SHRINKING CITIES: WHAT NOW?
Experiences from urban development in Europe and the USA

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The department International Planning Systems (IPS) puts its main focus on international trends of spatial and urban development such as shrinking cities and regions, the comparison of spatial planning in Europe and how international trends affect spatial development and planning strategies on national and regional levels. Various methods are utilized to compare planning systems and underlying frame conditions which leads to an exchange of experiences concerning challenges and possible solutions. Exchange of experiences is also being fostered by an international network of research and practise.
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Introduction

**PlanIt!** – This new journal edited by the Department International Planning Systems cultivates a calling, a programmatic approach, and a positive attitude to embrace the subject of planning. The online journal gives the floor to students: aspiring young academics have the chance – often for the first time – to practice scientific writing. This experimental format is new to the academic realm and it showcases the depth of analytical and conceptual research on urban development students are capable of. Moreover, the attachment to research carried out by the Department International Planning Systems is provided in a natural way. Likewise experimental was finding a name for the journal: here, students of the Faculty of Spatial and Environmental Planning at Kaiserslautern University had the chance to cast their vote for selecting their favorite name: PlanIt!

The first thematic volume is labeled ‘Shrinking cities: what now? – Experiences from urban development in Europe and the USA’. Urban shrinkage – meanwhile not a new topic anymore – has raised academic interest and public awareness around the globe. Europe and the USA are at the forefront of the discourse and many strategies have been applied. This volume brings the view of young researchers to the table: six students have quite intensely investigated this subject during the course of their bachelor, master or diploma thesis.

The five papers presented here display evidence for shrinkage in the European and the US planning realm – all cities are affected by globalization-induced economic transformations, and they have had their share in struggling with the effects on their economic, social, environmental and urban situations. Nonetheless, like phoenixes from the ashes, shrinking cites have the potential to invent creative and pragmatic solutions in order to change their fate. What are the stories of Youngstown, Providence, Detroit, Porto, and Pirmasens within the realm of shrinkage? How did these cities’ planning approaches fail, succeed, or change, and what can other cities learn from their paths?

The first paper by Viktoria Rösrlau presents one of the well-researched examples of a shrinking city in the USA: Youngstown. Viktoria investigates how the city’s planning culture changes in view of shrinkage. As a basis she used an analytical model, which has the potential to be applied to other shrinking cites.
The city of Providence is highlighted in the article by Tobias Schäfer, who traces social and economic effects in a city which once declined. Today, based on a history of redevelopment and careful planning, Providence is one of the few examples of a shrinking city which managed to induce new growth.

With a thoughtful study of Detroit’s greening paths, Franziska Trapp’s paper displays three aspects of the city of Detroit’s approaches to massive shrinkage: riverfront development, right-sizing, and green infrastructure. Franziska’s research traces shifts in paradigm from growth to a smaller scale shrinking smart.

Katharina Kloska and Thomas Luffy’s paper presents a shrinking city whose downtown is now acknowledged as Unesco World Heritage Site. The city of Porto has to cope with the effects of suburbanization, which led to a vacated and impoverished urban core. Here, the demands of contemporary housing needs versus the small scale inner city fabric become apparent.

Elena Gilcher’s article deals with a German shrinking city: Pirmasens. Located in the Western part of Germany, this city has a long history of economic transformations in the shoe manufacturing sector. Quite unusual are the city’s large-scale factory buildings within the center of this small town – now offering new potentials for redevelopment.

The results of the individual papers are impressive – yet their summation enriches the ongoing shrinkage discourse to a large extent.

Enjoy reading the first volume – more to follow…

About the author/editor:

Karina M. Pallagst has studied spatial and environmental planning at Kaiserslautern University and is now professor for International Planning Systems at Kaiserslautern University’s Faculty of Spatial and Environmental Planning.
Viktoria Röschlau

Coherences between Shrinking and Planning Culture

The example of Youngstown, Ohio

An increasing number of cities worldwide are facing heavy population losses due to demographic shifts and economic changes. Youngstown, Ohio was the first city which pro-actively accepted shrinking and came up with an integrated plan to tackle arising problems in order to achieve a better quality of life for its citizens. This paper sheds light on the conditions emerging from Youngstowns planning culture that led to this unique paradigm shift from growth orientation to planning for shrinking. After looking at the American planning culture in general, it retraces all steps taken by Youngstown during the last half-century.

Introduction

For some decades the phenomenon of shrinking cities could be observed. In the 1990s more than a quarter of all major cities lost parts of their population (Oswalt and Rieniets 2006). The reasons vary: while in Germany the low fertility rate and consequences of the re-unification have been main triggers (Pallagst 2010), in the US suburbanisation has a significant influence on city shrinking (Hollander et al. 2009). In addition, globalisation, de-industrialisation and economic structural changes have been particularly challenging for many former industrial cities.

Against the background of a growth oriented culture, cities confronted with population decline often refuse to accept shrinking and the underlying trends. Furthermore, as comparative studies on shrinking cities are underrepresented in the international planning literature (Pallagst 2010), there is hardly any orientation for cities in similar situations (Hollander et al. 2009). However, Youngstown, Ohio, took a new and unique approach with the master plan Youngstown 2010 to tackle the effects of shrinking within planning. Instead of desperately focussing on re-growth, planners together with other stakeholders try to improve the life quality in a smaller city (Hollander 2009; cited in Hollander 2010, 131).

This paper describes how this paradigm shift was enabled in Youngstown with regards to factors determining the local planning culture on the wider societal level, the planning level and on concrete measures in the past and present. At the same time it starts to evaluate the change in planning strategies in the imple-
mentation stage and its influence on the planning culture. Most importantly, conclusions are drawn on what can be learned from Youngstown and applied to other shrinking cities. This aims at triggering a paradigm shift of planning cultures in an earlier stage of the process in order to make “shrinking smart” more successful.

At first the theoretical background will be framed by giving a brief overview on the background, definitions and the current state of research of both terms shrinking cities and planning culture. Then the interdependencies are discussed and introduced with two models that are later applied on Youngstown. After giving a short overview on the US planning culture, the planning history and past planning approaches are presented. In a last step, conclusions are drawn about the transferability of findings to other cities.

Apart from academic literature which was investigated for the theoretical background, public media and local websites were analysed to find out about recent changes in perceptions in the planning culture. Moreover, local key actors from all important stakeholder groups involved in the planning process (citizens, private practice, educational, politics and planning) were interviewed.

**Background, current state of research and definitions**

As both terms “Shrinking Cities” and “Planning Cultures” that are fundamental for this paper have not been addressed sufficiently by academic research yet (Hollander et al. 2009; Selle 2007) they are introduced rather comprehensively. Different attempts to define both terms are introduced in order to set a context for this paper.

**Shrinking Cities**

Between 1960 and 1990 one of every sixth city worldwide was shrinking (Rieniets 2004) and during the 1990s more than a quarter of all cities were losing population (Oswalt und Rieniets 2006). Today, population decline has almost become the rule in many post-industrial regions and their cities (Rieniets 2004).

Despite the omnipresence of this phenomenon, there have hardly been any major discussions neither in the political sphere nor in academia (Pallagst 2008). Due to experiences with urban decline in East Germany, where almost every city has experienced shrinking, there has been a first step towards a paradigm shift in Germany (Hollander et al. 2009). However, while shrinking is almost seen as a ‘trendy’ issue in Germany (Brandstetter, Lang and Pfeifer 2005; Hesse 2008) the debate is only in its early stages in the US (Pallagst 2010). Only through Articles in public media such as the Forbes Magazine (Zumbrun 2008) or the New York Times (Lanks 2006) the topic could gain more popularity in the US (Pallagst 2011). Nevertheless, the issues being debated today do not meet the growing needs for orientation required by affected cities (Hollander et al. 2009). From the lack of systematic research results...
that the term “shrinking city” is not defined sufficiently (Brandstetter, Lang and Pfeifer 2005) and that there is currently no consent between planners, the public and scholars of what it embraces (Hollander et al. 2009).

Most existing attempts to define a shrinking city focus on population numbers, social and economic indicators, but not on the built area of a city. The fact that there is no universal definition of the term “city” regarding population numbers makes it even more difficult to find an internationally valid definition for a shrinking city (Owzar 2008). Another difficulty in finding a definition derives from causes for shrinkage that vary in different regional backgrounds (Hesse 2008).

Because Youngstown, as it will be demonstrated in the following part, can be classified as a shrinking city by all definitions that have been analysed for this paper (Oswalt and Rienits 2006; Gatzweiler, Meyer and Milbert 2003; Wiechmann 2006; CIRES 2010) no further discussion about attempts of definitions will be made in this paper.

Planning Cultures

Just like for shrinking cities, there is no internationally valid definition for the term planning cultures (Selle 2007). The meaning of planning cultures goes beyond planning systems and embraces cultural and regional aspects which influence specific ways of planning in different cultural areas.

The term planning cultures was first introduced in a European comparative study in the 1990s (Friedmann 2005) and has since then been brought up in various international studies (Sanyal 2005 cited in Steinhauer 2010). There seems to be consent about the fact that the cultural context of planning has a highly influential and to some extend impeding position on transnational collaborations. Against the background of globalisation and increasing international cooperation it is important that planners gain a better understanding of differences in planning cultures in order to improve the efficiency of their collaborations (Fürst 2009). Furthermore this field of research is particularly important for spatial planning as it is very strongly embedded in and dependant on political structures and decision making (Friedmann 2005).

The definition by Knieling and Othengrafen (2009) that will be used in the following is very detailed and includes further definitions by Friedmann (2005) or Sanyal (2005, cited in Steinhauer 2010) which will not be introduced.

According to this definition, the term planning cultures embraces the interpretation of planning tasks, the approach towards problems, the usage of specific regulations, processes, tools and methods of public participation. All of the factors result from opinions, values, convictions, requirements and beliefs that are shared by all participants from a particular planning culture. These in turn consist of both informal aspects such as traditions, customs, habits and conventions and of formal aspects such as the legal framework and constitutional
Setting a theoretical framework

In order to set a framework for the case study, both terms shrinking cities and planning cultures first have to be connected on a theoretical level. The Culturised Planning Model established by Knieling and Othengrafen (2009) classifies the mentioned factors influencing planning cultures into three levels. These levels will then be applied to a context of population decline and research questions will be derived that are directly applied to the US planning context and the local planning level in Youngstown.

Culturised Planning Model

The Culturised Planning Model consists of three levels that influence each other (see Fig. 1 on page 9). The fundamental level is called societal context and it describes the social background of a society and its relation to planning, generally the mentality or mindset of a society. Some of the research questions derived from this level and answered for the case study context later are:

• Which specific cultural or traditional aspects characterise Youngstown?
• What is the predominant atmosphere and mentality of Youngstown’s population and how has it changed over time?
• How close is the community and is there a collective memory about past changes in Youngstown?
• How do the media treat shrinking?

The second and more concrete level is the planning context. It consists of the planning related values of all stakeholders involved within the planning practice. These are normally expressed in planning models, principles and aims. Additionally political, administrative and economic constructs belong to this level. Potential research questions are:

• Are planners consciously aware of the declining population and do they accept that shrinking is unlikely to be reversed in the future?
• Is there an open discussion within the administrative level and with the public on shrinking?
• How flexible is the local planning system?

The third level, planning toolset, is the most detailed one. It describes the planning tools, concrete strategies and planning results that mostly take place on the local level. Other than the first two levels the differences in the planning toolset are mostly obvious and easy to differentiate (Knieling and Othengrafen 2009).

• What steps have been taken to address population decline?
• Which planning tools are used and have they changed over time?
• What significance has public participa-
tion?
• Who is involved in the decision-making process?

Figure 1: The Culturised Planning Model

Societal Context
Planning Context
Planning Toolset

Source: Knieling and Othegrafen 2009. Own design, Kaiserslautern 2011.

Perception of shrinking in planning

Two important factors to stress when it comes to planning for shrinking in contrast to growing are the lack of overall society precedents and the general negative connotation of shrinking.

On the one hand a tradition of growth exists which derives from the mercantilist economy. Due to expansive economic systems a “force to grow” has been established which determines thinking and acting of capitalist states (Oswalt 2004, 685-687). This pattern can also be seen in spatial planning: “Urban development has virtually become the same as growth” (Häußermann and Siebel 1987, 91). Furthermore, growth is thought of being implicit in planning, not only because it has its origin in organising growth in times of the industrialisation (Oswalt 2004). On the other hand there is almost a natural anxiety regarding shrinking. Just as quantitative growth is mostly equalised with qualitative success, shrinking is often interpreted as disappointment, failure or downfall (Owzar 2008).

When shrinking is approached with growth oriented strategies, in most cases measures fail to succeed and can even cause more negative consequences. Thus, time, resources and potentials that are needed to successfully plan shrinking are wasted (Killisch and Siedhoff 2005). For these reasons, academics have claimed a real paradigm shift (Glock 2002; Pallagst 2010) which does not address shrinking in order to re-grow but to gain a new aim and flexibility in planning when the future development is not predictable (Farke 2005).

Categorisation of planning reactions

From past experiences that various cities made, models have been established that shed light on typical reactions of cities when faced with population decline. The case of Youngstown will later be classified to draw conclusions about potential unique features.

Farke (2005) classifies perceptions and acceptance of shrinking into chronological phases. The basic criterion for the different categories is the internal and external communication. The first phase is named “negation” and means that a population loss is not taken seriously by officials and estimated as coincidental. The development is not perceived as a complex problem and gets repressed. Growth remains the aim of political action and so do short-term
strategies and re-election gains. The following phase is the “perception without acceptance”, where population losses are seen as a medium or long term trend but are not genuinely accepted. For fear of negative connotations the step to appear before the public is not made and at the same time the hope for growth remains. Due to the lack of seriously examining the issue, shrinking is perceived as negative. This change in the phase “certain acceptance without or with limited communication”. Individual stakeholders start to consider new measures and communicate with each other. This phase is primarily coined by in internal debate and the public is not integrated at this stage but the process is considered. The final phase “acceptance” is entered with informing and communicating with the public. There is consent that future action can no longer be oriented towards the growth paradigm and a willingness to accept that planning must adjust to shrinking is established. These cities have given up on gaining new growth. Detailed plans to meet the requirements of population decline are developed and implemented, and the public is involved in the process (Farke 2005).

Another approach to classify planning reactions by Danielzyk, Mielke and Zimmer-Hegmann (2002) categorises phases on the basis of measures and aims formulated by the city. In contrast to Farke’s model, the phases can occur simultaneously. The first and only passive phase “shrinking as a vicious circle” describes cities that are unable to act due to austerity. These cities apprehend the change but cannot implement appropriate measures for financial reasons. A more active approach is the “expansive strategy” where cities notice decreasing population numbers but cling to their strong growth orientation. Typical reactions are land use planning, major infrastructure projects, or attracting new companies. The third approach is “maintenance” and is mostly pursued by cities which are not strongly affected by shrinking yet. The only phase which has achieved the paradigm shift is “planning for decline and develop qualities” where the aim is to establish new qualities for the remaining population through conversion, flexible land uses and greening.

The next paragraphs will specify the planning culture in the USA to set a context for the situation in Youngstown.

Planning Culture USA

In order to understand the planning culture and reasons for changes in Youngstown, at first the national planning system and culture in which it is embedded needs to be studied. This will help answering the questions raised earlier in this paper through the Culturised Planning Model in pointing out main characteristics of the American planning culture. The “planning toolset”, the most detailed level of the culturised planning model, will directly be shown with the example of Youngstown.

Societal Context

The basis for the US planning culture is
the understanding of democracy which embraces the self-government and autonomy of the people. As interventions by the state are seen contrary to this notion, any kind of regulation tends to be refused or regarded sceptically (Cullingworth 1997). Because freedom of the individual is prioritised, a decentralised and local planning autonomy has been established ensuring a large scope of actions for cities (Schneider-Sliwa 1995).

This structure is emphasised by the tradition of “privatism” which describes the central role that private actors and enterprises have. The psychological and social aspect of the original idea of privatism is the belief that the pursuit of happiness of the individual results in wealth for the overall local community (Warner 1968). From this follows, that the role of politics is only regarded as creating a secure framework which enables individual freedom. Tasks that are seen as welfare duties in most European states are transferred to the private sector believing that the market can achieve aims in a fairer, faster and more efficient way. Therefore, welfare tasks are transferred from state to local level and from there transferred to the private practice (Schneider-Sliwa 1995).

Another factor that describes the general context in the US is expansive land use. Urban sprawl and suburbanisation are symptoms that derive from two notions that are routed in American mentality. On the one hand land has always been perceived as an unlimited resource (Pallagst and Wiechmann 2005) as in “There was always another valley over the next hill” (Cullingworth 1997, 18). Due to the oversupply of land it is cheap and because there have hardly been any regulations concerning land usage suburban land remains affordable while there is generally a lack of financial incentives for people to move into cities (Daniels 2001). On the other hand the intangible and financial value of owning property is a reason for many to move into suburbia. The inviolability of property is a basic right and other than for example in Germany does not oblige for social responsibility (Schneider-Sliwa 1995) but is in fact an expression of personal freedom. Additionally, life in city centres is often stigmatised and associated with crime while suburban life is expected to offer a safe environment and higher quality facilities (Pallagst and Wiechmann 2005). Hence, the market orientation of the population resulting in sprawl is contrary to contemporary sustainable planning aims (Pallagst 2007).

**Planning Context**

There is no competence for planning at the federal level with a few exceptions in the US, thus land use planning is a local task (Cullingworth 1997). Only if an issue is seen as nationally relevant the federal level can step in as a “crisis management” (Schneider Sliwa 1995, 427; Pallagst and Wiechmann 2005). The local autonomy means that planning aims and administrative structures can vary greatly in different states and cities (Cullingworth 1997).

Generally, municipalities prepare comprehensive and master plans that are valid for
20 years with reviews every five years. The tools that are commonly used are zoning and subdivision. Despite their official aim which is to safeguard a healthy environment for all people living and working in an area, comprehensive plans have frequently been used to increase property values and induce racial segregation (Pallagst 2007).

Both in terms of population numbers and land development the US are oriented towards growth. Just like the general economy, cities are expected to develop in a successful mode which can only be achieved by growing (Pallagst 2008). According to Molotch (1976) cities are perceived as “growth machines” with growth being a political and economic strategy. In the past, spatial planning was only focused on either manage growth or turn decline into growth (Pallagst 2011). In contrast, planning for shrinking is equated with accepting decline (Hollander et al. 2009). As the stigma that comes with shrinking population numbers does not fit into the ideal of planners (Beauregard 2003) shrinking is commonly seen as a taboo subject or threat (Pallagst 2008). It becomes clear that the American planning culture contradicts the acceptance of planning for shrinkage, which makes the Youngstown case even more eminent.

