



“It’s the process, stupid!”

**From Government to Governance
in urban development**

**A practical guide
for strong cities**

Stipo Consult on behalf of ReUrba²
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photo: Alaina B.

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Introduction: target group and subject matter

ReUrbA is a European project for urban regeneration. The partners want to reverse **urban flight**. Their cities are facing ever-increasing competition from other cities and surrounding areas. This requires new innovative concepts *and* an innovative approach. Government authorities feel unable, but also unwilling, to get to grips with urban redevelopment. They bear the full brunt of the switch from 'government' (taking the decisions) to 'governance' (steering developments in collaboration with others).

The primary focus on cities is no longer on new building, and also less and less on the subsequent 'expansion' in large locations within the city. Increasingly, everything is revolving around **the redevelopment of existing sites**, and the government authorities do not have control, or certainly not sole control, over the land. This makes governance a *sine qua non*. Governance is needed to achieve more with fewer resources.

At the same time, many cities are currently finding that urban regeneration is less and less the domain of spatial planners and housing developers, and that it is increasingly dominated by education, culture and employment issues. The emphasis is no longer on *regional development* alone, but also on *social development*. It is a question of searching for the **integration of all these disciplines** ('civic steering', see chapter 5), each with their own users and investors. Once again, governance is indispensable here.

The approach to governance varies depending on the actual challenges being faced, the local cultures, the people involved, and the circumstances and interests of the parties involved.

That is why we haven't got a **standard recipe**. We do propose the main underlying ideas acquired from our experience of urban development.

This publication deals solely with **governance for urban regeneration**, and not, therefore, with metropolitan governance or the many other fields involving the phenomenon of governance. It is not an academic publication but more of a practical treatise, a inspirational visual experiment based on experience with the best practices of ReUrbA partners, the award-winning best practice in Enschede Zuid (see previous ReUrbA publications), the practical experience of the author with the Stipo approach, and discussions with experts (see colophon). It focuses on the use of governance to encourage new developments and not, therefore, on administration or public services.

This publication looks at the undercurrents, the aims, the myths, the new skills required and the approaches we have found to governance in urban regeneration. Governance excludes at least one thing: working with fixed patterns. That is why the chapters are interspersed with a series of examples of **mechanical thinking**.

This publication is intended for everybody who – in whatever role – wants to play a **leading role** in urban regeneration projects. Although, for reasons of clarity, we have written the publication from a government perspective, our own practice has shown that they may be residents' groups, institutions, housing associations, the business community or private investors. And often all at the same time.



ReUrbA is a European project for urban regeneration.

There are five partners: English Heritage London, the City of Newcastle, GIU Saarbruecken, Rotterdam Development Corporation and the lead partner, the provincial authority of South Holland.

We develop innovative methods for urban regeneration, share them with each other, apply them and make them available for others working in European urban regeneration, for example through www.reurba.org.

The **ReUrbA method** involves four strategies:

1. from demolition to creative transformation
2. from supply to demand orientation, including lifestyles
3. from budget to value orientation
4. from government to governance.



This publication looks at the last of these strategies: the switch to governance resulting in new relationships between users, investors and government.



Mechanical thinking – I

This publication looks at governance. Governance involves almost everything – but it is certainly *not* mechanical thinking.

Mechanical thinking is not deliberately negative. Here, for example, two departments have done exactly what they were told, probably with the best possible intentions.

Governance can only succeed with the opposite of mechanical thinking. Incidentally, there is no term for this. What is the antonym?



I. Undercurrents

From Government to Governance. No more planning from behind a desk. Making plans, implementing them and making investments in ever-shifting coalitions. We see three undercurrents.

1) Among-ness Ten years ago, members of the public applied for permits. And now they come, even though they know they will be turned down, to negotiate about how they can get what they want. Ten years ago, the institutions involved (housing associations, education, etc.) were useful agencies for carrying out policy. Now they are independent and they have a 'leading' role. This is a typical example of how government is, as far as both residents and investors are concerned, no longer *above* those involved, but also *among* them ('among-ness'). And if it fails to organise the players properly, the others will follow their own ideas and *dominate* government ('under-ness').

2) City In the forty years after the Second World War, at least three times as much built-up area was built as in all the preceding centuries. This was a one-sided and cheap process because of the speed required. Despite this, the policy focus was primarily on new building until far into the 1990s. We are now seeing a shift. The city in place requires more and more attention on an ever-larger scale. The extent of the existing city area requiring transformation means that the switch will be permanent.

As a result, spatial planning is being completely transformed:

- from buildings in meadowland with hundreds of cows and tens of farmers to the present-day processes involving tens of thousands of inhabitants and hundreds of institutions, investors and entrepreneurs; each with their own position in the process and each with their own interests
- the mainly spatial approach-together-with-a-little-bit-of-community-thinking is increasingly switching to social, economic and cultural development-together-with-spatial-measures-that-are-needed-too ('civic steering', see chapter 5).

3) Action, action, action The time when government authorities could stick to making visions and plans is long gone. People expect the government to be involved in realisation too. This involves a fascinating paradox: at the same time as government is being given more responsibility, it is being given less authority.

From Government to Governance. It looks as though we are just at the beginning.



Mechanical thinking – 2

The Dutch Railways have been split up into three companies. Each company has its own guidelines. Hence the different types of litter bin.

Saarbrücken: a deliberately informal start

Frustrations from the past often play an important role in governance processes. This was also true of Saarbrücken, where the city wanted to put an ambitious plan onto the agenda, but properly this time. The motorway cuts through the heart of the city and prevents the use of the river located alongside. The city wants to cover over the motorway and, in that way, return the river to the inhabitants.

The strategy used was to launch the project in a very informal setting. Informal discussions took place with leading professionals from a range of organisations and governments involved, as well as with key figures: ‘multipliers’ such as leading architects, former mayors, etc. from outside these organisations but living in the city. They became involved as ‘co-makers’ of the project, contributed, and by doing so became patrons of the project. From this informal base, the project gradually gained public support.

At the same time, the strategy involved not remaining informal for too long. At a well-timed moment, there was a shift from informal to formal discussions.



2. Destination

What is the main goal of your governance approach?

ReUrbA deliberately refuses to offer a ready-made method. The local culture, partners, people and political circumstances are different everywhere. And so are the pitfalls: partners who unexpectedly exploit a procedure for their own interests, residents who appeal against decisions after all, a political crisis that wipes out everything that has been achieved over a period of months... Governance provides **no easy answers**. ReUrbA provides stimulating examples and insights based on a wide variety of practical experience.

Those insights involve the deliberate thinking through of the objectives of governance.

The criticism made of governance is that the involvement of all those involved results in too many drab compromises. Those compromises draw attention away from the urgency of regeneration in neighbourhoods and industrial estates facing difficulties. If innovation is to get going, unorthodox **ideas** are indispensable. Key players from the field who are close to the problems are crucial, but so are unexpected sources from outside.

A very different type of process is needed if **support** is the primary objective. In that case, governance extends involvement – at least among some of the inhabitants, business people and other users of a neighbourhood – and that can result in more support. This requires a different approach to selecting partners and more steering based on the mental ownership of those partners.

The situation is different again if the aim is joint **investment** because private interests will then play a role. Here, we use the term 'investors' in the broadest sense of the word:

volunteers, residents' organisation and welfare workers invest as well. Social investments are needed as well as financial ones. And this often means trying to share the returns. In turn, this objective requires a completely different approach to the governance process.

