

# CAPITAL CITIES: EMBRACING THE CHANGE AND TAPPING INTO OPPORTUNITIES

13th December 2013  
University of Latvia  
Riga, Latvia



# A pro-active and strategic approach of spatial planning in Antwerpen

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**RSA Research Network**

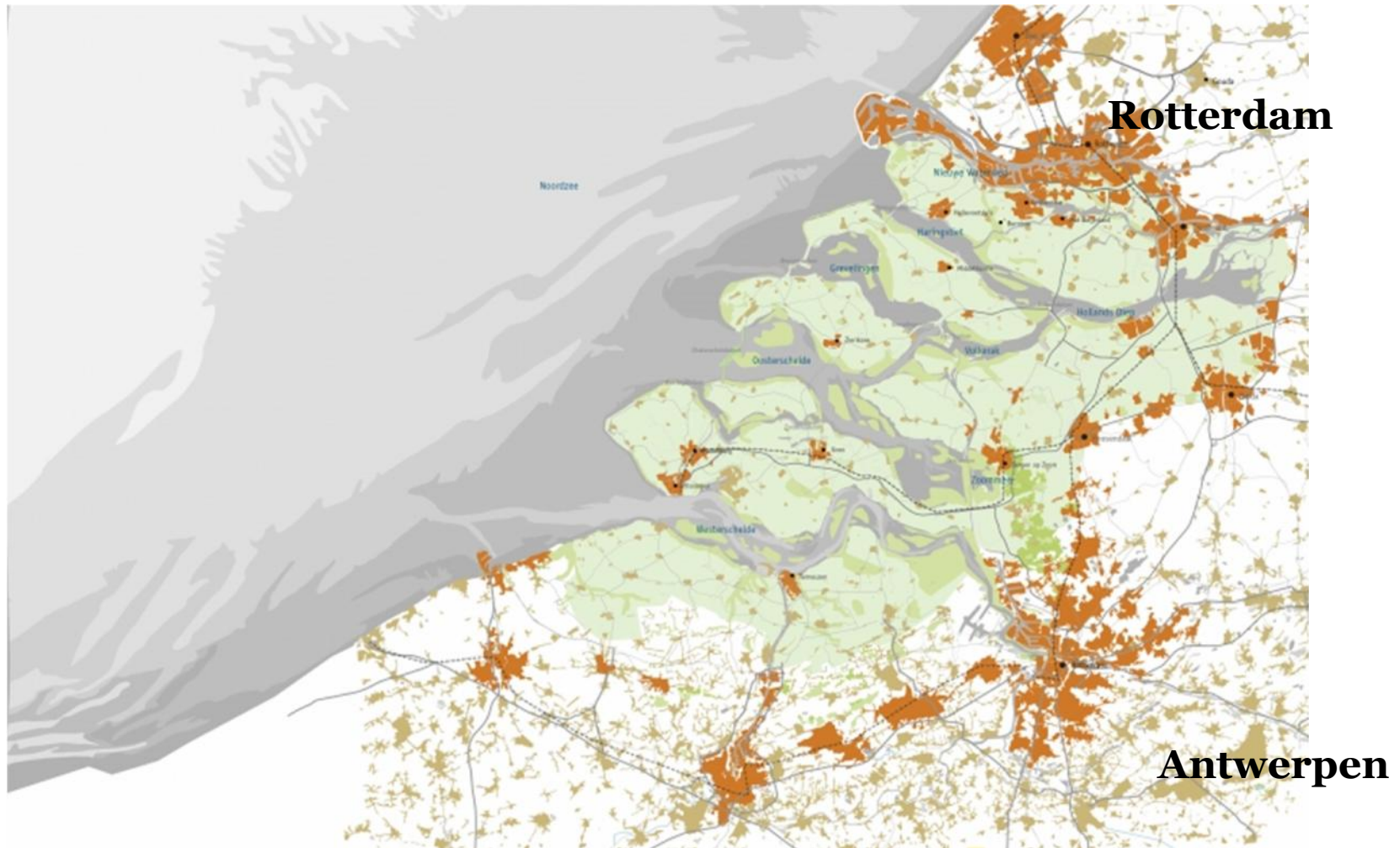
**«The impact of global economic crisis on capital cities»**

**Seminar 13th of December 2013, University of Latvia, Riga**

# Antwerpen in Europe (Mercator 1594)



# Antwerpen in the delta of rivers Schelde-Rhein-Maas





# City along a river





## 2nd Largest port in Europe





# World capital of Diamond





# Work, live, leisure...







## Key facts

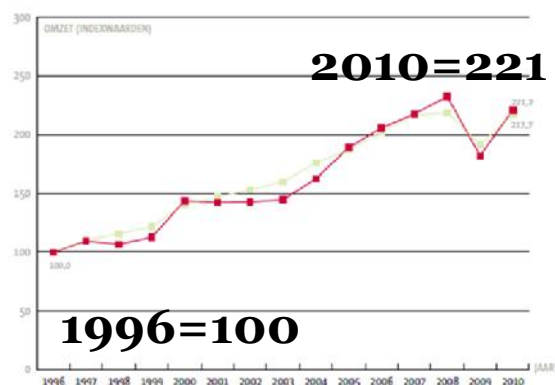


|                    | City   | Metropolitan area  |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| <b>Inhabitants</b> | <b>502.000</b>  | <b>940.000</b>     |
| <b>Surface</b>     | <b>204 sqkm</b>  | <b>1.000 sqkm</b>  |
| <b>GDP (2004)</b>  | <b>33.000 euro</b>   | <b>23.200 euro</b> |



# Economy

Indexevolutive omzet in Antwerpen en Vlaanderen, 1996-2010



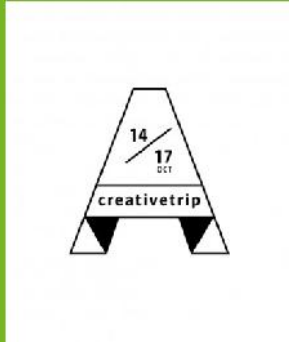
**Index turnover economy**

|                          | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>Flanders<br/>%</b> |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Employment rate</b>   | <b>91,4</b>    | <b>66,8</b>           |
| <b>Unemployment rate</b> | <b>15,1</b>    | <b>6,9</b>            |

| <b>Employment/Sector<br/>2009</b>    | <b>%</b>    |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Industry</b>                      | <b>12,4</b> |
| <b>Retail</b>                        | <b>11,9</b> |
| <b>Transport &amp; logistics</b>     | <b>10,1</b> |
| <b>Medical &amp; social services</b> | <b>12,6</b> |
| <b>Education</b>                     | <b>9,3</b>  |
| <b>Public services</b>               | <b>7,9</b>  |
| <b>Self-employed</b>                 | <b>4,7</b>  |
| <b>Catering</b>                      | <b>3,2</b>  |
| <b>Building industry</b>             | <b>2,8</b>  |
| <b>Other kind of services</b>        | <b>25,1</b> |