**Background and Challenges in Youngstown**

Youngstown, located between Cleveland and Pittsburgh, was founded as a small settlement in the early 19th century but population numbers increased quickly when eleven blast furnaces were built between 1846 and 1872 to produce steel (Linkon and Russo 2002; Buss and Redburn 1983). Youngstown was seen as the capital city of the industrial empire in the 1930s and in the 1950s 90% of the local economy could be traced back to the steel industry (Linkon and Russo 2002). Therefore, steel production dominated the life of all citizens and Youngstown has always depended on it (Aley 1950, cited in Linkon and Russo 2002).

In 1977 with which has gone down in history as the “Black Monday” the closure of the steel mills in and around Youngstown was announced. It caused the unemployment of 50,000 people in the region within a few years (Buss and Redburn 1983; Linkon and Russo 2002). This in turn caused so many people to leave Youngstown that population losses in the 1970s cannot solely be explained by suburbanisation (Linkon and Russo 2002). Today less than 65,000 people live in Youngstown (US Census Bureau 2010).

The consequences of losing more than half of the population within fifty years are obvious: Youngstown is perforated with vacant residential and commercial buildings and lots of land. Youngstown has the highest vacancy rate in the USA with more than 40% of lots underused and 4,500 vacant buildings in 2009 (Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative 2009). The actual problem is not the amount but the allocation of vacant sites throughout the built area which means that infrastructure provision
is less efficient and more expensive. A solution could be to relocate inhabitants into dense areas and leaving other neighbourhoods with no public supply but despite financial incentives the majority of inhabitants refuses to move (Christie 2008). The situation is exacerbated by a declining tax base and a decreasing financial support from state and federal levels which are allocated on the basis of population numbers (Swope 2006).

Furthermore, social problems have increased during the last decades. Due to “white flight” which describes that many white middle-class people have relocated to areas with better job opportunities, the majority of Youngstown’s population is from an African-American and Hispanic background (Mock 2008). Other demographic challenges for Youngstown are the Brain Drain of particularly young and highly-qualified people which leads to a percentage of graduates below US average (Mock 2008; US Census Bureau 2010).

Due to the low density of Youngstown combined with the low average household income there is a lack of retail demand in the city centre. This leads to an unattractive city core and forces people to drive to other locations to buy convenience goods (Christie 2008). The mix of a deprived community and urban appearance lead to Youngstown’s criminal rate being far above national average (Area Connect 2011). All factors mentioned strengthen the negative image so that less people are willing to move to Youngstown and a bad reputation can just be as hindering for the future development as the hard facts (Kidd 2007).

**Planning approaches before 2000 and Youngstown 2010**

Just like most other de-industrialising cities Youngstown has solely focused on growth strategies in the second half of the 20th century. Some random examples for growth-oriented projects are a NASCAR racetrack, a buoyant casino and an airship factory. Additionally the relocation of a branch of the Department of Defense to Youngstown was considered but none of these projects have been realised (Christie 2008).

### Table 1: Population development in Youngstown 1900-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>30,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>132,4</td>
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<td>1940</td>
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<td>168,3</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>95,8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>66,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2008; Joffe-Walt 2011). Other less popular developments proved to be more successful like the Brownfield Reclamation Program with which contaminate vacant sites have been treated to convert them into new commercial land usage. Companies that have emerged from this program together with the Youngstown State University today form the economic backbone of the city (Interview Finnerty 2011; Swope 2006).

The formation phase for the plan Youngstown 2010 started in the late 1990s when both the Youngstown State University and the City of Youngstown independently decided to prepare a new campus plan and a new master plan respectively (Sweet 2004). The effective master plan at the time had last been revised in 1974 when the city expected an increase of population up to 250,000 inhabitants (City of Youngstown 2011). University and the City decided to cooperate on a new plan to optimise the outcome (Sweet 2004). Key people in this process were Jay Williams who was Youngstown’s chief planner and Hunter Morrison, the director of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies at the university (Interview Kidd 2011).

Before the final master plan was worked on, a visioning process in cooperation with the public was carried out from 2002 onwards. In regular meetings the public was first informed about the meaning of planning itself and then fully engaged to work on concrete topics. The level of response was high and the Youngstown Vision 2010 was decided unanimously by the City Council in February 2003 (City of Youngstown 2005a). It contained the following four major issues:

- Accept that Youngstown is a smaller city
- Defining Youngstown’s role in the new regional economy
- Improving Youngstown’s image and enhancing quality of life
- A call for action

To achieve better acceptance of the plan and due to a lack of financial and personal resources the process for the master plan which started in 2003 was based on community involvement. Volunteering citizens and companies carried out site analysis and worked on various topics. The main goals of the plan are to establish a green network, competitive industrial clusters, lively residential neighbourhoods and establish a vibrant urban city centre. In terms of land usage this means that there will be no further designation of land for development and existing land will be converted to more appropriate uses concentrating business activities in the centre and establishing green industries instead of heavy industry. Residential areas are reduced by 30% (City of Youngstown 2005b).

Stakeholders from the public community, administration, private economy and education were consciously involved in the process. An impressive number of 5,000 citizens participated during the planning phase, which was enabled through active regional and local media (print, radio and TV) cooperating with the
City Council to inform about the process and the plan. Consequently, a majority of Youngstown's inhabitants became aware of the plan which is extraordinary for planning documents.

However, because of financial austerity the implementation phase is progressing slowly (Interview Kidd 2011). Since 2009 no trained planner has been employed at the City Council and the planning team shrank from five employees in 2002 to only two. Against the background of further budget cuts Youngstown has to decide whether to spend the remaining resources on the long-term planning strategy or on public safety such as the police and the fire department as the budget is not sufficient for both (Livingston 2011).

Youngstown in Culturised Planning Model

In order to understand the factors that have influenced Youngstown's unique and revolutionary approach to accept and plan for shrinking, distinctive features characterising the planning culture of Youngstown from 1977 through today are described. They are classified based on the Culturised Planning Model in the following.

Societal Context in Youngstown

The mentality of the citizens of Youngstown has changed dramatically over the last decades. During the industrially prosperous years the people were filled with pride because railroads that facilitated America's expansion towards the west and weapons with which the country won its wars had been produced in the Steel Town (Rowlatt 2011). The working class of Youngstown had negotiated the best wages in their sector nationwide and the city flourished and could offer various cultural facilities resulting in loyalty with the citizens’ home. The image of the working class was glorified and connected with virtue, productivity, strength and a strong sense of community. The steel industry was not only a means to make a living but was equalised with patriotism and solidarity (Linkon and Russo 2002).

When the steel industry began to decline in the 1950s and 1960s, Youngstown's steel mills were sold to the Lykes Corporation who had promised to modernise the facilities in order to keep them competitive. However, the promise was not kept and both productivity and working conditions in the factories decreased dramatically. The loyalty of the workers towards their new employer fell to a minimum but due to a lack of alternative jobs they stayed. The series of announcements of closures still came as a shock to most people. They hit Youngstown's society as a whole as almost every citizen was a part of the steel industry either as a family member or being employed in a job which was intertwined with dependent on the steel industry. The closures in the late 1970s and the unavoidable unemployment left the people disoriented and worried (Linkon and Russo 2002). However, soon after the closures steel workers and representatives of the pub-
lic and the church formed a coalition to release their anger, frustration and disappointment and fight for their jobs. An attempt to buy and run the steel mills themselves and an accusal against the U.S. Steel remained unsuccessful (Greenwald and Krauss 1984). In this pro-active opposition phase the people of Youngstown proved a strong sense of community and established a strong “us versus them” culture blaming the government, steel companies and local decision-makers (Linkon and Russo 2002).

In the 1980s the fierce atmosphere changed into a more passive one fixated on the past and searching for a new identity. Youngstown was trying to define and keep a common memory of its glorious days. At the same time parts of the community developed a “get over it” spirit and tried to focus on future projects that would bring success back to Youngstown (Linkon and Russo 2002). The strong sense of community increasingly fell apart. The generation which had worked in the steel mills themselves were split into three parts: one group had left the city, another had stayed and naively waited for the steel industry to come back and the third group waited for an external saviour (Interview Finnerty 2011). Additionally to this passive attitude of the citizens, cases of corruption in the judiciary and political spheres led to even more distrust towards authorities (Finnerty 2003). Overall, Youngstown’s people were cynical, frustrated and described as a “community in waiting” (Interviews Finnerty; Kidd; D’Avignon 2011).

The turning point around 2000 came with a change of generations in the public and the administrative personnel. Citizens who had only experienced the Black Monday as children saw Youngstown differently and had a more open relation with its past and present and saw a realistic potential for Youngstown’s future (Interview Finnerty 2011). The majority of people were aware of the fact that Youngstown would never become what it had been as a steel town but they needed someone to speak it out and admit it (Interview Slanina 2011). The planning process for Youngstown 2010 almost had a therapeutic effect on the community as the people were given time, space and attention to exchange their frustration and later in the process to share their ideas (Rugare 2004; Interview Kidd 2011). When a new and young mayor, Jay Williams was elected, trust into the authorities slowly returned (Interview Kidd 2011). The response to the planning process were positive and its goals were supported enthusiastically (Finnerty 2003). Youngstown had recovered its strengths that had been lost during the steel crisis and at the end of the Youngstown 2010 planning process looked into the future optimistically (Interview Kidd 2011).

The exterior image of Youngstown has changed from the proud steel capital of the USA to the loser of deindustrialisation. Being underestimated from the outside, Youngstown tried even more to become successful again in desperately trying to attract new companies. Offering very high economic incentives, Youngstown fell into a weak position and was not taken seriously anymore. Self-confidence
and self-reflection to own values were lost (Lincon and Russo 2002). Around 20 years after the Black Monday Youngstown was not primarily connected with deindustrialisation or the city’s fight against its fate anymore, but it was perceived as city that had resigned itself to the situation. The former Steel Capital became known as Crime Town, Murder Capital and Homicide City (Linkon and Russo 2002).

Youngstown’s representation in the media during the last decade is contradictory. On the one hand it has been labelled as one of the “fastest-dying cities” (Zumbrun 2008) and “most miserable cities” (Badenhausen 2011). On the other hand the city region is seen as one of the “fastest growing industrial areas” (Kotkin 2011) and the technology sector together with the Youngstown Business Incubator which supports start-ups are mentioned as positive developments (Samavati 2010; BBC 2010). More objective articles on Youngstown like “Creative Shrinkage” (Lanks 2006) are rare but at the same time one-sided articles about the tragic fate of Youngstown have decreased (Interview Morrison 2011). It seems like the citizens of Youngstown have reached a point where they do not let strangers decide on their image but want to define it themselves (Libecco 2007). Youngstown sees itself as a “City with a Plan” and as a pioneer for a new and revolutionary planning approach (Interview Slanina 2011).

**Planning Context in Youngstown**

In the mid 1990s the perception of planners towards shrinking changed. Both the City and the Youngstown State University started to realise that without a radical change both would go down (Finnerty 2003). Planners were aware of the recent development and realised that population losses were not a medium term trend but chronic and irreversible (Interview Morrison 2011). Additionally, many influential politicians and managers from the private sector who had witnessed the Black Monday retired, moved away or deceased and a younger generation came to power. With a more objective matter of fact attitude towards their hometown and without having to justify their actions they could tackle issues that nobody would have dared to even mention a decade earlier (Swope 2006; Daley 2009). Furthermore the positions of the University director and the director of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies were occupied by David Sweet and Hunter Morrison who had both worked in Cleveland before and therefore had a more neutral perception of the city and brought in new ideas (Finnerty 2003).

The process of accepting shrinking mainly took place outside politics (Interview Morrison 2011) until Jay Williams, an African American, independent and only 35 years old at the time, was elected mayor. He had supported the Youngstown 2010 planning process as an employee of the Community Development Agency and as a citizen and made the implementation one of his political main tasks (Skolnick 2005). In electing Williams Youngstown’s citizens voted for the core strategy of Youngs-
town 2010 which is to accept shrinking (Interview Morrison 2011). A “No-Growth” strategy and the aim of stabilising the current situation became the political aims and negation would not have been possible anymore. The reality of Youngstown has changed completely so that not those who talked about shrinking but those who concealed it had to fear not to be (re-)elected (Interview Kidd 2011). To talk openly about shrinking was not a burden but a relief and it was the precondition to create a better future (Interview Slanina 2011).

The perception of the planning profession changed as well. It was crucial for the Youngstown 2010 process that planning did not purely operate from the top to the bottom but acted as a partner, coordinator and motivator. Scarce financial resources had to be allocated in a more flexible and goal-oriented (Interview D’Avignon 2011). In order to save money administrative processes and structures were adjusted and the overall personnel reduced which in turn impedes the implementation of the plan. As Youngstown 2010 is widely regarded as the last chance for Youngstown there are high expectancies and pressure for it to succeed which often leads to frustration because as a matter of fact it takes time to see planning successes (Johnson 2006; Interview Kidd 2011). Since the implementation phase has begun it has lost dynamics and there is a threat of the citizens feeling disappointed again after a phase of strong enthusiasm (Livingston 2011).

**Planning Toolset**

The most important tools used by the planners in Youngstown to address shrinking were public participation and conscious involvement of the media.

From the start of Youngstown 2010 public participation was a key component of the process to (Interview D’Avignon 2011). While other shrinking cities in the US used either top-down or bottom-up approaches Youngstown based its planning approach of a combination of both (Kidd 2010). Community empowerment was seen as crucial for both the planning and the implementation phase for various reasons. First, Youngstown was convinced that its citizens knew best what the challenges and potentials of Youngstown were. Second, with agreement on the planning steps a wider acceptance of the planning outcomes could be achieved. Furthermore the expectations and hopes would become more realistic when people were actively involved in the planning process (Interview Kidd 2011).

For the implementation phase the Neighbourhood Activity Local Foundation was founded. Integrating the public as a partner in order to implement planning strengthens the sense of community and team spirit. Additionally it helps the citizens to identify with the plan and to respect and appreciate implemented projects. Not least it is expected to facilitate the implementation process as the city does not have a sufficient budget to carry out projects on its own (Interview Kidd 2011). Above all, the
planning process was very transparent and not based on election pledges. The process was characterised by trial-and-error as there were no role models for Youngstown’s approach to shrinking. However, when mistakes or failures were made they were admitted openly.

To reach as many people as possible and integrate them in the planning process an offensive marketing strategy was adopted. Local print media, radio stations and TV channels featured Youngstown 2010 regularly to inform about planning meetings and progress (Interview Kidd 2011). Additionally, billboards, posters, balloons and t-shirts with the Youngstown 2010 logo were produced so that it became ubiquitous and a majority of people became aware that something was happening. For this strategy Youngstown was awarded with the Public Outreach prize by the American Planning Association (Johnson 2006).

Youngstown received the attention from national and international media due to its role as a pioneer with its new and “revolutionary” approach towards shrinking (Interview Kidd 2011). However, the opinions on the overwhelming media attention are divided. On the one hand the description of Youngstown as a changing city is appreciated because it improves the image from a depressed to a forward-moving city (Interview Morrison 2011). On the other hand due to inaccurate articles many citizens developed unrealistic expectations although planners and politicians had never actually promised a quick implementation. This led to distraction and cynicism which was exploited by politicians who were against Youngstown 2010 in the first place (Interview Finnerty 2011). The relation from the plan and the media can be summarised as the following: “The media attention has been good for Youngstown but has not been good for the Youngstown 2010 plan” (Interview D’Avignon 2011).

Acceptance of shrinking in Youngstown based on the phase model

To draw conclusions about the conditions that led to an acceptance of shrinking in Youngstown, different phases in the development of Youngstown are categorised based on the phase model of Farke (2005).

Negotiation

The phase of negotiation ranges from the first evidence of a turning economy until 1979. Although Youngstown could have recognised from global trends that a steel crisis would hit, political strategies were not changed towards establishing an alternative economic sector. Both politics and planning seemed to be highly unprepared when Black Monday arrived. An article from 1978 shows the naïveté of Youngstown at the time stating that it would take “at least six months“ until a new political strategy would be decided which would address population losses (Finnerty 2003). It ended up taking over 20 years. Although the citizens were very active fighting for their jobs in this phase both groups were far from ac-
cepting the inevitable trend. No mutual debate over a realistic future strategy took place. When the Ecumenical Coalition’s plan to buy the steel mills was refused, the majority gave up the fight.

**Perception without acceptance**

This phase took place from 1980 until the late 1990s. In 1980 Youngstown had lost 50,000 inhabitants within 20 years so the trend was clear. Both the population and politicians were aware of this trend, but no communication among the groups took place. Everyone seemed to be focused only on their individual issues. A series of politicians tried to attract projects to turn Youngstown into a growing city again in efforts to be re-elected. The more of these projects failed, the more disappointed the public was by the expansive strategy. The society was split into some focussing on the past and others focussing on the future, while neither of the groups tried to analyse the original reasons of the situation. The image had changed from the commiserated loser of de-industrialisation to the even more unattractive crime capital. This phase is characterised by either passive, desperate or expansive behaviour.

**Certain acceptance without or with limited communication**

This was a relatively short phase from the late 1990s until 2002 starting with negotiations between the University and the City of Youngstown and the preparations of the Youngstown 2010 planning process. Additionally, a generational change was signalled in both institutions. The new generation had not witnessed the Black Monday because they were too young or because they came from other cities and therefore had an impartial view on the situation. It was recognised that population loss was irreversible and that no improvement could be made without fundamentally changing the planning strategy.

**Acceptance**

The start of the acceptance phase in Youngstown was marked by the first public meeting in the context of Youngstown 2010 where shrinking was first addressed in the presence of citizens. Before actual contents of the plan were discussed the citizens were given a forum to talk about their experiences and problems they faced. Then they were informed about planning in general so that they really had a chance to contribute to the plan as equal partners. The main goal of the plan, which is to accept that Youngstown is a smaller city, originally came from the citizens, but the overall process to get there had to be initiated by the planners. Additionally through realistic planning strategies the process brought about a recovered solidarity within the community and improved trust towards the authorities. The phase had its peak when Jay Williams was elected the new mayor, not in despite of but because his political manifesto was to plan for...
shrinking.

**Disillusion?**

Due to the financial situation in Youngstown an additional phase begins to show. Youngstown has a well-known and recognised plan which is complimented by its citizens, the media and international experts. However, since the implementation phase started in 2006 hardly any changes have been observed and there is an increasing pressure of expectations from the people and the local media. Although the City of Youngstown repeatedly mentions that there are no time limits or indicators to measure the success of the implementation it would be crucial to realise impulse projects to prevent losing the contact to the citizens.

This development would mean a step back not only for Youngstown but for international research on shrinking, because Youngstown is regarded as a model approach. A disillusion in Youngstown would show that even with accepting shrinking and an innovative plan cannot work without sufficient financial resources and automatically lead to “shrinking as a vicious circle” (Danielzyk, Mielke and Zimmer-Hegmann 2002).

