

BRIEF

ISOCARP
Young Planning Professionals Workshop

1st edition of the Gdynia School of Urbanism
7th AESOP European Urban Summer School

"NEW APPROACH TO URBAN HOUSING"

ORGANISED AS A PART
OF
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
LIVING IN THE CITY -
PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES
OF SHAPING HOUSING POLICY

GDYNIA | POLAND | 19 - 22 JUNE 2016

NEW APPROACH TO URBAN HOUSING

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INTERNATIONAL
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CITY – PROBLEMS AND
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HOUSING POLICY

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In partnership with City of Gdynia,

AESOP – Association of European Schools of
Planning

Society of Polish Town Planners – TUP

Committee for Spatial Economy and Regional
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02 INTRODUCTION

The workshop was organized along with the [INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE LIVING IN THE CITY – PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF SHAPING HOUSING POLICY](#), which is hosted by the City of Gdynia, Poland. It was conducted in frame of Young Planning Professionals Program and 7th AESOP European Urban Summer School but also as the new type of the activity for the Young Planners “Gdynia School of Urbanism”. It has been intended to become a platform for Young Planning Professionals (YPPs) from various parts of the world to get associated with principles and emerging ways of thinking. At the same time, the international workshop delegates were joined by a number of Polish YPPs. The workshop provided all participants with the opportunity for exposure to different schools of thought and planning techniques used across the world.

The topic of YPP workshop "[NEW APPROACH TO URBAN HOUSING](#)" was chosen by the Local Organizing Committee in agreement with the municipal planning services, and is of crucial importance for the future of the city development. At the same time the workshop is intended to become a point of reference for further discussions and advancement of planning research and practice within the field of housing. This is also justified by the fact that nowadays provision of various types of urban housing is a vital issue for many cities within Central and Eastern Europe and other parts of the globe. At the same time the Municipality of Gdynia is willing to take active role shaping the future of housing policy as well as to utilize the results in the process of re-planning the key development areas of the city. In addition to the practical outcomes of the workshop exercise, its results may also contribute to the wider discussion on the

topic. In order to achieve this, it is intended to present the workshop results during the conference on the same theme, organized in parallel to the workshop itself.



[Fig. 1](#) Gdynia

[02 YPP WORKSHOP AS A PART OF ISOCARP ACTIVITIES](#)

The Young Planning Professionals Program was initiated in 1991 in order to provide unique opportunities to YPPs to share their knowledge, skills and experiences in an attempt to resolve complex and multi-dimensional planning issues. Since then, the YPP Program has become a crucial component of ISOCARP’s dedication to the promotion and enhancement of the planning profession. The objective is to provide emerging professionals with an opportunity to work in a multi-cultural setting and share their experiences.

The first Young Planning Professionals' Workshop took place at the 26th ISOCARP Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico (1991). Since then, senior members of ISOCARP have happily – and at times perhaps a little enviously – observed the competition for admission to the workshop, the creative spirit of the workshop itself, and the enthusiastic response of the participants. The YPP workshop has become a source of meaningful debate, new ideas and rejuvenation for the Society. It is now not only a unique opportunity for young planning professionals and postgraduate students from around the world to meet and exchange technical and scientific knowledge, but also a basis for making life-long friends.

03 NATURE OF THE YPP WORKSHOP

YPP Workshops bring together young planners from all parts of the world. The workshops are brief, but very intense, brainstorming planning and design exercises in which our young colleagues work on real-life planning problems in the host city in an area defined by the local authority or university departments. YPP Workshops bring together young planners from all parts of the world. The workshops are brief, but very intense, brainstorming planning and design exercises in which our young colleagues work on real-life planning problems in the host city in an area defined by the local authority or university departments.



Fig. 2. phot. Rick Stephens



Fig. 3. phot. Rick Stephens

The YPP workshop has its own specific theme which is related to the main Congress theme. The theme relates to a specific area and/or project. The workshop is hands-on and seeks to establish solid working relationships between young professionals from all parts of the world who together seek final findings and results in a very short period of time. Over a concentrated period of four days, the YPPs will work in closely-knit international teams, exchanging ideas and learning from each other. The workshop, thus, provides a synergetic platform where new ideas and creative solutions to complex and multifaceted urban issues are produced. The tangible results are then presented at the main congress, are published in a Workshop Report, both on the ISOCARP website and on CD. The intangible ones, however, stay in the hearts and minds of the participant YPPs, who not only learn from each other but make life-long friends. Therefore, YPP Workshops are brief-but-intense brainstorming and design exercises that resemble what are commonly known as ‘charrettes’.

Another benefit of the YPP Workshop is related to the quality of the new ideas, concepts or proposals that are prepared and presented. The Young Planning Professionals are required to defend their ideas in front of a critical jury, the participants of the annual congress. Thus, the working teams have to prepare a well-rehearsed presentation that frequently catches the special attention of the planning authorities. The host Local Authority or Planning Agency usually welcomes the fresh ideas that arise from the Workshops. Sometimes these ideas and inputs have even been used as inputs in their own strategies for the study area.



Fig. 4. phot. Rick Stephens

We strongly recommend you read the past YPP workshop reports which are available at the ISOCARP website. This will provide further guidance as to the caliber of results to be achieved.

03 TASK AND LOCALISATION

01 THE CITY OF GDYNIA

Gdynia is often referred to as “a city built of the sea and dreams.” These words aptly describe the emotions and feelings that accompany the romantic legend of Gdynia from the Second Polish Republic. In the twenties of the 20 century City of Gdynia was transformed from a small fishing village into a modern seaport, pursuant to a resolution of the Polish national government, which decided about the creation of the Polish port on the Baltic Sea. This decision was influenced by the international situation, as Poland, due to customs conflict with Germany was in this time forced to depend on sea trade. Originally the main commodity which was shipped was coal. Demand became stronger with the long miners' strike in England. In this time railway leading to Gdynia was built. In the city itself 214 km of tracks and sidings were located. Wagons standing on these tracks served as granaries on wheels.

The first city plan of Gdynia was prepared in 1926. In this year City had 6 thousand residents. After a few years, the number had increased to 120 thousand and Gdynia became the most modern port of the Baltic Sea. Gdynia was designed according to a set of functional assumptions, with clearly determined urban zones, where the Downtown Area and the neighbouring port lie at the heart of the city. The layout of the main arteries was like that of a fan, based around the square for the railway station. One of the main roads led to the port, which was in accordance with the assumption that the city was to be merged with the port areas. The most elegant street of the city, the present 10 Lutego Street, was intended to expand into a Maritime Forum in order to emphasise the country's connection to the Baltic Sea

and become the symbol of Gdynia as the window on the world for the Second Polish Republic.

During the development phase the original plan underwent many modifications. Faster than expected development of the Port area devoured plots where the northern quarters of Downtown were planned. The axis leading from the train station along the street Starowiejskiej was seized by port functions. Plan established in 1930 adjusts the structure of the city to this situation. Kościuszki Square leading to South Pier became main axis of the city.



Fig. 1. Gdynia, phot. Anna Rubczak

Contemporary urban planners and architects draw inspiration from the pre-war traditions. In 2009, Gdynia received the main award at the prestigious Festival for Promoting Cities and Regions, in the Urban Space category, for a project that involved developing a part of Szwedzki Boulevard at the Downtown Beach and the marina. Within the project, some new but reflecting the city historic architectural tradition street furniture was created. Gdynia also looks after its historical architecture and space, consistently implementing initiatives like the programme to co-fund the renovation of houses situated in the historical, modernist Downtown Area. The city's location beside the sea is a great asset, visible in new, prestigious waterfront projects. According to the current spatial development plans, the designs to be implemented in these areas will be selected through architectural competitions. Another significant feature of the spatial development plans for this part of Gdynia is the friendly and open nature of the new spaces, which are accessible and appealing to inhabitants and visitors.

For more information, please see official city website: <http://www.gdynia.pl/eng/>

03 WORKSHOP THEME

The theme of the workshop is “New approach to urban housing”. Participants worked on development an innovative approach to urban housing, based on various themes and cases. Each of the teams was working on one of four preselected sites. Their distance to inner-city differ (from innercity urban regeneration areas up to new developing residential districts) but all of them are situated within already shaped urban structures. Not only their position with respect to city center varies but also they are located in very diverse urban context starting from blighted area through affordably but comfortable residential districts up to high-end waterfront apartments.

As discussed above, results of the workshop will become an important statement in discussion about development of housing policy in Gdynia. At the same time it is intended that the workshop becomes a source of ideas regarding the new approach to housing policy within the Central and Eastern European cities.

04 DEFINITION OF PLANNING SITUATION

City of Gdynia as all of the Polish Cities and communities is in possession of an urban masterplan called “Studium uwarunkowań i kierunków zagospodarowania przestrzennego Gdyni”. This document specifies the directions of spatial development in relation to all spheres of activity of the City. This plan also provides the general framework for further development of the concepts and ideas and specifies spatial policy of the City of Gdynia. For more information about the municipal development plan, please see the full version available online: **www.gdynia.pl/bip/zagospodarowanie/5528_48204.html**

Besides this basic document, the Municipal Planning Office is also competing the so-called “local plans” serving as the basis for the day-to-day development regulation. These are defined according to the current needs and do not cover the entire area of the city.

As stated in these documents, housing is one of the most important issues that has to be dealt with when shaping the city structure. Therefore, the outcomes of the workshop can serve as the basis for the new type of the policy document for Gdynia, focused on definition of the goals and priorities for the different parts of the city.

05 FEATURES OF THE LOCATIONS IN GDYNIA

The area of Orlicz-Dreszera Street is a residential area located in the district of Gdynia Grabówek on the steep slopes of Gdansk Plateau. Hypsometry of the area (drops of the slopes are reaching as much as 30%, and height differences are approximately of 60 m) makes this area difficult to manage. At the same time it is extremely attractive area in terms of landscape (view to the sea and the port, situated in the valley underneath).



Fig. 2. The area of Orlicz-Dreszera Street in Gdynia Grabówek phot. Rick Stephens

Housing dominates among functions of the district. Underinvestment in services and recreation is clearly visible, and jobs are lacking. Buildings within this district are very heterogeneous – one can find both high and low block of flats, terraced houses, villas, one-family houses, and sub-standard housing substance. The district raised suddenly. It expanded chaotically in the interwar period (starting from 1930.) as a slum area, providing residence to the poorest construction workers of the port and city of Gdynia. Still one can find isolated artifacts from this period.

The main challenge is: how to re-develop this site avoiding gentrification, and preserving the memory of the district's heritage?

The area of Portowa and Węglowa Street is situated at the northern outskirts of Gdynia city centre, at the border with a former marshalling yard, which was design to serve bulk terminals of Gdynia port (the Coal Pier). In 1926, when the first urban plan of Gdynia appeared, the living quarters of the city were situated further North. The main axis of the whole city was following the line leading from the railway station on East to the sea on the West, where a huge public space was planned (so called Maritime Forum). In 1930., due to the fast development of the port and it's turnover the borders of Gdynia port where moved toward South, what caused a necessity of reorientation of the original plan. From this moment the area, which according to plan from 1926 supposed to be the central part of the city, become the “dead end” of the city center. This duality, as well as the sharp border between the functions (living quarters/transport and logistics) led to problems in finding the proper spatial solutions for the site.



