, cultural and societal activities, the pressure on the housing- and real estate market is high. This has resulted in higher prices and fewer opportunities for parties to acquire a position or be part of a development.

Gentrification with a soft edge: is there a path for gentlyfication?

Is it possible to utilize contemporary economic processes in land-, real estate and area development, including gentrification, to realise new practical sustainable models and solutions for the inclusive city? In order to create places where everyone has a place to reside and to live, we must use our cities and spaces in an optimal and diverse manner, where value is created on many fronts: social, communal, cultural and ultimately on a financial level as well.

As opined by Theo Stauttner (in "[Our City](#), 2019"), the development of places necessitates both placemaking, and social, communal and cultural (societal) value creation, consolidated into healthy business cases for area transformation. By changing the way we view returns on area development, we can open up new forms of funding, financing and organisation in which a balance is sought between value creation and inclusiveness.

COMPARABLE FUNDS OUTSIDE OF THE NETHERLANDS



Interesting and inspiring examples in other countries demonstrate that there are projects led by citymakers and the residents themselves that can be successful. Projects such as the [Holzmarkt](#) and the [ExRotaprintfabrik](#) (both in Berlin) have acquired new investors who pursue investments in which a balance is sought between financial and economic preconditions and an appreciation of societal revenue.

Considering the success of these funds ([Stiftung Trias](#) and [Edith Maryon Fund](#)), the Citymaker-Fund was established in 2019, which, in collaboration with Triodos Bank, funded the first projects in early 2020.

GOVERNANCE AND THE ROLE OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

We set up an NGO and chose this form since it is both non-profit and relatively independent. As well, due to its nature the financial benefits can be reinvested in order to strengthen the social objective of the organisation in question.

As well, an independent board cannot be reappointed by itself. This is why we decided to establish an Advisory Board, the members of which have the responsibility to elect the board members and appoint new ones. However, it is important to note that an Advisory Board is not the same as a Supervisory Board. The latter also includes a formal installation of members, whereas an Advisory Board is less restricted, thus allowing for the appointment of ambassadors, citymakers and area developers onto the board. The Advisory Board also fulfils an important inspirational role for the fund.

Board		Advisory Board		
 BESTUUR Hans Karssenberg Voorzitter		 Gert-Joost Peek Eigenaar SPOT-ON Consulting	 Bianca Seekles Directievoorzitter ERA Contour	 Tom Daamen Directeur Stichting Kennis Gebiedsontwikkeling
 BESTUUR Theo Staattener Penningmeester	 BESTUUR Bert Hoek Secretaris	 Egbert Fransen Oprichter Pakhuis de Zwijger	 Najah Aouaki Founder Aouaki Concepts	 Alexander Ramselaar Eigenaar Backing Grounds
 BESTUUR Huib Arendse Bestuurslid	 BESTUUR Joost Beunderman Bestuurslid	 Ellen van der Lei Eigenaar Urban Patterns	 Gerard Kohsiek Directeur Wonam	 Beitske Boonstra Academic Researcher Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO REVENUES



The fund is engaged in financing projects by contributing equity in the form of subordinated loans. Since the first 20-30% of the financing requirement is covered by the fund, banks are less hesitant to lend the remaining capital for investment, usually coupled with reasonable conditions. Initially, the invested capital is a social investment for its members, which implies that the capital is fixed for 10 years and will be eventually lent with the precondition that the complete repayment obligation falls at the end of this period.

Additionally, banks often assume that in the event of a forced execution of investment, they will retrieve approximately 70% of the value of the sale, which is an important motivation as to why banks set an equity threshold of approximately 30%. This is because equity can only be recovered when all of the obligations concerning debts (borrowed capital) have been met. As a result, the risk of equity is considerably higher and the required return (the expected interest) is also higher, in fact often much higher at up to 8-12%.

If such interest were to be applied, the fund could perform well financially and economically, but it would have no investment options. This is because such a high-interest rate adds a lot of pressure on the business case of citymakers. Additionally, the realised societal revenue (for social investors who contribute to the fund) will not be reflected in the investment conditions. Therefore, the Citymaker-fund has chosen a different approach...

The revenue for impact investors in the fund is split between **societal** and **financial** revenue. The first represents the added value of the business case with regard to the social, communal and cultural aspects that are closely linked to placemaking. Thereby we distinguish the various societal motives and from that, we create measurable indicators and can consider how to monitor those over time.



An example of this way of impact mapping are the citymakers from '[Het Hof van Cartesius](#),' who strive towards a sustainable economy. They intend to build their new accommodation with at least 90% of reused materials. Together with the citymakers in question, we can come to agreements on how we quantify the societal revenue in their business case.

This is because the financial revenue will not be lower than the interest on debt, but in our primary investment, the financial revenue will neither be very different from the minimum (the interest on loans from the fund is almost equal to the interest of banks). As well, citymakers do not have to repay their loan until the end of the

contract. These conditions allow citymakers to build up a solid and responsible business.

As the number of financed citymakers increases, the number of indicators that we can measure and monitor increases as well. As such, we want to create a learning (adaptive) system that we will refer to as our **benchmark of societal revenue**.

From a purely financial/economic point of view, one could argue that the fund makes rather risky investments, especially considering the low-risk premium on the interest on loans. This requires extra care in financing the business cases and in the communications to influence investors. When assessing the business case, thorough research or a second opinion on the feasibility of the plan should be carried out. This is because banks and other investors like to keep their hands off these issues and will leave this to the applicant. This separation is also deemed conventional as these parties are compelled to be independent entities in the context of investment agreements.

The Citymaker-fund operates in closer proximity to the citymakers if necessary, as we can also assist them in the professionalization of their business case. Our involvement from the perspective of the investor is both **professional** and **indispensable**.

We know that if this ‘gap’ is not filled by our involvement, most initiatives will not be sustained. Through our approach, we would like to set up a roadmap for citymakers, who will eventually learn to do this by themselves, aided by our tools and knowledge.



FINANCING THROUGH OWNERSHIP – THE PRINCIPLES OF ‘FAIR-LEASE’

There is an important second form of financing: the fund buys land or real estate and rents or leases it out to the citymakers under the same conditions as it offers loans to them.

For the first land purchase, the fund has set up a separate company (a special purpose vehicle), something which was also suggested by the bank. The acquired land is then closed off from other loans and the separate company is the borrower of capital.



Of course, the NGO did have to participate in the financial obligations—especially in the starting phase of the fund, this seems like a desired certainty that we can offer the bank. In the future, we would desire that our separate companies be more independent and attract their own financing, which evidently limits the risks within the fund.

The land purchase was completed with 20% equity and a loan offered by Triodos Bank for the remaining 80% of the equity, with interest lying a fraction below the ground rent. This ground rent is the compensation we receive for making the use of the land possible for the citymakers.

If the land value changes within the upcoming years, let us say by an increase of an average of 2% per year for a period of 10 years, the collateral after this period will be of a higher value than the loan. If the value of the real estate develops positively and more than the average market inflation, then the relative financial risk of the land purchase decreases. Since money generally devaluates over time (inflation), it is important to take these effects into account.



As well, we often witness an increase in real estate value when citymakers can successfully proceed with their business. Land or real estate investment is therefore an interesting option, although the fund's primary focus is not financial revenue but realizing and perpetuating these important initiatives. As such, land, real estate and financing are used as resources, not as objective.

On the other hand, due to the special form of risk-bearing investment, such an increase in value is a necessity for the fund. It also enables the fund to allow the increase in value to be dispersed amongst the citymakers. After all, they are the ones who realize the increase in value through their efforts. Of course, the land- and real estate owner will benefit from this as well.

The Citymaker-fund wants to share that benefits; something that is not present in the current state of the economy and the relationships present within that economy: after all, the increase in value is for the owner, not the tenant.

For this purpose, the fund has introduced **FAIR-lease**, whereby an increase in value is shared between the fund and the citymakers. In advance, at the start of the lease, it is agreed upon that the citymakers can also buy the land or real estate in the long term and, in addition, the value distribution is settled. The land can then be bought for the first time after 10 years (although this option rests in the hands of the citymakers).

What we often see with real estate financing is that repayment results in an increase in equity, which leads to inflation alone being responsible for an increase in value. A positive change in value is when it is related to the size of the loan based on the

initial purchase price (because it retains the same absolute value); this means that after about 10 years, the financial situation surrounding the loan is considerably more favourable than at the start.

In addition, the business of the citymaker in question has often proven its worth (after several years), and financing is no longer a major problem. Refinancing can then lead to the land being purchased with an increase in value as a (justified) bonus. It is exactly these same citymakers who we hope to see after 10 to 15 years, not as borrowers of money, but as impact financiers helping other beginner citymakers.

In the Netherlands, Triodos Bank is an innovative bank in that finances organizations that put people and the planet first. In the era we live in, we hope that more (inter)national banks shift to a likewise mind-set so that it will be easier to obtain the 'remaining' 80% of the equity.



INVESTMENTS MADE POSSIBLE BY LARGE AND SMALL IMPACT INVESTORS

This fund has been established with the conviction that citymakers lack financial possibilities yet create a great deal of social opportunities. Meanwhile, numerous investors are looking for possibilities to make impact investments to do *good* or make a difference with their capital. These so-called impact investors pay special attention to societal value, so the Citymaker-fund wants to be a matchmaker between

the two groups and is therefore open to influence investors. For now, these investors can bring capital into the fund if they have at least a certain critical mass (for example, at least €50.000,-).

We want to offer the possibility of investing in specific citymakers, but also in the fund's objectives in general. The reason for the critical mass is the size of the fund's organization—when the fund grows, it wants to make it possible for the whole “crowd” to invest, so for now we are still working on this infrastructure.

An important aspect is the question of whether we can make it possible for people to invest in projects in “their neighbourhood” or in their direct vicinity. Special arrangements can also be considered when it comes to the use or shared use of facilities as a benefit for financing. We also investigate which structure the NGO should take with a private company (Ltd.) or several private companies in which projects are included. When looking at the various initiatives and plans, it is clear that there is both demand from and for the more long-term real estate financing as well as the short-term activation plans and placemaking programs.

In Anglophone countries, the real estate value of buildings is widely used as a basis for establishing investments into the public space. In the US, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is based on the future appreciation of real estate and the associated increase in property tax. For example, a financial product is created by estimating the value and tax over several years based on the present value. Use of bonds for example generates room for investment by placing investments into the public space and other facilities (such as infrastructure) at the very forefront of the process. When this system is used as a thought experiment in placemaking, property owners could invest in placemaking in advance, as they will eventually earn their investment back with the increase in value of their property.

An appointment in advance, with payment afterwards, is also a possibility. Suppose a party finances (at risk) certain placemaking programs in the public space in a certain area. Agreements on the goals to be achieved will be made in advance, including agreements on the goals for the increase in value of the property. When this increase in value occurs, the profit-making party pays, which will generate income for the fund. This can include:

- A. The compensation for the investment since there is no (financial) business case behind the placemaking;
- B. A partial compensation for risk, as placemaking activities on the short-term generally have limited income;
- C. Additional incomes, which allow the fund and its buffer for risks to grow.

ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

The government is a highly direct beneficiary of this system. This is because value creation from placemaking leads to higher real estate values and therefore to higher property taxes. It is true that the property owner will possess more value, but this is mainly on paper only. In addition, the property owner needs to pay higher taxes—when the municipality will partake in financing placemaking through the extra property tax, it will become more attractive for property owners. When the municipality is responsible for 50% of the increase in value, both the property owner and the government will benefit. This lowers the threshold for both to start the financing of placemaking.



Funded initiative 1: [Het Hof van Cartesius](#)

The initiative *Het Hof van Cartesius* is a sustainable and green (co-)working place in the former industrial 'Werkspoorkwartier' area of the city of Utrecht. Creative and sustainable entrepreneurs have built their own circular working-spaces around a new public courtyard, with this cooperation creating a green space that boosts the liveability and quality of the surrounding areas, which had formerly been dominated by heavy industry. The Citymaker-fund finances this site's further development, helping the initiative to grow three times as large.

Impact Citymaker-fund

- Scale-up of the initiative creating 60 new affordable circular working places;
- Helping the initiative and its impact grow three times as large;
- From a temporary to a permanent initiative.

Facts & figures

- Stadmakersfonds' investment: **€ 323.000,-**
- Total investment generated with the fund's partition: **€ 2.240.000,-**



Funded initiative 2: [Parkhuis Amersfoort](#)

The dream of *het Parkhuis* is to create lively third places where people with different backgrounds feel welcome and can meet each other.

They are located in an old boiler house that was part of a hospital surrounding the building. This hospital made way for a qualitative park and the boiler house now offers space for an inclusive day-care for children, welcoming every child so as to promote inclusivity in the youngest members of this planet. Parkhuis is a nature-inclusive meeting place, bringing together heritage, diversity and social value. They rent 50% of their places for a low rental price to organizations that put impact first.

Impact Citymaker-fund

- 50% affordable spaces for socially responsible tenants;
- Maintaining a national monument and setting it in motion;
- Creating a permanent meeting-place for the community.

Facts & Figures

- Stadmakersfonds' investment: **€ 300.000,-**
- Total investment generated with the fund's partition: **€ 2.285.000,-**



Funded initiative 3: [Stadsbrouwerij Rood Noot](#)

The initiative *Rood Noot* will become a meeting place for the neighbourhood where they can enjoy great beers brewed by people that might feel distant or ostracized from society and its job market.

Apart from that, they will facilitate free spaces for cultural and artistic expositions at their monumental farm in Utrecht, working together with local museums and art schools. They will become a franchise of the widely known brewery '[de Prael](#)' that once started with the same mission in Amsterdam. This initiative is partially funded by crowdfunding and will open their doors from 2022 onwards.

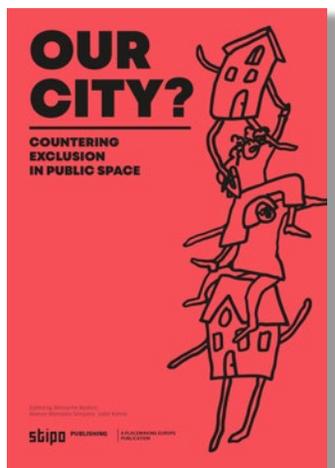
Impact Citymaker-fund

- At least 60% of the employers are (psychologically) distant or disconnected from the job market;
- Maintaining a local monument and setting it in motion;
- Creating a permanent meeting-place for the community.

Facts & Figures

- Stadmakersfonds' investment: € 160.000,-
- Total investment generated with the fund's partition: € 2.141.000,-

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES



Stadkwadraat & STIPO innovate in area development, financing and value creation and has, from this perspective, launched the concept of Gentlyfication (2019), Area Investment Zone (2014/2015) and the financing of Collective Living (2020).

Stadmakersfonds: www.stadmakersfonds.nl

Stadkwadraat: www.stadkwadraat.nl

Stipo: www.stipo.nl

Placemaking Europe: www.placemaking-europe.eu

Contact: fondsmanager@stadmakersfonds.nl

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Hans Karssenberg (STIPO), Theo Stauttner (Stadkwadraat) & Jan-Jaap Gerritsma (Stadmakersfonds)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

STADMAKERS
FONDS



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Marineterrein: slowly-growing living lab

An adaptive process driven by informal dynamics like community-forming and programming (NL)

Marieke Berkers

Architectural historian,
lecturer, editor

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. HIDDEN GEM	4
2. ADAPTIVE DEVELOPMENT	5
3. PRAGMATIC GROUNDS	7
4. VALUE SET	8
5. SUPERCHARGER FOR INNOVATION.....	9
6. THE POWER OF COMMUNITY-FORMING AND PROGRAMMING.....	10
7. LIVING LAB.....	12
8. SCALING UP	15
9. CONDITIONS.....	15
10. NOT A MATTER OF COURSE.....	17
KEY REFERENCES	18

Project Marineterrein Amsterdam¹

Location Amsterdam City Centre

Commissioner The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency and Municipality of Amsterdam.

Programming and temporary exploitation Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam (BMA)

Area The 13 hectare area covers a total of 62,000 m² of real estate, of which 10 ha is undeveloped.

Budget The municipal council made € 5.5 million available to the Equalization Fund from the Amsterdam Investment Fund (AIF) for the development of the Marineterrein. The municipal council has determined that the municipality will make these funds available on the condition that the central government contributes the same amount.²

Website www.marineterrein.nl

Marineterrein Amsterdam is a former naval dock in the center of Amsterdam, which for a long time was not publicly accessible. This changed in 2013 when the Dutch State and the municipality of Amsterdam signed an agreement to open up most of the thirteen-hectare Marineterrein. Both parties agreed to organize the development of the Marineterrein into a lively, densified neighborhood in an adaptive manner, one that would be phased and without a masterplan. The concept of innovation became a leading principle, and driven by informal dynamics like community forming and programming, Marineterrein slowly developed into an innovative hotspot. The next step is the development of the neighborhood, which requires the scaling-up of application of innovation, albeit that is not an issue of course.

¹ Marineterrein translated in English is: Marine Terrain.

² With the signing of the administrative agreement, the Dutch state and Municipality of Amsterdam have committed themselves to making €3.25 million each immediately available for the project to cover the investments for the first

three years. In addition, the municipality has made €1 million available for the renovation of building 027E.

Therefore, the separate designated reserve within the Equalization Fund still contains approximately € 1 million of the original budget. This budget is currently assigned to the implementation costs of the Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam, as well as the process and research costs for the project phase.



Marineterrein is a 13-hectare defense terrain, enclosed by water and walls. From 2013 onwards, the terrain will be in a transitional phase. The Dutch Ministry of Defense has gradually made the site available for temporary exploitation. Photo: Siebe Swart.

1. HIDDEN GEM

It is a ten-minute walk from Amsterdam Central Station to Marineterrein Amsterdam, yet for a long time the terrain was unknown to most inhabitants of and visitors to the Dutch capital. This is because the Marineterrein is bordered by a high brick wall and the water of the Dijkgracht and Oosterdok. In particular, the terrain of this over 350-year-old naval dock was constructed to house a wharf and the seat and workplace of the Admiralty.

The wharf closed in 1914 and was used by the Royal Netherlands Navy since then. The site was not publicly accessible and, until recently, was blurred on Google Maps. The Royal Netherlands Navy kept the terrain closed and hidden from curious eyes.



The Marineterrein used to be a naval dock. Its neighbour is the National Maritime Museum that is housed in a former naval storehouse: 's Lands Zeemagazijn of 1656. Photo: Marineterrein Amsterdam.

2. ADAPTIVE DEVELOPMENT

In 2013, the Dutch government, partly prompted by cutbacks in defense expenditure, decided to open up the terrain to public access. On 5 December 2013, the Dutch State and the Municipality of Amsterdam signed the Administrative Agreement for the Development of the Marineterrein Amsterdam, in which they agreed to initiate this development together.³ Because the land would not be transferred directly from the State to the Municipality of Amsterdam's possession, a collaborative organizational model has been chosen in which the ambitions in the area would be jointly realized since a joint effort would be made to achieve the appropriate, optimal yield for the government.⁴ Both parties provided the land, while the real estate and management of the site is in the hands of one organization: the Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam.⁵ This development is currently in a transitional phase, in which the Ministry of Defense has gradually made the site available for temporary exploitation.

The Royal Netherlands Navy partly left the site in 2015 when the Voorwerf became freely accessible for public. A year later, the west side of the site was opened to the public and there a temporary bridge over the Dijksgracht was realized, so that a

³ Dutch State and Municipality of Amsterdam, 'Bestuursvereenkomst Ontwikkeling Marineterrein Amsterdam' ('Administrative Agreement for the Development

of the Marineterrein Amsterdam'), in: *Staatscourant*, Den Haag, 9 December 2013.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ Originally the bureau was called Projectbureau Marineterrein Amsterdam, later changed to Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam.

continuous route would be created across the site. The plan was that from mid-2018, almost the entire site would be opened up and accessible; the Royal Netherlands Navy would only leave their national Recruitment and Selection section on the site. Yet, under a new cabinet in 2018, the Dutch government decided that the navy would not leave the site completely. As such, development plans had to be reshuffled.



The Commandants Bridge was made in order to create a continuous route across the site and to provide better bicycle-routes to Amsterdam's Central Station. Photo: Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam.

As Amsterdam is developing at a rapid pace—especially given the ambition to build 52,500 houses by 2025⁶—it is tempting to simply open up the gates and begin developing houses as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, the Marineterrein is not part of the Residential Building Action Plan that has targeted ten ‘acceleration locations’ for the construction of homes.⁷ Agreed upon in the Administrative Agreement for the Development of the Marineterrein Amsterdam, the decision was made to develop this top-located area in Amsterdam ‘gradually’ and ‘based on a concept rather than by urban plan’ in the first years⁸. The development of the Marineterrein Amsterdam, therefore, is adaptive in character: no masterplan with a clear result has been made and the development has taken place in phases.

⁶ Municipality of Amsterdam, *Woningbouwplan 2018-2025 (Housing plan 2018-2025)*, Amsterdam, 2018, p. 4.

⁷ Municipality of Amsterdam, *Koers 25. Ruimte voor de stad (Course 25: Space for the City)*, Amsterdam, 2016, p. 31.

⁸ Dutch State and Municipality of Amsterdam, ‘Bestuursvereenkomst Ontwikkeling Marineterrein Amsterdam’, in: *Staatscourant*, Den Haag, 9 December 2013, p. 5.

3. PRAGMATIC GROUNDS

This decision, made by the Dutch State and the Municipality of Amsterdam⁹, was based on pragmatic grounds, given that the development started in 2013 in the context of a global financial crisis. Using a masterplan to organize the start of the development would not have worked, given that the uncertain economic situation made it impossible to present clear images of the future. This meant project developers and investors were unable to invest, as the future was uncertain. Instead, the responsible administrative organizations kept all doors to the future open and decided upon ‘an irreversible process’ as a method for development. As they stated in their Memorandum of Strategy: “The financial climate didn’t allow for the land to be transferred directly from the State to the municipality of Amsterdam based on land value. Therefore, the aim of the collaboration between the government and the municipality is to initiate the development of Marineterrein as an irreversible process.”¹⁰ Secondly, the Royal Netherlands Navy planned to leave the terrain in phases; therefore, the land available for redevelopment also became free in phases.

Given that there was hardly an intrinsic motivation for adaptive development in 2013 when it came to the Marineterrein, there was a lack of understanding regarding what values or opportunities existed for this organic method of development. The Agreement mentioned: “The concept for the area functions as a compass and as a dot on the horizon. There is no fixed final picture fixed.”¹¹ But what does that mean? How does one develop a concept that ‘functions as a compass’? The usual players in the field of city planning, the planners and designers of the municipality, found it difficult to translate this idea into new ways of working: new methods, instruments and products. One of the first things they did was making foam models of a future neighborhood, yet one can argue whether making models is a fruitful first step when developing that neighborhood in an adaptive manner. As Wouter Jan Verheul and Tom Daamen, both working at TU Delft, mention about adaptive planning: “An emergent adaptive strategy is not made from the drawing board, but arises during the practice of project development from an environmentally aware, connecting and reflective attitude.”¹²

⁹ The Minister of Defense, J.A. Hennis-Plasschaert, and the Minister for Interior, S.A. Blok, acted as the representatives of the State of the Netherlands. Amsterdam Mayor, E. E. van der Laan, and the Alderman for Spatial Planning, M. van Poelgeest, represented the Municipality of Amsterdam.

¹⁰ Idem.

¹¹ Dutch State and Municipality of Amsterdam, ‘Bestuursvereenkomst Ontwikkeling Marineterrein Amsterdam’, in: *Staatscourant*, Den Haag 9 December 2013, parts of articles 5 and 6.

¹² Tom Daamen en Wouter Jan Verheul, ‘Stedelijke ontwikkeling vanuit een adaptieve strategie’, in: www.gebiedsontwikkeling.nu, 2 juli 2015.

4. VALUE SET

In a study commissioned by the Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam, Peter van Assche (bureau SLA), Vincent Kompier and myself, studied the method of adaptive development and defined its chances for Marineterrein Amsterdam.¹³ We argued that in an adaptive development process it is not the plan but a value set that represents the “dot on the horizon.” The values are basic, common ideas that form the guidelines for thought and action during a development. A joint value set as that “dot on the horizon” keeps the development on course, given that as values are fixed, the program, functions and spatial device might change.¹⁴ Furthermore, the development time is not necessarily fixed in advance—often one works in phases in which each phase has different objectives that can be realized.¹⁵ It therefore seemed reasonable for the stakeholders to start defining value sets with one another.

The development of the Marineterrein has been characterized by formal and informal dynamics: the main principles were formally defined in the policy documents that marked the start of development, principles that had been decided upon by the Dutch state and the Municipality of Amsterdam. Those were: a. Marineterrein will be one of Amsterdam’s innovative workshops with international appeal; b. Marineterrein will be maritime in nature, based on 400 years of history and development of protective power; c. Marineterrein is located in the city center and its implementation must contribute to the regeneration of the urban fabric—both the water and open spaces on the property will be transformed into an important meeting place as well part of the development of a connective route; and d. the Marineterrein itself already functions as an icon. However, an icon in the sense of one large building is not desirable here, not even to attract new flows of visitors. These must come because of the place itself and the programmatic interpretation.¹⁶ These four principles form the basis for choices for exploitation of the terrain and its projects today. These processes, dealing with the selection of particular tenants, making program,-forming communities, developing a common story and stimulating actors to make programs themselves, have a more informal character.

¹³ Peter van Assche (bureau SLA), Marieke Berkers en Vincent Kompier, Koers Houden. Leidraad adaptief ontwikkelen, deel 1 Methodiek & deel 2 Case Marineterrein, Amsterdam, 2016.

¹⁴ Peter van Assche (bureau SLA), Marieke Berkers en Vincent Kompier, Koers Houden. Leidraad adaptief ontwikkelen, deel 1 Methodiek, Amsterdam, 2016.

¹⁵ Idem.

¹⁶ Dutch State and Municipality of Amsterdam, ‘Bestuursovereenkomst Ontwikkeling Marineterrein Amsterdam’, in: Staatscourant, Den Haag 9 December 2013, Article 4, p. 4-5.

5. Supercharger for innovation

The common policy documents used in the area's development were useful in aligning ideas about main principles as dots on the horizon. In 2013, in the Administrative Agreement and Memorandum of Strategies, the Marineterrein was seen as an area that “will once again be one of Amsterdam's innovative workshops with international appeal.”¹⁷ The decision to focus on innovation as a development value regarding the Marineterrein was made early on and has proven to be a constant factor in the site's development over the last eight years.

The next phase in policy making – documented in the Memorandum of Principles of 2017 – takes the theme of innovation one step further. The stakeholders foresee “a future in which the Marineterrein will acquire a prominent and self-evident position in Amsterdam's international innovative network, and in which it will make a substantial contribution to making society more sustainable and to the economic future of the city, the region and the country.”¹⁸



Two innovative building by Bureau SLA: In 2016 (left) Bureau SLA realized the transformation of one of the educational buildings of the navy as a space for innovative startups. In 2019 (blue building) the Bureau SLA designed a facade for the Science Museum from residual material from the automotive industry. Photo: bureau SLA (c) Thijs Wolzak.

¹⁷ Idem. The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, Ministry of Defence and Municipality of Amsterdam, *Memorandum of Strategies, Amsterdam 2013*, p. 2.

¹⁸ Municipality of Amsterdam, Ministry of Defence, The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, *Memorandum of Principles Marineterrein*, Amsterdam, 2016, p. 5.



In 2016, bureau SLA realized the transformation of one of the educational buildings of the navy as a space for innovative startups. Its façade represents all European flags, as the building hosted the Presidency of the European Union, which took place at the Marineterrein.

6. THE POWER OF COMMUNITY-FORMING AND PROGRAMMING

The value of innovation is not only an abstract value anymore, but rather is connected to projects those that took place in between 2013 and 2017 up until now. The Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam selected the organizations that will rent the spaces by taking into account the level of innovation present in their business profiles alongside any sense of why they would fit the growing community best. No formal decision-making process is used here; instead, they were particularly interested in adding innovative forms of education. Overall, the final slate of tenants would include: three international communities of start-ups, three educational institutions, six organizations that are committed to a sustainable and innovative city, four designers of digital platforms or services, three agencies focused on digital learning and serious games, three organizations that unite history and the future, several restaurants and one hotel. Because of this selection, an innovative community has emerged at the Marineterrein. By mid-2017, some 350 people were

working on the public portion of the site, which received around 2500 people every week as guests, members or students.¹⁹



The terrain is opening up gradually. The public space is used by visitors to exercise, play sports, swim, stroll and relax. Photo Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam.



The terrain is opening up gradually. The public space is used by visitors to exercise, play sports, swim, stroll and relax. Photo Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam.

¹⁹ The amount of businesses, organizations and schools grew in between 2017 and now, but the focus on innovation and education remained.

7. LIVING LAB

These businesses or institutions have not only innovated behind their screens in their offices—as the Marineterrein has developed slowly over time, without legally fixed zones²⁰ or fixed land reservations, there has been a vast amount of free space. As defined in the Memorandum of Principles: “An area of this size (about 13 hectares in size), centrally located, offers excellent opportunities for an environment accessible to everyone in which innovations are not only devised, but also made, tested and applied.”²¹ The Bureau Marineterrein was particularly interested in innovative concepts of education. For example, there has been Codam, a college that teaches forms of coding as the basis of solutions for all kinds of challenges that we face as a society. Codam introduced a breakthrough in programming education by teaching talented students with peer-to-peer education, with its assignments being defined by major tech companies. This school on the Marineterrein does not charge tuition fees and students can go there 24 hours a day if they so choose. In 2019, the Marineterrein, together with the Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan Solutions (AMS Institute) opened up as a Living Lab. It uses the land, water and air as testing grounds for experiments. As such, going from a mere “dot” on the horizon in 2013 to becoming an “innovative workshops with international appeal,” the Marineterrein has essentially developed into being one.

To make it clear how the Marineterrein works as a Living Lab, I will describe three of about twelve projects that take place on the terrain. What all of these projects have in common is that they seek to provide possible answers to the question of “How do we keep cities liveable while tackling challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and digitalization?”²²

²⁰ Because the terrain was in hands of the Royal Netherlands Navy there was no zoning plan for most of the Marineterrein. No new zoning plan has been drawn up for the remaining area, pending plans for redevelopment, though the lack of such a legal-planning framework has not led to any problems. In the project phase, it will be determined how the legal planning framework can best be fleshed out in line with the adaptive development. The public legal frameworks against which initiatives and activities are tested are mainly the

Environmental Law General Provisions Act (Wabo) insofar as it concerns environmental permits for building and use, and permits and notifications Activities Decree under the Environmental Management Act (Wm), which also includes rules for noise, air quality, external safety, nature and ecology, within which water management can play a role. Furthermore, rules on the basis of the Drinks and Catering Act and the General Local Regulation (APV) can establish frameworks for specific activities, for example for operating permits and events.

²¹ Municipality of Amsterdam, Ministry of Defence, The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, *Memorandum of Principles Marineterrein*, Amsterdam 2017, p. 5.

²² <https://www.living-lab.nl/>



In 2019 Marineterrein together with Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan Solutions (AMS Institute) opened as a Living Lab. It uses land, water and air as a testing ground for experiments. Photo Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam.



In 2019, Marineterrein together with Amsterdam Institute for Metropolitan Solutions (AMS Institute) opened as a Living Lab. It uses land, water and air as a testing ground for experiments. Photo Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam.

One of these projects is investigating innovative, autonomous methods of water-based transportation, especially given that the city of Amsterdam is highly crowded. Can autonomous floating platforms help to transport people, rubbish, and construction material and waste? Can they be a solution to diminishing road traffic and therefore relieve the crowded streets? Being able to conduct testing in quiet waters like those the Marineterrein offers means the team will be able to answer

some of these pertinent questions like how one ensures that autonomous boats learn how to respond to other traffic in the canals.²³

Another example is the Boombrix project. Numerous trees in the city are suffering from drought, yet it is not so clear why some trees are more vulnerable than others are. What influences the way a tree responds to drought? The location of the tree, the type or quality of soil, the species? Two researchers from the Advanced Metropolitan Solutions (AMS Institute) installed a sensor in the ground beneath a tree on the Marineterrein. They collected data, for example on how long it takes for water to reach the tree's roots. First tests in the quiet area of Marineterrein have convinced the municipality of Amsterdam of the value of this technique and have led to them deciding to use it also in other spots in the city. The researchers were enthusiastic: the trees have been given a voice, they can now "tell" us how they react to a drought.²⁴

One last example: How to prepare for the arrival of autonomous vehicles on the streets of a dense city like Amsterdam? Marineterrein Amsterdam offers a relatively secure environment for testing, given that the terrain is private and mainly car-free. For example, currently a 3D-printed, autonomous electric vehicle named Olli drives across the Marineterrein. There's space for eight passengers in Olli and the electric vehicle continuously scans its surroundings so that it can respond immediately to changing situations and learn from them by leveraging machine learning principles.²⁵ As such, not only are technological solutions being tested. Researchers also study the social impact of their projects. The Olli team for example studies whether people feel more comfortable in an autonomous car. Does it help if the vehicle can respond to you through the use of artificial intelligence?



Marineterrein Amsterdam offers a relatively secure environment to test autonomous vehicles, as the terrain is private and mainly car-free. Photo Sjoerd Ponstein / Marineterrein Amsterdam, graphics Roy Korpel.

²³ JaapJan Berg and Marieke Berkers (ed.), *Marineterrein Amsterdam Magazine*, Amsterdam 2020, Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam, p. 14. This experiment is a collaboration between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions (AMS Institute).

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 15. Boombrix is a startup founded by MSc MADE (TU Delft and Wageningen University & Research) students Jakub Supera and Noelle Teh. The Marineterrein pilot was made possible by the partnership with Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 16. This experiment is a collaboration between Local Motors, AMS Institute, GVB, the City of Amsterdam, Provincie Noord-Holland, Vervoerregio Amsterdam, and Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam.

8. SCALING UP

How will the story of Marineterrein as an innovative living lab continue? It is of huge importance to keep innovating when in the coming years the step will be made moving from a temporary used and programmed area towards a densified living quarter with long-term residents, functions, businesses and a focus on learning. This is because cities are being faced with huge tasks related to sustainability, like becoming more circular,²⁶ climate adaptation or realizing sustainable energy supplies. Additionally, society is changing at a rapid rate—in the Netherlands in 2040, there is expected to be 1.6 million people over the age of 80, which is twice as much as today. We cannot finance caring for them in care institutions any longer.²⁷ How can we make environments safe so that vulnerable people can stay living at or near their homes? In the Netherlands, more people are immigrating than emigrating, especially in the big cities.²⁸ These people have other aims and wishes related to housing and recreation. As well, loneliness is a large and growing problem. To illustrate: more than 40% of the inhabitants of Amsterdam feel moderately or severely lonely.²⁹ That is a huge amount! We have to rethink and reconsider our neighborhoods, their design, planning and building process. We need to innovate.

9. CONDITIONS

The adaptive development process and spatial context of Marineterrein Amsterdam offers opportunities that have proven fruitful in the scaling up of the program of innovation to the level of neighborhood development. First: The lack of a zoning plan provides scope for experimenting with temporary use in the current transitional phase. “For the final development, there are possibilities to experiment with the municipal Environmental Vision. This new instrument is the result of the Environmental Act, which was expected to enter into force in 2019. An integrated approach is envisaged from the spatial, economic and social domain. If central government and the municipality work together in researching the most innovative

²⁶ Amsterdam set clear goals. For example: By 2030 the city wants to use 50% less new raw materials and by 2050 the city must be 100% circular. Municipality of Amsterdam, *Amsterdam Circulair 2020-2025 Strategie*, 2020.

²⁷ Central Agency for Statistics, *Prognose: 19 miljoen inwoners in 2039, 17-12-2019*. <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2019/51/prognose-19-miljoen-inwoners-in-2039>

²⁸ Central Agency for Statistics, *Dossier Asiel, migratie en integratie*, 2019. <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/dossier/dossier-asiel-migratie-en-integratie/hoeveel-mensen-met-een-migratieachtergrond-wonen-in-nederland>

²⁹ Municipality of Amsterdam, OIS, *Bevolkingsprognose 2020-2050*, Amsterdam, February 2020. City of Amsterdam, OIS, *Corona onderzoek*, Amsterdam, December 2020.

and effective planning framework, the development of the planning area can serve as an educational process.”³⁰ Second: the Marineterrein is seen as an area with opportunities for creating a distinctive living environment, one that is also attractive for international businesses.³¹ The development of Marineterrein is not part of the plan to accelerate the construction of houses in Amsterdam, therefore, there is no need to very quickly start with developing houses—there is time to innovate. Third: the Marineterrein is situated in the city center of Amsterdam, near Amsterdam Central Station. This accessible location offers opportunities to act internationally as a showroom for innovation. On the other hand, this top location also offers opportunities to easily reap large profits when development is conducted quickly and at a high density. Therefore, the location is also its weakness in relation to the scaling up of innovation. Fourth: the Marineterrein borders the quarter of Kattenburg, a living quarter consisting mainly of rented family houses from the 1970s and 1980s. It deals with unemployment amongst its youth, especially given that some are involved in criminal activities. Development of the Marineterrein should be done in connection with the socio-economic and spatial challenges present in this quarter. Moreover, the Bureau Marineterrein already works together with the community of the Marineterrein to examine how social return and societal impacts can be further worked out so that more places for internships/work experience can be created.³²

Issues like building affordable houses with good quality, making environments with a good working social network, employment, giving elderly the opportunity to keep living in their neighborhoods with care on the neighborhood scale can be addressed on the Marineterrein. Fifth: Scaling up innovation to the neighborhood level is connected to current policy ambitions policy. As one can read in the Memorandum of Principles: “Because innovation is pre-eminently dynamic and imposes rapidly changing demands on the physical environment, the explicit ambition is to develop a sustainable and adaptive part of the city. [...] Such an environment must have much more to offer than just adequate commercial buildings. Innovation flourishes when interacting: exchange of knowledge and skills. An attractive public space and facilities, both cultural and social, that stimulates encounters can contribute to this. [...] There is a search for forms of housing that are related to the innovations or innovators, for example by applying new inventions or by combining living and working.”³³ How to realize these ambitions requires a high level of innovation. Sixth: the Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam worked hard in developing a strong innovative community. Experienced experts are already working on the terrain, some dealing with architecture and urbanism. For example, the research group Circular Thinking of the Academy of Architecture Amsterdam maintains an office on the Marineterrein.

³⁰ Municipality of Amsterdam, Ministry of Defence, The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, *Memorandum of Principles Marineterrein*, Amsterdam 2017, p. 27.

³¹ Municipality of Amsterdam, *Koers 25. Ruimte voor de stad*, Amsterdam, 2016, p. 31.

³² Municipality of Amsterdam, *Ontwikkelmogelijkheden Oostelijke eilanden*, 2018, p. 4.

³³ The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, Ministry of Defence and Municipality of Amsterdam, *Memorandum of Principles*, Amsterdam 2017. p. 20.

This group developed a plan to develop, design and build a prototype of a circular building. With this project, they aim to investigate the potential of a new material paradigm. A circular lifestyle means a reassessment of all the core concepts and ideas that underpin our society: materials, urban planning, construction, financing, regulation, architecture, and the way we value and measure things, altering ways of living, et cetera.³⁴

10. NOT A MATTER OF COURSE

Why stress these conditions? Because it is not a simple matter of course that the conditions the Marineterrein offers will be used at their full potential in the next phase. Adaptive planning and living labs are not always fully embedded in development processes when the temporary programming and building phases merge into the building of higher density phase.

A threat is the way the Dutch government is organized in the Netherlands. Although developing in an adaptive innovative way requires an integral approach – combining economic, spatial, sustainable and social aims – municipalities and the state government are still organized and functioning in silos. Innovation often deals with different domains: spatial planning, financing and legislation for example. In addition, the Marineterrein is owned by the Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, and Marineterrein as part of the real estate department dealing with the disposal of real estate. Because of its aim is the agency is not so much interested in future developments. The agency's focus is instead “square meters and bricks:” quantity instead of quality.

Hopefully the formal agreements – the values as agreed upon in the Memoranda – and the informal dynamics – a lively and broadly innovative community, a common story and a visual burden of proof in the already executed tests on the terrain will be strong enough to keep the process going at a slow enough pace to develop that “dot on the horizon” as agreed upon in 2013: Amsterdam's innovative workshops with international appeal. If the Dutch administration really wants to keep its ambitions serious, it should be willing to take unfamiliar paths.

³⁴ Interview with Peter van Assche, Professor of Architecture & Circular Thinking at the Academy of Architecture, 25 January 2021.

KEY REFERENCES

- Municipality of Amsterdam, *Amsterdam Circulair 2020-2025 Strategie*, Amsterdam, 2020.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, OIS, *Bevolkingsprognose 2020-2050*, Amsterdam, February 2020.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, OIS, *Corona Research*, Amsterdam, December 2020.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, *Ontwikkelmogelijkheden Oostelijke eilanden*, 2018.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, *Woningbouwplan 2018-2025 (Housing plan 2018-2025)*, Amsterdam, 2018.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, *Koers 25. Ruimte voor de stad (Course 25: Space for the City)*, Amsterdam, 2016.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, Ministry of Defence, The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, *Memorandum of Principles Marineterrein (Principenota Het Marineterrein)*, Amsterdam, 2016.
- Municipality of Amsterdam, Ministry of Defence, The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, *Memorandum of Strategy Marineterrein (Strategienota Het Marineterrein)*, Amsterdam, 27 August 2013.
- Central Agency for Statistics, *Prognose: 19 miljoen inwoners in 2039, 17-12-2019*.
<https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2019/51/prognose-19-miljoen-inwoners-in-2039>
- Central Agency for Statistics, *Dossier Asiel, migratie en integratie*, 2019.
<https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/dossier/dossier-asiel-migratie-en-integratie/hoeveel-mensen-met-een-migratieachtergrond-wonen-in-nederland>
- Peter van Assche (bureau SLA), Marieke Berkers en Vincent Kompier, *Koers Houden. Leidraad adaptief ontwikkelen, deel 1 Methodiek & deel 2 Case Marineterrein (Keeping on Course. Guideline to Adaptive Development, Part 1 Methodics & Part 2 Case Marineterrein)*, Amsterdam, 2016.
- JaapJan Berg and Marieke Berkers (ed.), *Marineterrein Amsterdam Magazine*, Amsterdam, 2020, Bureau Marineterrein Amsterdam

Tom Daamen and Wouter Jan Verheul, 'Stedelijke ontwikkeling vanuit een adaptieve strategie,' in: *gebiedsonwikkeling.nu*, 2 juli 2015.

<https://www.gebiedsonwikkeling.nu/artikelen/stedelijke-ontwikkeling-vanuit-een-adaptieve-strategie/>

The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, Ministry of Defence and Municipality of Amsterdam, *Memorandum of Strategies*, Amsterdam, 2013.

The Dutch Central Government Real Estate Agency, Ministry of Defence and Municipality of Amsterdam, *Memorandum of Principles*, Amsterdam, 2017.

Minister of Defence, Minister of the Interior and Municipality of Amsterdam, 'Bestuursovereenkomst Ontwikkeling Marineterrein Amsterdam' ('Administrative Agreement for the Development of Marineterrein Amsterdam'), in: *Staatscourant*, Den Haag, 9 December 2013.

Platform31: Karin de Nijs, Melika Levelt and Stan Majoor (ed.), *Open stad, Werken aan duurzame en democratische steden*, Amsterdam and Den Haag, 2020, NWO-Verdus research project R-LINK.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Marieke Berkers, Architectural Historian, member of the Editorial Board of *Blauwe Kamer* and of *Yearbook Landscape Architecture and Urban Design*, lecturer at the Academy of Architecture Amsterdam and TU Delft Department of Architecture

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Panorama Lokaal

urban design competition
on urban-rural fringe visions (NL)

Joao Bento

Researcher of Architectural
Policies, University College
London - Bartlett School of
Planning

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2.1. National policy.....	4
2.2. Board of Government Advisors	5
2.3. Panorama Nederland.....	6
3. OBJECTIVES.....	7
4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	9
4.1. Main themes and challenges.....	9
4.2. Procedure	11
4.3. Phase 1: Call for coalitions with places located on the edges of cities	12
4.4. Phase 2: Design competitions and workshops.....	14
4.5. Presentation and selection	16
4.6. Coordination and cooperation.....	16
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	17
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	18
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES.....	18
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	19
9. EXAMPLE TILBURG NOORD	21
9.1. Local coalition (Phase 1).....	21
9.2. Design competition (Phase 2).....	22
10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	27
KEY REFERENCES	29
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	30

1. SUMMARY

Panorama Lokaal was launched in 2019 by the Dutch Board of Government Advisors together with other partners. Inspired by the 'Panorama Nederland' campaign, this initiative consisted of a two-phase design competition of ideas focused on residential neighbourhoods lying on the outskirts of Dutch cities in order to enable their renovation and adaptation to current challenges in places of livelihood. In its first phase, local stakeholders were invited to form a coalition and register a location on the Panorama Lokaal website, from which a jury selected seven as the competition sites. For each site, the seven coalitions formulated a design assignment aimed at innovation and framing local constraints, the needs of the communities, etc. In its second phase, an open call was launched for design teams to present a multidisciplinary team, with a portfolio and a motivation letter for one or more locations. For each site, three teams were selected to develop a design proposal through a collaborative process. Finally, a jury selected a winner for each site and the visionary proposals were presented and discussed in a symposium.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

In terms of administrative structure, the Dutch public administration is composed of four tiers: the central government, the provinces, the municipalities and the local water authorities.¹ The central government is comprised of 12 ministries responsible for policy-making and for drafting and adopting legislation, subject to parliamentary enquiry. At the sub-national level, the Netherlands is divided into 12 provinces, 21 water authorities, and 355 municipalities.² According to Meer (2018, p. 763), despite this clear structure, the Dutch administration is a "compound system of multi-level governance as many task areas are shared by various governments with different responsibilities according to scale of service delivery."³ This is the case of spatial planning and urban design, the public policy competences of which are shared both by the local and national administrations (Tosics et al., 2010, p. 199), as well as by the provinces which also have spatial development responsibilities, including water and environmental management, energy, and the climate, among other areas (Meer, 2018).

¹ The Netherlands has been a parliamentary constitutional monarchy with a decentralized unitary state since the middle of the 19th century. For more info:



<https://www.government.nl/topics/constitution> (accessed on 08/06/2020)

² <https://www.government.nl/topics/public-administration> (accessed on 08/06/2020)

³ Some of the exceptions are defence, foreign affairs, and support for the judicial system, public prosecution and prison system which are each a part of the central government (Ibidem).

2.1. National policy

With a long tradition in land-use planning and urban design,⁴ the Netherlands was one of the first countries in the world to adopt a national policy on architecture, entitled 'Space for Architecture' (*Ruimte voor Architectuur*), in 1991 (Cousins, 2009, p. 9). With a non-legislative nature, the Dutch policy aimed to promote good practices among public authorities and to create a favourable climate for architecture (Dings, 2009, p. 133). The first policy objective intended to set an example for society at large and development actors in particular by developing high quality public buildings and projects (The Netherlands, 1991, p. 13), as the second policy objective was intended to improve the architectural climate and promote a culture of design, for which a set of architectural institutions and a wide range of measures were put in place (Bento, 2017).

As with most innovations, this pioneering Dutch policy did not start from scratch. Ten years prior, a bottom-up movement of local initiatives started to develop, giving impetus to an overall improvement of the architectural climate in the Netherlands (Ibidem). This architectural grassroots movement that occurred throughout the 1980s was also a reflection of the dissatisfaction with the quality of buildings and urban spaces developed in the preceding decades. A huge amount of low-quality housing had been developed during the 1970s, influenced by post-war housing models in which design was not valued by the market (Figueiredo, 2010). This discontent reinforced the notion that design quality needed to be promoted, both socially and in market terms. Another important factor was the restructuring of the national cultural policy at the end of the 1980s, which led the then-Minister of Culture and Minister of Housing, Planning and Environment to work together on a joint architectural policy, ultimately adopted in 1991.⁵

Since then, the Dutch government continues to renew its architectural policy every four years in order to approve its multi-year policy budget, introduce new themes and update its action plan. Alongside the different versions, several partners have come on board, with the last one adopted in 2017 having involved four ministries, and entitled "Working Together on the Strength of Design. Action Agenda for Spatial Design 2017–2020."⁶

⁴ For a historical overview, see: Dings (2009), 'Historic perspective 1900-2010', in 'Design and politics', edited by Henk Ovink & Elien Wierenga, O10 publishers. Rotterdam.

⁵ In 1989, Hedy d'Ancona (Minister of Culture) and J.G.M. Alders (Minister of Housing, Planning and Environment)

followed up on the idea of their predecessors by developing a joint architectural policy that could politically frame 'The Netherlands Architecture Institute' (NAi) and bring building and cultural policy closer together through the establishment of a policy platform shared between the two ministries.

⁶ For more info see: <https://www.samenwerkenaanontwerpkraacht.nl/en/index.html>

Throughout the last 30 years, the scope of the architectural policy has been expanding. Although the first policy (1991) was mainly focused on the concept of “architectural quality,” in its second policy version (1996) the notion of ‘spatial design’ was introduced, thereby broadening concerns about design quality to the city and regional scales by embracing the idea of ‘spatial quality,’ in doing so cross-cutting other disciplinary fields, such as urban development, physical planning, landscape architecture and infrastructural design (The Netherlands 1996, p. 8).⁷ This broadening has continued until today and, more recently, the concept of “environmental quality” was introduced in the new Environmental and Planning Act, which intends to achieve and maintain good spatial and environment quality, including aspects like ‘cultural heritage, architectonic quality, urban quality, landscape quality and nature quality’ (Assen & Campen, 2020).⁸

2.2. Board of Government Advisors

The Chief Government Architect plays an important role in the development of the national policy on architecture and spatial design in the Netherlands,⁹ as their mission is to promote the design quality of public buildings across governmental departments and to stimulate a culture of design.¹⁰ As advisor to the entire government, the Chief Government Architect provides the various ministries with ‘solicited and unsolicited advice on matters of policy and strategic developments on architecture, urban and rural planning, infrastructure, landscape and ensuring that spatial design is properly covered in legislation and in education’ (The Netherlands, 2006). Among other tasks, they actively contribute to the definition and monitoring of the architecture and spatial design policy, for example by commissioning regular assessment studies on policy outcomes and impacts, promoting debates on specific themes, etc. In addition, the Chief Government Architect is officially the design advisor for the Central Government Real Estate Agency on the architecture and urban surroundings of state-owned property¹¹.

⁷ The Dutch Fourth Memorandum on Spatial Planning (1988) included for the first time the broader concept of ‘spatial quality,’ which was widely used in the development of residential areas and industrial estates (Dings, 2009).

⁸ Although its interpretation is left to the sub-national levels, the notion of good spatial and environmental quality is situated as one of the three social objectives of the new Environmental and Planning Act.

⁹ This position has existed within the Dutch public administration since the beginning of the 19th century (The Netherlands, 2006).

¹⁰ Since the 1960s, the Chief Government Architect’s mission has shifted from producing designs to advising the central government and the government buildings agency on public projects alongside offering guidance on architectural policy (The Netherlands, 2006).

¹¹ Initially, CRa was composed of four policy advisors: the Chief Government Architect, and the Government Advisors on Landscape, Infrastructure, and Cultural Heritage. In 2012, the mission and composition of the CRa was revised by reducing its number of advisors to three. <https://english.rijksvastgoedbedrijf.nl/about-us/government-architect>

Due to the high number of requests, since 2005 the Chief Government Architect has been assisted by two additional government advisors, one focused on landscape policy and the other on urban planning issues. Supported by a small staff and chaired by the Chief Government Architect, the three comprise the Board of Government Advisors (*College van Rijksadviseurs - CRA*).¹² Describing itself as an independent advisory body, the CRA fosters a place making culture and design quality agenda (e.g. organizing initiatives and events) through a variety of soft power tools (policies, research by design, and quality-teams). In this context, it provides advice on urban planning and architectural policy, promotes design competitions, as well as assuring the quality supervision of new developments. Panorama Lokaal is one of several other design competitions organised by the Board in recent years, which have addressed issues like housing for refugees, new forms of care and support for the elderly, and deals between farmers and citizens.¹³

2.3. Panorama Nederland

In early 2018, the CRA launched the campaign “Panorama Nederland” that aimed to promote a debate about the future of spatial planning in the Netherlands by addressing ‘how the major social issues of today can be the key to welcome structural improvements in the future’ (Rijksadviseurs, 2019, p. 3)¹⁴. A hypothetical future landscape was developed in the form of a circular panorama intended to promote a debate about the how the main social and spatial challenges for the Netherlands could be envisaged across the Dutch landscape. This visual panorama included new spatial interventions in different built and unbuilt spaces across the Dutch territory (e.g. the seacoast, urban centres, residential neighbourhoods, agricultural and rural spaces, etc.) (Fig. 1).

The underlying goal of ‘Panorama Nederland’ was to raise awareness about the importance of design and interdisciplinary collaboration when it comes to tackling new spatial transformations that result from social and economic challenges (e.g. energy transition, urbanization, climate change, etc.) in a coherent and integrated manner (Ibidem). ‘Panorama Nederland’ travelled across the country as an itinerant

¹² Its members are appointed by three governmental departments: the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, and the the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Agricultural Environment. For more info:



<https://www.collegevanrijksadviseurs.nl/actueel/nieuws/2017/05/17/cra-presenteert-werkagenda-2017-2020>

¹³ Examples of recent design competitions include: Housing for refugees: "Home away from Home" (2015); New forms of living care & support: "Who cares" (2017); and a new deal for farmers & citizens: "Brood en Spelen" (2018).

¹⁴ For more info see: <https://www.collegevanrijksadviseurs.nl/projecten/panorama-nederland> (accessed on 03/06/2020)

exposition, where people could step into the panorama and be able to peer into this future vision of the Dutch landscape, animated by a series of debates on the future spatial visions for their village, city or province that was holding the exposition.¹⁵ In early 2019, inspired by this initiative, the CRa decided to launch the 'Panorama Lokaal' competition in order to reimagine the urban-rural fringes in the Netherlands and provide a practical way of implementing the ideas of the past initiative.



Fig. 1 – One of 'Panorama Nederland' public events (Source: *College van Rijksadviseurs*)

3. OBJECTIVES

Operating under the following subtitle of “how do we prepare the city edges for the future?”, Panorama Lokaal is a two-stage design competition focused on residential neighbourhoods on the fringes of cities that aims to encourage new methods and means of collaboration among municipalities and local stakeholders with the design support of multidisciplinary teams. The focus of the competition is to promote experimental approaches that enable local actors to improve their neighbourhoods and the interconnection between urban and rural areas.

¹⁵ The exposition 'Panorama Nederland' was held in 25 different locations across the Netherlands with the CRa promoting around 100 presentations and debates regarding the topics associated with the future transformation of the Dutch landscape.

According to the competition's regulations,¹⁶ Panorama Lokaal holds the following objectives:

1. Place the ongoing transformation of existing residential and rural areas in Dutch municipalities on the political agenda, involving both the design and construction community alongside residents and politicians, so that the connections with the landscape may be improved;
2. To stimulate innovation, design power and multidisciplinary cooperation;
3. To encourage promising coalitions and new partnerships that actively work on the competition's results in the neighbourhoods and adjacent landscapes;
4. To actively share new insights and concepts with a wider audience;
5. To promote sustainability and the future-proofing of residential and rural areas, and to encourage the ultimate realization of the selected proposals;
6. To encourage proposals that eschew the construction chain and are innovative in terms of speed and affordability, in combination with sustainability and the associated public space, when it comes to housing construction (renovation, transformation and / or new construction).

In this context, Panorama Lokaal goes beyond a simple design competition of ideas by encouraging a special approach to the design of projects, based on multi-actor collaboration and partnerships among different stakeholders and design professionals, thereby enabling conditions for spatial experiments with a social impact. Although it is ultimately not guaranteed that the winning proposals will end up being realized by the municipalities or housing associations, the overall process of the competition fosters a place making culture and collaborative action between different stakeholders¹⁷.

¹⁶ Available at:
<https://panoramalokaal.nl/files/nvg/00011/190702ReglementPanoramaLokaal.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://panoramalokaal.nl/prijsvraag/english+summary/>

4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

4.1. Main themes and challenges



Fig. 2 – Panorama Lokaal cover leaflet (Source: *College van Rijksadviseurs*)

With an unusual brief, the Panorama Lokaal competition focused on residential areas located on the outskirts of the cities, that had been built in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Most of these areas are located in transitional zones between rural-urban areas, areas that are not yet considered rural yet are situated outside urban clusters, also classified as peri-urban areas (Piorr et al., 2011). Similar to the numerous urban-rural areas located on the peripheries of European cities, these residential areas are described by the competition as a mix of housing blocks and single-family houses, parking lots and some recreational or sports facilities, typically surrounded by nature or agricultural fields (Fig. 2).

Considering that several decades have passed since they were originally planned, one of the main challenges posed by Panorama Lokaal was how to transform these residential neighbourhoods into diverse, flexible and attractive places. As the Dutch Government advisor highlighted (interview, 2020):

“We saw several post-war suburban areas that were not being paid much attention and being neglected and that they would suffer in our eyes in the next decades.”

Inspired by the past initiative ‘Panorama Nederland’, the competition brief identified several challenges that needed innovative design strategies in order to enable and facilitate the desired positive transformation of these areas. Although interrelated, the following nine challenges were identified:

1. From monoculture to diversity – Most post-war residential neighbourhoods located on the periphery of cities are monofunctional, where single-family dwellings predominate. However, nowadays there is a strong demand for different types of housing as well as for mixed urban environments with both commercial and working places. Therefore, the first challenge posed by the competition was how to transform and adapt these monofunctional neighbourhoods in order to generate a more diversified, urban environment with various housing patterns and mixed uses.

2. Connecting the city and countryside – A second challenge was the lack of any interconnection between urban and rural areas, namely residential areas and their close natural surroundings. In an ideal scenario, a resident would be able to take advantage of their proximity to the natural landscape or agricultural areas and make better use of these zones (e.g. food production or natural recreational paths).

3. Suitable and affordable home for everyone – Currently there is a housing shortage in the Netherlands, which continues to raise market values and reduce the availability of affordable housing. To solve this challenge, it is necessary to build new housing as well as to improve vacant houses and reintroduce them into the market to be able to raise the number of affordable homes¹⁸.

4. New forms of housing, in line with new housing requirements – Designed and built five or six decades ago, most of these residential buildings are not adapted to current needs and changes in family lifestyles¹⁹. Therefore, a major challenge ahead remains how to modernize and adapt this housing stock in order to meet the requirements of the residents.

5. More biodiversity and natural experience – Although most of these residential neighbourhoods comprise abundant open spaces and green areas, they tend to have low levels of biodiversity and nature. Therefore, an additional challenge was the creation of more natural spaces in order to increase the level of biodiversity and improve the connection of these areas to their natural surroundings.

6. Building social structures – A current tendency is the growth in loneliness and social isolation as family sizes get smaller and social connections become weaker. This constituted the sixth challenge: how to create conditions that foster social interaction and to realize spaces for encounters.

7. More time for each other – An additional challenge was the economic dependence of these residential areas on the city centres, which results in large commuting patterns. Considering that the car is one of the most used means of transport, a large percentage of these areas are occupied by parking lots and infrastructure. A possible solution was replacing some of these parking areas with new office spaces that could help reduce the need to commute and use the car.

8. New energy – Most of the buildings in post-war residential districts use non climate-friendly energy sources (e.g. gas) and the neighbourhood's infrastructure is

¹⁸ In 2018, the Dutch Government announced its intention to construct one million new homes by 2030.

¹⁹ Panorama Lokaal emphasized that there is a mismatch between the housing types of the sixties/seventies/eighties*

and the current needs of the contemporary Dutch family, which nowadays tends to vary in composition, with a higher percentage of single parents or people living alone. As such, it can be seen that the existing housing types of these residential areas have not been adapted to current family needs.

often obsolete. The challenge proposed was how to introduce other energy sources to make these areas more sustainable.

9. Water as a connecting factor – The last challenge presented by the competition was the need to make these residential areas more resilient to climate change through the introduction of water elements. Creating new water basins and channels could help mitigate undesired heat waves and absorb excess rainwater from more regular precipitation peaks. In addition, it would help improve the connection between the urban and rural areas through ecological channels.

4.2. Procedure

Officially launched in May 2019, the Panorama Lokaal competition intended to attract creative teams who could be interested in tackling the themes referred to above (among others) on behalf of local coalitions of municipalities, housing associations and other relevant parties. This competition was structured in two separate phases, each consisting of two parts:

- In the first phase, an open call was launched for the submission of places by local coalitions to participate in the competition, from which a jury selected seven sites (1A); for each site, the local coalitions formulated a design assignment in collaboration with the CRa aimed at innovation and framing local constraints, the needs of communities, etc. (1B);
- In the second phase, a design competition was launched for each site, where the design teams applied with a portfolio for one or more locations (2A); for each site, three design teams were selected to develop a design proposal in a collaborative environment (2B).

Finally, a jury determined a winner for each site and the results were presented at a symposium. According to the resources of the client (the municipality or one of the local partners), the winning teams would receive a design assignment to develop the projects (Table 1).

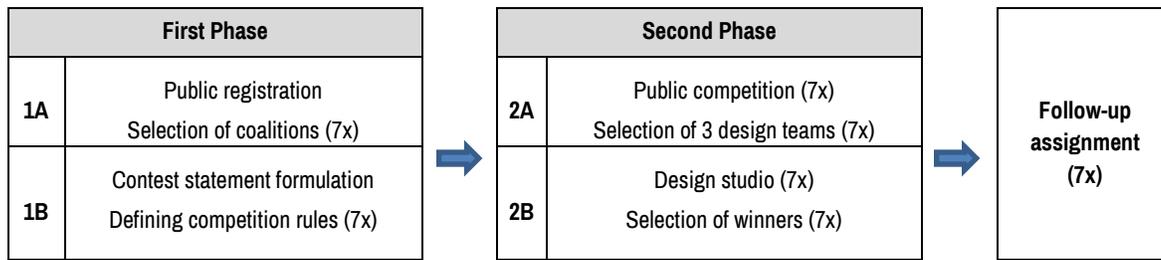


Table 1 – Procedure of the Panorama Lokaal competition
(Source: College van Rijksadviseurs)

Throughout the entire process, the local coalitions were supported by the CRa team, namely, when it came to defining the competition program, drawing up the competition's regulations, the programming site visits and workshops, selecting the design teams, and formulating the follow-up assignment (CRa, 2019).

4.3. Phase 1: Call for coalitions with places located on the edges of cities

1A. Selection of coalitions and sites

The first step of the competition was the launch of an open call for coalitions to propose and register a location in a residential area built in the 1960s, 70s or 80s, located on the edge of a city, including its adjacent rural areas. The local coalitions had to be constituted of at least one municipality, a housing corporation and a third party (e.g. a group of residents or other local stakeholders). According to the competition's regulations, each joint application had to provide a letter of motivation and a description of the proposed residential area, its main problems, and the future role the different parties would have in the implementation of the competition's follow-up phase (Ibidem)²⁰.

In October 2019, the CRa received 14 applications from which seven locations were selected²¹ according to the following criteria: nationwide distribution, residential areas from different periods, areas inside and outside the Randstad, large and small locations, and differences in rural contexts (Fig. 3).

²⁰ Considering the experimental nature of the competition, its procedure was tested in two locations (Schalkwijk in Haarlem; Tilburg-Noord in Tilburg), in collaboration with the municipalities and local partners. In May 2019, these two coalitions and sites were presented as examples at the launch

event for the competition in order to explain the procedure and incentivise submissions.

²¹ The seven selected sites were located in the following cities: Bargeres in Emmen, Schalkwijk in Haarlem, Julianadorp in Den Helder, Beverwaard in Rotterdam, Tilburg-Noord in Tilburg, Westwijk in Vlaardingen and Mosterdhof in Westervoort.



Fig. 3 – Location of the seven selected sites in The Netherlands
(Source: *College van Rijksadviseurs*)

1B. Definition of design assignments

The second step of the competition was dedicated to the definition of the design assignments. For each of the seven locations, the CRa promoted dedicated ‘Panorama sessions’ with the local coalitions to discuss and analyse the neighbourhood’s specificities and close surroundings, which included a site visit, in order to develop and define the design assignments (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 – One of the ‘Panorama Lokaal’ sessions with local coalitions
(Source: *College van Rijksadviseurs - CRa*)

According to the competition’s regulations, in each session the ‘context and ambitions are explored, substantive reflections will be given by experts and the contours of the assignment will be formulated in an interactive way’ (Ibid.). Based on the workshop’s results, an Architectuur Lokaal expert partner²² made a proposal for the associated design competition regulations for each of the seven locations, based on the procedures of the KOMPAS light competitions framework²³. This first-phase concluded with the adoption of the regulations for each of the seven design competitions by the parties involved.

²² Founded in 1992, Architectuur Lokaal is an independent, non-commercial foundation with ANBI status (Organisation for the Public Good), with a small team of officers and a director. It presents itself as a national centre of expertise devoted to building culture, preparing and moderating (council) debates, conducting evaluation studies, organising excursions,

providing in-company training, and organising prizes and competitions: <https://arch-lokaal.nl/english-summary/>

²³ KOMPAS light is a digital handbook and step-by-step guide for commissioning architectural services, resulting in a clear, ready-to-use guideline for invitations to tender, including standard application forms, including rules for design competitions endorsed by the various Ministries and professional organisations. For more information: <https://www.architectuuroopdrachten.nl/>

4.4. Phase 2: Design competitions and workshops

2A. Selection of design teams

The first part of the second phase was dedicated to the selection of the design teams. In December 2019, an open call for seven autonomous competitions (independent procedures) was launched on the Panorama Lokaal website, with the main questions for each site and specific regulations. To be able to participate and register an application, the design teams had to constitute a multidisciplinary team that included architects, urban planners, landscape architects and other designers, as well as people with other knowledge or experience according to the needs of each place (e.g. people from the social domain, energy or water experts, experts with knowledge of agricultural transitions, etc.). The design teams had to deliver a motivation letter and to substantiate why their team could provide the best answer to the design questions for that particular site. In addition, they had to include a portfolio of the team and / or of the team members, providing evidence of their expertise with reference projects.²⁴ (Ibid.).

At the end of January 2020, the CRa received 147 entries. For each location, an expert jury, led by the Chief Government Architect and comprised of at least four experts, selected three teams per location to develop design proposals for the seven locations in a collaborative environment. Each design team received a fee of €10,000 to cover their participation costs (amount excl. VAT). Although no prize money was foreseen at the start, in January 2020, before the call period for submission of the design teams ended, it was announced that an additional €10,000 would be distributed to the seven winning teams.

2B. Design workshops

In the final part of the competition, the 21 selected teams developed design proposals that responded to the competition brief and created project proposals that were: 'innovative, feasible, scalable and reproducible, and that can also serve as inspiration for other locations' (Ibid). To provide an example, for the competition regarding the Mosterdhof district, in Westervoort, the three design teams were asked to provide:

- a longer-term vision in which the tasks related to climate and energy were connected to each other and linked to the overall redesign of the

²⁴ The design teams could register for multiple locations, but the team members could not participate in more than one team per competition, because they cannot be in several places at the same time (like with the workshops).

- neighbourhood and rural area;
- a visualization at the neighbourhood scale of the neighbourhood and the immediate living environment until 2030 in the form of a plan map, a strategy for interventions and images at eye level;
- a toolbox with practical guides, which would assist residents and other parties with developing the projects.

With the support of the CRa, the local coalitions promoted and organized two design workshops for each site with local experts deployed from the local coalitions to facilitate future implementation. In the first workshop session, in February 2020, the design teams conducted a site visit to the neighbourhood, received relevant information and had the opportunity to meet local stakeholders, residents and other local parties (Fig. 5). The second workshop session was focused on interim design presentations and feedback from (among others) local stakeholders, jury members and residents²⁵. If needed, the organizers and the teams could arrange additional meetings.



Fig. 5 – One of the Panorama Lokaal site visits (Source: CRa)

²⁵ The second workshop sessions were planned to be held two months after the first session, in April 2020. Due to the Corona

(COVID-19) crisis, the second workshop meetings were postponed to July 2020.

4.5. Presentation and selection

The final part of the competition was dedicated to the presentation of the 21 design proposals to an audience and the selection of the best proposal for each site by the different juries (one for each site). According to the competition's regulations (art. 4.2), the juries evaluate the proposals according to the following assessment criteria:

- the way in which the proposals respond to the assignment;
- the degree of innovation and integrity of the proposals;
- the extent to which the proposals can generate acceleration or breakthroughs;
- the visibility of the solution offered in the neighbourhood and its spatial quality;
- the extent to which there is a positive impact on the functioning of the district and on the lives and housing of the inhabitants;
- the example effect for other locations and its feasibility.

Finally, the seven winning teams were announced on the 24th of September and the competition's results were communicated to a wider audience via a broadcast on television with a series of interviews in the preceding days. Although it was not an obligation, the coalition teams who co-supported the initiative (see below) were expected to do as much as possible to provide the winning design teams with a follow-up design assignment focused on implementing the plans.

4.6. Coordination and cooperation

As the main coordinator of the initiative, CRa managed the entire competition process ensuring that it would run smoothly, and efficiently provided all the necessary administrative and logistical conditions, replied to all of the questions from interested people or organizations, communicated and publicized the initiative, etc. Considering that 'Panorama Lokaal' aimed to foster collaboration among different parties that usually do not tend to work together, in order to set an example, the CRa promoted the competition in collaboration with four ministries²⁶ and two other national organizations: the Social Housing Network Organization²⁷ and the State

²⁶ The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Ministry

of Infrastructure and Water Management, and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

²⁷ For more info see: <https://www.aedes.nl/>

Forestry Authority²⁸. As the focal point of the initiative, the CRa reported back to the consortium, who jointly financed the competition.

In addition to the above partnership, the seven individual competitions were co-organized between CRa and the seven local coalitions that applied for the site projects. When submitting their applications, the local coalitions were requested to formally commit themselves²⁹ to cooperating with the CRa in promoting the initiative and assuming the organization of their own design competition, with the support of Architectuur Lokaal, and to actively participate in the workshop sessions, as well as, to undertake the following set of tasks: a) ensure that at least one person will be responsible for organizing the workshops and for supervising the work of the design teams³⁰, supported by the Panorama Lokaal project team; b) provide a suitable location for the workshops; c) provide one person to conduct the workshop sessions; d) collaborate with two local judges for the selection of three teams and the selection of a winner; and e) financially contribute towards the costs of the competition, with €10,000 for each design team (excluding VAT).

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

The Panorama Lokaal competition is an informal rating tool, which is not related to the formal regulatory framework, such as the urban planning system. In addition, the competition does not follow the normal tender procedures imposed by the EU's Public Procurement Directive. Despite the soft power approach, a regulation was defined and published before the launch of the competition of ideas. In addition, for each of the seven design competitions, an individual regulation was formulated and adopted by the stakeholders involved. These formalities were intended to offer participants a structured and transparent set of rules about the procedure and the set of criteria used for the selection and awards.

²⁸ For more info see: <https://www.staatsbosbeheer.nl/english>

²⁹ This is provided in the form of a signed declaration (a proforma), available at the conclusion of the competition.

³⁰ The Local Panorama regulation specifies that the time investment is at least 60 hours per person (incl. participation in the Panorama session and four workshop sessions).

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

Panorama Lokaal does not have any allied financial mechanisms associated with the tool (e.g. financial support for implementing the winning proposals). Nevertheless, the competition process is financed by public funding (e.g. logistical and technical support, communication resources, payment to the jury, site visits, etc.). According to the Government Advisor (interview, 2020), setting up and implementing Panorama Lokaal involved a budget of roughly €1.000.000. This budget was shared by the financial contribution of the various parties involved, namely the CRA's own budget, the four ministries involved, the two national partners and the seven local authorities. This budget does not include the person/cost of the board government advisors, the public officials and the secretariat, as their salaries are already assured by public expenditure. The highest rubric of the initiative was the financial compensation to each of the 21 design teams, which was assured by the seven local authorities.

7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

The main challenge of Panorama Lokaal was the uncertainty about whether the design proposals would be implemented or at least be able to influence local planning policy. As in all design competitions of ideas, the proposals usually provide innovative solutions to complex problems yet their implementation is dependent on a wide set of variables. Firstly, the proposals are defined on a strategic level, establishing a vision for complex areas and a toolbox that may inspire local parties. To transform these ideas into concrete plans and instruments, one of the steps would be to commission the projects to the design teams by the client, the municipality or one of the local partners, which is not an obligation. Another possibility is to opt for in-house development, which will be dependent on the capacity and knowledge of the internal design staff. Secondly, the social, political and economic contexts will have a strong influence on the institutional capacity to mobilize resources to invest in the improvement of the residential neighbourhoods' conditions. Thirdly, the investment capacity of other local partners, such as the housing associations or residents, will also be strongly dependent on the economic situation and the financial support they may receive from the local authority or other central administration funding bodies. Most likely, the recent global pandemic (COVID-19) will strongly affect all European economies, raising the level of uncertainty.

About equality issues, Panorama Lokaal was open to anyone who wished to participate, including two open calls: one for local coalitions in the first phase and

another for multidisciplinary design teams in the second phase. There were no application fees and the events were free of charge. In addition, the competition process was driven by local stakeholders, led by the municipality, yet involved housing associations which represented the interests of the residents. For the first local sessions at all of the seven sites, local residents were invited to participate and report on the main problems and issues affecting the area, including socially disadvantaged people. In the second workshop sessions, local residents were also invited to provide feedback on the interim design proposals. This means that there was a concern for promoting local participation and the involvement of the residents throughout the competition process.

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Panorama Lokaal is an innovative design competition of ideas focused on post-war residential neighbourhoods on the outskirts of a city, promoting partnerships among municipalities and local stakeholders together with multidisciplinary design teams. Through a cooperative planning approach, Panorama Lokaal aims to potentiate collective action towards social, economic and environmental challenges. By promoting the combination of different perspectives, the process transcends a simple design competition, instead encouraging a particular approach to the design of projects based on cooperation among actors that traditionally do not work together. As the Dutch Government Advisor mentioned (Interview, 2020):

“It is all about discovering through design, through people who are trained in seeing links between issues that others are not used to think off.”

Therefore, following a co-design approach, the Panorama Lokaal competition provides the preconditions necessary for effective cooperation between various local stakeholders and designers, firstly to frame the needs and then to develop an assignment for complex areas. As the Dutch Government Advisor argued (Ibidem):

“it is not only about design teams that are going to participate, it is also a way to educate clients, to let them form and discover that they have alliances within their own environment”

This means that that the process is driven by local stakeholders with the aim that they will buy into the results, appropriate the proposals, and ultimately achieve something in the end. Nevertheless, the role of creative thinking in the whole process

is crucial in order to exhibit multiple visions and solutions that embrace current challenges in a practical and feasible manner in order to inform and select the best way to proceed. The voluntary participation of the seven local coalitions, which implied assuming the costs of three design teams, organizing their own competition, site visits, meetings, etc., demonstrates the positive will of local actors towards work together and developing visions for future urban transformations in a collaborative manner.

One of the achievements of Panorama Lokaal was placing residential suburbs and their surroundings on the political agenda. Using the competition to promote a national debate on the topic, the Board of Government Advisors was able to persuade policy makers and relevant actors to pay attention to these often-forgotten neighbourhoods in their strategic urban planning visions. Therefore, Panorama Lokaal was used not just as a rating tool (a competition) but also as an informal quality culture tool fostering a place making culture through dedicated events, publications, websites, etc.

Another achievement of Panorama Lokaal was the development of a wide range of innovative proposals for residential areas in the fringes of cities through research by design, demonstrating the importance of design thinking when it comes to solving complex issues. The development of visionary strategies for residential neighbourhoods, as well as the cooperative method of multiple stakeholders, will act as a catalyst and have an inspirational effect for other cities and municipalities across the Netherlands.

Considering its informal nature, the impacts of Panorama Lokaal are long-term and difficult to measure. Essentially, it is a design competition of ideas, which resulted in 21 design proposals, from which three were considered the winners. However, its indirect impacts were much broader. Firstly, the competition allowed for a learning process among all the stakeholders and designers involved. Secondly, the initiative was widely disseminated through the media including several public events, gathering a community of practitioners to debate innovative solutions in order to adapt post-war residential neighbourhoods to future social, economic and environmental challenges. Therefore, Panorama Lokaal assisted CRa with promoting and raising public awareness on the importance of addressing residential areas on the outskirts of cities and influencing policy makers, practitioners, community representatives, activists and others, on changing mindsets and introducing new ways and means of design collaboration among different stakeholders.

9. EXAMPLE | TILBURG NOORD

To better illustrate how Panorama Lokaal was implemented and the type of proposals delivered by the competition, one of its seven locations - Tilburg Noord - and its corresponding design competition will be briefly described below. The information provided about the location, challenges and brief, as well as the summary of the three proposals were based on the Panorama Lokaal competition website.

9.1. Local coalition (Phase 1)

Within the fourteen applications received, Tilburg Noord (in English, Tilburg North) was one of the seven local coalitions selected to participate in the competition.³¹ The Tilburg Noord coalition involved four local institutional partners - the Municipality of Tilburg, a housing association (LivingBreborg), a real estate developer (Van Wanrooij Building and Development) and a water authority (De Dommel river water board) - as well as several residents that were involved in the process of PACT Noord³², which is currently still being promoted by the city council.

Tilburg-Noord is a residential area (district) in the city of Tilburg, which is located in the southern part of the Netherlands, near the border with Flanders. With 23,500 inhabitants hailing from 120 different cultural backgrounds, Tilburg-Noord is situated between the city centre and the landscape Park Pauwels in the northern part of the city, harbouring business parks on its east and west sides.

Challenges

The Tilburg-Noord neighbourhood is characterized by its predominantly residential use with very few commercial or industrial activities. The area presents several broad challenges, such as those stemming from climate change and the energy transition, as well as specific social and economic challenges. According to Panorama Lokaal's regulations, the existing inhabitants are aging and most of the new residents are within disadvantaged social classes, with low levels of education

³¹ Tilburg Noord was also one of the locations where CRA tested the Panorama Lokaal procedure in collaboration with the municipalities and local partners before launching the competition (see note 20).

³² PACT comes from 'People Acting in Community Together,' which involves residents and professional partners with the aim of promoting other ways of thinking, acting and organizing social experiments to tackle poverty, exclusion and the refugee crisis, among other social issues. The municipality of Tilburg is coordinating a PACT approach involving the deprived neighbourhoods of Tilburg Noord, West and Groenewoud. See: <https://www.tilburg.nl/stad-bestuur/stad/wijken/>

and suffering from economic fragility. In total, 40% of the residents live below the poverty line. In addition, the existing housing stock is mostly single-family, which does not offer enough variety or affordable homes to attract new residents. Furthermore, the numerous open green spaces in the area do not have a clear function and present low levels of biodiversity.

According to Panorama Lokaal, the municipality and various partners have been working on these issues for a long time. However, it has not yet been possible to achieve sufficient structural changes. On the contrary, poverty has deepened and expanded in recent years, partly due to international trends, such as the economic and refugee crises. In this context, both the built environment and the socio-economic situation required a lasting urban regeneration plan in order to improve the local residents' quality of life. This could include different approaches, such as creating better connections with the Pauwels Landscape Park in the northern part; introduce mixed uses and building more homes, creating natural spaces with water canals, etc.

Design statement

Together with the Board of Government advisors' experts, the local coalition drafted a design brief for the Tilburg Noord Panorama competition. This was undertaken by first asking designers to investigate opportunities to improve the area when it comes to meeting the current challenges of energy transition, climate adaptation and an acute housing shortage. In addition, the designers had to develop a rationale for an integrated business model for the area, so that optimal social returns could be obtained from the existing programs and planned investments. The proposals also had to offer a vision for action that would include all local stakeholders, including citizens, local authorities and market actors, so they could follow up and implement the vision in the long run following the competition. Additionally, the proposals had to be innovative, feasible, realizable and scalable, so they could serve as an inspiration for other locations in response to the competition brief.

9.2. Design competition (Phase 2)

As mentioned previously, the second phase of Panorama Lokaal included two parts: the pre-selection (part A) and the design phase (part B). For the pre-selection (part A), multidisciplinary design teams were invited to register an application on the competition's website with a portfolio and motivation letter. For this first phase, CRa

received 24 applications³³. In February 2020, a jury including residents and local coalition members selected three teams for the Tilburg Noord design competition³⁴.

In the design phase (part B), two design workshops were organized. In the first workshop, the three teams received all of the necessary information about Tilburg Noord necessary to help them with developing their proposals, including a site visit and a meeting with stakeholders, residents and other local parties. In a second workshop, the teams presented their first intentions and had the opportunity to discuss them with the local coalition and residents. Finally, the urban design proposals were submitted on 14th July and the results announced on the 24th of September 2020.



Fig. 6 – 'The Makers' spatial proposal: an overview of Tilburg North in 2040
(Source: Panorama Lokaal website)

Proposal 'The Makers of Tilburg Noord'

The first team proposed establishing a new organizational structure, called “The Makers of Tilburg Noord”, a neighbourhood company: (*Wijkbedrijf*) consisting of a representative for the residents, educational institutions, local businesses and local institutions. This new cooperative organization would work as an independent body capitalizing on the experience gained from the ongoing PACT process (see above), bringing together existing initiatives, goals, interests, financial resources and results.

³³ For all seven sites of the competition, Panorama Lokaal received 147 applications (see Section 4.4).

³⁴ The three selected teams were: KAW; Spacefolks; and Baudoin van Alphen Bergers.

The necessary funding would come from the various involved partners, and residents could contribute with their time and knowledge. The central principle behind this proposal was the fostering of an active collaboration among local stakeholders and residents. The neighbourhood company could be established in the short term and offer a long-term perspective based on a jointly drawn up agenda.³⁵ In addition, a spatial proposal was also presented entitled "Neighbourhood Renewal 3.0" for Tilburg Noord and its adjacent rural area.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Program was based on the principles of the "challenging city," aiming to contribute to higher environmental quality, a sustainable living environment and an inclusive society. The proposal involved a substantial densification of 2,000 homes through demolition/new construction, whereby the share of social factors would relatively decrease and there would be slight growth. In the countryside, a program was proposed that builds on the thematic axes of the existing spatial vision of Noord: with a pond, care homes and a city farm and centre for Food, Culture & Sport.



Fig. 7 – An overview of the 'MOSAIC Tilburg-Noord' proposal.
(Source: Panorama Lokaal website)

Proposal 'MOSAIC Tilburg-Noord' (Winning team)

The second proposal was based on the idea of a 'Neighbourhood Work Plan', entitled 'MOSAIC Tilburg-Noord', which comprised a strategy that links tasks, stakeholders and projects together based on three pillars: housing and public space; closing the energy chain; and establishing a connection between farm production and consumption. This proposal aimed to enrich existing programs and functions related

³⁵ Information based on the Panorama Lokaal Final Jury Report on the Tilburg Noord competition, available at:

<https://panoramalokaal.nl/files/loc/00478/panoramalokaaljuryrapporttilburgtilburgn.pdf>

to food and education by investing in the local food chain, which could result in higher production, reduced logistical costs and the increased affordability of food. The ambition of the proposal was that, by developing a variety of small interventions, it would provide added value for the neighbourhood, district, city and residents³⁶.

To achieve the aforementioned ambitions, the second proposal included a variety of tools and specific actions, such as: the deployment of a city-land route that greens and connects strategic and iconic places (see Fig. 7); the installation of insulating façades that contribute to energy consumption and also enrich the architectural appearance of the neighbourhood; split existing houses whenever possible so that new, smaller housing types would be introduced into the neighbourhood; and create small-scale food collection points in the neighbourhood where local products from the countryside can be bought for a satisfactory price through online sales. By providing organizational capacity to its residents, it will foster a positive transformation of Tilburg-Noord from a monotonous city district into a rich and diverse environment³⁷.



Fig. 8 – Visualization of some of the interventions of the 'MOSAIC Tilburg-Noord' proposal
(Source: Panorama Lokaal website)

Proposal 'TiBoka'³⁸

The third proposal was primarily focused on the people who live in the neighbourhood, connecting active residents with entrepreneurs. The plan aimed to improve the outdated urban design concept of the stamped neighbourhoods, integrated planning for public spaces, and to give meaning to the countryside. This plan focuses on food, youth and housing, with thematic maps representing these goals and which are intended to be used as a starting point to promote a movement in a certain direction (see Fig. 9). The proposal also opted to expand the residential area towards the countryside, with the inclusion of different types of community housing termed 'small villages'. This was combined with small-scale food production,

³⁶ For more information see:
<https://panoramalokaal.nl/files/inzendingen/00005/samenvattin g.pdf>

³⁷ Ibidem.

³⁸ TiBoKa is an abbreviation of the expression '*Tilburg Boven het Kanaal*' (in English: Tilburg Above the Canal).

which would contribute to a community garden nursery and a new market hall as well.

The proposal also included the introduction of recreational and daytime activities in the Kouwenberg Gardens as well as a new pedestrian crossing to Pauwels Park in the north. The natural landscape of the park would function as water storage and a garden, and its fields would host biological products in co-operation with the existing farmers. Another prominent project was the inclusion of a *Tuk-tuk*, which would provide an accessible and safe means of transport for elderly people. Among numerous other proposals, there is also a new vocational school (VMBO) for continuous learning programs.



Fig. 9 – One of Tiboka thematic maps focused on young people of Tilburg North
(Source: Panorama Lokaal website)

10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The organization and delivery of Panorama Lokaal involved multiple methods of design leadership, namely governmental promotion to raise awareness on the importance of design thinking and collaborative approaches to solve complex problems. Design competitions are a highly valuable tool for promoting debate and innovative ideas, and can be used for more than just high-profile prestige projects. Using competitions to focus on ordinary places and on common design problems can be very valuable, providing generalizable lessons for sites beyond those that are subject to the competition. In this respect, competitions as a design governance tool are not about defining winners (although that is necessary to encourage involvement) but are instead part of a learning culture in which innovative solutions to different problems can inform ongoing practices. Competitions themselves require infrastructure and resourcing to make them work, but the outcomes are often less important than the process itself. The aim should be for competitions to inform an ongoing debate and to be part of a process of change, but not necessarily to identify all the answers. As the Dutch Government Advisor argued:

“We should embrace the change and the challenges of the future as opportunities to make life better. Competitions (...) have the potential of mobilizing a variety of actors to work together on responding to such challenges.” (Interview, 2020)

Another key lesson is the multi-level governance model of Panorama Lokaal, which involves both the central and local administrations as well as non-governmental actors (housing associations) and residents. The sharing of costs and responsibilities in the competition's organization is a practical method of buying into the different partners and receiving support for the initiative, which may facilitate the implementation of the competition's results. The topic of the competition is also highly relevant, as the majority of the European cities have expanded heavily outside their administrative borders into the countryside where most citizens live. Using design competitions as research by design could be a practical way to define guidelines and strategies to improve residential suburbs and their connections with their surrounding landscapes.

Although design competitions are widely used across several European countries, be it by governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations and even private companies, in certain other countries they are rarely employed (Carmona et al., 2020). Panorama Lokaal's decentralized approach³⁹ that involves local stakeholders

³⁹ Panorama Lokaal competitions display some similarities with the European design competition model.

in several project sites could be a useful model to follow in countries where this tradition is not so present in delivering a design leadership agenda. Nevertheless, its transferability to other contexts will always be dependent on the willingness of national and local stakeholders to collaborate and push for such types of informal design governance tools.

KEY REFERENCES

- Assen, S. van, & Campen, J. van. (2020). *The balancing act of q-teams. Tool repertoire of Dutch spatial quality advisory practices*. Urban Maestro.
- Carmona, M., Tommaso, G., Terpsi, L., & Bento, J. (2020). *Informal tools of Urban Design Governance, the European picture*. (URBAN MAESTRO research project, p. 110). Bartlett School of Planning - University College London.
- Cousins, M. (2009). *Design Quality in New Housing Learning from the Netherlands*. Taylor & Francis.
- CRa. (2019). *Reglement Panorama Lokaal. Hoe maken we de stadsranden klaar voor de toekomst?* College van Rijksadviseurs.
<https://panoramalokaal.nl/files/nvg/00011/190702ReglementPanoramaLokaal.pdf>
- Dings, M. (2009). Historic Perspective. Em H. Ovink & E. Wierenga (Eds.), *Design and politics, Volume 1* (pp. 9–176). 010 Publishers.
- Figueiredo, S. M. (2010). Going Dutch—The NAI and the Search for Quality Architecture in the Netherlands. *Conditions. Independent Scandinavian Magazine on Architecture and Urbanism*, 5/6, 30–35.
- Meer, F. M. van der. (2018). *Public administration characteristics and performance in EU28: The Netherlands*. *European Public Administration Country Knowledge (EUPACK)*. European Commission.
- Netherlands. (1991). *Space for Architecture, Memorandum on Architectural Policy 1992-1996*. Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.
- Netherlands. (2006). *The Chief Government Architect and the Policy on Architecture*. atelier Rijksbouwmeester.
- Piør, A., Tosics, I., & Ravetz, J. (2011). *Peri-Urbanization in Europe: Towards European Policies to Sustain Urban-Rural Futures. Synthesis Report*. University of Copenhagen / Academic Books Life Sciences.
- Rijksadviseurs, C. van. (2019). *Panorama Nederland (English summary)*. Board of Government Advisors.
- Tosics, I., Szemző, H., Illés, D., Gertheis, A., Lalenis, K., & Kalergis, D. (2010). *National spatial planning policies and governance typology. PLUREL project: Peri-urban land use relationships – Strategies and sustainability assessment tools for urban-rural linkages, integrated project, contract no. 036921*.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://panoramalokaal.nl/>

<https://www.collegevanrijksadviseurs.nl/>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Joao Bento, Researcher of Architectural Policies (UCL – Bartlett School of Planning)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Q-teams

the balancing act and the tool repertoire
for stimulating spatial quality (NL)

**Sandra van Assen &
José van Campen**

Department of Urbanism,
Faculty of Architecture and
the Built Environment,
Delft University of Technology

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. INTRODUCTION.....	3
3. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	4
3.1. The emergence of a new generation of q-teams.....	4
3.2. Indicative planning and the need for informal tools.....	6
3.3. Dutch design governance.....	6
4. CHARACTERISTICS	7
4.1. Commissioners and funding	8
4.2. Scope	8
4.3. Level of independence	9
4.4. Management styles	9
5. SIX EXAMPLES.....	9
6. TOOL REPERTOIRE	16
7. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	20
8. CONCLUSIONS.....	22
KEY REFERENCES	24
APPENDIX 1. ADVICE CATEGORIES, TOOLS INCLUDING DESCRIPTIONS	27
APPENDIX 2. Q-TEAM TOOLS AND THE EU TOOL TYPOLOGY	28

1. SUMMARY

This paper contributes to the European typology of tools for urban design governance, by providing insight into Dutch spatial quality teams (q-teams) and their tools. It comprises part of the *Q-factor* research programme that addresses the influence of q-teams by compiling an evidence base. Q-teams are a unique instrument in Dutch design governance that address spatial quality in planning and design. The findings, based on a national survey and case study, suggest a broadening scope and an expanding tool repertoire, which represent a shift towards indicative planning strategies. Their dynamic use of tools is what has resulted in the necessary flexibility and robustness of q-teams. Therefore, they can be seen as a meta-instrument for urban design governance.

2. INTRODUCTION



Q-teams meeting at the start of the Q-factor research programme in 2012, photo: Annemarie Hoogwoud

In the Netherlands, more than 450 spatial quality teams, or q-teams, advise governments and involved actors about enhancing the spatial quality of buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, cities, landscape and regions. Q-teams do not design projects but rather use various tools to stimulate and preserve spatial quality. They manifest themselves in different forms, from the descendants of aesthetic control committees (*welstandscmissies*) to pro-active teams focused on spatial and environmental quality. 'Q-teams' is used as umbrella term.

Q-teams are shaped by the indicative planning system and national design governance policy. In the Dutch context, spatial plans are not prescriptive but rather leave room for interpretation. Planning and design processes are increasingly based on collaboration, deliberation, and stimulating bottom-up initiatives, in order to strengthen defined public interests. Furthermore, Q-teams are design governance instruments operating between general policy and the design of specific rules, projects and areas. They integrate and interpret spatial ambitions with the aim of improving spatial quality.

International interest in q-teams is increasing, since more countries have begun to adopt indicative planning and the development of new design governance strategies.

In fact, several organisations¹ have identified the Dutch q-teams method as an innovative approach to improving the quality of the built environment. However, limited research has been conducted on the q-teams. Therefore, the *Q-factor* research programme was launched in 2011 with a survey resulting in an atlas of Dutch q-teams (Van Assen and Van Campen 2014). In 2017, the programme continued with two PhD studies on the influence of q-teams, this expert paper using sources of evidence that have been gathered in the ongoing research.

The question this paper addresses is: what tools do Dutch q-teams use? Specifically, it examines whether the use of tools differs in relation to the governance profile of the teams: either regulative or indicative. The answers advance knowledge of design governance tools in the context of indicative planning strategies. In fact, Q-teams may have potential for transferability elsewhere, if evidence of their influence is delivered.

The paper builds on the literature on indicative planning and urban design governance, as well as on empirical research. First, the paper describes the emergence of q-teams and their context of indicative planning and design governance. Then, it turns to the general characteristics of q-teams, followed by the analysis of six exemplary q-teams, which are classified according to their governance profile: either regulative or indicative. Thereafter, this paper examines the tool repertoire of the teams and relates the tools and teams to the European typology of tools for urban design governance (Maestro s.a.). Finally, challenges and conclusions are formulated.

3. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

3.1. The emergence of a new generation of q-teams

In the Netherlands, the provision of spatial quality advice first started with the first aesthetic control committee in Amsterdam in 1898, followed by those in the majority of municipalities (Beek 1985). This practice of aesthetic control became mandatory in 1962 in the Housing Act, and was made voluntary in 2013 due to deregulation and

¹ For example : the Technical University of Sydney, the Government Architect of New South Wales, Kyoto Sangyo University, and Urban Maestro.

decentralization. To date, 95% of all municipalities still have an aesthetic control committee, in most cases combined with the committee for monuments and cultural heritage. These committees are often called committees for spatial quality (*commissie ruimtelijke kwaliteit*).

The starting point for a new generation of q-teams might be the 1988 Fourth Report on Spatial Planning (*Vierde Nota over de Ruimtelijke Ordening*) that designated spatial quality as a central aim of Dutch spatial policy. Spatial quality was defined as the balanced syntheses of user value, experiential value, and future value. Thus, the quality of architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture and public space became issues at the national, provincial and municipal levels.

In 1991, urban planner Riek Bakker, at that time Director of the Rotterdam City Development Department (*Dienst Stedelijke Ontwikkeling*) introduced a 'q-team' for the redevelopment of the Kop van Zuid district (*Kwaliteitsteam Kop van Zuid*). Bakker stated that spatial quality advice should transcend design and aesthetics. Furthermore, it should not be as interwoven into the bureaucratic system as the municipal aesthetic control committee had been. Taking the example of a design review panel in Baltimore, she appointed a q-team with five members of international renown and fame, and two members as representatives of the Rotterdam aesthetic control committee (Bakker 2013, 2016).

The example of a q-team with a broad scope and indicative profile was followed throughout the entire country. Over the next three decades, at least 139 q-teams were appointed by local, provincial and national authorities (Figure 1) (Van Assen and Van Campen 2014). They advise in collaborative settings early in planning and design processes, concerning both the built and unbuilt environment, by integrating and interpreting spatial ambitions, thus influencing decision-making on material and immaterial purposes and objects.



