Follow-up Report

COMPETING FOR URBAN LAND

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URBAN-NEXUS

1. Introduction

This Follow-up Report summarises the URBAN NEXUS Dialogue Café in Göteborg Sweden 10-11 April 2013. During these two days, a structured dialogue took place amongst a cross-section of representatives from a range of organisations with an interest or remit in developing sustainable urban land use. The Dialogue Café provided an opportunity for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from across Europe to share their knowledge, experiences, concerns, organisational aims, objectives and visions. It represented the third stage in the URBAN-NEXUS process of building long-term strategic partnerships to tackle some of the broader issues linked to adopting an integrated approach to urban sustainability.

Background material – the Synthesis Report, the agenda, key-not presentation, and descriptions of fieldtrips to local case studies can be downloaded from the Urban Nexus website www.urban-nexus.eu.

This Follow-up Report contains a summary of both the discussions around the Synthesis Report and the work with local case studies. Details on the discussions on the Syntheses Report and mainly its key messages will be provided as well as the outcomes obtained from those discussions and from the discussions on the local case studies. We will then revisit the key messages updating and reformulating them highlighting the links between the URBAN NEXUS' themes – Urban Climate Resilience, Health and Quality of Life, and Competing for Urban Land. We hope that these updated key messages will provide a basis for further discussion at upcoming dialogue cafés.

The authors wish to thank everyone who contributed to development of the Synthesis Report, the Dialogue Café, and this Follow-up Report. Special thanks to all participants and partners who provided a rich discussion on the relevant topics. We also want to thank the City of Göteborg who generously invited us to share their experiences of urban land use planning and management.

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Content

2. Executive summary

This follow-up report summarises the URBAN NEXUS Dialogue Café in Göteborg Sweden 10-11 April 2013. During these two days, a structured dialogue took place amongst a cross-section of representatives from a range of organisations with an interest or remit in developing sustainable land use. The Dialogue Café provided an opportunity for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from across Europe to share their knowledge, experiences, concerns, organisational aims, objectives and visions. It represented the third stage in the URBAN-NEXUS process of building long-term strategic partnerships to tackle some of the broader issues linked to adopting an integrated approach to urban sustainability.

A Synthesis Report on Competing for Urban Land was developed as a background providing the European state of the art regarding urban land use research and practice. It intended to inform dialogue before and during the Café. Not being able to cover everything, the Synthesis Report focuses on three main themes: Socio-cultural Space, Green-blue Infrastructure and Building Mass & Physical Infrastructure. These themes are discussed across the context of growing, stable and shrinking cities. The Synthesis Report also draws on experiences from the two previous thematic dialogue cafés on Urban Climate Resilience and Health and Quality of Life. The synthesis ends up in a number of Key Messages, some of which turned out to be rather self-evident and non-controversial others to be very much open to debate.

This Follow-up Report presents a summary and main conclusions from the Göteborg Dialogue Café. It identifies some key issues and topics for further consideration and development in subsequent phases of the URBAN-NEXUS project. The report also indicates potential areas for joint activities to help build long-term strategic partnerships amongst partners, the wider stakeholder group and participants in successive dialogue cafés.

The Dialogue Café was also experimenting with diverse forms of dialogue - comparing working on general questions based on the Synthesis Report with the application of these to local study areas. This also included comparing using traditional post-its with working through a new digital map-based workshop tool, Urbania. All methodologies have their pros and cons; the crucial thing though seems to be giving people time to engage in structured dialogue and ensuring that everybody has a say. Even so, we can see great potential in working with a map based digital tool, such as Urbania.

Policy-makers and practitioners risk drowning in a sea of data and information. Much of this information primarily discusses what needs to happen and why, but seldom tackles the issue of how to make change happen. Developing enabling mechanisms and providing simple tools/guidelines seem to be promising ways forward. And so does visioning, where experience shows that visionary mayors can make a difference and even more so if the wider range of urban stakeholders are involved in the visioning process.

Research is often too theoretical to be immediately implemented in urban planning and management processes. Practical case studies may give valuable insights but are seldom analysed in terms of what were the factors that led to success or failure and most importantly which of the lessons learnt could be transferred to other cities and city regions, and what adaptation is needed.

We need to find more efficient and effective means of sharing knowledge and building collective intelligence (and capacity) through partnerships that capitalise on and mobilise experience on a

range of critical issues, such as how to deal with risk and uncertainty, how to balance conflicting interests, and how to achieve an integrated approach. Especially in times of economic crises it is a real challenge to maintain the economic justification f for social or environmental needs.

Researchers recognise and appreciate the merits of building stronger partnerships with decision-makers and other stakeholders. This will help making the design and development of research more relevant to both society and diverse stakeholders. In the best of worlds it will also lead to co-creation of knowledge and capacity building. However, research must still be free to reflect on, and critically scrutinize present urban processes and praxis.

Partnerships demand an atmosphere of mutual respect across diverse disciplines, sectors and hierarchies in order to overcome prejudice, preconceptions, cultural differences and institutional and professional barriers. Engaging citizens in strategy development and implementation fosters new approaches to the use of physical assets as well as the various social and economic resources.

