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## **Place leadership and corporate spatial responsibilities**

**Hans-Hermann Albers, Lech Suwala**

### Introduction

The management of urban and rural areas has always consisted of a mixture of state, market and civil society actors. In times of increased liberalization, deregulation and privatization of many former state-dominated tasks, limited institutional capabilities of smaller communities, a lack of consolidated government bodies and low effectiveness of authorities (e.g. failed states), there exists a greater interest for non-state 'place-based' economic engagement in general (Harrison 2014), and for private-sector involvement and leadership in regional governance in particular (Cook 2009, Bentley et al. 2017, Suwala et al. 2018). By combining the two emerging discourses on place leadership (Gibney et al. 2009, Collinge and Gibney 2010, Beer and Clower 2014, Liddle et al. 2017, Sotarauta et al. 2017) and Corporate Spatial Responsibilities (CSpR) (Albers 2011, Knieling et al. 2012, Harrison 2014, Albers and Hartenstein 2017, Albers and Suwala 2018, Albers and Suwala 2020a), this chapter introduces approaches to enterprise-driven urban and regional engagement.

Empirically, the chapter summarizes existing case studies from the literature on enterprise-driven urban and regional engagement and asks if and how place leadership initiatives interact with CSpR. Should certain types of CSpR be understood as accompanying and passive measures in urban or regional settings, or are these geared towards genuine and active place leadership? For this undertaking, we borrow from the 'policy/place making' and 'policy/place framing' framework of Knieling et al. (2012) and from the 'CSpR maturity model' of Albers and Suwala (2018) in order to distinguish between the intensity of 'leadership' and 'responsibility' in these corporate spatial measures. The chapter thereby contributes to a more systematic understanding of enterprise-driven urban and regional engagement and the potential for place leadership by private-sector actors. Methodologically, the chapter draws mainly on data from existing literature and from a personal selection of case studies of corporate spatial engagement in Germany and beyond, according to both 'purposive sampling' (Patton 2002) and the 'go for polar types' approach (Meredith 1998) in order to identify different degrees of CSpR measures and potential accompanying place leadership activities. This German bias stems not only from the merely executed personal projects and experiences made, but also from the fact that Germany is known for its regionally committed Mittelstand (family firms, hidden champions). The chapter is organized as follows: section two summarizes the 'state of the art' with regard to enterprise-driven place leadership and CSpR, and points to possible synergies of a joint approach; section three encompasses the main analysis by showcasing different types and intensities of enterprise-driven engagement and the implications for place leadership; and section four concludes and highlights both original insights and contributions to the current academic discussion.

*Place leadership*

Place leadership originated as an academic concept roughly three decades ago, as the importance of spatial relations to leadership was reaffirmed by scholars (e.g. Judd and Parkinson 1990, Stough 2003, Sotarauta 2005). The concept really took hold as an important theme in policy, management and regional studies in the 2010s (Stimson et al. 2009, Collinge and Gibney 2010, Sydow et al. 2011, Beer and Clower 2014, Liddle et al. 2017, Sotarauta et al. 2017). Place leadership has gained popularity in particular against the backdrop of both the ongoing liberalization, deregulation and privatization of many former state-dominated tasks and sectors of the economy and the rise of the paradigm around the knowledge economy (Gibney et al. 2009). Both circumstances have resulted in an accelerated pace of economic, technical and scientific progress with a greater reliance on intellectual and creative competencies than on physical inputs or natural resources (Suwala 2014). Consequentially, the search for novel trans-institutional configurations, for example public–private partnerships (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2011) or regional arrangements, for example learning regions (Morgan 1997) among former unconnected stakeholders, such as the private market, academia, and politics has in some cases resulted in creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff 2000, Brinkhoff et al. 2015, König et al. 2020) through novel leadership constellations in various spatial settings (Beer and Clower 2014, Anderton 2017, Hu and Hassink 2017).

Hence, it comes as no surprise that place leadership is described as ‘the tendency of the community to collaborate across sectors (...) encompassing the public, private and civil’ (Stimson et al. 2002, 279) included ‘in a given locality’ (Hambleton 2015, 137). In recent years different topics have been examined, linking regional leadership to higher education institutions (Raagman and Keerber 2017), non-profit organizations (Potluka et al. 2017), public entrepreneurship (Rossiter and Smith 2017) and sustainable development (Horlings and Padt 2013), emphasizing varieties of place leadership (Nicholds et al. 2017). Despite the growing insights detailed in those studies, the meaning of ‘effective place leadership’ in this field is by no means clear. Important questions arise within the literature, for which no consensus answers yet exist. The questions include: who should lead (e.g. public, private or civil institutions; Hambleton 2011); why place leadership is necessary (e.g. re-discovery of leadership in sub-national development; Sotarauta et al. 2017); what purpose place leadership serves (e.g. the development of a vision for the future; Stimson et al. 2009); positive changes resulting from place leadership (Beer and Clower 2014); when place leadership is needed (e.g. in cases of regional crisis; Suwala and Micek 2018); where leadership is needed (e.g. leadership in/of regions; Collinge and Gibney 2010), and how to perform place leadership (e.g. formal vs. informal place leadership; Sotarauta et al. 2012).

Since we focus on enterprise-driven leadership in places, and in particular on its contribution towards urban and/or regional regeneration, it is important to elaborate on what is meant within this latter context. Enterprise-driven leadership in certain regions is far from a new phenomenon, as manifold examples testify. The idea that the private sector prompts urban development has a long tradition, in particular in so-called company-towns. Siemensstadt in Northwest Berlin, Germany; American Railway Union in Pullman, IL, USA; Volkswagen in Wolfsburg, Germany; and Lego in Billund, Denmark are but a few examples of this phenomenon (Porteous 1970, Idris-Soven et al. 1978, Garner 1992). The principal objective of this particular manifestation of enterprise-driven place leadership was ‘to enhance the economic performance or economic environment of the region’, among other cultural, social and ecological outcomes (Stimson et al. 2002, 279). In general, these examples do not vary significantly from other more homogenous forms of place leadership. Early bad experiences, in particular dependence, exploitation and power concentration within company towns, and de facto place leadership, monopolized by the companies themselves, have led to a diminishing interest in enterprise-driven place leadership (see, for US, Hanson et al. 2010).

