# Placemaking initiatives in challenged inner cities

Enhancement of urban retail areas.

# PLACE MAKING IN RETAIL

The research is based on the further workings of two leading authors in placemaking and place creation. For this the literary findings of Verheul (2017) were used to classify placemaking in inner city retail areas in the Netherlands. Secondly the findings of Projects for Public Space (PPS) were used to create the final research model.

Placemaking can be defined as: *"all temporary and permanent physical, social and marketing interventions in the (semi-) public space, including the plinths of the buildings."* (Verheul, 2017)

As a graduate student at the TU-Delft the last year or so I've been analysing inner city retail areas that are struggling with changing consumer demand and increased vacancies.

For my research I have been analysing the characteristics of placemaking and specifically how these can contribute to the ever changing retail environment.

The research shows a total of 14 critical success factors in placemaking that contribute to the overall success of a project located in these challenged inner cities in the Netherlands.

Now that my research is final finished I would like to specially thank my two mentors: Wouter Jan Verheul & Hilde Remøy for their excellent support in the development of the research and patient manner in which they've supported me.

## PLACE MAKING IN RETAIL

From the research findings a model was created that can strengthen the implementation of the 14 critical success factors. The model can be used in the project initiation, where it can be used as a checklist as an addition to the current development plans. The research shows that each of these in total 14 factors will individually contribute to strengthening the plan and thus as a whole will enhance the chance and also the degree of success. The implication of each individual factor will depend on the location specific conditions. However, each of the 14 factors were chosen based on their generic implication in similar challenged inner cities that currently are struggling with changes in market demand and increased vacancy.

The model consist out of three layers: the **key attributes** which are a further working of the research of Verheul (2017), the previously mentioned **critical success factors** as a result of the research and finally the **Secondary success factors** which consist out of 22 separate factors.

To explain it further, a number of examples are highlighted in the following section:

The "luchtsingel" or air bridge that was realised during the development of the Hofbogen in Rotterdam shows an important critical success factors in the project: **Citizen participation**.

Despite being a lack of budget for realising this part of the project together with both important stakeholder and local residents in the area a plan was devised in which people could sponsor their own

planks that would be added to the project. Also, people were asked to physically help built it together, creating a real sense of belonging. In the end a bridge was created that

attracted new people to the area and felt part of the community due to high level of participation it had received during the realisation.



The second critical success factors that is highlighted is that of **Area concession.** Despite being time and money intensive to implement multiple interviewees still advocate

for the importance of this factor. They state that it is hard but necessary in the current retail climate to create an area that fits the current consumer demand, even if this means that certain areas need to be transformed for other function as for instance dwellings. In the case of the Hofbogen area concession meant that they could stop a part of the developments in the north part of the Hofbogen as market demand changed during the development. This however, will require the need for both a strong financial underlayment of the project as sufficient support base for the overall project is needed.

The importance of this third and final highlighted example of a critical success factors is already shown by the previous example. This is the critical success factor of **Shared area investment zones.** The reason why this is so important is because implementing a large-scale plan or concept as area concession require allot of time and money, that in most cases cannot be invested by just one entity. Not even public entities as they have to remain to specific budgets. But by creating a project with shared goal and benefits as shown in the case of the Hofbogen, between multiple social housing funds, the RET and the municipality, a better financial underlayment can be reached.

# Content

**Placemaking**
*"All temporary and permanent physical, social and marketing interventions in the (semi-) public space, including the plinths of the buildings." Verheul (2017)*

**Challenged inner city**
*Primary and secondary retail areas that are currently struggling the most with vacancies and the overall dilapidation of the area.*

# Research Question

Which critical success factors of placemaking contribute to the success of a challenged inner city?

- Which context variables determine the current condition of a challenged inner city?

- Which potential critical success factors, derived from literature, contribute to the overall success of a challenged inner city?

- Which potential critical success factors of placemaking initiatives contribute the most to the overall success of analysed retrospective case studies?

- How could the conditions of successful placemaking in challenged retail areas be implemented in a development strategy of the prospective cases?

