



Reprogramming Private Public Space

Framework for the Transformation of (Semi-)Public Space

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GLOSSARY

EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HR	Handlungsraum der Stadtentwicklung / Urban Development Action Area
IHRK	Integriertes Handlungsraumkonzept / Integrated Urban Development Plan
ISEK	Integriertes Stadtteilentwicklungskonzept / Integrated Urban Regeneration Implementation Plan
M	Project Implementation Month
NEB	New European Bauhaus
NEBourhoods	Creating NEBourhoods Together
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPL	Munich Neuperlach
OA	Open Access
T	Task
WP	Work Package
Organisation Name (Consortium)	
AGM	Architekturgalerie München e.V.
BYF	Bayerische Forschungsallianz GmbH / Bavarian Research Alliance GmbH
GC	Green City e.V.
HM	HM Hochschule München University of Applied Sciences
HM:UniverCity	HM Innovationsnetzwerk / HM Innovation Network
MGS	MGS Münchener Gesellschaft für Stadterneuerung GmbH
MS	UnternehmerTUM MakerSpace GmbH
MUC	Landeshauptstadt München / City of Munich
MUC CCI	Kompetenzteam Kultur- und Kreativwirtschaft / Team of Excellence for the Cultural and Creative Industries
MUC CULT	Kulturreferat / Department of Arts and Culture
MUC LED	Referat für Arbeit und Wirtschaft / Department of Labor and Economic Development
MUC PLAN	Referat für Stadtplanung und Bauordnung / Department of Urban Planning and Building Regulations
SCE	Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship
STR	Str.ucture GmbH
SAAD	Studio Animal-Aided Design GmbH
SSR	Studio Stadt Region Forster Kurz Architekten und Stadtplaner Partg Mbb
TUM	Technische Universität München / Technical University of Munich
UTUM	UnternehmerTUM GmbH
Organisation Name (in Cooperation with)	
MER	Münchner Ernährungsrat e.V.
MIN	Münchner Initiative Nachhaltigkeit
OTH	Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg
Organisation Name (Associated Partners)	
BDA	Bund Deutscher Architektinnen und Architekten e.V.
BDA-By	Bund Deutscher Architektinnen und Architekten Bayern e.V.
ByAK	Bayerische Architektenkammer, Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts / BAK – Federal Chamber of German Architects
BYD	Bayern Design GmbH

1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

“Creating NEBourhoods Together” is one of the six lighthouse demonstrators of the New European Bauhaus funded by the EU to address the great challenges of climate, environment, and health. The aim is to collaborate on the European Green deal to create more sustainable, inclusive, and beautiful living environments across the EU. In Munich-Neuperlach (NPL), one of Europe's largest post-war urban expansion areas, NEBourhoods is collaborating with citizens and stakeholders from culture, science, and business to implement ten actions from all fields of urban development, encompassing circular construction and redesign of residential and commercial buildings, innovative forms of mobility and energy communities, biodiversity and green space concepts and nutrition and youth culture. Encouragement of entrepreneurial thinking and action and practical implementation in co-creative processes support the formation of sustainable neighbourhoods in liveable, inclusive, and beautiful cities of the future.

Combining co-creation and entrepreneurship while placing culture and creativity at the core of the transformation process, the project is delivering accessible and empowering solutions, providing roadmaps and kickstarting actions to make the EU Green Deal beneficial for all in NPL and beyond. With meticulous care, the district is being cultivated to become a resilient urban innovation landscape. Over this two-year period, we have been creating NEBourhoods together, demonstrating how circular thinking and acting in society and the economy can be realised, how the green transformation in construction, mobility, energy, food and health can be activated and how public spaces can be enhanced.

1.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE ACTION “REPROGRAMMING PUBLIC PRIVATE SPACE”

Neuperlach has a considerable number of privately owned office buildings. Many of these buildings are currently awaiting deconstruction, redevelopment, or programmatic transformation. In the action, we studied these superstructures and especially their exterior spaces, exploring pathways of their further development aligned with NEB goals. As a test case to understand how public-private space can be reclaimed for citizens' use, we planned to work with global real estate developer HINES.

When HINES withdrew from the cooperation, shortly after the start of the project, we adapted our approach accordingly. Drawing from this experience, which showed the need of exterior incentives for owners of real estate to engage with the public and universities, we developed a tool designed to actively engage property owners and guide them into a cooperative role. This tool aims to facilitate future collaborations by providing structured strategies to encourage owner participation in redevelopment and transformation processes. It is a certification system based on the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles, which are important benchmarks for real estate firms. We called the certification system URBAN SPACE CHECK (Stadtraumcheck).

