

## **REVIVING BROWNFIELDS INTO LIVING WORKPLACES: TECHNOPÔLE ANGUS AND TREFIL ARBED**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper tells the stories of two, geographically distanced, places that share to be witnesses of the now faded glory of the fordist era and that have been going through intense transformation during the last decade. Both places had an identity that was constructed around the presence of a factory, providing a large amount of neighborhood jobs throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The factories of Angus in Montreal (Quebec) and Trefil Arbed in Ghent (Flanders) were established during the industrial revolution and ceased functioning in the early 1990s. In the last decade, local actors of both places have been struggling to re-invent and re-construct these industrial landscapes and have made dedicated efforts to turn local assets in a strategy for economic renewal and community development. Either of the cases presents a project in which actors have been driven by a strong will to recreate local jobs and a better quality of life through a territorial reconversion project.

Two decades of economic restructuring, the globalization of competition, and rapid technological change have lead to the progressive obsolescence and abandonment of extensive industrial, port and railway properties in more or less central city locations all over Europe and North America (Bradford 2003). The search for reconstruction of viable futures for such locations is a widespread process (see e.g. Fontan *et al.* 2003; Hudson 2000). For the cities and landowners it has become a pragmatic question; what to do with these sites? For city builders<sup>1</sup> and for community builders, they are seen as opportunities to realize respectively land rent and community surplus values. As such the sites can be considered as places where interests meet and often oppose. In this perspective many researchers have found that private interests of attracting capital and maximizing the value of real estate, are (and have been) an often driving and sometimes dominating force in local redevelopment projects (e.g. see Weber 2002; Moolaert *et al.* 2003; Tasan-Kok 2003; Wolf-Powers 2005; Delladetsima 2006; Elander 2006). The cases presented in this paper however, show that ambitions that go beyond increased land rents and economic viability are possible for urban industrial reconversion projects. In these cases, actors have searched for reinterpretation of the function of the old industrial fabric in an attempt to recover social and economic dynamics. We wonder how these processes of re-interpretation and reconstruction in search of local development took place. Therefore, we briefly touch upon the characteristics of the two cases, in which we mainly focus on the complex modes of governance and organizational settings as they emerged. We analyze what strategies made industrial reconversion possible and stress the wide range of resources that have been mobilized for the reconversion of the sites.

### **ANGUS (MONTREAL, CANADA)**

The first case that is discussed, is the redevelopment project of the Angus locomotive shops (Montreal, Quebec). It is the result of a local collective action, emerging from civil society, following the close down of the *Angus Shops* in 1992. The total site of 92 ha belonged to the *Canadian Pacific Rail* (CPR) that had been active in railway and locomotive production on the Angus site since 1904. About one fourth of the site has been transformed in what is now referred to as Technopolis. The site is located in the

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<sup>1</sup> With "City builders" we refer to Fainsteins work on property development in London and New York (Fainstein 2002)

heart of Rosemont, one of the industrial neighborhoods in the periphery of inner-city of Montreal. The neighborhood has been urbanized in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the implementation of the large factory in that zone. In its high days the factory employed about 12000 persons. Since the 70ties this number gradually decreased until its final closure.

### **TREFIL ARBED (GHENT, BELGIUM)**

The second case is the redevelopment of the *Trefil Arbed* site. It consists of the revival project of a 15 ha industrial zone in the heart of nineteenth-century working class neighborhood of Gentbrugge. The neighborhood is located southeast of the old city center of Ghent, a harbor city of 232-thousand inhabitants. Ghent was one of the first cities in Flanders to experience large scale industrialization in the 1840s. In 1993 Trefil Arbed, active in the metallurgical industry since 150 years, closed its doors. Until the 1960s about 1600 employees worked at the site. Soon after the factory's closure, the city of Ghent took initiatives to prepare redevelopment of the Trefil Arbed site. The city wanted to take the lead in the redevelopment of a site that was seen as an opportunity for the reinforcement of the city's economic tissue and on a location that they considered "susceptible for speculation".