Fig. 3 The area of Portowa and Węglowa Streets. phot. Rick Stephens

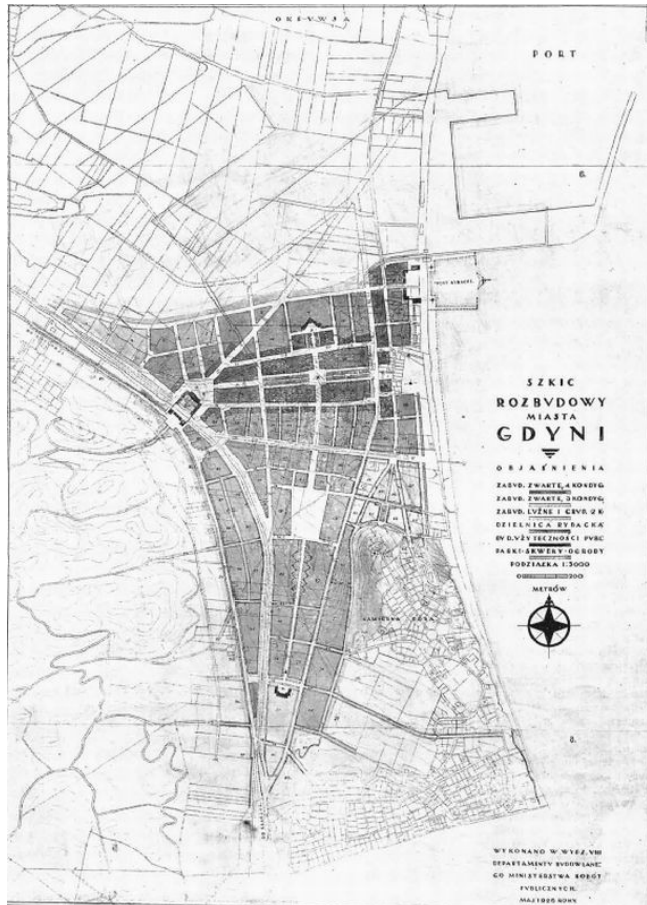


Fig. 4 The first plan of the centre of Gdynia drawn up by R. Feliński, A Kunczewicz in 1926

Nowadays, the port's border moved back again, what opened the new development opportunities for the city functions. The site contains a mixture of: open space abandoned by former marshaling yard, old warehouses from 60's and 70's, tenement houses of modernistic origin, as well as newer buildings hosting services or housing. In the direct neighborhood of the site there is a Kashubian square – an important public space of

Gdynia. North from the area, in the surrounding of the port, the new museum has been recently opened for the public (Museum of Emigration). The access to the museum leads from the city center through the site, and it is currently not very friendly for pedestrians. Moreover, some of the streets leading through the area are the access roads to the port terminals, what complicate the situation even more.

The question is: what would be the best housing policy to incorporate the post-port area into a city centre?

The Sokółka- Zielenisz district is a new, large housing district, situated west from the Gdynia city center. It lays about 120 m higher than the city center (situated at the sea level), on the morainic plateau (so called upper terrace). The slopes separating lower and upper terrace of Gdynia is covered with forests, protected as landscape park. Since 1990. the plateau itself used to be a rural environment, supporting the Tri-city region in food (mostly vegetables and fruits). Still, there exists some individual farms.



Fig. 5 The Sokółka Zielenisz District. phot. Rick Stephens

During the rapid spatial growth of the city of Gdynia in late 90. new blocks of flats came into being, creating the first part of Sokółka- Zielenisz district. Housing blocks were dedicated to the middle class, and were mostly populated by families with kids. Some parts of the district were created as gated communities. The district was well equipped with recreation facilities (such as: playground, walking paths ect.), but was, and still is, underinvested in services, jobs, and public transport connections. That situation leads to everyday commuting by the district's inhabitants, not only to work, but also to schools, or to do some shopping. At the same time, the only available public transport mode at the moment is a bus line, which has a limited bandwidth.

The question which rises while planning Sokółka-Zielenisz is: how to create and maintained a heterogeneous, sustainable society living in a self-supporting district?

Although the area of Gdynia city center “The Circus Site” is located in a direct vicinity of the city center of Gdynia (the pedestrian distance is about 5 -10 minutes), it is strongly divided from it by two car arteries, and railway tracks. For many years this open, flat area was a scene of temporary activities such as: circus, festivals and fests (hence the name). The area is very well communicated with other parts of Gdynia and the whole Tri-city – it neighbours with the rapid transit train stop, and a bus loop. It is surrounded by blocks of flats on the North, and single-family houses situated on slopes of the morainic hills on the East. At the southern border of the area a large shopping mall of a regional importance is located, together with some high-tech company buildings. Due to the recent investment along the so called “Pink road”, being one of the mentioned arteries, the value of a site has changed. New representative office buildings along the road made “The Circus” area a potential entrance

(gate) to the city of Gdynia. Therefore, it's spatial management is currently very intensively discussed.

The most vivid question is: how to achieve the best conglomerate of offices and housing, being at the same time able to maintained public spaces and activities, and achieving an attractive architectural form?

04 TRANSFORMING SOCIAL HOUSING INTO COMMUNITY-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

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“Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilisation.”

Mahatma Gandhi

01 INTRODUCTION

While the concept of social housing is one dimensional to provide housing for those of low income levels, it is merely one component of a much larger web of social issues present in cities around the world. As planners, it is vital to transform our mental frameworks from providing housing for impoverished people to creating vibrant communities for all.

This chapter describes Orlicz- Dreszera in Gdynia (Poland) as a case study. District represents how this expanded planning framework has the potential to transform a blighted neighborhood into an integrative part of the City. The dimensions of this chapter include spatial and social policies in regards to cultural and historic preservation, social engagement and services, the physical design of the area, and the financial plan to accomplish these qualities. To provide context, we first describe the history and current conditions of Orlicz-Dreszera.



Fig. 1 Location of Orlicz-Dreszera

02 HISTORY AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

The port city of Gdynia is located in the Pomeranian Region of Poland. It is a part of the Tricity including with Sopot and Gdańsk. Gdynia has a long history, however, it was not until the 1920's when the port was constructed that the simple fishing village transformed into the modern city it is today. The construction of the seaport attracted workers from all over Poland to

migrate to Gdynia causing a major population boom. A majority of people who came to work on the port first settled 3.5 kilometers northwest of the center of Gdynia in an area now known as Orlicz-Dreszera.



Fig.2 Orlicz-Dreszera

Based on this rich history, one would image that Orlicz-Dreszera is a preserved and celebrated area of the city. However, its current conditions are contrary (Figure 1). The 11-acre area is a blighted neighborhood of 1,600 people. Over 400 households live there without running water, electricity, or proper sewage systems. Most houses are dilapidated and there is minimal infrastructure including lack of lighting, dirt roads and walking trails unfit for people with disabilities. Additionally, the neighborhood is on a hill surrounded by major arterial roads that segregate the community from the rest of the city and its services.



In addition to physical issues, there are a plethora of social issues that plague the area. The Orlicz-Dreszera population suffers from high levels of poverty and unemployment, as well as low levels of education and skills attainment. Additionally, alcoholism is a rampant.

A majority of the current residents of Orlicz-Dreszera have lived in the area for generations and do not want to move. Younger families find the lack of services and infrastructure to be motives to move out. These younger families abandon their houses which produces more vacant, unkempt premises in the neighborhood.

While these current conditions seem bleak, there is tremendous opportunity for the City of Gdynia to transform the Orlicz-Dreszera into an integrative, celebrated area of the city. The strongest potential to reinvent Orlicz-Dreszera into a vibrant community for both the existing residents and for the greater Gdynia population is to preserve the culture, history, and heritage of neighborhood while embracing the future.

03 PRESERVE CULTURE, HISTORY, & HERITAGE



Fig.3 Vintage Photo of People on Gdynia's Beach

Preserving the heritage of the area is its *strongest potential* to reframe social housing and connect this neighborhood to the rest of Gdynia. Gdynia's master plan highlights and maps the city's many historical

preservation sites into a network of "pearl necklace." Monuments and plaques are placed throughout the city inviting residents and visitors to explore these sites and learn more about the Gdynia's past and culture. To achieve the same standard of historical significance as the rest of the sites in Gdynia, the first step in master planning the site is to preserve select cottages in Orlicz-Dreszera.

Though many buildings in Orlicz-Dreszera are unfit for rehabilitation, some are in decent condition and would require minimum investment. These select cottages can be refurbished into both functional and cultural uses.



Fig. 6 UK House Converted to Museum Monument.

One cottage can be converted into a museum and visitor center which will act as a gateway into the neighborhood for visitors (Figure 3 provides a United Kingdom example). There, people can learn about those who constructed Gdynia's seaport and how they lived during that time.

Other functions for the rehabilitated cottages include: a community center to host events, a day care center for the younger families, and shared community resource storage spaces. One shared community resource storage space that is highly recommended is a tool shed for gardening. As many of the current residents pride themselves on gardening, it is important to

reserve some space for community gardens that include shared tools and storage space (See Figure 5).



Fig. 5 Community Garden & Cultural Mural Vision

In addition to preserving and refunctioning existing cottages, the rest of Orlicz-Dreszera should display heritage art and informational plaques in parks, open spaces, buildings, and streetscapes to meet the standards set by the historical sites located around the rest of Gdynia. While having such displays of art and historical information is important, it is equally important to have them linked. Thus, these items should be listed and mapped for people to take self-guided walking tours around the neighborhood to see each of the plaques or pieces of art for a truly unique pedestrian experience.

04 FOR THE PEOPLE



If the City of Gdynia wants to synthesize Orlicz-Dreszera with the rest of the city, it is imperative to

diversify and empower the population of Orlicz-Dreszera. When talking about diversity, we mean respecting and valuing all forms of difference in individuals. People differ in many ways which may not always be obvious or visible. These differences not only include race, ethnicity, culture, belief or sexual orientation but also gender, age, social status and ability. It is recognized that some people find it more difficult to have their voice heard within a society and because of a range of differences their views and needs may not be taken into account. Inclusion is about meeting the needs of all people and creating environments where everyone can feel respected and able to achieve their full potential. The key concept of this proposal is based on equality of opportunity. This means ensuring everyone has fair access to opportunities such as housing, employment, services and community.



Fig. 7 Neighborhood festival with games, performances and market selling home-made products in Bytom, Poland

To achieve that goal of equality, a multi-dimensional approach consisting of social and financial programs, projects and strategies is necessary.

Skills and Tools

To fight poverty, unemployment, and social inactivity, it is important to teach people professional skills and provide them tools that encourage entrepreneurship. This can be done by organizing skill workshops and training courses to provide citizens with tangible skills (e.g., computer skills, construction) they can use inside and outside of the community. In addition to developing skill sets, it is equally important to provide workshops that teach how to write a resume, how to interview, and how to search for jobs. Of course, providing access to information on job offers (local job banks and Internet access) also helps.



Fig. 8 Workshop and exhibition room at the “Crooked Chimney” development center in Wrocław, Poland (source: www.krzywykomin.pl)

Activities for Everyone

Educational activities should be supplemented by organizing community-oriented events such as festivals, exhibitions, performances, film screenings, debates, and farmers’ markets etc. The key is to include everyone— young, old, disabled, poor—from both the existing community and the surrounding community. These events should invite the rest of Gdynia to visit and love Orlicz-Dreszera as much as the people who have lived there for generations. Some events serve

multiple purposes, including empowering community members to start their own businesses (e.g., selling their fruits and vegetables from the community garden at farmers' markets).



Fig. 9 St John of God Health Care's Horizon House aiding young people (source: www.sjog.org.au)

Local Guardians

In order to successfully repair the social problems in Orlicz-Dreszera, it is crucial to locate the helpful resources in the community rather than just offering it. People with problems often feel insecure and afraid to ask for help from the outside. The role of a local guardian can be fulfilled by a trustworthy entity such as a neighbor, NGO, private and public institutions. The guardian can provide helpful resources, information, general support for those in the community who seek assistance and also animate the neighborhood by organizing community-oriented events.

Connected

The matter of connectivity is not only physical, which is discussed later in this this chapter. Social connectivity is equally as important, and is necessary

to make Orlicz-Dreszera a true part of the City of Gdynia. The programs and events described in this segment are all targeted to build social cohesion by being open and inviting to neighbors, visitors and new residents.

05 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Developmental issues in a multi-stakeholder society requires actors to consider a communicative planning approach. A communicative planning approach shifts planning practices from one stakeholder's motivations and desires, for an approach that is more inclusive of all stakeholders' motivations and desires. To use this communicative planning approach, the City of Gdynia should adopt the following principles when considering the future of Orlicz-Dreszera:

- Consensus-building must be treated as an integral part of communicative planning process. Consensus-building, also known as collaborative problem solving, is a concept where participants discuss alternative options until they arrive at an agreement on actions.
- Communication of the planning process must be inclusive to a wide range of stakeholders in social, political, economic, and environmental backgrounds.
- Mutual understanding of interests and avoiding positional bargaining.
- Everyone must be given an opportunity to express their motives, concerns, and intentions based on their background.
- Planners must use language that is easily understood by all stakeholders involved. For

example, using symbols and images as tools for enhancing communications when necessary. It is easy for planners to forget that the concepts we study are used in different ways by community members.