1.2 METHOD:

The analysis of public and semi-public spaces takes place on-site and in a workshop process together with the users, the neighborhood, the owners of the two buildings, the municipality, and the already existing neighborhood management. Our findings will be incorporated into case studies of the TUM Cluster Sustainable Real Estate.

1.3 OUTCOME:

The outcome of the action Reprogramming Public Private Space is URBAN SPACE CHECK, a certification system to strategically guide property owners and developers into an active and cooperative role to reclaim public-private space for citizens' use.

URBAN SPACE CHECK aims to transform Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) into areas that embody ecological, social, and spatial quality in a sustainable manner. Its objective is to develop a flexible and adaptable framework for engaging private real estate owners, aligning with their operational logic to secure long-term participation. Central to this effort is the creation of a certification system based on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles, offering a scalable and universal model that minimizes reliance on individual partnerships. By prioritizing transparency, inclusivity, and equitable collaboration, the deliverable seeks to deliver sustainable, impactful solutions that benefit diverse stakeholders and foster broader urban transformation.

While the URBAN SPACE CHECK will be further developed at TUM after the end of the NEB project, the deliverable is designed to serve as a blueprint for other European cities. While large office complexes are ubiquitous around Europe, an individual approach has to be found for each city and each institutional and academic setup embedded into it.

1.4 IMPACT:

We are working on the important topics public space and hybrid urban uses for the transformation of today's city into a future-proof city, by investigating two former office buildings that stand next to each other but have diametrically different futures. The analysis of the temporary use of one of the buildings (SHAERE, 40000 sqm) and its immediate environment in NPL will help teach lessons to many similar projects in the EU.

1.5 NEB ACTION TEAM

The core team from the Urban Design Chair at TUM consisted of Prof. Benedikt Boucsein, Matthias Faul, Daniel Zwangleitner, and Elif Simge Fettahoglu, who led the research and

implementation of the action. They were supported by a group of students—Jana Liszewski, Hadiel-Ornella Khuri, Helena Bauer, Marcel Thielitz, and Marlene Schreck—who actively contributed to the project’s development.

As an advisor, Kees Christiaanse provided strategic guidance, while the TUM Cluster Sustainable Real Estate supported the project through research contributions and expertise in sustainable urban development.

The project was carried out in close collaboration with local stakeholders, including members of the District Council, the City of Munich’s Department of Urban Planning & Building Regulations, and the Quartiersmanagement der Stadtsanierung (Quidde35 / MGS). Additionally, residents from the neighborhood played a vital role by sharing their insights and actively engaging in the participatory process.

This interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach ensured a comprehensive perspective on the transformation of (semi-)public space, integrating academic research with practical, community-driven urban development.

1.6 OBJECTIVE OF THIS DELIVERABLE

This deliverable relates to task T5.1. Its objective is to present a *Framework for the Transformation of (Semi-)Public Space* around former office areas based on NEB-principles. It is the main result of our action *Reprogramming Public-Private Space*. The deliverable consists of two main parts:

- (1) This document, which offers an overview of the action, outlining its objectives, methodology, transferability, and scalability. It also situates the action within the NEB Compass and explains how adjustments were made in response to changes encountered during its development.
- (2) The Urban Space Check Handbook, which represents the core outcome of the action, presenting its substantive results in a structured and practical format.

Together, these components conclude the action.

2 REPROGRAMMING PUBLIC-PRIVATE SPACE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This NEB action explores the transformation of large, monofunctional office buildings and their surrounding outdoor spaces into mixed-use complexes, with a focus on privately owned public spaces (POPS). Using Neuperlach as a case study, the project examines how such transformations can drive positive change in urban neighbourhoods.

Across Europe, these office buildings are typically located in peripheral or semi-peripheral office park-like settings, marked by spatial separation and limited public access. However, with shifting white-collar work patterns and a real estate crisis, many now face high vacancy rates. Their structural and functional transformation presents an opportunity to create more inclusive, resilient, and adaptable urban spaces.

The project is based on the hypothesis that repurposing these buildings into mixed-use complexes and reimagining their outdoor spaces as POPS can revitalise surrounding neighbourhoods and enhance economic resilience. POPS, in particular, offer room for climate-responsive solutions by integrating green corridors, biodiversity, and sponge city principles to improve urban sustainability.

A key focus is redefining outdoor spaces as productive, multifunctional, and accessible urban elements. Thoughtful design can promote ecological sustainability, foster social interaction, and enhance overall quality of life for residents and employees.

