The private sector and public space in Dutch city centres

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ABSTRACT

Private sector involvement in the design and financing of urban redevelopment projects has been relatively rare in the Netherlands. The public sector has traditionally played a central role in spatial planning and development. Since the 1980s, however, local authorities have been sharing the responsibility for urban development with the private sector. This article explores the viability of claims drawn from the literature about the effects of private sector involvement in redeveloped public space. Confronting those claims with our empirical material, we expected to find that the participation of the private sector would increase the redevelopment budget but would also lead to restrictions on public access. These two expectations are evaluated in light of the experience in four redeveloped squares in four Dutch cities: Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Enschede and ‘s-Hertogenbosch. We found that actors on the public and private sides have different interpretations of what constitutes a direct financial contribution. Those from the private sector believe they have made significant contributions, while those from the public sector see themselves as the sole funders. But they agree on the issue of free access: both public and private actors deny any negative effects of private sector involvement in this respect.

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Introduction

The private sector has long played a role in the design and management of public space, although the intensity of its participation has varied by place and period (Punter, 1990; Mitchell, 1995; Cybriwsky, 1999; Bell, 2005). A prominent role for the private sector in urban development is still common in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, where businesses and civic organizations may provide for public spaces through business improvement districts or town centre management (Symes and Steel, 2003). Alternatively, private owners may be encouraged by government incentives to provide publicly accessible space on their property or on their premises (Kayden, 2000). Such forms of private sector involvement have been relatively rare in the Netherlands, where the spatial planning and development tradition reserves a central role for the national government (Priemus, 2002). However, since the 1980s, Dutch urban development has increasingly been approached from an ‘entrepreneurial’ perspective, whereby responsibility has been devolved from the national to the local government and even to the private sector. The question is, to what extent does increased private sector involvement affect public spaces once they have been redeveloped?

Private sector actors can influence the redevelopment of public space in a number of ways. According to Beauregard and Haila (1997), the participation of large property developers and investors makes it more likely that big projects will actually be completed. With more stakeholders, though, the decision-making process may become more complicated and time-consuming. Bringing more parties into the process could also heighten the need to compromise, which might lower the quality of the project. On the other hand, private sector involvement could improve the coherence between the public space and adjacent private properties, since an area could be developed as an entity rather than in a piecemeal manner. We have explored these claims in previous research by confronting them with the experience of redevelopment in four Dutch cities (Van Melik, 2008, pp. 175–179). There, we found more coherence between buildings and the public space in cases where the private sector had joined in the redevelopment process. Our research also showed that the long duration of redevelopment projects (6–10 years from the first plans to completion) is more the result of added regulation and the increasing complexity of society than of the involvement of the private sector. Furthermore, the projects we investigated showed no evidence of compromise on quality.

In the present study, we put two other claims to the test. The first one is that private sector involvement leads to increased budgets, and that this in turn makes for better quality in the design and management of public space. We base our expectations on the work of Punter (1990), who observed a growing awareness among investors and developers of the benefits offered by good quality in the public realm. These parties are motivated by the opportunity to appropriate the development value of the site and enhance its long-term potential to generate revenue. Their rationale is that public space of good quality facilitates the sale or lease of the
adjacent properties, since people would rather live, work or shop in pleasant surroundings than in an unattractive street or square. The private sector can presumably allocate more assets to improve the quality of public space than the local government could, given that local authorities always have to weigh such ambitions against other items on the budget. Yet since one of the main tenets of private ownership is the right to exclude and enforce (Scruton, 1982, p. 375), the involvement of the private sector might result in exclusion. For example, increasing the number of restrictions or the intensity of surveillance would diminish the public character of the space (Sorkin, 1992; Cybriwsky, 1999; Kohn, 2004). Although security measures might not be explicitly aimed at excluding certain user groups, they could in fact make some people feel less welcome, resulting in a form of social exclusion (Erkip, 2005). This undercurrent in the literature gives rise to our second expectation, namely that private sector involvement leads to a limitation of access to public space. These two expectations are discussed in more detail below and their viability is subsequently scrutinized by examining four redeveloped city squares in the Netherlands.