- Transparency in all planning actions creates relationships built on trust.

It must be noted that communicative planning is not immune to criticisms or challenges. As such planners must be aware that many individuals may not try to engage in debate. Therefore, it is necessary for planners to be innovative and attempt different ways to encourage all stakeholders to be involved in the planning



Fig.10 Participatory planning for revitalization in Bytom, Poland

process and in debating important issues. An issue on the other end of the spectrum, some stakeholders may abuse their power by placing unrealistic demands on planners. This may be managed by using majority rule where people are allowed to vote in support or against the proposals. This type of intervention should provide a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved.

06 PHYSICAL DESIGN

To meet the social goals of transforming Orlicz-Dreszera into a vibrant, integral part of Gdynia there are two primary design principles: diversity and

connectivity. These principles strategically encourage walking, bicycling, and social connection.

Diversify Land Use

Currently, Orlicz-Dreszera is 100% residential and does not provide public space or services. This leaves out options for people to start their own businesses. As discussed earlier, it is important to preserve and restore some of the existing cottages for cultural and functional community purposes. To create these much needed places while still maintaining some of the existing residential character, we recommend transect planning. Transect planning is an approach that creates a series of interconnected human habitats that gradually increases in intensity of urban character (Talen, 2002). The three transect zones suggested:

1. *Suburban*: Low-density, residential areas with naturalistic planting and deep setbacks
2. *General Urban*: Contains mixed-uses but is primarily residential. It has a variety of middle-housing types: single-family, duplexes, and row houses.
3. *Urban Center*: Has the highest density and intensity, with the tallest buildings at three floors to be at a comfortable human-scale. This zone is mostly mixed-use with public spaces, street trees, wide sidewalks, and smaller setbacks.

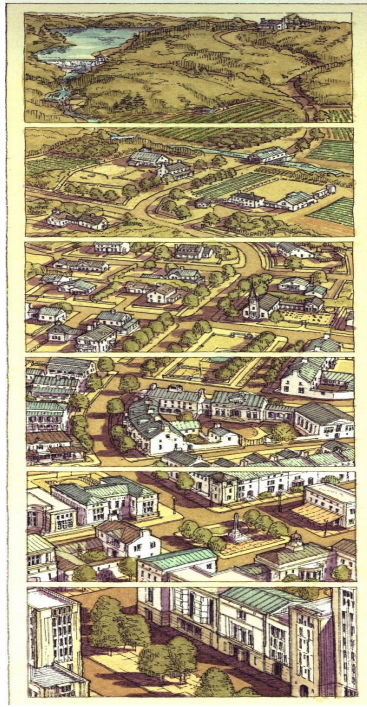


Fig. 11 Transects selected for Orlicz-Dreszera

Connectivity

To better connect the people who currently live in the Orlicz-Dreszera area to the outside community, it is vital to coordinate with the regional transportation agency. Working with the transportation agency, we suggest the City of Gdynia prioritize increasing visibility of pedestrian crosswalks through colorful or artistic designs, increase the number and quality of bus stops around the neighborhood, and create a bike share program. There is a plethora of nearby resources (e.g., a technical college, grocery stores, and health services) that these connectivity improvements will provide access to. Additionally, to increase the connectivity within the hill community, formalized greenways should be constructed. These greenways not only

mimic the mobility option the current residents recognize and are comfortable with, but will also be part of the self-guided walking tour suggested in the cultural preservation section of this chapter and provide a unique pedestrian experience for visitors.



Fig.12 Greenways and walking paths

07 FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The informal settlement of Orlicz-Dreszera is characterized by extremely poor living conditions, inadequate housing, and lack of basic municipal services. Like all informal settlements, housing in Orlicz-Dreszera is built on land that the occupants do not have a legal entitlement to and they live there without adhering to urban planning and zoning regulations.

The response to informal settlements involves the improvement of both the physical and social environment. In order to overcome slum upgrading challenges, it is important to create financial policies that link different actors through partnerships including the public, private and voluntary sectors. Community-driven solutions are also fundamental in any slum upgrading strategy by recognizing that the urban poor play a key role in improving their living conditions.

The major issue in slum upgrading in Orlicz-Dreszera is related to the growing number of informal residents, land ownerships and how housing and infrastructure services can be financed. Consequently, a clear and well defined financial strategy is needed in order to secure a long-term sustainable solution for all relevant stakeholders including the slum dwellers, the land owners, and the municipality.

The proposed financial strategy for the upgrading of Orlicz-Dreszera is as follows:



Fig.13 Financial Strategy

Land Acquisition by Gdynia

Controlling or owning the land is fundamental for the City of Gdynia to solve the problem of slum dwellers in Orlicz-Dreszera. The City of Gdynia, through a

strategic land acquisition approach, has various means to acquire control of the land. Options available to the city include: dedications, bequests, land swapping, compatible use agreements, leases, restrictive covenants, outright purchase, and easements. All of these options present an opportunity for a cooperative relationship with the six landowners of Orlicz-Dreszera. The City of Gdynia will ensure that this strategic land acquisition is made in the best interests of the public.

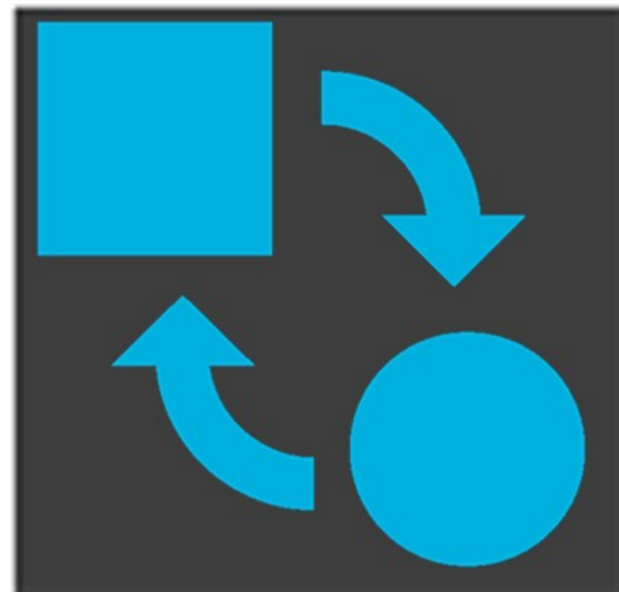


Fig.14 Land swapping is one of the options to acquire the land in Orlicz-Dreszera

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure provision is one of the most basic public services that is required for the future success of Orlicz-Dreszera. These services include water and sanitation, drainage, electricity, roads and footpaths, solid waste management, and telecommunications. Municipal works projects, such as upgrading the infrastructure, are immediately capitalized into surrounding land values. Therefore, any investment

that upgrades the infrastructure in Orlicz-Dreszera will make the land more valuable and more attractive for the current residents as well as developers.

use in order to secure ownership rights to the low-income dwellers. These include: Municipality threshold (subsidies, long-term loans), rent-to-buy (a scheme set by the local government to ease the transition from renting to buying a home by providing subsidized rent throughout a limited time frame that is agreed between the various stakeholders), and short-term rentals. To provide a diversity of options to the current residents, this proposal suggests a combination of these options be available to them.

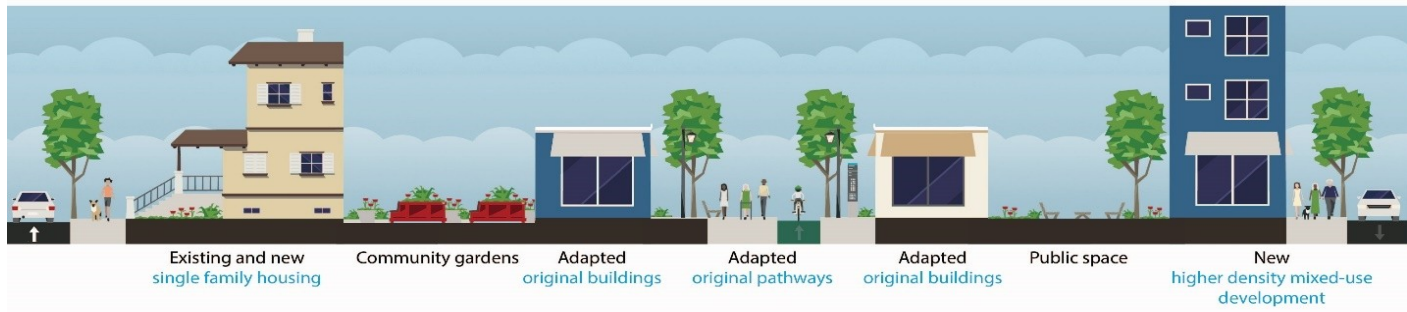


Fig15 Sustainable, Diverse Vision

Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

The City of Gdynia has a financing option to create PPPs that will make large scale investments in the provision of affordable housing and other municipal services. This can be accomplished through a long term agreement between various parties including the public, private and the local community at Orlicz-Dreszera.

Ownership or Rentals

Slum dwellers usually face various obstacles when attempting to obtain the rights to own the land or the apartment they have been living in. This is due to dysfunctional land markets that make it nearly impossible for local slum dwellers to afford to buy their property. For that reason, there are various legislative and fiscal means that the City of Gdynia can

Avoid Gentrification

In order to avoid gentrification and to sustain the slum upgrading process, the City of Gdynia has to secure housing rights and values through setting out clear mechanisms for affordable rental, reduced tax incentives, manageable rates, and renovation programs using community savings. To face the increasing threat of social exclusion through real estate markets, the City of Gdynia should gain leverage over market actors by capturing more of the real estate property value increases resulting from investments in infrastructure or municipal services, and from innovative zoning regulations.

08 CONCLUSIONS

Live Here	Invite Visitors
Explore History	Start Businesses

Gdynia has transformed itself from a small fishing village to a modern, cultural city. Throughout its cityscape, Gdynia has planned public spaces, art, and pedestrian friendly environments. This chapter does not want Gdynia to drastically change itself for Orlicz-Dreszera, rather, this chapter proposes that Orlicz-Dreszera becomes included in those planning standards.

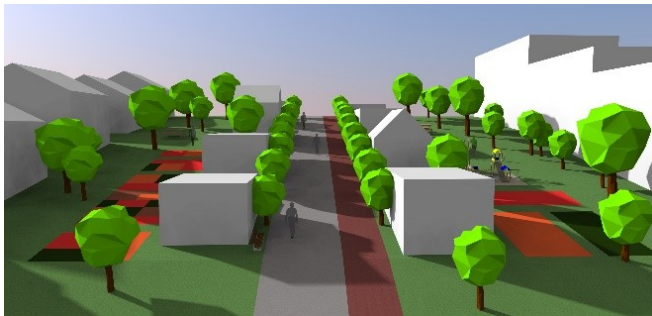


Fig16 Model rendering of new Orlicz-Dreszera.

The people who live on the hill of Orlicz-Dreszera essentially live on an island within the City. Isolated via arterial roads and oversized apartments. With conscious planning, these separators can become bridges that integrate Orlicz-Dreszera to the rest of the City.

The social and spatial policies highlighted in this chapter are merely a beginning to get things started in the right direction for Orlicz-Dreszera. Orlicz-Dreszera can be a place for people of all.

This proposal includes cultural and historical preservation, public engagement in the planning process, social reform to provide both the people and the place (Orlicz-Dreszera) a chance for a truly sustainable future, physical design improvements, and a flexible financial plan. This proposal is detailed and will take time, but if achieved, Orlicz-Dreszera will become another pearl on Gdynia necklace.