All of this cannot happen in a vacuum, however, and collective ownership, leadership and vision are fundamental prerequisites for the success of long-term ambitions to build sustainable urban land-use. Together with the need to engage all sectors of society – the private, the public and the civic – this calls for new forms and methods of governance as well as better education regarding the issues that we face when aiming to respond to challenges linked to competing for urban land.

The content and context of urban land use policies in Europe are highly diverse, but there are some common features which should be addressed at the regional, national and local levels of government. These include:

- alignment of planning for service-delivery and land-use with policies for urban development and regeneration

- effective linkages between city and regional planning mechanisms

- co-ordination of urban policies across all ministries and public sector agencies

- more integrated governance and planning instruments and processes

3. The Synthesis Report

The dialogue café started with a series of key note lectures and a presentation on the Synthesis Report and its key messages. After this warm-up session, participants were asked to discuss and comment on the report, in small groups. The following questions had been formulated in advance to animate the discussion:

- Does the report cover the different themes appropriately? What is missing and what should be covered in more depth?
- With which of the key messages do you agree/disagree?
- What do you find most encouraging or interesting in the report?
- What do you find most challenging in the report?

3.1. General

Very few participants had actually read the whole report beforehand while most had gone through the summary and the key messages. Therefore, it was hard for participants to have an opinion on whether the Synthesis Report covered the themes appropriately or not. The question was raised as to whom the report was aimed. It might be too extensive for the stated primary target groups: municipalities, policy-makers and businesses engaged in urban issues. Furthermore, much of the information primarily discusses what needs to happen and why, but seldom tackles the issue of how to make change happen. The report may thus be effective for awareness raising but less for decision-making. According to many participants, more knowledge alone is not the way to develop better solutions. Instead, more efficient enabling mechanisms as well as useful hands-on tools and guidelines are asked for by municipalities.

Many participants stressed that how challenges and potentials are met by cities depends both upon governance issues (e.g. interests, perceptions, political leadership, priorities, windows of opportunity) and the specific context in which the city is embedded (e.g. national policies, administrative hierarchies, funding).

Participants advocated an integrated approach to urban land use planning and management – but what are the mechanisms for supporting such approaches? The importance of context and scale was highlighted and several participants also stressed the importance of bottom-up initiatives and wide stakeholder involvement. More advanced urban governance was a key issue, but participants also recognized that visionary mayors and strong political leadership can make a huge difference.

3.2. Theme 1: Socio-cultural Space

KEY MESSAGE 1: Planners and spatial planning can play an important role both in negotiating diverse interests and in advocating less powerful social groups and Nature. However, in the end the economically and politically most powerful wins.

KEY MESSAGE 2: The socio-cultural identity of European cities is threatened. Instruments and procedures have to be found to better negotiate conflicting interests.

KEY MESSAGE 3: Cities have always flourished and declined. However, there are still no planning strategies and instruments for clever adaptation to present shrinking processes.

KEY MESSAGE 4: Cities with strong cohesion, a well-balanced relation of public and private, built up and open space, and ways to deal with conflicts before they turn into crises are characterized by on-going negotiation, cooperation between different actors and in general strong participation by civil society matched with an enabling administration and policies.

The first key message proved controversial giving rise to a lot of discussion. Some participants said that if true it was not worthwhile trying to do anything. Others saw the possibilities of citizens' initiatives to gain political power; to elect leaders who listen to all stakeholders and try to involve and empower citizens. Reports on visionary mayors and democratic processes of creative negotiations on sustainable development were given. Knowing the threat/problem enables planners and urban actors to tackle it.

The second key-message was too truncated and consequently easy to misunderstand: It was considered a bit dangerous as it could be interpreted as immigrants threatening local identity. But it is exactly the cultural, social and ethnic diversity, the multitude of ways of life that makes the European city. This includes the neighbourhood of old and new buildings, private, semi-public and public spaces, technical infrastructures, and green spaces. It is the privatisation of public spaces (shopping malls, stations, gated communities), segregation, an astonishing proximity of decay and upgrade accompanied by the loss of the average, the intensification of differences (social, cultural, physical, ecological) heading for conflict and crises that threaten the typical urban diversity and "freedom" (individualism, liberty). Social cohesion becomes a topic, not only in the public debate but also in European and national legislation, not only as the smaller sister of (economic) growth, but in context with a debate on equality as a factor of general happiness and fewer conflicts. To keep the wholeness, the unity within diversity for the socio-cultural space of a city is one of the great challenges.

Next to demographic changes the economic crisis was seen as a cause of shrinking cities. This in turn means that financial resources to take advantage of the opportunities offered by shrinkage are lacking. These were seen in green and blue infrastructure possibilities and the establishment of "best density ratios for best land use". The advice to city managers would be: accept reality, that is shrinkage, and plan for doing the best of it instead of trying to invest in growth that will never come. That 40 per cent of EU cities are considered to be shrinking underlines the relevance of such considerations.

The forth key message was widely accepted; participation and empowerment being seen as important instruments for sustainable urban development.

3.3. Theme 2: Green-blue Infrastructure

KEY MESSAGE 1: Urbanization is both a challenge and an opportunity for the management of ecosystem services globally, regionally and locally.