**PART 2**
Literature Review

# Current State of affairs

**Problem Scope**
- Challenged inner cities

**Effects of vacancy**
- Disappearance agglomeration
- Dilapidation
- Increased criminality

**Franzen et. al (2011)**

**Necessary conditions**
- Economic support base;
- Appropriate project scope;
- Inclusion of actors;
- Ownership status.

**Context variables**
- economic climate;
- political climate;
- cultural background;
- demographics;
- changes in legislation and regulations.

**Critical success factors**

"Critical success factors have a major bearing on the success or failure of the project in question but the extend of success can differ for individual project."
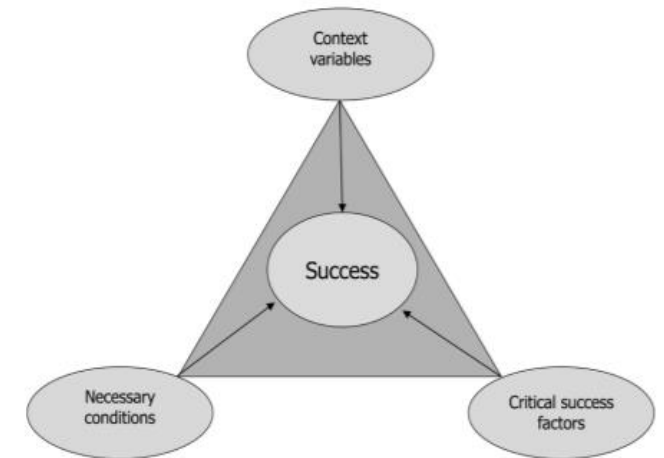
# Applicability of Placemaking

- **Placemaking as a multiple process'**

- *Hardware, Software, Mindware and Orgware*

- **37 factors**
  - *Literature check*

- **15 potential critical success factors**

| HARDWARE | | | | SOFTWARE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Plinths** | | **Public space** | | **Permanent** | | **Temporary** |
| Diversivication of the current combination of retail, restaurants and bars | (Hildebrand, 1987) | Broadening the sidewalks to create more space for the pedestrians. | (Kim, 2015) | Mixed use functions to create a more diverse street and attract more people | (Grant, 2011) | Pop-up concept to fill vacant gaps in the retail supply |
| Creating more room for public toilets. In addition to the current restaurants etc. | (Greed, 2004) | Removing cars from the inner city to make it more pedestrian friendly. | (PPS, 2017) | Using benches to create more places to admire the location. | (Verheul, 2015) | Organising festivals and other large scale events to create awareness of an area. |
| Creating an inversal plinth appearence, including materislisation and colour scemes. | (Karssenberg, 2016) | Introducing more public green to create a more attractive public space. | (Anderberg, 2013) | Creating interactive street furniture to attract new (younger) people. | (Synchroon, 2017) | Windowdressing vacant shop fronts |
| Urban re-allotment of excisting building stock to fit current demand | (Bennet, 2016) | Creating a clear routing trough the public space | (Swoboda, 2013) | Using art to create more attractive areas. | (Mouffe, 2008) | Open air exposés of art and theather. |
| Area consession to fit current demand. | (Saraswati, 2011) | | | Clustering shops to create specific areas (e.g. fresh food sections) | (Moore, 2013 | Neighnourhourhood (record) challenges |

| | | | | | | (CAEL, 2017) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | (Nozeman, 2015) |
| | | | | | | (Rowling, 2012) |
| | | | | | | (Mouffe, 2008) |
| | | | | | | (CAEL, 2017) |