Increasing budgets for redevelopment

For decades, local governments tended to give low priority to the design and management of public space; other responsibilities, such as sanitation and road maintenance, took precedence (Carr et al., 1992). In many instances, the capacity to provide upkeep and maintenance has been limited as a result of caps on public budgets. But this situation is changing as local governments find themselves competing to attract the increasingly mobile higher-income residents, tourists and businesses. They realize that it is not sufficient for a city to have a number of iconic buildings and to host notable events. The image of the city and its lifestyle can also benefit from public spaces of good quality (Madanipour, 2003). In search of funding to redevelop public space, local governments may turn to the private sector, which – unlike the public sector – can usually raise the necessary funds.

As noted above, the primary motivation for the private sector to engage in redeveloping public space is to increase the return on their other investments. Property developers and investors such as pension funds, life assurance companies and real estate funds now see that it may be in their own interest to invest in the quality of public space. Doing so would enhance the market appeal and long-term rental potential of the adjacent properties (Punter, 1990; Bell, 2005). A clear example of these positive returns is contained in the 1961 incentive zoning policy for New York City. This policy stimulated developers to create ‘Privately Owned Public Spaces’ (POPS) in or on their property in exchange for a bonus of extra floor space over and above that allowed by the prevailing zoning regulation – and as a result higher revenues (Kayden, 2000; Smithsimon, 2008). A similar policy instrument does not yet exist in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, the notion that investment in the quality of public space increases the value of adjacent properties has become widely recognized and has served as an incentive for the private sector to invest in public space.

The financial contributions by the private sector can take the form of direct, semi-direct or indirect investments. An investment is said to be direct when private parties buy land from the local government and then finance the development and management of both the buildings and the public space outright. The sale may be closed for a token amount if the new owner commits to significant investment in the external space. Most direct investments are funnelled into new areas at the city’s edge but some penetrate the complex tangle of interests in the city centre. Investment by the private sector can also be semi-direct. While the local government redevelops the public space, the private parties – usually owners of property abutting the redeveloped public space – make an earmarked contribution to the municipal budget. This can be either voluntary or compulsory, in the latter instance through special assessments. Such levies are usually proportionate to the value of the properties. The local authorities justify imposing them by referring to the presumed yield that the entrepreneurs will gain from the improvements. The third type of investment occurs when the local government redevelops public space with its return on the sale of the land. The private sector buys a parcel of public land in order to develop a new building. The municipality uses this return to finance the redevelopment of the remaining public space. This approach, in which the private sector contributes indirectly, is known as value capturing.

Limits on public access

The downside of private sector involvement in the redevelopment of public space is that access might be controlled, thereby diminishing its public character (Van Melik, 2009). After all, the private sector is not in business to solve a public problem such as the unattractiveness of public space. As Staeheli and Mitchell (2006) have shown, the provision of a public gathering place in a privately owned area like a shopping mall is less important than investment that is expected to stimulate consumer spending. The primary function of investment in private property is to generate income, which is often aided by controlling access. Desirable users are encouraged to frequent the space, while its use by potentially undesired users is hindered (Cybriwsky, 1999; Staeheli and Mitchell, 2006). Several instruments of control can be applied to this end: e.g., increased supervision by police or private security guards, or surveillance by the ‘electronic eye’ of closed-circuit television (CCTV). Other instruments, which are grounded in the architecture and the layout of the spaces, often entail constraints on loitering (Van Melik et al., 2007). The ‘hide approach’ can be used to conceal a particular public space: “… entrances and routes are hidden and are known only to – and hence are only supposed to be found by – exceptional privileged people …” (Koskela, 2000, p. 249). Another tactic is to use denial cues. While these do not actually hide a public space, they mask its public character by making access difficult, for instance through contorted or confusing paths of approach. These instruments do not explicitly exclude certain user groups; in principle, everybody is welcome in the public space as long as they behave appropriately. However, the instruments are designed to make some people feel unwelcome, resulting in social exclusion. Supposedly, this will create a mindset among those who are privileged in which they can enjoy themselves – and spend money – unreservedly. At the same time, others feel less welcome and stay away, leading to a segregation of users (Erkip, 2005).