A combination is almost always needed. It is important to proceed carefully here. If the issue of support becomes dominant, the threat of endless discussions and drab compromise looms, and any form of innovation is suppressed. But ultimately, every innovation requires support. So this means that good **timing** is required to determine which objective is most important at which stage of the process.

Jumble Sales!

How can you get residents past the front door? And how can you generate mental ownership?

Vicar Philippa Boardman introduced an unorthodox approach during the restoration and conversion of her church into the social and cultural heart of the Bow neighbourhood in London: jumble sales!

Every Saturday, for seven years, second-hand CDs, clothing and other articles were sold in the church. This allowed residents to contribute to the restoration as both buyers and sellers. The resulting stream of visitors was exploited by presenting the plans on an adjoining table and asking for people's opinions. A easy-access approach that generated a feeling of involvement among the residents with respect to the New Heart for Bow.

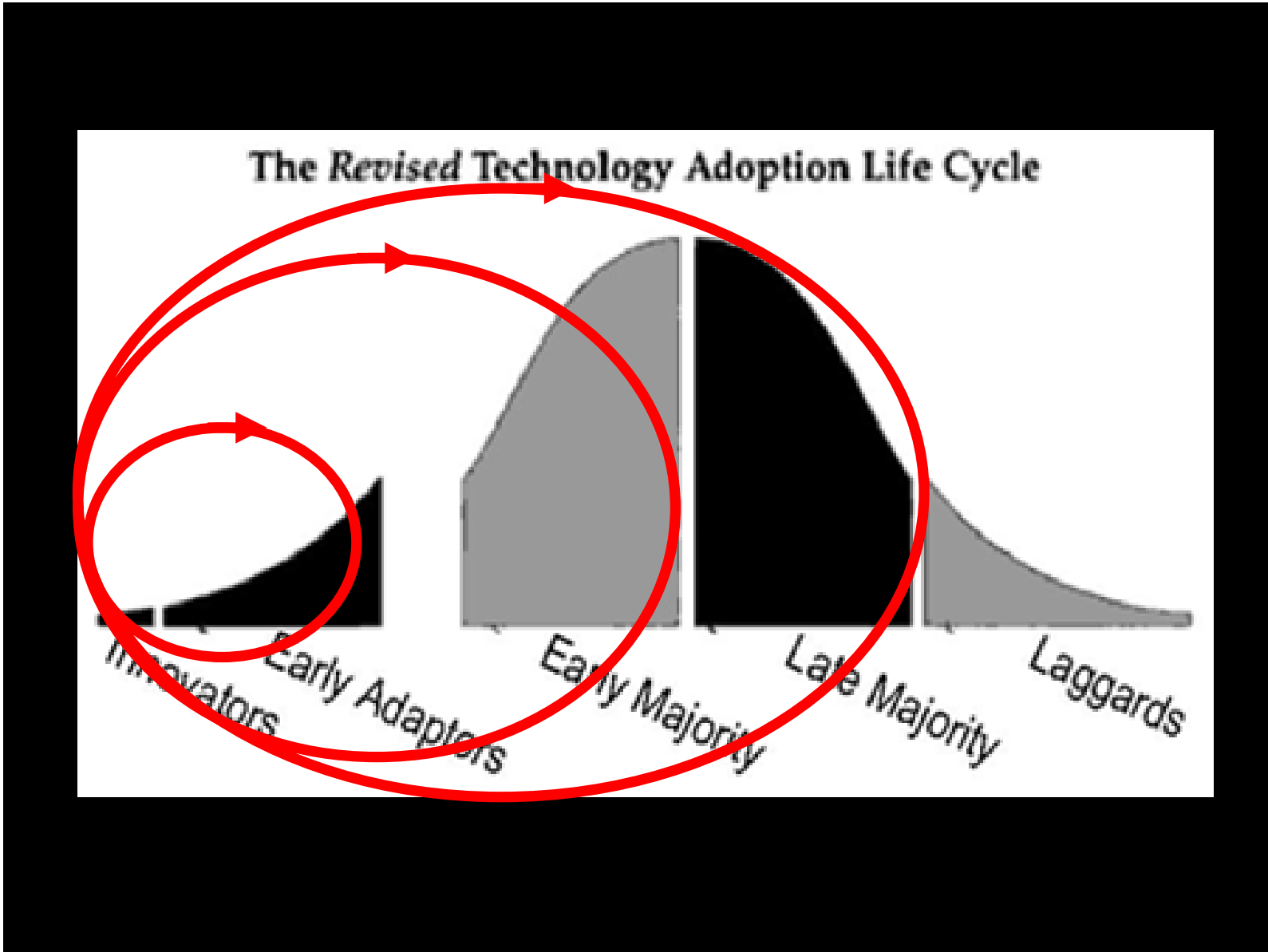


Mechanical thinking – 3

A new road was completed in Hampshire. The line on the left was nice and straight, but the one on the right was a 'wibbly-wobbly white line'. It attracted immediate publicity. Had the driver been drinking, or lost control over the vehicle?

However, after a few days, it turned out that he had followed his instructions exactly. His map had got crumpled on one side.

Source: C. Hartman and P. Tops, 'Frontlijnsturing; Uitvoering op de publieke werkvloer van de stad', University of Tilburg, 2005



3. “It’s the process, stupid!”

“We didn’t do everything from behind a desk. We talked to the local people for months. And even now they are fighting us with all sorts of legal procedures. Governance doesn’t work.” Three persistent myths about governance.

Send two project managers to talk to residents, and they will come back with totally different results. The fact that you do something doesn’t mean that it always works. It’s also a question of how you do something, and what skills you use. What matters is how you structure the process. Hence the title here.¹

Myth 1: “Governance = a new branch in the organogram”

Governance is often tackled on the basis of the structure in place. If residents want to be involved, a new box is added to the organogram of the project.

Urban regeneration usually happens in areas that are in a poor condition. Inhabitants and investors can be suspicious. The issues are very complex, requiring precisely their trust, funds and commitment. The essential thing is to work with them and gradually come up with **innovative solutions**. Talking to everyone without any goal in mind achieves precisely the opposite: compromises in which everybody makes minor concessions and nobody really gets what they want.