Figure 1: Map of the new generation of q-teams in the Netherlands (Van Assen and Van Campen 2014)

3.2. Indicative planning and the need for informal tools

The emergence of this new generation of q-teams mirrors the shift from regulative to indicative planning in the Netherlands. Indicative strategies involve collaboration and negotiation, with such plans aimed not at prescribing the material object, but at structuring and informing decision-making processes about that material object (Mastop 2000, Buitelaar 2012). Furthermore, they guide spatial transformations as 'step(s) in an ongoing sequence of events' (Buitelaar 2012, 214), with decisions being legitimised by the 'negotiated interpretation' of the planning guidance (Balz, 2018).

The new Environment and Planning Act (*Omgevingswet*), which is expected to come into force in 2022, sanctions and advances the aforementioned shift to indicative planning. It broadens the scope of planning by bringing together dozens of acts that influence the physical living environment. Good spatial and environmental quality (*omgevingskwaliteit*) comprise one of the main objectives of the Act, with health and safety being the other two.

Indicative planning requires planning tools that allow for the interpretation of policy, planning principles and 'open rules.'² However, the Act provides little guidance on the use of informal tools, with two legal provisions being relevant to design governance. First, initiators of spatial interventions are obliged to organise social participation. Second, the advice of a municipal advisory committee is *mandatory* for interventions on national monuments and *optional* for other matters. This allows municipalities to have the statutory committee next to, or combined with, informal q-team practices.

3.3. Dutch design governance

The Fourth Report (1988) also marked the beginning of national design governance with the first design policy document (*Architectuurnota, 1991*) aimed at strong institutionalization and several organisations having been established to stimulate and subsidize spatial quality and design culture. The second (1996) and third (2000) design policy documents extended the scope from architecture to cultural heritage, urban planning, landscape and infrastructure, and the integration of design in spatial

² In contrast to closed rules which can be objectively assessed, open rules offer discretionary room and require interpretation depending on the specific situation. Open rules are often elaborated in policy documents.

processes became the main goal. After 2005, Dutch design policy became more pragmatic and budgets were lowered. The current national Spatial Design Action Agenda 2017-2020 (*Actie Agenda Ruimtelijk Ontwerp*) addresses the design of spatial interventions, the development of policy, and overall *Baukultur*.³ The aim is to strengthen the cooperation between designers and clients and to support the application of design in assignments and projects.

Furthermore, Dutch design governance has moved beyond the boundaries of the built environment, as it currently includes landscape and nature. In this light, the Dutch use the concept of *design governance* where other countries may use *urban design governance* (e.g., Maestro s.a., Carmona 2013).

Dutch design governance is connected to spatial policy and planning, and as such has material and immaterial purposes. The material objectives concern 'forethought in [the] making' of spatial projects (De Jonge 2009, 28) and delivering policy and rules in order to preserve or stimulate spatial quality. Immaterial purposes stimulate reflection, 'challenge or enrich prevailing spatial concepts' (Balz 2018, 337), and identify 'relevant ideas and opportunities' (Sanders and Stappers 2012, 21). Hence, this distinction is comparable to the distinction between quality delivery and quality culture in the European typology of tools for urban design governance (EU tool typology).

Additionally, Q-teams have been expanding their scope since the 1990s. Now that the scope of the Dutch design governance has widened, we may assume that their tool repertoire will broaden as well. Q-teams, therefore, are possibly familiar with the numerous categories of the EU tool typology, although arguably some differences may occur that relate to Dutch design governance.

4. CHARACTERISTICS

The sources of evidence of the Q-factor research reveal that no two q-teams are alike. This section presents their main characteristics derived from a survey among 90 new generation q-teams⁴ (Van Assen and Van Campen 2014).

³ Baukultur refers to the Davos Declaration 2018, adopted by the European Ministers of Culture.
<https://davosdeclaration2018.ch/> (accessed May 25, 2020)

⁴ The 2012 survey was the first inventory of the new generation of q-teams. This survey was intended to be as representative as possible, however, there are limits to generalisation given that the population is not registered, so as such there is no sampling frame. Therefore, non-probability convenience sampling (or 'spread the word' sampling) was used. The questionnaire consisted of ten pre-coded and three open questions. All questions were factual, no perceptions were asked, and each team was asked to complete one questionnaire.

4.1. Commissioners and funding

Q-teams are commissioned by governments (80%) or public-private or semi-public commissioners (20%) and are active on a local, provincial or national scale.

The majority of q-teams are publicly funded. If they have a role in the assessment of building applications, the costs are included in the permit fee. In other cases, there is an earmarked budget for quality-advice, or the costs are part of a project-budget. Few teams are financed through fees levied on developers or public-private partnerships. Q-teams have individual commissioners, and some commissioners use several q-teams.⁵ No central organisation initiates, steers, governs or coordinates the practices, although the national Federation of Spatial Quality (*Federatie Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit*), established in 1931, functions as a representative of the municipal advisory committees.

The relation between q-teams and aesthetic control committees is diffuse. In most municipalities, the aesthetic control committee has been broadened to a committee for spatial quality. Thus, many (former) aesthetic control committees are q-teams, but not all q-teams are (former) aesthetic control committees.

4.2. Scope

Q-teams advise at all scales, from single buildings to entire regions to the national scale. 50% of the teams address urban developments such as city centers, residential areas, business parks and urban renewal, while 40% address landscape or water assignments on the regional scale, and the other 10% specific subjects or themes.

The composition of a team is related to the assignment, with the average number of team members being four to five and all teams consist of spatial designers (landscape architecture, urban design, architecture or public space design). On average 50% of team members are designers, often complemented by other experts, for example on cultural heritage, spatial planning, archaeology, sociology, sustainability, ecology, infrastructure, or recreation. Some q-teams have one or more nonprofessionals as members.

⁵ The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management for example, appoints q-teams to combine spatial quality with water safety or infrastructure. The Dutch Railways (Nederlandse Spoorwegen) uses q-teams that focus on railway

stations and station surroundings, with the Railways Architect (spoorbouwmeester) as one of the members. The Board of Government Advisors (College van Rijksadviseurs) and the national Cultural Heritage Agency (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed) participate in q-teams whenever national interests are at stake, for example regarding national cultural heritage, or water management and dike reinforcement.

The actor network of a team follows the scope of their work and consists of team- and project-related commissioners, project-related clients, designers, stakeholders and citizens. Moreover, a wider network of actors may be involved, such as societal organisations and citizens.

4.3. Level of independence

Overall, there is diversity in the level of independence. Members of q-teams can be employed by the commissioner of the team or be independent, with such independent members not falling under the responsibility of the commissioner, and have no interest in the projects under review nor do they bear any administrative responsibility for them. They are selected by a formal application process, or via societal or professional organisations.

About 15% of the teams consist entirely of internal members, 35% consist of independent members, and 50% combine independent and internal members.

4.4. Management styles

Management styles differ. Some q-teams have a regulated character with a detailed assessment framework, a carefully defined meeting schedule, and a protocol that defines how advice should be drawn up and what should happen in the event of conflicting opinions. Others have a more indicative profile, with unconstrained tasks, a global policy framework, and irregular meetings.

Some teams have a secretariat that records deliberations, and formulates and disseminates written recommendations. Other teams present their advice orally or visually, for example in presentations, via excursions or through campaigns or flyers.

5. SIX EXAMPLES

This section highlights the character and tool use of six q-teams in further detail.⁶ Although these teams are not representative for the whole population of q-teams, they can be seen as an exemplary cross-section. The q-teams can have either a regulative or an indicative governance profile (Table 1):



Figure 2. Areas the six teams advise about (numbers match the numbers in Table 1).

- Teams with a regulative profile deliver recommendations based on formal provisions, such as legal provisions, planning rules or formal agreements (Examples 1,2,3).
- Teams with an indicative profile use informal agreements, informal planning ambitions, collegial cooperation, service provisions or protocols (Examples 3,4,5).

There is no rigid division between the regulative and indicative governance profiles and they often overlap as the examples will illustrate. Furthermore, the selected teams advise about different levels and areas and are spread all over the country (Figure 2).

Governance profile	Definition	Q-teams in this study
Regulative	Q-teams that deliver recommendations based on formal provisions	1. Commissie voor Monumenten en Welstand Hoorn
		2. Commissie Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Apeldoorn
		3. Q-team Ruimte voor de Rivier
Indicative	Q-teams that deliver recommendations based on indicative plans, frameworks and agreements	4. Nije Pleats
		5. Hoeksche Waard
		6. Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân

Table 1. Governance profile of the six q-teams

⁶ The selection of six q-teams was based on the governance profiles. Additional selection criteria were: an even distribution across the country, variation in scale (object, area, region) and diversity of assignments (the built and unbuilt environment). Furthermore, the availability of documentation was a practical criterion. Relevant documentation was used, such as literary

publications about the teams, frameworks, team assignments, team mission statements, advisory reports, evaluation documents, annual reports, information on webpages and newspapers. The study concerns documents from the entire period of existence of four newer teams as well as a three-year period (2017-2019) for the two older committees, both of which have operated for over a hundred years.

Example 1: Commissie voor Monumenten en Welstand Hoorn (1916 - Present)

Hoorn is a city of 73.000 inhabitants, boasting a rich history as a port town. The municipal *Commissie voor Monumenten en Welstand Hoorn*, dating back to 1916 (De Vreeze 2006), is a regulative q-team. It delivers multidisciplinary advice on the conservation of monuments and the architectural quality of buildings. This independent team is appointed by the municipal council and hosted by the organisation for spatial quality in the province of Noord-Holland, *MOOI Noord-Holland*. The team advises in accordance with the policy and rules, and in order to obtain a building or monument permit, a positive advice from the team is needed, although it is non-binding for the municipal executive board. The team consists of two architects and three cultural heritage experts and pays attention to visual, social, sustainable and user qualities. The team's recommendations are public and review meetings are open to visitors. On average, this q-team addresses about 300-350 requests a year (Van Zandbergen 2018, 2019). Their assessment is part of the regular permitting process and integrated in the permit fee.

An example of a tool that this team often uses is 'pre-consultation.' Pre-consultation is an informal, voluntary dialogue early in the planning and design process. It is a review of the intended design before the permit application is made and the final formal assessment takes place. In particular, the team delivered 78 and 82 pre-consultations in 2017 and 2018, respectively.

According to the team, many initiators consider pre-consultation (2017 and 2018, respectively (ibid.)) to be welcome input as delivering advice at an early stage offers opportunities for creating added value. 'The best result is achieved if the team cooperates with the initiators and designers of building developments at an early stage when the input can easily be integrated into plans and designs... Having a constructive conversation with the initiator - aimed at creating added value - is actually more important than the final assessment' (Van Zandbergen 2018, 9, translation by the authors). Thus, in this example, investing time in pre-consultations has a double impact—it results in added value for spatial quality and a swifter and smoother final assessment of the permit application.

Example 2: Commissie Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Apeldoorn (1919 - Present)

Apeldoorn is a city of 160.000 inhabitants, with historic characteristics that are still intact. The regulative, independent *Commissie Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Apeldoorn* (CRK) is appointed by the municipal council, with this team dating back to 1919 (Segers 1994). It is hosted by the organisation for spatial quality in Gelderland,



Figure 3. *Commissie voor Monumenten en Welstand Hoorn*, photo: Mooi Noord-Holland

Gelders Genootschap. The team advises upon request and occasionally on its own initiative, with the advice provided being based on policy and rules. To obtain a building or monument permit, positive advice is needed, albeit non-binding for the municipal executive board. The committee is comprised of an architect, landscape architect, urban planner, heritage expert, restoration expert and an expert in the field of sustainability (Gelders Genootschap 2020). The team strives to advise at the earliest possible opportunity in processes, delivering pre-consultations and developing frameworks. The team cooperates with stakeholders to invite inhabitants and professionals to participate in developments, with the commission's recommendations regularly published and their meetings open to the public. The number of recommendations a year is about 650, and the assessment is part of the regular permitting process with the costs integrated in the permit fees (Gelders Genootschap and Gemeente Apeldoorn 2018).

Besides the assessment tools, the team uses other tools, such as events to explore spatial quality. In 2018, the team cooperated with the city in a design competition for the central town square that was aimed at adding value and increasing spatial quality, sustainability, and citizen participation. Four designs were submitted and 25.000 residents of Apeldoorn, invited via e-mail, voted for their favourite design. Many stakeholders contributed to the process: city officials provided input, the CRK delivered advice, local entrepreneurs developed initiatives, and inhabitants cast their votes (Gelders Genootschap and Gemeente Apeldoorn 2018, Omroep Gelderland 2018). This example illustrates how a q-team and its tools are part of the wider governance landscape.

Example 3: Kwaliteitsteam Ruimte voor de Rivier (2011 - 2016)

The national Room for the River programme focused on future (water) safety and the spatial quality of the Rhine River Delta. In this area of 24.000 hectares, floodplains were deepened, dikes were moved and secondary channels were constructed. During the programme, *Kwaliteitsteam Ruimte voor de Rivier* was commissioned and funded to coach planners and designers, and review plans and designs. This regulative q-team, appointed by the Minister for Infrastructure and Water Management, provided solicited and unsolicited advice and support based on frameworks of the national government. Additionally, the q-team developed 'soft guidelines' on quality and processes. Furthermore, their recommendations, directed to the programme management, were authoritative but not-binding (Sijmons et al. 2017). The team was comprised of a landscape architect, urban planner, river engineer, ecologist and physical geographer, with their meetings open for stakeholders and most recommendations being published. The programme management took positions in response to both the q-team's advice and the project

initiator's reaction (Klijn et al., 2013). However, not all recommendations of the team were followed. This q-team used tools and contributed to the development of other tools. Often, the tools employed were coaching, final assessment and framework development. According to the team, frequent reviews were important to achieve designs that would enhance spatial quality (Klijn et al. 2013). Therefore, the team members visited each project at least five times during the early study and design phases, before any decisions were taken, and during the realisation (Busscher et al. 2017). The team acted proactively as well as reactively.

Additionally, the team developed a design quality assessment framework with soft guidelines instead of hard rules, given that hard rules would 'conflict with the essence of planning and design – namely that each situation is different and requires another approach and solution' (Klijn et al. 2013, 292). Furthermore, 'human work leads to creativity, innovation, surprises that shouldn't be frustrated by rigid rules' (Hulsker et al. 2011, 33), and it appeared that 'the sense of being peer-reviewed made the project teams quite anxious to perform and display their best side' (Klijn et al. 2013, 292). Thus, the very idea of peer review stimulated the attitude within the project teams towards enhancing the quality of their work.



Figure 4. Q-team Hoeksche Waard, photo: Christiaan Krouwels

Example 4: Kwaliteitsteam Hoeksche Waard (2012 - Present)

Hoeksche Waard is an agricultural region of 30.000 hectares and 85.000 inhabitants south of Rotterdam. *Kwaliteitsteam Hoeksche Waard* is an independent q-team with an indicative governance profile, with their assignment being to promote and encourage regional spatial quality. This team was appointed by the partnership of five municipalities on request of societal organisations and provides solicited and unsolicited recommendations early on in processes of nature development, recreation, policy development for energy transition, the landscape integration of infrastructure projects etc. Their recommendations, based on quality criteria for the National Landscape, and the Structural Vision, are authoritative but non-binding. The team cooperates with the aesthetic control committee and cultural heritage committee, which both deliver final assessments in permitting processes. The team consists of an independent urban planner from outside the region (as the chair) and twelve regional members from social organisations. These members, with backgrounds in agriculture, landscape, biodiversity, cultural heritage, recreation, sustainability, entrepreneurship etc., act on personal basis, thus combining local knowledge with independence. Recommendations are public and published on a website, and meetings are open to visitors.

This q-team uses tools and contributes to the development of tools. The tools they employ are activities rather than reviews that end in a written advisory document. One example is research by design for the village of Goudswaard. Since 2000, actors in Hoeksche Waard have been discussing plans for a polder near Goudswaard. Here, the intention was to re-introduce tidal nature in the area. As this would mean the end of the agricultural companies and activities in the polder, this topic was highly sensitive. The q-team took a stimulating and guiding role and proposed to determine cooperatively common guiding principles instead of a blueprint-based solution. Using research by design, a possible new identity for the area was examined, in which historical, programmatic, spatial and process goals were integrated. This research by design facilitated an interactive and integrative process, and the collaborative research, visualization and discussion of current and future place values resulted in more support, and spatial and programmatic opportunities for the follow-up process (Van Bergen 2017).

Example 5: Nije Pleats (2008 - Present)

The province of Fryslân is situated in the Northern part of the Netherlands, comprising an area of 5.700 square kilometres with 650.000 inhabitants. In this rural province, q-team *Nije Pleats* advises early on in design processes of expansion plans for farmsteads. The aim is to ensure the best match between the ambitions of the farmer and landscape quality. This indicative, independent q-team was initiated by the province of Fryslân and is hosted by the organisation for spatial quality in *Fryslân Hus en Hiem*. Since its launch, one hundred and forty *Nije Pleats* design workshops have been organised (Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân, 2019). The team works upon request of the farmer and municipality, using informal guiding principles formulated by the team. At the heart of the team are landscape designers, architects and experts of cultural heritage. In addition, other experts join, for example, planners or archeologists. The farmer often brings their own experts, such as stable builders or architects.

Nije Pleats uses design workshops and professional hands-on enabling. The team facilitates co-creative design workshops 'at the kitchen table' of farmers as the setting is informal and hands-on. The farmer, advisors, institutional actors and other relevant actors are present. Usually, one workshop is enough to come with an advice all can agree upon and one or more sketches often accompany this advice. The recommendations provide the basis for the final assessment of the permit application by the municipality. If in accordance, obtaining the permit is a formality with respect to spatial quality. Advice is confidential until it is integrated in the planning permit, meaning workshops are not open to the public. The costs of advice from *Nije Pleats*

amount to approximately 2500 euro, to be paid by the farmer, although one municipality refunds permit fees when farmers consult *Nije Pleats*. *Nije Pleats* has proven to be successful because it ensures the functionality and sustainability of a farm, combined with the quality of the landscape. It results in enhanced spatial quality and a more rapid development process for the farmer. Additionally, the informal design workshops form an alternative for formal rules, and the team has contributed to the development of guiding principles in their first years and now represents a successful tailor-made solution that shortens traditional planning procedures. As such, the province of Fryslân has stopped developing a formal planning framework for the enlargement of agricultural plots larger than 1,5 hectares. Instead, provincial policy now obliges farmers to use the *Nije Pleats* method to address landscape quality (Provincie Fryslân, 2014).

Example 6: Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân (2008- Present)



Figure 5. *Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân*, photo: Sandra van Assen

In the same province, *Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân* aims at influencing and supporting spatial and environmental quality in policy, programs and projects. This indicative team is involved in integrative issues such as energy transition, reducing carbon emissions and circular agriculture. It started as a self-organised internal team, providing solicited and unsolicited advice based on provincial policy and rules. In addition, as the themes and places dealt with are diverse, the team has no fixed principles but instead uses specific theme- and place-based criteria. Recommendations are collegial and not-binding. The team consists of provincial designers and other provincial experts on archaeology, heritage, infrastructure and sustainability, and makes use of a number of tools, such as explorative and design workshops, fieldwork, events and research by design. Moreover, the team develops frameworks and participates in the selection of the best offer in tenders related to spatial quality, with their input seamlessly integrated during planning and design processes. In weekly meetings the common thread of the advisory work is coordinated and if possible, recommendations are made public. Meetings are open to governmental clients and colleagues. The team has successfully expanded its output over the years, earning a justified position within the organisation given that it now has an extensive track record of hundreds of recommendations (Van Campen et al. 2015).

An example of a tool used by the team is the development of frameworks. In 2014, the team drafted a spatial quality policy document, entitled *Grutsk op 'e romte* (Proud of the Frisian landscape). During the co-creation process, a wide range of disciplines was involved, and workshops and field trips were organised to solicit feedback from a large number of actors. The final framework allows for the identification of key attributes of the cultural landscape and provides guiding principles for the

development thereof. *Grutsk op 'e romte* was formally approved by the provincial council (Fermo et al. 2014, Van Campen et al. 2015). Since then, it has been an important framework for provincial policy and projects. Additionally, it is frequently being used by municipalities as a framework for local developments or to elaborate guidance on a local level. The document was included in the provincial vision for the built and unbuilt environment. Thus, the informal process of developing frameworks has had double impact, resulting in an enhanced quality culture, as well as increased quality delivery.

6. TOOL REPERTOIRE

The six portrayed q-teams all use more tools than described. This section analyses the tools and relates them to the EU tool typology.

Advice categories and tools

Together, the six teams use at least 20 tools, with Table 2 and Appendix 1 presenting an overview of the observed tools related to the purpose of the advice: policy, exploration, design development or assessment. The first three categories concern both material and immaterial objectives of design, with the last one predominantly concerning material objectives. The q-teams use more tools when delivering policy advice (7) and exploratory advice (5) than for design development advice (4) and assessment (4).

Advice categories	Purpose	Tools
Policy advice	Advice on general spatial quality policy and rules	Research Research by design (policy) Policy development workshop Framework development Dissemination Policy feedback Field-work
Exploratory advice	Early advice on specific areas, transformations or developments, exploring opportunities and conditions for spatial quality before design processes start or permit applications are made	Research by design (design) Events Explorative workshop Designer selection Excursions
Design development advice	Advice on the design of a specific transformation or development aimed at elaborating or refining the spatial quality of a design or plan	Design workshop Coaching Enabling Site-visits
Assessment	Expert judgement linked to formal procedures, culminating in advice to decision-makers	Pre-consultation Final assessment Jury Tender

Table 2. Advice categories and tools

Tool repertoire and governance profile

Table 3 lists the tool repertoire of the six q-teams in relation to their governance profile. All teams deliver advice in at least three advice categories and use eight different tools or more. *Team Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit Provincie Fryslân*, for example, uses 18 out of the 20 tools. Furthermore, tools for design development advice form the central axis underpinning all teams.

Q-teams do not use financial incentives, as they usually do not have financial resources to encourage better outcomes or to stimulate predefined ends. However, the study demonstrates that in fact some q-teams do function as incentives or as means to enable (regulative) processes to run more smoothly and rapidly. They foster public support, bridge interests, and serve as alternative mechanisms for formal planning frameworks. However, taking into consideration the modest incentive of the one municipality that refunds fees when q-team advice is followed (*Nije Pleats*); any financial incentive can be seen as a missing link.

Regulative teams have a broad repertoire of tools, together using 12 out of 20 tools, with their tools serving all advice categories. Nevertheless, there is a focus on tools that serve design development advice and the assessment of design in formal procedures. Additionally, regulative teams organise excursions to explore or evaluate thematic issues. Two regulative teams deliver advice during the development of policy, and organise or participate in knowledge- or policy-oriented fieldwork. The tool repertoire of regulative teams mainly concerns material objectives of design, although they may use tools that have immaterial objectives or side effects (such as dissemination, framework development, fieldwork, events, and excursions).

Indicative teams have a larger tool repertoire than regulative q-teams, particularly in the categories of policy advice and exploratory advice. Together, they use 18 out of 20 tools. Their tool repertoire serves all advice categories, but mainly supports policy advice, exploratory advice and design development advice. Two of the indicative teams do not deliver assessments. The tool repertoires of the three indicative teams serve both the material and immaterial objectives of design.

Thus, the case study acknowledges that q-teams with a different governance profile utilise different tools, although there are subtle differences between the tool repertoires of the individual teams with similar governance profiles.

Advice category	Tools	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
		regulative			indicative		
Policy advice	Research				X	X	X
	Research by design (policy)						X
	Policy development workshop				X		X
	Framework development		X	X	X	X	X
	Dissemination			X	X	X	X
	Policy feedback	X	X			X	X
	Field-work	X	X				X
Exploratory advice	Research by design (design)				X	X	X
	Event		X			X	X
	Explorative workshop		X			X	X
	Designer selection						X
	Excursions	X	X	X		X	X
Design development advice	Design workshop				X	X	X
	Coaching	X	X	X		X	X
	Enabling	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Site-visits	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assessment	Pre-consultation	X	X	X			
	Final assessment	X	X	X			
	Jury						X
	Tender						X

Table 3. Tool repertoire of the six q-teams

Q-teams as meta-instruments

The EU tool typology is based on a classification of formal versus informal tools and quality culture versus quality delivery tools. The EU tool typology distinguishes nine tool categories:

- Informal quality culture tools: analysis, information, persuasion
- Informal quality delivery tools: rating, support, exploration
- Formal quality delivery tools: guidance, incentive, control

According to Urban Maestro, 'it is important not to be overly rigid in how the classification is used. In reality, many tools have both culture and delivery implications, and the division between the formal and informal tools of the state are not hard and fast. The classification is instead a relational tool, designed to understand and relate broad types, rather than to strictly classify' (Urban Maestro s.a., 4).

When the 20 q-team tools are assigned to the EU tool typology (see Appendix 2), the tools do not always match the EU tool typology's vocabulary. For example, what q-teams call the 'final assessment' tool matches the category 'rating' in the EU tool typology, but a synonym for 'final assessment' in the Netherlands would be 'control.' However, the EU category of 'control' does not match the 'final assessment' tool, nor does it match any of the other Dutch q-team tools. Comparing tools across Europe may support knowledge dissemination; however, there is a risk of getting lost in translation.

With this disclaimer, the study reveals that all tools fit into one or more categories of the EU tool typology. In fact, many of the tools fit the categories of exploration, support and persuasion. Regulative q-teams mostly use tools that fit into the category support, where indicative q-teams mainly use tools that fit into the categories of support, persuasion and exploration. Again, this acknowledges that q-teams with different governance profiles use different tools and that indicative teams have a broader tool repertoire than regulative teams.

Table 4 summarizes how the six q-teams are classified based on their tool repertoire. Q-teams are familiar with six of the nine tool categories from the EU tool typology. This shows that q-teams are multi-purpose design governance instruments. For the most part, the three regulative teams operate as rating and support instruments, while the three indicative teams operate as instruments for analysis, persuasion, support, exploration and guidance. Since they hardly use information, incentive or control tools, they are not informational, incentive or control instruments.

Governance profile	Q-TEAM	EU tool typology								
		IQCT			IQDT			FQDT		
		Analysis	Information	Persuasion	Rating	Support	Exploration	Guidance	Incentive	Control
Regulative	T1				x	x				
	T2			x	x	x				
	T3			x	x	x		x		
Indicative	T4	x	x			x	x	x		
	T5	x	x			x	x	x	x	
	T6	x	x			x	x	x		

Table 4. Six q-teams related to the EU typology of tools

Regulative q-teams cannot be considered as formal instruments and indicative q-teams do not solely use informal tools, given that both use quality delivery and quality culture tools. The common denominator of regulative and indicative q-teams is therefore their roles as support and persuasion instruments.

Thus, in the Dutch situation, the boundaries between tool categories are thin or even non-existent. Even after considering their main objectives, the teams cannot be assigned to one single category of the EU tool typology. Their considerable matching with several tool categories reveals the broad scope of the Dutch q-teams. Additionally, although the findings are based on a small sample size and primarily on document-based research, the results do point out that q-teams may be considered as meta-instruments of design governance.

7. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

Balancing act

As meta-instruments, q-teams use different tools to steer public and private actors towards good spatial quality of the built and unbuilt environment. This combination of tools allows teams to customize the advisory process, given that the teams need to pick the right tools for every advice situation and create a balance between informal and formal tools. As such, Q-teams should be responsive to individual situations and offer flexibility and potential for collaboration and integration. On the other hand, they require legitimacy and formal planning tools as a condition and backstop for the application of informal tools. The coherence between robustness and flexibility, introduced by Hartman, Parra and De Roo (2015), may prove fruitful for the future research agenda: 'the concepts of robustness and flexibility allow for a more systematic analysis of practice and provide analytical leverage on planning practices' (Hartman, Parra and De Roo 2015, referring to Gershenson, 2007 and Portugali et al., 2012). Presumably, informal tools allow for the necessary flexibility, whereas formal tools result in the robustness of the meta-instruments.

Choosing the right team and tools for the right situation at the right time seems crucial, so therefore the members of q-teams need the necessary skills to both use and choose the tools. Insight into this balancing act may add to a better understanding and performance of the q-teams.

Boundary spanning practices

Q-teams are flexible and loose structures, in terms of their composition and operating rules, which is useful for ensuring the right expertise for each type of development. Nevertheless, q-teams are an instrument in a wider design governance landscape and do not work in isolation. They manifest themselves as boundary spanning practices, enhancing 'collaboration across institutional and disciplinary boundaries' (Brink et al. 2019, 13, referring to Neuvel & Van der Knaap, 2010; Huntjens et al., 2012) and engaging the public in their processes. In doing so, q-teams help to bridge gaps between actors. Moreover, they stimulate and coach designers, assist in adding value and 'enable the cross-fertilisation of ideas, knowledge and interests' (Busscher et al., 2018, p. 10).

The potential positive impact of these practices seems to be highly consistent, but again members of q-teams need the skills necessary to span the boundaries between private and public interests, between planning and design, between expertise and participation, and between formal and informal tools.

Reflecting indicative planning

The mixed use of formal and informal tools and the broadening scope of spatial quality in q-team practices represent the changing mechanisms of the planning system. The interplay between hard (regulative) and soft (indicative) governance allows q-teams to not only operate within the governance frameworks, but to interpret and influence those frameworks as well. The previous examples illustrate that the teams use and create tools, and that the informal q-team method sometimes serves as an alternative to formal rules. Additionally, Dutch q-teams deliver recommendations that are non-binding and not prescriptive (no boxes to tick). In doing so, they support negotiations on the interpretation of the planning guidance (Balz, 2018), delivering added value and leverage along the way. As such, expert input through q-teams and similar mechanisms may prove vital in complex spatial quality issues. The broader range of tools allows for discussion and debate on public interests, integrating participatory formats and activating new innovative actors.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This paper contributes to knowledge about European design governance tools, by providing insight into the tools used by Dutch spatial quality teams (q-teams). Since the 1990s, a new generation of q-teams has emerged in the Netherlands. This younger generation advises in collaborative settings early on in the planning and design processes concerning both the built and the unbuilt environment. Their character and tool repertoire mirror indicative approaches in planning and design that are increasingly based on collaboration, deliberation, and stimulating bottom-up initiatives, in order to strengthen defined public interests.

To examine what tools the Dutch q-teams use, this paper utilized literature on indicative planning and urban design governance, in addition to empirical research. It related q-team practices to the EU tool typology, and six exemplary q-teams were examined in detail, being classified for this analysis according to their governance profile as either regulative or indicative.

The sources of evidence on which this study is based demonstrated that no two q-teams are the same. Q-teams predominantly use informal tools, regardless of their regulative or indicative profile. In total, the study listed 20 q-team tools that encompass numerous categories of the EU tool typology, although they do not necessarily overlap on a one-to-one basis. Some q-team tools, for example, match with more than one category in the EU tool typology. The tool repertoire illustrates that there are no sharp dividing lines between formal and informal tools, nor are there any between quality delivery and quality culture. Q-teams with a regulative governance profile can use informal tools, and q-teams with indicative profiles use informal tools. An advice on quality delivery often influences quality culture and vice versa. It is precisely the combination of tools that allows q-teams to customize their advisory processes. Furthermore, q-teams use design governance tools, albeit simultaneously also influencing these tools. For example, q-teams may operate within policy frameworks, but also develop and influence them as well.

Although conclusions have been drawn from a small sample of q-teams and further research is ongoing, this study presents q-teams as a meta-instrument for design governance. They alter their tool repertoire depending on the situation. While evidence gathering on their influence is ongoing, the potential positive impact of q-team practices appears consistent. The mix and mixing of tools result in flexibility and robustness, and this interplay between tools allows q-teams to use and influence frameworks. This continuous balancing act requires skills, networks, knowledge and political awareness.

The rise of this new generation of q-teams with a broadening scope and mixed tool repertoire, represent the changing mechanisms of the planning system. Q-teams operate between general policy and specific rules, projects and areas, integrating and interpreting general spatial ambitions in specific situations, thus influencing decision-making on material and immaterial purposes and objects. The extensive tool repertoire at their disposal is precisely what makes q-teams a versatile instrument of precision in design governance.

KEY REFERENCES

- Bakker, R. 2013. Interview: q-team Kop van Zuid. In *Ruimtelijke Kwaliteitsteams in Nederland*, eds. J. Van Campen & M. Beek.
- Bakker, R. 2016. Mijn Rotterdam, over plichten en privileges van het stadsbestuur. In *D.G. van Beuningen lezing 2016*.
- Balz, V. E. (2018) Regional design: Discretionary approaches to regional planning in The Netherlands. *Planning theory*, 17, 332-354.
- Beek, M. 1985. *Het aanzien waard? Geschiedenis van de welstandszorg in Nederland*. Deventer: Kluwer BV.
- Brink, M., J. Edelenbos, A. Van den Brink, S. Verweij, R. Van Etteger & T. Busscher (2019) To draw or to cross the line? The landscape architect as boundary spanner in Dutch river management. *Landscape and urban planning*, 186, 13-23.
- Buitelaar, E. 2012. The fraught relationship between planning and regulation: Land-use plans and the conflicts in dealing with uncertainty. In *Planning By Law and Property Rights Reconsidered*, 207-218. Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Busscher, T., S. Verweij, M. Van den Brink, J. Edelenbos, R. Bouwman & J. Van den Broek. 2017. Het organiseren van ruimtelijke kwaliteit: Inzichten uit Ruimte voor de Rivier. Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.
- Carmona, M. 2013. The Design Dimension of Planning (20 years on). In *Centenary Lecture Series*.
- De Jonge, J. 2009. Landscape Architecture between Politics and Science: An integrative perspective on landscape planning and design in the network society. Wageningen: University of Wageningen.
- De Vreeze, N. 2006. *Negentig jaar adviezen over ruimtelijke kwaliteit in Noord-Holland*. Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press and Stichting Welstandszorg Noord-Holland.
- Fermo, M., D. Van Weezel Errens, H. Kloosterziel, S. Van Assen, B. De Jong, G. De Langen & K. Van Stralen. 2014. Grutsk op 'e romte. eds. M. Fermo, D. Van Weezel Errens & H. Kloosterziel. Leeuwarden: Provincie Fryslan.
- Gelders Genootschap. 2020. Gelders Genootschap, Commissie Ruimtelijke kwaliteit Apeldoorn.

- Gelders Genootschap & Gemeente Apeldoorn. 2018. Optellen! Jaarverslag CRK Apeldoorn 2018. Apeldoorn: Gelders Genootschap, Gemeente Apeldoorn.
- Hartman, S., C. Parra & G. De Roo (2015) Stimulating spatial quality? Unpacking the approach of the province of Friesland, the Netherlands. *European Planning Studies*.
- Hulsker, W., M. Wienhoven, M. Van Diest & S. Buijs. 2011. Evaluatie ontwerpprocessen Ruimte voor de Rivier. Rotterdam.
- Klijn, F., D. De Bruin, M. De Hoog, S. Jansen & D. Sijmons (2013) Design quality of room-for-the-river measures in the Netherlands: Role and assessment of the quality team (Q-team). *International journal of River Management*, 11, 287-299.
- Maestro, U. s.a. Towards a european typology of tools for urban design governance. London/Brussels: University College London, UN Habitat, Bouwmeester Maitre d'Architecture.
- Mastop, H. 2000. The performance principle in strategic spatial planning. In *The revival of strategic spatial planning*, eds. W. G. M. Salet & A. Faludi, 143-155. Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Omroep Gelderland. 2018. Apeldoorn krijgt 'Markthal' op nieuw marktplein. Apeldoorn.
- Sanders, E. B. N. & P. J. Stappers. 2012. *Convivial toolbox. Generative research for the front end of design*. Amsterdam: BIS Publishers.
- Segers, Y. 1994. *Op het kruispunt van oud en nieuw, 75 jaar op de bres voor de schoonheid van Gelderland. 1919-1994 Het Gelders Genootschap*. Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers.
- Sijmons, D., Y. Feddes, E. Luiten & F. Feddes. 2017. *Room for the river, safe and attractive landscapes*. Wageningen: Blauwdruk Publishers.
- Urban Maestro. s.a. *Towards a european typology of tools for urban design governance*. London/Brussels: University College London, UN Habitat, Bouwmeester Maitre d'Architecture.
- Van Assen, S. & J. Van Campen. 2014. *Q-factor: Ruimtelijke kwaliteitsteams in Nederland*. Wageningen: Blauwdruk
- Van Bergen, J. 2017. *Gebiedsontwikkeling Goudswaard, noties ruimtelijke kwaliteit, werkboek*. Atelier 1:1 and Samenwerkingsorgaan Hoeksche Waard.

Van Campen, J., S. Van Assen, M. Fermo, B. De Jong & D. Van Weezel Errens.
2015. *Foar in moai Fryslan*. Leeuwarden Friesland: Provincie of Friesland.

Van Zandbergen, M. 2018. Commissie voor monumenten en welstand Hoorn.
Jaarverslag 2018. ed. M. N. Holland. Hoorn: Mooi Noord Holland.

APPENDIX 1. ADVICE CATEGORIES, TOOLS INCLUDING DESCRIPTIONS

Advice categories	Purpose	Tools	Description
Policy advice	Advice on general spatial quality policy and rules	Research	Use of research to collect data, test hypotheses, determine spatial characteristics, etc.
		Research by design (policy)	Use of design to explore and analyse policy issues, test hypotheses, support societal dialogue, etc.
		Policy development workshop	Participation in, or the organisation of, an interactive meeting with actors and designers to explore or develop policy, with active support of designers
		Framework development	Development of operational policy or design parameters to direct the spatial quality of an area or development project
		Dissemination	(Public) dissemination of knowledge, such as guides, folders, films, exhibitions, (annual) evaluations, and any similar manifestations
		Policy feedback	Advice or feedback during the development of policy regarding aspects of the spatial quality
		Field-work	Organisation of or participation in knowledge- or policy-oriented field trips with relevant actors, alongside on-site experimentation
Exploratory advice	Early advice on specific areas, transformations or developments, exploring opportunities and conditions for spatial quality before design processes start or permit applications are made	Research by design (design)	Use of design to explore opportunities and conditions, to test specific hypotheses, etc.
		Events	Participation in, or the organisation of, a public event(s) to explore or draw attention to transformations, such as a competition, public/political discussions etc.
		Explorative workshop	Participation in, or the organisation of, an interactive meeting with actors and designers to explore a specific transformation, with the active support of designers
		Designer selection	Advice or feedback during the selection of designers at the start of the design processes
		Excursions	Exploratory trips with relevant actors, dedicated to a specific transformation
Design development advice	Advice on the design of a specific transformation or development aimed at elaborating or refining the spatial quality of the design or plan	Design workshop	Participation in, or the organisation of, an interactive meeting of actors and designers participating in a transformation, with active support of designers
		Coaching	Provide professional advice on how to attain design goals, supervision
		Enabling	Enhancing the possibilities of actors and designers to fit their plans into the context, enhancing progress of a design processes, co-design
		Site-visits	Site-visits with actors and designers participating in a transformation, with the active support of designers
Assessment	Expert judgement linked to formal procedures, culminating in advice to decision-makers	Pre-consultation	Review of the intended design (shortly) before the permit-application is made
		Final assessment	Review of the design during the formal permitting and decision-making procedures
		Jury	(Participation in) the selection of the winners from entries submitted for a competition related to spatial quality
		Tender	(Participation in) the selection of the best offer from the tenders related to spatial quality

APPENDIX 2. Q-TEAM TOOLS AND THE EU TOOL TYPOLOGY

Advice categories	Q-team tools	EU tool typology								
		IQCT			IQDT			FQDT		
		Analysis	Information	Persuasion	Rating	Support	Exploration	Guidance	Incentive	Control
Policy advice	Research	x								
	Research by design (policy)	x					x			
	Policy development workshop						x	x		
	Framework development		x	x				x		
	Dissemination		x	x				x		
	Policy feedback					x				
	Field-work						x			
Exploratory advice	Research by design (design)	x					x			
	Events			x						
	Explorative workshop			x		x	x			
	Designer selection							x		
	Excursions			x		x	x			
Design development advice	Design workshop			x		x	x			
	Coaching					x				
	Enabling					x			x	
	Site-visits			x		x	x			
Assessment	Pre-consultation					x				
	Final assessment					x				x
	Jury					x				
	Tender					x				

Explanation of abbreviations:

IQCT: Informal Quality Culture Tools: informally influencing the broad culture in which spatial quality is prioritised

IQDT: Informal Quality Delivery Tools: shaping actual projects and places by informal influence on decision-making

FQDT: Formal Quality Delivery Tools: shaping actual projects and places by formal influence on decision-making

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors:

Sandra van Assen & José van Campen
Department of Urbanism
Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment
Delft University of Technology
Email: s.vanassen@tudelft.nl, j.vancampen@tudelft.nl
www.q-factor.info

The authors both contributed equally to this paper want to thank:

Urban Maestro team and Prof. Dr. Wil Zonneveld, Dr. Dominic Stead and Dr. ir. Marina Bos-de Vos, Delft University of Technology. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Oslo waterfront regeneration

governing quality urban design (NO)

Heidi Bergsli

Norwegian Institute of
Urban and Regional
Research

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS: BUILDING VISIONS AS A DESIGN STRATEGY FOR OSLO – THE FJORD CITY	3
2. A CIVIC INITIATIVE TO REIMAGINE OSLO	3
3. VISION PLANNING AS A SOFT TOOL FOR COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE	4
4. BJØRVIKA: PLACE QUALITY DELIVERED THROUGH COLLABORATION AND A DESIGN TOOLKIT	6
4.1. Networked governance in Bjørvika.....	7
4.2. Cultural programming to enhance place quality	9
5. A QUALITY PUBLIC ARENA.....	11
6. HOW ARE QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES DELIVERED IN BJØRVIKA?	13
7. A SUCCESSFUL TOOLKIT USED IN BJØRVIKA.....	14
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	16

1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS: BUILDING VISIONS AS A DESIGN STRATEGY FOR OSLO – THE FJORD CITY

Oslo's central waterfront has, since the 1970s, been the target of design policies aimed to reconnect the seaside and the fjord with the urban landscape.

The Fjord city is a project established by the municipality of Oslo to govern and plan waterfront development by ensuring connectivity, accessibility and design quality in eleven sub-areas that are being developed by public, pseudo-public and private companies. The governance of the Fjord city and the Bjørvika sub-area includes a systematic approach in which a combination of formal and informal quality delivery tools is used. Bjørvika's success as a quality place lies in the role of public spaces and arenas that complement a high-density built environment.

This paper will discuss how networked governance and the use of a set of design tools have secured place-based qualities in Bjørvika, which have resulted from a long-term process in which building vision and spatial cohesion have been key factors in developing the Fjord city project, and the use of a toolkit of soft design tools at Bjørvika's sub-area level.

2. A CIVIC INITIATIVE TO REIMAGINE OSLO

Oslo's central waterfront was mainly used for industrial and transport purposes until the 1960s. Restructuring the waterfront was firstly conceived of as both a necessity and an opportunity, specifically an opportunity to apply urban design principles as means of economic restructuring and for the accommodation of more recreational offers in the 270 hectares of seaside areas designated for new land-use.

The idea to *act* upon the opportunities did not come from the city government. Instead, the concept of the Fjord city was borne out of an initiative undertaken by the Association of Norwegian Landscape Architects and the Oslo Heritage Society to construct a shared vision and cultivate a broad partnership through the Nordic concept competition entitled "The City and the Fjord - Oslo year 2000." The aim was to redevelop Oslo's central waterfront as a means to address deindustrialisation, a

declining economy, poor fiscal resources, and the flight of Oslo's inhabitants and businesses to the wider city-region.¹

Oslo's planning port authorities played central roles by co-financing and advising the competition and by taking part in the jury's assessment and ranking of the submitted proposals. Banks, insurance, and shipping companies also funded the competition, together with the Aker industrial group that owned a key lot of land. The jury established to assess the proposals was composed of representatives from the Aker group, Oslo's planning director, and the city's harbour director, alongside architects and landscape architects. With these new public-private partnerships formed, participative principles were enshrined in Oslo's planning processes in order to ensure the inclusion of broad perspectives and debates.

The concept competition resulted in almost 200 proposals and much public attention and debate when they were exhibited. The jury awarded six projects and bought thirteen others. Based on their ideas and propositions, the jury formulated recommendations that the city authorities could use as design principles in future plans. The lasting results of this event was the establishment of a quality culture in which consensus was built around the shared vision that quality places at Oslo's seaside should be based on the concepts of urban compactness, multi-functionality, recreation and accessible public space. This vision has been enhanced by a focus on Oslo as a green city, yet it took nearly two decades to achieve political consensus regarding the Fjord city. The overall vision of the waterfront project was thereby consolidated in parallel with the development of the first sub-areas, even as late as the 2000s.

3. VISION PLANNING AS A SOFT TOOL FOR COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

Vision planning aims to draw models, or scenarios, of the future in which technical and political goals are brought together among public and private agents.² The aim of scenario building is to address uncertainties about future needs and wants, and thereby to apprehend tendencies in a long-term perspective. In Oslo, the establishment of a quality culture and the use of vision planning was a basis for the

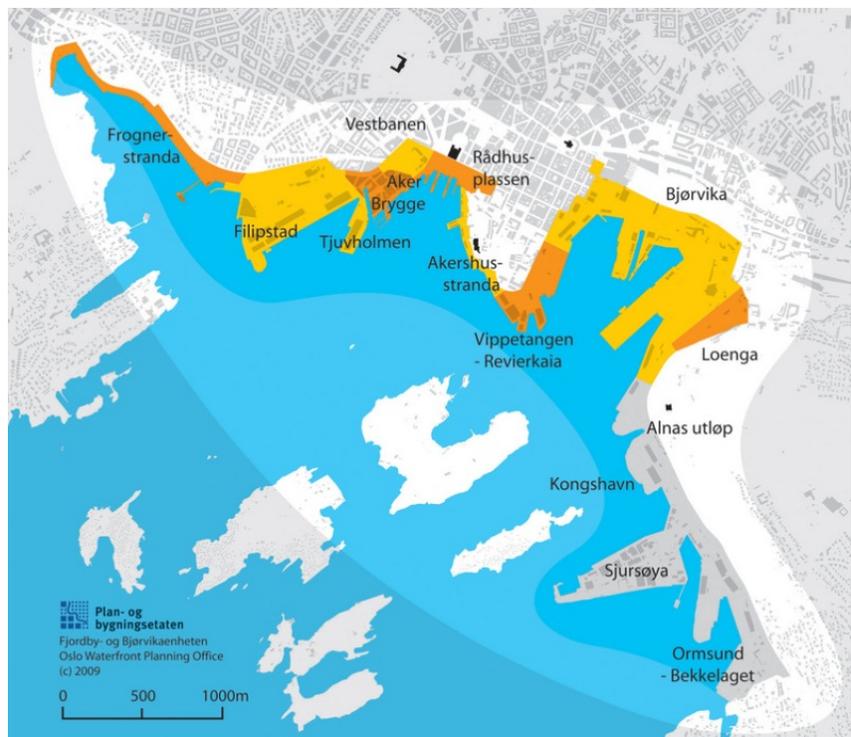
¹ Oslo Heritage Society (1983). The city and the fiord: Oslo year 2000 (Material in Norwegian). St. Hallvard. Tidsskrift for byhistorie, miljø og debatt, 83(1+2), Oslo.

² Fabbro, S. & Mesolella, A. (2010). Multilevel Spatial Visions and Territorial Cohesion: Italian Regional Planning between the TEN-T corridors, ESDP polycentrism and Governmental 'Strategic Platforms'. *Planning Practice & Research*, 25(1) : 25-48.

planning authorities to build such scenarios given that it represents a type of informal quality delivery tool that is both analytical and explorative.

In the mid-2000s, Oslo's planning authorities organised a series of workshops to which cross-disciplinary consultant groups (mainly composed of architects and engineers) were invited to work on three scenarios: Oslo Park (the natural landscape), Network (connecting people and places) and Oslo Large (a metropolitan development). Researchers and planners were invited to critically discuss the scenarios and debate on them. The results of the workshop were exhibited and become subject to public discourse, but it was first and foremost a *professional* event in which decisions about the overarching Fjord city plan could be informed by analytical considerations.

As a means to engage the range of stakeholders in the sub-areas surrounding the shared vision of a green, connected, and multifunctional waterfront development, the municipality emphasised the mutual benefits of investments that are based on a division of tasks and responsibilities in public-private partnerships.³



The Fjord city sub-areas. Source: Oslo Municipality (2009).

³ Oslo Municipality (2005). 3x Fjord city an exhibition of the results of the Oslo charette Oslo Waterfront 2030 (Material in Norwegian). Agency for Planning and Building Services, Oslo Municipality, Oslo.

The Fjord city plan adopted by Oslo City Council in 2008 included overarching principles for the entire seaside, given that the Fjord city should contribute to Oslo's regional and national role alongside promoting sustainability through new offers of public transport, increased accessibility, social diversity and the presence of nature. The plan offers formal guidance tools that secure place qualities by focusing on public space and cultural offers. Three examples illustrate how these tools are applied in the Fjord city plan: first, the plan establishes that a broad (10-20 meters) harbour promenade shall be developed through all sub-areas as a standard. Second, the eleven sub-areas must include public spaces and at least one park in their perimeter plans. Third, the sub-areas shall also have a cultural programme that secures quality in architecture, landscape and public spaces and a focus on urban recreation and culture.⁴ This latter guidance tool aims to offer a flexible design framework that can promote recreational and aesthetical qualities.

How these different principles have been integrated into the plan as guidance tools and are used in the sub-area of Bjørvika illustrates their role in the delivery of quality places. The case of Bjørvika further illustrates how new network governance models can ensure effective coordination and operation when highly complex areas are being developed.

4. BJØRVIKA: PLACE QUALITY DELIVERED THROUGH COLLABORATION AND A DESIGN TOOLKIT

Bjørvika is Oslo's "black swan," with 70 hectares of land having transformed from what was once complicated industrial and infrastructural land-use into an expansion of the city centre and resulting new neighbourhoods. This area is located in the eastern portion of the central waterfront, where the railway system has blocked access from the neighbouring districts. What facilitated this transformation and ultimately allowed for Bjørvika's transformation into a quality place were a successful networked governance model and the use of a complex toolkit that offered inventive building blocks.

⁴ Oslo Municipality (2008). The Fjord city plan. Principles for the overarching development of the Fjord city and sub-areas. Plan programme for Filipstand, Vippetangen and the outlet of Alna (Material in Norwegian). Agency for Planning and Building Services, Oslo Municipality, Oslo.



3D model of Bjørvika and the Oslo S-area. Source: www.bjorvikautvikling.no/3d-modell/ (September 2020).

4.1. Networked governance in Bjørvika

The redevelopment of Bjørvika was prioritised in Oslo’s redevelopment policies as early as the mid-1980s. This was due to the fact that Bjørvika was a complicated area, since not only had the pre-existing port structures and infrastructure been obstacles to redevelopment, but so had the transport systems. Next to Oslo’s central train station was Bjørvika—which could be considered “a monument” to modernist planning, given its favour for land-use for road systems and port infrastructure—that had come to be seen as a hodgepodge of concrete and pollution. All of this meant that Bjørvika had been fragmented and lacked any spatial connection.⁵ The massive material constructions and complicated ownership structures were obstacles to be overcome, requiring public-public and public-private cooperation, as well as improved connections with Bjørvika’s surroundings.

Though Oslo Municipality is the main public authority in charge, the central state and national governments are crucially involved in the development of the Fjord city. In the case of Bjørvika, its redevelopment fully depended on central state engagement, since a solution for the state highway was a prerequisite. The solution to this issue was ultimately an underwater tunnel, which was launched as part of the national transport plans in the 1980s.⁶ Another prerequisite was the establishment of an agreement with the landowners (the largest being Oslo Port Authorities and

⁵ Aspen, J. (1997). På sporet av Oslo. In J. Aspen & J. Pløger (Eds.), På sporet av byen: lesninger av senmoderne byliv. Spartacus, Oslo.

⁶ White Paper 28 (2001-2002). Development of Bjørvika. Ministry of Labour and Government Administration, Oslo.

Norwegian Railways), with the smaller shares initially being held by private real estate companies.

Bjørvika Utvikling AS is owned by [HAV Eiendom AS](#) and [Oslo S Utvikling AS](#), with shares in Bjørvika Utvikling AS of 66 percent and 34 percent respectively, reflecting the ownership distribution of the areas developed in Bjørvika. HAV Eiendom AS is owned by the Oslo Port Authorities, while Oslo S Utvikling AS was established in 2001, and is owned by Entra ASA, Linstow AS, and Norwegian Railways' real estate company, Bane NOR Eiendom AS (11 percent the companies involved are private).

Negotiations between the owners in the early 2000s resulted in the establishment of the Bjørvika Utvikling AS company (Bjørvika Development limited) and its daughter company Bjørvika Infrastruktur (Bjørvika Infrastructure limited). The central state and the municipality are hence indirectly involved through these property development companies. More specifically, the property is owned by HAV Eiendom and OSU, while Bjørvika Infrastruktur is responsible for developing the public spaces and technical infrastructure on their behalf. This agreement between the public shareowners established their respective financial responsibilities, and more importantly assessed that Bjørvika Infrastruktur will finance and develop the physical infrastructure, whereas the Municipality of Oslo will finance and develop the social infrastructure such as kindergartens and a school.⁷ A clause that secures the quality of physical infrastructure is that each square metre of property sold should yield at least 2500 NOK (index-regulated from 2003) for the development of public space. Once developed by Bjørvika Infrastruktur, the public spaces in the area will become the Municipality of Oslo's property and responsibility. The agreement includes the clauses that HAV Eiendom provides a loan to Bjørvika Infrastruktur, and that the public landowners can extensively develop housing and office buildings. If there are any obstacles to this, their obligations to provide technical infrastructure are reduced accordingly. This implies that the Municipality of Oslo incurs no direct financial risk.

The agreement was also committed to via a city council decision made in 2001 that was grounded in the recommendations of four international consultancy groups, and the subsequent evaluation made by the municipal and state owners of land and infrastructure in Bjørvika. On this basis, the city council's decision established a division of Bjørvika into four areas, each with its own functional profile and architectural character. The principles adhered to in the division of these areas aimed to ensure quality measures, such as building heights, city life and aesthetic

⁷ White Paper 28 (2001-2002). Development of Bjørvika. Ministry of Labour and Government Administration, Oslo.

demands for public spaces, streets and buildings, which were also listed and later included in the regulation plan.

The regulation plan for Bjørvika developed by the land owners in close collaboration with the municipality was adopted by the Oslo City Council in 2003 as a fixed legal framework which controls the development (e.g. of social and technical infrastructure, public space, cultural heritage conservation and pollution) and construction-related regulation (such as housing, office buildings and parking). As much as 40 percent of the area (of 70 hectares) is reserved for parks, public spaces and the harbour promenade, with another 20 percent allocated to the street grid. By 2019, the footprint of the buildings is lower than what had been envisioned in the plan (reduced to 31% and the street grid augmented to 29%).⁸

Enclosed within the regulation plan are non-judicial guidance tools that include a cultural programme, a design handbook and an overarching environmental programme, aimed at assuring aesthetic, cultural and environmental high quality and spatial cohesion. Additionally, the cultural programme and design handbook offer extensive guidelines and a set of indicators, yet allow the developers and landscape architects room to interpret and translate the principles of the guidelines for their respective projects.

4.2. Cultural programming to enhance place quality

An inventive process of cultural planning was undertaken in Bjørvika, based on the City Council's following remarks on the regulation plan and the demand for a cultural programme:

Bjørvika as the gate to Norway's capital should stand out as an expression of modern Norwegian urban culture and create pleasure and pride for Oslo's entire population; it should include broad cultural offers; locate public and private cultural institutions in the district, and accommodate temporary artistic production in the construction period.⁹

⁸ Reported by Bjørvika Development, retrieved at https://www.bjorvikautvikling.no/portfolio-item/bruken_offentligrom/ October 26, 2020.

⁹ Bjørvika Information centre (2003). Sustainability in Bjørvika. Cultural Programme (p.7), as adopted by City council 08/27/2003) (Material in Norwegian). Oslo.

The cultural programme was developed as a tool to meet the city council's aspirations, but also to consider and reflect upon the general, public expectations of Bjørvika.

Statsbygg, the national government's property manager, and the development company of Norwegian Railways, developed the programme in cooperation with two consultancies, with the aim of providing both a guide and a source of inspiration to Bjørvika's developers, investors and users in cultural matters. Representatives from the cultural and business sectors were assembled to inform the programme, which was also the subject to a public hearing before it was ultimately adopted by the city council in 2003. The process included the cultural sector but not broader public participation, thus it did not voice public expectations directly.

The city council's demand that available spaces be used for temporary activities during the development process was adopted in the cultural programme, which emphasises that "a strong cultural offer can be a first-mover in the off-set of a positive economic development process, [and] it can contribute to a positive image and the establishment of Bjørvika in the awareness of various users."¹⁰ The image of Bjørvika people had was one of industry, inaccessible to the population for a century and a half and thus not something they readily included whenever they envisioned Oslo's geography.

In 2004 and 2005, temporary activities contributed to artistic creation and the creative use of space. A wide range of cultural activities - art exhibitions, installations, concerts and performances - were organised in warehouses that would soon be demolished. Bjørvika was thereby discovered by Oslo's inhabitants and put on the map during its transition phase. These temporary cultural activities thus constituted a tool for exploration prior to the design of the area.

Bjørvika Utvikling has later programmed additional art projects, both temporary and permanent, with the company having invested one percent of Bjørvika Infrastructure's investment budget in art (20 million NOK, with 75 percent of the art budget used to fund permanent installations in public spaces and 25 percent for temporary art activities).

Meanwhile, the results of the cultural programme testify to the role of art in making Bjørvika attractive, with the decision by the national government to locate the Oslo City Opera house in the area having boosted its attractiveness. The architectural design of the opera house has proven vital to its success, since it has expanded this cultural arena through the inventive provision of public space.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*:13.

5. A QUALITY PUBLIC ARENA

The Norwegian government's decision to relocate the Norwegian Opera and Ballet to Bjørvika was made on the arguments of place quality, following a lengthy political debate about its location, and an opera house seeking relocation for much of the 20th century.

A broad political majority in the Norwegian Parliament supported the construction of a new opera house, but there was no agreement about its location. Relocation at the western seaside, at Vestbanen, was favoured by representatives of the Opera and Ballet and many politicians as it would finalise a redevelopment process instead of initiating a new one. Yet, Vestbanen was not a location that proved suitable or worthy of engagement by the members of the Labour Party. In order to gain political consensus, Bjørvika was promoted as it represented a promising project that could prove beneficial to the eastern working class districts of Oslo, which thus led to its selection achieving a majority vote.

High investment in an opera house, a marginal cultural institution in the Norwegian context, had to be justified at the national scale to the Norwegian population at large. Its role in Oslo's development was a minor argument to this matter. Instead, the symbolic and aesthetic potential of architecture served this purpose, as the director of the opera house at the time revealed:

We agreed to make an associative enrichment, with an alliance with modern architecture, to make it accessible. We didn't want a South European monumentality, with stairs and pillars signalling that 'this is not for you; it is something for the upper classes'. So we managed to create 'broad monumentality', what I would call a Scandinavian, socio-democratic monumentality. It is not something exclusive.¹¹

The success of the Opera House rested upon its achievement as an edifice of national pride based on its architecture and public space, symbolising an aspect of the country's natural, national beauty, an iceberg sliding into the fjord. It is possible to climb up this edifice, with the roof offering a large public space with a view of the sea. The opera house, the director stresses, also became successful because it is an urban space, "an Italian piazza," where people gather and can walk on the roof.

¹¹ Bergsli, H. (2015). Urban attractiveness and competitive policies in Oslo and Marseille. The waterfront as object of restructuring, culture-led redevelopment and negotiation

(citation page 144). Thesis submitted for the degree of philosophiae doctor, Institute of sociology and human geography, University of Oslo, Oslo.

The design proposed by Snøhetta to address the international competition's call for a beautiful, unique and monumental edifice included the choice of public space as an integral and vital part of the building. Snøhetta won the bid among 260, mainly international, architectural offices, and has won 24 prizes for its oeuvre (among which 21 are international prizes).¹² The opera house has provided Oslo's inhabitants with a distinctive public space, a new symbolic edifice of the capital city. In the end, it has served as driver for urban development in the eastern parts of Oslo.



The harbour promenade between the public library opening in 2020 and the Opera House. Photo: Bjørvika Utvikling/Vibeke Hermanrud.

The opera house is not the only cultural institution that has been relocated to Bjørvika. The Munch museum and the main city library are municipal institutions that have also been relocated in its vicinity. The latter represents the main offer aimed to attract a broader range of Oslo's inhabitants to Bjørvika by being universally accessible and free of charge. These three cultural arenas constitute public offers that complement the commercial ones, as do seven public spaces. This is because cultural arenas and public spaces are crucial to Bjørvika's quality design as they promote accessibility.

¹² Whist, E. Kalhagen, K.O. & E. Henningsen (2016). New Opera house. Evaluation, assigned by the Ministry of Finance, December 2016. Retrieved at

<https://www.ntnu.no/documents/1261860271/1262012574/Ettrevaluering+av+Nytt+Operahus.pdf/d12889f3-0aa2-47e4-b17e-5474aa909959?version=1.0>

6. HOW ARE QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES DELIVERED IN BJØRVIKA?

Political regulations secured the location, development and funding of seven public spaces as well as a harbour promenade in Bjørvika, which Bjørvika Infrastructure is developing and will hand over - free of charge - to the municipality of Oslo, who will be responsible for their maintenance. Additionally, their quality has been assured by the analytical tools offered by public space programmes developed by architects and landscape architects.

In 2004, Oslo and Bjørvika Utvikling organised an open competition to suggest overarching concepts for diversity and coherence in and between the public spaces. The proposal put forward by SLA Landscape Architects and Gehl Architects was selected by the jury based on their aims of fostering city life through the delivery of high quality public spaces. The analytical tool that SLA and Gehl uses in the programmes made for the public spaces of Bjørvika is the principle that the terrain should *support* the desired activities. This approach puts city living first, implying that urban design should sustain the city, avoiding urban designs restricting the desired uses of public space.



The Akerselvaallmenningen public space. Photo: Eskild Johansen.

The analytical tool offered by the public space programmes to ensure the delivery of quality design has been supplemented by the guidance tools of theme reports for lighting, city space and streetscape, buildings, street furniture and equipment, art

and most importantly the Overarching Sustainability Programme. These reports substantiate the main topics targeted in the design handbook, their aim being to support and inspire the delivery of quality design by providing principles about the components on which quality design depends, without detailed instruction.

Several measures have been taken to ensure that the programmes guide decision-making on design quality, with the first being that the city council instructed that the development of guidelines should be in accordance with and complement the design handbook. The second has been Bjørvika Utvikling's implementation of environmental and design principles and their curation of cultural programming. The guidance tools have been pivotal to the delivery of high-quality public spaces in Bjørvika, due to their status as being politically motivated, their embeddedness in formal planning, and the financial security for delivery established in the agreement between the landowners and the municipality of Oslo. The challenge of these tools is to find ways to institutionalise them and to avoid their dependency on personal commitment. In Bjørvika, this seems to have been avoided by their integration in the project management model.

7. A SUCCESSFUL TOOLKIT USED IN BJØRVIKA

The public spaces delivered in Bjørvika are the result of how different tools are deliberately combined. First, the governance model formed in collaboration between Oslo's city council, planning authorities, and pseudo-public companies provides the financial security necessary to provide quality urban design. Second, the formal tool represented by the regulation plan secured democratic public space, thus accessibility to this otherwise exclusive area of high-cost housing and offices. Third, the planning authorities have utilised various steering tools that have inspired the developers and thereby increased their competencies. These tools are the explorative and analytical tools of scenario-building, debate and concept competition, tools that inform stakeholders about urban design quality and its value to the built environment. Guidance tools such as handbooks, programmes and theme reports are politically prescribed, yet funded and followed up by the development company. The agreement between the landowners has implied significant investment in public space, greenery, and materials.

The physical result of the successful toolkit is the continuous, voluminous and diversified range of public spaces that are connected to the area and that connect the area to its surroundings. The social result is the extensive use of the harbour promenade by Oslo's inhabitants and visitors, and the appropriation of Bjørvika's beach area, especially by Oslo's younger generations.

What is further interesting in the case of Bjørvika is how this combination of financial mechanisms and democratic awareness about the role of public spaces and public functions have grounded development and assured a quality place. *Initiating* the development of the area with the opening of a cultural institution – the Oslo Opera House – was a bold political move, albeit one that has proven to be a success. Ensuring the prevalence of several cultural arenas has added value to the accessibility and diverse use of Bjørvika by different social groups. It accommodates the vitality of the place and the diversity of city life that prevents this new area that is located between established neighbourhoods, the city centre and the Fjord from being an exclusive area.

One challenge to Bjørvika's overall success is that a range of public meetings, hearings and activities to inform about and promote the area among Oslo's inhabitants did not provide a wide base of public support for the vision of the Fjord city. Insufficient physical connections to existing eastern residential areas caused the neighbouring district council to develop an alternative plan for Bjørvika in 2008, prior to the adoption of the Fjord city plan by the Oslo city council. The lack of housing accessible to lower and medium income groups has further been a central critique of Bjørvika, and one that has not yet been fully addressed in terms of social diversity. Combining high quality design with affordable offers is a challenge in urban development that Bjørvika has hitherto not been properly able to meet, despite public ownership and governance. This is also why the extent and quality of public spaces is key to its overarching role to the city.

The innovative approach illustrated by this case is the networked governance model that secures a holistic approach to place development due to agreement regarding the delegation of financial responsibilities and deliverances. The quality of design, however, is assured by the combination of formal and informal quality delivery tools: first, the decisions of the city council adopted in the regulation plan of Bjørvika which assure a large share of public space and encourage its quality by instructing developers to provide guidance tools. Second, the planning authorities and Bjørvika Utvikling have instilled competencies among the stakeholders through the continuous provision of additional guidelines, workshops with professionals, and arenas for debate, as illustrated in this paper in the cases of the scenario building and the cultural programme. Consequently, the highly complex development process

has been accommodated by a solid toolkit by which the quality of design in Bjørvika has been secured through the inclusion of design competencies.

The vision of Oslo has transformed from an industrial city into a green and recreational city through the evolution of the Fjord city project. The extensive development of public space has made it accessible and allowed it to be appropriated by Oslo's inhabitants. The project has ultimately consolidated the shared perspective that design quality and public space development serve economic, social and cultural purposes, on which investment in the city depends today.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.bjorvikautvikling.no/portfolio-item/information-in-english/>

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Heidi Bergsli, Researcher at Norwegian Institute of Urban and Regional Research

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Warsaw city architect

Warsaw - between rapid urban
development and the need for
sustainability (PL)

Monika Komorowska

Wojciech Kacperski

Unit for Dialogue in Planning,
City of Warsaw

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT: WARSAW IN TRANSITION.....	3
3. INTRODUCING A LANDSCAPE OF (INFORMAL) TOOLS.....	5
3.1. Participation in the development of formal planning legislation.....	5
3.2. Mayor's Architectural Awards & the ZODIAK centre	6
3.3. Working in the gap: "Warsaw Neighbourhoods" workshops	7
4. KEY LESSONS & TRANSFERABILITY.....	12

1. SUMMARY

The City Architect's office of Warsaw, Poland has been employing a combination of soft tools to address the urgent needs of a city under development pressure, and to lay the foundation for the creation of a wider design culture on urban issues. This paper outlines the efforts of the Department for Architecture and Spatial Planning (under the City Architect's direction) to be proactive and increase citizen engagement with the development of the city, in a context where not just the city itself but also the formal planning tools – laws etc. – are in a transitional phase. This paper looks at the combination of different initiatives in a 'landscape' of informal governance tools for urban design, with a particular emphasis on the 'Warsaw Neighbourhoods' series of workshops. Early insights and recommendations based on these ongoing processes are presented as tips for the employment of soft tools in challenging contexts.

2. CONTEXT: WARSAW IN TRANSITION



Figure 1: Warsaw's size/density compared to other European cities

Warsaw has always been and remains, the epicentre of the most important changes in Poland—the transformation of the political system in 1989 also brought about a rapid transformation for Warsaw, from provincial town of the Soviet bloc to a thriving European capital, with 2004, the year of Poland's accession to the EU, being the next important checkpoint. As such, change in Poland tends to radiate outwards from Warsaw to the rest of the country, and the same is true for spatial planning and design, alongside the development of urban space in general.

Contemporary Warsaw is a dynamic city that is still experiencing rapid development: in 2019 alone, the city gained 21,599 new apartment buildings and 175,000 sq. m. of new office space. Year to year, the skyline grows higher and higher with new skyscrapers, while, on the ground, public spaces are being modernised to become more and more attractive to people while new infrastructure, such as cycling networks, is created.

Polish spatial law, however, has not been able to keep up with the rapid pace change has taken in the city in recent years. For example, the last substantial change was in 2003, when, due to the need to align with European standards, a new Spatial Planning and Development Act was voted into law by the Parliament. The key element of the 2003 Act was the provision of two avenues towards building permits; depending on whether the site in question was part of an existing Local Development Plan or not. The goal was to encourage the formation of Local Plans and coordinated development; however, in practice it proved to be an enabler for just the opposite. As currently only about 40% of Warsaw is covered by valid Local Development Plans, and for the rest the dual avenues towards permits have led to a series of issues.

On the surface, obtaining permission to build on a site without a local plan seems more complex, given that the developer would have to specify design elements such as building height and indexes concerning living spaces, green spaces and so on, in addition to having to negotiate all of those. If a Local Plan is already in place, then only the building permit needs to be obtained—a complex procedure in itself, although based on established rules and criteria.

In reality, however, what was meant to be the exception actually became the rule. Negotiating specific conditions for developments outside local plans turned out to be, from the point of view of developers, easier than complying with existing local plans; therefore, much of the new development was occurring outside the areas already covered by plans. In a sense, it was (and still is) a race between planners trying to draft local plans for more areas and developers trying to build before plans are established.

In 2006, Warsaw established a General Spatial Plan (called the Study for Conditions and Directions of Urban Development) which became the overall framework for the future planning of the city. This plan specified the minimum requirements that must be met in order to obtain permits for areas lying outside local plans (e.g. forbidding building on designated forest areas) and also designated areas where new housing developments could be built. Still, in 2020 the document remained outdated and in need of revision, and while the process to produce a new formal plan is still underway, the old versions remain in place however, thus hindering efforts towards a sustainable mode of design and planning of the city.

3. INTRODUCING A LANDSCAPE OF (INFORMAL) TOOLS

Today, the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning of the City of Warsaw, led by the City Architect, is coordinating the spatial planning of the entire city. Public participation and transparency in all the actions the City takes with regards to spatial planning were brought to the forefront with the current City Architect's appointment in 2016, although efforts had already been in place previously so as to sow the seeds of a wider 'design culture'.

As such, increasing public engagement within the process of developing the new planning law was one of the priorities. As this is, however, an extremely lengthy process and one that is often not capable of conditioning high-quality architectural solutions by itself, other soft tools have focused on other fronts, mostly on creating space for and initiating discussions on the city and on design quality. Besides that, a series of workshops was launched that have tried to bridge the gap between formal legislation (or the absence thereof) and a more general debate that does not have site-specific goals.

Below is a brief account of the main tools employed by the City of Warsaw today, with a particular emphasis on the 'Warsaw Neighbourhoods' workshops.

3.1. Participation in the development of formal planning legislation

Under current Polish law, there is no legal requirement for substantial consultative processes for any spatial / urban development plans, much less for development occurring outside of plans. As a result, often the citizens' relationship to local development plans is restricted to late-stage objections when it first becomes known that something controversial is happening in their neighbourhood.

Since 2014, however, the City Architect's office has made significant efforts to involve citizens in the planning process and utilize their local knowledge to the benefit of new plans. Crucially, these efforts are directed not only to increasing participation in general but to transforming the way that citizens engage with the planning process – an innovative experiment for the Polish context. As such, we have strived to shift the bulk of participation efforts earlier in the process, rather than at the final stage, and to cultivate a continuous engagement. We have therefore introduced a three-stage structure, the first of which begins at the initial phases of

the plan and focuses on knowledge – both in the sense of gathering insights from the public (via workshops and surveys, asking to identify valuable elements, problems, opportunities for change, etc.), and in the sense of creating a common base of understanding for what a development plan is and is not, and what it can and cannot do.

A second stage then follows when different conceptual versions of the plan are ready for public consultation and a third wherein the final design outlines are presented, both in physical and online forms, with the emphasis being on translating technical and legal elements into an easily understandable language. This creates a chain of involvement and a better understanding of the process, building trust between the City and its citizens and helping to reduce conflicts over the design in the final stage.

3.2. Mayor's Architectural Awards & the ZODIAK centre

Established in 2015, the Architectural Awards of the Mayor of Warsaw annually awards designers and investors for the best completed work in various categories. Citizens have the opportunity to put nominations forward and vote for the residents' award, whereas the City sets the tone by defining the categories. Last year, for instance, two new ones were included to highlight environmental impact (best eco-solutions) and inclusivity (best accessible building).

In Warsaw, as in many other places, it is typically the negative examples of architecture and urban design that dominate the public debate—where ever that exists in the first place. By identifying and promoting high-quality works, the Awards play an educational role in helping to shift that balance towards good examples. As well, although it is still rather a niche subject and, as such, presents some issues; wider dissemination is always a tricky thing while, for example, it is easy to treat the Awards solely as a promotional tool for the city administration. Still, the Awards create a much-needed space for constructive discussions on architectural quality that are more easily separated from current political disputes.

Along similar lines, a collaboration between the City and the Warsaw Branch of the Association of Polish Architects led to the creation of ZODIAK in 2018. ZODIAK is Warsaw's Pavilion of Architecture, a place dedicated to architecture, urban planning, economic development and other aspects of the city's built environment. The pavilion hosts exhibitions and a variety of events, from lectures and workshops to movie screenings in addition to, in more official capacities, meetings with the Mayor and press briefings. It also functions as a meeting point for city officials, planners, architects and citizens.

ZODIAK was financed by the City of Warsaw and is operated jointly with the Branch of Architects in its status as an NGO. This poses certain, primarily administrative, challenges, in addition to those regarding the identity of the pavilion itself. Given that it is owned and managed by the City, the pavilion is meant to be a space as open as possible, not just to the NGO that initiated the idea but to as many associations and citizen groups as possible. After two years operating in that mode, one of the directions we are discussing for its future is actually trying to have the City be a little more present, and to use the space to open up dialogues about public policy, especially spatial policy, alongside all other debates and events.



Figure 2: the ZODIAK

3.3. Working in the gap: “Warsaw Neighbourhoods” workshops

‘Warsaw Neighbourhoods’ is an ongoing series of workshops that began in 2018, with the aim of addressing the particular problems that have arisen from the transitional state of the formal, legal planning documents, as explained above under ‘context’, and more specifically for those areas wherein the conflict between current and emerging spatial plans primarily concerns the designated land use. 14 such locations were originally mapped, the majority of which are brownfields and are mostly privately owned.

The specific issue is this: for the majority of these sites, the 2006 General Plan specifies that they should be preserved as industrial land. The reality of the city has already proven this to be outdated, and new uses are certain to be introduced one way or another. However, until the new strategic spatial plan is implemented, no local development plan can be created for such areas that would assign a change in use, therefore there is no 'formal' path for the local authority to influence any proposals. What can occur, as explained previously, is that developers can ask for an individual building permit, which does not have to take into account the previously assigned use. Again there is little room for the City to control or guide the development of such areas, yet, at the same time and as is often the case, these brownfields are now of increasingly high value as land for development, and as such neither the developers nor the City want to wait for the lengthy processes of first general, then local development plans to be completed before moving forward. On the City's part, this is because realistically it will lead to uncoordinated and uncontrolled development.

Based on these conditions, the idea behind the workshops was to try and bring all three of the main stakeholders involved in such development plans to the table: the private landowners, city officials and inhabitants / citizens. Given this, transparency has been a key principle from the beginning regarding both the process and the City's intentions. The main goal was to use these workshops to try and create a common vision for each of the areas examined, so in turn case-by-case and uncoordinated permits to different investors could be avoided. Results would then feed into the local development plans, when eventually these are put together - but the workshops themselves aimed more at creating a masterplan for each area.



Figure 3: from Warsaw Neighbourhoods workshops

A participatory workshop method (based on the charrette workshop method) was selected for the process and the decision was made to have the workshops be organized and run by an independent facilitator rather than city officials themselves. As well, three of the fourteen areas have already been worked on, with each workshop running for an average of three days.

The first workshop concerned an area that is partially (by about 1/3) owned by the City and is currently empty. Nevertheless, it still was essential to the City Architect that citizen groups were part of the discussion. Bringing the 'neighbours' to the table, however, proved to be hugely challenging due to the way the surrounding areas had been developed, meaning the residents there were reluctant to see any investment into an empty area while public urban/social infrastructure was still lacking in the areas where they lived. Public perception played a huge role and numerous misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the City's intentions provided further obstacles. Turning to local academic experts in social sciences, we were advised to investigate the social demographics of the people living in the wider area and to identify who the new place might be attractive to; then we would invite a statistically suitable sample with similar backgrounds to participate, although this still proved highly difficult, with engagement in the actual workshops ultimately being limited and rather superficial.

In the end, this first workshop concluded in four potential scenarios for development which the City Architect's office then began to look more closely into from a financial point of view. This process then led to another conflict, this time on the side of the investors who had expected the workshops to lead to almost immediate permits for new development. Eventually, a mix of scenarios was used to come to a 'final' result, but this was where the process stopped in anticipation of the new strategic document.

Reflecting back on this initial effort, on the one hand, it was crucially important to have a concrete result from this process; this is something that has been communicated to the team developing the new plan and which has been taken into account in the drafting of the new formal documents. On the other hand, from the point of view of both the inhabitants and the investors, there is as of yet no concrete result, as in, a development underway, which is something that can be frustrating. Yet, for us it is still extremely valuable, not least because the new General Plan and subsequent steps (the local development plan, the individual permits, etc.) can now be developed on the basis of this consensus rather than an isolated designer's vision.

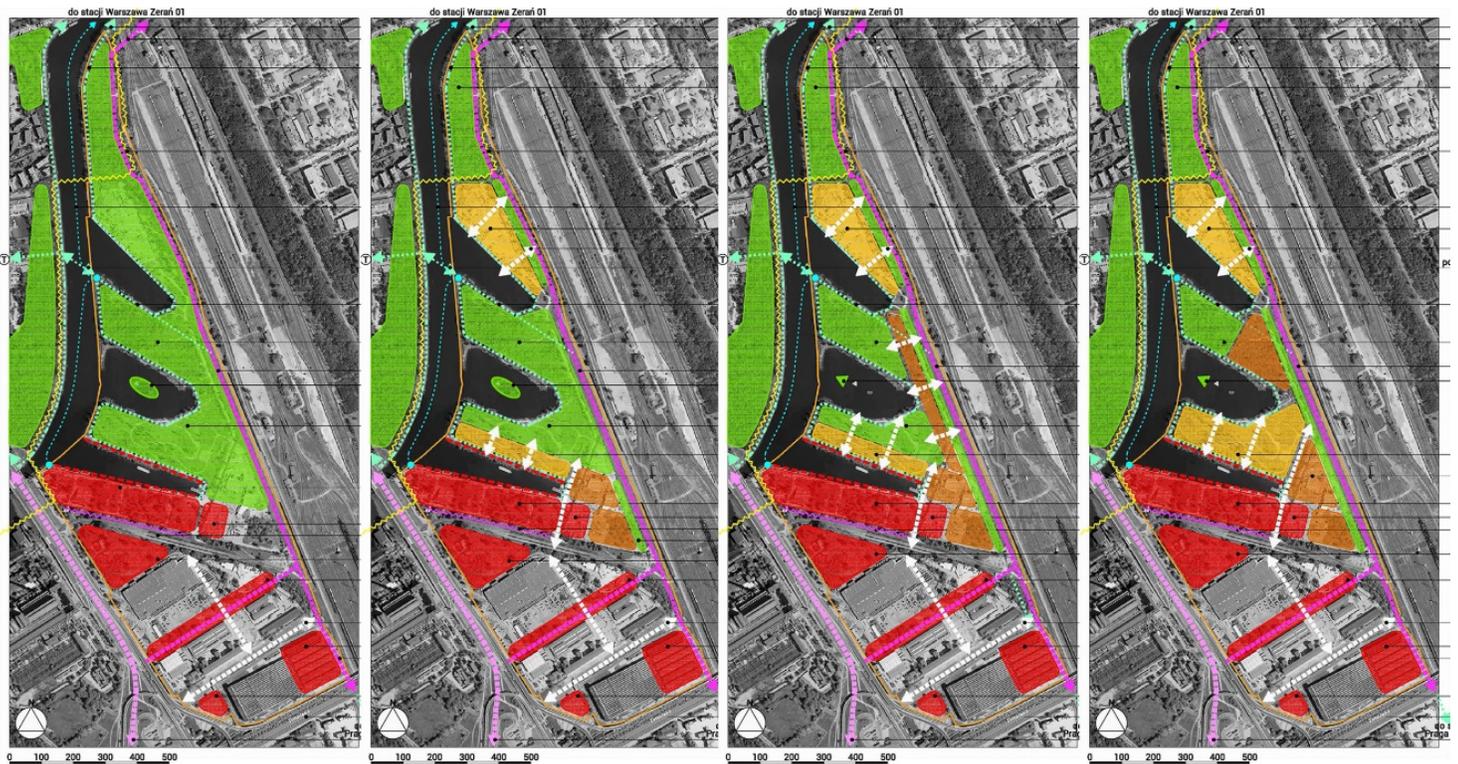


Figure 4: first workshop results

Building on the lessons from the first workshop, we organised the second one on the site of a former car factory, an easier case as there was almost no public land and nearly all of the land was under the ownership of the car factory (with just few other lots privately owned). Moreover, the fringes of the site were already inhabited, so there were actual residents to talk to, while an artistic foundation had already been active in one of the old industrial buildings for some time and which had been trying to engage with the community. In a challenge particular to this site, a citizens' group called 'The City Is Ours' (already active for many years as a 'watchdog' for both public authorities and private investors) had been advocating for the site to become a kind of Exposition area—however we found that public opinion in general was against the idea, and eventually the group stopped participating in the process. Yet for us, this demonstrated the value of having different stakeholders at the same table and bringing the conflicts to focus.

The structure of the workshops was also adjusted so that the first stage involved city officials and investors only, who compared and contrasted expectations and needs on both sides. Spatial concepts were developed based on this dialogue and taken to inhabitants for further debate. Dialogue over maps and models proved effective as it allowed for an immediate testing of ideas. In the end, the second try at the process was much easier for all involved, however, the practical result is still the same” -

investors and land owners came to the process expecting a quick route to building, which was neither the intention of the City nor the path we would have liked to take, especially without proper time allowed for economic discussions.



Figure 5: from a following workshop (Szwedzka)

It is perhaps not uncommon in the European context to plan and organise such collaborative processes, yet one key difference is that they are typically employed in places and contexts where formal frameworks (laws, spatial strategies and visions, etc.) are already in place. In Warsaw, we initiated this process in an effort to be proactive about the city's future while the formal framework is still under development, rather than wait for it to be finalised. On one hand, it could prove to be a disadvantage to not have an established legal framework in place when discussing a site in the workshops. On the other hand, it opens up new possibilities to discuss the future of the space. Once the document is in place, it would be difficult to have these kinds of discussions—in the Polish context, it takes a minimum of three years to create these documents and nearly as long to alter them if needed. Therefore, having discussions based on altering an existing local plan is not actually the most efficient or productive method, not just practically but also because it gives people the sense they have to fight against something. By contrast, the 'Warsaw Neighbourhoods' workshops enjoy the freedom to explore open potentials.

4. KEY LESSONS & TRANSFERABILITY

Through the combined effect of all the aforementioned tools, in recent years one clear achievement for the City Architect's team has been introducing more dialogue and transparency into the planning and development process. As such, citizen participation has become a key issue in spatial planning at all scales, from small neighbourhoods to new visions for large districts and the city as a whole.

As Warsaw is rapidly evolving, so are the tools and initiatives the Department employs. This is an emerging work-in-progress, yet experiences from the last few years have already provided us with insights on how we can optimise the function of each method, what is necessary for each tool to work well, and where potential pitfalls might lie.

Firstly, we have learned that **innovation is context-dependent**; an architectural pavilion, for instance, is not innovative in itself, unless such a space is completely missing from an urban context that is facing investment pressures or other significant transitions. Particularly in contexts where such elements are lacking, as was the case in Warsaw, simple tools like creating a space to gather or a well-considered annual award can be highly influential.

When it comes to **public-facing initiatives** such as awards and architectural centres, **dissemination is the key challenge**, like reaching as broad an audience as possible, and making the discussion relevant to different groups of people beyond the involved professionals. In the case of pavilions and similar spaces, the key to success is how these are **animated** by a variety of actors and in different ways.

When working in a **workshop format**, we found the biggest challenge to be having to explain to each group of stakeholders their **role in the process**, the opportunities, but also the limitations they have. Without such boundaries, there would be no constructive gathering of information and comments. On the bright side however, this is also the most valuable aspect of such formats: gathering information from different actors in one place, so that every party can see the others' needs and be confronted with differing points of view. We identified a similar insight from the consultative processes on the development of new spatial plans; the biggest innovation is creating a **better understanding of the process itself**, for all those involved.

We found the **methodology of a charrette workshop**, already tried and tested in numerous other countries and cities, to be highly recommendable as a means of finding solutions to complex spatial problems. At the same time, workshops need to be fit for purpose if they are to be successful; patterns of land ownership, resident/neighbouring citizen demographics and other social aspects need to be

considered before planning the process, and the specific steps of the charrette method adjusted accordingly.

The 'Warsaw Neighbourhoods' workshops are only just the beginning; beyond the first four, ten more are planned for areas that have already been mapped. They are an ongoing experiment and each edition provides lessons for the next; overall, however, early results are encouraging for the role of such tools in complex, transitional planning contexts—in other words, wherever the legislation is under development itself and there is a higher degree of uncertainty. It is a peculiar experience to try and **develop a constellation of informal tools at the same time as the formal ones are being re-defined**, yet what we are seeing is that such initiatives are highly valuable even under these conditions, and there is no reason why they cannot be employed before planning law and formal procedures have been established. Despite the obstacles that will and have arisen, mostly in terms of the speed of implementation of results, engaging citizens and bringing stakeholders together in dialogue remains crucial.

At the time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought even more challenges to cities all over the world and as well as challenge how we conceive of their development. At the same time, Warsaw, like many other places, is facing a future that is very hard to predict and anticipate, particularly with climate change already demonstrating its effects. In contrast to previous visions for Warsaw that focused on explosive development in housing and other sectors, we now need to think in much more modest manner spatially, and focus on everyday living conditions and sustainable solutions. A reconsideration of traditional planning tools is essential to addressing the urgent changes already underway, and it seems that following the principles of transparency and engagement is the way to go.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Monika Komorowska, Unit for Dialogue in Planning, City of Warsaw, and Wojciech Kacperski, Unit for Dialogue in Planning, City of Warsaw

edited for Urban Maestro by Terpsi Laopoulou, University College London/UN-HABITAT Brussels, with additional input from Marlena Happach, City Architect & Director of the Department for Architecture and Spatial Planning

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

BIP/ZIP program

Intervention in the neighborhoods
and priority areas in Lisbon (PT)

José Luís Crespo
Lucinda Caetano

CIAUD (Research Centre
for Architecture, Urbanism
and Design)

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. CONTEXT FOR THE BIP/ZIP PROGRAM	4
3. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOLS USED FOR THE BIP/ZIP PROGRAM	5
4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	6
5. CHALLENGES, PROBLEMS, AND MAIN INNOVATIONS AND IMPACTS.....	7
6. SCOPE, PERMANENCE AND EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION.....	9
7. CONCLUSIONS.....	11
KEY REFERENCES	12

1. INTRODUCTION

The participation in urban planning and management has taken place through formal processes within the conventional channels provided by Portuguese legislation, as well as through informal processes complementary to the planning and governance system, as is the case of this paper's subject of analysis: the BIP/ZIP Program (*Programa dos Bairros e Zonas de Intervenção Prioritária*).

For Garcia (2008), participation is crucial to maintaining social bonds and relating individuals to the decision-making power and to their citizenship. Governance implies a citizenship of mobilization at the scale of the city or conurbation, wherein the various problems of planning, transport, and safety arise, and which is not limited to a citizenship of proximity. This governance should respond to a true participation of citizens in all the stages of a project (Crespo, 2015). As such, Hall (2011) created a typological matrix – hierarchy, market, networks, community – within the scope of governance that ranges from a situation of absolute control (hierarchies) to a situation of self-regulation (communities) or “non-government.” These four elements, strictly speaking, represent the actors in the participative processes (public, private, and economic agents, communities and their relations).

In the governance of an urban project – alongside its intersection with resources and processes – it is important to intervene in regard to the interested parties and, consequently, the decision-making (be it public or private), so that the decisions are locally based, and made with and for the people, thus aiming at managing the built environment, shaping the processes, the actors, and the outcomes for the public good.

As an example, in Portugal, there is the BIP/ZIP Program: Neighborhoods and Priority Areas for Intervention, first conceived in the Municipality of Lisbon in 2009, which has been launched since 2011 in the 67 priority intervention neighborhoods or areas (according to the map approved in 2010). Therefore, it is a scale of municipal/local governance, since one of the partners – regardless of whether or not they are a sponsor – will necessarily be the parish council (local governance structure), given that the third sector (associativism) and the local community are essential to the processes of urban planning and management.

The tools of governance and urban management used in this practice are based on “quality delivery,” that is, intervention in the territory through concrete local action. These tools are both of a formal nature – given they are created and regulated by the municipality – and of an informal nature, since they are the result of experimentation by new associations and/or “collectives” who act directly with the local communities.

2. CONTEXT FOR THE BIP/ZIP PROGRAM

The Lisbon BIP/ZIP Program, as an example of good participatory practices, has similarities to what was proposed in the initiative “Operações de Qualificação e Reinserção Urbana de Bairros Críticos” (operations for urban qualification and reintegration of critical neighborhoods) [IBC]¹. This program has been influenced by the Portuguese participatory trajectory, as is the case of the “Serviço de Apoio Ambulatório Local” (local ambulatory support service) [SAAL]² and the “Participatory Budget” [OP]³.

The BIP/ZIP Program was first laid down in the scope of the objectives of the Local Housing Program (*Programa Local de Habitação*) [PLH], approved by the municipal bodies at the end of 2009, and was conceived as a municipal public policy instrument for the Local Housing Program.

Since 2011, the Program has aimed to promote and execute small local interventions that encourage the creation and development of activities and projects in the Neighborhoods and priority areas for intervention which are able to “enable a response to social and urban emergencies” that are a “challenge to the well-being of the whole community.” The Program is highly open, both in terms of partnerships and themes, of which notable examples include: the promotion of citizenship, competencies and entrepreneurship, prevention and inclusion, the rehabilitation and requalification of spaces, and the improvement of life in the neighborhoods. The philosophy of the Program is based on establishing local partnerships with parish councils and local associations, societies and non-governmental organizations, thereby contributing to the strengthening of socio-territorial cohesion in the municipality.

The primary goal of the program is to instigate an active citizenship that strengthens the integration of these territories in the city. In this way, the self-organizing ability of the residents and the different actors present in the territories is promoted so that

¹The IBC was a housing program established by Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 143/2005, in order to rehabilitate, based on a methodology of processes managed by multidisciplinary teams, taking place in a horizontal governance-style: e.g. the Interministerial Work Group and technical support groups, related to the Universities alongside the local partner groups for each territory and the financing partners.

² SAAL operations first appeared at the same time as the revolutionary process taking place in Portugal surrounding the Carnation Revolution of April 25, 1974. Its main goal was to

solve the housing problem. It was institutionally created via the Order of August 6 1974, with the SAAL emerging as a pilot-project whose goals were: i) participation of the residents in the construction of their homes; ii) a decentralization of administration, given that the SAAL was based on local power/authority (the residents were organized in “Residents Commissions” or “Housing Co-operatives”), and City Councils, with the financing for the construction of houses given directly to the Associations; and iii) the inclusion of the resources from the residents themselves.

³ In Portugal, the first phase (until 2004) included consultative and face-to-face processes, while the second phase (after 2005) comprised deliberative processes with the possibility of a “multichannel” participation. Additionally, in this last phase, the parish councils developed processes autonomous from the municipalities. Out of the whole country, this instrument was most effective in the Lisbon region (Crespo, 2013).

they can improve their living conditions and the quality of their built environment through dialogue.

The BIP/ZIP Program focuses on less bureaucratic-styled organization and participation, of a bottom-up nature, and on the swiftness of the response, in doing so stressing the goal of fighting and mitigating the increase in socio-territorial fracture through proximity policies that are well articulated with the area, and oriented towards the response to social, health, or urban emergencies.

On a practical level, a public tender is opened annually, with a maximum amount of 50,000 euros per project, to applications for projects to be executed in the priority neighborhoods whose applicants must be civil society associations.

Following the submission of the applications, they are evaluated by an independent jury who decides who will be the beneficiaries of the program, based on the predetermined criteria.

Afterwards, the program contracts are signed by the winning associations so that the proposed projects are implemented, with mutual conditions, execution deadlines and stages of payment established by the local authority.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOLS USED FOR THE BIP/ZIP PROGRAM

The main tool used by the Municipality is the incentive-based promotion, which is regulated and interventionist. With this tool, the administration (municipality) delivers the public resources directly to the local agents so that they can develop the projects, focus on specific results, or be process-oriented.

In the BIP/ZIP initiative, analysis and persuasion tools are also used. The analysis tools allow for an understanding of how the built environment is shaped by the processes, as well as their consequences on the territory and the people situated there. The norm for this initiative has been the use of protocols between the Lisbon City Council and universities in order to monitor and evaluate the results of the BIP/ZIP Program, so as to uphold the policy and evaluate changes in the state of the built environment in a broader fashion.

The persuasion tools that are also used defend proactive action, that is, instead of waiting for organizations and individuals to find and identify the knowledge they seek, these tools bring the methodologies and knowledge to them, either in-person or digitally. For example, this can take place through awareness-raising initiatives with awards for good practices, or structured campaigns that focus on participation and on altering perceptions and practices in key areas.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

The BIP/ZIP Program follows a protocol based on municipal stances. It begins with the approval and consequential deliberation, in a City Council meeting, of the cycle and rules that are to be followed in the public tender for each calendar year. The territorial management tool supporting the program is the BIP/ZIP charter, which was designed by combining socio-spatial variables. The map establishes 67 priority intervention neighborhoods—a neighborhood is considered a priority when, by analyzing the socio-economical, urban and environmental variables, a “socio-territorial fracture” is identified (Oliveira, 2013, p.74). In this manner, four areas/neighborhoods were typified: Urban Areas of Illegal Genesis [AUGIs],⁴ historical neighborhoods, municipal social housing neighborhoods, and others/mixed neighborhoods.

It is relevant to mention that the BIP/ZIP charter is included in Lisbon’s Municipal Master Plan and that it represents the municipality’s commitment, in the 10 years subsequent to its approval, to develop programs and measures that allow the BIP/ZIP to cease being deprived neighborhoods.

As well, there is a workshop (that can be either in-person and/or online) and some time later, the presentation of applications.

The preliminary list of approved proposals is announced, and a deadline is set for responding to the notification of compliance, as well as the notification of complaint about the preliminary list.

⁴ Defined and regulated by Law No 91/95 of September 2, as amended by Law No 70/2015, of July 16.