The recent understanding of enterprise-driven leadership is based more on collaborative and inter-institutional (public, private, civil) relationships than on ‘one great person or company’ or traditional hierarchical or power relationships (Stimson et al. 2002, Beer and Clower 2014). The questions, however, of whether an oligarchical place leadership (e.g. Bellandi et al. 2018) or a form of leadership based on collaboration between companies in a region (e.g. Stimson et al. 2002) is more effective is anything but resolved. This continuum of leadership is predicated on numerous conditions, including the types or style of leadership in place, the power, trust and/or cooperation relations among other factors (Uhl-Bien et al. 2007, Stimson et al. 2009, Hambleton 2011).

### *Corporate Spatial Responsibility (CSPR)*

Corporate spatial responsibility (CSpR) focuses on corporate engagement, in particular within urban and regional settings. It can be understood as a spatial extension of the well-known concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which places its focus primarily on social and ecological commitments of companies beyond their core economic competencies (Albers 2011, Albers and Suwala 2018). CSpR follows principles also evidenced in CSR practices, including corporate ethics, social enterprise, corporate civic leadership, corporate and voluntary self-commitment and sometimes even corporate citizenship. These are often targeted towards tackling societal problems not necessarily directly connected with a company’s principal economic activities, even when some of this activity can be repurposed in the pursuit of broader corporate objectives (Hiß 2006, Beschorner 2010, Hanson et al. 2010). What differentiates CSpR from CSR is the explicit spatial dimension and the respective commitment to locations or places at various scales, be it local, regional, urban or rural (Knieling et al. 2012). We understand CSpR as a collective term for the existing concepts of ‘corporate regional responsibility’ (CRR) (Kiese and Schiek 2016, Schiek 2017), ‘corporate urban responsibility’ (CUR) (Albers 2011, Albers and Hartenstein 2017) and ‘corporate regional engagement’ (CRE) (Lengauer and Tödting 2010, Bürcher and Mayer 2018), each of which opt for the CSR principles outlined above. Existing examples of activities in these fields do, however, display differences not only in their scale and regional focus (Werna et al. 2009) but also in their area of attention; existing literature documents fields as varied as revitalization of the built environment (Albers 2011), socio-spatial context framing and embeddedness (Bürcher and Mayer 2018) and the pursuit of (sustainable) technology-based urban development (Suwala and Albers 2020).

Many of these ideas are far from being novel, especially when it comes to corporate philanthropy for urban (infra-)structures, the support of local cultural and social institutions or the financing and even construction of affordable housing for employees, in cases like Margarethenhöhe, Germany (a company residential estate in the Ruhr owned by German industrialist Alfred Krupp) and Ford Homes in Detroit or Deadborn, USA. These initiatives led to considerable improvements in the living conditions of broad parts of the population, especially in overpopulated and rapidly growing industrial urban settings. In fact, corporate engagement in urban development forms an important basis for many modern cities. The driving forces for this corporate commitment towards home cities or regions, however, was not based on pure altruism alone but came about in order to take advantage of considerable market and sales opportunities, to secure a workforce and as part of image-building campaigns – especially in locally bound markets. As time and the forms of economic progress have evolved, so too have the goals and motives for the corporate spatial commitments around CSpR (Albers 2011). Not only have CSR and respective CSpR measures become more professionalized over the last 20 years, corresponding to new values and alternating social demands and ethical ideals, so too have patterns of organization, inter-institutional character and the depth and intensity of corporate urban and/or regional involvement.

Traditional CSR philanthropic activities, such as donations, sponsorships, patronage and charities are still widespread. However, more complex modes, such as public–private partnerships, corporate cooperation with the public sectors or civil society, and long-term inter-institutional projects are increasingly common (Albers and Suwala 2018). These complex instruments often have an explicit spatial dimension, as well as a local or regional imprint or impact (Albers and Hartenstein 2017). They are often a result of pervasive urbanization and focus on challenges such as environmental protection, scarcity of resources, demographic change and more general consequences of globalization – especially at the municipal level. Even in a globalized world with a prevalence of ‘absentee-owned’ companies (some of which were previously locally owned), incentives often still remain for companies to invest in local structures, civic engagement like CSpR and place leadership (Suwala and Albers 2020). Above all, growing companies in inner-city locations, especially those in the digital economy, are increasingly being called upon to commit themselves to urban development beyond the company borders, and to play an active role in their urban settings (Albers and Hartenstein 2017).

The variety of CSpR measures is far-flung. Measures include simple enterprise-driven social, educational or cultural object-based built infrastructure projects (e.g. child care centres; Albers 2011, Suwala 2015), revalorization projects (e.g. privately owned spaces for public use; Kayden 2000), relocation projects (also known as corporate reurbanization; Mozingo 2011), as well as the alteration of corporate premises (seen, for example, in district renewal through cultural creative industries; Rogerson 1996). More complex approaches take the form of business improvement districts (BIDs) (Hoyt 2003), town centre management agreements (TCM; Coca-Stefaniak et al. 2009) and even holistic urban frameworks that include a systemic understanding of CSpR within so-called enterprise-driven and business-community-led models (Albers and Suwala 2018; Enright et al. 2016). In many of these latter cases, the lack of consolidated government bodies (Enright et al. 2016) or effectiveness of public authorities, e.g. failed states (Suwala et al. 2018), leaves space for CSpR-driven development to take hold.