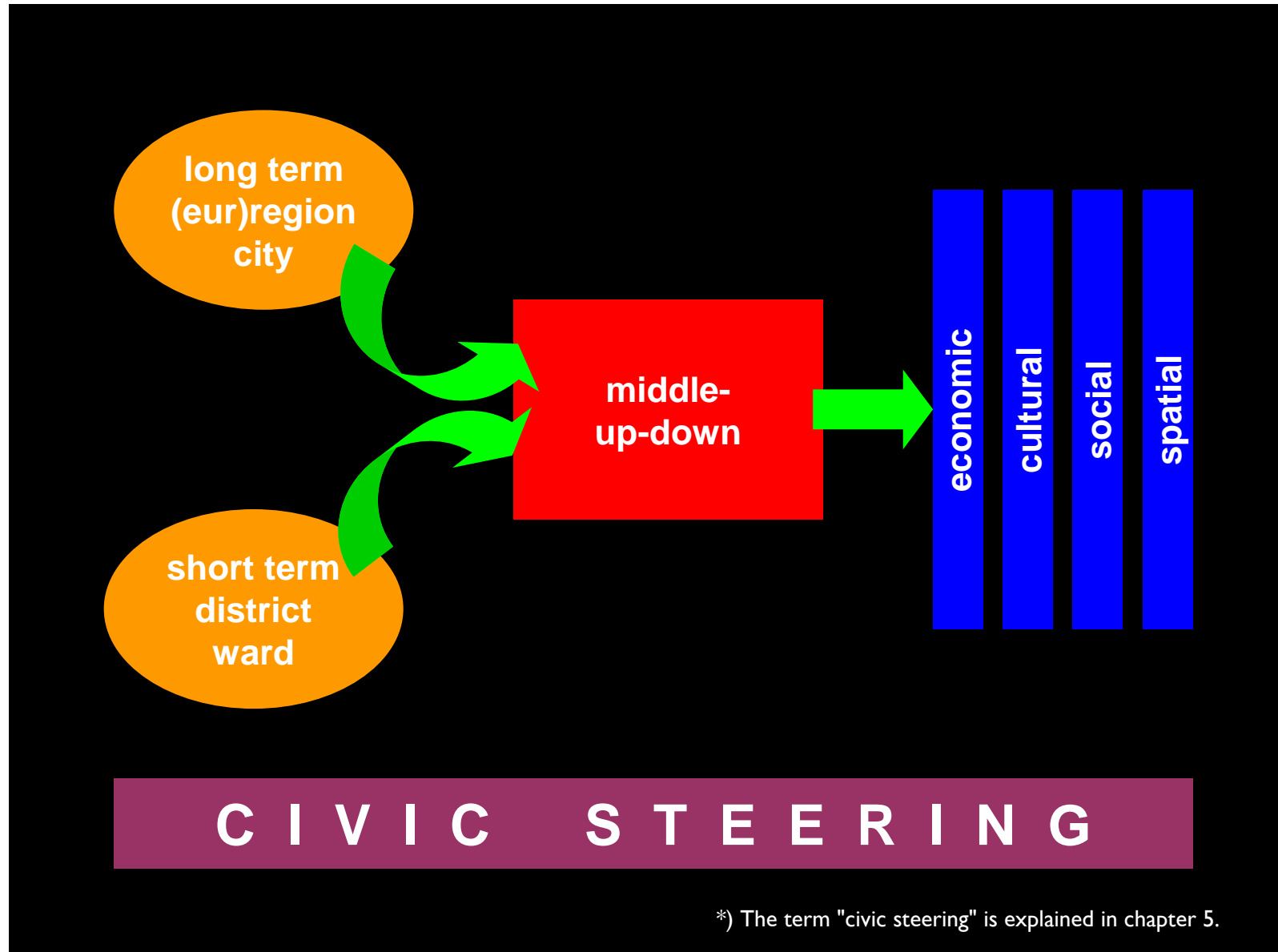
Governance is not an organogram. It is a process involving **energy, inspiration, enthusiasm, persuasion and**

boldness. It is ‘management of change’. It requires leadership, as well as strategic and very gradual, deliberate, manoeuvring. In a process of change, people judge you more on the expectations you generate than on the results alone. Sitting around a table with too many people at once leads to expectations that can no longer be managed.

Marketing theory shows us how people respond to innovation. Only a small group will embrace it immediately. So governments should not take too broad an approach initially, but should start by mobilising this group. It is only when the ‘innovators’ and ‘early adaptors’ get behind the innovation that the rest will dare to follow. There will always be ‘laggards’. If a project manager does not manage the process carefully, the laggards will push in the opposite direction. Widespread resistance will be the result.

Governance requires processes with inspiration, boldness and leadership. This means processes in which trust and enthusiasm are gradually established in relationships of mutual dependence. Processes in which sowing, cultivation and reaping are continuously intermingled, constantly requiring different angles. Governance based on fixed structures will simply block these processes.

¹ As Bill Clinton said: “It’s the economy, stupid!”



*) The term "civic steering" is explained in chapter 5.

Myth 2: “Governance = giving priority to your own agenda and then asking people to join in”

This is an attitude that, in practice, mainly results in conflict. Urban regeneration involves many parties who all have as much say as each other. The trick is to bring people together and establish smart coalitions. That doesn't mean that government can no longer provide steering. Steering is possible by taking an active approach to looking for these coalitions, exploring opportunities and providing the organisation to ensure that they produce results.

The principles of **empowerment and enhancement** are important here. People who take on all the work smother initiatives (however unintentionally) from other parties. Enhancement and empowerment are steering models that are based on encouraging, rewarding, inciting and even demanding initiatives from others.

The process of governance requires leadership. Leaders are people who take people (including the leaders themselves) to places they did not even know existed. Leaders have a **vision**, they know what they want, but at the same time they are open to contributions from others and they adjust their vision regularly. Leaders work together with other leaders on a basis of equality. So governance is *not* a question of letting yourself be steered by others without direction, or without your own vision.

The creation of coalitions that lead quickly to results but that are also sustainable in the long term will only be partially successful if a moral appeal is made to the social conscience of the parties making investments. Initially, it is indeed often necessary to establish a creative process that allows people and parties to look beyond their own interests. But the key to

a successful process thereafter is an alliance of public interests and private profit. Coalitions can only really be successful if there are benefits for all those involved. The first precondition in this respect is an understanding of the interests of all the parties. The second precondition is the ability to identify those interests and bring them together. This means that project managers are transformed from people who think up all the answers into **brokers**.

The question that remains is how to go about it. We now realise that the old top-down approach no longer works: you can't just make a plan behind your desk and drop it into the community. However, the alternative is not the **bottom-up** approach. Processes that simply match what comes out of an area will not include mechanisms that allow for the exploitation of the special features of that area. They miss opportunities afforded by long-term trends and positioning in a broader regional context.

The trick is to bring these two things together. Governance is not top-down, nor is it bottom-up: it is **middle-up-down**. Few people can manage this. Government authorities have people who think up strategic policy, but who find it difficult to transform policy into concrete assignments for particular areas. On the other hand, there are people with their fingers on the pulse of the area who seldom think in terms of higher strategic concepts or long-term trends. Between these two extremes there is a tactical gulf (in other words, there is no interaction between the ideas on the street and long-term trends) that explains why urban regeneration processes so seldom get off the ground.

Governance requires brokers who can use an open vision to work on a middle-up-down basis.



Myth 3: “Governance = a rational process”

“I have lived in the same house for 65 years and I was born there. In the last 10 years, I have seen 70% of my old neighbours leave the area. Problem families have replaced them. A few years ago, there was suddenly an announcement in the paper that the council was going to demolish our whole area. I moved last year and the house where I was born was demolished.” A resident from the regeneration neighbourhood of Scotswood in Newcastle.

For project managers, urban regeneration is a world of projects, timetables, land use, planning procedures, studies, statistics and concepts such as ‘functions’ and ‘spatial programme’. For project managers, government authorities and investors, urban regeneration is something **rational**.

For residents and entrepreneurs, however, it is very **emotional**. Often, they live or work in areas that everybody believes have gone into decline. They may be people who still live there because they couldn’t get out or had no choice but to stay. These may be business people who have watched margins that were already tight being squeezed even further. Their experience is that change is the same as decline, not only in their area but also in their personal circumstances. However, there is also often a lot of pride in the community relationships, the symbols and stories about the past, but these things are seldom exploited.

In these circumstances, fear of change and frustrations from the past play a major role. On the other hand, there are things such as pride, persuasion, boldness, inspiration, energy, identity, enthusiasm, image and culture.

However, urban regenerators seldom come across these emotions in their training or in their assignments. (“Make residents proud of their area again?”)

