

## Transformative Renewal Strategies

Urban decline is driven by a culmination of economic, social and environmental struggles that lead to population decline or social instability in the area. Urban and territorial planning has the powerful ability to deliver reform through long term planning strategies punctuated by area based projects. Urban renewal, with a view of stimulating economic growth, restoration of the social fabric and improvement of the natural environment, is a proactive means of spatially responding to a changing local and global environment. Instrumental in achieving this are strong and progressive governance structures, which use innovative approaches to respond to complex urban challenges.

The use of urban and territorial planning strategies to combat social exclusion was successful in the cases of **Lyon, France** and **Medellin, Colombia**, who successfully integrated previously ostracized areas to restore social cohesion. This was achieved through urban master plans and strategies that created a connection between different parts of the city and provided public spaces that encouraged inclusion and participation. Medellin is a prime case where reforming local approaches to urban development had an indirect but powerful impact on the homicide and crime rates on the city, subsequently improving economic growth. This can be credited to the successful integration of previously crime ridden neighbourhoods in the city, by using small scale urban development projects to make civic spaces more welcoming and socially integrated.

Renewal opportunities are prevalent in cities or regions which have seen a shift in industry, experiencing rapid economic decline, often accompanied by a degraded and polluted natural landscape. This was the case for **Chattanooga, United States of America**, **Rhine-Ruhr, Germany** and **Krasnoyarsk, Russia**, who used their degrading city cores as an impetus to elaborate master plans, envisioning a long term and adaptive renewal strategy. Rhine-Ruhr is a unique example, which reimagined itself from an industrial wasteland to a green landscape park that attracts thousands of visitors per year and has become a national model of urban and territorial planning.

Using spatial interventions to stimulate economic regeneration is not limited to former industrial cities. The city of **Strasbourg, France** identified its border region as an underused and impractical site due to the lack of integration across the trans-boundary region with **Kehl, Germany**. The innovative response of the two mayors was to proactively integrate the region through trans-boundary urban development projects. Together, they reformed their governance structures to facilitate urban development projects, stimulating the economic and human flows between the two areas, driving the supra-national region to a competitive position within the European Union.



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