### *Bringing Together Place Leadership and CSpR*

Within this framework, our aim is to provide insights from both of the concepts, place leadership and CSpR, in order to present a fresh take on place leadership from an enterprise-driven perspective. In investigating the relationship of the two concepts, we first consult recent literature on place leadership and CSR/CSpR to see if, when and how these approaches can be combined. A number of guiding questions have informed this case study collection. Does a combined view of place leadership and CSpR prove mutually beneficial for both schools of thought? Does private-sector-driven place leadership enhance CSpR measures, and conversely how do CSpR measures contribute to place leadership? Which CSpR projects have a large spatial impact? Which are organized in a way that also allows data to be gathered on place leadership indicators? Do contemporary enterprise-driven leadership initiatives need to include CSpR? Are there ‘varieties of place leadership’ and CSpR, and how do they relate to each other?

Although caution should be exercised when transferring concepts towards new areas of application, the relatedness of the fields of place leadership and CSpR encourages an investigation into a possible cross-fertilization of the two concepts. Place-based enterprise-driven or corporate civic leadership is a centuries-old phenomenon, displaying different degrees of commitment and versatile application, depending on the institutional frameworks and economic systems at hand (Stimson et al. 2009, Hanson et al. 2010, Sotarauta 2016). Decentralized systems such as the US and Germany, for instance, have been historically more benign to place leaders. One question that remains to be answered is whether this type of place leadership also involves aspects of CSpR, or whether inclusion occurs in the inverse direction. For our purposes, we approach the relationship of the two concepts from both perspectives.

Despite the presence of existing studies that tackle this relationship, ‘there is still a lot we do not know about the connection between leadership and the creation of CSR’ (De Ruiter et al. 2018, 871). Moreover, empirical studies of CSR have largely ignored the role of the corporate leader in implementing CSR (Waldman and Siegel 2008). Although there are studies that deal with the relationship between leadership and CSR (e.g. van Velsor 2009), in general, very little is known about the nature of ‘socially responsible leadership’ (Maak & Pless 2006, Waldman & Siegel 2008).

If we compound this discussion with the notion of space, things become even more complicated. In times of growing interactive and collaborative modes of governance, more attention needs to be paid to the socially responsible leadership question and its context, especially at the regional or municipal level. In this realm, leadership affects regions, cities or rural communities, just as it is affected by those spatial entities (Beer and Clower 2014, Sotarauta et al. 2017). Devinney even calls for ‘rethinking the meaning of space and place (...) as the rise of CSR is part and parcel of a more general phenomenon that is redefining the fundamental meaning of sociopolitical and economic geography. As corporations and economies have globalized, the sociopolitical structures have lagged behind’ (Devinney 2011, 329, 339). So far, however, very few studies exist that partly, if often unintentionally, link place leadership and CSpR (Voegtlin et al. 2012, Knieling et al. 2012, Normann et al. 2017, Albers and Suwala 2018, 2020a). In the case of Albers and Suwala (2018), enterprise-driven engagement is considered as ‘proaktive Unternehmer/in mit Ortsführerschaft (proactive entrepreneurs with place leadership)’ only when holistic and systemic CSpR measures are involved: for example, setting up corporate master plans or policy measures that go beyond a single area of policy in a given spatial context.

Given the existing affinities of the two concepts, we believe that a compound approach to understanding place leadership and CSpR would contribute to both discourses. In order to perform this analysis, we have compiled a two-dimensional matrix that combines two analytical frameworks to link and classify the two concepts: (1) the ‘place/policy framing, place/policy-making’ approach, which deals with varying ‘degrees of commitment/intensity’ of enterprise-driven regional leadership strategies (Knieling et al. 2012, 458), and (2) the CSpR maturity model that differentiates between ‘degrees of responsibility/spatiality’ of CSpR measures (Albers and Suwala 2018, 55). The first dimension of the analytical matrix is the ‘place/ policy framing, place/policy-making’ approach that differentiates between various ‘degrees of commitment and/or intensity’ of place-based policy measures. Place/ policy framing initiatives are considered a low level of place leadership, and place/ policy-making is considered high level of place leadership here. This framework applies to place leadership because it allows a mutual assessment of both the (inter-) institutional context of forces at play in a given context (leadership) and the policy measures, spatial development strategies and spatial concepts in which space is designed and produced (Davoudi and Strange 2009, Knieling et al. 2012).

The second dimension of the analytical matrix considers a CSpR maturity model defined by Albers and Suwala (2018). Based on the CSR maturity model (Schneider 2012), this model identifies four different levels of CSpR that vary according to the ‘degrees of responsibility/spatiality’. The first two levels, CSpR 0.0 and CSpR 1.0, encompass low threshold/conventional engagement activities. These can result from compliance with existing laws and incidental initiatives (CSpR 0.0) or from philanthropic engagement that exhibits less immediate spatial impacts and is only partially aligned with broader corporate objectives (CSpR 1.0). These initiatives are considered a low level of CSpR here. Further levels of responsibility and/or spatiality in the model consist of interventions in which systemic design targets purposeful regional economic and societal synergies between the city/region and the company (CSpR 2.0), or in which companies proactively intervene in (formerly) public responsibilities or matters of the government (CSpR 3.0). Both CSpR 2.0 and 3.0 initiatives map onto the concept of place leadership (Albers and Suwala 2018). These initiatives are considered a high level of CSpR here (see Figure 1).

