Stedebouw in samenwerking. Een onderzoek naar de grondslagen voor publiek-private samenwerking in de stedebouw
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The mid-eighties marked the start of a new period in the history of Dutch city planning. In the post-war years, repairing the damage had been the central theme, and later the focus shifted to the expansion a mushrooming Dutch population had made necessary. The stabilization of the population growth and new ideas as to the function of urban centres led to a veritable rush of activities in the field of urban renewal in the seventies. Far more than urban renewal, innovations focused on the multi-functional role of the historical heart of the city are now in the spotlight. In the implementation of new construction projects, every effort is now being made to stimulate and reinforce cooperation between the public and the private sectors.

The city can be viewed as an independent organic unit that is unceasingly undergoing metamorphoses. In some cases, these changes can be brought about by intervention on the micro-level, replacing specific buildings by specific other ones with either the same or perhaps quite a different function. In other cases, there have been – and still are – large-scale alterations in the very structure of the city. The significance of these changes in the overall appearance of the city can solely be effectively described if attention is also focused on the position of the city as regards the environment it is an integral part of. In itself, the position of the city within society as a whole is after all just as dynamic as the changes taking place within the city. The relations between the city and the national authorities as well as those with the actors in the private sector are what shape the opportunities the city has to develop, to advance, to grow. What is more, the instruments it has at its disposal are in a state of constant flux. There is also a considerable extent of variation in the financial, legal and organizational leeway a city has at different points in time.

The conception of space and scale held by a society in any given period of time also affects the way it deals with the very tangible spatial aspects of its cities. For each period of time, different priorities are accorded to different urban planning modes that present different solutions as regards housing, work, traffic, recreation and education. The appraisal of such matters as the advisability of high rise construction, or of various levels of density or accessibility can also exhibit considerable variation. The favourite city planning option at any particular moment in time depends on a number of fluctuating factors. These multifarious factors include:
- the particular society’s point of view as to the function of the city
- the significance the society attributes to one or more existing urban functions at any particular moment in time
- the relation between the national and the local government authorities

Not only are official documents and statements on the subject of urban renewal subject to constant change, so are the laws, regulations, and the overall economic situation. The willingness on the part of the population to invest sizable financial resources into urban renewal fell to an all-time low in the nineties. In recent years, the amount of financial funds available for urban renewal has gone into effect. In the recent past, private businesses have sometimes been called upon to examine the extent to which they may play a part in city planning. In any case, the way urban renewal was carried out differs from that of the seventies. In other words, the period of this kind, in which the focus was largely towards urban renewal in the past, is over. Instead, the focus is now towards urban renewal in the present.

In the choice of the cities and the periods when the reconstruction projects were carried out, considerable involvement of private business has been included. It is also possible to examine the extent to which the role of the city council was played as regards the implementation of the reconstruction projects. In the city centre of Eindhoven, for example, private companies were involved in the process. In the recent past, private businesses have sometimes been called upon to examine the extent to which they may play a part in city planning. In any case, the way urban renewal was carried out differs from that of the seventies. In other words, the period of this kind, in which the focus was largely towards urban renewal in the past, is over. Instead, the focus is now towards urban renewal in the present.

The reconstruction of the city centre of Eindhoven was the result of the Royal Decree F 67 dated 22nd November 1967. The reconstruction project was carried out within the guidelines of the national authorities. The reconstruction project was of a centralistic nature. The reconstruction project was bound by decisions as it saw fit. Management of the city centre of Eindhoven played a major role in the reconstruction of the city centre of Eindhoven.

Liinbaan in Rotterdam

Starting in the mid-eighties, the centralization of the reconstruction project in Rotterdam was well underway. The city centre of Rotterdam was well underway. The management of the city centre of Rotterdam was well underway.
the position of various commercial interests in the urban area to be developed
- the political, organizational and economic vitality of the city.

Not only are official views on the significance of the city for society as a whole subject to constant change, the same holds true for the importance the private sector attributes to the role of the city. The willingness on the part of the world of trade and industry to make sizeable financial investments in the quality of city centres – which fell to an all-time low in the seventies – has exhibited considerable improvement in recent years. In instances where the disappearance of former urban functions called for the creation of new ones to take their place, for example, private companies are now showing themselves willing to invest in the process.

