



STRATEGY MAKING

We consider “Urbanism” an integrative area of research and practice, gathering urban design, spatial planning, data analysis and modelling, urban studies and sustainable technology, among others. Each area of knowledge asks different (but complementary) questions anchored on different ontology and epistemology. Different questions demand different methods to answer them. Sometimes, the same question can be answered from different perspectives. The Method Sheets give an overview of methods, approaches, and concepts used in Urbanism.

WHAT DOES THIS METHOD ‘DO’?

You have envisioned a possible future, a design or vision, but now it is time to go back to the present and start thinking about how to get there. How do you strategize the implementation of your vision and the spatial transitions you imagined?

Part of being a designer/planner is to make spatial strategies. A strategy identifies concrete actions to be taken in the light of a vision. This strategy consists of a series of spatial interventions in the form of key projects and/or spatial policies, a timeline that orders interventions chronologically

and a description of actors and organisations that are involved in bringing spatial change about. Strategies might also include budget planning, legislations and/or policies that guide spatial development through rules and regulations for areas concerned.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS METHOD?

Strategies are useful for a number of reasons:

1. A strategy will help you get a grip on the governance of your vision and it will navigate your design through time, both short-term and long-term, to get to a meaningful and impactful outcome.
2. A strategy will help you understand the basic tools and instruments of strategic spatial planning in delivering public good, spatial quality and (more) spatial justice.
3. A strategy will anchor a vision in the face of long-term spatial development uncertainties. Making it more resilient to unforeseen occurrences during the process. It shows need-to-have interventions and nice-to-have interventions; and it therefore presents where the vision is flexible and adaptable.
4. The conflicts of interests in the use of space have turned spatial planning into a collaborative effort. A strategy helps to guide the collaborative processes of planning and development.

NAVIGATING YOUR VISION

LIMITATIONS & PITFALLS

Strategy-making is not the same as vision-making. They are both tools of spatial planning and design meant to frame and steer the development with the involvement of stakeholders. But, whereas vision-making focusses on the “what?” question of spatial transformation, strategies making focusses on the “how, when and by whom?” questions. Thus, strategy-making involves the processes surrounding the creation and implementation of a design.

Do you want to better understand this difference and do you know more about vision-making? Take a look at “Vision-making” method sheet.

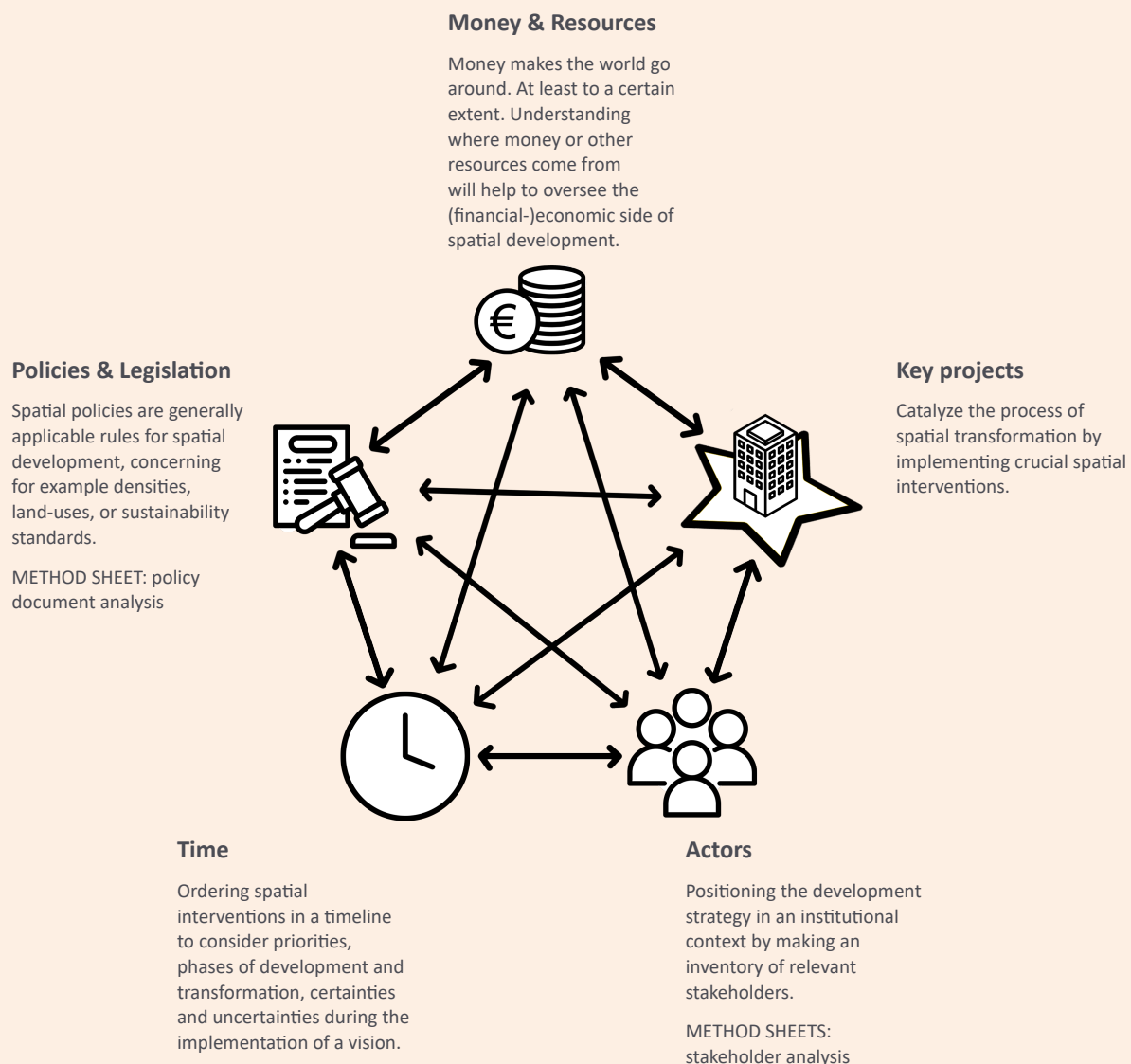
HOW, WHEN AND BY WHOM?

HOW DO YOU DO IT?



A spatial development strategy can be composed of different elements shown in the diagram below. Developing this strategy is not done in a fixed order or set protocol. But make sure to touch upon these elements to make your development strategy 'complete'. Keep in mind how they might influence each other!

Sidenote: "Backcasting" is planning method that starts with defining a desirable future and then works backwards to identify policies and programs that will connect that specified future to the present. This can be very useful for Strategy-making, so it is recommended to take a look at the "Backcasting" method sheet as well.



FURTHER READING



Qu, L. (2023). Vision and strategy making: teaching spatial planning in design education in a situated learning environment. In: Rocco, Bracken, Newton, and Dabrowski (eds). *Teching, Learning & Researching Spatial Planning*. TU Delft OPEN.