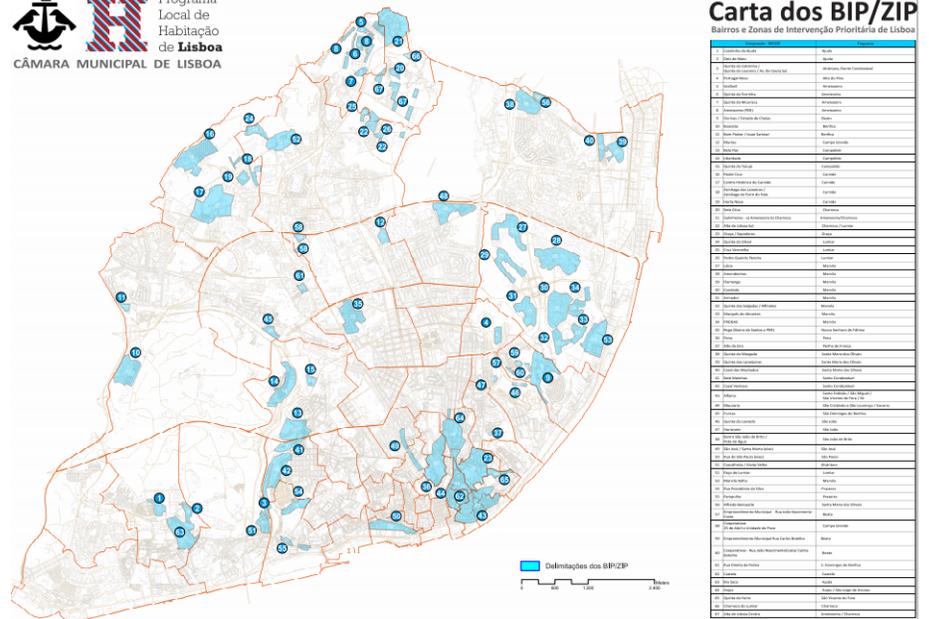


FIGURE 1 – CHARTER OF THE BIP/ZIP NEIGHBORHOODS, Source: Lisbon Municipality's website⁵

Following the abovementioned period, the proposal of applications to be approved is discussed in a Council meeting. Following any approvals, the public ceremonies for the launch of the program are scheduled.⁶

5. CHALLENGES, PROBLEMS, AND MAIN INNOVATIONS AND IMPACTS

The projects developed under the BIP/ZIP Program have an annual cycle. This short duration has certain virtues, since it grants the Program its agile and un-bureaucratic character, thus proving a contrast to the typical bureaucratic-administrative burden that characterizes long-term plans. However, this short duration can also generate inconveniences, such as when there is delay in the transfer of funds by the managing entity, which thus hinders the implementation of actions; it is also recurrent that there is an underestimation of the time allocated to the actions, thus denoting limitations on the follow-up by the Lisbon City Council (CML); among the partners, the lack of

⁵ In <http://habitacao.cm-lisboa.pt/documentos/1289927720M5bEX9ym2Lp76UW4.pdf>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

⁶ In <http://bipzip.cm-lisboa.pt/>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

more systematic channels and strategies for sharing opinions stands out, as well as certain difficulties when it comes to the implementation of project monitoring mechanisms.

Another virtue of this program is its openness regarding the entities that can be sponsors and/or formal partners of the applications, comprising not only public organisms and institutions, but also civil society organizations, a quality which can have multiplying effects. Additionally, following approval, the projects can incorporate the collaboration of other organizations, be they formal or informal, public, private, or of civil society, so long as they apply for the proposed objectives, thus demonstrating the agility and institutional comprehensiveness of the Program.

Among the evaluation criteria for the applications, there are: the participation of the population in the creation, development and evaluation of the projects (30 points); the relevance and complementarity of the foreseen actions of the projects as an adequate response to the problems identified in each BIP/ZIP, throughout the elaborative process of the BIP/ZIP charter (20 points); any contribution to local development and strengthening of social and territorial cohesion (20 points); sustainability (20 points), that is, the commitment by the sponsoring or partner entities to ensuring the continuity of the intervention beyond the cessation of the program funding; innovative interventions (10 points): i) the autonomy of the individuals when faced with a vulnerable situation: ii) an active role of the receivers in the development and evaluation of the projects; and iii) the creative use of existing resources inside and outside the BIP/ZIP.

Among the innovative factors of the program, it is worth noting the fact that the sponsors and partners are responsible for the creation and execution of the project, as well as for its evaluation and accountability; for example, there is the fact that the sponsoring and partner entities are obligated to ensure in their projects the continuity of the actions developed during the period, as an instrument in the context of a proximity policy. For Helena Roseta, it is “the transforming potential of what we call “BIP/ZIP energy,” that constitutes a sort of “emerging urban planning,” or “grassroots planning,” which we consider to be innovative and increasingly necessary” (Roseta, 2013, p.14).

The fact that the BIP/ZIP charter is included in Lisbon’s Municipal Master Plan and represents the commitment of the municipality to transform the BIP/ZIP neighborhoods determines that the residents of those locations will have the same rights as the rest of the population: decent housing, access to transport, public sanitation, public spaces, schools, health services, cultural facilities, safety, and, in short, to a better quality of life.

6. SCOPE, PERMANENCE AND EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Out of the 391 approved and potentially executed⁷ projects in the 10 years of the BIP/ZIP program's operation – 2011 to 2020 – there are several that must be mentioned, such as the “Edifício Manifesto” project, championed by the association *Renovar a Mouraria*⁸ (restore Mouraria), which aims to revitalize the historical neighborhood of Mouraria, in Lisbon, on a social, cultural, economic, and tourist level via several integrated actions; or the work carried out by the *Associação Nacional de Futebol de Rua*⁹ (the Portuguese national association of street soccer) with the project “Grupo de Jovens Bola para a Frente” (youth group ball onwards), in the neighborhood of Padre Cruz.

In order to analyze the development of civil society's momentum, the following graph illustrates the number of applications over the program's time span. For example, the year with the lowest number of applications was the program's first year, with 77 applications, while the year with the highest number of applications was 2014, with 146 applications, meaning an average of 110 applications in a total of 67 BIP/ZIP neighborhoods, thus demonstrating the importance of this initiative.

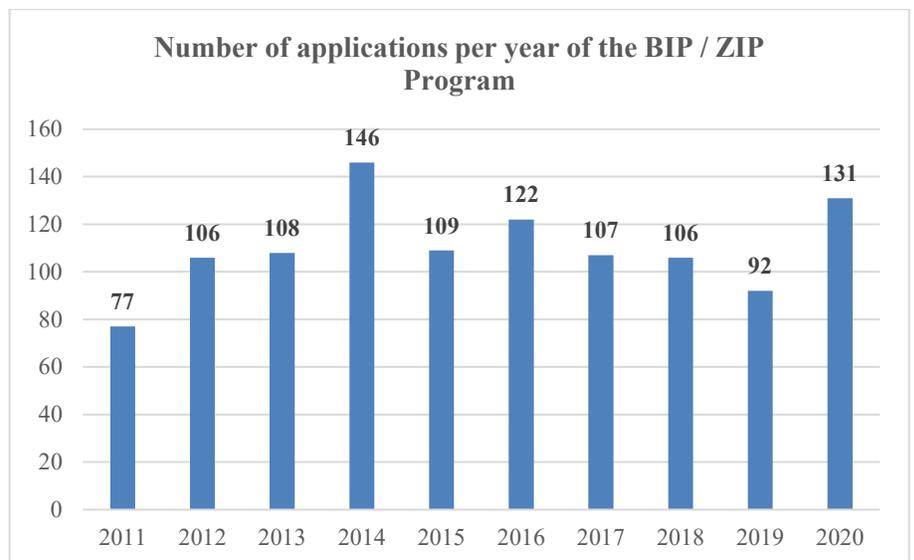


FIGURE 2 – GRAPH DISPLAYING ADHERENCE TO BIP/ZIP PROGRAM, Source: created by the authors using data collected from the Municipality's website

⁷ This research has not analyzed the execution of all approved projects.

⁸ In <https://www.facebook.com/renovar.a.mouraria>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

⁹ In <https://www.facebook.com/Futrua/>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

One component that is important for evaluating the performance is the reliability of the criteria, as well as impartiality when evaluating the applications. Considering the data from figure 3, on average 36% of the submitted projects are approved, with the lowest percentage – 26% – taking place in 2012 and the highest – 48% – in 2013 and 2019.

One of the evaluation criteria is the establishment of partnerships, and the BIP/ZIP network involves more than 1,300 entities throughout the city who are focused, during the times of this pandemic, on supporting and strengthening employability and the local economic fabric; on supporting the educational and formative process; and on supporting vulnerable communities and groups.

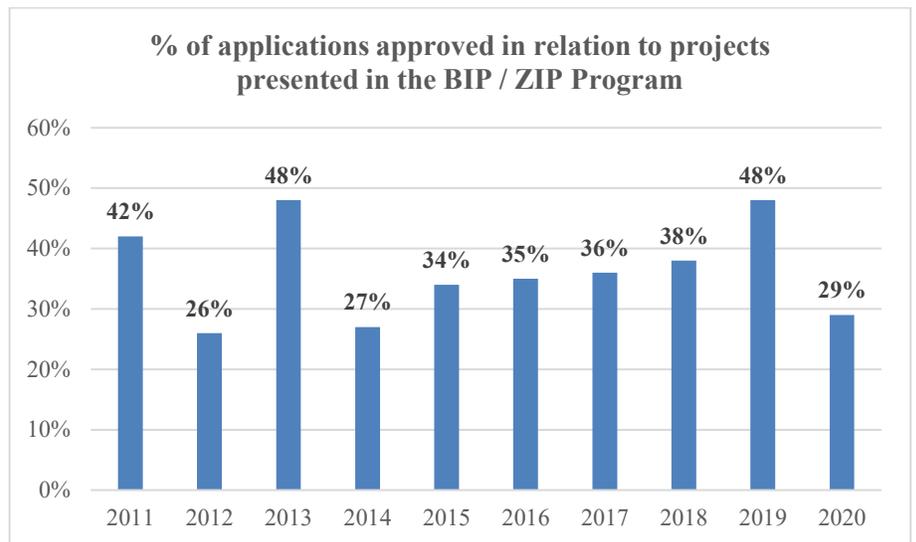


FIGURE 3 – GRAPH DISPLAYING THE PERCENTAGE OF APPROVAL IN RELATION TO THE APPLICATIONS TO THE BIP/ZIP PROGRAM, Source: created by the authors using data collected from the Municipality's website

The municipal investment up to 2020 was 14 million euros, to which funds or services raised directly by the partners were added, amounting to 4 million euros. In total, the 67 BIP/ZIP territories throughout the entire city have already been covered by submitted projects, which deal with more than 1/5th of Lisbon's population. As well, the 2020 edition of the program had a budget of 1.6 million euros,¹⁰ as has been the case since 2014.

¹⁰ In <http://habitacao.cm-lisboa.pt/index.htm?no=27310001>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

7. CONCLUSIONS

According to De Carlo (2005), the participation emerges in the context of urbanism and public management, in order to counter the excessive presence of architects and technicians in decision making, and so as to put citizens or associations that represent them in a strong and operative position. This stems from the notion that, in order to transform a given territory, the technical and artistic knowledge of architects and other technicians is not enough; the knowledge of the population to whom a set of territorial changes is being proposed is also necessary. This is because the notion behind the population's participation in the urban planning and management process is that they have firsthand knowledge of the area deriving from their daily activities, which can prove highly useful in the creation and development of urban planning and management proposals.

The participatory initiative presented here (BIP/ZIP) represents a set of capabilities for territorial management: i) allowing for commitments with the citizens in defining investment priorities; ii) promoting conflict mitigation among the several social actors; iii) incorporating the creation of a space for direct communication and cooperation between elected officials and voters; and iv) allowing the population to identify with the future and the projects of their municipality and neighborhood.

One of the incidences and influences of the BIP/ZIP Program occurred in 2010, when it was first transposed to the national setting through the creation of the *Bairros Saudáveis* Program¹¹ (healthy neighborhoods), given that the proposed territory is considered vulnerable upon confirmation by a parish council or a health authority. The budget per project can be €5,000€, €25,000, or €50,000, depending on the projected actions. As well, the applications for the *Bairros Saudáveis* program took place in 596 parishes (representing 21% of mainland Portugal), with the tender registering 774 project applications, accounting for 30.4 million euros, which is triple the available allocation (10 million) and thus greatly exceeded the initial expectations.

In fact, the participatory processes in Portugal have been gaining prominence in the political, social and urban management agenda, which can be due in part to their success and to the maturity of the democratic process (Crespo, 2013), as well as the need for better decision-making regarding the daily life of the citizens. By assuming a high level of civic participation and individual education, the participatory

¹¹ In <https://www.bairrossaudaveis.gov.pt/>. Retrieved January 20, 2021.

processes instill in the citizens a sense of belonging to the spaces they inhabit, something, which has been demonstrated and has served as an example of the BIP/ZIP Program.

KEY REFERENCES

- Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (CML) (2010). CARTA DOS BIP/ZIP, Bairros e Zonas de Intervenção Prioritária de Lisboa. Relatório. Metodologia de identificação e construção da carta dos BIP/ZIP. Lisbon City Council.
- Crespo, J. (2013). Governança e Território. Instrumentos, métodos e técnicas de gestão na Área Metropolitana de Lisboa. Doctoral Thesis in Regional and Urban Planning, Lisbon School of Architecture, Technical University of Lisbon.
- Crespo, J. (2015). A governança territorial como abordagem integradora na investigação. Espaços vividos e espaços construídos: estudos sobre a cidade, 1, 7-20.
- De Carlo, G. (2005). Architecture's public. In: Blundell-Jones, P., Petrescu, D. e Till, J. (Eds.). Architecture and participation. New York: Spon Press, 3-18.
- García, V. (2008). Participación ciudadana y vivienda. el programa de autoconstrucción de la junta de andalucía (1988-2007). Doctoral dissertation, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
- Hall, C. (2011). A typology of governance and its implications for tourism policy analysis. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19, 437-457.
- Oliveira, C. (2013). Programas locais de habitação como instrumento de mudança. Contributos Metodológicos, Master's thesis in Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto.
- Roseta, H. (2013). Mudar a política de habitação em Lisboa. Regras do jogo, caminho feito, novos desafios. Pelouro da Habitação of Lisbon's City Council.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors:

José Luís Crespo, CIAUD (Research Centre for Architecture, Urbanism and Design), Lisbon School of Architecture, University of Lisbon; jcrespo@fa.ulisboa.pt

Lucinda Caetano, CIAUD (Research Centre for Architecture, Urbanism and Design), Lisbon School of Architecture, University of Lisbon; lucinda.caetano63@gmail.com

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

La Marina de València

megaprojects and design governance:
the transformation of Valencia's
waterfront (ES)

**Amparo Tarazona
Vento**

Department of Urban
Studies and Planning,
University of Sheffield

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2.	GOVERNANCE: CONSORTIUM VALENCIA 2007.....	3
3.	FINANCIAL MODEL.....	7
4.	CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES.....	9
5.	SUCCEESS AND IMPLEMENTATION	10
6.	KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	14
	KEY REFERENCES	15

1. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

The story of the transformation of Valencia's waterfront offers important insights into the challenges posed by entrepreneurial design governance, specifically in the interface between design and financing. It also illustrates the use of different urban design governance instruments and their successes and failures.

With a population of around 800,000 and a metropolitan population of over 1.5 million, Valencia, located on Spain's eastern Mediterranean coast, is Spain's third largest city. Since the late 1980s, after the city became the seat of the newly created Valencian regional government, successive local and regional governments have made large public investments in infrastructure, prestige architectural projects and mega events with the objective of making Valencia more attractive for investment and tourism. One of the city's most significant projects was the celebration of the 32nd edition of the America's Cup sailing competition in the city, which was the source of an extensive urban transformation, particularly in the waterfront area.

Following their win in the 31st edition of the America's Cup sailing competition in 2003, the Alinghi team's principal, Ernesto Bertarelli, created a private company called America's Cup Management (ACM) to manage the organization of the subsequent edition of the competition and as such launched a competitive process to select a venue for it. In November 2003, Valencia was designated as a venue for the 2007 America's Cup. This designation, based on just a few sketches of the port, was considered to be a demonstration of Valencia's entrepreneurialism. The event was broadly well received by politicians, businesses and the general public (Vázquez, 30 November 2004). Decision makers saw the hosting of the America's Cup as an excellent opportunity to finish the city's waterfront, to regenerate the impoverished maritime neighbourhoods, to boost central government's investment in infrastructures and to attract high-end tourism (Biot and Velert, 2003).

2. GOVERNANCE: CONSORTIUM VALENCIA 2007

The plan to host the America's Cup, as well as the infrastructural works associated with the event, had strong governmental support. Such support materialised in the Consortium Valencia 2007, which was formed and comprised by the three main

levels of government - national, regional and local - and chaired by the mayor of Valencia. This consortium was the main governance body in charge of the spatial transformation of the maritime waterfront area. Although urban planning falls within the regional and local competencies, involvement at a national scale was essential since while the central government had competences related to the needs of the event – such as national security, air navigation, maritime navigation and radio space –the area where the competition would take place belonged to the central state (a total of 330,000 square metres of land and 565,000 square metres of water) (Vázquez, 27 March 2007).



Figure 1 - View of the new canal (Source: Author)

The consortium was responsible for the realization of a series of infrastructural works in preparation for the event, with these works ultimately comprising part of the candidature contract with ACM. These works included the construction of a new canal that would connect the inner harbour with the open sea, a dock for mega yachts, and the teams' bases (figure 1). Since the candidature project already included a master plan for the necessary infrastructure works, the Consortium, with limited additional work, implemented it by dividing the overall project into smaller individual undertakings, calling for tenders separately for each of them (Tarazona-Vento 2016). The only original addition of the Consortium to the candidature master plan was a representative building that was commissioned to David Chipperfield and Fermín Vázquez as a result of an international competition. Although the contract with ACM only stipulated the obligation of providing a VIP centre for ACM's guests, it was decided that an iconic building would serve as symbol of the competition, and as an emblem in commemoration of the event (Tarazona-Vento 2016). The representative building, renamed "Veles e Vents," won the LEAF (Leading European

Architects Forum for intelligent design) award and was short listed for the European Award of Contemporary Architecture (Boira, 2007) (Figure 2).



Figure 2 – Veles e Vents building (Source: Author)

In addition to the infrastructural works necessary for the hosting of the sailing competition, the America's Cup spurred further development and transformation of the maritime area. In 1995, there had been a competition to redesign the inner harbour and coastal area, but which had never been implemented. Motivated by the council's lack of overall planning for the area, a local real estate entrepreneur presented a private initiative to develop the maritime area in 2004. This project, designed by star architect Jean Nouvel, included proposals for the inner harbour and a residential development in the neighbouring areas and was the first to consider the sailing event (Olmos, 2005). An image of the Valencia Litoral proposal can be seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3 - Infography of Nouvel's Valencia litoral project (Source: The Ateliers Jean Nouvel, Ribas & Ribas Arquitectos)

The project did not go forward but, in 2006, the consortium convened an international ideas competition, presented at the Venetian Biennale, for the design of a new marina in the inner harbour area alongside a residential development in the neighbouring urban quarter of El Grao. The final area delimited for the competition covered approximately 1.35 million square metres and included a water surface area of approximately 565,000 square metres (Consortio Valencia 2007). The objective was to create a marina for mega-yachts which could attract high-end tourism. In contrast to the typical procedure with other urban plans, for the El Grao Urban Plan the council introduced an intermediate design phase independent of the implementation phase and for which a competition was convened. The first prize ex-aequo was awarded to the German office GMP International Architects and to the joint proposal of Jean Nouvel and Ribas & Ribas Arquitectos (Boira, 2007). The project for the marina was ultimately implemented but the 2008 economic crisis unfortunately meant that the residential development awaited for investment from private developers in order to be carried out.

3. FINANCIAL MODEL

The consortium invested in infrastructure and convened international design ideas competitions to influence urban design outcomes and processes. However, the design governance aspect which most influenced the resulting urban quality of the waterfront area was the use of financial tools to achieve the implementation of the project.

One key important element of the financial model utilised for the transformation of the waterfront area was leverage, including the money necessary for the project and ownership of the land. Recovering the inner harbour for the use of citizens had been a long time aspiration of the city and the 2007 America's Cup represented an opportunity to do so. With the precedent set by the overall transformations and investments made by the central government in Barcelona and Seville for the 1992 Olympics and Expo '92 respectively, the America's Cup was expected to be a lever by which substantial investment from the central government could be achieved as well as an opportunity to make the inner harbor—in the hands of the Port Authority of Valencia and used by the commercial port—suitable for citizen use. The America's Cup was therefore seen as an opportunity to expedite the cession of the inner harbour to the city council, as well as a pretext for receiving investment in infrastructure from the central government. In fact, the regional government requested infrastructural investments from the central government for a high-speed train and improvements to the three airports of the region, and the mayor submitted a request for €1,600 million to the Minister of Public Administration to pay for the necessary works for the America's Cup and to upgrade and improve various areas of the city (Velert, 10 June 2004).



Figure 4 - Bases of the America's Cup teams (Source: Author)

The precise financial model that would be used for the implementation of the project proved to be a real bone of contention within the consortium, and, while the definitive infrastructure project was soon approved, it would not be until October 2004 that there was a definitive agreement regarding the financing of the works. The infrastructures stipulated in the contract were initially budgeted at €500 million (although ultimately completed for €450 million). The works included the construction of the canal, the dock for mega-yachts, the team bases, and an iconic building — later on known as *Veles e Vents* — commissioned to David Chipperfield's global architectural practice as the result of an international design competition. Figure 4 displays a view of the America's Cup team bases.

For nearly a year the different levels of government represented in the Consortium could not reach an agreement regarding the specific financial formula to be used to pay for the infrastructure. Finally, it was agreed that the central government would provide a bank guarantee for a loan of €500 million from the Official Institute of Credit (ICO). The government expected to recover 70% of the investment through the exploitation of the inner harbour area after the sailing competition had taken place (that is, after 2007).

The finally agreed-upon financial formula highlights the importance of public sector investment for these kinds of megaprojects, as this formula was chosen for two main reasons. The first was to avoid making a budgetary allocation, given that a loan is a different type of financial asset and does not accrue as public debt while a budgetary allocation is active in the budget and since it is debt, it is therefore accrued as debt. The second was because, since the economic returns from the exploitation of the waterfront area (which had been intended to be used to pay the loan back) were not clear, the private sector did not want to take the risk. It was the public sector, as is usually the case, which took on the burden of the financial risk.

The sailing competition was considered a success; it attracted 6.4 million visitors, was broadcast in 150 countries and hit the headlines of newspapers worldwide. The results in terms of economic returns and profitability of the investment were, however, less positive. The exploitation of the inner harbour failed to generate enough returns to pay back the loan. Although the infrastructure had been paid for with public money, ACM had reserved the exclusive rights to exploit the inner harbour area under the name 'Port America's Cup' for the duration of the regattas. This was initially between 2004 and 2007, and was later extended to 2010, when the 33rd edition took place in Valencia as well. Once the 32nd edition of the competition concluded in 2007, the area remained deserted, and (as described by some local commentators) became a 'ghost town.' Bars and restaurants had to close due to the lack of clients while, in 2009, only 6% of the marina's 311 moorings for mega-yachts were occupied (Zafra, 13 September 2009). The area failed to generate any further

income that that already reaped by ACM. In 2009, the Consortium had accumulated losses of around 60 million euro. ACM, on its part, declared in 2007 to have obtained net surplus benefits of 60 million euro (50% for themselves and 50% to share with the rest of the teams) (Ros, 6 July 2007).

In addition to being used for the urban transformation of Valencia's waterfront, the sailing competition was expected to help consolidate the hospitality sector, focus on upmarket tourism and to raise the city's profile and reputation internationally. The results for the tourist sector were excellent in the short term, since in 2007, the number of visitors to the city increased by 8.1% and the number of night stays increased by 15.2%. However, only two years later, the number of visitors had decreased by 7% and the number of night stays decreased by 6% (Zafra, 8 February 2010). Moreover, the entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry complained that the huge increase in supply – in part due to the optimistic expectations that the America's Cup had generated – had left the sector in a flagrant crisis situation since the sailing competition had not been able to compensate for this increase. The America's Cup, which many local commentators described as 'one minute of glory,' proved to be too ephemeral to produce a permanent boost of the tourist sector (Nácher and Sancho 2007; Biot 19 February 2005).

4. CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

While the financial model chosen made the transformation of the waterfront area possible, it also imposed several constraints and challenges which would prove to impact the ability of the Consortium to deliver urban quality as expected. First of all, the dependence on the America's Cup sailing competition meant that in the inner harbour, where the event would take place, the needs of the event in terms of urban design were prioritised over the long term needs of the city. The contract with ACM was highly specific about the infrastructure to be built, and the dimensions and design details. The initial master plan for the candidacy project followed the brief provided by ACM and was strictly limited to the area required for the America's Cup. When the city was selected and the consortium was constituted to carry out the infrastructural works agreed upon with ACM, the candidacy project was implemented directly with little further design or architectural competition. The consortium implemented the master plan by dividing the global project into individual projects and calling for separate tenders for each of them. In fact, the only original addition of the consortium

to ACM's brief was the idea to turn the VIP center for ACM's guests that had been stipulated in the candidacy contract into an iconic building that would be a vestige to remind the city of the America's Cup.

In the same way, in order to repay the loan profitability took priority over holistic spatial planning. The economic opportunities linked to developing the area were grasped and realized but as a set of fragmented plans. Therefore, the sites within the waterfront area that were considered to be more profitable because of the America's Cup competition were planned and developed first regardless of other considerations. In reality, the economic feasibility of the waterfront seemed to depend on the patrons of the sporting competitions, because once there were no longer the crowds brought by them following the 2007 edition of the America's Cup having taken place, the pubs and restaurants in the area started to close. It was not until the end of October 2010 that the local and regional governments presented a usage plan for the waterfront area independent of the sailing competition (Levante, 27 October 2010).

5. SUCCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The main success of the waterfront project was the recovery of the inner harbour for citizen use which had been a long time aspiration of the city. However, important questions remain regarding to what extent the financial instruments that had been used ultimately jeopardised the urban quality of the proposal by making it excessively dependent on the event and the owners of the rights of the event, therefore leading to a prioritisation of their short term objectives over the long term needs of the city. While the event proved to be a catalyst for the spatial transformation of the area there was a failure to integrate such a transformation into a spatial planning framework with long term objectives.

Despite the encountered difficulties, from around 2016 onwards the inner harbour area which had remained almost deserted following the last edition of the America's Cup sailing competition in Valencia taking place, was renamed La Marina in 2017 and started to become more lively. The body in charge of the governance of the area continued to be the Consortium Valencia 2007, but it was now more clearly focused on making the area a vibrant and economically sustainable public space. It could be argued that the key reasons for the late success of the waterfront area are twofold, one linked to financing and the other related to the use of soft urban governance tools.

In terms of financing, the payment of the debt had become a heavy burden. In 2016, the Consortium had a debt of 440 million euro, 330 million of which were with the ICO and guaranteed by the state, and 66 million of which were private debt (García 2016). Despite the fact that the income from moorings and concessions had increased from 4 million euro in 2015 to 6 million euro in 2016 and over 7 million euro in 2018 (García 2016, Marrades 2018), the exploitation of the marina never generated enough income to pay off the debt, and the total debt in 2018 still amounted to 435 million euro (Europa Press 2018).

In 2018, it was decided that the state would pay off the 370 million euro debt with the ICO, and the 65 million of private debt would be paid off by the central, regional and local governments in a proportion of 40%-40%-20%, respectively (Europa Press 2018). The news was well received by the local authorities and the consortium alike, who saw the debt as an obstacle to the realisation of the area's potential (Europa Press 2018, Marrades 2016). Rather than pursuing those proposals with higher financial returns in order to pay off the debt, the consortium could now turn its attention to delivering high quality urban design. As stated in the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, the consortium's main objectives are to transform La Marina into an innovative productive space that is economically sustainable, and to generate vibrant, lively, sustainable, dynamic and inclusive public spaces (La Marina de Valencia website).

What was also key to the success of this project has been the use of soft governance tools to deliver the objectives of the strategic plan, which includes a participatory strategy plan and an urban financial and perception analysis (La Marina de Valencia website). In collaboration with Western Sydney University, an urban living lab was established with the professed remit of creating inclusive and innovative public spaces through a quadruple helix model of collaboration between government, university, industry and civil society (La Marina Living Lab website). One of the first activities of the living lab was the organisation of a four-day workshop in November 2018, which aimed to better understand the potential of the waterfront area as well as the challenges it has faced. The participants - including 40 experts, professionals and researchers from 15 countries - reflected on the relationship between public space and innovation, and how public space can promote innovation (La Marina Living Lab website).

As a result of the workshop, an Urban Living Lab manifesto was drafted. This manifesto offers guidance on the key principles that should be followed for the design and management of public spaces as well as regarding the stakeholders who should participate in the place making process (La Marina Living Lab website). In addition to being an informal quality culture tool, the manifesto later became an informal quality delivery tool (Urban Maestro) since it is used by the Consortium as a rating tool for the appraisal of tender proposals and design competitions (La Marina Living

Lab website). Thus, entries to design competitions must comply with the public space strategic plan (2017-2021), which is based on the principles established in the manifesto, and must also include a participatory placemaking exercise as part of their design process.

This approach was used in 2018 for the design competition for a skatepark to be located in one of the gateways to La Marina, which required the involvement of the future users of the space in a co-design exercise. However, the most significant example of an intervention in line with the new ethos of the consortium has been the reactivation of the public space in and around Tinglado 2, which is one of the three remaining early twentieth century industrial warehouses designed in an Art Nouveau style and located in the inner harbour.

In 2019, the Consortium launched a design competition for the transformation of over 10,000 sq metres of public space, including the building's 6,000 sq metres and the public space in its environs. The objective was to recover the space - which had deteriorated, was fragmented and lacked legibility - for public use, transforming it into an "open plaza with vegetation, shade and spaces for families and children" (Urban Lab webpage). Figures 5 and 6 depict views of the exterior and interior of Tinglado 2 before it was restored.



Figure 5 – View of Tinglado 2 before being restored (Source: Author)



Figure 6 – View of interior of Tinglado 2 before being restored (Source: Author)

The competition's call was innovative in that, rather than a finished design proposal, it aimed to select a team capable of designing and leading a 14-month-long participative placemaking process (Las Provincias 19 June 2019, Levante 13 February 2018, La Marina webpage). Therefore, the entries had to include a plan for public involvement (particularly the residents of nearby neighbourhoods) in every stage of the placemaking process, including the analysis, design, implementation and management of the public space (La Marina webpage). Moreover, the call specified that the conditions of eligibility stipulated that the participants had to be multidisciplinary teams of no less than six members, including at least one expert in public space design and one member responsible for co-design and public participation (La Marina webpage).

A total of twelve teams, composed of thirty national and international multidisciplinary groups with expertise in urban design, architecture, engineering, sociology, the humanities and communication entered the competition, which was won by the team of Grupo Aranea and El Fabricante de Esferas (Levante 24 December 2019). The first phase of the public participatory process was scheduled to begin in 2020 and the project would have been fully implemented in 2021, but it had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions (Levante 24 December 2019).

The final results are to be seen, as both the skatepark and the design of the public space in the environs of Tinglado 2 remain unfinished. However, both cases are representative of a new approach to the design governance of Valencia's waterfront area, which entails the existence of an explicit strategy for public space ingrained in the decision making process, the use of open design competition that include public participatory processes and co-design, and the emphasis on urban analysis.

6. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The case of Valencia's waterfront offers both negative and positive lessons to be learned from. Despite the initial difficulties linked to the hefty debt and the excessive dependence on the America's Cup mega-event, the Consortium managed to turn around the fortunes of the waterfront area around through the use of soft powers associated with urban design governance. The main transferable lesson offered here does not, however, refer to the specific urban governance tools used, but rather to the importance of political commitment to place making, materialised in a dedicated body such as the Consortium Valencia 2007 as well as through investment. While Valencia's waterfront clearly illustrates the drawbacks of speculative investment, it also demonstrates that, in order to deliver good urban design, in addition to a sound financial model, urban quality must be put centre stage; it must be considered a key objective rather than a taken-for-granted result of the development process.

KEY REFERENCES

- Biot, R. (19 February 2005) Los hoteleros esperan que pare el 'boom' de aperturas tras dos años de malos datos. *El País*. p.10
- Biot, R. & Velert, S. (30 November 2003) El reto de la Valencia de 2007. *El País*. p. 8
- Boira, J. (2007) "El puerto de Valencia y su espacio," in *Historia del puerto de Valencia*, J. Hermosilla, ed., Universitat de València, Valencia, pp. 349-395.
- Consorcio Valencia 2007, *Conditions and Specifications 'Valencia del Mar – Marina Real Juan Carlos I' Planning Ideas Competition*.
- La Marina de Valencia website, *Plan Estratégico de La Marina de Valencia 2017-2021*, <http://www.lamarinadevalencia.com/sub/1/somos.html>
- La Marina Living Lab website, *Manifiesto. Espacio público para la innovación*, <https://lamarinalivinglab.com/#manifiesto>
- Las Provincias (19 June 2019) La Marina de Valencia convoca un concurso de ideas para diseñar el entorno del Tinglado 2, *Las Provincias*, <https://www.lasprovincias.es/valencia-ciudad/marina-valencia-concurso-ideas-tinglado2-20190619152651-nt.html>
- Levante EMV (24 December 2019) La ciudadanía decidirá el futuro del Tinglado 2 de La Marina de València, *Levante EMV*, <https://www.levante-emv.com/valencia/2019/12/24/ciudadania-decidira-futuro-tinglado-2-13715807.html>
- Levante EMV (13 February 2018) Así será el nuevo entorno del Tinglado 2 del puerto, *Levante EMV*, <https://www.levante-emv.com/valencia/2018/02/13/sera-nuevo-entorno-tinglado-2-12063803.html>
- El País (30 September 2003) Consorcio para la Copa de América. *El País*. p. 7
- Europa Press (18 December 2018) El Gobierno asume la deuda de ICO del Consorcio Valencia 2007 y tratará de incluir el proyecto en los PGE de 2019, Europa Press <https://www.europapress.es/comunitat-valenciana/noticia-gobierno-asume-deuda-ico-consorcio-valencia-2007-tratará-incluir-proyecto-pge-2019-20181218211125.html>
- Huet, F. (2005) *El rol del Consorcio Valencia 2007 en la "America's Cup"*. Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País Valencià, Valencia.

García, H. (20 February 2016) Una nueva sentencia aboca a la quiebra al Consorcio Valencia 2007, Levante EMV, <https://www.levante-emv.com/valencia/2016/02/20/nueva-sentencia-aboca-quiebra-consorcio/1381792.html>

Levante (27 October 2010) Barberá y Camps presentan otro plan de usos para la dársena vinculado al AVE. *Levante*.

Marrades, R. (7 April 2016) Ocurrencias de seis estrellas, valenciaplaza, <https://valenciaplaza.com/ocurrencias-de-seis-estrellas>

Marrades, R. (20 December 2018) El futuro de La Marina de València, valenciaplaza, <https://valenciaplaza.com/El-futuro-de-La-Marina-de-Valencia>

Nácher, J. & Sancho, A. (2007) "El turismo," in *La Comunidad Valenciana en el umbral del siglo XXI. Estrategias de desarrollo económico*, Publicacions de la Universitat de València, Valencia.

Olmos, J. (2005) "Urbanismo litoral. Proyectos para un evento mariner.", *Arquitectura Viva*, vol. 103, pp. 23-27.

Tarazona-Vento, A. (2017) Mega-project meltdown: post-politics, neoliberal urban regeneration and Valencia's fiscal crisis. *Urban Studies*, 54(1), pp. 68-84.

Urban Maestro, *Urban Maestro: Towards a European Typology of Tools for Urban Design Governance*, <https://urbanmaestro.org/tool/analysis/>

Vázquez, C. (30 November 2004) El 78% de los valencianos valora la Copa de América y cree que subirá los precios, según una encuesta del PSPV. *El País*. p. 5

Vázquez, C. (27 March 2007) La Copa tendrá un impacto económico de 3.600 millones de euros. *El País*. March 27, 2007 Tuesday

Velert, S. (10 June 2004) Barberá asegura que pidió inversiones a un director general de Hacienda del PP. *El País*. p.1

Zafra, I. (13 September 2009) La ruina de los 'megayates'. *El País*. p. 1

Ros, C. (6 July 2007) La Copa sólo seguirá en Valencia si se frena la ampliación del puerto industrial. *El País*. p. 3026

Zafra, I. (17 November 2007) Valencia se juega con el puerto el futuro de su frente litoral. *El País*. p.4

Zafra, I. (8 February 2010) La crisis tumba la rentabilidad turística de los grandes eventos. *El País*. p.3

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Amparo Tarazona Vento, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, University of Sheffield

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Baukollegium Zurich

Independent design advisory board (CH)

Joao Bento

Researcher of Architectural
Policies, University College
London - Bartlett School of
Planning

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2.1. Federal government	3
2.2. Cantonal government	5
2.3. City government	5
2.4. Cooperative planning	7
3. OBJECTIVES.....	9
4. THE TOOL: DETAILED DESCRIPTION.....	11
4.1. General principles	11
4.2. Composition	12
4.3. Procedure.....	13
4.4. Design review process	15
4.5. Relation to other informal design governance tools	16
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	21
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	21
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITIES ISSUES	22
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	23
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	24
KEY REFERENCES	25
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	26

1. SUMMARY

The Zurich *Baukollegium* is a design advisory board that provides independent advice to the Zurich City Council. It assists the City Council in evaluating the design quality of projects and urban design concepts by offering non-statutory recommendations via a peer review system. In this way, the *Baukollegium* assists with optimising design outcomes, complementing the planning and construction regulatory processes with informal design advice. The advisory board is composed of members of the City Council of Zurich and external experts from the fields of architecture, spatial planning and urban development.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

In terms of administrative structure, the state in Switzerland is organized into 3 administrative levels, the federal government, 26 cantons and 2300 municipalities, which together cooperate and comprise the Swiss Confederation¹. Below the federal level, the canton constitutes the state level with its own government and legislative institutions. In turn, the cantons are sub-divided into municipalities, the smallest administrative unit in Switzerland. Following a decentralized model, the political and legislative powers are distributed to the three levels in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity (e.g. the Federal Spatial Planning Act defines the assigned tasks for each administrative level).

2.1. Federal government

According to the Swiss Constitution, the federal government has the responsibility of defining the conceptual nature of the spatial planning policy and its main principles at the national level². Specifically, the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) is the national authority tasked with handling issues concerning spatial development,

¹ Introduced in 1848, the federal system plays an important role in maintaining social cohesion in Switzerland due to the existence of four national languages. For more information see: <https://www.ch.ch/en/demokratie/federalism/>.

² The Swiss Constitution (art.° 75) defines that the federal government shall lay down the principles on spatial planning, which are binding for the Cantons, and serve to ensure the appropriate and economic use of the land and its properly ordered settlement.

mobility policy, and sustainable development³. Within the cultural sphere, the Federal Office of Culture is the strategic body responsible for drawing up and implementing the Swiss national cultural policy—its promotional activities comprise two areas: cultural heritage (heritage protection and historic monuments, museums and collections) and cultural creativity (films, prizes and awards, etc.).

Following two previous initiatives promoted by the Swiss Association of Engineers and Architects (SIA)⁴, the federal government decided to develop a national policy for *baukultur* (building culture) in 2015⁵. *Baukultur* is a German expression, a broad concept that can be translated into English as *building culture*, and which encompasses any human activity that changes or alters the built environment, at any scale from architectural detailing to spatial planning, referring not just to the built environment itself but also to the processes that create it⁶. In January 2018, in the framework of the Davos World Economic Forum (WEF), the Swiss Federal Office of Culture invited the European ministries of culture for an international conference on ‘how to achieve a high building culture’, with the aim of politically and strategically promoting the concept of a high quality *baukultur* in Europe and to promote the concept beyond German-speaking countries. This two-day international conference culminated in the adoption of the ‘Davos Declaration on *Baukultur*’ by the European ministers of culture⁷.

In February 2020, following a public consultation document⁸, the Swiss Federal Council formally adopted its first ‘Interdepartmental strategy for the promotion of building culture’⁹. Arguing that to achieve a high quality *baukultur* the federal government should be the one to set the example, given that the policy connects all *baukultur*-related operations of the different federal offices, defining seven strategic goals and 41 measures, with the aspects of public engagement, interdisciplinarity, capacity-building and cooperation being particularly based on the use of informal tools.



Fig. 1 – Swiss interdepartmental federal strategy for baukultur (2020)

³ The Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) works alongside Switzerland's cantons and communes, also taking the lead on international cooperation in spatial planning matters. For more information: <https://www.are.admin.ch/are/>

⁴ See: <https://www.sia.ch/de/themen/baukultur/>

⁵ This decision was foreseen in the Swiss Federal policy on the promotion of culture 'Cultural Message 2016-2020', approved by the Parliament in December 2015:

<https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20140096>

⁶ This means that *baukultur* is a holistic concept that includes all aspects of design of the built environment involving a wide range of actors and stakeholders, which integrates architecture, civil engineering, urban and regional planning, heritage conservation, landscape architecture, interior design and art for public buildings (*Baukultur! Planning and Building in Germany*, 2007).

⁷ In January 2018, under the framework of the Davos World Economic Forum (WEF), the European ministers of culture signed the Davos Declaration on *Baukultur*, which calls for the introduction of better strategies that embrace the concept of building culture and incorporate the vision of a high design culture as a primary political goal.

⁸ For more information <https://www.bak.admin.ch/bak/de/home/kulturerbe/zeitgenoessische-baukultur/strategie-baukultur.html>

⁹ For more information: <https://www.bak.admin.ch/bak/de/home/kulturerbe/zeitgenoessische-baukultur.html>

2.2. Cantonal government

Below the federal level, the Swiss cantons (states) possess a high degree of decision-making power, holding competences in several policy areas, namely in budget, political system and taxation. In addition, the cantons also share competences with the municipalities in several policy domains, such as infrastructure and education¹⁰. Similar to all Swiss cantons, the canton of Zurich has three administrative branches - the government, the parliament and the courts - and its citizens are able to influence how the politics of the city are shaped through instruments of direct democracy that allow them the right to elect representatives, to request a referendum and to propose a popular initiative¹¹.

Related to the built environment, the cantons possess several policy competences, including, among others, on spatial planning policy, landscape and townscape protection. In the former, each canton has its own Planning and Building Act approved by the cantonal (state) parliament. Furthermore, the cantons develop structural plans that guide and inform the municipalities (Kiessling & Pütz, 2020), especially where local zoning plans must comply with the cantonal guidelines for urban development and infrastructure (Muggli, 2004). In the latter, the cantons are responsible for the inventorying of urban areas and buildings that are important for the townscape from a supra-municipality perspective (cantonal townscape inventory), and for ensuring coordination with the federal inventory for protected townscapes (ISOS)—this means that within protected areas and buildings, an additional permit from the Cantonal Office for Spatial Development is mandatory in order to obtain a building permit in Switzerland¹².

2.3. City government

Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland and the capital of the Canton of Zurich¹³. To support the executive branch and implement its policies, the local administration is divided into nine departments responsible for implementing the city policies and the city parliament's decisions. Within this organizational structure, the Building Department (HBD) of Zurich is responsible for the planning, building and management of the municipal real estate as well as for ensuring legal compliance

¹⁰ For more information see: <https://www.ch.ch/>

¹¹ For more information see:

<https://www.ch.ch/en/demokratie/political-rights/>

¹² For more information see: <https://www.zh.ch/de/politik-staat.html> (accessed 2/08/2020)

¹³ The Canton of Zurich is subdivided into 12 districts and 162 municipalities; German is the official language.

with the planning framework and the building permit procedure¹⁴. HBD employs around 800 people and is subdivided into four major offices:

- *Office for Building Permits* - supports builders, deals with building applications, legal remedies and project authorizations for lifts and checks the construction work;
- *Office for Urban Development* - coordinates public and private interests and projects of architectural and urban planning, cultivates a building culture and care for heritage as well as enables the realization of forward-looking construction projects;
- *Office for (public) Building* - a construction service provider that develops and erects landmark buildings for Zurich. Among several other tasks, it promotes an average of ten design competitions for the new public sector projects and for non-profit developers every year;
- *Real Estate of the City of Zurich* (IMMO) is the owner representative and manager of the assets of the administrative assets entrusted to it, such as schools, administrations, sports, health, social welfare, etc.

Among these four, the *Office of Urban Development* is responsible for urban and spatial planning, heritage protection and design advice on new public and private building proposals¹⁵. This *Office* ensures the supervision of design quality proposals as well as the 'quality of the structural changes in Zurich', providing advice to the *Office for Building Permits*, which is responsible for processing and issuing building permits. Among other tasks, the *Office of Urban Development* promotes urban studies and organizes design competitions, as well as the architectural and urban planning review of building applications. The *Office of Urban Development* is supported by the *Baukollegium*, a design advisory body that provides non-statutory design advice and expertise to the Office and the building permit authority, which will be examined in the following section.

¹⁴ For more information see: https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/portal/en/index/politik_u_recht.html (accessed 22/10/2019)

¹⁵ The Office of Urban Development includes around 120 employees and has the following tasks: i. Create the basis for urban planning and monument preservation; ii. Coordinating

the planning in development areas; iii. Building codes and zoning plans; iv. Spatial planning and district plans; v. Urban studies and competitions; the Architectural and urban planning review of building applications and publicity; Construction consulting and inventory regarding the preservation of monuments; Archaeology, underwater archaeology and dendrochronology; and maintaining the Architectural History Archive.

2.4. Cooperative planning

In the last thirty years, numerous areas of the city of Zurich have witnessed a significant transformation, accompanied by a general improvement in the quality of its public spaces and services provided¹⁶. One of the key ingredients to this development, among others, was a paradigmatic shift in the spatial planning policy of the City Council of Zurich that gradually changed from a top-down hierarchal planning policy to a cooperative planning approach. According to Devecchi (2012), the urban policy in the 1980s did not allow for any form of informal discussions or negotiations with private developers about building and urban proposals (e.g. the type of development, the intended uses, the shape of the buildings, etc.). The private projects were entirely handled by the developers and their consultants with almost zero interaction with the local administration. Following its submission, the projects would then be assessed and decided upon by an opaque local planning authority (Ibidem).

Since the early nineties, a cooperative planning approach began to be employed by the City Council's officials (Eisinger & Reuther, 2007, p. 91). Based on a consensus-building method (Katsakou, 2019), the *Office of Urban development* promoted a variety of participatory initiatives with local stakeholders for debating and discussing future urban developments, such as workshops, meetings and forums. Launched in 1996, the 'City Forum for Zurich West' marked a new era in the city planning process (Katsakou, 2019). For the first time, it brought together all key local stakeholders to discuss the urban development strategy for Zurich West, involving ten workshops with the aim of defining recommendations and a future vision for Zurich West (Devecchi, 2012).

The new urban policy goal was “to create a broad basis for discussion between politics, administration and private individuals, which should take up all existing interests and enable a more goal-oriented agreement on possible development projects” (Devecchi, 2012, p. 5). As Martin Heller (2007) notes in an interview with the Urbanism City Councillor: “A culture of discussion based on ideas of content had to emerge as the core of this new-self-image (...) so that there could be an eye-to-eye debate with the outside - property owners, developers, planners, and architects, the construction business as a whole”. Throughout the years, this collaborative environment that had been established between the City Council and private developers has helped direct private investment towards the urban renewal of old

¹⁶ According to Mercer's 2020 Quality of Living Ranking, Zurich ranks second in its ranking of the quality of life of world cities.

industrial areas as well as towards the improvement of several urban and suburban areas across the city (Katsakou, 2019).

Building on this experience, the *Office of Urban Development* has continued to develop a proactive and collaborative planning approach towards high-quality development. Before defining an urban strategy for a certain area, the Office typically organizes meetings and workshops with all involved parties and designers (Eisinger & Reuther, 2007, p. 91). By assuming that the private investment is a necessary condition for urban transformation, the urban plans and zoning regulations are now “negotiated in a process-like manner at a round table and then officially decreed, often with special building regulations in the form of design plans” (Ibid).



Fig. 2 – Internal meetings with developers and designers at the City Council (source: City Council of Zurich)

Responsible for the promotion and supervision of the design quality of the built environment of Zurich, the *Office of Urban Development* promotes a ‘customer-friendly’ service where it provides direct enabling and advice to developers’ design teams¹⁷. For this purpose, the Office assumes two functions:

- prior to the building permit request - it advises potential builders as early as possible at the beginning of the preparation and planning phases of their projects;
- during the building permit process - it reviews and assesses the design quality of submitted projects for the *Office of Building Permits*.

In both functions, the *Office of Urban Development* is focused on supporting developers and its design teams in improving the overall quality of building and

¹⁷ According to the leaflet about the role of the architectural services of the Office of Urban Development. See: <https://www.stadt->

[zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/bewilligungen_und_beratung/beratungsangebot/architektonische_beratung/best_practice_architektur.html](https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/bewilligungen_und_beratung/beratungsangebot/architektonische_beratung/best_practice_architektur.html)

urban development projects. According to its website, every year the *Office* manages around 600 planning applications for design examination and around 500 planning applications for monument preservation. In addition, it receives around 1000 requests per year for outdoor advertising. Considering the need to inform the *Office for Building Permits*, which is responsible for issuing the building permits, on the design quality and urban integration of planning applications, it may request independent advice from the *Baukollegium* on complex projects or those that may be located in sensitive areas, the role of which will be examined below.

3. OBJECTIVES

Established in 1896¹⁸, the mission of the *Baukollegium* – also referred to as the Design Advisory Board - is to review the design quality of new building projects and urban developments as well as to avoid undesirable proposals in architecture and urban planning. Considering that design quality is a vague and subjective term that raises many questions about whose judgement of good design quality should be followed (Cousins, 2009, p. 1), the aim of the Design Advisory Board is to provide independent design advice to the City Council of Zurich by offering recommendations via a peer design review system and assistance with optimizing the planning application and construction processes.

According to its regulation¹⁹, the specific tasks of the *Baukollegium* are defined as follows:

- 1) Provide advice to the City Council and the Building Permit Authority on questions of urban planning and architecture developing corresponding recommendations;
- 2) Provide comment on construction and planning projects as well as on urban planning concepts and mission statements if their importance requires it or if they give rise to critical questions.

¹⁸ According to the minutes of the City Council (7 January 2015) about the role of the *Baukollegium*:
https://www.gemeinderat-zuerich.ch/Geschaefte/detailansicht-geschaefte/Dokument/9653fa94-bd0d-4c0c-8cbc-e5fcc0999272/2014_0340.pdf

¹⁹ Rules of Procedure for the *Baukollegium* of Zurich (Geschäftsordnung für das *Baukollegium*), from March 22, 2017. For more info see: https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/portal/de/index/politik_u_recht/amtliche_sammlung/inhaltsverzeichnis/7702/160.html



Fig. 3 – Family picture of the *Baukollegium* for the 2018-2022 mandate (Source: Zurich City Council website)

Although the *Baukollegium*'s advice will inform the formal planning process, its recommendations are not binding nor does it have any decision-making competences. The informal nature of the design advisory board enables soft powers of negotiation and persuasion between the City Council, the developers and their designers based on a peer review process regarding the design quality of building and urban projects and their relation to their close surroundings²⁰. Nonetheless, as will be seen below, only a small percentage of projects or urban development concepts are submitted to the *Baukollegium* design review process, as this board only provides advice on projects that may have a significant impact on the built environment or if they may be located in sensitive areas.

²⁰ Besides the *Baukollegium*, the Office of Urban Development of Zurich also coordinates a 'Heritage Commission' which advises the City Council on monument preservation issues, namely making recommendations on protection proposals or removals from the heritage inventory, assessing major renovation projects and taking a stand on questions of monument conservation.

compensate for the investment in the higher quality of the schemes, the improvement-based changes, and the time spent on the design review process.

Therefore, according to the City Official (*ibidem*), only a small number of applications are submitted to the Baukollegium, around 40 projects per year. Nonetheless, the design review process and advice are a valuable contribution for local officials negotiating and influencing developers and designers to heighten their ambition for major buildings and urban proposals that have a strong impact on the city.

4.2. Composition

The Design Advisory Board is composed of five external experts from various disciplinary fields, with recognized experience and curriculum, and members of the administration, some with only an advisory vote²³. The Board is chaired by the head of the Building Department (HBD) of Zurich and its members are appointed by the City Council for four year-terms, according to the following structure:

A. Voting members:

1. Head of the Building Department (as President);
2. Head of Civil Engineering and Waste Management;
3. Director of the Office of Urban Development;
4. Five external specialists from the fields of urban planning, architecture, monument preservation and open space design.

B. Members with an advisory vote: Deputy Director of Grün Stadt Zürich;

1. City Engineer, Civil Engineering Office;
2. Manager of Urban Development Department (from the Office for Urban Development);
3. Lawyer of the Legal Department of the Building Department;
4. Secretary.

The five external experts are appointed by the City Council based on their experience and curriculum within the different fields. According to the type of the project, additional experts may be appointed to participate in the sessions with a voting role²⁴. The external expert members are compensated for their time, as well as

²³ The composition and tasks of the Design Advisory Board (*Baukollegium*) are regulated by a specific ordinance. See Note 18.

²⁴ See note 18.

for travel expenses incurred by attending the meetings in the course of their mandate. The fact the five experts are not selected by an open call procedure has raised some criticisms from local opposition councillors who have argued that the selection process is not transparent enough, among others, since it is not clear what the eligibility criteria for the selection are and how to ensure the independence of the experts²⁵.

Addressing this issue, the City Council official (interview: 2021) stated that the selection of the external experts is a complex process because they must be replaced every four years, which means that there is not a gradual transition between the panels and the transmission of knowledge to the new members. In addition, the experts must be able to communicate easily their ideas to the promoters in a constructive manner. This means that the five external experts are selected not only based on their education and expertise, but also on their communicational and interpersonal skills since the Design Advisory Board should work as a coherent group of experts and not as several independent voices that are not able to discuss and assume positions in a collegial manner.

4.3. Procedure

Following the initial contacts between the promotor and the *Office of Urban Development* about the type of planning constraints that apply to the site and their intentions of development, if the project is considered to have a strong impact on the built environment due to meeting one of the criteria described previously, the Office will inform the promoter that the project needs to be submitted to the Design Advisory Board for an expert opinion about its design quality. If the promoter agrees to go forward, since they can always decide not to submit the project or opt for a design competition (as will be discussed later), its design team will prepare all the necessary sketches, documents and models to be submitted to Advisory Board for a design review. After receiving the proposals, the secretariat sends a copy of all the documentation to the five experts so they may analyse the project prior to the review.

The Design Advisory Board usually meets once a month according to a predetermined agenda defined by the *Office of Urban Development*, which is responsible for the administrative tasks, such as the preparation of the activities and meetings, managing the secretariat, preparing site visits, catering, etc. Usually, the

²⁵ See reply from the City Council: https://www.gemeinderat-zuerich.ch/Geschaefte/detailansicht-geschaefte/Dokument/9653fa94-bd0d-4c0c-8cbc-e5fcc0999272/2014_0340.pdf



Design Advisory Board reviews three to four projects in each meeting, some of which can be repeating entries from previous reviews.

The agenda of the Design Advisory Board is divided into two parts. During the morning session, there is a site visit to the different locations, with a mini-bus provided by the City Council. For each site, the Office of Urban Development describes the local constraints, explains the different projects, and the experts have the opportunity to obtain a better perception of each place (Fig. 4 and 5).



Fig. 4 and 5 – Examples of a Baukollegium site visit to proposed locations, Zurich (source: Eisinger & Reuther, 2007, p. 254)

In the afternoon period, the promoters and designers are invited to present their projects to the Design Advisory Board within a slot of 15 minutes. Following their presentation, the members of the board have the opportunity to make brief questions and then the promoters and designers need to leave the room for the members of the board discuss the project. In private, again within a slot of 15 minutes, the members discuss and deliberate the needs for improvement and whether the project will receive a positive or a negative review from the board. Finally, the results of the deliberations are communicated verbally to the interested parties immediately following the meeting and in written form some days after.



Fig. 6 – Example of a presentation session to Design Advisory Board of Zurich (source: Eisinger & Reuther, 2007, p. 254)

As stated previously, for assessing the proposals, the Design Advisory Board supports its recommendation based on the plans and models submitted by the *Office of Urban Development*, which were received from the building promoter and their design team. For deciding on the different recommendations, and whether a project is approved or rejected, the Advisory Board follows the following procedure:

1. The Design Advisory Board passes its resolutions with the votes of the voting members;
2. The Design Advisory Board has a quorum, in addition to the chair, if at least three non-executive members with voting rights are present;
3. The voting members are required to vote in all voting decisions;
4. The decisive factor is the majority of voting members present; in case of a tie, the chairman has the tie-breaking vote.

4.4. Design review process

The Design Advisory Board reviews and assesses the submitted projects in two subsequent phases: urban design and architecture. In the first phase, the review is focused on the urban design aspects of the proposals, including its relationship with its surroundings, the added value for the public realm, accessibility and connectivity, the type of uses, scale, density, etc. Only after the project's general layout and urban design aspects have received a favourable review will the project progress to the second phase focused on architectural aspects, including the relationship with the ground floor, functionality, its internal layout, materials, façade, etc. According to the City Official (interview: 2021), there is a risk that the design teams will have to present a very detailed proposal in the first phase as the Advisory Board usually requests certain improvements to the overall concept and layout. Therefore, to avoid any setbacks or frustration, the design teams are advised to focus on the urban design aspects and general principles in the first proposals, which should be seen as an opportunity to improve the projects based on constructive criticism and dialogue (Ibidem).

According to the City Official (interview: 2021), each project can be presented to the Design Advisory Board a maximum of four times. This means that if a project is rejected, after introducing the necessary improvements, it can be submitted for another review until the four-session limit is reached. If a project is not able to obtain a favourable approval at the end of those four reviews, the project will be rejected by the City Council (although the municipality can always decide otherwise, as the recommendations of the Design Advisory Board are non-binding).

In those cases where the project fails, in order to be able to obtain progress on the building permit process, the developer has to organize a design competition to

guarantee that a high level of quality will be achieved. Nonetheless, if the developer accepts doing so, the competition has to be organized with the help and participation of the staff of the Office of Urban Development, to assure that the public's concerns are taken into account in the definition of the competition brief, the pre-selection of proposals and the jury's final decision (Ibidem). See: the next section on design competitions.

4.5. Relation to other informal design governance tools

To complement the description of the Zurich Design Advisory Board and the urban design governance context within which it operates, some additional information is provided regarding the relationship of the Advisory Board with to informal urban design governance tools used by the City Council.

Rating tools (design competitions)

Building on a national tradition, the Office of Urban Development employs design competitions as a tool for promoting innovation and high-quality developments on a regular basis. In fact, since the beginning of the 20th century, Switzerland has been organizing design competitions for key public buildings and urban developments (Katsakou, 2013). Amongst European countries, Switzerland holds one of the largest number of competitions per year²⁶, where above a defined threshold public bodies typically promote a design competition (Van Wezemaal & Silberberger, 2015). According to the City Council's webpage, the Zurich *Office for (public) Building* announces an average of ten competitions per year for new public building projects and for interested non-profit property developers²⁷.

Within the formal building permit process, the *Office for Urban Development* is regularly solicited by private investors for organizing design competitions for complex buildings, a procedure considered as an alternative to the Design Advisory Board review process, that does not review projects resulting from a design competition. For this option to be accepted, the design competition must be carried out in accordance with the accepted rules, with the participation of the *Office for Urban Development* in the jury, and if the resultant project follows the

²⁶ According to Rönn et al. (2013), around 200 competitions per year are held in Switzerland.

²⁷ See: <https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/content/hbd/de/index/hochbau/wettbewerbe.html>

recommendations of the jury. Nonetheless, for the purpose of quality assurance, submitted projects resulting from a design competition may be submitted to the Design Advisory Board for assessment in the following cases:

- a) on a reasoned decision of the Board;
- b) a change of the architect;
- c) with significant changes in usage or utilization;
- d) when significant parts of the project are changed;
- e) for the materialization of prominent or important projects.

Although developers do not submit their projects to the Design Advisory Board on their own free initiative and will, this route continues to be appealing to developers for several reasons (City Official, interview; 2021). Firstly, the work of the Design Advisory Board is a public service paid for by the City Council, given that the costs of holding a design competition must be supported by the investor. Secondly, the organization of a design competition involves a complex process, meaning it is more time consuming. Thirdly, developers tend to view the design review process as an opportunity to negotiate and force their designers/architects to strive for a higher quality project that in the end will facilitate the procurement of the building permit.



Fig. 7 – View of the new University UZH Forum and open public space, a design selected through a two-phase design competition, Zurich (source: © herzog & de meuron; status: project from 2018)

However, as mentioned previously, if the Design Advisory Board rejects a project at the end of the four review sessions, the developers will need to organize a design competition to ensure that the project will have a high-quality design. In this context, design competitions can be organized beforehand as an alternative to the review process, or afterwards, as a consequence of negative advice. The main aim of both

processes is to ensure that those development projects with a strong impact on the built environment will positively contribute to the city of Zurich. Nonetheless, in 2012 at least, most of the design competitions promoted by the City Council together with private investors have followed restricted procedures (competition by invitation), which reduces the number of entries and proves an impediment to the inclusion of young designers (Katsakou, 2013, p. 57).

Design competitions have also contributed to the improvement of the city's housing supply and have represented an important tool for promoting urban regeneration processes in the periphery and disused areas. According to Katsakou (2013), design competitions are typically a part of “urban policies that aim to transform and regenerate broader urban and suburban areas of the city”. In part, the high number of housing competitions results from the obligation for housing cooperatives to organize a design competition to be able to access public land²⁸. In fact, nearly a quarter of the entire city's housing supply are non-profit rental apartments, which are managed directly by the city council administration or by one of the many non-profit housing cooperatives (Streite, 2019). Additionally, the provision of public land to housing cooperatives takes shape through long-term leasing contracts, where the City Council imposes the obligation of organizing a design competition as a way of assuring high-quality projects (Idibem, p. 37).

Information tools

Similar to other design review panels, the meetings of the Zurich Design Advisory Board are not open to the press or the community and its recommendations are not made public. In addition, its members are required to maintain confidentiality about both the content and the outcome of their deliberations, as it is considered to be a private matter of the promoter (City Official, interview: 2021). From time to time, professional designers criticise the ‘opacity’ of the Baukollegium design review process²⁹. For example, for the Baukollegium of Berlin, established in 2008, both the first part (presentation of the projects) and the final part (the results of the review) of the meetings are open to the press and public³⁰. Although the City Council has promised to make the work of the Design Advisory Board more transparent through

²⁸ In the last fifteen years, according to Katsakou (2013), housing design competitions in Zurich have typically been organized on a four-to-five-times a year basis.

²⁹ See: <https://www.swiss-architects.com/de/architecture-news/meldungen/qualitaet-nicht-ohne-fachperson> (Last accessed: 2020/08/21)

³⁰ In the Baukollegium of Berlin both the presentation of the projects by the building owners and the follow-up recommendations made by the Board are publicly available. Only the discussions of the Board regarding the projects take place internally. In this way, the Berlin *Baukollegium* contributes to the “qualification of the building culture debate in Berlin and strengthens the awareness of good architecture and urban design in the public, politics and administration.”

the publication of regular reports, this has not yet materialized, except for a report published in 2004 with a review of the 2002-2004 period³¹.

Despite the lack of regular publications regarding the activity of the Design Advisory Board, the Zurich Building Department offers a large number of publications about the urban built environment, such as 'Baukultur guides' about the architecture and urban projects in Zurich³². It also publishes several brochures about the work of the Department, which explains the basic building and planning principles and regulations. In addition, being responsible for the management of the city 'architecture and building history archives', the City Council usually publishes thematic book series about the history of the city of Zurich, with the last one having been titled "Urban history and urban development in Zurich".

Persuasion tools

The members of the Design Advisory Board do not participate in other initiatives outside their design review mission, as is the case with other countries. Nonetheless, the City Council has developed several awareness-raising initiatives directed towards promoters and developers to pay attention to quality. For example, in 2016, the City Council of Zurich promoted the "Award for Good Buildings" competition, which intended to promote a high building culture (baukultur) in Zurich. Architectural firms and building owners were able to participate through an open call for high-quality projects realized and completed between 2011 and 2015. An interdisciplinary jury gave awards to the best buildings and designed open spaces, which resulted in a series of cultural initiatives, such as an exhibition, publications and conferences.

The City Council of Zurich also promotes a culture of design through direct support to cultural institutions, initiatives and events. Since 2018, the City of Zurich has supported the new 'Zurich Architecture Centre' (ZAZ) (up to mid-2021) with 1.658 million francs. ZAZ's mission is to present architecture and urban development themes not only to a specialist audience but also to the wider public through temporary exhibitions, events, lectures, Open Houses, conferences, etc.³³ Nevertheless, the broad interest in architecture and urban design is also present in

³¹ At the beginning of the 2004, the City Council invited the media to one of the closed meetings of the Design Advisory Board, subsequent to which it published a report that allows interested parties a look "behind the scenes" of the Baukollegium for the 2002-2004 period.

See: <https://www.stadt->



[zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/staedtebau/archaeo_denkmal/publikationen/schriftenreihe/heft_6.html](https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/staedtebau/archaeo_denkmal/publikationen/schriftenreihe/heft_6.html)

³² See: https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/staedtebau/archaeo_denkmal/publikationen/baukultur.html

³³ The new architecture centre is supported by the *Architekturforum* Zürich, the architecture department of the ETH Zürich, BSA Zürich and Swiss Association of Engineers and Architects - SIA Zürich. For more information see: <https://www.zaz-bellerive.ch/>

professional bodies and civil society (e.g. until recently, the Centre Le Corbusier in Zurich was privately owned)³⁴.

Exploration tools (Zurich 3D)

One type of project that must be submitted to the Design Advisory Board is high-rise buildings³⁵. To better frame the rules that apply to these projects, the City Council developed high-rise building guidelines and defined specific development areas where high-rise buildings are allowed. As a basis for the updating of the high-rise building guidelines and a coordinated adaptation of the construction and zoning regulations, the Office for Urban Development carried out a two-stage test planning regarding a selective procedure with external planning teams. For this, it developed a web application, the high-rise viewer, which displays a citywide overview of all existing and selected planned skyscrapers.



Fig. 8 –3D visualization of the Zurich city centre (source: City Council of Zurich)

This web application includes an interactive 3D map, which is linked to a diagram of the height and year of a building's construction³⁶. This 3D map is available to professionals to be used as an experimental and visual communication tool for the efficient handling of important construction projects, namely for design competitions and projects with an impact on the built environment.

³⁴ Already in 1987, a group of enthusiast architects established the 'Architecture Forum Zurich' that still operates today, as a "platform for current statements and debates, but also an instrument for influencing planning and building policy." The *Architekturforum Zürich* has been supported by around 800

members of the sponsoring association for over 25 years. For more information see: <http://www.af-z.ch/geschichte/>
³⁵ According to the Cantonal Planning and Construction Act, buildings are considered high-rises from a height of 25 meters.

³⁶ See: https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/ted/de/index/geoz/geodaten_u_plaene/3d_stadtmodell.html

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

Although the advice of the Design Advisory Board is not binding for the City Council administration and development actors, in practice, its recommendations complement the work of the *Office of Urban Development*, which has a formal design review function. As previously mentioned, for projects with a strong impact on the built environment or those that may be located in sensitive areas, the *Office of Urban Development* requests independent design advice from the Board, which will inform the formal (regulatory) process and strongly influence the decision of whether or not to grant the building permit. Nonetheless, this informal advice is an effective counterbalance to the formal design review processes, assisting public officials with mediating and negotiating with private developers the need to improve the quality of complex projects, and who most of the times have to work as facilitators and educators of development actors (Kim & Forester, 2012). This means that the work of the Design Advisory Board is a practical method to bring different interests about design goals and constraints to the same table (Beeck et al., 2016).

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The Design Advisory Board does not have any allied financial mechanism to promote, negotiate or facilitate urban development. Nevertheless, the activities of the Design Advisory Board are publicly funded, the non-administrative expert members are financially compensated for attending the meetings and their travel expenses are covered by public expenditure³⁷. In an indirect way, by influencing the design quality of the building projects, the Design Advisory Board is contributing to high-quality urban environments that will bring better economic benefits for developers, neighbourhood landowners, residents and, ultimately, the inhabitants of Zurich.

³⁷ According to Art. 24 of the Rules of Procedure, the level of compensation is based on the hourly rate at the functional level for occasional services to third parties. Half-day sessions are credited with a maximum of four hours and full-time sessions with a maximum of eight hours; travel expenses are reimbursed.

7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITIES ISSUES

The question of independence represents one of the key challenges the Design Advisory Board faces given that it is managed by City Administration and its external members are appointed by the City Council. Although the five external experts are recognized professionals in their field (academics, designers with a relevant building portfolio, etc.), there have been some criticisms regarding the nomination process of the experts, namely why their selection is not based on a public procedure. The City Council has presented the argument that the appointed external members are always recognized experts and that they are chosen not only based on their experience and education, but also by their communication profile. The experts are supposed to focus on the qualitative aspects of the proposals and not only on aesthetic or stylistic issues, offering arguments and advice that may critically improve the proposals. As a former Zurich Design Advisory Board administrator (and current Berlin Senate Building Director) explained about the *Baukollegium* expert's selection:

"When choosing the experts, I make sure that they are able to formulate their criticism respectfully so that everyone can save face. The special quality of the committee is that we first look at the properties, then the projects. Then we enter into the discussion with the actors. At this moment of exchange, the decisive thing happens. It's an absolutely creative process in which the recommendations are worked out."³⁸

Another challenge is the short period of the time that the Design Advisory Board members have to examine the proposals and that the members must formulate their recommendations directly at the meetings. After the presentation of the project by the developer and/or their design team, the Board members debate the qualitative aspects of the proposals in a very short period (pre-defined as 15 minutes) and the recommendations are verbally communicated to the interested parties just after (and in written form thereafter). The pressure caused by the short session for debate among the members sometimes does not allow for a deeper debate about the proposals under consideration (City Official, interview: 2021).

³⁸ Newspaper interview with Berlin Senate Building Director Regula Lüscher about the role of the Berlin *Baukollegium*.

Available in: <https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/das-berliner-baukollegium-stadtkultur-als-diskussionskultur-ld.155390>

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Although the Baukollegium's recommendations are not binding for the City Council, which may always decide otherwise, its advice usually has a strong influence on the subsequent formal decision. According to the City Official (interview: 2021) obtaining an independent opinion of a panel of experts is an important contribution when evaluating the design quality of complex building projects as it helps to sustain the formal assessment of the City Council. In addition, the Board's recommendations are used as discursive arguments in persuading, mediating and negotiating with the promoter and their design team the need to improve or alter the design of their proposals.

Furthermore, most of these projects tend to have a strong presence in the media, which is important for the City Council to base its decisions on the advice of experts and not only in the public officers' review. In addition, within the Swiss political context, public referendums are regularly held to ensure that the local citizens participate in major decisions about urban transformation (e.g. buildings above a certain height, with a strong impact on city image or in a sensitive area)³⁹. This means that the validation of the Design Advisory Board is an important element to obtain a positive vote in local referendums.

As most informal design governance tools, the impact of design review panels is difficult to assess (Carmona, 2016; Carmona et al., 2017). The Zurich Design Advisory Board delivers an important advice complement to the design review function of the services of the City Council of Zurich by adding capacity to the statutory planning system and supporting the urban development department. In this framework, the Design Advisory Board delivers an important role of providing expert advice to municipal authorities on architecture and spatial development projects when requested. Nevertheless, the Design Advisory Board may not, on its own initiative make statements to state authorities and public institutions, as well as, make those statements public. This is a strong limitation on a more expansive role of design advice and promotion, which diminishes its impact on wider projects and public opinion. In this view, the Design Advisory Board of Zurich may have a direct impact on the design quality of development projects submitted to the municipality, but has a limited impact on the wider development process and mind-set of public and private stakeholders.

³⁹ The Swiss political system is a semi-direct democracy. In addition to parliament, the electorate also has instruments to

influence political affairs of the federal government, cantons and municipalities (such as constitutional or legislative changes, projects, and/or investments).

9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

One of the key responsibilities of local authorities is to supervise the quality of architecture and urban design and to promote high-quality built outcomes. To achieve these goals, statutory planning frameworks foresee formal processes of design review to ensure compliance with planning regulations and minimum standards. Setting up a design advisory board offers opportunities for a professional peer group to review built environment projects that complement those obtained through the formal design review functions of local authorities. In doing so, advisory boards add further capacity to the statutory planning system and support the urban development department in reviewing the design quality of development projects whilst also influencing subsequent negotiations and drafting reports on formal applications.

Considering that design quality cannot be defined by statute, hybrid models of design review have the potential to offer room for negotiation and compromise among development actors. In addition to those formal design review processes with a direct regulatory function and impact, informal design reviews have developed as an advisory and discretionary practice outside of statutory regulatory frameworks. They provide a means of evaluating projects through impartial expert opinions in order to offer critiques and constructive advice to development teams. Therefore, informal design review should be seen as an improvement design governance tool, focused on adding value to developments prior to their submission for regulatory consent (Carmona, 2017).

Although the structure and remit of the design advisory boards vary according to the specific context wherein they operate, this tool is being increasingly used by a wide number of medium and large cities across Europe, with a high prominence in German-speaking countries. In most cases, design advisory boards are not compulsory by law and may or may not be appointed according to the willingness of the City Council. According to the Austrian experience (UM Workshop 3, 2020), advisory boards function well in environments where the concern for design quality is already high on the political agenda, as in other cities politicians or developers may not be interested in setting up such structures. Nevertheless, in those cities that have one, it appears to work well and positively influence the outcomes.

KEY REFERENCES

- Beeck, S., Peschken, M., & Willinghöfer, J. (2016). *Baukollegium Berlin. Advising, Mediating, Persuading within Complex Building Processes* (Regula Lüscher, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umwelt Berlin). Jovis.
- Carmona, M. (2016). Design governance: Theorizing an urban design sub-field. *Journal of Urban Design*, 21(6), 705–730.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2016.1234337>
- Carmona, M. (2017). The formal and informal tools of design governance. *Journal of Urban Design*, 22(1), 1–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2016.1234338>
- Carmona, M., de Magalhães, C., & Natarajan, L. (2017). *Design Governance: The CABE Experiment*. Routledge.
- Cousins, M. (2009). *Design Quality in New Housing Learning from the Netherlands*. Taylor & Francis.
- Devecchi, L. U. (2012). Von politischen Grabenkämpfen zur kooperativen Planung. *disP - The Planning Review*, 48(4), 45–55.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2012.776815>
- Eisinger, A., & Reuther, I. (2007). *Zürich baut—Konzeptioneller Städtebau / Building Zurich: Conceptual Urbanism* (Stadt Zurich). Birkhäuser.
- Baukultur! Planning and Building in Germany*, (2007) (testimony of Germany).
- Heller, M. (2007). Learning from Zurich? City Councilor Kathrin Martelli interviewed by Martin Heller. Em *Building Zurich* (Stadt Zurich). Birkhäuser.
- Katsakou, A. (2013). The competition generation. Young professionals emerging in the architectural scene of Switzerland through the process framework of housing competitions – a case study. Em *Architectural Competitions—Histories and Practice*. The Royal Institute of Technology and Rio Kulturkooperativ.
- Katsakou, A. (2019, Dezembro 3). Consensual urban planning—Zurich’s model. *Proceedings of the International Conference held at Birmingham City University*. Urban Design Research: Method and Application, Birmingham, UK.

- Kiessling, N., & Pütz, M. (2020). Assessing the regional governance capacities of spatial planning: The case of the canton of Zurich. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 7(1), 183–205.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21681376.2020.1776631>
- Kim, J., & Forester, J. (2012). How design review staff do far more than regulate. *URBAN DESIGN International*, 17(3), 239–252.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/udi.2012.11>
- Muggli, R. (2004). Spatial planning in Switzerland: A short introduction. *VLP-ASPAN*.
<http://www.vlp-aspan.ch/de/documents/document.php?id=4>
- Rönn, M., Andersson, J. E., & Zettersten, G. B. (2013). *Architectural Competitions—Histories and Practice*.
- Streite, R. (2019, Spring). Shaping Zurich's Development with Non-profit Housing. *Urban Design*, 36–38.
- Van Wezemael, J., & Silberberger, J. M. (2015). We Have Never Been «Swiss». Some reflections on Helvetic Competition Culture. In *Architecture Competitions and the Production of Culture, Quality and Knowledge: An International Inquiry*. Potential Architecture Books.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/hbd/de/index/ueber_das_department/organisation/gremium/baukollegium.html

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Joao Bento, Researcher of Architectural Policies (UCL – Bartlett School of Planning)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Marketizing Design Review

analysis of design review practices
across London (UK)

Matthew Carmona
Professor of Planning
and Urban Design,
University College London

www.matthew-carmona.com

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
2.1. The national growth in design review.....	3
2.2. A maturing market.....	5
3. OBJECTIVES.....	5
4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	6
4.1. Independence and the commercial imperative.....	6
4.2. Attitudes, aspirations and panel types	7
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	10
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	11
6.1. Purchasers of design review services.....	12
6.2. Headline costs.....	13
6.3. Hidden costs.....	14
6.4. Value and benefits.....	15
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITIES ISSUES	16
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	17
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	18
KEY REFERENCES	19

1. SUMMARY

This case study explores the marketization of design review in England, a tool for design governance that prior to 2011 had almost exclusively been within the purview of the state (both the national and local governments). This is no longer the case, but neither is it the case that the involvement of the market in the delivery of such services has inevitably undermined their public interest *raison d'être*. This case offers insight into a rare, and—according to those involved—ultimately successful example of marketization in design governance services, albeit one with potentially limited potential for transferability elsewhere given the necessary conditions for such a viable market to take root.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

Design review is a peer review process for the design of built environment projects. Globally it is an increasingly prominent tool in the design governance toolbox where it is typically offered as a public service. The 'modernisation' of public services has been much written about as a key tenet of the neoliberal state. Such processes typically encompass the withdrawal of the state, the commodification of services, the introduction of competition and market mechanisms, and the general embedding of business interests into previous state functions. In England, between 2011 and 2018, design review was subject to such a change. It moved from a publicly funded service that had been dominated – although not exclusively delivered – by a single national agency, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), to a (typically) privately funded activity that a diverse group of market providers compete to deliver.

2.1. The national growth in design review

The sources of evidence on which this case study is based (see references) include a national survey of practice, conducted in early 2017 across the 374 local planning authorities in England. This survey revealed that the percentage of those regularly using design review services had increased to 64%, up from around 50% when CABE had been wound up, suggesting that the marketization of design review had led to an increase in uptake, or at least had not significantly undermined the upward

trend set in motion between 1999 and 2011. The headline figures were not, however, the whole story, as the survey also revealed a large differential in the level of use of the tool with only 19% of authorities using a panel regularly (monthly or quarterly), a further 37% occasionally, and the remaining authorities only very rarely.

Among those using the panel occasionally or very rarely, the most common explanation for this pattern of use was that only large or unusual planning applications were subject to design review. Some commented that they expected the developer to organize the review panel, and did not see it as their responsibility, while others stated that they would only undertake a design review if the applicant was willing. For these authorities, there was a noticeable tendency to look to the development community to take the lead in these decisions indicating that (in such cases) an almost complete abdication to the market had occurred.

Among the reasons for not using a panel at all, cost was most frequently mentioned – despite developers being liable for the costs of a design review – together with worries about delaying the development process and uncertainty over the accountability of external panels. The consensus among those who commented suggested that, given the budget and greater clarity as regards the process of design review and its impact on the overall planning process, more local authorities would welcome the opportunity to use a design review panel. Ad hoc evidence gathered since the survey suggests that the spread of design review has continued on an upward trajectory.

When asked about how panels were managed, a third of respondents revealed that they used an internally managed panel (by the local authority itself), whilst just over a third used an externally managed panel (from one of the market providers).

Geographically, local design review panels were less common outside the South East, South West and London, and virtually absent in the East of England. This geographical spread suggested that, where successful panels have been established, the practice of using design review quickly spreads to neighbouring authorities, thus establishing clusters of use. This was most obvious in London where the greatest density of panels can be found, with (in 2020) 26 of London's 33 Boroughs using design review either regularly or on an ad hoc basis.

Overall, despite almost a decade of a gradually growing market for design review services, a continued ignorance about how design review might be used and paid for is still apparent within local government. Clearly, there is still some room for the market to grow and mature (even in London), and there is definitely room for the market players to better communicate their products and the value they can add. However, there has also been a fragmentation of the market coupled with a lack of coordination across the sector to try and build the total market for these services.

2.2. A maturing market

In February 2016, this was also the message from the first ever Parliamentary Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment, a six-month-long enquiry held within the House of Lords to scrutinise policy making related to the built environment. Whilst the Select Committee did not question the move of key design governance services into the market, they argued that provision was often inconsistent and disjointed with an insufficient level of activity to justify a wider investment by the sector in design review. The recommended solution was more government action, this time to mandate design reviews for all 'major' planning applications (residential sites of over 0.5 hectares or 10 units or sites of over 1 hectare or 1000 sq metres of floorspace for all other uses) with the aim of driving up the volume and ultimately the quality of such activities, and as a means to encourage the market to mature.

Government did not heed the call, and in 2018, their revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) rolled back earlier provisions in the 2012 NPPF by dropping the all-important statement that: "Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place" (see below). Instead, they included the blander assertion that "Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development" (including "review arrangements"). The impact of this move on the still immature market has yet to be seen.

3. OBJECTIVES

The immediate function of design review is to improve the design quality of individual development schemes by providing advice from a pool of experts whose joint experience can be tapped into. In England, this typically occurs during the planning process. This brings a breadth and depth of experience that may not be available to the project team or to the planning authority, not least on more specialist areas such as inclusion, heritage or sustainability. It can help to broaden discussions about projects and draw attention to the bigger picture within which developments sit.

The distinguishing feature of design review in England is that it provides this advice in an independent manner from experts unconnected to the schemes under review and provides that advice to planners and others who will need to make decisions as part of formal regulatory processes. Design review itself is non-statutory and informal; at its most basic it can provide a 'crit' of development proposals which can then be refined and amended in light of the advice, but more sophisticated processes can also act in educational, facilitative and mediation capacities, helping to bring parties together to understand how outcomes can be achieved that are 'optimum' for all. Of course, like any tool, not all design processes are ideal and can be run badly; design review can bring confusion, discord and delay as well.

4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The relative vibrancy of this new market in design review services varies substantially across the country. In the North East of England, for example, just one organisation – NEDRES – provides a design review service to the market, whilst in the South West the South West Design Review Panel (managed by Creating Excellence, a not-for-profit) provides a regional service, Cornwall County Council maintains its own panel, the Architecture Centre, Bristol runs the city's design review panel, and a private consortium, the Design Review Panel, operates throughout Devon and Somerset to deliver, according to their own publicity, "a cost effective" alternative.

4.1. Independence and the commercial imperative

A key issue is how the commercialisation of services affects the essential relationship between the providers and recipients of design review, and in particular, how it affects the independence of the advice being dispensed. Some have asked whether design review panels are now beholden to the developers who ultimately pay the fees that lead to the design review in the first place, while others question whether it has given developers too much power to determine whether they wish to submit their schemes to a design review or not.

In some ways, the commercial imperative profoundly changed the essential relationships within design review, a reality that was not lost on the commercial providers in the early years of the burgeoning market. Indeed, there were reports that some subtly changed their practices to shy away from the more confrontational – and arguably challenging – style of design review practices and adopt a more supportive workshop style. Others argue that such processes are in fact more constructive and less confrontational and do not necessarily imply any loss of independence. Instead, and beneficially, design review has often become more formative in nature and less summative, in the process helping to address some of the reoccurring criticisms levelled at design review prior to 2011, notably that it was frequently too detached and paternalistic in style.

Whether independent or not, operating in the market, design review providers could no longer afford to alienate the clientele on whom they had relied to pay the bills, and neither could they afford to carry out reviews that weren't 'useful' to those commissioning them. Given, however, that the vast majority of their work was commissioned by and conducted for local government (and other public sector organisations), even if paid for by the private sector, design review was clearly still being conducted overwhelmingly with the public interest at heart. Arguably, therefore, the need for repeat public sector business has represented the ultimate guarantee of probity and quality.

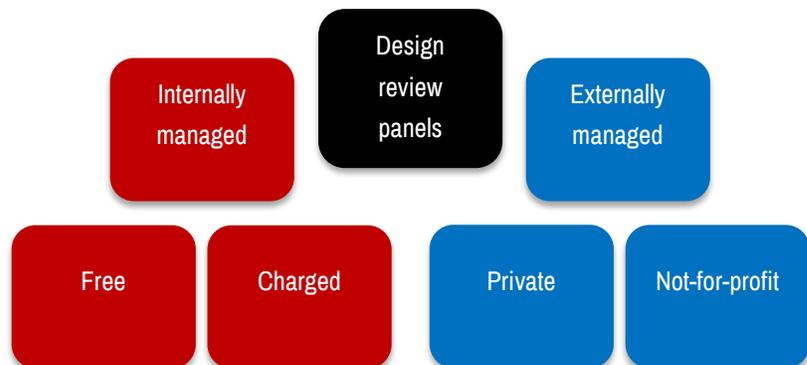
4.2. Attitudes, aspirations and panel types

London is by far the most mature market for design review services. When asked, those managing, the commissioning, or serving on design review panels, alongside the designers presenting to panels, have a series of complementary aspirations for design review. These broadly focus on achieving better design and placemaking than would otherwise be achieved without a panel, notably by empowering local planning authorities to demand better standards from developers. For their part, developers are more circumspect in their aspirations for design review, and whilst accepting that the practice does raise standards of design, its use is often viewed as a necessary additional hurdle to be overcome on the way to receiving planning consent.

Encouraged by the changes in national planning policy, there has been a strong element in London of the municipalities – London's Boroughs – looking towards one another in order to learn from and adopt the best practices of their neighbours. The increasing demand for development across both Inner and Outer London and the

austerity-led squeeze on resources within local government have also led the Boroughs to seek innovative means to assist decision-making within local planning authorities, including greater use of design review. As a by-product, this has also led to a professionalization of design review as Boroughs that had unofficial, sometimes self-appointed, panels have been switching to an official panel with an associated charging regime. Sometimes, there has been opposition to this when local panel members felt disenfranchised, but the change has typically been driven by a realisation that such practices were not able to deliver the step-change in design quality that was desired.

Four types of panel have resulted. First, those set up and managed in-house within a public authority, and second, those managed on behalf of a public authority by an independent third-party contractor. In-house providers can be further divided between those that charge for design review services and those that are offered free to the end user. External providers always charge and can be divided between not-for-profit providers of design review services and private companies.



Types of design review panel in London

The research (see references) revealed no evidence that any of these four models was intrinsically superior to the others (in regards to the quality of service or outcomes), and, when properly resourced, each were capable of delivering positive results. Equally, there was no evidence that particular types of municipality (whether urban or suburban) favoured one form of provision over another, or indeed favoured 'provision' over 'no provision.' In London, however, there were significant advantages and disadvantages that become apparent when comparing in-house panels against those externally managed, and notably when comparing paid for services against those that are free to applicants.

Design Review in practice

Panel type	Example panel	Example scheme
Internally managed free	London Borough of Merton, Design Review Panel	Haslemere Industrial estate: A single review led to a re-worked scheme with a significantly reduced building envelope, increased internal space standards, improved canal-side public space, and better articulated building blocks. 
Internally managed charged	London Borough of Wandsworth, Design Review Panel	Redevelopment of the former Battersea Police Station: A single review led to the preparation of a detailed energy strategy, revisions to the important interface between the old and new buildings, improvements to the public realm aspects of the scheme to ensure a better transition between the street and the new block and to improve accessibility, and tweaks to the south west elevation. 
Externally managed private	London Borough of Haringey, Quality Review Panel (managed by Frame Projects)	Land at Plevna Crescent: Two reviews led to the reduction of one pavilion, the re-orientation of the blocks to allow views through the development, and modulation of the blocks in response to the topography. 
Externally managed not-for-profit	Thames Tideway Tunnel, Design Review Panel (managed by Design Council CABE)	Victoria Embankment Foreshore: A single review led to the rationalisation of access routes across the site and to a de-cluttering of the ramp area, with the kiosks being consolidated into three, rather than four, structures, and the green landscape elements being revised on maintenance grounds. 

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

Different models of design review exist. In the US, for example, design review is typically a 'formal' tool for design governance in that it is sanctioned via statute with a formal regulatory role. In the UK, design review has a long history dating back to the 1802 Committee of Taste and throughout has doggedly remained informal in nature, existing outside of statutory regulatory frameworks. Used in this manner, informal design review is an evaluative or rating tool focused on improving the design quality of developments before they obtain formal regulatory consent. This is an approach developed through decades of national government directly funding design review and continues in the market era.

Formal and informal design review processes map onto a further conceptual distinction relating to whether the evaluation of design quality in planning happens in an integrated or separated manner. In 'separated' models, decisions on design are deliberately split from other planning / development concerns, with a separate statutory body – a design review board or commission – responsible for reviewing design. This board either makes a binding recommendation to the zoning / planning board or grants a separate design consent itself (e.g. in the Netherlands). Under such circumstances, the promoters of projects are compelled to undergo design review and, arguably, design issues will consistently receive an appropriate weighting before development approval is given or refused. A shortcoming, however, is the difficulty in making the necessary connections between design and other development issues, some of which – such as decisions on land use zoning, density, and transport / infrastructure provision – have major design implications. In these circumstances, the danger is that any consideration of a design is reduced to 'mere aesthetics.'

In 'integrated' models, design is typically treated as an integral part of broader planning and / or zoning processes, in a single integrated process. In the UK, for example, judgements about the acceptability of a design are ultimately made by local planning authorities, who may or may not seek the advice of an independent design review panel, but whom ultimately are responsible for weighing and balancing the advice received against other factors and determining the weight that should be given to it in the formal decision-making process. In such a system, design review has no formal status and developers are not obliged to submit their projects to its scrutiny, nor are planning authorities obliged to take design advice on board, or even to seek it in the first place (although they are encouraged to in national policy; see below). The danger is that design becomes side-lined by other factors and

sometimes may barely be considered at all. In England, the seriousness with which design recommendations are taken by planning authorities is a matter of local discretion, and it is clear that the practice varies widely between localities.

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

At the close of the 85-year-long era of nationally funded and led design review, the function had by no means been universally supported, and considerable doubt existed as to whether design review would survive at all. Following a guarantee of transitional funding from the Government, Design Council CABE was incorporated as a private subsidiary of the new charitable Design Council with the mission of determining whether a market in design review was indeed feasible.

The funding came in the form of £5.5 million over the accounting years 2011/12 and 2012/13, a large portion of which was intended to allow the new organisation – Design Council CABE – to develop its own income streams, most notably by commercialising design review, and in the process jump start a new market. Whilst the withdrawal of funding at the national level from CABE had been dramatic, arguably of equal magnitude was the rapid squeeze of local government finances, most notably those relating to the built environment, driven by the austerity climate into which the country was now immersed. Even if they had wanted to, local government was no longer in any position to purchase design review services, meaning that the future funding of design review could only come from one place, the private sector.

An early initiative of the new government was to streamline the voluminous planning policy (all 1,300 pages of it) that had accumulated over the New Labour years and to replace it with a 65 page National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 (DCLG 2012). The new framework laid out unequivocal support for the importance of design and included an important new addition to national policy. It stated: “Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design.”

Coming so soon after the winding up of CABE as a publicly funded organisation, the inclusion of the new guidance may seem surprising. However, for a government aspiring to high quality design yet unwilling to support it financially, it was a logical step on the road to the creation of a market in the governance of design services. Interviews with those involved in the negotiations reported that the Minister of State for Housing and Local Government, Grant Shapps, was particularly keen to work with CABE to find a solution to the funding crisis, although not at public expense. As

design review seemed to be the most easily commoditised tool in the design governance toolkit, it was on that basis that in April 2011, twenty, largely design, review staff, transferred from CABA to the new Design Council CABA.

Therefore, whilst the Coalition Government oversaw the demise of the publicly funded CABA alongside a good part of the larger design governance infrastructure that had gradually been built up across the country since the mid-1990s, it also played the key role in instigating the staggered yet ultimately viable emergence of a market in design review. Underpinning this was the necessary growth of a new bottom-up entrepreneurialism amongst service providers, many of whom had previously been able to rely on direct public funding for their existence and which now had to learn to either sink or swim in this new market.

The Design Network organisations (the equivalent of Design Council CABA in the regions) also quickly concluded that greater diversification and a more supportive offer was required, extending into community engagement, arts and culture, project support, capacity building, skills education, and professional and councillor training; in other words, design review alone would not support them. Unfortunately, whilst each of these services offered potential at expanding the market and at the same time helped change local cultures and priorities on design, most were even more financially marginal, and certainly less predictable, than design review. Nevertheless, to survive in this climate, regional and local organisations adopted a common strategy, which typically involved:

- Being entrepreneurial, supported by a wide range of services (the more diverse the better)
- Reducing fixed overheads (personnel and premises) and utilising an 'expert' network (local and/or regional) that can be flexibly called upon in different combinations as and when required
- Carefully tailoring the offer to local circumstances.

In very different parts of the country, from the largely urban West Midlands to the largely rural South West, and from the relatively wealthy South East to the relatively poorer North, this formula is now repeated across the range of design review providers.

6.1. Purchasers of design review services

In such a context, purchasers of design review services need to pay attention to the quality of the service being provided and how this is reflected in the price being paid.

However whilst there are clear differences, in London at least, between services run on a shoe-string or free basis, and those that are professionally organised (either in-house or externally) and charged for, qualitative differences between the various professionalised (market) providers of design review services in terms of how panels are run and the outcomes they achieve, are harder to detect. This suggests that competition is largely centred on price rather than on the level of service, although providers would certainly dispute this. As a manager at one design review organisation commented: “one of the issues around design review is the different layers of the market. If we’re bringing together a national or an international group of experts and yet other players in the market are offering a much less expensive model, but with different quality of results, the question becomes how you value quality and how you pay more for quality, if that’s appropriate to your scheme”. In other words, a premium service should attract a premium price.

The research revealed a range of perspectives on whether design review is best run in-house (within municipalities and other agencies) or contracted out to a specialist (market) provider of design review services. The benefits of external provision coalesced around the ease of setting up and running panels and the cost effectiveness of this model. The need for a proven, financially neutral model was particularly important to local commissioning authorities, amongst whom the national survey had revealed that the perceived cost to the public purse of providing design review was the number one reason for not using a panel.

Amongst those managed in-house, the dominant perspective was that design review should be a fixture in a constant conversation between developers and their design teams and the local authority, and if there was too much of a separation between the two, the design review could become ‘out of sync,’ thus leading to mounting tensions. Analysis of the externally managed panels suggested that this had not occurred, and that, however managed, the work of panels could be successfully integrated into other pre- and post-application processes. There was also a perception that payments for design review could be used to help develop design expertise within local authorities with any surplus of income used to support internal design capacity, rather than contributing to the ‘profits’ of the external organisation.

6.2. Headline costs

With the widespread shift from being a publicly funded service in England to a chargeable one, the headline fees of panels have been much debated. These,

however, are only part of the total cost of design review, and whether a design review process is fee-based or not, it is never free.