In the recent past, particularly in the period of post-war reconstruction and in the successive period of continuous economic growth, there was considerable involvement on the part of the world of trade and industry in the improvement and renovation of the existing city. It would be interesting to examine the extent to which the nature of this involvement on their part in city planning projects and the circumstances under which they were carried out differ from those of today. In an effort to conduct an examination of this kind, in Part I, *The Spirited City*, a number of large projects dating back to the post-war days of Dutch urban planning are described in the political and organizational context of the period they were carried out in. In the choice of the projects, a chronological order is adhered to regarding the periods when they were planned and constructed. Prior to the project descriptions, a brief sketch is presented of the situation relevant to the period in question in the fields of the national economy, public management, legislation, government financing and city planning.

The following information serves to support the choice that was made as regards the project descriptions:

*The reconstruction of Eindhoven*
Royal Decree F 67 dated 7 May 1945 constituted the legal basis for the entire reconstruction process in the Netherlands. The organizational structure within the government that was to implement the reconstruction process was of a centralistic nature. The Board of General Commissioners in charge of the implementation of the reconstruction process was free to make decisions as it saw fit. The other parties consulted as to the reconstruction of Eindhoven were the Board of Directors at Philips and the General Management of the Netherlands Railway Company. The municipality of Eindhoven played a subordinate role.

*Lijnbaan in Rotterdam*
Starting in the middle of 1947, efforts were made to establish a decentralized structure to carry out the reconstruction. In a legal sense, the decentralization was implemented by means of the Reconstruction Act, which went into effect in July 1950. In the meantime, the municipality of Rotterdam was working with a great deal of energy and enthusiasm on the
development of reconstruction plans for the city centre, including Lijnbaan. However, Rotterdam merchants lacked the investment capacity to carry out a plan of this type, and for economic policy reasons, the national authorities did not approve the Lijnbaan plan until 1952. The plan then had to be largely financed by the National Life Insurance Bank.

**Hoog Catharijne in Utrecht**

In the second half of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, finding a solution to the new traffic problems had a high priority in the Dutch cities. Drastic reconstruction of the city centres was viewed as the best way to solve the problems. For the downtown Utrecht area, Bredero presented a plan in October 1962 that would not only solve the traffic problems but would also make it possible to expand the Royal Annual Fair (Koninklijke Jaarbeurs) complex and increase the capacity of the railway station. This comprehensive private initiative, which covered the financing of the entire project and would certainly serve as a powerful stimulus for the development of the centre function of the city, was approved by the Utrecht City Council in 1963. The project development agreement the realization of the plan was based on did not start to give rise to criticism – partly due to the altered mentality and attitudes – until 1968, at which point the project was already under way.

**The Soetelve Project in ’s-Hertogenbosch**

In 1970 the Brabant Real Estate Company (Brabant Vastgoed B.V), a project development company, took the initiative for the construction of a nineteen-hectare complex of a multi-functional nature with a zoo, a restaurant, athletic facilities and shops for durable consumer goods. For this purpose, an agreement was signed in April 1971 with the municipality of ’s-Hertogenbosch. In the course of the preliminary stages, there were considerable changes in the ideas held by the national authorities as well as the municipality of ’s-Hertogenbosch as regards the whole conception of city planning. This led to an alteration in the zoning plan for the district in question, which was of such a magnitude that it was no longer feasible for Brabant Real Estate Company to carry out its plans. This resulted in the annulment of the agreement and a civil law procedure between the Brabant Real Estate Company and the municipality. The main issue of the damage claim has since been granted to the Brabant Real Estate Company by the Dutch Supreme Court, although the procedure to decide the amount of the damage claim is still in progress. The fiasco this effort at public-private collaboration resulted in was due to society’s altering views in the field of city planning.

**Scheveningen, A Seaside Resort**

Its take-over of the Scheveningen Operating Company (Exploitatie Maatschappij Scheveningen) was one of the things that made it possible for the Zwolsman concern to earn itself such a strong position of power in the sixties. The termination of the commercial activities at the Kurhaus and the threat of demolition gave rise to a fundamental discussion on the future of Scheveningen. This reached in principal agreement on the need to attract new types of companies, and in the end, it was not feasible in principle.