### **POST-KEYNESIAN INDUSTRIAL URBAN RECONVERSION PROJECTS: ON CITY BUILDERS AND COMMUNITY BUILDERS**

Responses to the crisis of the Fordist-Keynesian capitalism and the resulting urban industrial wastelands are various.

The policy orientation towards large-scale development projects that we observe today throughout the world - and in which economic redistribution occurs in favor of capital - reflects a "supply-side logic" (Brenner & Theodore 2002). Several, mainly anglo-saxon researchers, have shown the dominance of supply-side approaches in most post-Keynesian economic policy (e.g. Brenner & Theodore 2002; Geddes 2006). Policy interventions then focus on the aspect of marketing land, goods and services in the most profitable way, while other interventions with no or lesser profitability are often left aside or removed from the market. Consequently, urban development projects under such logic are accompanied by a legitimizing force that is founded on expectations related to benefits in the real estate market (e.g. see Moulaert *et al.* 2003; Tasan-kok 2004; Wolf-Powers 2005; Salet *et al.* 2006). The principle of "highest and best use" becomes thus a guiding principle for major land-use planning decisions. The highest value however is narrowly interpreted as the land use that generates highest land rent. Adherence to this principle for the reconversion of abandoned urban industrial zones almost exclusively leads to a change of zoning and redevelopment for residential, office or commercial projects. Brenner and Theodore (2002: 371) link the adoption of the approach of "highest and best use" to the urbanization of neoliberalism and to the "destruction of traditional working-class neighborhoods in order to make way for speculative redevelopment" and a "retreat from community-oriented planning initiatives". Wolf-Powers (2005) studied the impact of incremental planning and planning decisions based on the highest and best use in New York and she also came to conclusions that questioned outcome in terms of benefits for the *general* interest.

Alongside – or in the shadow of – the numerous examples of supply-side policies that guide the "city building processes" a range of other types of policy approaches exist that are concerned of "community building processes" in an urban environment. Such locality-rooted development policies are concerned with satisfaction of local needs, the integration of different policy domains, and the promotion of proactive democratic local

initiatives (Moulaert 2000). Territorial reconversion projects in which local actors have chosen to influence their economic destinies based on “build from within” strategies that aimed to grow local assets (Bradford 2003) are one type of the resulting projects. They are part of what Klein and Fontan (2003) called a new generation of local development initiatives that try to connect or reconnect with the knowledge economy, but in which local partnerships are based on local cultural and social assets and seek to valorize territory in function of the community. They would usually combine bottom-up strategies with top-down support. A central issue becomes then, as is illustrated in the two cases below, the local capacity to mobilize external (public and private) resources (Bradford 2003; Klein 2005).

Klein (2003; 2005) observes how such local development projects emerge around a collective or individual initiative that is confronted with other needs and interests. When these interests find each other a collective action can result. If collective action is structured around a given territorial issue, enjoys local support and involve the restructuring of the larger spatial, social, economic and politic context we speak of territorial development projects (Klein 2005). In this view local development projects are not simply “socially embedded”, but rather social relations are part and parcel of the development strategy (Moulaert 2000: 13).

The two cases discussed below, that emerged around the issue of local jobs and the presence of a vast amount of abandoned industrial urban land, illustrate this type of territorial development projects. They are examples of policy choices that led to lower yielding land uses, but consequently to the realization of a wide range of added values that go beyond increased land rent and trickle down effects. Added value is represented in local jobs and the territorial embeddedness of the project.

The two examples of urban transformations show that collective action of local actors, in a post-Keynesian context, can succeed in using alternative forces than market forces to redevelop urban brownfields for local job creation. They emerge from new modes of governance reflecting the complexity of social relations in society and aim at territorial development based on a plural economy (see e.g. Fontan *et al.* 2003). The idea of a plural economy then is an economy ‘with’ the market and not solely the market (Aznar *et al.* 1997; Fontan *et al.* 2003).

In both cases jobs and landownership were key issues. Innovative social strategies are observed to reach these goals. In particular bridges and “true” partnership between the private sector, the public sector and civil society was needed to breathe new life into the local economy. We illustrate below how a range of market resources, non market resources and non-monetary resources were mobilized to reach the aims of local cultural, socio-economic and environmental transformation.