By 2017, the headline fees paid by developers to have their projects submitted for design review in London varied significantly: from £0 to £5,000 (plus VAT) for a single full review. The average of those (excluding those that did not charge a fee) was £3,670 per review. Fees are typically reduced by about £500 for a return review (when a site visit is not required) and are even lower for a shorter and smaller 'Chair's review' (on average £1,500 cheaper than a full review). While the information on fees is often no longer fully transparent, these fees were significantly lower than the much larger fees originally envisaged by Design Council CABE, although they are higher than the estimated average cost of £2,500 per review in the days before national funding was withdrawn from CABE.

Furthermore, there was no evidence that, as a category, external private, external not-for-profit, or in-house panels necessarily cost more or less to run, or levied higher or lower fees, than panels in a different category.

Costs that are typically built into the fees paid include paying the chair and panel members (from £200 to £400 per half day), refreshments, room hire, travel, and the hours spent organising the review, preparing the briefing notes, getting the information ready, attending the review and writing it up. In other words, they cover all of the directly incurred management costs of the organisation responsible for setting up and conducting the reviews, plus a profit in the case of external suppliers and an overhead for some in-house suppliers. Design review is clearly seen by some as an area with revenue-raising potential beyond that needed to deliver the review service itself.

6.3. Hidden costs

Even if panels are fully paid for by the developer, there are still likely to be hidden costs for the public sector. As one case officer argued: "a lot of my time is spent on design review – preparing for it, attending, and dealing with the implications of its recommendations – which is not costed as part of that service." Another suggested, however, that "design review is often the tip of the iceberg in work terms. A huge amount of work goes into pre-application advice on design," but that this would most likely be even greater if design review was not there to assist. The comment suggests that there are potential workload compensations to be had or made.

For their part, developers and their teams were subject to two sets of substantial 'hidden' costs, especially as most design teams put a significant amount of work and effort into preparing for a design review, with further costs almost inevitably being associated with the post-review period. These are inconsistent and depend on the nature of the scheme and how well the design was resolved before going into review. Almost inevitably, a panel's recommendations will lead to further design costs, to potential delays to the development process, and/or to costs associated with the ongoing dialogue required to keep planners informed about how a project is responding to the review. These costs are likely to dwarf those paid to the provider of the design review.

6.4. Value and benefits

When asked about whether the costs of design review represented a satisfactory value for the money paid, overwhelmingly the interviewees felt they did, seeing multiple benefits to the practice, although to varying degrees. Developers were the most sceptical and believed that the process needed to demonstrate that it was adding value in order to justify its continuing role, and this meant economic and not just societal value. In this regard, design review can often work against maximising the development potential of sites (in London notably by reducing heights and densities), but developers generally felt it was "a necessary evil to get planning permission in a timely manner" courtesy of a smoother and more streamlined planning process.

Panel managers and local politicians (councillors) were particularly supportive, arguing that when done well, design review is highly efficient and often saves time and money by facilitating a speedier process when it comes to obtaining planning consent. The cost of the service is never more than a minor proportion of the total development budget and is massively outweighed by the value it adds; in effect, it ensures that projects meet the public as well as private interest. As one long-serving manager of a panel confided: "No-one has ever, in all my roles, ever quibbled about the cost of a design review – it's not a problem."

As reported in the recently published national *Housing Design Audit for England*, comparing the headline cost of a single design review against the gross development value (GDV) of an average-sized development project in England reveals a cost of just 0.003% and 0.005% GDV. Moreover, schemes that benefited from the use of a design review were almost four times more likely to appear in the 'good' or 'very good' design categories than in the 'poor' or 'very poor' ones.

7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITIES ISSUES

The question of independence presented different challenges for panels depending on whether they were internally or externally managed. In-house panels (within municipalities) were sometimes perceived by developers as being too close or too tied to the planning authority to give an unbiased review. Criticism was also levelled at those external providers whose model of operation (particularly in the early years of the developing market) had them being paid by developers directly to deliver a design review service, albeit at the instruction of, and as required by, the requisite municipality. Some felt that at times this relationship between design review providers and developers could become too close.

To avoid such situations, independence always requires that a distance be maintained between the panel and panel managers and developers (and their teams). At a minimum, this seems to require that, even if paid directly by a developer, the client for the review remains the public sector. This has now become the norm. Panels also routinely establish conflict of interest provisions for panel members, with the most transparent maintaining a register of interests to record clients with whom panel members have worked (typically within a five-year period) and whose projects they are therefore unable to review. Increasingly, the constitution of panels is subject to an open process of advertising for members and selection, with attention paid to gender and diversity factors when making selections.

There is also a general issue surrounding the openness and transparency of panels. In part, this reflects the commercial imperatives of market players, but also extends beyond the management of panels to the Boroughs for whom design review is mainly being conducted. Thus, in a context where some large regeneration projects are controversial, many councils are happy not to expose their design review processes to public scrutiny. The large majority of panels are patently not 'transparent' or 'accessible' by any standard that would be recognised as acceptable to meet national standards for public life, and recently this has been raising concerns amongst organisations such as Civic Voice (the voice of local civic societies in England) who are increasingly calling for panels to be opened up to lay and local community members as well.

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Evidence from the different research projects listed in the references reveals that design review in England has come a long way. Coming out of the days (pre-2011) when design review was a state-led, state-funded, but also somewhat exceptional activity, the new market in design review services is making the activity not only more widespread, but also more varied in its practices. Most seem to feel that this journey has been a positive one, leading to greater innovation in the sector and to a less paternalistic (top down) character to design reviews. It is certainly encouraging a greater uptake of the practice, which, for advocates of the tool, must be regarded as a success.

What is clear is that today there is no single panel or set of practices that can be singled out as 'the' exemplar to which all others should look. The question is, does (or should) the design review sector also operate like a business? The experience in England has suggested that there is no 'practical' reason as to why not. The marketization of design governance through design review (with encouragement in national policy) seems to be delivering more design review than ever before with no obvious diminution of standards. Instead, it is widely recognised as having improved standards of design, establishing a more positive environment within which good design can flourish, and encouraging a more efficient development process that is more formative and less summative in its assessments; all for a price that the market is willing to pay.

In reality, the situation in England is not a pure market for design review. Instead, we have witnessed a hybrid model of marketization with providers that range from purely private to purely public, and everything in-between. There are also limited numbers of market players, suggesting that (in economic terms) what has been witnessed is more akin to an oligopoly rather than a completely free market. Yet, despite the obvious limitations that such a system can place on achieving a competitive marketplace, for the clients of these services (the local authorities in England) there is always the option to eschew the market players altogether and set up their own in-house panel, in the process taking the income and resources for themselves.

A successful market does seem to be operating, albeit it is small, specialised, and not nearly as lucrative as some had hoped it would be at the start; neither do its somewhat secretive practices help in marketing this design governance tool more widely and encouraging the practice of design review to grow.

9. Key lessons and transferability

The situation in England provides a rare example of the marketization of design governance services, although one that may have limited application beyond England or to other tools of design governance. This is because, in England, design review is delivered through an informal (discretionary) but integrated process, within a strong national policy framework. In other words, for the market to work there needs to be enough flexibility in the system to enable parallel, competing, and non-binding models and providers of design review to operate. However, there also needs to be enough authority and / or incentive to ensure that developers feel it is in their best interest to participate in (and pay for) a design review, and that municipalities should back its provision by ensuring that it occurs.

It is therefore possible to conclude with a hypothesis that the marketization of design governance is most likely to occur and will be successful (delivering on the multiple potential benefits of design review) through an informal design review model that operates within an integrated system of design decision-making, albeit one with enough force and, crudely, enough business to sustain it. It seems to be no accident that in England, this has occurred most rapidly and with the greatest degree of innovation in London, precisely where the concentration of development and municipal authorities (the Boroughs) and therefore market opportunities are greatest. The regions are following more slowly behind with providers often serving large geographical territories in order to generate enough business.

At the same time, even in London the external providers of design review have found it tough to market other design governance services on the back of design review. So, whilst there have been concerted attempts by some providers to 'upsell' to their clients, none of the other informal tools of design governance that were so compelling under the auspices of publicly-funded CABA have been saleable to nearly the same degree. As such, it is clearly possible to successfully marketize aspects of design governance, but that does not absolve the public sector's ultimate responsibility for the design of place, and without the public sector creating the demand, there will surely never be any supply.

KEY REFERENCES

The discussion above was based on the following sources of evidence:

- Carmona M (2019) Marketizing the governance of design: design review in England, *Journal of Urban Design*, 24:4, 523-555
- Carmona M (2018) Reviewing Design Review, in London, Place Alliance, Urban Design London, and Greater London Authority, <https://indd.adobe.com/view/6b092a16-9991-4abf-a4ee-9da8719afec5>
- Carmona M, Alware A, Giordano V, Gusseinova A and Olaleye F (2020) A Housing Design Audit for England, London, Place Alliance
- Carmona M, de Magalhaes C & Natarajan L (2017) Design Governance: The CABE Experiment, London, Routledge
- Carmona M & Giordano V (2017) Design Skills in English Local Authorities, London, Urban Design Group, Place Alliance

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Matthew Carmona, University College London

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

The Place Alliance

a movement campaigning for place quality
(UK)

Matthew Carmona
Professor of Planning
and Urban Design,
University College London

www.matthew-carmona.com

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
3. OBJECTIVES.....	4
4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	6
4.1. Analysis initiatives.....	7
4.2. Information initiatives.....	8
4.3. Persuasion initiatives.....	9
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	10
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	10
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITIES ISSUES	11
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	11
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	14
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	14

1. SUMMARY

The Place Alliance aims to put design quality back on the national agenda in England. It does this through building an evidence base, working through a network, and campaigning at the national level. Being university (rather than government) based, it is entirely informal in its operation, having no power at all (hard or soft) except for the legitimacy given to it by the evidence base it builds, the neutral stance it adopts (it only takes the side of place quality, not that of any government or set of actors), and the network of willing supporters and volunteers it nurtures. This case study draws from a detailed [five-year review](#) of the initiative (see references) that itself involved extensive interviews and the detailed tracing of impacts over time.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, England saw a withdrawal of funding from, and the watering down of national policy and commitment to, the achievement of better-quality development and places. Consequently, a major leadership gap emerged. Place Alliance was subsequently established in order to help fill that gap through collective and collaborative action across the sector, and specifically beyond the Government.

In 2014, Place Alliance was established by UCL (University College London) as an informal network to encourage collaboration and collective leadership in the quest for better place quality. Increasingly, it has developed a campaigning role and does so through direct engagement and the dissemination of targeted research and thought leadership to key governmental, professional and community audiences. Place Alliance provides a forum for its supporters to come together, debate and work towards raising the national consciousness regarding the importance of place quality. All are welcome and there are no joining fees or charges for Place Alliance events.

Uniting the many organisations that now support Place Alliance is the belief that the quality of the built environment has profound health, social, economic and environmental impacts. The empirical evidence for this 'Place Value' has been gathered by the Place Alliance through one of its tools – www.place-value-wiki.net – which has shown that "Place quality is not a mysterious and luxurious aspiration only to be considered when things are good or only for the wealthy. Instead, it is a basic necessity of urban life with profound and far-reaching impacts

on the lives of citizens today and tomorrow. It is so important to our basic well-being that it should be the expectation of all.”

Since its establishment, the Place Alliance has held ten BIG MEET conferences bringing together thousands of participants from across governmental, NGO, industry, and community sectors. The organisation has over 1000 supporters representing hundreds of organisations, its work is freely distributed, and its evidence and knowledge tools provide a free resource for others to use. As one supporter noted “the new alliance provides powerful collective voice on questions of place quality and facilitates cross-sector discussion and debate around improving our everyday environment.”

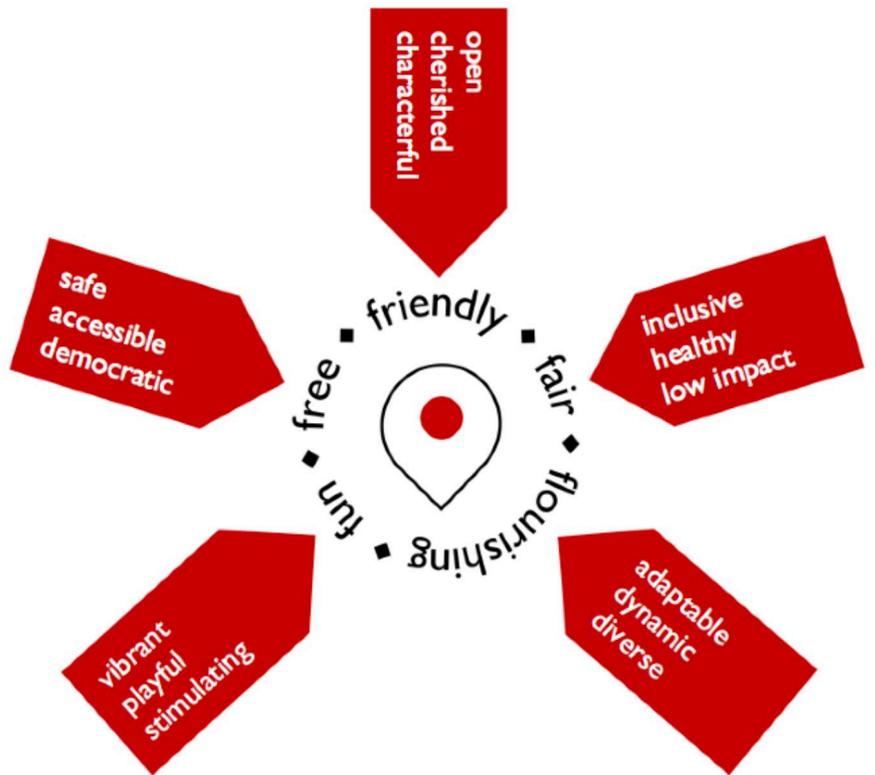
So far, the Place Alliance has limited its operations to England, as other parts of the UK did not suffer the same cuts in this critical area of national policy and practice. With UCL now part of the EU-funded Urban Maestro project, it is hoped that using other cases in Europe as examples and learning opportunities can inform its practices going forward, for example in its recent campaign to establish a [Design Quality Unit in England](#).

3. OBJECTIVES

Place Alliance was set up with a view to influence the delivery of high-quality places. It defines these as places that are friendly, fair, flourishing, fun, and free (the five ‘F’s).

The network’s driving ambition is to help establish a culture whereby place quality becomes a regular fixture in public debate and a continuous and accepted criterion in all new development, regeneration, conservation and urban management processes in England. The organisation’s literature defines this as a culture where:

- Place quality has a value that is recognised by all
- The quality of buildings, streets and spaces is always given a high priority by those who have the power to shape them
- National and local government recognises the vital contribution of the quality of place to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation and to achieving environmental sustainability
- The professionals that are responsible for making and managing places work constructively together and with local communities to shape high quality local environments.



Year 2020, finds Place Alliance in its sixth year of operation. Its core aims going forward are to:

- Inspire and raise aspirations for places
- Support dialogue and collaboration to improve place quality
- Build and share evidence, knowledge and resources
- Influence policy, practice and behaviour to achieve better place quality
- Be open and accessible to all interested individuals and organisations.

4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Place Alliance's initiatives encompass a wide range of actions and tools, from evidence reports and practical guides to campaigns, networking events, and conferences. Place Alliance has played an active role in supporting the network by organising design training for public sector professionals and facilitating cross-disciplinary working groups as a space to organise specific areas for action. Place Alliance takes an active role in influencing policy by participating in a collective campaigning effort along with a range of allied organisations and by gathering and generating evidence to influence decision makers.

Place Alliance's initiatives are clustered around three areas:

1. The Analysis Initiatives – research, evidence and evaluation.
2. The Information Initiatives – Practical guides (Place value Ladder and Place Value Wiki); Design Skills Summer Schools for the public sector and currently three active working groups (urban rooms, arts and place, and education and place).
3. The Persuasion Initiatives – Partnerships for specific campaigns alongside the national and regional BIG MEETs.



4.1. Analysis initiatives

Through its body of work, Place Alliance supports evidence-based discussion at the national and local levels. The analysis initiatives broadly refer to the sorts of background research and evidence gathering (in collaboration with partners) that can be used to facilitate an evidence-based conversation and ultimately influence more informed policy and practice. These outputs and results are presented in an accessible manner to related stakeholders, including to national policymakers, local authorities and professionals, as well as to lay audiences.

Research efforts began with [Design Skills in English Local Authorities](#), a report that summarises the findings of a national survey of urban design skills / resources within local planning authorities nationally and how they have changed over the last five years. *Reviewing Design Review in London* examines a range of design review cases in London, with the findings based upon in-depth interviews with applicants, designers, panellists and panel managers, providing a 360-degree analysis of the diversity of design review practices across London and the benefits that stem from high-quality provision.

[Councillors' Attitudes to Residential Design](#), summarises the views gleaned from a national survey of local councillors in England on their approach to the design of new residential development. Understanding the role of local politicians in regards to the design of new housing development — their aspirations, motivations, modes of operation and frustrations — was the purpose of this national survey. This research begs the question: how are our local politicians playing their part in helping to deliver better design? [A Design Audit for England](#) offers a systematic approach to assessing the design quality of the external residential environment. The audit has assessed 142 large-scale developments across England and provides enough data for comparisons to be made between regions and different approaches to the delivery of new housing.

New research will be available in 2020 that seeks to understand the impact of the built environment on people's well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each project is designed to fill an identified gap in knowledge that will support the organisation's other 'Information' and 'Persuasion' activities.

4.2. Information initiatives

Place Alliance initiatives are always centred on building partnerships to deliver robust evidence-based reports. These reports are utilised to inform policy through direct campaigns, best practice advocacy, and outreach to promote place quality.

Place Alliance's 'Information initiatives' support this by encompassing the preparation and publication of documents and web-tools which aim to diffuse research to an audience of practitioners, local authorities, governmental committees and key players. The forms the information initiatives pursued take are designed to have different purposes and encompass a diversity of approaches, from involving its network supporters in nominating place exemplars, to building a broader collaborative platform, to the simple synthesis of knowledge. Key target audiences are development professionals, local authorities, and public servants representing the interests of local communities.

Place Alliance's involvement with the production of publications and tools began in July 2015 with [Place Exemplars](#), a document used as a campaigning tool that had been prepared in advance of a meeting with the then-Minister of State for Housing and Planning. Place Alliance asked its supporters to suggest examples of initiatives where local communities have been successfully incorporated into the planning, development and design of their areas, and where local powers had been used to positively shape the places existing or springing up in their localities.

This was followed by the development and release of a collaborative online tool that amasses evidence-connecting aspects of place quality and place value, the '[Place Value Wiki](#)'. This baseline of knowledge searched 13,700 relevant records to publish *Place Value and The Ladder of Place Quality*, a practical guide useful for built environment decision-makers, arguing that an intelligent approach to public policy should have a definite place quality dimension at its heart.

As well as its central work, the Place Alliance supports working groups, which develop initiatives/actions and lead BIG MEETS in order to broadcast their work to a wider audience. These working groups provide different points of reference for the whole network that are grouped around different themes, notably Arts and place, Education and place, Health and place, and Urban rooms. Some of the works developed and supported through the working groups include the [Place Manifesto and Health and Place Manifesto](#).

By reaching out to organisations and individuals in local areas across England, Place Alliance provides significant support to non-profit bodies across the country. In addition to representing these affiliated working groups, it enables the network to

develop actions, projects and initiatives that relate to its supporters' areas of interests. It does so by acting in a support role; at no point does it take control or ownership of any of these groups but instead remains in an enabling role.

Place Alliance has also delivered a series of Urban Design Summer Schools, helping to:

- Increase design skills in the public sector for individuals with no formal design background
- Promote urban design across the public sector.

The next Urban Design Summer School will be organised in conjunction with Urban Design London. It involves the preparation of a two to three-day intensive programme focusing on types of skills perceived as lacking among professionals in the public sector.

4.3. Persuasion initiatives

Place Alliance's remit is to promote design quality, and therefore, the type of campaigning activities plays a significant role in this. This includes leading or taking part in campaigns to spread the notion of design quality among the government and industry. The campaigns aim to advocate independently in order to influence legislation and policy. Partnerships with other organisations are created and nurtured from within the Place Alliance network of supporters to spread the reach of its campaigning themes across government (national and local) as a unified, independent voice to promote the value of design quality.

The primary aim of this campaigning activity focuses on ensuring that government incorporates design quality more prominently into their processes and decisions. This first started by engaging with the 2015-16 Parliamentary Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment – [Building Better Places](#), with Professor Matthew Carmona (UCL) represented Place Alliance and served as the Committee's Specialist Adviser. A second campaign focused on the Housing and Planning Bill, which introduced the 'Permission in Principle' PIP. The Campaign suggested combining the designation of PiP with the production of a simple 'Coordinating code.' This Coordinating Code approach was featured by the Federation of Master Builders in their report *Small is Beautiful* and in the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission's report [Living with Beauty](#).

This was followed by a campaign that brought together five organisations led by the Place Alliance to call for the ‘Government to get serious on design’ when reviewing the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The resulting changes to the NPPF included a clear statement that “The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development processes should achieve.” Most recently, the Place Alliance has led five other organisations to campaign for the establishment of a Design Quality Unit for England, publishing the pamphlet [Delivering Urban Quality, Time to Get Serious](#), and disseminating it to an audience of 450 across industry and government.

Apart from being directly involved in publishing evidence and campaigning based on that evidence, Place Alliance regularly brings together a diverse range of industry and non-industry, professional and non-professional actors in BIG MEET events that are open to all. By these means, Place Alliance supports its bottom-up grassroots model to expand its reach and influence at minimal cost. The BIG MEETS help to expand the Place Alliance’s reach nationally and provides a platform to discuss and inform the public conversation around place quality in different localities. Each BIG MEET typically attracts around 150 delegates to focus on a different aspect of the place quality agenda. To move beyond a London-centric understanding of place quality in England, three Regional BIG MEETS have also been conducted, in the South West, North, and West Midlands.

5. Relationship with formal (regulatory) tools

Whilst the Place Alliance is independent of government, industry or any narrow interest bodies, it does its utmost to work with all. At its heart is a network and all are welcome to join as supporters (at no cost) and to take part in its management and direction. It exclusively uses informal tools, having no powers of its own, but campaigns to achieve positive changes to the formal design governance apparatus of the state. Its only significant asset is the authority of its voice delivered through an informed, evidence-based approach to all of its work and undertakings.

6. Allied financial mechanisms

Place Alliance is an independent not-for-profit initiative of UCL. It operates on a tight budget and relies on the generosity of its supporters who donate their time and efforts to help with the organization’s work and undertakings. It receives a limited

income to help support its research activities, notably to conduct the housing design audit and its research on design review.

7. Challenges and equalities issues

The Place Alliance is hosted by University College London (UCL) and is chaired by Professor Matthew Carmona, but its strategic direction is set and determined by a Core Supporters Group, which is also open for anyone to join. All its events are open, free and participative and anyone is free to suggest and indeed set up a relevant Working Group to steer key themes of interest. A very loose management framework is available for all to see on its website and all outputs, results, activities and support is published there in an open and transparent manner. Being hosted by a university, Place Alliance is seen as a neutral space without any political or commercial allegiances.

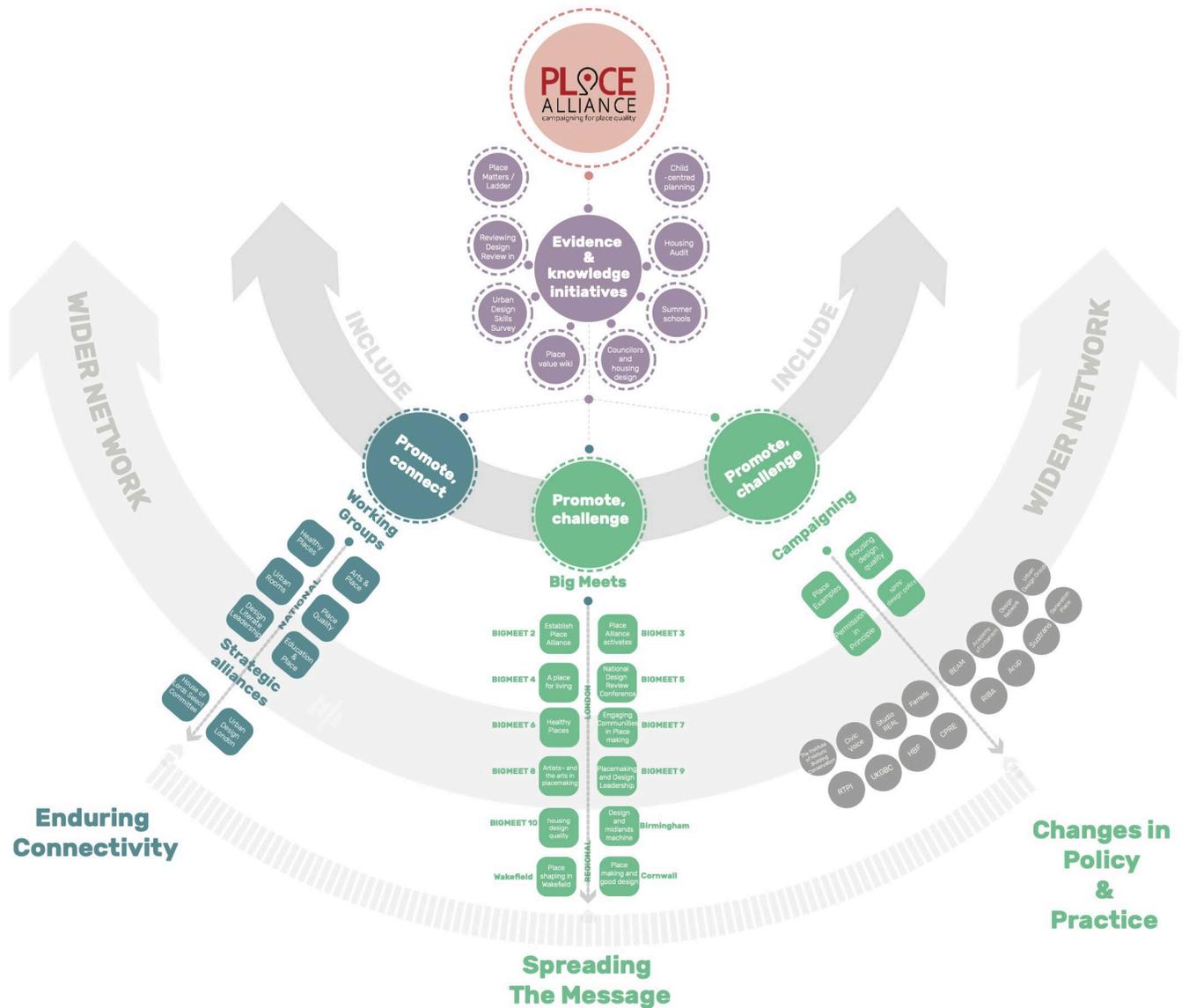
Inevitably its work is limited by the funding it receives (largely from the university) and by the fact that it relies entirely on influencing others to have any impact, given that it has no powers or formal authority itself.

8. Key innovations, successes and impacts

The Place Alliance initiative emerged from research at UCL into the value of informal tools of urban design governance. It is difficult to be precise about the impact of the Place Alliance as many are diffuse and likely to be long-term in their influence. In essence, Place Alliance has:

- Developed and cultivated a large and active network that is collectively making the case for place quality both nationally and locally and which gives numerous organisations and individuals the confidence to take these critical issues seriously
- Filled an evidence gap by building an evidence base that not only demonstrates and highlights the value of place quality, but uncovers key urban design governance issues – skills, political commitment, design review – that need to be addressed nationally, and underpins guidance for practitioners to use
- Influenced national policy and helped to re-ignite a national conversation on design quality that is now informing debates at the highest level, including in reformed national planning policy on design

- Encouraged further discussion around place quality by bringing thousands of policy makers, practitioners, community representatives, activists and others together, inspiring them, and enabling them to renew their interest in design / place quality with vigour and purpose
- Given licence to participate and collaborate through its working groups, alliances around key initiatives and BIG MEETS. All of these approaches empower individuals and organisations to come together and debate and collaborate around key concerns relating to the design of the built environment
- Helped to build capacity in the sector through its summer schools and other events, whilst work by the Place Alliance directly led to the investment by the Government in urban design skills for local authorities through the influence of its design skills work on resources made available through the Planning Delivery Fund.



In England, Place Alliance has brought a new bottom-up and collaborative approach – completely open and inclusive – to the leadership of urban design governance. The neutral space it provides and its evidence-based approach enables organisations and individuals to influence one another and the place quality agenda at large. The conversation has engaged many, from small community groups to large professional institutes. This networked approach to design governance represents a new paradigm that is particularly suited to the fragmented design governance landscape of England in the post-CABE era ([CABE](#) being the former government advisor on design, disbanded in 2011).

Place Alliance acts as a knowledge broker, helping to translate and amplify the messages arising from its research, collaborations and communications activities, enabling them to reach policy makers, practitioners and other audiences. In doing so, Place Alliance has helped keep place quality on the national agenda at a time of austerity and disengagement across the country, and remains significantly implicated in the national revival in interest in this field since 2018. Their being awarded the Sir Peter Hall Award for Wider Engagement by the Royal Town Planning Institute in 2016, and receiving the accolade from the Association of European Schools of Planning for Best Published Paper for the underpinning research, both confirm the importance of its work.

9. Key lessons and transferability

While so far its activities have been limited to England, it is hoped that the Place Alliance could provide a valuable model for others to emulate, particularly in the Global South. In part, this is because it represents a model that is able to operate with virtually no resources and which instead works by harnessing and enabling a network of willing and enthusiastic supporters. For the Place Alliance, the key challenge will be to sustain this into the future, but evidence from its first five years has demonstrated that this is a model that appears to be very effective indeed.

Key lessons include:

- Influencing debate and practice nationally does not need to be resource heavy, but can harness the boundless enthusiasm of the many who see the value of place quality
- Having universities take a leading role puts a trusted and impartial player in the driving seat and ensures the initiative is led through evidence and knowledge rather than through dogma and politics
- The built environment is often a fragmented field of knowledge and practice, meaning that often design and place quality can be dismissed as irrelevant by those who do not understand the critical place value that they can add. In England, Place Alliance has helped to fill a leadership gap.
- It has been critical to build a network that connects into and seems relevant to those who are responsible for delivering top-down solutions, as well as to those for whom empowering bottom-up solutions is the right way. There is a need to empower both.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<http://placealliance.org.uk>

Place Alliance @ five, initiatives and impact, http://placealliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/5-Years-Impact-Report-PA-Final_April-2020_small.pdf

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Matthew Carmona, University College London

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Place Standard

framework for conversations
around place quality (UK)

Joao Bento

Researcher of Architectural
Policies, University College
London - Bartlett School of
Planning

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY.....	3
2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION	3
3. OBJECTIVES.....	5
4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION	6
4.1. Themes and scoring system.....	6
4.2. Application.....	9
4.3. Implementation and monitoring.....	10
4.4. Assessment	11
5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS	13
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	15
7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES.....	16
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS	18
9. EXAMPLES	19
9.1. Alloa (Clackmannanshire): housing design and town centre improvement....	19
9.2. Pollokshields Community Council: neighbourhood strategic plan.....	22
9.3. Aberdeenshire Council: local development plan	24
10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	26
KEY REFERENCES	28
KEY ONLINE RESOURCES	28

1. SUMMARY

Place Standard is a formative evaluation tool designed to facilitate and structure conversations around the quality of places. The tool takes into consideration fourteen themes on the physical elements (buildings, open spaces, transport) and social aspects of a place (for example, whether people feel they have a say in decision-making). Each theme hinges on one central question for participants to answer, aided by secondary questions highlighting particular aspects for people to consider and rate on a scale from 1-7 according to the level of improvement that a place may need. In asking a series of questions about different aspects of a place, the Place Standard tool provides a framework for local stakeholders and communities to assess and identify the strengths and weaknesses of a place. Officially launched in 2015, the Place Standard tool was jointly developed by the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and Architecture & Design Scotland. Although applied mostly by local authorities, the tool is being widely used across Scotland and has already been transferred to other national contexts.

2. CONTEXT AND ADMINISTRATION

In terms of administrative structure, Scotland has had its own devolved parliament and government since 1998, with the power to legislate in all areas of policy except for those overarching ones reserved to the government of the United Kingdom (such as immigration, foreign policy and defence). The Scottish government runs the country in relation to all other matters, including responsibilities such as health, education, justice, rural affairs, housing, and the environment.¹ In order to handle these tasks, the Scottish government is structured into a number of directorates, which, along with their internal divisions as well as via related public bodies, are responsible for developing and implementing different areas of public policy.²

The origins of the Place Standard tool can be traced back to two policy initiatives, one starting from the side of health and the other from that of the built environment: entitled 'Good Places, Better Health' (2008) and 'Creating Places' (2013) respectively.³ The former was a national policy strategy on health and the

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/about/> (accessed 6/5/2020)

² <https://beta.gov.scot/about/how-government-is-run/> (accessed 6/5/2020)

³ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1706/1-johnny-cadell-origins-1.pdf>

environment adopted in 2008 that sought to reflect a better understanding of environment in health, wellbeing and equity in Scotland.⁴ Within its implementation period, a report on the impact of places on children's health was published in 2011,⁵ where its first recommendation was a call for a 'Scottish Neighbourhood Quality Standard' to be used for neighbourhood asset development.⁶ This very early conceptual outline of what would become the Place Standard already embraced two key dimensions: that it is a tool to enable conversations, and that it needs to present an easy-to-grasp model of interrelated factors (Ibidem). Regarding the latter, 'Creating Places' was a national policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland⁷ adopted in 2013. Among several initiatives, this document defined the following policy commitment: "Develop a Place Standard assessment tool, which will be the hallmark of well-designed places. This standard will be aimed at creating greater certainty around quality of place and it is intended to support the private and public sectors and communities. It will address quality in relation to places that support healthy and sustainable lifestyles" (Scotland, 2013).

To develop the Place Standard tool, a partnership was established in 2015 involving three organizations: the Scottish Government (Architecture & Place Division), NHS Health Scotland, and Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS). Leading this joint venture, the Architecture & Place Division of the Scottish Government is part of the Local Government and Communities Directorate, and, organisationally, operates under a Chief Planner, who supervises the planning and architectural policy of Scotland. Within that operates the internal Division of Architecture & Place, headed by the Chief Architect for Scotland, whose functions run the gamut of built environment aspects, from housing and heritage to community engagement, promotion and advocacy.⁸

The partnership also involves NHS Health Scotland (now Public Health Agency), one of the Scottish national health boards with a specific focus on health inequalities. One of their strands of research concerns the impact of social and physical environments on health and, within that, the notion of place (as the combined physical, social and cultural environment) has emerged as a key factor that significantly affects health equity.⁹

⁴ At the heart of this initiative was the belief that policy in Scotland at the time did not quite reflect the significance of the physical environment for health, nor its role in addressing the issue of health inequalities that was identified as being particularly important. For more information: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1707/2-george-morris-key-note-1.pdf>

⁵ The 'Good Places, Better Health' policy implementation phase (2008-2011) focused on the environmental determinants of health and inequity in health for children, and led to the

publication of 'Good Places, Better Health for Scotland's Children' in 2011.

⁶ <https://www2.gov.scot/resource/0039/00398236.pdf>

⁷ The development of the Scottish architectural policy started with the Scottish devolution process in 1997, leading to the first national architectural policy for Scotland in 2001 (Bento & Laopoulou, 2019).

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/Roles/Scottish-Government/SG-contacts/TeamStructures> (accessed 6/5/2020)

⁹ Health boards are a key organisational element of NHS Scotland, and which support the regional health boards by providing specialist and national services: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1088/27414-place-and-communities-06-16.pdf> (accessed 6/5/2020)

The third and final partner is Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS), a semi-independent national champion for good architecture, design and planning in the built environment.¹⁰ Established in 2005, A&DS works closely with the public, private and third sectors, assisting communities to engage with their environment, advising the government on how to best deliver policy and taking the initiative in appropriate directions. A&DS is accountable to the Scottish government and works closely with the Chief Architect in developing several policy initiatives, including the Place Standard tool.

3. OBJECTIVES

According to its detailed guide, the Place Standard tool was developed to “support the delivery of high-quality places in Scotland and to maximise the potential of the physical and social environment in supporting health, wellbeing and a high quality of life.”¹¹ In order to achieve this, Place Standard provides an evaluation tool that enables anyone to assess the quality of places. This is because, although “most people are capable of making judgments about places, it is often difficult to establish a precise definition of what place quality means due to the term’s subjectivity and the different ways it can be interpreted by each individual” (*Carmona & Sieh, 2004, p. 13*). Aware of this difficulty, the Scottish government decided to develop the Place Standard tool in order to cultivate greater certainty around the notion of place quality by providing a methodology that somehow rationalize the qualities and complexities inherent to making judgments about the quality of places (*Carmona et al., 2017, p. 198*).

A second objective of Place Standard is to facilitate conversations about the physical elements and social aspects of the built environment, through which local stakeholders and communities can work together and assess the quality of places. In this context, Place Standard is meant to be one step in a larger process, in which different stakeholders may easily co-produce a qualitative assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a given place that can be used to identify priority actions. In relation to this, Karen Anderson, the former Chair of A&DS, described the Place Standard as a:

“simple way to broker a conversation with a number of different communities around anything. And it doesn’t even need to be with communities, it could be

¹⁰ A&DS is designated as an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NPDB) funded by the Scottish Government, whose role is to support and promote ministerial policies and

objectives for the built and natural environment. As an organisation external to the government, it has more freedom and flexibility to work directly with communities or engage with stakeholders (White & Chapple, 2019)

¹¹ <https://www.placestandard.scot/guide/full> (accessed 08/05/2020)

with any client group; but it means that you are instantly having a joint analysis of issues [...] which is free of the traditional role of ‘I’m the planner, you’re the architect, you’re the member of the community and you’re the guy with the money. [...] The primary idea is to give people confidence, they become the expert because they know their place better than you do” (interview: 2018¹²).

This means that the focus is on the process of evaluation itself and not so much on what exactly the outcome of the assessment is, since the results are not comparatively analysed, and hence the tool is not designed to be used centrally by one organisation or by trained professionals only. Rather, it is about providing a common base for people to collectively consider their quality of life in relation to their experience of a place and to be more actively involved in the planning of improvements.

In this context, a third and final objective is the promotion of public participation and the empowerment of Scottish communities. This underlying goal stems from its teaser question: “Are we having the right conversations with the right people at the right time to change things for the better?” To do so, the tool was designed using accessible language that everyone can use, namely, by people with different social and economic backgrounds, thus enabling them to gain further knowledge about their places and to decide their own aspirations, priorities and possible solutions.

4. THE TOOL / INITIATIVE: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

4.1. Themes and scoring system

As explained, the Place Standard is a formative evaluation tool designed to assess the quality of places in a holistic and accessible approach so all type of users may identify the strengths and weaknesses of a place and select priority intervention areas. The tool is structured around fourteen themes encompassing both the physical elements and social aspects of a place, from mobility and traffic to the sense of belonging and having a voice in how things change. For each theme, there is one main question for the participants to answer, aided by secondary questioning

¹² Interview for the ‘Spatial Design Leadership’ project, August 2018.

highlighting particular aspects for people to consider when replying to the different questions (see Table 1).

Theme	Question
Moving around	Can I easily walk and cycle around using good-quality routes?
Public transport	Does public transport meet my needs?
Traffic and parking	Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?
Streets and spaces	Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?
Natural space	Can I regularly experience good-quality natural spaces?
Play and recreation	Can I access a range of spaces with opportunities for play and recreation?
Facilities and amenities	Do the facilities and amenities meet my needs?
Work and local economy	Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access high-quality working opportunities?
Housing and community	Do the homes in my area support the needs of the community?
Social contact	Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?
Identity and belonging	Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel like I belong?
Feeling safe	Do I feel safe here?
Care and maintenance	Are buildings and spaces well cared for?
Influence and sense of control	Do I feel able to take part in decisions and help change things for the better?

Table 1 – Place Standard themes and main questions (source: www.placestandard.scot)

All questions are phrased in such a manner that they always refer to people's experience of the place (asking, for instance, 'do the facilities and amenities meet my needs?' rather than 'how many of such-and-such facilities are there in the area,' 'how many people use them,' or any other kind of detached observation / measurement type of questions). To support the users' understanding and ability reply to all 14 questions, the Place Standard tool provides 5-7 prompts for each question with a particular emphasis, which encourages the user to consider the different population groups and ages who may engage with the place (Howie, 2018).¹³ In the end, however, the answers result in a simple score on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means there is a great deal to improve and 7 that there is little need for change. Scores on all fourteen themes are plotted in a spider diagram, which allows

¹³ For example, under Facilities & Amenities, one prompt reads: "Can everyone use the facilities and amenities,"

whatever their age, sex, ethnic group, disability, religious belief or sexuality?"

for an immediate visual representation of the perceived strengths and weaknesses for the place analysed (see Fig. 1).

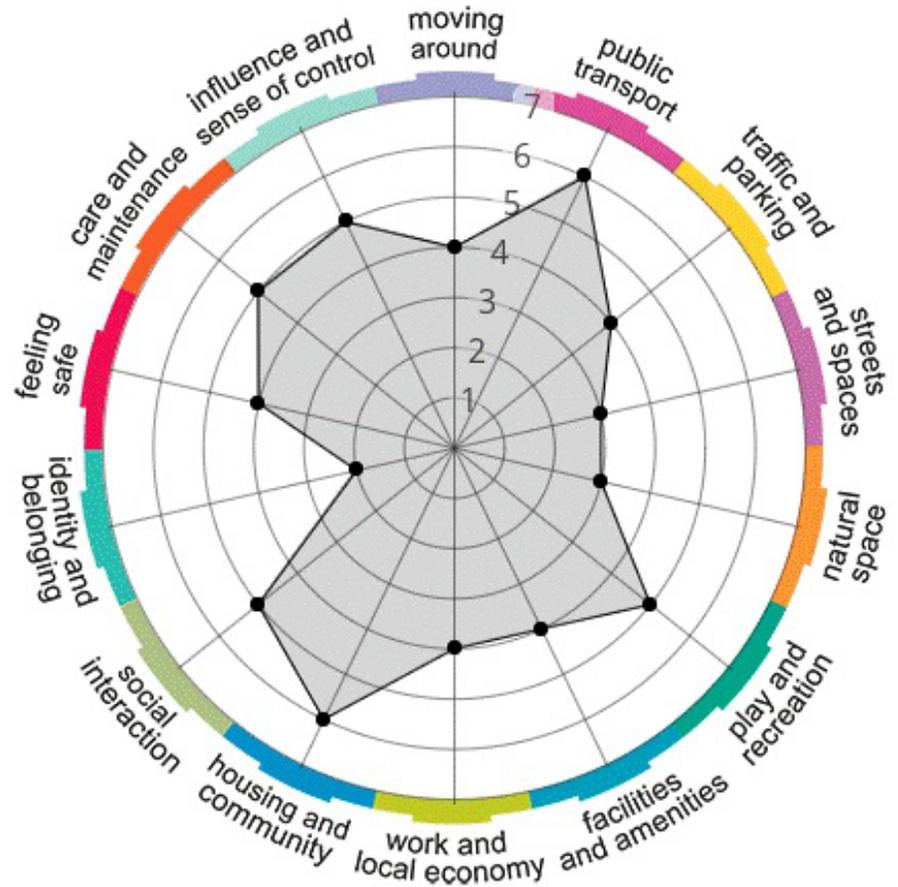


Fig. 1 – Example of Place Standard final spider diagram (source: www.placestandard.scot)

To facilitate the completion of the Place Standard assessment, an online version was developed as well as a mobile application (*app*) version, where the scores are automatically displayed and available for download or printing. After the Place Standard diagram is completed, users can review their comments and then prioritise and document what place dimensions may need improvement(s). Once this stage is completed, users are invited to identify and describe what actions should be taken to make the necessary improvements (Ibid.)¹⁴.

¹⁴ As an example, under the themes of “Moving Around,” “Traffic & Parking,” and “Feeling Safe,” a user who would like to cycle safely may prioritise the need to reduce the volume of

traffic and increase cycling opportunities in their area through a number of actions that include the introduction of improved traffic calming and segregated cycle lanes (Howie, 2018).

The Place Standard tool is intentionally left vague enough so that it can be applied to different scales, from a single street to a whole region, and to existing places and proposals alike. It can also be used in different formats, from individual evaluations or as a basis for a survey, to more collaborative ways of working in workshops. It is no surprise it has so far been employed in numerous different manners.¹⁵ The Place Standard was also developed in such a way that it can fit within public health science models, particularly those examining fundamental/systemic, environmental, and individual influences on health inequalities¹⁶.

In the months before and leading up to its public launch, A&DS conducted four pilots for Place Standard in communities and places of different circumstances.¹⁷ Lessons learned from those pilots were incorporated into Place Standard's final version (e.g. bringing the number of themes down to 14 from 24, solidifying the 1-7 scoring scale as opposed to alternatives such as +/-3 or 1-5).¹⁸

4.2. Application

Since its launch, the Place Standard tool has been used in a diverse array of ways and at a range of scales to inform spatial planning community planning and design across Scotland, from settlement and city district to neighbourhood and development site scale. The wide variety in the ways Place Standard has been used would seem to suggest it works well as a common foundation on which different groups and places can build and expand, whether through focused meetings, community-led design charrettes, structured workshops, surveys, street consultations, etc. According to John Howie (2018), in December 2018, 142 separate instances reaching almost 17,000 individuals were recorded by 28 local authority areas and 1 national park.¹⁹

¹⁵ For more information on cases studies and examples see: https://www.ads.org.uk/case_studies_place_standard/

¹⁶ Johnny Cadell of A&DS has cited a number of past initiatives that were examined as part of the development process for Place Standard; amongst them, the work of CABE (By Design 2000 & Building for Life 2012), previous initiatives of the Scottish Government (Designing Streets 2010), the work of Danish architect Jan Gehl, social tools like the Health Impact Assessment of NHS Scotland and the Healthy Sustainable Neighbourhoods of the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, and the 'Creating Strong Communities' initiative. Source: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1706/1-johnny-cadell-origins-1.pdf>

¹⁷ The four pilots were: Carnegie Trust UK which piloted the tool with three communities that had won the Carnegie Prize for Design and Wellbeing, each for a small public space improvement project; Angus Community Planning Partnership, who tested the tool in Arbroath town centre in a 'before' scenario (evaluating a place as-is); the South Queensferry & District Council and City of Edinburgh Council who tested the tool in a 'during' scenario, i.e. in managing a major ongoing change, the Forth crossing; and finally, the Shetland Islands community which tested the tool in survey format for the monitoring and evaluating of changes already taking place (Ibidem)

¹⁸ In the Place Standard development, considered different scoring options were considered (e.g. -/+3 or 1-5), but it was ultimately decided not to introduce negative scoring so that negative feelings or attitudes would not be created or instilled in more deprived places (Currie, interview: 2020)

¹⁹ For example, the Argyll and Bute Council Community Planning Partnership (CPP) used the Place Standard tool to engage residents in Argyll and Bute on how they feel about the place(s) where they live and work, for which 1,558 responses were received. For more information: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/how-good-your-place>

Within these figures, over 70% of the applications were used for local authority locality planning, master planning or local development planning.

According to Jude Barber (interview: 2020), to help set the conversations with community groups about the fourteen themes of the tool, their events have also included didactic materials, such as different scales of orthophoto maps, models and pictures of an area to help participants visualize the different target areas and the interrelation between the physical and social aspects of a place (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 – Workshop with local communities in Edinburgh (Source: @LeithCreative)

4.3. Implementation and monitoring

To supervise the development and implementation of the Place Standard tool across Scotland, it was decided to set up a Place Standard Implementation Board, chaired by the Chief Architect who oversaw the development of the tool and its launch in late 2015 (John Howie, interview: 2020). This board supervises the work of the Place Standard Implementation Group alongside three other working groups (see Fig. 3). A three-year-long implementation plan (2016-2019) was also agreed upon, which provided a framework of actions to support the practical application of the tool across Scotland.

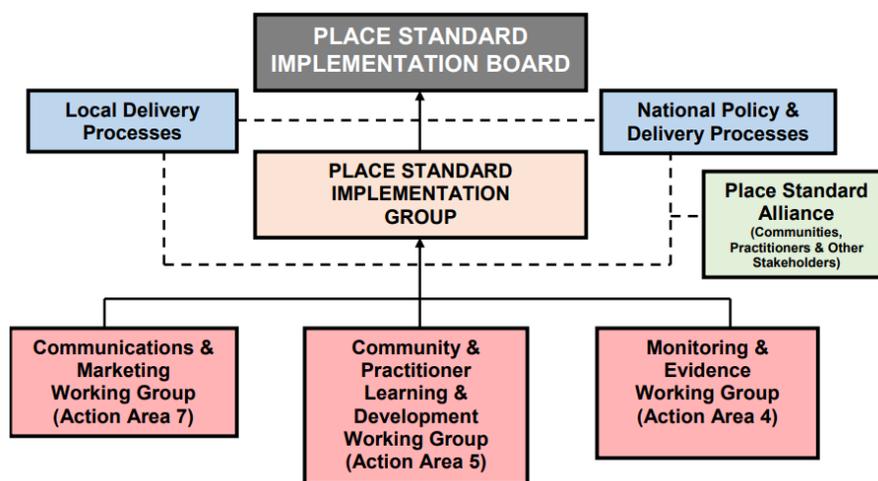


Fig. 3 – Place Standard organisational structure (Source: Kat Hasler presentation²⁰).

After the launch of the tool, Place Standard was officially in its implementation phase, so as such a new network was established, the ‘Place Standard Alliance,’ which consists of practitioners, communities and other stakeholders actively involved with the tool. Local coordination and delivery are supported by a Place Standard Lead from each local authority and both national parks, who meet together in a Place Standard conference every six months (Howie, 2018). Over the years, more organisations have joined the alliance, either as active partners (Glasgow City Council) or in other modes, leading to the formation of new entities. In December 2019, a new three-year strategy was launched for the tool,²¹ which will be followed by an updated version of the original tool and three new place standard publications: the first for children, the second for young people, and a third for key professional groups such as architects, urban designers and planners (Ibidem).

4.4. Assessment

In May 2017, NHS Health Scotland published a report evaluating the first year of the Place Standard, looking into the reach of the tool across Scotland and the specifics of its local implementation, by recording the instances and types of use at the national level and selecting five implementation case studies for in-depth examination.²² In terms of reach, the report found over 80 use instances in the first

²⁰ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1708/3-kat-hasler-implementation-1.pdf> (accessed 08/05/2020)

²¹ https://placestandard.scot/docs/Place_Standard_Strategic_Plan.pdf

²² http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1394/place-standard-process-evaluation_may2017_english.pdf

year, with at least 11,000 individuals involved in some way or another (each use may mean a focus group or a large-scale survey, or a series of one-to-one evaluations). 70% of Scottish local authorities had either signed up to begin or had begun using the Place Standard, mostly as a community engagement tool and to support the development of Local Outcome Improvement Plans (one of the formal participatory planning formats in the country). However, the tool was not only employed at the local authority level, but at varied scales including smaller districts & neighbourhoods in both urban and rural areas.

Findings from the five case studies were grouped to address seven key themes pertaining to local implementation, and to address both the positive outcomes and the barriers to effectiveness. Without going into all of the details, some of the important points addressed included: the need to engage underrepresented yet highly affected communities via more sensitive and targeted approaches; the importance of scale and context; the need to have skilled facilitators assisting the process (especially those competent in qualitative data analysis), which was also the part requiring and consuming the most resources; the need for the process to go beyond mere 'community planning' and include a wider range of stakeholders, who can buy in to assist with taking actions forward; the need to manage expectations of what Place Standard can and cannot do, and to formulate specific plans with clear responsibilities and financial opportunities to move towards tangible results.

Overall, Place Standard has been positively perceived as an engagement tool with the spider diagram representation thought to be effective; on the other hand, concerns have been noted on the overlap of some themes, on the fourteen question-long evaluation process still being too lengthy for some purposes, and on the language being too complex for some users (especially children). It was also highlighted that, often, the comments accompanying the scores were perceived as being more important than the scores themselves. Particularly in larger-scale implementations such as surveys, the averages tended to display a middle-option bias with everything converging around the 3 & 4 marks. Therefore, a more nuanced analysis of the results and an understanding of the reasons behind the scoring were thought to be more meaningful than the headline scoring figures.

Based on this report's findings and on the general feedback from the first year of implementation, the online version of the tool was improved to allow for various types of usage including in a survey format, and capacity-building resources were planned to assist with further learning and analytical skills, as well as with how to transition from mere assessment to concrete action plans. In that regard, the online 'Place Standard Learning Resource'²³ was launched in 2018, following separate pilots and

²³ <https://elearning.healthscotland.com/enrol/index.php?id=567>

under the umbrella of NHS Health Scotland. A follow-up was also planned for the examined cases studies.

In 2017, a World Health Organisation-sponsored event also took place that specifically focused on the Place Standard.²⁴ Among other presentations, there were early case studies showcasing the particulars of implementing Place Standard and the effects of the process.²⁵ By December 2018 when the second Place Standard Alliance event took place,²⁶ there was already a satisfactory basis of implementation efforts at various levels - including one architecture/design practice,²⁷ Collective Architecture, who were already incorporating the tool in their practice and experimenting with its use. More recently, they presented their efforts at the first *Making Places* conference in June 2019, including their attempt at formulating a 'designers' version.'²⁸

5. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL (REGULATORY) TOOLS

From its very origins, Place Standard has always had a close connection to formal policy, given that it is the product of (at least) two formal policy documents and the outcome of a collaboration between governmental and arms-length organisations, whose main working tool still remains policy documents. Unsurprisingly then, there has been an effort to incorporate Place Standard in formal planning processes (mostly as an evidence tool). Nevertheless, the usage of the Place Standard tool is not compulsory in any way and, even when it is cited as a potentially solid source of evidence, it is never compulsory that this method in particular and no others should be used to generate evidence. This may suggest that the value of Place Standard, as seen by its creators, still lies in its 'informal' character and the flexibility this affords.

That being said, Place Standard is indeed designed to have a place in the formal planning process, and the policy framework is cited as one of the factors involved in the first implementation plan.²⁹ Even before Place Standard's launch, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act of 2015³⁰ set the stage for the application of such tools: each council area is also designated as a Community Planning Partnership (CPP),

²⁴ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/healthy-people-and-healthy-places-in-the-who-european-region-presentations>

²⁵ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1710/5-case-studies-x-3-1-1.pdf>

²⁶ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/place-standard-alliance-december-2018-event-documents>

²⁷ http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2305/2_jude-barber.pdf

²⁸ http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2625/ps8_jude-barber_collective-architecture.pdf

²⁹ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1708/3-kat-hasler-implementation-1.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/contents/enacted>

which is meant to incorporate all services that come together to take part in community planning (incl. public bodies). CPPs are responsible for producing two types of plans: Local Outcome Improvement Plans for the whole council area, and Locality Plans (at least one) which cover smaller areas and usually focus on those which are the most deprived.³¹ Additionally, CPPs have a legal requirement to work with their communities in producing those plans, which is where the Place Standard usually comes in.

For another perspective, some local councils have been making an effort to integrate the Place Standard tool into their formal planning framework. For example, the Glasgow City Council (which is an active partner in Place Standard) refers to the Place Standard in its Supplementary Guidance to City Development plan. This document stipulates that “the Place Standard Tool will be a requirement for all masterplan areas in the City and all new major development unless otherwise agreed by the Council”³² – as evidence of its impact on health outcomes (although, again, other equivalent forms of evidence would be accepted). While this presents a sometimes-ambiguous mix between formal and informal tools, it does showcase how Place Standard is meant to be integrated in the local placemaking processes.

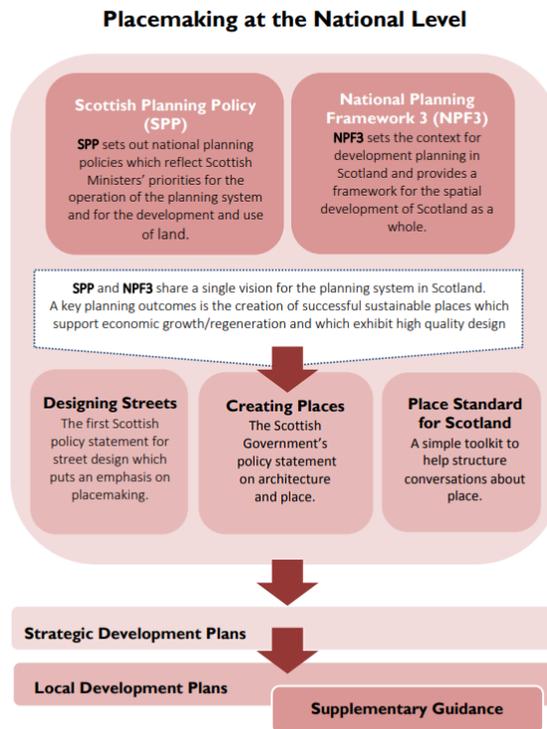


Fig. 4 – Policies & Plans from the National to Local levels in Scotland (from the Supplementary Guidance to the Glasgow City Development Plan, SG1: The Placemaking Principle Part 1, June 2018)

³¹ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/improving-public-services/community-planning/>

³² <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36870&p=0>

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The Place Standard tool does not have a direct allied financial mechanism. Nonetheless, Scotland used to have a Charrettes fund, which was transformed (in 2018) into the Making Places initiative, which is aimed at encouraging communities to contribute to the development of their local places.³³ The first round of the initiative was to provide funding for projects to be completed by the end of March 2019 and which consisted of two strands: the Place Standard Conversations fund and the Community-Led Design fund.³⁴ The first was closely related to the Place Standard tool, as it provided small grants directly to community groups to support them in beginning to use the tool as an incentive to reconsider their place and how it affects their life. The fund was primarily aimed at areas of large-scale deprivation, communities which have fewer resources and opportunities, and may not have the confidence to undertake such an evaluation process without further support. Funding from this strand did not require match funding and was not available to local authorities (solely for community groups). According to John Howie of NHS Scotland, in 2018/19 a total of 21 projects were awarded funds of between £500 and £5,000, amounting to just under £77,000 in total.³⁵

The second strand, the Community-Led Design fund (now accessible through the new 'Investing in Communities Fund' within the Scottish 'Empowering Communities Programme') was meant to support the delivery of participative design and place-based workshops, particularly where these support the development of local place plans. This fund was open to community groups, third sector organisations and public authorities, in order to take forward design processes relating to a particular place. Match funding was required, with the Government contributing, in most cases, to 50% of the cost. The total fund available for this initiative was £275,000.³⁶ Although this strand was not directly connected to the Place Standard, it would enable the use of the tool under the auspices of its workshops and meetings.

³³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/making-places-initiative-2018-2018-prospectus-and-application-form/>

³⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/form/2018/08/making-places-initiative-2018-2018->

<prospectus-and-application-form/documents/making-places-prospectus-document-2018-colour-pdf/making-places-prospectus-document-2018-colour-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/Making%2BPlaces%2B-%2BProspectus%2Bdocument%2B2018%2B%2BColour.pdf>

³⁵ http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2309/6_john-howie.pdf

³⁶ as in [31]

7. CHALLENGES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

One of Place Standard's key challenges is its capacity to influence decision making process and effectively help reduce inequalities and improve places for the better. As noted previously, Place Standard is a formative evaluation tool about the qualities of place that can be used by very different people. This means that its main outputs are detailed information about the level of satisfaction, needs and aspirations of local actors and communities, which in turn would influence planning decisions. However, the collected data is not a guarantee that it will effectively influence decision makers and lead to change. As John Howie (interview, 2020) puts it:

“one of the Place Standard big challenges is how to transfer the information that communities, businesses and organizations shared of what could improve a place into a reality. We have to accept that creating our reality requires funding, time and political commitment and strong leadership.”

This means that the Place Standard tool is part of a wider system of design governance, where decisions to improve places in a certain way will be dependent on a combination of multiple factors and interests, with the information provided by the Place Standard tool comprising only one of those. Therefore, it is important not to create false expectations for participants and to make the best use possible of the collected data to determine priority actions and to influence policy decisions in putting forward the needs of communities. Nevertheless, the information collected by the tool has the potential to inform the planning process in several ways, including Local Development Plans or more strategic/city district plans.

Another key challenge is the capacity to identify and consider the needs of different users of a certain place, as any public space will encompass numerous different views on what a place may need. This means that according to the age, social background and interests of whoever is completing the Place Standard tool, the tool will produce highly different results. Similar to a public consultation process, the role of facilitators or those coordinating the consultation will be crucial for reading through and analysing the different answers in order to reach a common understanding of the weakness and strengths of a place, including integrating and weighting the different needs and preferences of a community in an independent manner.

Regarding the relation of the tool to equality issues, Place Standard has always had a great concern for the rights of different people to have similar voices and receive the same treatment by focusing on participation, empowerment, inclusion and health. In fact, concern for health (in)equalities was at the very heart of the scheme since its

conceptual beginnings on the part of NHS Health Scotland. Considering the impact of place quality on the health of individuals and communities, the tool intends to enhance the built environment as a method to promote wellbeing, and physical and mental health by obtaining a better perception of what a place may need.

The presentations cited before have also mentioned the need for further efforts to be made towards more extensive inclusivity in the use of the Place Standard - most commonly in reference to its translation to other languages and making sure the language use is accessible for all age groups/demographics, including young children. As every place is used by a huge diversity of people, with different ages and social economic backgrounds, it is crucial to create conditions for different people to influence their surroundings in order to strengthen local communities and include the voices of the disadvantaged in the wider debate surrounding the future of places.



Fig. 5 – Place Standard street consultation (Source: @LeithCreative)

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS

Although other evaluation tools for design quality have existed before,³⁷ one of the key innovations of Place Standard is its holistic approach that touches on the majority of the issues affecting the quality of places, including both the physical and social aspects of the built environment. When assessing the quality of the public realm, most people tend to focus only on its physical attributes and forget that places also consist of people, where aspects such as safety, freedom, or the capacity to take part in decisions and help change things for the better are also highly important. The tool also innovates in raising awareness to the fact that the quality of the built environment affects our health and well-being, particularly for disadvantaged people. The connection between the quality of a place and the way it affects our physical and mental health is particularly important in the current COVID-19 situation the world is facing.

Another key innovation is the fact the Place Standard tool is available as a free resource for anyone to use, aiming for it to contribute to the reduction of spatial inequalities. Once available, the Scottish government and its partners have sought to empower others to take ownership of the tool and promote its dissemination as a resource focused on compelling people to gather and talk in groups and to demand more from their local places. As argued in the Place Standard strategic plan 2002-3, the tool can help give local communities a voice and a “role in influencing their future and bringing together all of the interests and resources within an area. This process of engagement and informed decision-making provides a strong foundation to address inequalities and improve the wellbeing of communities” (Scotland, 2020).

Since its launch in 2015, the Place Standard tool has been successfully implemented and widely used across Scotland, and is beginning to be exported to other countries and national contexts (see below).³⁸ Its success appears to be rooted in the simplicity of the tool (given that anyone, be they a professional or normal citizen, can use it) to measure spatial quality from a holistic perspective and to facilitate conversations about place. Considering the tool is also being used within local planning consultation processes, there is some evidence that it assists public authorities with holding discussions with local stakeholders and communities to better understand the assets and needs of their local places.

³⁷ For example, see the CABE ‘Spaceshaper’ tool: <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/spaceshaper-users-guide>



³⁸ https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/2500499/FINAL%20RTPI_Awards_for_Planning_Excellence_2017_Digital_Brochure_Darya.compressed.pdf

Regarding the impact of the Place Standard tool, it is not possible to measure its direct impact on the quality of projects and places. Being an informal tool aimed at facilitating dialogue between communities and planners, the Place Standard tool will end up having an indirect impact on places by improving overall planning practices in Scotland. The value of involving communities in the planning and design of their urban spaces goes much beyond merely its measured results, such as the number of assessments, meaning it strongly contributes to wider engagement, inclusiveness, and the participation of different stakeholders on the discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of a place and to collaborate on the definition of areas for improvement.

9. EXAMPLES

To illustrate how the Place Standard tool has been applied to projects of different scales and associated planning processes, three examples will be briefly described below. The information provided about these three examples is based on reports developed by Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS).³⁹

9.1. Alloa (Clackmannanshire): housing design and town centre improvement

In the follow up of a design workshop, the City Council of Clackmannanshire recognised that there was a need to improve local services and infrastructure in the town centre of Alloa alongside new housing that could meet the needs of elderly residents. In this context, the City Council decided to use the Place Standard tool to examine whether the town centre would make an appropriate place for older people to live and what type of needs had to be prioritized by the Council.

How was the tool applied?

In a first stage, the Place Standard tool was used to assess and test the requirements for the town centre of Alloa, supported by A&DS and the Scottish Government. In 2018, a focus group was set up including Council officers from across a range of services working with health and social care professionals, architects, housing association representatives and representatives of town centre businesses. Using

³⁹ The reports are accessible on the A&DS webpage:

<https://www.ads.org.uk/tag/place-standard/>

the tool, the group looked at the town centre assets and improvements required to provide for the needs of the elderly residents of the new housing proposed at Primrose Street alongside those of the wider Alloa community.



Fig. 6 – Focus group meeting using the Place Standard Tool (Source: A&DS report on Place Standard tool Alloa Case Study⁴⁰)

In a second stage, the Place Standard tool was used for a major community consultation in 2019. Led by the City Council and organized by the Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSI), the consultation involved around 300 residents of Alloa. The consultation received grant support from the Scottish Government through the Place Standard Conversations fund (see Section 6 on Allied Financial mechanisms). The Council and CTSI organized a three-day drop-in event in vacant town centre shop premises, and throughout the consultation period the CTSI also connected with specific target groups in order to ensure a representative cross-section of society, including local disability groups, racial minorities, and younger people.

⁴⁰ The Alloa case study report is available at:

<https://www.ads.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/AlloaCaseStudyv5.pdf>



Fig. 7 – Consultation meeting with local residents (Source: Ibidem)

What influence did the work have?

According to the A&DS report (2019), the Place Standard focus group helped identify priority streetscape improvements that would benefit the new development as well as the wider town centre, with these priorities being reinforced by the community in the results of the second stage. From the consultation process, it became clear that the “streetscape works to make the town centre a safer, friendlier place for older people were simply good practice actions that would benefit everyone” (Ibidem).



Fig. 8 – Visualization of the key intervention features in Alloa town centre (Source: Ibidem)

9.2. Pollokshields Community Council: neighbourhood strategic plan

At the end of 2015, the Pollokshields Community Council (Glasgow) commissioned Collective Architecture and Dress for the Weather to lead a design charrette⁴¹ for East Pollokshields which would engage the community in identifying key areas for long-term improvement. The main aim of the consultation was to complete the East Pollokshields and Port Eglinton Planning Study as a masterplan document that, as a Supplementary Planning Guidance to the new City Development Plan, would help guide the next two decades of development in this multicultural area. The Place Standard tool formed an integral part of this wider design charrette process to structure and facilitate engagement with local stakeholders and residents from a holistic perspective.

How was the tool applied?

In February 2016, the Place Standard tool was used in a week-long design charrette in a range of settings and in different ways, so that local residents could participate and contribute regardless of how much time they could devote to the undertaking. In order to do so, the week began with informal, on-street 'mobile charette' consultations, where the project team went out onto the streets with plans and models. This mobile charrette used a simple, one-page version of the Place Standard compass diagram with a small comments section in order to obtain thoughts from passers-by on the street.

To support the process alongside the community council and the consultant team, a number of active local residents signed up as Charrette Champions, representing a cross-section of the local community and who encouraged local residents to participate. This was divided into a series of four focus group workshops structured around the Place Standard topics. Each of the four half-day workshops covered three to four of the Place Standard themes, so that the participants could have a questionnaire completed by the end of the process. The workshops also used maps of the area with note-taking and sketching overlaid. The discussion was prompted by the Place Standard questions, which allowed for consistent themes across the charrette but also for participants to express specific concerns.

According to the case study report, at the end of the charrette all of the completed forms were digitally transferred using the Place Standard app so they could be

⁴¹ 'Design Charrettes' are a type of collaborative event which bring together local people with a team of designers to inform the planning process and shape future urban plans. In this

context, design charrettes provide a dynamic environment where residents can put forward their own ideas and aspirations on how the local area should develop over the coming years.

assessed together with the key themes and feedback. The collected data was gathered into a report and distributed to all key participants for review. Finally, the outcomes were refined into a five-point vision for the area and an action plan.



Fig. 9 – One of the charrette sessions around the large city model (Source: A&DS report on Place Standard tool being used for planning at the neighbourhood scale⁴²)

What influence did the work have?

Through the design charrette process and the use of the Place Standard tool, the local community was able to produce a clear and concise five-point vision that addressed existing challenges, proposed viable solutions, and set out a positive future plan/outlook for the area. This vision seeks to build on existing infrastructure and to better support the local community in shaping and influencing the development of East Pollokshields. Adding to this, the process also helped to shape a community action plan, a series of short, medium and long-term actions through which the five-point vision could be achieved in a dynamic, phased manner. This process led to the formation of a Community Trust which has been taking forward the aims and objectives identified in the study.

⁴² This case study report is available at:

<https://www.ads.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PSIP-Neighbourhood-Scale-V1.1.pdf>



Fig. 10 - Analysis of green space and links in East Pollokshields (Source: Ibidem)

9.3. Aberdeenshire Council: local development plan

In collaboration with the Community Council of Portlethen, the Aberdeenshire Council used the Place Standard tool to inform settlement statements for the Local Development Plan (LDP) and for three large settlements in the Kincardine and Mearns area (Portlethen, Stonehaven and Laurencekirk). The aim of the initiative was to establish a community brief for actions in each of the three settlements.

What influence did the work have?

According to the A&DS report, the crosscutting nature of Place Standard themes has enabled the main concerns of the community to be surveyed regarding the different areas. In order to consolidate plans for improvement in Portlethen, a follow-up two-day event took place to confirm the community brief and create project profiles for specific initiatives. Opportunities to improve three 'town centre' locations in Portlethen were then identified and discussed with stakeholders. The brief and projects that arose from the sessions were then mapped into cross-service policy and investment plans to be able to define an implementation programme. In this way, community ideas and priorities were mapped into policy and investment opportunities. The process gave rise to a Place Making Plan for Portlethen, to be delivered by the Aberdeenshire Council, as well as by community and stakeholder groups. Finally, the process also catalysed initiatives to be led by the community, such as improvements to path networks, improved open space and play areas, improved community facilities and improved retail experiences.

10. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

One of the key lessons is the value of the tool as an enabler that promotes constructive conversations about the quality of places. Using easy and clear language, the tool facilitates a structured dialogue with local communities or other target groups about different aspects of the built environment. Looking at the Place Standard experience in Scotland, it is possible to conclude that using an informal evaluation tool improves the dialogue and engagement between authorities, technicians and non-experts, including the most disadvantaged and socially excluded, which in turn will contribute to better collaborative processes surrounding places, namely planning and designing collective spaces in a more inclusive manner.

Regarding the transferability of the tool, the Place Standard has already been applied internationally across 14 European countries and translated into other languages (Dutch, Greek, Norwegian, and Turkish). The World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities Network has widely adopted and promoted the use of Place Standard

beyond its place of origin.⁴⁴ The 2019 Making Places conference, for example, involved presentations of case studies from Lithuania, North Macedonia & Turkey;⁴⁵ while there have also been workshops with municipalities, local authorities and other local stakeholders in Carlisle (England), Copenhagen & Aarhus (Denmark) and Riga (Latvia)⁴⁶.

The H2020 research project INHERIT piloted Place Standard in Skopje (North Macedonia) as part of one of its case studies, and has featured the tool (as applied there and also in Riga) as one of the project's selected 'triple-win cases'.⁴⁷ Recently, following an initial pilot, a Dutch version of the tool was launched in 2019, entitled the "LeefPlekMeter," with some slight changes so that it would be more adaptable to the Dutch context⁴⁸ (Howie, 2018).

⁴⁴ According to John Howie, the Place Standard has had the following international applications: a) Local use in Carlisle, Sheffield, Kirklees Council and the UK Eden Project; b) In Lithuania the tool was delivered via the Healthy City Team in Kaunas City Council within 11 city areas in 2018; c) Research-based testing in Macedonia (Skopje) & Latvia (Riga) via Eurohealthnet funding to determine roll-out in both national contexts; d) Maastricht University Health Promotion Department use in spatial planning development around the Maastricht Railway Station; e) Belfast WHO Healthy Cities – Planning Workshop with Organisations & Communities delivered on 3rd May; f) the initial pilot in the Netherlands followed by the development and launch of a new Dutch tool in Utrecht; g) the PhD research study in Cyprus using a Greek version of the tool which is now being adapted for application

in six areas in Greece; h) An application in Copenhagen's South Harbour area, and thereafter being escalated by the Danish Healthy Cities Network into a 30 month-long funded programme at 14 individual sites across Denmark; i) A workshop for Turkish WHO Healthy Cities in Bursa to develop country-wide and regional capacities for roll-out in December 2019 (a Turkish version of the tool launched early 2019); j) a Norwegian translation to support piloting across Norway; k) a German pilot in two municipalities with a new German version planned for March 2021; l) a Spanish adaptation tested by the Valencian Office of Community Action for Health; and m) an Early interest to develop the French translation by the University for General Medicine & Public Health, Lausanne, Switzerland.

⁴⁵ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/international-making-place-conference-2019-presentations>

⁴⁶ http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2309/6_john-howie.pdf

⁴⁷ <https://inherit.eu/triple-win-cases/place-standard-macedonia/>

⁴⁸ The Place Standard 1-7 scoring was changed to 1-10 (the Dutch national scoring system); the title was also slightly changed to 'Living Place Meter' as 'Place Standard' does not have the same meaning in Dutch as in English contexts.

KEY REFERENCES

- Bento, J., & Laopoulou, T. (2019). Spatial design leadership: The role, instruments and impact of state architect (or similar) teams in fostering spatial quality and a place-making culture across five European states. Government Office of Estonia.
- Carmona, M., de Magalhães, C., & Natarajan, L. (2017). Design Governance: The CABE Experiment. Routledge.
- Carmona, M., & Sieh, L. (2004). Measuring Quality in Planning, Managing the Performance Process. Spon Press.
- Scotland. (2008). Good Places, Better Health. A new approach to environment and health in Scotland. Scottish Government.
- Scotland. (2013). Creating Places—A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland. The Scottish Government.
- White, J. T., & Chapple, H. (2019). Beyond design review: Collaborating to create well-designed places in Scotland,. *Journal of Urban Design*, 24(4), 597–604.
- Howie, J. (2018). 'The Place Standard - "How Good is Your Place?"'. Conference Abstract World Health Organisation International Healthy Cities Conference. Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK.

KEY ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.placestandard.scot>

<https://www.ads.org.uk/placestandard>

[https://www.placestandard.scot/docs/Place Standard Strategic Plan.pdf](https://www.placestandard.scot/docs/Place_Standard_Strategic_Plan.pdf)

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Joao Bento, Researcher of Architectural Policies (UCL – Bartlett School of Planning)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

EU Mies Award

EU Prize for Contemporary
Architecture

Anna Ramos

director, Fundacio' Mies Van
Der Rohe

Ivan Blasi

curator of programmes and
prizes, Fundacio' Mies Van
Der Rohe

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. THE PRIZE, FROM THE START TO NOW	3
3. CASE STUDIES - WHAT THE PRIZE FOCUSES ON	5
3.1. Transformation of 530 Dwellings - Grand Parc Bordeaux.....	6
3.2. Skanderbeg Square.....	7
3.3. PC Caritas.....	9
4. NETWORK MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE PROCESS.....	11
5. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT THROUGH DISSEMINATION.....	13
6. CONCLUSIONS.....	15

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture is a biennial prize awarded by the EU and Fundació Mies van der Rohe in Barcelona, in recognition of exceptional quality in architectural and urban design works across the continent. It also represents a network of organisations coming together to decide on these results and debate on the new ideas they might bring. Prize-winning works to date have put forward agendas of social, cultural, ecological or political change, always emphasising that architecture is, and must continue to be, a good of public interest.

2. THE PRIZE, FROM THE START TO NOW

The notion of a prize that would recognize and commend excellence in European architecture was first proposed to the European Parliament by its member Xavier Rubert de Ventós, who had published a series of works on the challenges of European identity. The point of reference for such a prize was the Barcelona Pavilion, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich in 1929 and considered a symbol of both architectural quality and socio-technological transformation.

The Barcelona Pavilion was reconstructed in 1986 coinciding with a formative period for the foundation of the European Union that would result in the eventual Maastricht Treaty of 1992 - this same period witnessed the signing of the Schengen Agreement (1985) and the establishment of the Erasmus Programme (1987). Within that context, the Pavilion was taken to signify a powerful message on a common architectural culture, building and uniting Europe. Based on that message, and with the aim of creating a European and international network, on 28 April 1987 European Commissioner Carlo Ripa di Meana and the Mayor of Barcelona Pasqual Maragall signed the agreement to launch a biennial architectural prize bearing the name of the Pavilion's most famous architect. Originally named the "Mies van der Rohe Award of the European Communities", the prize had gained the support of the then-European Economic Community, with its first edition held in 1988 as the "Mies van der Rohe Award for European Architecture". This support continued after the formal foundation of the EU, with the Prize eventually renamed to the "European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award", as it is still known today.

Architect Kenneth Frampton, first Chair of the Prize jury, wrote:

“For five hundred years our locus of the modern has been gravitating towards the West and, above all for the last century or so, towards an almost mythical New World. Now, quite suddenly, in a manner that uncannily corresponds to the approaching millennium, our idea of the modern is suffering a change and nothing seems now to be new, in the sense that it once was. In large measure, this is due to a constantly accelerating rate of change that increasingly renders every innovation obsolete before it has had a chance to become assimilated. The rapid techno-economic transformation has disconcerting implications at many levels, not least of which is the fact that the natural environment is beginning to break down under the impact of such rapacious development. This crisis has implication for architecture at many different levels and in part the Prize is oriented towards compensating, at a critical level, for the ecological and cultural disruptions caused by recent urban expansion and development. With the current upheavals in Eastern Europe, the emergence of the European Community as an independent political force and the promise of some form of continental federation by 1992, the star of the Old World is rising in both an economic and cultural sense”¹

Many of the challenges that Frampton pointed out in 1988 are still wholly pertinent today. In fact, recent editions of the Prize have responded to, and further promoted to the international stage, current debates on urban management strategies, underpinned by both theoretical principles and best practices. The two most recent winners of the Prize were both transformation projects involving 1960s-era apartment blocks, one in Amsterdam’s Bijlmer neighbourhood (2017) and the other in Bordeaux (2019), signalling a shift from previous editions. In the words of the then-Director for Culture and Creativity at the European Commission’s DG EAC, Michel Magnier, at the 2017 ceremony:

“In past years, the Prize went to what journalists call ‘iconic buildings’; museums, opera houses, concert halls etc. This time it took me some time to understand the jury’s choice. We are sending a strong message to policymakers and urban planners everywhere in Europe and perhaps even beyond”²

¹ Mies van der Rohe Award for European Architecture, 1990, Fundació Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona, p.10

² EU Mies Award Ceremony, Barcelona, 2017

This both follows and intensifies a mindset towards re-evaluating and transforming what Europe has already built, a mindset that is increasingly finding more followers amongst both designers and clients. One, perhaps small yet indicative effect of this message was the recent interest in regeneration displayed by Janet Sanz, Deputy Mayor for Ecology, Urban Planning and Mobility on the Barcelona City Council - who affirmed she has begun to “pull strings” to ascertain what regulatory changes would be necessary to facilitate the construction of balconies on older apartment blocks and other renovations of that kind (Ara, Dossier p.7, 26 April 2020).

With the help of the EU Mies Award's networking and dissemination actions, recently awarded and finalist projects - such as the ones detailed below as case studies - have demonstrated to relevant stakeholders across Europe that renovation and reuse can encompass much more than a mere technical improvement of façades. In the words of Mrs. von der Leyen, President of the European Commission,

“the necessary can also be beautiful”³

3. CASE STUDIES - WHAT THE PRIZE FOCUSES ON

Three entries from the 2019 edition of the Prize are presented below - the winner and two of the finalists. These are meant to illustrate the direction the Prize has been taking in recent years and the values it focuses on, hence the emphasis on the motivations behind each project and its associated process of creation, even as much if not more than the final result.

³ press statement on the New European Bauhaus, 14 October 2020

3.1. Transformation of 530 Dwellings - Grand Parc Bordeaux



Grand Parc Bordeaux by Lacaton & Vassal Architects, Frédéric Druot Architecture, Christophe Hutin Architecture © Philippe Ruault

CATEGORY: Housing and Renovation - Winner of the 2019 EU Mies Award

AUTHORS: Lacaton & Vassal Architects; Frédéric Druot Architecture; Christophe Hutin Architecture

THE SITE: three large blocks of flats from the 1960s in Bordeaux, France. 530 flats in total, mostly in the region of 40 m² each.

BACKGROUND: The three teams of architect had been collaborating for some time before this work and, most notably, in 2004 carried out a joint research project commissioned by the French Government's Ministry of Culture (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication et la Direction de l'architecture et du patrimoine). The project, titled "PLUS - Les grands ensembles de logements – Territoire d'exception", looks at the large housing complexes dating from the 1960s/1970s and the recent major demolition programmes targeting them in order to alter the image of cities. In short, the project proposes that in light of current housing shortages and given the potential these large blocks hold (such as their structural, geographical, and spatial capabilities), they should be redesigned and transformed so as to meet current requirements for housing conditions rather than outright demolished.

PROCESS & PROJECT: In Bordeaux, the recommendations from that previous project found a fertile ground for practical experimentation. Existing regulations were used to allow for the built area to be expanded via 'winter gardens' for each

residency (an extension of the original façade), while at the same time removing the pre-existing asbestos and improving the energy efficiency of the buildings without the need for elements that would require regular replacement or maintenance (for example insulation layers or solar panels etc.). The original residents were not relocated, as often the case, but were able to remain in their homes.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS: The success of this project was largely due to the creative and strategic thinking and foresight of the architects, and their ability to manage a complex process without forgetting the human dimension. Also crucial was the role of the public housing agency, the client, whose director was well aware of the previous PLUS research and trusted the architects by commissioning them to implement the findings of their previous research in this project.

3.2. Skanderbeg Square



Skanderbeg Square by 51N4E, Anri Sala, Plant en Houtgoed, iRI © Filip Dujardin

CATEGORY: Work in Other European Countries - Finalist for the 2019 EU Mies Award

AUTHORS: 51N4E; Anri Sala; Plant en Houtgoed; iRI

THE SITE: main square of the city of Tirana, Albania.

BACKGROUND: the square has had a long history following the country's transitions; most importantly, prior to its redesign, it was presented as a large urban void surrounded by the monumentality of Communist architecture.

PROCESS & PROJECT: It took many years and different collaborations between public and private stakeholders for the project to be completed. Formal and informal dialogue processes were established with local and central governmental departments as well as existing and future users. A large-scale model of the project was made accessible to the public and functioned as the focal point of the ongoing discussion on the project, facilitating further design improvements as well as fostering a sense of co-authorship among the people involved.

The execution of such a large-scale project presented particular challenges in a post-communist democracy that still has yet to reach maturity. The architects, 51N4E, had to coordinate a complex path navigating their way through the official permits and the financial and technical dimensions. In doing so, they recruited and supervised specialised contractors and consultants, both legal and technical, to oversee various aspects of the process. They also worked in close cooperation with the municipal authorities and assisted not only in the process of organising management of the project but also in revising and adapting local standards to those compatible with the EU (e.g. for material and application methods).

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS: The success of this project was clearly due to the specific capacity of the design team, which was selected via an international competition to cultivate trust, to engage stakeholders, and to propose common sense solutions. To achieve this, they developed a sophisticated dialogue framework involving local stakeholders, with the support of public authorities.

3.3. PC Caritas



PC Caritas by Architecten de Vylder Vinck Taillieu © Philip Dujardin

CATEGORY: Health and Care - Finalist for the 2019 EU Mies Award

AUTHORS: Architecten de Vylder Vinck Taillieu

THE SITE: Psychiatric Clinic Caritas in Melle, Belgium. Innovatively designed for its time, the complex fell into abandonment and faced gradual demolition.

BACKGROUND: Originally, the complex was conceived as a series of separate pavilions, one for each department, united through their architecture and the green spaces in between. Changes in technology and healthcare protocols meant that most of the pavilions were gradually abandoned and/or demolished to make way for newer, purely function-oriented buildings. Eventually, only a couple pavilions remained, and demolition was already underway when a new administration came in and called a halt to the works.

PROCESS & PROJECT: The new administration led a debate on the inherent value of the pavilions and their remains; could they lead to new healthcare practices? They put together a working team of doctors, therapists and patients and invited specialised architect Gideon Boie to supervise the process; the aim was to ascertain whether the existing construction programme could be reconfigured and whether it was possible to imagine a different space for therapy. Based on the information gathered, a call for entries in a public architectural competition was launched.

The winning entry was based on the principle of retaining the existing structure almost as it was, without replacing either the roof or interior elements that had already disappeared; carefully planned interventions made it possible to reuse the structure even without these elements. At the same time, a public space was configured, one open to exploration and modification according to the needs of both doctors and patients. This allowed the clinic staff to create knowledge and devise tools on how to plan based on what already exists, which then led to them being able to transform the interior of another neighbouring pavilion, one also in disuse but somewhat better maintained, with less deterioration. The project is not 'finished' in the conventional sense; it continues to adapt to the needs of its users.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS: The attitude of the hospital director was key to the success of the intervention - particularly in the decisions to, firstly, stop the demolition works and, secondly, to involve a range of different stakeholders (doctors, patients and so on) as well as external experts (in a supervisory capacity) in the working process.

Smart design solutions, such as those exemplified in the above projects, have always been inseparable from smart clients - those who understand the benefits of thinking twice about proposals and allow the necessary time and conditions for that but, most importantly, those who remain continuously and actively involved. It is a fact that the success of these projects was, in large part, due to the dedication of various stakeholders (from designers to clients and beyond) who devoted their time and effort, much beyond what was formally required and even when not fully compensated financially. Good leadership and bringing the right team together are also essential, both in private and public bodies. Ultimately, the success or failure of such projects depends on not only the design itself or its execution, but also on the level of continuous maintenance and survey of their evolution.

Public competitions seem represent to be the best method for finding the right team - however, one key element that is often not adequate is how the rules of such competitions should be established. When, for example, what matters are only the financial aspects or previous experience, then the results are often underwhelming if not outright mediocre.

Inter-disciplinary work is also crucial. Historically, architects were always assisted by specialists - from artists, historians or sociologists to engineers and the workers themselves. This is no less essential today - pooling efforts and remembering that

everyone plays a role alongside making use every group's expertise should all be taken into account.

The winners and finalists of the EU Mies Award are exemplary in this regard, from infrastructures made in conjunction with engineers to iconic buildings that were the result of unexpected collaborations - like the Neues Museum in Berlin, for which the architect, David Chipperfield, opened an office in the city and worked with Julian Harrap, a specialist in historic buildings and landscapes. This has been increasingly the case in recent years, where the roles of the users and demographic changes have a much more important place in achieving dynamic and sustainable spaces.

A key function of the EU Mies Award is highlighting these aspects and encouraging others to follow in the footsteps of awarded projects, not just in terms of design results but also, crucially, in terms of processes and attitudes. The Prize is, therefore, structured in such a way that it emphasises networking and promotion, in order to steer, encourage and allow for better architectural design throughout Europe. The structure of the whole organisation can be understood in two dimensions: network and knowledge management.

4. NETWORK MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE PROCESS

Three bodies are responsible for the organisation of the Award, with the support of the European Commission: Fundació Mies van der Rohe, the City of Barcelona and an Advisory Committee consisting of the following European institutions:

Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna; **Danish Architecture Centre**, Copenhagen; **DESSA Gallery**, Ljubljana; **German Architecture Museum**, Frankfurt; **Fundació Mies van der Rohe**, Barcelona; **Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre**, Budapest; **Cité de l'Architecture et du patrimoine**, Paris; **Museum of Architecture**, Wrocław; **Museum of Estonian Architecture**, Tallinn; **Museum of Finnish Architecture**, Helsinki; **Museum of Architecture and Design**, Ljubljana; **National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design**, Oslo; **RIBA**, London; **The Berlage**, Delft; and **Triennale di Milano**, Milan. The Committee is responsible for the major decisions, such as the composition of the jury, the selection of experts and any necessary changes to improve efficiency at any time.

The Advisory Committee meets in person once a year and a permanent digital contact is established. Once the appropriate decisions for each edition of the Prize

have been made and agreed upon with the European Commission's Creative Europe programme, the Prize Rules are announced and contact is made with all of the European Architects' Associations in the countries submitting Prize entries (https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/library/eligibility-organisations-non-eu-countries_en) alongside a group of independent experts, who are tasked with nominating newly-built works from the last two years that they consider to adhere to the values enshrined in the Prize's Rules. Once these nominations are received, they are discussed with the Advisory Committee to review relevant works that may have been overlooked and, if applicable, up to 20 more nominations will be added.

This network-based organisation allows the Prize to reach and scour the length and breadth of Europe, while the periodic change in experts facilitates the Prize's emphasis on transparency and fairness, given that the jury, which consists of seven members, is changed at every edition of the Prize.

Nominees put forward by national architects' associations and the expert pool are contacted by Fundació Mies van der Rohe and all relevant information is cross-checked for accuracy before the relevant material is shared with the jury. Selection criteria for the jury members include gender and age diversity, geography, field of knowledge (practising architects, theorists and critics, other related fields such as sociology or journalism, clients and European vision in a global context) and experience with architectural debate and discourse. Members of the jury are asked to have sufficient time to review the works digitally, to make contributions to the debate (be it oral, written, with members of the jury, with users and clients, etc.), to meet four days in-person with other members of the jury, and to be available for a one-week trip to visit a set of five or six works that the jury itself has shortlisted.

This process allows a solid foundation to be built, on which a debate on each nomination's contribution can be launched. The Prize rules are always the reference point, but at the same time, sufficient scope is allowed for jury members to debate and come to a joint final decision. The jury finally gives a decision on two works: one by an established architectural firm and another by a younger upcoming one. In parallel, in alternating years, an independent jury decides on the Young Talent Architecture Award, bestowed on the best graduation projects at European architecture schools. Therefore, the Prize encompasses not only the geographical range of Europe but also the range of architects' careers from the very beginnings to the developmental years and the subsequent peak.

5. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT THROUGH DISSEMINATION

For the Prize to be an effective non-regulatory (informal) tool for improving the quality of the built environment, results at various stages must be shared with the public and communicated to expert audiences. Therefore, various dissemination activities are included in the structure of the Prize, starting from the very early stages:

- Biennial group of between 350 and 400 high-quality works at the European level, built in the two years prior to each edition of the Prize;
- Selection of 40 particularly noteworthy works, of which four are highly relevant and two others are deemed to have reached levels of excellence;
- A platform for public presentation, celebration and debate through the EU Mies Award Day (presentation of works by the authors, roundtables with promoters and experts, exhibition of the 40 shortlisted works and the prize-giving ceremony);
- EU Mies Award – Architecture Days in which visits to nominated works are organised throughout Europe;
- Creation of an archive with documents that include drawings, photographs, videos, texts and models and an open online database;
- Curation of exhibitions in various formats around the world;
- Publication of books/catalogues of the exhibitions;
- Organisation of debates and participation in similar discussions organised by others;
- Creation of a continuous impetus or driving force that highlights the importance of architecture, landscaping and urban planning as well as the support of the European Union.

Numerous people are involved in each edition of the EU Mies Award and the YTAA. From all the conversations and debates held, topics are drawn that are analysed in greater depth and disseminated through interviews, textbooks, online videos, exhibitions and debates.

All works are posted on the websites eumiesaward.com and ytaaward.com as a form of open consultation. Nominees are also featured in an app with the same name as the award, which allows anyone to locate and delve deeper into examples of high-calibre architecture. All these works are also analysed for, and curated in, a specialised publication accompanying each edition of the Prize.

Physical experience with architecture is essential to better understand its values and the EU Mies Award – Architecture Days facilitates visits to the Prize’s nominated works throughout Europe for all those who wish to gain a more in-depth insight and exchange opinions with the project authors. During the EU Mies Award Day, clients, architects and policy-makers, as well as the interested public, gather in the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona (when the city simultaneously celebrates Barcelona Architecture Week and the Barcelona Building Construmat trade fair) and openly discuss the strategies followed that have proven effective and that can be implemented in an adapted manner to different contexts as well as those that have produced less satisfactory results. Thus, exchanges progressively unfold at different levels that also turn out to be tools for the development of soft policies to improve the quality of our environment.

When physical experience is not possible, exhibitions become the main tool to make architecture accessible to everyone and, on the basis of an archive that, to date, includes 3,618 built projects, 1,556 fundamentally theoretical proposals, more than 500 scale models as well as videos, texts and interviews, exhibitions can be created that are tailored to even exacting requirements. Examples include the “Made in Europe” exhibition, held in Barcelona, Venice, Shanghai, Milan and Wroclaw on contemporary European architecture between 1988 and 2013; “Spanish Architectures”, held in Madrid on Spanish architecture in the EU Mies Award; “Polish Architectures”, held in Katowice and Warsaw on Polish architecture in the EU Mies Award; “Architectures on the Waterfront”, on the recent transformation of sea- and riverfronts throughout Europe and held at the Barcelona Maritime Museum; and “Large scale transformation: a new challenge for sustainability” at the Cité de l’architecture et du patrimoine in Paris on the transformation of housing blocks built after the IIGM, in parallel with the travelling biennial exhibitions of each edition of the EU Mies Award and YTAA.

All these debates and conversations in different formats have been created as a centripetal force from which everything that has taken place in Europe can adhere. As a catalyst, the Prize produces a centrifugal force that broadens the debate throughout Europe and beyond, with the intention of reaching those who can transform soft policies into tools for improving the built environment.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Architecture is still largely absent from formal legislation in Europe but, when it does appear (e.g. France 1977/2016, Catalonia 2017), it does so as a 'public good' or good 'of public interest'. Establishing built environment quality in such a manner is one of the most important 'soft power' policies that, in some places, has already found its way into 'hard power' or legal documents, with the result being that it should be highly interesting to follow the course of how that evolves.

In that sense, the process and network of the EU Mies Award and the consequent strategies aimed at dissemination present an innovative way to transform the European landscape. Links between hard and soft power are stimulated via the Award and, although the context of each case is different, common lessons are extracted and shared through the established network. From theoretical projects to constructed ones, from first perceptions to in-depth analyses, from individuals to institutions and policy-makers and from consolidated regulations to informal tools, in all cases, the knowledge is shared and all works participating in the EU Mies Award are encouraged to leverage every challenge they are confronted with in order to take a step forward and understand the original values of what we have while conferring it with added value.

If we should only point to one lesson learnt from the history of the EU Mies Award, it would be the key role of attitude as a game-changer. Not only that of the design team, but, more importantly, the attitude of the client; where being open-minded and trusting in the creative power of architecture can lead to truly meaningful results. It is the aim of the Awards to help influence more clients, whether they be public or private, to embrace that mindset and allow design teams to provide innovative, thoughtful solutions to pressing urban problems.

