# *URBAN SPACES OF CROATIA:*
## *A process of development*

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

*Mirna Karzen*
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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

How many times have you found yourself in a beautifully maintained park that had no place to sit? Or streets with no safe place to cross? Or in a picturesque, historical square that was filled with parked cars? How many great places can you think of? And how many just fill the function of a public space, but have no public there to use it at all? William H. Whyte, a pioneer of great public spaces once said, "*It is difficult to design a space that will not attract people – what is remarkable is how often this has been accomplished*"[1]

Having these basic questions in mind, this two-year fellowship project wanted to gain a better understanding of the state and problems of Croatian towns today, with a special emphasis on public spaces[2], and to propose policy recommendations for a multi-sector, community-based approach to their revitalization and development. The overall goal was to encourage partnerships among citizens, private business and government in creating more creative, usable and livable public spaces that would bring communities together through an array of activities, ranging from the entertainment and culture to education and eco-tourism, to sport and recreation, and small businesses.

The research also wanted to identify key people interested in promoting the "community-based" approach as a healthy and more sustainable alternative to the current "project-driven" urban development practices that are imposed on community without offering opportunity for their views and creative ideas.

And finally, the research wanted to emphasize that the absence of effective community organizations is one of the key problems of current urban and spatial planning and that increasing public participation should be one of the main objectives of urban revitalization with a specific focus on underrepresented groups such as youth, women and elderly.

The research tried to address two main challenges, which if successfully addressed could open new solutions for more effective participation of local community:

1. *How to increase the capacity of the community to respond to its problems; and*
2. *How to get local authorities to change their current practices by involving community in decisions that will have an affect on their lives.*

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[1] How to Turn the Place Around: a Handbook on Creating Successful Public Spaces, *Project for Public Spaces, Inc.,* 2000*,* page 20
[2] Public spaces can include for example, streets, sidewalks, parks, bike-trails, squares, waterfronts, vacant lots and transit facilities.

In the period of two years (2002-2004), the public space methodology was presented in more than twenty cities and municipalities in Croatia[3] and cross-border with Serbia to a total of at least 20,000 people[4]. A total of 24 workshops and training programs were conducted involving over 600 people. The PPS methodology was implemented in many communities, with a flexibility to allow for diverse social, ethnic, age and/or gender structure and the size of the community. In smaller communities, a simple, less demanding methodology was applied to communities with older, and more rural population. In cities, a full PPS methodology was applied through presentations, discussions, placemaking workshops and focus group meetings.

As a result of this work, a total of 5 concrete, multi-sector projects were initiated in a total of five cities in Croatia[5].

The research tried to take challenges and differences specific for Croatian urban areas in consideration when selecting target cities/towns and identifying public spaces. Towns were selected according to their location, character (coastal, mountainous or continental), size, historical or other characteristics paying attention to their regional location. According to the current regional division, Croatia is divided into twenty counties therefore at least half the number of counties was covered by the research.


## I.     BACKGROUND ON PUBLIC SPACES IN CROATIA

*"Croatian towns historically served as cultural, economic and social centers, and were a part of the rich European history. The spatial organization of some important Croatian towns as an integral part of the European network of cities has proven critical for the survival of Croatia through the history, especially during the last war. Considering the rich architectural, historical and cultural heritage, the important emphasis is on protection and preserving that heritage for the future generations to come. The spatial and urban planning strategy thus needs to take that in consideration when preparing sound instruments for urban planning and development."[6]*

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[3] Cities and municipalities include: Rijeka, Koprivnica, Karlovac, Labin, Slatina (city plus two neighborhood councils), Pula, Sućuraj, Zagreb, Opatija, Lovran, Kostrena, Drniš, Osijek, Glina and seven municipalities in the Sisačko-moslavačka county. Cross-border, established relationship with Novi Sad and Belgrade.

[4] This number is a rough and conservative estimate, since it excludes a promotion of the workshops, initiatives and national award on the national media. Each national media has a distribution between 30,000 –150,000.

[5] "*Mali uče velike*", Rijeka; *Army barracks* revitalization, Slatina; *Center for the youth* revitalization, Karlovac; two public space developments, Slatina neighborhood councils. Cross-border, "*Pacis Pannoniae*", Novi-Sad – Osijek).

[6]*National Strategy on Spatial Planning,* Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing, Department for Spatial Planning, Zagreb, 1997, page 76

In order to understand the urban environment and the state of public spaces in Croatia, it is important to give a brief overview of the urban network consisting of four large cities, around 20 medium size towns (between 20,000-100,000 inhabitants) and around 100 small towns with less than 10,000 inhabitants[7] -- see the map of Croatia in Annex I. The latest data collected by the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing (1991) has shown that 51% of the population lives in 117 towns and cities, of which 20% in the four largest cities of Zagreb, Rijeka, Split and Osijek [8].

It is also important to mention the differences in population density – in some areas like the north-west, the density is 140 inhabitants/km2 while in more mountainous areas of Lika, Gorski kotar and islands, the density is less than 20 inhabitants/km2.[9] In the continental part of the country there are 67% of inhabitants with 100.5 inhabitants/km2, while in the coastal areas there are only 33% with 64 inhabitants/km2. On the 3300 km2 of island territory in 303 towns there were 120,000 inhabitants in 1991 with the density of 39 inhabitants/km2. In Croatia there are still 46% of towns that have distinctly agrarian/rural character. Some of them will with time become more or less urban and most of them will most likely keep their rural character[10].

Differences can be also seen between the coastal and continental urban regions. For example, urban areas of Rijeka, Pula, Split and Šibenik have more urbanized areas than those of Zagreb, Varaždin and Sisak. In Istria and Kvarner, the region of Opatija has more urbanized character because of a close proximity to Rijeka. More urbanized character is visible, also between Rijeka and Crikvenica connecting towns of Kostrena, Bakar, Bakarac and Kraljevica). In Dalmatia, the elements of urbanization are also more visible along the coast than in the more continental area of Dalmatia, especially around Zadar, Šibenik, Split and Dubrovnik. Towns that were damaged or destructed during the war currently require special attention in legal, financial and other aspects of development especially towns of Vukovar, Ilok, Beli Manastir, Županja, Virovitica, Glina, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Gospić, Slunj, Knin, Dubrovnik and others.

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[7] ibid, page 81
[8] ibid, page 78
[9] ibid, page 80
[10] Types of residential areas as of 1991:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Urban | 117 | 1.7% |
| More urban | 1,880 | 28.1% |
| Less urban | 1,590 | 23.8% |
| Rural | 3,105 | 46.4%, *ibid* |

## II.     THE STATE OF CROATIAN PUBLIC SPACES TODAY

In Croatia today, planning and development of public spaces is still conducted at the national and local government level without an active citizens' involvement. Spatial development, which also includes a category of public spaces is regulated by two national documents -- the "*Law on Spatial Development*" from 1998 (revised version of the '94 law) and the "*Act on Public Discussion in the Spatial Development Process*"[11], and the city/county plans on a local level. Croatia has also ratified and adopted several international treaties and conventions including the UN Habitat Agenda 21 and recommendations prepared by the Council on Europe.

In the last thirty years, urban and spatial planning in Croatia has been regulated by top-down, technocratic and city-centric methods which focused mainly on rapid de-agrarization of rural areas, increased urbanization and industrialization, without taking in consideration community needs, the real pace of urbanization and sound environmental practices. Some of the challenges facing Croatian towns are typical in today's urbanized world: traffic, pollution, overpopulation and crowding, crime, destruction of natural and cultural resources and many others. Years of war and economic devastation has only added to those problems and caused further degradation in both urban and rural areas.

Urban policies in Croatia are still based on old, inflexible and inadequate urban plans that contribute to already high levels of pollution and health problems, inadequate transportation solutions and a lack of appropriate public spaces, including streets safe for pedestrians, playgrounds adequate for children, green areas, waterfronts, sport and recreational facilities, and other public spaces necessary for the overall healthy and sustainable urban living. Local government officials, overwhelmed with too many problems are lacking skills and motivation important for reaching out to citizens and building partnerships.

According to the National Strategy on Spatial Planning developed by the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing, Croatian space has a great diversity and all elements needed for the integration into European development systems. Among those elements are a favorable geographic position and easy access to Western and Central Europe a diverse mix between rural, mountainous, coastal and urban areas.

Among major spatial development problems, the most pronounced ones identified by the Ministry are "*irrationality of space use, uncontrolled growth of large cities, neglected rural areas and areas along the state border, the occupancy of large areas for building purposes, low quality mass construction*

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[11] Implementation of the Law on Spatial Development, Law on Croatian Association of Architects and civil engineers, and discussion on the Draft Law on Constructions:, Conference in Opatija, October 22-24, 1998., *Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing in cooperation with the Institute for Civil Engineering in Zagreb*

*at the coast with an extremely large share of illegal construction, underdeveloped infrastructure in some segments and generally unsolved questions of waste disposal"* [12]. Among the areas that require special attention and adequate planning approach and measures are areas of large cities that need to be systematically researched and integrally planned because of strong urbanization impacts to the wider areas around.  Cities are going through transformations that include big commercial facilities or shopping malls, as well as illegal building expansion of private houses – urban dynamics difficult to follow by local planning authorities.

With all these changes, impact on public spaces is devastating, confirms Platforma 9,81, the NGO for architecture and media. The main reasons are that:"... *the existing ones (*public spaces, ?) *are being privatized or commercialized and the new ones are hardly being built due to lack of political will and public investments"*[13].

Strategic objectives identified by the Ministry for Spatial Planning, Housing and Construction are taking all of the above challenges in consideration. Objectives include developing links between urban and rural areas, spatial development of cities with large concentration of population, developing conditions for cultural and historic preservation of towns especially those in remote areas and on the islands, and focusing on small and medium size towns as key centers of urban development.

In the process of planning and development of spatial areas, urban planners are required to respect the "*Act on Public Discussion in the Spatial Development Process*" and present their plans at public hearings. Specifically, the process includes the initial phase, which identifies the scope, goal and timeline for the development of a specific urban/spatial plan. Public has 30 days to respond to city plans except for the City of Zagreb and the county plans (60 days). According to the article 9 of the Act, citizens and NGOs can participate at the public forum by reviewing the draft project plans and giving their comments; asking questions about the proposed solutions and options; giving recommendations and advice or sending written recommendations by regular or electronic mail. All the comments need to be reviewed, and relevant government representative sends written explanations on why some comments were not or were partially taken in consideration. The final decision is announced in all the official government publications and local media.

However, considering a long tradition of government-subsidized social, education, health and other programs, and the top-down approach to urban planning, citizens are still not used on interacting with local government,

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[12] *National Strategy on Spatial Planning,* Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing, Department for Spatial Planning, Zagreb, 1997, page 248
[13] Platforma 9,81, Architecture and Media Collective, project proposal to the European Cultural Foundation, February 2005.

questioning their decision-making and participating at public forums. Even when citizens decide to participate, they often don't know how to respond in constructive fashion focusing on a bigger picture rather than what is happening in their back yard. In addition, the attitude toward the government is still of mistrust in the government's credibility, efficiency and transparent policies. The citizen's response is low and the urban plans are thus implemented without their real involvement.

Despite the requirements posed by the Act, therefore the real question lies in the effectiveness of such an approach. The low attendance of citizens at public hearings and lack of understanding of complex city plans makes it difficult for citizens to challenge expert opinions and influence the planning and implementation process.

In Croatia today, there is very little if any secondary data available specifically on public spaces or alternative approaches to their development. This research thus mostly relied on the primary data that was collected from interviews with different sector representatives, questionnaires, and analysis of the city plans, as well as cultural and historical documents relevant for a specific town or a public space, as well as on concrete steps in applying public space methodology to project design and implementation.