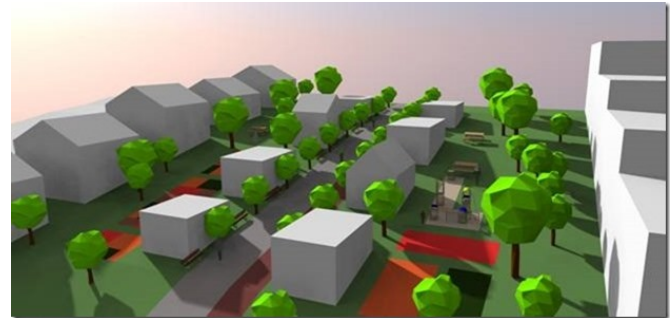


Fig 17 Model rendering of new Orlicz-Dreszera

“We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them”

Albert Einstein

05 BRIDGING COMMUNITIES OF CHWARZNO-WICZLINO NEIGHBOURHOOD



Team:

**Anna Janus, Anna Rubczak,
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01 INTRODUCTION

During the “New Approach to Urban Housing” Young Planning Professionals workshop organized in Gdynia, our group studied the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood with the aim to gain more insights about the areas and to identify its main problems in order to formulate an alternative development scenario and to introduce possible directions for intervention proposal.



Fig.1 Work in progress. phot: Rick Stephens.

WORKFLOW

Our group, composed of six young professionals with backgrounds in architecture and urban planning, originally from four different countries (China, Poland, Romania and Slovenia) has worked intensively during the four days of the workshop. The main language used to communicate was English, sometimes accompanied by Polish. We started discussing about the neighbourhood on the first day, receiving some input from our team coordinator; however, after undertaking the site visit on the next day we had a better understanding of the context, main issues and of the specific character of the area. Consequently, we had numerous brainstorming sessions and consultations in

order to be able to formulate the main challenges as well as opportunities and to define our vision for the future social and spatial development of the site. Having many ideas and directions in mind we then worked on a clear strategy for our intervention and for this aim, the feedback discussions with the workshop tutors and local experts, but also the intermediate presentations were very helpful. The last day before the final presentation was very intense and our team focused on structuring and preparing the final presentation illustrating the main points of our proposal.

02 CURRENT SITUATION OF CHWARZNO - WICZLINO NEIGHBOURHOOD

DISTRICT LOCATION



Fig.2 Location of the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood and its relation to the city of Gdynia.

Chwarzno-Wiczlino district is located in the western part of Gdynia city. It is one of the largest and most dynamically developing districts of the city. The district was established in 1991 as a result of the expansion of the city into the surrounding suburban

areas. It consists of two main settlements: Chwarzno and Wiczlino - both within Gdynia from 1973.

POPULATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Chwarzno-Wiczlino is currently home to approximately 20 000 residents. These are mainly young people: singles, couples and families with young children. The older residents represent a minority. Municipality predicts that Chwarzno–Wiczlino neighbourhood will be home to 40 000 people in the next 20 years. The uniform demographic trend represents an important challenge for the future development of this area, as the progressively ageing population will eventually require more help and care. More over, the social diversity is one of the main component of a vibrant community, so the variety of the social structure play an extremely important role in the future development of this district.

	CURRENT STATE	FUTURE VISION
POPULATION	<p>20 000 inhabitants</p>	<p>40 000 inhabitants</p>
SOCIAL STRUCTURE	<p>couples, families with children</p>	<p>aging population requiring care</p>
BUILDING STRUCTURE	<p>private houses, blocks, fields.</p>	<p>multihousing residential area</p>

Fig.3 The analysis of the current state of Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood and consequences of a development without providing an alternative to the current trends

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Neighbourhood is currently growing mainly through the construction of multi-family housing units and large housing estates developments, many of which in form of gated communities. A small amount of individual detached houses can also be found in the area. The housing developments of the district are usually interrupted by agricultural areas, uncultivated land and various isolated buildings, all remnants of the Chwarzno and Wiczlino villages and its agricultural heritage. At the moment, the neighbourhood is developed in a dispersed and unplanned manner. The housing blocks are built at human scale (4-5 floors) and generally have good design features. The building stock is usually surrounded by huge natural or agricultural areas which give a false impression of the neighbourhood being connected to its natural surroundings. In reality these housing estates offer a fairly small amount of access to public and green spaces.



Fig. 4 Diagram showing current state of the neighbourhood and what it represents.

The existing communal areas (playgrounds and shared spaces in private enclosed patios) have restricted access and are not famous for their inclusiveness. The convergence of exclusive development trends, the relatively small amount of planned public and green space and the discontinuity of the urban fabric shapes the Chwarzno and Wiczlino in an extremely fragmented neighbourhood, lacking physical as well as social connectivity within its own sectors, its natural surroundings and neighbouring settlements. One positive element of the existing neighbourhood is represented by the existence of underground parking garages. This partially eliminates the visual and functional problems generated by the large number of cars being parked on the neighbourhood's streets.



Fig. 5 Gated community, phot. by Rick Stevens

Apart from the connectivity, the next main issue is represented by an almost complete lack of identity. The neighbourhood is in desperate need of different services, amenities and cultural activities, bringing some life and thrill among the communities. Few educational and recreational centres have been spotted in addition to the main public transport terminal with the adjacent square which is being built at the moment. Without the social infrastructure to rely on,

the residents are forced to travel every day out of the district in search of the basic facilities, fact that promotes even more the development of a car oriented society. All those facts make the Chwarzno-Wiczlino just another monotone “sleeping community”, that can be found anywhere in the world. What is more the cultural and traditional heritage of this former agricultural area and its relationship with the past has been completely lost. For centuries the small farmers living and working the rich land in this area build its identity on the linkages between people and nature, giving this area a sort of bucolic spirit. Sadly, nowadays we could describe the neighbourhood as a place dominated by cars and human isolation.

DISTRICT SURROUNDING

The Chwarzno - Wiczlino neighbourhood is attractively surrounded by a protecting area – Trójmiejski Park Krajobrazowy. From one point of view, this represents a highly important asset because the neighbourhood is surrounded by a natural belt with all its benefits and incredible landscapes and views. On the other hand, the lack of public green spaces inside the neighbourhood and the lack of proper infrastructure connecting adequately the urbanized areas with the nature results in the degradation of the protected landscapes, because of the increasing turistic pressure of the population of Chwarzno-Wiczlino as well as of residents of Gdynia city and other neighbouring settlements.

03 KEY ISSUES

Through a set of neighbourhood analysis the group identified the main problems of the research area:



Fig.6 Key issues

a. Lack of connectivity – identified on three main levels: lack of connection between the different areas of the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood, lack of connection with the surrounding green natural park and green corridors, lack of connection with the city of Gdynia.

b. Discontinuity of the urban fabric - the area is mainly composed of gated residential communities; the fences that surround these developments disrupt the urban and social fabric of this area.

c Lack of identity – the new neighbourhood doesn't emphasize any connection with the specific features of this area. The housing units and the lifestyle that develops around them are similar to many suburban areas developed around other Polish or even European cities.

d. Lack of local cultural heritage – the development of this area doesn't relate and highlight the rich specific natural and cultural heritage of the area.

e. Lack of public space and services – the area mainly consists of housing units grouped in gated communities, with almost no public spaces and services that could enhance social life and community bonds; therefore, the area looks more like a large dormitory neighbourhood.

f. Lack of social diversity - at the moment, most residents are young couples and families with children, living in private houses and blocks of flats. Given the current lack of mix in terms of age and social structure, in 20-30 years from now the neighbourhood is prone to be inhabited by an ageing population, whose needs might not fit well with the urban design and housing policy promoted in the present.

04 VISION & STRATEGY

VISION.

Taking into consideration the local specific conditions and the main problems, we have come up with a bold planning solution for the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood. Therefore, the vision statement for our project is:

The Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood is a vibrant and attractive place to live, work, play, invest and visit. It is very well connected to the city of Gdynia, its surrounding natural landscape and the area's cultural heritage.

Chwarzno-Wiczlino is a diverse neighbourhood in terms of urban conformation, housing design and social structure. It is a place people choose to live in due to the unique approach and lifestyle it promotes: a life oriented towards building strong relationships **to people** (family, friends, neighbours and community); **to places**, the neighbourhood itself and the surroundings (re-connect to the local landscape, culture and traditions); **to local food** (food produced by local farmers) and finally **to life**.



Fig.7 Diagram showing our vision for the future of the neighbourhood.

STRATEGY



Fig.8 The sequence of our neighbourhood planning and development strategy.

To achieve the vision presented above, the Chwarzno–Wiczlino neighbourhood should be seen as a highly important component of a complex territorial system made of Gdynia and the surrounding suburbs.

Therefore, we structured the transformation of the Chwarzno–Wiczlino neighbourhood on three different planning layers:

- The macro level that relates the neighbourhood to the surrounding area and puts accent on the strategic spatial planning aspects;
- The mezzo level that refers to the neighbourhood’s structure and its different components.
- The micro level that relates to the detailed urban design aspects.

To make this vision come to life, our team formulated six main objectives, each of them corresponding some direction lines and specific measures, as presented in the figure below.

First of all, we aimed to enhance the connectivity of the neighbourhood with the surrounding countryside and to enhance the interactions of the various

communities living within the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood itself. For this, we proposed to build green roads networks (for cars and public transport with limited speed) and green pedestrian/cycling paths, that connect various parts of the neighbourhood and its centralities, but also the neighbourhood with the surrounding rural landscape through the link with the green natural corridors entering the urban fabric of the neighbourhood. Furthermore, to reduce car dependency in the neighbourhood and to promote sustainable modes of transportation, we envisioned that the various projected centralities will be connected by a free reliable shuttle bus service and that in the long term the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood will be connected to Gdynia and the surrounding region by a light rail service.

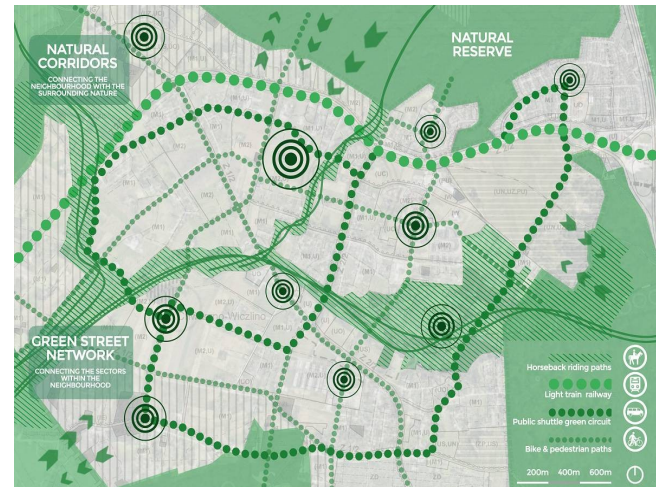


Fig.9 Map showing the strategy for the development of the physical connectivity of the neighbourhood through a network of green roads, pedestrian/cycling paths and natural corridors forming an intricate green connecting system linking various centralities of the neighbourhood and the neighbourhood with the surrounding nature.

A main aspect of our strategy is the idea of increasing the “green connectivity” of the neighbourhood. In creating a sense of identity for the neighbourhood and transforming it into a liveable and vibrant place, a key element is

represented by its geographic location right in the close proximity of a natural reserve and of a green corridor. Therefore, through our strategy we aim to position the neighbourhood in a “green continuum”, in which strong aesthetic and functional links are built between the exterior elements – the adjacent natural reserve and green corridors, and the interior elements – the network of proposed green paths and roads and main projected centralities.