### **COMPARING CASES: ANGUS TECHNOPSIS AND TREFIL ARBED**

The interest of comparing both cases lies in similar processes of local initiative, even though its context is quite different.

In order to compare both cases we developed 2 tables that include the following dimensions: timeline and contextualization (Table 1); and program, strategic choices, institutional arrangements, partnerships and alliances and resources mobilized (Table 2). Both cases have been studied on the basis of interviews, field visits and existing documents. In the case of Trefil Arbed, little research has been done on the case before. As such, the sources mainly consist of own interviews (10) with key actors, abstracts from the project archive, policy documents and articles in local and regional newspapers. The case of Angus has been intensively studied, mainly by researchers from the Centre for Research on Social Innovations (CRISES) in Montreal. Some of the researchers also have been involved as actors in the project. These studies have been very useful

(Fontan *et al.* 2003, 2005; Scalzo 2003; Klein and Fontan 2003; Yaccarini 2005) and have been complemented with 9 interviews, field visits and document review. All interviews lasted between 40 and 180 minutes. The format of this paper does not allow extensive contextualization and framing of the cases, therefore we only briefly outline some main characteristics in Table 1.

**Table 1: Angus and Trefil Arbed: timeline and contextualization**

Dimension of analysis	Trefil Arbed	Technopôle Angus
<i>Short historic overview</i>	1840 - first industrial activities on Trefil Arbed site 1993 - final closure of Trefil Arbed 1998 - establishment of first PPP between the city, the Flemish environmental holding and a private soil sanitation company 1999 - Private developer buys the land, dissolution of the first PPP and new public private agreements 2000 - Elections- new direction for the development plan. From single to multiple land use. 2005 - Inauguration of the first building 2007 - to be completed: housing and greenery	1904 - implantation of Angus factories 1970s - first closure of part of the Angus factories 1992 - final closure of the Angus factories 1994 - public assembly on zoning 1995 - start of housing and commercial project 1998 - agreement between CPR and SDA on concept of the industrial project and first land acquisition 2000 – Opening of the restored Locoshop. 2007 - to be completed: part of the technopolis
<i>Geographic context</i>	Heart of Western-Europe. Within 500 km from The Dutch Randstad, Lille-Rijsel, Paris, The Ruhr Area and London. Part of the Flemish urbanized region (Flemish Diamond). Working class neighborhood south of downtown Ghent.	East-coast of north America. Within 500 km from Boston-New York, Toronto, Quebec. Working class neighborhood East from downtown Montreal.
<i>Institutional context</i>	Federal state, with large autonomy on the regional level for territorial matters.	Federal state, with large autonomy on the regional level for territorial matters
<i>Socio-economic context</i>	The decline of activities at Trefil Arbed and the final shut down, are part of a wider socio-economic downturn of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century belt of Ghent. Since the beginning of the 90s the city of Ghent launched several investment initiatives for improving socio-economics conditions in the borrow of Gentbrugge. The main programs are social housing in Sas en Bassijnwijk and the redevelopment of Trefil Arbed.	The decline of activities at Angus and the final shutdown in 1992 are part of a much larger economic downturn in the east end of Montreal. Many other older industrial sites were also shutting down, putting thousands of employees out of work. The local Economic Development Corporation of the Rosemont Borough (CDEC) played an active role in trying to maintain industrial activity on the Angus site

Both cases are urban industrial zones that reflect Montreal and Ghent's local importance during the industrial revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their location in traditionally working class neighborhoods and their industrial abandon during the early 1990s posed similar challenges of socio-economic revitalization.

### **ANGUS: A PLACE DESTINED TO BE 'A L'AVANT-GARDE'**

In the 1970s locomotive building activities in the Angus shops decreased. Half of the site has been sold to be redeveloped in the mid 70s to Marathon, *Canadian Pacific Rail*

(CPR) property division at that time<sup>2</sup>. Marathon proposes to develop a large retail complex. Opposition from local commerce and social movements that fight for affordable housing, obstruct the project to happen. In 1976, the “Parti Québécois” comes into power on the provincial level. The in the mean while organized local milieu persuades the prime minister of Québec to intervene. A mixed society Quebec-Montreal is created and buys the land to develop the site ( $\pm$  45 ha) for mixed residential use, 1200 units (40 %) is affordable housing (Baudouin 2007).