Building in meadowland was easy to approach rationally. Changing existing urban areas requires much more of a **cultural process**. An approach which – alongside all the rational work that also has to take place – makes room for residents’ emotions and adopts them as a guide. An approach that, through cultural intervention and story-telling, works on establishing new pride and making a new future appealing. And an approach that respects the carriers of emotions in a community: significant buildings as well as stories from the area.

Newcastle has taken a hold of itself. The first demolition plans for Scotswood were developed as a ‘desk job’ and sent out into the world. That resulted in a march on the Civic Centre. Since then, the residents and the council have been talking. They have found an inspiring way of thinking about their new future: joint excursions to projects elsewhere. With each visit, interest in a radical new solution grew, reaching a climax with the visit to the Expo in Malmö in Sweden. The residents and the council are now also working on an innovative Expo for their own neighbourhood, Scotswood.

Governance requires an emotional strategy and a cultural approach to the process.



Mechanical thinking – 4

Here, two departments have done exactly what they were told:

- one has provided information,
- the other has taken steps to prevent vandalism.

Rotterdam: from pampering to empowerment

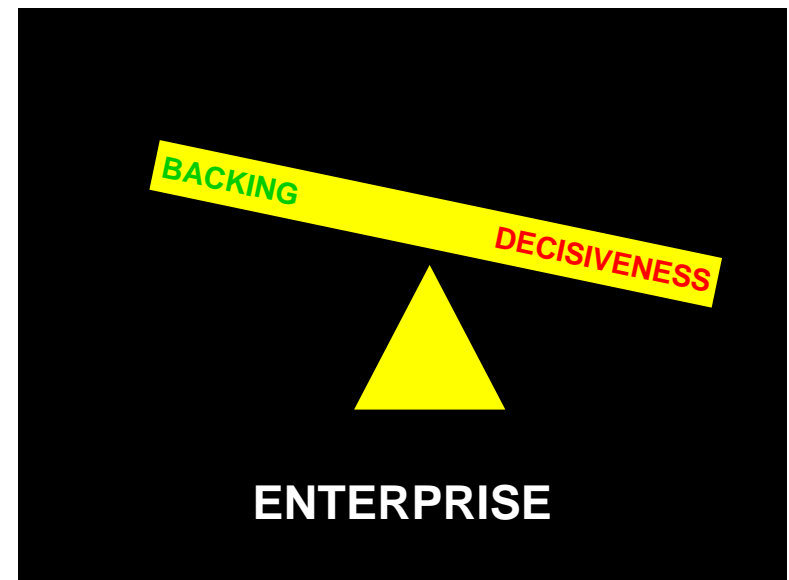
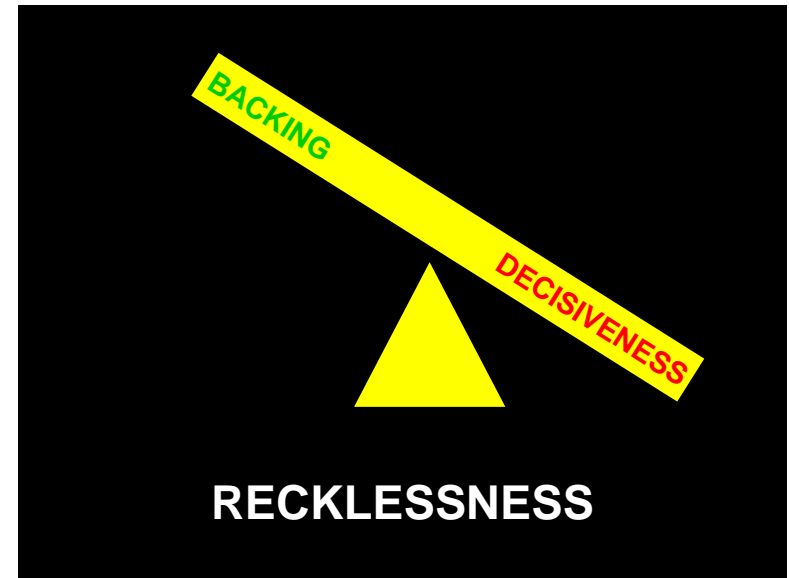
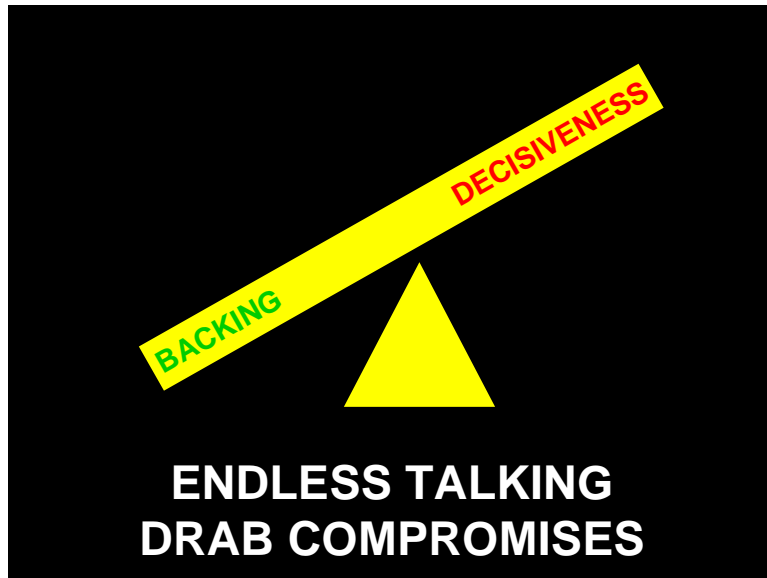
Government wants to get things right for residents and business people but sometimes it goes too far. Rotterdam is restructuring its largest inner-city industrial estate, the Spaanse Polder. It has not proven easy to involve business people in the process. If something had to be done, the council sorted it out quickly, so why should things be any different now? Too much government pampering has an adverse effect on the involvement of the business community in their own surroundings.

The Rotterdam Development Corporation is now trying to make the switch to the *empowerment* of the business community. There is a new representative association for the Spaanse Polder. And areas where the business community makes extra efforts are dealt with first.

The South Holland Stedenbaan: large and numerous

Urban regeneration is becoming ever larger in scale. The Stedenbaan project of the South Wing Platform is the best possible example. The objective: a high-frequency, high-quality rail service for the South Wing, more stations, and the intensification and regeneration of more than 30 areas surrounding stations.

These ambitions require collaboration between numerous municipal, regional, and provincial authorities, as well as ministries and traffic authorities. Two very different policy worlds also have to join forces: traffic & transport, and urban & regional planning. The scales, the investment horizons, financing and the decision-making structures are fundamentally different. The project management brings the two together by getting them to work on joint products and identify mutual interests.



4. The Enterprising Government

Government is being given more responsibility and less authority. It must earn its position in ever-shifting coalitions, and generate investments. In its role as broker, it has to steer emotional processes with considerable boldness and leadership. This requires a totally new type of government.

