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Public participation in urban development: The case of Leipzig, Germany

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During the years following the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 the city of Leipzig in the former East Germany was facing considerable urban challenges. Vacant housing and derelict lots could be found everywhere. The population was shrinking and Leipzig became known as a perforated city. In the early 2000s, city officials obtained federal government funding for a research project entitled "Leipzig 2030" to help them develop planning and urban policies. Members of the project were urban planners, architects, sociologists, and anthropologists from Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. One of the purposes of the project was to develop a master plan that would reposition a city with a surfeit of buildings and space in such a way as to preserve the qualities of that city, seize the opportunities presented by the transformation, and ensure that the city remains exciting, safe, and attractive for its inhabitants. The participants in the project used various scenarios of urban development in Leipzig up to the year 2030 to examine various questions that might affect the future growth of the city. In addition to scenarios of economic and spatial development, they focused on creating a family-friendly city where families would have all the advantages of suburban life in an urban setting. The paper examines "Leipzig 2030" and four other key projects with two important civic initiatives that were initiated and also analyzes the successful incorporation of the community stakeholders' vision into them.

Key words: Citizen participation, perforated cities, stakeholders in urban development, scenarios for urban development.

INTRODUCTION

Leipzig policy makers and community leaders in the early 2000 viewed social equity as an integral component of urban development. They understood that the underlying ethos of public policies had to be grounded in fair and inclusive principles in order to ensure sustainable development, that is, balancing urban developments that are unbalanced and restructuring only a few of them ultimately fails. The entire community is disadvantaged when efforts based on unequal policies are advanced. This is why the various projects Leipzig officials undertook all reflect such an approach. The social equity concerns of city officials became an important element in their strategies for an urban renewal.

In the early 1990s, with the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the reunification of Germany, European alliances and borders shifted and changed for the first time in nearly half a century. As they did, many people asked themselves how Germany would manage

the monumental task of unification that lay ahead given the deep differences that had emerged between its eastern and western parts as a result of years of separation and ruling ideologies. But others predicted a smooth process with beneficial results. "Yet, after the first giddy days of post-Border, post-Wall Germany, reality struck, bringing with it unemployment, government deficits, higher taxes, and general malaise" (Gibbon et al., 1995). These factors, mostly generated by the East's uncompetitive industries and failing social system, soon made it obvious that significant sacrifices would be required from the West in order to make unified Germany the powerhouse that most expected it to become. Reunification required enormous expenditures and in the 1990s, both East and West Germans raised nearly $785 billion for reconstruction, though the much larger and richer West picked up about three-quarters of the tab. It was calculated at the time that each West German

National donated $10,000 for the East (Rubin, 2000). Indeed, in retrospect, the West can be largely credited for having led Germany as one whole to rise above the challenges that these tumultuous times posed, to become Europe's largest economy and key member of the Continent's most important economic, political, and defense organizations. But some eastern cities must be credited for these achievements as well. From the beginning of the unification process they have sought creative ways by which to secure success and thus contribute to the greater progression of an integrated Germany. The city of Leipzig serves as an excellent example. It provides an interesting case study of how managerial leaders have been able to achieve successes at all levels and even compete advantageously with the bureaucracies of several of the other European Union countries.

These managerial leaders have made use of the Leipzig Model, a consensus-based approach to management developed in the late 1980s, which many feel has greatly contributed to the growth and development of this German city and to the notoriety of Germany as a leading economic and political player in the world (Garcia-Zamor, 2008). In a contest run by media giant Bertelsmann's foundation, Leipzig was ranked second out of eighty-three German municipalities for civic initiatives. The mayor of the city at that time, Wolfgang Tiefensee, said, "I think it is the people and their mentality, which is the crucial thing" (Rubin, 2000: 6A). Effectively, one of the major assets of Leipzig is its population. The people of Leipzig love their city. They are participants in, and witnesses to, the urban transformation process that is described in this paper, and they possess sufficient imagination and optimism to help the process into the future. At the end of the 1990s, 60,000 homes and 800,000 m^2 of office and commercial space stood empty in Leipzig. This gave the city the dubious reputation of being the East German precedent for a shrinking and perforated city (Daldrup and Doehler-Behzadi, 2004). But the Leipzig's situation was not an isolated one. Some key elements of the debate on shrinking cities can be found all over East Germany. Some of its cities are trailing their western rivals on all the main urban indicators, look unattractive to international investors, and are a drag on the country's economic competitiveness. Many East German cities are still struggling to cope with high dependency populations and constraints on decision-making. They lag behind their western competitors in terms of gross domestic product, innovation levels, connectivity, social cohesion, quality of life, political capacity, and connections with their wider territories.