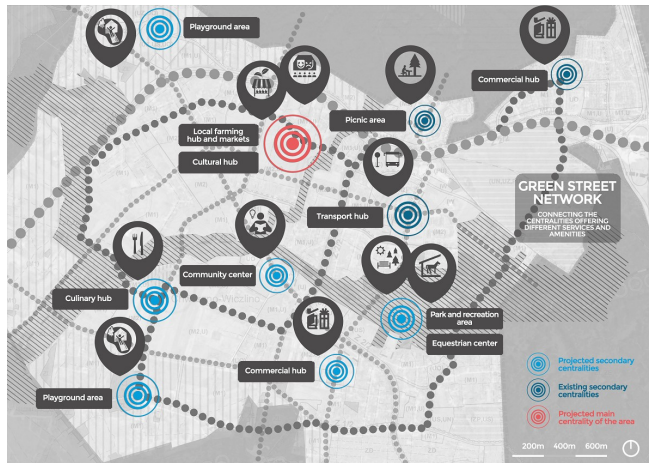


Fig. 10 Map showing the strategy for the diversification and connection of new and existing centralities of the neighbourhood

These proposed connections are vital for the neighbourhood development into a vibrant place not only because they re-create the residents’ ancestral bond with nature, but also because they ensure the area’s biodiversity and maximize the ecosystem services that benefit the neighbourhood. Despite being situated in a rural area, the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood is characterized by an urban character, due to the kind of buildings developed here and the urban lifestyle of its inhabitants and for these reasons it is perceived as a suburb of Gdynia. However, given the specific character of the natural and cultural surroundings, it deserves to shape its own strong identity. This goal can be achieved by increasing the functional diversity of this neighbourhood and by re-

connecting the local community to the surrounding cultural and natural heritage. Therefore, throughout the strategy’s aims, the emphasis is on promoting a “slow lifestyle” that re-connects the residents of the neighbourhood with the local producers and promotes local heritage, traditions and culinary diversity. Creating in this way a new hub in the region for everything that is connected with sustainable production in terms of food as well as crafts. To achieve this kind of lifestyle and to succeed in creating a vibrant urban community that values local traditions, it is essential that the local public policies promote diversification of the social and age structure of the neighbourhood, and enforce the development of a functionally mixed area, which embeds a variety of public spaces. One of these kinds of public spaces, which is a key element of our strategy is the local farmers’ market place, a central area in the neighbourhood that has a flexible structure. We have imagined this area as representing the main attraction point of the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood, consisting of both an open and a closed space where all-year round activities can take place, such as local producers food market, folklore festivals, traditional food markets and educational activities (e.g. traditional cooking lessons, gardening lessons, etc).

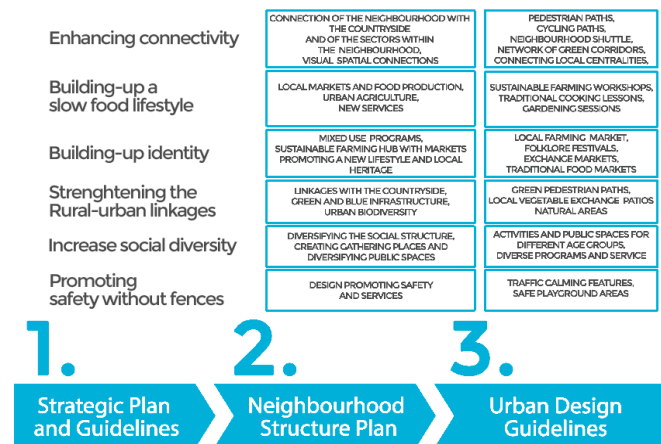


Fig. 11 Neighbourhood outcomes and principles at different scales.

All these kinds of activities aim at having the residents learn about the local and regional history, culture and traditions. In this way, the main central area of the Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood would not only attract residents, but also people from the whole region and would become a thrilling place that facilitates social interaction, cultural exchange and social bonds.

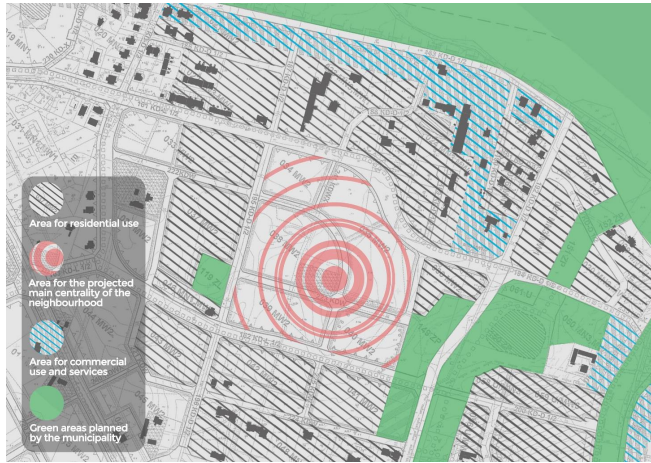


Fig. 12 Maps showing the analysis of the existing neighbourhood structure of the area and the proposal for the development of neighbourhood structure of the projected main centrality of the neighbourhood.

05 URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINE

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF OUR DESIGN APPROACH

Urban design is generally accepted as the process of giving design directions to the relationship between buildings and open space in response to social and economic forces that impinge upon different scales of the city, at each stage of its development. In arriving at urban design concepts and principles for the Chwarzno-Wiczlino and also for the future connection and development of the city of Gdynia, it is important to recognize that this area aims to become a new town development and it is the area of the main future urban growth of Gdynia. On the other hand, with the very unique Kasabian culture and its own characteristic, which gives this area its own attributes and development needs, it is therefore necessary that the urban design concepts and principles for this area have to take due consideration of the above. To achieve this objective, it is necessary first to understand the major factors that fit and affect the its physical design context. These factors include green infrastructure, historical development and the major urban design programmes. In addition to fully explore the unique urban context and its social connection, three layers of strategic planning have been adopted among this intervention. It is basically a scale down approach from core problems identified, to single neighbourhood structure plans, and finally the urban design guidelines as the third more detailed layer.

PHYSICAL DESIGN CONTEXT OF CHWARZNO - WICZLINO

The natural context is a fundamental consideration in a place formation. The Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood comprises of a very good natural

surrounding and relatively good infrastructure system. This physical context has some important implications. Firstly, it has given the rise to the urbanization of this area. Secondly, the distance between Gdynia and the neighbourhood has channelled urbanization in various parts of the suburbs and forged uncontrolled urban sprawl but on the other hand has also improved the existing infrastructure. Thirdly, the natural reserve gives this area a number of distinct views and potential green infrastructure linkages.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

The natural context is a fundamental consideration in a place formation. The Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood comprises of a very good natural surrounding and relatively good infrastructure system. This physical context has some important implications. Firstly, it has given the rise to the urbanization of this area. Secondly, the distance between Gdynia and the neighbourhood has channelled urbanization in various parts of the suburbs and forged uncontrolled urban sprawl but on the other hand has also improved the existing infrastructure. Thirdly, the natural reserve gives this area a number of distinct views and potential green infrastructure linkages.

MAJOR URBAN DESIGN PROGRAMMES

Another dimension that affects the urban design context of the site are the major urban design programmes. There have been various urban design studies undertaken at both strategic and district levels. The most important is the urban design and landscape framework of the area which provide a visual framework and guidelines for the three dimensional

design of the urban form of this designated area. Because of the extensive consultation during the preparation of this workshop, the urban design concepts and principles have been well taken by the community and are useful basis for future direction and approach of urban design in Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood area.

URBAN DESIGN ATTRIBUTES OF CHWARZNO-WICZLINO NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

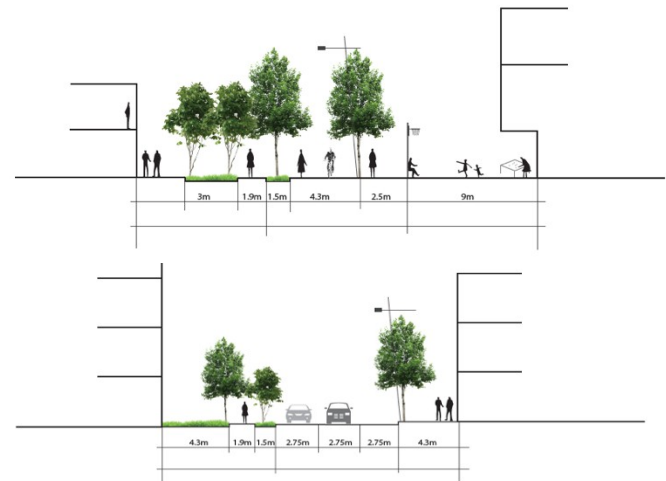


Fig. 13 Proposed solutions; green pedestrian/cycling paths and green road circuits with limited speed and pedestrian

Taking into account the above, the urban design attributes of Chwarzno-Wiczlino neighbourhood area can be viewed at three levels:

- At the macro level is the urban design relationship between the built form (buildings, space and infrastructure) and its natural setting (forest, landscape and green space). Elements include ridge lines, urban morphology, gateways, functional districts, etc.

- At the intermediate level is the exploration into residential buildings, into the relationship between buildings and the open space, and the relationship of the buildings to streets. The design attributes include the composition of buildings, massing and heights, the urban architecture and layouts, flexible places, open spaces, linkages, pedestrian networks, views and corridors.

- At the micro level is the relationship between the residents and the built environment. It is about people's perception and experience of their daily environment. The design attributes include human scale, transitions, harmony, street furniture, street-scapes and others. Urban design guidelines should play the leading role of formulating for enhancement of the above attributes to improve living quality of this designated area.

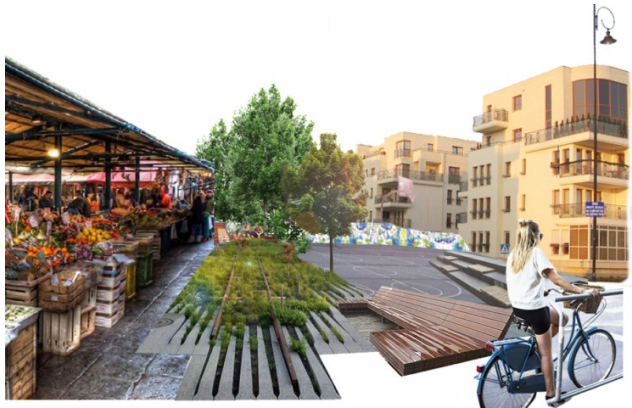


Fig.14 Proposed future C-W neighbourhood scene

FLEXIBLE GROUNDS

The new housing concept for the neighbourhood follows the rules of completeness and integrity. Residential areas require space for human activity, which enriches the living conditions of the inhabitants. In our concept, this kind of space is not specifically defined when speaking about the function. We called it

the 'Flexible grounds'. Flexible grounds can play the role and the function of many different spaces, based on the needs and desires of its users. There are three main reasons why such space was proposed:

- Following the 'live&work' formula, it provides space for local entrepreneurship.
- It creates a space which has a glimpse of locality, also when speaking about regionalism – and respects the character of the area.
- It creates a vibrant and multi-purpose space for the inhabitants and makes the residential area more interesting and liveable.
- To sum it up, it enhances the general sustainability of the new residential neighbourhood.

As previously stated the area of Chwarzno-Wiczlino district is located between the city and the countryside. This creates specific hints for further design and functioning of such spaces, which may bring closer the character of the space that was already there before the spread of the new development trends.

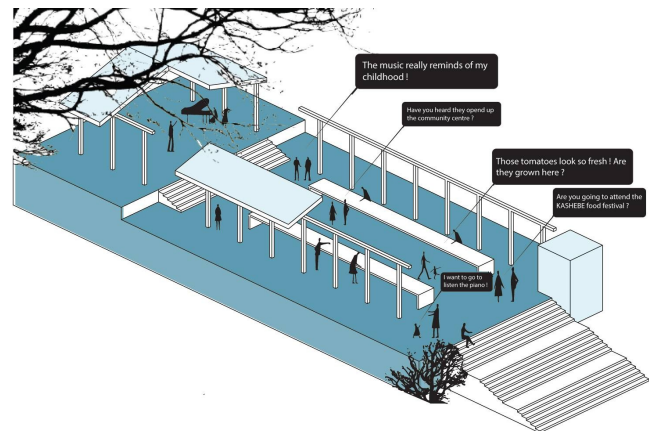


Fig.15 Flexible ground-market

The Flexible grounds basically play the role of a common, shared and public space. They encourage meetings, interactions, everyday hi's and hello's. They may change during the week and year, based on the climate and social needs. By implementing the 'live&work' formula through Flexible grounds, we thought not only about enhancing the social interaction but also about strengthening the local economy, building up livelihoods and diversifying the social structure. The Flexible grounds concept adapts perfectly that idea. The area studied is relatively far from the city centre and the proposal is aiming towards the self-sufficiency with programmes that involve places to live and work. As a result there is a chance of re-articulating the local character of the area because the inhabitants will spend more time within the neighbourhood, which has a great impact on forming the social structure and bonds. On the other hand, the provision of a more reasonable and complete programs in the neighbourhood together with the new ways of local mobility proposed (minibuses, bikes, pedestrian continuous paths and others) may also prevent people from excessive or redundant car usage. Finally, Flexible grounds offer a space where the inhabitants can organise various folklore festivals and other cultural activities, promoting local traditions and regional heritage.