**Conclusions**

This paper has shown how important the acceptance of shrinking is in order to develop an effective planning strategy given that growth strategies do not function in cities with long-term shrinking trends. In Youngstown the paradigm shift was influenced by a generational change both within the citizens and within politics/planning which enabled a neutral and less emotional view on Youngstown’s future. Additionally, a constellation of key persons in planning, academic and political positions cooperated and were able to initiate an integrated planning process. Hereby the active involvement of the public and other important stakeholders proved to be crucial. A broad marketing campaign which informed a wide range of people seemed to be helpful to make clear that Youngstown 2010 was not only a sectoral planning topic but had the potential of a holistic political and economic strategy for the future of the city and its people.

While it might be difficult for other shrinking cities to strategically position key persons, which more or less happened naturally in Youngstown, affected cities still have to analyse reasons why they are shrinking and accept if these trends are not reversible. This way they do not have to wait for a generational change to come but can start to develop a realistic strategy for a smaller city immediately and at the same time save time and important resources. It seems like the current planning practice of shrinking cities takes the second step - the formulation of concrete strategies to reverse shrinking - before the actual first step - the acceptance of and communication about shrinking and setting new and realistic goals. To reverse this approach, more cities have to become aware of the fact that there are best
practice examples from cities in similar situations. Youngstown itself has taken the first step first and very successfully but now struggles with the implementation phase. The example of Youngstown shows that there is potential for research on the topic on how planning for shrinking can be achieved on the basis of a declining budget.

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Cities all over the world have to struggle with processes of shrinkage. This article is an analysis of population shrinkage in Providence, Rhode Island, a city in the northeast of the US. Providence lost about 100,000 residents during the 20th century. This article defines shrinking processes in the US and displays the current effects on Providence.

Shrinking processes in the US have two main reasons: Suburbanization and people moving because of unemployment. In Providence a typical suburbanization process took place. Shrinking cities often struggle with the effects and problems caused by population losses. The four main categories of problems are: economic/fiscal problems, physical decay, social problems, and image problems/quality of life. Providence especially struggles with economic/fiscal and social problems. This article analyses the shrinking process in Providence, identifies several effects and problems caused by shrinkage, and determines their origin.

Development of the City of Providence

To understand the shrinking process in Providence and related social and economic problems it is important to analyze the historical development and the urban structure of the city.

Providence was founded by the English Protestant Roger Williams in 1636 and has approximately 180,000 residents on a surface of 53 km² (City of Providence 2012). From the early beginnings on, Providence’s history was defined by commerce with goods from the sea. The eighteenth century was characterized by its maritime orientation (Downtown Providence 1970 1961). In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Providence became America’s center of textile industry, and since the steam locomotive was prevalent, the commerce concentrated more on land than on the sea. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Providence was established as an industrial center for textile industry, jewelry, machine tools, steam engine, and metal manufacturing in the US (Leazes 2004).

Until 1940, the population of Providence grew to approximately 250,000 residents. During the industrial revolution people moved to the cities and many immigrants came
to Providence to work in the mills and factories. Most of them came from Ireland, Italy, and Portugal (Leazes 2004). Between 1940 and 1980 Providence’s population shrunk due to suburbanization to approximately 150,000 residents. After World War II the industrial era ended and the mills and factories were closed down. The industry as well as the city residents moved to the suburbs (Frank 2005). The deterioration of downtown and the surrounding neighbor-

**Figure 1: Providence Neighborhoods**

![Providence Neighborhood Boundaries](image)

*Source: The Providence Plan, compiled by the author*
hoods set in. In particular, the neighborhoods in the south of Providence suffered a great loss of population and economic potential (City of Providence 2012).

The urban structure of Providence is similar to other cities in the New England region. The downtown area is compact and contains buildings from the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. The first zoning code for Providence was established in 1923. Providence is known for its historical heritage of this Federal-style, Greek Revival, and Victorian architecture (Woodward 1986).

Providence is divided into 25 neighborhoods (see figure 1). The neighborhoods of College Hill, Smith Hill, and Federal Hill form the core of the city. The area of College Hill was the first permanent settlement in Rhode Island. The neighborhood contains some of the oldest and historical architectural sites of Providence. College Hill is a part of an area called “East Side” between the Interstate Highway 95 and the eastern border of the city. This area is characterized by hosting the Brown University and its current economic success. The southern part of the city is marked by a diverse ethnic population and old industrial brownfields. The two parts of the city show very different economic potential (Leazes 2004).

The Urban Renaissance

In the early 1980s Providence had to deal with population loss and related social and economic problems. In this time an era began, which is called the “Urban Renaissance of Providence” (Leazes 2004). In this term, “Renaissance” describes an urban rescue effort of the city.

The development of the Urban Renaissance in Providence is strongly linked with the election of Vincent Cianci as mayor of Providence in 1974. He was capable of coordinating individuals from the private and the public sector to work together on the development of the city. Public-private partnerships played an important role during the whole process (Leazes 2004).

Urban Renaissance was based on physical changes of the old industrial structure in the downtown area and in the transportation system. One goal was to change the image of the city. Providence should become a “city of destination”. The progress started with different spatial plans and building projects. By changing the built environment they hoped to start a progress that would change the whole economic and social fortune of the city (Leazes 2004). The idea was to start a movement of development in the whole city based on physical changes.

Figure 2 shows changes in the downtown area, in the transportation system, and the opening of the waterfront. Before 1980, almost the whole river was paved over and was called “the longest bridge in the US”. Along the river an attractive promenade was created. Every second weekend in the summer hundreds of fires get lit in steel cages above the surface of the water. This event is called “WaterFire” and
The City of Providence is very popular among tourists and residents. Another important project for the city was the opening of the new shopping Mall “The Providence Place” in 1999.

**Phenomenon of shrinking cities**

Shrinkage of population happens all over the world, but reasons and associated problems are very different. Moreover, the types of shrinkage differ, so do the effects that occur due to the loss of population.

There are several definitions of a shrinking city. Most of them concentrate on the loss of population. Because of diverse historical developments, and different contexts and locational factors, there is no single definition (Owzar 2008).

The Shrinking Cities International Research Network (SCiRN) describes shrinking cities as densely populated areas with at least 10,000 residents, a loss of population for more than two years and an economic transformation with symptoms of structural decline (Wiechmann 2006).

The acceptance of the shrinkage phenomenon in politics and society is very low (Beneke 2005). Shrinking cities exist all over the world, but there hasn’t been a great international discourse on this topic. In particular in the US this topic has been neglected (Pallagst 2007). Western civilization concentrates on growth in planning, economics, personal life, and other fields. For politics it is very difficult to deal with shrinking processes and to view possible benefits from shrinkage, because the topic has such a negative connotation in society (Martinez-Fernandez 2007).

The reasons for shrinkage are very diverse. The shift from manufacturing to service industries plays an important role worldwide. In addition, other factors like suburbanization, war, natural or human-induced disaster, low-fertility rate or the dissolution of political systems can also reinforce shrinking developments (Pallagst 2008). Different reasons and...
factors often appear in a similar mode and aggravate each other (Owzar 2008). The basic conditions and the historical development of a city are very important to understand shrinking processes. In Germany, the dissolution of the socialist system and demographic change towards an ageing population are the main causes for shrinking cities (Fuhrich 2005).

Likewise, shrinking of cities is a big problem in the US. While the total population is still growing, there are also cities which have to deal with shrinking problems. Sixteen of the 1950’s twenty largest cities in the US have shrunk over the last decades (Hollander et al. 2009). The shrinking of cities started in the US with the post World War II era. The process is closely linked to the transformation from manufacturing to service related industries (Beaugregard 2003). There are two different kinds of shrinking processes in the US: on the one side shrinking processes within a city and on the other side there are shrinking processes of a whole region (Pallagst 2008).

**Reasons and Problems/Effects of Shrinkage in Providence**

Figure 3 shows reasons and effects of shrinking processes in the US. One reason for shrinking is out-migration due to unemployment and the other is the process of suburbanization. Shrinkage and a loss of population lead to certain effects and problems within a city. There are four main categories of problems:

**Figure 3: Reasons and Effects/Problems of shrinking cities in the USA**

Source: Own design, 2011
economic/fiscal problems, physical decay, social problems and image problems/quality of life (see figure 3). All these problems aggravate each other. The following paragraphs explain the different reasons and problems and if they occur in Providence.

**Reasons for shrinking**

Shrinking of cities and inner city decline began in the 1950s and 1960s (Shetty 2009). People and industries moved from the core of the city to the suburbs. The sprawling population led to massive losses of population in the city centers (Pallagst 2008). Urban areas lost their benefits compared to the suburbs, which offer space in a less crowded environment. The suburbanization was reinforced by racial segregation, development of cars, electronic communication, and also by politics with the “New Deal” from Franklin Delano Roosevelt or the “Interstate Highway Act” from 1956 (Fishman 2005).

Not only cities but whole areas are shrinking, in particular in the northeast/midwest of the US (Pallagst 2008). This “Rustbelt” area relied mainly on manufacturing and heavy industry. As a result of the development to service-related industries the “Rustbelt” area displays a high unemployment rate and residents moved to other parts of the country (United States Census Bureau 2012). Shrinkage of whole regions isn’t part of a broader debate in the US. Discourses are limited to suburbanization and decline of central city areas (Pallagst 2005).

The city of Providence shrunk from 1940 to 1980 by approximately 100,000 residents. This was - compared to other major cities - the largest proportionate out-migration in the US (State of Rhode Island General Assembly 2011). The development in the State of Rhode Island and in the County of Providence shows that in the area around Providence there was no decline in population from 1940 to 1980. The area around Providence grew approximately to about 300,000 residents. This shows that Providence was affected by suburbanization. Another evidence for suburbanization is the growth of Cranston, a city in the south of Providence with a suburban character (United States Census Bureau 2010).

Providences industrial economy began to decline in the beginning of the 20th century. The textile industry was hit hardest and Rhode Island failed to attract new service related industries. Industrial manufacturing moved to other areas in the south of the US due to better working conditions. This led to a high rate of unemployment in the old industrial city center. The government developed federal housing programs that reinforced the suburbanization of citizens and businesses. Supporting suburbanization in Rhode Island was the only way to attract new businesses and it was favored by the citizens. As a consequence, Industrialization and suburbanization (partly) supported by the government led to the shrinking process in
Providence and to growing communities in the suburbs (Frank 2006).

**Economic and Fiscal Problems**

Processes of shrinkage affect the economic and the fiscal situation of a city. In the US the fiscal situation of cities mainly depends on the local tax revenue. If people and companies leave cities, the fiscal revenue sinks dramatically. With less financial capabilities it is difficult to keep up a certain level of public services (Jossart-Marcelli et al. 2005). The infrastructure of each city can be divided in “hard” and “soft” infrastructure. “Hard” infrastructure contains services like the transportation system, energy supply, or waste management. “Soft” infrastructure is mainly characterized by social infrastructure like health and education systems, and it also contains governmental services (Jochimsen 1966). Because of suburbanization and urban sprawl it is more difficult to keep up a certain level of “hard” infrastructure in the central city. Costs of infrastructure are more expensive in a sprawling area than in a densely populated area (H.C. Planning Consults INC. 1999). Additionally, costs for “soft” infrastructure rise because of increased social problems (Joassart-Marcelli et al. 2005).

The local revenue of the city of Providence is based on property taxes and aids from the State of Rhode Island. Property taxes include revenues from the real estate sector and from private property. The fiscal health of a city is strongly connected to the number of residents, their economic success, and to the property value (Leazes 2004). Providence's economic situation depends to a high degree on state aids, which mainly assist the public school system. Providence receives more than double the amount of state aid than all other Rhode Island communities combined. Today, many of Providence's residents work in the education and health sectors which is in part provided by the State (United States Bureau of labor Statistics 2012).

The median household income in Providence is with $36,925 per year between 2006 and 2010 very low compared to $54,902 in the State of Rhode Island. Moreover, the poverty rate is with 26,3% of Providence's inhabitants below the poverty level high compared to the state with 12,2%. The educational attainment shows that despite the existence of Brown University and a concentration of schools in the city of Providence, there are proportionally less residents with a higher education in Providence than in the rest of the US (Leazes 2004).

Most recently, in 2011 and 2012, Providence suffered a fiscal crisis. Mayor Angel Taveras, elected in the beginning of 2011, announced that there is a high amount of hidden debt in Providence (Report of the municipal finances review panel 2011). For this reason, the tax revenue is too low to break even with the costs. The high dept level in Providence was caused by the desolate economic situation with low income, the expensive restructuring of the city center, and several other problems. Also, the State of Rhode Island started to cut
back the aid for Providence in 2008 because the state also suffers financial problems (Zezima 2008). Providence depends on funding from the state in order to keep up social services for the Rhode Island region.

During the process of suburbanization, economically successful people left Providence and moved to the suburbs. The consequences are low property values and low tax revenues. It is difficult for the city of Providence to keep up public services as a capital of Rhode Island on the basis of low tax revenues. Suburban residents make use of the public services of the city, but pay their property taxes in the suburbs (Schultz 2006).

Public services of Providence are strongly linked to the fiscal situation of the city (The Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Service 2004). The public opinion report of the Taubman Center from Brown University 2011 shows that most residents of Providence are satisfied with the city services. About 70% of the people said that they are very satisfied or satisfied with garbage collection and about 64% felt the same about neighborhood police presence and 89% about fire and ambulance services (Taubman Center 1999). As the capital of Rhode Island the education and health sector in the city of Providence can be considered very good (Leazes 2004). However, there are already cut backs due to the financial situation. In 2011 four schools were closed (Providence Journal 2012). The further development mainly in the form of downsizing of city services will mainly depend on the future development of the fiscal crisis.

**Physical decay**

Population losses can lead to the physical decay of a city, including vacant brownfield sites, abandoned residential buildings, shrinking property values, unauthorized uses of properties and parking lots, destroyed streets and railroads, dumping of waste, vandalism (e.g. graffiti), and uncontrolled growth of weeds. The result is an unattractive landscape (Draft environmental Impact Report; Hollander et al. 2009).

High vacancies and abandoned buildings should be avoided, as they cause other problems (Hollander et al. 2009). If there is no chance of redevelopment, vacant land and housing vacancies should be used temporarily, for example as temporary market places, as public gardens, or for cultural events (Martin 2010; Hollander et al. 2009). These temporary uses are very important, because if the property value of the parcels drops, the property value of the whole area shrinks (Economic and Planning Systems Inc. 2009).

The decay of streets and railroads is strongly connected with the fiscal situation of the cities (Hollander et al. 2009). In particular areas from the industrial era can aggravate an unattractive landscape. Nevertheless they can also provide the possibility of redevelopment, as they are often located in close proximity to the city center and might be valuable for private companies. A national government program
aids the redevelopment of so called “brownfields” (Greenberg 2003).

The building structure of the old industrial downtown area in Providence was very decrepit and old industrial “brownfields” influenced the landscape of the city. The changes of the physical structure from the 1980s to the 1990s altered the whole look of the downtown area. Railroad tracks and roads were moved for a better traffic flow, the restructuring of the riversides created a new image of the city. These changes saved the business district from decay. Most parts of the housing stock in the downtown area were restored and today are in good condition (Leazes 2004).

Providence has approximately 8,1% vacant units compared to an average of 9% in the US. The number of 8,1% vacant units is very low for a city that lost 100,000 residents during the 20th century. Compared to other communities in the New England region, Providence has fewer vacant units and not a large amount of abandoned land within the city (Leazes 2004). Shrinking cities often struggle with vacant areas and need to restructure the city landscape e.g. by demolition and greening (Fishman 2005). The city of Providence, with 3,840 residents per km² in 2010, is still densely populated. In comparison to that, the shrinking city Youngstown, Ohio has to struggle with problems of the housing structure and the vacancy of whole areas showcasing a population density of 761,2 residents per km² (United States Census Bureau 2012). Providence is in the favorable situation that the city does not need to face great physical changes due to an underutilized spatial area.

An explanation for the still dense population despite the loss of approximately 100,000 residents in the 20th century is the high population density of Providence during the industrial era. At the end of the 19th century Rhode Island was one of the first states with an industrialized economy, which drew many immigrants to Providence (Frank 2006). The population of Providence grew from 1880 to 1940 by approximately 150,000 residents. The population peaked at 250,000 in 1940 and with 14,000 residents per km² Providence was one of the most densely populated cities in the US. In Boston, which is one of the cities with the highest density nowadays, live approximately 12,000 residents per km² in 2010. Also, the growth of population between 1990 and 2010 to approximately 180,000 residents had a positive impact on the population density of Providence. At the end of the century, there was the necessity of some physical reconstructions to adapt the city to the new population size (The Providence Plan 2011). Thus, vacant land or vacant units are not a big issue for the city of Providence.

Social Problems

Cities with a huge loss of population have to struggle with different social problems. In shrinking cities, suburbanization is partly motivated by racial segregation and class issues. If people can afford it they move to suburbs. This
leads to an economic segregation between the city center and the suburbs (Jargowsky 1997). As a result of unemployment, people from economically weak regions move to other parts of the country. In the remaining areas, poverty rises. Segregation means a spatial separation of people with one characteristic trait like “low economic status” or “race” (Friedrichs 1985). The agglomeration of people with a “low economic status” leads to poverty, higher crime rates, and homelessness (Shaw 1942; Pallagst 2005). The process of segregation is the result of social disparities (Friedrichs 1995). People of the same social level or the same racial group start to agglomerate in certain areas. Socio-economic weak people can’t choose their living space, they are forced to move to areas with cheapest rent or housing prices. The economically strong residents can choose their neighborhood. This can lead to a polarization of economically weak and economically strong people in different spatial areas (Friedrichs 1995). Physical characteristics, public services, and facilities cause leaving of economically strong population in the first place (Lupton 2003). The progress aggravates itself because people don’t move to neighborhoods with a majority of poor people (Richardson 1978).

For the city of Providence, in particular the “Southside” area has to struggle with problems that occur due to segregation. “Southside” is an area in the south of the downtown area, which is approximately 3,3 square miles big and has approximately 39,000 residents. The area involves the four neighborhoods Upper South Providence, Lower South Providence, West End and Elmwood. Most areas of “Southside” have cheap housing costs. The construction of the interstate Highway 95 and the Interstate Highway 195 at the end of the 20th century destroyed the historical relationship with the downtown area. The area “Southside” was always characterized by immigrants and foreign population. Many European immigrants, in particular from Ireland, lived in this area during the industrialization. Nowadays, a big part of the residents is hispanic or african-american (Woodward 1986).

Investigating economic and social data from Providence shows an aggregation of a lower socio-economic class and a high amount of people from racial minorities in the “Southside” area. This leads to a spatial and social segregation of the “Southside” compared to the other neighborhoods of Providence.

The residents have to struggle with several problems. Most of the people depend on public service facilities. With a large socio-economic ‘weak’ population the supply with public facilities is insufficient in segregated areas. Often the residents have to struggle with prejudices because of their poor neighborhood. The whole neighborhood gets isolated from influences of the other population and the growth of parallel societies can take place. People don’t have the same possibilities to achieve their goals in life than the rest of the population.