A development concept reached an implementation decision on the construction of Scheveningen. The impression evolved that the projects described in the projects description were carried out with the national Treasury and the sober national Treasury. The midbouw fourier was a repetition of the sixties and was carried out with the Dutch Treasury. The Hoog Catharijne in Utrecht, the Midbouw fourier, the Scheveningen Operating Company, the Lijnbaan, the city with the eminent collaboration, and the national Treasury. The impression evolved that the projects described in the projects description were carried out with the national Treasury and the sober national Treasury. The midbouw fourier was a repetition of the sixties and was carried out with the Dutch Treasury. The Hoog Catharijne in Utrecht, the Midbouw fourier, the Scheveningen Operating Company, the Lijnbaan, the city with the eminent collaboration, and the national Treasury.
of Scheveningen. The maintenance and restoration of the Kurhaus became the bone of contention in a dispute among various project development companies, and in the end it was Bredero that emerged victorious.

A development consortium was founded, with a maximum of 50% Bredero participation on the basis of conditions drawn up by the municipality of The Hague. In the final instance, this consortium was in the hands of the National Netherlands Insurance Company (Nationale Nederlanden). In the portfolio of this insurance company, the seaside resort of Scheveningen is only one of the projects in progress in the municipality of The Hague. Unintentionally, and totally without the support of the municipality of The Hague, the progress of the further development of the seaside resort became a component in the negotiation package between the National Netherlands Insurance Company and the municipality.

The impression evoked by the position of the municipalities in relation to the projects described above has been mainly one of the municipality as the agency responsible for carrying out national policies. The underlying factors leading to this impression have to do with the centralistic nature of the post-war reconstruction process and the mushrooming of the tasks of the national government in the field of city planning from 1958 to 1974, in a period of uninterrupted economic growth.

There was a gradual reduction in the significance of the influence exerted by parties from the private sector that were active in the field of new construction. It had been stipulated, for example, that as a result of the standpoint adopted upon further consideration by Philips, as far as sub-plan 7 was concerned the Eindhoven reconstruction plan could not be implemented, and this has remained the case up to this very day. So in this particular instance, it was still the private party that had the last word.

The Midbouw Foundation (Stichting Midbouw), acting on behalf of the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, played a prominent role in the realization of Lijnbaan, be it a role that did not turn out to be decisive. In the end, it was not feasible for the parties directly concerned to make the necessary private investments on their own, and the plan could only be carried out with the help of the National Life Insurance Bank (Nationale Levensverzekeringsbank).

The Hoog Catharijne Plan launched by Dr. J. de Vries as Director of Bredero United Companies (Verenigde Bedrijven Bredero) was able to be carried out just before society's drastically altered views on city planning emerged and came to play such a decisive role. In themselves, the premises of the Royal Annual Fair (Koninklijk Jaarbeurs) proved to be unable to generate the level of investments that would have enabled them to carry out the kind of expansion that would have been necessary to ensure their continued existence.

A repetition of the formula utilized in the construction of Hoog Catharijne proved to be unfeasible in Scheveningen, firstly due to the new views on the city with the emphasis now on council housing, and secondly due to the imminent collapse of the Bredero concern. After an agreement was reached in principle with the public parties and private parties alike, in
's-Hertogenbosch it turned out to be impossible to develop a joint master-plan to serve as the basis for the realization of the Soetelieve project. One striking aspect has been the relation between the private parties and the city in the sense that in four out of five cases, the actors were private parties operating in the city where the project itself was being carried out. Philips has its home base in Eindhoven, Lijnbaan was carried out in conjunction with the local Midbouw Foundation, acting on behalf of the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce, Hoog Catharijne was initiated by Bredero in Utrecht and the Brabant Real Estate Company has long been located in 's-Hertogenbosch. It was only in the re-development of Scheveningen that in the end, Bredero became involved as private party, though not until after the initiative of Zwolsman's EMS in The Hague had proved unsuccessful. It would seem important to note here that the local reputation and the local prominence of the private parties involved played an important role in the creation of the plans described here.

Lastly, in the Eindhoven reconstruction plans as well as in Hoog Catharijne, the Netherlands Railway Company played an important role. The position of the Netherlands Railway Company is founded on the considerable property it owns in any number of Dutch cities, but it is also based on the very precisely formulated points of departure with respect to the remuneration of the expenses for work to be conducted on the infrastructure of the Netherlands Railway Company in order to meet with city planning requirements. What this amounts to is that these expenses can only be remunerated by the Netherlands Railway Company if and when direct economic advantages for the company are entailed. The Netherlands Railway Company thus proved to be a power factor of significance in Eindhoven as well as in Utrecht.