KEY MESSAGE 2: Planning for, developing, and maintaining functioning urban green-blue infrastructure can significantly enhance human health and wellbeing

KEY MESSAGE 3: Urban ecosystem services and urban blue-green infrastructure can significantly contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

KEY MESSAGE 4: Ecosystem services and biodiversity must be integrated in urban policy and planning. Successful management of ecosystem services and urban blue-green infrastructure should be based on strong multi-scale, multi-sectoral, multi-administrative level and multi-stakeholder involvement

These key messages were considered quite self-evident and non-controversial. There are obviously a lot of win-win solutions, but also potential conflicts (for details see the Synthesis Report). Careful planning and management as well as stakeholder involvement are needed to bring about the full positive potential. Green-blue infrastructure must be integrated in urban policy and planning.

Green-blue infrastructures are cultural ecosystems that do not self-establish; planning, investment and maintenance is needed. Mechanisms for financing in times of economic crises need better illumination. You also have to come to grips with the fact that costs often burden one part of the city administration whilst benefits appear elsewhere. The big challenge is maintenance, an area where local stakeholder involvement can constitute part of the solution.

Ecosystem disservices, such as increased incidence of pollen and insect pests, the damaging of pavements and sidewalks, could have been treated more thoroughly. More emphasis on governance was also wished for. The regulatory structures, even if they are very diverse and differ a lot from country to country and even from city to city within the same country, could have been discussed more.

Most encouraging is the present trend of urban gardening and farming. Although this cannot feed the city it is a valuable complement both for environmentally conscious people who want fresh food and for more self-sufficient people and communities. Gardening and taking care of green-blue spaces has also proved to foster social links and enhance social networks.

The 4th message was considered most important as it dealt with action.

3.4. Theme 3: Building Mass & Physical Infrastructure

KEY MESSAGE 1: Shaping "better" cities is seen as a main response to current sustainable development challenges globally. This entails creating cities that succeed in mixing a plethora of different land uses and activities to ensure equal and efficient access to urban services and functions – regardless of whether the cities are growing or shrinking. The complexity of such endeavours calls for dealing with urban development as a "wicked problem", where there is never a final resolution, but instead continuous development processes in need of constant strategic facilitation.

KEY MESSAGE 2: From both resource saving and cultural heritage perspectives, an obvious approach to urban development is to make the most of existing buildings and infrastructures. However, for them to perform well from social, cultural, environmental and economic viewpoints, a multitude of interests have to be negotiated with all involved stakeholders – including the public. Such an integrated approach to conservation and transformation also needs to be institutionalised into different systems for urban planning and management.

KEY MESSAGE 3: Urban infrastructures – and in particular traffic and urban water – take up vast areas of urban land. To mediate between different land use demands, there is a need for more integrated approaches to infrastructure planning and management that build capacity for future-oriented transformation and resilience. This is not least a matter of negotiation between different urban development interests.

KEY MESSAGE 4: Turning cities smarter is put forward as a key response to urban development challenges, but to promote sustainable development such approaches need to shift from seeing smartness as an engineering challenge to dealing with smart cities as a wider societal challenge involving a multitude of urban stakeholders.

KEY MESSAGE 5: Combining high urban density with polycentric urban structures may deliver benefits of both compact cities (such as accessibility, efficiency and cohesion) and sprawling cities (such as urban greenery), and be implemented both locally and on the city-scale. However, density is highly city-specific, where cultural factors and lifestyles impact on what is seen as good urban patterns and acceptable density in different locations.

Also here, the key messages were thought to be quite general and maybe not very exciting. It was discussed if there were too many target groups and whether this made the key messages less interesting for all. A general comment was on the lack of examples from Southern Europe, with a side comment was that such experiences may become increasingly relevant for Northern countries due to climate change. Additionally, the economic dimension was seen as missing in the key messages and also largely in the Synthesis Report. What are the impacts and responses to the on-going economic crises? Another widespread comment related to the lack of concrete – and followed-up – examples. What works and in what contexts? What are the "low-hanging fruits"?

Regarding key message 1, the understanding of urban development challenges as "wicked problems" was appreciated and seen as relevant. There is a need to take conflicts and processes into account, as well as to develop different strategies for the short and long terms. The 2nd message was very much linked to the dynamics between conservation, re-use and flexibility, to build fluid and vibrant cities. Regarding urban infrastructures, the need for seeing them as integral elements of cities and not as problems was emphasized. However, it was also acknowledged that infrastructure is a strong development driver that needs more proficient design efforts. "A good infrastructure network is not a patchwork of projects." This also links to a need for more integrated governance, planning instruments and processes.

The 4th key message triggered much discussion around smart cities being also about social aspects. This lead to an emphasis on the social dimension of smart cities – such as "the right to the city", public goods, environmental injustice and spatial segregation – and from there to the needs and capacities for wider public participation in design, planning and implementation, and the possible need for a new governance layer between government and local people. The word "co-production" was frequently used.

Finally, the key message linked to urban form and structure was challenged by saying that there are limits to compactness and also to the optimum size of cities. The lack of discussions regarding critical links between the city core and its hinterlands was viewed as another gap.

