

# The influence of municipal spatial visions on developers' investments in urban area development

*Case study research into the decision-making process of developers regarding participation in urban area development in the Netherlands*

S. Tervoort

Master of Science Thesis





# **The influence of municipal spatial visions on developers' investments in urban area development**

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MASTER OF SCIENCE THESIS

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S. Tervoort

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Student number: 4475925  
Thesis committee: Prof. dr. W.K. Korthals Altes, TU Delft, chair  
mr. F.A.M. Hobma TU Delft, supervisor  
Dr. M.L.C. de Bruijne TU Delft, supervisor  
Ir. T. Kunen Brink, supervisor  
Ir. B. Muijsson Brink, supervisor

Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences(CiTG) · Delft University of Technology

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# Management summary in Dutch

Dit onderzoek heeft als doel om de invloed van gemeentelijke ruimtelijke visiedocumenten op het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars om deel te nemen aan een gebiedsontwikkeling, te onderzoeken. In dit onderzoek wordt nagegaan hoe dit proces eruitziet en welke factoren van invloed zijn op de beslissing van ontwikkelaars om deel te nemen aan een gebiedsontwikkeling.

Voor dit onderzoek zijn verschillende onderzoeksmethoden gebruikt. Een literatuurstudie naar de praktijk van stedelijke gebiedsontwikkeling in Nederland en mogelijke invloedsfactoren. Een case study onderzoek waarbij vier stedelijke gebiedsontwikkelingen in Nederland zijn bestudeerd. In al deze gevallen ging het om de herontwikkeling van industriegebied tot een gemengd stedelijk woon-werkgebied. Alle herontwikkelingsplannen hadden betrekking op bestaande stedelijke gebieden en lagen in vier verschillende Nederlandse steden in het westelijke deel van Nederland. Voor dit onderzoek zijn de volgende vier casussen bestudeerd:

- Oudorp, Alkmaar
- Spoorzone, Beverwijk
- Schieoevers, Delft
- Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad

De casestudymethode omvatte een deskresearch met betrekking tot de gepubliceerde visiedocumenten in de casussen en interviews met de verschillende gemeenten om deze documenten en de ontwikkelcontext te duiden. Daarnaast zijn interviews gehouden met ontwikkelaars over hun visie en beoordeling van de gepubliceerde ruimtelijke visiedocumenten, hun redenen om al dan niet te investeren in deze gebiedsontwikkelingen en hun interne besluitvormingsproces. De literatuur- en casestudieresultaten zijn verder geanalyseerd en gevalideerd door het houden van een expertmeeting met deskundigen uit de Nederlandse stedelijke gebiedsontwikkeling praktijk.

## **Stedelijke gebiedsontwikkeling in Nederland**

Het gebiedsontwikkelingsproces in Nederland bestaat uit vier fasen: initiatie, haalbaarheid, realisatie en exploitatie. Dit onderzoek is gericht op de initiatie fase. In theorie start deze fase met de publicatie van een ruimtelijk visiedocument, echter bleek dit in de praktijk niet altijd het geval. Sommige ontwikkelaars verwierven namelijk percelen voordat een visiedocument

was gepubliceerd. Dit komt mogelijk voort uit nationaal ruimtelijk beleid, dat erop wijst dat ontwikkeling in specifieke gebieden mogelijk is. Ook verrichten ontwikkelaars hun eigen demografisch onderzoek, voorspellen waar woningen moeten worden ontwikkeld en investeren op basis van die informatie.

### **Publieke-private wederzijdse afhankelijkheid**

Samenwerking tussen gemeenten en ontwikkelaars is in de initiatief fase en de volgende fasen cruciaal omdat er sprake is van onderlinge afhankelijkheid. Gemeenten zijn afhankelijk van ontwikkelaars om de gewenste gebiedsontwikkeling te realiseren, aangezien ontwikkelaars de expertise en (financiële) middelen hebben om dit te doen. Ontwikkelaars zijn afhankelijk van gemeenten voor bouwvergunningen en/of investeringen/realisatie van infrastructuur en/of openbare ruimte.

### **Planningsinstrumenten**

Gemeenten kunnen verschillende planningsinstrumenten gebruiken om ontwikkelaars over te halen te investeren in gebiedsontwikkelingsplannen. Deze instrumenten kunnen worden onderverdeeld in vormend, regulerend, stimulerend en capaciteitsversterkend.

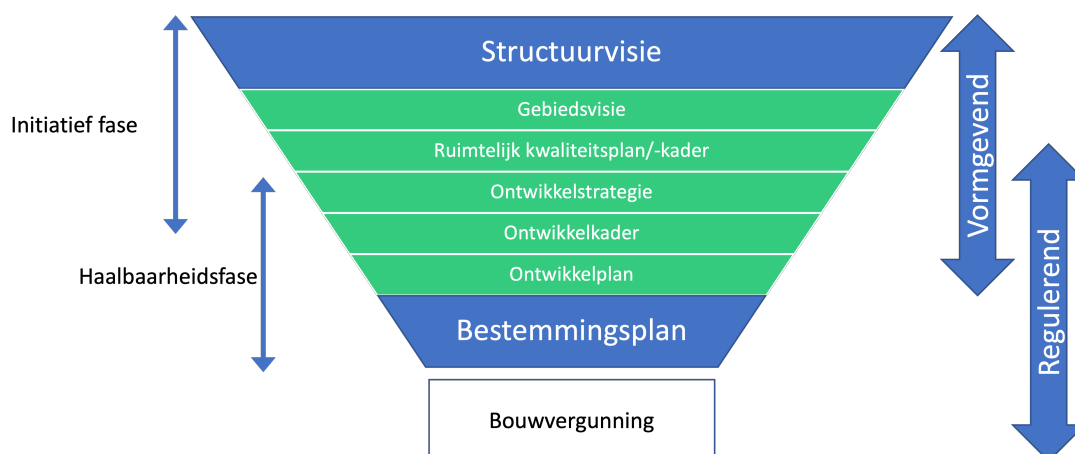
### **Ruimtelijke visiedocumenten: doel**

Een gemeente kan door middel van visiedocumenten ontwikkelaars proberen over te halen om mee deel te nemen aan een gebiedsontwikkeling. Voor een gemeente heeft de publicatie van een dergelijk document meerdere doelen. Ten eerste om de ontwikkeling van een gebied te starten of te stimuleren en om de richting van die ontwikkeling te bepalen. Ten tweede dient het opstellen van een visiedocument een intern gemeentelijk doel, aangezien het wordt gebruikt om intern budgetten vrij te maken en verschillende departementale visies en beleid op elkaar af te stemmen. De publicatie van een dergelijk document bundelt dus de opvattingen en ambities van de gemeente met betrekking tot het te ontwikkelen gebied en kan daarom worden gezien als een belangrijk politiek statement. Ten derde is het uiteindelijke doel om een gebied succesvol te ontwikkelen door ontwikkelaars te verleiden in het gebied te gaan ontwikkelen.