Since these properties are privately owned—often by large firms or institutional investors—any transformation must align with the owner’s economic interests. To create effective incentives, we developed a quantifiable, ESG-compatible evaluation system that assesses measures, conditions, and transformation strategies for POPS. This certification framework facilitates stakeholder communication, encourages investment, and serves as a scalable model across the EU.

Following the logic of established sustainability certifications (e.g., LEED, DGNB), this framework enables precise assessment, classification, and targeted recommendations for POPS transformation.

Under the title URBAN SPACE CHECK, we introduce a certification metric with gold, silver, and bronze levels. This system incentivises property owners to enhance publicly accessible spaces while addressing ecological, social, and economic factors. At the same time, it ensures long-term benefits for local communities, aligning private investment with broader urban and environmental goals.

2.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The development of the URBAN SPACE CHECK certification system followed a multifaceted methodology combining empirical research, design experimentation, stakeholder engagement, and applied teaching. This structured, iterative process explored the transformation of monofunctional office buildings and their outdoor spaces into mixed-use complexes with a focus on POPS. The approach integrated urban analysis, participatory design, prototyping, and evaluation. This approach was chosen to ensure both conceptual depth and practical applicability of the certification system.

1. Research Framework and Data Collection

The initial phase involved extensive research and data collection across key areas:

- Urban and real estate analysis – Examining office real estate trends, particularly in Munich, in response to shifting work patterns and the ongoing real estate crisis.
- Spatial analysis – Mapping and assessing POPS in Neuperlach to understand their urban, social, and ecological characteristics.
- Stakeholder analysis – Identifying key actors (investors, property owners, municipal authorities, and residents) and analyzing their motivations, constraints, and roles in urban transformation.
- Public space demand analysis – Evaluating the need for public spaces in Neuperlach to identify gaps and opportunities.

The collected data was visualized in maps to support subsequent Design-Based Research, covering aspects such as: POPS location, media presence, actor networks, land use, greenspace, climate conditions, active/inactive spaces, public space usage, ownership patterns, cultural and educational institutions, commercial clusters, mobility infrastructure, and urban development concepts.

2. Teaching-Based Design Research

To ensure the needed depth of knowledge and to generate valid test designs on various scale, the collective intellect and also power in terms of production of design classes with students was employed. This served to multiply the workforce that went into the NEB project. served an educational purpose, but also is seen as a methodology that can be transferred to other European cities that have according faculties located in them

Thus, a key methodological component was the integration of academic teaching, involving over 150 students in bachelor's and master's studios, seminars, and thesis projects at TUM's Professorship for Urban Design. The teaching approach was structured into two phases:

Phase 1: Understanding & Exploration (10/2022 – 04/2023)

- Case study analysis – The seminar The XXL Office Complex examined office transformations in Neuperlach and other European cities, focusing on the roles of authorities, owners, and society.
- Master theses – Two master theses explored mixed-use redevelopment strategies and public-private space transformations.
- Site observations & participatory engagement – Students conducted interviews, surveys, and mapping exercises to analyze the social and spatial dynamics of POPS.

Phase 2: Design & Prototyping (04/2023 – 07/2023)

- Bachelor studio projects – 86 students developed scenarios for Neuperlach's transformation, addressing traffic, urban density, and POPS reprogramming.
- Bachelor thesis: The Interventions Class NPL – Students tested hypotheses through 1:1 interventions, including community benches, urban gardens, water installations, and urban furniture prototypes, to explore public-private space configurations.
- Stakeholder dialogue – Workshops and discussions with residents, city officials, and local groups facilitated knowledge exchange.

3. Development of the URBAN SPACE CHECK Certification System

Building on these research and design insights, the project team developed URBAN SPACE CHECK, a certification and evaluation framework for assessing and incentivizing POPS transformation. The development followed these steps:

1. Conceptualizing an evaluation system – A matrix-based tool was created, incorporating ecological, social, and economic criteria aligned with ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles.
2. Iterative refinement with stakeholders – Multiple testing rounds with property owners, policymakers, and community representatives ensured relevance and feasibility.
3. Prototyping certification levels – A three-tiered assessment system (Gold, Silver, Bronze) was introduced to encourage property owners to integrate public accessibility, sustainability, and urban quality.

4. Further Development & Evaluation

- Real-world application – The system was tested in pilot interventions in Neuperlach, assessing its impact on public-private space usage.
- Stakeholder feedback loops – Continuous input from residents, urban planners, and property owners refined the certification criteria.

5. Conclusions and Future Applications

The iterative research confirmed that POPS transformation requires a flexible yet structured approach integrating urban analysis, participatory processes, and incentivized certification systems. URBAN SPACE CHECK serves as a scalable prototype, but its success depends on localized adaptation to diverse urban, regulatory, and societal contexts.