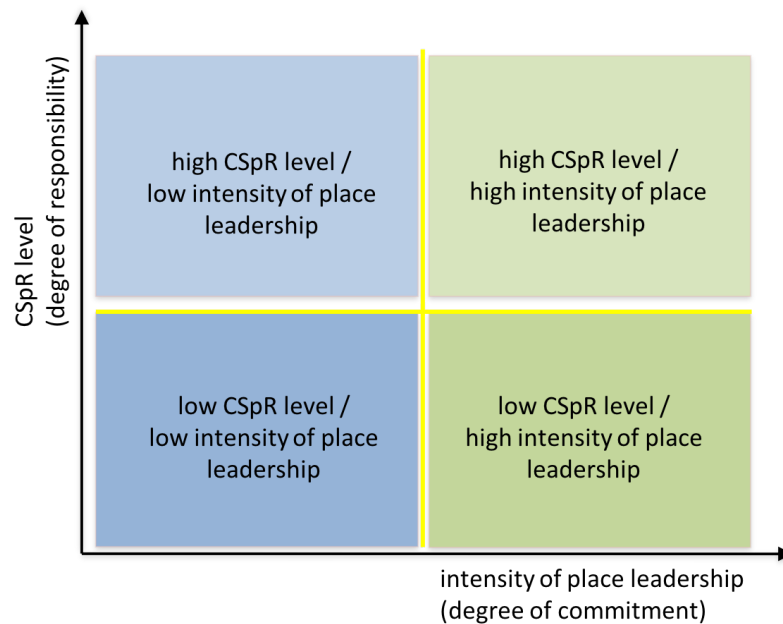


Figure 1 Two-dimensional matrix of CSpR and place leadership

### *Methodology*

The analysis of the relationship between place leadership and CSpR is based on a literature review (consisting largely of international examples) and a personal selection of case studies of corporate spatial engagement (primarily taken from a German context). The literature review largely relied on internet research, using combinations of topical keywords drawn from existing theories – ‘(place) leadership’, ‘corporate leadership’, ‘enterprise-driven leadership’, ‘private-sector-driven leadership’, ‘CSR’, ‘CRR’, ‘CUR’, ‘corporate engagement’, ‘enterprise-driven engagement’, ‘private-sector-driven engagement’ – together with expressions of a spatial component (e.g. ‘place’, ‘location’, but also ‘local’, ‘regional’ etc.). The personal selection of case studies in Germany is based on a continuous monitoring of CSR activities in the context of urban and regional development over the past ten years and the evaluation of relevant studies, databases and research, as well as the authors’ participation in research projects, themselves mostly in Germany. For both forms of data collection, three further methodological concepts played a crucial role. First, the accessibility of examples based on ‘purposive sampling’ (Patton 2002), where examples have been selected that were either easily accessible or where personal participation played a role. The reason that case study examination was limited primarily to German examples is that by limiting cases to the same legal framework and administrative structures, comparability between case studies was more easily ensured. Second, the relevance of examples was also assessed by analysing the frequency of mentions they received in the daily press and academic journals. Third, a diversity of examples was ensured by using the ‘go for polar types’ approach described in Meredith (1998). This was important for identifying typical and extreme cases, maximum variation cases, critical cases and politically important or sensitive cases of CSpR activities, as well as potential accompanying place leadership qualities. Since our background lies primarily in CSpR studies, we grouped different CSpR measures according to their degree of ‘responsibility’ and then contemplated if and (in the positive cases) to what degree enterprise-driven place leadership was involved. For this analysis, we employed the two dimensional matrix presented above, which we used to link and categorize place leadership and CSpR by combining two analytic frameworks: (1) the ‘place/policy framing, place/policy-making’ approach (‘degrees of commitment/ intensity’) (Knieling et al. 2012, 458), and (2) the CSpR maturity model (‘degrees of responsibility/spatiality’) of CSpR measures. Moreover, we utilized a structure vs. process-based distinction between the grouped types to differentiate between lump-sum and strategic measures. Overall, our approach focused more on plausible selection (of examples that were accessible) than a representative selection.

## Analysis

The following analysis presents examples of enterprise-driven urban or regional engagement. The analysis attempts to classify those examples into four types, related both to the ‘degree of place-based leadership’ evident (degrees of commitment) and the ‘maturity levels’ (degrees of responsibility) of CSpR qualities. Additionally, it was helpful to distinguish between object/structure-based engagement and planning/ process-based engagement in order to derive target-oriented policy and planning suggestions. Concerning the degree of commitment, we value planning/process-based engagement higher than object/structure-based engagement due to the strategic character of the former. In general, the analysis is not intended to be exhaustive but is intended to illustrate possible links between place-based leadership and CSpR measures.

### *Object/ Structure-Based Engagement – Social, Educational or Recreational Built Infrastructure*

More traditional instances of enterprise-driven urban/regional engagement focus on the financing or promotion of buildings for social, educational or recreational purposes. In the 19th century, donations for art and cultural buildings helped cities to develop a new civic identity. This tradition is still widespread among business patrons and companies and, in addition to garnering prestige for donors, is also intended to enhance the image of cities and city centres (Rectanus 2002). A contemporary interpretation of this style of intervention is the so-called ‘Bilbao effect’, a non-enterprise-driven venture named after the Guggenheim Museum built by Frank Gehry in the Basque city of Bilbao (Plaza 2008). The term describes the strategic use of iconic and symbolical buildings in order to revive a city economically and culturally, to draw attention to it despite its non-central or economically weak position or to place it on the global ‘tourist map’ or ‘economic landscape’.

This concept has since served as a role model for manifold art and architecture projects, partly or fully corporate-financed. Examples in Germany include: the Marta Herford project (a Bilbao-inspired art museum hosting an impressive selection of works by contemporary artists in the medium-sized city of Herford, which was jointly started via a mutual corporate initiative by the local furniture industry), the Phaeno Science Centre in Wolfsburg, an iconic, centrally located building co-financed by Volkswagen to enhance and improve the city’s image, and the Elbe Philharmonic Hall, now the prime new landmark in Hamburg and co-financed through a donation initiative by local entrepreneurs. In each of these cases, project financing was provided by either private-sector companies or individual philanthropic entrepreneurs. In particular in smaller German cities, this type of financing has grown in popularity over the past few decades, with cultural buildings sponsored by local firms helping to provide branding in city centres. Examples of this are numerous, often involve donations by market leaders in certain niche economic sectors (often family firms and so-called Hidden Champions); the buildings are named after those enterprises and include the Kunsthalle Weishaupt in Ulm, the Museum Barberini in Potsdam, Hasso Plattner’s SAP Co-Founder in Berlin and the Knauff Museum in Iphofen. Each of these projects was based on strong commitment to the site on the part of CEOs or family-led companies. Of course, similar examples exist in other countries (Albers 2011, Suwala 2020, Basco et al. 2020).