4. Local case studies

Three field trips were arranged, linked to the three main themes of the Synthesis Report. The district of Northern Hisingen illustrating Socio-cultural Space, the Kville Valley illustrating Green-blue Infrastructure and the River City illustrating Building Mass & Physical Infrastructure. The aim of the field trips was to let participants test the key messages of the Synthesis Report in a local context. Questions aligned to the key messages were formulated and local expert guides provided insights into land-use challenges and opportunities.

The following day participants reflected on their impressions from the field trips. The purpose of this session was to elaborate on and reality-check the key messages of the Synthesis Report.

We used a new Google Maps-based workshop tool – Urbania – to help collate "notes" and "comments" geographically. This was an interesting experiment. Some people thought that the way we used Urbania – having someone enter notes, comments and pictures via a keyboard hampered the discussion. On the other hand most people found it useful to have easy access to maps and views during the discussions. Furthermore all notes and comments were easily combined and available as a pdf file immediately after the workshop. A majority of the participants was willing to work with Urbania again and we judge the tool to have great potential.

4.1 Socio-cultural Space – Northern Hisingen

Map: Kartdata 2013 Google
Marking added by URBAN-NEXUS

Photo: Klas Andersson (Mistra Urban Futures)

We visited the northern parts of the Hisingen Island, a part of the city that previously has been perceived as insecure with incidences of car fires, stone throwing and gunfire. Northern Hisingen is situated between areas undergoing densification and the urban fringe.

"We want to around the negative socio-cultural development and work with the inhabitants to create secure, vibrant and attractive neighbourhoods", said our guide, Åsa Lorentzi, who is working for the city of Göteborg. As a project manager, she coordinates twenty different activities concerning a diversity of areas such as labour market measures, youth recreation, the social dimension in city planning, meeting-places and school management. The combined results of these activities are meant to create a sense of belonging, trust and reliance between people and are fundamental to social sustainability.

The study visit also included a stop at the newest preschool in Gothenburg, designed with inspiration from Reggio Emilia in Italy. One of the most challenging aspects of the Reggio Emilia approach is the solicitation of multiple points of view regarding children's needs, interests, and abilities, and the concurrent faith in parents, teachers, and children to contribute in meaningful ways to the determination of school experiences. Thus parents play an important part in the activities of the pre-school.

"We think that good living conditions for the children are important if we want people to feel hope and optimism", Åsa stressed. Another way of establishing good living conditions is to involve citizens' in 'safety-tours' of the neighbourhood, whereby people highlight hazards and unsafe areas that would benefit from attention. This was also a topic for discussion, when we experienced Northern Hisingen by walking and talking.

Question: How can economic and political powers be balanced in the development of Northern Hisingen?

The political strategy to put "Backa in focus" was the starting point for a new development period in Northern Hisingen. Backa, the neighbourhood where the unrest occurred, received special attention, but the work was carried out within the regular administrative structure. This approach delivers two advantages: it allows for learning processes offering benefit to the urban district and the entire city; and it encourages staff in the different departments to cooperate towards a common goal. In this way integrated and balanced social, economic and cultural development can be achieved.

Concentrating activities on children's upbringing and improvement of public spaces promises visible benefits in a relatively short time. The high quality of the pre-school is a sign of respect for the needs of the community. Giving access to the premises for civic activities after school hours provides a good place for a community in need of negotiation space. Civic activities like Safety Walks and urban gardening can be interpreted as "community economy" delivering pleasant surroundings, flowers and vegetables and publicly accepted "self-employment". There are chances for a local economy, the first signs of which can be seen in small shops and enterprises in the ground floors of residential buildings. Political support to follow this pathway might create jobs and contribute to the identity of a mixed, lively neighbourhood.

Forward planning and participation, participatory budgeting or local control over budgets or parts of budgets are ways to accept the expertise of the inhabitants. This ought to be connected with a policy to protect existing residents, making sure the residents are not forced out because of increasing rents. Agreements to offset rent increases through energy savings was discussed as a possible way.

One big issue in Northern Hisingen was the actual involvement of politicians in the district´s development. People want to see their representatives, talk to them, and make them understand their priorities. Community planning and organising but also simply living up to the responsibility of elected politicians can improve the situation. To engage all social groups it will be important to use different means: for instance social media, local press and local television. Beyond involving the different social strata it will be of outmost importance to integrate the different ethnic and cultural groups of former migrant families and "new-comers" making diversity a welcome resource of the neighbourhood and use it for the coproduction of good living.

Question: *What is the socio-cultural identity of Northern Hisingen and how can it be promoted?*

The answer to this question is yet to be found! The activists in the district encounter great diversity in culture, attitudes, age, interests etc., which is not yet commonly identified as a resource but rather as a problem. The community of diversity may start by using public space such as an urban garden to involve different people in events and interactions that help them recognise and respect one another's diversity while celebrating shared interests. However, funding and organisational support is needed to facilitate intergenerational encounters. The middle-aged immigrant woman who speaks rudimentary Swedish may turn out to be a great cook, the elderly gentleman retired from Volvo knows a thing or two about bikes, and teens may help elderly people to Skype with their loved ones. Monitoring the social background of the garden users will help to find ways to involve different groups addressing their various needs.