2.3 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE URBAN SPACE CHECK

The Urban Space Check is a certification and evaluation system designed to assess and enhance publicly accessible spaces on private properties. It provides a structured framework to ensure that these spaces generate societal value by improving quality of stay, cultural offerings, biodiversity, accessibility, and overall urban livability. The Urban Space Check is designed as a structured evaluation system that aligns with ESG certification frameworks, which assess environmental (E), social (S), and governance (G) criteria in corporate and real estate contexts. Similar to ESG standards like LEED or DGNB, it provides a quantifiable assessment of privately owned public spaces, ensuring they meet sustainability, accessibility, and social impact benchmarks. By offering a gold, silver, or bronze classification, the system incentivizes property owners to enhance urban quality while integrating ESG-compatible practices into their development strategies. For insights into the operational framework, please refer to the Urban Space Check Handbook.

Evaluation and Implementation Process

For properties exceeding a certain size, companies are required to provide publicly accessible spaces that contribute to the community. The transformation process follows a collaborative approach, involving:

1. Evaluation – Urban planners, associated with the university and directly guiding students, assess the current state of public-private spaces to identify areas for improvement.
2. Tool Selection – In cooperation with property owners, planners determine the most suitable strategies and interventions from a predefined toolbox. These tools range from creating new uses and inclusive meeting spaces to enhancing biodiversity and ensuring barrier-free access.
3. Implementation – Selected measures are realized in collaboration with startups, ensuring innovative and effective solutions for urban space transformation.

Certification System



To incentivize the improvement of publicly accessible spaces, Urban Space Check introduces a three-tiered certification system based on a points-based assessment:

- Bronze (27+ points)
- Silver (45+ points)
- Gold (63+ points)

The urban planners associated with the local university evaluate private properties according to a structured scoring system, measuring their contributions to urban quality, sustainability, and public engagement. Companies that meet the criteria receive official certification and recognition, signaling their commitment to creating high-quality urban environments.

By providing a clear and scalable framework, the Urban Space Check ensures that privately owned public spaces are not just functional, but actively enhance urban life, ecological resilience, and social inclusivity.

2.4 REPLICATION + UPSCALING OF THE URBAN SPACE CHECK

Key steps that must be taken to successfully replicate (parts of) the solution:

- 1. Identifying Suitable Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS):**
Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) hold significant potential for advancing sustainable urban development, particularly in addressing climate change and promoting socially just city transformations. These spaces should become a key focus of urban development, especially around large, formerly monofunctional office complexes, to maximize their value.
- 2. Early Stakeholder Participation for Context-Specific Processes:**
The optimal configuration of POPS in large-scale office environments depends heavily on the surrounding urban structure. These specific needs can only be accurately identified through intensive stakeholder participation. This collaborative approach helps ensure that the functions of POPS are well-suited to their context and avoids potential misconfigurations.
- 3. Developing Certificates with Municipal Support:**
Given the unique nature of each context, the development of a POPS certification must be tailored to the specific local environment and created in collaboration with local stakeholders. Universities with architecture or urban design faculties are valuable resources in this process, aligning with the principles of the New European Bauhaus initiative. The ownership structures of large office complexes typically require incentives aligned with ESG criteria and measurable outcomes. One such incentive could be a municipality-supported certification recognizing the effective

implementation of POPS. This certificate would provide tangible motivation for private stakeholders while promoting sustainable urban design practices as a standard for future developments.

4. **Real-World Laboratories in Collaboration with Local Universities:**

Aligned with the NEBourhoods co-creation approach, establishing living labs with relevant stakeholders is an effective method for fostering collaboration. This format ensures that interaction- and intervention-based processes provide a framework for real-world testing of solutions in public spaces. We recommend following a structured process of understanding, designing, and refining prototypes for public space interventions. The following conclusions developed through the “StadtRaumCheck” (Urban Space Check) serve as a strong foundation for site-specific iterations, which can then be developed, tested, and implemented in local collaborations.