The final closure of the Locoshop in 1992 occurs during a large economic crisis. Eastern Montreal suffers heavily, the traditional blue collar neighborhoods sink into poverty with 20% of unemployed. It is during this economic crisis that the *Corporations de Développement Economique Communautaire* (CDECs) are created in different neighborhoods of the city. The CDECs group actors from local businesses, union representatives, local shopkeepers and communitarian groups with the objective to revitalize the neighborhoods. In the early years the main focus was the coordination of the principal socio-economic players in the context of development. Gradually some of them became more proactive actors in revitalization processes in order to improve the neighborhood for its inhabitants, rather than realizing shareholder benefit.

The CDEC Rosemont saw the abandoned site of the Angus shops as an opportunity to realize jobs for eastern Montreal. The CPR, the landowner however had different plans with the terrains. CPR wanted to realize a residential and commercial project on the site. Therefore, however CPR would need to obtain a change of zoning, as all the land was designated for industrial use. The city that was just about to present its first masterplan for Montreal, played a crucial role in forcing dialogue between the competing interests (CDEC and CPR). The change of zoning had to be presented to a community assembly. The CDEC realized soon the importance to mobilize the community with the proposition of an alternative vision that was build by a committee of members from the local community, external experts and academics. In the mean while intensive negotiations between the CDEC and CPR occurred. Shortly before the community assembly - that was needed to obtain the change of zoning - a deal was made that would allow CDEC to buy gradually half of the land for the development of a technopolis. As long as CPR was owner of the site it continued to pay property taxes and would also finance soil decontamination. In exchange CDEC would mobilize the community to give its support for changing the zoning of the eastern half of the site to realize CPRs residential and commercial project. As such 3 subprojects occurred (residential, commercial and industrial) and the main actors CDEC and CPR could both realize at least part of their project.

The CPR initially wanted to sell the land to an external developer. However expertise in brownfield redevelopment under new environmental regulation was very limited and property market conditions were most unfavorable, as a consequence CPR acted as developer ‘by default’. The CDEC had an idea, a vision for the remaining part of the site. However, not many believed that the CDEC would ever be able to complete its mission and actually succeed in mobilize the resources needed for land acquisition and development under the present economic conditions. Neither did the statutes and mission of CDEC allow such actions. Therefore a new body was created: the *Société de Développement d’Angus* (SDA). The SDA had learned from the earlier mobilization throughout the 1970 and 80s for the fight for affordable housing, and controlled the skills of building alliances and making sure to be surrounded by different kinds of expertise.

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<sup>2</sup> Marathon Real Estate is now one of the bigger real estate investment companies in North America.

The SDA's mission consists mainly of 3 sections (Scalzo 2003). To begin with it had to acquire the land and then to develop the Angus Technopolis. First big obstacle was finding financial resources; second major challenge consisted of finding the right incentives for companies in order to locate at Angus. Moreover the idea was to attract companies that also have a social mission. The goal is to realize 2000 jobs on the site. The companies that have been installed on the site anno 2007 are active in different economic sectors: high technology, social economy, laboratories, training and research centers. Secondly, SDA has to offer assistance and services to the companies that have been implanted on the site. Thirdly SDA wants to be a "pole of local governance, based on partnership and an implication with the community in the realization of projects". This mission implies that SDA wants to take the lead in economic and social development together with the community, while being embedded in a large network of partners (Scalzo 2003). This implies a program that aimed at integration of physical, institutional, economic, ecological and social change programs.

The historic patrimony was restored to retain its industrial feel. Therefore the program was adapted to the character of the space. An industrial mall was developed mixing fabrication with office spaces, targeting small industries. In addition to recycling much of the existing building, the space was engineered to be heated and cooled passively and to perform according high environmental standards. The "green" approach was taken in the Locoshop because it was commensurate with the values of social and economic sustainability embraced elsewhere on the Angus site (Lam 2004).