| MINDWARE | | | | ORGWARE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Branding** | | **Marketing** | | **Stakeholders** | | **Organisation** |
| City branding to create a identity that consumers recognize and appreciate. | (Nozeman, 2015) | Create a omnichannel experience based shopping | (Abramham, 2019) | Using a bottom up approach to create new imput of users. | (PPS, 2017) | Creating area investment zones (e.g. BIZ or GIZ) |
| Designing around destictiveness of the current buildings | (Markusen, 2010) | Focus on experience based shopping | (Abramham, 2019) | Both bottum up as top down approach | (CAEL, 2017) | Using incetives to attract new and active current entrepeneurs in the area |
| Urban branding for creating a specific idenity for inner cities consumers | (CAEL, 2017) | Create public facilities to enhance the overall shopping experience (e.g. free wifi) | (Abramham, 2019) | Identifing stakeholders based on their roles, interest and possible involvement | (Nozeman, 2015) | Crowd funding to create financial support for new concepts and entrepeneurs. |
| Creating urban imaginary to spaces within the urban areas that are visually attractive spaces | (OPUS, 2008) | Create a personalised shopping experience based on preferences | (Abramham, 2019) | Using big data to create valuable insights in consumer behaviour | (Nozeman, 2015) | Using subsidies to create finacial support for new conepts and entrepeneurs |
| | | | | Using pentalities for shopowners to active them. | (Stolwijk, 2012) | Creating public will true citizen participation |

| | | | | | | (Zoest, 2017) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | (Williams, 2002) |
| | | | | | | (Berglin, 2013) |
| | | | | | | (Berglin, 2013) |
| | | | | | | (PPS, 2017) |