**Vacant jobs (2012): 6.220 + 15,7% (2011)**

# Creative industry



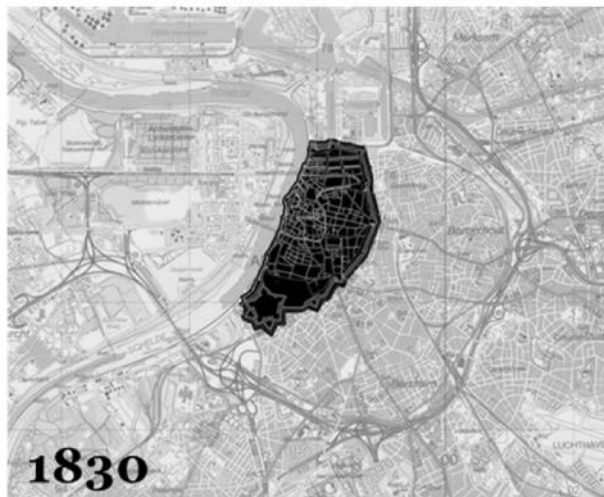
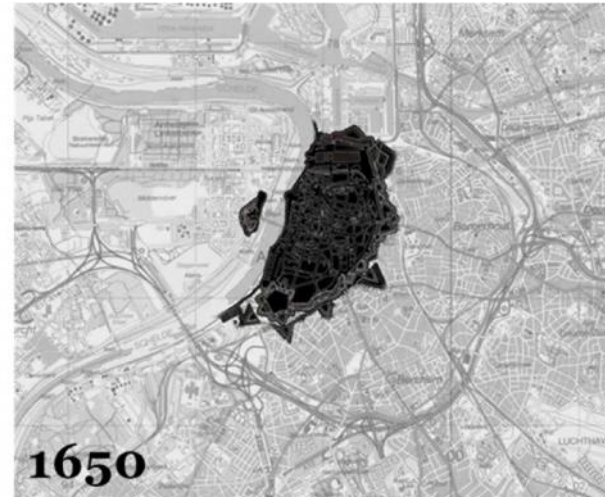


