

## Stimulating the Redevelopment of Industrial Areas – an action plan for public authorities

### 1. Introduction

Initiated by an initiative in Swiss national parliament, this study aims to identify the real bottlenecks in the redevelopment of under-used industrial areas and to outline an action plan for public authorities to stimulate such. The study commissioned by the federal agencies for planning and environment in cooperation with the authorities of the canton of Aargau and carried out by the authors for Metron Raumentwicklung AG. Although it reflects the specific situation in Switzerland (e.g. only few heavy industries, liberal property and planning laws, strongly subsidiary federal state), it generated some outcomes that might be inspiring for brownfield redevelopment and other kinds of urban densification elsewhere.

### 2. Theoretical Framework

Basing on different studies and own observations and practical experiences during the last decade we came to the conclusion, that brownfield redevelopment might be less a technical than rather a procedural and managerial planning problem. Therefore we established a hypothesis concerning the ideal project procedure and the appreciation as a management process. The subsequent case studies then showed that these hypotheses are of high relevance as a framework for analysis and planning action.

#### ***Hypothesis “Project Procedure”***

1. The ideal “project procedure” of a redevelopment consist of seven different phases.
2. The first three phases must be carried out systematically in this sequence, if the planning action should have the potential to be successful.
3. And it is crucial to always keep temporary uses and alternative developments in mind.



Figure 1:  
ideal project procedure in redevelopment (Metron 2007)

### Hypothesis “Management Process”

4. The most interesting up-to-date management models describe (project-)organizations as socio-technical systems. How such systems fulfill their primary task depends not only from their technical comprehension of the duty, but even more from the organizational structures and rules as well as from the working and problem solving culture.
5. The core of the manager's task is observing and intervening in the relations between duty, structure and culture as well as in those to the societal and economical environment in a productive way.
6. Transferred to a successful management of a redevelopment project, it is essential to have the whole process in eye: The economical and societal environment of the project as well as the temporal and organizational structure, the solution-oriented and cooperative culture and at least the essential planning duties.

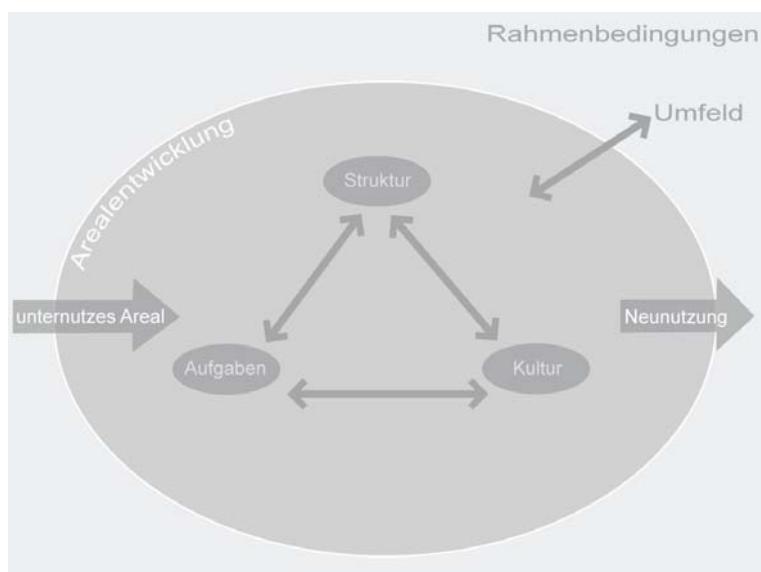


Figure 2:  
management process in redevelopment (Metron 2007, based on Steiger/Lippmann 1999)

## 2. Case Studies Analysis

Based on this theoretical framework we analyzed 10 cases industrial area redevelopment throughout northern Switzerland. The cases differed in size (1 – 25 ha), in location (urban – rural, 3 different planning legislations), in stage (initial – completed) and in process (successful – failed). For each case study we first did a desk analysis. Then we had 3-4 semi-structured expert interviews with key persons directly involved in the respective redevelopment process on the landowner, developer, municipality and planning authority side.

Already the desk analyses, but especially the interviews with private sector partners, clearly depicted what we already suspected at the beginning: In practice, a good management of the redevelopment process is far more important than the handling of planning instruments themselves.

The most important weak points, all concerning process management, that were mentioned are:

- Structural and organizational aspects; like experience of landowners, key persons and project knowledge management, systematic project phasing, prudence in time schedule optimization and project management on public authorities side.
- Aspects of anticipation and flexibility of public authorities; like existence of an overall idea on spatial development or flexible conception and interpretation of planning instruments.
- Planning project culture; like a growing cooperation in partnership, an active information and communication policy, enduring the allegation of entanglement private-state and PPP only if on an equal footing.
- Financial and technical aspects; a financial participation of public authorities in the area redevelopment is just nice-to-have, meanwhile the in-time provision of an adequate infrastructure in the surrounding is very helpful, the ambition to plan the final solution at the beginning instead of a step-by-step approach can lead to failure, and in most cases so-called financial and technical problems are just the expression of missing confidence and cooperation between private enterprises and state authorities.

### 3. Proposals for an action plan

Facing these findings and having discussed a catalogue of almost 50 potential measures we came to the clue, that the key actor in industrial area redevelopment is and remains the private landowner, developer and investor.