The discussion clearly revealed the necessity to work with the inhabitants to develop ways of talking about socio-cultural identity by making use of the diversity, looking for and supporting stabilising

factors within the diverse communities and within each socio-cultural group. To feel the support of a group of one's own choice strengthens the ability to meet "the strangers". The strategy is to work with what is already there.

Just like any other community Northern Hisingen has its activists; they are part of the socio-cultural identity of the area. Inhabitants can experience the positive outcome of their activities: using the pre-school playground after opening hours, using its rooms as a community centre, sitting on the benches alongside the way to the bus stop etc. It is important to preserve the spaces and competences of existing groups while giving new-comers room and support for their activities. The group of young men working on their motorbikes could be offered space next to the petrol station to minimise conflict with elderly people needing silence. The celebration of diversity – which could become the district´s identity – is connected to consensual solutions for conflicting interests.

Question: In a future of less housing scarcity in the Gothenburg region: how could Northern Hisingen adapt to a potentially shrinking population locally?

This was perceived as a very unlikely scenario. Still some ideas arose:

− diversify the functions of the ground floors
− set up guest flats
− be aware of homogenous age groups among inhabitants: ageing at the same time or children moving out at the same time
− monitor vacancies, for instance to concentrate vacancies allowing for reconstruction,
− adjust your investments
− adapt the neighbourhood for decreased housing demand through demolitions or partial demolitions that reduce building capacity, e.g. remove upper floors or convert to social/community space and services.

Question: How can negotiation, cooperation and participation be strengthened in Northern Hisingen?

The main focus in the search for strengthening Northern Hisingen was on working **with not for** people to assist self-empowerment. As a rule everything, all social and educational measures, political strategies, economic development should have as a guiding principle: "**with, not for**".

Amongst the detailed proposals some convincingly connected pragmatism and coherence: make safety walks more attractive for younger inhabitants, for example, by including cultural events ("local artists"). Keep involving existing social groups, associations, and clubs. Use the urban garden and other activities in public spaces to involve everybody, all social groups to interact with each other. Move forward from a functional and aesthetically satisfying pre-school building to a school with an educational concept of openness towards the neighbourhood, which might attract parents to keep their children in the district and to join the activities. Generally this means adding functions to existing public buildings thus creating places for cooperation.

The Safety Walks were perceived as another form of coproduction, because they take into account local views of existing measures. If political representatives accept it as a civic duty and political responsibility to participate this is a good first step to linking local communities with the city

administration.

There is a common view that stimuli or incentives are more effective than regulation in order to achieve objectives. This point was argued whereby a certain degree of financial autonomy in district management would favour greater local cooperation, especially for building on the activities of "Backa in focus".

4.2. Urban Green-blue Infrastructure - Kville Valley

Map: Kartdata 2013 Google
Marking added on by URBAN-NEXUS

Photo: www.hokalla.se

We followed the Kville River (Kvillebäcken), beginning in the wetlands just outside the city. We passed a golf course, an industrial park, and a newly built neighbourhood. We then continued downstream to the outlet in Göta River. Here we faced the Free-port, the next great urban development project in Göteborg.

"Our ambition is to develop the Kville Valley into an attractive recreation area with farming and teeming with wildlife. We also wish to create several wetland ponds to reduce nutrient leakage into the sea", said our guide John Thulin, Head of Operations at Hökälla – Green Work and Rehab and deeply engaged in the development of the Kville Valley.

> **Question:** *How to turn the Kville Valley into an extended green wedge by resolving potential conflicts and drawing on potential synergies?*

Participants identified several potential conflicts and synergies. Public access may be in conflict with farming. That can be resolved by involving people in farming and gardening. There are plenty of successful examples from elsewhere – such as allotment gardens, community gardens, "Adopt a sheep", "Rent a pig" etc. Public access may also be in conflict with nature conservation. That can be regulated by limited access to some key areas during for example the breeding season.

Farming has both conflicts and synergies with nature conservation. There are tensions regarding flooding, the farmers want to clear the stream and nature conservationists want more wetland. This

needs negotiation. On the other hand wet meadows were traditionally grazing land for cows and sheep and also habitats for important crop pollinators.

In Sweden there is a customary law of right to public access. However, that does not mean you can do whatever you want on government, municipality or private land. Educating people on what is allowed or not will help minimise conflict. Industrial land is a special case where the public, often for safety reasons are not allowed access.

The vision of an extended green wedge must be better integrated in both the regional and city strategies*.* Removing the barriers between the three study areas and integrating the green wedge with the development of the Free-port were two other things high on the suggested "to do list".

Question: *How to safeguard and strengthen the beneficial green–blue structures already in place in the valley?*

Urban recreation is a key strategy. However, recreational activities must be carefully integrated with the ambitions of preserving and enhancing biodiversity and farming. Management of the existing golf course to help enhance biodiversity is a good example of a win-win situation. Engaging schools and pre-schools in environmental education is another. Public amenities like picnic sites, toilets, jogging and walking tracks will make the green wedge more valuable to the public. Better access by public transport and some parking space will also enhance the area.