# Part of MEGA city

Use the potentialities



# Historical evolution

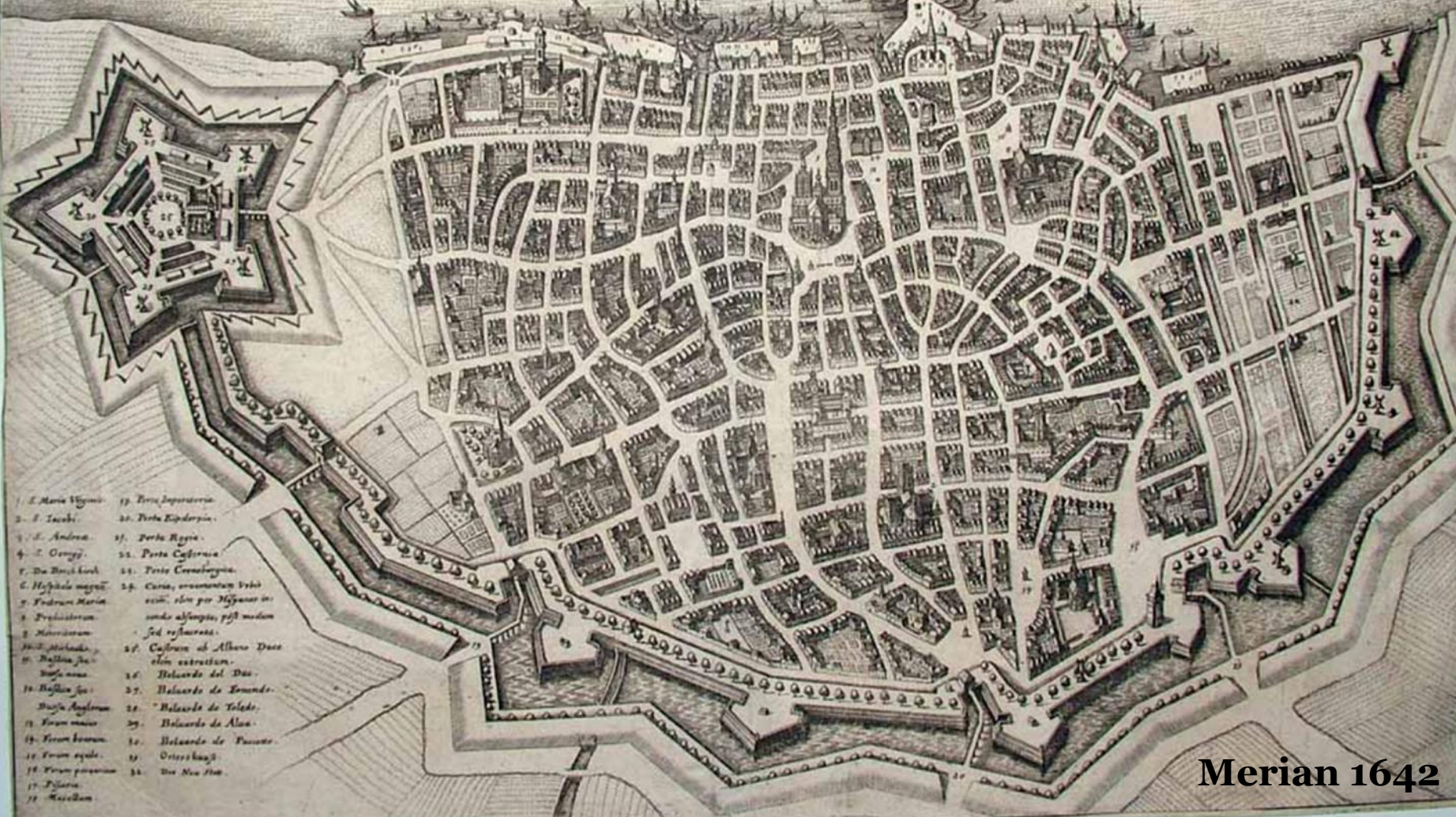




# ANTVERPIA

Scaldes fluvius

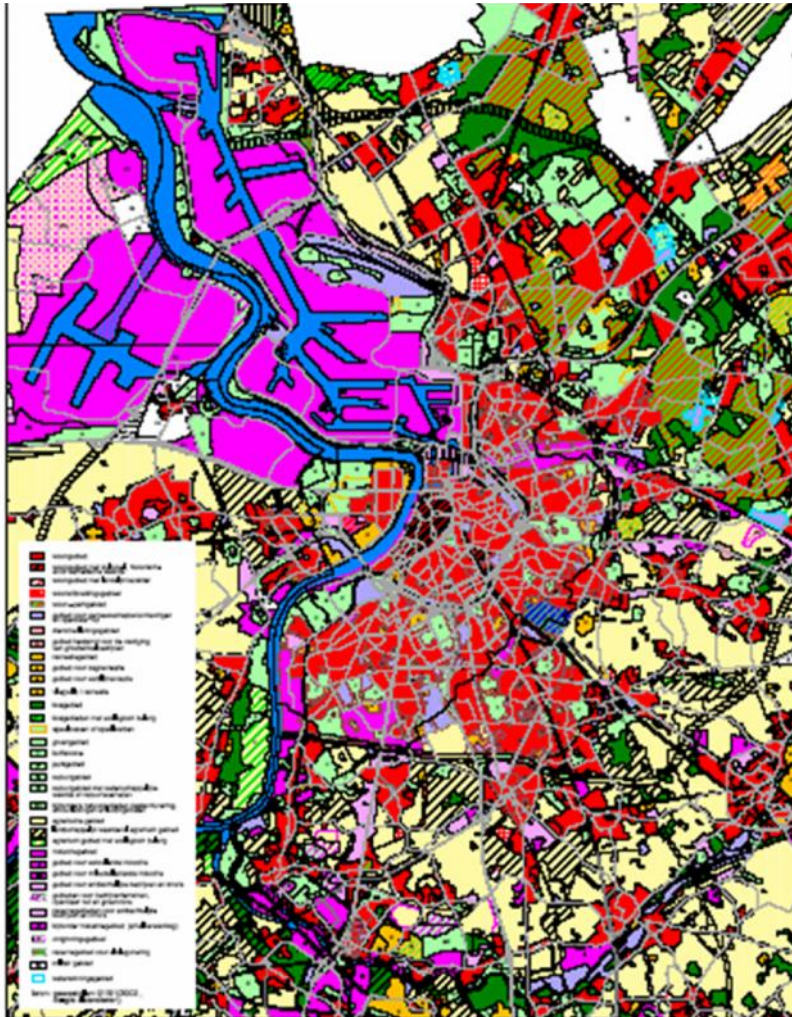
Die Schelde



- 1. S. Maria Wynne
- 2. S. Jacobi
- 3. S. Andrea
- 4. S. George
- 5. De Buis kerck
- 6. Hospitaal maget
- 7. Frederic Maria
- 8. Predicatore
- 9. Marten
- 10. S. Michaelis
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Merian 1642

# Urban sprawl: An abandoned city



# 1970+ Local renovation projects



**Focus on social housing**  
**Car free squares**  
**Protection of monuments**

**Instruments:**  
**Social housing companies**  
**State subsidies**



# 1983 Fusion with municipalities



**Enlargement of total surface**

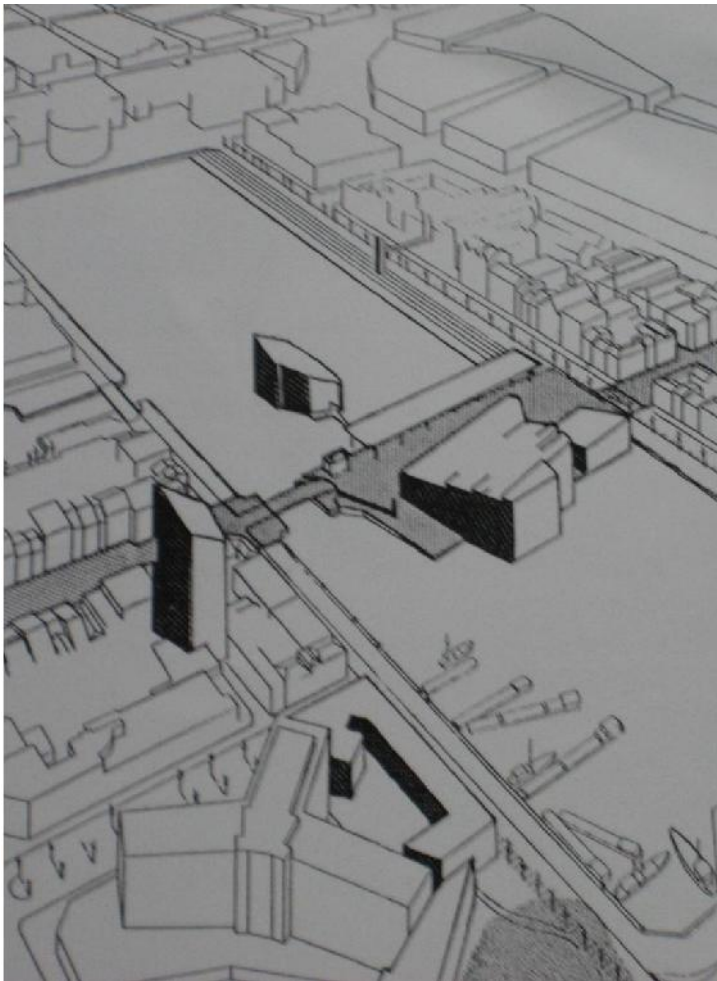
**Increase of inhabitants  
175.000 till 500.000**

**Increase of debts**

**Focus on new areas**

**No interest for the core city**

# Reactions civil society 1987



**‘Stadsoverleg’ :**  
proposing a ‘Global Structure  
plan for Antwerp’ (GSA),  
a vision for the urban  
development

**Stad aan de Stroom :**  
showing the huge  
opportunities of the city  
along the river

**Few response and limited  
support of the City for  
both initiatives**

# 1995+ Building blocks for a new policy

**Impact of EU, national and regional policies and funds**

**Regional program**

**«At home in the city» :**

- strategic interventions
- debate and co-production
- financial support
- support from external experts