An important element in the realization of the urban development projects described above is the influence exerted by a number of individuals in positions of prominence in the private sector. An engineer by the name of Tromp, who initiated and supervised the reconstruction of Eindhoven, earned the esteem and confidence of all the parties involved. As ex-Minister, Tromp was familiar with all the ins and outs of governing the nation in the post-war period. He was a member of the Philips Board of Directors and was later also appointed Commissioner of the Netherlands Railway Company.

Dr. Lichtenauer seemed at first to be the man credited with the fruitful completion of Lijnbaan, though further examination reveals that it was mainly the influence of the municipality of Rotterdam that was responsible for the ultimate success of the project. It was Dr. J. de Vries, the director of Bredero, who took the initiative to present a virtually ready-to-build plan for the downtown area of Utrecht to the City Council. In the development and early realization phase, there was a great deal of appreciation for his initiative, and it was not until the realization phase of the Hoog Catharijne complex that opposition to the plan was expressed.

Changing political ideas led to a sharp reduction in the appreciation for personal initiative of this kind. In Scheveningen, it was the very success of Bredero that was to later alter the political context, making it impossible to carry out the alterations of the Brabant Real Estate plan. The changes in the zone were made to make it unfeasible for Bredero to continue. In all the cases described, it was persons from the private sector that led the projects.

In Part II, The City and the Private Sector, several specific aspects of the urban projects being considered are examined. It should be noted that, concept, structure and effect of those being developed differ from those of projects of the kind that will make the city have its own reputation and status of itself. Thus the city has become the surprise unto itself. The Municipal Memorandum on Urban Planning and the Eindhoven plan is devoted to the problem of how to make the plan. In line with the view that the city is a space that has as possible a range of functional, cultural and economic opportunities, the opportunity to earn a living must be granted the status that the city itself deserves. The city has become the surprise unto itself. The Municipal Memorandum on Urban Planning and the Eindhoven plan is devoted to the problem of how to make the plan. In line with the view that the city is a space that has as possible a range of functional, cultural and economic opportunities, the opportunity to earn a living must be granted the status that the city itself deserves.
Bredero that was to turn against the company. In 's-Hertogenbosch, due to altered political concepts at the level of the national government, it became impossible to carry out the plans developed by Mr. J. Stienstra as director of the Brabant Real Estate Company. What is more, by making considerable changes in the zoning plan, the municipal authorities made every effort to make it unfeasible to carry out the Brabant Real Estate Company plans. In all the cases described here, private initiative on the part of prominent persons from the private sector had considerable repercussions.

In Part II, The City as Enterprise, a description is given of the organizational and financial position of the city in the nineties, followed by an outline of five projects being developed at the moment, focused in particular on several specific aspects of these projects. On the grounds of these descriptions, it should be possible to analyse the similarities and differences in concept, structure and method between projects developed in the past and those being developed at the present time.

In Chapter IX, an outline is presented of the position of the Dutch city at the moment. Particular attention is devoted to the cities that have been granted the status of 'urban junction' on the grounds of the Fourth Memorandum on City Planning (Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening). In line with the views expressed in the Fourth Memorandum, the city functions as the engine of the Dutch economy. The recovering economic basis, the status of urban junction and the aspiration to provide as complete as possible a range of facilities in the fields of research, education, information, culture and recreation have combined to give the Dutch city the opportunity to earn a place for itself among the leading cities of Europe. Thus the city has become an independent organizational unit, an enterprise unto itself. The city as enterprise, the enterprising city.

Five sample projects selected by the Minister of Public Housing, City Planning and the Environment are described here. In Chapter X, 'From Babylon to New Church' in The Hague is described, and special attention is devoted to the prerequisites stipulated for the realization of the project in connection with the complexes to be constructed outside the area of the plan. Together with a set of facilities focused on improving the quality of the public space, the realization of the project is to create conditions of the kind that will make it the finishing touch, as it were, of the city's facelift.

In Chapter XI, attention is devoted to the IJ Axis Project in Amsterdam and the endeavour to found a 'Waterfront Development Company' and a 'Waterfront Management Company' in which there is to be joint participation on the part of the government and the world of trade and industry in bearing the risks.

In Chapter XII, the Rotterdam South Crest (Kop van Zuid) is dealt with, particularly in relation to foreign examples of re-development plans for harbour districts that have lost their former function. Chapter XIII devotes attention to the North-West Train Station district in Groningen, which is part of the Connecting Channel Zone (Verbindingskanaalzone) and the significance of the Master Plan as the basis for a construction project.