As a result of all the presented above, the Flexible grounds can have a great impact on the general sustainability of the area. Creating a special space which role refers to the Greek agora, the progenitor of the public space, and which welcomes different types of activities promoting the development of a strong local identity and multi-functionality, is crucial for the inhabitants of Chwarzno-Wiczlino. It is so important not only because it increases their consciousness and responsibility towards the environment they live in but also because it enhances their sense of belonging, the formation of social bonds and finally the establishment

of an identity, features common in every strong and thriving community.

06 TO WŁAŚNIE GDYNIA!

Lennaert Dekkers (NL)

Nicolas Drożdż (FR)

Wiktoria Matecka (PL)

Dominika Misterka (PL)

Marta Rusin (PL)

Živilė Šimkutė (LT)

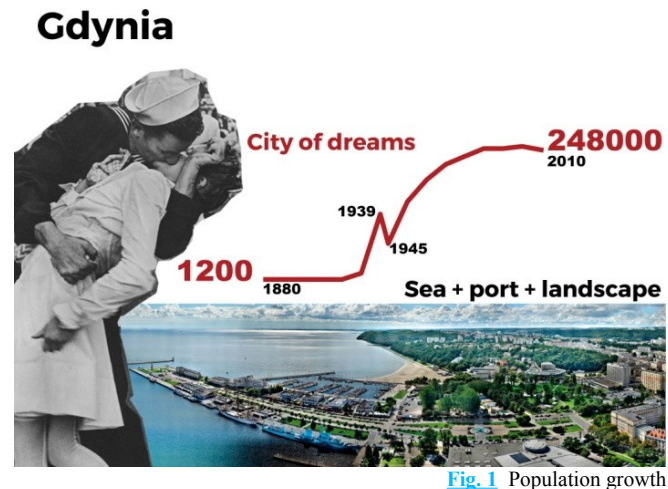
01 INTRODUCTION GDYNIA: THE CITY AND THE PORT

The city of Gdynia is a happy city. The centre has sufficient services and amenities, it is well preserved and clean, and there are green open spaces at almost every street corner. One can see people from the golden age enjoying their retirement in the multiple sunny terraces and open spaces. Families feel at home too, having picnics outdoors while children chase birds or play ball. Upon arriving at the beach, passersby are **swept** away by amazing views of the blue Baltic Sea, lush forests on high cliffs, and white sand. In Gdynia, fancy beachside bars, museums, historic ships, and modern design meet to offer an exceptional setting that gives the feel of a city on vacation.

Over the course of history, the port and the city started leading separate lives. One does not feel the industrial side of the city, save for a few cranes visible in the distance. Due to security restrictions and technological upgrades, the port slowly distanced itself, became an independent body with its own infrastructure, supporting facilities, population and green spaces. The municipality today has the ambition to reconnect the urban tissue of Gdynia to the industrial port areas. Recently, the port has been migrating towards the sea

and thus requires less space on land. As land starts to free up, doors open to a plethora of project possibilities.

Our challenge: how to reconnect the city with the port while keeping both parties satisfied. How to superimpose a walkable, human scale, livable city in abandoned post-industrial areas?



02 GDYNIA'S SPATIAL CHARACTER

The old city of Gdynia is characteristic of the early modernist architecture, and a movement called Streamline Moderne which means it has a liveable street network with diverse functions on the ground floor. Gdynia's Masterplan defined a city made of urban blocks built in perimeter, parcelled into small lots with each corner offering something special. Young architects were invited to design each individual building. As a result, a vibrant and diverse centre was created and the main streets led to the waterfront and the port, anticipating lifelong cooperation between the two.

03 HOUSING PROVISION

The current way of developing the city is very different from the way the city was originally created. The city is mostly being built by developers or private persons who make projects on large pieces of land for mid-class or upper-class families. Living in the city centre is either too expensive or the housing stock is deprived. Due to low salaries and difficult access to the labour market, a lot of young people are moving to other countries and those who stay either have family savings to buy a unit or take a mortgage which they will have to finance over a 30-year period. On the other front of the financial system, banks consider alternative ways of development like co-development – a high risk investment, thus getting a loan for a cooperative to co-fund a development becomes a mission impossible.

Financial institutions have difficulty defining what affordability means in Polish cities and see developers as the only source for housing provision. The developer is indeed able to provide a high amount of housing in a short time, but due to project scale, housing areas are usually gated, and all look alike, reducing the sense of place. It is important to recognize that alternative housing provision models have better collaboration between the municipality, future residents and the developer to find a solution that could benefit everyone.

04 GDYNIA: GLOBAL CITY VS. LIVEABLE CITY

Dr. Wouter Vanstiphout in his lecture at TU Delft named “Follow the Money” argued that every financial crisis results in the construction of a tower. During the financial crisis, Gdynia also built its tower. It looks completely foreign to the city, not resembling any prior constructions neither by design, nor calibre, but will be emblematic of Gdynia long into the future. There is

demand for such projects, as can be proved by the fact that all residential units were purchased as early as the proposal phase of the project. The question arises: is this walkable city of low-rise housing called Gdynia the right place for intense densification? The struggle to become a liveable city and beat others in global city competition is a difficult one and it is for people and governments to decide which path to follow.

The happiest people in Poland live in Gdynia, and surveys say that the reason to be happy is safety, public spaces, accessibility to kindergartens and public transport. It is important to maintain these qualities that make its residents happy, rather than win in the “global cities competition”.

05 PROJECT AMBITION

Our project is to bring the port and the city together by ensuring accessibility and co-creation. Accessibility in terms of infrastructure, but as well as access to affordable housing, to public spaces, cultural amenities, quality education, and vocational skills. The area has to be developed following the principles of co-creation to ensure transparent dialogue and diversity of financial models. The site is an opportunity for a testing ground for innovation in urban development. Its location between the port and the city offers an opportunity to develop a crossroads with positive implications both at the municipal and local scale.

06 SITE CONDITIONS

The area to the east of the project area is currently owned by the port authority and is undergoing a transition to accommodate mixed-use development with multifamily housing, offices, public spaces and a marina.

To the north is the working port that is the place of contemporary shipping facilities, including a container



Fig. 3 Infrastructure

Urban project is an opportunity to improve the spaces we live in. The space we were given to work on is a small space, but this can be seen as an opportunity thanks to its location. We see it as a place that's anchored right in the heart of the city, a nexus where port and city meet, mixed with a potential to offer housing and shopping, leisure and recreation. Its location is the perfect place for a project with a city-wide impact.

At the edge of a vibrant city centre and surrounded by a port, the space we were given to work on lingers in a sort of no man's land. It's desolate, undesirable, and strewn with abandoned buildings and makeshift houses. Beyond this area to the north is a small residential neighbourhood, lost in the middle of a dense industrial area, and just a little further is the ancient quarter of Oksywie. Transforming this nexus is an opportunity to sew these residential areas back to the city and at the same time improve the port and its functions.

Our prescription for this area is to improve connections, be it in the form of a new roads, a public transportation route, an extended bike lane, and a **ferry crossing the bay**.



Fig. 4. Ferry connection

Being a little cut off from the life of the city, the first step would be to prolong Waszyngtona Street northwards to connect it with Marka Zygmunta Street, which shall be extended westwards. The creation of a new street would encourage all types of traffic to pass through the area, which in turn will make it more lively, friendly, and give it a safer feel thanks to "eyes on the street" (Jane Jacobs, 1961).

Public transportation is an important part in making a place more lively and desirable. New public transportation connections can improve a neighbourhood by allowing more flow of people, opportunities and business. The new neighbourhood should reflect a diversity of classes, cultures, and activities, so that it can have something to offer to everyone in Gdynia.

Two bus routes already exist in the area, line 4F and line 137. The former only offers extremely limited accessibility, running only 2 or 3 times before 9am and 3 times after 7pm. The latter has a better frequency, running every 20 to 30 minutes, but not after 5:30pm. We would like to increase accessibility all day to this neighbourhood so that all types of activities could take place and the people of Gdynia could get home safely. The new road could also be an opportunity to reroute one of the buses.

Oksywie, on the other side of the bay is the ancient centre of Gdynia, long ago before the port came into being. Residents of this quarter are disadvantaged by their relative distance to today's centre made by a forced detour around the port. But in reality, as the crow flies, Oksywie is very near to the centre and the area we're working on. Both Oksywie and project area would benefit from increased passage, at least in the form of pedestrians and cyclists, to maintain the quiet character. We suggest implementing a ferryboat that would cross the bay to connect the two areas.

A bike path currently exists along the seafront in Gdansk but ends abruptly in Gdynia at the main beach. With the creation of a new street infrastructure, we can imagine creating a bike lane going through the city and linking the beach with the ferry.

Thanks to its location, these four modifications could help the project site to become a crossroads in the city, with all types of citizens going through. It offers the potential of opening up the city north-south and east-west.

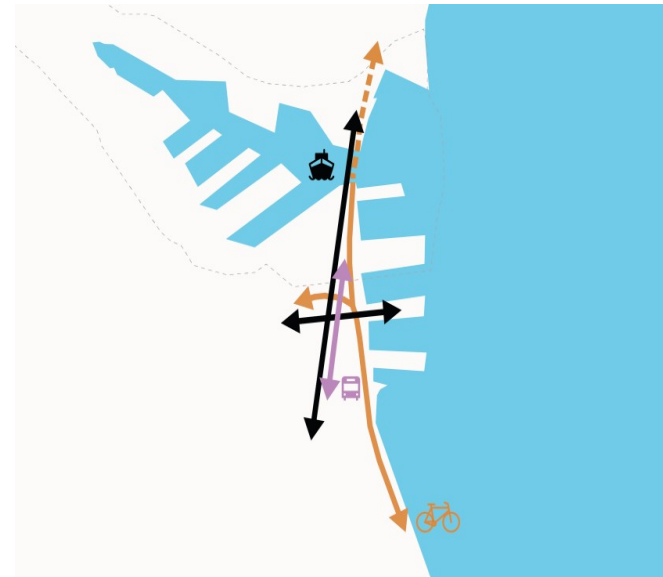


Fig. 6 Connections

08 OUR STRATEGY: *SMALL SCALE*

All these large scale projects are good to keep in mind as a positive result of an urban planning project, but it's what we do at the smaller scale that allows us to envision a larger scale project with a city-wide impact.

The entrance to the site is potentially the most important aspect to be rethought. By **redesigning the problematic intersection** at the end of Świętojańska Street, we ensure that people will be drawn to the neighbourhood, which will create a sort of cohesion between the port and the city. Our plan is to widen the sidewalks, block off the street with the viaduct and create an inviting atmosphere that can be seen from the city.



Fig.7 Redesigned intersection at the end of Swietojanska Street

Tadeusz Wendy Street is currently a **viaduct** that cuts through the middle of the project area creating a fragmented territory. As it runs parallel to Węglowa St and traffic is not heavy on this axis, it is possible to simply block it off and turn it into a quality public space. Taking example from la Coulée Verte in Paris, we could convert it into a green promenade overlooking the city, the port and the sea. It could be the site for weekly markets that would sell local products, giving purpose to the project and bringing citizens from around the city to rediscover their city from a new point of view. The viaduct goes all the way to the Urząd Morski neighbourhood in the north and would be the main element in creating a successful tourist attraction, going all the way to the ferryboat and the Emigration Museum. This transformation would turn the number one element of fragmentation into a strong element of cohesion in the neighbourhood. As it can be seen in images 9 and 10, a green steps would be created to link the viaduct to the lower part, while also making an comfortable place to sit.