**PART 3**
Methods & Process

# Conceptual model
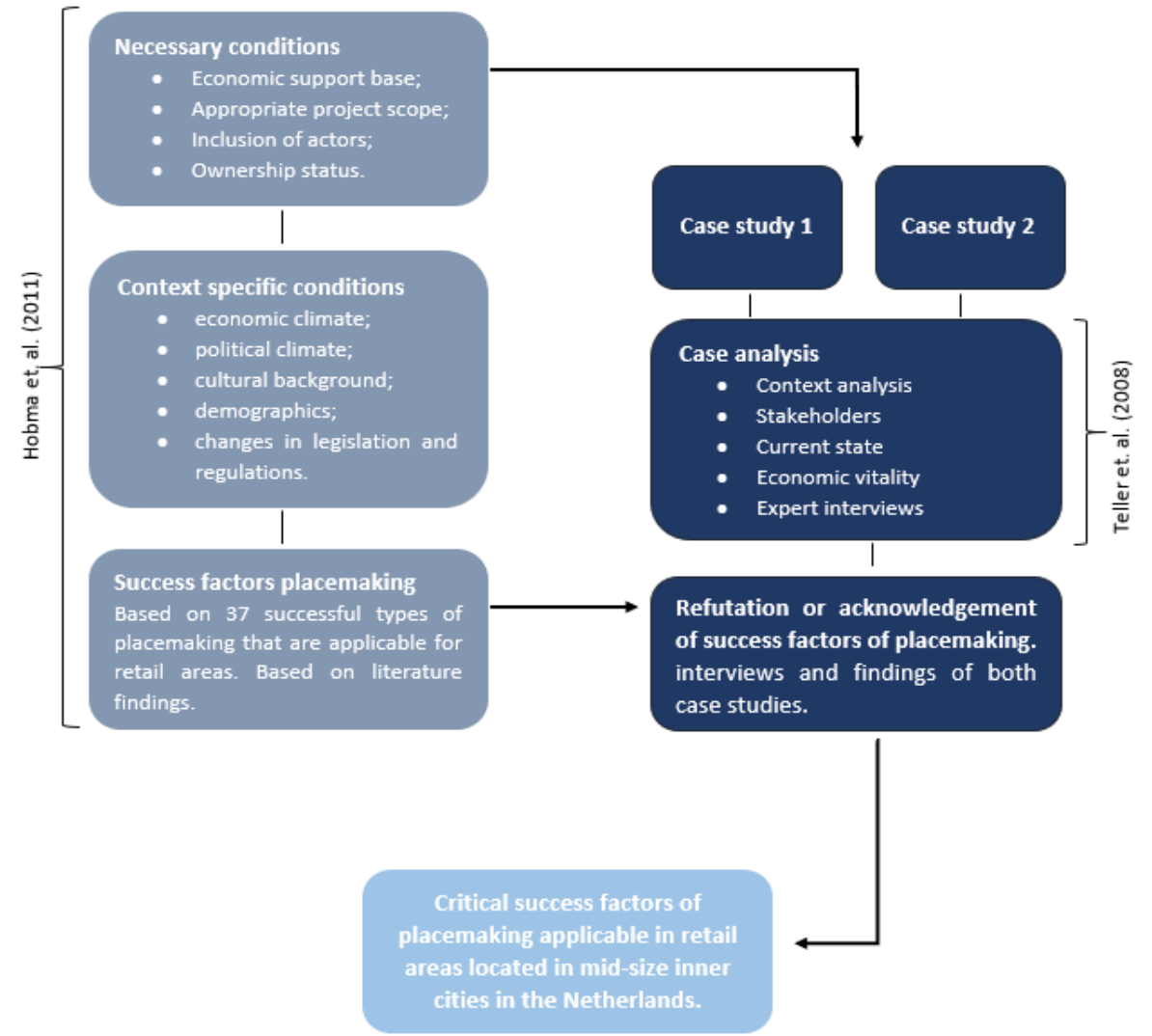
**PART 4**
Empirical Research

# Context Analysis

| Schiedam | |
|---|---|
| Type | Retrospective case study |
| City | Schiedam |
| Status | Delivered |
| Retail type | Primary shopping area |
| Plan type | Public initiative |
| Development period | 2014-2019 |

| Hofbogen | |
|---|---|
| Type | Retrospective case study |
| City | Rotterdam |
| Status | Delivered (with the exclusion of expansions) |
| Retail type | Secondary shopping area |
| Plan type | Private initiative |
| Development period | 2008-2018 |