**Question:** *What adaptive measures should be implemented in Kville Valley?*

Further development of the wetlands could improve water management and lead to better nutrient and flooding control. However, one must be aware of the pressures on farm land from flooding. On the other hand flooded meadows traditionally provided good grazing land for cows and sheep. Vegetation absorbs air pollution, sequesters carbon, and safeguard against landslides. Unsealed land also helps in the management of storm water and minimises flood risk.

New developments should be designed to achieve a benevolent microclimate. The spatial pattern should allow for cooling breezes during heat waves and protection from icy winds during the cold season. Buildings should be energy efficient and environmentally friendly, preferably with green roofs (and/or walls) that not only improve the microclimate but also help take care of run-off water from heavy rains.

Question: *How to integrate green-blue infrastructure into participative urban policy-making and planning affecting the Kville Valley?*

A visioning exercise like the one for the River City where citizens, business, academia and organisation are invited to an open dialogue with city and regional planners might be a way forward. The shared vision must then be communicated with clear messages focussing on the benefits of green-blue infrastructure and possible ways of resolving conflicting interests.

4.3. Building Mass and Physical Structures – River City
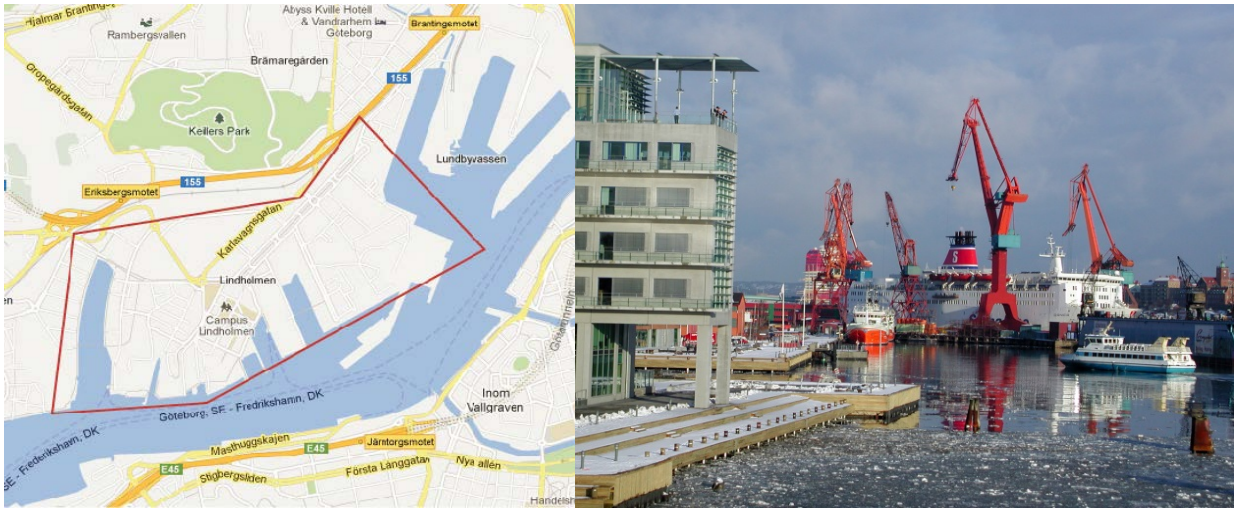
Map: Kartdata 2013 Google
Marking added on by URBAN-NEXUS

Photo: Klas Eriksson (City of Gothenburg)

We got to know the north bank of the Göta River and how, over time, it has evolved as an integrated part of Göteborg. The area was mainly occupied by shipyards until the end of the 1970's. Today, the area includes space for businesses (one ship yard), schools and universities, as well as housing. The city council has great plans for the area explained by our guide Bo Aronsson, from the development corporation Älvstranden Utveckling AB. He also shared his experiences from the visioning process whereby citizens, business, academia and organisation were invited to an open dialogue with city planners.

Question: How can the most important cultural heritage and existing resources of the RiverCity be transformed into a high performance urban fabric?

It is crucial to maintain and make the warehouse, harbour and ship yard heritage accessible and understandable, and then embed this in the new social, cultural and physical (infra)structure. However, it should not be a museum but rather seen as cultural heritage integrated as part of the broader design to meet community needs. More green character is needed, including space for peace and quiet; support for greenhouses and allotment gardens. Some of the heritage could be turned into "smartly neglected" industrial nature. There is also a need for more public space and functions, which could benefit from building on the existing cultural heritage features.

Question: What is the potential for more integrated and efficient planning and management of land-use and resilient infrastructure in the RiverCity?

A crucial topic is how this area links to the rest of the city, for example to older parts of Hisingen (with a different socioeconomic mix) and to the Northern parts of Gothenburg? Linking to the city centre is not enough! Also how to promote demographic mix within the area? One way is to provide cheap accommodation for students as pioneers of public life.

The second critical point is how to discourage the use of private transport to free-up public space for other uses? Suggestions include restricting the number of traffic lanes or prohibiting private transport; promoting other outdoor activities and making the area denser and more pedestrian-friendly with small-scale fabric, footpaths and walkways. Strengthen waterfront activities through the provision of cafés, public spaces, recreational and play areas with areas designed to provide shelter from extreme weather conditions. The area currently suffers from a lack of identity and centrality. Develop a central node (Nexus) based on a public transport hub and transform it into a social gathering place. Create reasons to be there, but develop sensitive plans, policies and most importantly fiscal controls to avoid pricing out the local population, as sadly often happens in urban waterfront developments!