The economic situation of the residents causes most problems in the “Southside” area of Providence. The violent crime rate, which in-
cludes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assaults, is very high: In 2007, approximately 35% of all violent crimes in Providence were committed in the “Southside” area. Kelly (2000) noticed that there is a direct correlation between poverty and crime. People only commit crime if the costs of committing the crime are lower than the benefits gained (Becker 1968). The property crime rate, which includes burglary, vehicle theft, and larceny is high with approximately 23% of all property crimes in Providence.

The housing stock in “Southside” is mainly from the 1950s and in very bad condition (City of Providence 2012). Only 21% of the housing units were owner occupied in 2000. House owners invest more in their property and stay longer at one place (Friedrichs 2008). Poverty also influences people’s health in the “Southside” area. Surveys from Jungbauer-Gans (2006) and from Mielcke (2000) show that the higher the socio-economic status, the better the health condition of the residents.

The concentration of racial minorities in the “Southside” area leads to a segregation of poor people, including minorities. This causes ‘linguistic isolation’ which in turn creates barriers between the different races living in Providence.

Image and Quality of Life

As a result of urban decay, economic and social problems, as shown in the previous parts, the quality of life as well as the image of the city suffer (Owzwar 2008). The image of a city is important if it is necessary to attract new residents and businesses.

Due to the changes at the waterfront and the collection of Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival and Victorian homes, Providence has now the image of an old historical city (Leazes 2004, 30-39). Art and culture play an important role in Providence, as the city also uses the term “the Creative Capital” as a brand (City of Providence 2012). Several cultural events, like “WaterFire” at the rivers of Providence, contribute to this image (Providence Warwick 2011).

Another indicator for the attractiveness of Providence is the growing tourism industry. The number of tourists is rising steadily (Tyrell 2000) and tourism is the fastest growing industry in the city. Providence is specifically known as an attractive destination for day trips (Leazes 2004).

An important part in the development of the image played the television show “Providence”. The show is about a family that lives in the suburbs of Providence. Many different places in Providence were used as film set (Leazes 2004).

A survey from Brown University in 1999 shows that most residents in Providence are satisfied with their quality of life and that they are happy with the urban developments in the city center. 72% of the residents in 1999 said that downtown Providence looks better than before the physical changes in the 1980s and the 1990s (Taubman Center 1999).

The city of Providence has no problem
with its image like other shrinking cities in the US (Rybczynski 1999). Visitors have a positive impression of Providence and overall the residents are also satisfied with the quality of life. The population of Providence grew from 1990 to 2010 by 20,000 residents. The effects of the physical changes had a positive influence on the population.

**Analysis of the present situation in Providence and some conclusions**

Providence still struggles with problems caused by suburbanization. Comparing to the problems of shrinking cities all over the US, Providence has to deal with problems attributed to the economic/fiscal and the social sectors. There are also problems with the physical structure and the image/quality of life, but they concern certain parts of the city and they cannot be regarded as main issues.

In the middle of the 20th century suburbanization took place in Providence. Population and businesses left Providence and moved to the suburbs. Despite the loss of residents, the city of Providence is still densely populated. The number of residents, compared to the spatial area, is still high. There are not many vacant parcels or vacant housing units. Moreover, the population growth since 1990 has a positive influence on the urban fabric. There is no radical physical restructuring necessary regarding sparsely populated areas.

Most of the necessary structural changes were applied during the “Urban Renaissance”. Large infrastructures such as railroads and the highway system were renewed and the industrial core of the city was transformed. Problems with physical structure become obvious on the level of neighborhoods. Providence struggles with its old housing stock and the bad condition of smaller roads. In particular in the “Southside” area physical changes are necessary.

The restructuring of the old industrial city center since the early 1980s led to a new image and saved the downtown area from decay. In addition, the growing population since the 1990s shows a positive impact. The “Urban Renaissance” was necessary for the survival of the city: without it the situation in Providence would be much worse and the whole city would be in decline. On the other hand, the debts of the city grew because of the “Urban Renaissance” leading to fiscal problems.

The financial problems will most likely have an influence on the quality of life and the public service in Providence. The cut backs of the public service will depend on the further development of the financial situation. In the current situation of Providence it is important to handle the urgent fiscal crisis. Thus, cut backs in the public services are essential. A long term solution requires sustainable economic development. Increasing tax revenues are important to keep up or to improve the quality of life in Providence. The city depends to a high degree on public funds from the State of Rhode Island. Many people work for the education or heath system, which is directly paid by the
state. It is important for Providence to attract new kind of businesses to reduce the dependence on the state. For old industrial cities like Providence it is difficult to change to a service related industry. The execution of this change didn’t work well in Providence. Now, with the new physical appearance it would be a necessary step to change the economic landscape to service related businesses. The residents of the suburbs around Providence gain from the social infrastructure of the city. For this reason, the other cities in Rhode Island should have a financial share in providing infrastructure in order to sustain Providence as center of Rhode Island.

The suburbanization leads to a concentration of poor people in certain parts of the city, in particular in the neighborhoods with a deteriorated housing stock or other low conditions. This affects in particular the “Southside” area. A mixed population is positive for the individual economic situation of the residents and also for the economic situation and the living environment of the whole city. People from the “Southside” area are separated from the social life of the city. A mixed community based on socioeconomic classes, employment status, and ethnicity would reduce social problems. The crime rate and anti-social behavior would go down and the social interaction between residents would improve. Economically successful people could have a positive influence on the rest of the population and the image and satisfaction of the residents with their neighborhood would rise. The city and also civilians would invest more in the building structure and in public spaces (Tunstall 2006).

Nevertheless, it is difficult to measure the effects and the influence of the “Urban Renaissance” and to say in what condition Providence would be without it. The goal was to create a movement of development in the city and to change the social and economic situation. The low household incomes and the low tax revenues show that the restructuring were not able to change the whole fortune of the city. What becomes clear is that it takes more than physical changes to improve the social and economic situation of a city.

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Franziska Trapp

Greening as a new Planning Strategy for Shrinking Cities?

The example of Detroit, Michigan

„Greening“ is a new planning approach of spatial planning to solve the problems of shrinking cities. This paper examines this new planning approach as a revitalization measure for shrinking cities as well as a potential departure from the growth-oriented planning paradigm in the United States. To this end, the framework of the United States - which led among other things to the fact of shrinking cities - will be described in general and with the example of Detroit. In addition, greening is presented based on three methods and set in relation with other spatial planning approaches. Using the example of the city of Detroit, which is suffering from an unprecedented decline, these measures are finally examined in more detail regarding their chances of success.

Current Situation and Problems

The problem of shrinking cities is ubiquitous today. As a consequence, cities and their residents have partially given up unprecedented proportions of the urban areas and the most affected cities plunged into more and more crises. Nevertheless, cities are intertwined with corporate development and represent the heritage of the company and industrial growth.

Settlement patterns are influenced by the specific historical, social, political and economic conditions as well as by local and regional characteristics of each planning region. The changes of the last century have brought about shrinking cities, which provides new challenges for the affected cities and also for urban planners. This raises the question of how the development of shrinking cities can be steered in a positive direction reaching new vitality to alter the acute crisis situation in a sustainable way. Especially old industrial cities in the northeastern United States suffer from a high degree of shrinkage (cf. Müller & Pipe Wranglers 1995). The previous, growth-oriented planning strategies in the United States today are no longer suitable to solve the problem of shrinking cities. Instead, new planning approaches need to be developed in order to respond to today’s settlement conditions. To find a solution to the problems of these cities, it is furthermore necessary to understand what forms each city or region, in which direction it should be developed, what is necessary to reach this and how the objectives can best be achieved. For this reason, it is necessary to examine and rethink the circumstances and conditions of the affected cities. While the cities are adapting to their si-
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The active approach to the problems of shrinking cities can be seen as an opportunity to deflect the prevailing paradigm of growth of the U.S. in a different - more sustainable and regional - way (see Westin Book Cadillac Hotel 2011).

The shift away from sprawl to better organized urban areas might indeed be the beginning of a strategy which will lead to new economic success. John Gallagher, author of the 2010 published book „Reimagine Detroit“, defines the loss of population as an opportunity to reinvent cities. The industrial collapse of many U.S. American cities would initiate new entrepreneurial activities, while enabling new ways of thinking. According to Gallagher, dealing with a declining population means redesigning urban space and at the same time this allows the definition of new development areas (see Gallagher, 2010). Next to the often discussed problem of shrinking cities to adapt to a more appropriate size, there is simultaneously the challenge of implementing it. Moreover other strategies to reuse many existing and emerging brownfields in shrinking cities are in place. This is where the focused planning approach of „greening“ and also the problem of the correct application of this strategy to revitalize shrinking cities sustainably takes place. Although the problem of shrinking cities is not new, research in this area is just at the beginning of a long road to efficient solutions.

Conditions and Causes of the Problem

The causes of shrinkage in many U.S. American cities, which began in the early 20th century, are due to a combination or superposition of out-migration, wrong urban investments, economic changes and an increased mobility of the population (see Westin Book Cadillac Hotel in 2011). The result of this is called „donut effect“ or „hollowing-out“ phenomenon, which is a result of the steady shrinkage of the core cities, while spreading and compaction of the surrounding area. Although in this case of population and employment increases throughout the region, however, the dynamics takes place in the surrounding areas of the city. Especially regions in the Northeast and the Midwest - the old-industrialized regions such as the so-called Rustbelt - are significantly affected by shrinkage and the consequences of economic, social and urban problems (see Pallagst & Wiechmann 2004/2005).

Various aspects of the U.S. American culture of planning play an essential role in the formation of this phenomenon. On the one hand, there is no federal planning law for all states in the U.S. The legal framework for spatial planning is enacted by each individual state on their own, which leaves the decisions to individual municipalities and private actors in the field of urban planning and development. The consequences are different planning laws in the states and free competition to the settlement of mainly large companies and wealthy population. The legal regulation of land use is taking
place through zoning and subdivision. Both instruments are used to control the structural use by planning area designations and are mainly carried out due to health and safety (Pallagst 2007). This is one aspect which promotes the suburbanization of cities. On the other hand, the concept of democracy and the respect for personal freedom play a crucial part in shaping spatial structures. Higher-level regional policies and spatial planning are seen as fundamentally un-American and would contradict the views of democracy and personal freedom of the individual. Results of this self-determination right of the population are developing single family houses in rural locations on generous lots (see Schneider Sliwa 1995).

This shows that the previous planning models in the U.S. were geared to the management of growth and new construction projects, which promoted suburbanization at the urban fringe and shrinkage in the center of many cities. This traditional approach of development, however, is not suitable for the problem of shrinking cities. The fact of shrinking cities only recently emerged in the discussion in the United States. In order to sustainably influence this problem, new methods and approaches as well as a mix of different strategies are needed (Pallagst 2013).

**History, Problems and Current Situation of Detroit**

The old industrial city of Detroit, Michigan, is regarded as the most extreme example for a continuous sprawl, while simultaneously hollowing-out in the urban core by suburbanization coupled with de-industrialization (see Gallagher 2004). Detroit is the most important example of a shrinking city because, like other cities of Rustbelts until today the city lost more than half of its population, and in particular because of its size, with the highest absolute number of population of a shrinking city.

The city experienced a rapid economic rise with an even deeper economic fall in a very short time, which set off a number of unforeseen consequences. The recent revitalization measures, mostly large projects, cost the city of Detroit millions of Dollars and still carry little to improve the crisis. The failure of these projects, however, is mainly linked up to the lack of awareness of regional solidarity of the citizens for the metropolitan area of Detroit, coupled with the ongoing racial hostility and the lack of civic engagement to improve the overall situation of the city. Furthermore, for a long time the city authorities lacked an overall approach, to pursue improvements. In addition, for a long time Detroit was forced to pursue „expensive“ strategies to retrieve a lack of private capital and to find a way out of racism, unequal conditions and uncontrolled sprawl (cf. Neill, 2005). The fierce adherence to the name “Motown” in times of crisis was also unhelpful to date is little new economic success. Besides, it is difficult to catch the errors and omissions of planning of the last 40 years (see Venn 2009).

The out-migration of citizens from Detroit left thousands of vacant houses, aban-
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doned buildings and brownfield land. The excess of empty, abandoned properties constrains private and public reinvestment, leads to a dysfunction of the market and restricts public and non-profit revitalization efforts. Moreover, an oversupply of urban wastelands degrades the price of land and property values. Managing this empty and neglected property and the extent of unused public infrastructure of the city, has a significant impact on the already dwindling tax base, driving the city further into debt (see Schilling & Logan, 2008). For the inhabitants of the city, in particular in areas with a high level of brownfields and vacancies, this appears in a more dramatic dimension. Missing connections to public transit make it for some cities almost impossible to commute out of their neighborhood, so that the search for a job is more difficult for the already poor population. The actions of some citizens’ groups, which are trying to replace that lack of urban services, is not sufficient to resolve the dimension of the urban crisis (cf. Bates, 2011). To find a way out of this, Detroit must change its development against the former idea of growth and adapt its conditions of being a smaller city, which would probably be more efficient in economic terms.

It is necessary to reduce the surplus of vacant buildings, which is inappropriate for the current population and to direct resources to those urban parts of the city, which have the potential to be functioning urban areas the city. The classic market-based urban development policies have been based on reinvestment are not sufficient to solve the previous developments which led to the steady loss of control in this shrinking city (see Okrent & Gray, 2010).

The preparation of a master plan in 1992 and the subsequent revision of its first version, however, seem to be a step in the right direction. This represents a concept that reconciles the different development areas to each other and connects them to an overall concept, which finally shapes a long-term vision. All target areas are coordinated by a superior institution, the “Detroit Works Project”¹, and complemented by the approach of citizen participation. Step by step the future vision of the city of Detroit should be realized through maximum participation of various interest groups.

Greening - Greening in the City Planning

The concentration of growth, which results primarily from the prevailing planning process as well as the values and market orientation of the population, had far-reaching consequences, in particular for old industrial cities. To respond to the burdens of shrinkage, new planning tools are needed. The methods

¹ The Detroit Works Project is an initiative of the city which provides a continuously evolving, implementation-oriented and comprehensive plan. It sets out to achieve sustainable development of Detroit. It is the best way to revitalize Detroit and to ensure that the planning approach of broad participation will be encouraged. The planning process of the Works Project deals with various topics such as land use, zoning and surveying, economic recovery, improvement of neighborhoods and buildings, landscape and environmental, historical and cultural resources, green and gray infrastructure, etc. At present, some of these issues are already at work, such as cooperation with residential districts to achieve the goal of the demolishing 10,000 vacant buildings by 2014 (see the Detroit Works project 2010).
and practices of greening are one of the latest strategies to revitalization and sustainable development of cities, as well as an approach to move away from the one-sided focus on growth in the U.S. In conjunction with deconstruction methods, greening is utilized as a measure of strategic urban shrinkage - in the sense of a „shrinking smart“ strategy and other approaches such as participation, key projects and revitalization measures, target group strategies and smart growth\(^3\) (see Pallagst 2007). Greening provides a possibility to respond to the financial and economic crises of shrinking cities, as well as the challenges of climate change.

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\(^2\) The strategy of „shrinking smart“ intends a targeted shrinkage to achieve a „healthy“ city. At this, shrinkage is more than the attempt of a revitalization of neighborhoods without any chance. Rather, it means a complete abandonment of these buildings in favour of a positive development of the city. Therefore, shrinkage is considered as a chance of shrinking cities.

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\(^3\) Since the 90s, smart growth is a continuous trend in the U.S., based and rooted in the anti-sprawl movement. Within this interdisciplinary movement, efforts of new types of participatory sustainable regional development are discernable. Nevertheless, this approach, which is designed for lower growth rates, is interpreted for growth due to societal acceptance (Vgl. Pallagst 2007).

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**Figure 1: Departure from the paradigm of growth in shrinking cities in the United States**

![Diagram](source: Own design, Kaiserslautern 2010)
Greening - Definition and Scope

The term „greening“ is used as a strategic approach to nature and landscape protection and spatial planning to achieve „green infrastructure“4 as well as environmentally and socially acceptable practices to implement this strategy at the national, state, regional and local level in a spatial context. Greening at the state level is purely focused on environmental objectives such as the protection of larger landscape settings. At the municipal level, the objectives of greening are characterized primarily by their creative and social orientation. As a result, the successful realization of this planning level does not only offer amenities to the urban society, it also fits in the overall green infrastructure network (see Benedict & McMahon 2006). At both levels, the sustainability aspect is main guideline in order to develop, protect and maintain the environment of the people and the animals. Another focus of Greening is the reorientation from uncontrolled sprawl toward a new awareness of the population for supporting the historically rich urban cores. Fixing the problems of the shrinking American city centers as far as possible is intended to help the cities to a new revival. In the past, natural greenery and green elements in the present shrinking cities were often eliminated in favor of economic development. In addition, some areas are affected by the former industrial use with contaminated sites. Greening in shrinking cities involves the regeneration of these areas for new parks, community gardens, restored habitats, flood-mitigating measures, water treatment plants and municipal agricultural land, combined with the integration of existing green spaces (see Schilling & Logan 2008). Furthermore, greening methods in cities can include the transformation and reorganization of road transport, expanding routes for pedestrians and cyclists, design measures on the urban environment beautification, promotion of urban gardens and farms, as well as the deliberate demolition of blighted and derelict buildings, which in turn can be replaced by open spaces and green planning policies (see Adelaja 2010). Necessary and helpful for the greening of a city is a plan which displays the inventory of green infrastructure (green infrastructure plan) in order to connect planned green areas to a network and to guide urban resources strategically. Such a plan ideally contains information on the location, the ecological value and economic relations of these areas (see Schilling & Logan 2008).

Greening, the production of green infrastructure and the associated benefits of this approach, is understood as a networked system. Greening brings benefits through all social, economic and environmental areas. In fact, many of the heavily damaged and devastated areas within shrinking cities have huge potential for implementing greening measures. In recent years, awareness has risen in the United

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4 The natural and built environment of a society can be divided in grey and green infrastructure. Green infrastructure exists both in natural and in built environment and describes a network consisting of green spaces and corridors, natural areas and waterways in and between landscapes, peripheral zones and cities. Grey infrastructure, however, includes areas that are dominated by development, such as buildings, streets, parking lots etc.
States, that the economic success of a city more and more depends on its environment, and that a sound ecological and social environment influences the prosperity of a city. The process of greening promotes revitalization, social inclusion, social cohesion, the health of residents and the sustainable development of cities (see Leeds city region 2010).

Shrinking cities have a surplus of vacant housing units, underutilized infrastructure and fallow land, but only a portion of this land and property is suitable for reuse and redesign. To accept the fact that some areas can no longer be considered for their former use and should better be redeveloped into a network of green spaces, hiking and walking paths, community gardens, parks and newly designed open spaces, is an inevitable requirement in the long term need of shrinking urban areas. In addition, green infrastructure contributes to improving the quality of life of local residents, providing recreational opportunities and increasing the property values of neighboring homes (see Schilling, 2007). Furthermore, investment in green infrastructure can create economic benefits for the city and thus boost economic growth of the city and its region. Moreover in addition to positive impacts on climate and flood mitigation, high-quality places can be created and health and social well-being increased. Beyond that, the rising land and property values, can contribute to sustainable economic growth, investments and higher productivity. Additionally this can lead to attractiveness for tourism, better amenities for recreation, protection and improvement of land and biodiversity, and producing agricultural products (cf. Leeds city region 2010).