### III.   AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC SPACE DEVELOPMENT

*"Public places are a stage of our public lives. They are the parks where celebrations are held, where marathons end, where children learn the skills of a sport, where the seasons are marked and where cultures mix"..."When cities and neighborhoods have thriving public places, residents have a strong sense of community; conversely, when they are lacking, they may feel less connected to each other."*[14]

There are technically speaking two different approaches to the public space development, the project-driven approach, which lacks citizens' involvement (typical of planning in Croatia), and the community-based or a bottom-up approach, which involves community in the early process of planning. Next chapter will briefly explain both approaches and provide information about organizations and groups that are behind the alternative approach.

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[14] How to Turn the Place Around: a Handbook on Creating Successful Public Spaces, *Project for Public Spaces, Inc.,* page 14

### 1.      Project-driven approach

The primary focus of this research was to identify alternative methods to the traditional, inflexible urban planning approach that lacks citizen participation, or the so-called "*project-driven approach*".  As explained earlier, this approach is usually imposed on citizens – the city introduces a new final urban plan or a project to a community and then asks them their opinion. This approach usually doesn't work when creating great public spaces.

**Why?** Because the project is not needs driven and based on dialogues with citizens, but comes from a political or some other agenda. Basically, what happens is "*professionals develop alternative design schemes and take them to the "community", which reviews the project and provides input*"[15].

This top-down approach doesn't allow citizens to bring their needs and issues at the table at an early phase but only to respond to already make plans – this is a reactive rather than a proactive approach. As a result, many issues remain unheard and spaces are not used nearly as much as they should be when/ifdiscussed and planned together with communities.

Most of the Croatian departments for Urban planning are currently trying to change this traditional and impersonal approach with longer and more interesting exhibitions of urban and spatial plans, experts available for answering people's questions and including different means for sending comments and suggestions.  Nevertheless, citizens are still not able to really understand the plans and make a difference in the planning process. In many communities it has been proven that even the best local governmment's intentions could remain unanswered unless community takes ownership of the project. For example, in Koprivnica, the City has invested large amount of funds in renovating the Center for youth. However, children and youth are not using it nearly as much as they might have if they have participated in the planning process from its very beginning.

### 2. Community-based approach

An alternative to the "*project-driven approach*" is the "*community-based approach*",* which is becoming more and more acceptable in local communities around the world. This approach starts with a dialogue with a community in the early, planning stage through workshops, forums, questionnaires and other means of communication. It allows citizens to express their concerns, offer their vision of the space and evaluate it together with experts. The result, often a compromise of all positions, can be a lively, creative space that offers more sustainable alternative and creates partnerships between professionals and community.

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[15] How to Turn the Place around…, page 15

Project for Public Spaces, (PPS), a New York-based non-profit organization established in 1975 believes that "*a public involvement that defines and responds to community conditions and needs from the outset is one of the most critical factors in designing public spaces*"[16]. The PPS has pioneered the so-called "*Placemaking*" approach to public spaces (*more on this methodology later in the paper*). Their approach is based on a simple logic that the development of design ideas and elements is not sufficient to create a great place without a thorough understanding of the "*dynamics, desires and conditions within the community*"[17]. Their belief is that "*all the improvements must be planned so that they work together to make the area a distinctive place where people want to come to meet, shop and socialize and that reflects community values and needs*".[18]

For almost thirty years PPS has worked with over 1000 communities offering education, training, mentorship and their unique set of tools on how to create and sustain public spaces. In their "Bible": "*How to Turn the Place Around: a Handbook on Creating Successful Public Spaces*", PPS offers practical advice and not ten but eleven commandments on building great public spaces, e.g. the community is the expert; you can't do it alone; they always say it can't be done; you can see a lot just by observing; and you are never finished.

The Urban Institute, an American non-profit organization funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has accepted the PPS-designed methodology and public space development as one of the partnership tools in its Citizen Participation Model[19]. In its Citizen Participation Manual for local governments and local communities in Croatia, the Urban Institute agrees that the "*Citizen participation is critical to developing and strengthening democracy at all levels of government...*"[20]

However, they also add that citizen participation has a broader meaning – "*Citizen participation is a very important management tool that increases the effectiveness of local government management and, if understood widely, can lead to a real and lasting partnership between all of the "sectors" in a community (public, private and civil society sector).*"[21].

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[16]"Community development through Public Spaces: Expanding Placemaking to Serbia and Montenegro", a proposed initiative a proposed initiative of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the USAID/Community Revitalization Through Democratic Action Program, Project for Public Spaces, Jan 2005, pg. 3
[17] ibid
[18] ibid
[19] The Citizen Participation Model is one of the eight models designed and implemented in Croatia through the Local Government Reform Project and has been implemented in over 50 communities in the period of 2003 – 2005.
[20] Chmura, Karzen, Kuzmanović: Citizen Participation Manual, Local Government Reform Project, The Urban Institute, USAID, Savez udruga gradova i udruga općina, second edition, Zagreb, 2005, pg. 13 in the Croatian version of the manual.
[21] ibid

In their work with different local governments all over Croatia, the Urban Institute argues that it is difficult to implement various policies without citizen support, as the results might be devastating and long-term. Involving community in decision-making can help local government officials in prioritizing scarce local resources, making better and more sustainable choices and bringing access to different local resources through the community participation. *"The meaningful citizen participation is to involve citizens in decision making process, where they also commit their own resources to justify choices and also which provides platform to real dialogue enabling authorities to explain the situation and make the right choice of using scarce resources"*.[22]

Participation in the process, including objective setting and delivery and ensuring that the community has sufficient skills and resources to contribute constructively, may be an effective way of developing self-sustaining community structures and giving community real empowerment. It may also foster social cohesion and trust and contribute to better decision making in a variety of ways. Local people understand the problems and needs of their areas or group and may generate ideas for tackling these problems, which would not have been thought of otherwise. They may also have their ideas of priorities for expenditure so that maximum benefit is achieved. Citizen participation also contributes to major improvements in local government, including better decision-making process that takes different views in consideration, stronger partnerships with local community, which leads to better understanding of local government policies and finally, the trust necessary to implement those policies.

*"The esign or redesign of public places requires a participatory process where the eventual users, or representatives of the same, are involved in the design process. Research –based recommendations cannot substitute for public participation".*[23]

Many other professionals in urban planning and development, architects, engineers, professors, NGO and community leaders, prominent academics and government officials are also a great supporters of the community-based approach to urban planning and advocate for greater and more livable cities and public spaces as the necessary component of healthy urban life.

For example, the Academy for Educational Development in Zagreb has accepted the PPS and the Urban Institute's promoted methodology on public spaces, changing their core activity, the Community Partnership Program to include a community-based approach to public spaces. Their small grants program, which initially had two categories of grants, economic and community centers'

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[22] ibid
[23]"People Places: Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space", edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Carolyn Francis, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998, pg. 8

development is now offering a specific category for projects on public spaces[24]. This change provides great new opportunities for NGOs in not only applying for funding but also in learning more about this methodology through education, exchange of information and finally an informal network of groups engaged in the public space activities in Croatia and regionally. In order to provide an integrated package of information to NGOs, LGs and others interested in this methodology, AED and the Urban Institute are currently exploring ways of cooperation that would provide both small grants (AED) and education (the Urban Institute).

The final document of the First Congress of Croatian Architects also emphasized the importance of establishing dialogue among architects, investors, politicians and citizens, as a "*new positive spirit to overcome common challenges*"[25]. The documents offers "Ten Proposals for National Policy of Architects", which will be sent to the Croatian Parliament, Government and local authorities.

Two out of eight articles in the Document make a special emphasis to citizen participation. In the Article 4 it says, " *Legislative framework on the building should be easy and effective, and citizen's participation in making decisions on quality architecture and constructed environment should be assured*".

Article 7 makes an equally important statement,  "*Sustainable development without citizens is not sustainable development. The state should find measures to let local citizens survive in their space*".[26]

### 3. Benefits of the community-based approach

Despite numerous problems that cities are facing today, city is and should remain the best form of organized people's life. Urban /spatial planning is thus also increasing in its importance for a number of reasons – it is contributing to socio-economic development, it brings harmony to the community development and is decreasing differences among different regions in the country bringing them closer together in all aspects of development. According to the Agenda 21, "*in the future, the quality and pleasantness of living will be the most determined criteria for people's inhabiting.*[27]

Taking this in consideration, we can say that there are essentially four most important benefits of the community-based approach:

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[24] For more on the Community Partnership Program see AED's web site: http://www.aed.hr/en/events.asp?id=21
[25] Nenad Klapcic, Report on the Final Day of the First Congress of Croatian Architects, for the Urban Institute, October 2004
[26] ibid
[27] UN Habitat, Agenda 21, pg. 5

### a) Physical changes to the place

Infrastructure changes are the most visible and first signs that the place is changing, becoming more attractive and approachable to its users. The reason why people love to participate in the place evaluation workshops is from the obvious reason that they can see some changes quickly – seasonal flowers in the city park, improved and painted swings or street art. All these changes bring a sense of ownership and pride to people who participated in the planning process and are a part of the implementation actions.

Some changes are more difficult to see and they require more patience from people. For example, revitalization of former industrial buildings is probably the most complex and time-consuming process, which needs to include all community representatives from its very beginning. Next example presents a former gas factory, now multifunctional site, which received a full rebirth due to a major involvement from the local community.

In many examples throughout this paper, we can see places being revitalized and improved – the first thing we see on the "before" and "after" photos are those of a physical change. Those, sometimes very quick changes motivate people in the community to become a part of the change. They also motivate other neighboring communities or councils to also become proactive and take charge of their community's existence and lives.

Next example of the Westergas plant in Netherlands illustrates changes in the physical structure of the building but also changes in the purposes of the facility, now a popular entertaining and multi-functional site.

**Box 1          Westergas plant – a former industrial site turned into an attractive multi-functional facility**
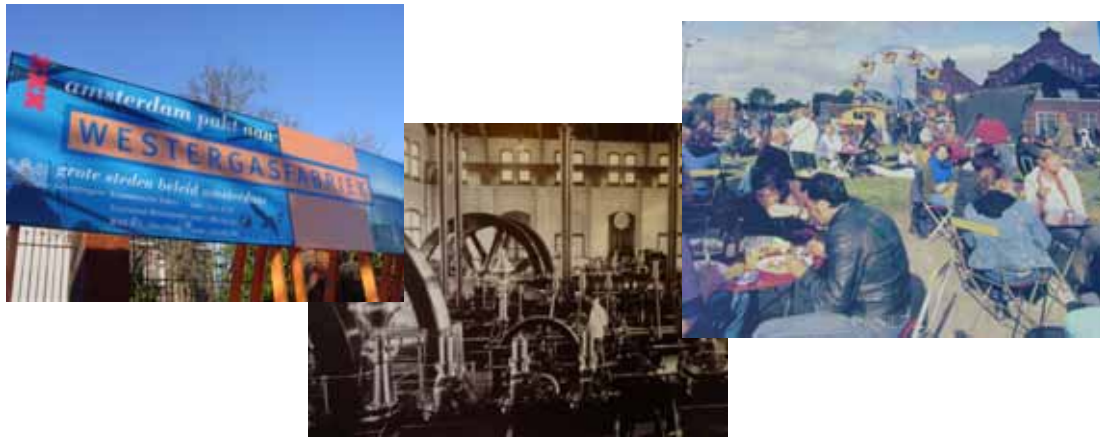


*©Project for Public Spaces, Inc.*

The Westergas plant closed in 1967 and the property fell in ownership of the local district council in 1992. Despite problems related to the residual contamination and expenses of the clean up, the local district council built new relationships and strategies that helped design the new community park, preserve the historic buildings, and establish the Westergas as an international cultural venue.

The recipe for the success of this site is first of all in selecting a visionary project team and its leader who coordinated all of the activities and succeeded in mobilizing community as well as all other stakeholders. They also successfully coordinated community activities and temporary uses of the buildings. Second successful ingredient lies in the flexibility of the team to understand all of the stakeholders' desires and achieving the right balance between the demand to design a traditional park with the ecological and cultural demands of the entire community. The team spent numerous hours at the neighborhood meetings, discussing various interests and options with the community representatives, and at the same time, building a strong relationship with all the primary stakeholders. For example, the team organized forums and designed competitions to see which creative ideas would work the best. The end result of these collaborative efforts was a wonderful park that integrates cultural venues with the historic buildings -- the park's major attractions, also allowing for adaptations and changes over time.