A strategic plan including well thought out financial and economic instruments is necessary to ensure integrated and mixed use development in the short and long term.

Question: How can the existing Science Park and innovation clusters of the RiverCity be transformed to contribute more strongly to a smart city for all?

A smart city for all requires investment and a governance structure specifically for this area to support integration between students, local inhabitants, companies, etc. You need to adopt the full package of quality urban services. It should not just be a business centre, expand the focus of educational facilities beyond purely modern technologies to achieve a more dynamic and balanced centre for knowledge mobilisation within the city and surrounding region.

Create a "connected" community linking different groups: different ages, social groups, etc. Integrate initiatives for entertainment, learning and environmental innovation. Attract young people through the provision of cheap housing and "young" activities. However, be careful not creating a ghetto for the young and poor. Build on the existing industry cluster by creating or encouraging incubator space and helping students to open businesses after graduation.

Question: What constitutes "good" compactness in the RiverCity?

Include the south bank of the river in the project and develop better connections between north and south riverbanks. But it is hard to connect the city entirely, so this area will still be a "sister city" to the central parts of Gothenburg. Use this as an advantage, turning it more into a village than a city, slow down the pace of traffic, and promote outdoor activities.

The "village feeling" can strengthen community facilities and social interfaces. Develop a local market based on innovation (new ideas from students and others). Cheap student accommodation (again) in exchange for them contributing to activities, like the market, is an interesting but maybe provocative idea – some may consider it as a revival of tied housing.

Today, there are many different kinds of activities in the area, but they are not mixed or integrated, merely juxtaposed. There is still a need to achieve critical mass to support mixed use. Pack as much of the development program as possible within the existing development phases. Use temporary development initiatives to create a "kick-start" for the area. Show-case new technology and innovation for housing and transport and build-in flexibility.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Concepts highlighted

Summaries and comments from the Dialogue Café can be grouped under the following headings.

GOVERNANCE - aspects such as multi-level approach; negotiation, cooperation and participation; top-down versus bottom-up approach, local views, values and knowledge were highlighted.

HOUSING - the importance of affordable (public) housing for young people was emphasized.

ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY - public transport and the links between the city and its rural hinterland as well as links between different city areas were especially mentioned.

SOCIAL MIX was seen as an opportunity; making clever use of diversity would create a connected community.

MIXED USE - the advantages of localizing various functions in the same area were stressed.

PUBLIC SPACE was primarily looked upon as an enabler for citizens' initiatives.

However, participants did not necessarily use exactly those words. In the word cloud below the most frequently used words in written notes and comments can be seen: green (24), local (15), value (15), people (13) different (12), access (10), and community (8). This indicates that the ecological and social pillars of sustainability were most thoroughly discussed. Economic and technological aspects are less visible.

5.2. Revisiting the Key Messages

Based on the discussions during the Dialogue Café, it makes sense to revisit the Key Messages from the Synthesis Report to make them more to the point as well as more thought-provoking. Integrating over the three main themes and making the messages a bit more operational has been a guiding principal:

KEY MESSAGE 1: Develop strategies, instruments and procedures to negotiate conflicting interests
In *competing for urban land*, the economically and politically most powerful wins. But who is the most powerful? Building cities with strong cohesion, a well-balanced relation of public and private, built-up and open space, and ways to deal with conflicts before they turn into crises requires continuous negotiation, cooperation between different actors and strong participation of the civil society matched by enabling administration and policy. Planners and spatial planning can play an important role both in negotiating diverse interests and in advocating less powerful social groups and Nature to strengthen win-win situations and to resolve conflicts, but in order to be a genuine advocate for social/community groups' neutrality must be genuine.

KEY MESSAGE 2: Aim for multifaceted solutions across city and regional levels
Cities and urban regions are faced with multifaceted problems where multidisciplinary and multisectoral approaches are required. Such integrative practices are needed at all scales – from the EU level to regional and local levels, as well as across multiple municipalities, regions and nations. A particular issue to address is the various urban–rural interdependencies and how these unfold in different types of periurban landscapes. Such "multi" approaches active across multiple scales and geographies both depend on and will help bring about administrative coherence. They also very much depend on political leadership and commitment – as well as political cohesion – to be able to use the various urban development drivers in favour of positive urban change. To strengthen capacities within initiatives at local levels, new governance layers need to be developed between government and local people; the mechanisms and methods of communication are keys to whether this layer will help or be seen as just another tier of bureaucracy

KEY MESSAGE 3: Make the most of what is already there
In Europe, future cities will largely consist of existing buildings and structures, but transformed, added to and retrofitted to adapt to demographic, social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges. From both resource saving and cultural heritage perspectives, the obvious approach is to make the most of what is already there. However, the most vital assets are not buildings and structures but everyone who lives and works within and around them – and their different cultures and identities. Effective integration of social, cultural, economic, natural and material resources is a recipe for resilient, flexible, cohesive and vibrant urban environments. This requires negotiating a multitude of interests among all involved stakeholders – including the public and most of all those with weak voices. To be successful, such an integrated and participative approach needs to be institutionalised into the different systems for urban planning and management.