The EU Mies Award helps to cultivate a culture of better design across Europe by highlighting innovative works and showcasing to policymakers and politicians what architecture can do for the most pressing current problems when allowed the right circumstances. Unlike other awards, as it is the official European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture, the EU Mies Award manages to effectively reach an audience beyond the mere architectural sphere - an audience in the position of making decisions on the economic and regulatory fields. If real changes are to be enacted, a design culture needs to be promoted amongst those traditionally outside of the 'architectural bubble' - and the EU Mies Award is one of the key methods of doing that at the European level.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Anna Ramos, director, Fundacio’ Mies Van Der Rohe & Ivan Blasi, curator of programmes and prizes, Fundacio’ Mies Van Der Rohe

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Lessons learned from the European Prize for Urban Public Space (2000-2020)

David Bravo

secretary of the Prize Jury on
behalf of the Center for
Contemporary Culture of
Barcelona (CCCB)

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. BACKGROUND OF THE CONTEST: BARCELONA AND THE CCCB	3
2. AN EXHIBITION GIVES RISE TO THE PRIZE.....	4
3. THREE PROBLEMATIC BOUNDARIES.....	4
3.1. The complex idea of Europe.....	5
3.2. The ambivalent idea of public space.....	6
3.3. The confused notion of what is urban	10
4. FOUR SENSES OF DEMOCRATIZATION TO ANSWER A QUESTION OF A POLITICAL NATURE	12
4.1. Downwards, the sense of redistribution	13
4.2. Forward, the sense of sustainability.....	18
4.3. Upwards, the sense of participation	25
4.4. Backwards, the sense of memory.....	32
5. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONTEST	39
6. COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS FOR DISSEMINATION, REFLECTION AND DEBATE	40
7. LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE	40

INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) hosted an exhibition that featured the efforts of numerous European cities at reconquering many of the places that the automobile had taken over. Faced with this discovery, the Center decided to join forces with other institutions in London, Paris, Vienna, Frankfurt, Helsinki and Ljubljana to launch the European Prize for Urban Public Space. Delving into issues as thorny as the essence of Europe, the sense of the public sphere or the limits of what is urban, the contest wondered to what extent the physical transformation of shared places such as streets, squares or parks could contribute to the improvement of democracy. After ten biennial editions, the call for entries has harvested a wide repertoire of best practices that contribute to the redistribution of opportunities, the improvement of the legacy for the next generations, the empowerment of citizens or the revaluation of the inheritance received from ancestors. The dissemination of this body of knowledge constitutes a valuable tool for reflection and debate—a tool that is as rich in useful lessons as it is in open challenges.

1. BACKGROUND OF THE CONTEST: BARCELONA AND THE CCCB

The fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) triggered a process of globalization that led to the deindustrialization of many European cities; production moved to global remote locations where it was easier to exploit workers and the environment thus leaving many urban factories in Europe as unoccupied as their labour. Suddenly, the major European municipalities faced a new dilemma: how should cities make their living from now on? Barcelona, an eminently industrial city whose factories had attracted large waves of rural population for more than a century, became the spearhead of a possible response—the city was committed to a profound improvement of the public space as a recipient of democracy belonging to everybody. Following its example, countless European cities saw in this transformation the opportunity to bet on a tertiary economy based on knowledge, tourism and investment in real estate. In the midst of this refounding process, the Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB) was founded in 1993 in order to offer a critical and kaleidoscopic look at

urban facts. One of its most long-lived cultural products would be the European Prize for Urban Public Space.

2. AN EXHIBITION GIVES RISE TO THE PRIZE

In 1999, the CCCB hosted *The Reconquest of Europe | Urban Public Space, 1980-1999*, an exhibition that bore witness to the enormous efforts that have been made in Europe since the early 1980s to recover open urban public spaces. This exhibition confirmed the existence of a revolution on a continental scale that sought to reclaim the public space from the private vehicle to offer it to the public. The success of this discovery motivated the CCCB to organize in 2000 the first edition of the European Prize for Urban Public Space. Since then, the Award has certainly been unique, having offered an innovative approach to urban reality from both an empirical point of view—a repository of good practices—and from a political perspective—an agora open to reflection and debate on complex issues that condition coexistence and survival. This biennial and honorary contest recognizes both the authors and the developers of the best interventions carried out in public spaces in European cities. In the early stages of the Prize, the works presented were mostly Spanish and architectural, but over time their European dimension was consolidated and the type and scale of the interventions diversified.

3. THREE PROBLEMATIC BOUNDARIES

From its inception, the European Prize for Urban Public Space was comfortable with the complexity of the three concepts that appear in its own title. What is Europe? What does "public" mean? Where are the limits of the "urban phenomenon"? These were three problematic subjects that were in full review at the time the Prize was created and whose limits are still highly difficult to determine today. Very often, the difficulty of defining them leads to scepticism or perplexity regarding certain works submitted to the Prize, whose European, public or urban dimension is not at all evident. Far from being an obstacle, the problematic nature of these three dimensions is very useful when it comes to enriching reflection and debate, which are the ultimate aim of the contest.

3.1. The complex idea of Europe

To begin with, the Europe of the Prize represents both a heritage settled over centuries and millennia and a desire that has not yet materialized. Of course, its scope goes beyond the shrinking European Union, whose instability has been sadly confirmed by the uncertainty of Brexit. According to the contest's rules, the urban transformations that can be submitted to the contest are those that have taken place in any of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. However, the adoption of this political criterion collides with the geography of the continent, since it exceeds its limits without covering it completely.



On the one hand, it includes transcontinental states such as Russia, which occupies 40% of the European surface, although 75% of its territory is Asian. Something similar happens with Turkey, with 97% of its territory in Asia, and with Istanbul itself, the most populated city in Europe although it straddles two continents. For example, this is not a contradiction in the particular case of the reform of the Beşiktaş fish market (Istanbul, Turkey, 2010)¹, since it is located on the European shore of the Bosphorus. But the same does not happen in the case of the "Green Tenerife" plan (Buenavista del Norte, Spain, 2002)², since, technically, the Canary Islands belong to

¹ Beşiktaş Fish Market | Istanbul (Turkey), 2010 | Work submitted to the award for the 2010 edition | A triangular roof shelters a new fish market which, without facades, is closely integrated with the street. | [LINK](#)

² "Tenerife Verde" | Buenavista del Norte (España, 2002) | Mención especial en la edición del 2004 | Dinamización del tejido urbano mediante la superposición de una red nodal formada por cuatro espacios públicos conectados entre sí por un sistema de itinerarios peatonales. | [ENLACE](#)

the African continent. On the other hand, the Council of Europe does not include among its member states countries such as Belarus or the Vatican City. Although their territories are de facto included within the European continent, their political regimes are incompatible with the governing principles of the institution, based on such European values as democracy, human rights, and the protection of national minorities or the fight against intolerance.

However, the ambiguity inherent to the idea of Europe far transcends its physical boundaries. On the north-south axis, for example, there are clear climatic and cultural contrasts. For example, the bustling promiscuity of Naples has little to do with the respectful order of Stockholm. This diversity of sociabilities is reflected in the shape and use of public spaces, thus enriching the European idea of the city, an idea that is more the result of the constant mixture of identities than of national, ethnic or religious purity. As an example of this, it is undeniable that Islam also belongs to the European DNA, although certain essentialists may find it difficult to accept. The Prize attests to this through interventions such as the restoration of the Torre del Homenaje (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)³, a watchtower built by the Arabs in 13th century Europe. However, this belonging has not only been extremely fertile throughout the centuries, but continues to be so today, nourished by migratory flows. This becomes evident in the Altach Islamic cemetery (Austria, 2012)⁴.

3.2. The ambivalent idea of public space

Another ambiguity inherent to the Prize is the concept of the public. On the east-west axis, European cities still reflect the traces of the division of the continent for almost half a century into two blocs, with political and economic paradigms that understood this concept in contrasting manners. The cities of the capitalist West, for example, anticipated those of the post-Soviet bloc in the communal reconquest of space taken over by the private vehicle. The delay that eastern cities still display on this front could be explained by a certain disdain for everything that is publicly owned, which has for decades been identified with authoritarianism. As such, it could certainly be said that there is a two-speed Europe. This justifies, for example, the recognition of

³ Torre del Homenaje | Huéscar (España, 2007) | Mención especial en la edición de 2008 | Nuevo mirador público sobre los restos de una antigua torre medieval de vigía. | [ENLACE](#)

⁴ Cementerio islámico | Altach (Austria, 2012) | Mención especial en la edición de 2014 | La construcción de un cementerio que obedece al rito musulmán satisface una demanda de una minoría muy considerable y da a muchos inmigrantes la posibilidad de inhumar a sus difuntos dentro de su tierra de acogida. | [ENLACE](#)

Tirana's effort to pacify Skanderbeg Square (Albania, 2017)⁵, a reform that, surely, would not be perceived as so unusual in French or British squares nowadays.

In fact, the example of authoritarianism highlights to what extent reducing public space to a mere question of ownership can be problematic. Identifying it with the publicly owned land carries the risk of neglecting its political burden and its democratic values. What is legal does not always coincide with what is legitimate, the public does not always coincide with the community. This is reflected in a special way in two of the most controversial recognitions in the Prize's history. One of these is the "Heavenly Hundred" Garden (Kiev, Ukraine, 2016)⁶, which flourished in a central landfill whose metal fence was dismantled to erect barricades during the harshest days of the Revolution of Dignity—also known as *EuroMaidan*, literally, "Europe's Square". The brutality with which the authorities repressed these protests resulted in hundreds of dead and wounded. Within a week, the surrounding residents illegally occupied the publicly owned landfill, transforming it with their bare hands into a community garden where they could meet and discuss which democratic reforms Ukraine required.



⁵ Reforma de la plaza Skanderbeg | Tirana (Albania, 2017) | Primer premio en la edición de 2018 | La plaza mayor de la capital albanesa se ha reformado mediante la plantación de un cinturón verde que unifica los edificios de su perímetro y el

tendido de un pavimento multicolor de piedras provenientes de varios puntos del país. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁶ Jardín de los "Cien celestiales" | Kiev (Ucrania), 2016 | Mención especial en la edición de 2016 | Un solar abandonado se transforma en un memorial de las víctimas de la revolución del *EuroMaidán* mientras desempeña cotidianamente un papel productivo como huerto comunitario autogestionado. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

The other controversial recognition is that of Occupy Puerta del Sol (Madrid, Spain, 2011)⁷. An illegal and crowded demonstration occupied with hundreds of tents, one of the most emblematic squares of the Spanish capital, for several weeks, night and day, until being violently evicted by the police. Aside from demanding democratic reforms, the demonstrators were protesting against the privatization of public services and cuts in state budgets. Indeed, the neoliberal hegemony that has characterized the era of globalized capitalism has led to a crisis surrounding the idea of the public, to the extent that it is not always easy to distinguish what is public from what is private.

On the other hand, although the public is usually defined in opposition to the private, there is no doubt that both domains maintain a relationship that is not only close, but also necessary. Proof of this are interventions such as the improvement of the center of Barkingside (London, United Kingdom, 2015)⁸, which crosses the sacrosanct property limits by renovating the signs and windows of private businesses. Usually, public space is also defined in opposition to domestic space, although it maintains an equally inseparable relationship with it. Dwellings require access, light or ventilation, but streets are also configured through facades, doors and windows. This is reflected in complex interventions that transcend the perimeter of public space in order to configure or activate it from the residential domain. This is the case of the new urban center of Can Mulà (Mollet del Vallès, Spain, 2000)⁹ or the comprehensive rehabilitation program of the Marinha de Silvalde neighborhood (Espinho, Portugal, 2002)¹⁰. In both cases, new affordable housing buildings serve to shape the public space.

Finally, it is also problematic to identify public space as being synonymous with free ground/open spaces, as opposed to what is built-up. From a purely typological point of view, the archetype of public space understood as being an open-air and universally accessible place often collides with the reality of the awarded works. Numerous works among the results of the different editions of the contest can be surprising at first glance because they escape traditional categorizations such as the street, the square, the park or the promenade. The truth is, it is not too difficult to

⁷ Acampada en la Puerta del Sol | Madrid (España), 2011 | Categoría especial en la edición de 2012 | Demostración masiva de ciudadanos que reclaman la mejora del sistema democrático a través de una acampada temporal en una de las plazas más representativas de Madrid. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁸ Mejora del centro de Barkingside | Londres (Reino Unido), 2015 | Mención especial en la edición de 2016 | Las fachadas ciegas y los alrededores descuidados de una biblioteca pública y un polideportivo municipal de los años sesenta adquieren centralidad y representatividad cívica gracias a la

inserción de un porche escenográfico, los jardines de Virginia y la mejora de los escaparates de la adyacente calle mayor. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁹ Centro multifuncional de Can Mulà | Mollet del Vallès (España), 2000 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2000 | Creación de un complejo urbano consistente en el mercado municipal, la sede del Ayuntamiento, equipamientos comerciales y viviendas en torno a un espacio público central. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁰ Programa de rehabilitación urbana de la Marinha de Silvalde | Espinho (Portugal), 2002 | Mención especial en la edición de 2002 | Plan integral de mejora urbana en el barrio de la marina de Espinho; ordenación integral del espacio público, rehabilitación de edificios y mejora medioambiental del frente litoral. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

include among these classic categories open canopies that function as civic roofs, roofs capable of sheltering from the sun or rain activities that are typical of public spaces such as the market, the theatre or the wait for transport. This is the case of interventions such as the theatre "La Lira" (Ripoll, Spain, 2012)¹¹ or the multipurpose canopy of Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium, 2015)¹².

It is becoming more difficult to understand the reform of a pavilion of the PC Caritas psychiatric hospital (Melle, Belgium, 2016) as a characteristic of public space¹³, not only because of its private ownership, but also because of its ambiguous architecture, halfway between a closed building and open space. The difficulty disappears when it is understood that the old pavilion was partially saved from demolition to offer a peaceful refuge to patients, its visitors and the walkers of the public park that surrounds it. The recognition of completely closed buildings without free access, such as the Norwegian Opera House (Oslo, Norway, 2008)¹⁴, the "Przełomy" dialogue center (Szczecin, Poland, 2015)¹⁵ or the Memorial of the Abolition of Slavery (Nantes, France, 2011)¹⁶ is also complex. The paradox vanishes when one takes into account that the roofs of these three facilities are walkable public spaces that openly offer themselves to the continuity of their urban environments. Even more difficult to assimilate into the realm of public space are situations such as the "Volkspalast" (Berlin, Germany, 2005)¹⁷, a totally enclosed parallelepiped-shaped building. Its opening is only perceived in the programming of its offer as an experimental and self-managed cultural center.

¹¹ Teatro "La Lira" | Ripoll (España), 2012 | Mención especial en la edición de 2014 | Un porche y una pasarela llenan el vacío dejado por el derribo de un antiguo teatro, convirtiéndose en una ventana que enmarca las vistas hacia las montañas y en una puerta de acceso al casco antiguo. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹² Nuevo porche polivalente | Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Bélgica), 2015 | Mención especial en la edición de 2016 | La construcción de un porche monumental en un patio de manzana permite acoger conciertos, ferias y una amplia gama de actividades vecinales en un barrio de composición social compleja y fragmentada. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹³ PC Caritas | Melle (Bélgica), 2016 | Mención especial en la edición de 2018 | A medio camino entre el edificio cerrado y el espacio abierto, el antiguo pabellón de un hospital psiquiátrico se salva parcialmente del derribo para ofrecer un refugio

sosegado a los pacientes, los familiares y los paseantes del parque público que lo rodea. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁴ Palacio de la Ópera Noruega | Oslo (Noruega), 2008 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2010 | La cubierta del palacio emerge suavemente de las aguas del puerto de Bjørvika para ofrecer a los peatones un espléndido punto de vista sobre la ciudad y el fiordo. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁵ Centro para el Diálogo "Przełomy" en la plaza Solidarność | Szczecin (Polonia), 2015 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2016 | El lugar en el que fueron asesinados más de sesenta trabajadores que se manifestaban en los años setenta se convierte en la nueva plaza de la Solidaridad y la cubierta de un museo subterráneo sobre la historia reciente de una ciudad que fue seriamente dañada durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁶ Memorial de la abolición de la esclavitud | Nantes (Francia), 2011 | Mención especial en la edición de 2012 | Un muelle del río Loire, antiguamente usado para la trata de esclavos, se somete a una restauración que reemplaza un aparcamiento por un nuevo paseo fluvial y dedica un espacio museístico a la esclavitud. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁷ "Volkspalast": centro cultural experimental | Berlín (Alemania), 2005 | Premio especial del Jurado en la edición de 2006 | Una plataforma ciudadana toma el Palacio de la República, antiguo parlamento de la RDA, para convertirlo en un centro cultural experimental mientras no es derribado para sustituirlo por un antiguo castillo barroco. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

3.3. The confused notion of what is urban

The third ambivalent concept that appears in the title of the Prize is that of the urban notion—presumably, one of the largest contributions Europe has made to humanity has been its particular way of building cities, long-lived cities, where the vestiges of successive historical moments overlap. Compact, walkable and human-scale cities; mixed cities, especially prone to social interaction, political participation, commercial activity or cultural fertility. However, throughout the 20th century, the European conception of the city has suffered two great betrayals that many of the works presented to the contest try to compensate through the most diverse of strategies. One of these betrayals attacked the compactness of the urban fabric; the other, its mixture.

This attack against compactness took place following the Second World War, when the mass availability of private vehicles made the phenomenon of urban dispersion possible for the first time in history. Apart from lacking any civility, today we know that low-density urbanization is a completely unsustainable model in the face of global challenges such as global warming, the energy crisis or the outbreak of pandemics. Its expansionism depreciates the biodiversity of vast areas of territory, wastes large amounts of water and energy, and causes the emission of enormous amounts of greenhouse gases. Initially emerging in North America, the scattered city, comprised of gardened houses, highways, roundabouts and large shopping centers, has spread to countless European peripheries. The well-defined limits of the old walled cities have been diluted to the point that it is not always obvious where the urban area ends and the natural begins, if that still occurs anywhere on the old continent. The enclosure is no longer around the cities, but around the natural parks.



This ubiquity of the urban is reflected in the Award through peripheral interventions such as the landscape restoration of the controlled deposit of the Vall d'en Joan (Begues, Spain, 2003)¹⁸ or the opening of the Rainham wetlands (London, United Kingdom, 2014)¹⁹. The first case consisted of the closure of a landfill located precisely within a natural park, so it is difficult to understand its inclusion in an award intended for urban spaces until it is understood that all solid waste from the metropolitan area of Barcelona accumulated in it for four decades. The second case is the creation of a metropolitan park in a vast natural territory miraculously preserved thanks to its condition, for decades, as a military compound closed to the public.

The attack against the urban mixture came from the hand of the urbanism of Modernity. Denying the promiscuous hodgepodge of cities inherited from the past, modern rationalism proposed the specialization of residential, administrative, commercial or productive uses in large sectors that function as monocultural landowners. Thus, the modern city is segregated into hyperactive and *hyperpassive* territories. Among the former are the large retail, service or office sectors, which concentrate all their activity during the day, but are desperately unpopulated at night. Historical centers that have expelled their former inhabitants to specialize as theme parks for mass tourism can also be included here. Among the latter, there are the dormitory cities where there are only dwellings and which are emptied during working hours because they lack economic activity. The "centrum.odorf" (Innsbruck, Austria, 2006)²⁰ stands out among the innumerable works of the Prize that try to reverse the *hyper passive* condition of the residential estates. The intervention tries to create a new centrality between the blocks and towers of an inhospitable Olympic village built in the seventies. To this end, it creates a square surrounded by facilities, a place of social interaction activated by various community services.

Thanks to the large number of public housing units included in the project, this example from Innsbruck allows us to introduce another type of urban mixture, which Modernity has attacked: the social mixture, a quality of the European tradition that has been the victim of spatial segregation in numerous modern developments, which has occurred through action and by omission. In the first case, the proliferation of the elevator terminated the coexistence on the same building of different social strata, while automobile hypermobility fostered the polarization between rich and poor

¹⁸ Restauración paisajística del depósito controlado de la Vall d'en Joan | Begues (España), 2003 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2004 | Clausura y recuperación como parque público del vertedero de residuos del área metropolitana de Barcelona. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

¹⁹ Apertura de los humedales de Rainham | Londres (Reino Unido), 2014 | Mención especial en la edición de 2014 | Un paraje periférico con una riqueza natural insólitamente preservada se hace accesible a los londinenses para que lo conozcan, lo amen y lo defiendan de una probable depredación urbanística. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

²⁰ "centrum.odorf" | Innsbruck (Austria), 2006 | Mención especial en la edición de 2008 | Nueva plaza y nuevo edificio multifuncional a caballo entre los dos polígonos residenciales de las villas olímpicas de Innsbruck. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

peripheries. As for the omission, modern planning was unable to channel the waves of rural migrants seeking opportunities in the city. In industrial cities like Barcelona, the newly arrived workforce had to crowd into informal settlements consisting of precarious and unsanitary huts; the restoration of the summit of Cerro de la Rovira (Barcelona, Spain, 2011) attests to this²¹. This intervention treats as vestiges of maximum archaeological value the remains of an informal settlement demolished because of the Olympic transformation that the Catalan capital undertook in the 1980s.

After all, the compactness and urban mix defended by the Prize are closely linked to the European idea of the city. This was claimed in 2012 by the documentary "Europa Ciudad"²², produced by the contest's organizing team for Spanish public television (RTVE), based on interviews with award-winning authors and members of the jury. Time has confirmed that, far from being nostalgic, this European notion of the city fully coincides with the guidelines established by the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III (Quito, 2016). Against the segregation and dispersion promoted by an unjust, senseless and *urbicidal* urbanism, the mixed and compact city is the best geometric solution to inhabit in a fair and sensible way a finite and delicate planet, subjected to threats such as the demographic explosion, the scarcity of resources, the climate emergency or the increase in social inequalities.

4. FOUR SENSES OF DEMOCRATIZATION TO ANSWER A QUESTION OF A POLITICAL NATURE

The unavoidable complexity of the urban situation requires that the Prize approaches it from an eminently transdisciplinary perspective. Many of the interventions that are presented to their calls come from technical or humanistic disciplines as diverse as urbanism, engineering, architecture, geography, sociology or art. However, under the bases of the call there is an underlying question of a deeply political nature: what are the physical transformations of the urban environment that best contribute to democratizing the city? To answer this question, the Prize selects the most

²¹ Restauración de la cumbre del Turó de la Rovira | Barcelona (España), 2011 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2012 | Restauración paisajística y mejora de la accesibilidad de un mirador en que se solapan los restos de unas baterías

antiaéreas de la Guerra Civil con las del asentamiento informal que posteriormente las colonizó. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

²² "Europa ciudad" | Soy Cámara | 2012 | Documental producido por el CCCB y RTVE. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

outstanding works of each edition, giving four different meanings to the word "democratization."

4.1. Downwards, the sense of redistribution

Looking down, there is a sense of redistribution, which comes to the rescue of the base of the social pyramid to promote cohesion and equal access to opportunities. To this end, comprehensive neighborhood upgrading is an essential tool for transforming underserved neighborhoods into more prosperous and cohesive communities. This is exactly what is taking place, for example, in the aforementioned urban rehabilitation program in Marinha de Silvalde, a marginal and degraded neighborhood in Espinho (Portugal, 2002)²³. There is also a deep sense of redistribution in the multiple transformations aimed at dissolving physical barriers that segregate or corner certain urban sectors with respect to the rest of the urban fabric. This is what is occurring in "El Valle Brazado" (Elche, Spain, 2014)²⁴, a proposal that solves the shortage of bridges over the Vinalopó River and the consequent marginality of the neighborhoods on its right bank. It does so by converting the riverbed into a linear park that joins both banks through a network of paths and intersecting walkways. Something similar happened with the environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river, one of the best examples of democratization in the recent history of metropolitan Barcelona (Spain, 2000)²⁵. What had been a sort of sewer that separated the poorer neighborhoods from the central city became a green corridor that summons the two shores and connects them with the sea.

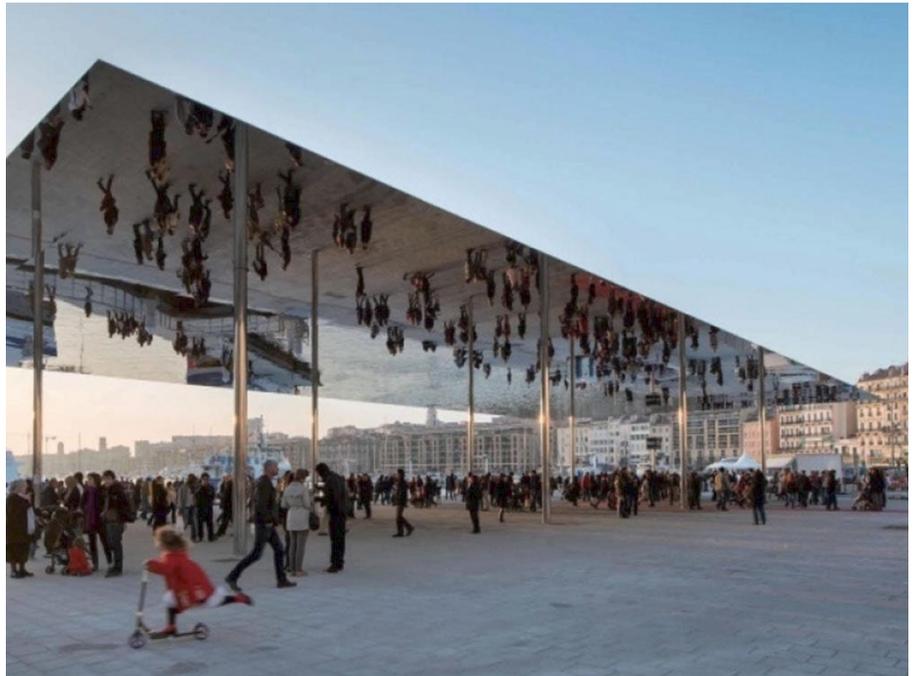
In fact, one of the recurrent forms of opportunity redistribution occurs on the maritime fronts. Coveted by the real estate market and the tourism industry, these prime locations are constantly subjected to privatization pressures that seek to make them more exclusive and exclusive. For this reason, it is important that cities democratize them, guaranteeing universal access to the greatest diversity of users. A good example of this is the renovation of the Poniente beach promenade (Benidorm,

²³ Marinha de Silvalde Rehabilitation Program | Espinho (Portugal), 2002 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | Comprehensive urban improvement plan in the Espinho marina neighborhood; Comprehensive planning of public space, rehabilitation of buildings and environmental improvement of the coastline. | [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁴ "The braided valley" | Elche (Spain), 2013 | Ex aequo award in the 2014 edition | A network of paths and intersecting walkways have converted the Vinalopó riverbed into a linear park that gathers together the neighborhoods through which it passes and connects them with the natural landscapes in the north of the city. | [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁵ Environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river | Barcelona (Spain), 2000 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New park and river walk in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. | [\[LINK\]](#)

Spain, 2009)²⁶. Thanks to its high population density, the municipality was able to support an exuberant civil work that invites all citizens to enjoy the sea, regardless of their condition. Another emblematic example is in the "marine organ" that was installed on the west coast of Zadar (Croatia, 2005)²⁷, a mere landing dock for massive floods of cruise passengers completed with a wide staircase that plunges into the sea. It is provided with long tubes that emit musical sounds with the impact of the waves. Now, it is a beautiful promenade whose magnificent sunset draws residents and tourists alike. Equally, representative is the remodeling of the Old Port of Marseille (France, 2013)²⁸. This historic site, which had succumbed to the unjust mismanagement of yacht clubs and their pleasure boats, was spruced up so that any stroller could enjoy the view of the water.



When they have not ended up as backyards for cities, riverbanks can also constitute primordial fronts whose attractions run the risk of exclusionary privatization. Among the results of the contest, there are numerous interventions that have defended them as public spaces with universal access. Noteworthy among them is the case of the recovery of the banks of the Ljubljanica River as it passes through the historic center

²⁶ Renovation of the Poniente beach promenade | Benidorm (Spain), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This complex strip that represents a transition between the city and the beach displays a colorful repertoire of sinuous forms with sufficient force to order the seafront and imbue it with a unitary character. | [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁷ "Marine organ" | Zadar (Croatia), 2005 | Ex aequo award in the 2006 edition | The new seafront on the Zadar peninsula includes a wide staircase fitted with long tubes that emit musical sounds with the impact of the waves. | [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁸ Remodeling of the Old Port | Marseille (France), 2013 | Ex aequo award in the 2014 edition | The renovation of the Old Port frees the docks of obstacles and vehicles, making the presence of pleasure boats compatible with the access and enjoyment of any citizen. | [\[LINK\]](#)

of Ljubljana (Slovenia, 2011)²⁹. The profuse collection of bridges, canals, dikes, squares and riverside parks that historically accompanied the riverbed was rehabilitated and completed for pedestrians to revisit following decades of neglect. Another situation that occurs frequently in the water courses that cross urban centers occurs when they lose their industrial character in order to be opened up to citizen uses. Also in these cases it is necessary to claim the shore as a primarily accessible and publicly owned place, which is precisely what happened with the new "Havnebadet" public baths, located in the port of the Grand Canal in Copenhagen (Denmark, 2003)³⁰, next to the Islands Brygge neighborhood. Here had been the historic Rysensteen Baths, closed in 1954 due to increased water pollution. The site was consolidated as an industrial sector that went into decline between the 70s and 80s of the last century, becoming a marginal neighborhood with a high crime rate. However years later, by opening up to new commercial and residential real estate developments, it became one of the most expensive sectors of the city to the point of being known as "the Manhattan of Copenhagen". That is why the installation on the dock of a floating platform that is accessible and equipped with different pools of clean water that allows the most varied citizens to enjoy the bath safely and free of charge was so pertinent. In less central positions, the riverbanks also have the possibility of becoming public parks that preserve the delicate meeting between city and nature. In this way, green lungs that democratize access to chlorophyll are saved from urban predation, which is especially suitable for those who do not have a terrace, garden or second home. Excellent examples of this are the recovery of the banks of the Gállego River (Zuera, Spain, 2001)³¹ or the new Ter River Park, on the outskirts of Girona (Spain, 1999)³².

Another family of interventions impregnated with an authentic sense of redistribution is made up of those that are dedicated to reconquering the immense proportion of public space still privatized by the car, as soon as it is parked just as if it were moving. There is no doubt that private mobility is class-biased, as not everyone has the purchasing power to buy and maintain a car, yet it also involves other biases. For example, gender, since women drive less than men do, although they are more harassed when they walk on streets without pedestrians. In addition, age, since children and the elderly are more dependent when they do not have alternatives to

²⁹ Restructuring the banks of the Ljubljanica river | Ljubljana (Slovenia), 2011 | Ex aequo award in the 2012 edition | Renovation of the banks of the Ljubljanica river as it passes through the historic center of the city, the result of a collective effort that concentrates resources on specific operations. | [LINK](#)

³⁰ "Havnebadet" | Copenhagen (Denmark), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | New public toilets in the Grand

Canal harbor, next to the Islands Brygge neighborhood. | [LINK](#)

³¹ Recovery of the channel and banks of the Gállego river | Zuera (Spain), 2001 | Ex aequo award in the 2002 edition | Environmental improvement and urban planning through the creation of a new park with river walks. | [LINK](#)

³² Ter river park | Girona (Spain), 1999 | Special mention in the 2000 edition | The Metropolitan Park of the River Ter entails the environmental recovery and improvement of the accessibility of the fluvial surroundings, which are no longer city's backyard. | [LINK](#)

the car and suffer largely the shortage of play or rest areas. In addition, there is a health bias, because many people with functional diversity lack the physical faculties necessary to drive. There is even an origin bias that affects migrants without certain permits. In short, taking the city away from the car to offer it to pedestrians, cyclists or the users of public transport is an act of pure redistributive democracy.

As regards pedestrian conquests, they are as abundant as they are diverse among the results of the Prize. Those that pacify squares are especially symbolic, such as La République (Paris, France, 2013)³³, Robbiano (Italy, 2005)³⁴, Kalmar Cathedral (Sweden, 2003)³⁵ or Skanderbeg (Tirana, Albania, 2017)³⁶, cited above, as well as those that pacify main streets, such as the Exhibition Road (London, United Kingdom, 2011)³⁷. This emblematic case adopted the concept of "shared surface" by greatly reducing the speed of road traffic and applying a striking diagonal grid to the pavement that made drivers aware of the fragility of pedestrians. But perhaps one of the most notorious cases of pacification is that of the "superblock" of Poblenou (Barcelona, Spain, 2017)³⁸, a pioneer in a much more ambitious strategy that aims to reconquer the wide streets for walks, games or social interaction of the orthogonal plot of the famous Ensanche planned in the 19th century by Ildefons Cerdà.

Lastly, the sense of redistribution is also present in some interventions that go beyond the bourgeois conception of public space as a merely recreational place—the setting for the Sunday walk—by acknowledging its productive role. These are the actions that are conscious of the fact that many people with low purchasing power have always made their living on the street. As a paradigmatic example, the market square, which welcomes small merchants' stalls weekly so that the population has access to local and quality products at reasonable prices. This same evanescent productivity is found in the aforementioned Ripoll canopy (Spain, 2012)³⁹, which on certain days shelters temporary markets. Also on the Sint-Jans-Molenbeek

³³ Restructuring of the Place de la République | Paris (France), 2013 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | While the main squares of the French capital continue to be under the hegemony of the private vehicle, that of the République chooses to dedicate most of its surface area to pedestrians. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁴ "Black Square / White Square" | Robbiano (Italy), 2005 | Special mention in the 2006 edition | Remodeling of the public space located in front of two churches in the historic center. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁵ "Stortorget" | Kalmar (Sweden), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Renovation of the pavement of the cathedral square. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁶ Reform of Skanderbeg Square | Tirana (Albania, 2017) | First prize in the 2018 edition | The main square of the

Albanian capital has been renovated through the planting of a green belt that unifies the buildings on its perimeter and the laying of a multicolored pavement of stones from various parts of the country. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁷ "Shared area" on Exhibition Road | London (UK), 2011 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | A main street in the cultural district is subject to the renovation of pavements, the removal of architectural barriers and the pacification of road traffic according to a "shared surface" system that achieves a consensual balance between pedestrians and vehicles. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁸ "Supermanzana" of Poblenou | Barcelona (Spain), 2017 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Several tactical urban planning operations pacify a cell of nine blocks in the Ensanche de Cerdà and constitute a pilot test for a future large-scale strategy that seeks to regain public space from the private vehicle and offer it to public transport, bicycles and pedestrians. | [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁹ Theater "La Lira" | Ripoll (Spain), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A canopy and a walkway fill the void left by the demolition of an old theater, becoming a window that frames the views towards the mountains and an access door to the old town. | [\[LINK\]](#)

multipurpose canopy (Belgium, 2015)⁴⁰, the "Stadshal" market canopy (Ghent, Belgium, 2012)⁴¹, the photovoltaic canopy of Figueras (Spain, 2011)⁴² or the Theater square (Antwerp, Belgium, 2009)⁴³. Of more stable but no less productive uses are the open canopies of the aforementioned Beşiktaş fish market (Istanbul, Turkey, 2010)⁴⁴ or the market of the port of Vodice (Croatia, 2015)⁴⁵.

Since productivity goes beyond merely commercial activities, examples of actions dedicated to the primary and secondary sectors of the economy could not be missing from the award results. On the manufacturing side, the case of the network of urban commons "R-Urban" (Colombes, France, 2014) is of great interest⁴⁶, which combats the structural unemployment of the Parisian *banlieue* through the creation of a set of productive facilities. Aside from community gardens, an experimental *micro farm* and a proximity market, the complex includes coworking premises and spaces to store, process and reuse construction materials recovered from demolition. Another example of a public space dedicated to manufacturing is the *Fabrique Urbaine*, a cooperative workshop located in the *Schieblock* building, which is part of the complex urban renewal action "Test Site" (Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2016)⁴⁷. The workshop offers its cooperative members and small self-employed professionals a fully equipped space to manufacture models, furniture and interior finishes that are sold in local stores.

Within the agricultural sector, there are abundant examples of urban gardens among the award results. The orchard located on the roof of the *Schieblock* building stands out for its professionalism and size. Known as the *Dakakker*, it is the largest roof garden in the Netherlands and one of the largest in Europe. In it, they experiment with different techniques of beekeeping and urban agriculture. Among its healthy, seasonal and zero kilometre products, there are fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey.

⁴⁰ New multipurpose canopy | Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium), 2015 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | The construction of a monumental canopy in a block patio allows for concerts, fairs and a wide range of neighborhood activities to be hosted in a neighborhood with a complex and fragmented social composition. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴¹ "Stadshal": a new market canopy with its main squares | Ghent (Belgium), 2012 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | A civic canopy with a highly representative cover that allows for host the weekly market and large events to be hosted, while returning to the historic center the dense and complex structure that it had lost during the 20th century. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴² Photovoltaic roof | Figueras (Spain), 2011 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | A large civic roof covered with photovoltaic panels provides shelter for activities as varied as the weekly market, meetings and concerts. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴³ Plaza del Teatro | Antwerp (Belgium), 2009 | Work presented in the 2010 edition | A large canopy in front of the Stadsschowburg façade houses the regular markets of the Theaterplein, as well as eventual theatrical performances and open-air concerts. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁴ Beşiktaş Fish Market | Istanbul (Turkey), 2010 | Work submitted to the award for the 2010 edition | A triangular roof shelters a new fish market which, without facades, is closely integrated with the street. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁵ Port market | Vodice (Croatia), 2015 | Finalist in the 2010 edition | The old market of this coastal town is restructured under a new open canopy that facilitates its direct relationship with the daily life of the port. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁶ "R-Urban": network of urban commons | Colombes (France), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A peripheral residential polygon combats structural unemployment through an ecological and productive complex that includes community food gardens, an experimental *micro-farm*, a market, coworking workshops, and spaces to store and reuse recovered materials. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁷ "Test Site" | Rotterdam (The Netherlands), 2016 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A series of temporary interventions of tactical urbanism activate a marginal strip between the train tracks and Weena Avenue. | [\[LINK\]](#)

They are sold in local bars and restaurants, especially *Op het dak* ("On the rooftop"), a cooperative bistro located on the same deck. Other professional examples include the orchards on the outskirts of the town of Caldes de Montbui (Spain, 2015)⁴⁸, which underwent a comprehensive restoration following the recovery of the old community irrigation system based on thermal waters. In this case, the reactivation of agricultural production in a mosaic of private plots of the urban perimeter was combined with the opening of a network of footpaths and walkways for pedestrians that allow all citizens to contemplate the passage of the stations through the orchards. A similar visual relationship between the contemplative stroller and the producer of the primary sector was established in the booths installed in the port of Cangas de Morrazo (Spain, 2008)⁴⁹. This intervention energized a breakwater in the fishing port with an economic activity deeply rooted in the place, as well as being attractive to pedestrians.

4.2. Forward, the sense of sustainability

Looking forward, another sense of democratization is that of sustainability. Plain and simple, it is about enhancing the legacy we leave for generations to come. Although typically judged from an ecological perspective, sustainable inheritances must also be valued from an economic point of view. If in the first case there are the actions that prevent the deterioration of the environment, in the second there are those that avoid the waste of resources. Perhaps one of the most extreme examples of economic sustainability that can be found among the results of the Prize is in the temporary pacification of Verona Street (Bucharest, Romania, 2012)⁵⁰, which had a total cost of €450. During the hot Romanian summer, once stripped of the cars that normally park on it, this road was completely cleared so that the residents could enjoy a communal pool built out of rented pallets, a reusable tarpaulin and the water provided by themselves. An intervention as austere as it is transformative, it contrasts with so many pharaonic works whose wastefulness puts future generations in debt with little social return.

⁴⁸ Recovery of the irrigation ditches of the thermal gardens | Caldes de Montbui (Spain), 2015 | Ex aequo award in the 2016 edition | The orchards surrounding the village are the object of a comprehensive restoration that recovers the old thermal irrigation water, reactivates agricultural production and opens a network of footpaths for pedestrians. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁹ Fishermen's huts in the port | Cangas de Morrazo (Spain), 2008 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | A row of fishermen's huts invigorates a harbor breakwater with an activity rooted in the place and attractive to the eyes of passers-by. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵⁰ Temporary Pool at Verona Street | Bucharest (Romania), 2012 | Finalist in the 2014 edition | In the three days during a summer festival, a street normally occupied by cars becomes home to a swimming pool constructed out of rented pallets and a waterproof canvas so that residents can enjoy having contact with water. | [\[LINK\]](#)

Regarding the ecological aspect of sustainability, one of the most pressing needs of cities is to reduce discharges and polluting emissions. Regarding the dumping of solid and liquid waste, there is no doubt that a great pedagogical deployment is required to modify the habits of mass and irresponsible consumption that are deeply rooted in the population. From the senseless waste of water underlying touristic farms to the exponential waste of single-use packaging that involves e-commerce or department stores, cities must stop and reconsider this way of life that seems completely normal, as it is completely unviable. As an agora where shared challenges are highlighted and discussed, the public space plays a fundamental role in reducing consumption and improving waste management. The Prize offers multiple examples of how to raise public awareness in this regard. For example, when it comes to reducing consumption, the case of “Elsewhere” is fascinating, as it is an artistic installation that occupies the Central Station of the Citytunneln, the underground railway that crosses Malmö (Sweden, 2010)⁵¹. This piece, which will be discussed later, is the result of a radical decision—the public transport authorities chose to eliminate all consumerist propaganda from their platforms, corridors and lobbies and replace it with works of art that encourage travellers to think, thus contributing to reducing consumption. This is like facilities such as the aforementioned network of urban commons in Colombes (France, 2014)⁵², where residents learn to reserve, classify and reuse waste from demolition. Even the many proximity markets that have been discussed above invite the responsible consumption of local food and are free of non-returnable packaging.

Regarding waste management, it is again inevitable to refer to the case of the Vall d'en Joan landfill (Begues, Spain, 2003)⁵³. The public park that this former site of exploitation became has not only sealed the immense mass of accumulated garbage so that the rain stops pushing its leachate to the adjacent aquifers, but it has also covered it with legume plantations that eliminate the toxicity of the soil. It has even been turned into an educational space visited by masses of schoolchildren who thus become aware that what is thrown away at home does not magically disappear. As if that were not enough, a network of pipes collects all the biogas that emanates from the mass of waste. What would represent 20% of the total greenhouse gases emitted by the city of Barcelona is used to generate electricity instead. The resulting energy

⁵¹ “Elsewhere” | Malmö (Sweden), 2010 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | A permanent installation projects moving images onto the platforms of an underground railway station, thus making the waiting period more enjoyable for passengers. | [LINK](#)

⁵² “R-Urban”: network of urban commons | Colombes (France), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | A housing estate on the

periphery of the city combats unemployment through an ecological and productive complex consisting of community food gardens, an experimental *micro-farm*, a market, cooperative workshops and spaces for storing and reusing recovered materials. | [LINK](#)

⁵³ Vall d'en Joan Landfill Restoration | Begues (Spain), 2003 | Joint winner in the 2004 edition | Landfill and recovery as a public park of the Barcelona metropolitan area rubbish tip. | [LINK](#)

is enough to satisfy the electricity demand of 12,000 inhabitants, which would mean the emission of 100,000 tons of carbon dioxide if it were generated using fossil fuels.



Arriving here, it is unavoidable to point out that approximately one third of the gaseous emissions of cities comes from transport, within which the private vehicle has an overwhelming weight. All this, without accounting for the fact that a good part of the microplastics that end up in the oceans correspond to fine particles detached from car tires which are washed away by rainwater. If it was already clear that cities must get rid of the car in order to redistribute opportunities, it is no less so that they must also do so for sustainability. As well, there is no doubt that the best way to get rid of the car is to conduct our movement and transportation in a more fair and sensible manner again, that is, to regain active or shared mobility. As has already been stated, both the one and the other require that the city be compact; that is, that distances are shortened to the human scale and that the population density allows for route- and expense-sharing. When it comes to active mobility, there are countless reasons why cities should prioritize walkers and cyclists. Apart from the fact that they do not pollute the air, they bring life and safety to the streets, while avoiding such harmful effects on one's own health and that of others such as accidents, noise or sedentary lifestyle. In addition, compared to the car, they take up much less space and consume far less energy, dwindling goods on a finite and increasingly populated planet. Previously, works of the Prize that stood out for promoting pedestrian mobility have already been mentioned, such as the "shared surface" of London's Exhibition

Road (United Kingdom, 2011)⁵⁴ or the "superblock" of Poblenou (Barcelona, Spain, 2017)⁵⁵. It is also necessary to review interventions specifically aimed at facilitating and promoting the use of bicycles. One of the most relevant of these is undoubtedly the Cuypers passage (Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2016)⁵⁶, an underground passage more than one hundred meters long that crosses the Central Station, facilitating the connection between the historic center and the piers on the river IJ for cyclists. Another work worthy of being highlighted in the same vein is "Cykelslangen" (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2014)⁵⁷, an exclusive walkway for bicycles that winds between buildings to complete the first transversal connection of the port of the Danish capital opened in the last fifty years.

Regarding shared mobility, a large number of interventions are presented at each edition of the Award that strive to improve public transport. There are abundant examples that bet on intermodality; that is, to facilitate the connection between different modes of transport—for example, those that connect metro lines with trams, buses or bicycle infrastructure. An exemplary case of this is the reform of the Nørreport metro station (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2015)⁵⁸, through which some 165,000 people pass every day. Its exit to the street was rearranged to house a bus terminal, more than two thousand bicycle parking spots, and a pedestrian zone connected to the old town. Those interventions that opt for surface public transport, such as bus or tramlines, are especially noteworthy. On the one hand, these surface systems compete with the car and, therefore, their extension contributes to taking away urban space. On the other, its execution is much more sustainable compared to metro lines. Although these other metropolitan forms of infrastructure are sometimes unavoidable due to their high capacity to transport large numbers of people, over long distances in very short times, the truth is that they require the investment of huge economic and ecological efforts in burying or raising infrastructure in order to avoid disturbing the car. Finally, its appearance can also be used to renovate the public space, thereby maximizing the benefits of the

⁵⁴ "Shared area" on Exhibition Road | London (UK), 2011 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | A main street in the cultural district is subject to the renovation of pavements, the removal of architectural barriers and the pacification of road traffic according to a "shared surface" system that achieves a consensual balance between pedestrians and vehicles. | [LINK](#)

⁵⁵ "Supermanzana" of Poblenou | Barcelona (Spain), 2017 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Several tactical urban planning operations pacify a cell of nine blocks in the Ensanche de Cerdà and constitute a pilot test for a future large-scale strategy that seeks to regain public space from the private vehicle and offer it to public transport, bicycles and pedestrians. | [ENLACE](#)

⁵⁶ Pasaje Cuypers | Amsterdam (Países Bajos), 2016 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Un nuevo paso subterráneo de más de cien metros de largo y decorado con azulejos que representan fragmentos de la historia naval neerlandesa atraviesa la Estación Central de Ámsterdam facilitando a los ciclistas y los peatones la conexión entre el centro histórico y los embarcaderos del río IJ. | [ENLACE](#)

⁵⁷ "Cykelslangen" | Copenhague (Dinamarca), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | Una nueva pasarela exclusiva para bicicletas serpentea entre edificios comerciales, residenciales y de oficinas para culminar la primera conexión transversal del puerto de la capital danesa abierta en los últimos cincuenta años. | [ENLACE](#)

⁵⁸ Estación de Nørreport | Copenhague (Dinamarca), 2015 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | La caótica explanada que cubría la estación subterránea más antigua de Dinamarca, por donde pasan cada día unas 165.000 personas, se reordena para acoger una terminal de autobuses, más de dos mil bicicletas aparcadas y una zona peatonal conectada con las calles medievales del casco histórico. | [ENLACE](#)

investment. This can be perfectly appreciated in the Place de Pey Berland (Bordeaux, France, 2005)⁵⁹, which was substantially improved thanks to the arrival of a new tram network. Also relevant are the numerous interventions that do not understand public transport infrastructure from a merely functional aspect, but rather try to imbue them with the dignity proper to large civic spaces in order to improve the experience of travellers and thus favour their use. An excellent example of this attitude is the already mentioned artistic intervention "Elsewhere", which projects footage on the walls of the Citytunneln Central Station (Malmö, Sweden, 2010)⁶⁰, turning it into a dreamlike hall. Another example is in the artistic installation "At sea level" (Lisbon, Portugal, 2011)⁶¹, a mosaic placed on the ceiling of the lobby that connects the metro with a ferry terminal and that metaphorically announces to passengers the presence of the Tagus River.

Apart from reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate global warming, another of the most urgent needs of cities in terms of sustainability is to offset the tons of CO₂ that will inevitably continue to be released into the atmosphere. Without a doubt, the best recipe to achieve this is to increase the plant mass, capable of fixing the released carbon. There are countless incidents of this highlighted by the Award that obey this strategy, both outside and within the urban fabric. In the first case, it is obvious that urban sprawl and consequent forest predation should be avoided as much as possible. On the peri-urban front, the plant masses provided by the aforementioned Rainham wetlands (London, United Kingdom, 2014), stand out, due to their colossal extension⁶² with 640 hectares of surface, the Lea River Park (London, United Kingdom, 2018)⁶³, with 235 hectares, or the Zollverein park (Essen, Germany, 2019)⁶⁴, with 80 hectares.

Regarding the insertion of arboreal mass into urban tissues, in addition to serving to fix carbon on a planetary scale, it is also very useful on a local scale, since it helps to detoxify polluted air or to mitigate the heat island effect, two phenomena very harmful

⁵⁹ Plaza de Pey Berland | Burdeos (Francia), 2005 | Obra presentada al Premio en la edición de 2006 | Reforma de la plaza de la catedral con motivo del paso de una nueva red de tranvía. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁶⁰ "En otra parte" | Malmö (Suecia), 2010 | Special mention in the 2012 edition | Instalación artística que proyecta en los andenes de una estación subterránea de ferrocarril imágenes de paisajes en movimiento, amenizando así la espera de los viajeros. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁶¹ "A nivel del mar" | Lisboa (Portugal), 2011 | Finalista en la edición de 2006 | Un mosaico colocado en el techo del vestíbulo que conecta el metro con una terminal de

transbordadores establece una relación metafórica entre los pasajeros y el río Tajo. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁶² Apertura de los humedales de Rainham | Londres (Reino Unido), 2014 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | Un paraje periférico con una riqueza natural insólitamente preservada se hace accesible a los londinenses para que lo conozcan, lo amen y lo defiendan de una probable depredación urbanística. | [\[ENLACE\]](#)

⁶³ Lea River Park | London (United Kingdom), 2018 | Finalist in the 2018 edition | The creation of a park following the course of the Lea River from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to the Thames at Blackwell has overcome physical and social fragmentation caused by large-scale infrastructure while also recognising the industrial landscape which has been essential for London's economic development. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶⁴ Zollverein Park | Essen (Germany), 2019 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | After two decades of work, an old mining operation which was closed at the end of the twentieth century and subsequently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site is now a large park combining industrial archaeology, green landscape, leisure installations, and cultural facilities. | [\[LINK\]](#)

to public health. A beautiful example of this strategy is the arboretum planted in Barking's main square (London, UK, 2008)⁶⁵, which consists of 40 mature trees of 16 different species. On the other hand, extending the proportion of green area in cities also serves to reduce the runoff coefficient from urban land. This helps the natural terrain to absorb a portion of the water accumulated during episodes of torrential rains—which, with climate change, will become more and more frequent—so that it feeds the aquifers and does not collapse the sanitation facilities. The city of Copenhagen has set an example of this by implementing the 'blue and green' strategy, which consists of integrating rainwater management with increasing and maintaining urban green. This is to replace asphalt and waterproof surfaces with landscaped areas that have a greater absorption capacity. A small sample of this strategy is the new green area in Tåsinge Square (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2014)⁶⁶, which replaces an old open-air car park. The frequent flooding in surrounding basements was resolved with the creation of this rainwater retention garden that expresses how rain can be used as a resource to improve urban space.

In any case, inside the city, not only the amount of surface covered with vegetation counts; equally important is maximizing the perimeter of the green areas since that is where friction with the buildings that enjoy them takes place. In other words, the longer its borders, the more people that can enjoy its proximity. In this sense, the central park archetype is the least convenient, since it concentrates the vegetation within a compact enclosure. This means that its perimeter is reduced, so that the fronts of interaction with the city are scarcer and, therefore, more desired, expensive and exclusive. With the same vegetation surface, the constellations of pocket parks or green corridors are much more democratic, since, for purely geometric reasons, both have longer perimeters. The last two cases mentioned—the Barking Square Arboretum (London, UK, 2008) and the Tåsinge Garden (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2014)—are good examples of pocket parks. In contrast to large central parks, this solution can be replicated by coating the entire urban fabric with green spaces so that everyone can live within walking distance of a garden.

Regarding green corridors, apart from the fact that they also maximize their contact perimeter with the city, they have two other added advantages. On the one hand, in addition to offering green environments for rest and recreation, they can also constitute pleasant mobility infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. These modes of active, silent and clean mobility will not disturb the idle users of the green zone and, surely, they will prefer to move through this placid environment than to do so on

⁶⁵ Barking Town Square | London (United Kingdom), 2008 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | New town square in the suburb of Barking. | [LINK](#)

⁶⁶ Refurbishment of Tåsinge Square | Copenhagen (Denmark), 2014 | Finalist in the 2016 edition | The problem of frequent flooding in basements around a small square overrun with cars has been solved by creating a garden that can collect and store rainwater and thereby demonstrate how water can be used as a resource for enhancing urban space. | [LINK](#)

roads invaded by the smoke and noise of the car. This is the case of "Baana" (Helsinki, Finland, 2012)⁶⁷, a former railway cutting that tore through the urban fabric and was recycled as a green corridor for cyclists and pedestrians. On the other hand, green corridors are useful when it comes to increasing the biodiversity of ecosystems, whose loss contributes, among other calamities, to zoonosis and the spread of epidemics such as COVID-19. Given the inherent fertility of aquatic ecosystems, this increase in biodiversity is achieved especially in green river corridors such as those already mentioned in Girona (Spain, 1999)⁶⁸, Barcelona (Spain, 2000)⁶⁹, Zuera (Spain, 2001)⁷⁰, or Elche (Spain, 2013)⁷¹.

Despite all that said, it is necessary to note that vegetation does not always contribute to the sustainability of the city. The attachment to chlorophyll, widespread among neighbours and activists, often leads to a kind of "green populism" that shares some vices with the NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) phenomenon. From an individual point of view, anyone prefers having a park in front of his or her house rather than a hospital or an affordable housing building. However, not everything that is green is ecological, like golf courses in dry climates, and not everything that is ecological is green, like a railway line. Therefore, the claimed increase in green should never be detrimental to a reasonable urban compactness. In fact, scattered low-density tissues can be highly generous in vegetation, but they are so at the cost of predated natural territory and multiplying distances that generate dependence on the car, that is, they multiply the emissions of polluting gases and, therefore, aggravate global warming. If green is to gain more urban space, it does not have to do so at the expense of buildings, but of polluting uses such as automobile infrastructure. Avoiding urban sprawl is essential because reversing its effects will not be increasingly difficult in the future. As the energy crisis renders low-density, car-dependent developments completely unviable, it is very likely that these will have to be abandoned. Everything indicates that we will not have the necessary energy to turn them into walkable cities that are well equipped and served by public transport.

When dealing with natural areas that have been damaged by anthropic action, some works of the Prize intentionally renounce returning them to their original state. This is

⁶⁷ "Baana": pedestrian and bicycle corridor | Helsinki (Finland), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A deep railway cutting which slices through the urban fabric has been converted into a pedestrian and bicycle corridor in a resource-saving collaborative process that also respects the memory of an industrial past. | [LINK](#)

⁶⁸ River Ter Park | Girona (Spain), 1999 | Special mention in the 2000 edition | The metropolitan park in the River Ter brings environmental recovery and new access to the riverside

surroundings, which have ceased to be the city's backyard. | [LINK](#)

⁶⁹ Environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river | Barcelona (Spain), 2000 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New park and river walk in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. | [LINK](#)

⁷⁰ Recovery of the channel and banks of the Gállego river | Zuera (Spain), 2001 | Joint winner in the 2002 edition | Environmental improvement and urban planning through the creation of a new park with river walks. | [LINK](#)

⁷¹ "The Braided Valley" | Elche (Spain), 2013 | Joint winner in the 2014 edition | A braided network of paths and footbridges have transformed the bed of the Vinalopó River into a linear park that stitches back together the neighbourhoods through which it passes, connecting them with natural spaces to the north of the city. | [LINK](#)

the controversial decision that was made in the case of the former Maurice Rose airfield (Frankfurt, Germany, 2004)⁷². After the Second World War, the installation of this military infrastructure by the US military irreparably damaged a natural area on the outskirts of Frankfurt. Once abandoned, the City Council considered what to do with it. There is no doubt that tearing it down and getting rid of the debris would have meant nothing more than consuming a lot of energy to carry the problem elsewhere. Knowing this, a partial dismantling was opted for. The surface of the runway was broken into jagged pieces that were left on the ground. While before they formed an impermeable and continuous layer, now they generate an abrupt relief, full of folds and cavities that plants and animals have gradually colonized. Since then, the Senckenberg research institute has rigorously documented this reconquest by nature by recording the plant and animal species that have appeared and how they had done so. With the same attitude, the terraces, slopes and ramps that were preserved that made up the aforementioned Vall d'en Joan landfill (Begues, Spain, 2003)⁷³. The immense economic and energy cost that would have involved making this artificial topography completely disappear explains why the new park recognized it as its own.

4.3. Upwards, the sense of participation

Looking up, a third sense of democratization is that of participation, which serves to fight the abuse of power. Top-down decision enforcement is nothing new in the history of cities, nor the popular movements that have faced them from below. Although it is true that enlightened despotism has had certain successes over the centuries, it is no less true that it has also given rise to countless injustices. In their paternalistic arrogance, two great vices can be identified, one of which is the result of the excessive accumulation of power, which occurs when the rulers do not recognize the rights of citizens to participate in decision-making, and it occurs even in regimes that call themselves democratic. This manifests itself in multiple ways, from the corruption that steals from the public coffers to the speculation that gambles with privileged information, passing through the most undemocratic authoritarianism. The other vice of enlightened despotism is the result of hoarding knowledge. This occurs when those who have been recognized as experts in some field impose their technocratic determinism on the people, without the people and, sometimes, against the people. Armed with their supposed excellence, they assume that people are

⁷² Partial dismantling of the Maurice Rose airfield | Frankfurt (Germany), 2004 | Work submitted to the 2006 edition | Partial dismantling of the old Bonames military aerodrome. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷³ Restauración paisajística del depósito controlado de la Vall d'en Joan | Begues (España), 2003 | Premio ex aequo en la edición de 2004 | Clausura y recuperación como parque público del vertedero de residuos del área metropolitana de Barcelona. | [\[LINK\]](#)

ignorant and do not recognize their ability to influence decisions that greatly affect their own lives.

Citizen participation has valuable instruments to counteract these two trends. On the one hand, it gives citizens the right to control power through tools such as transparency, voting, and accountability based on fact checking. On the other hand, it empowers citizens with weapons such as pedagogy in complex issues or training in new skills. Sometimes, citizens receive these powers from rulers who honestly place themselves at their service; others the citizens are forced to conquer by themselves. In any case, participation does not only face threats from above—beyond the abuse of power, there are risks that arise within the citizenry themselves. These include phenomena as widespread as indifference, individualism or populism, which are fought from their own participation, through practices that invite them to get involved in the defense of the common good from the respect of the other. In other words, participation is medicine against idiocy. In fact, in Ancient Greece the idiot (from *idios*, "oneself") distinguished himself from the citizen by being one who only took care of his own affairs, without participating in the assembly.

After all, the city is a social co-production that is enriched by the participation of the most diverse agents. The countless forms of co-production that the Prize has garnered throughout its ten editions can be grouped into three main families. One of which is that of transdisciplinary solutions, which recognize the polyhedral nature of the urban event and address its transformation by integrating different fields of knowledge in a transversal manner. For example, the creation of the cultural and ecological space "Passage 56" (Paris, France, 2009)⁷⁴ included the participation of architects who are experts in the reuse of construction elements, engineers specialized in renewable energy and agronomists trained in permaculture. Another interesting example of interdisciplinary collaboration was the Westblaak skate park (Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2001)⁷⁵, where engineers and architects from the Department of Urban Planning had the expert advice of future users who were involved in the design, construction and the maintenance of eleven pieces of equipment for skateboards, inline skates or BMX bicycles. Perhaps the most interesting case of participatory knowledge transmission was in the already mentioned recovery of the irrigation channels in the thermal gardens of Caldes de Montbui (Spain, 2015)⁷⁶. With an attitude diametrically opposed to technocratic

⁷⁴ "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passage on Saint Blaise Street into a collective organic garden. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷⁵ Westblaak Skatepark | Rotterdam (Netherlands), 2001 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New public park in the central space of Westblaak Avenue. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷⁶ Recovery of the Irrigation System at the Thermal Orchards | Caldes de Montbui (Spain), 2015 | Joint winner in the 2016 edition | The orchards around the town are the focus of an integral project of restoration which restores the old irrigation system of thermal waters, reactivates agricultural activity and opens up a network of pedestrian pathways. | [\[LINK\]](#)

arrogance, a team of young landscapers rescued from oblivion the ancient irrigation techniques treasured by seventy elderly gardeners in order to restore their productive capacity to the gardens.

Another family of interventions based on co-production is given by those that are the result of collaboration between different agents. Sometimes they are public administrations of different levels, as was the case of the aforementioned example of the recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river (Barcelona, Spain, 2000)⁷⁷, wherein four different city councils and a ministry of the Spanish government were involved. In such kinds of interventions with a metropolitan scale and different municipalities involved, it is necessary that municipal solidarity allow the struggles between neighbouring municipalities and the short-term logic of the mandates to overcome. In addition, when supra-municipal administrations intervene, it is important that the principle of subsidiarity be respected, which recognizes the smallest ones' greater proximity and empathy towards the real needs of citizens. Other forms of co-production between different agents include public-private collaboration, in which it is essential that public leadership be never lost to ensure that the general interest is respected. Because of this type of collaboration, the Grotekerk Square Theater was realized (Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2009)⁷⁸, promoted by a private, non-profit organization under the supervision of the City Council.



However, there is no doubt that the most authentic formula for participation is the co-production of solutions with citizens. To this third family belong the public spaces that do not culminate in the physical construction of an object commissioned by the authorities and designed by experts, but are developed through an open and

⁷⁷ Environmental recovery of the final stretch of the Besòs river | Barcelona (Spain), 2000 | Special mention in the 2002 edition | New park and river walk in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷⁸ Theater in Grotekerk Square | Rotterdam (Netherlands), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | The insertion of a theatrical pavilion programmatically invigorates the Laurenskerk cathedral square and articulates its relationship with the Delftsevaart canal. | [\[LINK\]](#)

collective process of a social, cultural and political nature. They are places where citizens are treated as qualified interlocutors with full rights. The first step towards this type of participation is to avoid functional determinisms that insult the intelligence of the users. The "paths of desire" have already acquired the classical category, which appear when disobedient walkers trace alternative routes to those imposed by poorly designed flowerbeds. In this sense, there is the delightful approach that inspired the pathways of "The Braided Valley" (Elche, Spain, 2013)⁷⁹, an intervention that has already been discussed above. During the project phase, a temporary office was installed next to the Vinalopó River that collected data on the routes of the residents and their preferred places of passage. Based on this information, the network of crosswalks and footpaths that connects both banks of the riverbed and gives its name to the intervention was drawn.

Interventions that bet on the versatility of public space also avoid functional determinism, understanding it as a place open to interpretation by people and capable of hosting different uses at different times. A good example of a versatile space is the Smithfield Esplanade (Dublin, Ireland, 2000)⁸⁰. Covered with a continuous blanket of cobblestones, the imposing 43-meter-wide by 335-meter-long urban hall is open to uses as diverse as everyday games, temporary markets or mass concerts. The aforementioned multipurpose canopy in Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium, 2015) is also committed to versatility⁸¹, whose monumental indeterminacy is capable of housing a wide range of community uses. Citizen assemblies, concerts, children's workshops, barbecues, theatrical performances or film screenings allow us to achieve the ultimate goal of the intervention, which is none other than to bring together the inhabitants of a fractured neighbourhood under the same-shared roof. Another way to avoid deterministic impositions is the so-called "tactical urbanism" (although perhaps "tactical urbanization" would be more appropriate), which provisionally tests spaces so that people can examine the suitability of their transformation through use. This is what happened in the first phase of the aforementioned Poblenou "superblock" (Barcelona, Spain, 2017)⁸², undertaken by students from various architecture schools through the reversible application of painted signs on the ground, the temporary installation of elements of urban furniture or the placement of trees planted in mobile containers. The provisional nature of

⁷⁹ "The braided valley" | Elche (Spain), 2013 | Ex aequo award in the 2014 edition | A network of paths and intersecting walkways converts the Vinalopó riverbed into a linear park that gathers together the neighborhoods through which it passes and connects them with the natural landscapes in the north of the city. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸⁰ Smithfield Esplanade Reform | Dublin (Ireland), 2000 | Ex aequo award in the 2000 edition | Restored with simple but forceful means, an old and dilapidated esplanade acquires the

identity and unitary character that it required to become one of the main public spaces in Dublin. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸¹ New multipurpose canopy | Sint-Jans-Molenbeek (Belgium), 2015 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | The construction of a monumental canopy in a block patio allows concerts, fairs and a wide range of neighborhood activities to be hosted in a neighborhood with a complex and fragmented social composition. | [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸² Poblenou "Superblock" | Barcelona (Spain), 2017 | Special category in the 2018 edition | A series of tactical urbanism operations has pedestrianised a "superblock" - nine blocks in the grid-designed Eixample district - in a pilot test of a future large-scale strategy for reclaiming public space from private vehicles and making it available for public transport, bicycles and pedestrians. | [\[LINK\]](#)

these solutions allowed the introduction of modifications based on the results of a participatory process with the neighbours, which gave rise to children's play areas, sports courts, picnic or ping-pong tables, assembly spaces, literary routes or ephemeral markets. Once the spaces had already been subjected, empirically and pedagogically, to different tests of use, the second phase consolidated the intervention permanently through conventional civil engineering works. Beyond the conventional urban transformation, Poblenou's "Superblock" functioned as a cultural product capable of bringing to the public debate the need to bet on a more equitable and sustainable mobility, a still highly controversial issue in Barcelona.

At the end of the day, the countless examples of participation that can be found amongst the winners of the Prize present varying degrees of co-production of solutions with the public. The most classic—and moderate—forms of participation are provided by interventions wherein future users act as consultants in the preparation of the needs-based program, prior to the drafting of the project. A beautiful example of this is the participatory process that led to the design of "A8ernA" (Zaanstadt, The Netherlands, 2005)⁸³. In order to inject life into the underside of the elevated highway that divided the Koog aan de Zaan square in two, the most unlikely requests of the neighbours were collected in an ambitious program of needs. Instead of acting on the continent, the resulting intervention inhabited it with edifices and installations as eclectic as a jetty on the Zaan River, a park, an urban art gallery, a shooting range, a supermarket and a flower and pet shop. A further degree of participation is in the interventions that involve citizens in co-design processes to conceive of the most appropriate responses to their needs. Accompanied by professionals who have the technical knowledge necessary to act rigorously, future users become aware of the complexities and limitations of the intervention. An excellent example of this occurred in the collaborative design of the Magdeburg open-air library (Germany, 2009)⁸⁴. In that project, the residents of the Salbke district were fed up with waiting for the City Council to build the new public library on the same site where the old one had been demolished. The abandoned premises of an adjacent store served as their base of operations to organize a book drive and launch a homeless library project. With the advice of a team of professionals, a program of needs was agreed upon and several designs were developed. With more than a thousand cases of beer, they raised a 1:1 scale model on the site that allowed them to determine the main successes and errors of the best-valued proposal before it was finally built.

⁸³ "A8ernA" | Zaanstadt (Netherlands), 2005 | Ex aequo award in the 2006 edition | A participatory process configures a program of needs to inhabit the space covered by the A8 motorway, in the historic center of Koog aan de Zaan with citizen uses. | [LINK](#)

⁸⁴ Open-air Library | Magdeburg (Germany), 2009 | Ex aequo award in the 2010 edition | The residents of a socially depressed neighborhood have organized to collect and share books in an open library that they have built, following a participatory process, with the prefabricated pieces of a demolished building. | [LINK](#)

The next step in the ascending ladder of citizen empowerment is constituted by interventions that are open to self-construction or self-management by users. This occurred in incipient form in the aforementioned case of the "Passage 56" (Paris, 2009)⁸⁵, where its neighbors were involved actively in the collection and sorting of recycled materials for the construction of the cultural and ecological equipment. Even greater was the involvement of various groups of musicians, poets and visual artists in the temporary renovation of an old Stalinist amphitheatre located in the central park of Dnipro (Ukraine, 2017)⁸⁶, the result of self-financing, collaborative design and assisted self-construction. There are also abundant public spaces that, once transformed, are opened up to formulas of community self-management that, while respecting sufficient democratic guarantees, strengthen the sense of responsibility of the users and unite the interrelated fabric of the neighbourhoods. This is what took place with the group of residents, professionals and entities that took charge of "Passage 56" itself (Paris, France, 2009)⁸⁷ and its community garden. In fact, there are more and more situations in which the merely decorative gardening carried out by municipal officials gives way to a "bottom-up" pedagogical and productive agriculture. A pioneering experience on this path was that of the Reudnitz municipal park (Leipzig, Germany, 2002)⁸⁸, where a good number of plots were reserved and rented at affordable prices to individuals. Used as recreational gardens or as productive orchards, private plots even have containers where users can store furniture or tools. Not exempt from the risks of privatization, this innovative experience stimulates the identification of citizens with "their" park and encourages joint responsibility in the care and maintenance of public space. Something similar occurred in the renovation of the Schorfheide residential estate (Berlin, Germany, 2010)⁸⁹. In the public gardens that separate their housing blocks there, twenty-four prefabricated containers were installed that neighbours can rent to use as simple storage, as a DIY workshop or even as a second living room in contact with the green. Thus, they give members of small and often overcrowded households the possibility of withdrawing to spaces where they can be alone or meet others.

Finally, the most extreme degree of citizen participation occurs in situations that incur civil disobedience. It is marked by activists who put what they consider as

⁸⁵ "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passage on Saint Blaise Street into a collective organic garden. | [LINK](#)

⁸⁶ Stage | Dnipro (Ukraine), 2017 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Several cultural groups of musicians, poets, and visual artists organised to carry out a temporary renovation of a Stalinist-era amphitheatre in the city's central park by means of crowdfunding, collaborative design, and a "self-constructed" team effort. | [LINK](#)

⁸⁷ "Passage 56": cultural and ecological space | Paris (France), 2009 | Special mention in the 2010 edition | This popular initiative has transformed an abandoned passageway on rue Saint Blaise into a collectively-managed ecological garden. | [LINK](#)

⁸⁸ Reudnitz Municipal Park | Leipzig (Germany), 2002 | Joint winner in the 2002 edition | New city park on the land of the former Eilenburg railway station and a reorganization of traffic in the surrounding areas. | [LINK](#)

⁸⁹ Renovation of the Schorfheide housing estate | Berlin (Germany), 2010 | Work submitted to the Prize in the 2012 edition | Local residents take part in a transformative process that gives sense and attributes to dreary interstitial spaces in a residential estate. | [LINK](#)

legitimate above what is legal only. Without waiting for the permission of the authorities, they take possession of emblematic places to occupy and transform them. Sometimes, the absence of official authorizations does not prevent the occupation of the space from being extended in time and entailing substantial modifications to its use and physical configuration. This is exactly what occurred in the aforementioned interventions of the "Heavenly Hundred" Garden (Kiev, Ukraine, 2016)⁹⁰ and "Occupy Puerta del Sol" (Madrid, Spain, 2011)⁹¹. In the first case, the occupied site reconciled the commemorative function—in honor of the victims of police repression during the *EuroMaidan revolution*—with playful and creative activities that invited us to share daily life. The slogan "no tears, no candles, only action" inspired a place that was transformed through community co-production and self-management, with the help of NGOs, but without any interference from the authorities. After clearing the site and removing tons of waste, the activists planted trees brought in from other parts of the country in order to honour the victims with a symbol of life. Among the new landscaped flowerbeds, trails and a playground equipped with a slide and swings were installed. In the centre of the garden there is a communal garden where children and neighbours learn to grow organic food. When time permitted, free events such as concerts, readings, exhibitions, educational games or film screenings were held. The occupation received hundreds of expressions of solidarity from around the world.

The camp that occupied the most emblematic square in Madrid in May 2011 also received international attention. In this protest, the demonstrators were involved in a protest march organized by the group Real Democracy Now! under the slogan "We are not merchandise in the hands of politicians and bankers." It was comprised of ephemeral and lightweight constructions, whether they were commercial tents destined to spend the night or artisanal structures, built on-site and on the fly with waste materials that acquired unsuspected functions. Ropes, cables, tarpaulins, plastics and adhesive tapes were applied to ingenious constructions in which logistical requirements such as having sanitary or quartermaster services were sheltered. The constructions effectively and decisively reserved spaces of collective interest such as circulation corridors, libraries or nurseries. Denounced by some as an illicit appropriation of urban space and silenced by media that only cited it under pressure from social networks or the foreign press, the Sol campsite disappeared a few weeks after its spontaneous emergence. Cleaning brigades organized by the campers themselves left the pre-existing space as they had found it.

⁹⁰ "Heavenly Hundred" Garden | Kiev (Ukraine), 2016 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | An empty lot is transformed into a memorial for the victims of the EuroMaidan protests and, on an everyday basis, has a productive role as a self-managed community vegetable garden. | [LINK](#)

⁹¹ "Occupy Puerta del Sol" | Madrid (Spain), 2011 | Special category in the 2012 edition | A large-scale demonstration by citizens demanding improvements in the democratic system by means of a temporary occupation of one of Madrid's most representative squares. | [LINK](#)

4.4. Backwards, the sense of memory

Looking back, the last of the four senses of democratization is that of memory, which makes the best use of inherited pre-existence from the past. Unique in the animal kingdom, the human capacity for cultural transmission between successive generations is what makes progress possible. “By contrast, beyond animals” genetic evolution, they do not experience any cultural advancement. Knowledge is not passed from parents to children. Instead, each human being accumulates a large amount of learning produced millennia before being born. This has occurred largely since the Neolithic Revolution, when hunter-gatherers stopped being nomads and began remain in stable settlements. Adopting a sedentary lifestyle caused that, in addition to intangible knowledge, and material assets began to be transferred. Both the location of the historic centre and the layout of its streets are the result of old decisions, taken by missing ancestors, but which continue to determine the present. As a tapestry on which the traces of successive generations are superimposed, the city is a space of memory par excellence.

Therefore, the principle of memory is directly aligned with that of sustainability. Subsequent generations access from memory the legacy that previous generations have left them through sustainability. The better the values inherited from the past are preserved, the richer the legacy that can be passed on to the future. As such, there is a deep sense of intergenerational co-responsibility here. Yet, on the other hand, recycling the thermodynamic heritage of pre-existence is more ecological than opting for a clean slate or to prey on more territory by spreading out new plant developments. The utopias of modern urbanism that started from a blank page are those that have neglected many lessons from the past. They also seem to be ignored by the techno euphoric *neophilia* of the Smart City. However, the truth is that the city of the future is already built—it treasures great wealth and is only waiting for renovations that give it new uses and meanings to adapt to the needs of the present.

Due to the extraordinary longevity of European cities, interventions dealing with memory are perhaps the most abundant among the Prize’s nominees. Everywhere, at every moment, archaeological remains, industrial heritage or war wounds return from the past to interfere in the present. However, their effects can be completely the opposite, so therefore highly different approaches are required. If sometimes it is about making up for unforgivable forgetfulness, other times you have to deal with traumatic memories. On the first front, European cities are very prolific in memorials. Some save very recent events from oblivion, as is the case of the Garden of the "Celestial Hundreds", which has already been widely spoken about. Others date back

to time immemorial, such as the medieval Homage Tower (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)⁹², which has also been mentioned. Halfway through, a large number of memorials still appear that fight against collective amnesia regarding the countless calamities that the 20th century brought. At the "Przełomy" Center for Dialogue (Szczecin, Poland, 2015)⁹³, for example, homage is paid to the victims of Soviet totalitarianism. The same square in which more than sixty protesters from the Solidarność union were killed has thus become the cover for this underground museum on the recent history of the city. But perhaps one of the most exquisite memorials in the way of remembering the past century is the Ghetto Heroes' Square (Krakow, Poland, 2005)⁹⁴, dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust. Located next to the Krakow ghetto, it was designated during the Nazi occupation as Umschlagplatz, the place where Jews were to congregate for deportation. In 1943, once the ghetto was vacated, the suitcases or chairs that the Jews had been able to carry during forced transfers and which, before undertaking their last trip to Plaszow or Auschwitz, were forced to abandon were accumulated there. The square kept these monstrosities silent until 2005, when dozens of bronze chairs were arranged, somewhat larger than usual and oriented in the same direction. These household objects evidently refer to the furniture abandoned by the Jews. Thus, avoiding the dramatic spectacle and the sublimation of the tragedy, they humbly summon the presence of the absent.



⁹² Torre del Homenaje | Huéscar (Spain, 2007) | Special mention in the 2008 edition | New public viewpoint over the remains of an old medieval watchtower. | [LINK](#)

⁹³ Dialogue Centre "Przełomy" at Solidarność Square | Szczecin (Poland), 2015 | Joint winner in the 2016 edition | A place where sixteen demonstrating workers were killed in the

1970s has become the new Solidarity Square while also forming the roof of an underground museum on the recent history of a city which was seriously damaged during the Second World War. | [LINK](#)

⁹⁴ Ghetto Heroes Square | Krakow (Poland), 2005 | Special mention in the 2006 edition | Refurbishment of a square in memory of the victims of the Krakow Ghetto. | [LINK](#)

With regard to interventions that deal with traumatic preexistence, there are two clear examples from Berlin among the Prize results. One of them is offered by the Tilla-Durieux Park (Berlin, Germany, 2003)⁹⁵, which sutured one of the gashes inflicted on the urban fabric by the Berlin Wall. After its fall, a 500-meter-long esplanade between the Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie was abandoned during the construction euphoria of the 1990s, when most of the urban voids adjacent to the Potsdamer Platz were consolidated. The creation of an immense swath of grass has filled that void with life, testifying to the existence of the wall without being overshadowed by the memory of dire times. In a city divided for 40 years between two opposing worlds, the presence of physical testimonies of separation can be a painful burden. Perhaps that is why, since the fall of the Wall, Berlin has undergone an intense process of renewal, which, in an attempt to bring about reunification, seems to have chosen to forget that chapter of its history.

This is precisely the starting point for the second Berlin example. In 2003, the Bundestag approved the complete demolition of the Palast der Republik, the headquarters of the Socialist Party of the former GDR. The same mistake had been made by the authorities of the socialist regime in 1950, when they demolished the Stadtschloss, a baroque palace that had been despised as a symbol of Prussian imperialism, in order to replace it with the modern Palast der Republik. In fact, the Bundestag's decision also involved the construction of the Humboldt Forum, a new complex that would faithfully reproduce the baroque façade of the old imperial palace. Thus, controversy was served. While some believed that the Palast der Republik represented the oppressive architecture of the fallen regime, others argued that the literal reproduction of the baroque façade was more typical of a Disney theme park than of central Berlin. At this point, advocates for the building's preservation organized around the aforementioned "Volkspalast" initiative (Berlin, Germany, 2005)⁹⁶, which for several years turned it into a dynamic center of cultural experimentation. Thus, giving it new uses and meanings, they managed to deactivate its negative connotations, until it was sadly demolished.

At the opposite extreme from the supporters of the clean slate, there are the aggressive defenders of the petrified heritage who advocate for not touching anything and leaving everything exactly as it is. If it were up to them, the city would look like a stuffed, taxidermied animal with glass eyes. To contradict them, a large number of interventions on public space have been committed to reactivating obsolete pre-existence in order to adapt them to the present without fear of modifying

⁹⁵ Tilla-Durieux Park | Berlin (Germany), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Creation of a new park near Potsdamer Platz. | [LINK](#)

⁹⁶ "Volkspalast": Experimental Cultural Centre | Berlin (Germany), 2005 | Special prize of the Jury in the 2006 edition | A citizen platform took the Palace of the Republic, former parliament of the GDR, in order to turn it into an experimental cultural center until it was demolished to be replaced by a former baroque castle. | [LINK](#)

them. This is the case of the remodelling of the Paseo del Óvalo (Teruel, Spain, 2003)⁹⁷, which seamlessly inserted a monumental elevator into the Mudejar wall to complement its old staircase with infrastructure more in line with current accessibility demands. Equally uninhibited was the paving of the Stortorget, Kalmar's cathedral square (Sweden, 2004)⁹⁸. The history of the city was written on its cobblestones. The dry stone boundaries that delimited the original crops were dismantled to build the walls of the houses and to pave streets and squares. Large, uncut pebbles formed the floor of Stortorget for three hundred years, but, in the middle of the 20th century, the continuity of the pavement was damaged when slabs and curbs were added that differentiated the passage of pedestrians and vehicles. When it came to undoing the damage, literally restoring the original cobblestones would have been a technical challenge in the service of conceptual impertinence. Thus, the gaps in the pavement were filled with contemporary dressings. They are large slabs of pre-cast concrete, lined with a layer of small granite pebbles that look like miniatures of the originals. Thus, the new differs from the old openly, in a game of textures reminiscent of a marquetry board.

Far from damaging memory, this frank dialogue between the ancient and the contemporary expresses the passage of time in a pedagogical manner and adds layers of richness to the city's complex tapestry, yet the physical contrast between solutions from different times is one thing, while the change in the uses and customs that inhabited them and gave them meaning is quite another. In the recent examples of Kalmar and Teruel, they acted on material bodies that preserve their original functions as a plaza and stairway intact. However, often the vestiges of bygone eras have fallen into utter obsolescence and the functions for which they were conceived have lost all validity. This is what has happened to many factories during the era of deindustrialization, and is what will probably also happen, sooner rather than later, to the heavy infrastructure of the car. Even so, the obsolescence of a pre-existence does not necessarily imply that the city should get rid of it, especially given that something that was conceived for a certain purpose can be used in a completely different manner. Among the results of the Prize, countless interventions are dedicated to attributing new uses to the industrial heritage that has been left empty and inactive.

⁹⁷ Remodeling of the Paseo del Óvalo, its staircase and surroundings | Teruel (Spain), 2003 | Joint winner in the 2004 edition | Construction of a new system of lifts by a flight of steps in Teruel. | [LINK](#)

⁹⁸ Stortorget | Kalmar (Sweden), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | Renovation of the pavement in the cathedral square. | [LINK](#)

Due to its lavish scale, it is inevitable to again mention the reconversion of the Zollverein mine (Essen, Germany, 2019)⁹⁹, one of the most important industrial remnants in Germany. In operation since 1847, the complex encompassed an area of more than 80 hectares that included multiple coal extraction pits and several coke distillation plants. However, the decrease in world demand for coal, the gradual extinction of the most accessible deposits, the conversion of the Ruhr basin into one of the most populated metropolitan regions in Europe and the progressive diversification of its economy towards the technological industry and the tertiary services sector led to the sequential closure of the complex, which closed its doors definitively in 1993. Surrounded by new urban developments, its immense extension remained isolated for years, becoming a reserve of flora and fauna protected from any human presence. Since 2019, following the principle of "development through maintenance," restricted areas have receded to give way to a huge park that is deliberately unfinished. In the end, it is becoming accessible with the gradual and continuous contribution of improvements and new elements. For example, in addition to its new recreational function, it has already become one of the most important points on the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

Another notable update of an obsolete industrial infrastructure occurred in the "Baana" intervention (Helsinki, Finland, 2012)¹⁰⁰ already mentioned previously. In 2008, the transfer of the old port to the Vuosaari neighbourhood rendered unnecessary the railway line that, for years, had made possible the traffic of goods to the Central Station. Suddenly, the tear in the useless gorge, dug under the open sky, became more annoying. The option of covering it and turning it into an underground tunnel would restore the continuity of the urban fabric, yet it is expensive and will take time to complete. Meanwhile, it has become a green corridor for cyclists and pedestrians that preserves industrial memory and saves resources for the future. This is similar to the strategy the hermit crab employs when it takes advantage of the empty shell of a dead mollusc as a dwelling place. Similar forms of thanatocrosis—biological interaction in which a living being benefits from another dead—are found in the aforementioned interventions of "A8ernA" (Zaanstadt, Netherlands, 2005)¹⁰¹ and PC Caritas (Melle, Belgium, 2016)¹⁰². The dead husks that are filled with life

⁹⁹ Zollverein Park | Essen (Germany), 2019 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | After two decades of work, an old mining operation which was closed at the end of the twentieth century and subsequently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site is now a large park combining industrial archaeology, green landscape, leisure installations, and cultural facilities. | [LINK](#)

¹⁰⁰ "Baana": pedestrian and bicycle corridor | Helsinki (Finland), 2012 | Special mention in the 2014 edition | A deep railway cutting which slices through the urban fabric has been

converted into a pedestrian and bicycle corridor in a resource-saving collaborative process that also respects the memory of an industrial past. | [LINK](#)

¹⁰¹ "A8ernA" | Zaanstadt (Netherlands), 2005 | Joint winner in the 2006 edition | Layout for the space covered by motorway A8, in the historic centre of Koog aan de Zaan. | [LINK](#)

¹⁰² PC Caritas | Melle (Belgium), 2016 | Special mention in the 2018 edition | Somewhere between a closed building and open space, an old psychiatric hospital pavilion has been partially saved from demolition to offer a peaceful refuge for patients, their families, and people walking in the public park surrounding it. | [LINK](#)

come from the slab of an elevated highway in the first case and an abandoned clinical ward in the second. However, perhaps the most beautiful case of thanatocresis that can be found among the Prize's winners is that of the memorial of the abolition of slavery (Nantes, France, 2011)¹⁰³. During the 18th century, the river port of Nantes was the main starting point for French expeditions dedicated to the slave trade. This is where a good portion of the city's wealth comes from, although, until very recently, only the sumptuousness of the palaces erected by the slave owners attested to this. Suddenly, under one of the docks of the port, a reinforced concrete structure appeared that was periodically submerged by the floods of the Loire River. Coincidentally, its triangular shape was reminiscent of the hold of a slave ship. This significant coincidence led to it being rehabilitated to become a center for the recovery of the memory of slavery. With the same attitude with which Marcel Duchamp would have recycled an *objet trouvé*—ready-made—to turn it into art, Nantes thus endows itself with a public space impregnated with an ethical sense that sheds light on some of the darkest episodes of its past.



On other occasions, the opposite occurs. Instead of injecting new uses and meanings into old pre-existence, some interventions invent objects *ex novo* in order

¹⁰³ Memorial to the abolition of slavery | Nantes (France), 2011
| Special mention in the 2012 edition | A wharf on the Loire
River where slave ships once docked has been renovated with

a new riverside walk that replaces a car park, while a memorial space commemorates the slave trade. | [LINK](#)

to recall historical events. This is the case of the "Ring of Memory" (Ablain-Saint-Nazaire France, 2014)¹⁰⁴, a colossal elliptical structure that crowns the Notre-Dame-de-Lorette hill to commemorate the first centenary of the start of the Great War. Located in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, where more than half a million soldiers from different sides lost their lives during that war, the promontory houses the largest necropolis in France, giving the small town to which it belongs the dark peculiarity of having many more graves than inhabitants. This justifies the irruption of the "Ring of memory," erected in the present to carry wise warnings from the past to the future. This is by no means the only case among the Prize's results in which memory travels through invented objects. In the aforementioned "Havnebadet" baths (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2003)¹⁰⁵, for example, there are several elements that, although new, refer to the industrial past of the Grand Canal: a pergola formed by steel beams recovered from a demolished factory or the roof of a drinks kiosk built out of the inverted hull of an old ferry. In the aforementioned reconstruction of the Homage Tower (Huéscar, Spain, 2007)¹⁰⁶, there has also been a great deal of invention. Fortunately or unfortunately, restoration could not be equivalent this time to consolidating or reproducing a pre-existence, since the original watchtower had been lost to the oblivion of time. For this reason, six hundred years after its destruction, the intervention has reinvented the shape of the tower from a respectful yet frankly contemporary attitude, restoring only its meaning and function. But perhaps the most blatant case of invention of pre-existence is in the reform of the main square of Barking (London, United Kingdom, 2008)¹⁰⁷. On the one hand, there is the Folly Wall, a new manual brick wall that hides the dividing line of a supermarket and that, with its ruined appearance, evokes the exposed brick facades of the old Barking buildings. On the other, there are the arcades leading up to Ripple Road, lit by chandeliers and paved with a checkerboard of large black and white flagstones like the sumptuous villas of Edwardian London. In the end, the eclectic coincidence of these picturesque and extravagant elements dilutes the banality of an urban landscape that had lost its attributes and colours the space of senses, turning it into a recognizable and significant place.

However, landscapes that have lost their attributes are not only reconquered through physical transformations, they can also be filled with senses if the intangible memory

¹⁰⁴ "Ring of Memory": International Memorial of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette | Ablain-Saint-Nazaire (France), 2014 | Special mention in the 2016 edition | An elliptical structure which seems to hover over the landscape expresses the fragility of peace and displays the names of more than half a million victims of different nationalities who lost their lives during the First World War on the hill of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. | [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁰⁵ "Havnebadet" | Copenhagen (Denmark), 2003 | Special mention in the 2004 edition | New public baths in the Grand Canal harbour, in the Islands Brygge district. | [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁰⁶ Homage Tower | Huéscar (Spain), 2007 | Special mention in the 2008 edition | New public lookout built over the ruins of a medieval watch tower. | [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁰⁷ Barking Town Square | London (United Kingdom), 2008 | First prize in the 2008 edition | New town square in the suburb of Barking. | [\[LINK\]](#)

of their intangible heritage is restored. This is what the artistic intervention "Other People's Photographs" (Folkestone, United Kingdom, 2008)¹⁰⁸ achieved. The construction of a new shopping center was the most aggressive transformation that Folkestone had undergone in generations, with streets and buildings were systematically wiped off the map, leading to inhospitable wastelands and temporary parking lots. The place was so alienated from its social fabric, that it lost the symbolic references that had guided it until then. To mitigate this disorientation, the artistic initiative collected more than 1,500 photographs of people from citizens, taken over 125 years in any of the public spaces of Folkestone. They depicted children on bicycles, street parties and other everyday scenes. Each of them was hung in the corresponding public space, accompanied by the voice of its protagonists, who narrated the underlying story. In this manner, individual memories strengthened the collective imagination to re-establish some connections between places and inhabitants.

5. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONTEST

Since 2000, the CCCB has launched ten biennial calls for the European Prize for Urban Public Space. This has been conducted together with other European organizations such as the Netherlands Architectur Center (NAI), The Architecture Foundation (London), Architekturzentrum (Vienna), La Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (Paris), Deutsches Architekturmuseum (Frankfurt) and the Museum of Architecture and Design (Ljubljana). The directors of these institutions are part of the contest's jury, chaired each edition by a renowned architect who is appointed by the CCCB. In addition to its partner organizations, the Prize is also supported by an expert council consisting of urban specialists from across Europe. This board guarantees a wide geographical scope in addition to ensuring that the most relevant works that have taken place do not stop being submitted to the call. Registrations are free and open to any work that has created, recovered or improved a certain public space in the two years since the last edition. The Prize jointly recognizes the authors of the work (for example, architects, engineers, artists) and its promoter (mostly

¹⁰⁸ "Other People's Photographs" | Folkestone (United Kingdom), 2008 | Special mention in the 2008 edition | An artistic intervention that brings together collective memory by means of an exhibition of personal photographs taken in public space. | [LINK](#)

municipalities or a branch of public authority, but also other institutions that sponsored it). The Award is honorary in that it does not carry any remuneration.

6. COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS FOR DISSEMINATION, REFLECTION AND DEBATE

Far beyond the call for entries and the announcement of the Jury's verdict, the award has made a great effort to document the accumulated knowledge and make it accessible to the public in order to promote reflection and debate surrounding the complexities that underlie the urban fact. To begin with, the Online Archive of the Prize brings together the most relevant works that have been presented in each edition and that already constitute a corpus of more than 300 examples of good practices explained through images, descriptive texts, technical figures and typological classifications. In addition, this digital content is also part of traveling exhibitions that have been installed in a large number of cities around the world and that have been accompanied by talks and debates on topics such as mobility, parks, peripheries, waterfronts or heritage. In addition to specific works, the Award's website also includes sections dedicated to reflection, either through interviews with personalities from a wide range of backgrounds who have visited the CCCB, or through specialized articles commissioned from experts from around the world. All of this content offer an open and kaleidoscopic view of the city, always seeking to know which decisions best favour the achievement of high-quality built environments from the perspective of the general interest.

7. LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

After twenty years defending and celebrating Europe's efforts to improve its public spaces, the Prize has collected countless evidence that these shared places are closely linked to the democratic quality of cities. In addition, from the abundant harvest of case studies accumulated over ten editions, important lessons can be drawn on the main challenges that European cities share, no matter how varied their

sizes, geographies, climates or cultures. Among all, perhaps the most outstanding lesson learned is that, far from being nostalgic, defending the European idea of the city is more imperative today than ever—a compact city, of human scale and walkable distances, and a blended city, where diverse people and different functions coexist. Although urban planning, public policies or even citizen claims have too often betrayed this notion of a blended and compact city, the truth is that it constitutes one of the best solutions to fairly and sensibly inhabiting a finite planet facing challenges as severe as demographic explosion, a scarcity of resources, growing inequalities or the climate crisis. However, what if the goal of raising awareness about the importance of public space has already been achieved? What if we now need to be aware of other domains? Perhaps the most painful observation that has emerged throughout the ten editions of the award is that, even if necessary, public space is not sufficient to achieve a compact and blended city. This finding has been revealed especially through the paradox of gentrification: the improvement of streets, squares and parks can lead to an increase in the cost of the homes or shops that surround them and, therefore, in an expulsion of the citizens who most deserved to benefit from it. Thus, a holistic and attentive approach to the interdependencies between public and domestic spaces is more necessary than ever. At the end of the day, houses and streets have always needed each other.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: David Bravo, secretary of the Prize Jury on behalf of the Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB)

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Analysis of the Global Future Cities Components as Governance Tools for Urban Projects

Pinar Caglin
Ban Edilbi
Jean-Paul Hitipeuw
Yelda Reis

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
1. UK PROSPERITY FUND GLOBAL FUTURE CITIES PROGRAMME.....	4
2. GFCP COMPONENTS AS SOFT POWERS FOR URBAN DESIGN	
GOVERNANCE	6
2.1. Strategic Development Phase.....	7
2.2. Implementation Phase.....	8
3. CASE STUDY: INCREASING QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF STREETS	
IN CANKAYA NEIGHBOURHOOD, ANKARA, TURKEY.....	12
4. CONCLUSIONS.....	27

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP) aims to carry out technical assistance for a set of targeted interventions in order to encourage sustainable development and increase prosperity while alleviating high levels of urban poverty. The overall set-up of the Global Future Cities Programme builds upon the UK FCDO (donor) as programme owner—for effective and targeted delivery of the programme, the UK FCDO has engaged five private sector partners for the development and delivery of the 30 strategic interventions. To ensure quality in the overall delivery, UN-Habitat has been engaged by the UK FCDO as a strategic and capacity-building partner.

The GFCP is delivered in two phases: an initial **Strategic Development Phase**, which informs and shapes the (currently ongoing) **Implementation Phase**. Throughout the two described phases, UN-Habitat has employed various tools and methodologies to shape, monitor and improve the urban projects currently under implementation. The tools described below are classified according to the Urban Maestro typology of tools.

In a complementary nature, one case study is presented, through a set of guiding questions posed to UN-Habitat's Strategic Advisors. The project, Increasing Quality and Accessibility of Streets in Cankaya Neighbourhood, Ankara, Turkey, is among the 30 projects currently being implemented under the GFCP.

This case study highlights the value of having a set of tools within a programme of a similar nature to the Global Future Cities Programme. While all tools have been used, not all are deemed effective, given that different tools have different purposes, effects and outcomes. Application of such tools may also depend on the context, the nature of the project and the stakeholders involved, as such tools are deemed effective not only with engaging stakeholders, but also in helping to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda at local levels, promoting sustainable urban development.