The commercial part of the project was developed by CPR with consultation of the SDA. Ville de Montréal developed the infrastructures and the 2 main parks. CPR, together with subcontractors, took care of the entire housing project and financed remediation works for the entire site.

When the Angus shops were built in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the industrial complex was an example of modernity. In the 1970s and 1980s one of the earlier struggles for participation in decision-making and territorial development took place on the Eastern part of the Angus Shops. In the 1990s the local milieu realized again what was considered impossible. One century after the opening of the locoshops, the new technopolis still is "*à l'avant-garde*". It is a technopolis developed by a grassroots organization according the principles of a plural economy.

### **TREFIL ARBED: THE CITY TAKES THE LEAD**

Soon after Trefil Arbed's closure and bankrupt in 1993 the city started negotiations with the trustees to define the conditions to buy the land. As the city at that time wanted to create more space for SME and sought to steer the type of development in one of its more deprived neighborhoods, initiatives were taken to acquire the land and develop the site for non-polluting industrial activities. One prerequisite to get landownership was the obligation of soil decontamination. In an attempt to develop the resources needed for land acquisition and soil remediation the city initiated negotiation with the Flemish Environmental Holding and a private soil sanitation company. The negotiations lead to an institutionalized partnership in 1998 to carry out these tasks. Already at that moment tension occurred about who get benefits out of the development project. Shortly after the installation of the new public-private body, competitors in the waste treatment sector ("waste barons") raised doubts about the legitimacy of the structure. The legitimacy of the choice of the private partner in the newly institutionalized body was questioned. The private partner, at the same time shareholder of the Flemish environmental holding, was brought in the partnership due to former agreements between them. A public tender would be expected for such projects. Also the partnership was installed on the basis of improper use of the decree on waste matters. Therefore the partnership was given up in

1999. New negotiations with the trustees lead to the agreement that a private developer would buy the land and develop it in partnership with the city.

Local elections in 2000 became an opportunity for more progressive planning ideas to take root; emphasizing mixed use instead of single economic use and public involvement. The new policy direction aimed to create a more diverse and activity-filled area, to attract visitors to the area with the location of part of the city administration and its archive on the site, and to foster multiple use of the area (in functions and time). In addition it would help countering the city's shortage of greenery and affordable housing. Planning and development occurred in close collaboration with the public body working on projects of integrated area development. The more open approach to redevelopment of the site was able to trigger a degree of cooperation between different political and sectoral interests that had been rather unusual until then. Physical changes were connected with economic and other opportunities such as improvements for a local park and recreation, the expansion of a green corridor and additions to the social housing stock.

In 2003 a semi-public Urban development corporation was installed. This institutionalized body managed the partnership with the private sector, organized finance and land acquisition. The city remained responsible for most planning aspects and screening of new companies that want to establish on Trefil Arbed. As was documented in former research (Van Dyck and Verhetsel 2006) the role of the central and regional government in Belgium has changed but remained powerful. Financial resources under the form of subsidies were key in the realization of the project, as well as several territorial regional policies that largely define programs, the type of projects and institutional local settings.

The city is and plans to remain owner of half of the site. The other half of the site has been sold to the users, but includes certain conditions and the right for the city to buy the land whenever it would be for sale again. The project enjoys rather wide support politically and within the neighborhood. Sensitivity to community desires has been included. The economic activities aimed for are small scale activities providing jobs for low skilled labor. A center for social economy was one of the first users of the site and it has a central role in the redevelopment of the area. This center was an initiative of the city and developed as a collective action of different public, private, union and social actors (*Gent, Stad in Werking 1997*).

All new activities on Trefil Arbed have to be in line with the philosophy of a plural economy that combine market economy, public economy and non-market resources. Opting for the creation of employment suitable for local employees shows sensitivity to the community's needs as well as recognition of local history. In 2006 the business park had created 618 jobs, 16% had been taken up by neighborhood residents (Stad Gent, 2006). In the near proximity of the business park 14 new companies have been established between 2001 and 2006 (services, catering and local shops).