Op basis van dit onderzoek kan geconcludeerd worden dat dergelijk documenten een cruciale rol spelen in het gebiedsontwikkelingsproces omdat zij een eerste kader voor de ontwikkeling scheppen. Er werd echter ook vastgesteld dat deze documenten onrealistisch kunnen zijn en ontwikkelaars niet effectief kunnen overtuigen omdat zij geen rekening houden met de financiële realiteit van ontwikkelaars en het prijskaartje van de gewenste ambities.

### **Soorten ruimtelijke visiedocumenten**

Figuur 1, toont enkele verschillende ruimtelijke visiedocumenten die in Nederland in het stedenbouwkundig proces worden gebruikt, met de meest globale documenten bovenaan en de meer gedetailleerde onderaan. De documenten bovenaan zijn meer gericht op vormgeven, terwijl die onderaan ook gericht zijn op reguleren van de gebiedsontwikkeling. De structuurvisie bovenaan markeert het begin van de initiatiefase. Naar beneden in de piramide worden meer visiedocumenten gepubliceerd en uiteindelijk gaat het ontwikkelingsproces over in de haalbaarheidsfase. De verlening van de bouwvergunning, onderaan de piramide, markeert het begin van de realisatiefase. De volgorde waarin de tussengelegen documenten zijn geplaatst is niet indicatief voor iets.



**Figure 1:** Overzicht van ruimtelijke visiedocumenten, hun onderlinge relatie en relatie tot ontwikkelingsfasen en planningsinstrumenten

In de initiatief- en haalbaarheidsfase onderhandelen gemeenten en ontwikkelaars over wat er gebouwd gaat worden. Stappen in deze onderhandelingen kunnen worden afgesloten met de vaststelling en publicatie van ruimtelijke visiedocumenten. Daarom kan worden geconcludeerd dat de overige ruimtelijke visiedocumenten, die tussen de brede structuurvisie en het gedetailleerde bestemmingsplan vallen, kunnen worden gezien als de afsluiting van tussenstappen in het planvormings-/ontwikkelingsproces.

### Beoordeling ruimtelijke visiedocumenten door ontwikkelaars

Op basis van het casestudieonderzoek kan worden geconcludeerd dat ruimtelijke visiedocumenten belangrijk zijn voor ontwikkelaars en dat het belangrijkste aspect van deze documenten is dat het aantoont dat de gemeente instemt met woningbouw in een bepaald gebied. Ontwikkelaars kijken naar verschillende elementen bij het beoordelen van een ruimtelijk visiedocument, maar zijn vooral geïnteresseerd in het ruimtelijk kader; aanwijzingen over wat er gebouwd zou kunnen worden, aangezien dit in hoge mate bepalend is voor hun business case voor de gebiedsontwikkeling. Dergelijke aanwijzingen zijn bouwvolume en type woningen (sociaal, huur, koop). Details over het ruimtelijk kader ontbreken echter vaak in ruimtelijke visiedocumenten.

Er kan verder geconcludeerd worden dat ontwikkelaars een evenwicht willen tussen flexibiliteit en zekerheid in ruimtelijke visiedocumenten en het gebiedsontwikkelingsproces. Zekerheid over wat er gebouwd zou kunnen worden om de business case beter te kunnen bepalen en flexibiliteit om plannen aan te passen als de marktomstandigheden veranderen of zich onvoorziene omstandigheden voordoen. Flexibiliteit kan worden geboden door; parknormen te verlagen, woningbouw toe te voegen aan het ontwikkelingsplan in ruil voor het realiseren van gemeentelijke ambities, en de ontwikkelaars te laten bepalen welk type woning wordt gerealiseerd en wanneer. Een meer gedetailleerd kader van wat eventueel ontwikkeld kan worden zou zekerheid kunnen bieden.

### **Besluitvormingsproces ontwikkelaars**

Het interne besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars bestaat uit het maken van een business case en het uitvoeren van een risicoanalyse, welke gecombineerd worden in een investeringsvoorstel. Er kan worden geconcludeerd dat de beslissing om al dan niet te investeren niet alleen gebaseerd is op dat business case rendabel en in lijn met de doelstellingen van de ontwikkelaar is, maar ook op de 'overtuiging' dat de ontwikkeling kan worden gerealiseerd, welke gebaseerd is op de risicoanalyse en het gevoel van de ontwikkelaar over de ontwikkeling.

In dit onderzoek zijn interessante punten naar voren gekomen met betrekking tot hoe ontwikkelaars omgaan met de gemeentelijke ambities zoals die in de ruimtelijke visiedocumenten worden geschetst. Aangenomen wordt dat ontwikkelaars eerst proberen aan boord te komen van de gebiedsontwikkeling om zo samen met de gemeente de plannen voor het gebied verder vorm te geven. In een later stadium zullen ontwikkelaars echter gaan kijken of zij meer geld aan de ontwikkeling kunnen verdienen door de gemeente te bewegen bepaalde ambities te laten vallen. Het opportunisme van ontwikkelaars bij het omgaan met complexe gemeentelijke aspiraties werd aanvankelijk verklaard als het vermogen van de ontwikkelaar om deze aspiraties in hun plannen te verwerken. Maar zou dus ook verklaard kunnen worden dat ontwikkelaars weten hoe hard ze ontwikkelingsspel kunnen spelen.

### **Conclusie**

De 'overtuiging' dat de ontwikkeling succesvol zal zijn, bepaalt uiteindelijk of een ontwikkelaar zal deelnemen aan een gebiedsontwikkeling. Deze 'overtuiging' omvat verschillende factoren, waaronder de business case. De business case bepaalt dus niet direct en alleen de beslissing, maar is een onmisbaar onderdeel van die beslissing. De business case en de 'overtuiging' worden beïnvloed door de vier typen planningsinstrumenten en interne en externe factoren, waarvan sommige voortkomen uit de ruimtelijke visiedocumenten. Echter spelen bij elke ontwikkeling andere factoren een meer of minder belangrijke rol. Tabel 7-1 toont, in het Engels, de verschillende categorieën factoren die het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars beïnvloeden. Voor elke categorie zijn de cruciale of belangrijkste factoren gepresenteerd.

Op basis van dit onderzoek kan worden geconcludeerd dat uiteindelijk veel factoren van invloed zijn op het besluitvormingsproces van projectontwikkelaars met betrekking tot participatie in een gebiedsontwikkeling. Visiedocumenten dragen bij aan dit besluitvormingsproces, maar er is geen direct oorzaak-gevolg tussen het document en de participatiebeslissing aangezien ook andere factoren een rol spelen. Uit de verschillende categorieën van factoren kan worden opgemaakt dat vormgeving, capaciteitsversterkend, interne en externe factoren de meeste invloed hebben op de besluitvorming; daarmee is niet gezegd dat de andere factoren geen belangrijke rol spelen.