New skills

What this new government needs is not so much a new structure but, above all, new skills:

1. **motivation / energy:** the will and motivation to make real progress with the area and the community
2. **creativity / innovation:** establishing pioneering solutions; inspiration and renewal rather than consensus; the mobilisation of new ideas; the organisation of fruitful interchanges
3. **externally-oriented / social skills:** winning trust and establishing enthusiasm; forging coalitions, getting interests to overlap; managing expectations; bringing others on board
4. **enterprise / boldness:** responding quickly to opportunities and achieving results; forcing breakthroughs; daring to take risks; leap before you look; don't get stifled by rules; not 'no, unless' but 'yes, as long as'

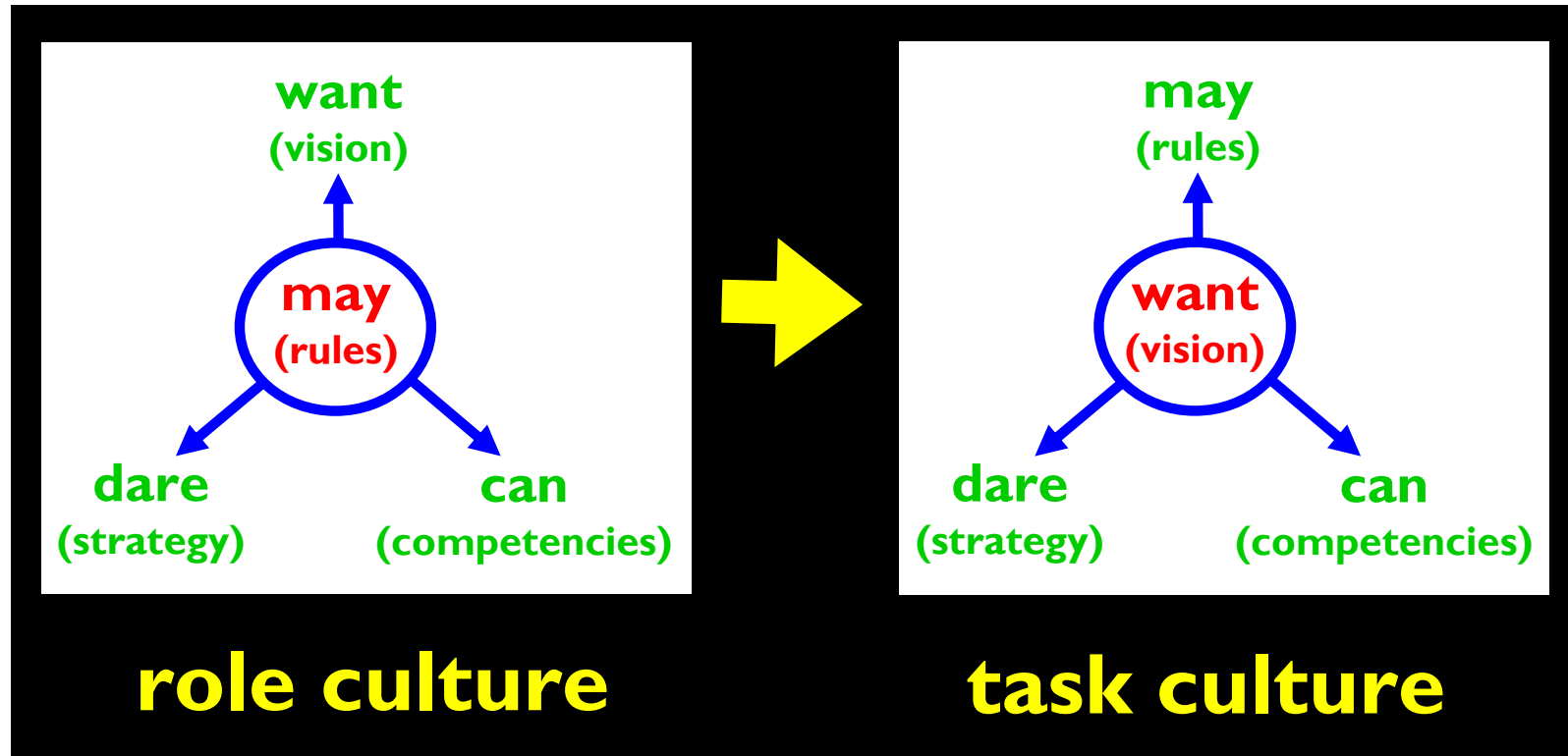
5. **strategy:** everything – and this really means every step – should be approached on the basis of a single strategy, even in the case of long-lasting processes.

Marines model

Governance requires government that operates in the front line, not from behind a desk. Deploying skills in this way means working with the 'marines model', in which the best qualified and best paid people work in the front line. The opposite is true of most government authorities: the more office-based you are, the higher your salary.

Clashing continents

This new structure is in sharp contrast with practice in most government organisations. The staff are recruited on the basis of other skills. Regulations and authority are still not based on this approach. The culture is founded on accountability and the fear of failure. These movements and the pressure of the surroundings are like two continents colliding. If the government doesn't change, the other parties will be quite happy to ignore it.



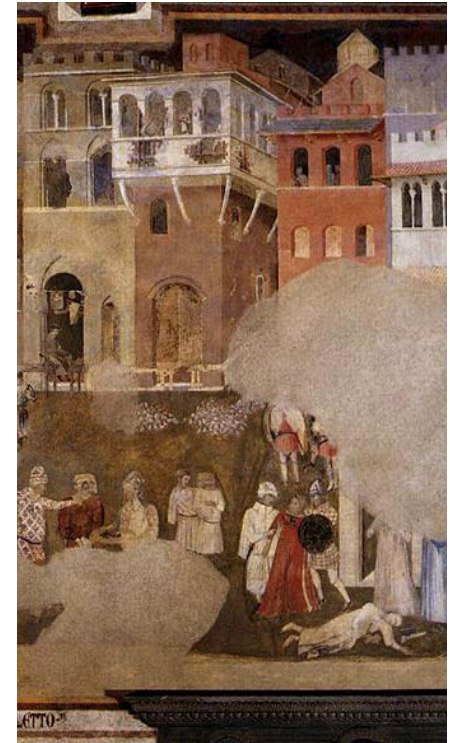
Mechanical thinking – 5

Rules and roles have a central position in the **role culture**. A typical response in this culture is: 'I'm not doing that because it's not my job'. What people are *allowed* to do determines what they *want*, what they *dare* to do and what they *can* do. If the culture of the organisation places a very strong emphasis on compliance with rules as an aim in itself, this is a very strong contributory factor to mechanical thinking.

In the **task culture**, what people *want* determines what they are *allowed* to do, what they *dare* to do and what they *can* do. Rules are required, but they are a way of achieving objectives.

The role culture is occasionally very necessary, for example in the case of administration and enforcement. But it smothers innovation when people try to get new developments going. The task culture is needed for developments such as urban regeneration.

A role culture often develops spontaneously because hiding behind rules is easier than using them flexibly. So a task culture is only created if management explicitly works towards it: an atmosphere in which mistakes are possible, with boldness and trust to the forefront and responsibilities being delegated.



Effetti del buon governo in città and **Effetti del malgoverno in città**, details, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, 1338-40, Fresco, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

There have been two frescos in the town hall of Siena since the 14th century: one that shows the effects of good government, and one that shows the effects of bad government. Under good government, the city flourishes, trade prospers and the surrounding country is green. Under bad government, the only person in the city with a job is the blacksmith who makes weapons. The buildings are neglected and the surrounding country is bare. A deliberate, daily warning for the city fathers.