The center for social economy "de Punt" has four lines of business: it manages start-up units for new businesses; it offers consultancy to existing firms who want to start up departments to integrate unemployed people into their workforce; it sponsors a mutual aid co-operative of budding entrepreneurs, and it launched an initiative to boost economic growth in the social economy (Equal 2005). De Punt was a cooperative that brought together a wide range of organizations. Shareholders are an equally wide range of public, union related and private bodies. In 2004 it merged with the regional business centre and became a conventional share company, but still different as the company does not pay dividend.

## ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Both projects are rather unique in their context and became references for interventions that protect a “low-yielding use pattern” from the encroachment of the “higher and better” (Wolf-Powers 2005) for the sake of a more human development and a decent living for the local community and a more equal distribution of wealth. It was opted to give a different interpretation to ‘highest best use’. Values of local economic development have been decisive in what was considered best use. Social development, in the broad sense, was realized on the basis of territorial development.

Comparisons of program and objectives, strategic choices, institutional arrangements and partnerships and resources mobilized are shown in Table 2 and discussed below.

**Table 2: Angus and Trefil Arbed : comparative table on resource mobilization**

<b>Dimension of analysis</b>	<b>Trefil Arbed (15,5ha)</b>	<b>Technopôle Angus (45ha)</b>
<i>Main program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work: industrial activities and public administration (11 ha, goal 1000 jobs)</li> <li>- Greenery: park and restoration ecological corridor (2 ha)</li> <li>- Living: mixed housing (2,5 ha; 100 units, 73 are social housing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work: industrial and commercial activities (22 ha + 3,3 ha; goal 2000 jobs)</li> <li>- Living: mixed housing project (24,7 ha, 1350 units) includes 4 parks</li> </ul>
<i>Specific objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Redevelopment of neighborhood</li> <li>- Access to jobs for low-skilled labor and through social economy insertion projects</li> <li>- Urban greenery</li> <li>- Social housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to jobs for low-skilled labor and through social economy insertion projects</li> <li>- Housing</li> <li>- Environmental awareness</li> </ul>
<i>Important Strategic choices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The city of Ghent tries to acquire the land for industrial redevelopment</li> <li>-The city decides to develop the site in function of economic and social needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CDEC proposes to develop the site for local economic development</li> <li>-The city forces negotiations between CPR and CDEC</li> </ul>
<i>Local institutional arrangements (actors involved and roles)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City of Ghent (planning competences, leadership, organization participation)</li> <li>- Urban Development corporation (PPP, project management, final land acquisition)</li> <li>- Private developer (land acquisition and development)</li> <li>- De Punt (development of social economy and assistance for start-ups)</li> <li>- Neighbors (participation in park management and workforce social return)</li> <li>- Flanders (finance)</li> <li>- Belgium (finance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ville Rosemont - Petite Patrie / Ville Montreal (forcing negotiations, infrastructure and public space, planning competences)</li> <li>- CDEC-RPP(mobilizing community, development of the concept and negotiations with CPR)</li> <li>- SDA (land acquisition, project development, social economy)</li> <li>- Neighbors (decision power in change of zoning)</li> <li>- FTQ (finance)</li> <li>- Quebec (finance)</li> <li>- Canada (finance)</li> </ul>
<i>Emerging partnerships and alliances</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PPP between private developer and the city</li> <li>- De Punt : alliance between the city and social actors for development social economy</li> <li>- Park management: users of the site and neighbors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CDEC – SDA: Cooperation, networks with syndicates, universities, research centers, local milieu</li> <li>- SDA-CPR on content of the program, gradual land acquisition and division of task</li> <li>- PPP between CPR and the city for the provision of infrastructures and public space</li> </ul>
<i>Resources mobilized</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional, Federal, Local and private financial resources</li> <li>- Cultural : Restoration of part of the historical patrimony</li> <li>- Space and material environment</li> <li>- Local and international companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional, Federal, Local and private financial resources</li> <li>- Cultural : Restoration of part of the historical patrimony</li> <li>- Space and material environment</li> <li>- Local and international companies</li> </ul>



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- Local politicians and administrators,  
private company  
- Neighbors  
- Social actors

- Social actors, academics, local experts  
- Local politicians and administrators,  
private company  
- Neighbors

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### ***BUILDING BRIDGES: PROGRAM, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC CHOICES***

The coupling of different programs (industrial, commercial and residential for Angus and industrial, ecological restoration and residential for Trefil Arbed) have been important triggers to move ahead. In both examples the initial program was conceived by one actor or organization. The rather mono-functional programs reflect this unilateral approach. The development of a program that combined interests, and thus resources, was necessary to gain large support and enable implementation.