5. **Transferable Conclusions for Urban Design of POPS Based on Neuperlach:**

- a. **Prioritize Green Spaces:** Green space and desealing measures should be a core focus of POPS around large office buildings, leveraging existing natural qualities to enhance sustainability and resilience.
- b. **Ensure Accessibility:** Public accessibility must remain a central goal throughout the design process. This includes fostering open and mixed-use ground floors in adjacent buildings to encourage inclusivity and broader public engagement.
- c. **Improve Connectivity:** POPS should contribute to better connectivity and wayfinding across the district. This can be achieved with clear, visible signage that includes symbols, Braille, and multiple languages to ensure ease of navigation and inclusivity for all visitors.
- d. **Integrate Sustainable Mobility Hubs:** Transforming private spaces into POPS should consider adding hubs for sustainable mobility, supporting the shift to greener urban transportation.
- e. **Program Site-Specific Uses:** Uses such as playgrounds, water fountains, sports facilities, or seating areas should be tailored to the specific site. These features must be planned as part of a broader process, such as the certification outlined in this deliverable, to ensure success.
- f. **Promote Inclusivity and Shared Responsibility:** The design and management of POPS should foster a culture of inclusivity, respect, and collective responsibility, creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.
- g. **Engage Students for Interim Uses:** Students can act as pioneers by testing temporary uses in and around POPS. Collaborating with local residents from the outset ensures the transformations meet community needs.
- h. **Adopt the "Commons" Framework:** The concept of "commons" provides a valuable framework for understanding POPS as shared resources. This

approach emphasizes principles of shared ownership, collective responsibility, and equitable access to benefit the entire community.

6. **Upscaling:**

We recommend developing certificates across various contexts to build expertise on the topic and encourage the formation of European startups for collaboration. The insights gained from these efforts could ultimately pave the way for the creation of a more unified, EU-wide certification.

2.5 EVALUATION OF CORE VALUES

Value: Beautiful – To Integrate

The “Beautiful” value is rated as “to integrate” because the project successfully reimagines Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) as essential elements of the urban fabric. By transforming their role within the city, the initiative enhances both local well-being and ecological balance, integrating site-specific conditions and neighborhood dynamics into the design process.

Value: Sustainable – To Repurpose

The “Sustainable” value is rated as “to repurpose” because the StadtRaumCheck (Urban Space Check) aims to redefine and reprogram POPS. By aligning its certification with ESG criteria, the project shifts property owners’ typically market-driven perspectives toward a more ecologically and socially responsible approach to urban space management.

Value: Together – To Transform

The “Together” value is rated as “to transform” because the StadtRaumCheck actively involves diverse stakeholders with varying interests. This collaborative process reinforces social connections, turning POPS into key nodes for community interaction and engagement.

3 CONCLUSION

The “Reprogramming Public Private Spaces” action successfully addressed the core objectives outlined in Task 5.1 by developing and implementing a structured approach to transforming Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) in Neuperlach (NPL). The project observed, collected, and analyzed data from the pilot area, generated case studies through student engagement at TUM, formulated strategies for the sustainable transformation of

public-private spaces, and provided recommendations for future urban developments in NPL and beyond.

Through extensive empirical research and participatory methods, the project identified key challenges and opportunities in the transformation of large, monofunctional office buildings and their surrounding spaces. The Urban Space Check emerged as a central outcome, providing a scalable, ESG-aligned certification framework to guide property owners and stakeholders toward more sustainable and socially inclusive urban space management.

A key methodological component was the integration of academic research with real-world applications. The collaboration with over 150 students at TUM facilitated an iterative design process, generating a diverse range of interventions and transformation strategies. By engaging with local stakeholders—including property owners, municipal authorities, and neighborhood representatives—the project ensured that proposed solutions were both feasible and context-specific.

The Urban Space Check directly supports the NEB principles of sustainability, inclusion, and aesthetics by offering a structured tool that evaluates and incentivizes improvements in public-private spaces. The certification system, structured in bronze, silver, and gold levels, encourages property owners to contribute to urban quality while aligning with existing sustainability certifications like LEED and DGNB. This approach not only fosters improved accessibility and ecological resilience but also strengthens the economic viability of real estate investments by integrating ESG principles into urban planning.

Furthermore, the project's impact extends beyond Neuperlach. The methodological framework, findings, and recommendations provide a roadmap for similar transformations across European cities. The certification system's adaptability ensures that it can be implemented in different urban contexts, reinforcing the potential for widespread application and scalability within the EU.

In conclusion, the "Reprogramming Public Private Spaces" action has successfully developed a replicable model for the sustainable transformation of POPS. The Urban Space Check serves as a critical instrument in reclaiming and enhancing public-private spaces for broader societal benefit, aligning private development goals with the New European Bauhaus vision of a more sustainable, inclusive, and beautiful urban future.



Figure 1: NEBourhoods' colour scheme. *(example for Figure – delete for final report)*

SYSTEMATIK BEI FOTOS – pink hinterlegt ersetzen;

Figure 2: Text Bildunterschrift. Image Source: NEBourhoods/Vorname Name (ggf. Institution)