Apart from philanthropic and indirect city revitalization measures based on traditional co-financing and donations to cultural or social institutions, many companies are now actively strengthening and developing the quality of life and reputation of a given location by investing in social, educational and recreational facilities. Investments range from kindergartens (the Stihl company has recently cooperated with the municipality of Waiblingen to build a day-care centre for children of employees and non-employees) to sports fields (on the roof of its wholesale food market in central Berlin, the company Metro laid a public football pitch in order to attract employees and enhance local quality of life). There has been a renaissance of company-owned dwellings, especially



in metropolitan regions: for example, Google's employee housing in Palo Alto, California (USA) but also Boulder, Colorado (USA) among others or Deutsche Bahn's recent announcement to construct residential properties for staff in a smaller town in the vicinity of Munich (Germany). The lack of affordable housing in many large cities has developed into a growing problem for companies whose employees find it difficult to find homes close to their place of employment.

Most of these enterprise-driven object and structure-based measures represent important CSpR initiatives whose spatial impact largely depends on the qualities of the individual realized project (for example an art museum vs. a kindergarten). Although projects dedicated to artistic and cultural purposes are often defined by the personal interests and patronage of donating entrepreneurs, similar to traditional philanthropic activities, these projects also have an indirect spatial impact, often serving as flagship projects for promoting or reviving a city or region (the latter will refer to the above mentioned CSpR 0.0/1.0). Concurrently, the implementation of social, educational or recreational infrastructure, often sponsored in cooperation with municipal authorities, establishes a more direct link between the acute urban needs of the municipality and the necessities of the donating company. The easement of the property housing market, for example, and the provision of housing for workers are commensurate in the establishment of regional economic and social synergies when built upon long-term organizational structures. The downside of these activities is that some enterprises and their managers are just not capable or prepared to deal with complex cultural, or social issues, should problems within those initiatives arise. Moreover, some of those initiatives might be exploited as green- or social-washing. Because of the sporadic nature of many collaborations between the private and public or civic sectors, only indirect connections can be drawn from these examples to genuine place leadership. In these cases, many measures demonstrate a more supporting function; their place/policy framing character is often unintended, strongly tied to the given projects or the personal/corporate interests of sponsors (see Figure 2 for assessment).

#### *Object and Structure-Based Engagement – Corporate Re-Urbanization, District Renewal and Privately Owned Public Spaces*

Related to object and structure-based engagement, there is a second type of enterprise-driven measure, based on active and targeted corporate support of urban renewal and open-space strategies. This type of intervention occurs in times of competing urbanization dynamics and reflects more complex urban migration patterns of residential and commercial activities (Hierse et al. 2017.) It represents a response to the well-known 'doughnut effect', where cities and municipalities struggle with deteriorating centres as retail, industry and new housing move to peripheral locations on the outskirts of the city (Sternlieb and Hughes 1980). In these cases, corporate investment in cultural landmarks, cultural infrastructure or image-building activities is often just the first step for attracting attention back into the city centre (Suwala 2015). A second-phase, more integrated and holistic approach is known as corporate re-urbanization, where companies themselves move back to city centres to directly or indirectly contribute to local economic development (LED). Examples of this can be seen in the revitalization of city centres through corporate campuses or universities (Kujath 1988, Turk 2000, Butler 2007).

There are manifold recent examples of large-scale corporations, especially in the US-American context, returning to city centres after decades of corporate suburbanization, for example McDonalds' recent return to downtown Chicago or General Electric's return to downtown Boston (Mozingo 2011, Weber 2013). There are particular reasons for this turning back, although attracting a younger, more-educated workforce is often the most important. It is interesting to examine whether in this resettlement process, corporations also intentionally contribute to LED by means of community development corporations (CDCs) or by similar measures: for example, by participating in city revitalization (Wilson 1995). Several positive examples of this type of

investment exist. In one such example, South African Breweries in the Newtown Cultural Precinct in Johannesburg, South Africa invested heavily in the development of a cultural district (Rogerson 1996). Similarly, the family-owned German company Zott, one of the largest dairy production companies in Europe, founded in 1926 with approximately 3,000 employees, has played a crucial role in current plans to remodel the town centre of Mertingen, Bavaria, a small town of approximately 4,000 inhabitants in the district of Donau-Ries. Supported by the state funding, the project aims to revitalize the town centre into a lively and attractive place for the community. Alongside measures by other actors, Zott is modernizing parts of its courtyard location and setting up a headquarters and new administrative branch there. A vital aspect of the corporate re-urbanization is the opening of the corporate campus to the public (Albers and Suwala 2020b). This phenomenon draws upon the trend of privately owned public spaces (POPS, or *kôkai kûchi*) that started in the 1950s in dense urban fringes of central business districts (CBDs) in global cities like New York, Tokyo and Hong Kong, later also in new metropolises in China. Here, large corporations opened their properties in various ways to the public (e.g. as arcades, urban plazas, through-blocks or covered pedestrian spaces). At the time of the profusion of this type of intervention, companies were usually compensated for these measures via higher floor-area ratios or other profitable policies (Kayden 2000, Zhang and Yu 2010, Dimmer 2012).