**Flemish Spatial Structure Plan and new Planning Law  
Flemish new Mobility Policy**

**In Antwerpen:**

**1995 City Architect**

- Starts Masterplan for Islet

**1999 Planning Cell**

- Upstart of important projects via Urban 1 & Urban 2:
  - - Central Station area
  - - Prostitution area
  - - Former railwaystation Spoor Noord
- The Islet

**2003 Upstart Strategic Spatial Structure Plan**

## 2007 Upstart present planning system

- **Strategic Spatial Structure Plan,**  
approved 2006  
( Bernardo Secchi & Paola Vigano)
- **Administrative re-organization**
- **Governance agreement**

# Strategic Spatial Structure Plan

**A new modernity = opportunity**

- **Shift of the port**
- **Shift of activities**
- **Need for renewal infrastructures**

**Need to overcome the social, cultural and economic fragmentation**

**Need to overcome the fragmented planning approach**

**How to live together ?**

- **Parallel aiming to reach a stronger international profile, there is a need for simple things: identity, good places to work, to live...**

**Renovatio Urbis: a threefold spatial strategy:**

- **Generic policy**
- **Specific policy**
- **Active policy**

# Generic policy: from visioning to guidelines

**The essential of planning is to anticipate 'changes'**

- taking a critical view on society and its environment
- studying the external trends and forces
- defining the key issues
- identifying and gathering major stakeholders (public and private)

**Strong visioning** based on

- Real and mythical dimension
- Referring to the collective memory
- Using powerful images

**Generic policy** by:

- Selecting key elements
- Defining Tasks
- Providing measures, actions
- Making suggestions to external authorities
- Creating relation with Specific and Active policy

# Generic policy



# Key Issues

GLOBAL, LONG-TERM VISION  
BASED ON 7  
IMAGES

CONNECTING  
ANTWERP'S  
PAST WITH ITS  
FUTURE







# Specific policy

## Concretising the generic policy into prior urban areas

via

area-directed strategic programs and key projects

These interventions must:

- attract investments
- guarantee a stepwise development
- have an impact beyond the local level



The so-called  
**‘Strategic Spaces’**  
are:

- Hard Spine
- Soft Spine
- Green belt
- Lower network and urban centers
- Lively channel

## Specific policy

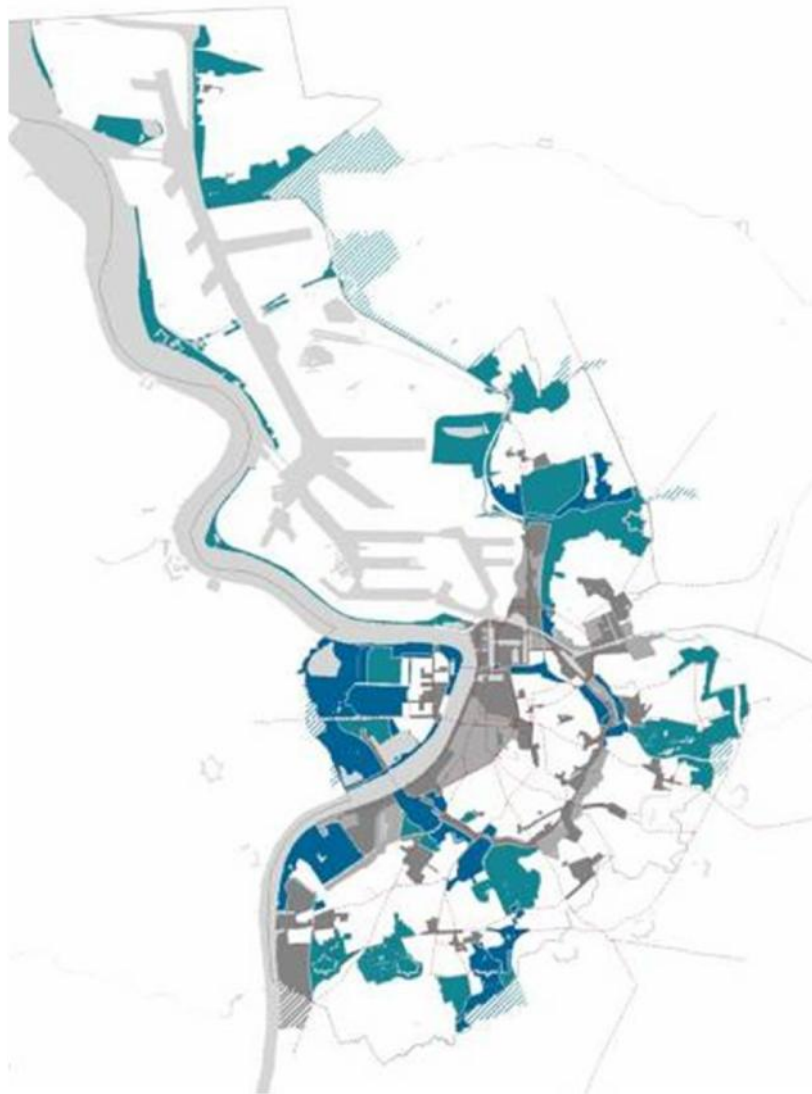


## Hard Spine

**Metropolitan and international functions  
Waterfronts**

- **Noorderlaan**
- **The Islet**
- **Quays**
- **Old Town**
- **Central Station**
- **South**
- **Southern riverbank**

## Specific policy

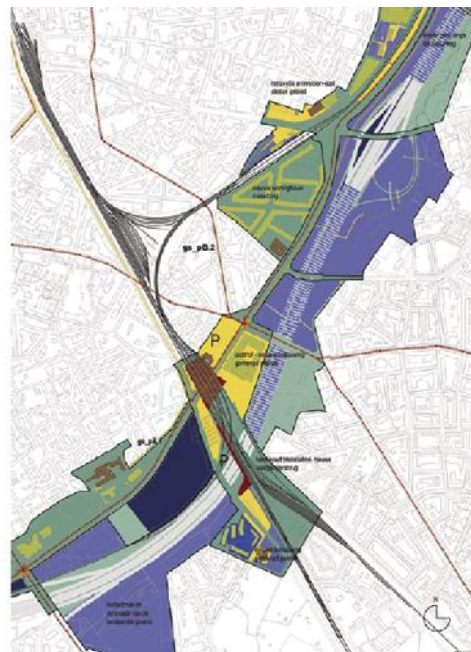


## Soft Spine

- **Connecting existing parks and green areas**
- **Optimize the relation of the water system with the system of the green areas**