The most important lesson that one can learn from this example is that *"an open and inclusive process is the key to a successful redevelopment project. Having people who both understand the community's needs, as well as take ownership of its many complexities to see the project through is crucial"[28].*

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[28] **Web site:** www.**westergasfabriek**.com/

### b) Social benefits

*"To successfully design an urban space, it is essential to see the space from the viewpoint of all the groups that are using it and then find a balance between their needs. This approach is ideally suited to the partnership approach as it allows all sides to state their opinions and often to make a compromise."* [29]

Social benefits are many as public spaces offer endless possibilities for sociability and interaction between different racial, gender, ethnic, income and age groups thus promoting a positive message of building inter-cultural and multi-ethnic societies. According to the PPS-designed placemaking diagram[30], the attractiveness and usability of a public space very much depends on its social character -- is it friendly, open, diverse, welcoming, well maintained etc.

Many different activities can take place in a public space, recreational, cultural, entertaining or "spiritual" – giving people a chance to enjoy time alone or with friends and family. All these activities contribute to the social life of a community, bringing people together and enriching their day-to-day lives.

Public spaces also play an increasingly important role in the building of social capital, or as the World Bank refers to "*norms, and networks that enable collective action*"[31]. As we can see in the next chapters, social capital is critical in alleviating poverty and creating sustainable, human and economic development.

### c) Economic growth

Public space development is very closely connected with economic growth and benefits for the community. For example, real estate values around some famous parks such as the Central Park or Hyde Park, or famous squares, such as Saint Marco in Venice or Times Square in New York are among the highest in the world. Riverside or waterfronts houses always are in highest demand as are trendy apartments in former industrial buildings. For example, very attractive apartments in the former Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, Virgina decorated by artists and adjacent to the waterfront are among the most expensive in the city. Public markets are also an excellent way to combine community mobilization, income generation and touristic attraction all in one.

Next example is illustrating successful community's involvement in not only reviving the local public market but also promoting local produce, thus generating income for the farmers. The initiative is a direct result of the PPS-organized placemaking workshop.

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[29] The U.K. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Urban White Paper: Our Towns and Cities: The Future Delivering an Urban Renaissance, (http://www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/whitepaper/ourtowns/exec/index.htm)
[30] See Placemaking diagram, Box 8
[31] PPS Project proposal to RBF, January 2005, pg. 2

**Box 2** **"Women's Urban Beat" in Vojvodina**



**Project for Public Spaces, Inc., 2004**

*A small public market in Vojvodina, Serbia is an excellent example of a public space initiative that connects both economic and social benefits – besides generating income and promoting locally-grown food, women from a little village in Vojvodina had also built their capacity, brought the community to their market and attracted tourists from Novi Sad and other cities, as well as from Hungary.*

Almost every activity initiated on a public space can bring some economic benefits, even if it just results in clean and attractive streets – this contributes to the overall image of the city, which brings more tourists and generates more income. Street activities, vendors, eco projects and biking trails can all contribute to the economic development of the community.

Even very small communities, such as e.g. Sućuraj a small municipality of 500 in eastern island of Hvar, Dalmatia (Croatia), has a lot to offer. The municipality is for example planning to turn an empty house into a small museum of local traditional arts and crafts, print a calendar with photos of local wells and develop a biking trail that would connect municipalities' 70 little bays – all these activities can prevent tourists from leaving Sućuraj, now just a transitional point between two neighboring islands and bring income to the community.

**Box 3          Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, Virgina**

A truly remarkable example of a revitalization effort that offers both nonprofit and commercial activities is a former Torpedo Factory in a small city of Alexandria, VA. There is the Art Center which houses 84 studios and 160 artists (both studios and public galleries where you can buy art directly from artists); the 40-year-old Art League, Inc., a nonprofit membership cooperative, the Art League School that offers various art classes, and national and international workshops; and the Alexandria Archeological Lab.

The information/souvenir booth offers flyers about the Torpedo Factory in multiple languages. Visitors can also buy different souvenirs with the Factory's logo (target) such as T-shirts, aprons, caps and other knicks and knacks. Visitors can also stroll along the river and visit many of Alexandria's restaurants or just sit at the waterfront and have some ice-cream from many of Alexandria's ice-cream shops.

The space is also used for other more commercial uses, e.g. rental for weddings, parties and other events. Across the street from the factory is the apartment complex with unique apartments, designed by one of the artists.

**Photo resource:** *http://www.torpedofactory.org/home.html*

**Box 4       Ostrava, Slovakia**

Another great example of a former industrial town turned into an economic and tourist center is Ostrava and its city district of Ostrava-Petřkovice. The district was until recently know as mining town, while today it is a candidate of UNESCO's World Heritage Fund.

Tourists from all over the world are now coming to enjoy many of Ostrava's hiking trails or 1500 kilometers of marked cycling paths and to see the relics of industrial and technical past exhibited in the **Ostrava's Museum of Mining** at the Anselm mine. The exhibits include original machines and equipment that was used in the mines. In addition to the exhibit, visitors can also experience the life under the ground and visit one of the underground galleries.





**Photo resource: http://www.ostravainfo.cz**

### d) Community revitalization

Community has every right to participate in building their own vision of the space where they live, work and socialize. One of the most important benefits of all is in seeing communities been rebuilt and reenergized as a result of joint efforts being put in the development of a central square, run-down park or a neighborhood center. Collective action, planning and joint activities can create so much positive energy among the citizens that more complex activities could easily follow.

Some of the very poor neighborhoods of New York City, like Bronx or Brooklyn have lively public spaces with public markets, street music, vendors and street parties that attract not only residents but tourists and New Yorkers alike. Smaller communities such as the one in Del Ray, Alexandria, Virginia have a strong sense of community and attract young families interested in giving back to the community. Public spaces in Del Ray care small but attractive -- flea and antique markets, open cafes and seasonal charitable marathons.

Many communities in Latin America also thrive around public spaces, the pulsating center of life. In Eastern Europe, especially former Yugoslav countries, in the period of post-socialist transition, people although inundated with public spaces have lost a real sense of belonging to a community. As explained before, expansion of cities into big commercial districts is slowly changing the city culture turning it into bland mirrors of American communities where the only real place to have a coffee and have a fun with your teenage friends is a shopping mall.

*"When cities and neighborhoods have thriving public spaces, residents have a strong sense of community; conversely, when they are lacking, they may feel less connected to each other"*[32].

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[32] **How to Turn…pg. 14**

**Box 5          Community mural depicts the history of the Slavic Village**



The mural on the photo left is one of the most significant results of the citizen participation in reviving and creating a «vision» of the Slavic Village community development. This community was marked by a decade of problems in the fall of industrial activities, migrations and racial tensions.

There were two other key moments relevant for the revival of this community:

- Publishing of the «Neighborhood News», a newlsetter covering stories and issues for and about the people of this community
- An annual street festival «Hands across Turney», which attracted people and experts from the Slavic Village and Turney
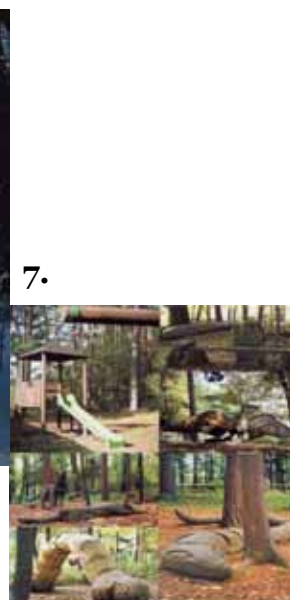
It is interesting to note that community selected members of the "**Committee for the mural development**", consisting of residents and artists. The Committee was in charge of the mural development as well as improving the small park (photo shows both an area of the park and the wall). The Committee organized meetings with the community members in order to collect ideas about the theme of the mural (e.g. history of the community and elements of the collective vision). Actual painting of the mural was coordinated by a well-known artist who tried to incorporate everybody's ideas and visions into the mural and present the community development in process. Citizens participated in the development of the mural in a simple way, drawing a flower at the bottom of the mural and signing their names.

This example of the community in action is one of the key elements of the so-called *Appreciative Inquiry* approach. According to this approach a community planning process starts with positive examples, which are critical in developing a joint vision of the community and defining joint activities important for achieving any improvements in the community. This approach allows all ideas, volunteer work, skills and expertise to be included in crating the future of the community.

## Examples of "good" and "bad" public spaces[33]

**1.**



**2.**



©**Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (photos 1-4)**





**3.**                                                                                          **4.**

**5.**                                                                                          **7.**







**6.**

---

[33] 1. San Francisco, California; 2. Rijeka, Croatia; 3. Granville island, Canada (before); 4. Granville island, (after); 5. Rijeka park, Croatia; 6. Zagreb Maksimir park, Croatia; 7. Czech Republic

*Final Research Paper*
*Submitted on February 28, 2005*

## IV.    COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH IN ACTION

### What is Placemaking?

So called "*placemaking*" or a place evaluation, as the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) calls it looks at "ground floor" of the community, such as streets, parks, playgrounds, and other public spaces, fosters interaction between people and develops better, healthier and more livable communities.

This organization has designed a methodology for identifying and interpreting numerous indicators that help determine the functioning of a public space. PPS has also developed a set of tools that can help every community in evaluating their public spaces, identifying problems and resources and finding short and long term solutions. This methodology was implemented specifically through different communities in Croatia, in an attempt to not only determine the state of public spaces today, or the level of community involvement in public space development but also offer specific education and skills that could be applied to different public spaces and local communities.

### How can Placemaking be done?
Through workshops with local community, using observation techniques, time-lapse photography, citizen surveys, placemaking game etc. The IPF research will focus on some techniques such as community workshops, surveys and placemaking game, while it won't explain techniques such as e.g. behavior mapping, tracing, counting and tracking – all part of the PPS-manual on placemaking[34].

One of the most effective techniques used to evaluate a place is *observation*. As PPS argues, anybody with strong observation skills can evaluate a public space disregarding his/her level of expertise, experience or an understanding of public spaces – a child, an architect, professor, student or a kindergarden teacher. At our workshops, participants included everybody from the 12-18 year old children to the City Council Presidents, Mayors, school Directors and NGO leaders. When observing a public space, each person needs to keep one thing in mind: "*Forget your title, your experience and your current position, free your mind, be creative and look at the space like you've never seen it before*". This message is being transmitted to experts, urban planner, architects and/or local government officials in the attempt to get fresh, uninhibited results for the new design of a place.  The best, most imaginative and free-spirited visions of a space are of course, received from children involved in this process.