An important role plays involving residents in the planning and implementation of greening, which creates the possibility to work closely with civil society actors, residents and owners. These residential areas and the related properties can be identified and selected in order to respond to the diminishing tax bares and vacant properties and it can be an incentive for new investments (see Schilling 2007). Furthermore, civic engagement and community by involving residents in planning, planting and maintaining green infrastructure. Greening thus takes place by individuals, local planning authorities, community initiatives as well as through voluntary organizations (see Leeds city region 2010).

The following paragraphs present key aspects of greening, namely right-sizing, riverfront development and urban agriculture.

**Right-sizing Measures in Shrinking Cities**

Shrinking cities in the United States are facing the problem of unsuitable planning and reconstruction modes for the challenges of abandoned properties and derelict land. The measure of right-sizing is one of many ways of greening to help cities with population losses (see Schilling & Logan 2008). Shrinking cities like Detroit could become livable smaller cities, with plenty of parks, green areas and small ur-
ban farms by applying the strategy of right-sizing, or by utilizing a „shrinking smart“ strategy to control and shrink in a targeted way complemented by Greening.

The strategy of right-sizing is defined according to Schilling & Logan as: „(...) (the) stabilizing (of) dysfunctional markets and distressed neighborhoods by more closely aligning a city’s built environment with the needs of existing and foreseeable future populations by adjusting the amount of land available for development. (Schilling & Logan 2008). The strategy is thus an attempt to revitalize shrinking cities through a denser arrangement of buildings and infrastructure and through diminishing available land. Part of right-sizing is also replacing empty and abandoned properties through green infrastructure in order to take advantage of empty land in a meaningful way. This should be a benefit to society, while at the same time the offer is designed to fallow for the existing and future demand (see Schilling & Logan 2008). In addition to adapting urban boundaries through expropriation, the excess supply of urban services can be shut down by cutting back largely unused infrastructure. Urban growth can be targeted by diverting demands from regional real estate markets towards the development of vacant lots and empty property (see Schilling & Logan 2008).

The dismantling of unused buildings and refocusing the city to an urban core can bring multiple benefits. The government of a more compact city is often less bureaucratic and therefore more accessible, representative and adaptable. Networks between residents, nonprofit organizations, government officials and managers are easier to promote. In addition, smaller cities offer opportunities for urban innovations to test creative ideas or to initiate new programs. Results from this are a faster implementation of planning activities and the faster feedback, reactions and improvements thereon. At the same time losses in the value of adjacent property can be slowed down by demolishing dilapidated buildings. The demolition of empty and abandoned properties also supports public safety as criminal activities are cut back, which in turn increases the quality of life of urban residents. Moreover, smaller cities are able to attract new entrepreneurial activities, because fewer barriers for development exist (see Okrent & Gray 2010).

**Urban Agriculture**

In terms of social and societal problems in shrinking cities, such as rising poverty, unemployment, segregation, long distance commuters, a smaller number of supermarkets with fresh food, etc., more and more people have tended to farming activities in cities over the past few decades. Originally formed as a movement by underserved, poor populations in small backyards, urban agriculture is becoming increasingly important at local level. Urban residents, urban planners and nonprofit organizations in North America and the rest of the world pay attention to local, small-scale agriculture in the cities and the government is increasingly
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Aware of its benefits. Primarily as a tool for sustainable urban development, urban agriculture is currently gaining in importance. The government and citizens recognize this action as a way to use vacant land in a sustainable way and to enhance social benefits. The current challenge is to integrate urban agriculture into urban planning and to actively promote its multiple benefits for urban residents (see Van Veenhuizen 2006b).

Van Veenhuizen, author of ”Cities farming for the Future”, defines urban agriculture as: „(...) the growing of plants and the raising of animals for food and other uses within and around cities and towns, and related activities: such as the production and delivery of inputs, and the processing and marketing of products” (Van Veenhuizen 2006b). Urban agriculture thus describes the planting of edibles and rearing of animals in and around cities.

In shrinking cities such as Detroit urban agriculture is meaningful in particular for producing food and non-food products on vacant lots, open spaces and in closed buildings (cf. RUAF Foundation 2011). Characteristic, in addition to the location of urban agricultural land in the city, is also its importance as part of the urban economic, social and ecological system. The farm operators use urban resources5, produce food for urban dwellers and are strongly influenced by urban factors such as market and price levels as well as by the conditions of the country. In so doing they influence policies and the urban system. Urban agriculture includes agriculturally productive activity, marketing, supply of materials as well as sales-related service activities. Urban agriculture takes place on a commercial, neighborly and community level, where the nature and extent of management differ (The Detroit Works Project 2010).

Urban agriculture can bring multiple benefits and play an important role through: the support of urban food security, improved nutrition and health, urban job and income opportunities especially for poorer citizens and provide social safety net for these groups (cf. Van Veenhuizen 2006a). Moreover, the government realized the benefits of urban agriculture as a measure of brownfield recycling and associated economic benefits. The annual costs of maintenance of a city park are much higher than that of maintaining an urban garden. Usually the non-profit organizations cover maintenance costs of agricultural lands and their activities, so that the cities can save 100% of maintenance expenses (Jonathan D. Lachance 2004).

Urban Greenways and Riverfront Redevelopment

From the early 90s the planning of green spaces has come a long way in Western countries and today it plays an important role in improving the urban environments, protecting cultural heritage and resources, and providing spaces for leisure and recreation in cities and regions.

It should be noted that green belts and

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5 Land, labor, organic fertilizer from waste and water
green areas form a coherent system. They are planned, designed and managed for protection and redesign purposes, as well as a strategy for sustainable development. Moreover, they often follow natural land or water resources and combine natural resources, parks, cultural features and historic buildings with the urban areas (see Sheng & Hongyu 2009).

An urban shore refers to the location or the buildings adjacent to the water such as a river, lake or the sea, and it usually plays a special role in the city. The connection of green spaces with parks, the shore of cities as well as to other natural and restored resources to an interlocking green space system brings great benefits to people, the environment and the economy of the city. Greenways connect people, communities and the landscape, and they help to increase real estate values and much more (See Sheng & Hongyu 2009).

**Greening - Analysis of Planning Approaches in Detroit**

The recent developments promise new opportunities to stimulate the regeneration of the city. Today there exist many ideas from a variety of stakeholders in the city, addressing what can be done with the large amount of empty lots. Similarly, numerous initiatives have emerged with the intention of helping Detroit to new vitality and beauty. In addition to urban agriculture, redesigning parks and restoring shores, measures such as the construction of new museums and public art exhibitions including to the currently planned projects. Additionally, plans have been made since 2009, to let the city „shrink“ or to adapt the city’s boundaries in order to provide a smaller footprint. At the same time, more than 600 community gardens in Detroit are developed in order to provide for a long-term self-sufficiency of residents (see sustainable cities 2011). Moreover, Detroit has some benefits, which prove to be an advantage for a development, such as river banks, the supply of unused land, affordable housing and available workforce. In any case, the reconstruction of Detroit will probably represent one of the largest and most difficult urban undertakings of the U.S., which will be possible only through a joint cooperation of politicians, urban planners, NGOs and residents. Based on the revised master plan of policies of the city of Detroit there are some approaches of Greening measures to revitalize Detroit.

The next section will deal with right-sizing of Detroit in order to display significant examples of greening measures.

**Right-sizing of Detroit**

A first step to promote Greening measures is right-sizing, which provides several demolition activities of vacant buildings. In this way the city limits should be adjusted to the declining population and it should also be a counter-measure to reduced tax revenues, the housing crisis and the ongoing sprawl of the region. As part of the neighborhood stabiliza-
tion program, a Detroit housing demolition program is implemented, which is to promote the overall development strategy of the city and thereby strengthening, revitalizing and rebuilding selected neighborhoods (see City of Detroit 2010). A total of nine development areas were selected, which are designated for a targeted allocation of resources. Effects shall be reversing the decline in real estate values, a substantial elimination of blight and vacant buildings and an incentive for other investments in and around the selected areas. Almost a quarter of the city could be converted to semi-urban of „urban“ (see Washington Times 2010).

Already in 1990, Detroit’s authorities have made plans in the form of „Detroit Vacant Land Survey“, which provided a resettlement of population, a demolition of buildings and an adjustment of urban service to save costs. As these plans, however, were based on the „top down“ principle, this ultimately failed (see Pallas, Significance Magazine March 2011). The „neighborhood stabilization program plan“ represents a revision of the „Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008“. Originally developed as a response to the foreclosures in the most affected areas of the city, the NSP, however, tries to tackle the consequences of the crisis more strategically, efficient and result-oriented and it also tries to establish the financial resources to strengthen the most affected areas, to design specific strategies to prevent future foreclosures and to promote the recovery of the real estate market (see City of Detroit, 2010). Responsible for the regulation of Detroit’s land use is the „Department of Planning and Development.“ The Department holds collaborative meetings with various stakeholders in order to perform the NSP strategies successfully and to prevent future foreclosures, thus reducing further decline or devaluation of Detroit’s residential areas (see Washington Times 2010).

The objectives of the NSP in the selected areas are for instance to engage societal actors, to remove defaced buildings and to stabilize residential areas (see Hackney 2011). In addition, the residents of deprived areas will be resettled to the nine development areas to improve the quality of life of the remaining residents and to perform the right-sizing strategy successfully. A final redevelopment plan of the depressed areas is still not provided, nevertheless some of the areas are expected to be occupied by temporary uses with urban gardens and green spaces (see Davey 2011).

The funding of the demolition program is provided by the government - which has committed a total of 20 Mio dollars to the NSP (see City of Detroit 2010). More funding comes due to the crisis of foreclosures in 2008.
mainly from the private sector through public-private partnership. The research organization Data Driven Detroit funded by private foundations, for example, recorded important data which made it possible to create a GIS map to assess the current situation of Detroit and decide on future investments. Without this basic data a targeted plan of shrinkage would be impossible (cf. Bates 2011).

Currently between 300 and 400 buildings are demolished each month. Despite numerous demolitions, many parts of the city are still waiting for vacant and derelict buildings to be eliminated. Moreover, the process of identifying the owner to permit the demolition of their property often takes months (see Williams 2011). Right-sizing would bring many opportunities to the city of Detroit. Above all, the property values in the development areas would increase again through the dismantling of Detroit and the hereby revitalization of the city. Additionally, through the demolition of empty buildings which are often places of criminal activity, public safety will be supported and quality of life of residents will be boosted. The management of „unused“ buildings and infrastructure will be more efficient by concentrating them, so that the tax base would be relieved and the accessibility of urban facilities for residents would be enhanced. Risks of this strategy also exist, because its success depends on the interaction of urban structure, which can be only vaguely predicted, as well as the precise consequences, because so far right-sizing has not been implemented to this extent.

It consists among other things, the risk of speculation in financial resources, which are not present and the creation of further debts. In addition, the city has no own resources to implement the strategy. If it comes to the depletion of donated funds or unpredictable costs, which the city cannot bear, it is possible that plans will be suspended. Due to the limited demand in the property market no buyer could be found for the resulting new development areas and a limited economic success would be generated. These are mainly the financial and economic difficulties the city might have to face. The social problems that could result from this would then accelerate the existing problems.

Urban Gardening in Detroit

No city in the United States seems to have so much potential for urban farming as Detroit. The abundance of brownfields, the cheap land and the desperate search for work of residents, form a supportive basis for this activity. Detroit also has a long history of gardening and planting of food, as many of the current residents of Detroit, who came in search of work to the city over the years, brought knowledge of gardening (see The Detroit Works Project 2010). The movement of urban farming in Detroit is unique in its extent today. There are hundreds of registered and unregistered community gardens on vacant lots in residential areas, gardens and on parking areas. Starting points of this development were the consequences of shrinkage for the residents and thereby caused
unemployment and poverty of the population (see Jonathan D. Lachance 2004).

Community gardens get support either through The Garden Resource Program or the Urban Farming Foundation. In 2009, the Garden Resource Program supported more than 875 urban gardens and farms in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck, including 263 community gardens and 55 schools (see The Detroit Works Project 2010). The Urban Farming Foundation leads gardening services across the country and supports dozens of gardening areas throughout Detroit. However, currently there is no agricultural use above 1.2 hectares in the city. Newer plans include two large agricultural projects on a commercial level. The SHAR FOUNDATION - RECOVERY PARK plans in several areas over 12 hectares of farms and over 800 ha project area. This major project was developed to create, with urban agriculture as a tool, a new development opportunity for the company. It is estimated that 10-12 jobs will be created per 12 ha area. HANTZ FARM intends to build an almost 49-acre farm with about 47 acres exclusively in the East and West Indian Village. Land with contaminated soil, that is unsuitable for food production, should be used for commercial forest, water or air laboratory cultures. Additional uses for tourism and education, research and innovation and retail are expected to be included in the plans. It is estimated that 20 jobs for preparation and planting, 100 jobs for tourism and education and in addition jobs for research and innovation will be created (see The Detroit Works Project 2010).

With the strategy of urban agriculture, Detroit pursues both short- and long-term goals. These include supplying food, identifying partnerships for public information campaigns to urban agriculture, and research on the impact of environmentally friendly supplies of food and other agricultural products (see The Detroit Works Project 2010). However, despite implementing urban agriculture in Detroit’s current master plan, the city council neither accepts urban agriculture as a legitimate land use nor established a general framework for implementing the activity yet. There are countless agricultural areas, which are neither registered nor where land use is clarified. At present, however, there will be a revision of zoning in order to deal with the large-scale use of agricultural activities (see Jonathan D. Lachance 2004).

However, the conflict over land use represents a risk, which may arise between residents and the city authorities, since a deficit of methods over the basic operation of urban agriculture exists. What is needed is a general framework for handling agricultural activities in order to balance the urban agriculture with...
land use interests of the city.

**Urban Greenways and Riverfront Redevelopment in Detroit**

Detroit has - compared with other American cities - the lowest proportion of neighborhood parks. Despite the size, age and the decades-long migration rate of Detroit there is only a very small proportion of green space available per inhabitant. There are only a few large parks in the city, which are in poor conditions. In addition, no visible green space network exists (see The Detroit Works Project 2010).

The updated Master Plan of Policies provides new developments as well as the maintenance of parks and other green spaces in order to build a stable, secure, and attractive multifunctional open and green space system. Some natural and regional parks, green spaces and green links are already restored and rebuilt by new projects of the city as well as through community initiatives and regional organizations. Through the reuse of derelict and unused land to open spaces new growth and innovation should be created. By providing additional agricultural areas the inventory as well as the planned parks and green areas will be complemented completed and a visible and connected green space network will be established (see The Detroit Works Project 2010). Some parks are already connected to the restored eastern riverbank. In addition, parks are considered as part of the larger landscape and a green space network will be created. At the same time, this system will create a sustainable improvement of the ecosystem, air and water quality and serve as a corridor for wildlife and rainwater collection. Moreover, plans will be improved and community gardens and alternative modes of transportation will be promoted with the updated Master Plan and policies for parks, recreation and open space (see The Detroit Works Project 2010).

Through the support of public-private partnerships, foundations, local, federal, state, and national governments and the whole community, the non-profit organization of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy\(^\text{12}\) was able to start developing the east bank of Detroit. By 2010, almost 80% of the river bank was completed and made publicly accessible. The areas along the waterfront are used as public open space and thus help to balance the region of Detroit’s open-space deficit. The city will be revived by the urban riverfront and expanded as a regional tourist destination which might attract new residents to the city. Contrary to the original concept for industry, the space will be adapted to today’s needs and as a result redesigned to a framework of green belts within the city. Brownfield sites adjacent to the riverside should be revived in order to improve the area around the river bank. To adapt to the

\(^{12}\) A nonprofit organization that has teamed up in 2003, with the aim of revitalizing Detroit’s riverfront and thus promote the revitalization of the city. The organization is engaged in the design, implementation, maintenance and programming of the Detroit River Trail. The plans of the organization are possible here, especially through public-private partnerships, foundations, local, state and national government and the whole community. The full schedule is set for almost 8.6 km of public riverbank.
current economic and social conditions and to promote the rebuilding of the city, areas along the river are currently divided into new areas in order to create a compact, walkable center with different useful options. Further work to redesign the entire riverfront with surrounding green spaces will be continued in the coming years. As a result this will improve the general quality of life, promote a higher consciousness and a greater responsibility for the river and the surrounding areas and give impulses to further greening measures. Social connections will be encouraged and strengthened and brownfields will be cleaned, revitalized and exempt from existing contaminated land (see The Detroit Works Project 2010). Approx. 4 km of the eastern waterfront are now complete, including the existing pedestrian and bicycle paths, gardens, green spaces, public places, etc. Some parks are already connected to the path along the river bank. Furthermore, future connections to the areas in the city center are planned with green belts to the water front to turn it into a public space (see The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy 2011). Detroit’s eastern riverfront has been transformed from a derelict and unsightly industrial wasteland into a varied and beautiful open space for society, tourists and businessmen. Visitors can watch cargo ships and fishing boats and enjoy leisure and recreational opportunities along the river bank (see Maisha Tyler 2010). The next five years further work will be implemented in order to redesign the entire Detroit riverfront with surrounding green spaces (see The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy 2011).

Because of the construction of green belts new chances arise for social, economic and environmental spheres. One chance is the strengthening of links between the Detroit citizens and the region through numerous activities and events on the riverbank. Furthermore, environmental benefits can be seen by cleaning up the industrial sites and by improving water quality (see Maisha Tyler 2010). Areas in the surroundings of the waterfront will be upgraded and integrated into a system of green spaces along the banks. The risks of this action remain to be seen. However, due to the previous success, this will prove to be far less problematic than, for example, the strategy of right-sizing. At least the residents in the surroundings of water fronts will have benefits from the increased quality of life. Whether the hoped-for tourist and visitor flows are arriving from outside will be revealed in the coming years.

Conclusions

An important question of the paper was whether shrinking cities have a realistic chance to build at least partly on earlier successes, by capturing new policies and measures, such as green infrastructure. Through the actions of greening the city of Detroit and other shrinking cities will probably have one of their few chances to change something about their situation. For Detroit as a whole the described greening measures can be very beneficial, as hereby individual measures are initiated and at the same
time further greening measures could be initiated. Mainly due to the high citizen participation, the residents of Detroit see them clamped into a new, in most cases for them profitable vision of urban development and are thereby encouraged to remain involved. Detroit’s greening approaches are already on the way to implementation or in the midst of this, and demonstrate initial success.