# Specific policy

## Green belt 625ha



- **Liquidate the barrier between core city and districts**
- **Transform the fragmented and underutilized space into a metropolitan centrality**

## Specific policy

## Lower network and urban centers



- **Improvement of public space, tram network, bike lanes, boulevards, shopping streets,....**
- The policy will strengthen the identity and attractiveness of the local centers**

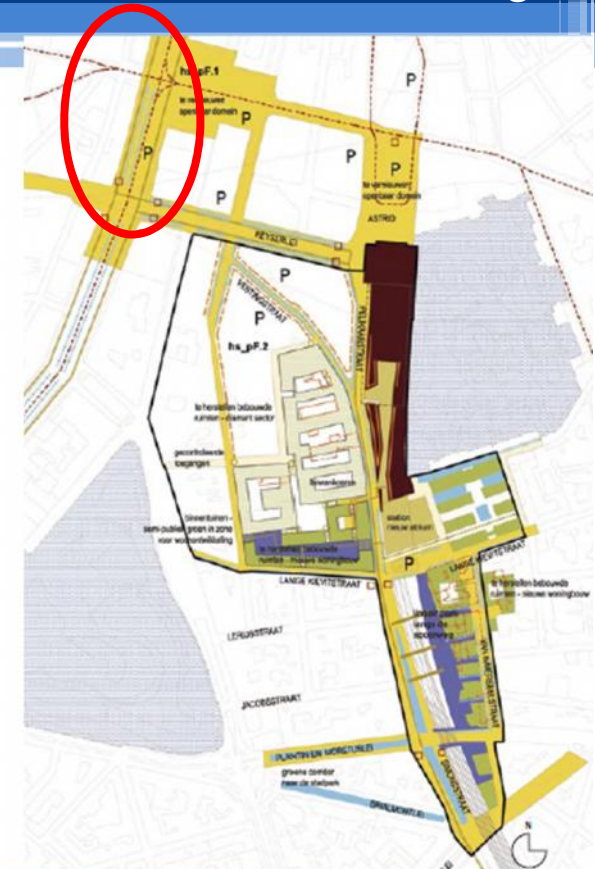


# Active policy: Projects

Here, the threefold strategy becomes clear

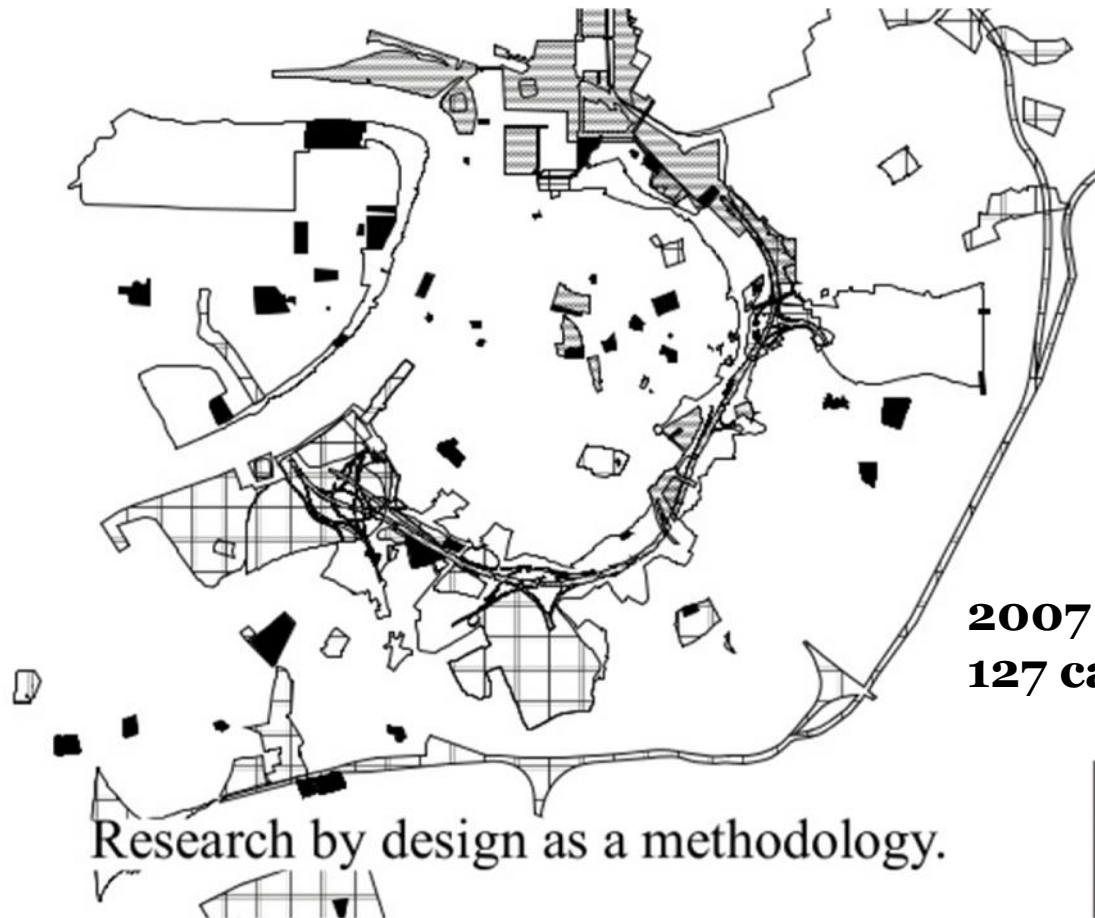
3 policies meet each other:

- Thematic approach with its guidelines
- Area-directed multi-disciplinary approach of the area related program
- Concretising thematic issues on project level