KEY MESSAGE 4: Invest in green-blue infrastructure

Well-functioning green-blue infrastructure offers many benefits to cities, and often for comparatively low investment and management costs. It improves a city's resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change effects, such as heavy rains, flooding, heat island effects and heat waves. Urban greenery also improves the health and wellbeing of its citizens, both by reducing air and noise pollution and by offering appealing areas that stimulate physical activities and strengthen cognitive abilities. Urban green space furthermore provides opportunities for citizens' initiatives – such as community gardens and allotment gardens – in this way fostering social networks and cohesion. However, to fully benefit from ecosystem services, and to minimize their potential disservices (allergenic pollen, mosquitoes, ticks, etc.), careful multi-scale and multi-sectoral policy and planning are needed. A very critical issue is the continuous management and maintenance of green and blue areas. Here the involvement of many different local stakeholders is of importance.

KEY MESSAGE 5: Promote dense, mixed-use and polycentric cities

Urban densification and mixed land use may contribute significantly to increased accessibility and better resource efficiency. Compact cities can be served by an efficient, less land-consuming and more integrated technical infrastructures for transport, water, sewage, and waste. Together with energy conserving housing and building policies this will help cities mitigate climate change. A compact and mixed land use city not only ensures better air quality, but also equal and efficient access to urban qualities and functions to citizens – especially if combined with an efficient public transport system. Combining high urban density with polycentric urban structures can deliver benefits of both compact cities (such as accessibility, efficiency and cohesion) and more sparse cities (such as urban greenery), and such a mix can be implemented both locally and on the city-scale. However, density and size are highly city-specific, and therefore, economic and cultural factors and lifestyles impact on what is seen as good urban patterns, sizes and acceptable densities.

KEY MESSAGE 6: Increase the smartness of "smart cities"

Making cities "smarter" is put forward as a key response to urban development challenges, where the opportunities of innovative technologies can only be realized by research and practice in collaboration. However, such approaches need to shift from seeing "smartness" as an engineering challenge to dealing with "smart cities" as a wider societal challenge involving a multitude of urban stakeholders and to placing justness and users perspectives first. Here, constantly evolving ICTs provide urban development dynamics outside of traditional governance systems. Empowering local citizens often (but not always; there are cases of the reverse) results in resource efficient, creative, resilient and socially robust solutions. Here, social investment is often needed to reduce current social inequalities and thereby unlock citizens' creativity. Such initiatives can be strengthened considerably through locally grounded "living labs" or "incubators", providing niches for emerging business models for sustainable urban development. A particular challenge is how to provide social and economic spaces for young people.

KEY MESSAGE 7: See urban development as a "never ending story"
Aiming to bring together more compact urban patterns with abundant urban green and blue structures – and at the same time preserving existing material and social fabrics through inclusive development processes – results in high levels of complexity. Such complexity calls for dealing with urban development tasks as "wicked problems", where there is never final resolution, but instead continuous development processes in need of constant strategic facilitation. Such processes can flow towards urban expansion, shrinkage or status quo – where none of these should be seen as problematic per se, but rather as likely fluctuations. As an example, "neglected" urban areas are critical for nurturing alternative and innovative avenues of individual and collective fulfilment. Traditional planning and management need to be supplemented by enabling mechanisms to ensure public participation – mechanisms that are adapted to socio-cultural differences and local specificities and needs.

6. About URBAN NEXUS

URBAN-NEXUS enables knowledge transfer and stimulates dialogue to form long-lasting partnerships amongst researchers, practitioners, policy makers, civil society and SMEs. It promotes integrated approaches to sustainable urban development.

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ICLEI – Sustainability Management and Urban Governance, Europe

FORMAS – Swedish Research Council for Environment and Spatial Planning, Sweden

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SIRS – Information System and Spatial Reference, France

AASDE – Agency for Sustainable development and Euro-Integration, Bulgaria

Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Germany

REC - Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary

Annex 1. Urbania

Make geographical plans together!

Mistra Urban Futures uses Urbania to promote citizen participation in different projects. We strive to simplify your possibility to share your knowledge with the rest of the other Urbania users.

What is Urbania?

Urbania is a digital and web based workshop tool. Users can collect and add area coded data as well as offer ideas for sustainable urban development. Urbania is designed to give citizens the opportunity to present their feedback to civil servants who work with strategic planning and dialogue processing.

How does it work?

Urbania uses Google Maps and engages users in transparent interactive functionality. Users can add comments and drawings to maps, offer answers to posed questions as well as comment on the comments of others through writing, pictures and audio files. Both user and administrator have access to an overview of the result and can download specific reports.

Analyse

Urbania offers a quick and comprehensible overview of how users feel about a defined activity in relation to a specific area. Through clear info graphics, Urbania makes the process of urban planning more perceptible and efficient than passive GIS viewers. The instant documentation through reports and scoreboards keep users updated.

Want to know more?

Go to: http://urbanfutures.urbania.se/

Annex 2. List of participants

DIALOGUE CAFÉ – COMPETING FOR URBAN LAND
10-11th of April 2013 Göteborg, Sweden

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Åsa	Lorentzi	City of Gothenburg