Case II
Schiedam

Case I
Hofbogen
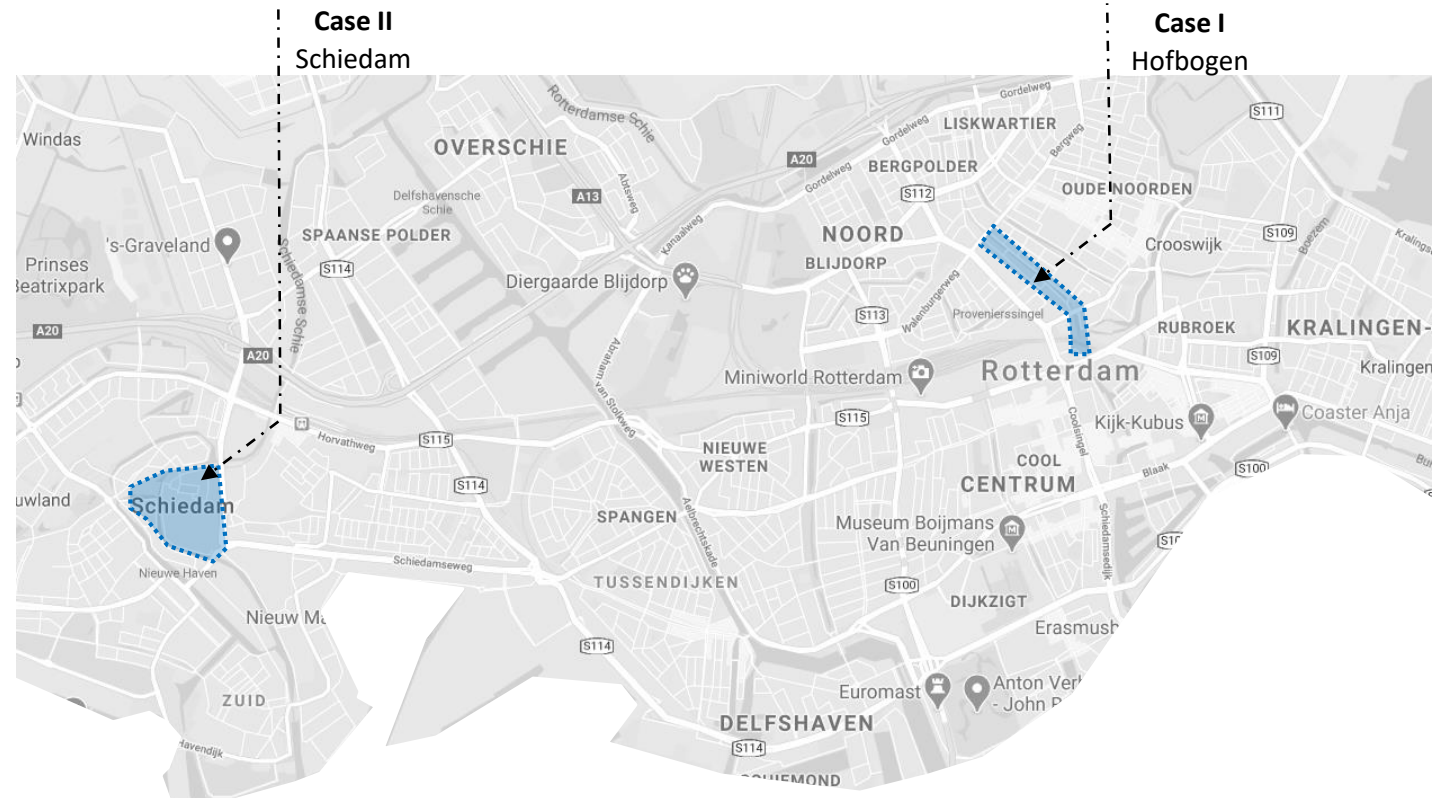
# Context variables

▪**Case analysis:**

- ▪ Context analysis
- ▪ Stakeholders
- ▪ Current State
- ▪ Economic vitality
- ▪ Expert interviews

# PART 5
## Synthesis

# Cross Case Analysis

**Correlation matrix**
- Validated by literature / 6 experts interview / case comparison / final expert review
- Critical Success factors
- Secondary success factors

| | | Literature review | Case study 1 Hofbogen | Case study 2 Schiedam | Critical success factor | Secondary success factor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Diversification of the current combination of retail, restaurants and bars | | x | x | | x |
| 2 | Creating more room for public toilets, in addition to those in restaurants etc. | | | | x | |
| 3 | Creating a universal plinth appearance, including materialisation and colour schemes | | | | x | |
| 4 | Urban re-allotment of existing building stock to fit current demand | | | | x | |
| 5 | Area concession to fit current demand | x | x | | | x |
| 6 | Broadening the sidewalks to create more space for the pedestrians | | | | x | |
| 7 | Removing cars from the inner city to make it more pedestrian-friendly | x | | | x | |
| 8 | Introducing more public green to create a more attractive public space | | | | x | |
| 9 | Creating a clear routing trough the public space | x | x | x | | x |
| 10 | Mixed-use functions to create a more diverse street appearance and attract more people | x | x | x | | x |
| 11 | Using benches to create more places to admire the location | x | | | x | |
| 12 | Creating interactive street furniture to attract new (younger) people | x | | | x | |
| 13 | Using art to create more attractive areas | x | x | | x*1 | |
| 14 | Clustering shops to create specific areas (e.g. fresh food sections) | | | | x | |
| 15 | Pop-up concept to fill vacant gaps in the retail supply | x | x | x | | x |
| 16 | Organising festivals and other large-scale events to create awareness of an area | x | x | x | | x |
| 17 | Window-dressing vacant shop fronts | x | | x | | x |
| 18 | Open air exposés of art and theatre | | x | x | | x |
| 19 | Neighbourhood (record) challenges | | | | x | |
| 20 | City branding to create an identity that consumers recognize and appreciate | | | | x | |
| 21 | Designing around distinctiveness of the current buildings | x | x | x | | x |
| 22 | Urban branding for creating a specific identity for inner cities consumers | x | x | x | | x |
| 23 | Creating urban imaginary to spaces within the urban areas that are visually attractive spaces | | | | x | |
| 24 | Create an omnichannel experience-based shopping | | | | x | |
| 25 | Focus on experience-based shopping | x | x | | | x |
| 26 | Create public facilities to enhance the overall shopping experience (e.g. free WiFi) | | | | x | |
| 27 | Create a personalised shopping experience based on preferences | x | | | x | |
| 28 | Using a bottom-up approach to create new input of users. | | x | | | x |
| 29 | Both bottom-up and top-down approach | x | | x | | x |
| 30 | Identifying stakeholders based on their roles, interest and possible involvement | x | x | | | x |
| 31 | Using big data to create valuable insights in consumer behaviour | | | | x | |
| 32 | Using penalties for shop owners to active them | | | x | | |
| 33 | Creating area investment zones (e.g. BIZ or GIZ) | x | x | | | x |
| 34 | Using incentives to attract new entrepreneurs and activate existing entrepreneurs in the area | | | | x | |
| 35 | Crowd funding to create financial support for new concepts and entrepreneurs | | | | x | |
| 36 | Using subsidies to create financial support for new concepts and entrepreneurs | | | | x | |
| 37 | Creating public will through citizen participation | x | x | | | x |