---

[34] **How to turn…pg 99 on observation techniques**

**Box 6          Drawing their vision: Children in the O.Š. Brajda, Rijeka**



*Children in the primary school "Brajda" in Rijeka conducted an art competition with a theme "My vision of a school yard Campetto". The art exhibition with the best drawings presented children's visions of a place.*
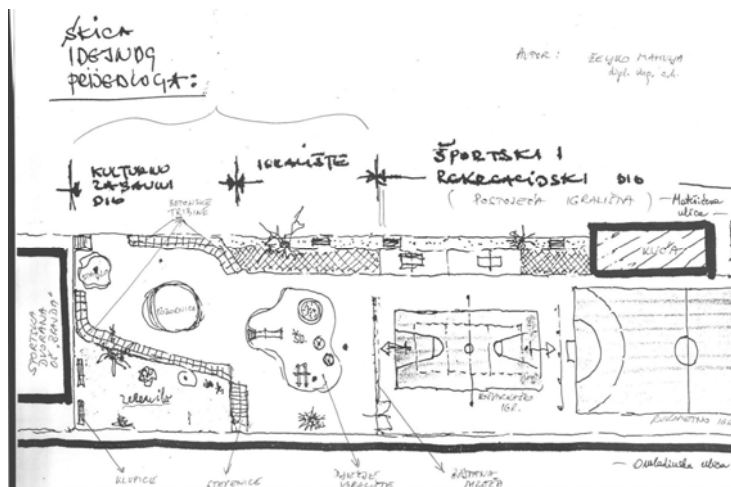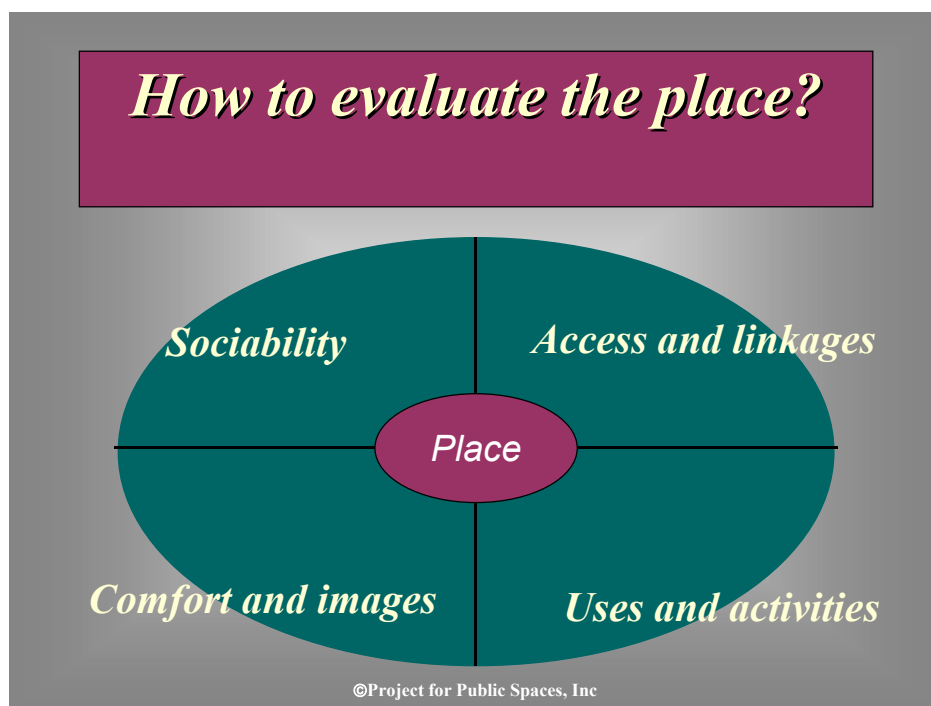


*The final design of the place was prepared in cooperation with a reknown architect. Children applied to the local competition for the youth, "Mali uče velike", [MU:V] 2003 and received the second award.*

*Children from the school participated at the placemaking workshop in April 2003 in Rijeka.*

## How to evaluate the place?

The PPS methodology provides a set of different questions that could be used when evaluating a public space, or its level of usability and function. Answering these questions will help evaluate the current situation in a public space and improve it for the future users. Each evaluation starts by asking different questions, relevant to one category:

| Box 7 | PPS-designed diagram on placemaking |
| --- | --- |

*How to evaluate the place?*

Sociability

Access and linkages

*Place*

Comfort and images

Uses and activities

©Project for Public Spaces, Inc

**Resource: ©Project for Public Spaces, Inc., www.pps.org**

This chapter explains in more detail each of these categories and gives examples of questions that could be used when evaluating each category.

### 1. Uses and activities

There are many different uses of public spaces, from outdoor cafés to biking trails, open theaters, playgrounds and large chess boards in the middle of a public square. Activities are the reason for people to use public spaces and come back to them. But the question is where to start and how to evaluate uses and activities in a public space. We can ask different questions: How many different activities are taking place? Who is using the public space the most/the least? What kinds of groups are there? Who is managing and maintaining the place? Which parts of

the space are more/less used? Are there different events going on? Are those events seasonal (e.g. Christmas or Easter sales and events) or permanent (e.g. arts and crafts stands, flea market, book fairs, concerts, etc).

### 2. Access and linkages

The most attractive public spaces are those that are easily visible and can be reached by different means, walking, car, and public transport. When evaluating this category, we can ask these questions: How can people access the place? What kind of public transport is available? Is the place near the center of the town? Or in the outskirts? How safe it is to walk to the place? Is there a place to cross for pedestrians? How accessible it is for people with special needs or people with strollers?

### 3. Comfort and image

People keep longer in places that offer a certain charm and distinct character, such as a park with large animals for kids to play, or historical houses with lots of flowers and local amenities. In addition to those characteristics, people also look for places to sit. They will keep much longer in a place that offers a certain comfort, a chair, a bench, than those that have no place to rest, people-watch or just sit and enjoy lunch. You can evaluate a place by asking these questions: What is your first impression of a place? Positive or negative? How many places to sit are there? What kind of places to sit are there are where are they located? Are there too many cars crowding the place? Are people staying in the location for a while or just transiting through? Are there tourists or just locals? Are they taking any pictures?

### 4. Sociability

This is probably the most important aspect of a public space. Lively and sociable space is the one where people meet, communicate to their friends and neighbors, come back at different times of a day, feel connected to the place and contribute to its maintenance.  How to tell if the place has a sense of sociability? You can ask different questions: Would you come here to meet a friend or walk with your baby? Are people staying there for a while communicating with their friends? Are they gather in groups? Are there women, children or elderly? How do people look like? Are they happy and relaxed or just passing through in a rush? Do people make sure that the place is clean?

Answers to all of these questions and characteristics of a good place are summarized in a diagram designed by the Project for Public Spaces. The diagram is easy to use and can be of a help when evaluating a public space, especially those public spaces that are not well known to the observer or evaluator.

**Box 8          Placemaking diagram**



Resource: ©Project for Public Spaces, Inc., *www.pps.org*

## V.      CONCRETE STEPS IN THE PLACEMAKING PROCESS

The placemaking, or place evaluation and planning process has a number of different steps that can be adopted for each community. These steps are developed on the basis of the PPS methodology and concrete implementation in the Croatian communities in the period of 2003-2004.

**STEP ONE          IDENTIFY AND TALK WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

In order to understand the community, one needs to first identify strong local partners that could provide initial information and explain the dynamics of the community. Local partners can be found first of all among the local government officials (Mayor and his/her team), different departments such as the Department of urban planning, health, communal services and others, as well as local NGOs, informal groups and private sector representatives.

### *Local government officials*
In Croatia, local government officials were usually the first ones to be involved in the placemaking process, since local governments mostly owned properties in question. The best people to approach to in the local government are representatives in the Department of urban planning or a similar department (e.g. communal services) who can provide information about the general urban plans as well as about the plans for a specific public space (if there are any). They can also provide physical maps of a space, designs developed by different architect and planners and can also take you to see the actual location, which is very useful, especially when researching former industrial buildings and closed spaces.

Any more serious placemaking that goes beyond presentation and workshops requires Mayor's endorsement. Thus, it is necessary to inform Mayor and his/her staff about the work in progress, even if he/she is not directly involved and delegates staff to supervise the ongoing work. In most of the cities in Croatia, Mayors showed a great interest and support for this methodology.

In most of the cities and municipalities in Croatia, the officials in the local government departments provided great support and information to any phase of the research and placemaking activities and were interested in the future cooperation.

**Box 9        Local government officials cooperating with the youth**



*Photo: Brane*

*In Slatina, the President of the City Council and other City representatives were actively involved in the placemaking workshops, evaluating the designated place – a former army building and the sorrounding park.*

*Here, designing the vision, a result of a «Placemaking» game.*



*Photo: UMKI*

*Rijeka Mayor, Vojko Obersnel was involved in presentations and award ceremonies, providing great support to the MU:V, initiative for the youth.*

*Almost all of presentations and workshops were held outside of the City Hall, usually in the former industrial buildings, alternative theathers and schools*.

### *NGOs*

Other interested groups and potential partners are NGOs, especially those engaged in different activities focusing on youth, elderly, people with special needs, environment, architecture, arts and culture, sub-urban culture, etc. Very useful are also different resource or support centers for NGOs, training organizations, which can provide contacts, promote information through its network or provide training facilities.

In Croatia, most active NGOs were those working with the youth such as the "*Korak ispred*" in Rijeka, UMKO, the youth NGO in Koprivnica, or "*Domaći*", NGO for youth in Karlovac. Each organization can carry a different role in the placemaking process, including a promotion and information sharing, mobilizing target groups (e.g. children and youth, artists, people with special needs etc). Most of the placemaking workshops in Croatia were organized through a local NGO, which ensured the presence of the community representatives but also experts and local government officials, especially if the organizer has a good reputation in the city. Some NGOs provided office space and logistics (e.g. UMKO or Domaći), but others organized it in cooperation with a school, other local NGO or a local government (if the workshop was conducted in the public space, e.g. former industrial or army building).

### Local community leaders

It is important to also identify local leaders either through NGOs or neighborhood councils who can reach out to different community groups, e.g. elderly, parents, disables etc, who are not always "covered" by NGOs. Sometimes it is also important to involve church and/or religious organizations, especially in those communities where there is a strong presence of church or even two or more churches (e.g. in multi-ethnic communities).

### Individual experts

Experts in urban planning, architects, historians, artists and others are critical in assisting with the planning and implementation from its very beginning. They can help in developing technical plans (e.g. in Rijeka, Croatia) or in ensuring preservation of the historical and local character of the place. If possible, it is good to include students of architecture who can assist small communities without architects and experts in putting ideas into technical plans.

### Neighborhood councils

Although thought of as a remains of the socialist past and not very active in many Croatian communities, they are the unavoidable part of almost all Croatian cities and municipalities. In larger communities, neighborhood councils can be a focal point for reaching out to residents, sending information and invitations or posting results on the info boards. Some can even offer to organize a workshop and provide a space and logistics. They can also organize small competitions for citizens e.g. the "best balcony" or the "best yard", which also contributes to the overall improvements in the city and more livable and lively communities.

**Box 10        NGOs helping to organize workshops**



*Placemaking workshop in Koprivnica was organized in the Center for youth, a former army building. This room is currently been transformed into a privately-owned restaurant.*

*The local NGO, UMKO provided support and logistics to the workshop.*

*One of the rooms in the local NGO for youth «Domaći» where a presentation and a placemaking workshop took place.*

*The Center was completely rebuilt through the involvement of the local community.*





*All photos: Maja Gaćeša*

## STEP TWO        OUTLINE CHALLENGES

People love public spaces. People use public spaces. And yet it is remarkable how many public spaces lack even some basic characteristics of a good place. Some places need only small changes to attract people – for example a small but lovely park in the historical part of Rijeka provides no place to sit -- a bench or two would completely change its character and attract people to sit and overlook the famous castle on Trsat and further ayway, the waterfront. Another places, on the other side require more serious changes, from building an entire infrastructure to transforming roads and "calming" traffic.

What are some of those challenges related to public spaces in a given city? How to assess them? How to find out if people are satisfied with their spaces and if they are using them? Which ones are they using the most? How to assess people's involvement in the planning process?

In order to have a full understanding of citizens' needs and a level of satisfaction about public spaces in their city, placemaking includes observations but also interviews and surveys that can be conducted with people living around the public space, local businesses, local policemen, skaters or even drug dealers and prostitutes who are using some of those public spaces for their own activities. Every placemaking starts with a complete understanding of the community's structure, needs, interests as well as possibilities and resources.

In the below survey conducted in Koprivnica and Karlovac (***see results of the complete surveys in Annex 1***), there was a section of questions specifically designed to assess people's satisfaction with public spaces in their city. The results of the survey helped in preparing for the workshops and in identifying solutions to the public space improvements.