Cruciaal zijn de vormende factoren die aangeven wat er gebouwd zou kunnen worden en die uit het visiedocument kunnen worden afgeleid. Bovendien spelen de capaciteitsversterkende factoren die verband houden met de reputatie van en de relatie met de gemeente een cruciale rol. Deze factoren beïnvloeden de 'overtuiging' van een ontwikkelaar voor een succesvolle gebiedsontwikkeling. Daarnaast hebben factoren die verband houden met de interne doelstellingen en werkwijze van ontwikkelaars een cruciale invloed op hun beslissing waar te investeren. Verder kan geconcludeerd worden dat het cruciaal is dat partijen vroeg in het proces samenwerken, dat hun relatie goed is en, belangrijk, dat er wederzijds vertrouwen is.



Samenvattend hebben ruimtelijke visiedocumenten, vormgevingsinstrumenten en capaciteitsversterkende instrumenten een belangrijke invloed op het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars, maar interne en externe factoren spelen een minstens even belangrijke rol.

Figuur 2, in het Engels, geeft een overzicht van hoe een ontwikkelaar besluit te investeren in een gebiedsontwikkeling. De figuur toont de business case en de 'belief' waaruit de investeringsbeslissing bestaat. Aan de linkerkant van de figuur staan de belangrijkste factoren die de business case en de 'belief' beïnvloeden.

### **Aanbevelingen voor de gebiedsontwikkeling praktijk**

- Gemeenten moeten, in hun visiedocumenten, (meer) ruimtelijke kaders opnemen en het daadwerkelijk ontwerpen en maken van ontwikkelingsplannen overlaten aan marktpartijen. Deze kaders moeten bepaalde bandbreedtes bevatten over wat gebouwd kan worden om zowel de door ontwikkelaars gewenste flexibiliteit als zekerheid te bieden. Een dergelijk ruimtelijk kader moet voor een langere periode worden vastgesteld en mag tijdens het ontwikkelingsproces niet worden gewijzigd. Gemeenteambtenaren moeten daarbij ook meer beslissruimte krijgen om zo in overleg met marktpartijen tot ontwikkelingsplannen te kunnen komen. Verder is er meer tijd nodig vooraf bij het maken van een visiedocument om een helder, werkbaar en robuust ruimtelijk kader vast te stellen.
- Verder wordt aanbevolen dat gemeenten flexibiliteit en prioritering inbouwen ten aanzien van de ambities die zij gerealiseerd willen zien. Op deze manier kan een ontwikkelaar zich richten op de belangrijkste ambities. Het prioriteren van ambities kan de ontwikkelaar ook helpen kiezen welke ambities kunnen vervallen als de haalbaarheid van het ontwikkelingsplan in gevaar komt.
- Meer samenwerking met marktpartijen bij het maken van visies en plannen wordt aanbevolen. Dit kan door gecombineerde planteam op te richten met mensen van de gemeente en de ontwikkelaar, waarbij alle partijen hun kaarten op tafel leggen. Op deze manier begrijpen partijen elkaars standpunten en behoeften beter, waardoor er voor alle partijen begrijpelijke oplossingen komen en er meer wederzijds vertrouwen ontstaat.
- Voor een succesvolle maar vooral snellere stedelijke gebiedsontwikkeling moet het aantal betrokken ontwikkelaars worden beperkt. Volgens de ontwikkelaars betekenen meer betrokken partijen een langzamer en moeizamer proces. Een beperking van het aantal betrokken ontwikkelaars betekent ook dat de gemeente met minder partijen hoeft te overleggen, waardoor het proces gemakkelijker verloopt en minder personeel nodig is.
- Het wordt aanbevolen om alleen grotere ontwikkelaars bij een gebiedsontwikkeling te betrekken omdat zij in staat zijn het lange spel te spelen en geld hebben om te investeren in planvorming en onderzoek voor de gebiedsontwikkeling. Meer in het bijzonder zouden gemeenten ernaar moeten streven om vooral investerende ontwikkelaars te laten deelnemen aan (grote) gebiedsontwikkelingen, vanwege hun lange binding met het gebied omdat zij eigenaar blijven van een deel van het ontwikkelde vastgoed. Zij hebben er dus baat bij (hogere) kwaliteit aan het gebied toe te voegen en zijn dus eerder bereid daaraan bij te dragen.

**Table 1:** Factoren die het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars beïnvloeden

<b>Spatial vision document factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Political statement development could be possible, made through the publication of the spatial vision document
<b>Capacity building factors</b>	
Collaboration with municipality (relationship, cooperation, communication)	Open and proactive approach municipality
Municipality having the political will to develop the area	Prioritisation area development within municipality
Decisive and swift decision-making within municipality	Receptive to change plans in the future
<b>Shaping factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Desired car-parking solution
<b>Regulating factors</b>	
Parking norms	Municipal construction requirements for housing (e.g. sustainability)
<b>Stimulating factors</b>	
Endorsement of plan by higher authorities	Public investments in infrastructure, public space
<b>Internal factors</b>	
Time between investment and realisation	Rental income from buildings on development plot (during plan development)
Composition of development portfolio	Type of developer (constructing, independent, investor, financial)
Preferred type of development (development focus/specialisation)	Risk profile development plan (the belief that risks can be managed)
Liquidity of finances	Development business-case
<b>External factors</b>	
Accessibility of plan area	Attractiveness town/region in which area development is situated
Presence of environmental circles	Spatial planning procedure time (between investment and realisation)
Market conditions for area development	General price level construction costs
Current and future economic situation	Current and future general housing market situation
Location and potential area development	



**Figure 2:** Overzicht van het interne besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars en belangrijke invloedsfactoren, met betrekking tot deelname aan een stedelijke gebiedsontwikkeling



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# Abstract

The Netherlands is currently dealing with a housing shortage, specifically in urban areas; therefore, more housing is to be developed in the upcoming years. Spatial planning policy in the Netherlands thereby dictates that new developments are to be realised as much as possible in or adjacent to developed urban areas.

In recent and coming years, housing development in the Netherlands has been and is to be realised through private parties (developers) as municipalities no longer want to take on the risks of active land policy, where they are actively participating in the realisation of housing development.

Instead, Dutch municipalities use passive or facilitating land policy where they set the framework for urban (area) development and try to persuade developers to realise housing development in their municipality. One way of doing this is through the publication of spatial vision documents. This way of spatial planning is sometimes called invitational spatial planning or 'uitnodigingsplanologie' in Dutch, where municipalities invite developers to participate in spatial planning.

However, the contents of spatial vision documents and the municipal ideas and aspirations regarding the area development often do not match the market reality with which developers have to work. Based on the literature, one of the reasons for this is that municipalities lack knowledge regarding how developers operate and make investment decisions, what factors are important in these decisions and what the effects of spatial vision documents are. This research tried to gain insights into these aspects within the context of urban area development in the Netherlands.

The objective of this research is to examine the influence of municipal spatial vision documents on the decision-making process of developers, examining what this process looks like and what factors influence the developers' decisions to participate in urban area development plans.

## Research question and methodology

To study the different aspects mentioned above, the following research question was defined:

**What factors influence the internal decision-making process of real estate developers regarding participation in urban area development plans of municipalities, originating from the publication of a spatial vision document?**

To conduct this research, several research methods have been used. A literature study into urban area development practice in the Netherlands, including planning culture, process and actors. Also, potential factors influencing the decision-making process of developers on whether to participate in an area development were identified in the literature study.