# Critical Success Factor Model

- **15 -> 13 Critical Success factors**
- Review of DNWS
- Key attributes / Critical success factors / Secondary success factors
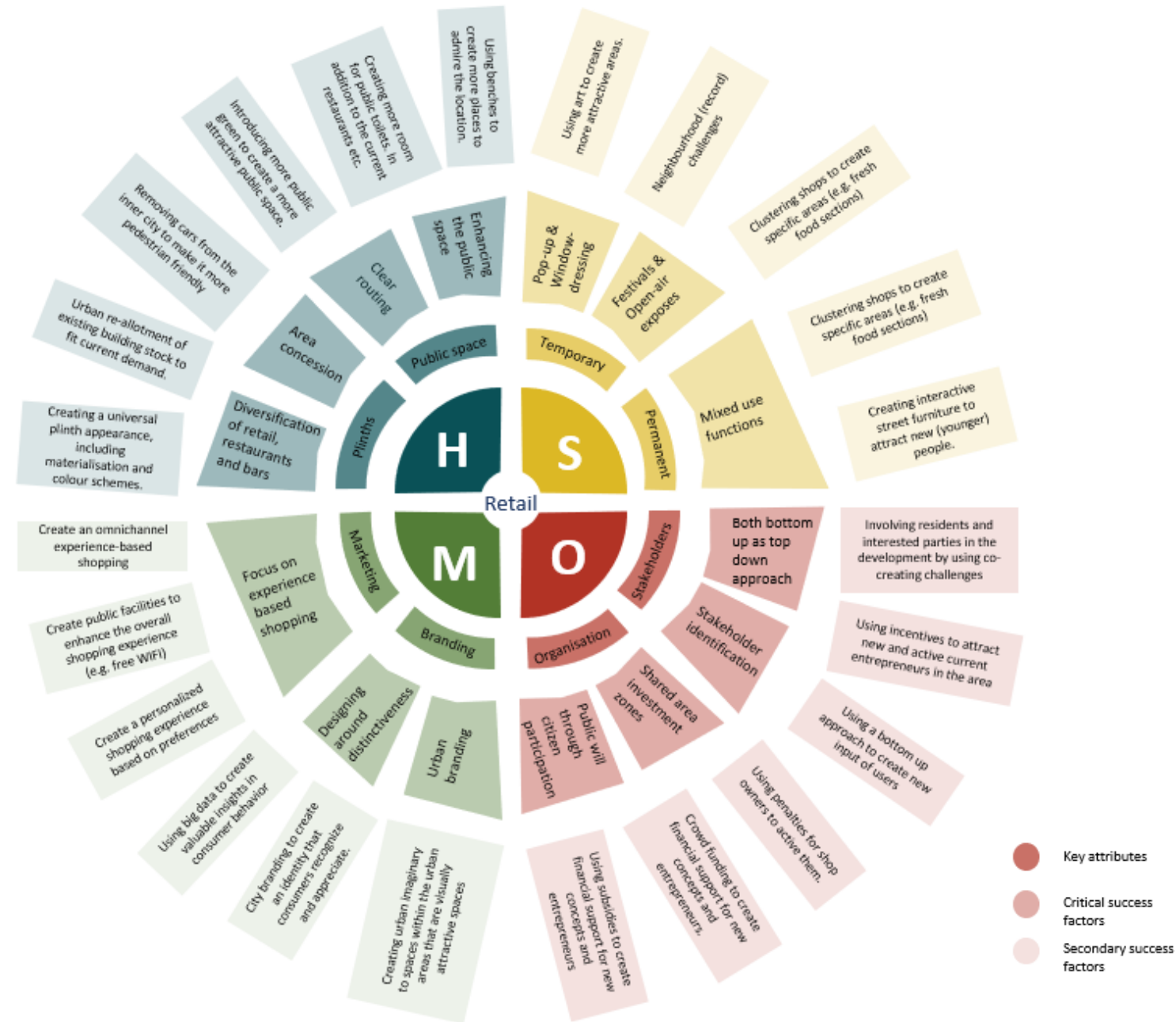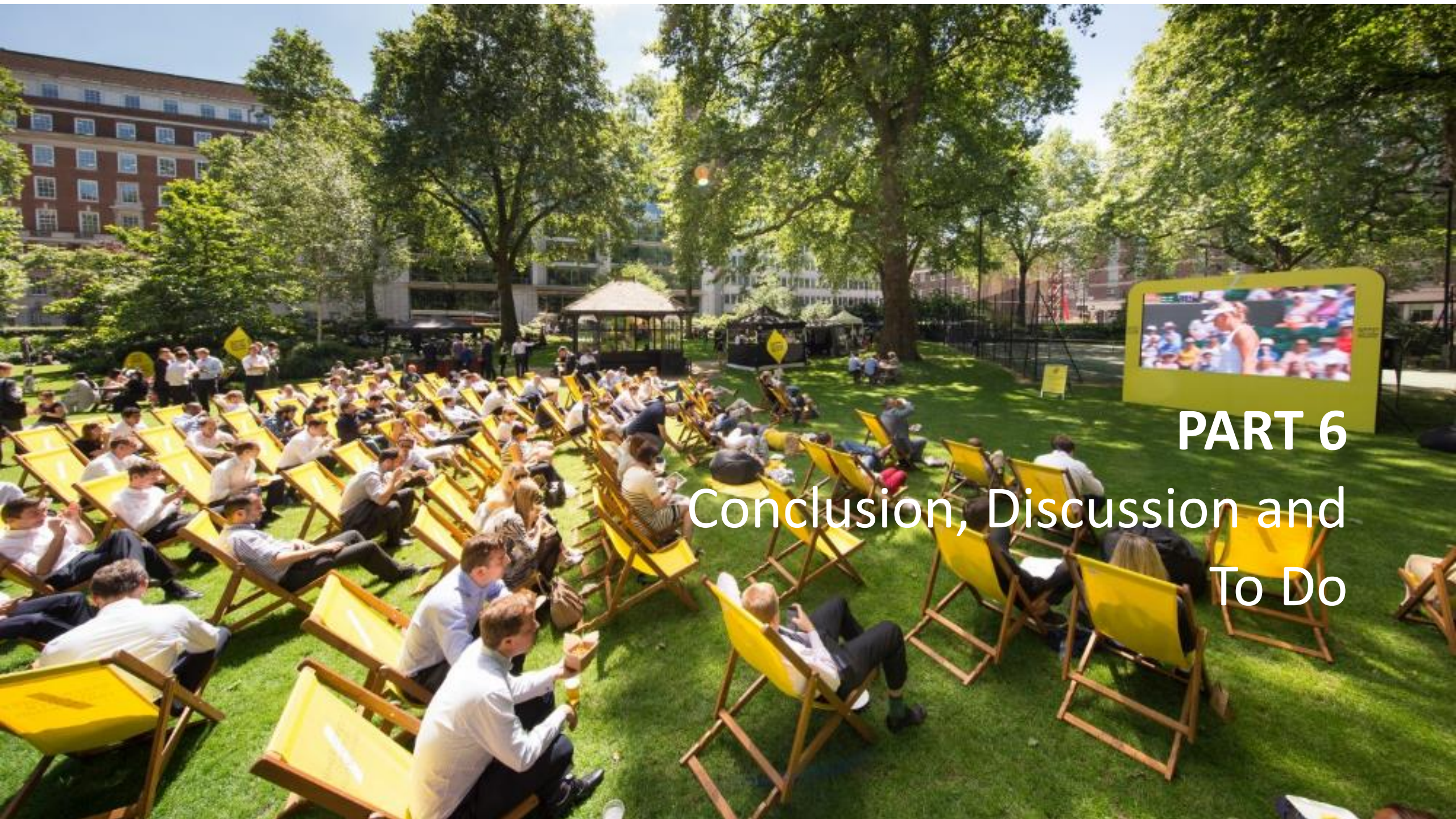
**PART 6**

Conclusion, Discussion and To Do

# Conclusion

**Which critical success factors of placemaking contribute to the success of a challenged inner city?**

- Which context variables determine the current condition of a challenged inner city?