---

**Box 11        How to examine people's satisfaction about public spaces?**

*How often are you and members of your family use public spaces?*
*never            sometimes                  very limited                 often                  very often*

*To which extent current public spaces satisfy your needs and interests?*
*Not at all                 to some extent            entirely*

*How satisfied are you with the functionality of current public spaces?*
*Not at all                 to some extent            entirely*

*How satisfied are you with the design and image of current public spaces?*
*Not at all                 to some extent            entirely*

*Which public spaces are missing in your city? Count at least three.*

---

## STEP THREE    ORGANIZING PRESENTATIONS

This section is offering a general outline on how to organize an initial presentation and then subsequently, a placemaking workshop.

### PRESENTATION

Before organizing a placemaking workshop it is always better to organize an initial presentation to introduce the public space methodology and assess the interest in the community. Depending on a community, presentation could be organized first for key local government officials, e.g. Mayor and representatives from key departments, such as the department for urban planning, communal services, and economic development. Second presentation could be organized for broader community or can be included as part of the workshop. In some cities, the initial presentation was organized for large number of representatives (in Rijeka e.g. over 100 people attended the presentation at the City Council), while in others there were two initial presentations precluding the placemaking workshop (e.g. Slatina and Koprivnica). In some cases, it is better to organize a presentation in the City/municipal building (e.g. City Hall) in order to give a more formal tone to the presentation and ensure a presence of key officials and experts. In other cases, it is better to have it in a more informal space, even an abandoned building (a site for the placemaking) to attract the target audience (e.g. youth).  For example, in Rijeka, the initial presentation for the [MU:V] was organized in a former industrial building and attracted over 100 people, including the Mayor, NGO and school, and youth representatives.

Presentation usually consists of two parts each focusing on different area of public space methodology. In this presentation, it is not necessary to present the steps of the planning process. It is better to leave that for the placemaking workshop or even for the second workshop (a follow-up, action planning).

### I. part of the presentation
- Goal and objectives of the community-based methodology
- Main tools – observation, evaluation, time-lapse photography, surveys
- Four main categories of the placemaking evaluation

### II. part of the presentation
- Principles of creating great places
- Examples of placemaking in Croatia

**Box 12        Sample letter to Mayor**

**Gradonačelnik Grada Karlovca**
**Mr. Sci. Božidar Joha, dipl. ing.**
**Banjavčićeva 9**
**47000 Karlovac**

Poštovani gospodine Joha,

Pišem Vam u vezi istraživanja koje provodim za Institut Otvorenog Društva, Budimpešta na temu javnih prostora u hrvatskim gradovima (www.policy/karzen), te molim za suradnju. Već sam imala priliku razgovarati sa Vašim suradnicima, gospođom Marinom Grčić i gospodinom Mirom Tomaševićem koji su preporučili da Vam se javim.

Istraživanje koje provodim već drugu godinu se bavi temom osmišljavanja javnih prostora (parkova, trgova, ulica ali i napuštenih zatvorenih prostora) na jedan alternativan način, a to je kroz aktivnu suradnju građana. Dakle, ovim pristupom, ideje i komentari građana bi se mogli uključiti u što ranijoj fazi planiranja i implementacije urbanističkih projekata, kako bi se postigli što bolji i održiviji rezultati, efikasnije iskoristili resursi, odnosno stvorili funkcionalni i kreativni prostori koje će građani moći često i sa uživanjem koristiti. Ovaj se pristup temelji na načelima i metodologiji njujorške organizacije *Projekti za Javne prostore* koja je prilagođena našim uvjetima. Više o ovoj organizaciji možete pogledati na www.pps.org.

Istraživanje sam do sada provela u gradu Rijeci gdje smo prije godinu dana pokrenuli i konkretan projekt pod nazivom «**Mali uče velike» [MU:V]**, te u Labinu i Puli gdje sam u suradnji sa kolegama iz New Yorka održala prezentaciju o ovoj metodologiji. Suradnja u Rijeci se nastavlja projektom **[MU:V] 2004,** odnosno natječajem za mlade koji se mogu prijaviti sa svojim projektima na temu osmišljavanja javnih prostora. Projekt je do sada mobilizirao veliki broj mladih u Rijeci koji su se prijavili sa svojim idejama i omogućio finalistima natječaja da svoje ideje realiziraju i u stvarnosti. Projekti su naime odobreni od strane Grada Rijeke i biti će sufinancirani.

U sklopu istraživanja koje bi provela u Karlovcu, planirala sam da se održi jedna opća prezentacija na temu javnih prostora na koju bi se moglo pozvati sve zainteresirane (Grad, udruge, škole, stručnjake, arhitekte i planere),  jednodnevna radionica na kojoj se kroz igru evaluacije prostora može i praktično primijeniti ova metodologija, te opća anketa građana o konkretnom javnom prostoru u Karlovcu. Sve tri aktivnosti ukoliko je moguće održala bih najkasnije do kraja travnja ove godine.

Ovim putem bi Vam ne samo prikazala ideju i metodologiju ovakvog pristupa, već možda i pomogla u primjeni ove metodologije, uključivanju predstavnika vaše zajednice u osmišljavanje plana za preuređenje konkretnog prostora te u korištenju rezultata ispitivanja građana.  Prvi korak je dakle prezentacija koju bih mogla organizirati u suradnji sa Vašim suradnicima **25. ili 26. ožujka**. Gospođa  Grčić je predložila prostorije Gradske knjižnice.

Ukoliko imate bilo kakvih pitanja, možete me nazvati na mobitel, broj 091-335-2003 ili me kontaktirati putem e-maila na mkarzen@zamir.net.

**Box 13        Sample invitation to the presentation**
*«Changing places around you»*



*Photo in the middle: Maja Gaćeša*
*Other photos: ©Project for Public Spaces, Inc.*

How can you change your city, street and places where
you live, work and play? If you are interested in finding out
how, come to the presentation on PUBLIC SPACE
DEVELOPMENT this
SATURDAY, MAY 15 AT 11:00 A.M.
at the Center for Youth "Domaci".

Presentation will be conducted by
MIRNA KARZEN, Citizen Participation Specialist,
the Urban Institute.

For all information contact Mirna at mkarzen@zamir.net
THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!

**STEP FOUR          PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP**

Placemaking workshop, originally designed by the Project for Public Spaces was adopted for the Croatian audience and communities. Main goal of the workshop is first of all to present the public space methodology and define key challenges and issues related to public space, as well as to propose changes and improvements – both short and long term. Each workshop can be easily changed and adopted for the local community, depending on its size, needs and possibilities. It can be also adopted for different target audience, e.g. community leaders, NGOs, neighborhood councils, business, local government, young people etc.

In order for the placemaking workshop to succeed, it is critical to include local officials. Without the local officials support it would be almost impossible to implement the results of the workshop, since public space are mostly a local government property.

There are some basic things to remember when organizing a workshop:

   *1.      Select the workshop location*
As explained earlier (see STEP ONE), workshop can be organized in cooperation with a local NGO, school or a local government. It is usually more effective if a local NGO or a school coordinates the logistics of the workshop with a support from a local government. That way, community representatives could be attracted and come in larger numbers than if it is organized by a local government in the formal environment of the City Hall.

When deciding on a location, it is necessary to also think about the proximity of the workshop location to the evaluation sites. Unless the workshop is taking place on the site (e.g. in Slatina it was conducted in the former army building and was a part of the evaluation game), both locations should be within walking distance from each other.

After deciding on the location, it is important to reserve the room and make sure there are enough chairs and tables, as well as a space on the wall for posting flip charts and making a power point presentation.

It is also important to bring a map of the placemaking site and copy it for all participants so that they can draw their vision directly on the map – part of the "Place Game".
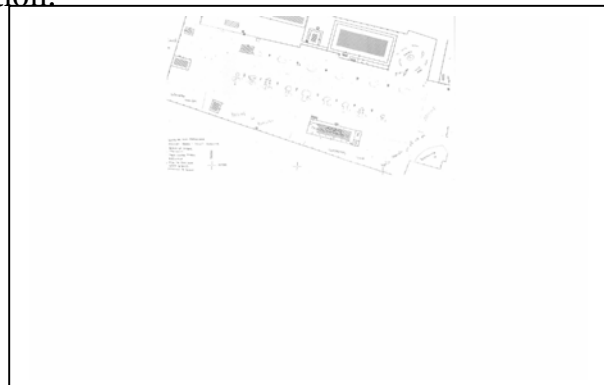
**Box 14**         **Examples of different sites**



*Slatina, a former army building, now in the process of revitalization into a technical school.*

*The small building on the photo where the workshop took place was the only one without a determined use and was open for new ideas.*

Photo: Brane

*Rijeka, a park and playground «Potok» in the city's center. The park, although adjacent to a number of day cares, kindergartens and schools has not been improved in years.*

*A group of participants is discussing short and long term improvements for this run-down park.*





*An image from an old mine facility in Labin, eastern Istria, Croatia. The hall, now an empty and dilapidated relic to industrial past was a former bath facility for miners.*

*Participants identified a range of different ideas for this huge place, from public market to recreational and cultural activitie.*

Photo: Mirna

   2.    *Define time and length of the workshop*
Workshops can vary in time from 2 hours to 2 days, depending on the interests
and needs of the local community. In Glina for example, workshops were less
than 2 hours long, while in Rijeka it was a two-day long planning process with the
applicants of the youth competition. The PPS-organized workshop that
introduces the methodology and the placemaking game usually lasts two days
and takes place in New York.

Below are two different agendas, one that is commonly used for the initial
workshop and the second one that also explains the planning process.  Both
agendas can be easily adopted for different communities.

---

**Box 15        Sample agenda -- 3-Hour Placemaking workshop**

**Placemaking Workshop Agenda**

***Koprivnica, Croatia***
**23. travanj 2004.**
**Center for the youth**


*15:30 – 15:45*        **Introduction**

*15:45 – 16:30*        **Presentation on public spaces**

*16:30 – 17:15*        **"*Placemaking game*"**

*17:15 – 17:45*        **Work in small groups**

*17:45 – 18:15*        **Reporting and discussion**

*18:15 – 18:30*        **Conclusion and next steps**

*18:30*        **Adjourn**

---

**Box 16         Sample agenda -- Day-long workshop on planning process**

<div align="center">

**PLACEMAKING TRAINING**
**AGENDA**
**PLACEMAKING AND PLANNING PROCESS**
**Zagreb, Croatia**
**November 10, 2004**
**(The Urban Institute office)**

</div>

**9:00         Welcome and Introductions**

**9:15         Presentation:  Introduction to Placemaking**

**10:00        Instructions for the Place Game**

*10:15        Break*

**10:30        On-site work in teams**

**11:30        Teams meet and report back**

*12:30        Lunch*

**1:30          Presentation; The Placemaking Process**

**2:15         Teams do work-plan for the project:**
   *1. Identify the key stakeholder for the site*
   *2.  Organize problems and opportunities into general themes*
   *3. Outline a workplan for any additional research and detailed planning*
   *4. Finally develop an "action plan" for implementing short-term steps.*
   *Identify specific roles for different partners and estimate a budget for*
   *implementation.*

*3:15         Break*

**3:30         Report back**

**4:00         Open discussion of application of this process to different projects**
         **in Croatia**

**5:00         Adjourn**

3. *Decide on who to invite*

Invitations can be extended to a larger number of different sector representatives, usually to all that have attended the presentation. Unless the workshop crafts to a specific audience, participants can include mixed audience, from the City representatives, school children, NGOs and neighborhood council members.

Number of participants can vary anywhere from 20 to 40 or even larger. The workshop can be adopted to different number of participants. For example, with larger groups, participants can work in more smaller groups that evaluate different sites (two or three) or larger groups that evaluate the same site. In the Zagreb workshop, groups evaluated two different sites, in Koprivnica three and in Labin only one.

Prepare and send an invitation in advance, at least a week to ten days and ask people to RSVP in order to plan for room setting, a number of sites and lunch options.