Other **public spaces** will be created with special attention to including creative aspects that allow residents to turn the space into their own. Examples could be expression walls, for local painters or graffiti artists, public gardens, or a large outdoor firewood oven.



Fig. 8 Green viaduct



Fig.9. Street under the viaduct

Improving the general infrastructure to allow for easy passage through the site is vital, as has been explained in the big scale strategy. On the local scale, this will

help give access to the future projects and help them integrate better into the urban streetscape.



soil quality and clean it with plants that have decontaminating properties. This method can be used as a cost-effective environmentally-friendly way to clean the soil in certain areas while waiting for a project to come to life.

This new project is the opportunity to take advantage of local knowledge to manage a real co-creation project. It is important to communicate with all stakeholders that will be impacted by the future project through meetings, opinion polls, creative labs, and question and answer sessions to ensure ideas flow and are shared.

Public spaces:

- Stair terraces on the west side of the viaduct work as calm public space for people to have lunch on or relax
- The viaduct has a potential to become an attraction for street food festivals, local markets and other events
- A railway that is no longer working is transformed into a green artery through the site, leaving the authentic structures and introducing more floral diversity.



Fig. 11. Fab Lab

Knowing that there is a risk of industrial contamination on the site, the next step would be to investigate the

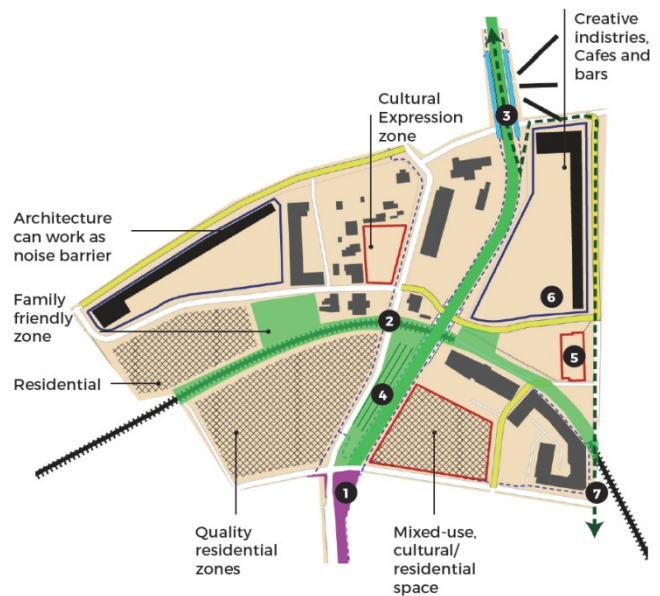


Fig. 12. Strategy plan

09 SITE PROGRAMME

The project site represents the junction between the functions of the port and the functions of the city. Therefore, to maintain the industrial character, creative industries are invited to establish in good quality industrial buildings and on the empty post-port areas. It is important to take advantage of the fact that the eastern part currently empty which is an opportunity that can be taken advantage of to implement ephemeral fab labs and creative studios in recycled containers. The diverse program also involves building various types of housing and mixed-use development. Residential buildings similar to the “Gdynia blocks” from the Streamline Moderne movement will be developed in cooperation with other users ensuring all stakeholders have a say and a possibility to both invest and capture the value created by new interventions.

10 CO-CREATION MODEL: DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

In order to develop the port area in Gdynia it's important to take into consideration that the construction market has changed in the last few years due to a decline in investments and an increased competition in the sector during the crisis in Europe. Market players need to change to a new type of organizational structure and present a more innovative approach both technologically and in accordance to the contractor when developing areas in the future. To turn the tide and be prepared for new needs in the housing market, it's important to think about different business constructions and financial models. New interests in the local quality of the place, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurship, have changed housing needs of the local communities.

Multiple financial and organizational models exist to develop housing projects. A traditional one is the cooperation between municipality (who sells the land) and a developer. The municipality sells the land to the developer who has the freedom to build whatever will make his investment profitable. With this type of construction, it's most of the time difficult to reach an excellence in public space or neighbourhood quality, needless to say that creative design is more of an afterthought.

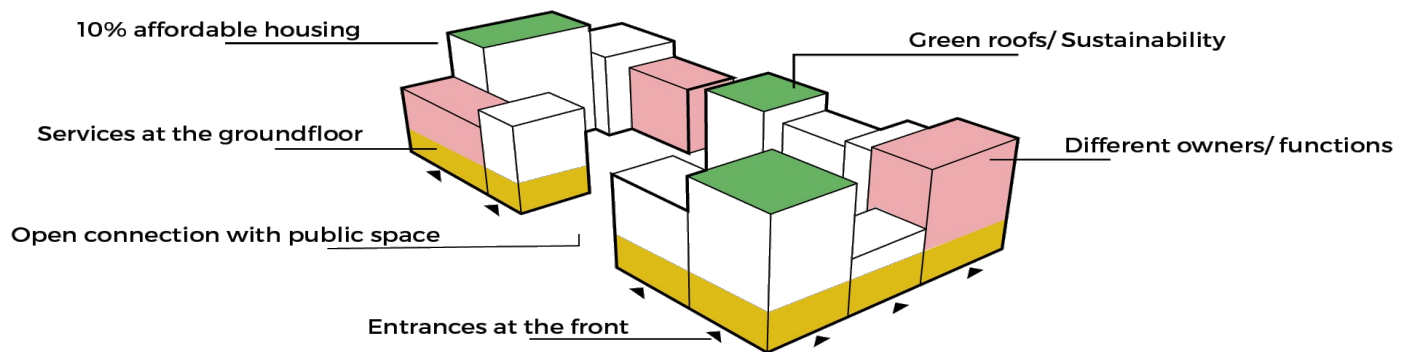
The “price to quality ratio” method is more interesting when planning a new neighbourhood, as the contractor not only makes a choice for ‘the highest bid’ but also for the highest living quality by creating extra guidelines at the start of the project. As an example the guidelines are descriptions of standards for the public space, the function of the ground floor, participation of the occupants and aspects of sustainability for the building materials and energy systems. In this method, the building company that scores the most points for

the guidelines and also for the lowest price wins the bid.

The third method is to encourage “collective private commissions”. In this example, a non-profit co-operation between several future occupants design, conceive and develop a residential building together. By pooling their personal funds together, each increases his personal buying power, and hence can more easily purchase a parcel of land to be developed by following the municipality’s guidelines. At the same time, they are the owners of the land and are **responsible for the design** and construction strategy. The future occupants can choose their own architect and construction contractor. The role of the

The benefits of this method are a high quality of life and public spaces for the occupants, thanks to their high level of implication in every aspect of the design and concept. This is also an opportunity for the future occupants to choose their neighbours, and save money along the way.

All future decisions to be taken on their residences will be made by them and this is also a cost-effective measure, as no expensive middleman has to be hired to take their opinions into consideration. It thus becomes possible for the future occupants to reach more goals as a collective than they would have individually, all the while saving money.



government is to stimulate and support the future occupants and prescribe the guidelines for the neighbourhood on a higher level to ensure the general cohesion of the neighbourhood. The future occupants are a full partner of the municipality. If it is possible to organize themselves professionally and everyone is open to compromise, it has the potential to become a very strong collective. An option for the government is to ask the collective to design and maintain public space as a park or create co-working areas and services such as a café or a nursery on the ground floor of their construction for example.

Fig. 13. Typical block

In this concept the occupant’s neighbourhood attachment is quite strong as they created their **own neighbourhood**, and chose their neighbours. This will ensure the neighbourhood stays clean and prim at their own expense, as they feel it is an area that belongs to them. This co-operation further stimulates the social cohesion in that area. Furthermore, the differentiations in design choices between different blocks can give the neighbourhood an interesting feel, thanks to architectural quality and diversity.

11 CONCLUSIONS

The group's analysis of Gdynia recognized great characteristics of the city that can be brought together to regenerate the development between the city and the port. It is important to think strategically in both the larger and smaller scale when creating a project in a city, as it can have an impact on both. Accessibility to affordable housing can exist in both poor and rich cities and it is important to address the issue in a way that reflects the city's inhabitants. This project site is a great place to experiment alternative financing and development models, as well as introduce vibrant and diverse public spaces between the Gdynia Urban Block, as it is a neutral area with a lot of space to improve.

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07 THE CIRCUS SITE

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01 INTRODUCTION

The location of project is a site of over 1,2 ha, situated on the southern fringes of Gdynia formerly used as an area to host a Circus. Here artists were performing for the public, newcomers were meeting the locals, the temporality of the event was enhancing the experience of exchange. Circus used to be the place where people live, work and create art.

Currently the site stays empty but surely not for long. Its potential, attractive location and demand for housing attracts developers. Existing local land development plan points the need to create a city sub-center with mixed use development that leaves over 25% of open space and protects vistas to the city and from the city to Tricity landscape park. With this project, our team looked closely at what the site could be and what sort of development would best suit contemporary Gdynia's needs. We didn't want to contest the existing plan but rather to start a dialogue which allows for more complementary vision.

The location creates a potential of the site to be the gate to the city. The welcoming arms of Gdynia. We combine the two ideas: the circus and the gate, to guide a mixed use development, where different people meet in a vibrant, cultural place.

At the city scale the site serves as a gate in few different dimensions. Firstly, it is the direct link from the surrounding Tricity landscape park to the coast. It is also an entry point, a first stop of SKM light rail connecting the TriCity - Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia. The site, being at the edge of main city is also an entry to an upper terrace city with its satellite districts and cities. Located at the end of commercial corridor it links city centre and the biggest local shopping mall.



Fig. 1 The site analysis

02 DEFINING THE PROBLEM

All these qualities, specific to the location of the site, make it a desirable land to build. However, the dominating type of housing development might not be the best solution. We would like to avoid creation of gated community housing, typologies which segregate functions and constrain life in public space. To be able to respond to a question on what type of development is needed we asked ourselves following questions:

What type of development should be promoted on the site?

What kind of functions should there be?

What connections should be strengthened?

Should there be landmarks and if yes where?

How to achieve the goals we aim to?

As mentioned before, we see that the site functions as a gate in four different dimensions. It connects green hills which are the city center corridor - Świętojańska street and the Baltic Sea. It is an entry point to Gdynia from Sopot and Gdansk both by road and by rail. It is also a gate from lower terrace to upper terrace - from lower city center to the suburbs. It could direct visitors of the Riviera shopping mall to the cultural facilities of the city center.

The SWOT analysis shows the most important strengths and problems of the area. There are location of the place and single land ownership among the strengths. However, those can be the weaknesses as well, as the plot is limited by highway and railway. The opportunity is to create a place with mixed use where the housing can serve as a lifestyle. However, the threat is that this site could be developed as a gated

community where affluent people are prioritized and they decide on the shape of space.

The area has an enormous potential but it is not used so far. In every big city, place such as the plot should be developed and serve to the public. We approach hilly ground with some grass in the middle of it. The plot has several visual axes, which are underestimated because of emptiness of the area. Moreover, there is an electricity station right next to the plot. One can say that it is not the perfect neighborhood for the families with children. However, the electricity station can be hid with wall of the building or some greenery.

02 THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

As mentioned before, the analysis showed us the main characteristics of the site, and the next task was to find a solution how to build on strengths and use the opportunities of the site, and in the same time, to lower the effect of its weaknesses and avoid detected threats. In order to achieve this, we developed methodological approach that should preserve the identity of the place, but still to develop the functions that would be interesting and make benefit for public, the city and for the private investor.

Our approach is based on the development of the Gdynia cultural gate, a place that would be a landmark at the entrance to the city center, with multi-functional uses, where people would meet, just like they used to do when this site was hosting the circus. The first step was to analyze the existing plans and strategies that could help us to understand the position of our site related to the surrounding. From these documents, we got the conditions of preserving visual access between the hills and forests west from the site, and church and Baltic Sea east from the site. Related to this, we followed building codes about maximum allowed height of the buildings.

The next step was to figure out how to develop a site with housing function, but still to be more than a block of buildings where people will sleep. The idea was to use the existing identity of the place that was circus site. Circus is the place where locals meet the foreigners, where the art and skills are performed and where the people are having fun, but also work, and even live (the performers). Based on that, we developed the idea of the cultural, even magical gate of the city, where people will live, stay, perform and have fun.