Although the population of Leipzig had declined during the final years of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Leipzig was able to maintain a viable economy due in part to its historical and symbolic significance for the Berlin government. Emigration to the West was compensated by the influx of people who were moving

there from less affluent cities and regions of the state of Saxony. This group is a relatively "homogeneous" one: the vast majorities are East-Germans moving from smaller towns or villages to Leipzig. About 20,000 people move to Leipzig every year. Since 2001 the numbers are similar: around 16,000 immigrants to 20,000 emigrants per year. There are detailed statistics available for those "internal migration patterns" and this useful information can be found in the German Identification System known as *Meldewesen*. These data show the migration numbers of each municipality in relation to Leipzig. It is thus possible to define the origin of the new-comers (East Germans, West Germans, EU-foreigners, non-EU foreigners, age groups, sex ratio, even income groups and education). Such detailed analysis could be valuable if one wants to assume that the "qualities" of migrant groups probably influence success or failure of certain urban strategies. Or to put it this way: some strategies might be "tailored" to target particular groups. The expression "to gentrify a neighborhood" implies all those assumptions and it should be part of a theoretical approach for a more in-depth analysis comparing different planning strategies.

THE GLOBALIZATION ASPECT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Over the past twenty years more than a dozen new megacities have emerged creating a new landscape for global urbanization. At the present time, more than half of humanity lives in cities, and every month 5 million people move from the countryside to a city somewhere in the world. Although Leipzig cannot be considered a megacity, it has adapted some of the same characteristics of the larger cities around the world. It is a medium-size former socialist city that was integrated only in 1990 to the dynamic economy of the western part of Germany. Its recent history can be seen as a unique opportunity for the experimentation of new approaches to urban development. Leipzig is the largest city in Saxony, Germany, located about 100 miles southwest of Berlin. Leipzig's name is derived from the Slavic word *Lipsk*, which means "settlement in the linden trees." Leipzig's population, which peaked at 750,000 before World War II, has diminished to about 550,000. Although the city has relatively a low number of immigrants, it does not escape entirely the national debate on immigration and the integration of immigrants – especially Muslims – into the society. It is a reflection of the contradiction in the ways the law and the people treat the immigration topic. On the one hand, there is strong criticism on the failure of Muslin migrants to integrate into German society. On the other, German nationality law is based exclusively on blood, not place of birth. Thus immigrants are prevented from becoming Germans very easily. Only in 1999 were second generation immigrants were finally given a limited

right to choose German citizenship (they have to decide before the age of 23) if they were born in the country.

The approximately 30,000 students, who study in Leipzig, as Nietzsche, Goethe, and Leibniz once did, add a youthful flavor to Leipzig. More than any other city in former East Germany, Leipzig is a city to visit in modern Germany. Glassy skyscrapers and glitzy nightlife add a cosmopolitan flavor you do not encounter in much of the rest of the region. But there is also history to be seen in Leipzig, including a church where Luther preached and where Bach was choirmaster for 27 years and where he is now buried.

Leipzig has been facing a great housing problem: an abundance of vacant apartments and houses that may become a threat to the economic development and the social stability of their inhabitants. A complex political and economic realignment has enticed people to leave their city to move westward after the Berlin Wall fell and the two parts of Germany reunited. Leipzig is held up as an example of cities accepting shrinkage and finding better use for land and empty houses. Marcuse and van Kempen (2000) noted that while cities have always been divided along lines of culture, function, and status, the pattern today is a new, and in many ways deeper-going, combination of these divisions. Although it varies substantially from city to city by historical development of the built form, by national and economic structures, by the relative weight of the contending forces involved in development, by the role of "race" and ethnicity, and by the place in the international economy, nevertheless they found that there are basic features in common. This includes a spatial concentration within cities of a new urban poverty on the one hand, and of specialized "high-level" internationally connected business activities on the other, with increasing spatial divisions not only between each other but also among segments of the "middle class" in between (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000). Despite its many differences, Leipzig fits well into this pattern.