The involvement of the private sector in redevelopment processes might thus create public spaces that are less openly accessible than those developed and managed solely by the local government. Several commentators have drawn attention to such exclusionary effects. Some call it the end of public space (Sorkin, 1992; Kohn, 2004); others identify a general transformation of public space from being freely accessible to being under constant surveillance (Carr et al., 1992; Mitchell, 1995). The discussion is frequently couched in the wider debate on the increasing social segmentation of today’s post-Fordist city. Marcuse (1995) has defined this as the quartered city, in which enclaves of wealth and power coexist with areas for the socially excluded. Others have elaborated on this notion, introducing concepts such as splintering urbanism (Graham and Marvin, 2001) and the post-justice city (Mitchell, 2001). What these and other publications have in common is that they “… offer compelling dramatizations about how the contemporary urban form appears to be manifesting as an in-
tensely uneven patchwork of microspaces that are physically proximate but institutionally estranged . . ." (MacLeod, 2002, p. 606). Most commentators agree that the shift toward cities that are divided into areas with differing levels of control and accessibility coincides with a stronger presence of private stakeholders.

Yet others believe that these interpretations are over the top. Kirby (2008) argues that the social benefits of public space are exaggerated, while those of private space are commonly ignored. He clearly espouses a more positive stance towards public spaces owned or controlled by the private sector and states that these are "... heterogeneous places that are managed rather than controlled, and that employ technologies that are soft rather than hard . . ." (Kirby, 2008, p. 91). Moreover, as Erkip (2005) found in her research on Turkish malls, the private atmosphere of the mall might even have an emancipating rather than an exclusionary effect. In particular, teenagers, the elderly and females appear to feel more comfortable at the mall than on the street. However, her research also revealed that malls become more homogeneous in terms of user groups, suggesting that some users are in fact being excluded. Webster (2007) is less pessimistic about the effect of decreased accessibility in the urban landscape. In his view, more rules and restrictions are inevitable simply because public space becomes scarcer as urban populations grow. He sees some benefit in this transformation, as monopolistic management of public space by a municipal government leads to limited incentives to innovate. The involvement of a variety of agencies and institutions would be likely to increase its quality and diversity through competition (Webster, 2007). Similarly, Goodsell emphasizes that local governments can also have a negative effect on access to public space. "One question is whether government itself will own or control the public space, either place-bound or electronic. Clearly, this arrangement privileges those in authority. The state is in a position to promote constructions of public space that accentuate its power . . ." (Goodsell, 2003, p. 371).

Although some authors have doubts about the negative impact of private sector involvement, most find that it does restrict access to and use of public space. For instance, Carr et al. (1992, p. 363) contend that "... there is typically a perceived conflict between the developer's interest in bottom-line profitability and the publicness of public space . . ." A large-scale survey of all POPS in New York City led to the same conclusion. Apparently, many of the spaces that developers created to qualify for the zoning bonus were either substandard or did not meet the contractual obligations. For example, some were closed during the specified opening hours; others lacked the promised amenities or posted entry restrictions (Kayden, 2000; SmithSimon, 2008). In light of the literature, we raise the question whether a negative relation between private sector involvement and public access can be found in Dutch redevelopment projects in which the private sector has participated. This question forms the grounds for our empirical research, outlined below.

Research design

To investigate the two assumed effects of private sector involvement in redevelopment on the resulting public space, we selected four inner-city squares, one each in four Dutch cities: Beursplein in Rotterdam; Statenplein in Dordrecht; Van Heekplein in Enschede; and Loeffplein in 's-Hertogenbosch (see Fig. 1).1 Construction of the Beursplein retail complex was completed in 1996; it consists of a 300-metre-long underpass connecting two existing re-

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1 The term 'plein' is Dutch for square or plaza. H.J. van Heekplein is named after the influential textile industrialist Hendrik Jan van Heek (1814–1872). For sake of simplicity, it is abbreviated to Van Heekplein. Similarly, Burgemeester (Dutch for mayor) Loeffplein is abbreviated to Loeffplein.
the city's main public space. Each project linked the redevelopment of public space to the construction of a new retail complex. Altogether, these conditions allowed for a thorough redevelopment of the areas without much resistance from the local population or historic preservationists.

**Redevelopment budgets**

As discussed above, three different modes of the private sector’s financial contribution to the redevelopment of public space can be identified: direct, semi-direct and indirect. Rotterdam’s Beursplein...
was redeveloped with a direct investment by the private sector. Being developed, owned and managed by a consortium comprising the City, ING Bank, and the pension fund of the retail conglomerate C&A, this project is a textbook example of far-reaching cooperation between local government and the private sector. Their specific contributions to the redevelopment differed. Local government participated to the tune of 9.5 million euro, which was the appraised value of the land. Private parties came up with the other 7/8 of the financing, which covered the cost of the construction of the shops as well as the fees for the design of the sunken mall (Fig. 2). Since its completion, the management costs, including maintenance and surveillance, have been shared among the
consortium members in proportion to their participation. Beursplein is thus a prime example of a publicly accessible space that is developed and managed on the basis of direct financial contributions by the private sector.