This case study demonstrates that UN-Habitat's Urban Lab plays a key role in the GFCP by implementing the soft powers in urban projects in both the Strategic Development and the Implementation Phases. As experienced in the GFCP through 30 interventions across the globe, soft power tools complement the hard powers (formal tools) such as regulatory frameworks, general plans, design standards, and financial incentives. Together with the other interventions, this case study also reveals that soft powers feed into the hard powers present in cities by focusing on the process of carrying out an urban project rather than the end product itself.

INTRODUCTION

This paper builds upon previous and ongoing work by UN-Habitat and demonstrates through examples how the governance of urban planning and design interventions can be regarded as a soft power in establishing sustainable and inclusive design processes, with the ultimate goal to spur sustainable urbanization. Specifically, this paper builds upon the Ankara (Turkey) project within the Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP). In addition to providing this unique case from the GFCP, this paper illustrates similarities and differences in how various soft powers are applied within the programme; hereby, global references are linked to the European context. Furthermore, this paper demonstrates how specific cases can contribute to both achieving and localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (in particular SDG11), as well as the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

This paper is organized by firstly introducing the Global Future Cities Programme, its various partners and the governance structure it has adopted. Secondly, various tools utilized in the Programme are further explained, demonstrating direct linkages to Urban Maestro's typology of tools for the governance of urban design. Thirdly, this case study from the Programme referenced above is presented in order to illustrate how the urban design project utilizes those tools through a series of questions. Finally, this paper concludes with remarks highlighting the value of having a diverse toolkit applied in programmes of a similar nature to the Global Future Cities Programme.

1. UK PROSPERITY FUND GLOBAL FUTURE CITIES PROGRAMME

In 2015, the UK government established a new cross-government Prosperity Fund worth £1.3 billion over 2016-2021 in order to help promote economic growth in developing countries. The Global Future Cities Programme, a component of the larger fund, aims to carry out targeted urban interventions to encourage sustainable development and increase prosperity while alleviating high levels of urban poverty in 19 cities across 10 countries.

The Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP) is a specific component of the Prosperity Fund, which aims to carry out technical assistance through a set of targeted interventions to encourage sustainable development and increase prosperity while alleviating high levels of urban poverty, in particular, based on three thematic pillars: *urban planning, transport and resilience*. The Programme will also create significant short and long-term business opportunities in growing markets.

The overall set-up of the Global Future Cities Programme builds upon the UK FCDO (the donor) as programme owner, who, in order to ensure active and direct engagement in the programme, has deployed responsible programme managers in each of the participating countries. To ensure the effective and targeted delivery of the programme, the UK FCDO has engaged five private sector partners for the development and delivery of the 30 strategic interventions. These private sector partners, composed as consortiums of local and international organizations / companies, report directly to the UK FCDO as programme owner.

Role of UN Habitat's - Urban Lab

To ensure quality of the overall delivery of the Global Future Cities Programme, UN-Habitat has been engaged by the UK FCDO as a strategic and capacity building partner. To undertake this mandate, the Urban Lab of UN-Habitat has been deployed, taking an integrated, inter-disciplinary and impact-oriented approach in order to enhance inclusive and sustainable urban development.

Through this role, the Urban Lab provides participating cities with strategic, policy and technical advice, enabling cities as partners to be informed clients and to develop their own overall capacity and ownership in order to ensure delivery and the sustainability of the projects in the longer term.

The Urban Lab helped identify and define the 30 strategic projects, in consultation and dialogue with the 19 cities, and continues to support the delivery of the programme along its three core areas in order to embed global goals and promote policy change:

1. Strategic Advice and Technical Recommendations: interventions will be strengthened, and stewardship of proposed interventions will be enhanced beyond the Programme.
2. Capacity Development: city authorities are expected to strengthen their technical capacities and enhance their effectiveness in order to sustain the interventions regarding urban planning, transport and resilience. City authorities are also expected to be in a better position to finance interventions.

3. **Knowledge Management:** Awareness will be heightened about inclusive and sustainable urbanization as well as lessons learned from the interventions. As such, the Programme will contribute to the scalability and replicability of good practices.

2. GFCP COMPONENTS AS SOFT POWERS FOR URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE

The GFCP is delivered over two phases: an initial **Strategic Development Phase** to inform and shape the following **Implementation Phase**, which also provides further evidence for the Programme. In each Phase, UN-Habitat has engaged and used several soft power tools to shape, monitor and improve the urban projects in collaboration with the project partners.

The **Strategic Development Phase** of the GFCP was implemented with the support of UN-Habitat from April to December 2018. This phase aimed at supporting the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO) in the identification and definition of 30 strategic interventions in 19 cities across 10 countries. Several key milestones were achieved during the Strategic Development Phase including stakeholder mapping and engagement; intervention definition, context analysis, viability assessment, assessment of the professional capacity and the market maturity of cities; a Transition Training, 20 Charrettes and 19 Validation Workshops.

During the ongoing **Implementation Phase**, private sector partners, referred to as Delivery Partners, provide technical assistance to city authorities regarding the implementation of the 30 strategic interventions. These Delivery Partners launched their work in Autumn 2019 and will continue to do so until the conclusion of the Programme in 2022. As the Programme is classified as Official Development Assistance (ODA), the UK FCDO places great importance on engaging private sector partners so as to have an international and national presence, expertise in cross-cutting issues such as those dealing with gender, and a solid understanding and commitment to the SDGs and the NUA.

As described above, the Global Future Cities Programme is a component of the Prosperity Fund, which was established in 2015 in order to help promote economic growth in developing countries. From this point of view, GFCP stands as a constituent part of the UK's overseas development aid that can already represent a form of financial support which aims to provide technical assistance to encourage

sustainable development and increase prosperity. Therefore, the Programme itself falls within the Support typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.

The following section provides an overview of the various methodologies and tools applied within the Global Future Cities Programme and their respective linkages to the Urban Maestro typologies of tools.

2.1. Strategic Development Phase

City Context Reports: The City Context Reports ground the interventions with broader city trends and transformation dynamics. These reports describe the current city context and provide urban analysis on legal, spatial, and financial factors relevant to the interventions' implementation. They describe each intervention's potential contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, NUA, and Programme objectives in the short, medium and long term. They also outline the main success factors, based on international best practices, which provide recommendations for how proposed interventions could achieve maximum impact. *The City Context Reports fall within the Analysis and Support typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Stakeholder Mapping: Stakeholder mapping supported the validation process for interventions—the Programme identified key stakeholders (the public and private sectors, civil society, donor organisations) that influence the sphere of the proposed interventions. This assisted in understanding the local institutional structures and organisations in place, as well as who the main stakeholders should be for leading the Implementation Phase, as well as the subsequent building, operation and maintenance of the interventions. *The Stakeholder Mapping falls within the Persuasion typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Charrettes: UN-Habitat led the implementation of 20 inclusive and participatory charrettes that drove discussions around intervention definitions, political objectives, and technical barriers and opportunities among relevant stakeholders in the cities involved. Participants included city officials, high-level decision-makers from the public and private sectors, academics, and civil society representatives, who shared their views and opinions through roundtable workshops, plenary feedback sessions, and discussions. The charrettes enabled UN-Habitat and its partners to identify the most appropriate interventions for each city and to foster a sense of common

ownership of the interventions. *The Charrettes fall within the Support, Exploration and Persuasion typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Validation Workshops: Validation workshops were used to consolidate the final definitions of the interventions and Terms of Reference in smaller committees led by key city authorities and high-level political representatives. The validation workshops resulted in key stakeholders and main partners reaching consensus, and increased ownership of the interventions, paving the way for the Implementation Phase. *The Validation Workshops falls within the Support, Exploration and Persuasion typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

ToR Development: The ToRs define the framework for the delivery of the main activities the service provides during the Implementation Phase. The terms of reference describe the scope, context and expected outputs for each urban project, and explain how the interventions link to specific SDGs, the NUA and the goals of the Prosperity Fund. The ToRs were developed based on the outcomes of the aforementioned tools used in the Strategic Development Phase, through a participatory process with all relevant stakeholders, taking into account the city's needs as identified in the City Context Report. *ToR Development falls within the Exploration and Persuasion typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Training and Dialogue Event: UKBEAG hosted a week of Training & Dialogue in London in 2018, which brought together representatives from each of the cities to engage with a group of subject matter experts and share experiences with one another. Among the subject matter experts who contributed to the London event were: the British Standards Institution, Connected Places Catapult, Design Council, HM Treasury Infrastructure & Projects Authority, the Met Office, Ordnance Survey, Transport for London and the UCL Development Planning Unit. *The Training and Dialogue event falls within the Information typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

2.2. Implementation Phase

Theory of Change: The Theory of Change outlines potential drivers and barriers, alongside preconditions for achieving the expected outcomes of each intervention, which will contribute to the identification of potential capacity building and policy reforms in each city to achieve the long-term sustainability of the interventions. UN-Habitat supported the Delivery Partners in the programme by providing guidance and reviews to the country- and project-level ToC developments. Through UN-Habitat's review, strategies could be established to improve the viability of intervention and their long-term impact on the city. *The Theory of Change falls within the Support typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Technical Reviews of Project Outputs: UN-Habitat's thematic and international experts provide technical advice and support the city authorities throughout the Implementation Phase with assessing the main ToR deliverables against two main criteria:

- Level of alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA);
- Strategies in place to make interventions effective and sustainable beyond the Programme's timeframe.

The Technical Reviews fall within the Support typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.

SDG Project Assessment Tool: The SDG Project Assessment Tool (referred to as the SDG Tool) has been developed by UN-Habitat as an offline, digital and user-friendly instrument to guide City Authorities and Delivery Partners in the development of more inclusive, sustainable and effective urban projects. The main purpose of the SDG Tool is to further the alignment of selected urban projects with the SDGs and each of their city's contexts. The objective of the SDG Tool is to:

- Improve the quality of urban projects in the planning, development and design phases to enhance sustainability and inclusiveness;
- Promote an enabling environment that ensures the implementability and viability of the projects in the medium and long term;
- Steer a participatory process between City Authorities and Delivery Partners to develop strategies that optimize each project's alignment with the SDGs and the Programme objectives.

The SDG Tool is applied periodically throughout the various phases of project implementation as an iterative assessment, triggering a discussion among key stakeholders to further improve the projects. Application of the SDG Tool will generate recommendations that aim to identify both weaknesses that could be improved on for projects and strengths, which could contribute to a greater sharing of best practices among cities in the Programme. *The application of the SDG Tool falls within the Support, Exploration, Persuasion and Rating typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Knowledge Platform: The [Global Future Cities Knowledge Platform](#) is a web-based tool for disseminating knowledge between the multiple partners and stakeholders of the Programme, enabling knowledge exchange amongst them, particularly city-to-city learning. The platform facilitates information collection, storage and access, and functions as a repository of curated reports and background information that is relevant for the participating cities, donors and delivery partners. *The Knowledge Platform falls within the Information and Persuasion typologies of tools in the Urban Maestro project.*

Capacity Development: The aim of the Capacity Development component guides the development of the 30 urban projects to enhance their transformative potential, increase their impact and sustain them in the long-term. This component also enhances governance and technical capacity among the cities, in order for them to take ownership of the projects, ensuring both quality and long-term sustainability. This component will complement the technical assistance the Delivery Partners are providing on the ground. As well, thematic webinars and country learning events together with city-to-city learning activities will focus on the enabling environment, thereby reducing barriers and strengthen the drivers for implementation in the areas of:

- Integrated and inclusive planning
- Evidence-based design and the effective use of data
- Governance and collaboration
- Finance and procurement
- Implementation and enforcement

Capacity Development falls within the Information typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.

Normative Outputs: Normative outputs can be defined as the collection and analysis of local best practices in order to establish trends. These outputs are used to generate or contribute to new global standards that can be derived from the Programme, and will reflect on various relevant topics for the GFCP and its contribution to a larger global debate on urban development in emerging economies. This debate will build upon key findings from the Programme across the 19 cities regarding the main urbanisation trends in emerging economies, while also reflecting on key policy knowledge gaps in urban planning, transport and resilience and how these barriers can be addressed so as to maximise long-term impacts and advance the SDGs. In the Strategic Development Phase, two normative outputs were produced:

- Laying the Foundations for Transformative Urban Interventions in Emerging Economies
- Addressing Systemic Barriers for Achieving Sustainable Urbanization in Emerging Economies

The normative outputs fall within the Information and Analysis tools in the typology of tools in the Urban Maestro project.

The table below summarises the GFCP component in the Strategic Development and Implementation phases and the Typology of Tools they fall under the definition put forward by the research conducted under the auspices of Urban Maestro.

GFCP components	Typology of Tools
Strategic Development Phase	
City Context Reports	Analysis, Support
Stakeholder Mapping	Persuasion
Charrettes & Validation Workshops	Support, Persuasion, Exploration
ToR Development	Persuasion, Exploration
Training and Dialogue Event	Information
Implementation Phase	
Theory of Change	Support
Technical Reviews (Project outputs)	Support
SDG Tool (promotion of global frameworks, assessment sessions, recommendations report)	Persuasion, Exploration, Support, Rating
Knowledge Platform (Case studies & Project outputs)	Information, Persuasion
Capacity Development	Information
Normative Outputs	Analysis, Information

In the following section, a specific project is presented through a set of guiding questions posed and responded to by UN-Habitat Strategic Advisors. The project, titled Increasing Quality and Accessibility of Streets in Cankaya Neighbourhood, Ankara, Turkey, is among the 30 projects currently being implemented under the auspices of the GFCP. This project is currently being implemented by a consortium of private sector partners, led by UK-based companies: Arup in Turkey and Mott Macdonald in Myanmar. The project was selected as it has a strong urban design component, with a variety of tools being employed.

3. CASE STUDY: INCREASING QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF STREETS IN ÇANKAYA NEIGHBOURHOOD, ANKARA, TURKEY

Yelda Reis, Local Strategic Advisor - Turkey

Could you briefly describe the project's content and components?

The main objective of the project “Increasing Quality and Accessibility of Streets in Çankaya Neighbourhoods in Ankara” (hereinafter referred to as Çankaya Healthy Streets Project) is to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the Çankaya District Municipality for improving the streets and open public spaces of its neighbourhoods to favour a more liveable urban environment and to promote better life quality. The project is characterized by a socially inclusive and participatory design approach, and is built upon three components for achieving the desired impact. These include;

- Urban Design and Implementation Plans for Healthy Streets (Methodology for measuring the quality of public space and prioritization for pilot area selection, Strategic Plan, Urban Design Project, Participatory Design Process, and Manual for Implementation)
- Capacity Building (Training Programme, Municipal Networking Activity, and Adaptation to Municipality Regulatory Framework)
- Dissemination of the Methodology for Further Replication (Design Manual Handbook for Healthy Streets, Communication and Promotion, and Future Actions for Sustainability)

Following the strategic development phase for Çankaya Healthy Streets Project between January and December 2018, the implementation phase started in September 2019 and is expected to be completed in September 2021.

How did the Strategic Development Phase and the various tools used help shape the project?

The Strategic Development Phase used an interactive participatory process to ensure that the needs and priorities of Çankaya Municipality are integrated into the design and development of the project concept. The various participatory methods

like the charrettes, validation workshops and consultation meetings were applied to engage various stakeholders from the central government, the metropolitan municipality, and national and local NGOs and neighbourhood associations to identify not only existing capacity needs, but also the opportunities and limitations of the city. The charrette was the primary project preparation tool employed wherein key stakeholders contributed their ideas and comments towards the development of the project proposal. The thematic group discussions allowed for the development of the initial scoping studies under the guidance of the recommendations provided for further pursuing the project's main idea. Within this phase, Cankaya Municipality also participated in the Training & Dialogue Week in London which was organized at the programme level, which enhanced the municipality's awareness of the opportunities and challenges in Cankaya, and to better understand the broad range of topics addressed in the programme towards the achievement of the SDG targets.

Were the charrette and validation workshops effectively used to define and validate the project? Did they ensure the participation of vulnerable groups?

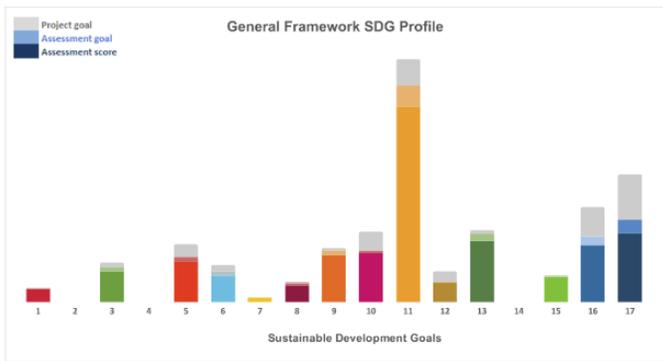
The charrette and validation workshops enabled UN-Habitat to achieve valuable input and contributions from a number of stakeholders in the project design phase. In the charrette, the participants were invited in groups to review the project in terms of cross-cutting issues such as: (1) the built environment (2) natural environment (3) social development (4) gender equality (5) human rights and (6) economic development. In that charrette, they found an opportunity to discuss both the potentially positive and negative aspects of the core project idea, which is to improve quality of life at the scale of streets/neighbourhoods, as determined in the initial scoping studies. While the majority of positive effects represented the how well thought-out the project is, challenging aspects were considered in the development of the main components of the project. Interactive discussions were encouraged to provide feedback from other stakeholders to understand different perspectives and to determine potential risks and opportunities. The validation workshop also enabled the relevant directorates of Çankaya Municipality to have a final input and adjustments on the draft TOR document. The workshops also increased the project ownership and commitment of the Municipality regarding the implementation phase, and although there was not any direct participation of vulnerable groups, their needs and demands were considered through the engagement of local NGOs and neighbourhood associations at the charrette.

From your experience of applying the SDG Tool, what are the benefits of the Tool?

The SDG Tool guides cities with developing interventions towards inclusive and sustainable urbanization, ensuring that project activities adequately incorporate sustainable principles of the SDGs under eight key drivers. The tool also provides an opportunity to assess progress on the technical and effectiveness aspects of project activities by using the performance criteria, supporting the identification of improvement areas for the project's upcoming stages.

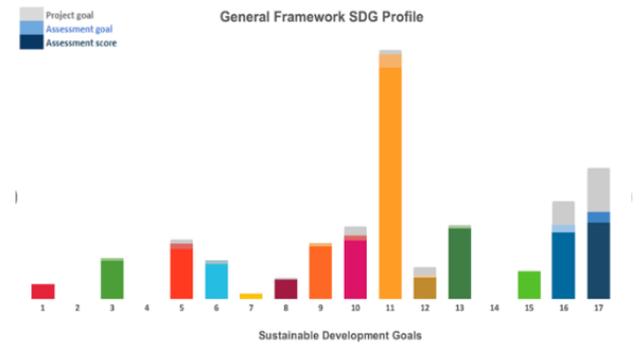
For the Cankaya Healthy Streets project, all parties to the project evaluated and discussed the project's activities using a set of performance criteria in multi-stakeholder and iterative SDG project assessment workshops. The tailored SDG tool for Cankaya Project has 25 sustainability principles and 81 performance criteria under eight technical and effectiveness key drivers which mainly guide urban projects promoting sustainable urbanization. Two sessions have been conducted at the date of writing this paper, with these workshop discussions providing input for addressing "security" and "safety" issues as criteria to be included in the project methodology for existing situation analysis and the development of urban design solutions in the selected pilot neighbourhood. Similarly, the delivery partner has benefited from the scope of the various performance criteria of the SDG Tool in addressing action plans for sustainability while developing the project deliverable "Physical Implementation Programme". Likewise, it has been identified that COVID-19 has had an impact on stakeholder involvement and participatory activities, such as reaching out to different stakeholder groups. Therefore, there is a need to improve the participatory process, stakeholder engagement and awareness/communication activities as addressed by the SDG Tool performance criteria. This has also been highlighted as an important focus area for the next phases, which requires strong coordination and support from Çankaya Municipality.

The SDG project profiles displaying the project progress against the SDGs as a result of the assessment workshops are presented in the graphs below. UN-Habitat's technical recommendations provide input as part of the SDG Project Assessment Tool, which will eventually be adapted into roadmaps/strategies to sustain project implementation. For example, the urban governance perspectives highlighted by PC 46 revealed that the project should formulate good governance principles with defined roles and responsibilities, rather than solely identifying the stakeholders and target groups for the implementation of urban design solutions.



Sustainable Development Goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Assessment score	10	0	45	0	59	38	6	24	68	71	284	29	89	0	37	83	100
Assessment goal	21	0	51	0	66	45	6	27	75	75	315	30	99	0	39	96	120
Project goal	21	0	57	0	84	54	6	30	78	102	354	45	105	0	39	138	186

Figure 1. Cankaya WS1 SDG Profile (June 2020)



Sustainable Development Goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Assessment score	21	0	54	0	71	49	6	27	75	83	329	31	100	0	39	94	108
Assessment goal	21	0	57	0	78	54	6	27	78	90	348	33	102	0	39	105	123
Project goal	21	0	57	0	84	54	6	30	78	102	354	45	105	0	39	138	186

Figure 2. Cankaya WS2 SDG Profile (January 2021)

In your opinion, does the Tool facilitate horizontal and vertical collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders in your city/country? If so, how? What would in your opinion be the key benefits of engaging partners in the SDG Tool session related to your project?

The SDG Tool application process has facilitated close coordination and dialogue between key stakeholders. The constructive and participatory discussions have identified improvement areas on the technical and effectiveness aspects of project activities towards the achievement of the SDG targets. Besides internal technical meetings during the Implementation phase, key stakeholders have found the workshop an opportunity to re-evaluate the project activities against the sustainability principles and also the limitations/external factors, derived from the current circumstances in the city that are affecting the implementation stage. External factors affecting the project’s alignment with the SDGs have also become more visible—for example, the existing safety/security analysis addressed by PC 7 highly depends on access to data and requires a higher-level collaboration with other public authorities, such as the Ministry of the Interior and Security Forces (the Police).

During the workshops, stakeholders have also identified potential areas for close collaboration which are essential to increasing the chances of success within the project’s scope and timeframe. Cankaya Municipality understands that site-specific disaggregated data gathered from complaints and demands should be integrated into their workflows to improve existing urban environment conditions. The delivery partner has also shared their expectations from the Municipality for the timely and effective implementation of communication and community engagement plans.

Another example of the added value of the Tool to the project is that the delivery partner has integrated an outstanding approach following the first SDG Tool workshop in designing a project methodology that analyzes the existing site to

develop urban design solutions in the pilot area. There are eight themes, with two sub-themes each, that have been identified to ensure compliance with the sustainability principles of the tailor-made SDG Tool for the project; these are **security, comfort, inclusiveness, physical safety, people's voices, public spaces, sustainable environment and right to the street**. Each theme has been discussed in detail to provide technical guidance on the different components of streets. As displayed in the graph below, this work is an excellent example for other projects in the Programme, demonstrating the relation between the tailor-made SDG Tool and the Cankaya project's methodology (Urban Design Project Report, Arup, October 2020).



Figure 3. Cankaya Healthy Streets Project Framework: Main and sub-themes

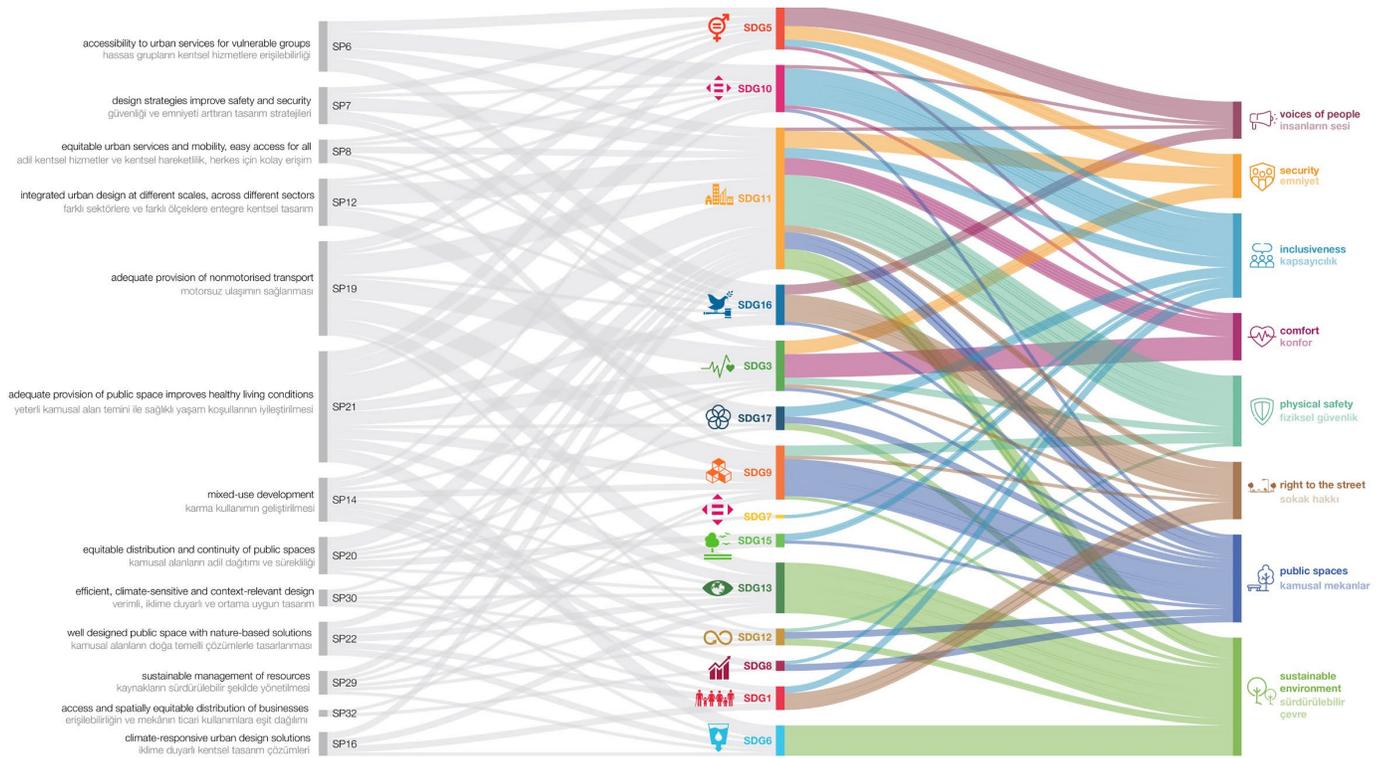


Figure 4. Mapping the relevance of the project methodology to the Sustainability Principles of the Tailored SDG Tool (Arup)

It is worth noting that the delivery partner has prepared a paper to introduce the SDG tool application process in Cankaya Project and its contributions to project development. This paper will be published in an academic journal and subsequently on the Global Future Cities Knowledge Platform.

Does the SDG Tool help to bring the international agenda on sustainable urbanization in your city? If so, how?

The SDG Tool ensures that the project aligns with the norms and standards recognized by international agendas for inclusive prosperity, sustainable urbanization and gender mainstreaming to meet the project objectives. The SDG Tool provides integrated and interdependent principles that address the key components of sustainable urbanization on the environmental, social, and economic dimensions.

The post-workshop evaluation results reveal that the SDG Tool has assisted in heightening Cankaya Municipality's awareness of social inclusion and the UN-Habitat's cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, gender, human rights, vulnerable/disadvantaged groups, given that they are embedded into the Sustainability Principles in the SDG Tool. According to a survey conducted during the 2nd SDG Workshop, it was agreed that the urban design solutions in the pilot

area, technical capacity building and stakeholder engagement perspectives were key areas to which the project mostly contributed. Furthermore, the social inclusion, participation and sustainability aspects of the project are considered as replicable aspects for other projects within the municipality.

No Poverty (SDG 1): Strategies should be adopted to eradicate all forms and dimensions of poverty. In this respect, the themes of right to the street and inclusiveness come into prominence in order to address the lack of transportation and access within the scope of SDG 1.

Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3): Healthy lifestyles for people should be ensured. Not only the economically advantageous group, but everyone should be provided with access to high standards of healthcare. SDG 3 is discussed under the themes of security and physical safety, as well as the theme of comfort. In addition, it is related to the themes of right to the street and public spaces.

Gender Equality (SDG 5): Equality between men and women should be ensured. The position of all women and girls in the society should be strengthened. SDG 5 is heavily associated with the theme of voices of people. In addition, it touches upon the themes of security, inclusiveness, and comfort.

Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6): All individuals should be provided with access to clean water in a sustainable manner. SDG 6 is connected to the theme of sustainable environment.

Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7): All individuals should be provided with access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy. SDG 7 is discussed under the theme of inclusiveness.

Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8): In the urban environment, a healthy work environment should be supported with an uninterrupted, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth. SDG 8 is discussed under the themes of public spaces and inclusiveness.

Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9): An inclusive, solid, sustainable, and innovative infrastructure should be promoted. SDG 9 is discussed under the themes of physical safety, right to the street, and sustainable environment, as well as the theme of public spaces.

Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10): Regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, economic status, or other statuses, everyone should be empowered in the economic, social, and cultural sense. Within the framework of SDG 10; the themes of voices of people, comfort, and public spaces, as well as the theme of inclusiveness, are discussed.

Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11): Inclusive, safe, strong, and sustainable cities and settlements where all citizens have a quality life and where common welfare is achieved should be built. The themes that serve SDG 11 are the themes of physical safety, sustainable environment, comfort, security, public spaces, inclusiveness, and right to the street in that order according to their flow rates.

Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12): It should be ensured that resources are used responsibly and that both consumption and production are sustainable. SDG 12 is discussed under the themes of public spaces, sustainable environment, and physical safety.

Climate Action (SDG 13): Action should be taken to mitigate climate change and its potential effects. SDG 13 is closely related to the theme of sustainable environment.

Life on Land (SDG 15): Soil ecosystems should be protected and rebuilt, and their sustainable use should be promoted. SDG 15 is discussed under the themes of inclusiveness and public spaces.

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16): Implementation methods for sustainable development should be strengthened. Institutions that are efficient in every field, can be held accountable, and are inclusive should be established by bringing together municipalities, non-governmental organizations, private sector representatives, and universities. SDG 16 is closely related to the themes of voices of people and public spaces, as well as the theme of right to the street.

Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17): Implementation methods should be strengthened, and the global partnership for sustainable development should be revived. The themes that serve SDG 17 are the themes of inclusiveness, public spaces, and sustainable environment.

To summarize; the themes of physical safety, security, comfort, inclusiveness, sustainable environment, right to the street, public spaces, and voices of people serve respectively 12, 5, 7, 10, 9, 11, and 4 sustainable principles.

Figure 5. Scope of Project Main Themes against the relevant SDGs (Arup)

How engaged are your project partners with the Global Future Cities Knowledge Platform? Are they active users? In which ways is the platform contributing to this project?

Çankaya Municipality is not an active user of the Knowledge Platform, while the Delivery Partner has shared information regarding project progress updates and the online participatory design of tools for the adaptation of stakeholder engagement due to COVID-19. UN-Habitat engages both project partners in disseminating their insights and feedback on the platform regarding the SDG Tool following the workshops. Nevertheless, the Municipality has demonstrated a lack of interest in using the platform since language barriers are still a common challenge for the municipalities in Turkey. The communications-based activities, as determined at the beginning of the project, have not even been effectively implemented or supported by the Municipality. It is also worth noting that the recordings of the UKBEAG capacity development thematic programme have been uploaded with Turkish translations on the platform, which has been very helpful for the Municipality in providing access to training documents and presentations.

What is the reflection of the City Authorities on the capacity development component? Would this project benefit from capacity development activities directly or indirectly? How?

The programme level capacity development component (CD) is complementary to the project level capacity building activities. While designing the programme's capacity development activities with regards to scope and methodology, the needs and demands of the cities were heavily considered so as to strengthen the effectiveness and ensure sustainability and successful project implementation beyond the programme timeframe. The thematic content of the CD component has addressed the city-level limitations and challenges, which became apparent during the workshops conducted as part of the SDG Tool application. Some of the technical and effectiveness aspects addressed by the SDG Tool performance criteria (inclusive urban planning, data-based management, monitoring and evaluation, project financing mechanisms and participatory process) are critical areas that are needed by the Municipality to ensure sustainability. Through the CD program, Çankaya Municipality is better positioned to understand not only the alignment of their projects and policies towards the SDGs, but also major requirements for the implementation of urban design project components.

The project level training sessions are designed and implemented in the Municipality by the delivery partner for three target groups: decision-makers, technical staff and field workers. The healthy streets approach, SDGs, Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) perspective, communication tools, public awareness, site analysis

techniques, urban design strategy making, project implementation roadmap and urban design detailing are the main areas addressed in the training sessions.

Prior to the first SDG tool workshop for the Cankaya Project, UN-Habitat prepared and implemented a short training session to introduce the SDG Tool's methodology and general policy framework for the SDGs and New Urban Agenda. This session was informative and was considered as a capacity development activity, as it will likely enhance the understanding of key drivers and principles of sustainable urbanization and help bridge key concepts of the SDGs to the municipality.

How would you describe UN-Habitat's contribution to the project's development by providing technical reviews?

UN-Habitat contributes to the development of each project's outputs through technical reviews and recommendations, which are focused on identifying critical issues and ensuring that the projects are being developed in a sustainable and inclusive manner. The technical reviews have always considered to what extent each project's outputs comply with the sustainability principles and performance criteria set out in the tailored SDG Tool.

The recommendations provided as a result of the technical reviews intensify the level of engagement of multiple stakeholders including beneficiaries and civil society organizations towards each stage of a project, and ensure the taking of relevant measures for active participation beyond the consultation level, though it was obvious that the current pandemic conditions have strongly hampered this participatory process. The technical reviews provided feedback to integrate safety issues in the project methodology for designing public spaces to promote non-motorized transport. The reviews are also very helpful for the SDG Tool pre-assessment stage to guide technical discussions with the Municipality.

How were normative outputs utilized in the project? Have any been developed as part of the project, and can the project contribute to the development of urban planning and design guidebooks in the future? Are there any Urban Design Guidelines developed for your city? If yes, have they been of any use for the GFCP? How?

Cankaya Municipality has gained practical knowledge on the approaches for implementation of urban design solutions, which have been proposed for the selected pilot area. The Cankaya project has provided valuable outputs: a

methodology for measuring the quality of public space, urban design strategy and pilot implementation designing approach at the neighbourhood level in the combination of five design components for healthier streetscapes and viable urban spaces; mobility, hardscape, landscape, digital and lighting and an implementation manual. The development of “**Design Standards and indicators Guideline for Healthy Streets**” is a major project deliverable and is being developed for the first time in the city, which increases the possibility for replication in other neighbourhoods in Ankara. This guideline will also contribute to the ongoing regulatory framework studies directed by the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning in Turkey.

The proposed UN-Habitat guidebook is complementary to the Cankaya guideline in defining detailed urban design components/requirements at the local level and providing a comprehensive roadmap for designing healthier and more resilient land uses. Through global experiences with smaller-scale urban design projects, the UN-Habitat guidebook can present how urban design standards respond to the local context and ensure long-term sustainability issues.

Are the soft power tools in GFPC commonly used in your city? If yes, which ones? How do they work?

Within the implementation phase of the Çankaya Project, community engagement and participatory processes are key to ensuring that the project’s activities are appropriate and suit the needs and expectations of the communities and other relevant stakeholders. Given that COVID-19 has highly impacted stakeholder involvement and active participation, online participatory tools have been utilized to sustain a social inclusion perspective in order to reach diverse social groups, including women, youth, children and elderly people. Street interviews, surveys, focus groups, interactive workshops and online design workshops were very helpful to understanding the existing needs, opportunities and challenges that are faced by the community and stakeholders in the pilot area. In a series of citizen workshops, a number of scenarios for healthy and safer streets were tested with all identified groups for the development of urban design solutions.

Which other soft powers are being used in your city in urban design projects? (not covered by GFCP) If there are, what are the similarities/differences compared to the governance tools applied in the GFCP? Are there any complementarities/synergies?

The Turkish experience indicates that urban design projects are a matter of national-level regulatory framework of land use planning (No. 3194) which defines building densities, routes and the widths of roads and streets, alongside the distribution of social infrastructure (such as educational and health services, and public and religious buildings) in relation to the population's needs. Public participation is strictly limited to conducting surveys and joining informative meetings. Once the local level land use plan is prepared, the public is notified that they have one month to review and object to the proposal.

Urban design project competitions/exhibitions are organized by all national and local level authorities. Those design works are developed by professional experts in the fields of urban design, architecture, landscape and other related subjects. However, they rarely include local communities and NGOs in the decision-making process, which would otherwise build a dialogue with the land use planning authorities.

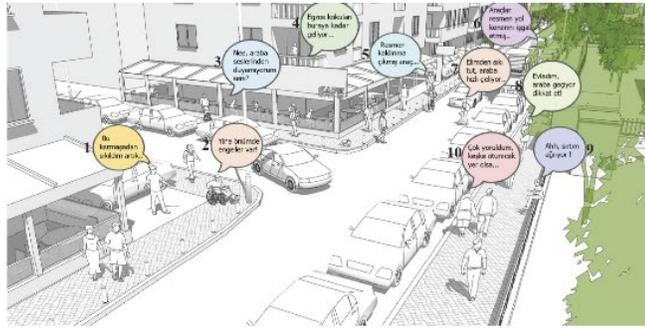
On the other hand, there have been certain improvements in the implementation of participatory activities, as individual initiatives are likely supported by some of the district and metropolitan municipalities (Kadıköy, Mersin, Istanbul), urban design ateliers are being developed to gather all affected people and enhance their involvement so as to decide on and shape urban development concepts at the local level. Participatory techniques have become widely used by local authorities for land use planning and strategy development as well. But again, the focus should be on designing participatory processes in urban planning phases; analysis, development of shared vision, strategies, prioritized projects and detailed action plans through the participation of interest groups.

Regarding the urban design, there are strategic documents and urban policies developed by Çankaya Municipality that increase open/green areas and the share of non-motorized modes and public transportation to promote healthy urban spaces at the district level (*Çankaya Urban Health Indicators and Çankaya Urban Health Development Plan, 2019-2023 (in terms of liveability, healthy green areas, pedestrian and cycling priority and effective public transport systems)*, *Çankaya Municipality Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) 2015-2020 (in terms of buildings, transport and challenging greenhouse gas emissions)*, *Çankaya Municipality Strategic Plan*).

The GFCP soft power instruments highly complement the city level policies and provide an important opportunity to showcase how to develop the urban design process (such as analysis/strategy-making, implementation-operations/maintenance and monitoring). Moreover, the pilot implementation component of the project is the core activity to formulate concrete urban design solutions and a roadmap for implementation to promote accessible and viable urban spaces at the neighbourhood level by integrating a participatory approach.

Egzersiziz 1: Mevcut durum üzerinden sorun tespiti

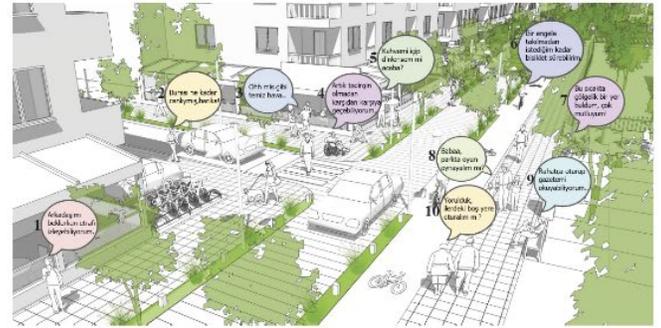
Exercise 1: Problem definition through the current situation



- 1 : "I'm tired of this mess"
- 2 : "There are obstacles in front of me .Again!"
- 3 : "What?? I can't hear you from car sounds!"
- 4 : "Exhaust odor is coming up here!"
- 5 : "Unbelievable! The car is on the pavement."
- 6 : "Cars occupied the roadside!"
- 7 : "Hey,take my hand! A fast car is coming"
- 8 : "Dearie be careful! The car is coming"
- 9 : "Ugh! My back hurts!"
- 10 : "I'm so tired. I wish there was a seat!"

Egzersiziz 1: Öneri sokak tasarımı üzerinden beklentiler ve hayaller

Exercise 1: Expectations and dreams on proposal street design



- 1 : "I can watch around while waiting for my friends"
- 2 : "Fantastic! This place is so energetic"
- 3 : "Finally, fresh air!"
- 4 : "I can cross the street without being nervous anymore"
- 5 : "Maybe I can rest with drinking coffee"
- 6 : "I can ride a bike as much as I want without"
- 7 : " I found a shady seating place in this heat. I am so happy"
- 8 : "Daddy, shall we play game in the park?"
- 9 : "I can sit comfortably and read the newspaper"
- 10 : "We are tired. Shall we sit there in a bank?"

Figure 8. Visualization of the project's healthy streets concepts

Do you think GFCP governance tools (soft powers) are effective and would trigger a change in the governance of urban design projects in the city?

The SDG Tool is one of the instruments used during the project implementation phase. The sustainability principles of the Tool address strategies and approaches to ensure the continuous participation and active engagement of stakeholders including diverse social groups. Based on stakeholder analysis and institutional setting, horizontal and vertical integration dimensions have also been explored with defined roles and responsibilities across all city levels.

The project-level capacity development programme is highly effective for key stakeholders in the Municipality to increase awareness and knowledge on the whole urban design process; strategy making, analysis, urban design and planning phases, maintenance and operation, with the participatory and social inclusiveness perspectives.

Manuals for physical implementation and urban design guidelines are informal guidance documents that enhance the possibility for project replication in other local contexts within the city for better urban quality. In fact, they provide suggestions

rather than obligations on a wide range of functions, such as practical design guidance, design strategy, principles, framework, dimensions (landscape, hardscape, lighting elements, land use planning etc.), design techniques, and implementation tools (such as participatory methods or the design process). This will also highly contribute to the implementation of urban design solutions on the ground both technically and inclusively. The development of a guidance document and participatory design processes can trigger a change in the design governance and simply lead to no longer requiring lengthy procedures for alterations in the regulatory framework.

What conclusions and learnings can you draw (at this point) from the GFCP on how various governance tools can contribute to more sustainable governance from an urban design perspective? Any recommendations to share?

The SDG Tool, stakeholder engagement, participatory activities and capacity development are effective urban governance tools implemented in the Cankaya Project. The SDG Tool application process has provided the possibility to incorporate principles and criteria contributing to the achievement of integrated, inclusive, and sustainable design approaches during the project implementation phase. However, the effectiveness of the Tool would be higher if it had been integrated into the project design phase.

The involvement of stakeholders and the community in the urban design and planning of urban spaces are key to achieving sustainable and inclusive development. It allows for the building trust and better communication between the Municipality and the community while understanding their problems and design process for their own neighbourhoods. An effective participatory process will also strengthen the level of co-operation between decision-makers and the community, which would thereby contribute to the democratization and empowerment of the society. Due to restrictions imposed by governments in response to COVID-19, the participatory process in Cankaya Project has been limited to the consultative/informational level for analysing the needs and expectations at the local level, but is also intended to include co-designing activities to shape their future together. The development of a shared vision, strategies, prioritized projects, detailed action plans and design solutions through the participation of the community and relevant stakeholders would have also increased their ownership during the realization of the project, which is typically the case in Turkey. The participatory practices do not allow citizens to be involved in urban decision-making processes. Various mechanisms like public hearings, awareness campaigns, citizen forums, community outreach, and citizen advisory groups should be created or formed under

close collaboration with the Municipality to ensure participation at the local level. The experiences from best practices around the world demonstrate that NGOs can initiate and lead the participatory process at the local level.

On the other hand, the programme and project-level capacity building activities are effective for ensuring project sustainability and improving institutional ownership. Considering that the UKBEAG Capacity Development Programme started near the project's conclusion, the timing will ensure the obtaining of an appropriate contribution and guidance from the Municipality in developing project activities.

In your opinion, how can governance tools (soft powers) in urban design contribute to meeting the 2030 Agenda, and in particular, the SDG11 and the NUA?

The urban design governance tools accelerate the achievement of the effective implementation of the SDG11 and NUA, which go beyond planning and physical implementations on urban space. SDG11 targets address the promotion of local creativity, living and human concepts with a non-discriminatory approach and stimulating bottom-up processes for inclusive and integrated planning. They recognize citizens as the main actors of planning and development which shape their future urban spaces. Integration of the participatory approach into the urban design process provides an active engagement and cooperation of all stakeholders and community who have various powers, interests and institutional relationships.

The NUA makes the governance dimensions explicit alongside the ways in which cities are planned, designed, governed and financed to achieve sustainable development. The implementation of the capacity development programmes and the SDG Tool cultivate the technical and professional capacities of city authorities on integrated dimensions of sustainable development. Similarly, the application of the participatory urban design process empowers collaboration between all spheres of government and increases civic engagement in shaping their cities, which will facilitate the possibilities for building partnerships with all levels of stakeholders. The guidance documents for the Urban Design Standards provide physical and social integration in the design of urban spaces towards better implementation practices with various approach options instead of prescriptions and obligations provided via regulations.

The UN-Habitat's SDG Tool also provides capacity development to local authorities who are the main actors in urban development and the provision of urban services. Besides increasing collaboration and dialogue, the local goals are developed by all key stakeholders using a set of Sustainability Principles towards better implementation of the SDGs. The discussions held during the SDG workshops

provide that city contexts are taken into account based on harnessing local opportunities, limitations, and priorities. The Tool serves in localizing the SDGs and facilitates and catalyses sustainable development by linking the global, national, regional and local levels using a set of criteria under eight key drivers. The relevance between the project's methodology/outputs and the SDGs framework can be clearly defined.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The case study presented above highlights the value of having a set of tools within a programme of a similar nature to the Global Future Cities Programme. While all the tools have been used, not all have been deemed effective. Through the case study, and in relation to the 30 strategic interventions conducted across 19 cities, it is clear that the tools differ in their level of impact, depending on the city's local context, capacities, and reception to the tools. Differences in local contexts and complexities result in the tools having to be adapted for each application.

The case study has also revealed that governance and soft power tools should be, to an extent, applied early on in a project during the design and conceptualization stages in order to achieve a more effective implementation. Further, it can also be noted that different tools have different purposes, effects and outcomes, which also depend on when in the project cycle they have been applied. The application of such tools may also depend on the context or nature of the project and the stakeholders involved. In essence, tools, as discussed in this paper, are deemed to not only engage stakeholders, but also to help in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda at the local level, promoting sustainable urban development.

This case study has also demonstrated that UN-Habitat's Urban Lab plays a key role in the GFCP by implementing the soft powers in urban projects in both the Strategic Development and Implementation Phases. As a strategic partner to the UK FCDO, Urban Lab supports the governance of the urban projects in the 19 cities across the programme by empowering informal tools such as city-wide analysis, participatory charrettes and workshops, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building events, as well as technical support for project design and monitoring as discussed in this paper. Through the effective use of such soft power tools, UN-Habitat helps cities to deliver better urban projects.

As experienced in the GFCP in 30 interventions across the globe, soft power tools complement hard powers (formal tools) such as regulatory frameworks, general plans, design standards, and financial incentives. Furthermore, this case study has also revealed that soft powers feed into those hard powers present in cities by focusing on an urban project's process than its end result.

Among the tools described in this paper, the SDG Tool has the significant power to improve urban design projects. Firstly, it brings the global agenda down to the project level given that the tool itself is built upon the SDGs and NUA principles. Secondly, it creates an opportunity to bring project partners together to discuss the project's outputs, thus enhancing the iterative consultation and feedback throughout the project implementation. Thirdly, because of the scoring process of the outputs, it serves as a ranking instrument and helps to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project. Lastly, through the involvement of technical experts in reviews and deriving the technical recommendations from the workshop discussions, it supports City Authorities with cultivating knowledge and expanding their technical capacity. Together with the overall experience of the GFCP programme, this case study confirms that the SDG Tool is an efficient and innovative soft power developed and implemented by the UN-Habitat Urban Lab to shape sustainable, inclusive and resilient cities.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Pinar Caglin, Urban Planner; Ban Edilbi, Urban Planner; Jean-Paul Hitipeuw, International Strategic Advisor – Myanmar; Yelda Reis, Local Strategic Advisor – Turkey

Contributors: Klas Groth; Cecilia Bertozzi; Frederic Saliez

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Citywide public space inventory and assessment tool

Joy Mutai

Associate coordination officer,
Global Public Space
Programme, UN-Habitat

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS	4
2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL.....	4
3. THE APPROACH.....	6
3.1. Part 1: Pre-fieldwork.....	6
3.2. Part 2: Data collection and quality check	10
3.3. Part 3: Reporting	12
3.4. Part 4: Post-citywide assessment	17
4. IMPACT OF THE CITY-WIDE PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT TOOL	19
5. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION	21
6. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	31
7. CONCLUSION	33

INTRODUCTION

Little effort has been made towards developing citywide public space networks and correcting spatial imbalances in public space supply, distribution and quality in different neighbourhoods and settlements within cities. Additionally, in most cities, marginalised groups and other minorities are systematically excluded from decision-making processes and therefore their knowledge is not incorporated in the policy-making process and the way public spaces are planned and designed. This paper therefore, describes the citywide public space assessment tool and how planning public space strategies and designs is anchored within good governance. It describes how governance structures in planning and design of public spaces must be adapted or re-designed to accommodate stakeholder participation. This means that as local governments plan for public space networks, the roles and voices of different stakeholders ought to be included to improve the suitability of actions, increase support and facilitate implementation.

The tool is placed within a flexible framework designed to aid local governments and partners working in public space development to assess public spaces while ensuring social inclusion and human rights are considered through the process. This supports the development of a prioritized set of interventions – both spatial and non-spatial– that government and private entities can take to address. To ensure that recommendations are implementable, the regulatory framework, urban planning instruments, financing structure and institutional set-up are considered in the process. The findings and key recommendations are drawn from the application of the tool in 30 cities. By applying this tool, cities are able to understand the state of their public spaces, specifically the network, distribution, accessibility, quantity and quality of their public spaces. This supports the development of a comprehensive evidence-based public space strategy or policy. This approach to policy-making and strategy development brings coordination among government levels and between public and non-public actors and the civil society in planning citywide public space networks. The tool is also key to monitor and achieve the public space commitments within the New Urban Agenda and the Agenda 2030.

1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

To support local governments to include a network of public spaces as part of their development plans, UN-Habitat developed the citywide public space inventory and assessment tool. This tool has been designed within a flexible framework to aid local governments and partners working in public spaces to assess the network¹, distribution², accessibility³, quantity⁴, and quality⁵ of their public spaces in a cost-effective way. The tool takes a participatory approach that aims to determine priority areas and sectors of intervention – both spatial and non-spatial– that government and private entities can take to address them.

Public spaces play a key role in achieving inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements. This means that interventions in public space can support achievement in several other targets within the 2030 Agenda and commitments within the New Urban Agenda. Since the monitoring of SDG 11.7⁶ and the public space commitments in New Urban Agenda are done at the city level, this citywide public space assessment tool also supports local governments to report their progress towards achieving these commitments.

2. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL⁷

The citywide public space inventory and assessment is a digital tool developed to assess public spaces in cities and identify gaps for the development of long-term public space strategies and policies. It utilizes a digital questionnaire that can be contextualized to fit different contexts and priorities. Therefore, the assessment could either be formulated to capture the broad and diverse aspects of public space or it can emphasize certain thematic [8] or geographical areas [9]. Application of the tool provides a basis for the actual state of public spaces in the city; that includes the state of public space, the problems, and their causes. Mapping of the supply, quality

¹ A system of public spaces

² Spatial balance of public spaces across the city

³ Spatial accessibility of public space to the population within walking distances

⁴ Proportion of urban surface devoted to public spaces

⁵ Main design features, operation, and management (comfort, universal access, use, users, amenities and green)

⁶ By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green, and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

⁷ The full document can be found: <https://unhabitat.org/city-wide-public-space-assessment-toolkit-a-guide-to-community-led-digital-inventory-and-assessment>

and distribution of public spaces are important, in order to determine priority areas and sectors of intervention, this included institutional, financial and regulatory frameworks. It also identifies where public spaces may be lacking, areas where there might be over provision, poor quality public spaces or poorly located public spaces and where there are opportunities for improvement to meet the local needs. This approach supports the development of evidence-based policy, regulatory and spatial strategy development as well as provides a potential to reorganise institutional set-up and financial mechanisms within the city.

A citywide public space assessment can be commissioned by a local government due to several reasons, which could be:

1. A city might not have an inventory of their public spaces.
2. A city would like to develop a new public space strategy or update an existing public space strategy⁸.
3. A city would like to revise their institutional, legal, and regulatory frameworks and understand where to allocate funding more efficiently.
4. A city would like to tackle emerging issues such as climate change, safety, biodiversity loss, unplanned urbanization, encroachment of public spaces, heritage loss, and accessibility among others.
5. A country would like to revise or mainstream public space in their National Urban Policy⁹.

Once the objective of the assessment has been developed, it is crucial to understand the spatial scale of the assessment within cities. The public space assessment could cover two different scales: the administrative boundary¹⁰ and the urban extent¹¹. In some instances, the assessment could be designed for specific neighbourhoods/geographical areas within the city. This could be in the case where the city would like to pilot and test the public space assessment tool and methodology in the city or where the neighbourhood has an independent government body and would like to develop strategies for their neighbourhood. The geographic scope and the overall objective of the assessment are set prior to undertaking the assessment.

⁸ Public space strategies can range from thematic ones such as public space and health strategy, by typology such as a park strategy, or an activation strategy for public spaces or public market strategy. They can also be ambitious and incorporate several themes and typologies. This is, however, dependent on the objective of the city

⁹ In this case, the country will focus on a sample of cities that are representative of the country and conduct the assessments in these cities.

¹⁰ In this case, cities are able to develop strategies within clearly defined jurisdictions. It also becomes easy both in terms of gathering statistics and politically. Additionally, administrative units are frequently those for which policies are implemented.

¹¹ It is important to note that in some contexts, urban extents go beyond the administrative boundary of the city and may include other cities/jurisdictions. Therefore, a clear governance structure needs to be set-up.

3. THE APPROACH

UN-Habitat works with different city governments and partners in conducting citywide public space assessments in their respective cities. The model is flexible and dependent on the capacities of the local government and partner. The city-wide public space assessment tool ensures the active participation of the community through the process from formulation of the reference group, development of the assessment to proposing policy and strategic recommendations for the city's public spaces.

Capturing data in the field usually means using paper, however, the citywide public space inventory and assessment uses an open source application called Kobo Collect¹². The application is supported by android software but can be used by iPhone users through a web form. It supports multiple languages and further works offline. By using a smartphone or tablet, field data can be collected with all the advantages that electronic data gathering brings (value input control, auto-skipping irrelevant sections, elimination of transcribing errors from paper, etc.).

The process of conducting a citywide public space assessment has been designed into four parts that are progressive with outputs that are as important as the process and social inclusion being considered at all stages of the process. The process includes (i) pre-field work, (ii) data collection, (iii) reporting and (iv) post- citywide assessment. Each of these parts has steps that should be followed with activities, tools and inspiring cases that are drawn from partners and UN-habitat's experiences working in cities. UN-Habitat recommends that each city follow the process to guarantee long-term appropriate provision, quality and accessibility of public spaces. However, it recognizes that cities are different with different capacities and are at different stages of development. Therefore, depending on the objective of the city and the level of public space provision there are certain steps that are not mandatory to undertake.

3.1. Part 1: Pre-fieldwork

Pre-fieldwork involves preparing clear protocols for ensuring high quality, consistent and accurate collection of data. It aims at developing a contextualized tool and

¹² Open source mobile application, which allows the creation of a questionnaire form, fill it out on a mobile phone or tablet,

store and view the aggregated information on a central server, and retrieve the aggregated data to one's computer for analysis.

process fit for the city. It outlines 5 key steps and activities that should be conducted with each step having outputs that are important for the next steps.

Step 1: Reference/Project Group

A citywide public space inventory and assessment preparation does not belong to a single department function, a joint approach is required between all relevant stakeholders. This means representatives from different stakeholders, government departments within the city, experts and representatives from gender groups, youth and human rights council, persons with disabilities , older persons group and representatives from women and children, private sector, academia, NGOs and community members will be part of the reference group.

The reference group does not have to be formed as a permanent institution that will take over the roles of the existing government agency currently involved in public space. The reference group is an ad hoc team that can better coordinate stakeholders to accelerate the citywide public space assessment planning. Therefore, the public space planning department within the local authority should take a leading role.



IMAGE 1: Reference group for the district-wide public space assessment in Jianghan, Wuhan, China © Wuhan Landuse and Spatial Planning Research Centre

Step 2: Developing the assessment

The citywide public space assessment is designed to fit the local context. This step supports the preparation of the questionnaire that will be used in the field. The citywide public space assessment is divided into the following dimensions: city-wide and site-specific. Workshops and seminars are conducted with relevant stakeholders, community members, government bodies to define the assessment scope¹³, questionnaire, and the thematic¹⁴ entry point. This is to ensure that everyone is involved from the onset and alignment with existing approaches/activities are set. If a city is focused on a specific theme, additional dimensions could be added as well as new indicators in the existing dimensions. The results from this will be used to judge change in public space quality and provision. These indicators can incorporate indicators and benchmarks already set by the local government, national government and globally. The translation of the final assessment/digital questionnaire to the local language is done at this stage as well as testing the tool during the workshops.

Step 3: Information gathering

The reference group collects all the information relevant to public space, reviewing existing strategies, laws and regulations, assessing institutional set-up, financial plans as well as mapping of public space related initiatives in the city by government, partners and key stakeholders.

Step 4: Mobilizing the data collectors

Data collectors who will be undertaking the fieldwork are selected in this step. This team will primary do the field study with agreed terms of service. Data collectors could be university students, local government officials, community members, neighbourhood groups e.g. block associations, local religious groups etc. It is highly recommended that students are selected from appropriate disciplines (urban planning, landscape architecture, forestry, agriculture, environment, ecology). It is also advised that some data collectors speak the local language. The data collectors should be grouped according to the area where they will conduct the survey with a representative from that community. The groups should have a balance gender

¹³ This could mean revising the agreed geographic scope, the typology of public space i.e. it could focus on open public spaces, streets or public facilities. It could also specify the type

of public space i.e. markets, plazas, squares, playgrounds, sidewalks, religious institutions etc.

¹⁴ Thematic focus of the public space assessment could be on blue green networks, mobility, arts, culture, and economic development among others.

representation. It is key to select a team leader to coordinate each group and support the teams on the ground and to do the quality control of the submitted questionnaires. The team leader communicates directly to the reference group. Where possible, persons with disabilities should be included in the data collection teams.

Step 5: Workshop/training

At this step, a workshop/training is conducted. This takes approximately 3-5 days. Prior to the workshop, a clear agenda should be developed. The participants of this training should include community members, relevant government departments, data collectors, key stakeholders, and other relevant bodies. In some instances, government officials are trained separately on the use of the data for decision-making. This step is also an opportunity to train local governments on the importance of public spaces and how they can integrate this process and public space into their development plans. Participants are trained on public space definitions, issues, theories, principles, and design considerations. A training on the application of the tool is conducted including testing the tool. The pilot test should provide an estimation of the time to undertake the overall assessment for each site including conducting interviews. Pilot testing should not only test the questionnaire, but all aspects of fieldwork, including logistics, supervision, and data entry. Translations of the questionnaire should also be checked at this point. It is useful to do a quick analysis of the data collected to check for any problems that might otherwise be overlooked. Following the pilot test, the survey team should share lessons learned to the reference group who will modify and finalize the questionnaire and fieldwork plan. A 'training of trainers' could also be conducted to a selected number of representatives including the reference group who will then conduct a training to the data collectors. This is in the case where there could be barriers such as cultural, linguistic, availability of facilitators or data collectors etc.



IMAGE 2: Community members and students being trained on the use of the city-wide public space assessment tool in Sharjah, UAE Sharjah © Urban Planning Council



IMAGE 3: Workshop to review and contextualize the questionnaire in Kabul, Afghanistan ©UN-Habitat

3.2. Part 2: Data collection and quality check

This part has two steps with activities included to each step. Data collection protocols involves field work to collect data on each public space in the city while quality checks aims to assure that data were, in fact, collected in accordance with the requirements and that the data has been submitted to the database.

Step 6: Field work

In this step, data collectors are sent to the field to conduct the survey as per their designated location. It is important for the reference group and the team leaders to determine the best day for data collection. Considerations should be made about how people use different places on weekdays and weekends throughout different seasons. Additionally, data collectors should avoid extraordinary weather events or activities to get a sense of what the site is like on an everyday basis. Depending on the geographical scope of the assessment, the city/reference group may need to organize for transportation for the data collection teams. It is essential to ensure that the data collectors have a supply of food and refreshments when out in the field. Data collectors should be aware of all the data collection tools that have been integrated into the citywide public space assessment tool as well as adhere to ethical considerations during data collection.



IMAGE 4: Municipality staff members and university students testing and familiarizing with the tool in a public space in Johannesburg, South Africa © Ayanda Roji



IMAGE 5: Data collector interviewing older persons in a public space in Jianghan, Wuhan, China © Wuhan Landuse and Spatial Planning Research Centre

Step 7: Data cleaning and updating GIS map

Data cleaning refers to the process of identifying and removing (or correcting) inaccurate records from the data set collected and this is done by the team leader, the reference group in collaboration with the Municipality/local government. Proper data cleaning can make or break the assessment results and it usually takes a large portion of time on this step. Time spent on data cleaning is usually shorter when proper training, pilot testing and quality control during data collection was conducted. Data cleaning includes duplicate or irrelevant data, entries with no data and privately-owned spaces. This step can be done either with Kobo Toolbox or ArcGIS/QGIS.

3.3. Part 3: Reporting

This part focuses on developing the final report from step one. This included consultations with the local government, validation workshops together with the community and key stakeholders and drafting the vision. There are four steps to follow:

Step 8: Data analysis

Data analysis is a process of transforming, and modeling data with the goal of identifying the gaps, developing recommendations, and informing decision-making. The public space assessment tool has several indicators related to safety, inclusivity, accessibility, ownership and management, typology and scale. However, further spatial analysis is required such as, spatial distribution, land allocated to public space and green space, trend in the distribution and allocation of public space in relation to population density, population growth and spatial growth of the city. Additionally, a more in-depth analysis of the key priorities or thematic focus of the city is required e.g. safety, heritage, health etc. This also means reporting on the gaps (if any) and aligning with the existing institutional framework, the legal framework, the policies and other relevant guidelines and strategies within the city/municipality. This process can be done by the local government, the academic partner, or other involved partner such as the private sector together with UN-Habitat. This is usually dependent on the capacities of the local government.

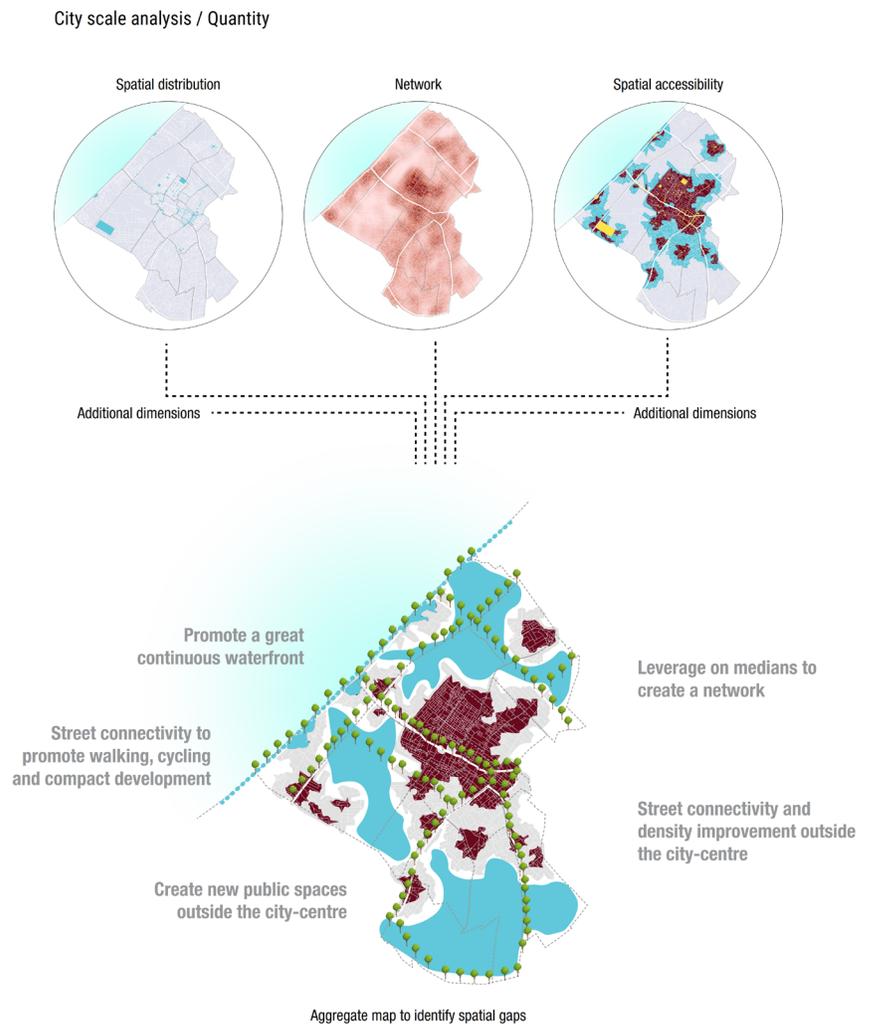


IMAGE 6: City-scale analysis: Aggregate map to identify spatial gaps and Site-scale analysis Aggregate map to identify priority public spaces for upgrading

Step 9: Public Space Assessment Report: Preliminary findings

Before providing concrete recommendations to the municipality. It is important to have a report on the preliminary findings from the research. This report provides an overview of the data, maps on key hotspot areas, analysis on the network, distribution, accessibility, quantity, and quality of the public spaces in the city, gaps and opportunities in the institution, legal, policy and other relevant guidelines and strategies. It is important to share this report with the municipality, community members and key stakeholders for inputs prior to the validation workshop.



IMAGE 7: Meeting with Key Government officials on progress made and some results on the citywide public space assessment in Jericho, Palestine © UN-Habitat_Palestine

Step 10: Validation workshop

Organizing and holding a validation workshop is key to be able to ensure that the information gathered is accurate and correct. The validation workshop also provides an opportunity to identify and consult with experts and agree upon the recommendations emanating from the assessment. It is important to ensure that different departments of the local government, key professionals and stakeholders and community members are invited to the validation workshop. This workshop is usually a good opportunity to create a shared vision and goals for the city's public spaces. The validation workshop is also an opportunity to mobilize social and political support and to obtain the commitment necessary for the development of a public space strategy/ policy.



IMAGE 8: Group discussion during the first validation workshop for Nairobi public space assessment in 2015, UNON, Nairobi, Kenya © UN-Habitat



IMAGE 9: Validation workshop for Nairobi public space assessment in 2015, UNON, Nairobi, Kenya © UN-Habitat

Step 11: Public Space Assessment Report: Final Report with identified gaps and recommendations

Once the data has been validated, a final report is prepared. This report will provide a comprehensive overview of the state of public space in the city including a strong component on the priority area for the city/municipality and this could be related to heritage, mobility, biodiversity, safety, child-friendly and senior friendly public spaces etc. A long-term strategic vision and public space spatial plan for the city needs to be prepared at this step including key recommendations on policy, institutional set-up to anchor the public space strategy development and implementation. This the most crucial stage of the process, as the report will form a basis for a long-term strategy/policy for the city.



IMAGE 10: Report -Bethlehem Cluster.

3.4. Part 4: Post-citywide assessment

This part involves developing a public space strategy, monitoring and evaluation plan and implementation of selected priority public spaces.

Step 12: Developing a citywide public space strategy

A citywide public space strategy is developed from the recommendations of the citywide public space assessment report. This strategy provides an action-oriented approach to acquiring, setting up, planning, implementing and maintaining a network of high quality public spaces in a city or town for future sustainability. It confronts the present actual state of the public spaces in the city, identifies needs and demands and crystallizes a collective vision and goals through better management and development of public spaces.

Step 13: Site Specific Assessment

Once a city has selected public spaces to be upgraded from the citywide public space assessment, a site-specific assessment is recommended prior to the design and implementation. The Public Space Site-specific Assessment consists of a series of activities and tools to understand the quality of public spaces and influence, through a participatory process, the design of the site. The assessment focuses on a selected open public space and its five (5) minute walking radius.

Step 14: Block-by-Block workshop

The Block by Block workshop uses the video-game Minecraft to co-design the selected public space with and by the community in a 3D model. Other design workshops can be used to get physical inputs from the community. Concept designs are made based on the results of the site-specific assessment and the participatory design workshop. This is then developed into architectural designs that are used for the implementation of the selected sites.

Step 15: Implementation

During the process of preparing the citywide strategy on public space, it will be necessary to identify relevant tools and instruments for an effective and efficient

implementation. The tools and mechanisms can be applied by the local authority itself, as well as, in collaboration with external partners, such NGOs, community groups, private and public developers. Each strategy in the public space development is accompanied by an action plan. It is important that all partners agree on who the implementers of the plan are and set the lead for each project. The action plan should also be able to anticipate future needs for the public space system. The action plan describes in detail the steps, personnel, budget, and timescale for achieving the citywide public space strategy's aims and objectives. It is usually derived from the strategic policies. Individual actions may need to be expanded into more detailed, site-specific activities.

Step 16: Monitoring and Evaluation

Another citywide public space assessment is commissioned when a city would like to update their public space strategy or to evaluate the city's progress in public space provision. In this case, the process of conducting a citywide public space assessment is followed and the results are measured against previous results. Additionally, any public space strategy should include a monitoring and evaluation component. Such review could for example be connected to the reviewing of the overall city development plan/strategy, in conjunction with the municipal budgeting cycle or similar. In case the set strategies are not working, new strategies are set. The objective of this is to allow the citywide public space strategy to be a dynamic and adaptable instrument that responds to the development and growth of cities.

Some key considerations while undertaking the citywide public space inventory exercise includes.

During workshops/training and data collection

- It is required to ensure that representatives from gender, children, older persons and persons with disabilities are within the reference group. Representation from these groups should also be present during all workshops and training sessions.
- It is required that equal gender representation¹⁵ within data collection teams and where possible include persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups¹⁶ such as migrants, refugees.

¹⁵ In some contexts, during data collection, interviewees become comfortable talking to a female than a male interviewer, therefore gender balance within data collection teams is key.

¹⁶ Although Kobo Collect is not inclusive for children below age 5, persons with some disabilities and persons with low digital literacy, it is possible to use third party assistance such as caregivers, parents, and assistance within data collection teams.

- Where children are required to undertake the data collection, children below the age of 5 need to be accompanied by parents or caregivers.

In the digital questionnaire

- Interview questions should be directed to a selected number of individuals using the public spaces, ensuring age and gender balance.
- Questions related to the use and social mixing in the public space are required to be included.
- Questions related to the users of the public spaces disaggregated by age, gender and disability are required to be included.
- Questions on the presence of infrastructure to access public spaces by all and especially for persons with disabilities are required to be included.

During data analysis

- Disaggregation of the analysis by age, gender and disability is important especially when assessing the quality of the public spaces.
- Identification of neighborhoods and areas that do not have access to public spaces¹⁷ within walking distance needs to be identified.

4. IMPACT OF THE CITY-WIDE PUBLIC SPACE ASSESSMENT TOOL

Since 2015, UN-Habitat has supported 30 human settlements of varying spatial scales to conduct the assessment. These include Dhaka, Bangladesh, Wuhan, China, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Durban, South Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Khan Younis, Palestine, among others. There has also been a keen interest by other cities to use this tool for their own citywide public space strategy work. The tool is also key in monitoring and reporting on SDG 11.7 as well as toward the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Local governments have seen the importance of using this tool to engage communities and key stakeholders in developing strategies and policy

¹⁷ Every individual has a right to have quality public spaces within walking distances to their homes.

recommendations. Through the validation workshops, citizens are involved in validating the data that has been collected and analyzed on maps. They recognize areas within the city that require creation of new public spaces but also public spaces that require upgrading. Additionally, they propose strategic directions that the city should take to ensure long-term provision of public spaces. However, these recommendations, in addition to responding to specific needs, must consider the institutional framework in which they will be promoted. In this regard, a review of the institutional framework of the municipality is done and proposals for change are made i.e. where the recommendations from the assessment could be anchored or a new public spaces department to be created. Kabul, among other cities in Afghanistan, has tried to leverage the goodwill of the general public to transform the city into a better one for citizens to fully enjoy their civil rights. To ensure a long-term approach to public space planning and implementation, recommendations were made to the institutional set-up of Kabul, which included listing some of the directorates within the City that could support the public space work to ensure that there is no duplication of mandate. Proposals also included placing the public space work within the Urban Planning or Public Works Departments, depending on the existing delivery capacity of the directorate and the political decision of the Mayor and his/her management team. Creation of a separate entity was also proposed under the Urban Planning and implementation directorate such as Deputy the Urban Planning and implementation. However, issues such as authority, hierarchy, teamwork and duplication of mandate were to be carefully looked at when defining this institutional position and the assignment of responsibilities and staff recruitment. Another proposal was to have a separate crosscutting department/directorate where all actions regarding public space are embedded into the existing administrative and functional structure but the manager of the department reports to the Deputy Mayor of the Urban Planning and implementation directorate. This was to limit duplication of mandate and ensure clear reporting.

It is also necessary to take into consideration both the regulatory framework and the financing structure that would make the recommendations a reality. With this objective, the citywide assessment methodology incorporates into its elaboration process the review of planning instruments and programs associated with the implementation, improvement, and maintenance of the public space network. The process of undertaking a citywide public space assessment is usually financed by the local government with very few assessments financed by external donors. UN-Habitat's experience realized that cities do not usually have the financial and human resources to implement all the recommendations and therefore creating opportunities and incentives for private sector involvement could be an added advantage. Additionally, synchronizing these recommendations within the municipal workplan

could support implementation. In Bamenda, Cameroon, through the process the government realised the need for allocated financial resources to public spaces and has now dedicated 5 per cent of its annual budget to public space planning.

Likewise, the evaluation of planning instruments, such as master plans, allows exploring the degree of relevance that public space has in the city vision and identifying the strategies established for its development. In Ethiopia, the citywide public space assessment in Addis Ababa was a great tool for the government to realize the importance of reviewing its master plan. It was also instrumental in mobilizing partners and communities in realizing the value and quality of their own public spaces. This has led to scaling up the approach to 5 other cities with implication to National policies. The visioning workshops and engagements also ensures that the process aligns with ongoing frameworks for example, in Kabul, Afghanistan, the city-wide public space assessment was aligned with the Kabul Urban Design Framework (KUDF) which envisages Kabul as a green city with parks and open spaces for residents to relax, gather together and enjoy the region's natural beauty. The recommendations from the public space assessment tool supplemented the KUDF and served as a catalyst to achieve a safe, inclusive and accessible public space network, especially for the most vulnerable demographic groups including children, women and girls, the elderly, persons with disabilities and youth. It further supported the approach to regenerate the central city and reinforce the city's conservation and open space network strategy by supporting a balanced ship between the built and natural environment. As a result, the Mayor has commissioned a greening action plan for the city.

The review of the regulatory framework is carried out to identify laws that refer to both the concept of public space in the context studied and its application. This stimulates the reflection on the bases under which public space is produced in specific contexts. In Nairobi, Kenya, the city-wide public space assessment did not only provide an inventory of all public spaces for the city, it also revealed that the bylaws were outdated and which have not been reviewed since the 70's and this is also impacting on the management and use of public space (e.g. loitering, cycling, vending, etc.).

5. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Since 2015, the tool has been regularly updated with feedback from its application in a variety of urban contexts. It has been applied in 30 cities and engaged

approximately 1,750 data collectors with every city having different thematic entry points such as children, safety, markets, women, heritage etc.

Through the application of the tool, 40 training sessions to local governments, community members and volunteers have been conducted on the use of the tool but also the importance of public space and the need for data and participation for policy and strategy development. There have been over 25 visioning workshops to develop recommendations and strategic interventions for the cities.

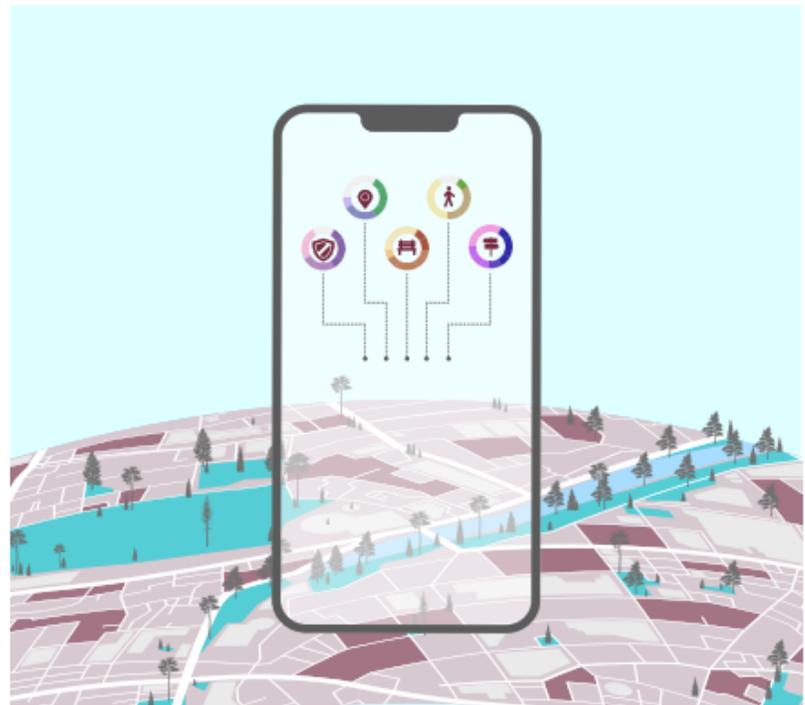
5.1. HAYA Programme “Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip”

To support the “HAYA” Programme “Eliminating Violence Against Women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip”, UN-Habitat in collaboration with Ministry of Local Government, the community, academia and private sector to conducted city-wide public space safety audits in five cities in Palestine; Khan Younis, Jenin, Nablus, Jericho and Bethlehem Cluster of Ad Doha, Beit Sahour, Beit Jala and Bethlehem. The aim was to understand women and girls’ safety concerns in public spaces and to develop city-level public space strategies that will feed into the national public space policy development process.

The process of conducting the city-wide public space safety audits in the five cities had its challenges as far as public spaces, security and violence were concerned, and were related to the combination of restriction of movement and political violence, linked with the Israeli occupation, and the intra-Palestinian divide. Palestinian governance institutions have limited power and legitimacy because of the control exerted by Israel and the administrations that came before its occupation. Financial resources of most municipalities, especially in the Gaza Strip have been diminished in the last few years due to the current situation. They have however, leveraged community engagement and principles of transparency and accountability in planning processes.

Through the participation of over 150 active members of the local community including women associations, journalists, local NGOs, International NGOs, handicapped related associations, Ministry of Education, and youth activists; in addition to UN-Habitat, municipality, other municipalities, and representatives of local universities, recommendations were made for each city. Public space strategies that are proposed for Palestine Territory to promote safety and enhance social cohesion include; 1. spatial (reducing spatial inequality by ensuring public spaces are equally distributed within the cities), 2. social (re-integration strategies such as

improving public spaces and creating shared spaces by reducing car movement, promoting diversity and social programming in public spaces to reduce perception of unsafety and increase “eyes on the street”, improving infrastructure to support the active use of public spaces) and 3. promote good governance (provide for rules of use in public spaces and apply penalties for all forms of violence against women in public space and ensuring maintenance of public spaces in order to avoid them being perceived as abandoned and thus attracting crime and antisocial behaviour). Public spaces were also prioritized for upgrading based on these assessments and it will lead to the development and regeneration of five safe and inclusive public spaces in the targeted Palestinian Cities.



CITY-WIDE **PUBLIC SPACE** **ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT**

A guide to community-led digital inventory and assessment of public spaces.



IMAGE 11: Cover for the report



IMAGE 12: Data collector testing the tool in an open space in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip, Palestine © UN-Habitat Palestine

5.2. Towards child-friendly open public spaces in Sharjah, UAE

The Emirate of Sharjah is committed to providing safe, vibrant, inclusive, and resilient open public spaces that are child friendly. It aims to ensure the process of open public space development promotes the diverse benefits that public spaces offer but also that are child friendly. To this end, a citywide open public space assessment was conducted for 60 open public spaces within Sharjah City. This is part of the Child-friendly Urban Planning Project by Sharjah Urban Planning Council (SUPC) and Sharjah Child Friendly Office (SCFO) with the support from UNICEF and UN-Habitat.

The assessment focused on six main areas: the presence of children in open public spaces, the presence and condition of facilities and services for use in open public spaces, spaces that promote social, emotional, physical and cognitive development for children, accessibility and comfort of open public spaces, safety and security, and climate adaptiveness of the open public spaces. There were 45 volunteers who were trained and conducted the field survey.

When the six dimensions used to assess the open public spaces from a child-friendly perspective were compared, presence of children in open public spaces by gender

and age (42 per cent) and open public spaces that promote social, emotional, physical and cognitive development for children (48 per cent) scored the least. Open public spaces that are climate adaptive scored the highest (79 per cent), however, the factors used for these were only three (grass coverage, presence of trees and urban agriculture). Additionally, it showed that 45 (75 per cent) open public spaces require moderate upgrading, 15 (25 per cent) require least upgrading while none require most improvement. This means that Sharjah could leverage on quick wins and low budgets improvement within these spaces and focus on new open public spaces in areas that lack provision while ensuring an interconnection of spaces through streets and green corridors The assessment informed the development of the Sharjah Child-Friendly Open Public Spaces Guidelines which is intended to act as a starting point for the design and development of child-friendly and family-friendly open public spaces in the Emirate.



IMAGE 13: Data collectors from Sharjah, UAE © Sharjah Urban Planning Council

5.3. Development of evidence-based public and public market strategy in Bamenda, Cameroon

Bamenda is the third largest city in Cameroon, after Yaoundé and Douala, and is the capital of the North-West Region. It is located at the cross route that links cities in Nigeria such as Enugu and Calabar. The current population is 500,000 however, according to the new master plan; the city is expected to be home for about 2.1 million inhabitants by 2026, and this will be over four times the current population. Notably, the city is well known for its market's places, which are the key drivers for its

economic development and job creation. According to the World Health Organization, Bamenda is the most polluted city in Africa in terms of PM_{2.5}. Furthermore, with abundant rainfall, very hilly relief, poor environmental conditions and very limited control of urban development, the city is exposed to flooding. The ambiguity of the land tenure system, urban poverty, poor civil protection, high population growth and uncontrolled spatial expansion of the city, explains the high vulnerability of its population.

Realizing that these challenges were impending, UN-Habitat collaborated with Bamenda City Council to conduct a citywide inventory and assessment. The survey was on all open public spaces, with a unique focus on markets, as key public spaces in the city. The city-wide open public space and market assessment was confined within the urban footprint of Bamenda and aimed to realize the gaps in the spatial location, distribution, accessibility, quantity and quality (in terms of accessibility, safety and inclusiveness) of markets and open public spaces in the city. Other parameters were also assessed such as environmental risk assessment of markets and open public spaces, comfort and ownership and management schemes of these spaces.



IMAGE 14: Mr. Vincent Nji Ndumu, the then Mayor of Bamenda City, addressing the training participants on the importance of public space for the city, Bamenda City, Cameroon © UN-Habitat

The proportion of urban area dedicated to streets and public spaces is a crucial feature of the spatial plans of cities. Therefore, UN-Habitat recommends up to 50 per cent of urban land should be allocated to public space. This can be broken down to 30-35 per cent for streets and sidewalks and about 15%-20% for open spaces.

Notably, Bamenda has only 7 per cent of its urban land dedicated to open public space. The results of the survey highlighted issues such as the need for markets and open public spaces for economic and environmental sustainability, the gaps in their distribution, quality, inclusivity, safety and accessibility and how they can be used to promote sustainability and form the basis of market and open public space policy. This participatory process established key recommendations to meet the current challenges faced by the city's markets. It also informed the way forward for their renovation and modernization to meet citizens' needs and social changes. A citywide open public space strategy has been drafted based on the results of the assessment with two pilot projects being launched and the Mayor had committed 5 per cent of its budget to public space planning.

5.4. An integrated and multi-scale planning in West Nile, Uganda

UN-Habitat, in collaboration with Politecnico di Milano, and together with the Municipality of Koboko, Arua and Nebbi, is undertaking a multi-scalar advisory research project in the West Nile Region. The aim is to support the integrated territorial development in the region with Arua as core "city" in a "system of cities" along the Nebbi-Koboko corridor. Since July 2016, Uganda has received over one million refugees from South Sudan with the majority of the settling in the West Nile Region. This is however not the first humanitarian response in the area. Over the past twenty years, there have been three humanitarian responses to the West Nile Region. This influx of refugees is one of the factors that leads to population increase in the region and thereby putting pressure on not only the land but also other sectors such as health and basic service provision within the urban areas. Given this protracted displacement and the likelihood of future refugee responses, the Government of Uganda and UNHCR are calling for approaches to help refugees engage in sustainable livelihoods and become self-reliant by participating in the local economy.

Therefore, as part of UN-Habitat's response, a citywide open public space and public market inventory and assessment was conducted at the municipality scale. Prior to the data collection, UN-Habitat trained 149 participants in Arua, Koboko and Nebbi on the importance of public space and data collection for evidence-based policy and strategy. Majority of public spaces data were collected in Arua Municipality that had 162 data entries, out of these, 126 were open public spaces and 36 were markets. Nebbi Municipality, which had 156 data entries, 100 being open public spaces and 56 markets and Koboko had the least number of data entries having 93 in total with

48 classified as open public spaces and 26 as markets. It was found that even with a lack of data on urban refugees, they were present in the open public spaces and were also part of the vendors in the public markets.

This initiative seeks to support the Ugandan government in developing policies, plans and projects that will foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of the West Nile Region (from Nebbi to Koboko) with Arua as Hub for an “economic development”.

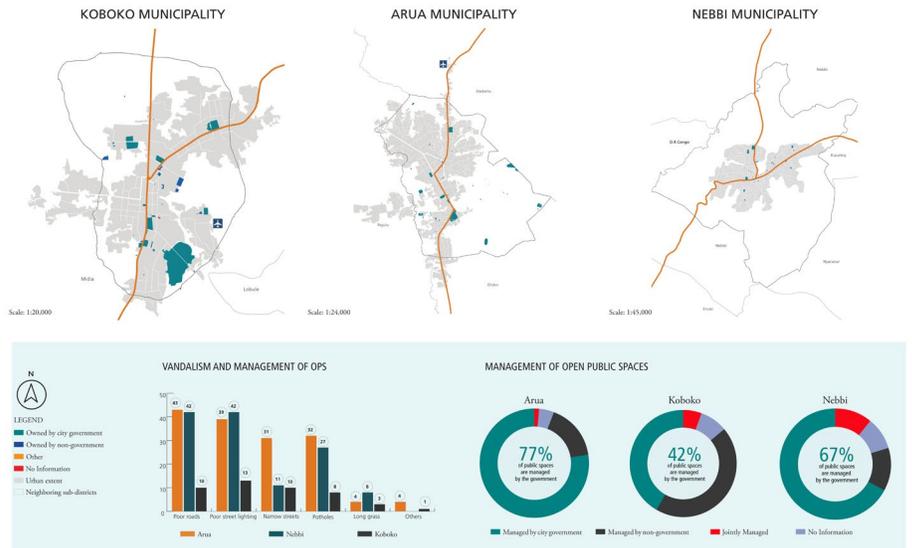


IMAGE 15: West Nile Management



IMAGE 16: Training of municipal governments on the importance of data for policy development in Arua, Uganda © Jia Ang Cong

5.5. Protecting public spaces in Jianghan, Wuhan, China

In 2017, UN-Habitat supported Wuhan Lands Use and Spatial Planning Research Centre to undertake a district-wide open public space inventory and assessment. This came at a time when public spaces in the district were being commercialized and threatened by the expanding city structures. A training was done for the local government, Wuhan Land Use and Spatial Planning team and data collectors. The result of the city-wide public spaces assessment showed that Jianghan district falls short of standards set by the National Ecological city of 11m²/capita as well as the international standard of 9m²/capita. Total green public space was just 2.2m² per capita. Being the densest and least spacious district in Wuhan, Jianghan has to find innovative ways to counter this trend. Moreover, the increase of urban environments in Jianghan District has left public spaces to be derelict and therefore decreasing public space's function.

The citywide public space inventory and assessment in Jianghan identified gaps in the safety, accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces. Therefore, in 2018, UN-Habitat identified public spaces that require upgrading and the areas within the district that needed new public spaces to be created. Spaces that required upgrading were identified through an aggregate of indicators and UN-Habitat prepared a map of priority public space for improvement. It was noted that 21% (29) of all public spaces require the most improvement while 29% (41) require the least improvement measures. A spatial analysis of the distribution of public spaces in Jianghan was done and the areas that required new public spaces were identified to be at the periphery of the district accounting for 18% (4.9 km²) of the total area of the district.

These results led to the development of a public space strategy for the district, with an ambitious vision of having "Public Spaces in Jianghan District to be of High Quality, More Accessible, Unique and Diverse." This vision came with clear goals and objectives to achieve it. To achieve these goals and objectives, a phased implementation was proposed, combining near-term (2017-2022) and long-term (2023-2030) development projects. This was to ensure that upgrading of public spaces to enhance their quality was supported by a long-term green network plan in the district. One public space was selected for upgrading and was implemented in 2018. UN-Habitat together with WLSP will monitor and evaluate the achievements of this strategy.

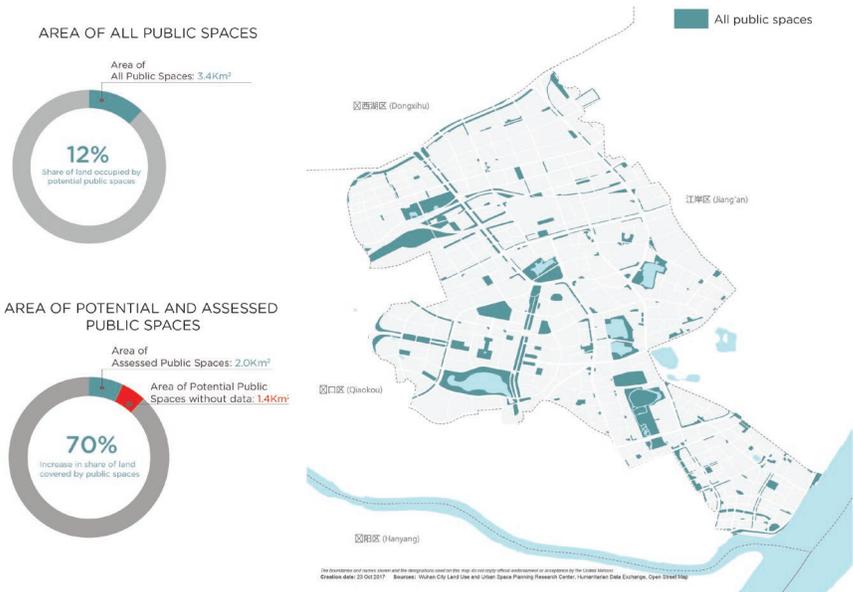


IMAGE 17: Jianghan Assessed OPS and/or Jianghan_Management



IMAGE 18: Data collector in Jianghan, Wuhan, China © WLSP

6. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

Through working in these cities and towns, UN-Habitat has considered how the citywide public space can deliver more value for cities. Therefore, some of the lessons and recommendations are highlighted below;

1. Securing **political support** to provide the mandate to execute the process for buy-in and allocation of both financial and human resources. UN-Habitat has found that without the support from the local government, the public space assessment reports remain a shelf report without informing the public debate or influencing the development community. The success of the public space assessment conducted in 5 cities in Palestine and in 4 Provincial Districts in Kabul, Afghanistan was as a result of direct endorsement by the local and national government.
2. Enhance **synergy among actors in public space**, including municipal government agencies, the private sector, NGOs, women's groups, older persons, persons with disabilities, community members and others. The citywide public space assessment is not a task for one individual stakeholder and an inclusive partnership is an important mechanism for its implementation and success. This should be built upon a shared vision and principles that places public space and people at the centre of planning. In all the cities we have worked conducting the assessments, a training is organised for targeted city officials from different departments within the local authority, representatives from academia, NGOs and community members. This orientation provides them with an overview of the activities and how they can align it with their already existing or planned activities. In Johannesburg and Durban, South Africa the Social Affairs department and the Police saw the importance of conducting hot spot analysis for safety to understand where and what type of safety concerns are present to be able to act upon them. In other cities, this continuous engagement has led to greater synergies among partners within the city eg, in Nairobi, Kenya, the process led to the creation of a Public Space Network that is active with over 60 members who support implementation of public space projects, leading urban design competitions and other public space initiatives.
3. **Build the capacity of local partners.** We have found in cities where we have worked, there is little capacity to conduct the survey and report on the findings from the citywide public space assessment. This leads to a lack of accountability and responsibility for taking the findings towards a long-term plan for the city or align it to already existing plans.

4. **Increase funding from sources other than municipal government**, such as from the national and provincial governments, donor agencies, the private sector and the public. The task of conducting a citywide public space assessment requires financial resources to conduct the field study and draw out findings that are useful for strategic and policy change. It also identifies public spaces that require upgrading and areas within the city that need prioritisation for creation of new public spaces. Often, the cities do not have the financial and human resources to implement all the recommendations and therefore creating opportunities and incentives for private sector involvement could be an added advantage.
5. Create **enabling institutional and regulatory frameworks** to accelerate public space development. In Nairobi, Kenya we supported the establishment of a public space unit under the urban planning department where the document and its implementation could be anchored. In other cities such as Kabul, we provided recommendations for institutionalising public space within the local government, to ensure its planning and implementation.
6. **Focus on the overall urban area rather than a small area of the city.** In some cities, such as Durban, South Africa we supported in piloting and testing the methodology in the Inner City and Ward 21. However, the recommendations remain for those areas rather than the overall city. Therefore, these cannot be implemented at a city scale and long-term strategies cannot be developed based on findings from only those areas. It is recommended that cities plan to conduct the assessment for the whole urban area to provide comprehensive strategic recommendations. In some cities, however, where the small urban area has an independent local authority, e.g, Wuchang District in Wuhan, China the recommendations can be implemented within the geographical scope.
7. Ensure an **action-oriented process and connect strategic thinking to project implementation.** In Jiangnan, Wuhan, China, from the findings of the district-wide public space assessment and together with the local partner, we developed strategic priorities and made a road map for implementation. However, the recommendations were not synchronised within the municipal/district work plan and a detailed action plan was not developed, therefore, the implementation of these recommendations remain fluid.
8. **Balance external influences** (*political, economic, environmental and social cycles*) and long-term ownership of the process. Without a clear vision for public space, it is difficult to minimise external influences. A written vision is important for orientation of public space. The strength of it is the fact that it has been debated and discussed and aligned with city development plans

and policies and the actual state of public spaces based on results from the citywide public space assessment. This can help keep the city's public space planning on track, despite political or other changes. It helps avoid priorities being set in an ad hoc way by reacting to external pulls and pushes.

7. CONCLUSION

It has become evident through the application of this tool in 30 cities that the task of planning and designing city-wide networks of public spaces is not only to deliver equity in spatial distribution and gain from the wide benefits that public spaces have, but must also simultaneously design frameworks that will allow those plans to take place effectively and democratically. The process must, therefore, be anchored on a firm understanding of the role of stakeholders and the socio-political context where these plans and designs take place, but more importantly, should stem from the voices of those these plans are supposed to serve.