With the birth rate declining and the population ageing, Leipzig and the other East German cities found themselves in a situation where, contrary to most urban centers, they had to restructure themselves in a context of abundance of space (De Gasperin, 2009). But when the population in East Germany started growing again after reunification, the State started to focus on how to use the new spatial extensions of the cities. This approach followed a fundamental principle of German democracy: a dialogue precedes any action. This good governance criterion often facilitated the acceptance of restrictive measures after they were exposed as needed and were approved by stakeholders (Hecker, 2009).

Understanding the reasons for the emergence of large cities is essential to understanding their internal urban structure. The term "urban structure" refers to the kind, location, and densities of activities as they are distributed across space in urban areas (Mohan, 1994). These initiatives are the direct results of policies made by city officials. However, the analysis of these policies is complicated by the interdependence between globalization and city performance. A scholar who discussed interdependence wondered if the demands of globalization produced better-performing cities, or if it is the good performance of some cities that allows them to take advantage of globalization. She thinks that this question of causality is crucial, so that policies can be designed to avoid the downward spiral in which cities that performed less well are not attractive for further globalization, and without the competitive pressures of globalization, poorly performing cities have less incentive to improve local governance (Léautier, 2006). Globalization is definitely shaping a new era of interaction among national economies and people.

But Moulaert believes that analysts of globalization should examine the inclusion and functional significance of cities in the global economy. According to this logic, they only look at metropolitan cities which are already playing an important role in the networks of the global economy (networks of top-tier privileged cities, predominantly global cities). He wrote that that today's local spatial form in their physical, economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions cannot be reduced solely to the consequences of globalization dynamics. Even if one decides to look only at metropolitan cities that are well embedded in globalization dynamics, the globalization discourse is insufficient to analyze the relationships between the urban society and the globalization process (Moulaert, 2000).

EQUITY PLANNING AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

It is clear that in order to ensure the realization of fair and balanced urban development, several sectors of society are impacted. Decision-making for equitable urban development ought to involve all those who will be affected by the decisions to be made. It must be recognized that all stakeholders' values and concerns are legitimate and should be taken into consideration. This is ensured by seeking deliberate and significant participation from all stakeholders. Roseland and Connelly (2005: 191) wrote that:

Truly meaningful participation requires that all concerned and affected stakeholders are provided the information and resources they require to influence and contribute to the decision-making process, and that planning and decision-making process must be designed and implemented to foster comprehensive stakeholder participation. The issues of who participates, when they participate and how they participate are critical to achieving fairness, efficiency, and stability in decision-making…Shared decision-making involves planning *with* stakeholders rather than *for* stakeholders".

This inclusive approach to planning raises the issue of social capital which fuels productive community development. Fukuyama (2000: 98) defines social capital as "an instantiated set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits them to co-operate with one another". It is the "organizations, structures and social relations which people build up themselves, independently of the state or large corporations" (Roseland and Connelly, 2005: 9). Social capital is, therefore, the stock of formations and maintenance of networks that are based on shared values such as trust and reciprocity among and with individuals and groups which enables community efforts to be successful. Stakeholders are the building blocks of social capital. They are government, civil society, businesses, schools, and residents.

Urban development affects residents' quality of life. Residents are instrumental in making or breaking the promotion of sustainability goals depending on the posture of their participation in urban development decision-making. Uninformed or under-informed residents often assume Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) positions which may ultimately be detrimental to the city or region in which they live. If urban development occurs in a way where residents are not the direct beneficiaries of the development, for example, when the jobs created by urban development do not go directly to residents but to people outside the locality, such inequity creates discontent among residents who might withhold their economic and political power. When residents protest against certain public decisions (for example, affordable housing), it may often backfire in other ways, thwarting urban growth and development. Conversely, residents who are engaged in the process of sustainable community development are likely to be more cooperative with government and the business sector in achieving and maintaining equitable economic development goals.