Both projects show a pro-active strategy of local actors to make use of property dynamics in order to finance the project and realize their goals. 'Shareholders' that provided the necessary financial capital have been different state layers and labor unions. We consider this a countermovement to what is considered a general relaxation of public sector controls over private land development (Healy 1991) in which novel ways of extracting surplus value are adopted. Also the planning system has not been used as an enabling function to encourage private enterprise to undertake development in circumstances that would be otherwise difficult or unattractive (Weber 2002; Berry *et al.* 1996; Couch *et al.* 2003; Delladetsima 2006). Zoning rather has been used as a control and enabling function simultaneously.

Ownership changed throughout the project. The private developer (Ghent) and CPR (Montreal) did not aim at long term immobilization of its financial capital (investment). CPRs aim was to sell the land 'as soon as possible, but was somehow forced to act as developer before that. The main aim of the developer was to develop land and capture any socially produced increases in land rents plus the value of the improvements. On the contrary the city of Ghent and the SDA aimed for land ownership. In this case the driving factor was mainly ideologically, as it is expected to allow future land use control to a large extend. For those institutions ownership indeed renders control, but also responsibilities to reproduce the conditions that avoid devaluation and future abandon of the land.

Connections between the reconversion project and its neighborhood have been observed in both cases. The vision of social return in Trefil Arbed wanted to go beyond the creation of local employment, and realize other commitments towards the neighborhood. So have the neighbors been invited to think about ways to link the neighborhood to the site. This resulted in the possibility for neighbors to make use of some of the meeting places and computer facilities of the training center. Also the central parking of the business park is accessible for neighbors at night and during weekends. The site is used for events, such as a popular market for local agricultural products. Ideas are suggested for other shared services such as child care for the companies and the neighbors. The mobilization of resources to realize the so called "social return" program depended on the local administration and politicians.

Both cases want to create local jobs and stress their mission to help people to find their way back to the labor market or to insert people that don't have chances in the private economy. The residential part of the Angus site targets young families that find an attractive living environment on the site and might be stimulated to build their live in the city.

These examples show that renouncing to producing high economic value for property entrepreneurs and higher revenues for the city can contribute to the realization of projects that at least aim at improved living and working conditions in working-class

neighborhoods. These observations argue for the role of planners in reinforcement strategies that show to be an important source for local development and socio-economic stability.

### **BRIDGING ACTORS AND INTERESTS: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND EMERGING PARTNERSHIPS**

Physical re-connection of space with its environment allowed many bridges to be built. Bridges between interests, between different sectors, within the local community, between different levels of governance. Bridges for people that establish ways to the labor market, to society. Bridges between issues of democracy, economic development, housing, culture and politics.

Both cases represent examples of new modes of governance, in which relations between the state, the market and civil society take, in their moment of space and time, new forms. The intervention of the state in the case of Angus (here the province of Quebec, directed by the *Parti Québécois*) and the city of Montreal (directed by the *Parti Civique*) allowed to solve a problem of opposition between CPR-Marathon and the local milieu in the 70s. Scalzo (2003) identifies this as a typical example of Keynesianism. In the 90s a similar strategy of intervention did not happen, because of lack of political will and financial resources (Scalzo 2003: 96). Local actors had to search for new ways of governance to solve the problem of opposition. Actors with initially divergent interests had to become partners in order to solve the problem. A truly new mode of local governance had to develop/grow.

In Trefil Arbed some similarities can be observed. However the role of the state seems to be more prominent. Here political will to lead the intervention was observed halfway the 90s. The city set up a partnership to directly acquire the land. Due to mainly stringent environmental regulations this strategy did not succeed. A new partnership, in which the private developer got a much more prominent role, was set up. However leadership in the program definition remained largely a political and public issue. The success of the redevelopment was mainly due to a stronger alliance between different actors within the city of Ghent and one private developer. Innovation in governance seems to be mostly related to inter-sectoral cooperation in the local government. The civil society was largely absent in the redevelopment process, but got a more prominent role in the establishment of the center for social economy and the fine tuning of some elements of the redevelopment program.