Chapter XIV discusses the last of the sample projects, the Céramique yards
in Maastricht. Attention is devoted to the specific role architecture can play in the development of a plan of this kind.

In Chapter XV, conclusions are drawn as to the five sample projects. They are linked to the conclusions formulated in Chapter VIII regarding the projects described in the first five chapters.

By way of the analysis of city planning projects that have been developed in the recent past on the basis of collaboration between the public and the private sector, an effort is made to stipulate the conditions on the grounds of which cooperative public-private projects can be successfully realized in the spirit of contemporary times.

A number of essential conclusions can be formulated on the grounds of the projects described in Part II. On the basis of city plans or regional plans formulated at an earlier point in time, which were supported by the draft and at a later stage by the final version of the Fourth Memorandum on City Planning, the local authorities in the five cities involved have made enthusiastic efforts to carry out the plans for the sample projects. Up to now, the most successful effort in this connection has been made in Maastricht.

As regards the position of the national government, it should be noted here that in contrast with the period from 1945 to 1985, nowadays the national authorities do not play an essential role in the development of plans of this kind. It is only in instances where the national government is a party with a direct interest, for example the acquisition of office space in the specific area, that it plays an active role in the development of these plans.

In comparison with the position of the private sector in the period from 1945 to 1985, the situation of this sector today exhibits some important differences. In the first place, there is now much less of a direct interest on the part of the private party in the architectural plans to be realized in the end. In the projects described in Part I, the direct users of the buildings to be constructed in the area involved were Philips, the participants in the Midbouw Foundation (Stichting Midbouw), the Royal Annual Fair (Koninklijke Jaarbeurs) and to a lesser degree the Brabant Real Estate Company (Brabant Vastgoed) in 's-Hertogenbosch and as far as Scheveningen was concerned, Bredero. In today's sample projects, the private party frequently consists of some nationally or sometimes even internationally operating investor, whose only relation with the project after its completion will be by way of the returns on the invested capital. In the plan to be implemented, the local involvement of this investor is solely based upon considerations pertaining to investment opportunities and returns.

If we compare the situation pertaining to the projects in Part I with that of the sample projects described in Part II, the impression we get is quite surprising. The more the city lost of its identity in the period from 1945 to 1985, the more direct involvement private parties appeared to have in the developments. In a sense, the opposite is the case today. The cities, working on the reinforcement of their own identity and prosperity, are making every effort to carry out high quality urban projects in conjunction with the private sector. For this purpose, they are quite willing to cooperate with developers and, if possible, with investors. These investors have no direct relation with the city. On the contrary, an extent a cooperative public-private project could be preferable.

Special attention shall be given to planning stage where in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and in Scheveningen, it was the private party that took the initiative and took the lead in the development of the plans in the context of the regional plan.

The position of the local government in the present situation is not the same. Land owned by the local government as a result of development completed by the public and the private sector are all included in the IJ Axis plans. If this land is developed, it will be by a joint planning and development committee of the public and the private sector.

In all of the present projects, the local authorities took the initiative in cooperation with the local government and the private sector in the development of the plans for the regional plan.

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Unlike the plans described in Part I, the social process on the development process is not the main focus. In the plans described in Part I, the social process was the main focus.

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relation with the city except, as has been noted above, in Maastricht and Amsterdam. On the grounds of this observation, one might wonder to what extent a cooperative agreement with a local investment company would not be preferable.

Special attention should be devoted to the moment in the preliminary planning stage when the private parties are called in. In Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Utrecht, 's-Hertogenbosch and to a lesser extent in Scheveningen, it was the private sector that took the initiative for the projects described here. On the basis of suggestions developed by the private sector, consultations were initiated with the municipal authorities and, wherever necessary, with the national Ministries involved. In principle, this meant a joint planning and development process leading to a joint Master Plan. In all of the present sample projects, it was the municipal authorities who took the initiative for the development of the plans. The roots for the development of these plans were mainly to be found in some city plan or regional plan.

The position of the land owner in the planning area is of great importance. Land owned by the municipality can, if so desired, be transferred into a development company or management company to be jointly founded by the public and the private party, as was described in connection with the IJ Axis plans. If this kind of joint risk-bearing corporation or limited liability company is not advisable under the circumstances, it is also feasible for municipal land to be put up for sale by the municipal authorities and sold to the investor participating in the development and implementation of the plan. In addition, of course, land that is privately owned should be purchased. The Netherlands Railway Company occupies a special position in this respect.