Now less popular, POPS tend to be restricted to local spatial impacts, whereas larger measures such as the relocation of a corporate headquarters may have a tremendous effect and revive an entire district. At the same time, earlier POPS-interventions have a clearer relationship to place leadership (self-interest might be included), and in general to CSpR (as they are mostly a result of higher floor area ratios). The question remains whether POPS and corporate re-urbanization cases actually involve CSpR at all. When they do (e.g. the Mertingen case), this tends to be contingent on cooperation with municipal actors. Adverse effects might originate from corporate leverages and strategic trade-offs against local authorities. All in all, both traditional POPS measures and corporate re-urbanizations have the potential to drive purposeful regional economic and societal synergies and build on 'win-win situations' (high-level CSpR) beyond simple philanthropic initiatives without necessarily appropriating existing urban development plans and frameworks. When it comes to place leadership, these measures present additional private-sector modes that might assist place-based policies ('place/policy framing'). The Mertingen case, however, shows that the private sector can act as the principal actor (whether intentionally or not) in place-based inter-institutional cooperation. For such initiatives, public programmes that provide start-up aid, institutional know-how and campaigns for the sensitization of companies on urban topics are crucial. For most measures, however, the degree of commitment and/or leadership are rather low (see Figure 2 for assessment).

#### *Planning/Process-Based Engagement – BIDs, TCM and Private-Sector Master-Plan Initiatives*

In addition to corporate object- and structure-based engagement, private-sector participation is also prevalent in more strategic urban management activities. This happens in a number of contexts central to urban planning, for example planning processes on a district level, business improvement districts (BIDs), town centre management (TCM) or the preparation of master plans (Cointreau-Levine 1994, Stubbs et al. 2002, Hoyt 2003). These practices chart a long history; the Plan of Chicago, or Burnham Plan, of 1909 is considered the most famous example of a master plan initiated by the private sector. The idea was commissioned by the Commercial Club of Chicago following the guidelines of the City Beautiful Movement but was only partially implemented. The principal aim and purpose of the initiative, however, was to ensure the city's functionality and competitiveness (cf. Burnham and Bennett 1909 (1993), 2). These early ideas of urban management continue to develop today in various new shapes, intensities and modes.

Instances which originated in Canada and the USA in the 1970s are Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), otherwise known as downtown improvement districts (DIDs) in Japan and main street associations (MSAs) in New Zealand (Hoyt 2003). BIDs are among the most important developments in local governance in the last four decades in those countries (Ward 2006) and consist of geographically defined areas where property owners and/or retailers agree to cooperate financially and administratively to provide higher levels of a service than the public authorities can and would otherwise provide to the area (Mitchell 2001). The idea is to ‘channel private-sector energy toward the solution of public problems’ (MacDonald 1996, 42) and to set up a ‘powerful combination of ingredients – business self-interest and vision, together with public financing unencumbered by urban politics’ (Houston 1997, 38). Studies have revealed that BIDs in the USA were mostly involved with marketing downtown districts, providing supplemental sanitation and security services, and advocating public policies that promote downtown interests and act as drivers for urban regeneration (Mitchell 2001, Symes and Steel 2003). This idea is applicable beyond commercial management in other areas such as housing and neighbourhood improvement districts (Kitzmann 2018). From a pragmatist point of view, BIDs could also be seen just as another strategy to raise revenues.

Another enterprise-driven management strategy is known as town centre management (TCM). TCM involves ‘a coordinated pro-active initiative designed to ensure that our town and city centres are desirable and attractive places. In nearly all instances the initiative is a partnership between the public and private sectors and brings together a wide-range of key interests’ (Coca-Stefaniak et al. 2009, 75). TCMs have been analysed by Stubbs et al. (2002) using a matrix to evaluate and chart two main criteria of this form, namely: (a) the financing of TCM schemes (e.g. the public or private sector) and (b) the extent of formality of the system. Whereas voluntary and community-led schemes (initiated by the public or civil sector) are of minor interest for our sake, programmes led by trade associations, chambers of commerce or individual companies involve clear private-sector participation. One interesting example of TCM is the Altstadt Salzburg Marketing GmbH, an Austrian limited company (roughly 60 per cent of financing comes from the private sector) with shares held by the Tourismusverband Salzburger Altstadt (TSA, Salzburg Old Town Tourism Association), Salzburg City Cooperative and a retail trade association. The principal objective of the partnership is the revitalization of the city centre, led by its own small- and medium-sized retailers, jointly working with the City Council. Whilst Salzburg’s City Council holds four permanent seats on the executive committee, their members do not have voting rights on financial issues. Although decision-making within this partnership includes those business sectors with a financial stake in the cooperation, the civil sector remains under-represented in the activities of the TCM (Coca-Stefaniak et al. 2009).

A third example of this type of corporate spatial engagement deals with private-sector involvement in local or regional master-plan initiatives. Stemming from a desire to boost urban economic development and a lack of confidence in conventional public urban planning, the business association *Unternehmer für die Region Köln* (Entrepreneurs for the Cologne Region) and Chamber of Commerce of Cologne assigned a famous architectural office to draft a master plan for the city. The plan was subsequently ratified by the city council after several closed expert panels and amendments (financed by the city) and has since then become the de facto official urban development concept. Interestingly enough, the public was not invited to participate in the planning, based on a stipulation of those business leaders who provided financing for the master plan (Beste 2009). Two further master-plan initiatives started by the private sector have recently attracted considerable attention in Germany. One, for Mönchengladbach in North Rhine-Westphalia, was also created in 2012/2013 via financing by local companies. The city of Offenbach in Hessen also developed a master plan, which was initiated and financed by a partnership between the city’s business association and its chamber of commerce. Both of these cases entailed broader discussions, including involvement of city officials (public sector) next to citizens and local actors (civil sector), before being adopted by lawmakers.

All enterprise-driven initiatives mentioned above comprise some sort of strategic and at least a mid-term planning or process-based engagement. Moreover, all measures have an explicit 'spatial focus', encompassing city centres, particular urban districts or the city or region as a whole (high level of CSpR). Often these initiatives build on associations of proactive companies (rather than relying purely on individual initiatives) that are willing and able to design, finance and lead processes in those spatial realms. Whereas the public sector is always involved in expert panels or steering committees (which also lends credibility to the measures), the participation of the civil sector is usually under-represented. It must be acknowledged, however, that the latter is not always desired, as the private sector, which is almost exclusively organized here through trade associations or limited companies, has usually already a clearly articulated and mostly business-oriented vision. All in all, it can be said that these measures not only target regional economic and social synergies, but also go beyond and formulate demands for policies. Therefore, in some cases there is genuine place-(co)-leadership involved, although this is usually confined to specific areas of commercial interest and is pursued in a rather top-down way (see Figure 2 for assessment).