5. The Art of Governance

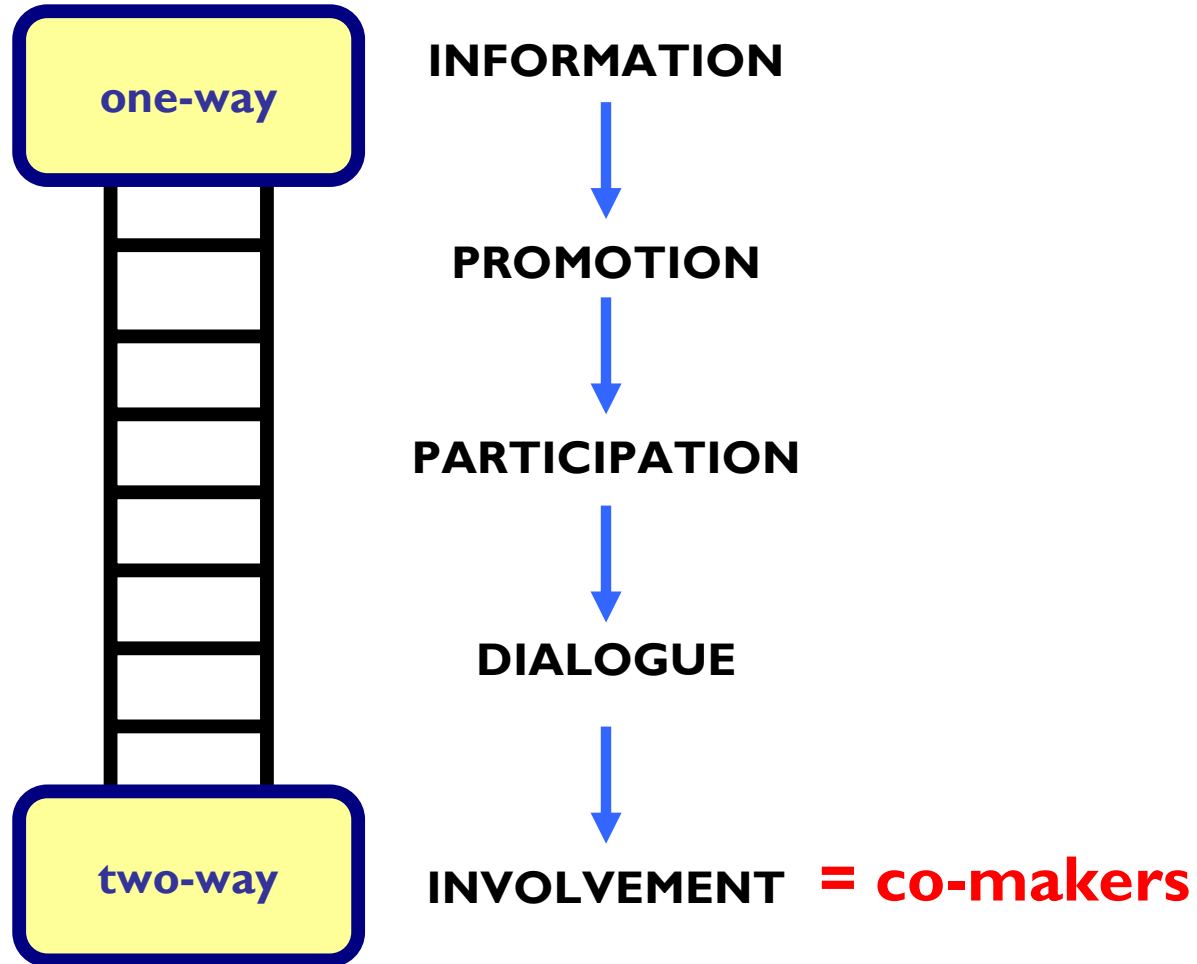
Governance, innovation and urban regeneration come together in three arts: Selectivity, Co-Makership and Civic Steering.

Simon and the Art of Selectivity

Urban regeneration and governance are more complex than new building work. There are more sectors, more parties and all the strands are more interdependent. Under these circumstances, complexity needs to be reduced in order to make steering possible.

This is all closely linked to Herbert Simon's theory of **bounded rationality**. People, and organisations, can only store and retrieve a limited amount of knowledge. Bounded rationality means, in effect, that you can't see the woods for the trees. This phenomenon is exacerbated as complexity increases. However, accepting complexity and not pretending that total rationality is possible makes steering possible again. Eight techniques:

1. **Unravel** the complex issue by breaking it up into manageable, simple components. Split problems up into smaller sub-problems.
2. Don't spend too much time on analysis and review. This will only generate an excessive amount of relatively unimportant information. Make a direct leap into the future by stating an **objective**. Focus your ideas and activities on the goal in an effective way.
3. Go for a **short planning period** in which the establishment of a vision and implementation are not successive chronological steps but intertwined with each other.
4. Adopt a position as a **broker for ideas and interests**: there is a solution to every problem; don't think up things yourself but make sure you know where the right channels are for finding the answers elsewhere.
5. Keep the project organisation small. Large groups end up in endless rounds of meetings without any energy. It is better to have a full-time **small team** than lots of people for brief periods.
6. You should not assume all the responsibility and implementation unnecessarily. Draw on the organisational strength of others and concentrate primarily on getting them to take initiatives: **enhancement**.
7. **'Integrated working'** should not be a basic principle; at most, it should be a result. Otherwise, you are doomed to get bogged down in all the different interlinked interests.
8. Your **course** should be clear and forceful. Set it out clearly and concisely in two or three main objectives. This is also a strong move in terms of communications.



The Art of Co-Makership

If people are to be committed, it is important for them to be actively involved. Their contributions make a project their own: they become **co-makers**. There are external co-makers (residents, investors and external inspirational figures) and internal ones (policymakers, team members and directors).

If co-makership is to be successful, it needs to meet a number of preconditions. **The management of expectations** is the first. Never start too fast with large groups straightaway; adopt a bilateral approach. This will provide you with important information quickly and allow you to establish trust. Get a few people involved properly rather than lots of people a little bit. Extend the circle gradually only after you have done this.

The **selection** of co-makers varies depending on the phase and there is an explicit structure. Use four questions:

1. Who can supply innovative ideas?
2. Who wants to be involved in discussions? (No known moaners)
3. Who is the key figure in a larger group?
4. Who has important initiatives or who can invest?

A lot depends on your **personal skills**: an open attitude and genuine interest. Co-makership is a subtle interplay of mutual exchange. Start in the world of the co-makers and gradually bring them in.

Co-makership only gets exciting when it concentrates on the future. Stop thinking about the here and now. Ask each co-maker what they want to have achieved in the area in ten or twenty years from now. You can work back from this