# 'Research by design'

Structural part of the planning process in Antwerpen



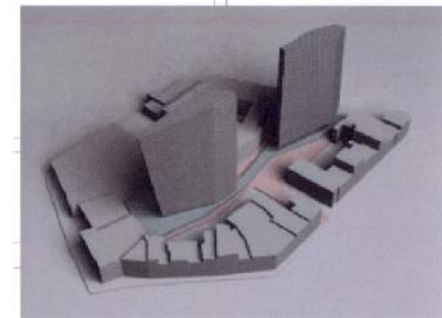
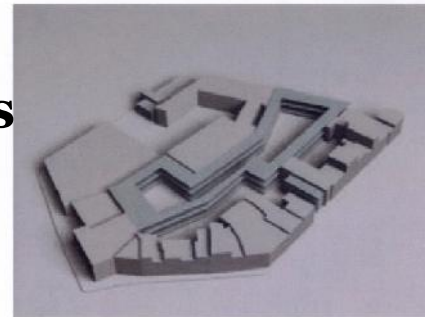
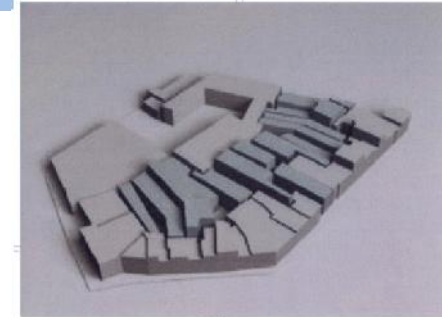
**2007 - 2012:  
127 cases analysed**





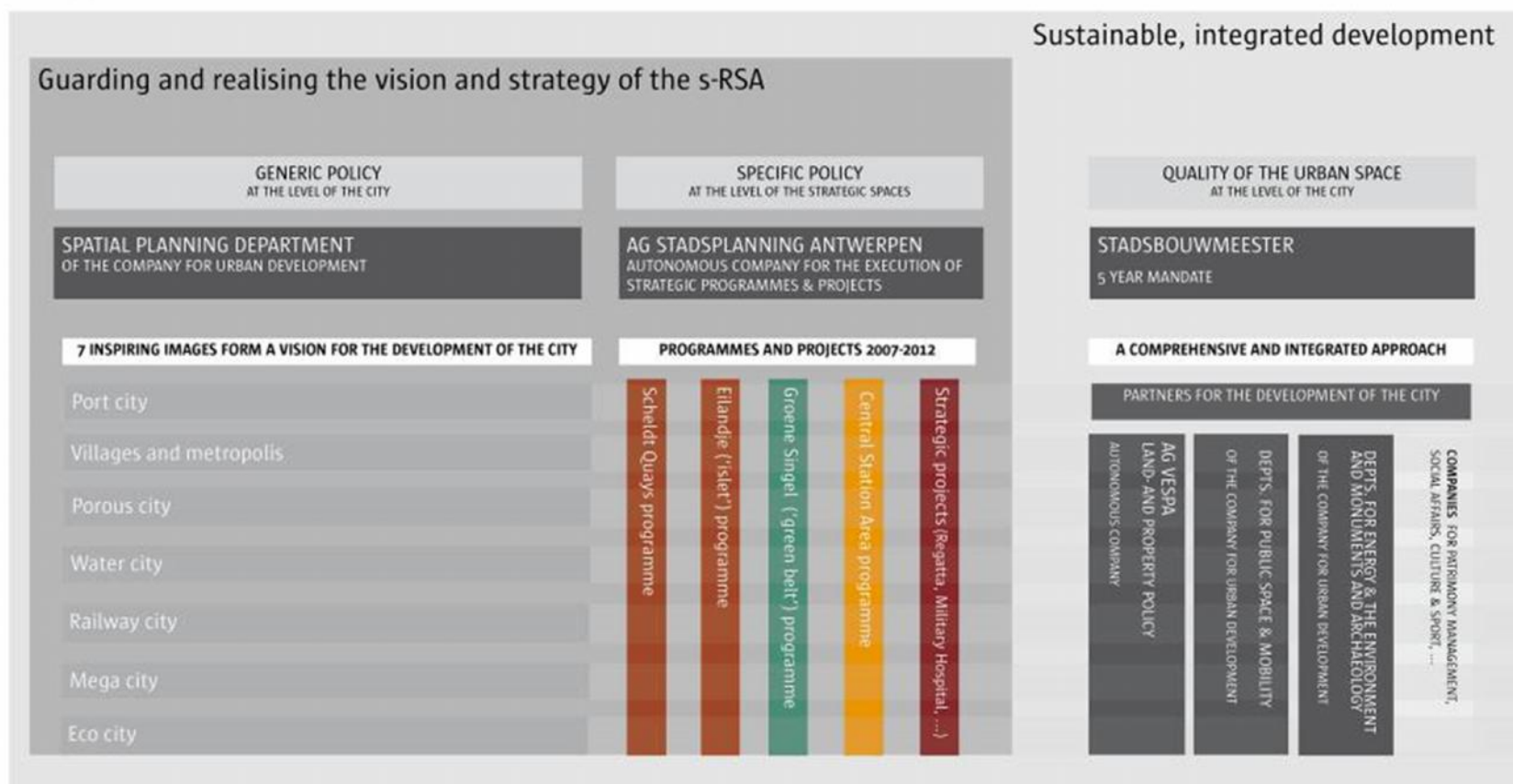
# ‘Research by design’

- **Qualitative analysis of the spatial potentialities**
- **Design exercises and scenario’s**
- **Critical questioning**
- **Final objective is not a design but feeding the discussion**
- **Makes planning issues understandable for politicians and citizens**
- **Facilitates co-production**
- **Needs a degree of independence**