The development will probably improve stronger city areas and tend to neglect weaker parts of the city in the future. This will probably continue, as the city has huge budget deficits. Right-sizing and to encourage the inhabitants to move to designated areas at least for the time being, seems to be an appropriate revitalization method. The fact that it cannot be accessible for all residents of the city is an unpleasant but inevitable path at the same time. To lead the remaining land left fallow at least to a temporary usage is also a wrong direction. In order to recover the city, these areas can be regenerated by being used as green spaces for urban agriculture or even until they find another use. Besides, inner parts and surrounding areas of the city might become more attractive. In addition, the demolition activities strengthen public security by discouraging potential crime, as the aspect of crime also slows the economic recovery of Detroit. It seems like overall Detroit can achieve benefits by following up with further plans in the area of greening.

However, the ultimate success of Detroit’s strategy is still uncertain. In any case, within the discourse in the field of planning in the U.S., hope arises for a shift away from growth. The changes of Detroit will contribute to the success or failure of this strategy in the next years and this will help steering the understanding of spatial planning of the U.S. into the right direction.

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Sugrue, T. J. (2004). Niedergang durch Rassismus. In P. O. Bundes, Schrumpfende Städte Band1 - Interna-
Urban structures are and have always been undergoing a constant transformation. They are affected by external impacts as well as internal factors, shaping life in the city, which build upon one another, and are interacting in a complex chain of effects. They are no static constructs that always keep their pattern, but instead have to defer to the specific circumstances. This also leads to the fact that they can grow and shrink at the same time. Due to the fact that there has been a huge period of growth in the age of industrialization, which established its sentiment rapidly in the minds of the people, the terms subtly changed. Now growth was associated with prosperity, and shrinkage – involving physical decline as well as decrease in numbers – was associated with demise.

Since more and more cities around the world are entering an ongoing process of shrinkage in the cause of advancing deindustrialization, actions from planning entities are considered necessary. However for many actors these implications have been hard to approach and to accept. Because of the variety of different interactions and multi-dimensional processes, individual solutions are needed to create an added value out of decrease. This can pave the way for a whole new positive direction of development for the respective cities.

One of the cities affected by urban shrinkage is the city of Porto in Portugal, which is losing inhabitants and – as a result – has to cope with a high vacancy rate as well as structural and social degradation, despite being embedded in an economically booming region.

The diploma thesis “Lines of development of urban shrinking – dangers, chances
and potentials for the city of Porto/Portugal” presented here, examines the general developments, determinants and impacts of urban shrinkage as well as the specific concern of Portugal and especially of the city of Porto. In this connection not only the causes and effects are of interest, but also the measures that are implemented and planned to react on the changing circumstances, which are described and evaluated.

At first it should be noted that cities being affected by shrinking generally have three developmental possibilities and therefore three options in order to pursue a certain favoured future prospect.

1) The city shall overcome shrinkage and grow again.
2) Shrinkage shall be stopped and the city shall be developed on the current level seizing the potentials arising from the previous shrinkage processes.
3) The pattern and urban fabric of the city shall – without counteracting the shrinkage – be adjusted to the consequences of shrinkage as kind of an “ordered retreat”.

The concept of “right sizing” can be applied for the third strand. It aims at downsizing supplies – e.g. in the realm of infrastructure. This can be reached through a comprehensive approach in the sense of shrinking smart. In doing so, suitable strategies are applied in order to prevent so called trading-down effects, meaning a downward spiral, e.g. in the real estate market (problems concerning vacancy).

Despite there are still no panaceas for dealing with urban shrinking, various countermeasures and courses of action currently exist in the field of urban planning. These are implemented to combat the negative effects which are often identified as problems. Here the valorization of public space, conversion, removal, demolition, revitalization, greening or other infrastructural adjustments can be mentioned. Besides there are other methods and policies that promote measures of communication such as civic involvement and soft location factors like cultural services or changes in legislation. The measures mentioned here concentrate on the problems of vacancies and brownfields, which are most often and most severe features of urban shrinking processes.

In this respect it can be stated, that both – growth – as well as decline – might offer potentials and new opportunities for the development of a city. Following the slogan “less is more” those chances can be accessed through the application of the right strategies in the frame of targeted urban regeneration.

**Urban Shrinkage in the National Context of Portugal**

Looking upon the development of urban shrinking processes with the example of Portugal, it is projected that this country is going to lose 7 % of its population until the year 2050, based on the figures of 2010. Spatially,
not only the rural regions are affected by this shrinkage but also a large number of urban areas, which already have to deal with degradation tendencies, especially in the inner cities. Regarding the 21 major cities of Portugal, it can be seen that six of them are going to lose population, where Porto accounts for heaviest losses.

Causes for this development are the neglect of the city centres under the housing policy of the Salazar dictatorship until 1974, governmental rental controls in the following years, and suburbanisation accompanied by a great decrease of population in the centres (“doughnut effect”). Increasing earnings and changing lifestyles contributed significantly to the latter development (Balsas 2007).

How the city of Porto handles shrinkage and its consequences and how the specific processes of shrinking loom in this case is specified in the next paragraphs.

**Urban Shrinkage in the local context with the example of Porto**

In administrating the city of Porto is divided into 15 so called freguesias, which are districts respectively parishes. Four of them – Miragaia, São Nicolau, Sé und Vitória – form the historic downtown of Porto, that is part of UNESCO World Heritage since 1996. In addition, Massarelos, Santo Ildefonso, Cedofeita and Bonfim can be counted to the wider inner city area (see figure 3).

As far the historic centre of Porto as well as that of other portuguese cities, they differ from many other european cities in the way that no effects of war or extensive demolitions left their mark, so that the inner cities mostly show a high state of preservation.

What at first appears as an advantage, often involves constraints, because many of the old buildings are in a bad condition and show signs of deterioration due to a lack of maintenance and redevelopment measures for decades. These effects can hardly be compared to those in other european cities (Balsas 2007). Some buildings are even in danger of collapsing, a great number of them is vacant or noticeably degrading. The vast majority of the existing building stock can be labelled to be in need of rehabilitation.

Despite the massive structural decay of many buildings and entire blocks, the historical centre of Porto was attributed the status of UNESCO World Heritage in 1996, which was besides a number of significant buildings – owed to the overall historic framework of the old town. This is characterized by numerous

**Figure 1: Look upon the historical centre and cathedral Sé**
medieval and baroque buildings which reflect the cultural development of the city and – combined with the typical steep and narrow lanes – form an ensemble that is worthy of protection and preservation and in its entirety is considered of universal as well as aesthetic value (Internet presence UNESCO 2012).

Population and Development of the City

The development of the overall population in the two administrative entities “City of Porto” and the metropolitan area “Grande Porto” was characterized by very differing trends during the last 20 years. While the City of Porto constantly was losing inhabitants since 1992, Grande Porto in its entirety gained residents during the same period of time: from 1992 to 2010 the population rose from roughly 1.181.000 to about 1.286.000 (Internet presence Instituto Nacional de Estatística 2011). During the same timeframe the City of Porto shrank from 300.000 to around 208.000 inhabitants until 2010. Thus the City of Porto lost more than 30 percent of its population, while the metropolitan area registered a population growth of nearly 9 percent.

A closer look on the population development of the entire city of Porto shows that there has been a radical change after a long phase of growth which lasted until the early 1980’s. From this point on a constant decline of the total population can be detected that lead to a number of inhabitants of about 240.000 in the year 2011.

Figure 2: Population Development of the City of Porto

Looking at the intensity of shrinkage in the so called ‘freguesias’, it can be noticed that these were affected by shrinkage very differently during the past 20 years.

In addition to the population decrease, a tendency to smaller households can be observed simultaneously (increase of 1-2 person

Source: Own photography, Kaiserslautern 2010
households) (Porto Vivo 2006), with the result that the residential density is becoming lower, too. Moreover the predominant allocation of households with different sizes – being typical for many cities – can be found. One- and two-person households are easier located in the city centre (historic downtown and wider inner city), whereas three- and more person households are more often located in the areas outside the inner city. This situation had been similar in 2001, whereas a slight trend emerges that three- or more person households settle outside the city centre.

With an amount of 14.68 per cent the highest number of young people under the age of 14 can be found in areas outside of the city centre. With an age of 65 years or older, elderly people on the other hand are represented disproportionately high residing in the historic downtown (23.98 per cent) and the city centre (23 per cent). In particular the districts Santo Ildefonso (27.4 per cent) and Vitória (28.3 per cent) hold the highest concentration of elderly persons in Porto’s urban space (Internet presence of Instituto Nacional de Estatística 2012).

The problem of vacancies is distinct in the city centre and historic downtown and was triggered by population decline. Based on this observation, special attention and an analysis of the set of problems concerning the city centre is given in the following.

Figure 3: Allocation of the Shrinking Processes in the Period from 1991 to 2011

Structural and social decline in the centre of Porto

When examining occupation of buildings in the area around Porto’s historic downtown, which is a World Heritage Site, it becomes apparent that 49 per cent are fully inhabited, whereas 34 per cent are partially occupied and 17 per cent vacant (Câmara Municipal do Porto und Porto Vivo 2010).

One of the main causes of the structural and social decline in Porto’s historic downtown is a governmental rent control during the time of the dictatorship as well as after its end around the year 1974. Nevertheless these processes of decline were induced earlier and are furthermore strengthened by multiple factors, i.e. population growth, housing shortage, structures of ownership, population pattern, political priorities as well as politics concerning rent (Ramos Lobato 2010).

As a result of a dictatorship which prioritised representation and monumental structures and therefore omitted renovating Porto’s historic downtown redevelopment measures weren’t included in political discussions. In fact projects suggested to modernise the city centre were aimed at a large-scale demolitions. These plans failed due to a lack of funds and only a small number of projects has been implemented (Cardoso 2000).

Besides these incremental projects, the problem of poverty among the population in the historic downtown was not addressed during the dictatorship. Instead of dealing with decay of the city centre, the government forced a politically initiated suburbanisation by resettling population to a social housing development in the suburban area (Ramos Lobato 2010).

Structural decline is also increased by historical ownership patterns. Many property owners handed their life estate building lease over to tenants - which is a process passed down generations. This structure is also sustained while selling the buildings and it leads to owners who are not concerned with their properties in the historic downtown. Since property owners are oftentimes not well-situated financially and only low income is generated from rent there is no or only little investment considering the historic downtown’s buildings which fosters structural decline. Tenants who lived or had to live in derelict buildings were and still are neither able to afford appreciable clean-up operations nor maintenance work (Ramos Lobato 2010).

Even though these conditions excluded investment in historical buildings, before rent control, introduced in 1948, aggravated the situation dramatically. In particular in the mid-1970s when the inflation rate reached up to 30 per cent, owners were merely able to finance redevelopment measures because adjusting of the rent to the on-going price decline was not possible (Ramos Lobato 2010).

In order to gain profits out of renting their properties, the only way for owners to increase housing units per building was by splitting the units. Consequently, the city centre’s
population density went up which lead to physical and social degradation (Ramos Lobato 2010). The dimension of the problems become apparent when looking at buildings that lack access to basic infrastructure such as electricity and water. Furthermore some housing units do not possess heating installation or bathrooms (Nunes Alves 2010).

In the year 1986 Portugal joined the European Union and the Portuguese building industry, which grew at fast pace, concentrated on new settlements in the suburban areas. Due to this approach, income from rent in the historic downtown was remote which disabled investing in existing buildings. Subsequently poor and elderly people remained in degraded districts which in part triggered a social and economic segregation caused by selective migration within the city (Ramos Lobato 2010).

Not before the mid-1970s the opinion of historic importance of the entire historic downtown became accepted. The idea of developing and protecting the city with regard to its touristic, cultural and distinctive potential began to establish. At this point the individual requirements of the historic downtown and the city centre have to be considered. In this diploma thesis there are factors pointed out using a SWOT analysis. Significant findings are highlighted in the following table.

One main finding from the SWOT is, that the basic potential of Porto’s inner city is the coherent structural heritage in form of grown historic structures and buildings. This not only

Table 1: Synopsis of the Results of the SWOT Analysis concerning the Development of the Historic City Centre of Porto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historic old town</td>
<td>vacancy and structural decay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attractive site for tourism, economy and commerce</td>
<td>building structure and transport infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>central location and good short-distance public transport as well as exterior infrastructure connection</td>
<td>building structure and traffic development / accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topography</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>External</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>growing region Grande Porto</td>
<td>precarious financing situation for further enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>property situation concerning the vacant real estate</td>
<td>lack of interest of potential investors and inhabitants concerning real estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attractive preconditions for investors</td>
<td>gentrification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Own design.
involves the particular sights, but also the overall structure with all residential and commercial buildings of different epochs and styles, representing the special charm and atmosphere of the city centre.

All in all can be stated, that the City of Porto – apart from the structural problems – also features several strengths that – even in times of financial weakness – show a better picture as compared to the remaining country of Portugal. This may possibly be owed to the city’s economic potential and its relevance as the central business location.

Thus it can be assumed that the problems can be solved by implementing the right strategies focusing on developing the endogenous potential. Also the problem of vacancies, especially of the inner old town, could be reduced despite of the public financial position. Nevertheless, this problem will require further efforts.

Moreover, inspite of the obvious disadvantages of high vacancies, it is deemed possible to implement a balanced social mix in the inner city without suppressing the current population. The latter should be a fixed component in the socioeconomic deliberations to the renewal of the inner city. This requires watching the triggered developments precisely (monitoring) in order to possibly counterbalance unwanted tendencies such as gentrification. Insofar, vacancies show potentials, since new demographic groups can move into the vacant housing units and be integrated into the respective quarters without the current inhabitants having to leave their neighborhood. Furthermore after the redevelopment there is a sufficient number of housing units available, which can fuel the economy. Thus the redevelopment measures – that are necessary to preserve the world heritage – could be interesting for investors. Also the financial expenditures for a temporary relocation of the current inhabitants during the redevelopment process are reduced significantly.

Dealing with the problem in terms of planning

First approach: 1974 to 2004

Since 1974 there had been a considerable involvement with the topic of bad housing conditions in the city centre of Porto. In this year, the „Comissariado para a Renovação da Área de Ribeira/Barredo” (CRUARB) – a commissariat fed on public funds, that aimed for the redevelopment of parts of the historic centre, also using the authority of confiscation and resettlement – was initiated (Balsas 2007). This was the outcome of a range of public demonstrations demanding better living conditions (Ramos Loza 2000).

The financial funds of CRUARB were provided by both the state of Portugal and the City of Porto. However in 1982 the state backed down from the project forcing the city to wholly take over the charge as well as the financing. Due to the now vastly lower financial capacities CRUARB increasingly became less important.
In 1990 in addition to CRUARB the „Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Zona Histórica do Porto“ (FDZHP) was founded, that – as a “foundation for the development of the historic area of Porto” – aimed for an integral renewal through the redevelopment of buildings, promotion of socioeconomic improvements as well as the increasing of the quality of living. Here, the focus was less on building up new structures, but on the financial and conceptional support of existing facilities (e.g. communal kitchens, washing rooms etc.) (Ramos Lobato 2010).

**Current approach**

Since the year 2004 the „Sociedades de Reabilitação Urbana“ (SRU) are the means of choice for tackling the problem of urban decay. Their wide-ranging competences contain for instance the expropriation of owners as well as the authority of judging building licences. Through the urban regeneration societies the aims of redevelopment should be reached faster by means of primarily private investments and lower bureaucratic efforts (Ramos Lobato 2010). Whereas until then there had been no feasibilities of involving private stakeholders and through that private capital into the renewal processes, these now shall be financed solely by the building owners, while public investments focus on the maintenance and redevelopment of infrastructure as well as the upgrading of public space (Ramos Lobato 2010). Insofar a fundamental change in approaching the topic can be noticed.

The tasks of the urban regeneration societies consist of supporting and attending the particular owners during the redevelopment process. The provider of an SRU usually is the respective municipality; only in cases of special public interest, the state can contribute to the financing. In this case, the SRU is provided with solely public funds as an incorporated company. An inclusion of private stakeholders further than that however is excluded (Ramos Lobato 2010).

Because of the huge degradation and the UNESCO world cultural heritage status of the historic centre, the urban regeneration company of Porto - Porto Vivo – offers the highest national public participation. The two shareholders, the city of Porto and the state of Portugal (represented by the „Instituto da Habitação e Reabilitação Urbana“ (IHRU)), operate Porto Vivo at a ratio 40 to 60 (Costa 2010).

**Porto Vivo**

The city renewal company of Porto - Porto Vivo - established for the inner city in 2004, pursues the five objectives „recolonisation“, „growth and promotion of the capability“, „reactivation of trade“, „activation of tourism, culture and recovering“ and „upgrading of the public space“ (Porto Vivo 2012a).

The range of competence of Porto Vivo, the so-called „Área Crítica de Recuperação e Reconversão Urbanística“ (ACRRU), which includes the critical regeneration areas, ext-
ends at about 1,000 hectares (see fig. 4, yellow boundary) and comprises in this way over one fourth of the city area of Porto. However, the current renewal projects are located within the so called „Priority Intervention Area“ (Zona de Intervenção Prioritária bzw. ZIP), which includes with about 500 hectares (show fig. 4, red boundary) only about half of the ACRRU. These comprise the historic town area as whole (show fig. 4, purple boundary) plus the Baixa (city centre) and further areas of neighbouring districts (Bonfim, Santo Ildefonso, Massarelos und Cedofeita) (Porto Vivo 2012b). However, so the ZIP is still much bigger than the extension of an intervention area in the portuguese average, which is currently approximate by 189 hectares (Costa 2010). The boundary of the ZIP was devised on a statistical-base and with respect to the economic, social and architectural degradation (Porto Vivo 2005).

The figure below shows the UNESCO world heritage site area (marked in green), which extends from the real city boundary to the neighbouring municipality Vila Nova de Gaia.

For achieving the legal regulations and to encourage, accelerate and finally control the renewal process of the city, Porto Vivo is

Figure 4: Devision of Subjects of Porto Vivo

responsible for developing a renewal concept with renewal strategies. In this connection, the ZIP is divided into six priority intervention areas (Áreas de Intervenção Prioritária or AIP), which themselves are subdivided into intervention sectors (Unidades de intervenção), which are mostly single blocks of houses. For each of these intervention sectors there are extensive surveys and systematic inspections for identifying the specific needs of social and structural type on which the following strategic documents are based. These could under some specific conditions - when the size of the area is allowing this - also be established for a whole AIP (Ramos Lobato 2010).

The strategic documents lay out the particular regeneration strategy. This is additionally embedded into the whole ZIP and it involves a strategic approach (planning horizon of 15 years), providing an orientation. Contents of the documents are for example information about the functional and architectural structure, ownership, vacancy, level of degradation and also the need for renovation of the single existing buildings. There are also analyses about the necessity of consolidation of buildings or the ordering of a private investor. In effect, the strategic documents are binding for the owners, which have to implement the planned rehabilitation measures after the document is authorized (Ramos Lobato 2010).

Finally, by implementing these documents Porto Vivo has a number of important functions as “calalyst” of the renewal process. The company should speed up the process by being the central contact for private owners. This includes legal consultation and internal coordination of administrative processes like authorizing and licensing of measures, which means a significant (Ramos Lobato 2010). In the same way, PPP-projects are possible for implementing specific measures.