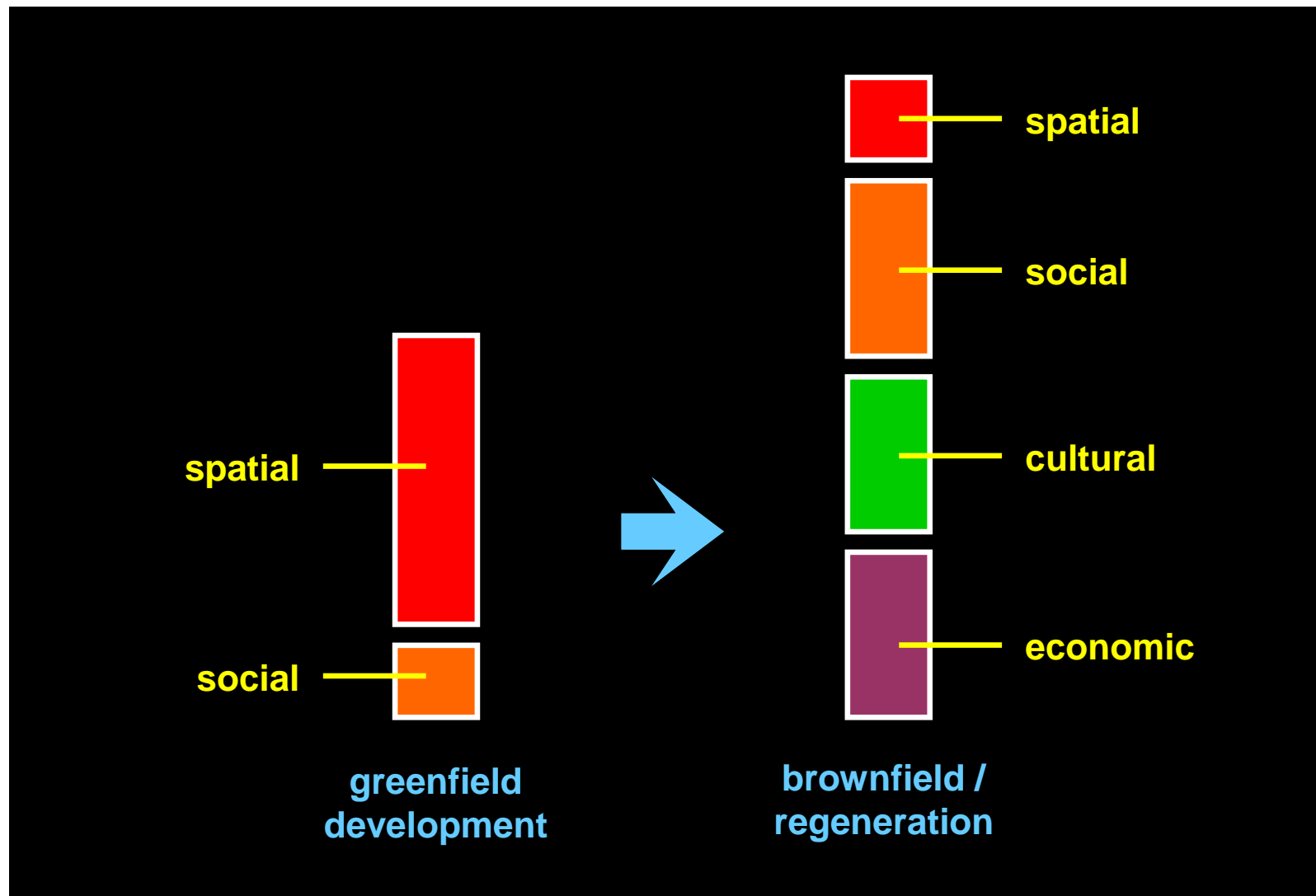
objective to what is needed in the years to come in order to achieve it.

10 ways of botching discussions:

1. Don't put the other person at their ease, don't establish any relationship, and have only your own ideas in mind.
2. Start by setting out your vision.
3. Convince the other person you're right.
4. Explain why his ideas are impossible.
5. Keep things superficial. Don't ask any follow-up questions.
6. Use a set list of questions.
7. Don't provide feedback about what happens to the ideas.
8. Don't follow up on the discussion at all.
9. Make an appallingly boring and businesslike report.
10. Let a long time go by before follow-up discussions.

As you move along, it becomes important to convert involvement into commitment. There have always been activities and projects in neighbourhoods. Bringing the parties into contact with each other allows you to work on **combinations** which wouldn't otherwise have been created. If a combination is to succeed, three features are required: 1) The combination must generate new, unexpected possibilities that weren't present before. 2) It brings all those involved closer to their aims. 3) It doesn't cost much more than the investment needed to find the combination.

Round off the co-makership when the timing is right by establishing projects or pilot projects, and naming the parties involved and a **leader** (owner). The enhancement tactic means that you deliberately aim at giving the initiative to as many other people as possible.



The switch from the emphasis on new building to the redevelopment of existing areas has a major impact on the professions involved. The mainly spatial approach-together-with-a-little-bit-of-community-thinking is increasingly switching to social, economic and cultural development,-together-with-spatial-measures-that-are-needed-too. Civic steering was developed to tackle urban regeneration by involving all these professions.

The art of civic steering

Urban regeneration that is purely based on spatial considerations results in more attractive residential neighbourhoods, but often in the displacement of problems as well. The 'problems' move elsewhere, and the demolition crews follow. To bring an end to this cycle, a new profession is needed: **Civic steering**.² Present and future lives in the area play a central role here, rather than a single policy sector.

One of the most vital requirements of civic steering is tapping into the knowledge from the locals themselves (residents, investors, business people), but also tapping into strategic concepts about potential in the long term (**middle-up-down** steering).

Civic steering takes place in the front line. Here, steering power is developed through the tactic of cross-fertilisation and **release**. The project management organises networks which wouldn't be present otherwise and moves out when partners start tackling the problems themselves. In this way, organisational strength is released among residents and investors.

Civic steering is a **new paradigm** in response to collaboration between social, economic, cultural and physical areas. A paradigm is a set of basic rules we use in our attempts to grasp reality and control it. Since reality is constantly changing, our paradigms make leaps accordingly. That is not a natural process. Changes in time-honoured working practices require a lot of energy and creativity.

Civic steering is a general field, but this does not mean that specialists are no longer required. Building is a profession of its own. Social prevention is a profession of its own. The

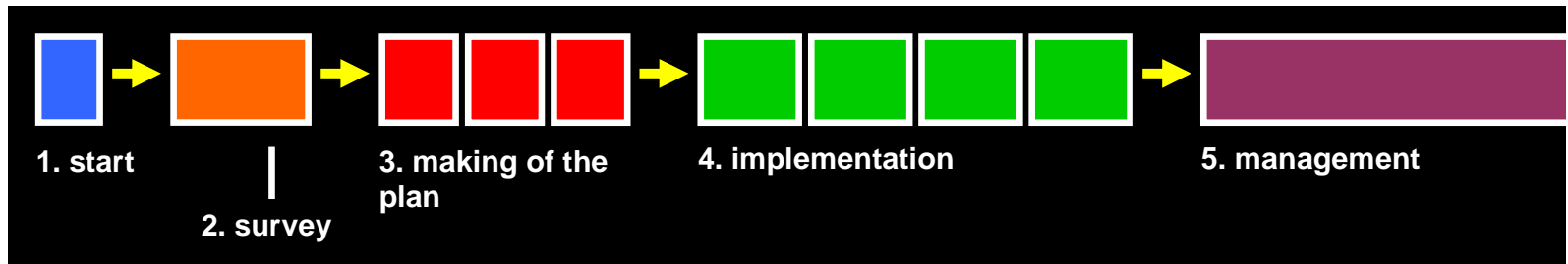
² Civic steering was developed first by Stipo Consult and Enschede for the urban regeneration project Kultuurstraat Wesselerbrink in 2004.

disciplines remain necessary to help with the ongoing development of the challenges generated by civic steering.