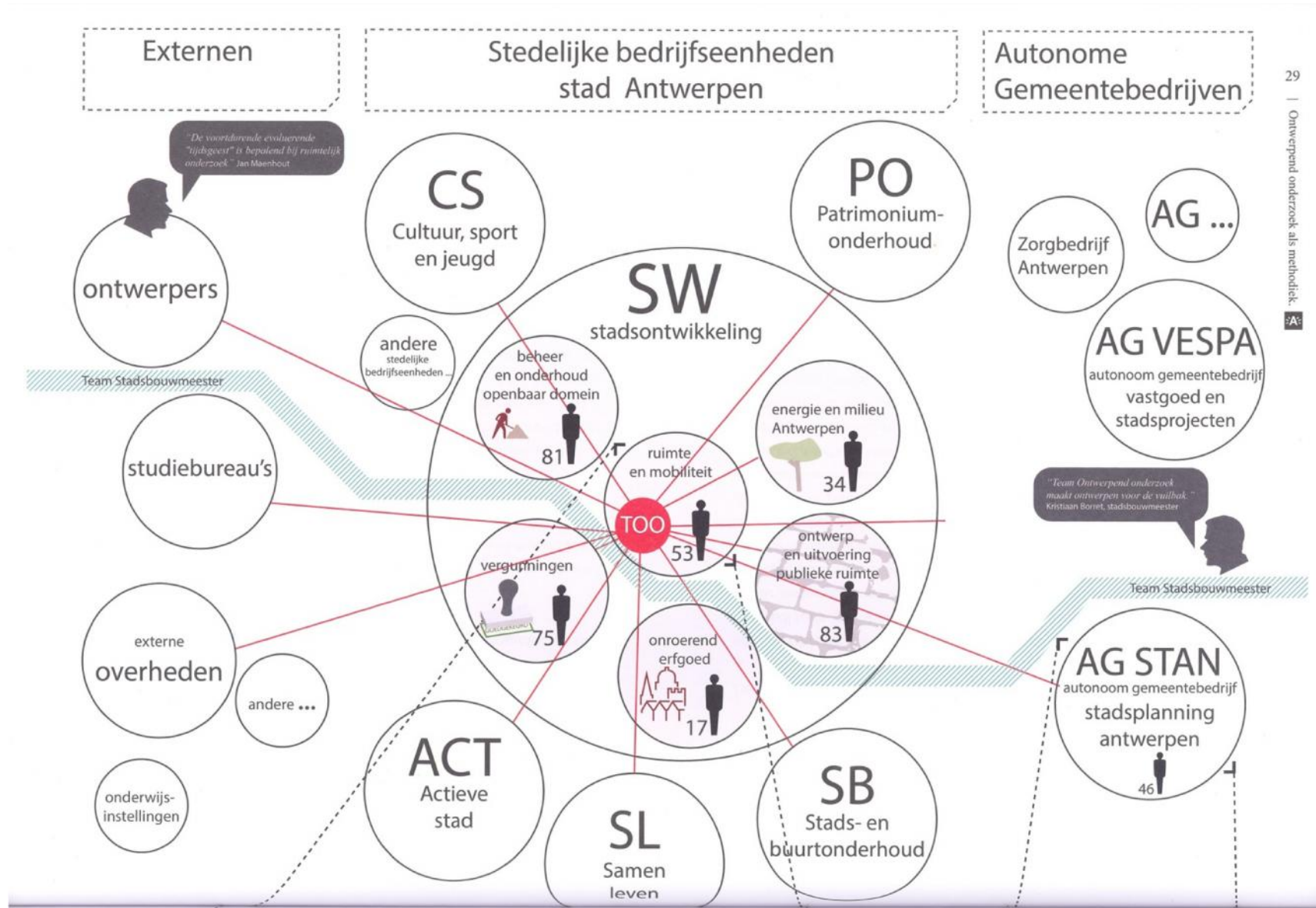


# Administrative re-organization

## Operationalisation of the s-RSA



# Administrative re-organization



29 | Ontwerpend onderzoek als methodiek. A-

# Autonomous Municipal Enterprises AME

**Subsidiarity of the city**  
- legal personality  
- own governing body  
and capital

**City is only shareholder**  
**General Assembly is City Council**  
**AME is public enterprise**  
**Employees are government staff**

## **AME City Planning**

- **Mandated for the planning, designing, management of all projects in the Strategic areas**
- **Program directors (6)**
- **Project director s (29)**

## **AME Real Estate**

- **Mandated to buy, sell, rent, let, run, build, renovate, design and to do everything that is needed to guarantee a good development and governance of the immovable properties of the city.**

# Neighbourhood action

## Department 'Living together'

- Meeting centres
- Service centres for seniors
- Integration programs
- neighbourhood 'manager'
- Deprived Neighbourhood Approach (EU project)
- Residents' organized groups
- Neighbourhood consultation related to City planning

## NGO 'Living together development'

- Concentrates on poverty and discrimination
- Focuses on 4 deprived areas

危機 = 危 GEVAAR  
機 KANS

CRISIS = CHANCE

# Governance agreement

## **Urban pacts**

- Agreement of political coalition parties for each legislative period (6 years)

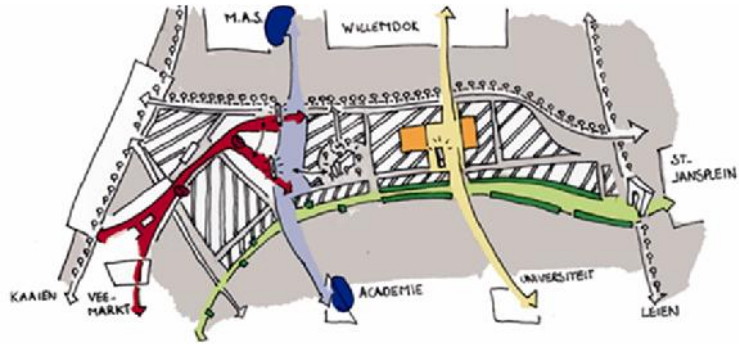
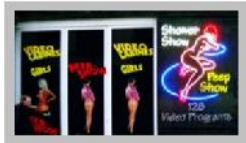


- Politicians decide about :
  - Targets
  - Priorities
  - Budgets for AME
- SS Structure Plan covers 15 years but can be actualized in between