Furthermore, financial and tax benefits can be used for renewing historic areas. These include for example a reduction of value-added tax for many construction measures, with the aim of renewing buildings into the ACRRU and relieving the historic centre from municipal property taxes (Porto Vivo 2012). For the renovation of a degraded building in the old town average costs are reduced by approximately 45% compared with a newer building (Branco 2007). The necessity for financial support measures is the result of the actions already mentioned, where private actors like owners and investors shore the costs.

Specific objectives in the framework of the renewal process

In Summary, the goals of the inner city renewal are defined in this way that revitalization by resettlement, the promotion of commercial activities, a structuring of the public space and an intensification of touristic, cultural and leisure activities should be established. Towards the key objective of recovering the partly emptied city centre, the focus of interest is on families and younger people. These groups should relocate to vacant areas and provide
catalysts for inner city development. It is noteworthy that the target group of young graduates, young couples and middle-aged groups is wide ranged indeed (Porto Vivo 2005). Nevertheless, the emphasis is on families, which should relocate to the city centre (see e.g. Porto Vivo 2005).

Vacant retail spaces on the ground floors of many buildings should be reactivated by establishing shops, especially of Port Wine, other regional products and also jewelry. In this context the creative potential of immigrants (for example from Brasil, China, Africa, East-Europe) should be utilized and also their integration supported (Porto Vivo 2005).

A further development of tourism addresses specific target groups in a better and more specific way such as cultural tourists, families, private travel groups, especially from Europe and the Iberian peninsula. Particularly for short-break vacations of 3 or 4 days, Porto is presently very popular. This should be further promoted by information and marketing strategies and a wider availability of two- and three-stars hotels. Further, a permanent “Street Entertainment” should come into the streets of the city for bringing more life and entertainment value, which includes shows, events and festivals (Porto Vivo 2005).

Also with regard to infrastructure, it shall be implement improvements of the telecommunications network and gas supply should be improved together with the controlled elimination of dirty water and precipitation water in separation system. Moreover, measures to improve the mobility in the old city centre and a road-accompanying tree plantings should be implemented. The streets inside the ZIP shall be largely freed from the stationary traffic and travel by bikes or on foot should be promoted (Porto Vivo 2005).

**Figure 5: Public Places inside the City Centre of Porto**

![Image](image.png)

Source: Own photography. 2010.

In the course of all improvement measures residents of the city centre should be considered. Those residents who were relocated temporarily due to the redevelopment process regardless of the duration of their move obtain right to return into their original neighborhoods. Moreover, legal provisions for rent
increases were established in order to prevent fast price increase of the residential and business units. Likewise, public benefits should allow financially weak residents to stay in their homes.

Generally, a participation and interaction with the occupants is also required. This is the task of the urban regeneration office, which is point of contact and information. The renewal operations should be supported by the residents as much as possible. Expropriations are seen as last options.

**Assessment of already implemented Measures and Strategies in Porto**

The requirement that the SRUs represent autonomous and in part independently Institutions, possessing some decision-making power, which allows an accelerated and efficient procedure, can be considered as extremely beneficial for the further development. In light of the vast decay of the city, this makes it possible to avoid delays in the renewal process. Concerning Porto Vivo it could be said, that compared to other cities this is an advantage, which comes out of the experiences and mistakes of predecessor institutions like CRUARB and FDZHP from which Porto Vivo learned. By this means further measures and strategies can be designed in a more efficient way.

With regard to the strategic approach it can be said that the objectives and the empirical basis with surveys of the inner city seems to be a good and well-planned basis for developing strategies and plans. Also the close cooperation with the city administration, which included the adjustment of planning ambitions and general frameworks, shows an integrative and perspicacious approach for the development of the inner city. This forms the basis for Porto Vivo to perform an efficient and dynamic development process in the related parts of the city, after defining the planning measures.

The circumstance that Porto Vivo acts from the date of the transfer of responsibilities as the only contact for all parties involved, must be interpreted as extremely positive and allows short distances within the process because of the bundling of information, the consultancy power and in particular also the executive competences. Limited is this scope of redeveloping the historic centre however by the strict requirements of builder conservation, which delays the preparation of developments plans, which is demonstrated by the fact that for the historic centre there doesn’t exist a single development plan (Ávila de Sousa 2012).

Also the use of the opportunity to integrate private sector parties in form of a Public Private Partnership shows the break with a dependence on public resources and a search of further options to mobilize capital for the renewal process in an effective way.

Even though there are many positive aspects in the current model, it remains critically assessed yet, that the - in principle welcome – source of information and participation for the affected citizens obviously are improvable and extendible, especially in view of the right to say
in which case a one-sighted and limited participation policy are practising.

Guiding ideas, how a recolonisation and revival of the inner city by taking into account trade, tourism, economy and infrastructural and ecological aspects are quite able to related, even though the definition of the target group can be doubted. Particularly the fixing on young familys as main target group for the revitalisation of the inner city, which becomes apparent, is a desirable conception, because so the average age would be lowering and the social surround would be upgrated hereby. However this aim appears to be rather utopistic.

A reason for this, is the fact that the requirements of young families out of the inner city become generally better accepted with the housing environment, because of the normally calmer housing situation, more free space, secured parking places and the mostly good individual-transport accibility. Particularly with regard to the grow up of the children this aspects are looked upon as positive and determining criterias for the election of the housing place in the families’ eyes, in contrast to the close built-up, strong busy, noisy and partly with a bad image afflicted historic centre, which allow only a limited space for children.

The housing environment in the historic and inner city centre would are being corresponds more the claims of another target group. This includes, for example, singles, group homes, couples without children or couples, where the children have already moved and students or trainees. An essential - the target group further limited - factor is the fact that because of the often limited space conditions in the historic centre, it should be granted some degree of independence of automobiles.

Because finally the demand of each individuum with their spezific needs and requirements of housing situation makes the decision of marketability of the real estate, it is indispensable to investigate also these with the aim of a successful marketing. For that reason it should be effected an objective analyses of the real relevant target group, which can be arise from an enquiry according to desired lifestyles or preferences. (How such a interview could be, for example, looked as are being elaborated and explicated in the context of this diploma-thesis.)

Regarding the dealing with the existing inhabitants, the objectives of Poro Vivo, which includes the in the affected areas residential people into the renewal strategy and permitted them to stay into their residential location, is expressly welcome, even though the future will be showing if this vision becomes true in the planning way. Conductive to the objective are in a legally view particularly rent control mechanisms in accosiation with the right to remove into the home neighbourhood and the strategic vision of a social and age structure mixing, including a balanced offer of rented houses and social housings.

In conclusion, concerning the efforts of Porto Vivo, it can be said that the urban regeneration company in general introduces useful and coherent approaches and actions, which have the potencial to release the inner city of
Porto from the currently, in many parts dominated desolate situation.

Also in view of the conditions that Porto Vivo has to restore the taken and necessary sectors renovation of the weakened substance often in consideration of the preservation, which complicated the process also in form of enormous financial additional efforts, it can be giving the assesment that the urban renewal in Porto is nevertheless already well-established, even though a longer implementation process is being expected, which will be stretching far into the future.

**Conclusion**

In respect of the approach or the suitable ambulatory with these developments it proves necessary to make first of all an objective analysis of the initial situation of the involved city for classifying the shrinkage in the right way and to decide in favour of viable and seminal urban development strategies.

In case of Porto it can be said that the city is equipped with individual characteristics and framework conditions which provide a basis, which is showing the particularly promising and potential to filling the focused shrinking regions - historic centre or city centre – through appreciation with inhabitants, so that the shrinkage can be roll back and the for the identity important city centre can be revive. In this context, the city of Porto has recognized the signs of the times and the imminent potential of the inner city, which should be regenerated and released step by step. The focus now doesn’t rest only on the residential function but also on typical inner city usages like commerce, handicraft, touristic accommodation industry, service an gastronomy, which should be integrated in a conscious way. With Porto Vivo is created a suitable agency which realized and transfers the city administration´s objectives in a reasonable and strategically well thought-out way. Even if the realization probably does not always take place in the intended way step by step and building by building, this development doesn’t view it as a disadvantage. Instead of, it contributes to a gentle upgrading and renewal of the inner city, which can not transform them over-night from a crisis area to an exclusive residential and business district. In addition, as the results of this, the risks like gentrification, loss of identity and also inhabitant’s fears of displacement can be reduced, so that this slowed-down approach finally contributes crucially to the acceptance of the measures by the population of Porto.

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Bibliography


Elena Gilcher

Changes in Planning Culture caused by Urban Shrinkage

The Example of Pirmasens

In Germany, a change in the planning culture has been taking place due to demographic and economic shifts during the last decades. Many cities experience shrinkage caused by population decline and the exodus of companies. Some years ago the expulsion of living areas and retail spaces in the periphery were in the planning focus. Nowadays, reviving the city center by increasing its attractiveness is considered more important.

Also, the city of Pirmasens is confronted with the problems caused by shrinkage. Pirmasens was the center of the German shoe industry in the 19th and 20th century and a distinctive industrial monos- tructure was established. Due to economic change as well as the out-migration of the American Armed Forces, employment diminished, inhabitants departed and thus a high vacancy of residential and industrial buildings developed.

For those reasons a paradigm change took place in Pirmasens. It envisions to accomplish the consequences caused by urban shrinkage with different projects and measures.

Introduction

Problem

According to Hager and Schenkel the term “shrinkage” is a “natural counter process of growth” or a “negatively connotated decline” (Ragnitz et al. 2005, 56f.). In the context of urban development, shrinkage is often present in discussions about the future development of German cities. An unbiased examination of this topic is not easily possible in a society historically fixated on growth like the German one.

Until the 1970s, urban development was constantly equated with growth. This was caused by the creation of modern industrial cities and the consequent massive migration of rural workers into cities and urban regions. Shrinkage, however, was seen as the downfall of a city. It manifested in the economic decline of a municipality, discernable by the exodus of companies as well as the loss of jobs. As a result many residents left the structurally weakened municipalities. Such a decline of German cities
took place in the 1960s and 1970s during the economic change. At this time first trends of shrinkage appeared in Germany (Ragnitz et al. 2005, 56f.).

Since the German reunification the issue of urban shrinkage is getting more attention. It mainly affects cities of the former German Democratic Republic in eastern Germany. The causes can mostly be found in negative demographic development. Additional factors like the lack of jobs as well as the economic transformation also caused shrinkage in eastern Germany. Consequences are numerous out-migration of qualified workers as well as young people, the increased proportion of older residents and the increased vacancy rate of apartments and commercial space. In 2001, the federal government and the eastern federal states, the German Bundesländer Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia launched the program “Urban Reconstruction East” (Stadtumbau Ost). Its aim is to analyze the aforementioned problems and to initiate appropriate measures. Yet, the demographic and economic changes not only exert their effects in the eastern part of Germany, they are visible throughout entire Germany. As a result the federal government also initiated the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West” (Stadtumbau West) in 2004. On the basis of 16 pilot cities the shrinkage problems of western German cities and their counteractions are analyzed (Ragnitz et al. 2005, 41).

Pirmasens, a city in Rhineland-Palatinate, was chosen to be one of the 16 pilot cities of the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. Since the 1970s Pirmasens had to fight with the consequences of a dramatic structural change in the shoe industry. Additionally, the American Armed Forces stationed there were withdrawn in 1997. Pirmasens developed to the center of the German shoe-industry in the 19th century. Approximately 300 shoe-factories were located in the city. Companies of the shoe-industry as well as companies of the chemical industry, engineering and shoe-accessories had to close due to structural economic changes. Since the early 1990s, 10,000 Americans left Pirmasens and the surrounding area on account of the military conversion. During this process 4,000 to 5,000 civilian workplaces were lost (BMVBS 2010, online).

In Pirmasens, a lower occupancy of industrial, residential and retail spaces can be registered. Accordingly, the vacancy rate is becoming high. Furthermore, purchasing power declined due to a lesser per-household income. That led to a worse public budgetary situation of Pirmasens while social expenses continued to rise. In the population, a lack of perspective began to be perceived because of a high unemployment rate and a loss of residents (BMVBS 2010, online). Pirmasens wanted to show, on the basis of impulse projects, how to manage these problems caused by urban shrinkage. In

1 In view of the demographic and economic structural change, the political program “Experimental Housing and Urban Development” (ExWoSt) started a research initiative called “Urban Reconstruction West” with a term of six years. The revaluation of the city center, the adaption of economic and residential locations as well as the regeneration of brownfields are the focus of activities and urban reconstruction activities of the included cities and municipalities (BMVBS 2011, online).
the future, more projects are planned to protect vacant residential, industrial and commercial brownfields from decomposition and to give the city a new image.

**Aim and methodology**

This paper provides a basic contemplation of whether and how the planning culture in Germany has changed and will change due to urban shrinkage. In the introductory part, the impact of the urban design principles of the 20th century on today's planning culture is analyzed. Furthermore, the causes of urban shrinkage in western Germany and their influence on the urban functional areas are examined.

How to deal with shrinkage processes is shown by an exemplary case study featuring Pirmasens. In this part, the primary focus is set on the design of different planning methods. The possibility of embedding these methods into the urban planning concept of a municipality, which is influenced by additional factors, is revealed. This work is based on a structural analysis as well as interviews with the stakeholders, who were involved in the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”.

**Planning culture**

Planning culture deals with the conception, institutionalization and accomplishment of formal and informal processes and methods of spatial planning (Steinhauer 2010). It includes planning instruments and processes, is determined by evolving factors and embedded in political-administrative and institutional structures as well as in social-economical and cultural models. Demographic developments, economic and technical methods as well as social traditions, values and attitudes also influence it (Knieling and Othengrafen 2009).

**Change in planning culture during the last decades**

In the 20th century, urban design objectives and principles were defined to establish urban development concepts. First, the Athens Charter of the 1930s defined the concept of the “functional city”, then the “structured and sparsely built-up city” followed in the 1950s. The 1960s strived for “urbanization by density” and “the car-friendly city”, the 1970s aimed for “plans of urban reconstruction” and a “planning science”. “Gentle urban development” and “urban ecology” predominated the 1980s, “sustainable urban development” was the objective of the 1990s, and “urban reconstruction east” as well as “urban reconstruction west” were focused on in the beginning of the 21th century (Stöhr 2005).

The current planning culture was essentially shaped by the urban development concepts of the last three decades of the 20th century. Since the 1970s citizens’ participation is deemed necessary in urban planning. The procedure of urban redevelopment measures, regulated by §136 of the Federal Building Code (Baugesetzbuch), is very similar to the proce-
dure of redevelopment of the Promotion Act (Städtebauförderungsgesetz) of 1972. Furthermore, the current planning culture is shaped by the urban development concept of sustainability of the 1990s. This concept tries to equate the economical, social and ecological dimension of urban development. This aim is enacted in the Federal Building Code and in the Spatial Planning Act (Raumordnungsgesetz). Urban shrinkage is caused by the negative development of the population, economic structural change and is thus also a topic of the planning culture. The cities of “Urban Reconstruction East”, a program supported by the federal government and the federal states of eastern Germany, as well as the cities of “Urban Reconstruction West”, an ExWoSt (Experimental Housing and Urban Development) research initiative, showed how to deal with those problems.

Novel instruments are also required due to recent trends like globalization and urban shrinkage as well as new problem areas and fields of action of urban planning. The tight financial situation in many municipalities causes new constellations of stakeholders and forms of cooperation. For example, the model of public-private partnership became popular in recent years. Federal tasks should be fulfilled by the gain of private capital and know-how. Furthermore, formal planning instruments, which are already signed in the Federal Building Code, are not sufficient to solve current and future problems. The participation of citizens and stakeholders becomes increasingly important. This can mainly be implemented with informal planning instruments and is mostly a precursor to formal planning. All this will affect the planning culture in the near future.

Causes of urban shrinkage in western Germany

In western Germany, old industrial and shipyard cities as well as cities with a peripheral location are almost exclusively affected by shrinkage (Gestring 2005). Shrinkage of western cities is not only caused by demographic change, but also by the structural change of the economy. A transition from the primary to the secondary sector and finally to the tertiary sector took place along-side the economical growth, increase of job productiveness, technical progress and rising income. Accordingly, urban shrinkage is also connected with unemployment and high out-migration. Vacant buildings as well as the deconstruction of technical and social infrastructure both result from that change. Since the 1960s the suburbanization of housing, retail and industry is another cause for the urban shrinkage in western Germany. The urban life-style of the inner city extended to the outskirts, which offered better living conditions and more affordable property prices.

Consequences of urban shrinkage for urban functional areas

“Urban shrinkage affects nearly all areas of a city” (Stöhr 2005, 59). In the following, the consequences of urban shrinkage for the
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housing market, the social and technical infrastructure as well as the urban society and municipal finances are shown.

**Housing market**

Population decline and suburbanization undeniably lead to plenty of empty properties. This particularly concerns apartments in old buildings with a dismal structure dating back to World War I or World War II. When faced with low pressure of utilization, whole buildings are permanently vacant or lie fallow (Giebler 2008). Vacant buildings located in urban valuable locations are of particular importance. They have a negative impact on the city structure and the city’s image (Stöhr 2005). Furthermore, a constantly changing demand in housing leads to construction of new as well as reconstruction of existing apartments in suburban areas. On the one hand, this is required due to risen living space consumption and, on the other hand, in view of the changed age distribution. It makes restructuring towards assisted and age-appropriate living necessary (Giebler 2008).

**Technical and social infrastructure**

Infrastructure comprises federal and private facilities, which are necessary for sufficient public service and economical development (BBP 2010). The most pronounced consequences of urban shrinkage are in the technical and in the social infrastructure. Besides, difficulties arise mainly in the preservation of existing infrastructure (Giebler 2008).

The technical infrastructure is the basis for residential and economical development. It is only depending on the quantitative population development or density. Every infrastructure facility needs a certain minimum utilization to be profitable. In areas where the population is declining noticeably or the urban sprawl and de-concentration of its population are pronounced, efficiency of supply and disposal networks is dismal. Facilities thus have a disproportional ratio of fixed and variable costs and as they are both distributed over the low population, per capita costs for water, sewage or waste disposal are high. The exodus of big companies and a changed consumer behavior also contribute to the strong underutilization of existing infrastructure. The entire system was designed for higher extents of utilization and capacities decades earlier (Giebler 2008).

The increasing change in the population structure leads to a reorganization in the social infrastructure, too. The demand in nurseries, kindergartens and schools declines, but the need for care-oriented facilities for older people rises. Therefore, the infrastructure should be adapted to senior citizens. For example, stationary and mobile nursing stations should be constructed (Giebler 2008).

**Urban society**

The vacancy of apartments is a self-reinforcing problem. The negative consequences of vacant apartments on their environment, “the sight of empty windows” and the questions attached to this view show a considerable negative effect on the residential quality. The
residents feel insecure in houses with a high level of vacancy.” In areas with a high number of vacant apartments, people move away due to worsening property quality. Besides, a negative environment promotes the poverty in a city. Social inequalities and the solidification of social segregation are results, which can cause and strengthen vacant apartments or old building quarters in need of redevelopment (Stöhr 2005).