- Which potential critical success factors, derived from literature, contribute to the overall success of a challenged inner city?

- Which potential critical success factors of placemaking initiatives contribute the most to the overall success of analysed retrospective case studies?

- How could the conditions of successful placemaking in challenged retail areas be implemented in a development strategy of the prospective cases?

- Economic climate; political climate; cultural background; demographics; changes in legislation and regulations.

- Fifteen potential critical success factors such as: pedestrian orientated street, public facilities such as benches and top down approach.

- Hofbogen 15 CSF and Schiedam 11 CSF which are compared to the previous findings and the expert review of DNWS which results in a total of 13 critical success factors.

- The Critical Success model can be used in the further implementation of prospective case studies as an addition to the current development plans.

# Conclusion

**Which critical success factors of placemaking contribute to the success of a challenged inner city?**

### Necessary conditions

The case analysis shows that with both cases each of the four conditions are met. Both projects show similarities with creating a phased project scope and the actors that were involved in the project. The overall biggest differences can be found in the ownership status and economic support base.

### Context variables

First of all, the biggest difference between context variables can be found in both the Demographics and Economic climate as it is determined by the sheer amount of people. Secondly the Cultural difference within ownership situation show a difference in the need for certain critical success factors. Finally, a notable finding is that despite the growing importance of **E-commerce** none of the cases show the importance of a omnichannel experience as a critical success factors.

### Critical success factors

**Hardware**
- Diversification of the current combination of retail, restaurants and bars
- Area concession to fit current demand
- Creating a clear routing through the public space
- Enhancement of public space

**Software**
- Mixed-use functions to create a more diverse street and attract more people
- Organising festivals and open-air exposés of art and theatres
- Window-dressing & pop up

**Mindware**
- Designing around distinctiveness of the current buildings
- Urban branding for creating a specific identity for inner cities consumers
- Focus on experience-based shopping

**Orgware**
- Both bottom-up and top-down approach
- Identifying stakeholders based on their roles, interest and possible involvement
- Creating area investment zones
- Creating public goodwill through citizen participation

# Discussion

▪ **Covid-19**

▪ Currently the effects of Covid-19 on the retail landscape are not determined yet. However, that it will influence the performance of the current retail areas is inevitable. Currently some retailers already have addressed their fears of what will happen after the lockdown. Because currently the total of consequences is hard to depict the choice was made not to take into account Covid-19 related results. However, it is possible to speculate what effect this will have on the research by looking at the critical success factors and how these would change. Therefore, the following examples are highlighted
  - ▪ "the diversification of bars restaurants and hotels"
  - ▪ "festivals and open-air exposes"
  - ▪ "area concession"

▪ **Causality**

A second important condition in the research was determining causality for the critical success factors. This meant determining critical success factors based on their implication in the project of both case study and literature review. However, the implication of each individual factor was impossible to determine, because multiple elements were implemented simultaneously and therefore the effects were impossible to determine separately. Therefore, the following measures were taken to individually determine the success of each factor.

Firstly, within literature review each of the 37 factors were analysed based on their implication in regards to the potential effects on retail areas using the influence of the context variables (Franzen et al., 2011). These were then compared with the research findings from both case studies. The outcome shows a total of fifteen critical success factors, that were combined into thirteen factors.

Secondly the findings of these thirteen factors were analysed by DNWS, experts on the field of inner city retail areas. The feedback showed the need for one final critical success factor.

# Recommendation

## Implementation

The model can used by both public or private entities, where it can function as a checklist in addition to the current development plans.

- Stakeholders
- Phasing