The result is a multi-functional site, with permanent and temporary housing, leisure activities, open spaces and improved connectivity, dedicated to culture and arts. Its development will be based on the partnership between the public and private sector, and both sides, together with general public would have the benefits from the development.

We concluded our visions in a master plan, which serves as a roadmap for all the stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation process. This plan, however done within few days of workshops, tried to capture the principles which we discussed above. Finally, we proposed a design solution, which show how the principles form the master plan can become a reality. Here we used a virtual reality and with the 3D model, we create an urban design that respects the vistas, visual axis to the church, aims at provision of well designed and well connected development.

04 THE SITE ANALYSIS

The area of analysis is situated at the entrance to the central part of Gdynia. It provides a gateway between urban and green areas of Landscape Park in the east of the city center. From the east side, this area is closely connected with ‘Witomiński’ Cemetery. In the south in the close vicinity a newly built shopping center is located. The main part of the city center is located

from the north and the west side. Next to the area a railway station Gdynia St. Maximilian, which is a secondary station in Gdynia, is located.

During the analyses of the area on the smaller scale it was emphasized, that it is located on the main communication route – Śląska Street. However, this road is also a strong barrier separating the area from the north-western and central parts of Gdynia. The area is covered by the binding spatial master plan. Master plan allocates it to the commercial function (southern site) and housing (northern site). After analyzing the opportunities associated with the location of the area we decided to add the cultural and tourist function on the south and commercial function on the north, with special guidelines for the spatial development in context of mixed functions. Municipality ground was reserved for communication function.

Analysis of the spatial development plans is extremely important in the context of the viewing axis and panoramas, which should be definitely included in the project proposal. Master plan sets viewing axis which are directed to the St. Antoni church and also determines zone of exposure on hills located in Landscape Park, visible from the center of Gdynia. These factors significantly affect the ability of the arrangement of building volume in this area. The plan divides the elementary area due to the allowed height. The highest buildings are allowed on the northwestern part of it. This analysis of local condition made background for further project approach.

05 PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

Vision

Imagine being in a vibrant place where artists, families and tourists are meeting grouped together with different aims. Newcomers performing for the locals. Circus being a used to be the place where people live,

work, create and experience art. But this is the past. Currently the site is different. Empty. For us, it has a potential to be the gate. The welcoming arms of the city of Gdynia. We combine the 2 ideas: the circus and the gate, to create the plot with mixed use, where different people meet in a vibrant, cultural place. Our vision is the place where there are several types of housing. However, it's not prioritized. The art, culture and services play a crucial role. This is all because of the mixed use of the plot.

Strategy

The strategy is to develop a multi-functional, mixed-use site. Its main functions will be housing, art & culture and services.

Housing would also have different types: permanent and temporary. Permanent will be developed through multi-family buildings with reserved space for the neighborhood and green roofs and terraces. Temporary housing will be developed through hotel, hostel and dormitory, where students, businessmen, artists, tourists and other Gdynia visitors will have the opportunity to stay and meet and contribute to the city culture.

Art & culture will be developed through *ArtTunnel* and *ArtPark*, meaning that public spaces will be dedicated to the culture, where everyone will have access to the culture, to see it, to hear it and experience it, but also to contribute, to perform. The public space will contain small stages, cafe-cinemas, etc. while studios, galleries, libraries will be located in the ground floor of the buildings.

Services will also be developed in the site with task to keep the people there and offer them a leisure activities and satisfy their needs. One of the main services will be already existing transportation service, with the bus station, and nearby located train station. Besides, hotel

and hostel will provide accommodation for tourists and visitors. The site will have one part reserved for offices in the upper floors, while in the ground floors there will also be restaurants, cafes and indoor recreation activities.

Tool

In this level very important is choosing adequate way to implement strategic assumptions. We are suggesting the tool - partnership between the municipality of Gdynia and the private owner of the plot, working for common aim. This is proposal of innovative approach to the involvement of private investors through investment on land belonging to the municipality. The crucial in this concept is idea of the partnership, which it provides financial, social and cultural benefits for both sides. In this specific case study, roughly a quarter of the plot is owned by the municipality. In this situation the municipality should be one who initiates the process of positive and beneficial changes. This is only way to implement social oriented vision of development of this area. Municipality can start changing current situation by improving the connectivity and accessibility to the area. In our proposal existing bus station is being put underground, the underground tunnel is being improved and the new important footbridge is being built. That increases the value of the plot and enables the municipality to negotiate with the owner from the different level.

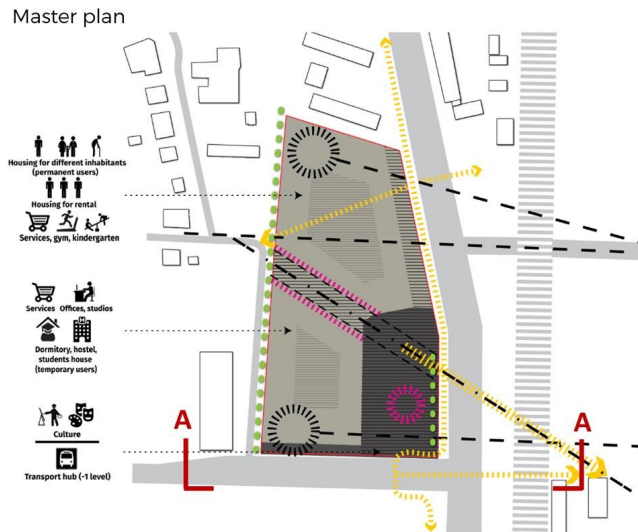


Fig. 2 Master plan

The main idea of negotiation itself is to develop public space in a privately owned land by creating multifunctional site with the emphasis on cultural activities and diverse housing and services. This is multibeneficial, win-win situation. Synergy between cultural area (on municipality land) and proposed business-cultural-housing area (on private land) can give an important impact for whole district and city. In the picture of master plan hatched lines represent public spaces and semi public spaces in the middle of the courtyards. We emphasized existing visual axis with landmarks. Our proposal is also variation about Gdynia's InfoBox, by creating *CultureBox* - place with temporary art exhibitions and information center about cultural events. Connection linkage in a form of the footbridge is serving also as a art hall which is continued by a service corridor. Establishment of cafes and restaurants is being encouraged by attractiveness of the plot.

This approach can change the way of thinking of developers about possible adaptation of free land in city centers. Common work of municipality and private owner can be impact for redefinition of this part of the city.

06 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Cultural Tunnel

Since the vision of proposal is to create an gateway image for all the people who will participate in the cultural activities and programs including local people as well as tourists, the guiding part which plays the role of attracting people to the plot will be the first impression for the public. In other words, the proposed tunnel will set the primary cultural atmosphere and also enhance the pleasure and will in the passing experience.



Fig. 3 Current view



Fig. 4 Vision of cultural tunnel

The current situation of the tunnel and the vision is shown in the photos. Only few people walking in the dark space without any form of engagement in commercial activities. This situation is not providing safety and increase possibility of incidents. For this reason, the introducing new functions will help to ensure a safe commuting environment for the citizens.



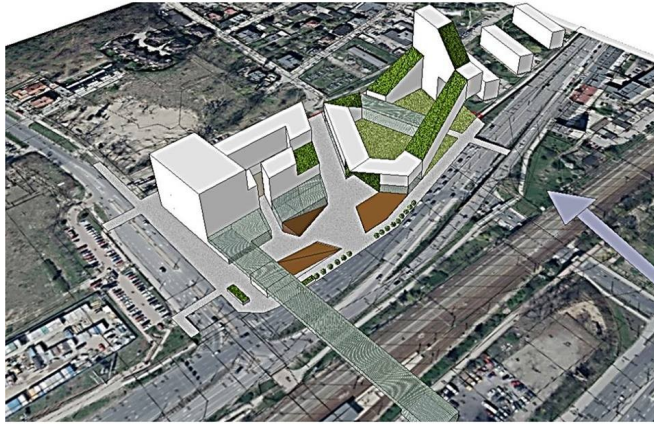
Fig. 5 Current view



Fig. 6 Vision of cultural tunnel

As we have proposed diverse working places for the artists who will be gathered within our plot, then we could also provide various job opportunities for the artists not to only display their art works but also offer them the public place for selling their artisan work. It is a more effective approach to combine cultural, commercial and transportation activities.

In addition, the tunnel will not only serve as a connection but also as an attraction where it is much more convenient for the artists to display their art work. Based on this, the tunnel will serve as a micro outdoor exhibition space which contents will be switched in certain period and also be corresponding to the theme of the main cultural center. In this way, passengers and tourists who just got off the train will be guided by the colorful tunnel to our plot which would definitely increase its regional popularity.



[Fig. 6](#) Model

[07 CONCLUSIONS](#)

Our idea derives its essence from the former use of the place and its genius loci. It aims to capture its former importance while looking at current needs of the city as a whole. The Circus site project team looked at the potential of the area to be one of Gdynia's subcenters and at the same time a gate to the city. We investigated different levels on which those two ideas could be strengthened - from visual connectivity, to functional, mobility and accessibility and housing perspectives. The final proposal puts together those ideas and by creating an alternative to existing master plan, establishes a dialogue on the future of this important part of the city. We are proposing to focus on the vision for urban life quality instead of the housing itself by strengthening the role of municipality in the development process.

08 REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Gdynia Young Planning Professionals Workshop exemplifies the best of collaborative design. International young planners, students, instructors, subject matter experts, city officials and the public collectively researched, discussed and designed multiple solutions to specific local housing issues. The multi-national participants and workshop format allowed for a wide spectrum of design solutions relevant not only to the Gdynia urban landscape, but global cities with similar concerns for adequate housing balanced with social, economic and environmental considerations. The resulting recommendations are innovative in their narrative approach, environmental design, and comprehensive goals and objectives. They are extraordinary. Participants in this event gained new perspectives on urban housing as well as many other topics from historic preservation to maritime development. In addition, the young planning professionals were enriched by a multi-cultural experience that expanded their expertise and professional networks. We are indebted to the City of Gdynia and the many organizers and participants who made this transformational experience possible.

*With much appreciation,
Ric Stephens,
President of ISOCARP*

ISOCARP's YPP workshop on a "New Approach to Urban Housing", organized in Gdynia, Poland between 19-22 June, was a truly eye-opening experience for tutors and YPPs alike. The four case study areas assigned to four groups dealt with dramatically different issues and priorities –a slum-like settlement in the heart of the city faced a range of socio-economic challenges in addition to poor quality housing and lack of services; a former shipyard at the edge of the port, awaited renovation, but without gentrification; a US-style suburban housing estate offered a decent quality of life but without any particular character, or even effective linkages with the main city; and a greenfield site in the city centre, privately owned, was poised for redevelopment in the form of a typical high-rise gated housing estate approved by the municipality. The young professionals pushed the boundaries of the envelope, challenging existing thinking, approaches and plans, focusing on not only spatial planning and urban design but also the socio-cultural and economic dimensions of urban housing. Working with Young Planning Professionals from different backgrounds and nationalities, and bringing to the table a variety of experiences, is its own reward. For me, having worked in developing countries, transition countries as well as post-disaster and post-conflict contexts for nearly two decades, this was an interesting and challenging exercise, a learning experience on many fronts. The New Urban Agenda recently agreed for adoption by the UN Member States at the forthcoming Habitat III Conference in Quito, has a very strong focus on housing, as well as its relationship with planning, socio-economic development, resilience, and governance. This YPP

workshop illustrated some of the ways in which these normative discussions can be translated into practice. The presentation of results of the YPP workshop at the International Conference "Living In the City: Problems and Challenges associated with the Contemporary Housing Policy" was a great success, with the Gdynia city authorities responding positively to several proposals. I hope that ISOCARP and TUP, along with other co-organisers of the YPP workshop, would be able to follow-up with the policymakers to take some of these ideas to fruition.

*Shipra Narang Suri,
Vice-President of ISOCARP and YPP Workshop
Tutor*



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