### **COMBINING RESOURCES: PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

Within partnerships, actors held on to their agenda, but succeeded in creating a more uniform discourse and managed to combine resources. Increasing the pool of resources to draw from created new opportunities and provoked some domino effect.

Within these alliances *leading individuals* within or representing the organizations (actors) has been of prime importance in both cases. The key individuals had a powerful mandate within their own organizations and access and strong legitimacy/credibility towards political power. These individuals were not only the ones with some power, but also the ones that could see that coupling resources would result in richer territorial development projects. The strength of the local actors was to actively build a sense of belonging to the project and to mobilize resources and expertise from different milieus according to the needs. In both cases the fact that a concrete place was involved allowed the linking processes. Bridges were built between actors that traditionally would

rather for confrontation than consolidation. The social milieu and the private sector, but also different sectoral interests managed to sit around the table.

The creation of a public issue and debate around the project helped in building the feeling of belonging. Interviewees reported how citizens as well as elected representatives, as well as private companies wanted “to be part of it”. The identity linked to the fordist factories was used as central resource in the regeneration discourses. Pictures, names, activities and architecture reflect that redevelopment occurred in the spirit of the identity related to the former activities. In Gent for example, the site hosts the historic archives of the city of Ghent and the administration for cultural affairs. This fact is partly due to coincidences, the city was looking for a new location at the moment the reconversion plan started, but the fact to locate it on this site has a high symbolic value. In the case of Angus historical identity is reflected first of all with the transformation of the enormous building “Locoshop” and some smaller buildings. Pictures of the factory are present on several spots of the site (in public and private spheres). Names of new roads that had to be built, the technopolis itself, newly created companies and organizations all refer to the Angus factories.

Citizen’s participation in the presented projects goes far beyond common practices. Whereas participation in Trefil Arbed was almost entirely based on organized participation, it was innovative in its context. Remarkable is the very proactive role of the community for the redevelopment of the Angus shops. The local milieu was not only given the chance to hold a referendum on land use, but had an active role in decision-making on issues of economic development. Whereas political democracy is rather advanced in many cities worldwide, economic democracy is poorly developed. In this case a grassroots organization took the lead in the development of an industrial project. The local milieu thus truly became a resource. Resource distribution in both projects was such that cooperation between the local milieu and private developers was essential. Due to reasons of permits and city’s vision and plans for the site, the private developer of Trefil Arbed could only develop the site in partnership with the city. However this partnership was also very welcomed as the developer expected the city “to take care of the citizens”. Angus shows an excellent example of a case where the private developer was forced not only to take the citizens into account, but also to cooperate.

## **FINAL COMMENTS**

What we have learned from these cases of industrial reconversion is that economic development projects shouldn’t necessarily be considered as projects with purely “economic” nature. The cases show alternatives and feasibility of what is common in economic development projects. Local collective action succeeded in bringing social, political and cultural issues on the agenda of economic reconversion

Keys to success lie in the struggle for social return and the absence of muscular behavior of one actor. Nevertheless, leadership was particularly crucial in both projects. Success factors seem to be constructed through a complex web of *leading* individuals from different organizations, forming alliances and newly institutionalized bodies. In both projects this has been of primordial importance in the realization of what was considered an ambitious program. The governance structures allowed pro-active participation of some individuals for the mobilization of resources that could lead to the actual implementation of social and economic perspectives.

Despite its success in realizing ‘facts on the ground’, and building bridges more patience is needed if we want to estimate fully what plus values might have been realized. Anyhow, in terms of governance and public participation both cases show interesting examples of social change and showed that alternative ways of development and reorganization of market structure after crises are feasible. There is more out there than

going with the flow. Key factors were here the power of imagination and trust, the mobilization of a wide range of resources and the establishment of partnerships that succeeded in combining expertise.

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