Furthermore, this research used the case study methodology by which four urban area developments in the Netherlands were studied. These cases all involved the redevelopment of an industrial area into a mixed urban residential-business area. All area redevelopment plans were in existing urban areas within four different Dutch cities located in the western, most populated part of the Netherlands. The following four cases were studied for this research:

- Oudorp, Alkmaar
- Spoorzone, Beverwijk
- Schieoevers, Delft
- Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad

The case study method for this research included a desk research regarding the spatial vision documents published in these cases. As well as interviews with developers regarding their views and assessment of the published spatial vision documents, their reasons to invest or (for now) not to invest in these area developments and their internal decision-making process. The literature and case study results were further analysed/interpreted and validated by conducting an expert meeting with experts from urban area development practice.

### Urban area development process in the Netherlands

The urban development process in the Netherlands consists of four phases: initiation, feasibility, realisation, and exploitation. This research focused on the initiation phase, which is the starting point of the urban development process and is considered highly important as it significantly influences the subsequent three phases and is an inescapable step to be taken. In this phase, the municipality often sets the direction of the development and tries to persuade potential developers to invest in the area development.

In theory, the initiation phase starts with the municipality's publication of a spatial vision document. In the studied cases, however, this was not so black and white since the initiation phase was not always started by the municipality, as developers sometimes acquired plots of land before the publication of a spatial vision document. This possibly comes forth from national spatial policies, pointing towards development being possible in specific areas. Also, developers conduct their own demographical research, predicting where housing needs to be developed and invest based on that information.

Furthermore, in theory, the initiation phase is often closed-off with a collaboration agreement between the municipality and developer to work together on further plan-making for the area. From this research, it could not be concluded that an agreement between the municipality and the developer always accompanies the switch from the initiation to the feasibility phase. Therefore, the moment when a developer acquires a plot of land in the to-be-developed area can also be seen as the end of the initiation and start of the feasibility phase.

### **Urban area development actors in the Netherlands**

The urban area development process involves a variety of actors from both the public and private sector. In the initiation phase, the main public actors are municipalities, and the main private actors are developers. For developers, the initiation phase can have three possible outcomes: acquiring a plot of land, deciding that the area has no development potential, or deciding the area has development potential but now is not the right time to invest. The municipality can play a role through private law (active land policy) and public law (passive or facilitating land policy), giving them a double role as market players and market supervisors. Either way, the municipality decides whether a development is taking place, making it an indispensable player in the development process.

#### *Interdependency*

Collaboration between municipalities and developers is crucial in this phase and the following phases since interdependency is at play. Municipalities depend on developers to realise the desired area development since developers have the expertise and (financial) resources to do so. Developers depend on municipalities for planning permission and/or investment/realisation of infrastructure and/or public space. It is, therefore, also important that municipalities and developers better understand each other and their needs in the development process.

### **Planning tools**

Municipalities can use different planning tools or instruments to persuade developers to invest in area development plans. These tools and instruments can be divided into shaping, regulating, stimulating and capacity building. It was found that planning tools overlap and can be placed in multiple categories simultaneously. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the usage of specific planning tools can influence the usage of other planning tools.

### **Spatial vision documents: aim**

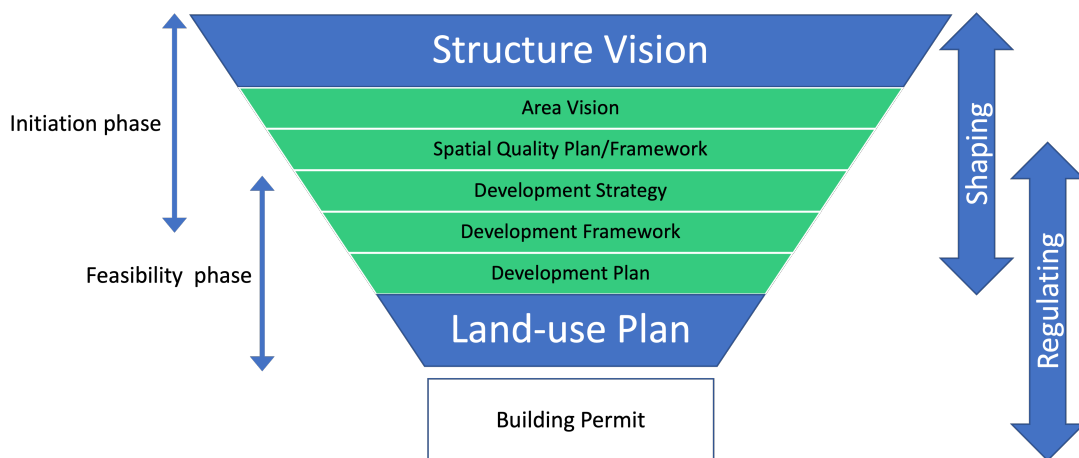
A municipality can, among others, persuade developers to participate in their area development by publishing spatial vision documents. For a municipality, the publication of such a document has several aims. Firstly to start or boost the development of an area and to set the outlines for that development. It is, however, argued that the start of the development process is not so clear in practice. Secondly, the process of creating a spatial vision document serves a municipal internal aim, as it is used for freeing up budgets internally and aligning different departmental views and policies. The publication of such a document thus bundles the views and ambitions of the municipality regarding the to-be-developed area. It can therefore be seen as an important political position statement of the municipality regarding the future of that particular area. Thirdly, the ultimate aim is to get an area successfully developed by getting housing and/or other buildings developed and realised in an area.

This research concluded that spatial policy documents play a crucial role in the urban development process since they create a first framework for the development. However, it was also noted that these documents can be unrealistic and fail to effectively persuade developers due to not taking into account the price tag of the desired aspirations and not clearly setting the outlines for the development.

### Types of spatial vision documents

Figure 3 shows the various spatial vision documents used in the urban development process in the Netherlands, with the broadest documents at the top and more detailed ones at the bottom. Furthermore, the documents at the top are more focused on shaping, while those lower also focus on regulating. The order in which the in-between documents are placed is not indicative of anything. Dutch municipalities are legally required to create structure visions periodically, which outline areas where housing development is allowed and serve as a starting point for further plan development. The most specific documents are land-use plans that municipalities are legally obligated to create and describe the exact spatial framework on which a building permit can be granted.

The structure vision at the top marks the beginning of the initiation phase. Moving down the pyramid, more vision documents are published, and eventually, the development process transitions into the feasibility phase. The granting of the building permit, located beneath the pyramid, marks the start of the realisation phase.



**Figure 3:** Overview of spatial vision documents, their mutual relation and relation to phases of development process and planning instruments

Municipalities and developers negotiate on what will be built in the initiation and feasibility phase. Steps in these negotiations can be concluded with the adoption and publication of spatial vision documents reflecting the agreements reached on what will be built in the area. Therefore, it can be concluded that the other spatial vision documents, that fall between the broad structure vision and detailed land-use plan, can be seen as the closure of intermediate steps in the plan-making/development process.