Krumholz and Clavel (1994) defined equity planning as "a practice that tries to move resources, power, and participation away from elites and emphasizes the needs of low-income and working-class residents of the community." But they also stated that equity is more than the distribution of income and wealth. The distribution of productive assets such as land, productive inputs, savings, and credit, is also important (Krumholz and Clavel, 1994). Fincher and Iveson (2008) discussed redistribution for social justice in the context of Henri Lefebvre's original articulation of the "right to the city" first published in 1967. They tried to answer the question of how one might develop the notion of a "right to the city" to usefully inform contemporary planning efforts to work toward a just diversity. Based on "the core promise of the right to the city – the notion that all urban inhabitants have a right to full participation in urban life as equals – they view the debates on this topic framed in the relationship of two core normative principles of justice – those of redistribution of resources towards the poor, and

of recognition of social diversity" (Fincher and Iveson, 2008). The increased use of capacity building and consensus processes in a variety of planning applications was an important start toward broader participation and democracy, and hence greater social equity, in planning. Open participation by all concerned and the fostering of relationships, also ensure that public and private entities feel a part of the decision-making and allows for a sustainable development. Harmon (2008) felt that because meaningful change must ultimately occur at the local level, urban experiments with sustainability can be illustrative of the usefulness of sustainability as a framework for engendering participation and for translating sustainability concepts into terms that are locally relevant and actionable. Such an approach might eventually bring good urban governance. UNESCO (2000) defines urban governance as the processes that steer and take into account the various links between stakeholders, local authorities, and citizens. It involves bottom-up and top-down strategies that favor active participation of concerned communities, open negotiation among actors, transparent decision making, and innovative urban management policies (UNESCO, 2000). Community participation is essential in the creation of healthy livable, workable, and walk-able neighborhoods.

For the city dwellers of the former East Germany, socialism may appear to be a good example of the practice of social equity in governance. This is why reunification brought a lack of understanding and sympathy for the East Germans from their western countrymen who taught that there was nothing to be proud of in the old system. Regardless of the justification or social merit of officials of the former East Germany, positive changes occurred after 1990 as the country was moving from communism to democracy. It shows that despite some original difficulties in adapting to new Western norms, officials from cities in the former East Germany, under the guidance of their new superiors from the West, have been able to develop some goal-oriented activities that are typical of good governance in Western bureaucracies Post-reunification performance reveals a new efficiency and professionalism. They have developed a sense of the necessities of the time, including globalization.

THE PROJECT "LEIPZIG 2030"

In 2001, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research - BMBF (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*), and Partners in Solving Local Tasks (Partner bei der Lösung kommunaler Aufgaben - DIFU) together established a program of research entitled "Stadt 2030." In that program, towns and cities were invited to carry out research into particular problems that they faced. The research was aimed at finding solutions that could be put into effect in the town or the city itself. The BMBF and

DIFU had initiated the project "City 2030" ("*Stadt 2030*") as a competition to find ideas for academic voices and the towns themselves to combine and to seek innovative solutions to current and future problems. The city of Leipzig seized this opportunity to seek funding for the project "Leipzig 2030" to form a decisive foundation on which to improve the quality of life for its citizens and also to increase the competitiveness of the city as a whole. Active steps were taken to counteract the "Leipzig paradox" whereby the city was both growing and shrinking at the same time, leading to its perforation. Later, the focus of the project was switched to the opportunities that this situation presented for the future. After reunification, Leipzig lost many of the industries that had made it an economic bastion under communism. Thus Project 2030 focused on reversing the excessive de-industrialization in Leipzig. In order to make the city attractive as a job market, it developed urban development policies that addressed the growing requirements for high-quality housing. Leipzig officials hoped that the federal government funding would help them develop sensible planning and urban policies (Daldrup and Doehler-Behzadi, 2004).

Members of the project were urban planners, architects, sociologists, and anthropologists from Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. One of the purposes of the project was to develop a plan that would reposition a city with a surfeit of buildings and space in such a way as to preserve the qualities of that city, seize the opportunities presented by the transformation, and ensure that the city remains exciting, safe, and attractive for its inhabitants. The task required an active stance on the part of planning and politics. Two of the participants in the project used various scenarios of urban development in Leipzig up to the year 2030 to examine various questions that might affect the future growth of the city. In addition to scenarios of economic and spatial development, they focused on creating a family-friendly city where families would have all the advantages of suburban life in an urban setting (Pfeiffer and Porsch, 2004).