Private stakeholders can also contribute by shouldering part of the municipal budget for a project. One of the informants representing the private sector indicated that his organization occasionally topped up the budget for the redevelopment of the public space in front of its own property. However, such forms of voluntary, semi-direct contributions were not common; nor were special assessments on private stakeholders. Among our cases, only the city of Enschede had imposed a tax on all businesses in the city centre in order to redevelop one of the squares. Such assessments have been contested since 2005, when local entrepreneurs in another Dutch city successfully sued to have their compulsory contribution to the redevelopment of the city centre rescinded. They pleaded in court that special assessments would only be legal if the improvements could be shown to increase the value of their own real estate property. And that, they argued, would apply to the upgrading of utility systems, for example, but not to the beautification of public space.

The standard urban development model in the Netherlands entails that developers buy the land from the local government after it has consolidated the ownership of the site and prepared it for building (including the adoption of the necessary development plans and the provision of infrastructure). The price is often the outcome of negotiations. The third mode of private sector contributions refers to situations in which the local government redevelops the public space with money from the sale of what was formerly public space. This would amount to indirect investment by private stakeholders, a strategy that has been applied in three of the cases: Statenplein, Van Heekplein and Loeffplein. Regarding the first of these cases, Statenplein was reduced in size by the construction of a new block of mixed commercial and residential building, called the ‘Nieuwe Blok’. The lot was owned by the city, which sold it to be developed and managed (by the Multi and Achmea corporations, respectively). At the Van Heekplein redevelopment, the private stakeholders also had to purchase city-owned land to enlarge their property. This included not only land for the construction of the new Bijenkorf department store but also for the extension of the existing V&D department store and the Klaverij shopping centre. In ‘s-Hertogenbosch, the outdated police station located at Loeffplein was demolished; the site was subsequently sold to a developer to create the shopping centre named Arena. In each of these redevelopment projects, the yield of the transaction was reinvested in the surrounding public space. But as the interviewed public sector representatives emphasized, the sales price was not enough to cover the costs of redeveloping the public space.

The 38 informants were asked whether private sector involvement had increased the available budget for the four projects. The opinions differed among the actors (public versus private sector) and between the projects. With regard to Beursplein, all stakeholders – public and private alike – acknowledged the importance of the financial participation by the private sector. This is not surprising, because the private sector contributed directly to the funding of the consortium that developed and subsequently managed the project. The actors involved in the three other redevelopment projects were less in agreement. The representatives of the public sector believed that they had paid the full bill for the improvement of the public space. With regard to the redevelopment of Van Heekplein, one commented:

We don’t regard the money received from the sale of the land as a boost to the resources. Obviously, it is part of the project’s management, but you don’t call that an increase in resources.

There have not been specific contributions from the side of the developers … (public sector representative).

On the other hand, almost all private sector representatives saw things differently. They believed that they had contributed financially to the redevelopment of public space. As one of the private actors involved in the same redevelopment project argued:

We have contributed through the price of the land. The local government always thinks that they pay for redevelopment, but that is by the grace of the land price. If you don’t have a viable function, the land price is zero. From that perspective, the private parties contribute. The land price increases because we develop something and give the site a function. The authorities have always had the tendency to see that as their own money, but it is money raised from the market. Obviously, the question whether enough money has been raised remains a topic for debate. But that is a different issue, as we have indeed not paid for the paving stones … (private sector representative).

Obviously, the private stakeholders are convinced that they make a significant financial contribution to the redevelopment, while the public sector disagrees. Besides their interpretation of the sale of the site as an indirect financial contribution to the redevelopment, the informants from the private sector also expressed a similar view on the interaction between the value of the private properties and that of the public space. The general idea is that public space of good quality constitutes a positive externality and thereby increases the value of the surrounding property (Punter, 1990). Yet they turn the argument around, claiming that buildings of good quality increase the value of public space. In other words, the private sector perceives its investment in buildings as a positive externality for the adjacent public space. Consequently, the private sector believes that its investment in a building on a square is tantamount to an investment in the public space and as such counts as a direct financial contribution.

Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the contribution that the private sector makes to the redevelopment budget, despite the lack of direct payments for the redevelopment of public space:

Private parties put municipalities under pressure. Developers say, “We have come all the way from Amsterdam to Enschede to pitch up your city, now it’s your turn.” Then the ball starts rolling, and I believe the local government does its very best to make an honest effort. It probably intended to do so anyway, but because of the presence of private parties, it is more or less challenged … (designer).

Even with a limited financial contribution, the private sector’s role can thus lead to a budget increase by stimulating the local government to invest more in its city centre. Overall, however, the private sector’s direct financial contribution to improve the public space in redevelopment projects remains limited. Allowing the private sector to play a role in the decision-making is no guarantee that the available budget will expand.

Access to redeveloped spaces

The second expectation that we have distilled from claims made in the literature – and scrutinized in this empirical study – is that private sector involvement leads to heightened control and limited access. At first sight, all four of the projects appear to place some restrictions on access and use. There is camera surveillance at Beursplein; no fewer than 68 cameras have been installed in the 300-metre-long underpass. Parts of all four projects are closed off at night, specifically the underground part of Beursplein and the shopping centres bordering Statenplein, Van Heekplein and
In these particular areas, the rules on behaviour are also stricter than in the surrounding public spaces. For example, rollerblading and cycling are not allowed on Beursplein. Actually, the public is not always aware of all the restrictions that apply. When vendors of the homeless newspapers first appeared at Beursplein, they were swiftly removed. And when a radio station was broadcasting live from Beursplein, the reporters were summoned to leave while they were on the air. These incidents prompted many questions about the regulations in force at Beursplein. To avoid future confrontations, the management has now posted the main ‘house’ rules at the entrance. However, large parts of the Statenplein, Van Heekplein and Loeffplein complexes cannot be closed off. They are only governed by the standard local ordinance on public conduct and there are no cameras. There, the involvement of the private sector does not necessarily lead to more control and limits on public access. Any differences in the level of control are related to the particular forms of ownership. In classifying the four projects, Beursplein can be typified as a shopping mall, even though it is not indoors and looks rather like a public street. At Statenplein, Van Heekplein and Loeffplein, stricter regulation and partial closure apply to the privately owned adjacent shopping malls (i.e., Drievriendenhof, Klanderij and Arena), not to the squares themselves.

No, Statenplein is a public space; in principle anything may happen there that falls within the range of what is permitted under the local ordinance. The investors have no influence on that ... (public sector representative II).

Like Beursplein, the shopping centre Arena causes some confusion. It too looks like a public space, due its close connection to Loeffplein and its outdoor character (it is gated but not covered). Drievriendenhof and Klanderij have a more private appearance because they are indoors. Yet the squares on which these shopping venues are located are publicly owned. Therefore, they are not subject to a more stringent regime of surveillance and control, even though the private sector was involved in their redevelopment.

The interviews revealed general agreement among both public and private actors that private sector involvement leads to more control only in privately owned places. Many felt this was reasonable; they argued that property owners are simply entitled to impose rules in private areas, even if these are publicly accessible. The stricter regime of regulation and surveillance at Beursplein, Drievriendenhof, Klanderij and Arena was thus widely accepted. But one developer insisted that the private sector makes public space not less but more accessible by improving its attractiveness through the redevelopment process. Others added that the reason why Beursplein is more accessible than a regular shopping mall (i.e., Drievriendenhof, Klanderij and Arena), not to the squares themselves.

If you ask an average person from Rotterdam what he thinks about Beursplein, he will say that it is fantastic. I believe that you have to look very hard to find a single user who feels controlled, manipulated, or restricted in his freedom of action in that area ... (public sector representative III).

Another informant emphasized that more control in one area is not bad as long as there are other areas that are widely accessible. As long as there are places where everybody is allowed to go and where everybody can gaze at each other, amuse, and even disturb each other, it is understandable that there are also places that – because they fulfill certain functions – exclude certain elements ... (designer II).

One informant suggested that the increase of control in public space is not an effect of private sector involvement. Rather, it is required because people have become more wary of each other and of the possibility of victimization. Legal regulations are needed to oppose this trend, both in privately and in publicly owned spaces.