### **Persuasiveness spatial vision documents according to the literature**

In the literature study of this research, nine variables were identified that could determine how good a plan, spatial vision document is at persuading developers to invest in an area development. Though not a scientifically rigorous analysis, the spatial vision documents from the cases studied were assessed on their persuasiveness and, on average, received a low score. Therefore, it can be argued that the studied documents do not effectively achieve this aim. From these nine persuasiveness variables, several were identified as factors raising persuasiveness the most. These are clear and apparent evidence base, the plan's persuasive logic and rationale, endorsement by higher-level actors and the plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources.

### **Assessment spatial vision documents by developers**

Based on the case study research, it can be concluded that municipal spatial vision documents are important for the decision-making process of developers, along with other policy documents such as the municipality's general housing policy. It can furthermore be concluded that the key aspect of a spatial vision document is that it demonstrates the municipality's endorsement of housing development in a specific area. However, the time between the publication of vision documents and the implementation of a development framework can be long and uncertain. Developers view the publication of spatial vision documents as important political statements by the municipality. Without such a political statement, developers would consider investing in an area riskier.

It can be concluded that developers look for several elements when assessing a spatial vision document. They are mainly interested in the spatial framework; clues on what could be built since this greatly determines the business case of the developer for the area development. Such clues are building volume and type of housing (social, rental, purchase). The desired type of housing and acceptable percentage of social housing in an area development are crucial factors for developers but are, however, different per type of developer. Images or sketches in spatial vision documents are not very important to developers as they are open to interpretation. Details regarding the spatial framework are often lacking in spatial vision documents.

Therefore, spatial vision documents are mainly described by developers as vague and only providing a high-over view of what could be developed. Furthermore, they lack information on the impact of the development on the existing city infrastructure and only provide an overall storyline for the area development from a municipal point of view.

The level of ambition and aspirations displayed by a municipality in a spatial vision document is very important to developers. However, developers indicated that these aspirations often do not match the reality of the market.

Market research or other studies (environmental, noise, traffic) conducted in the creation of spatial vision documents are unimportant for developers, as stated by many developers since they will always conduct these studies themselves as well.

According to the literature, stakeholder engagement in the creation of spatial vision documents should make these plans more persuasive. However, based on the interviews, it seems this is not a major factor in developers' decision-making during the initiation phase. Developers acknowledge the importance of this factor but view it as more relevant later in the development process.

Furthermore, developers desire a balance of flexibility and certainty in spatial vision documents and the area development process. Certainty on what could be built to better determine the business case and flexibility to change plans if market conditions change or unforeseen circumstances occur. Flexibility can be provided by; lowering park norms, adding housing to the development plan in exchange for realising municipal aspirations, and letting the developers decide which type of housing is being realised and when. A more detailed framework of what could be developed in the area could provide certainty.

### **Decision-making process developers**

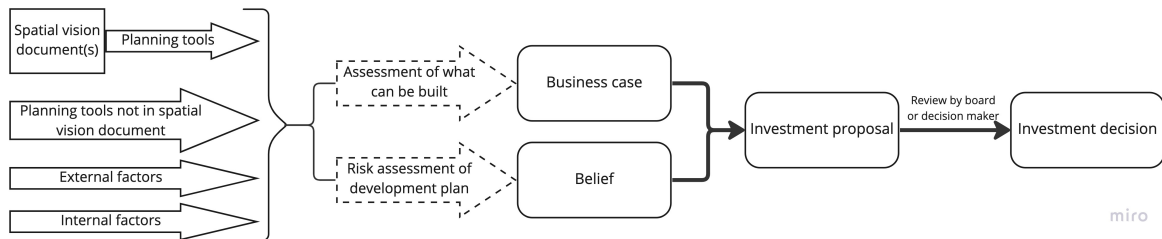
The internal decision-making process of developers regarding participation in an area development is quite similar for all developers. It consists of creating a business case and conducting a risk analysis of the development plan, which are combined into an investment proposal. These two elements: the business case and the 'belief', together with the different steps in the decision-making process, are shown in figure 4. It can be concluded that the decision whether or not to invest is not solely based on the business case being profitable and line with the internal goals of the developer, but also on having the 'belief' the development can be realised, which is based on the risk analysis as well as the developer's (gut) feeling about the development. When a decision to invest has been made, a developer will acquire a plot of land and start the further plan-making and development of that plot, thereby moving on to the feasibility phase.

Interesting points were identified in this research regarding the developers' internal assessment process and handling of municipal aspirations as outlined in the spatial vision documents. It is believed that developers first try to get on board the urban area development and, together with the municipality, further shape the plans for the area. However, at a later stage, developers will start looking if they can make more money on the development by moving the municipality towards dropping some aspirations. This internal assessment process thereby contributes to a better business case and the 'belief' since developers take into account that not all the aspirations of the municipality will be fulfilled in the phases after the initiation. The opportunism of developers in dealing with complex municipal aspirations was initially explained as the developer's ability to incorporate these aspirations into their plans. However, it could thus also be explained that developers know how hard they can play the game of urban development.

### **Conclusion main research question**

Having the 'belief' that development will be successful ultimately decides whether or not a developer will participate in an area development. This 'belief' comprises several factors, one of which is the business case. The business case thus does not directly and solely determine the decision but is an indispensable part of the decision. The business case and the 'belief' are influenced by the four types of planning tools and internal and external factors. Some of these factors come forth from the spatial vision documents.

However, the developers indicated that different factors play a more or less important role in their investment decision with every development. An overview of the decision-making process and the influence of the different categories of factors can be seen in figure 4.



**Figure 4:** Overview decision-making process of developers and factors influencing this process

Table 2 shows the different categories of factors influencing the decision-making process of developers. For each category, the crucial or most important factors are presented.

Based on this research, it can be concluded that ultimately many factors influence the internal decision-making process of real estate developers regarding participation in urban (area) development plans of municipalities, originating from the publication of a spatial vision document. Spatial vision documents contribute to this decision-making process, but there is no direct cause-effect between the document and participation decision since other factors are also in play. From the different categories of factors discussed, it can be stated that shaping, capacity building, internal and external factors have the most influence on decision-making; not saying that the other factors do not play an important role.

Crucial are the shaping factors indicating what could be built that can be derived from the spatial vision document, as these factors partly determine the development business case. Moreover, capacity building factors related to the reputation of and relationship with the municipality play a crucial role. These factors influence the 'belief' of a developer for successful area development. Additionally, factors related to developers' internal goals and modus operandi have a crucial impact on their decision of where to invest.

It can be concluded that it is crucial that parties collaborate early on in the process, that their relationship is good and, importantly, that there is mutual trust. However, it was identified that municipalities sometimes distrust developers as developers are supposed to have a bad reputation for being untrustworthy and profit-driven.

Summarising, spatial vision documents, shaping instruments and capacity building tools are an important influence on the decision-making process of developers, but internal and external factors play an at least equally important role.

Figure 5 shows an overview of how a developer decides to invest in an area development. The figure shows the business case and the 'belief' that makes up the investment decision. The left-hand side of the figure shows the most important factors influencing the business case and the 'belief'.