Participation is one of the tools that can limit bias in the planning public space. The city-wide public space assessment tool has therefore been anchored within a flexible framework where local governments are able to design new relationships between civil society, the private sector and communities and understand the state of public spaces, gaps and opportunities in the legal and institutional systems, existing forms of partnership and financing mechanisms to develop inclusive and evidence-based city-wide public space strategies. The tool is also applicable in varying contexts and can be adopted to fit priorities of a city and has shown that the inclusion of communities as key stakeholders in the planning process is necessary if actions towards acceptable or desired outcomes are to be met.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Joy Mutai, Associate coordination officer,
Global Public Space Programme, UN-Habitat

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Kigali Yacu, Our Kigali

Community-driven homegrown solutions
alongside transformative urbanization
projects in Rwanda

Liliane Uwanziga Mupende

Project Lead at Global Green Growth Institute
Kigali, Rwanda

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS	5
2. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION	7
3. KIGALI YACU! OUR KIGALI! KIGALI MASTER PLAN 2020-2050	8
4. IN-SITU URBAN UPGRADING-DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN KIMISAGARA SECTOR.....	12
CONCLUSION.....	14

INTRODUCTION

Rwanda's government plans to accelerate urbanisation to achieve an urban population of 35% by 2024. In the National Strategy for Transformation (7 years Government Programme that provides the foundation for sustained growth and transformation), the target to accelerate sustainable urbanization from 18.4% (2016/2017) to 35% by 2024 identifies the City of Kigali and the Secondary Cities as economic poles of growth¹.

In strategically electing to accelerate Sustainable Urbanization to facilitate economic growth, the Rwandan government acknowledges that significant progress in the past has necessitated key collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders with embracing Home-grown Solutions and Values, notably enhancing ownership at all levels.

Rwanda's Home-Grown Solutions (HGSs) are governance innovations that have provided unconventional responses to societal challenges unlikely to be addressed through conventional means. HGSs are based on national heritage, historical consciousness and strive for self-reliance. HGSs have been enablers for stability and accountability, but also drivers of socio-economic transformation in Rwanda². The HGSs are culturally owned practices translated into sustainable development programs.

This paper explores three Home-Grown Solutions that have been at the forefront of the process of elaborating and implementing Sustainable Urbanization initiatives, as well as the transformative projects anchored to these initiatives: **Imihigo**, **Umuganda** and **Ubudehe**.

Imihigo³ is the plural Kinyarwanda word of Umuhigo, which means "to vow to deliver". Imihigo also includes the concept of **Guhiganwa**, which means "to compete among one another". **Imihigo** describes the pre-colonial cultural practice in **Rwanda** where an individual sets targets or goals to be achieved within a specific period of time. The person must complete these objectives by following guiding principles and be determined to overcome any possible challenges that arise. In 2000 a shift in the responsibilities of all levels of government, as a result of a decentralisation program, required a new approach to monitoring and evaluation. Local levels of government were now responsible for implementing development programs, which meant that the central government and people of Rwanda needed a way to ensure accountability. In

¹ National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017-2024

³ <http://www.rgb.rw/index.php?id=36>

² <http://rgb.rw/department/home-grown-solutions-department/>

2006, Imihigo (known also as performance contracts) was introduced to address this need.

Umuganda⁴ can be translated as “*coming together in common purpose to achieve an outcome*”. This day also serves as a social gathering where citizens can present concerns and share ideas on how best to deal with challenges within their communities. **Umuganda** is a practice that takes root from Rwandan culture of self-help and cooperation: in traditional Rwandan culture members of the community would call upon their family, friends and neighbours to help them complete a difficult task. The activities of the then Umuganda included, for instance, farming for those who were unable to do so due to either physical handicap or old age, building houses for the poor and providing transportation to medical facilities to those who were in need. While it is, however, defined as a single day of communal gathering for a common purpose, its results have far exceeded the limited scope of a day’s work, with contribution made towards infrastructure development and environmental protection⁵.

Ubudehe⁶ is one of the country’s core development programs, launched in 2001 as a way to better involve communities by setting up participatory problem-solving mechanisms at the village level; it addresses issues such as land disputes, ensuring child education, access to health facilities among others. Furthermore, through community collective action, the Ubudehe Credit Fund works to advance collective development (with risks and costs minimized) by people owning the solution to their local problem, and consequently the benefits. Ubudehe is a home-grown socio-economic categorization mechanism for determining eligibility for Rwanda’s key social protection interventions including public works, direct support, community-based health insurance (CBHI) and education grants⁷. Ubudehe also serves as a pro-poor credit channel: since finance institutes find it risky and costly to transact with the poor, Ubudehe offers an opportunity to mitigate the risk and lower costs through community collective action. In the Ubudehe Credit Scheme each beneficiary/client will sign a contract with the community and will be informed of his obligation and commitment to pay back, so that the next beneficiary designated for credit can be able to get it from cumulative reimbursed amounts.

This paper presents the application of the selected Home Grown Solutions as soft governance tools that have enabled the City of Kigali to attain its ambition to become

⁴ <http://www.rgb.rw/index.php?id=37>

⁶ <http://www.rgb.rw/index.php?id=35>

⁵ http://www.rgb.rw/fileadmin/Key_documents/HGS/UMUGANDA_2017.pdf

⁷ NST-1 Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan (SP-SSP) 2018/2019-2023/2024, Ministry of Local Government

a Clean, Green, Safe and Smart City through community engagement that is anchored on institutional accountability.

1. BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

The prerequisite policy, legal and institutional frameworks have been established across the Central and Local Government and the relevant institutional structures, while tools in use have continued to evolve, in order to provide the backbone for sustainable urbanization initiatives. Emanating from the process of decentralization that was initiated in 2000, the “*Decentralization Policy*” has been critical in defining the role of Local Government and, most importantly, the empowerment of citizens to participate in local decision-making as well as the development process⁸. While there are still debates on the conduciveness to promote allocative efficiency of some of the platforms established under this policy (i.e. Joint Action Development Forum⁹), alongside Imihigo-Performance Contracts introduced in 2006, mechanisms for accountability were enhanced.

The Law No.10/2012 of 02/05/2012 governing Urban Planning and Building in Rwanda, recognizes the role of decentralized entities in implementing laws governing urban planning and construction, and inherently the role of decentralized entities in elaborating Master Plans. The law underscores the provisions for sustainable land administration, efficient land management, urban planning and design as stipulated in the National Land Policy of 2004¹⁰ and 2019¹¹. Alongside this, the “*National Land Tenure Regularization Program*” (LTRP) issued registered titles to all landholders, unlocked potential for sustainable growth that would be equally valid to all users of land, further empowering citizens and enhancing inclusiveness through its systematic land registration process. This land reform process converted majority of land from state land into privately owned or leased land.

⁸ Good Governance and Decentralization in Rwanda, Rwanda Governance Board 2018;
http://www.rgb.rw/fileadmin/Publications/Rwanda_Governance_Review/Rwanda_Governance_Review_2018.pdf

¹⁰ https://rema.gov.rw/rema_doc/Policies/National_land_policy_english_version_.pdf

¹¹ https://www.environment.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Moe/Publications/Policies/Revised_National_Land_Policy-Final_Version_2019.pdf

⁹ *ibid*

The “*National Urbanization Policy*” (NUP)¹², which addresses all aspects of cross-sectoral action in urban development and governance, introduces four policy pillars against which the sustainable urbanization of the country will be measured:

- **Coordination pillar** addressed the enhancement of institutional capacities, to manage urban development in a coordinated manner at all levels of governance;
- **Densification pillar** captures how to integrate urban planning in order to achieve resource-efficient and compact growth;
- **Conviviality pillar** introduces a focus on how to support quality of life and equity in urban settlements; and
- **Economic growth pillar**, which has the objective to facilitate employment creation and off-farm productivity for local subsistence and regional competitiveness.

Alongside the National Decentralization Policy, the NUP empowers local authorities to drive their urbanization processes within their contexts, constraints, and opportunities. The five-year “*Decentralization Implementation Programme*” (DIP) considers, among others, **citizen participation** and **accountability mechanisms** as key for further development.

Sustainable management of natural resources as well as innovative and inclusive urban planning remain at the core of the “*National Land Use Master Plan*”¹³, as well as of the District Land Use Plans and Master Plans for the urban areas and emerging centers, driven by Local Governments.

¹²https://www.mininfra.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Mininfra/Publications/Policies/Urbanization__Human_Settlement_and_Housing_Development/Rwanda_National_Urbanization_Policy_2015.pdf

¹³https://rma.rw/index.php?id=41&tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=375&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=a0f94d3902d3b4f56dd34bb1861878d3

2. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

The collective use of the performance-based management system (Imihigo) in combination with community-based approaches to implementing local development (Umuganda and Ubudehe) has yielded extensive and impactful results. The contribution of Umuganda to the country's development since 2007 has been estimated at more than US \$60 million, and every year a citizen participation scorecard report is released; complementary, an accountability day where citizens meet and engage with their respective local leaders on socio-economic related matters is held on a quarterly basis¹⁴.

Furthermore, extended and growing community engagement has resulted in increased informed community participation in the decision-making process, and in higher expectations on the local authorities, with accountability mechanisms structured from bottom to top. Communities' involvement in implementation of projects has also ensured that their needs are at the forefront of any solutions presented, and that ownership, innovation, inclusivity and increasingly competitiveness underscore the role plaid by the communities.

Umuganda has been applied to several initiatives, inclusive of which are national tree planting initiatives^{15 16 17}, road repairs and construction¹⁸, and the construction of homes for the vulnerable, identified under the Ubudehe household classification mechanism and community projects¹⁹. Furthermore, incorporating the anticipated activities and expected deliverables in the Imihigo Performance Based Management System has benefited the citizens. The annual evaluation process has heightened the level of accountability and continued to emphasize the need for increased community engagement and participation, with the preparation of Imihigo emanating from the needs and commitments of communities at household level²⁰.

We recognize the use of Imihigo, Umuganda and Ubudehe as powerful tools of governance that continue to contribute to Rwanda's initiatives towards sustainable urbanization, and describe hereafter two examples where these have been applied in the context of City of Kigali. Through Umuganda sessions, the community priorities

¹⁴ <https://www.rgb.rw/>

¹⁵ <https://www.ktpress.rw/2018/11/diplomats-join-rwandas-campaign-to-plant-43000-ha-of-trees/>

¹⁶ http://rwfa.rw/index.php?id=64&tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=16&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=c14e28adcbc0a93146683c4f4d31781e

¹⁷ <https://rwandainspire.com/2018/10/27/government-accelerates-efforts-to-plant-over-700000-hectares-of-trees-by-2020/>

¹⁸ <https://rwanda.unfpa.org/en/news/rwandas-homegrown-solution-building-road-kigali-nairobi-through-umuganda>

¹⁹ <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/207550>

²⁰ https://gasabo.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Imihigo_evaluation_2014-2015.pdf

have been defined and incorporated into Imihigo performance contracts that form the basis for sustainable development initiatives, as well as the collective and collaborative responsibility in the implementation of these initiatives. Alongside this, the Ubudehe program has ensured that inclusivity is enhanced in the identification of development and poverty reduction priorities.

3. KIGALI YACU! OUR KIGALI! KIGALI MASTER PLAN 2020-2050²¹

The City of Kigali's journey towards becoming a Green City may have initially been premised upon the understanding that the increase of tree cover and protection of the environment would be adequate to achieve the goal of Greening Kigali. While extensive tree planting initiatives did achieve their expected goal of "greening Kigali", the "*Detailed Master Planning Process*" of 2013, and now the review in 2020, brought to light aspirations to become a Green, Clean, Safe and Smart City. Aspirations that far exceeded greening through planting of trees alone.

In the 2013 version of the City of Kigali Master Plan, the three Districts that form Kigali (Nyarugege, Gasabo and Kicukiro) were planned separately. The review of 2020 was intended to consolidate, ensure consistency and coherency. The main considerations in 2013 were:

- The need to establish a range of employment centers/commercial nodes around which development would be structured;
- Creation of affordable and quality living environments in Kigali;
- Development of a compact, vibrant and transit-oriented city placing importance on increased densities;
- Managing and improving the environment and infrastructure;
- Preservation of urban heritage and enhancement of public greens; and
- Consolidation and reservation of land for future needs

²¹<https://masterplan2020.kigalicity.gov.rw/>

The 2020 review process was designed to be innovative, centered on rigorous needs assessment, establishing integration and synergies, inclusive, and building on transit oriented development based on sustainable infrastructure development, while ensuring it was implementable.

The 2020 review of the Master Plan, guided by the above main considerations from the 2013 Master Plan, has resulted in an updated urban sustainability framework formed on a unique set of eight principles that have been adopted to guide urban growth, economic growth, land and urban management in Kigali over the coming decades. An extract from the Master Plan Report presents the following glance into some of the rationale behind the selection of the principles:

- **Accommodate incremental development:**

The element of flexible housing options with room for growth, responding to the ability of households to spend, and allowing for changing housing demand to dictate development.

- **Facilitation of affordable housing**

New housing models (like SKAT), to provide for lower rungs of income groups with housing options. Furthermore, these kinds of models focus on the use of local materials, involving local communities in the process, exploring alternative funding models

- **Encourage detailed phasing aligned to city development strategy**

City's growth corresponding to the population and economic growth -phase wise increment

- **Promote mixed use development**

Compact and integrated neighborhoods with amenities accessible at a short distance, promoting diverse built up use at one place, with a combination of varying housing typologies

- **Support green growth (balance protection vs development)**

Sensitive to development impacts on environment, caring for eco-fragile and agriculturally fertile land and promoting sustainable use of natural resources in the development process

- **Ensure sustainable and resilient infrastructure services**

Weather and climate proof infrastructure provision -Roads, transit modes, water, sanitation, electricity etc., that is affordable and accessible to all

- **Promote inclusivity and equity**

Attention to vulnerable groups like women, children, poor, old, differently abled etc. Promoting inclusive and representative planning.

While retaining the overall ambition of becoming a city of urban excellence, the principles were defined along the needs and capacities of the citizens. Increased Community participation helped to inform the principles on the need for incremental development, responsive zoning, inclusivity, affordability and equity as well as green, growth, sustainability and resilience, as clearly resonates throughout the Master Plan report. The community and stakeholder engagement process included among others:

- 13 Focused groups discussions with Community and City of Kigali representatives
- 8 Technical Advisory Group meetings
- 5 Stakeholders meetings
- More than 100 technical meetings
- 30 days of Public Exhibition in the 3 Districts for citizens to provide feedback
- Comments collected and incorporated from City Districts through Community Consultations Sessions at the Village level, SMS , WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter.

Successes of incorporating the Communities inputs are evident in sample projects, such as the **Kimisagara In-Situ Upgrading project** presented herein below (implemented concurrently with the Master Plan Review).

Drawing back to the Home-Grown Solutions and their contribution to informing the Master Planning Process, the Umuganda Sessions were used to gather local information during the planning process and share preliminary planning ideas for inputs. Catalytic Capital Improvement Projects, defined as critical for the Master Plan implementation, were also further informed by these sessions as the process promoted bottom-up planning. These Catalytic Projects now form part of the City's Imihigo, and will continue to guide development initiatives over the next years.

Principle One: Kigali Integration in the National and Regional Context

Principle Two: Incremental development

Principle Three: Facilitating Affordable Housing

Principle Four: Detailed Phasing aligned to City Development Strategy

Principle Five: Mixed Use Approach (in all areas, along transport corridors, etc.)

Principle Six: Green Growth (protection vs. development)

Principle Seven: Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure



Figure 1: Engaging the community while embracing the role of professionals in the Master Planning process

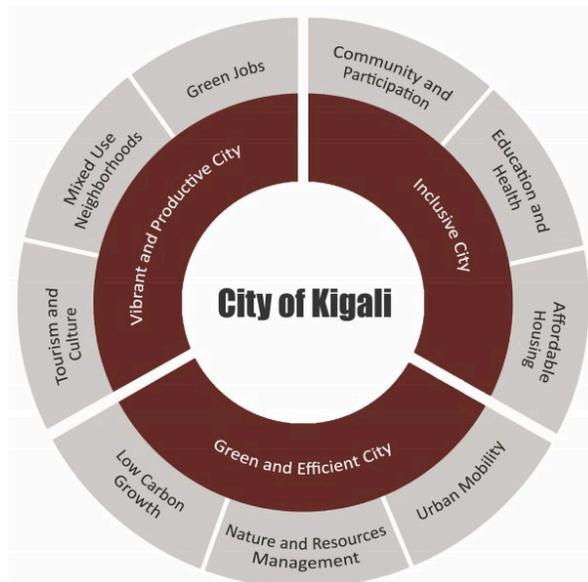


Figure 2: Urban Sustainability Framework for the City of Kigali alongside the 8 guiding principles²²

²² Kigali Master Plan 2050 Report, City of Kigali 2020

4. IN-SITU URBAN UPGRADING- DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN KIMISAGARA SECTOR

Densification, upgrading and urban renewal are increasingly being presented as solutions to dealing with the growing population of the City of Kigali and the resulting increase in demand for affordable housing. The Master Plan has provided for incremental growth, densification, upgrading and urban renewal.

A demonstration project, resulting from a partnership between the PROECCO project- SKAT (Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development), the City of Kigali, the Nyarugenge District, Rwanda Housing Authority and the residents of Kimisagara Sector, has seen the design and construction of multi-family housing in a dense urban neighborhood that served also as an on-the-job training for construction firms, both public and private²³. With the use of this in-situ upgrading and densification approach, social economic issues tied to expropriation and relocation are alleviated, with community ownership and participation enhanced.

The demonstration project, which is aimed at scaling-up for use in upgrading of unplanned settlements in the City of Kigali and across the Country, has resulted in:

1. Introduction of a Cost-Effective Densification Method that can be applied to in-situ upgrading schemes. The compact design of the Demonstration Block responds to the unique planning and construction challenges associated with building in dense, urban environments by introducing cost-effective and para-seismic building solutions suitable for difficult terrains.
2. Community-driven urban development
 - Community Engagement through Umuganda. Engagement has been driven through the Upgrading Committees, which are formulated by a select group of residents including women and the most vulnerable.
 - Employment Creation. Promoting off-farm employment and income through climate responsive construction material production.
3. Building local industry: addressing the construction materials value chain.

23

https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/rwanda/en/home/news/news.html/content/countries/rwanda/en/meta/news/2018/October/Affordable_housing



Figure 3: In-situ upgrading of Kimigasara Unplanned settlement, engaging the community in the construction works

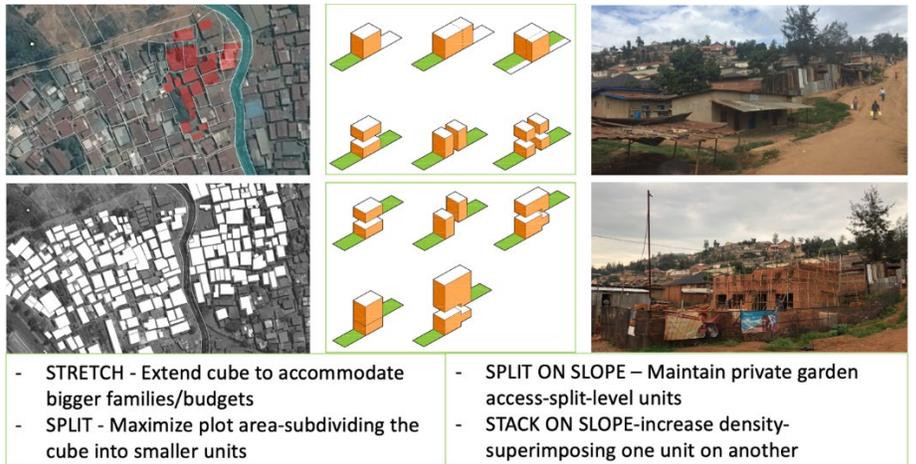


Figure 4: Demonstration project PROECCO project- SKAT (Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development), the City of Kigali, the Nyarugenge District, Rwanda Housing Authority and the residents of Kimisagara Sector

CONCLUSION

The community insights provided during Umuganda Sessions are incorporated into the City Imihigo, with the Ubudehe Programme ensuring that planning and initiatives are pro-poor, gender responsive and socially inclusive. This has proven effective in ensuring sustainable and inclusive development. However, there is a need for continued innovation and improvement in their use, to truly attain the desired level of community engagement and resulting continued transformation of the citizens through tangible benefits that address their needs. Improved community consultation during the elaboration of the Imihigo and enhanced coordination among stakeholders²⁴, inclusivity and extensive community sensitization, awareness and knowledge sessions during Umuganda have been cited as critical to the continued success of community-based initiatives. The heightened level of the communities' knowledge on sustainable development, master planning and related projects and activities was evident in the quality of feedback received during this Master Plan review process of 2020, in comparison to the initial planning in 2013. While this may be attributed to continued community engagement and awareness over the years as implementation of the 2013 Master Plan was ongoing, a focus must still be placed on bringing the technical knowledge, and communicating it in a form that the citizens can easily understand. In which case, the 3 Home-Grown Solutions still represent strong platforms for the enhancement of Community Participation moving forward, as they each promote a significant sense of ownership, responsibility, and accountability at all levels.

²⁴ Imihigo Evaluation FY 2014/2015, Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR) on behalf of the Government of Rwanda 2015

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Liliane Uwanziga Mupende, Project Lead at Global Green Growth Institute, Kigali, Rwanda

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

Participatory design for child-friendly space improvement in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Sohel Rana

Urban Development Specialist,
Global Public Space
Programme, UN-Habitat

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION	3
INTRODUCTION	3
1. BACKGROUND	4
2. THE TOOL – PROCESS AND PURPOSE	4
3. THE INITIATIVE – PARTICIPATORY DESIGN, PRIORITIZATION AND FINANCING	5
4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL REGULATORY TOOLS.....	7
5. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION	8
6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS.....	10
7. CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND MAIN ISSUES.....	10
8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES, AND IMPACTS	11
9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY.....	14

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location: Rayer Bazar and Mirpur in Dhaka North City Corporation

Key stakeholders: Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Work for Better Bangladesh trust (WBBT); UN-Habitat; local residents of Ward 2,4,5,9 and 34 of DNCC

Contact details: Dr. Tariq Bin Yousuf (DNCC), Ziaur Rahman (WBBT), Sohel Rana (UN-Habitat)

INTRODUCTION

Urban design governance tools are key in creating better quality and sustainable urban development for all. In addition to formal tools, the use of informal tools can activate soft power for better urban design governance and allow different marginalized groups to take part in decision-making process with a greater flexibility.

The current paper explains how the informal quality delivery tool “Minecraft” was used to support “Participatory design for child-friendly space improvement in Dhaka, Bangladesh” initiative. With the examples of two public spaces, Rayerbazar and Mirpur in Dhaka North City Corporation, the paper shows how using the Block by Block methodology helped to change the mind-set of policymakers to realize the value of soft power of urban design governance for built environment interventions. This paper highlights the successes, impacts, innovative approaches, transferability, challenges and lessons learned from this project.

This example provides a model for how formal regulatory mechanisms can support priorities derived from the community through informal governance tools.

1. BACKGROUND

Launched in 2012, the UN-Habitat Global Public Space Programme aims to improve the quality of public spaces worldwide and has implemented projects in more than 30 cities globally, including several physical transformations. The programme provides technical and advisory support to improve safe, accessible and inclusive public spaces through an integrated approach that allows citizens to take part in design, development and decision-making processes.

The “Child-friendly space improvement in Dhaka” initiative is a tri-party collaboration between Work for Better Bangladesh Trust (WBBT), UN-Habitat and Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC). The project introduced the “Block by Block” methodology that uses Minecraft as a soft governance tool to enable communities to identify and prioritize their needs for designing and improving their very own public spaces. The initiative facilitated improvements in six child-friendly spaces in Rayer Bazar and Mirpur areas. It contributed to change the mindset of local users through innovative participatory processes, as well as of the DNCC, in adopting soft governance tools public space planning development and management practices.

2. THE TOOL – PROCESS AND PURPOSE

Globally, a wide range of tools is available to support the process and outcomes of urban design governance to improve the quality of the built environment in urban centers. These tools help both public and private actors to take part in decision-making and development processes. Some tools are formal and mandatory to use while others are informal and use soft power to encourage actors to participate and provide their inputs for quality design and developments for specific projects. All tools aim to be adaptable, evidence driven, participatory and self-evaluative, however certain tools are more useful at different stages of the planning process and in diverse spatial, political, legislative and social contexts.

In 2012, UN-Habitat entered into an innovative partnership with the Swedish computer game company Mojang AB, the makers of the popular computer game Minecraft. Through the partnership, named Block by Block (BbB), Minecraft is used as a community participation and engagement tool in the design and implementation of public space projects.

According to the classification provided by Urban Maestro, Minecraft falls under the informal exploration tool within the broader category of the quality delivery tool. Minecraft engages grassroots communities and hard to reach groups directly in the design process through mechanisms that investigate, test out and involve them in particular public space improvement projects. The Block by Block methodology emphasizes how community participation has been considered as a key driver for the implementation of the public space programme at different spatial scales.

Minecraft 3D models visualize the actual project site and therefore facilitate the participants to visualize and develop improvement proposals based on the project site and its challenges. It also provides opportunities to discuss debate, argue on issues, and build a common consensus for a more unified vision for the site. The tool is particularly interesting to children and youth groups who are often neglected in the conventional planning process but have important roles in sustainable urban development. Moreover, the tool has immense potential to empower the community as it allows them to present their development proposals to policymakers, to validate and prioritize them based on their needs.

This tool also contributes to a sense of ownership among the public space users. The Block by Block workshop usually takes 2-3 days and involves multiple participants using Minecraft to design interventions on a single model and to construct different proposals, which is more similar to real-life construction projects with multiple workers carrying out different roles simultaneously, than traditional digital 3D model-making with only one designer. This approach helps to give them a sense of ownership, responsibility, and management for a long-term project.

3. THE INITIATIVE – PARTICIPATORY DESIGN, PRIORITIZATION AND FINANCING

For the “Child-friendly spaces in Dhaka” project, Minecraft had been used as an informal exploration tool to ensure quality public space design where the actual users could contribute to their own spaces based on community needs. The process specially prioritized children, youth and women as they are mostly neglected from design and development processes in formal planning practices. In the case of Dhaka, the tool helped to explore the needs, demands and vision for child-friendly spaces in the selected areas (Rayer bazar and Miprur). The participatory workshop

took place in Dhaka and was hands-on and exploratory in nature. The process allowed participants to collaborate on issues and solutions for the space.



Community consultation to identify challenges and solutions for Boishakhi Playground in Rayer Bazar © UN-Habitat

Once the models were built by the community representatives in Minecraft, the proposals were validated through community consultations for a wider stakeholder validation. As well as the participatory design process and workshop, another tool was critically important - the cost estimation exercise and prioritization of initiatives. The prioritization of different proposals helped to understand the number of proposals that would be implemented by this project, what proposals would require additional sources of funding, and how to be most efficient with the design ideas and practical limitations of the project.



Users presenting their ideas and solutions through Minecraft tool to revitalize Boshakhi Playground in Rayer Bazar © UN-Habitat

In particular, the experience of Rayer bazar and Miprur in Dhaka revealed that the participatory workshop helped to enable intrinsically motivated users to work on urban projects by devoting their enthusiasm, competence, and creativity, in a voluntary manner, and therefore act as tools that imply an efficient allocation of talents and resources for projects with a public interest. Moreover, this collective approach on which this participatory tool is based enabled soft powers of negotiation and persuasion to be exercised.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL REGULATORY TOOLS

Upon prioritization of the proposals by the community, the site-specific Minecraft models were used to develop implementation drawings and designs by the urban designers and architects of DNCC. The process and the designs were also documented as a manual for future use for similar interventions to develop child-friendly spaces. The success of this process motivated DNCC to allocate additional resources from its annual budget for child-friendly spaces improvement in densely

populated neighborhoods. The example provided a model for how formal regulatory mechanisms can support priorities derived from the community through informal governance tools.

5. EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

The project was implemented between 2018-2019 under the joint collaboration mechanism, where UN-Habitat provided overall advisory and technical support as well as funding; WBBT worked as key implementing partner on the ground; and DNCC performed key supervision, quality control and management-related tasks. Over two years, 6 spaces were improved as child-friendly public spaces through the active participation of the communities in the DNCC area:



Completed children zone in use at Boshakhi Playground © UN-Habitat

Boishakhi playground in Rayer Bazar: The playground is the only public space in Ward 34 with a population of 250,000. Before implementation, the site was considered unsafe and unusable from users' perspectives. The project used "Minecraft" as a participatory design tool to receive the community's inputs in design and development process. In total, 14 improvements were proposed which later on implemented over 7 days of intervention through the active participation of the community. The community helped to clean the playground and children helped to paint the murals. In total 320 hours of volunteer time was contributed to the project by the community. Since implementation, the project attracted a significant number of

users especially girls, toddler, and women; and the number has increased more than double.

Child-friendly spaces in Mirpur: Mirpur is one of the most densely populated areas in Dhaka and lacks quality public spaces for women, children, and elderly people. Based on the success of the previous project in Rayer Bazar (Ward 34), UN-Habitat collaborated again with WBBT and DNCC to revitalize 5 children friendly spaces in Ward 2 (Pallabi Mini Park in Road 5-6, Pallabi Mini Park in Road 17) ,4 (Mirpur 13 Mini park),5 (Bauniabadh Children’s Zone) and 9 (Gloratek Playground)in Mirpur area. Upon the success of Phase-1, this initiative also used Minecraft as a soft governance tool to ensure the community’s engagement in the process. The initiative accommodated 134 proposals made directly by the user communities of those sites. On each improved site, the number of users (especially for girls, toddlers and woman) has doubled. During a post-implementation survey, the users have mentioned that they feel more safe and comfortable using these sites now for the availability of different facilities and better management. The initiative also supported to develop and institutionalize of a community-led public space management mechanism that engaged community elders, youth, and children leaders from the user groups. A management guideline was also developed and adopted by the communities in all these 5 sites, which will be monitored and supported by the respective Ward Councilors and DNCC team.



Child friendly spaces created in Bauniabadh in Mirpur © UN-Habitat

6. ALLIED FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The “community-led child-friendly space” initiative was funded by “block by block” foundation through UN-Habitat’s Global Public Space Programme. The national NGO WBBT received the funding for project implementation through a global open call for proposal. One of the key elements of the financial model used was to inaugurate the strength of soft governance tool that prioritizes community’s needs and encourage DNCC to invest its’ own budget to implement similar investment in public space. For the entire initiative, UN-Habitat made a contribution of 95,750 USD. In both phases, WBBT and DNCC provided in-kind and cash contributions to implement the initiative. However, the lengthy and bureaucratic budgeting and project implementation procedures of DNCC delayed the co-funding model for project implementation.

The participatory design, prioritization, validation and cost estimation exercise helped DNCC to realize how to allocate resources for long-term sustainability on built environment interventions. Despite the direct engagement of DNCC in the process, it had been realized that the participatory financial model for such small projects is cumbersome, as it depends on political will and overall development priorities placed by the policymakers. However, based on the success of the initiative DNCC allocated additional 240,000 USD to complete unfinished tasks of the 5 sites under phase-2 in Mirpur area. DNCC also replicated 2 similar spaces in Noyatola and Mirpur with a total budget of 285,000 USD.

7. CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND MAIN ISSUES

In the case of Dhaka, the “block by block” participatory method contributed positively to transform 8 child-friendly spaces (six directly and 2 indirectly). It also helped to change the mind-set of the policymakers in using soft governance and design tool to engage the community into decision-making and development process. However, the approach also imposed a few important challenges and constraints during the implementation process. First, this initiative was implemented with the direct support of DNCC, which is in charge of service delivery and maintenance, whereas RAJUK is responsible for the overall development control and planning of Dhaka City. The project approach, method and tools used were highly appreciated, adopted and replicated for few other similar projects by the DNCC. However, it was not integrated

into Dhaka Master Plan, which could have played significant roles in resource mobilization and citywide public spaces improvement. Secondly, political will and interest also played vital roles during project implementation. In one site, implementation was delayed due to conflicting political interests. The issue was resolved through the direct support of the Mayor and multiple community consultation meetings. Thirdly, due to resource constraints the initiative could not implement the whole list of proposals made by the community in all these 6 sites. However, after a series of negotiation and mediation meetings, DNCC allocated extra resources from their annual budget to complete the unfinished tasks. Fourthly, DNCC's annual budget is mostly linked with specific donor and government funded development projects. Therefore, they are hard to link with small-scale community-led projects. Lastly, there is a big gap in the demand and supply system of public spaces in Dhaka City as multiple government agencies are involved in the process. The existing system enables parallel agencies to plan, design and implement public spaces and they fall under different ministries. A big strategic change and shift of higher-level governance system is needed to adopt a holistic approach to work public space issue at citywide scale, which was not covered within the scope of this project.

8. KEY INNOVATIONS, SUCCESSES, AND IMPACTS

The key innovation of this specific initiative was to introduce a digital participation tool that allowed communities to engage in design and development processes. It explored the community's potentials to design and implement their own public spaces based on challenges and needs that they face on daily basis.



Local kids taking part in painting the site at Boishakhi Playground © UN-Habitat

The tool was attractive to children and youth groups and proved successful in encouraging them to propose solutions based on their needs. The digital tool has proved to be more appealing for youth groups than traditional tools (site planning, community mapping etc.) where they could visualize solutions, prioritize, and finally validate through discussion and debate, which also heightened their collaborative and leadership skills, giving them engagement and ownership over improving their environment.

The overall impacts of this initiative were very encouraging and opened windows for discussion on quality public spaces in Dhaka City. Some of the key results/successes derived from this initiative are:

- The project in Rayerbazar Boishakhi Playground inspired DNCC to re-think the need and demand for child-friendly public spaces in densely populated and congested neighborhoods in Dhaka. DNCC replicated 2 similar playgrounds/pocket parks for children in Nayatola and Mirpur by following the participatory methods launched by UN-Habitat.
- Based on the acceptance of the “Block by Block” methodology, using Minecraft, DNCC adopted and demonstrated this approach to revitalize 2 major parks/playgrounds (1 park in Banani and 1 Playground in Moghbazar) through their ongoing efforts to upgrade 32 parks and playgrounds under urban Resilience Programme in DNCC area.
- The project in Mirpur where 5 child-friendly spaces were developed, motivated the city authority to realize the needs and importance of pocket parks and the benefits of children’s recreation facilities. The Mayor has

allocated additional 240,000 USD to finish the unfinished proposals that came out through the participatory design workshop from the community people.

- The initiative also contributed to enhance the capacities and skills of 80 experts from different agencies on participatory public space planning and management.
- The community workshop contributed to the learning of more than 80 children and youth who received collaborating and design skills. In total, 94 community consultations and validation meeting were held which were attended by 350 community members at different stages of the project.
- The project developed a design manual to improve child-friendly spaces in congested neighborhoods, which provides practical design guidelines for implementation. The guidelines provide solutions on different services based on the local contexts and available local materials. It also outlines the integrated approach for child-friendly spaces creation, improvement, and management.
- The project also helped to develop a community-led management guide of the completed sites. The guide provides guidelines and policies on the management and maintenance of the spaces with clear roles and responsibilities.
- The participatory method followed for this initiative also attracted multiple public and private actors working on urban development issues in Dhaka. It enhanced their understanding of how public space can lead to sustainable urban development and how voices of the unheard can contribute positively to the design and development process for greater community interest as well as sustainable urban development. Based on that success, a network of public spaces for Dhaka City was formed in 2020. The network provided a set of recommendations on “child-friendly cities” to the 8th Five Year Plan for implementation at the national level.

9. KEY LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

The case of “Child-friendly space for Dhaka” initiative offers multiple positive lessons to be learned from. The active engagement of the community including a wide variety of experts played pivotal roles in creating child-friendly spaces in selected neighbourhoods some of the less served neighbourhoods in Dhaka city. This community-led design and implementation approach brought together a broad array of specialists from the government, academia, community, political and other organizations to collaborate across sectors and build consensus. The result of public space design and implementation related interventions that are not only technically robust, but also take into account the requirements of a broad range of stakeholders, including agencies involved in service delivery and sustainable urban development.



Community meeting to create sustainable management of improved spaces in Mirpur © UN-Habitat

Consensus building through multi-stakeholder engagement is a long-term process that allows the collaborative and effective distribution of roles and responsibilities. Given the diversity of individuals and agencies involved in the process, regular communication and discussions were critical for decision-making. The project facilitated more than 35 field visits and 94 community meetings to assess the community needs as well as for implementation.

In addition to informal tools, the project also used formal tools to finalize the design and implement the sites at the City corporation level. The soft governance tool (informal and experimental) helped to capture the needs and demands of the community whereas the formal governance approach helped to institutionalize the findings from the informal and experimental one. Therefore, the experience of Dhaka suggests that a formal framework that institutionalizes temporary and incremental participatory design process can be replicated in similar and favorable conditions for built environment intervention, in this case quality public space promotion.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Sohel Rana, Urban Development Specialist,
Global Public Space Programme, UN-Habitat

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)



Urban Maestro

New governance strategies
for Urban Design

The use of soft-power
tools in urban
governance towards
higher quality
environments
in South Africa

Karina Landman

Associate professor,
Department of Town and
Regional Planning,
University of Pretoria

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research
and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 831704



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1. THE RAPID GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES	3
2. CONTEXTUALISING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE IN SOUTH AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES.....	5
3. INNOVATIVE AND INTERESTING PRACTICES RELATED TO THE USE OF SOFT-POWER TOOLS IN URBAN GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	8
3.1. State of policy development	9
3.2. Finding evidence through analysis	10
3.3. Disseminating knowledge to offer information.....	13
3.4. Persuading the right people in the right place.....	17
3.5. Reconsidering the quality of place or process	20
3.6. Enabling the development of higher quality spaces.....	22
3.7. Exploring the needs of and working with communities	24
4. LESSONS AND INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS.....	27
5. CONCLUSIONS.....	30

INTRODUCTION

The post-apartheid, democratic era gave rise to a renewed focus on development towards creating more opportunities and better conditions for all South Africans. This development drive has been enhanced using soft power tools such as a plethora of research documents and practice guides, as well as a huge uptake of partnerships between the public and private sectors. There have also been increasing levels of participation from communities, either to voice their needs or to physically get involved in the establishment and/or maintenance of public space. The use of soft-power tools in combination with hard power-tools have not only contributed to higher quality environments, but also an improved quality of life for many people. This has been due to several ingredients to success such as: 1) the presence of dedicated organisations or groups, 2) a committed champion driving the initiative, 3) fruitful partnerships, 4) working together with formal power-tools and 5) the ability to demonstrate the benefits of changing environments. The use of the soft power-tools has, however, often been linked to major flagship or urban upgrading projects, with limited utilisation for less high profile projects. This use, therefore, has the potential to be scaled up largely in order to reap greater benefits for the country.

1. THE RAPID GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES

In 1994, South Africa held its first all-inclusive democratic elections with Nelson Mandela becoming the country's first black president. Since then, South Africa has experienced major socio-economic and spatial transformations that have been both the product of a wide range of new policies and development plans, as well as challenges such as poverty and unemployment, crime and insecurity, and large-scale corruption.

Post-Apartheid cities have generally been characterised by a huge increase in urbanisation. Although this also includes the growth of medium-sized cities, most of the rapid growth occurred in the eight large metropolitan regions. Between 2001 and 2011, the population in Metropolitan Municipalities grew by more than 25%,

compared to 10% in the rest of the country¹. In line with the UN Report², noting the ‘urbanisation of poverty’ as a trend, most of the urban growth in South Africa has been characterised by poor people migrating to the cities to look for employment opportunities. Spatially, the city-areas experiencing rapid growth tend to be concentrated in former black townships and informal settlements, as they “are the first recipients of rural (and foreign) migrants in search of work.”³ In 2013, only 77% of households were living in formal dwellings⁴. Those living in informal conditions also include households living as tenants in backyard shacks, which occur mainly in former black townships and new low-income housing settlements. Additionally, household sizes have also decreased. Therefore, although South Africa has made huge progress in the provision of basic services, there is a growing demand for low-income housing and service delivery in cities⁵.

According to the National Development Plan, in 2011 more than 60 percent of the population in South Africa lived in cities, creating a greater demand for infrastructure, affordable housing and spaces for recreation. Yet, amid increased urbanisation, South African cities continue to struggle with high levels of inequality and unemployment⁶. Currently, the level of unemployment is estimated to be at 30.8%. This has been exacerbated further by the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, which resulted in the loss of 648 000 jobs in the second quarter of 2020 and a further 701 000 in the 4th quarter⁷. Furthermore, youth unemployment is estimated to be at 55%⁸, contributing to low morale and little hope for the future. This also contributes to high levels of poverty, as almost 20% of South African households had inadequate or severely inadequate access to food in 2017⁹. As well, child hunger remains a major challenge, with more than half a million households with children younger than 5 years having experienced hunger¹⁰. Many households also depend on social grants

¹ Turok, I. & Borel-Saladin, J. 2014. Is Urbanisation in South Africa on a sustainable trajectory? *Development Southern Africa*, 31(5):675-691.

² UN-Habitat. 2004. *The challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*. UN-Habitat.

³ Mahajan, S. (ed.) 2014. *Economics of South African Townships: special Focus on Diepsloot*. World Bank Studies. Washington, DC: World Bank, p.8.

⁴ Statistics SA Website 2021. Household Service Delivery Statistics. Accessed online on 2021-01-25 at http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=739&id=2&paged=2

⁵ *State of the Cities Report*. 2016. Produced by the South African Cities Network. Accessed online at

<https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SoCR16-Main-Report-online.pdf>

⁶ The National Development Plan. 2013.

⁷ Statistics SA. 2021. Quarterly Labour force survey, Accessed online on the Statistics SA Website at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02114thQuarter2020.pdf>

⁸ Jonas, M. 2019. *After Dawn: Hope after State Capture*. Johannesburg: Picador Africa

⁹ According to Oxfam, food security occurs when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy lifestyle. Food insecurity occurs when people’s access to food is minimally adequate and they have trouble meeting their basic needs, while severe inadequate access to food occurs when there is a critical lack of access to food. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/food-insecurity-infographic>

¹⁰ Statistics SA Website 2021. The Extent of food security in South Africa. Accessed online on 2021-01-25 at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12135>

for survival¹¹, while informal trading has grown exponentially. The condition of the poor is further exacerbated by the spatial patterns in the country, as most low-income areas are located on the periphery of the cities. As many of the job opportunities continue to be located more centrally, this results in high transport costs and long travel times, which further impacts negatively on the quality of life of the poor. Despite the development of many progressive policies to facilitate social and spatial development, their implementation has often been slow and hampered by large scale corruption, which has been referred to as state capture.

Crime remains a major challenge. Between 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 aggregate crime levels increased, including crimes such as: theft of motor vehicles (19%), hijacking (14%), assault (12%), deliberate damage of residential buildings (7%), trespassing (7%), murder (4%) and home robbery (3%). These include numerous types of crime related to where people live, as well as contact crimes, both being categories that significantly increase the fear of crime. Given this, it is not surprising that only 32% of South Africans feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhoods at night¹². In response, the built environment has also been transformed into a series of gated enclaves for the middle and higher-income households, referred to as gated communities or developments. These developments include large luxury estates, gated townhouse complexes, secure office parks and security-controlled mixed-developments or shopping centres. Many lower-income households also aspire to live in gated developments. Following suit, the public open space has been changed to address these challenges.

2. CONTEXTUALISING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE IN SOUTH AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

There is a long tradition of public space development in South Africa. However, during the colonial and apartheid eras, the well-developed spaces were mostly limited to the historic city centres and wealthier white areas. Leafy suburbs with tree-lined streets and well-maintained parks often stood in stark contrast to undeveloped open spaces in the former black township areas. Despite attempts to address this

¹¹ Statistics SA Website 2021. How unequal is South Africa? Accessed online on 2021-01-25 at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12930>

¹² Statistics SA Website 2021. *Crime statistics*. Accessed online on 2021-01-25 at http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=737&id=5

situation after 1994, recent studies have indicated that large inequalities remain in terms of the provision and nature of the public realm in different parts of the country and within cities. Urban green infrastructure remains unequally distributed across income and race geographies in South Africa and is mirrored in both private and public spaces, from gardens to street verges, parks and greenbelts.¹³ Public space in former township areas, with some exceptions, are still to a large extent un- or underdeveloped and where they are developed, often vandalised or unmaintained (Figure 1). The quality of space in smaller rural towns has also dramatically declined due to limited or a complete lack of maintenance, broken furniture and severe damage to existing vegetation (Figure 2). Many small low-income houses are scattered across a barren and underdeveloped landscape. This overall situation raises several questions about the quality of the built environment, from growing informal settlements (Figure 3) and state-delivered low-income housing projects to the condition of the streets and open spaces.



Figure 1: Vandalised play equipment and pavement in the Pienaarspoort Park in Mamelodi, City of Tshwane.

¹³ Venter, Z.S., Shackleton, C., Van Staden, F., Selomane, O. & Masterson, V.A. 2020. Green Apartheid: Urban green

infrastructure remains unequally distributed across income and race geographies in South Africa, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 203: 1-2.



Figure 2: Derelict and vandalised park in Harrismith, a rural town in the Free State Province.



Figure 3: Growing informal settlements in Mamelodi East, City of Tshwane.

Several challenges contribute to low-quality environments. With high levels of poverty, limited employment opportunities and high demand for low-cost housing, housing delivery and basic services remain the priority of lower-income earners. Most municipalities, facing restricted budgets, focus on service and housing delivery. The result is that the quality of the built environment is therefore influenced by low budgets and competing needs. Secondly, competing needs also refer to the function of public spaces—while many users long for well-maintained and safe spaces of a higher quality, others frequent these spaces as a matter of survival, for example, informal traders and the homeless. This creates tensions and fear in many spaces. Thirdly, where there are some ideal examples of higher quality environments, these

tend to be either linked to highly controlled spaces (pay-to-enter parks, pseudo-public spaces connected to shopping centres and common open spaces in gated developments) across the country (Figure 4), or to selective spaces in metropolitan municipalities that have benefited from regeneration programmes. Thus, many of the higher quality environments have utilised the use of soft-power tools to enable the (re)development of the spaces.



Figure 4: High quality common open space in Dainfern, a luxury estate in northern Johannesburg.

3. INNOVATIVE AND INTERESTING PRACTICES RELATED TO THE USE OF SOFT-POWER TOOLS IN URBAN GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African governance framework consists of a three-tier system based on a constitutional democracy and an independent judiciary. All three levels of government—national, provincial and local—have legislative and executive authority in their spheres and are defined in the Constitution as being distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. Besides, there are advisory bodies drawn from traditional South African leaders that operate at both the national and provincial levels. The intention, as highlighted in the Constitution, is that the country be run on

a system of cooperative governance¹⁴. Additionally, the country moved towards a more developmental state since 1994, which implied the need to address the knowledge gap. An attempt to address the restructuring and developmental goals has required more efforts to increase the capacity and skills of both built environment professionals and other decision-makers in municipalities.¹⁵

Urban design governance is defined as "the process of state-sanctioned intervention in the means and processes of designing the built environment to shape both processes and outcomes in a defined public interest"¹⁶. Soft governance includes a casual administration approach related to spatial advancement and planning¹⁷, which breaches the formal authoritative and political boundaries through informal procedures to provide interventions in a given geographical area.¹⁸ In recent years, the use of several informal (soft-power) tools has become more widespread to complement the use of formal (regulatory/hard) tools within the public sector¹⁹. This has also been the case in South Africa, with an increased focus on involving various stakeholders from both within and outside the public sector to increase the feasibility of built environment projects and the quality of space. It reflects the power of the state to encourage development in a way that is not compelling or forceful.²⁰ The following discussion presents an overview of the use of soft power-tools in South Africa.

3.1. State of policy development

While there is no policy addressing the quality of public space or the built environment at the national level, the issue is mentioned in several high-level policies. For example, the National Development Plan 2030 encompasses the country's road map towards improved socio-economic development. This plan includes an entire chapter on the envisioned nature of the built environment entitled *Transforming human settlement and the national space economy*. The NDP specifically notes that "more attention should be given to the design and quality of

¹⁴ South African Government, Structure and functions. <https://www.gov.za/about-government/government-system/structure-and-functions-south-african-government>

¹⁵ Coetzee, J. 2012. The transformation of municipal development planning in South Africa (post-1994): Impressions and impasse. *Town and Regional Planning Journal*, 61:10-20.

¹⁶ Carmona, 2017. The formal and informal tools of design governance, *Journal of Urban Design*, 22(1): 6.

¹⁷ Allmendinger, P. & Haughton, G. (2009). 'Soft spaces, fuzzy boundaries, and meta-governance: The new spatial planning in the Thames Gateway,' *Environment and Planning A*, Vol. 41 no. 3, pp. 617–633.

¹⁸ Olesen, K. (2011). 'Soft spaces as vehicles for neoliberal transformations of strategic spatial planning?' in Olesen, K. *Strategic Spatial Planning in Transition - A Case Study of Denmark*, Aalborg University: Unpublished PhD thesis, pp. 145-162.

¹⁹ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

²⁰ Urban Maestro. *op. cit.*

urban public space”²¹, yet gives limited direction to what this quality should entail or how it should be achieved. The Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) seeks to foster a shared understanding across government and society so as to manage urbanisation and achieve economic development, job creation and improved living conditions. The IUDF also emphasises the need for multi-functional urban spaces and expanded public amenities to transform the quality of life through a whole-of-society approach.²² Additionally, numerous Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) from local municipalities acknowledge the importance of a high-quality public space.

The City of Cape Town prepared a detailed urban design policy in 2013 that outlined the nature of urban design, desired outcomes, interaction with stakeholders and broad urban design principles. This policy is structured around nine broad objectives to guide future interventions and ensure higher quality environments. Objective 2 specifically focuses on an improved quality of the public realm and public spaces.²³ Furthermore, there is the case of Gauteng Province, the smallest province in the country yet that is considered the economic powerhouse. The province includes three powerful metropolitan municipalities, namely the City of Johannesburg, the City of Tshwane (including Pretoria, the capital city) and the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. Ekurhuleni developed a comprehensive approach to urban design,²⁴ and a draft urban design policy framework with detailed guidelines for reshaping the built environment.²⁵ These policy documents have contributed significantly to increasing the role of urban design in South Africa and focusing further attention on the importance of higher quality environments.

3.2. Finding evidence through analysis

The first set of soft-power tools assists policy and other decision-makers with understanding how the built environment is shaped through various processes and how these give rise to certain outcomes. These tools, therefore, present evidence to inform governments and built environment professionals about the consequences of

²¹ The National Development Plan. 2013. Developed by the Planning Commission in the Presidency. Accessed online at https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/ndp-2030-our-future-make-it-workr.pdf, p286.

²² Integrated Development Framework. 2016. Developed by the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Available online at <https://iudf.co.za/knowledge-hub/documents/>

²³ Urban Design Policy. 2013. Developed by the City of Cape Town. Accessed online at <http://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/Bylaws%20and%20policies/Urban%20Design%20-%20%28Policy%20number%2012986%29%20approved%20on%2004%20December%202013.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.ekurhuleni.gov.za/about-the-city/priority-projects/urban-design/urban-design-precinct-plans/urban-design-policy.html>

²⁵ <https://www.ekurhuleni.gov.za/about-the-city/priority-projects/urban-design.html>

certain types of interventions and decisions through research and audits.²⁶ It most often provides evidence for ongoing policy processes and decisions around the prioritisation of certain types of interventions.

There are several organisations in South Africa that commission research ranging from different spheres of government to non/pseudo-governmental organisations. Various departments of national government initiate research to support certain directions or encourage specific approaches. In recent years, the quality of the built environment has become increasingly important to demonstrate greater alignment with international trends, expressed through the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, it still receives limited attention in major continental documents such as the African Agenda 2063 and “Opening Doors to Africa”, developed by the World Bank.²⁷ This is probably due to the enormous scale of the challenges faced in Africa and the need to prioritise. From a National Perspective, the Treasury has commissioned research to support the Neighbourhood Development Programme (NDP) and the development of specific guides. In another case, the Department of Human Settlements, Sanitation and Water, calls for research to support policy formulation and implementation, such as the development of the New Redbook for example (see the next section for further details).

At a local level, some municipalities have commissioned research to support the development of policies and guideline-documents for special focus areas such as safety. For example, the City of Johannesburg asked the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to develop a framework to mainstream Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) into the activities of the municipalities, while eThekweni municipality (including Durban) commissioned them to investigate the incorporation of CPTED into Area-Based-Management.

Research in the country is also commissioned and carried out by some non/pseudo-governmental organisations, such as the CSIR, the South African Cities Network (SACN), the Isandla Institute and the Development Action Group (DAG). First is the CSIR, an entity of the Department of Science and Innovation,²⁸ and regularly carries out research on the quality of urban space in the country; for example, the Smart Places Cluster recently completed a study on Inclusive Smart Cities and whether they are appropriate to the South African Context.²⁹ There is also the SACN an established network of cities in the country and partners that encourages the exchange of information, experience and best practices on urban development and

²⁶ Urban Maestro. 2019. Informal tools of Urban Design Governance, the European picture. www.urbanmaestro.org

²⁷ <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview> and <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25896>

²⁸ <https://www.csir.co.za/>

²⁹ CSIR. 2020. Inclusive Smart Cities. Available online at <https://www.ukesa.info/library/view/inclusive-smart-cities-appropriate-to-the-south-african-context2>

city management³⁰. They regularly carry out or commission research on important issues influencing the development of cities in the country, such as the quality of the built environment. These include the *Smart Cities Paper series*³¹ and *Planning for Green Infrastructure: options for South African Cities*.³² The Isandla Institute is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and key role player in the local government sector that produces quality research and facilitates dialogue between key role-players. They focus on issues related to addressing poverty, inequality and vulnerability.³³ DAG is another influential NGO that produces important research to shape the built environment, for example, by conducting a report on value capture, another on financing affordable housing and infrastructure in cities and one on upgrading informal settlements.³⁴

Finally, the private sector has also been involved in commissioning research. Future Part is an initiative founded within Boogertman and Partners Architects as a creative engine to enable research and experimental design thinking.³⁵ For example, they recently funded an inquiry into the future of Corporate Privately Managed Space in Johannesburg and Nairobi, which resulted in several documents and a large-scale exhibition in early 2020.³⁶ Future Part's studies tend to focus more on the problematic issues influencing the quality of the built environment, such as the impact of technology on the nature and use of the built environment, the vulnerability of the poor, and the implications of the privatisation of public space.

Another form of evidence in South Africa, and that tends to be more place-orientated than problem-orientated³⁷, are audits. In the past, the Department of Housing commissioned a State of the Cities report in 2001 and a Sustainability Analysis of Human Settlements in 2002³⁸, both of which were carried out by the CISR. Since then, the SACN has filled a large gap in this regard, thereby becoming well-known for their State of the Cities reports, such as the latest one published in 2016 for example.³⁹ They also carry out other audits such as those on the State of Crime and Safety in SA Cities and the State of Water in cities.⁴⁰ The variety of SACN audits

³⁰ <https://www.sacities.net/>

³¹ https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Smart_Cities_Papers_Volume_1_Final-Draft.pdf

³² https://www.sacities.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/SACities_GreenerCities_Web.pdf

³³ <https://www.isandla.org.za/en/>

³⁴ <https://www.dag.org.za/research-reports/>

³⁵ <https://futurepart.co.za>

³⁶ <https://futurepart.co.za/a-future-of-corporate-privately-managed-public-spaces/>

³⁷ Carmona, *op. cit.*

³⁸

http://researchspace.csisr.co.za/dspace/bitstream/handle/10204/3522/Du%20Plessis_2002.pdf;jsessionid=77C86FCE7C0AF97BA5AB7293DE5EE53D?sequence=1

³⁹ <https://www.sacities.net/state-of-cities-reports-2/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.sacities.net/publications/>

offers valuable information to assist various spheres of government with planning, designing and managing aspects and portions of human settlements and contribute to the improvement of the quality of the built environment. Local municipalities also carry out audits from time to time. The eThekweni municipality has a record of conducting Business and User Survey Satisfaction Surveys, which offer a baseline for design impact assessments and are used as a basis to monitor progress.⁴¹ The Department of Public Safety in the City of Johannesburg also carries out safety audits to understand the state of safety in public spaces⁴². This is because, as mentioned previously, safety is a critical issue that affects both the qualities of place and life in public spaces in South Africa.

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) is another important research organisation that contributes evidence on how the built environment is shaped and what it means for planning and design. The GCRO focuses on research in the Gauteng City region that comprises South Africa's economic heartland. This region includes more than 15 million people and generates a third of the country's GDP on just 2% of its land area. The GCRO aims to collect and compile data in order to inform development in this region.⁴³ Recent reports include *Towards applying a green infrastructure approach in the CGRO*, *Social Cohesion in Gauteng* and *Taking Streets Seriously*.⁴⁴ Not only have they become significant providers of evidence in Gauteng, but also strong voices to influence the trajectory of development in the most powerful region in the country.

3.3. Disseminating knowledge to offer information

Once there is evidence, it needs to be distributed to key decision-makers and other stakeholders. The main purpose of knowledge tools is therefore to disseminate knowledge about the nature of design practices and processes so that key influencers can learn from what has worked, but also what has not worked well. Knowledge tools comprise a wide range of practices, including **practice guides**, **best practice case studies** and **education or training activities**.⁴⁵

⁴¹ eThekweni Municipality IDP:2019-2020 review. Available online at: http://www.durban.gov.za/City_Government/City_Vision/IDP/Pages/default.aspx

⁴² The city of Johannesburg. 2021. Safety ad Public Spaces.

⁴³ <https://www.gcro.ac.za/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.gcro.ac.za/outputs/research-reports/>

⁴⁵ Carmona, M. op cit. & Urban Maestro. 2019. Informal tools of Urban Design Governance, the European picture. www.urbanmaestro.org

The development of **practice guides** has been very popular in South Africa. These have been produced by various spheres of government, as well as some non/pseudo-governmental organisations. As mentioned previously, the National Treasury has been instrumental in the development of the NDP in order to facilitate the development of higher quality neighbourhoods through grant funding and technical assistance provided to municipalities for capital projects.⁴⁶ To address the fragmented nature of South African cities and the often underdeveloped township areas, the NDP aims to reconnect the important nodes in marginalised or degenerated inner-city areas with those areas of higher potential in cities. This includes the development of several guides to explain the involved processes and design requirements, including an *Urban Hub Design Toolkit* to restructure the hubs to be more sustainable through better connections, integration of land use and compaction, alongside the spatial preconditions necessary to create vibrant, people-friendly environments.⁴⁷ The Department of Human Settlements also commissioned a major guideline document in 2000, which was upgraded in 2020, entitled *Guidelines for Human Settlement Planning and Design*, or more commonly known as The Redbook. This document provides performance-based guidelines for informed decision making⁴⁸. As well, the National Department of Safety and Security commissioned a CPTED Manual, called *Designing Safer Communities*,⁴⁹ which not only offered knowledge on how to reduce opportunities for crime in the built environment, but also provided a foundation for further practice guides, such as the *Safer Cities Guidelines* produced by the City of Cape Town⁵⁰ and the *Public Space Handbook* and *Safety and Public Space Guide* produced by the City of Johannesburg (see the next section). The Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality developed the *Sustainable Community Planning Guide* to highlight several sustainable planning principles to contribute to more integrated and sustainable cities and neighbourhoods.⁵¹ Other types of practice guides include the *Building Better Neighbourhoods through co-production* by the Isandla Institute⁵², the *Sustainable Neighbourhood Design Manual*, produced by the Sustainability Institute⁵³ and a highly innovative guide to upgrading informal settlements, produced by the Afesis-corplan in both English and IsiXhosa. The guide provides a very basic step-by-step

⁴⁶

<http://ndp.treasury.gov.za/About%20NDP/Forms/UNS%20Support%20Guide.aspx>

⁴⁷ Urban Hub Design Toolkit. 2014.

⁴⁸ <https://researchspace.csir.co.za/dspace/handle/10204/3750>

and http://www.dhs.gov.za/sites/default/files/u16/RB_CouncillorsBrochure_10August17_Final.pdf

⁴⁹ <https://www.csir.co.za/designing-safer-places>

⁵⁰ Design and Management Guidelines for a Safer City. 20. Developed by the City of Cape Town. Accessed online at <http://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/Procedures%2c%20guidelines%20and%20regulations/Design%20and%20Management%20Guidelines%20for%20a%20Safer%20City.pdf>

⁵¹ https://www.nelsonmandelabay.gov.za/datarepository/documents/TZ62e_Introduction%201-13.pdf

⁵² <https://www.isandla.org.za/en/>

⁵³ http://www.cityenergy.org.za/uploads/resource_139.pdf

blueprint to residents on the process of informal settlement upgrading in the country and the potential role that they can play, as well as other initiatives to improve the quality of the area through community work programmes, etc.⁵⁴

Compared to practice guides, **case studies** are a more raw form of knowledge tool that also share best practices. It is typically written with a common structure to allow for comparisons and to reveal key issues.⁵⁵ The Department of Human Settlements, Sanitation and Water have from time to time commissioned case studies to spotlight best practices, for example on sustainable housing practices. At a local level, the eThekweni municipality has also engaged in case studies on housing typologies, which scrutinized best practices in this regard.⁵⁶ Over the years, the CSIR has also engaged in the production of several case studies. This includes those on medium density mixed development in South Africa, which examined seven cases across the country according to a three-layered framework of 1) critical success factors, 2) key factors to an enabling environment and 3) its relation to sustainability. These were documented in seven individual documents and one comparative case study document⁵⁷. DAG has also been involved in producing several best practice case studies, including a best practices case study of capacity development, and another on capacity building through the People's Housing Process (PHP), a review of international and national trends and best practices in housing and design options and delivery models for hostel development.⁵⁸

Education and training are other informal tools that involve both formal and informal education programmes. At the National level, Treasury placed a large emphasis on training as part of the NDPG. This involved the development of NDP Training Guidelines⁵⁹ as well as hands-on workshops in order to assist local authorities and consultants in the development of precinct plans for the NDP hubs. For example, when a project has been awarded to a consultant team, they have about two weeks to analyse the precinct and thereafter develop a draft concept plan. This plan is then presented at a workshop involving all the key stakeholders from the local municipality in which the precinct is situated. Subsequently, all of the participants drive and/or walk around the precinct, after which they return to the workshop to reconsider the plan with a leading urban designer that has been appointed to assist the group with refining the concept plan (Figure 5). Such a workshop can take more than half a day,

⁵⁴ <http://afesis.org.za/upgrading-of-informal-settlements/>

⁵⁵ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

⁵⁶

http://www.durban.gov.za/City_Services/engineering%20unit/City%20Architects/back-up/Housing_Typologies_Study/Pages/default.aspx

⁵⁷ Landman, K., du Toit, J., Mmonwa, M. and Matsebe, G. (2010). Comparing seven case studies of medium density mixed housing in South Africa. CSIR Report: Document reference number: CSIR/BE/PSS/IR/2009.

⁵⁸ <https://www.dag.org.za/case-study/>

⁵⁹ Neighbourhood Development Programme: Training Guideline – templates and Tools. 2015.

though the outcome is enormously beneficial in not only getting every stakeholder involved and contributing valuable information, but also to building the capacity of all the participants under the guidance of a skilled urban designer.



Figure 5: NDPG Workshop to refine the concept plan of the CBD precinct Emafuleni

The Sustainability Institute is a living and learning centre, which teaches, explores, and applies planning, design and management mechanisms towards greater sustainability in the built environment. They operate in partnership with the School of Public Leadership at the University of Stellenbosch, and although they offer a Master's Programme in Sustainable Development, they also offer numerous other degree courses and other shorter-term courses in order to transfer and cultivate skills and knowledge to and in those interested in the sustainable development.⁶⁰ This is an example of a highly local organisation that contributes to capacity building and skills development across the country. Training is also provided by the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA), who offer specialised knowledge so as to empower people across the design, property and construction industries towards more sustainable buildings.⁶¹

The dissemination of knowledge can also take place through the development of a knowledge platform. The CSIR's Urban Knowledge Exchange Southern Africa (UKESA) is a knowledge platform that hosts a wide range of documents or provides links to access them. This allows built environment researchers and professionals, as

⁶⁰ <https://www.sustainabilityinstitute.net/>

⁶¹ <https://gbcса.org.za/>

well as decision-makers, to gain access to valuable information and improve their knowledge on important issues in the country.⁶² The themes that are featured include climate change/resilience, economics, environmental management, food security, gender, governance, law, livelihoods and markets.

3.4. Persuading the right people in the right place

Distributing information alone, however, is not going to have a major impact. Promotional tools present the case for particular design responses in a more proactive manner so that the message can be extended to persuade the right people in the right place to take note and implement them. Persuasion tools include awards and campaigns to spread the notion of good design and to advocate within the government to influence legislation and policy. It also involves partnerships towards more effective delivery options and allows for collaboration between key role players⁶³.

In terms of awareness-raising, there are not many awards in South Africa that acknowledge good design and practices. The most notable of those that do exist include the Awards bestowed by the South African Institute of Architects (SAIA), which include Awards of Excellence and Merit, as well as a gold medal that is awarded to an outstanding individual who has provided distinguished service to the profession. Concerning urban design, the Institute of Urban Design in South Africa (UDISA) has recently launched the Roelof Uytendogaardt UDISA Memorial Lecture, a prestigious award bestowed on a leading urban designer that has made a distinguished contribution to urban design in the country. This Lecture was launched in memory of Roelof Uytendogaardt, one of the most prominent and influential architects and urban designers in the country who passed away at the turn of the century.

The second promotional tool refers to the use of active campaigning through media events and networks to promote awareness among the general public, professionals and regulators about the key issue of concern in the built environment. The aim of this is to raise awareness about design quality to encourage its incorporation in projects and cultivate appreciation among everyday users—this is closely linked to advocacy and fostering partnerships, as the role of advocacy is to convince audiences of the value of a particular approach.⁶⁴ For example, organisations such as the SACN have been actively involved in the promotion of higher quality

⁶² <https://www.ukesa.info/>

⁶⁴ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

⁶³ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

environments in the country. This includes their *Strategic Conversations*, occasional sessions where leaders from South Africa's largest cities, including metropolitan and secondary cities, as well as other key stakeholders, convene to discuss topical issues and examine key evidence related to strategy, planning, leadership and governance of these cities.⁶⁵ Another key role player is the GBCSA, which in addition to offering training, also hosts events and campaigns to advocate for a better environment. These advocacy platforms aim to create critical foundations for a green economy and to highlight the role of the built environment in the drive towards greater sustainability.⁶⁶

At a more local level, departments within municipalities have also been involved with advocacy within their organisations in an attempt to promote design quality and better environments. For example, Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (JCPZ) has been actively involved in internal advocacy to promote the important role of well-developed and maintained public spaces across the City of Johannesburg. The JCPZ is responsible for the development and management of over 3000 parks and public open spaces in the metropolitan area but has limited resources, budget and capacity to deal with the challenges. They have partnered with several organisations to carry out pilot projects, involve the communities, and develop a series of strategies and practice guides towards their goal of transforming public parks into safe and inclusive community spaces. These partners have included the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), the Johannesburg Safety Programme and the Special Projects Unit in the Office of the City Manager (all internal partners), as well as the Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme (VCP), a joint programme between South Africa and Germany implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). For the development of the practice guides, they also partnered with the UN-Habitat. The innovative work of the JCPZ and its partners also resulted in the upgrading of the End Street North Park in the Johannesburg Inner City area where they worked with the GIZ-VCP (providing technical support), the UN-Habitat Global Public Space programme (sharing best practices), Sticky Situations (a social enterprise assisting with public participation and stakeholder engagement) WITS University students and professors (collaborating with park assessments and providing expert input), Tshimololong precinct Techno Hub to facilitate the Minecraft Workshop with the public space users, and the Department of Development Planning (providing input on design considerations for public open spaces).⁶⁷ Additionally, the JCPZ also hosts several

⁶⁵ <https://www.sacities.net/strategic-conversations/>

⁶⁶ <https://gbsa.org.za/>

⁶⁷ Transforming public parks into safe and inclusive community spaces: lessons on collaboration and participation from the City of Johannesburg. Available online at www.jhbcityparks.com and www.saferspaces.co.za.

environmental campaigns and events throughout the year to raise awareness and promote the active use of green spaces.

The GIZ VCP is also actively engaged in promoting good design and management to contribute to safer spaces through their website, Safer Spaces⁶⁸. This is an interactive platform run by and for community safety and violence prevention practitioners in South Africa to connect, share knowledge and learn from one another. Therefore, although they also have a knowledge sharing and educational role, through the production of guides and training events, their main focus has remained on campaigning for safer spaces and building partnerships to enable this in practice. An example of this is the *#Eksê My voice, My safety* project which has also been jointly sponsored by the Gauteng Department of Community Safety, the South African Police Service, the Youth Crime prevention desk and the Community Police Forum. This is noted in the *#Eksê My voice, My safety* project booklet, which has also been jointly sponsored by the Gauteng Department of Community Safety Booklet and includes references to the quality of the built environment and its link to safety.⁶⁹

DAG has also been actively involved in raising awareness, especially concerning the quality of housing in the country—they are actively involved in advocacy for change, enabling citizen coalitions to create change and re-imagining neighbourhoods through facilitation. They have often worked in partnership with local governments on project implementation to improve conditions in lower-income housing areas.⁷⁰ Another NGO, the Isandla Institute, seeks to promote and contribute to urban governance systems and practices that are democratic, inclusive, equitable, accountable and sustainable. They aim to do so through the promotion of urban citizenship in order to influence progressive policy, planning frameworks, programmes and practices, as well as through strategic partnerships and coalitions for change.⁷¹ For example, one of the projects has included building communities based on practice to advance participatory approaches to informal settlement upgrading, including cultivating community capability, supporting sustainable livelihoods through upgrading, securing tenure, facilitating incremental approaches, etc.⁷² Both of these NGOs are regularly involved with events to campaign, advocate and involve communities within the project and therefore create valuable partnerships with local municipalities.

⁶⁸ <https://www.saferspaces.org.za/>

⁶⁹

https://www.saferspaces.org.za/uploads/files/Ekse_booklet.pdf

⁷⁰ <https://www.dag.org.za/what-we-do/>

⁷¹ <https://www.isandla.org.za/en/what-we-do>

⁷² <https://www.isandla.org.za/en/projects/urban-land>

The (re)development and management of the Alkantrant Park in the City of Tshwane also highlights the valuable role of Public-Private Partnerships. Although the park is still publicly owned and accessible, it was redeveloped and remains managed and maintained by the private sector. During their negotiations to obtain development rights for the Lynnwood Bridge Development, Atterbury Properties agreed to develop and manage the Alkantrant Park. The city drew up a contract with the developers, and a schedule of appropriate horticultural services was incorporated into the agreement to avoid confusion. According to a city official, the city has certain policies in place to guide park maintenance, while the management of these parks is influenced by existing challenges such as squatters in the open space, vehicles, human and waste pollution in streams and illegal dumping. Although this is an ideal example of a public-private partnership, it also demonstrates the use of both informal and formal (incentive) tools working together.

Finally, City Improvement Districts (CIDs) have also been used as a successful method for fostering partnerships to improve the quality of the built environment. For example, through a CID, the Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP) is involved in the co-management of the inner city and Joubert Park, one of the most historic spaces in the city. They do this together with other partners, such as the CJPZ, who is responsible for the park, the Metropolitan Trading Company and the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department. The establishment of CIDs has also contributed to good quality spaces in Nelspruit, located in the City of Mbombela, the capital of the Mpumalanga Province. The development of the CIDs has resulted in a higher concentration of mixed economic activities that offer more employment and improved property values. Through the use of soft power-tools and the relationships established between the CID managers and the municipality, the revenue from property owners has increased significantly, giving rise to a higher revenue base for the municipality. In Cape Town, the CID contributed to a large-scale transformation of the inner city through cleaning, maintenance and improved safety. They have, however, been criticised for targeting and excluding homeless people and informal traders from public spaces.

3.5. Reconsidering the quality of place or process

Once persuaded, decision-makers and professionals have to make sure that the required outcome or impact has been achieved in order to confirm that their efforts have been worthwhile. Rating tools allow judgements to be made about the quality of design structurally and systematically by independent groups. They include both

formative (indicators and design reviews) and summative (certification and competitions) evaluation tools.⁷³

As part of their Urban Design Policy, the Ekurhuleni Municipality developed a tool for evaluating development applications with a set of indicators, in addition to establishing an Urban Design Review Committee.⁷⁴ Examples of other formative evaluation tools can be found in the eThekweni Municipality, which established an aesthetics committee to assess building design and how this contributes to overall place-making in the Inner City. This committee is comprised of municipal officials and experts from the private sector.⁷⁵ The municipality also has a Design Review Panel (DRP) which was, for example, involved in the assessments of design proposals for the Durban Point Development Project. This large project was officially launched in 2001 to regenerate the Point in Durban, one of the most historic areas between the harbour and the Durban Promenade. The DRP involves individuals from the Council and the development team such as planners, architects and engineers who scrutinise the proposals to ensure that they reflect the overall vision for the Point, commenting on the plans and then forwarding them to the municipality for approval. This process has been so successful that it has been rolled out to other catalytic projects in the municipality.⁷⁶

There are also a few examples of summative evaluation tools. In addition to advocacy and education, as mentioned earlier, the GBCSA also carries out the objective measurement for green buildings in South Africa and Africa. The certification processes governed by the GBCSA involve the certification of buildings utilising tools such as the Green Star, Net Zero, EWP and EDGE rating tools.⁷⁷ This process has recently been extended to also assess neighbourhoods through the Green Star System, adapted for South Africa from the Australian version.

Design competitions are focused on raising the standards of design through a competitive process.⁷⁸ This has only occurred occasionally in the country and only with major flagship projects of national concern. One of the most famous examples includes the design competition for the Constitutional Hill Development in Johannesburg. The Constitutional Court, established in 1994, was operated from rental accommodation in its first few years. Subsequently, an international architectural competition was held in 1997 for the design of the new building, with

⁷³ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ <https://www.ekurhuleni.gov.za/about-the-city/priority-projects/urban-design.html>

⁷⁵ eThekweni Inner City Regeneration Strategy – A Roadmap for Regeneration of the Inner City: 2019-2020. review.

⁷⁶ Gouden, K. 2010. Waterfront Development as a Strategy for Urban Renewal – A case study of the Durban Point Waterfront Development Project. Unpublished Master's thesis. School of Architecture & Planning, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

⁷⁷ <https://gbcasa.org.za/certify/>

⁷⁸ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

the competition being widely advertised and eventually drawing an overwhelming response of 580 applications and 185 formal submissions from 30 countries. An international team of judges, led by Charles Correa, awarded the winning entry to a group of young South African architects from OMM Design Workshop in Durban in partnership with Paul Wygers from Johannesburg. They proposed a design that was comprised of a series of pavilions subtly linked by internal and perimeter pathways and public plazas.⁷⁹

3.6. Enabling the development of higher quality spaces

Funding is always a challenge – even more so in South Africa. One way to increase the likelihood of higher quality developments in the built environment is through indirect and direct support in the form of financial assistance and enabling organisations to produce better environments. Financial support to organisations can include the provision of grants to projects or through less direct means such as the support of officers on the ground to take action that would improve the quality of the environment.⁸⁰

As mentioned before, the NDP was established in 2006 within the National Treasury, with this programme being responsible for managing the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG). This grant is driven by the idea that public investment and funding can be used creatively to attract private and community investment to unlock the social and economic potential in targeted and underserved neighbourhoods. This type of investment then has the potential to improve the quality of the built environment and the quality of life of its residents. The purpose of the grant is thus to fund, support and facilitate planning and development of key urban hubs through catalytic infrastructure to leverage third-party public and private sector investment for more sustainable and future development. Grant allocations are earmarked for municipalities that align with the NDPG prioritisation criteria, including population densities, levels and diversity of economic activity, the concentration of poverty and the presence of connectivity networks such as public transport.⁸¹ This has given rise to the identification of 18 municipalities in larger urban areas and key regional service centres. The investment has indeed contributed to the improvement of these areas, for example, the Solomon Mahlangu Square in Mamelodi (Figure 6) and the Refilwe Park in Cullinan, both located in the City of Tshwane.

⁷⁹ <https://www.concourt.org.za/index.php/about-us/the-building>

⁸¹ <http://ndp.treasury.gov.za/default.aspx>

⁸⁰ Carmona, M. *op. cit.*



Figure 6: The Solomon Mahlangu Square in Mamelodi with the statue of Solomon Mahlangu, one of the heroes of the struggle, in the centre at the back.

The JCPZ also supports several park rangers who share information with park users and provide security. However, park rangers have no mandate to arrest people. For this, they have to rely on the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) for support.

Support tools can also focus on more direct financial support through key initiatives such as professional enabling, providing direct-targeted assistance on projects⁸². The Neighbourhood Development Programme also assists in professional enabling through the support of an urban designer to facilitate the precinct workshops. Direct support in this form is often used in large projects to assist the various design teams with the development of specific design proposals. For example, in the early 2000s, one of the largest urban upgrading projects in the country took place in Alexandra, a former black township close to Sandton, one of the richest neighbourhoods and economic hubs in the City of Johannesburg. The different design teams working in the various precincts were advised by a team of CPTED experts from the CSIR, who were supported by the project financing to review the proposals to ensure greater safety in a crime-ridden area. Similarly, the design teams and local municipal officials working on the urban regeneration project in Warwick Junction, one of the largest and busiest model interchanges in Durban, were also supported by the project to engage with the CPTED team to transform knowledge and advice regarding planning and designing for safety.

⁸² Carmona, M. *op. cit.*

3.7. Exploring the needs of and working with communities

The quality of the built environment is ultimately aimed at improving the quality of its users. Therefore, involving the users in the production and management processes is critical. Explorational tools allow the users to engage directly in the design process through mechanisms that instigate, test and involve community design processes. This can typically include the direct participation of communities in the design guidance or in processes such as design charrettes.⁸³

In 2019, a group of concerned residents, including architects and landscape architects, met at a local park to discuss the state of an undeveloped open space located at the top of a hill in the Groenkloof neighbourhood under the Telkom Tower. They were concerned with the state of the space and the impact thereof on the users and the rest of the neighbourhood. As such, they developed criteria for the design of the park, and started mobilising to obtain donations for different materials to build benches, pathways and plant vegetation. These were donated by various community members, companies manufacturing construction materials, and the lights by the Council. Some of the building architects and the landscape architect volunteered their services to design the park and assist with its construction, while various community members produced small clay tiles that were incorporated in the bench and some other individuals and organisations also donated plants. The outcome of this initiative is a vibrant and high-quality space that is used actively by people passing it by daily on their way to work, as well as the local community that organise picnics, film screenings and other events there. The landscape architect regularly assists with the maintenance of the park. This is an excellent example of a community that saw a need, took the initiative and transformed an unsafe space into a high-quality place (Figure 7). This initiative is also demonstrative of an active community—there are three community groups active in the large Muckleneuk area. Having more resources and higher technical abilities, the residents established a group targeting safety, one that is focused on the well-being of the community, including quality spaces, and a third focusing on the conservation of natural resources, especially the Kruijnpark Nature Reserve. These groups not only contribute to the improvement of the built environment, but also to greater integration and cohesion between its residents.

⁸³ Urban Maestro. 2019. Towards a European Typology of Tools for Urban Design Governance. www.urbanmaestro.org



Figure 7: Groenkloof Park in the City of Tshwane.

In 2017, the City of Tshwane and the KfW Development Bank partnered to launch the Safety Promotion through Urban Upgrading (SPUU) project in Mamelodi. This is a typical former black township area that is characterised by unemployment, poverty and growing backyard shacks and informal settlements. The SPUU aimed to understand the crime situation and identify key interventions to address safety through urban upgrading. Due to limited available information, the analysis included a community survey, as well as a physical assessment of crime hotspot areas to identify the key problems. One of the crime hotspots, the Pienaarspoort Park (see Figure 1) and Station was identified as a key intervention area. The first part of the process included a three-day workshop to understand the nature of the problem and identify possible solutions. This workshop allowed interested parties, including several members of the immediate surrounding community and other relevant stakeholders, such as members of the police, the local Crime Prevention Forum (CPF)⁸⁴ and local authority officials, to have an input. The workshop started with an introduction of the project, a walk through the park and adjacent station to understand the nature of the situation, a discussion to analyse and map the challenges (Figure 8), a design charrette to develop various design responses through diagrams and models, and finally, the development of possible management plans. Not only did the workshop allow the needs of the community to be communicated, but it also assisted with raising awareness of the scope of the planning and design, as well as the role

⁸⁴ Community Police Forums in South Africa refer to a community organisation to enable improved community-police relations and facilitate communication between the police and

the community. It is a legal structure established in terms of the South African Police Service Act and members are elected through formal election processes (Community Safety Forums Policy).

that the community can play in the ongoing management and maintenance of the park.



Figure 8: The workshop in Mamelodi included an analysis of the challenges and a design charrette to obtain the inputs of the community and other key stakeholders

In the Oulandsloop Park in Tshwane, the community was extensively involved in the reimagining of the park. The chairperson of the Wilgers Residents' Association and Friends of Oulandsloop represented the community on the municipal planning and supervising committee, having been appointed by the municipality as the community liaison officer (CLO) for the erosion control project, a position that still plays a large role today. The park is publicly owned, yet co-managed by the community. The Parks and Horticulture Department of Region 6 is responsible for the park and utilises two contractors to perform maintenance services, and the contractors use their labour force. The Department recognises the Friends of Oulandsloop as stakeholders in the park, which is a 'veldpark' (field park) and maintained as such, meaning that the natural Highveld grass is cut only when it becomes a safety hazard. According to the CLO, there are some challenges with maintenance, such as budget constraints and absent contractors, but in general, the community and municipality work well together.

Through co-management and co-production processes, the City of Johannesburg is working with the local community and a local NGO to provide safe, clean sanitation services in the End Street North Park. This offers dignity to the users of the park and the pedestrian bridge. An extraordinary example of working with the community is

evident in the Thokoza Park in Johannesburg, located in Soweto, where there is a great involvement of the community in the maintenance and care of the park with the inclusion of numerous stakeholders and different bodies, such as the Friends of Thokoza Park (FOTP), the Thokoza Park User Committee, the Thokoza Park Safety Committee and the Ukamba Development Project. The FOTP is working with the community to ensure 'ownership' and the sustainable use of the park. According to the chairperson, the FOTP are "the watchdogs and eyes and ears of the park." It is not a formal organisation and is open to any user of the park. As a non-profit organisation, it cannot receive funding. The Thokoza Park User Committee was established to create a tidy, pleasant, safe and crime-free space for all. It is more of an advisory committee and includes the JPCZ, the JMPD, the South African Police Service (SAPS), park rangers, ward committee members and the councillor, residents of Soweto, the FOTP and the CLO, who meet every month. In response to numerous safety concerns, the Thokoza Park Safety Committee deals with safety issues and the prevention of vandalism. This committee is comprised of the members of SAPS, the JMPD, park patrollers, security guards, community members and the Community Policing Forum (CPF), and is led by the JMPD. The safety meetings are held at the Moroka SAPS station monthly, and the JMPD is responsible for the enforcement of by-laws and traffic management in the park, and members are always present. Finally, the Ukamba Development Project, also a non-profit organisation, assists the JPCZ by presenting educational programmes in the park that target the youth from the surrounding areas and aims to educate them on the protection and conservation of the environment.

4. LESSONS AND INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS

The use of soft-power tools in South Africa has contributed to higher quality environments, which has been due to several ingredients to success such as: 1) the presence of dedicated organisations or groups, 2) a committed champion driving the initiative, 3) fruitful partnerships, 4) working together with formal power-tools and 5) the ability to demonstrate the benefits of changing environments. Many of the examples discussed in this paper reflect the efforts of dedicated organisations or groups who have been committed to improving the quality of the built environment and through that, the quality of life of the people using it. This is especially true of some pseudo-governmental organisations and NGOs such as the SACN, DAG and the Isandla Institute that work tirelessly to carry out research and audits, develop practice guides, campaign and advocate for better environments and work in partnership with the government whilst involving communities. In some cases,

success was also enhanced through the involvement of a strong champion, for example in the case of the CJPZ, where the local authority official is highly committed and engaged with a large variety of stakeholders from inside and outside the organisation to improve the quality of public space in the city. In other cases, the involvement of a champion or key group, as in the case of Groenkloof Park, also contributed to the success. Thirdly, public-private partnerships were also a major ingredient to success that facilitated the production and management of higher quality environments. In both the Alkantrant and the Groenkloof Parks, the land and parks are still owned by the state (local council), but the parks were developed and are maintained by the private sector through the developers in one case and the local community in the other. Through successful partnerships with NGOs, the public sector has also been able to develop higher-quality housing environments; yet, soft power-tools have often worked together with the hard power-tools—for example in Alkantrant Park, where incentive tools also played a role, or in the case of the Point Development in Durban, where a detailed precinct plan with design codes was developed by the urban design team to guide the individual consultants developing proposals for the specific sites within the precinct. The last ingredient to success was the value of the ideal examples provided by the projects which acted as inspiration for built environment professionals and motivation for officials from various spheres of government of what it is possible to achieve in South Africa, despite all the challenges.

The lessons are primarily related to interactions and context, as it is important to acknowledge and allow for new types of relationships and social networks to develop and emerge in South Africa that can deal with the changing socio-economic environment and the political challenges surrounding state capture and corruption. The new types of relationships and social networks enabled by the use of soft urban design governance can contribute to more innovative means and practices of designing the built environment to influence both the processes and products towards a higher quality standard. Yet, for urban design governance to have the greatest effect, it has to be considered a Complex Adaptive System (CAS). Such a system is characterised by agents and the networks through which they interact. These networks provide the means for flows or the transfer of resources. In CAS neither the flows nor the networks are fixed in time and therefore continues to evolve in terms of behaviour and structure. This occurs through emergence and self-organisation, while the adaptive behaviour of agents leads to the adaptation of the flows and structures. This adaptation both gives rise to and is made possible by the level of diversity in CAS.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Nel, D., du Plessis, C. & Landman, K. 2018. Planning for dynamic cities: introducing a framework to understand the

urban change from a complex adaptive systems approach, *International Planning Studies*, 23 (3):250-263.

In terms of urban design governance, the specific situation or problem determines the agents and networks that will be involved. However, this is not fixed in time, but is dynamic rather. Therefore, the agents and networks can change depending on the agenda, the negotiations that take place and the decisions that are made. This is where the soft-power or informal tools can play a crucial role in influencing various parts of the process, working together with the formal tools and allowing for emergence and self-organisation to occur when the behaviour of agents or structures of the networks change, for example through training, campaigns, advocacy or the involvement of partnerships. The participation of communities can make a huge difference in the process at various stages to explore various possibilities based on needs and priorities. The diversity of tools therefore assists coping with various parts of the process and the requirements necessary in seeking a higher quality product. This is crucial as the context can differ extensively, not only across the world but even within South African cities. Therefore, the value of the informal tools is that they offer mechanisms that can be applied in different contexts, and which can be adapted and evolve as circumstances change. South Africa can be strengthened with the numerous good policies that acknowledge the role of high-quality environments and the importance of public space. However, the challenge is that implementation is very slow and often restricted by budget and political constraints. Soft power-tools can assist the process of moving towards a higher quality product and then to reconsider and refine the product if necessary. Thinking of urban design governance as a CAS, through an evolving process of setting the agenda, negotiating resources and political power and shaping decision-making, allows a range of stakeholders to connect and constantly restructure the planning, design and management of the built environment to improve its quality (Figure 9).

The discussion indicated that the soft-tools in South Africa have contributed to higher quality environments. However, this has occurred in selective places and has often been linked to the major flagship and urban upgrading projects driven by the public sector, or to significant private sector developments. Yet, many areas still reflect a very low quality. Given this, the challenge is how to take the successes further and mainstream the use of soft-power tools without excluding certain areas and people in the process. As mentioned previously, tensions remain between the need for safety and survival in public spaces. Many public spaces are also used by homeless people and for informal trading, yet, the government has often reacted, in the name of safety, through strong regulatory and control measures to prohibit the unlawful use of public space. This has led to growing tensions between different groups. Involving the informal traders and homeless in the process through the use of soft-tools can open doors to more inclusive solutions.

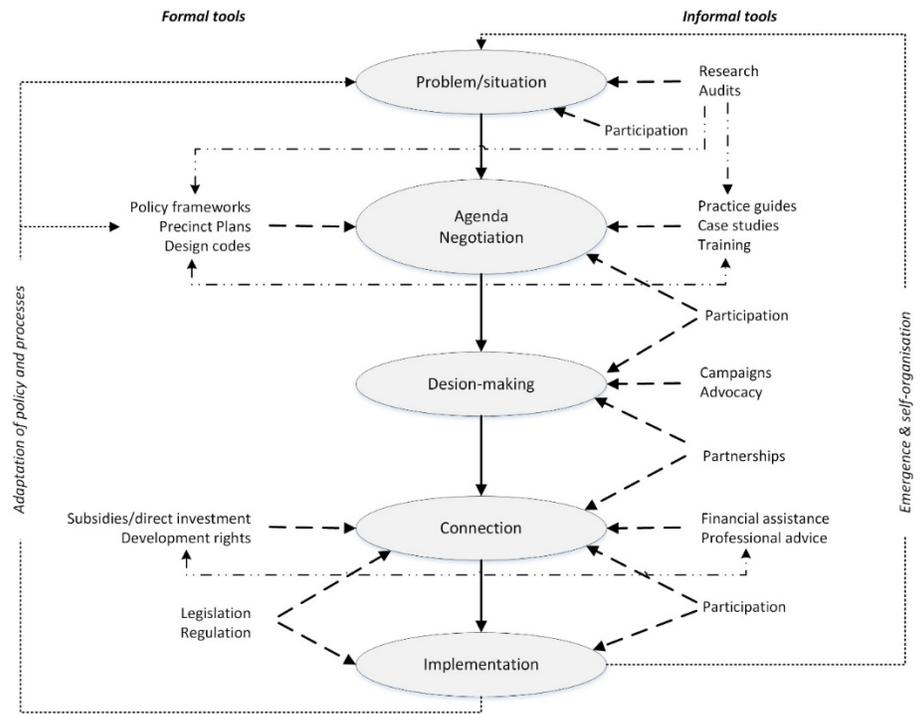


Figure 9: New types of relationships and social networks related to soft urban governance in South Africa

5. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has indicated that soft power-tools have been used in South Africa as a form of urban design governance to enable higher quality environments. In particular, there have been examples of all six tools, including the quality-cultural tools such as tools of analysis, information and persuasion, as well as the quality delivery tools, namely rating, support and exploration tools. It appears that there are more examples of analysis and information tools in the country, with a large amount of research being carried out and numerous practice guides being developed. While awards and campaigns seem to be less prevalent, the utilisation of partnerships between government and agencies or between government and the private sector has become more widespread. Rating tools also seem to be underused, however, the use of exploration tools and community involvement seems to be growing. It is worth noting that these are tentative conclusions and will have to be confirmed through a more detailed survey of the situation in the country. Only in such a case will one be able to compare the use of soft power tools in urban design governance in Europe and South Africa—this will also allow for knowledge production in the global south as well as to serve as a platform for knowledge exchange between the global north and south.

It is undoubtable that soft tools have been used successfully in numerous cases to improve the quality of the built environment. However, this has been selective and often contributed to rising tensions and conflict between the need for safety and survival, as well as between competing needs such as housing and service delivery vs. well-developed streets, parks and other open spaces. This raises a number of questions surrounding people's priorities and the purpose of public open space. For many people and municipalities, urban design is considered a luxury and urban design governance just a vague idea that sounds nice on paper. However, once they realise the value of high-quality spaces, for example in the North End and Tokoza Parks in Johannesburg, government and other organisations become more amenable to the use of soft-power tools and can link these to existing best practices in the country. In this way, their interest and uptake may increase dramatically. For example, there has been a long tradition of community involvement in planning and fieldwork to gather information in South Africa. Given this, it is important to transform the image of urban design in the country from one that is only related to the creation of aesthetically pleasing environments to an important process wherein soft-power tools can play a critical role in moving from the right words in policy documents to higher quality places in practice. Only by combining soft and hard power tools, of which the last mentioned is regularly used in the country, can we move from quality environments for a selective few to a more widespread availability of quality environments for all.