Unlike the plans described in Part I, the ones being developed at the moment are all multi-functional. The underlying reason for this is the wish to reinforce the city's identity and prosperity. In the decision-making process on the development of the plans involved, the multi-functional nature is consequently an important aspect.

In the plans described in Part I, the private sector was often represented by the parties directly involved. This was very different in the case of the projects described in Part II, where to a large extent, leeway was created for the role of the investor. The parties directly involved in a project are much less interested than the investor in developments outside the immediate vicinity of the real estate to be used by them. The situation that is most clearly to the advantage of the investor is one in which factory space or office space is developed in a vicinity that contributes towards the realization of high profits. Thus the investor will attribute a great amount of importance to the quality of the outdoor space in the area and the infrastructure. In addition, the livability of the urban climate is heightened by adding the residential function to the planning area and creating recreational facilities wherever possible.

The plans described in Part I are in no way related to the historical development of the city in question. The city as such did not function as the point of reference for the plans and little or no attention was devoted to establishing links between the new plans and the existing urban struc-
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The reinforcement of the significance attributed to the identity of the city and the striving to emphasize this identity to an even greater extent led to new prerequisites for the development of new plans. A good balance between the scale and structure of the new architecture and that of the existing city became one of the prerequisites. The acknowledgement of this aspect in the drawing up of future plans can serve to contribute toward the feasibility of these plans. Research into the historical growth of the structure of the city can also promote successful urban planning in the future.

The city plays a central role in Part II as well. This time not as the local organ that carries out national policies, but as an autonomous management unit in a European framework. The foundation for the projects which are in preparation at the moment once again represents the conjunction between the public and the private sector, whereby a sharp distinction emerged between public-private cooperation and public-private partnership. In its relations with the private parties involved, the city has gradually become a full-fledged partner. The process of partnership or cooperation is focused upon new ways of dealing with the urban space. In comparison with the projects described in Part I, the more recent ones are of a different nature. They are often long-term complicated projects on a high level of abstraction. Decision-making takes place on the basis of resolutions, and here a large extent of flexibility pertaining to the possible ways of dealing with this space in the future serves to simplify the entire decision-making process. The government has traditionally had difficulty accepting a decision-making process based on flexible concepts for long-term planning; the government should make every effort to master the principles of dynamic planning on a more long-term basis. In the field of politics, deciding about and financing projects spread out over more than one term in office of a Mayor and Aldermen and a City Council always involves a certain extent of uncertainty.

Today’s cultural climate and mentality differ essentially from the circumstances under which the plans described in Part I were drawn up. Nowadays society is much more focused than it was in the period from 1945 to 1985 on service, cultural and recreational aspects. The position of the public housing component in the city has lost much of its importance, and it is quite probable that the need for ways to expand and intensify knowledge and know how will increase in the future.

The quality of the urban facilities constitutes the basis for the appreciation of the city. This entire assortment of facilities is at the service of the user, the citizen in his or her own city. In order to be able to implement high quality architectural plans focused on the improvement of the quality of the city, in their negotiations with the private sector the municipal authorities have had to be as businesslike and forcefully efficient as possible. Time and funds have been invested in plans that are to be the bearers for the urban facilities of the twenty-first century. The citizens in the city view themselves as the future clientele for these facilities. This is especially true now that cities have established their own legal, financial and organizational instruments, which are utilized to reinforce the metropolitan founda-

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tion in such fields as urban prosperity, residential quality, culture and recreation.
Perhaps a new explicit function should be added to the traditional list of city functions: housing, working, traffic and recreation. Namely, the function of the city as a knowledge and know how centre. On the grounds of its growth, social development and experience, the city is continually acquiring new knowledge and know how. In addition, focused perhaps on one or more specific qualities of the city in question, knowledge and know how can be derived from the city.

The city is often part of a whole series of urban networks. They can be infrastructural networks, like the ones being developed on a European scale for the TGV (Très Grande Vitesse) lines, a network of urban junctions like the one created by the Fourth Extra Memorandum for City Planning, or for example a network of government centres.
A historically important network is the European network of urban knowledge and know how centres consisting of the university cities. It is in these cities that a high quantity and quality of knowledge and know how are readily available.
The recognition of this specific quality, which should be used toward the qualitative improvement of the economic and cultural climate of urban life, can help the city acquire and preserve a dynamic position within a societal structure geared toward European unity. This is why reinforcing the relations between a city and its universities can do so much to help strengthen the position of the city in general.