Leipzig officials had decided to concentrate on a problem typical of the former East Germany: urban depopulation because they wanted Leipzig to return to a strong and compact city center. They sought answers not only to the question of how to prevent further urban depopulation but also to the question of how to attract young people back to the city center. The research questions were stated as follows: a) How to avoid a 'doughnut city'; an empty city center surrounded by highly populated suburbs? and b) How to make the city more attractive to young people and families? The city used the experiences of Barcelona and Manchester, both of which are familiar with the problems of the doughnut city. Leipzig city officials had realized that if nothing was done to stop the depopulation of the city, in the decades to come its population would see a decline of twenty per cent. During the seventies and eighties there was a spate

of construction on the edges of the city. However, due to a shortage of jobs, many (mainly younger) people had moved to West Germany. Those who stayed in Leipzig moved to the suburbs and as a result the city center was emptying and becoming uninhabitable.

To meet the demands of young people, Leipzig refurbished old housing stock. The former lignite mining sites and associated laborers' homes were demolished and replaced by high-rise developments leaving enough room for greenbelts yet maintaining levels of available housing. People wishing to live in the center were encouraged to do so. Banning cars from the city center and making parking more expensive gave Leipzig a physically attractive core. The Leipzig region also worked on reinforcing its competitive strength. Particular attention was paid to catching up with the regions of the western part of the country. The city looked for more and better jobs, especially for young people. University courses, particularly at Leipzig University, were better attuned to the opportunities offered by the regional economy. In addition, Leipzig pursued an active family policy, making the city child-friendly with playgrounds and parks, and aiming to provide free daytime childcare. Talks on this are still under way with a number of potential partners.

The Stadt 2030 projects from the different cities that initiated them could be followed through a website at www.stadt2030.de, where each town or city had its own domain name, for example, www.Leipzig2030.de. Residents were strongly encouraged to be involved in the plans for a better city center through public consultation and public debates open to all. Although citizen participation was not direct since the population did not actively engaged in decision-making, there was a lively form of indirect citizen participation in the process. The projects have now been completed and the program is currently being evaluated.

In addition to the project "Leipzig 2030," four other key projects (*Stadtumbau Ost, Leipziger Osten, Urban 21,* and *National Model Project*) and two important civic initiatives (*HausHalten e.V.* and *Leipziger Selbstnutzer Programm*) were initiated in Leipzig to allow people in need of low-cost housing to use legally vacant dwellings. A brief analysis of these four government projects and the two other civic initiatives illustrate how well Leipzig officials' strategies apply social equity in urban development.

FOUR ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS AND TWO CIVIC INITIATIVES

Stadtumbau Ost

Since the German federal government started this Urban Revitalization in Eastern Germany Program in 2002, many activities have been initiated in the field of urban planning. There are more than 1.5 million empty

apartments in the eastern states right now, about 55,000 of them in Leipzig. During the period from 1997 to 2002, the average number of persons per household in the city of Leipzig diminished. The plan is to develop strategies to cope with such a problem and its resulting consequences for city development in the East. Under the program, 350,000 empty apartments will be demolished in the coming eight years. The federal government is assisting the cities financially. In 2002, 197 cities received 153 million euro for the demolition of 45,000 apartments, most of them in the old communist-style apartment buildings. But in order to receive this financial aid, the cities were forced to create or update their city development concepts. City officials in Leipzig designed new strategies and initiatives to adopt an ethical approach to urban development where people's safety and welfare are the dominant factors. The project managers saw planning as a way to improve physical and economic conditions for the entire population of Leipzig, including low-income earners such as artists and students. Their great challenge was to promote participatory democracy and positive social change. The primary focus of the federally administered *Stadtumbau Ost* program lies in revaluation. This is accomplished through a number of means. Demolition is currently being used for two goals: 1) to stabilize the housing market; and 2) to make the eastern sections of Leipzig more attractive areas in which to live and work. However, the rebuilding of such areas is also being conducted at the same time, in order to modernize the communities in post-GDR times. The project is essentially a redevelopment plan. Currently, demolition plans are in place while development will continue in some areas for significantly longer (until 2020). From the diagrams of the area, it appears that emphasis is being placed on gentrifying various green areas of this particular section of the city as well.