Conclusions

Some contributions to the public space literature mourn the overall decline of public space as a result of privatization (e.g. Sorkin, 1992; Kohn, 2004). According to Brill (1989), though, this ‘narrative of loss’ is overrated. He argues that claims about the demise of public space are laments for something that rarely existed. Atkinson agrees: ‘If public space is defined as space to ‘which normally people have unrestricted access and right of way’ it is difficult to make the argument that any space has ever held such a status...’ (Atkinson, 2003, p. 1830). In this train of thought, recent privatization trends should not be seen as a threat but as a new form of public space development and management.

Our research findings offer support for this argument. Although the consortium model of public–private cooperation underpinning the development and management of Beursplein is often presented as a success, it has not been copied at Statenplein, Van Heekplein or Loeffplein. The involvement of the private sector in these three projects is limited to indirect financial contributions through the yields of the sale of the land. The private sector’s influence on the freedom of public access also appears to be modest. Its involvement does lead to more control and restricted access, but only in the newly developed areas that are privately owned rather than in the public space. This is particularly true for enclosed malls, which are closed off at night and are subject to strict rules of behaviour and to oversight by private security. Outside these areas, public space is still public; that is, it is not covered by more rules than stipulated in the local ordinance and it is accessible to all. As such, our results do not suggest the creation of a ‘quartered’, ‘splintered’ or ‘post-justice’ city (Marcuse, 1995; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Mitchell, 2001). In that sense, the Dutch context of urban redevelopment differs from that of the United States. In the Netherlands, the notion of urban public space that is ‘used by and accessible to all’ is still prevalent in urban policy (Van Melik, 2009). This may very well explain why serious restrictions on access are not tolerated. Consequently, the impact of private sector involvement is rather limited, both in terms of an increase in budget and as a decrease in public access.

Altogether, our survey of the four projects suggests that the private sector is interested in redevelopment when it involves public space that does not have a historic character but does offer an opportunity to clear obsolescent structures and build new retail complexes. This common denominator underlines the observation by Kirby (2008) that the private sector is only willing to participate in city centre revitalization projects if offered the opportunity to make a profit by developing and selling the new property. In each of the four case-study areas, new or expanded retail functions were included in the project, providing a strong incentive for developers and investors to come on board. The private sector is not likely to...
participate when the redevelopment entails merely ‘cosmetic’ changes to the design of public space. Its role in the redevelopment of one location and its absence at another might lead to quality differences between urban spaces; some benefit from new investment, others are ignored.

This effect did not occur in our projects, however, because the redevelopment was not limited to the squares proper. The four cities applied a comprehensive approach and simultaneously redeveloped other public spaces in the city centre (Van Melik, 2008). This is possible in a welfare state in which the government (still) plays a fundamental role in the provision of public goods. In addition, public spaces do not differ extensively due to the limited involvement of the private sector. While such differentiation could become problematic in the long run, the situation is not expected to change in the near future. The volume of private sector investment in the enhancement of public space has been low, and as long as the current economic malaise persists, the role of private sector actors is not likely to expand significantly. But at such time as disinvestment in the city centres do occur – due to a diminishing retail sector and the concurrent devaluation of commercial real property – the public space would be negatively affected.

We should sound one note of caution. There is a possibility that the retail sector will become more homogeneous, and that would change the look of the consumption ‘landscape’. Public spaces are already looking more and more alike due to interurban competition and city marketing that results in “…using similar ‘tools’ in an attempt to create differences…” (Spierings, 2006, p. 199). Private sector involvement might further increase the homogeneity of public space in Dutch cities because the group of developers and investors active in the production of public space is relatively small. While this is not necessarily bad, it could lead to similar design and management outcomes in the built environment and public space of many city centres.

It seems inevitable that the private sector will play an increasingly important role in urban redevelopment in the Netherlands. Like elsewhere, Dutch local authorities are acting in a more entrepreneurial manner. They are no longer solely focussed on the provision of services for residents but are also involved in the promotion of the prosperity of the city and its ability to attract jobs and investment. The entrepreneurial strategies of local governments range from ‘branding’ campaigns and the organization of events to large-scale redevelopment projects. These strategies will increasingly require participation by the private sector, as the authorities lack the necessary financial resources due to declining local tax revenues and limited national fiscal support. The local government must find a balance in engaging and directing the private sector. International examples, such as the POPS in New York City, show that the private sector is more willing to invest in public space.

References


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