Regiopole Rostock is a growing and prosperous community. Rostock prepares its quantum leap: the city center of the polycentric city is to be extended. According to development studies Rostock and its catchment area serve about 550,000 inhabitants. The historic inner city center and its western outskirts have been renewed during last 28 years. To raise the Regiopolis Inner City standards the plan is to locate high-end urban functions on the river bank in such a way that the river becomes a connecting element between the different development sites. For decades, the river and its shore-line areas have been almost completely neglected and (mis)used for low urban functions, missing strong economy and clear development goals. Now there is the historic opportunity to integrate the eastern (in general of poorer urban qualities) and western parts of the city, to develop an higher Inner-City attractiveness, a step towards the future center of a northern German Regiopole in the Baltic Sea Region. Increasing the density of the urban Inner City and its surrounding does not mean “loss of green and water areas”; we will counter the evidence by extension.

**What does the city center of the polycentric Regiopole Rostock offer in 2030?**

The goal is to conceive a future oriented mix of functions in the interest of the community. Clever decisions on completing urban functions to extend the Inner City Centre (also necessary structures and procedures) are to be made in the near future; so it is not about selling space and building conventional projects to revitalize the construction and real estate industry, but sustainable increase in attractiveness through a appropriated, sensitive and

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balanced functional mix, as well as intelligent - the common good obliged – fitting economic and operating options.

Therefore, the planning and investment initiative is clearly in the responsibility of the City administration. The Rostock city council agreed to set a generous framework for this mega-project about 500 Mio €. The favoured development instruments are the "Federal Garden Exhibition" (similar in some aspects to the International Building Exhibitions, IBA) and voluntary co operation with different public, private and third sectors.

Why not experiencing positive multi-level-governance? Focusing on one underdeveloped area in the interests of all stakeholders; thus securing the public initiative and preventing economic failures. The deadline of 2025 is set because of the strong formalized public procedures of federal garden exhibition 2025 national competition.

Six years are available to demonstrate the efficiency of Rostock in close cooperation with the regional state and Federal governments. In this (the social, economic, ecological and spatial urban structures) formative urban megaproject is less about landscaping and horticulture, but more to increase the potential on and of the river, activation of a modern urban society, local and regional economic development, highest urban and design qualities. This Inner City and its surrounding area strategy shall strengthen the whole regiopolis and catchment areas. The mega 500 Mio € project shall practitise goals-implementation of development grants of the EU, and of Federal and Central governments. Rostock’s strategy is based on a multilevel governance approach; therefore, the project is placed under direct leadership at the Lord Mayor.

Regarding the strengthening of the lost maritime function and city harbor appeal, the Interreg project JOHANN addresses the revitalization of the river/bank) by commercial-tourist shipping: small cruise ships, mega-yachts and tall ships are to receive additional port functions in the historical Inner City port area (www.smallships.eu).

It is a good tradition in Rostock to seek international expert advice before making strategic decisions. Questions to our guests:

**Complex 1: pedestrian bridge:**

- The pedestrian bridge shall display an eye catcher character with high symbol and image effects. The bridge shall shorten the ways for rescue vehicles. For winter services a minimum 5 m width is needed. Why not installing a permanent innovative transport service, like an autonomous driving (mini)bus? Any ideas?

- How to meet the interests of the majority of stakeholders? Interests of pedestrians are met, interests of bicycle drivers met with only a 4 % slop, interests of majority of sailors met. The integration of an opening/folding mechanism will open the last river

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bay for sailing boats; the closed bridge will allow the passage of sailing boats with a 10 m top. How to convince all stakeholders and those with particular interests? How to get high public acceptance for the inspiring design and corresponding high costs? How important should beauty be to us?

**Complex 2: conversion of waste depot to Public Park**

- Should this "sin of the 1980s" stay forever in an attractive place? The conversion costs are still enormous. Which temporary use for a period of about 30 years? Which options should be reserved for 2050+?

- Are there affordable environmental solutions that would enable urban development, building and construction?

**Complex 3: from the unintegrated mixed situation to an attractive urban space**

Spatial development studies; how to move from sophisticated intellectual discussions to more operational issues

- How to speed up public decisions and control procedures? How to find balance between wide public participation and collective irresponsibility? How to come fast from intellectual talks to high quality and integrated investments? How to avoid feeling of “I am not responsible but I like to have to say a lot”; how to close gap between high quality sectoral and spatial planning and development process? How to ensure continuity of the overall investment over the full period of development?

- Are processes, actions and communication planning part of the development process? Who shall become responsible (management, monitoring)? Which qualifications needed? Which organisational structures? Which co operation models?

- How to generate most efficient follow up investments? How to make needed public investments independent from permanent public subsidies? How to combine investment with losses with investments with wins in an economic system?

- How to ensure permanent dominance of public interests and high qualities? Are reduced quality and quantity standards even any future times acceptable? How to ensure national gardener affair quality over its duration time? Who account and save maintenance costs?

- Is a risk-plan (plan B) necessary? How to avoid impact from short-term approach changes, caused by political changes?

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