## **Recommendations for urban development in the Netherlands**

Based on this research, several recommendations were drafted regarding the persuasion of developers and the development process.

### *Recommendations for spatial vision documents*

Municipalities should include spatial frameworks in their spatial vision documents and let the actual designing and making of development plans to market parties. These frameworks should contain certain bandwidths on building volume and type and mix of buildings/housing to provide both the flexibility and certainty desired by developers.

Such a spatial framework should be set for a more extended period and should not be altered during the development process. This allows municipal officials not to dictate what should be built but to come to development plans for the area in consultation with market parties. It also gives the developers more certainty on the rules of the game for the area development process. Therefore, municipal officials should be given more decision room to come to feasible plans together with market parties, and more time is needed upfront when creating a spatial vision document to define a clear, workable and robust spatial framework.

Before the publication of the spatial vision document, municipalities should also unofficially consult with market parties about the document. In this way, checking whether the proposed spatial vision is realistic and workable for developers.

Furthermore, municipalities should incorporate flexibility and prioritisation regarding the aspirations they want to see realised in an area development. In this way, a developer can focus on the most important aspirations and make sure these are realised. Prioritising aspirations could also help the developer choose which aspirations could be dropped when the feasibility of the development plan becomes jeopardised. Furthermore, the municipality should give something in return to developers for realising more of their aspirations. For example, allowing more housing in exchange for underground parking or in the case of unexpected soil pollution.

It is also recommended that spatial vision documents are based on current cadastral boundaries. This way, developers can develop their plots without being dependant on acquiring other plots first.

### *Recommendations for development process*

Working with market parties to create visions and plans can improve urban area development. Therefore it is recommended to create combined plan teams with people from the municipality and developer, where all parties put their cards on the table. This way, parties would better understand each other's positions and needs, as a result arriving at understandable solutions for all parties and creating more mutual trust.

For successful but mainly more swift urban area development, the number of developers involved should be limited. According to the developers, more involved parties mean a slower and more laborious process. Also, limiting the number of developers involved means the municipality has to consult with fewer parties, making the process easier and acquiring less staff.

It is recommended only to involve larger developing companies in an area development cause they are able to play the long game and have funding to invest in plan-making and research for the area development. More specifically, municipalities should strive for mainly having investor developers participating in (large) area developments due to their long attachment to the area since they keep owning part of the developed real estate. Therefore, they benefit from adding (higher) quality to the area and are thus more willing to contribute to this.

The municipality could also use the power of its pre-emptive rights more in area development. First of all, using this instrument shows dedication to the area development from the municipality. Secondly, it could also be used strategically to prevent unwanted developers from entering the area development. For example, when a land-owner wants to sell, the municipality could relinquish its pre-emptive right but propose a particular developer to acquire the land instead. In this way, the municipality could somewhat steer which developers join the area development. This would, however, require changes in national and EU competition laws, as public parties cannot prefer a private party over other parties.

It is furthermore recommended to create sub-areas within the larger area development as a whole. Creating sub-areas will make decision-making more manageable since it is split into smaller parts, allowing (smaller) development plans in sub-areas to start taking off more easily. This is important since the presence of other developers and already completed projects attract other developers and interested parties to the area.

#### *Further recommendations*

It was argued that working with market parties should not be limited to creating vision documents for a specific area. In consultation with market parties, the municipality should create spatial vision documents for the municipality as a whole. In such a document, the aspirations and wishes of a municipality should not all be laid down in one area. Still, for every ambition, it should be analysed which area is most suitable for realising that specific ambition. In this way, the number of aspirations a developer should realise in their plan will be fewer, but the likelihood of realising the aspirations successfully will probably increase. In other words, the often massive pile of municipal aspirations should be more realistically distributed and allocated to different development areas to make more of these aspirations a reality. A municipality, thus, should not throw all its aspirations into one area (postage stamp thinking), but you should look citywide with market parties to see which aspirations are to be realised, where, and how this can be done while having a realistic business case.

The relocation of existing businesses when an industry area is being redeveloped to a residential area should be governed on a higher level than the municipality, for instance, the province or metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Since other municipalities are also working on transforming business parks into residential areas, demand for new locations for these businesses is high. If new business parks are being allocated, the companies could eventually be leaving the greater area, which would cause the economy to decline.

#### **Reflection on research**

Initially, two successful and two failed cases would be studied in this research. However, failed cases were hard to find since they are not much spoken about. Therefore, three cases were studied where developers invested and one case where developers were planning on acquiring

or developing land in the near future. Consequently, this research's results primarily consist of factors that contribute to the successful activation of developers. However, studying failed cases could provide results on factors that are not successful at persuading developers. Therefore, future research into this topic should put more effort into finding failed cases.

This research strongly focussed on developers and their internal decision-making process. This research left out public-private interaction in the development process, specifically the initiation phase. This was due to practicability reasons. Therefore, the influence of these interactions has not been considered in this research. Therefore, it could be argued that the results of this research give a too-simplified image of what the decision-making and important factors influencing it looks like. It is strongly recommended that further research studies these public-private interactions and tries to determine their importance in the decision-making of developers.

One of the research methods used was case study interviews. Interviews, especially the processing of interviews, are open to the researcher's interpretation. At every step during the processing of the interviews, from a complete report to a summary and eventually abstract of the main takeaways, data is cut away by the researcher. In this process, information could be left out that, according to the researcher, is not significant; however, according to another researcher's interpretation, it could be important. Using interviews, valuable information could thus be left out of the research report. Meaning the research results do not provide a fully complete overview of the important factors.

In the literature, specific planning instruments and internal and external factors were identified, which were focused on during the case studies. By focusing on these factors, other factors that also play a role may have remained understudied since they were not asked or mentioned by the developers. The latter can be explained because many factors influence the development and decision-making process; therefore, one factor is easily forgotten to mention. For future research to deal with the issue, an interview protocol is recommended to be drafted and tested in a mock interview. To check whether the results from the interview are similar to the results expected to obtain from the interviews.

Using case studies also has limitations, as the results cannot simply be applied to all developers in the Netherlands.

### **Recommendations for future research**

Based on the insights obtained during this research and the limitations of this research, several recommendations for further research can be made.