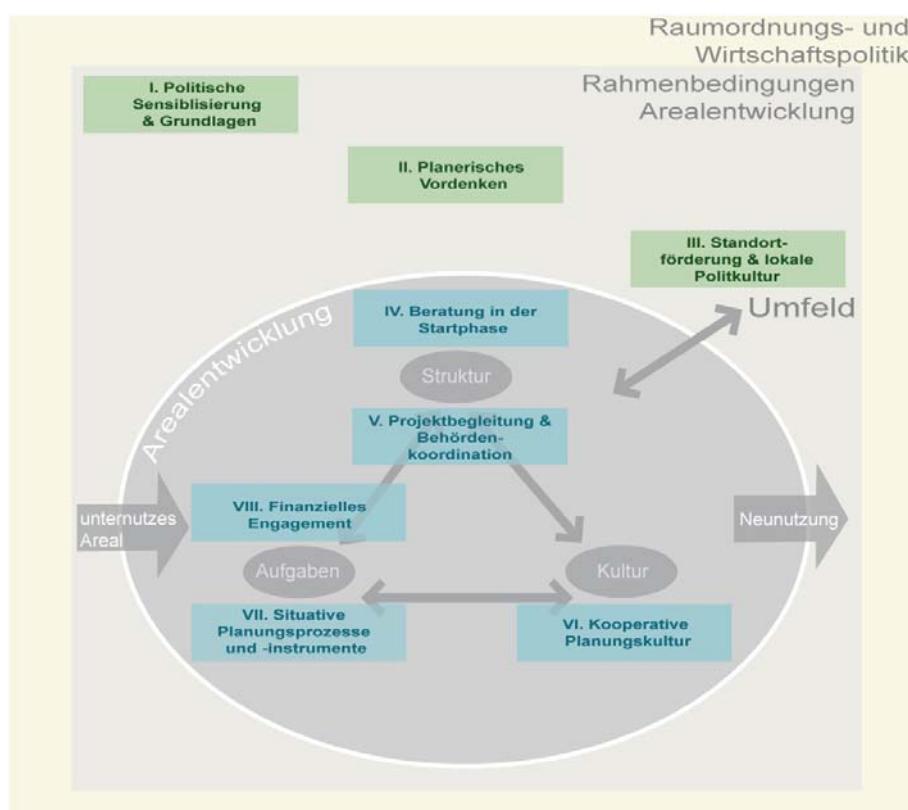


Figure 3:  
packages of measures situated on management process of redevelopment (Metron 2007)

Never the less we were able to bundle 8 packages of measures for preparing and supporting the redevelopment of under-used industrial areas by public authorities on federal, cantonal and municipal level. Each of these packages consists of a 2-3 (total 18) actions that were judged as helpful and potentially effective from private interview partners.

Due to the Swiss planning system, the actions federal administration can take are primarily concentrated on the improvement of general conditions and the sponsoring of pilot projects and feasibility studies. On the cantonal state and (or city) level a professional consultancy in the kick-off phase as well as a competent project coordinator are crucial. Almost as important is the capability of the municipality and canton to cooperate in partnership with private land-owner and developer. And not at least, the municipality's capability in situational adaptation of planning processes and professional application of planning instruments is an important prerequisite.

	Massnahmen Rahmenbedingungen			Massnahmen Arealentwicklung				
	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.
	politische Sensibilisierung & Grundlagen	planerisches Vordenken	Standortförderung & lokale Politikultur	Beratung in der Startphase	Projektbegleitung & Behördenkoordination	kooperative Planungskultur	situative Planungsprozesse und -instrumente	finanzielles Engagement
	internationales u. nationales Know-how aufbereiten (I.a)	Bundeskonzepte anpassen (II.a)	Vorleistungen durch Massnahmen Ia, Ib, Ic und IIa	Vorleistungen durch Massnahmen Ia, Ib, Ic und IIa				Förderung von Pilotprojekten und Machbarkeitsstudien (VIII.a)
	Industriebrachen-Übersicht schaffen + bewirtschaften (I.b)							
	politische Sensibilisierung (I.c)							
		kantonale Strategien ergänzen (II.b)	Vermittlung des Standortmarketings verstärken (III.a)	kompetente Erstberatung anbieten (IV.a)	Projektkoordinator ernennen (V.a)	partnerschaftliche Zusammenarbeit des Kantons (VI.a)	Unterstützung der Massnahme VII.a	Unterstützung der Massnahme VIII.a
	Unterstützung der Massnahme I.a und I.b						Unterstützung der Massnahme VII.b	
	Unterstützung der Massnahme I.b	kommunale Entwicklungs-vorstellungen formulieren (II.c)	lösungsorientierte Politikultur pflegen (III.b)	Kontakt mit Kanton gewährleisten (IV.b)	verantwortliche Ansprechperson bestimmen (V.b)	partnerschaftliche Zusammenarbeit der Gemeinde (VI.b)	Hand bieten für situativ angepasste Planungsprozesse (VII.a)	Eigenleistungen einbringen (VIII.b)
							Planungs-instrumente flexibel anwenden (VII.b)	

Figure 4:  
table of 18 actions, sorted according to the packages and three state levels (Metron 2007)

For each of these 18 actions we formulated a guideline. These 18 guidelines describe the key problem, target, actions that may be taken on federal / cantonal / municipal level and pitfalls. And on their backside they contain further detail information. The report finally ends up with a questions checklist on the key aspects to keep in eye in each of the six project phases.

Our study now will be the basis to answer the parliamentary initiative on national level. And for a publication making cantonal and municipal authorities aware of options for action to stimulate redevelopment of under-used industrial sites.

**Literature (selection):**

- Steiger, Thomas et al. (Ed., 1999), *Handbuch angewandte Psychologie für Führungskräfte*, Berlin / Heidelberg, Springer
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