## Sample invitation

**REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA**
**VIROVITIČKO-PODRAVSKA ŽUPANIJA**
**GRAD SLATINA**
**Upravni odjel za komunalno gospodarstvo,**
**prostorno planiranje i gospodarstvo**

KLASA:    023-01/04-01/12

URBROJ: 2189/02-03-04-3
Slatina, 4. studenoga 2004. god.

**POZIVNICA ZA PRVU RADIONICU**
**«Kako osmisliti javne prostore?»**

     **Gosp/Gđa** _____

**U sklopu projekta «Mjesna samouprava i građani», koji na području Grada Slatine uz podršku Britanskog Veleposlanstva, provodi Organizacija za građanske inicijative (OGI) iz Osijeka, pozivamo Vas na prvu radionicu alata za sudjelovanje građana**

**- p l a n i r a n j e   j a v n i h   p r o s t o r a -**

**Radionica će se održati** *9. studenoga 2004. godine (utorak), od 13,00 do 16,00 sati, u prostoru bivše vojarne u Slatini, Trg Ruđera Boškovića bb.*

**Radionicu će voditi potpredsjednik organizacije Project for Public Spaces (Projekti za javne prostore) Gospodin Steve Davies iz New Yorka.**

    **Dnevni red:**
        **13:00 – 13:30  Uvod, predstavljanje**
        **13:30 – 14:00  Prezentacija o metodologiji osmišljavanja javnih prostora**
        **14:00 – 14:15  Pauza**
        **14:15 – 14:45  «Igra prostora» - vježba na konkretnom prostoru**
        **14:45 – 15:15  Rad u malim grupama:**
                ❖  **Rezultati igre**
                ❖  **Izrada plana aktivnosti za jednu kratkoročnu aktivnost**
        **15:15 – 15:45  Izvještaj grupa i razgovor**
        **15:45 – 16:00  Zaključak i sljedeći koraci**

*Cilj radionice je uključivanje građana u procese osmišljavanja javnih prostora, a krajnji rezultat je plan aktivnosti koje će se provesti u smislu konkretnog rješenja novoga trga na prostoru bivše vojarne u Slatini.*

**Molimo da svoj dolazak na radionicu potvrdite najkasnije do <u>ponedjeljka, 8. studenoga 2004. godine</u> Slađani Mihajlović na tel. 033/551-109 ili na e-mail: sladana.lazic@slatina.hr.**

    S poštovanjem,

                                     GRADONAČELNICA

                                     *Ksenija Plantak, mr. ph.*

*4.      Prepare a detailed program*

It is much easier to prepare for the workshop if you prepare a detailed program, that outlines each section, timing, section objectives, exercises etc. The detailed program is like a scenario for the play, helping a facilitator to stay on top of the situation with the workshop objectives and program, and to keep track of time.

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**Box 17          Sample detailed program/agenda for a 3-hour placemaking workshop**

**PLACEMAKING TRAINING**
**AGENDA**

**November 9, 2004**

**Slatina, Croatia**

**13:00-13:30   Welcome and Introductions**

**a)  Objectives (FLIP)**

Objective 1:            Learn and understand main goal of a community-based approach
                        to public space development.

Objective 2:            Learn about the methods and tools of this Model.

Objective 3:            Learn about one of the tools in the public space development –
                        placemaking game.

Objective 4:            Develop plan for short-term activities

**b)   Agenda (FLIP)**
**c)   Introductions (name tags)**
**d)   Icebreaker –**      e.g. name one good and one really bad public space or think of
                        the most memorable public space etc.

**13:30-14:00            Presentation:  Introduction to Placemaking          30 min**
_____

*14:00 – 14:15          BREAK*
_____

**14:15 – 14:25          Instructions for the Place Game                    10 min**

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**a)       Explain the TASK**
- Task:   Explain that the participants will work in groups and evaluate the selected places using the evaluation form. After they return from the site, they need to write their results on the flip chart and draw it on the prepared maps of the place.
- Tell the groups to select one person who will facilitate the process, one to write down the notes, one to write the results of the evaluation on the flipchart and one to report the results.
- Write the instructions on the flip and explain how much time they have for each part of the task and in total.
- Make copies of the maps for each group (make sure that you have extra copies).

**b)       Divide participants into two groups**
**c)       Assign place to each group or have groups evaluate the same space**
**d)       Distribute the game and answer any questions**

**14:25 –14:45        On-site work in teams                                      20 min**
_____
- Teams work on the evaluation. Leave the groups to observe the place alone and go through the questionnaire. Be there to answer any questions

**14:45 – 15:15        Teams meet (game results and plan of activities)     30 min**
_____
- Work in groups preparing the results of the evaluation game and the report

- Prepare a plan of activities for one short-term activity (distribute the plan of activities table)

**15:15- 15:45        Reporting and discussion                                  30 min**
_____
- Reporting (5 min/group)                                                          10 min
- Discussion                                                                              15 min

**15:45 – 16:00        Summary and next steps                              15 min**
_____

**16:00                Adjourn**

*5.    Prepare material and flip-charts*

Material includes the following:
- Sign-up sheet
- Flip charts, which list objectives, agenda etc.
- A copy of the power point presentation on the public spaces
- Explanation of the game
- A copy of the "Game"
- Map of the place
- Flip charts for writing results
- Resource material
- Contact information
- Evaluation form

*Note: Flip charts need to be prepared in advance and not during the workshop.*

*6.    Prepare necessary equipment*
Think of and reserve all necessary equipment, including the projector and cables, screen if necessary, slide projector or overhead projector, flip chart board and papers, markers, pads and pens for participants, name tags etc.


**STEP FIVE:        PLACEMAKING WORKSHOP**


Now that you brought people together for a day or half day of fun, the real work can start!

*Introduction*
Introduce yourself and your host who should say few words of introduction. That is usually somebody from the local government or a host organization.

*Icebreaker*
You can start by asking people their name, which organization they are from and to name one place, which they think is particulary "good" or "bad".

*Objectives and agenda*
See above sample agenda for explaining objectives and agenda. It is always good to explain objectives of the workshop, what are people going to learn and get by the end of the workshop. This will ensure a focus of the workshop. Also, it is good to write both objectives and agenda on the flip-chart. People like to know when is the break ☺.

*Presentation*
Try to prepare a presentation that is not longer than 20 minutes, as people loose patience. Make sure that you have the equipment ready on time in order to avoid delays and technical problems. *Placemaking game*

Place evaluation game can take around 30 minutes for observation plus 30 minutes for preparing reports (on a map and flip-chart). This is the most important part of the workshop and it HAS TO TAKE PLACE ON A SITE. Try to conduct an evaluation on a site even if it is bad whether. People cannot think of improvements in the space without being actually physically there.

The following are some tips for conducting a placemaking game:

1. Start with explaining the game and a questionnaire (*see page 45/46*). Answer participants' questions.
2. Divide participants into groups – use counting (1,2,3) or (A,B,C) or different types of candy to divide them
3. Give them some time to organize
4. Take them to the site (if there are more groups, think of some additional assistance for leading groups)
5. Leave the groups to observe the site, walk around, work in groups or alone but remain around for any questions. Occasionally come to the group and make sure they understand the task.
6. After evaluation, groups return to the room and prepare results of the questionnaire on the flip-chart and draw a vision on the prepared map.

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**Box 18          Placemaking game – explaining the task**



Photo: Maja Gaćeša

*Trainers, Maja Skvaža and Maja Gaćeša from Rijeka are explaining the task for participants in Karlovac and dividing them into teams.*

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## Working in teams…



*Photo: Maja Gaćeša*



*Photo: Maja Gaćeša*

## ...or alone



*Photo: Maja Gaćeša*

# SAMPLE PLACEMAKING GAMES

## I.    Sample Placemaking game -- for unused places

I.    Imagine how could this place look like:

| PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES |
|---|

What do you like best about the place?

What would you like to do here? List all of the activities, seasonal and throughout the year.

| ACCESS AND LINKAGES |
|---|

What kind of transport would you use to and from this place?

How accessible and connected with other parts of the town is this place?

| COMFORT AND IMAGE |
|---|

How could this place become more comfortable and attractive?

| SOCIABILITY |
|---|

What would bring you and your friends to this place?

Are there possibilities for socializing? For your age group? For different age groups together?
_____

II.    IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

1.  List ideas that you could do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost much.

2.  What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

3.  Ask someone who is in or near the place what they like about it and what they would do to improve it. Right down their answer.

4.  Think about the local partners that could help implement some of your proposed improvements (e.g. artists, craftsman, NGOs, schools, local businesses, local government etc.) Please be as specific as possible.

*©2003 Project for Public Spaces, Inc.*

## II.    Sample placemaking game -- for places that need improvements

1.    Observe the place
2.    Evaluate the place:

| Comfort and image | POOR | FAIR | GOOD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall attractiveness | | | |
| Feeling of safety | | | |
| Cleanliness/Quality of maintainance | | | |
| Comfort of places to sit | | | |

*Comments/Notes:*

| Access and linkages | POOR | FAIR | GOOD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Visibility from a distance | | | |
| Ease in walking to the place | | | |
| Transit access | | | |
| Clarity of information/signage | | | |

*Comments/Notes:*

| Use and activities | POOR | FAIR | GOOD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mix of stores/services | | | |
| Frequency of community events/activities | | | |
| Overall busyness of area | | | |
| Economic vitality | | | |

*Comments/Notes:*

| Sociability | POOR | FAIR | GOOD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of people in groups | | | |
| Evidence of volunteerism | | | |
| Sense of pride and ownership | | | |
| Presence of children and elderly | | | |

*Comments/Notes:*

3. same as in the first placemaking game (see above)

*Preparing for reporting and discussion*

Groups should have at least 30 minutes to collect thoughts, draw a vision and write up results from the questionnaire on the flip chart. Each group needs to have a reporter and note-keeper. Reporting is usually 5 minutes per group.

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**Box 19        Placemaking workshop in Slatina**



*Workshop in Slatina attracted almost 30 different participants from the City Council to the NGOs, professors and teacher, students and other community representatives. Participants were divided into three groups each evaluating the same space, outside and inside space of the former army building, now technical school.*

*After initial adjusment time, participants joined together in creating a vision for the space. Ideas were pretty similar and fitted into the City's vision for the space.*
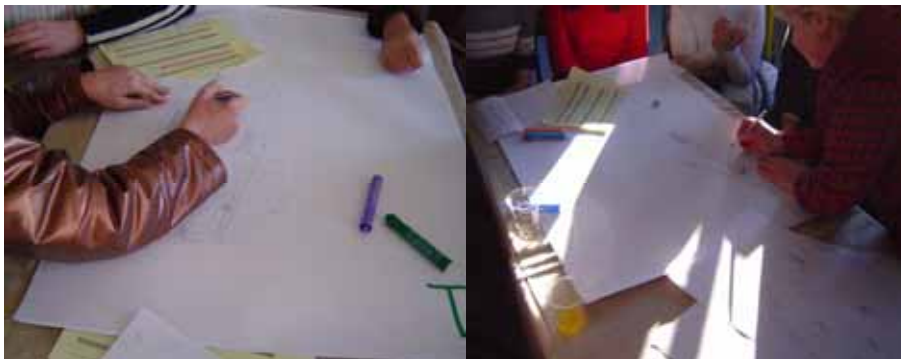


*Photos: OGI*

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### Box 20          Koprivnica workshop: revitalizing the Center for youth
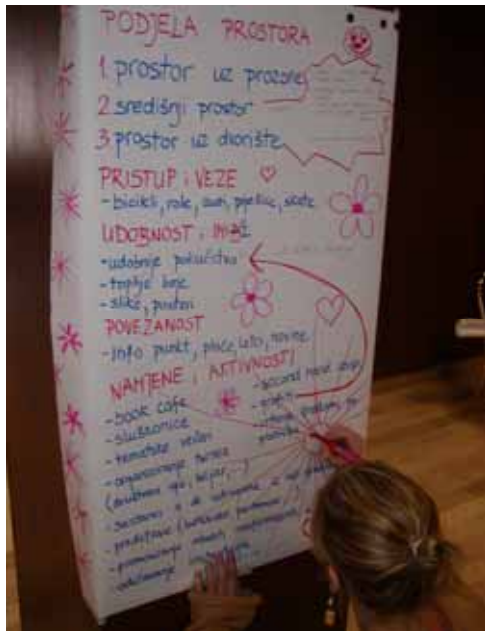
*Two placemaking workshops attracted over sixty young people from Koprivnica's youth NGOs, environmental group, skaters, and young journalists who wanted to find out more about the methodology and its application to their Center for the youth.*