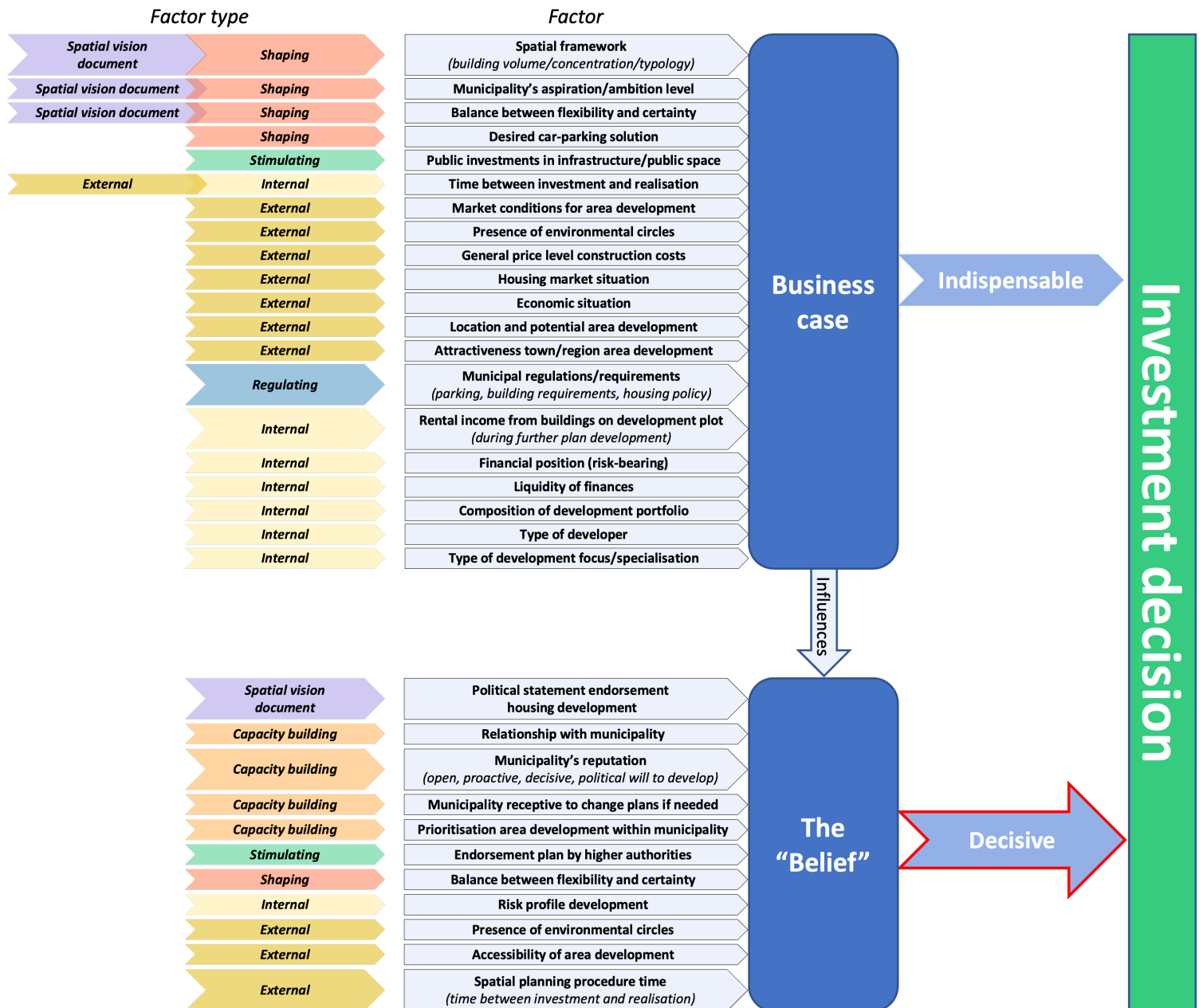
- **Zeitgeist:** This research was conducted during a period of excellent market conditions for developers. Therefore, there could be less reason for criticism. Factors that are more influential for the decision-making process during economic lesser times could, therefore, not be mentioned. It is therefore recommended to conduct this research again, during economic lesser times and with other cases. This is important because, during an area development, there will often be worse economic times as well due to the often long duration of area developments

- **Earlier involvement of market parties:** Further research could study how to involve market parties earlier and let them contribute to area spatial visions without creating unfair competition between market parties. Asking market parties to think about a spatial vision document indirectly indicates that you have the idea to develop an area as a municipality. Then they will speculate on or acquire land immediately and thus have an advantage over other parties. Future research, therefore, should look into how developers can be involved earlier in plan-making without violating competition laws.
- **Realised spatial vision ambitions:** Further interesting research would be to study what remains of the ideas and ambitions in area vision during the development process, which ideas from the initial vision are eventually realised in the end, which ambitions dissolve and why.
- **Serious game urban development process** Since the initiation and subsequent feasibility phase contain a lot of public-private interaction, negotiations and haggling. Interesting future research could develop a serious game for these first two phases, in which public and private parties participate. Using a serious game, different spatial visions and approaches could be tested. The results could be used to develop a framework for spatial vision documents and development approaches that successfully persuade developers to participate in an urban area development.

**Table 2:** Factoren die het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars beïnvloeden

<b>Spatial vision document factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Political statement development could be possible, made through the publication of the spatial vision document
<b>Capacity building factors</b>	
Collaboration with municipality (relationship, cooperation, communication)	Open and proactive approach municipality
Municipality having the political will to develop the area	Prioritisation area development within municipality
Decisive and swift decision-making within municipality	Receptive to change plans in the future
<b>Shaping factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Desired car-parking solution
<b>Regulating factors</b>	
Parking norms	Municipal construction requirements for housing (e.g. sustainability)
<b>Stimulating factors</b>	
Endorsement of plan by higher authorities	Public investments in infrastructure, public space
<b>Internal factors</b>	
Time between investment and realisation	Rental income from buildings on development plot (during plan development)
Composition of development portfolio	Type of developer (constructing, independent, investor, financial)
Preferred type of development (development focus/specialisation)	Risk profile development plan (the belief that risks can be managed)
Liquidity of finances	Development business-case
<b>External factors</b>	
Accessibility of plan area	Attractiveness town/region in which area development is situated
Presence of environmental circles	Spatial planning procedure time (between investment and realisation)
Market conditions for area development	General price level construction costs
Current and future economic situation	Current and future general housing market situation
Location and potential area development	





**Figure 5:** Overview of the internal decision-making process of developers and important influential factors, regarding participation in an urban area development



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# Preface

This document contains the master's thesis of Sven Tervoort to obtain a master's degree in Construction Management and Engineering from the faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences at the Delft University of Technology.

*Delft, February 1, 2023*





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# Acknowledgements

This research topic was not what I had in mind when I started my graduation. With my head full of circularity and tendering procedures, I met with Fred Hobma on how to combine these topics into a thesis. A little bit tired of yet again a student wanting to do his thesis about circularity, he showed a list of topics he seemed interesting for a thesis research. This is how I found the topic of this master's thesis. Therefore, I would like to thank him for helping me find this interesting topic and for the countless meetings, useful feedback and sometimes needed assurance that everything will turn out fine. Moreover, I would like to thank him for always being available for a quick meeting or feedback on parts of my thesis.

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Delft, University of Technology  
January 24, 2023

S. Tervoort

Master of Science Thesis

S. Tervoort



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# Chapter 1

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## Introduction

This chapter introduces the context and problem area in which this thesis research will be conducted. Furthermore, the research relevance will be discussed, and the research questions will be presented. The chapter will be closed off with an outline of the remainder of this thesis.