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

P.O. Box 30030 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA

www.unhabitat.org

URBAN MAESTRO

This paper was drafted as an external contribution to the Coordination and Support Action “URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE - Exploring formal and informal means of improving spatial quality in cities across Europe and beyond”, also known as “Urban Maestro”. The Action was funded by European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 831704 and implemented from 2019 to 2021 by a consortium comprising the University College London, Brussels Bouwmeester Maître Architecte and UN-Habitat.

www.urbanmaestro.org

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal authors: Karina Landman, Associate professor,
Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of
Pretoria

Design and layout: Kidnap Your Designer, Brussels
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA)

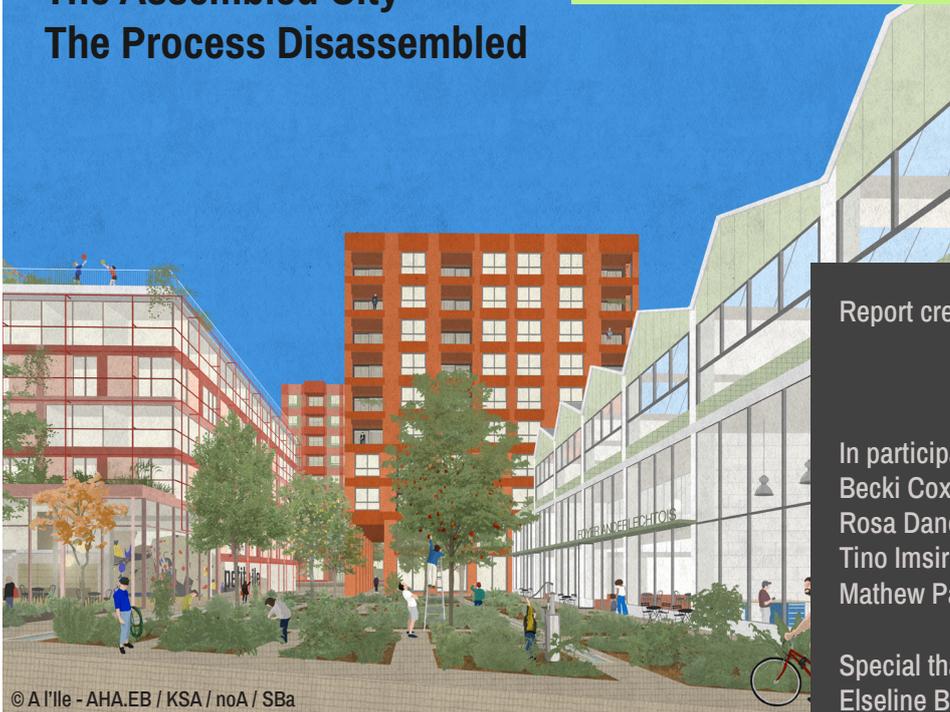


Urban Maestro

Masterclass:
New governance
strategies for
Urban Design

Petite Île City Gate II

The Assembled City –
The Process Disassembled



Report created by:

Yusuf Abushamaa
Anna Koskinen (tutor)
Ksenia Krasnitskaja

In participation with:

Becki Cox
Rosa Danenberg
Tino Imsirovic
Mathew Page

Guillaume Sokal (tutor)
Hannah Grijns
Arushi Malhotra
Alexia O'Brien
Paul Strobel

Special thanks to:

Elseline Bazin
Julie Collet
Yannick Dal
Aurélie Hachez
Severine Hermand

Elke Schoonen
Youssef Abaoud
Victoria Forget
Benoit Koot
Steyn Van Assche



Introduction

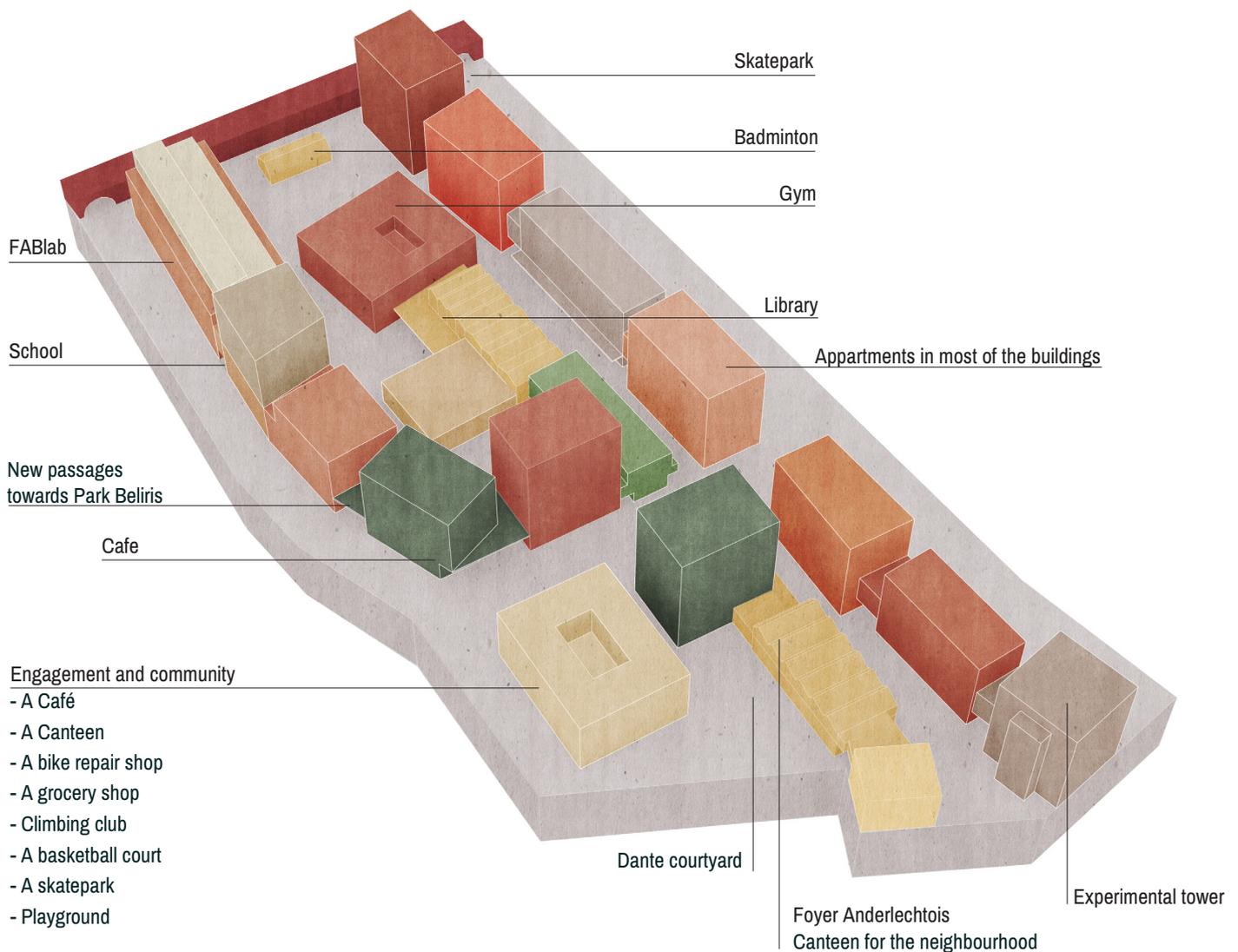
Petite île/ City Gate II is a new mix-used neighbourhood, “a city within a city”, located in the municipality of Anderlecht, Brussels, Belgium. The former industrial site between railway tracks and a canal is being turned into a new sustainable neighbourhood where working, learning and living coexist. The rich programme of the project contains 400 social and subsidised housing units, a library, commercial space for shops, cafés and restaurants, a variety of sports facilities for both indoor and outdoor activities, including bouldering and skateboarding, and a school for 1,200 students, 'École de Tous'. The porous masterplan is designed to bring the various functions together and enhance encounters between the workers, teachers, students, residents and visitors. The project aims to reuse the existing building stock on the site, both to preserve the industrial heritage and to allow temporary usage by different actors during development and construction.

The plot is owned by two public actors, Citydev.brussels (The Brussels Regional Development Agency) and the SLRB (The

Brussels Capital Region Housing Corporation) who wanted to develop the site into a lively and productive hybrid complex in a coherent but ambitious manner, at the same time following the specifications of the ZEMU (the Urban Enterprise Zone), the Plan Canal and the Special Land Use Plan (PPAS).

The project is the result of an international design competition, which was won by a multidisciplinary team composed of both national and international designers. Different governance tools were established and used in order to enhance the collaboration between the various stakeholders, designers, developers and the public sector, to engage the existing and future users and inhabitants, as well as to promote sustainability and heritage preservation.

During the Urban Maestro Masterclass, our group of students was asked to analyse these tools in order to better understand the patterns of collaboration between different stakeholders on the site.

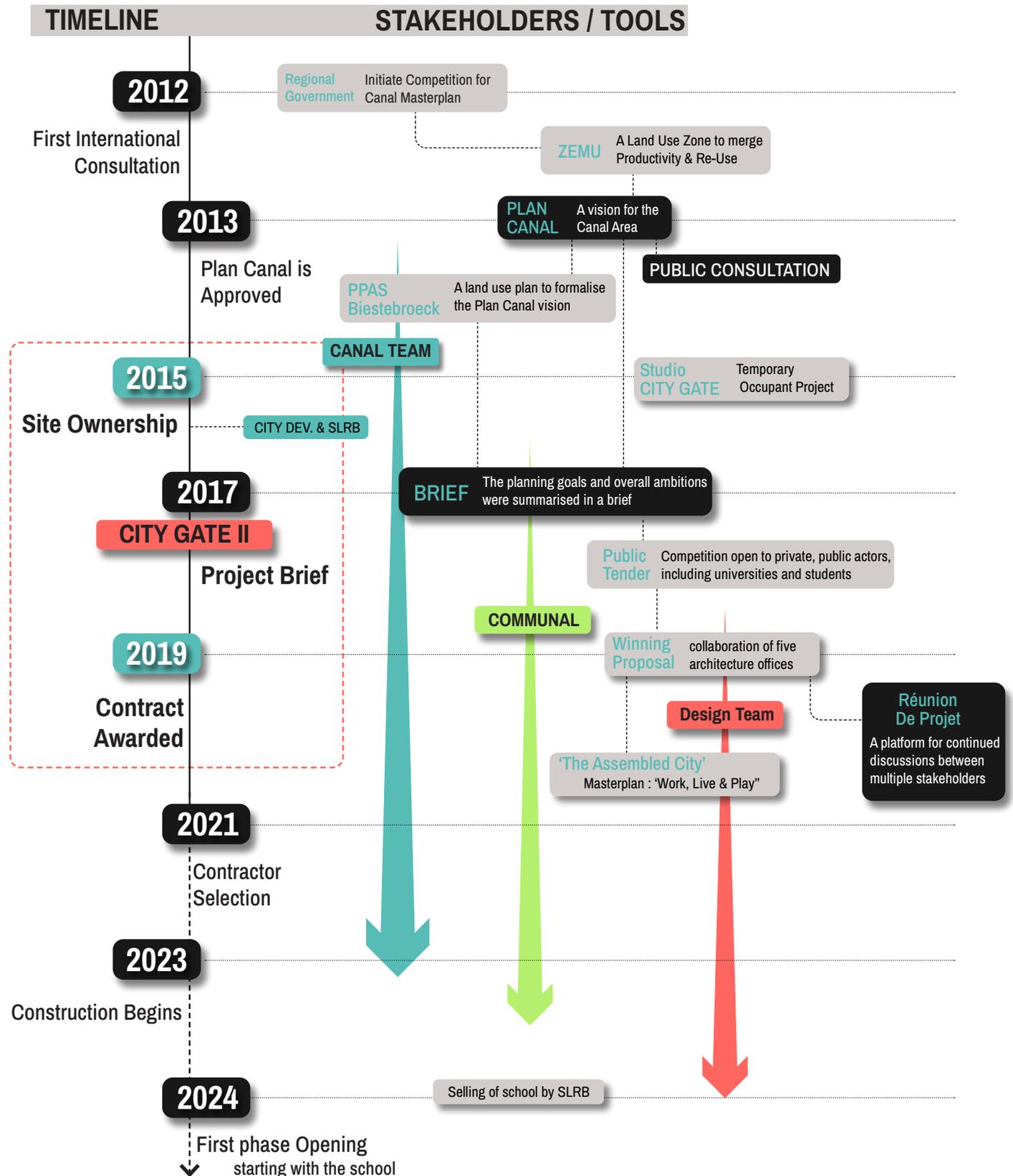


Stakeholders

The Canal Team, a group of regional actors already formed as part of the official co-operation, got its name from the Plan Canal, Brussels' vision for developing the quays of the canal throughout the city. The team members involved are:

- The Urban Development Corporation (SAU) of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for carrying out

- major urban development projects in Brussels and constructing public facilities of regional significance.
- Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA), the Chief Architect of the Brussels-Capital Region, who acts as a supervisor of the overall Canal Plan vision and plays an advisory role to ensure a high level of architectural and urban quality.



Analysis Framework

- Urban.brussels, formerly known as Brussels' Planning and Heritage, in charge of assessing all applications for regional permits in the Canal Plan zone. The team is involved from the submission of applications to issuing the urban planning permission.
- Perspective.brussels, the Brussels Planning Bureau in charge of the general planning, expansion and monitoring of the regulatory framework of spatial planning in Brussels.

After the regulatory actors, there are the acquirers of the site; the landowners and developers:

- SLRB (Société du Logement de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale) is the supervisor of the social housing companies and is in charge of building new social housing. SLRB bought the western plots on the site of Petite Île in 2017 to build social housing, a part of the school, new spaces for Foyer Anderlechtois (a social housing organisation) and workshop space.
- Citydev, a regional developer with two main tasks: Economic expansion through (1) making land or buildings available to companies and promoting the economic development of the region and urban renewal; and (2) building medium-sized owner-occupied homes. On the site of Petite Île, Citydev owns the eastern plot and the Studio City Gate building.

Nonprofit organisations were also involved in the final programme for the site:

- Le Foyer Anderlechtois, a social housing company in Anderlecht. While the SLRB is one of the plot's owners and is building the new social housing, the apartments will be sold to and managed by Foyer Anderlechtois.
- Ecole de Tous, chosen by the municipality of Anderlecht to lead the pedagogic project of the school. When completed, the municipality will become the owner of the school.

In addition, many designers, architects and consultants were involved. A team of five architectural firms, three offices from Brussels (Aurélié Hachez Architecte, Elseline Bazin and noArchitecten), one from Rotterdam (Korteknie Stuhlmacher Architecten) and one from London (Sergison Bates architects), won the design competition organised with the Brussels BMA.

During the development process, the site owners allowed temporary use of vacant spaces. Different cultural organisations now organise activities in the former industrial building of Studio City Gate. Skatepark Byrrrh has been there for two years now and Volta also moved from Ixelles to Anderlecht six months ago. The temporary use is managed by Entrakt.

Other local organisations that were involved in the process are Le Comité du Bout du Monde, ULAC (Union de Locataires Anderlecht-Cureghem), Médecin du Monde, Cultureghem, Le Foyer Anderlechtois, PCS Goujons, Medikuregem, TRAVIE, Plastoria.

To analyse the different governance tools used in the project, we developed our own analysis framework (presented on the next page) that categorises the tools by their characteristics.

Firstly, the tools are divided into those which focus on **quality culture** and prioritise the process in order to establish a long-lasting relationship between the stakeholders, and those tools which focus on **quality delivery** and prioritise the outcome and quality at different key moments. Quality culture tools are often more time-consuming and hence more difficult to support financially, whereas quality delivery tools require less budget. Secondly, the tools are categorised by their formality range: formal tools, which are obligatory and symbolise the hard power of local authorities; and informal tools, which represent soft powers and other stakeholders who informally influence the process or the outcome. These governance tools each possess a different hierarchy: the more institutionalised a tool is, the more power it has.

The analysis framework itself is created by two axes that form four quadrants and therefore four categories. The first quadrant of the scheme is the quality delivery/ formal axis where the most formal and institutionalised tools, e.g zoning plans and future visions, fit. In the case of Petite Île, ZEMU, the design competition and Plan Canal can be found here. Because Plan Canal is the future vision for Brussels, it is closer to quality culture. At the same time, there is less space for informal and soft powers.

Moving down, we find the formal tools that aim towards better urban design by having a diverse design team with different expertise backgrounds to maximise the design quality. The different partnerships, like the Plan Canal co-operation, underline the process and are also located in this quadrant. Involving different stakeholders makes the decision-making process more complex, but also more solid and futureproof for the local society.

Softer power tools are in the lower left quadrant. Greater focus on the process requires more flexibility in the project, but it can ultimately add social value. Transparent and socially inclusive tools improve the design process. The Research by Design tool is placed here as it allows for more dialogue between different stakeholders.

The informal quality delivery tools are placed in the last quadrant. The informality level of these tools shows that social values are often neglected from a quality delivery perspective. It is important to note that the timeline for the use of these tools was not taken into account in this categorisation. Informal tools are often only introduced at the end of a project in order to get some minor feedback and finalise the project. Including soft power tools earlier in the process could result in a more balanced inclusion of different ideas at an earlier stage. Here the stumbling block is the informality: how can an informal tool be part of an obligatory requirement?



The balance between the four quarters is very important and the soft tools need to be taken into consideration, especially during the first stages of the development process. Finding a balance between all axes also means finding a new approach, forcing the project to be more innovative. When soft tools are included, the inclusivity of the project increases, followed by better public support and recognition. In general, delivery tools

need to support the process tools and vice versa. The process and the outcome are always interconnected, so it makes more sense to make this interdependence work instead of investing time and resources in just one of the two.

Important processes, collaborations and outcomes

One of the main goals of the project was to develop the site of Petite Île into a mixed-use neighborhood that brings the past, present and the future together. In order to meet the goal and preserve the heritage, the project went through various critical milestones with different stakeholders, community engagement and co-design processes.

The site is in the former industrial zone along the canal. In 2012, as part of the development plan for the canal, the city decided to rezone the canal area from an industrial zone to ZEMU Zone. In 2013, the Plan Canal was approved as the new Vision Masterplan, and the regional actors' representatives formed the Canal Team. In 2015 the Canal Team announced that the site had been acquired by both SLRB & Citydev. Placed within our analytical framework, the Canal Plan vision is closer to quality culture, as it is part of Brussel's future vision. In terms of quality culture, it is interesting to note that, in the beginning, the existing community was not engaged in the process. Cultural heritage received a lot of attention, but the focus was more on the built environment and the preservation of the existing building stock than on social issues. This caused confusion among the locals.

In 2017, the community representatives were invited to participate in workshops and meetings in order to set planning goals and overall ambitions for the project together. The Canal Team and community representatives were involved to ensure the achievement of the Plan Canal initial vision. This was an important stage in the process, allowing the public and local community to cooperate, interact and help to form a solid project brief with clear objectives. As a result, private firms and public actors, including universities and students, were invited to participate in an open design competition.

In 2019, the competition was won by a team of five design firms. The winning team collaborated with a sustainability expert in order to ensure that the project had a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach. The project was titled The Assembled City – Work, Play & Live, reflecting the rich mixed-use programme mentioned earlier. The school 'École de Tous' was a major player in creating such a diverse community and played a large role as a stakeholder in framing the project, leading to the design team creating a new type of innovative school with the aim of ensuring a mixed population in the neighborhood.

Ultimately, the development process of Petite Île is a result of multiple interactions, starting from the Plan Canal vision and ZEMU zoning plan right up until the interactive design process to form the Assembled City. This interactive process involved public, private and communal sectors, creating a co-design framework.

Reflecting on the process, it succeeded in involving multiple stakeholders in a complex project, achieving the goal of

preserving the heritage and simultaneously creating a livable neighborhood for everyone. Although such interactions and collaborations act as soft tools in forming and shaping the project brief, the locals and their representatives were not included from the beginning. Instead, they were invited during or at the end of the process, after the bigger alignments had already been made. This created a sense of quiet exclusion which was not consistent with achieving the desired engagement in the project.

It is possible that the ZEMU plan is not really working or achieving the mix that it claims to do (living & working), since only very light industrial activities are permitted on the plot, which has the effect of excluding many skilled workers and certain whole industries. On another hand, Réunion De Projet City Gate, which is a platform for continuous discussion between multiple stakeholders, was a useful tool to ensure the participation of all the stakeholders, even inviting local representatives, making the process more transparent and knowable to the neighborhood.

Recommendations

The interaction between actors was extremely complex, which was reflected in the tools employed to endorse the process. We have the impression that coordination and exchange between formal and informal powers could have been better integrated and harmonised so that all the actors would have been involved, making the process smoother.

To achieve such a harmony, an independent stakeholder should act as the main organiser for the participatory process to better engage locals, previous users, temporary users and future users. Such an informal actor could also provide an evaluation of the process, and ensure the equality and transparency of the participatory process and decision making. In addition, great impact needs a clear goal and continuous evaluation of social value, even after construction.

A further question is: what is the main tool that is needed throughout the process? We believe the most important tool in such a complex project that is necessary to achieve the goal of a "city within a city" is PARTICIPATION. It is a tool that creates mixity and exchange between formal and informal power, helps to have clearer and more direct communication, and creates a clear goal through continuous evaluation.

Additional interviews

After studying the developing process and analysing the governance components that have shaped Petite Île, we decided to look beyond the official framework. Although we got the chance to hear about the process from different parties, they all represented the client's side. Our team wanted to know more about the community's experiences. We contacted different people who were involved with this site in the past, present and future. They were all involved at different stages, which gives us an interesting view on how the project initiators engaged external parties over time. Below are some critiques and experiences we have heard from our interviewees.

Past

ZEMU - A GOOD IDEA?

For the first interview, we talked with Steyn Van Assche, who represents BRAL, a citizen action movement in Brussels. BRAL has over 40 years' experience in striving for urban livability. Steyn gave us some insight about what happened before Petite Île/ City Gate II was launched. "There was much discussion about the canal zone Biestebroeck and the rezoning with ZEMU, specifically about the abolition of productive industrial zones in exchange for housing zones. The areas that were targeted were considered necessary to keep the productivity and labour with the unavoidable noise, nuisance and traffic close to the canal."

BUYING LAND BEFORE REZONING

Even before the Plan Canal was launched and no concrete plans were prepared by Chemetoff, the speculating promoters bought land there. After the rezoning, the land became more valuable and the developers made great profits. At this point, the authorities should have been stricter and moved to acquire the industrial land first, in order to avoid it becoming private property.

LOW SKILLED WORK OPPORTUNITY

Petite Île/ City Gate II is a public project and set to be an example. The canal zone is important in terms of employment and manufacturing activity. Citydev reserves 10% of the space for manufacturing and productivity, but these are often offices, shops and bars, with no actual manufacturing. Some of the spaces are not even occupied, since enough money is already earned from the apartments on the other floors. Why not mix horizontally instead of vertically and allow more labour-related productivity?

Present

BUSINESS PLAN, NOT SOCIAL WORK

Youssef received help from Citydev to build an indoor skatepark. It was a temporary agreement, so he knew from the start it was a temporary project and therefore he will not

be disappointed when he has to leave. For him, this is a good solution because the market price is a double of the current rent in Studio City Gate. "For Entrakt (the 'curator' of the temporary users), it's a business plan, not social work. Now we have a good relationship with Citydev. They are happy with us and what we build, also because we organize skate camps for children. Every Wednesday afternoon we teach children to skate at a local school in Anderlecht."

SKATEBOARDING IS GOOD FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Youssef Abaoud was not invited to participate, and the design team did not reach out to involve him. "I did see the plans and I know that there will be an outdoor skatepark. They did not ask for my contribution concerning the new skatepark. But I don't mind, and I will find another place in Brussels with Citydev. I'm just happy they planned skateboarding here in the future. Skateboarding is a great sport and very popular so it's good that it will have a place. Skateboarding is good for neighborhoods and should be included in plans more."

Future

NOBODY PLAYS BADMINTON

Citydev and SLRB programmed a school in the heart of the site. The municipality of Anderlecht hired École de Tous to represent the local authority in the development process. Benoit Koot and Victoria Forget explained their role in the process. Since 2018, École de Tous participated in the selection of the architects and analysed the plans of the five projects. Following the selection they were also involved in the design process and worked closely with the designers. In all phases of the project, they felt like an equal partner and had a lot of flexibility to discuss and reflect on all topics. "We didn't see a lot of citizens, but we did see the organisations that work with them, so they were represented, and it was a good compromise. A good example was that the designers drew a badminton terrain and the neighborhood association said nobody plays badminton in Anderlecht."

A SHARING PHILOSOPHY

École de Tous has a pilot project on the site with a mixed school population. "We will have students from the new neighborhood, but we also aim to attract people from Anderlecht. Mixity is the core of our project. If we don't have mixity in the surroundings, then our project will not succeed. We also experiment with shared infrastructure for the neighborhood. All the sport terrains and halls, the library, the FABlab, all these infrastructures will be accessible for the neighbourhood after school hours. In our project we planned to work closely with local partners so that some parts of the school remain open after school hours to make it accessible, letting the people use our space. It's a sharing philosophy."

Conclusion

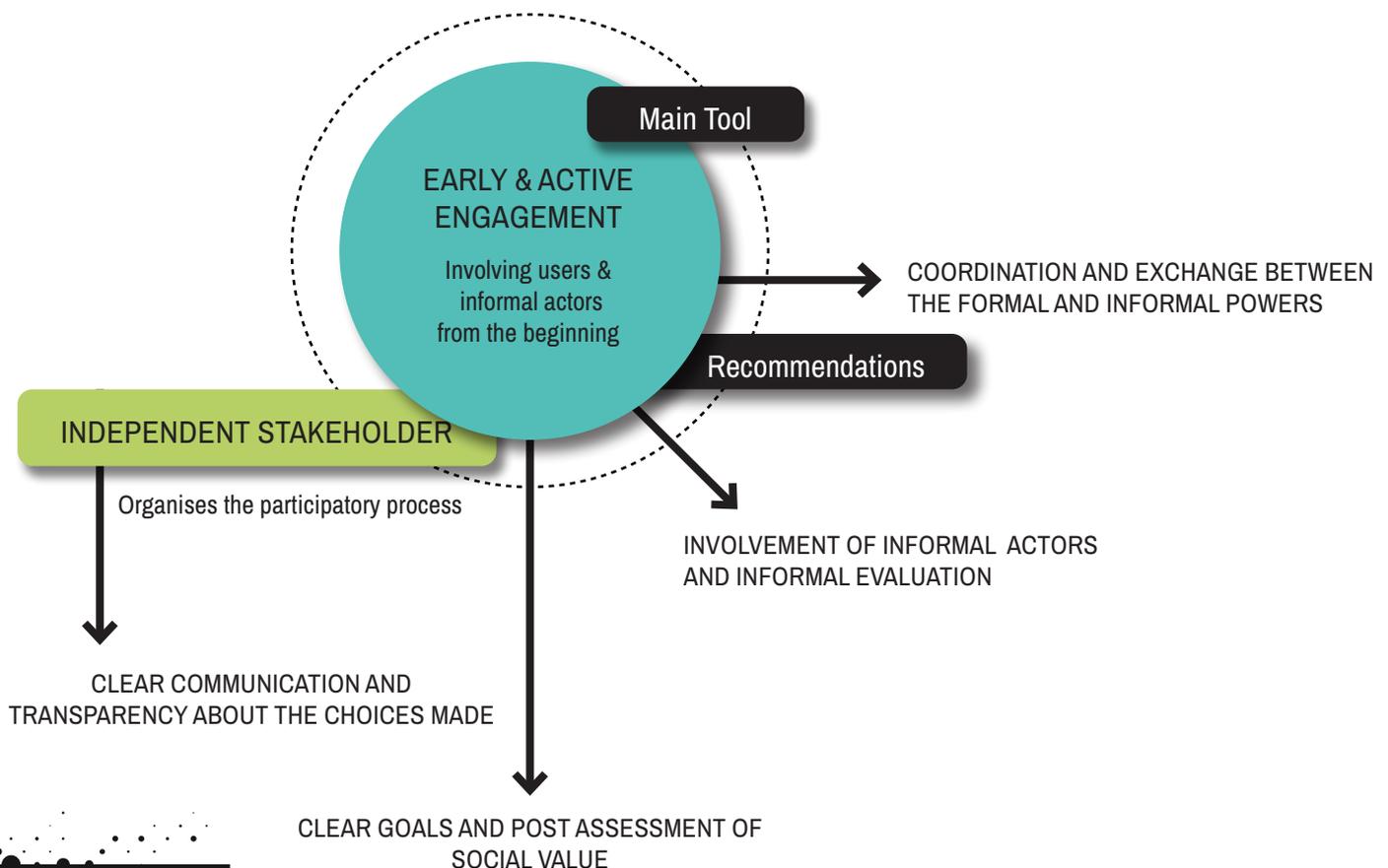
“The combination of developers, functions, stakeholders and the large team of designers makes City Gate II / Klein Eiland a very complex project” explained Benjamin Cadranel of Citydev (Bruzz, 2020). For us, too, it was a challenging project to analyse. We started with the constellation of actors. The reality of interaction between them was more complex than expected. We aimed for a clear representation of the involvement of actors through the use of a timeline. We identified the milestone moments from the vision of Plan Canal to the future users of the site. After this exercise, we noticed that some of the stakeholders were missing. For example, the current neighbourhood inhabitants and temporary users were not strongly represented in the process. It seemed that the project initiators approached Petite Île/ City Gate II as an empty arena but in reality, there were different actors involved. That’s also why we reached out to a few representative actors to hear their opinions.

The concept of transforming an industrial zone to an urban zone is quite generic. A lot of cities struggle with rapid population growth and look for unconventional zones for housing. Most urban planners applaud density, especially in such sprawled regions as Flanders and Wallonia in Belgium, but creating such dense and brand-new neighborhoods in industrial zones can create quite big expectations. We could argue about how innovative and how future proof this project actually is. We agree that the design team did excellent work within the

parameters of the design brief. On the other hand, the design brief is almost the only communication that has reached the designers. It is interesting to see if all the needs from different stakeholders are consolidated in this document, and how flexible the interpretation could be.

We examined the different tools that were used and determined an imbalance between soft and hard powers. This also explains the critique this project has received from the surroundings, because it is heavily-weighted towards formal actors. A lack of inclusivity during the development process often translates to distrust after finalisation of the project. Allowing more space for local actors would have resulted in a more robust design and more public support and recognition after realisation. In our recommendations, we highlighted the importance of participation and came up with an idea of another independent stakeholder, who would be in charge of the participation process and also evaluate the process. This tool is presented in the diagram below.

Although the name of the project “Petite Île” translates into English as ‘Small Island’, this project should not have become an urban island in the surroundings. Instead, it should have been more embedded within the existing tissue, embracing the industrial past through a more mixed program in terms of work and living, but also through an active involvement of citizens from the neighbourhood and current users of the site.



Urban Maestro

Masterclass:
New governance
strategies for
Urban Design

StadtLand
Co-creating a new urban-rural relationship

IBA Thüringen



UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

BOUWMEESTERMAITREARCHITECTE

UCL

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 831704





International Building Exhibitions (IBAs) demonstrate what can be achieved with social, environmental and built projects.

More than 100 years ago, the first IBA showcased 20th-century German building expertise. Today's IBAs have evolved to explore and experiment with social cohesion and local empowerment through small interventions and large strategic regional projects to promote good building culture and innovative regional development, becoming internationally recognised.

StadtLand

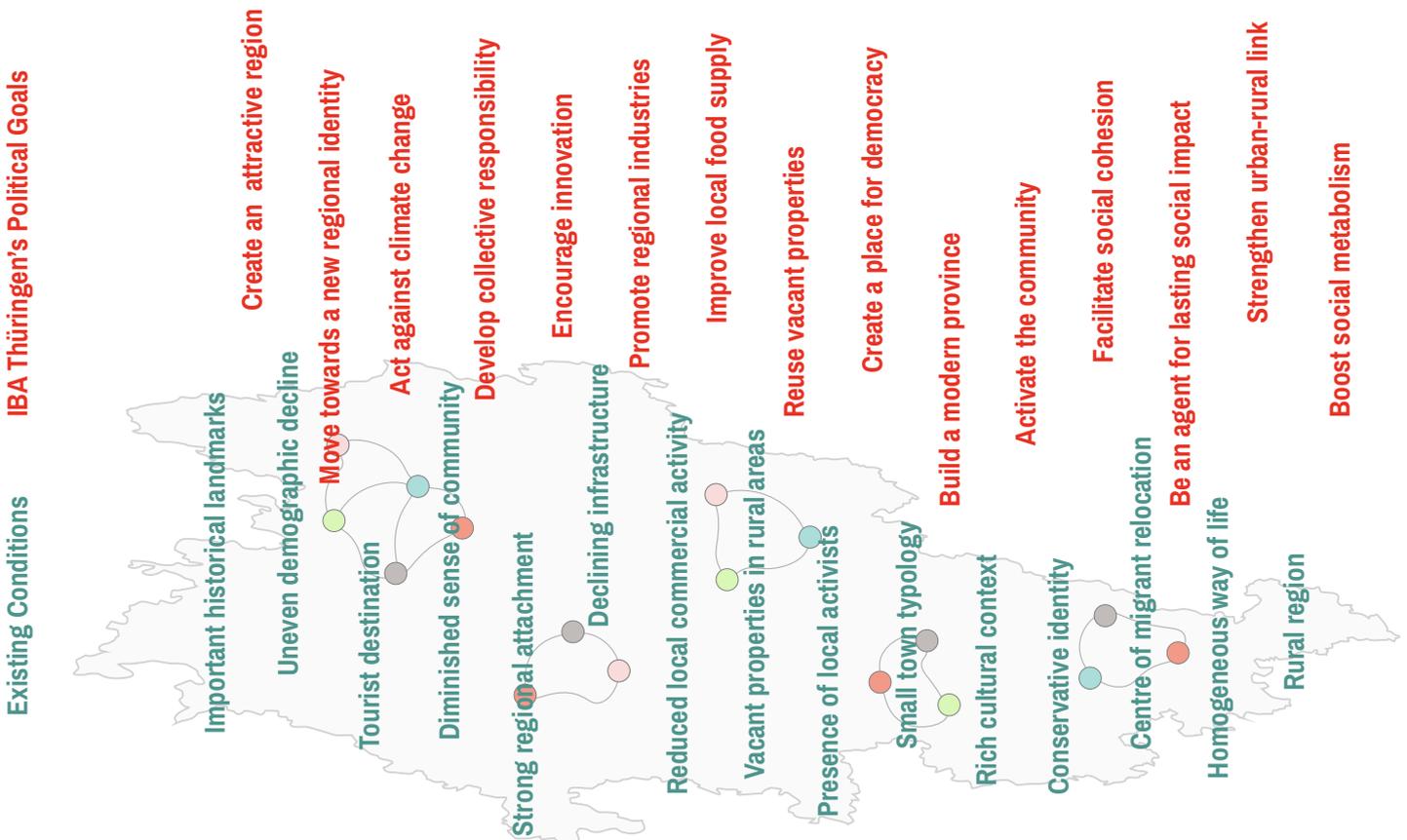
Co-creating a new urban-rural relationship

In search of a new vision for the province, IBA Thüringen (2013–2023) has chosen **StadtLand** as its central theme.

A combination of the German words *städtisch* and *ländlich*, meaning urban and rural respectively, StadtLand aims to highlight the continuous dynamic between the small-scale towns and villages that make up the Free State of Thuringia.

By choosing this theme, IBA Thüringen creates a framework in which the people behind the selected projects partake in developing and promoting a new quality of relationship between town and country. StadtLand thus becomes a vision of a collective mode of living and an agent of social change. Three key areas of action have been established to achieve this vision: BUILD a modern province, DEVELOP collective responsibility, and REUSE vacant properties.

Following an initial lobbying effort from the Thuringian Chamber of Architects and other regional institutions, such as the Bauhaus University in Weimar, as well as formal ideation workshops and feasibility studies, IBA Thüringen GmbH was founded by the Free State of Thuringia in 2012.



IBA Thüringen

Employing Baukultur to lead a comprehensive territorial development

Realised Visions

BUILD



Thuringia, 2000 Churches



Apolda, Timber Prototype



Leubinger Fürstenhügel, Motorway Services

REUSE



Weimar StadtLand School



Initiative Timber Building Culture



Nordhausen, Climate Culture

DEVELOP



Weimar, The 100



Schwarzatal, Rottenbach Railway Station

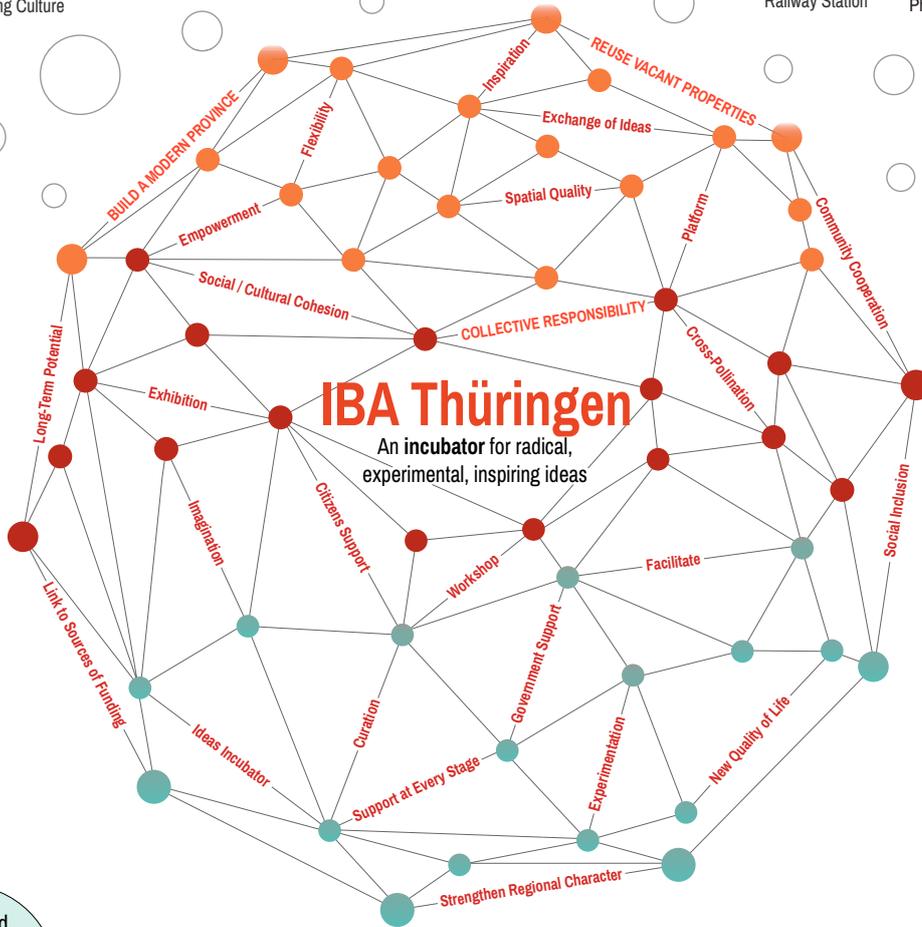
Photos © IBA Thüringen by Thomas Müller

Social Impact

Process

Guiding Principles

Community of Thuringia Aspirations



Inform and educate about "bottom-up" urban development

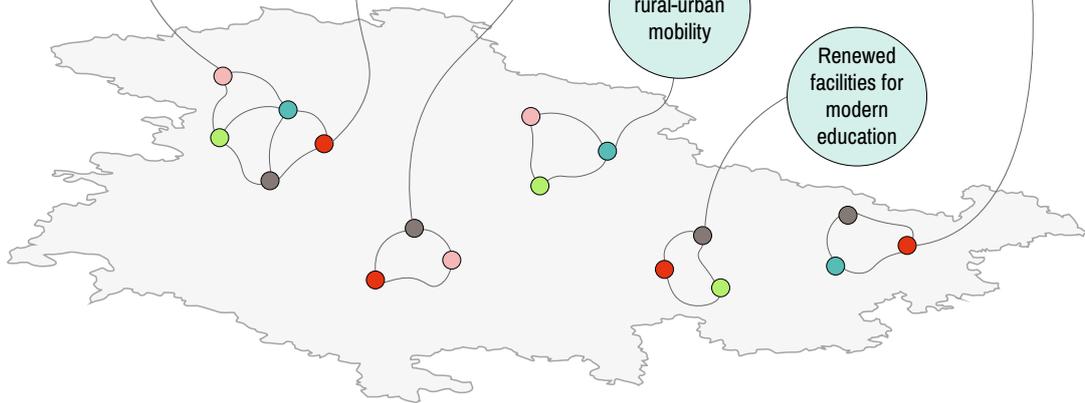
Promote regional wood industry

New grocery store

Improve rural-urban mobility

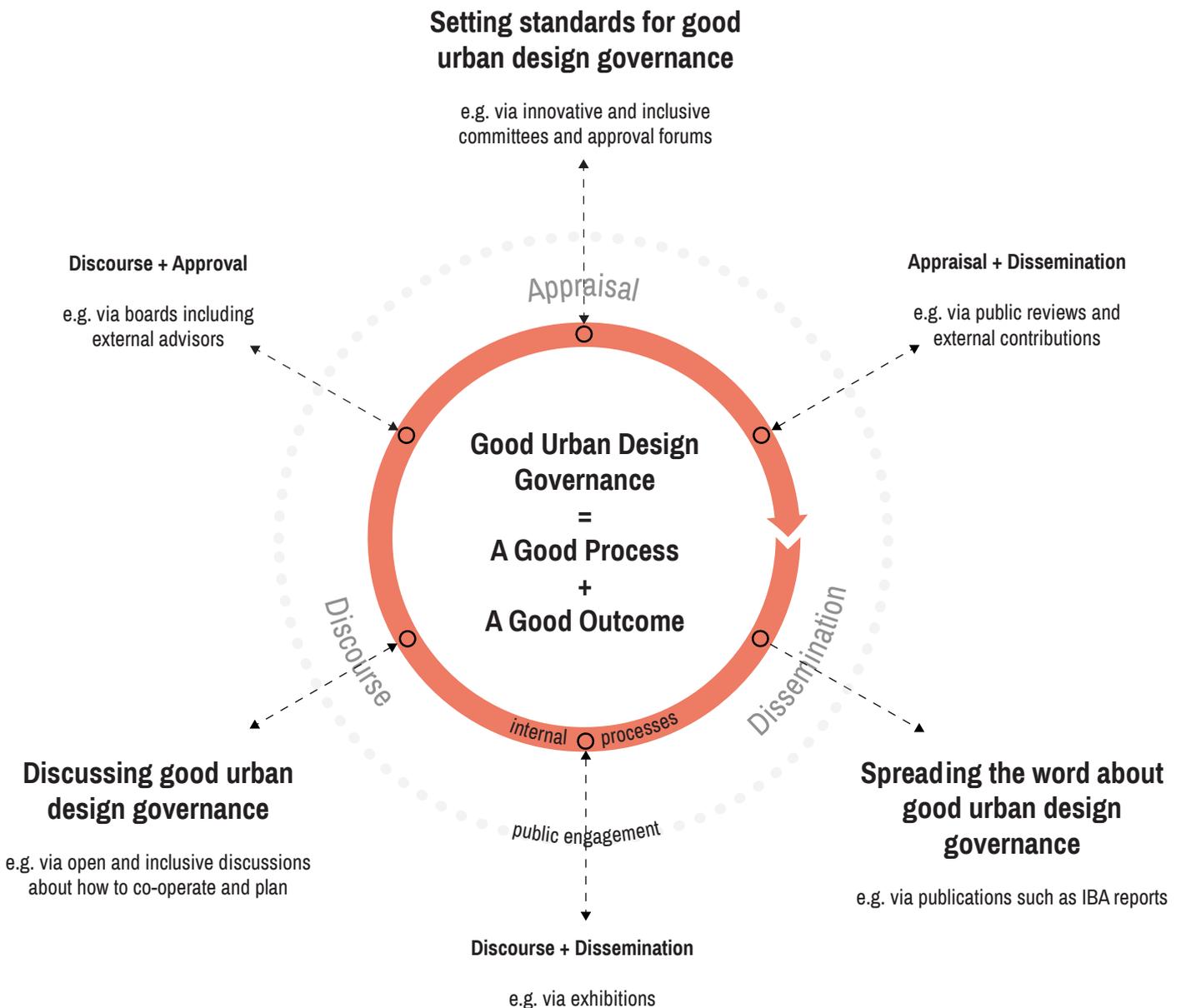
Renewed facilities for modern education

Flexible, affordable, resource-efficient housing



- Civil Society
- Educational Institutions
- Cultural and Religious Institutions
- Local Businesses
- State and Local Authorities

Proposed Framework for Good Urban Design Governance: D-A-D



Discourse, Appraisal, Dissemination: The Urban Design Governance of IBA Thüringen

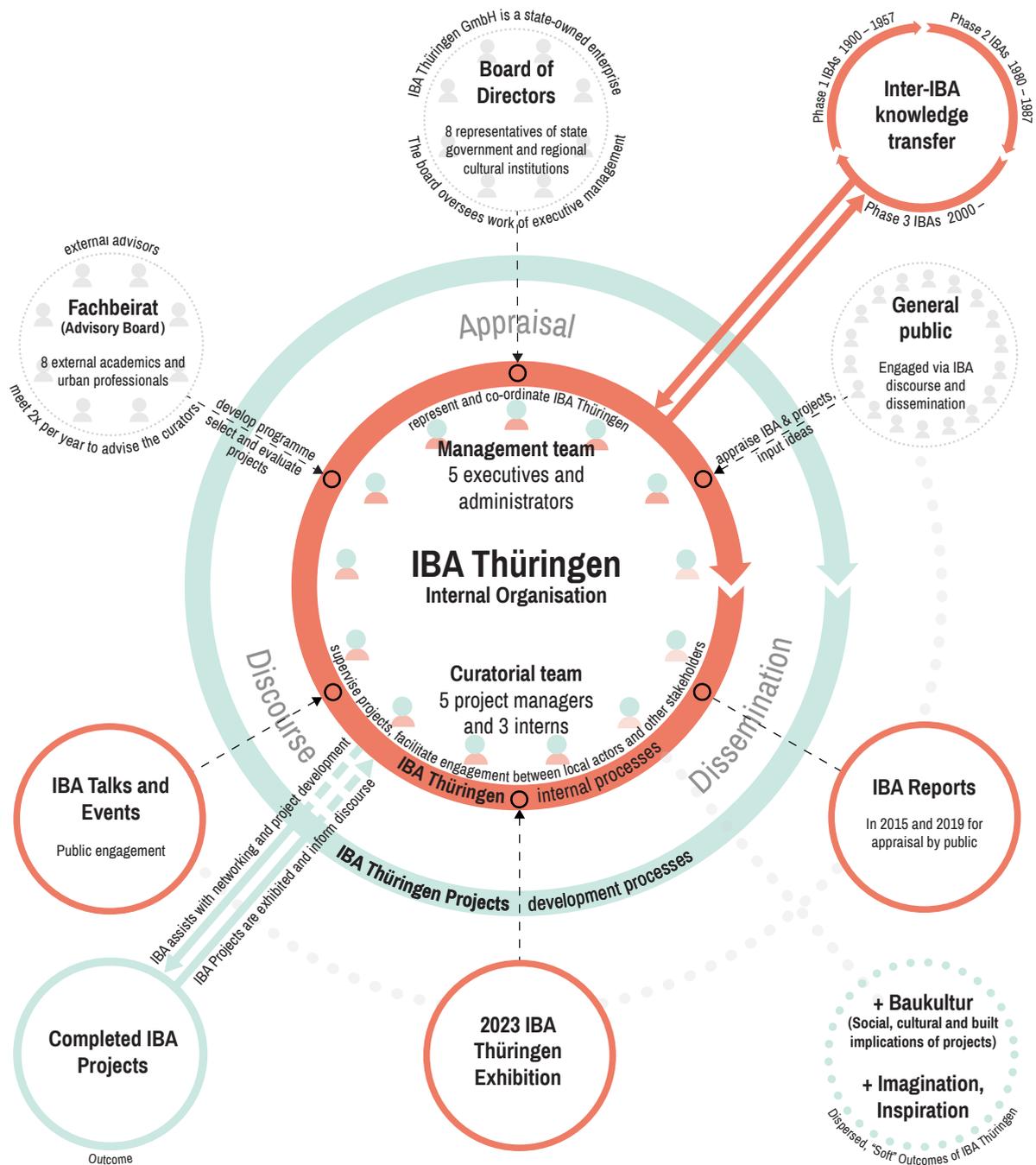
Tasked with visualising good urban design governance through the lens of IBA Thüringen, we have arrived at a basic framework that aims to illustrate the incremental and cumulative process of decision-making and stakeholder relations: D-A-D.

With our contribution, D-A-D, we argue that urban design governance is the constant process of discussing, appraising, and disseminating (D-A-D). When in action, D-A-D is non-linear and non-delineated. Some processes exist somewhere in between appraisal and dissemination (such as the IBA reports), or between discussion or appraisal (such as the Fachbeirat).

The D-A-D framework is also an illustration of what the IBA Thüringen team calls 'research in discovery', or simply, incrementalism. At the end of this incremental and cumulative process is an outcome: a completed project; a new building culture; a new participatory design framework; etc. Crucially, the process of experimentation, as illustrated by the D-A-D framework is itself an outcome.

Good governance is the accumulation of different decisions and stakeholders that together comprise a) a good process and b) a good outcome. That's the definition according to Frédéric J. Saliez, Programme Officer at UN-Habitat Office for Europe and European Institutions and Urban Maestro Project Co-ordinator.

The D-A-D of IBA Thüringen



D-A-D at Project Level



Scalability and Conclusions

International Building Exhibitions (IBAs) were initially conceived as events to showcase architectural achievements. The concept has evolved significantly over the years, and today IBAs are explorative projects that promote an integrated approach to urban and regional development. Through an experimentation-like process, they promote ideas and projects that regard aesthetic and technological aspects as well as complex social, economic and ecological issues in order to effect change.

Each IBA exhibition presents a common theme and narrative in line with the specific needs and the vision of the city/region. Projects are proposed by local stakeholders and selected by IBA's curatorial team. In this way, IBA acts as both a facilitator and an incubator, providing a space for discussion around new ideas; a cross-pollinator of those ideas; and a platform to highlight selected projects. Flexible appraisal processes and broadly defined themes encourage the submission of innovative projects, including both place-based architectural interventions as well as novel social and cultural programming proposals. IBA's discussion-based approach encourages discourse between local communities and politicians on the socio-cultural and built implication of projects. This is significantly related to the concept of 'Baukultur', a German term that embraces every human activity that changes the built environment, from detailed craftsmanship to the planning and execution of infrastructure projects, and which highlights the value of cultural heritage assets as well as innovative building techniques.

IBA is framed as a non-formal instrument that, unlike common formal urban processes, can react with flexibility and promptness, and is less constrained by the rigidities of ordinary urban planning frameworks. This provides a window of opportunity for innovation and inspiration while enhancing horizontal and vertical cooperation through shared work on projects. As part of the Urban Maestro Masterclass, we developed the D-A-D Framework, a didactic tool to represent IBA's core process. This framework is replicable and can be effectively deployed in different geographic and cultural contexts, regardless of the existing formal structures for territorial development. Examples of its replicability across different contexts exist already (e.g. IBA Ethiopia and IBA Vienna).

The IBA process is a really powerful tool to test innovative ideas for the future of urban life, as well as to engage and give voice to local communities about their built, social and political environment. Reproducing such process in different places has the potential to empower communities to draw and implement innovative approaches for a renewed, integrated vision of their city/region.

To learn more about IBA Thüringen, visit: iba-thueringen.de/en

All photos in this document
© IBA Thüringen by Thomas Müller

Report created by:

María Ruiz de Gopegui
Sabah Usmani

Melissa Fundira
Simon Warne

Mauricio Suarez
Nadja Zhrebina

Jana Čulek
Una Daly

In participation with:

Renata Machado

Elena Petsani

Ekaterina Solovova

Tim Rodber

Special thanks to:

Bertram Schiffers

Jan Schultheiß

Urban Maestro

Masterclass:
New governance
strategies for
Urban Design

Co-City Torino



© Paulus van der Kuil

CUMIANA 15

- The Co-City Torino project examined the processes enabling collective management of urban commons by public administration and 'active citizens' who sign a common pact of collaboration.
- Using 'soft power' approaches, Co-City Torino creates new spaces for citizen engagement in an innovative model of urban governance that aims to build mutual trust and address urban deprivation.
- Cumiana 15 was inaugurated in 2020 as an initiative of the Co-City Torino project, launched in 2017.



Context

Dilapidated Structures

Since 2008, the co-financing of the city annual budget has been reduced by 80%



6.5 % of about 1600 buildings and about 1 million sq/metres of land owned by the city of Torino are unused or underused

Socio-Spatial Polarisation

The economic climate has contributed to a deterioration in living conditions



This fed mistrust in local institutions that are decreasingly responding to the needs of local communities through welfare services provision

Social Exclusion & Spatial Segregation

14.1% of the population in Turin live under the relative poverty line, while the group of people on the edge of poverty grows

In order to reduce poverty, it is necessary to break the cycle of socio-spatial polarisation

The decentralisation plan & decrease of public expenditure

The regulation on urban commons, affects the functions and the attitudes of the public officials in relation to the urban commons and active citizens

Impacting on the exchange, cooperation and definition of the roles of the participants in the shared care of urban spaces

Objectives

The objectives of the project respond to the outlined context. Here we consider the thematic objectives in relation to one another. Based on the anticipated impact of co-management of urban commons, we consider the primary objectives to fall within the themes of economy and sociology.

Processes

Pacts of collaboration for co-management of urban assets.

Output

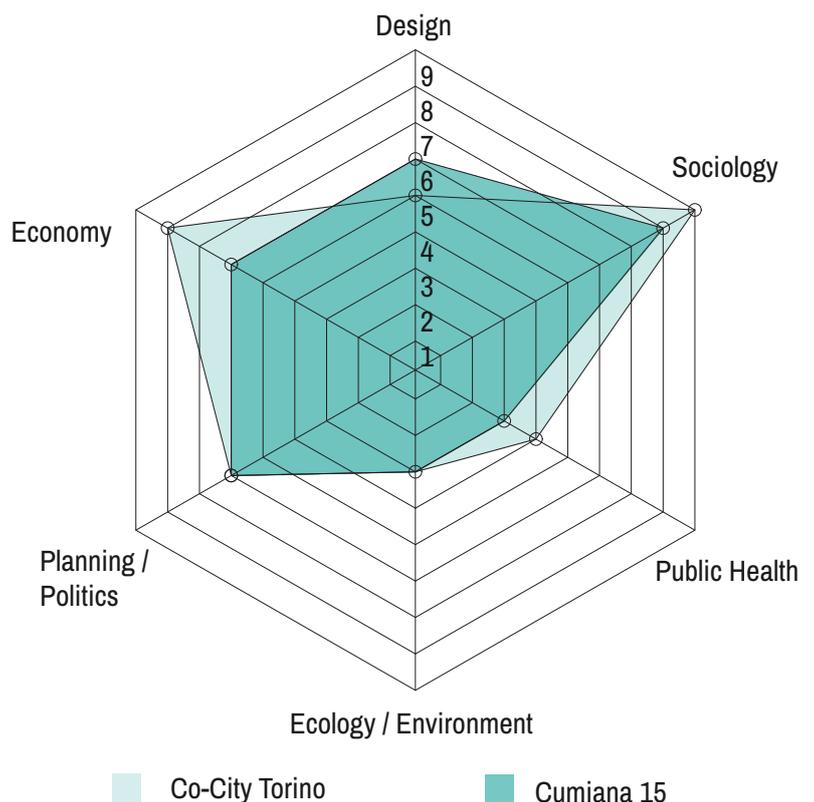
Long-term co-management of urban assets.

Anticipated Outcomes

New paradigm of collaborative administration between residents and urban authority.
 Regeneration of dilapidated structures / spaces.
 Citizen engagement through co-management.
 Social enterprise and low-cost service co-production in urban commons.

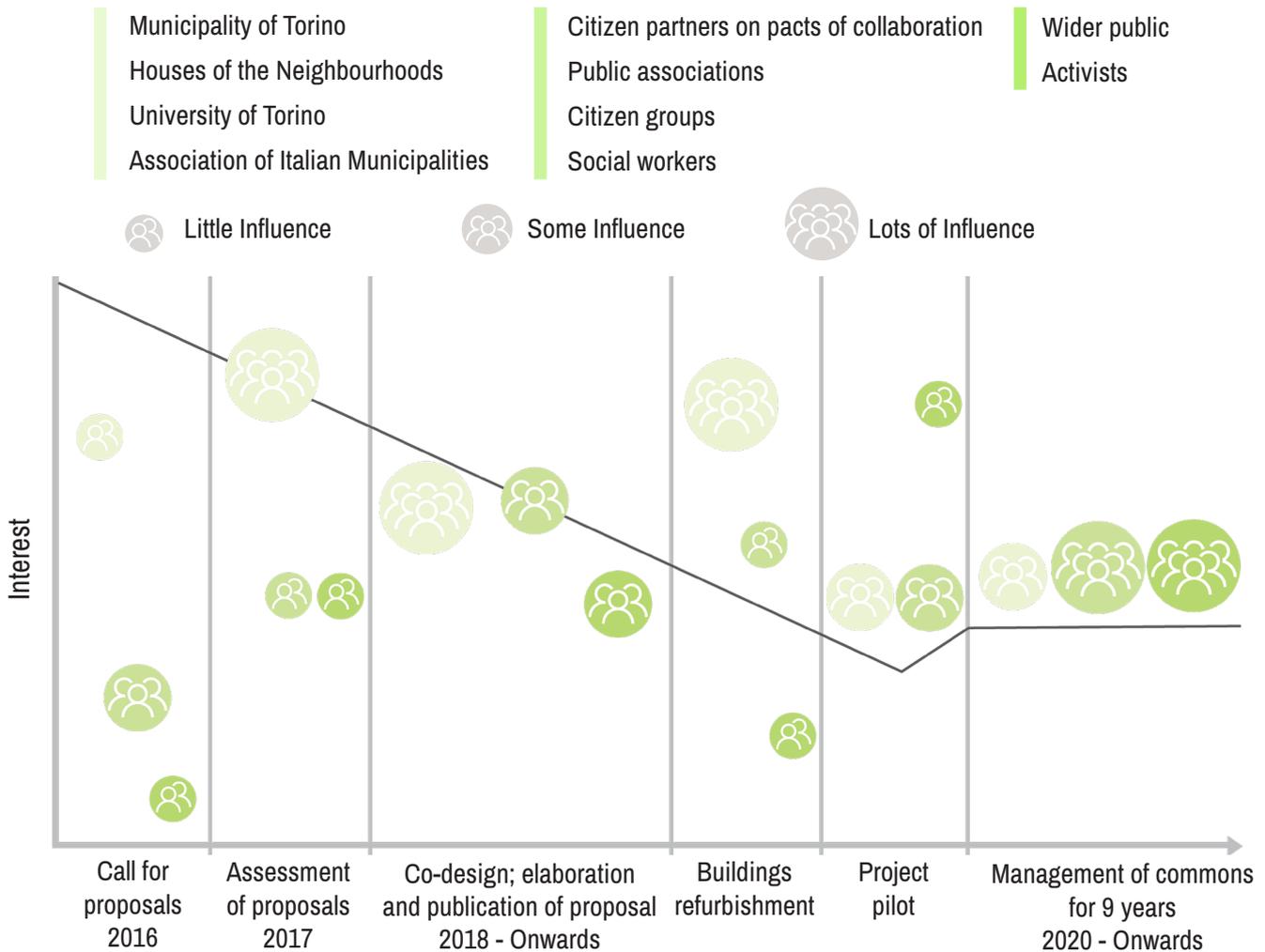
Anticipated Impact

Reduced urban poverty
 Reduced social exclusion
 Increased urban innovation
 Innovative urban management



Stakeholder analysis and timeline

Co-City Torino included stakeholders associated with the municipality and citizen stakeholders. The influence of these groups over the course of the Cumiana 15 project, as perceived by the authors, is depicted below.



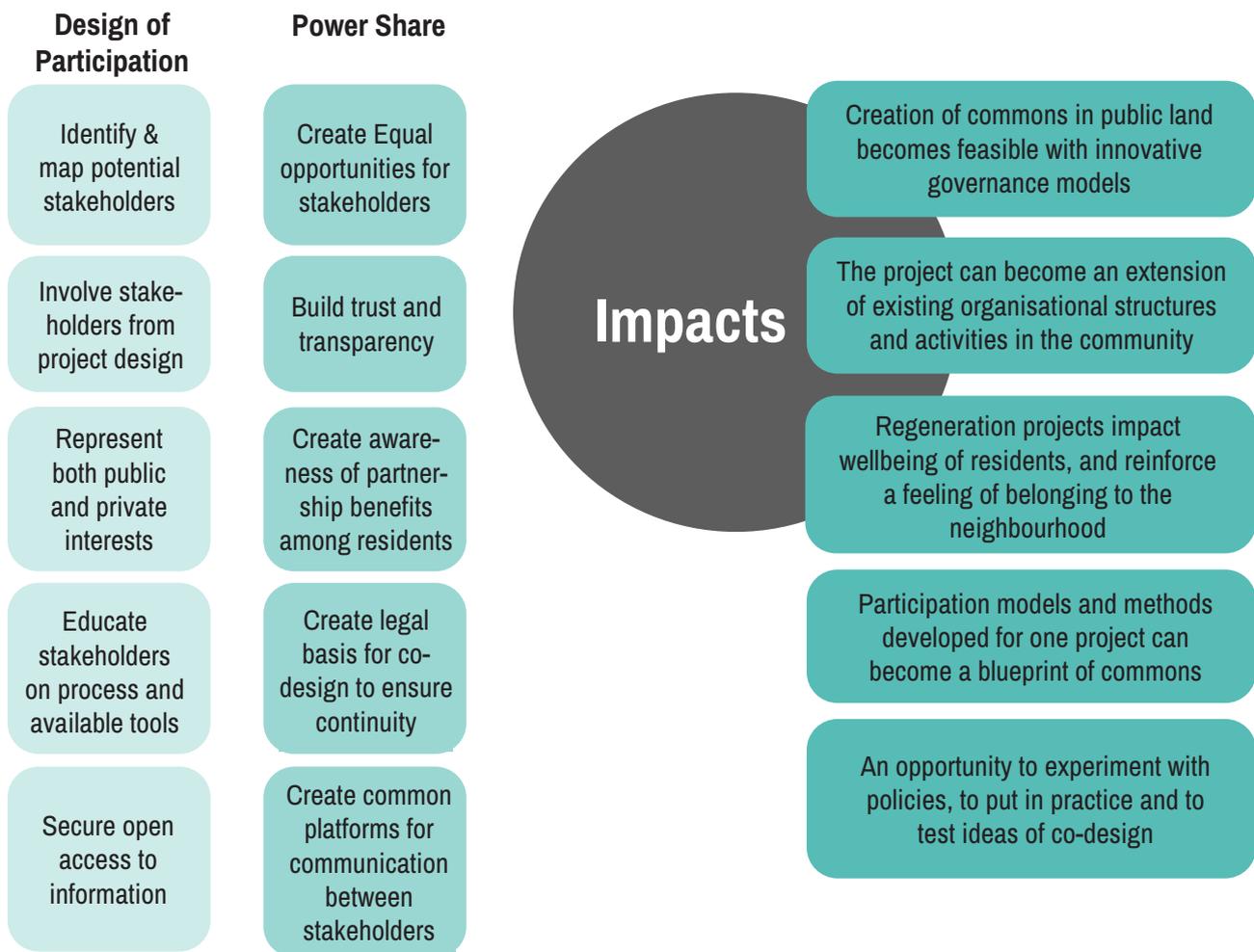
The degree of stakeholder influence and interest fluctuates over time and can be considered in relation to the scope to adapt the project. Influence is shared between municipal stakeholders and active citizens throughout the course of the project, although there is a transaction of power between active citizens and the municipality between the call and assessment of project proposals.

As might be expected, relative to municipal stakeholders and active citizens, the wider public (i.e. residents who are not involved in the pact of collaboration) have relatively limited influence on the project other than an opportunity to react to the open publication of the proposal and, potentially, use of the commons. It is currently not clear whether the co-management process may generate or dismantle barriers to use of the commons by the wider public. Informal governance tools may help to dismantle any barriers which are encountered. Engagement with the wider public at each stage of the project may permit a more equal balance of influence across the three groups.

'Soft Power' Approach

Co-City Torino uses non-regulatory (soft power) tools for urban governance, comprising an innovative administrative framework (i.e. pacts of collaboration), an innovative ICT infrastructure for local social markets and networking and the provision of technical and management support (through access to professional expertise and coaching/ tutoring). This facilitates the co-design phase of the project and once the project is open, provides operational capacity (e.g. equipment, fire safety) and a platform for community projects or enterprises.

Recommendations based on Co-City Torino for:



Research Agenda

Considering that Co-City Torino and Cumiana 15 are ongoing projects, more research will be needed to analyse and evaluate the outcomes in the medium and long term.

As co-design projects are also starting to be fostered in other Italian cities (for instance, Bologna), future research could focus on comparing the outcomes and obstacles faced by these projects. Bearing in mind the importance of context, future research could also focus on comparing other case studies, particularly in the Global South.

Although we had the opportunity to hear the experience of some civil society actors participating in the co-design process of Cumiana 15, more research on the perceptions and experiences of residents and users will be needed to know the satisfaction and involvement in the co-design and subsequent co-management process.

Some of the possible questions for future research could include:

1. How to guarantee the inclusion of certain groups that tend to be marginalised from these processes and do not trust the authorities?
2. How flexible/ resilient are these projects to external shocks that can change the context or characteristics of the neighbourhoods?
3. What is the impact of this project in the long term on contributing to the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals?
4. Are these projects increasing the neighbourhood attachment of residents/ users?
5. What are the mechanisms for enhancing commoning of spaces within cities?
6. How could the experiences from Co-City Torino be applied in the Global South?



© Comune di Torino

Torino, via Cumiana 15

Interviews

“The most significant advantage of the whole project is the possibility to use abandoned or unused infrastructure with the ‘Pact of collaboration’ tool that allows people to approach the use of urban commons differently. It’s very flexible and it’s a tool that allows the use of common assets for different purposes, so they are not linked to a single practice, either commercial or voluntary organisation, it can be anything with the right principles. It’s a flexible legal instrument, which I think its the most significant advantage. It doesn’t mean that the bureaucracy somehow becomes flexible or that the Municipality becomes a flexible institution because people in the administration are still rigorous in the way they use this tool, with its norms of use.”

- Alice Zanasi, Co-City Torino Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant

“The idea is to replicate these kinds of projects. However, these experiences of urban regeneration are not mainstream, rather part of the experimentation field. From the point of view of the city administration or the urban authority, mainstream policies are the ordinary construction and maintenance of infrastructure, or civil services, schools, and these kinds of service provision, both in terms of human resources and money invested. Still, I think that the governance of urban commons definitely has a chance to become one of the tools that public administration and citizens organisations can use in certain situations.”

- Giovanni Ferrero, City of Torino Officer, Co-City Project Manager

Authors: Alexia Sawyer, Arturo Paredes-Rodríguez, Nazaket Azimli, Ximena De La Guardia. Tutor: Paulus van der Kuil.

In participation with: Eugénie Tenezakis, Alice Devenyns, Diogo Mello, Emilia Puotinen, Robert Richardson, Jiwon Park, Pablo Sendra

Special thanks to: Loredana Di Nunzio, Giovanni Ferrero, Riccardo Galetto, Alice Zanasi

Outcomes and Obstacles

Co-City Torino / Cumiana 15 establishes a new relationship between the diverse stakeholders in order to manage urban assets. Below we present a list of expected outcomes as well as possible obstacles to their realisation.

Outcomes

The public officers and the active citizens have the skills for using the new legal framework

Active citizens' ideas are operationalised into project proposals and are presented to the urban authority via a public call

The urban authority and the active citizens underwrite and sign contracts (pacts of collaboration)

Implementation plan of projects fine-tuned with the technical and economic resources, the expertise and the needs of the territory, the possible synergies

The urban authority implements investments for urban commons

Citizens in need are reinforcing their life skills

Obstacles

Resistance to structural innovation in the public sector

Inexperience of local associations and citizen groups in sustainable management and financial sustainability

Failure in the co-design phase approach due to conflicts and impasses

'Tyranny' of the experts in the co-design phase. Self selection of citizens/ associations with the most resources and exclusion of citizens in need

Decisions taken by financially powerful groups

Asymmetric relationship with institutional actors



Photo © Comune di Torino / Collage by Ximena De La Guardia

Final Recommendations

The context of the neighbourhood, the specificities of the political system and the Municipality play an essential role in the development and success of Cumiana 15. It is vital to have this in mind when thinking about translating or applying some elements of the Co-City Torino project in other contexts, particularly in the Global South. Co-City Torino represents an innovative way to engage civil officers, active citizens and residents. However, in different contexts it is possible that barriers may be faced, such as: confrontation, lack of trust in public servants or institutions, political misuse of public resources, or a historical exclusion of certain groups and privileging of others.

Urban Maestro

Masterclass:
New governance
strategies for
Urban Design

Room for the River

Added value for people, place and planet

Tutors: Sandra van Assen, David Bauer

Authors: Hala Aburas, Sandra van Assen, David Bauer,
Rosa Catalina Pintos Hanhausen, Johanna Westermann

In participation with: Naglaa Abbas, Ramsés Grande Fraile, Naveen Isarapu, Piotr Kruk,
Javier Luengo Oroz

Many thanks to Hans Brouwer, José van Campen, Michiel Daams, Matthieu Schouten,
Pieter Schengenga for their time, their helpful critique and their insight.



Fig. 2: Room for the Waal in Lent/ Nijmegen © Johan Roerink / Aeropicture

Introduction

Cities and regions around the world are facing major transformation challenges, involving actors with opposing interests, whether it be climate change-related issues, or other urgent matters, such as rapid urbanisation and environmental pollution. Worldwide, the scarcity or excess of water represents one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century.¹ Historically, governments have prepared to meet water-related emergencies through top-down decision making.² However, a demand for the integration of additional values is becoming apparent as water management systems increasingly influence whole landscapes and settlements. As a consequence, the need to balance top-down planning and bottom-up demands grows,³ leading to a pressing call for governance tools that enable negotiation and collaboration.⁴ Nevertheless, empirical sources of successful and replicable tools in water management remain scarce.

This study focuses on the role of design governance tools in the case of the Dutch Room for the River programme (RftR), a large-scale transformation project, internationally known for the *Dutch approach*.⁵ We are highlighting the tools implemented to address friction specifically because we understand it as a culture-shaping power arising in “heterogeneous and unequal encounters”,⁶ relevant in the face of global and local transformation challenges. We assume the boundary spanning role of design governance tools to be essential as a value-adding mechanism when friction is present. These tools enable the integration and mediation of natural and cultural spheres and therefore the establishment of sustainable inter-organisational relationships.⁷ This study tries to systematise the tools with the help of the European Typology of Design Governance Tools that distinguishes between formal and informal, quality delivery and quality culture tools.⁸

The study uses evidence from document research (evaluations, reports, websites) and discussions with three key stakeholders. It examines the historical development of Dutch water management assuming this knowledge of paradigm changes in water management is conditional for the understanding of the Dutch approach. It introduces what design governance tools are used throughout the process and how, by illustrating the case study of Nijmegen.

Room for the River

Large parts of the Netherlands are below sea level, with 60% of the land being prone to flooding.⁹ Over centuries, the Dutch have created an anthropogenic landscape, claiming land from the sea through a complex system of dikes and polders;¹⁰ a landscape destined to suffer hard consequences related to climate change.

In the 1990's, two major flood events resulted in a paradigm shift in the approach to water management in order to ease inherent and century-old flood-related problems. Instead of continuously raising dikes and embankments, as standardised practices had dictated for many decades, the government decided to give more room to the natural course of the rivers Rhine, Meuse, Waal and IJssel, which had been marginalised over the past century.¹¹

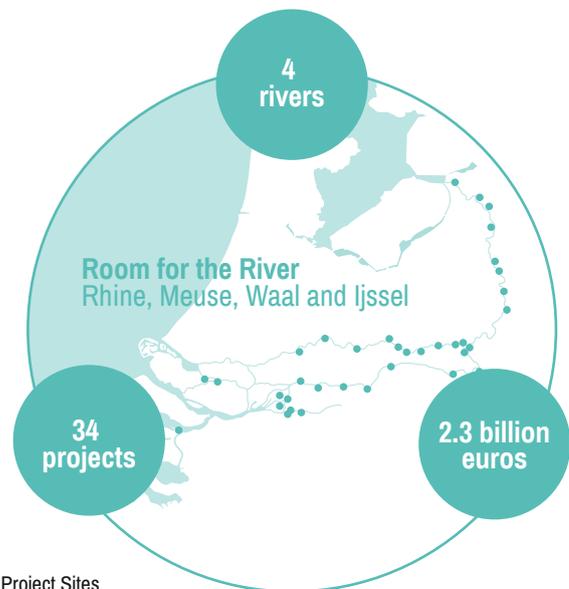


Fig. 2: Project Sites

The programme had two goals: ensuring lasting safety by taking measures such as lowering the flood plains and creating buffer zones, while simultaneously enhancing the spatial quality in the areas of transformation.

After a ten year period of feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments, the project was initiated in 2007 by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment to be carried out by Rijkswaterstaat (Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management) as the executive agency. After a long survey process that discussed several hundred possibilities to lower the water level, 34 projects were selected for implementation. Ambitions, knowledge and a budget of € 3.2 billion fuelled a new way of managing old problems. While the measures were decided on a national level, their implementation was decentralised to regional and local authorities and/or private parties, which increasingly had to interact with local stakeholders and civil society actors.¹²

The Development of the Dutch Approach

Due to the constant threat of floods, the Dutch have long strived for a manageable water system, constantly reiterating their approach to water management within their limited land resources. The first major paradigm shift, between 1200 and 1400, paved the way for a democratisation of the decision-making process, by introducing water boards. Ongoing urbanisation and the development of vulnerable land resulted in an increasing complexity and scale of the necessary water control measures to ensure the populations safety. The second major paradigm shift occurred during the 1990s with the aforementioned floods. This shift changed the approach to water management from dominating nature through technology, to understanding the causes and effects of these long-lasting, anthropogenic interventions on natural processes.¹³

This change manifests in the RftR programme and its attempt to integrate and work with natural, spatial and social conditions. Moreover, it bridges gaps between top-down and bottom-up strategies, using participatory planning approaches involving multiple stakeholders.¹⁴

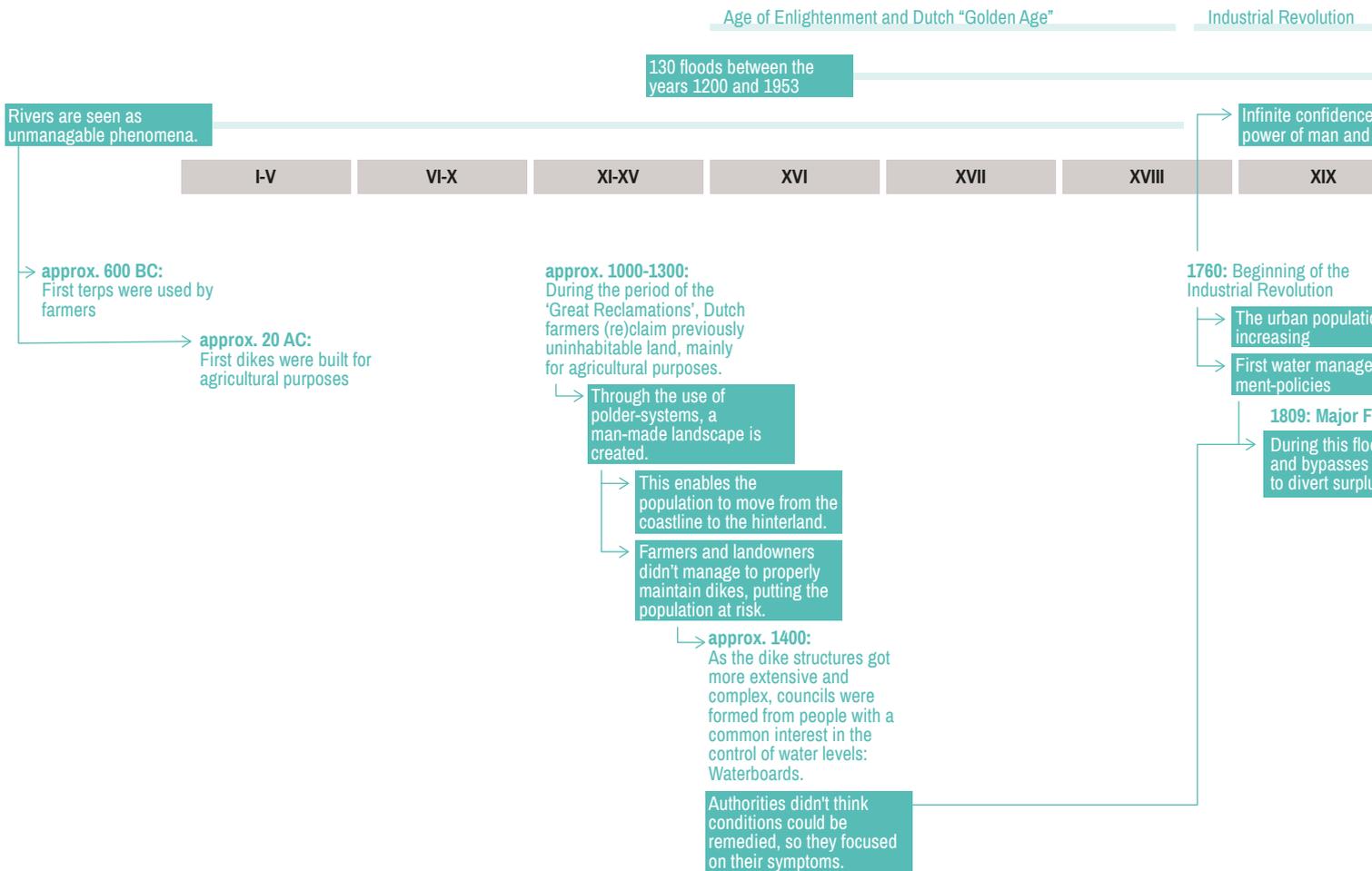


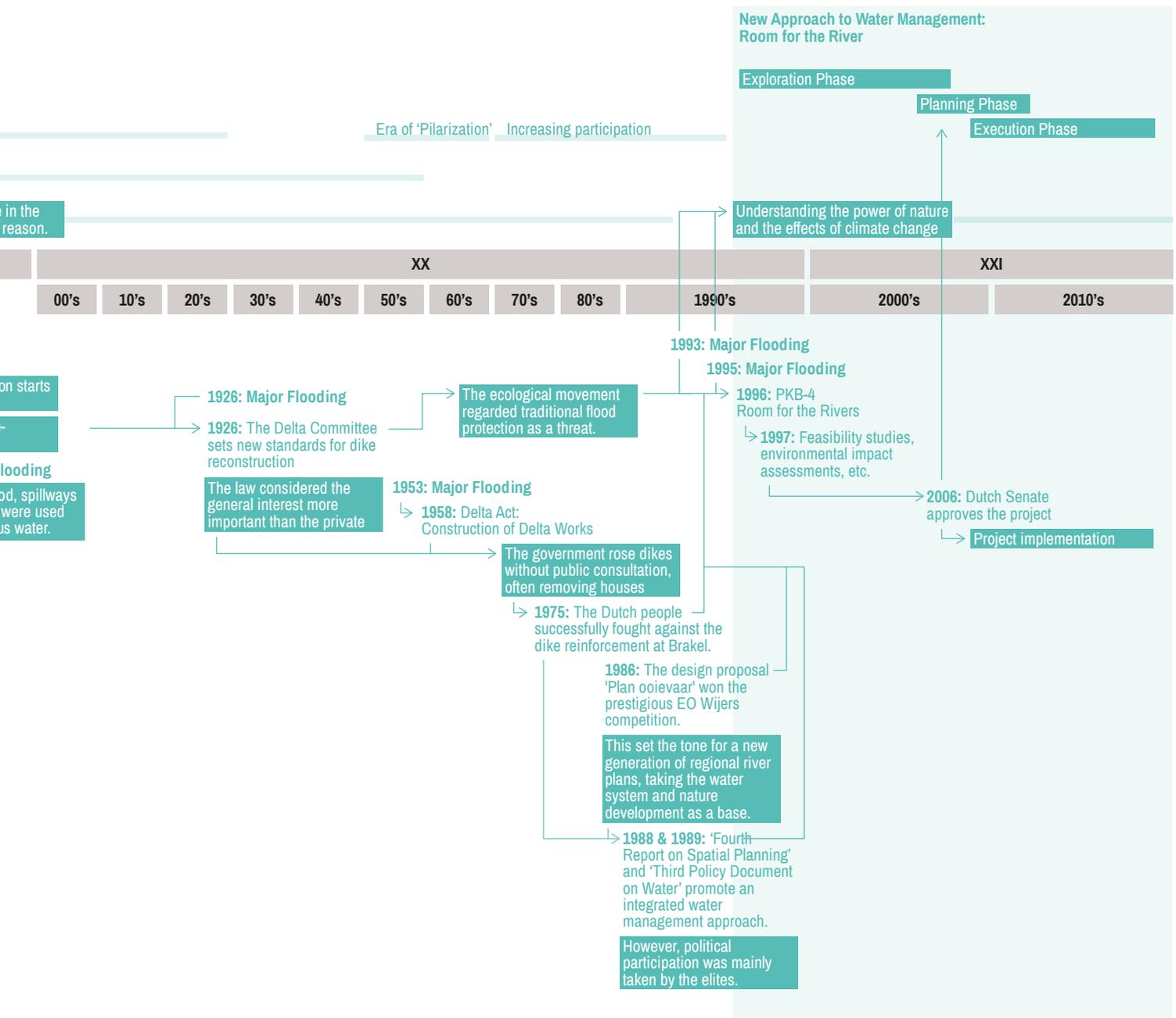
Fig. 3: Historic Development of Water Management in the Netherlands¹⁵

Spatial Formations

In the first century before the Common Era, the first dikes were built and maintained by farmers and landowners, who directly benefited from them (see Fig. 3). Through the use of terraforming, they eventually reclaimed the land from the water, thus, creating productive land.¹⁶ As these water control measures increased in size and complexity, more actors became economically dependent on their functioning and maintenance. Disagreements and conflicting interests became a risk and therefore necessitated a better organisation. Hence, water boards were established among people with an interest in controlling the water levels surrounding their land. These water boards represent the first institutionalised form of water management. While over time the water boards developed into larger, regional organisations, water management remained a task for the local people.¹⁷ The shaping of dikes and other structures can be understood as architecture of common interest: for the people, by the people. This "particular form of self-government [...] formed a strong foundation for the democratic structure of the present Dutch society".¹⁸

Societal Influence

During the *Age of Enlightenment*, the Dutch *Golden Age* and the *Industrial Revolution*, the Dutch increasingly incorporated technical and human-centred approaches to water management. With an "infinite confidence in the power of human reason and the desire for a socially engineered society",¹⁹ the Dutch landscape was engineered according to human needs. Large-scale terraforming allowed an intensified urbanisation process. Rivers and man-made canals were equipped for shipping traffic, commodifying the landscape. The approaches to water management were mainly technocratic. The local population was negligibly involved and the natural environment was increasingly marginalised in these processes.



Environmental Awareness

Despite all these technological solutions, flooding remained a constant companion. With the beginning of the 1970s, political protests and public resistance emerged and demanded a new approach to water control, with a civil society organisation successfully fighting the unilateral implementation of flood protection in court.²⁰ Meanwhile, public involvement increased. In the 1980's, *Plan Ooievaar* set the base for a nature-based approach to water management.²¹ The plan incorporated the river and natural systems and worked with their metabolic processes.

However, it was not until the mid-nineties that a fundamental change took place. The force of a crisis bears the potential to challenge social, technological and economic dimensions and to function as a catalyst for systemic change.²² In this case, two floods and a growing awareness of climate change led to the realisation that continuously building higher dikes and reinforcements would not save the Dutch population from flooding in the long term.²³

These shifts in perspective resulted in the ambition to combine safety and spatial quality in the RfR programme, acknowledging the necessity of an integrated planning approach. The programme developed and worked with tools and methods that enabled the integration of spatial, social and natural qualities and values, and supported the negotiation of opposing interests.

Governance Tools Bridging the Gaps

RftR aimed to improve safety and spatial quality. While the former proved to be a straightforward goal to achieve, the latter appeared to be more difficult. For the RftR programme, the general definition was changed into “the balance between *hydraulic effectiveness, ecological robustness, and cultural meaning and aesthetics* [emphasis added]”;²⁴ thus, including spatial, social and natural aspects. In addition, RftR invested in tools enabling and supporting this aim by creating settings for negotiation and integration of opposing views and interests – or in other words, friction. The observed tools can be grouped in boundary spanners and hands-on tools. The former facilitated the multi-level approach from within the government or as external consultants. The latter enabled the teams and designers to stimulate the dialogue between actors, to enable negotiation and to develop integrated design solutions, guides and frameworks.

Boundary Spanners

The Spatial Quality Cluster (SQC) formed part of the Programme Directorate (PDR) and it was responsible for the coordination of the programme’s spatial quality objective. The SQC worked as an intermediary between the different stakeholders (see Fig. 4), by setting a general frame and developing guides for the regional spatial quality objectives and creative freedom in individual projects. Additionally, they informed the PDR about the contributions these made to the previously established goals. Overall, this team had a large influence on spatial quality and the communication between different stakeholders.²⁵

The Q-Team was an independent entity that coached planners and designers, peer-reviewed the proposals, and reported to the ministry about the achievements; thus supporting the multi-level approach. This interdisciplinary team of experts offered advice unconstrained by formal governmental or institutional opinions. Frequent reviews were important to achieve designs that would enhance spatial quality, therefore, the team members visited each project at least five times along the whole process.²⁶ The Q-Team created a design quality assessment framework with soft guidelines instead of hard rules, arguing that “each situation is different and requires another approach and solution”.²⁷ The team had a large influence on decision making and on how project teams and their designers developed spatial quality.

Landscape architects were the “guardian[s] of spatial quality - especially to prevent the tendency to see spatial quality as a “costly luxury” in the face of limited budget and time”²⁸; they communicated complex planning policies to civil society actors,²⁹ while at the same time visualising possible outcomes; and gave a voice to the river by integrating it as an actor in the negotiation. The landscape architects were boundary spanners between the different interests and policy sectors involved in flood risk strategies³⁰, and played important roles in the processes by managing “a wider creative process of arriving at decisions and action”.³¹

Hands-on tools

Workshops and design ateliers allowed the mediation between top-down planning and bottom-up demands. They were organised in local projects with both societal stakeholders and citizens, where local ideas were taken into consideration during the development of the projects.³²

During these workshops, the use of a digital design table allowed professionals and citizens to draw their plans and ideas on the map and immediately calculate what the consequences would be. Initial scepticism from municipalities, provinces and the state was followed soon by enthusiasm and co-developing project plans.³³

A comparison of the tools used in the RftR programme with the tools from the European Typology of Tools shows that the examples of tools are directed at quality delivery and incorporate both informal as well as formal components. However, the SQC, the Q-team and the landscape architects additionally function as boundary spanners, which enable the cross-fertilisation of ideas, knowledge and interests, across boundaries of organisations.³⁴ Therefore, they influence the quality culture and promote a positive decision-making environment.

The Use of Tools in Lent, Nijmegen

One of the 34 projects selected was implemented in Lent/ Nijmegen. The citizens of Lent were confronted with top-down strategies to create more room for the River Waal. These top-down decisions, resulting in the demolition of 40 houses, were met with a great deal of protest in Lent as there had been no preliminary consultation with the residents. The inhabitants opposed the plans, joined forces and developed an alternative plan, which gained attention from decision-makers. Although this plan wasn’t considered an optimal solution by the PDR, it nonetheless gave voice to the citizens.³⁵

Design workshops were then organised with local working groups and citizens from Lent, through which the citizens gained influence. According to the landscape architect of the municipality of Nijmegen, the design workshops resulted in shared ideas and a vision.³⁶ As a result, a river park with a 4.5 km channel was developed, with opportunities for nature, recreation and living, in addition to the guarantee of better water safety. According to local newspapers in 2017 and 2020 the development became “a much more attractive area than initially planned”³⁷ and “the cross of Lent eventually became the strength of the new Nijmegen on the river”³⁸, demonstrating the potential of incorporating different opinions in a design process.

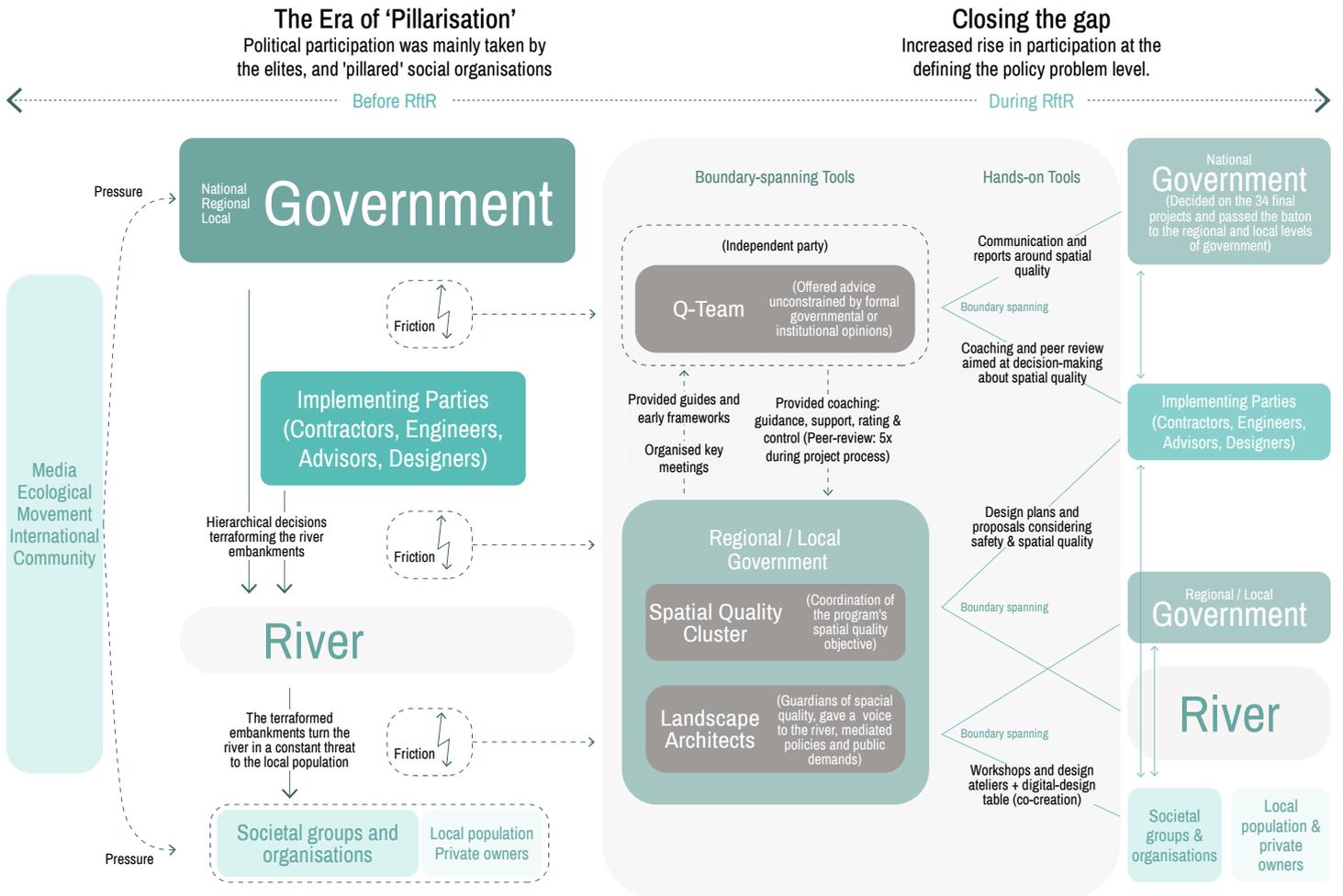


Fig.4: Governance and tools before and during RfTR

Conclusions

Given the complexity of handling pressing transformation challenges involving actors with opposing interests, the necessity for new governance tools is evident. This study has examined the role of design governance tools in addressing friction and enabling negotiation and co-creation. We found that RfTR has tried to institutionalise negotiation processes with the help of boundary spanners and hands-on tools. The study shows that it is the combination of tools that helps to address the friction on different scales. Additionally, in all tools, the role of designers appeared essential in the operationalisation of spatial quality.

Looking at the example of Lent, we notice room for negotiation and adaptation in the governmental proposal. While ensuring safety from high water has been a non-negotiable aspect throughout the project, spatial quality, the second goal, gave important means of negotiation and leeway in local projects and implementation processes. The awareness of the existence of opposing interests and addressing them has in many ways changed the project for the better.

We believe the future will bring greater challenges, such as water- and climate change-related issues, and other urgent matters. These will bring not only friction, but also severe conflicts that need to be addressed. The process of negotiation, mediation and finding consensus will become ever more critical. We therefore see an essential role in integrative design

governance tools that address friction productively. This study acknowledges their power to integrate top-down and bottom-up approaches. Boundary-spanning capacities are especially promising for tools in governance networks that aim at building sustainable inter-organisational relationships and facilitating participation.

1 Forster, T., J. Himmelsbach, L. Korte, P. Mücke, K. Radtke, P. Thielbürger, and D. Weller. 2020. "Worldriskreport 2019". Berlin: Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and Ruhr University Bochum. 2 Jha, A. K., R. Bloch and J. Lamond. 2012. "Cities and Flooding: A Guide to Integrated Urban Flood Risk Management for the 21st Century". The World Bank. / 3 BMUB (Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, Bau und Reaktorsicherheit). 2007. "LEIPZIG CHARTA Zur Nachhaltigen Europäischen Stadt". Berlin: BMUB. 4 Nunes Silva, C., and A. Trono. 2020. "Local Governance In The New Urban Agenda." Springer International Publishing AG / Carmona, M. 2020. "Design Governance, Making Planning Proactive Again." Journal Of Urban Research And Development 1 (1): 5-16 / UN-Habitat. 2020. Urban Maestro. Retrieved from <https://urbanmaestro.org>. 5 Zevenberger, C., J. van Tuijn, J. Rijke, M. Bos, S. van Herk, J. Douma, and L. van Riet Paap. 2013. "Tailor Made Collaboration: A Clever Combination Of Process And Content". The Hague: Rijkswaterstaat Room for the River. 6 Tsing, A. L. 2011. Friction: An Ethnography Of Global Connection. Princeton University Press. Citation from p.5. 7 Van Meerkerk, I. F. 2014. "Boundary Spanning in Governance Networks: A study about the role of boundary spanners and their effects on democratic throughput legitimacy and performance". Erasmus University, Rotterdam. Thesis. 8 UN-Habitat. 2020. 9 Rijkswaterstaat. 2015. "The National Flood Risk Analysis For The Netherlands". VNK Final Report. Rijkswaterstaat 10 Van Alphen, S. 2020. "Room for the River: Innovation, or Tradition? The Case of the Noordwaard." Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam. 11 Idem. 12 Zevenberger et al. 2013 13 Van Alphen 2020 14 Zevenberger et al. 2013 15 Van Alphen 2020 / Borger, G. J. and W. A. Ligtdag. 1998. "The role of water in the development of The Netherlands - a historical perspective". Journal of Coastak Conservation 4:109-114. EUCC; Opulus Press. Uppsala / Zevenberger et al. 2013 16 Van Alphen 2020 17 Borger and Ligtdag 1998 18 Idem. 19 Van Heezik, A. 2007. "Strijd Om De Rivieren: 200 Jaar Rivierenbeleid In Nederland Of De Opkomst En Ondergang Van Het Streven Naar De Normale Rivier." Delft University of Technology, Delft. In Van Alphen 2020 20 Van Alphen 2020 21 Zevenberger et al. 2013 22 De Flander, K. and J. Brugmann. 2017. "Pressure-Point Strategy: Leverages For Urban Systemic Transformation". Sustainability 9 (1): 99. 23 Zevenberger et al. 2013 24 Van Alphen 2020, 310 25 Collignon-Havinga, R., M. Menke, W. Oosterwijk, J. Van der Grift, and M. Tilstra. 2009. "Ruimtelijke Kwaliteit bij Ruimte voor de Rivier: Rollen, Taken, Organisatie en Werkwijze." Utrecht: Ruimte voor de Rivier. 26 Klijn, F., D. de Bruin, M. C. de Hoog, S. Jansen and D. F. Sijmons. 2013. "Design quality of room-for-the-river measures in the Netherlands: role and assessment of the quality team (Q-team)". International Journal of River Basin Management, 11 (3): 287-299. 27 Idem. 28 Busscher, T., M. van den Brink and S. Verweij. 2018. "Strategies for integrating water management and spatial planning: Organising for spatial quality in the Dutch "Room for the River" program". Journal of flood risk management, 12 (1). Citation from p. 10 29 Busscher, T., S. Verweij, M. van den Brink, J. Edelenbos, R. Bouwman and J. van den Broek. (2017). Het organiseren van ruimtelijke kwaliteit: Inzichten uit Ruimte voor de Rivier. Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. 30 Heeres, N., T. Van Dijk, J. Arts, and T. Tillemma. 2017. "Coping with Interrelatedness and Fragmentation at the Infrastructure/Land-use Interface: The Potential Merits of a Design Approach." Journal of Transport and Land Use 10, no. 1: 409-35. 31 Heeres et al. 2017, 412 32 Busscher, van den Brink and Verweij 2018 33 Smits, T. 2009. "WaalWelde" - van onderaf werken aan ruimtelijke kwaliteit en duurzame veiligheid." Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. 34 Van den Brink, M., J. Edelenbos, A. Van den Brink, S. Verweij, R. Van Etteger, Busscher, T. 2019. "To draw or to cross the line? The landscape architect as boundary spanner in Dutch river management." Landscape and Urban Planning 186 (2019) 13-23 35 Groothuise, F. A. G., M. N. Boeve, G. M. van den Broek, A. Keessen, H. F. M. V. van Rijswijk, N. de Boer and C. Smit. 2018. "Juridisch-bestuurlijke evaluatie Ruimte voor de Rivier". Utrecht Centre for Water, Oceans and Sustainability Law. 36 Gemeente Nijmegen. 2007. "Visie kern Lent. Herkenbaar en verbonden." 37 The Gelderlander. 2017. "Hoeveel ruimte heeft de rivier nodig?". Freely translated by the authors. 38 The Gelderlander. 2020. "Zo werd 'het kruis van Lent' uiteindelijk de kracht van het nieuwe Nijmegen aan de rivier." Freely translated by the authors.