*Representatives from the City council and the county department of urban planning, as well as local media were also present.*

*Results were shared with the City officials and other representatives.*

*The Urban Institute is currently continuing a cooperation with the City, specifically in applying its Citizen Participation Model. At the Mayor's initiative special emphasis will be put on the youth, in identifying their interests and putting the Center for the youth in a more active use by the youth.*

*The participative methodology of public spaces will be reapplied to the Center for youth and other public spaces for the youth.*

*Photo: Maja Gaćeša*

**Box 21          Karlovac youth: putting ideas on paper**



*Placemaking workshop in Karlovac was more a training of trainers, rather than a typical community planning workshop. It attracted around ten community leaders active in working with children and youth. Organized by the leading Karlovac NGO, «Domaći», the workshop was conducted in their Center for youth.*

*The selected site was an outside space a part of the Center -- really a dreadful grey parking lot sorronding the Center. The NGO already conducted research on the potential use of the space and was looking to the workshop results as another way of involving community and collecting their ideas. They are currently implementing the results from the workshop and their earlier research into action.*



*Photos: Maja Gaćeša*

## STEP SIX:        SHARE THE WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Participants usually have 5 minutes per each group to share results of the game with others. Discussion about each group presentation and ideas is at the end – evaluation of ideas, how realistic they are, do they fit into overall city plans (if those plans exist), what are the short and long term activities, partners etc. Trainer(s) should not "evaluate" the plans but give suggestions on the partners, realization of plans, grouping activities together etc. It is good to write the results from discussion – key points.

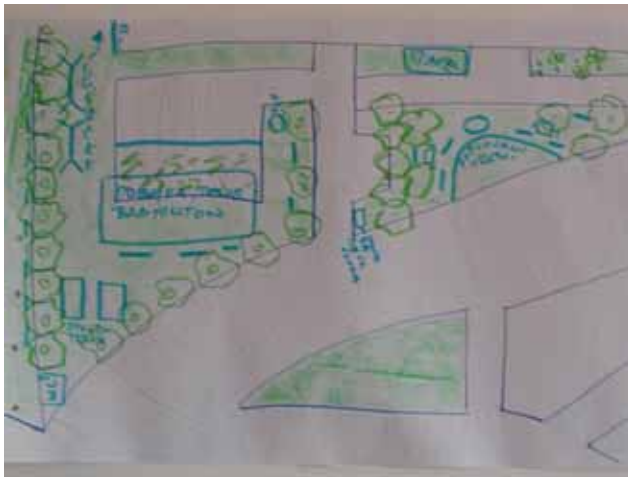**Box 22        Participants are sharing their ideas**



Photo: Maja Gaćeša

*Ideas for the outside space in front of the Center for youth in Karlovac.*

*Some ideas included:*

- *Different sport & recreational activities*
- *Outside stage*
- *Green areas*
- *Playground*



Photo: UMKI

*Youth in Rijeka are sharing their ideas for revitalizing a street in the former industrial zone leading to the bancropt Paper mill, Vodovodna ulica (street). The group suggested to organize a day-event (e.g. graffiti competition, as a temporary use of the space*

*The street with its late XIX, early XX cent. buildings has a great potential to develop into a charming, lively street filled with small caffes, pubs and art galleries*

## Box 23          Dirty wall crew: bringing art to people



*The youth group in Rijeka, Dirty Wall Crew, the finalist of MU:V, a competition for youth on public spaces   want to creat a «Message board» for all everybody who has something to say or draw on the board.*

*The idea came from the Italian project «Illegal art show», which is promotiung a freedom in art expression.*

*The project initially supported by the three initators' high school class attracted the entire «School for art and design» in Rijeka including professors.*

**»Oglasna ploča«**
– Naša je zamisao stvoriti »oglasnu ploču« na kojoj će svi koji imaju nešto za reći moći nalijepiti papir ili direktno nacrtati na pano sve što im stoji ili pada na um, rekle su nam naše tri sugovornice koje su ideju za projekt crpile iz talijanskog projekta »Illegal art show« koji se zalaže za slobodu umjetničkog izražavanja.

Zanimljivost projekta je da je u njegovu realizaciju uključena gotovo cijela Škola za primijenjenu umjetnost u Rijeci, dok grupu koja je donijela prvu iskru čine Jadranka Lacković, Martina Vorkapić, Anessia Grkov Mervcich te Krispin Stock. U početku se za projekt zagrijao 4b razred industrijskog smjera, ali se dobra ideja uskoro prenijela na učenike mlađih i starijih generacija, kao i na neke profesore...

*Novi List, January 28, 2004 (also photo)*

*(From an interview in the local daily "Novi List", with a distribution of over 30,000. Presentations at the local media were one of the conditions to enter next competition round. Groups received education in proposal writing, team building and media presentation.)*

**Box 24          Workshop in Koprivnica – abundance of ideas**



*EVALUATION RESULTS OF THE CITY PARK:*

*After careful evaluation of this popular public space for all the Koprivnica residents, the groups concluded that the park is mainly transient as the City does not «recommend» any activities that would damage the park's well manicured paths, such as bike ride, dog walking, sitting on a grass etc.*

*IDEAS FOR PARK IMPROVEMENT:*

*In order to make the space more relaxed for the use and more «people friendly», the groups recommended to first take down the «No sitting on the grass» signs and allow activities such as riding bikes, picnics on the lawns and walking dogs (provide bags). They also recommended various activities and concerts to take place in the main pavillion that is in a low use. One idea included a big chess on the main square.*



*IDEAS FOR ATRIUM SPACE OF THE YOUTH CENTER*

*Ideas for the atrium included activities such as dance, antique and flower fairs, workshops, jewerly, book and paintings sales, barbiques and concerts and a «snowman-making» competition in winter, exhibitions, chess and other tournaments, aerobics and pilates, Christmas celebrations etc.*

*All photos: Maja Gaćeša*

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**Box 25          Young and old report in Slatina**



**Short-term activities**
 Competition for the "Best façade"

**Long term activities**

- Park with benches, fountains and lights
- Skate park
- Playground
- Open stage
- Center for youth
Dance school, thematic evenings, info center

**Partners**
- Art club «Slatina»
- Small private owners (crafts)
- Local government
- Youth club and students (all ages) – key players

*For improvements in the inside and outside areas, students (from the adjacent technical school) could easily design and make all the amenities for the park as well as participate in the painting of facades. In this, students would use eco-friendly and locally-based material. Design and building of amenities could become a part of the school curriculum. Their products would not only be functional but would also represent a unique open gallery of arts and crafts, since each product would be different. Students would be also responsible for creating and managing the program for the youth – different outdoors and indoors activities, including the thematic evenings, info center and the center for youth in cooperation with other partners, especially local government.*



*Photos: OGI*

## STEP SEVEN:     DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

Action plans are developing in longer workshops or in a follow-up workshop (second or even a third one depending on their length). Each group first sorts proposed activities in themes (e.g. all workshops together, all recreational and sport activities together etc.) and then "vote" deciding which group of activities are the most realistic, easy to organize, or which one don't require much infrastructure building and/or funding. After voting each group has a list of activities that are listed from short-term and quick to organize to more complex, expensive and long-term.

In the second workshop, groups can start drafting an action plan for the short-term and long-term activities, depending on the length of the workshop. Groups can do one or two activities as an exercise and then after they form a working group continue planning for the rest or all of them.

In the box 26 is a sample action plan for improvements in a park.

## Box 26             Sample table for developing an action plan

| Activities WHAT? | Results WHY? | Responsible WHO? | Partners WITH WHOM? | Time WHEN | Resources | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Cleaning, picking up garbage in a park | Site is ready for landscaping and new use | Coordinating group (key people from city, NGOs, school, MOs) | Schools – organize a cleaning party for all children and youth | Saturday morning with a party in afternoon. If needed, few weekends. | Brooms, garbage bags, drinks and pizza | Ask local store or business to donate material or drinks and pizza |
| 2. Landscape design and works | Site is more attractive and usable for all age groups | Coordinating group | Key landscapers in the City or individual experts | Coordinate with the landscapers | Material, bulbs, rocks, time | City or local business could donate or fund the material |
| 3. Construction of a temporary stage | Site is ready for organization of events and different activities | Coordinating group | City with local carpenters | Coordinate with carpenters | Material, time | City or local business could donate or fund the material |
| 4. Design and construction of park amenities (benches, chairs, garbage cans, bird houses etc) | Site is more usable and attractive for all age groups, improves image and comfort. | Coordinating group | City with school and local artists | During the school year – as a part of the program for e.g. school for art or technical | Material | City or local business could donate or fund the material |
| 4. Organize a big party, a-day event | Event attracts people and get them used on using the place | Coordinating group | City with NGOs, local businesses | Sunday | Musicians, coordinators' time, | Local businesses could donate food or sell at the stands. |
| 5. Plan a year-all activities – decide on management | Place will become a lively, usable by all citizens all year | Coordinating group | Local NGO | All year long | Time for a coordinating NGO, maintainance | Co-funding from City and other donors and sponsors |

## STEP EIGHT        IMPLEMENTATION

The most important step in the public space development process is implementation – putting your vision into action. After each group identified some short-term activities, developed an action plan with potential partners and set clear deadlines, the best is to start with implementation as soon as possible to keep the group dynamic and get some quick results.

Some of the best and most energizing activities are collective place cleaning (for outside) and painting/decorating (for inside) places. Groups can also organize some simple, temporary events to get people used to the idea of coming to the place – fairs, flea market, balloon rides, graffiti painting and competition, free car day etc. Those activities are fairly easy to organize, don't require much funding and can get people together. After those activities, more long term and complex planning can continue. In this planning it is critical to have the City on board, especially experts from departments for urban planning and communal services or local architects who can turn the vision into plans.

For any placemaking to succeed it is critical to have secured some funding, or the City's obligation for the funding. With the City's funding it is easier to get other sponsors or donors. In some cases, workshop organizers had foreign funding but also succeeded in securing not only the City's funding but also a support from local communal businees in-kind support).

It is important to note that only conducting workshops without some funding secured for implementation will not only limits the success of the workshop but also raise false expectations in the community.

As a result of the IPF research and promotion of the methodology through the Urban Institute and Urban Institute-educated consultants and partners, a solid ground was built for developing an independent public space development model as a part of the Citizen Participation Model. This model will enable more continuous education and promotion of the methodology, development of manuals and resource material and assistance in fundraising for project implementation.