#### *Planning/Process-Based Engagement – Private-Sector-Driven and Business-Community-Led Models*

The most acute form of enterprise-driven engagement for urban or regional development is the so-called business-community-led model. Here, the private-sector exerts genuine place leadership in cities that have a robust business presence, a weak consolidation of city authorities or a general discontent among actors with the planning framework. The weakness of public authorities can be linked to a number of factors: for example, fragmentation or over-localization of public decision-makers, high deference to a strong regional or national authority or a lack of developed social and economic infrastructure, independent investment, tax income or spending power. In those cases, chambers of commerce, business groups or even individual dominating companies can take the lead in setting the spatial agenda in a city in order to influence 'combination[s] of district, city and state authorities or government agencies on issues from business conditions to a city's broad long-term agenda' (Enright et al. 2016, 3). This approach has the potential to overcome or mitigate the effects of parochial politics, and to secure long-term private-sector support, especially for the funding or execution of projects. However, this model is only desirable when it includes a balance between business interests and other strategic needs of the city. Advocacy usually dominates these initiatives and is negotiated between consolidated business groups and sets of government entities, for example district, city and state authorities or government agencies (Enright et al. 2016). The activity spectrum ranges from communication about current business needs to the active co-development of a city's comprehensive long-term agenda and highlights multiple forms of enterprise-driven involvement.

There are multiple forms that business-community-led engagement can take. The first that we highlight are those initiated by a single company and implemented through enterprise-driven urban development agencies. The Duderstadt2020 project is such a business-community-led initiative, headed by the entrepreneur Hans Georg Näder (owner and CEO of Otto Bock GmbH, the world market leader for orthopaedic technology from Duderstadt, a midsize town in Lower Saxony, Germany). The project has been developed and organized since 2009 by a team from a regional University of Applied Sciences (HAWK). The limited company Duderstadt2020 was founded to guide this initiative and to strengthen the attractiveness of the whole region, focusing in particular on amenities, quality of life, and workplace environment. Its activities consisted of the following consolidated initiatives: development of a master plan; strengthening of existing corporate, public and civic networks among different stakeholders; stimulating discussion forums, future workshops jointly with other forms of citizen participation; and fostering neighbourhood development. Another important pillar of the company's engagement was to introduce more entrepreneurial commitment to politics and civil society. Since its initiation, Duderstadt2020 has been involved in

‘integrative urban development management’ within six areas of interest: urban marketing, tourism promotion, economic promotion, cultural promotion, neighbourhood development and social interaction. Most recently, the company was involved in presenting the Duderstadt 2030 city vision and the ‘Futuring Duderstadt’ master plan (Albers and Suwala 2020a). The Duderstadt 2020 Initiative, containing the establishment of an enterprise-driven urban development agency, participation formats and development of a master plan, demonstrates an innovative approach to, and example of, place leadership. Similar initiatives are prevalent in rural Australia and Honduras, where individual mining companies or grocery producers play a key role in planning and development with far-reaching implications for land use and wider regional development (Morrison et al. 2012, Suwala et al. 2018). However, those examples also reveal the overlaps in action and competence between the local administration, citizens and other companies, leaving the responsibility or leadership role to the dominant company or company leader; the latter often results in one-sided effects and high dependency on single entrepreneurs or companies (Albers and Hartenstein 2017).

In practice, it is more common that business community-led initiatives are started by private consortia or business associations and executed by means of enterprise-driven urban development agencies. In Chicago, the World Business Chicago (WBC) was founded by business leaders before later evolving into a public–private partnership; now, the WBC exists as a ‘main channel for collaboration between the city government and business to promote economic development [to] define the city’s long-term vision and tackle – business priorities and broader challenges for the city’s future’ (Enright et al. 2016, 22). Two-thirds of the WBC’s funding derives from private donors, although membership in the WBC is restricted to those directly invited by the mayor. The main objectives of the group include business advocacy for relocation, employee retention and employee education (e.g. the Chicago Career Tech Program) and entrepreneurship services (e.g. Seed Chicago). Further objectives include collecting and processing research and data on the local economy, as well as promotion of Chicago as a place to do business: for example, through the marketing partnerships programme Sister Cities International. Another example of these association-led initiatives exists in Sydney, where the lack of a strong centralized city government (the authority splits duties between the state government of New South Wales, 38 local councils and the mayor’s office for the central business district) has given rise to place leadership from the business community, led in particular by the Sydney and West Sydney chambers of commerce. This initiative has broad influence and works with government authorities on issues such as transportation planning, talent acquisition and the general liveability of the city. Stakeholders include businesses, government departments, universities, the third sector and civil society. Moreover, the initiative has contributed significant funds for the creation of the Greater Sydney Commission, a consolidated governance entity aspiring to integrate planning at a city level by collaborating with the state government, local councils and communities.

Initiatives within this type of enterprise-driven planning-based or process-based engagement are systemic, holistic and develop long-term visions that traverse specialized policy areas. That is, they tend to target not only economic but also cultural, educational, social or planning goals for territorial authorities. All of the above case studies can be categorized as intentional very high-level CSpR interventions that take into consideration multiple major sectors of civil society. They have far-reaching implications for residential, commercial and industrial planning, land use and the built environment within the wider regional community. This engagement is promoted and sustained by independent enterprise-driven urban development agencies with an autonomous executive body. These agencies directly and indirectly influence and set the pace of policy-making in various areas. Furthermore, they tend to adopt genuine place-leadership characteristics by intervening in many fields once exclusively reserved for state and municipal administrations (see Figure 2 for assessment).