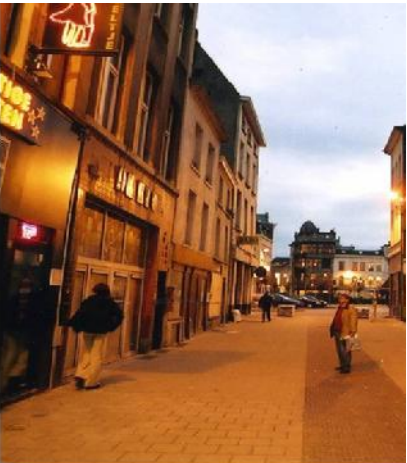
### **Budget**

**AME City Planning: 80 million euro**

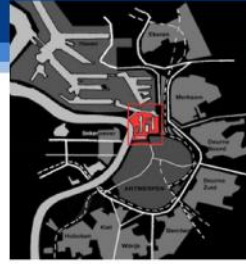
# Projects Hard Spine



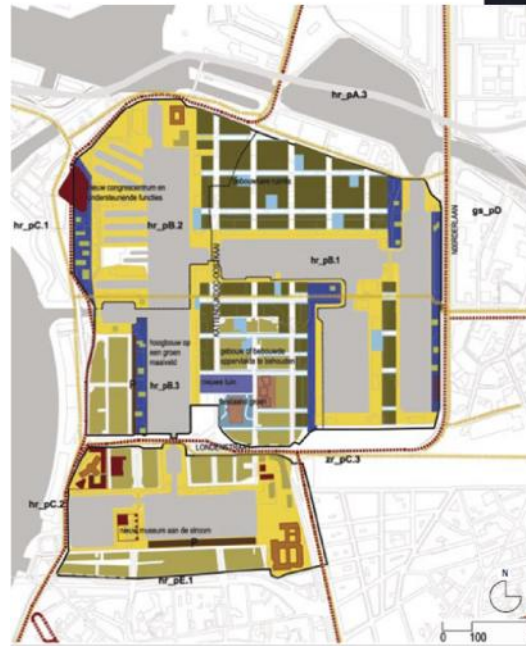
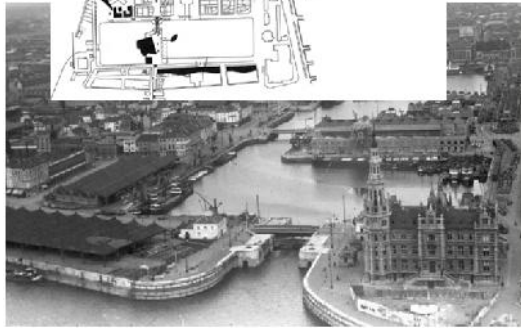
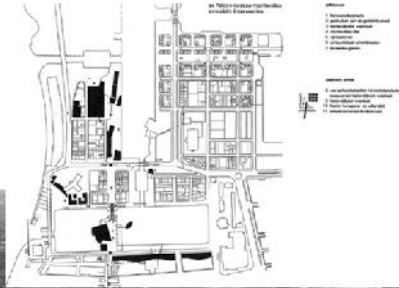
# Sailor's quarter



# Projects



## The Islet





# Projects



# The Islet



# Projects Hard Spine



## Railway station area



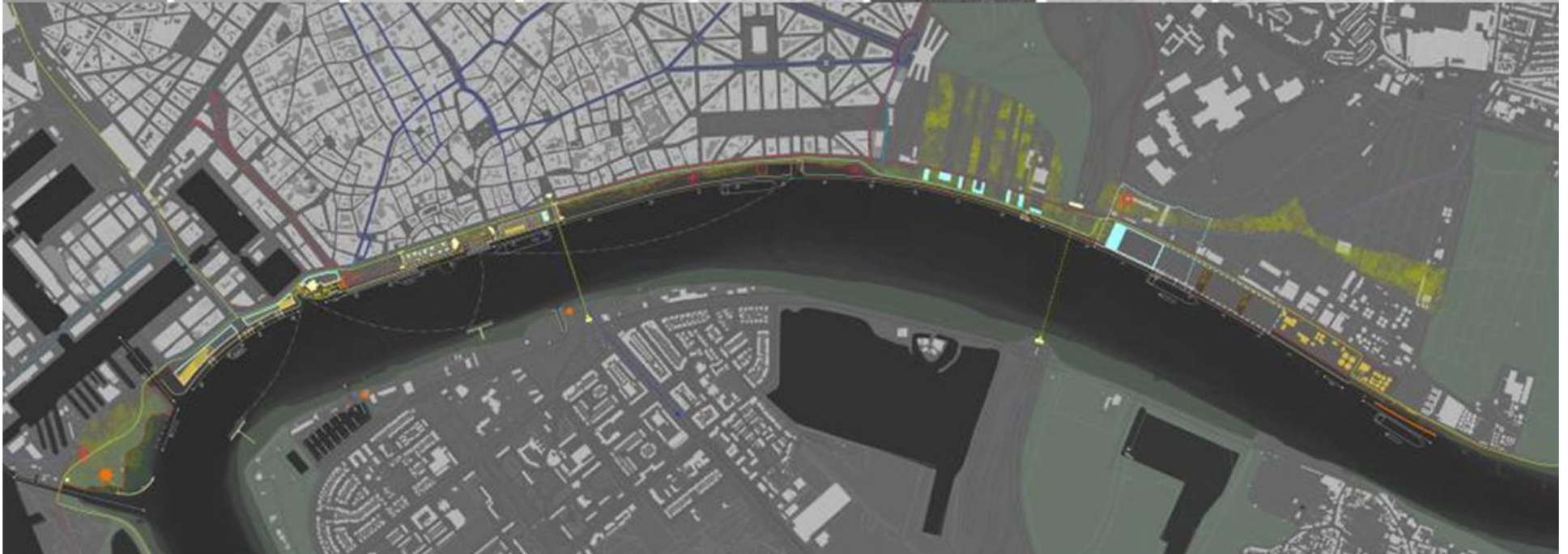
# Projects Hard Spine



# Railway station area



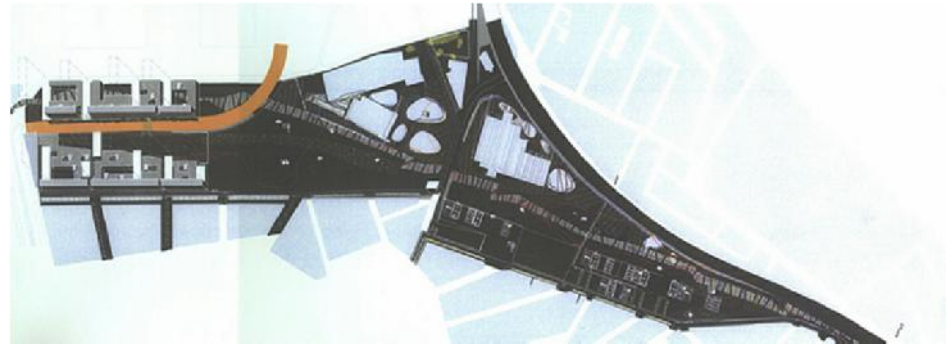




# Projects Soft Spine



# Park Spoor Noord



# Programs Projects

## Living / working in the city...



## To conclude

- **Co-productive approach** has given HOPE to inhabitants, PERSPECTIVES to creative industries and TRUST to international enterprises
- Strategic planning is **a permanent activity**
- Spatial planning is a 'Triialogue' between **visioning- action and co-production**
- Design is a medium for research, visioning and **negotiation**





**Thank You !**