*Note: Placemaking workshops conducted in most of the cities (Karlovac, Labin, Koprivnica) were part of the IPF research and never promised funding for implementation. Expectations were limited from the beginning due to a different type of work conducted in those communities.  In Rijeka, funding was secured after the workshops for the project implementation as well as in Slatina.*

**Box 28     Local community in Slatina improves their public spaces**

## A story of Bakić

*In a small local community of Bakić (a neighborhood council in Slatina, a city of 30,000), the results of the placemaking workshop were applied to a part of the park of app 350 m2. Placemaking workshop was organized by a renowned Croatian NGO, **Organization for Civil Initiatives (OGI)**. Funding for the workshop and implementation was secured through OGI from the British Embassy. The site was selected by the Council members and citizens.  Land works and all the finishing works were conducted by the Bakić citizens, while work related to infrastructure and asphalt was done by a local firm for communal services "Komrad, Slatina.*



*Current park in front of the primary school in Bakić is a wonderful area used by citizens all year long. However, children needed more adequate space for their own activities, primarily sport and recreation – basketball, biking, and rollerblading. Previously, there was only a rusty gate for playing soccer.*



*OGI, in cooperation with the primary school and the neighborhood council of Bakić, organized a competition of children writing and art works on the topic of «Children in public space». All participants received a plaque at the opening ceremony and the best competitors received awards.*

*Community participating at the placemaking workshop. Participation and a great support received from Mayor Ksenija Plantak (photo right) ensured successful results of this community mobilizing initiative.*



*Demonstration exercise for young firefighters at the newly apshalted part of the park – a result of the community-based public space initiative.*

*This public space was improved based on the placemaking workshop and community ideas with the assistance from OGI, British Embassy, the City of Slatina, neighborhood council and a private business – multi-sector partnership in action.*



*Opening celebration at the newly created public space in Bakić. The event included competitions in bike rides, young firefighters, cultural program and a celebration party with local music.*

*Local Board Council members and local school agreed to further work on the improvements in the space. By Spring 2005 there will be a flower garden, benches and garbage cans designed and created by children.*

*All photos: OGI*

## A story of Markovo

*In another local community Markovo, two workshops were held with citizens and local government representatives who all together drew a vision for both an inside and outside place. The ideas were then presented to a larger group of citizens. The result of the visioning process was a plan to connect the outside and inside space. Placemaking workshop was organized by a renowned Croatian NGO, Organization for Civil Initiatives (OGI) through a donation from the British Embassy. Material and work was mostly funded by the City and the British Embassy through OGI. However, all the works on cleaning and placing the equipment was done by volunteers, residents of Markovo.*



*The building belonging to the neighborhood council of Markovo and the outside area in front of the building were the sites of the placemaking workshops. Participants agreed to connect both indoor and outdoor space and create a multi-functional community place.*



*Children were the most active participants, putting their ideas into art and literary work. The competition «Children and Public spaces» attracted a large group of children.*

*The best competitors received a plaque and an award at the final opening ceremony.*

*Exhibition of children art, results of the "Children and Public spaces" competition.*



*Opening ceremony in Markovo included different competitions in rollerblading, pastry making, children art works and the chess tournament. The newly painted center and asphalted outdoor place will now offer many more possibilities for community activities – sport, recreation, socializing, and indoor gatherings.*

*All photos: Brane*

## Box 30        [MU:V] initiative for youth in Rijeka

*In December 2002 the City of Rijeka in partnership with the Urban Institute and youth NGO "Korak ispred" launched a new initiative focusing on public spaces and improving the partnership between the City and its citizens, in this case, youth. The City provided financial and technical support to the initiative. Over 150,000 youth has been informed about [MU:V], over 2,000 more directly included and over 200 participated in the competition and received education in different areas like proposal writing, public space methodology, team building and media presentation.*

### Success Story ■ ☐ [MU:V]

In May 2004, the initiative [MU:V], Mali uče velike, (Kids Teach Grown ups) received a prize from the National Foundation for Civil Society as one of the best examples of co-operation between a local government and civil society. [MU:V] was initiated in April 2003 by the city of Rijeka in co-operation with USAID, the Urban Institute and the Rijeka-based youth association *Korak ispred* (Step ahead).

Youth in Rijeka are one of the most marginalized groups in the city. Young people often don't have adequate space for creative expression, recreation and socializing. On the other hand, the city has a large number of abandoned and neglected public spaces, which could be adapted by young people for use by young people. The [MU:V] project was initiated as a competition that was open to anyone younger than 25 who wanted to submit ideas and visions for how to use the public spaces. The main criteria stipulated that the project be invented for the youth, by the youth, and that it be implemented in a public space, mainly owned by the city, such as streets, parks, children's playgrounds, abandoned industrial plants. It was also hoped that the project proposal would promote co-operation between the sectors and that it was a long-term, self-sustainable project.

In addition, the [MU:V] Project offers an opportunity for the Rijeka local government to achieve better co-operation with its citizens, especially young people, through these joint projects that contribute to improved quality of life in the city and the establishment of mutual trust between youth and government. Through this project, young people are being motivated to identify the resources needed to achieve their own ideas. To a certain extent, the project also liberates the local government from bearing the sole financial weight for improving the city's assets. Young people are eligible to receive additional training in different areas, thereby helping them develop new skills and possibly becoming trainers themselves.

By April 2004 [MU:V] had attracted young people not only from Rijeka, but also from the surrounding area — Kostrena, Lovran and Opatija. These youth are working to build partnerships and better co-operation among young people. Last year's winners of [MU:V] (17-year old teenagers) are currently engaged in moderating workshops and promoting the idea of partnership and active involvement of youth in Karlovac, Koprivnica and Labin. ■

*Jadranka Kosor, vice-president of the Government of Croatia at the National Foundation for Civil Society Development award ceremony for best practice of co-operation between a local government and civil society, National University Library, Zagreb, June 2, 2004*

**[MU:V]**
**MALI UČE VELIKE**

**Local Government Initiative Project newsletter, No. 1, The Urban Institute, November 2004.**

## STEP NINE      MANAGEMENT

It is almost impossible to talk about sustainability of public spaces and their improvements long-term without mentioning maintenance and management components. During the planning process and developing action plans both for short and long term activities, it is critical to think about the management of the place – who can do management, who will maintain the place long term (e.g. city, school, communal services etc). If projects deal with a certain group of users, e.g. youth involved in planning and designing a skate park, it is always better to involve them in the management and maintenance of the park. That way, kids will take care of the place much better, feel a stronger ownership of a project and learn about management.

There are different ways of managing a public space. The best is to ensure a partnership between the local government and local NGOs who can implement the program and manage the place all year long. In some cases, the City leaves the entire management to NGO, and in others acts as co-manager. In Croatia, public spaces are still mostly owned and managed by local government, which presents difficulty since the city cannot maintain all the public spaces, ensure the right activities for all ages and manage those activities. The initiative for the youth, MU:V tried to promote a new partnership between the City and youth, where youth not only realize their ideas but also plan for long term activities, as well as their maintenance and management.

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### Box 31        Urban Parks in the United States

Public parks are another example of urban public spaces that can with citizen involvement in their design, program planning, and management become true centers for the community and a symbol of pride for the local governments. Parks also provide a great opportunity for developing civic activism, volunteerism and cooperation between the citizens and local government and offer a ground for developing public-private partnerships that can be implemented in a number of different ways.

For some smaller parks, the so-called "*friends of the park*" groups are organized to raise funds for maintenance and development of the park.  In other cases, different types of organizations are being developed with the purpose to plan and manage park's activities, it's public outreach and marketing efforts, fundraising and maintenance. Those examples however don't have to be applied only to parks but to all other public spaces, which could be potentially managed through the public-private partnerships.

Here are some examples of public space management:

*Assistance providers*
Provide help to parks departments with education, developing program activities, volunteerism and fundraising. They are primarily volunteer-based organization with none or few paid staff members and no responsibility for the park.

*Catalysts*
Play a major role in defining the vision, mobilizing support and helping with awareness raising, building community and political support and raising the start-up funding.

*Co-managers*
City and nonprofit organization are equally sharing responsibilities and taking care of the park although the city usually keeps the authority over the policymaking and maintenance.

*Sole managers*
In some cases, the city transfers a full responsibility to a nonprofit organization, which means that those organizations are then responsible for managing and maintaining the parks.

***Resource: "Public Parks, Public Partnerships", Project for Public Spaces, Inc. 2000***

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## STEP TEN          ASSESS RESULTS

In assessing results of the public space it is important to do it while the implementation is still under way, and not wait until it is "finished". The coordinating or the working group should meet on a regular basis to monitor each part of the action plan, modify it according to needs and conduct another planning workshop, if needed. They should have a fundraising plan as well as budget, which should be monitored and modified as needed.

The work on public spaces is never really finished. The working group should not set unrealistic goals and expect to change habits of people over night. Especially when it comes to new initiatives or places that haven't been used, people need time to get used to the idea of using a place or joining the initiative.

When assessing results we are also assessing the level of participation from community and their interest in using the place or participate in making improvements.

There is a need for developing more structured evaluation and monitoring mechanism that would allow better following up the implementation results and demonstrate the affect of citizen participation to the improvements in public spaces and community lives.

## *CONCLUSION*

The 21st century will be urban. Despite numerous problems that cities are facing today, city is and should remain the best form of organized people's life. City is offering a future -- economically, culturally, socially and ecologically. The focus in the future will be on strengthening key sectors of urban lives by achieving balance between rural and urban areas and creating public-private partnerships.

The ultimate position of this research paper is that the new urban areas need to become spaces for communication, emotional and social connectedness, where people exchange ideas, experiences, and live without any fears and where they can express their individual styles and way of living. Urban areas should develop in such a way that all necessary segments of peoples' lives are available and grouped within a short distance (housing, work, social life and recreation), where people can encounter other people and "*help build a sense of communality and tolerance that in turn provides the underpinnings for thriving urban life in an increasingly diverse, multicultural world*".[35]

The two-year research work in Croatia demonstrated first of all a lack of efficient national and local government policies regarding public space planning and development. Offices are still using traditional and inflexible practices in the urban planning and development and are primarily applying a so-called "project-driven" approach. There are some changes and efforts to include citizens but are not sufficient in changing the environment and ensuring broad citizen participation, critical in creating attractive and livable public spaces.

Through research and a number of interviews with different sector representatives, I have demonstrated a great interest and need for changing a current approach and shifting towards the "community-based" approach, as a healthy and more sustainable alternative to the current "project-driven" urban development practices that are imposed on community without offering opportunity for their views and creative ideas.

In the period of two years (2002-2004), the public space methodology was presented in more than twenty cities and municipalities in Croatia[36] and cross-border with Serbia to a total of at least 20,000 people[37]. A total of 24 workshops and training programs were conducted involving over 600 people. The PPS methodology was implemented in many communities, with a flexibility to allow for diverse social, ethnic, age and/or gender structure and the size of the

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[35] "People Places: Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space", edited by Clare Cooper Marcus and Carolyn Francis, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998, pg. 3

[36] Cities and municipalities include: Rijeka, Koprivnica, Karlovac, Labin, Slatina (city plus two neighbourhood councils), Pula, Sućuraj, Zagreb, Opatija, Lovran, Kostrena, Drniš, Osijek, Glina and seven municipalities in the Sisačko-moslavačka county. Cross-border, established relationship with Novi Sad and Belgrade.

[37] This number is a rough and conservative estimate, since it excludes a promotion of the workshops, initiatives and national award on the national media. Each national media has a distribution between 30,000 –150,000.

community. In smaller communities, a simple, less demanding methodology was applied to communities with older, and more rural population. In cities, a full PPS methodology was applied through presentations, discussions, placemaking workshops and focus group meetings.

The work in Croatia will continue in partnership with the Urban Institute and the Project for Public Spaces, as well as a number of identified partners who have offered great assistance in the last two years and are now promoting this methodology through their work. The overall goal is to develop the public space methodology into a separate Model on Public Spaces, a sub-model of the current Urban Institute-designed and implemented Citizen Participation Model.

Subsequently, the goal is to develop the Model into a sustainable local Program on Public Spaces that would provide education, small grants and influence policy changes – and contribute to the overall "*new vision to urban living*"[38] that includes people shaping the future of their community supported by strong local leaders; people living in livable, attractive towns and cities, which offer good quality services and promote more sound sustainable environmental practices -- less noise, traffic and pollution[39], and ultimately deliver "*an urban renaissance*"[40].

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[38] The U.K. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Urban White Paper: Our Towns and Cities: The Future Delivering an Urban Renaissance, (http://www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/whitepaper/ourtowns/exec/index.htm)
[39] segments from the Urban White Paper, ibid
[40] ibid

*? ? FOR YOU:*

*Can you think of one public place that you thought was:*

*REALLY BAD – Why?*

*REALLY GREAT – Why?*

*Send me your answers and if you have photos at:*
*mkarzen@zamir.net*

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