## An Attempt to Locate the Examples

In this review, we have attempted to categorize different case studies from the literature on a two-dimensional matrix, measuring engagement dually in terms of place-based leadership (degrees of commitment) and CSpR levels (degrees of responsibility). In this iteration, we have categorized only tangible examples and not abstract types of measures (e.g. recreational built infrastructure, POPS, TCMs, BIDs), as these types of intervention can vary greatly from case to case. Moreover, we have included only examples in the assessment where we had enough information to categorize the initiatives. One important hypothesis in this mapping is that planning- and process-based engagement has a higher commitment to place leadership due to its strategic nature than object- and structure-based engagement. In most of the cases reviewed, this assumption proves itself to be very appropriate, although it could certainly be challenged on a theoretical level. One could imagine, for example, corporate planning- or process-based engagement (e.g. permanent non-strategic philanthropy) that reveals limited leadership aspirations despite great commitment within the spatial context (Mullen 1997). Moreover, it can be called into question whether specific forms like POPS or BIDs encompass any features of CSpR at all, even though place leadership tendencies there are easily observed; instead, these interventions may be undertaken solely to align activities with local zoning or building laws.

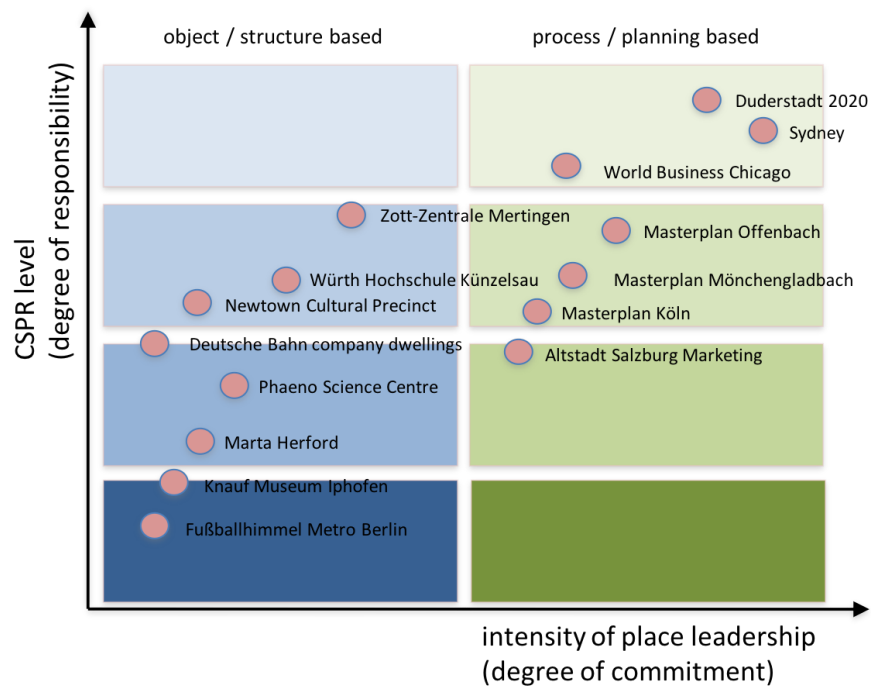


Figure 2 Varieties of enterprise-driven place-based engagement

## Conclusion

Combining enterprise-driven place leadership and CSpR frameworks adds to existing 'regional policy toolboxes' and allows for an alternative model of local and regional economic engagement and development – one that is designed, implemented and led by corporate actors. The leitmotif behind both concepts is an understanding of how various spatial activities are orchestrated and framed, and how these might foster positive economic development or other favourable outcomes in the region. CSpR in particular corresponds with the rise of the non-state 'place-based' economic development strategies at a time when both state and civil society at large find themselves increasingly reliant on non-state actors (e.g. Albers 2011, Harrison 2014, Suwala and Albers 2020). Furthermore, in accordance with many neoliberal critiques and broader critiques of broad corporate influence in contemporary urban settings, not only private-sector place-based leadership

and CSpR interventions, but most corporate-led interventions are subject to increased scrutiny (see, for example, Ward 2006, Cheshire 2010). Moreover, our examples have also shown that this scrutiny is in part justifiable (take, for example, the dominance of a single entrepreneur in the Duderstadt case), especially in cases where private interests take on a disproportionate role in strategic planning- or process-based measures and where the civic sector was not adequately involved, or was even intentionally neglected (e.g. Masterplan Cologne).

Notwithstanding, we believe that a coordinated and appropriate level of application of enterprise-driven place leadership, conducted jointly with CSpR measures, can create synergies for communities dealing with the increasingly complex and diverse demands of internal stakeholders and external pressures. Moreover, in small towns or rural areas, particularly in jurisdictions that lack strong government bodies or that have administrative authorities with low effectiveness (e.g. failed states), business-community-led models might be without alternatives (Horlings and Padt 2013, Enright et al. 2016, Albers and Suwala 2018, Suwala et al. 2018). By means of our dual framework approach, we aim to contribute to both theoretical and practical developments in the fields of place leadership and CSpR. Place leadership studies should not neglect enterprise-driven initiatives (e.g. Tretter 2017, Bellandi et al. 2018), while CSpR can help to overcome the fear of the ‘one great person or company’ myth. Moreover, we have provided examples for ‘different degrees of commitment and responsibility’ within place leadership and CSpR and shed further light on different varieties of possible place leadership (Beer and Clower 2014, Nicholds et al. 2017). The ‘regional policy toolbox’ mentioned above opens up possibilities for an appropriate practical use that can be tailored to the given mode of governance, economic structure and social norms (for example, Sotarauta 2016). For the future, it is desirable to explicitly include the private sector in place leadership roundtables in order to create tri-sectoral negotiations. Only then can true transparency, communication, reciprocity and mutual sensitivity for the needs of the counterparts begin to resolve problems. Invoking CSpR measures in such talks will help to foster further confidence when working with the private sector.

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