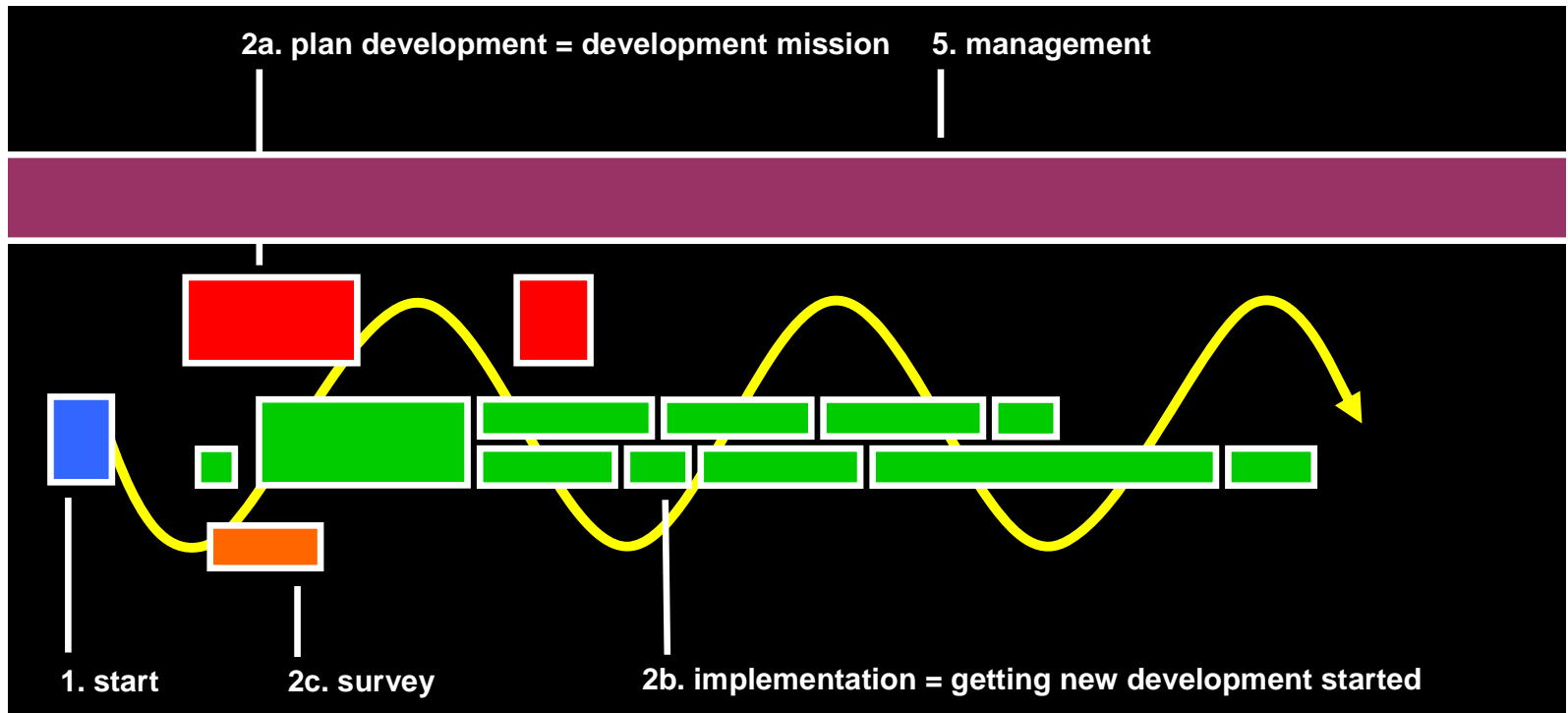
Civic steering results in numerous benefits. The ReUrba publication about *best practice* in Enschede South describes how a plan was drawn up for social, cultural and spatial development within a period of seven months and with the involvement of residents, investors and local professionals. The initial projects were launched as early as the fifth month, usually led by parties from outside government. Examples are pride projects from artists returning residents' stories to the public arena; the use of trade and sport to establish ongoing exchanges between cultures; and the establishment of a new *facilities association* for all the community real estate in this part of the town.

In short, civic steering is:

1. for **strong towns**, and against urban flight
2. not based on a single policy sector, but on the **lives** of residents and the business community
3. **not the displacement of problems** as a result of demolition and new building work but living improvements in the area itself
4. not working from behind a desk, but in the **front line**
5. not only implementation, but also organisation, cross-fertilisation and **release**
6. not just here-and-now, but also **long-term**, strategy and positioning
7. neither top-down nor bottom-up, but **middle-up-down**
8. not only rational steering but also **emotional/cultural** steering
9. not based on structures but on processes with **leadership**, energy and inspiration
10. not mechanical, but oriented towards **innovation** and enterprise
11. not government, but **among-ness and governance**.



New building planning process



Civic steering planning process

Epilogue: a totally different process

In the case of new building work, the planning process amounted to thinking first, followed by development and then management. This is all very logical, but not for the redevelopment of urban areas. The management phase is already structurally present and, every so often, **development interventions** are required (cultural, physical, social, economic, or in all the possible combinations).

A crucial factor in the success of development interventions in urban areas is the tapping into resources of residents, the business community and investors. From the beginning, they want to contribute their own agendas and ideas, and not to be confronted with a ready-made plan about which they can only give an opinion. But they also want to see **the first results quickly**, and not to wait for years of review and planning. The area in which they live and work often demands this, too. Good governance here actually opens up numerous new opportunities because all the planned and ongoing investments of many people can be deployed faster. In the interim, it will be possible to work out longer-term plans.

The role of the project manager is to act as a broker for interests, identifying investment plans and linking them to the shared vision. Vision and implementation will overlap much more and they interact repeatedly and continuously. This is represented by the wavy yellow line. The procedure moves in less of a straight line and is more **fluid**.

The implementation of the development intervention series takes longer in the case of urban development than with new building, particularly if the intervention is also expected to achieve social, cultural and economic goals. The result is a linked web of implementation actions which take shape only

as progress is made, in collaboration with numerous parties and often in irrational ways, so that **new, unexpected paths** are taken.

In this series of larger and smaller interventions, a **concise, supported, binding strategy** is crucial. Otherwise, the numerous projects will degenerate over the course of many years, with contributions from numerous people, into an *ad hoc* process. The strategy can, for example, consist of three 'quality basics' (as in ReUrbA best practice in Enschede Zuid: 'pride', 'uniqueness', 'neighbourliness') and a shared objective (a leap into the future that describes what 'we' want to achieve in 20 years from now, allowing us to work back and decide what is needed tomorrow). The objective is adjusted repeatedly as progress is made; this is less true of the quality basics.

Chapter 4 describes how a totally new process of this kind calls on **totally new skills** from project managers and their circles. Knowing what everybody wants, acting as intermediaries for different interests, new networks, investments and tapping into pools of ideas – these things all require extensive enterprise skills, a willingness to take risks, creative breakthroughs, boldness and stamina and very highly developed social skills.

The two illustrations are intended to be metaphorical rather than literal descriptions. All situations are different. But what they show is that steering urban redevelopment is completely different from steering new building developments. It is high time for a thorough rewriting of the handbook about project-based working.



photo: Hermano Gris

Colophon

Client

Lead partner ReUrbA², provincial authority of South Holland

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This publication drew on

- the experience of, and discussions with, the five ReUrbA partners: English Heritage London, City of Newcastle, GIU Saarbruecken, Rotterdam Development Corporation and the provincial authority of South Holland
- Discussions with Professor Pieter E.W.M. Tops, University of Tilburg; Professor Geert R. Teisman, Erasmus University Rotterdam; T.A. Daamen of Delft Technical University
- The ReUrbA² publication 'Urban Regeneration: from government to governance, a practical outline'
- Best practice Kultuurstraat in the neighbourhood Wesselerbrink in Enschede Zuid; winner of the Ecorys Restructuring Award 2005
- The Stipo approach for urban regeneration and spatial strategy developed at the University of Amsterdam and elaborated in practice

- Visual material from De Intensieve Menshouderij, Stipo Consult and from the publication 'Front-Line Steering' of Professor Tops

Internet

- www.reurba.org
- www.stipo.nl
- www.leefsturing.nl / www.civicsteering.com
- www.enschede.nl -> stadsdelen -> enschede zuid
- www.intensievemenshouderij.nl

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