Leipziger Osten

This project is very much interrelated with the *Stadtumbau Osten* program. While *Stadtumbau Ost* has the very direct purpose of physical renovation, the *Leipziger Osten* program attempts to work on a macro level to establish cooperation in the community. The program itself is multifaceted with numerous partners handling such tasks as public relations and finding partners in development. All of this is combined to achieve the ultimate goal of a "social city." In essence, the program is very broad in its goals, but with coordination as its purpose, because each party involved has its own interests. Thus, the *Leipziger Ost* program is designed to combine all of these individual interests to reach a greater goal of cooperation in modernization. An interesting aspect of the program is that it took the perceived weaknesses of the neighborhood and changed them into a driving force for its development. The great

number of immigrants was originally seen as an impediment to rapid progress but *Leipziger Osten* used them to provoke innovative changes. And the abandoned properties were seen as a great opportunity to improve the social life of the community.

Urban 21

This program is focused primarily on redevelopment; however, instead of concentrating efforts on housing, it is aimed more at developing commerce in residential areas of Leipzig and eleven other German cities. In Leipzig, the program is being implemented in a number of eastern and western parts of the city, as well as significant portions of Grünau. The city has received approximately twenty million Euros for the project from the European Union, and is working in conjunction with a number of agencies. Nonetheless, the primary focus of the program is on strengthening small- and medium-sized businesses, as well as improving parts of the city's social and recreational infrastructure. The program's website emphasizes localized cooperation, with residents taking an active role in the project.

National model project

The essence of the *National Model Project* is to create a clear vision of redevelopment within a number of German towns. Basically, this is also a cooperation project, but takes place much more in the political realm. The project provides a forum for cooperation between municipal, state, and national authorities from various departments (traffic, environment, etc.). It creates such a forum through so-called "future lounges," in which a circle of political leaders discuss and debate issues of development to create a more unified "German" view of town development. The goal of such discussions is to "iron out" concerns and create a clear vision for the future with solutions to such problems as providing a balance between environmental and traffic concerns. The program remains distinct in its special consideration for the involvement of the political realm. As a direct result of the aforementioned four government-sponsored projects, the following two important civic activities were initiated in Leipzig.

HausHalten e.V.Due

To vast amounts of suburbanization, Leipzig has lost tens of thousands of city residents. What has resulted is a great number of vacant buildings and apartments across the city. Instead of mass demolitions and the decay of many of Leipzig's historic buildings, the *HausHalten* initiative is a program aimed to fill this void. This civic

initiative is focused on creating a win-win situation for both the owners of the numerous vacant buildings across the city as well as potential tenants. The program attempts to take the burden off owners, who have to constantly maintain and protect uneconomical properties. It does this by appealing to so-called "users," who are given the responsibility of keeping up the buildings, and in return being able to reside in the buildings rent-free. To achieve this aim, *HausHalten* functions as the link between the owners who do not wish to sell their houses, but also have no current use for them, and groups that due to lack of financial capital want to inhabit the buildings for inexpensive living as well as the possibility to create employment or other ideas. For such agreements three criteria are essential: (1) that the house is considered a cultural landmark; (2) that the agreement fosters employment; and (3) that the whole project helps the development of the neighborhood. Therefore, groups wanting to benefit from this program have to come up with a business idea (usually some sort of shop) which will occupy part of the house. If this condition is met, each participant must become a member of *HausHalten e.V.* and agree to rehabilitate the house while the owner agrees to pay for the necessary materials and to demand only the running costs, but no rent, from the participants. The time frame for such an agreement is a five-year term. During this period, *HausHalten e.V.* remains the link. The participants do not negotiate directly with the owners. In essence, the goal of the program is to "kill two birds with one stone." It provides an affordable alternative for those who may not have the means to afford an apartment, as well as a way for owners to keep up their buildings at a reduced cost.

Leipziger Selbstnutzer programm

The essence of this so-called "Leipzig Self-User" program lies in marketing the attractiveness of urban living. The program relies heavily on attracting private developers and avoiding what it calls the bureaucratic "jungle" of governmental development. For this reason, the program remains unsubsidized. Thus, the initiative has launched significant marketing efforts, such as press releases, presentations at fairs and real estate exhibits, bus tours of potential sites, and Internet campaigns. In essence, it is a free-market solution to the demands of the community. In meeting such demands, potential developers convene and consult with architects, building experts, and the town itself. They provide a consultative process for the passing of ownership to private enterprises with concern for the demands of the community.