**Municipal finances**

The decline of population, a rising number of senior citizens as well as departing companies (Giebler 2008) can deteriorate the financial situation of a municipality (Stöhr 2005). Consequences are lower income and trade taxes. Moreover, financial support by the federal government and the federal state are attached to the population. Both allocations decrease with the exodus of residents and as a result many municipalities need to save money. Thus cultural and social offerings have to be reduced or ceased. Furthermore, the assignment of financial support of projects by the federal government and the federal states demands a co-funding by the municipalities. However, under an austerity budget they are not able to contribute their share anymore. The consequence is the exclusion from succeeding projects and thus the further decline of a city (Giebler 2008).

**Urban Shrinkage in Pirmasens**

*Initial situation and basic conditions*

*Location of the city and settlement structure*

Pirmasens is a mid-sized, administratively independent city in the southwest of the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate. It is the seat of administration of the district Südwestpfalz (south western palatinate) and is located at the western edge of the Palatinate Forest (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The agglomerations Rhein-Main, Rhein-Neckar and Saarland can be reached from Pirmasens within 90 minutes by using the Autobahn (highways) A8, A62, or the Bundesstraße (federal highway) B10. The airports Frankfurt/Main (155 km), Frankfurt/Hahn (120 km), Saarbrücken (55 km) and Zweibrücken (23 km) are the nearest international airports (Bauer and BBP 2007). The centrally located main station is connected to the railway system of Rhineland-Palatinate and offers three regional railway lines. There are direct connections to Kaiserslautern, Landau and Saarbrücken (City of Pirmasens, 2011).

The administrative area of the city covers 61.37 km2. „The city of Pirmasens is divided into the urban area and seven local districts. [...] The urban area itself is distributed over the central city and another seven districts” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 5ff.).

*Challenges*

In the 19th century Pirmasens evolved
to the biggest location for shoe-production in Germany. Pirmasens became a mono-structured city as there were no other industries besides shoe manufacturing and its supplemental sectors located (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The structural crisis in the shoe-industry in the 1970s resulted in a long-lasting downsizing and loss of importance. In 1960, 30,000 people were working for one of the 187 shoe companies. Today, only 28 companies with 1,000 employees exist (Bauer and BBP 2007). By the structural crisis micro companies as well as large companies had to close. For example, the formerly biggest shoe factory in Germany, Rheinberger, was shut down. Thereby the situation in leather trade, mechanical engineering, in the paper and cardboard packaging industry and in the sector of shoe accessories also became worse. In total, approximately 15,000 jobs were lost. Furthermore, the trade fairs, which took place several times a year, lost their importance and thus the utilization of the exhibition center decreased (BMVBS 2011).

In 1945, another important development factor was established in Pirmasens. Barracks of the American Armed Forces and the associated residential area “Bunker Hill”, located in the district Husterhöhe, were built with the military presence. About 4,000 jobs as well as the purchasing power of the American soldiers were brought to Pirmasens. Since the beginning of the 1990s, a conversion of the military sites in Pirmasens took place and the once created jobs were lost until to the complete withdrawal of the Armed Forces in 1997. About 10,000 Americans left Pirmasens and the environs. Thereby income losses were caused and purchasing power fell (BMVBS 2011).

As a consequence, the unemployment in Pirmasens rose to 20% in 1997, the highest number throughout Rhineland-Palatinate. The amount of residents declined from 57,698 (January 1970) (Bauer and BBP 2007) to 40,808 (December 2009) (Statistisches Landesamt RLP 2011). Vacancies and under-uses in industrial, retail and residential structures resulted. The public budget declined due to closing and migration of companies. At the same time the social expenses rose because of increasing unemployment. This was partly compensated by lower investments in the private and public sector. Until today, these omissions clearly left their marks in the townscape (BMVBS 2011).

Expansive settlement development stagnated extensively with the decline of the shoe industry and the high population decline. Furthermore, the military area Husterhöhe/Bunker Hill was given back to Pirmasens after the deduction of the US troops. Conversion as well as reconstruction became the novel concepts for urban development (Bauer and BBP 2007).

At the end of the 1980s the effects of the structural change in the shoe manufacturing industry were already visible in the city center. For example, mold threatened the building of the former shoe factory “Neuffer”.

Reactions to the shrinkage process by Pirmasens

Pirmasens had to develop strategies to cope with the shrinkage caused by demogra-
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From 2005 to 2008, Pirmasens participated in the EU program INTERREG III b North-West-Europe (NWE) Medium Sized Cities (MSC), in which it collaborated with different cities. The aim of this program was “to make the concept of urbanity more attractive, especially for mid sized cities affected by the problems of demographic, economic and urban functional changes” (BMVBS 2011, online). The project area of Pirmasens contains an inner urban corridor, which was strengthened in the ExWoSt research initiative by the impulse-projects “Rheinberger” and “Messeumfeld” (exhibition surroundings) (Böhme and Ruppert 2010).

In addition, first measures were implemented for the urban transformation of Pirmasens. Furthermore, Husterhöhe/Bunker Hill was a brownfield since the deduction of the US troops in 1997. It was converted to an industrial park.

The following paragraphs show the crucial impulse projects executed by Pirmasens in order to identify the planning culture under the terms of shrinkage.

Impulse projects in Pirmasens

The choice of the impulse projects of the ExWoSt research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West” was made based on the “inner city development model” (Entwicklungsmodell Innenstadt). This model was provided by the inner city development concept from 2001 and takes the exhaustive redevelopment and investment requirements of the city center into account.
The new concept of the urban reconstruction is mainly based on the inner city development concept, which was developed at the beginning of the ExWoSt research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. Until the end of 2007 another development concept was provided for the entire city to consolidate the urban reconstruction in Pirmasens, a comprehensive planning approach. The topic “residency” was a central area within the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. Nevertheless, the “urban development concept living” was created without indicating specific measures. This constitutes another basis for the urban reconstruction in Pirmasens and should actively counteract existing deficits (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The projects and measures should show that structural change can be overcome within the realization period of the program. Additionally, the projects should reach the highest possible efficiency by integration in the general city development process. They should initiate other investments of third parties (Bauer and BBP 2007).

*Impulse project „Rheinberger“*

In 1905, the shoe factory Rheinberger was built. It was the biggest shoe factory

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**Figure 1: Localization of the impulse project**

*Source: Google Earth; own design*
in Germany and is one of the most important symbols of the shoe city of Pirmasens. Since the 1980s 25,000 m² of the building complex were vacant. On account of its special urban planning situation, the building still symbolizes the lost prosperity of Pirmasens (Bauer 2010). In summer 2001, a donation of the Rheinberger family as well as the admission of the city to the ExWoSt research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West” caused an unexpected burst to the development, which reactivated the building complex (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The former shoe factory is located on the north-western edge of the inner city and constitutes an essential element of the west-east axis of the “inner city development model”. The impulse project aims at reactivating or reusing this industrial location in the inner city. A successful, sustainable and economically viable development of the building can be used as a tangible symbol of the prosperous structural change and can have a positive effect on the self-esteem of the whole city (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The rear building’s structure had to be removed for the reactivation. The usable area decreased from 25,000 m² to 16,000 m². The former shoe factory was transformed to a new center hosting industry and services, as well as high-quality offices and the “Dynamikum”, the first science center in Rhineland-Palatinate (Bauer 2010). On an area of 4,000 m², the science center features an interactive exhibition under the topic “movement”. It is supposed to be a flagship project for the touristic development and therefore forms the basis “for the development of new employment opportunities while accomplishing structural change” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 28ff.).

The project’s development was carried out as a “public private partnership (PPP)”. An EU-wide call for tenders took place in order to find investors. The Schweitzer brothers, who had a personal relation to Pirmasens, were selected as investors (Bauer 2010).

At the end of the ExWoSt research initiative, long-term rental contracts could be concluded for about 60% of the 13,000 m² commercially usable area. Two local newspapers, doctors, a restaurant, a gym and other service companies reside in the building. The “Dynamikum” represents an appreciable success. In spring 2008 it was opened and 78,500 visitors came in the course of this year. The expecta-
tions were exceeded (Stadtverwaltung Pirmasens 2008). In the mid of 2010 90% of the building area was rented out and it was expected that 95% of the area would be occupied until the end of 2010 (Bauer 2010).

Impulse project „exhibition surroundings“ (Messeumfeld)

According to its own statement Pirmasens has the only international exhibition center in Rhineland-Palatinate able to host trade fairs (City of Pirmasens n.y.: 1). As a remainder of shoe industry’s heyday, the exhibition organization of Pirmasens owns an area of 45,000 m² open space, seven halls with an area of about 20,000 m² as well as 1,850 parking spaces for cars and 100 parking spaces for buses. Here exhibitions took place several times a year (Bauer 2010). However, due to the exodus of companies, the exhibition center is not used for events of this dimension anymore.

“The impulse project shows the conjunction between exhibition center and city center. The project area is located at the northeastern edge of the city center. Together with the exhibition facilities it forms the eastern end of the west-east axis of the ‘inner city development model’” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 34f.). The principal purposes of the impulse project are the reorganization and attraction of the connecting axis exhibition – city center as well as the creation of qualities in the urban environment. The implementation of these objectives is based on the following components: the Dr.-Robert-Schelp-Platz in front of the exhibition entrance should be transformed into an open square. It should contain a varied quality in use and of sojourn and “should manage the traffic flows at the same time” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 34f.). The axis exhibition – Exerzierplatz in the city center should be reorganized and improved towards urban quality (Bauer and BBP 2007). The project “exhibition surroundings” could not be implemented within the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. The draft plans for the reorganization of the Dr.-Robert-Schelp-Platz included a new traffic control system. The political identification process for the future traffic control on the Dr.-Robert-Schelp-Platz lasted from September 2003 until March 2006 (Bauer and BBP 2007). In May 2007, the planning-related foundation was provided and the first regulatory measures for the preparation of the newly created exhibition plaza were met. The constructional measures for the transformation of the street space in the Höfelsgasse could be started in August 2007 (Bauer and BBP 2007), and the transformation and reorganization of the Dr.-Robert-Schelp-Platz could be done from May 2008 to May 2009 (Bauer 2010).

Impulse project „living for generations/PS:patio!“ (Wohnen für Generationen/PS:patio!)

The urban district „Winzler Viertel“, a settlement from the 1950s, is located adjacent to the southern core of the city. It is a district of mixed use with different forms of residential development and classes of population. A few
years ago it was a district with a mixed usage and a conflict-free community. However, some disadvantageous changes could be registered in the subsequent time and the people were afraid, that a deprived area could arise (Bauer and BBP 2007, 39). This affected areas with a classical perimeter development. Furthermore, a large part of the building structure could be dated back to the 1950s and was not compliant to current standards (Bauer and BBP 2007).

Based on the results of the “urban development concept living” (städtbauliches Entwicklungskonzept Wohnen) Pirmasens saw opportunities in a “forward-looking development of the inner city area by a comprehensive city reconstruction” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 39). The main aim of the project was an image improvement of this district. An individual living with a high quality of life and indoor environmental quality should implement this. At the same time the impulse project deals with the development of advanced, cross-generational residential forms. Thereby a residential model should be realized, which combines housing for older age groups with services for people of different periods of life. In this district the social welfare facility is located as well and thus care based on neighborhood assistance should be realized. Residential forms emphasizing capacity building should also be offered by satisfying specific requirements of accommodation. The project also supports the aim “to revalue inner city living and to substitute the run-down building structure with new sustainable structures” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 39).

A residential building study including a housing demand forecast was compiled as the basis for the impulse project. At the beginning of the project the outdated building structure had to be deconstructed. On this occasion four apartment blocks mostly vacant and requiring a reconstruction were deconstructed as a regulatory measure. In August/September 2007 the demolitions of a former car dealer and of the former children’s home in the area of the social welfare facility took place as further necessary regulatory measures (Bauer and BBP 2007).

At the same time as the deconstruction of the four apartment blocks, the joint draft of the architect’s office Nickl & Partners and the landscaping office R. Schmidt was chosen as the future basic concept for the project ‘living for generations/PS: patio!’ in October 2006 (Bauer and BBP 2007, 41). The project attracted support by the admission of a subarea of the Winzler Viertel including the area of the impulse project in the federal-state-program

Figure 3: Modified Dr.-Robert-Schelp-Platz in front of the exhibition center

Source: City of Pirmasens
Changes in Planning Culture caused by Urban Shrinkage

In 2009 the architectural requirements for this project were compiled together with 130 prospective customers, so that the plans could turn into a specific phase of implementation (Bauer 2010). From January until February 2011 the local development plan of the residential building area of the residential concept “PS:patio!” was made publicly available for comments. This participation procedure took place with the residents and the public.

Impulse project „living in the city“ (Wohnen in der Stadt)

The district „Schachen“ is located in the northwest of the inner city and “is an attractive and sought after residential area in Pirmasens”. The numerous brownfields of commercial development zones in the inner zone of this resi-

Figure 4: Deconstruction of the apartment blocks in „Winzler Viertel“

Source: City of Pirmasens

“Social City” (Soziale Stadt). In this context, a former supermarket in close vicinity to the project area was temporary used as a project information center (Projektladen). It acted as a meeting place for the public and thus provided information to the residents. Furthermore, the project information center should be a hub to exchange ideas and a workshop for the common development of this project. Meanwhile the project information center is also a place for exchanging information and for establishing contacts. Here, the citizens get information about the different offers and services of the town (Bauer 2010).

Figure 5: Newly built residential area in „Winzler Viertel“

Source: Elena Gilcher, January 2011
dential area had a dismal future development prospect due to their location. But they exhibit a high urban potential. The city sees the opportunity “to initiate advanced residential development by a comprehensive urban reconstruction” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 43f).

The building complex of the Deutsche Post AG had been vacant for a long time. It was given up in the course of privatization. An industrial brownfield subsumes to this postal courtyard. Both should be supplied by a comprehensive urban reorganization and restructuring “to a new utilization with its main focus on the topic ‘living’” (Bauer and BBP 2007, 43ff).

**Figure 6: Vacant former building complex of the Deutsche Post AG**

The aim of the project is a revaluation of living in the inner city and the replacements of run-down building structures with new sustainable structures. These measures should ensure the preservation of Pirmasens as a place to live in the future. This impulse project should also demonstrate that housing needs can be satisfied in the inner city on account of a high vacancy rate and numerous industrial brownfields. As a result, the establishment of bungalows and duplex houses with a plot area from 200 to 300 m² is possible (Bauer and BBP 2007).

The city of Pirmasens acquired the property of the Deutsche Post AG to prevent a reorganization of the area to an industrial development zone. This project is still in its infancy and thus could not be implemented in the course of the ExWoSt research initiative. In 2010, a further development could not be recognized.

**Perceptions in Pirmasens regarding „Urban Reconstruction West“**

The ExWoSt research initiative „Urban Reconstruction West“ contains an open debate of the paradigm change from “growth” to “shrinkage” for the first time. It shows that a qualitative growth is possible without a renunciation of advancement (Stadtverwaltung Pirmasens 2010).

The admission to the ExWoSt research initiative „Urban Reconstruction West“ brought the concepts of the paradigm change to Pirmasens...
sens and delivered some success. It was shown that Pirmasens has other qualities besides the shoe industry and that these sections (mainly service, tourism and science) should be further strengthened. New companies settle down and new jobs are created. Further projects and initiatives were initialized or were resumed by the impulse projects within “Urban Reconstruction West”. These projects also strengthen the inner city.

However, some obstacles and difficulties became clear during the regeneration of brownfields as well as the implementation of measures and projects within the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. A conversion of the brownfields is difficult. The sustained demographic change and the consequential shrinkage create vacancy elsewhere. Therefore, the processes cannot be stopped, but rather are just transferred to other areas. Most buildings of the shoe industry have a large usable area and Pirmasens reaches its financial limits with the burden of maintaining these vacant buildings. These buildings consist of several levels, yet, nowadays companies usually prefer single level buildings. Therefore it is hard to find a re-user (Bauer 2010).

The model of public-private partnership (PPP) can be judged as positive for the funding of the projects. Projects, which could not be implemented because of the city’s financial restrictions, could be realized in cooperation with a private partner. It was concluded with the “urban development contract” (städtbeaulicher Vertrag) (Bauer 2010). The instruments “social city” and “urban reorganization measure” (städtbeauliche Sanierungsmaßnahme) of the “special urban development law” (besonderes Städtebaurecht) can be proved as successful. These were mainly combined with the “urban development contract” (Bauer and BBP 2007).

Conclusion

The designation of living and retail areas in the peripheral zone of cities triggered a high vacancy and a demise of the inner cities. Therefore, a change of the planning culture in Germany takes place. This is reinforced by the demographic and economic change as well as the change of lifestyles. The federal government and the federal states recognized these problems and the program “Urban Reconstruction East” and the Ex-WoSt research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West” started at the turn of millennium. Affected cities should attract support to combat the problems caused by this trend.

The city of Pirmasens was admitted in the research initiative “Urban Reconstruction West”. Urban shrinkage is a chance for the city to master the consequences of the structural change in the economy and conversion of military sites. A reconstruction and redevelopment measure in fallow buildings and of brownfields took place to encounter the existing problems. Different impulse projects were implemented to show how the effects of city shrinkage could be used for overcoming of consequent problems.

In 2004, the paradigm change of plan-
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Planning culture was confirmed and supported by the introduction of the urban instruments “urban reconstruction west” and “social city” in the Federal Building Code. These instruments show alternatives to the expulsion of areas in the outer zone with the result that the urban functional areas can be reinforced. Indeed, a focus on these instruments is not enough on account of complex stakeholder constellations and conflicting interests. Less formalized, action- and implementation-oriented instruments are more and more important in comparison to normative planning tools. But the new, flexible instruments should complement but not supplant traditional tools. Informal planning can be achieved by an intensive participation of citizens and stakeholders. Public participation is of increasing interest in planning. The inhabitants have to be actively integrated into the planning process to reach a constructive participation. This is possible with different participation procedures like workshop discussions or working groups.

The application of formal as well as of informal instruments due to the stakeholder constellation was unavoidable for the implementation of the projects in Pirmasens. Another important aspect was the public relation. The citizens are informed about the urban development by a city magazine and city debates.

The Pirmasens example demonstrates that city shrinkage will change the future of planning culture. In Germany, there will be higher vacancies in the inner city on account of declining population numbers and the change in urban lifestyle. A development of new concepts is necessary to prevent the desolation of the inner city. A counteraction of city shrinkage should be possible with these new concepts. Furthermore, the application of formal planning instruments should be complemented with informal tools to reach cooperation between stakeholders and the public and to prepare a better implementation of the concepts. The challenges of city shrinkage can be mastered by utilizing the instruments of spatial planning. The opportunities can also be leveraged for improving general living conditions caused by deconstruction and regeneration.

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