Following a broad public dialogue, the German federal government and the federal state ministers responsible for spatial planning met on June 30, 2006, and adopted a joint urban development strategy for the cities and regions of Germany. They discussed four concepts:

growth and innovation, ensuring services of public interest, conservation of resources, and shaping of cultural landscapes. What is interesting is that city officials in Leipzig, while following the federal and state governments' guidelines, concentrated their planning strategies primarily into helping people occupy the vacant dwellings. Contrary to the approaches of other cities where officials are usually quite concerned with helping the business sector, Leipzig's strategy concentrated first on the needy residents. The private sector had to take full initiative in renovating the commercial space needed to operate in the city center. In the area of urban development, Leipzig is able to thrive with relative competitiveness not only in Germany but also in Europe.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the article Leipzig citizens participation cannot be considered a form of direct citizen partici- pation. In a very comprehensive report prepared for the IBM Center for the Business of Government, Nabatchi describes direct citizen participation as a series of processes that are organized or used by government agencies and are designed to achieve specific goals and also involve some level of interaction between the agency and participants (Nabatchi, 2012).

In that same report she cited another scholar who further clarified that direct citizen participation in public administration can be broadly defined as "the process[es] by which members of a society (those not holding office or administrative positions in government) share power with public officials [that is, public managers and other agency officials] in making substantive decisions" related to a particular issue or set of issues (Roberts, 2008). Public participation in urban development in Leipzig has been evident from the beginning. Planners have been constantly looking for ways to receive feedback from the public during the entire process. As previously mentioned, residents were strongly encouraged to be involved in the plans for a better city center through public consultation and public debates open to all. A website where the public could present their views was highly publicized. Although citizen participation was not direct since the population did not actively engaged in decision- making, there was a lively form of indirect citizen participation in the process. Citizen participation in Leipzig reflects Nabatchi's cited seven definitions:

1) Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision should be sought out and facilitated.
2) The participation of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision should be soughted out and facilitated.
3) Public participation should seek input from participants in designing how they participate.
4) Public participation includes the promise that the

public's contributions will influence the decision.

5) How public input affected the decision should be communicated to participants

6) Public participation should recognize and focus on the needs and interest of all participants, including decision-makers.

7) Public participation should provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way (Nabatchi, 2012: 6-7).

Leipzig planning officials promoted the integration of city community interest and the goals set forth by the project entitled "Leipzig 2030." They provided a space for dialogue of various perspectives and thus helped prevent misinterpretations and conflict by providing the public with sufficient information to define its role in a participatory process and to be able to make informed inputs. At the end, *Leipzigers* had an intrinsic stake in the urban development plan. Because they had their voices heard during the early stages of the project, they were more inclined to accept it and promote its continuation. Most importantly, the participative strategy adopted by city planning officials helped develop trust between them and community members and provided an opportunity for open communications, identification and resolution of stakeholders' needs, and conflicting viewpoints.

In addition to its emphasis on citizen participation over recent years, urban development in Leipzig has been viewed not only in architectural but also in social terms. As pointed out by some scholars, social equity in urban development is more than architectural design and the provision of housing to those in need. It is also about the distribution of human capital such as health, education, and production. Income inequality reflects deeper inequalities in access to opportunities for a better life. Improved access to education and better health enable poor people to contribute more fully to the growth process and to participate more equitably in the opportunities that growth creates and the benefits it offers. In short, policies that are good for equity are good for growth, and good for converting growth into poverty reduction. Equitable social development can enhance dignity and curb the sheer structural distortions of biased policies and institutions that produce exclusion, marginalization, and vulnerability (Krumholz and Clavel, 1994). A British scholar, Patsy (2007), who has written extensively on urban planning, expressed the same ideas. She has investigated the governance of urban places, especially efforts that promote place qualities and recognize that the spatial organization of phenomena are important to quality of life, for distributive justice, environmental well-being, and economic vitality.

Although Leipzig has some unique economic, social, and political characteristics, its urban policies could very well be a model for the application of civic participation and social equity in urban development in other cities in Europe and some cities in the United States. The Leipzig

approach could prove beneficial elsewhere because citizen participation and social equity are currently two of the concerns of urban development strategists around the world, although the priority in most cases is to solve some existing economic crisis. The strategy adopted by Leipzig is not a universal model that can be applied to all cities since each city has its own socio-economic, political, and legal systems that provide a framework for workable solutions. But the way Leipzig faces its challenge could be an inspiration for other cities that might want to borrow only some of the transferable features of the Leipzig solution to design their own responses to similar problems.

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