The objective of this master thesis is to examine the influence of municipal spatial vision documents on the decision-making process of developers in urban area development in the Netherlands. The research will focus on how these documents shape developers' decision-making and development options. This research will examine the factors influencing developers' decisions to participate in an urban area development. Understanding these factors will help to get a deeper understanding of how spatial vision documents impact decision-making and the relative importance of other factors in the process. Through a combination of literature review, case studies, and interviews with developers, this thesis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between municipal spatial vision documents and developer decision-making in the context of urban area development in the Netherlands. For the remainder of this research, the term 'project development plan' will be used to indicate plans created by real estate developers to develop buildings on a plot of land.

### 1-1 Context

To better understand the goal of this research and the problem this research tries to address, it is important first to outline the context for this research. The following topics will be briefly discussed: the current state of urban development in the Netherlands, the development process, and planning tools.

#### 1-1-1 Current state of urban development in the Netherlands

The current housing market in the Netherlands is facing several major challenges, such as high housing prices, an inadequate supply of homes to meet demand, and difficulty in finding affordable housing options (DNB, 2022), resulting in social unrest and protests (NOS, 2021).

The housing deficit in the Netherlands has existed for many years and is expected to continue in the coming decades (Gopal et al., 2021). To meet this demand, 775,000 new dwellings have to be constructed between 2021 and 2030. Although there are plans to build around 1 million houses during this period, the actual realisation is likely to be lower due to plan failures and delays. Despite these promising numbers, the housing deficit will continue to exist after this period in the urban areas (Groenemeijer, 2021). Urban areas, particularly the four largest cities, will continue to grow while other areas stabilise or decline (te Riele et al., 2019). This is due to urbanisation, which is caused by the high level of jobs, good education opportunities, and leisure facilities and activities that cities offer (PBL, 2015). The need to construct 1 million new homes is underlined by the action agenda presented by a coalition of 35 actors from the Dutch construction sector (2021). The necessity and urge to construct these new homes are present; the question remains, however, where these 1 million houses are to be constructed.

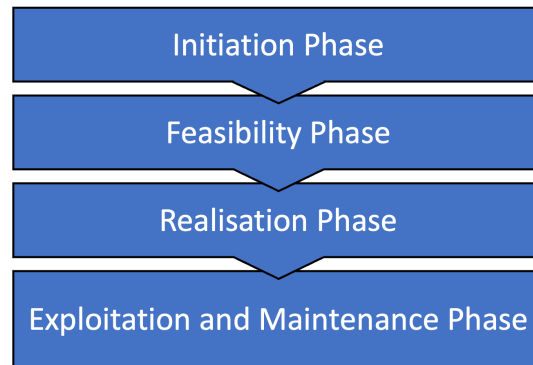
Research has found that a significant portion of the housing demand can be met by transforming existing buildings and underutilised areas within cities (Brink, 2017). The Netherlands has 23,476 hectares of underutilised areas. In an economic high-growth scenario, up to 35% of the housing needs until 2050 can be met by transforming these areas within existing cities. In a small growth scenario, this percentage increases to almost 80% (Brink, 2017). However, simply transforming vacant properties is not enough to meet this demand, and larger areas must be tackled. Policymakers in the Netherlands have pushed the development of new real estate in the direction of existing urban areas. Planning policy on a national level dictates that the realisation of new housing projects is to be first realised in currently existing urban areas. Developers could be only allowed to build outside of existing urban areas if it is not feasible or possible to do so within them (IenW, 2012; Rijksoverheid, 2020).

In recent years, municipalities in the Netherlands have shifted from active involvement ('actief grondbeleid' in Dutch) in urban development to a more facilitating role ('faciliterende grondbeleid' in Dutch) (Segeren, 2007). Before the financial crisis, municipalities played an active and dominant role in the development process, where municipalities also actively participated in the development process as market players. The financial crisis and the aftermath itself resulted in less active land policy, and encouragement of private initiatives in urban development, meaning housing is more and more to be developed by developers (van der Krabben and Jacobs, 2013; Heurkens and Hobma, 2014). Since municipalities no longer want to take the risks of active land policy and joint ventures. This change can be seen as a shift from government to governance, where municipalities are less involved in urban area development, and developers are expected to take on more responsibility for housing development. As a municipality, to get the much-needed housing developed, it needs to persuade developers to develop in their municipality (Healey, 2010; Heurkens, 2012; Adams and Watkins, 2014).

## 1-1-2 Development process in the Netherlands

The urban development process begins with the idea of creating housing in a specific area and ends with this housing being used. Literature on the urban development process in the Netherlands roughly identifies four phases: the initiation, feasibility, realisation and exploitation phase (Gehner, 2006; Wolting et al., 2012, Reiswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019). The different phases are shown in figure 1-1.

This research will focus on the initiation phase, which often starts with an idea from private or public parties. In the case of public parties, this usually happens through the publication of a spatial vision document, a shaping instrument, the purpose of which is to invite market parties to develop in the area, the so-called invitational spatial planning or 'uitnodigingsplanologie' in Dutch.



**Figure 1-1:** Phases urban development process in the Netherlands, adapted from Reiswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling (2019), p.18

Urban development in western countries is typically financed and constructed by private parties, making it crucial for public parties as planners to understand and potentially influence the property and development market (Adams and Tiesdell, 2010). Adams and Tiesdell (2010) point out that planners (public parties) are essential elements of the property and development markets. They call upon planners to move away from market-led planning and create plan-shaped markets instead. Even more interaction between public and private parties is needed to establish these plan-shaped markets, especially with development plans that cause significant urban change (Healey, 2006). The importance of effective relationships between public and private parties in the development process is emphasised by multiple studies (Adams, 1994; Brindley et al., 1996; Faludi, 2000; Needham, 2000). Bengs (2005) and Wolting et al. (2012) argue that the role of public parties switched from control to promotion of development. Wolting et al. (2012), in particular, see this new promotional role for public parties in the initiation phase of urban development. They are even taking it further and labelling the public parties as the driving force behind urban area development plans.

### **Interdependency**

Urban development in the Netherlands is a collaborative process between market parties and municipalities. On a municipal level, urban development shifted from regulating growth towards facilitating new developments and stimulating growth, thereby taking a development-oriented stance and using invitational spatial planning or 'uitnodigingsplanologie' in Dutch (NEPROM, 2016), which moved the realisation of plans from public parties to private parties (Pelders et al., 2014; Daamen, 2010; Wolting et al., 2012; Heurkens et al., 2015). Daamen (2010) underlines the increasing role of private parties in the development process and the responsibilities that private parties get allocated. This means that public parties are becoming increasingly dependent on private parties, resulting in private parties strengthening their position within the development process (Heurkens et al., 2015).

Plans created unilaterally by municipalities no longer have the guarantee of being realised precisely as devised by the municipality. Heurkens et al. (2015) stress that private party investments and involvement are needed and that public and private actors are interdependent in realising urban development. Making plans, particularly with urban (area) development, is no longer just a simple step in the development process. The planning or initiation phase increasingly functions as a phase in the development process where negotiations and decisions are made between public and private parties (van Loon et al., 2008).

### 1-1-3 Planning tools

Within the context of the public-private interaction in the development process and the suggested role of the public parties, it is interesting to look at how public parties put this into practice. Adams et al. (2005) and Adams and Tiesdell (2010) identified several policy instruments, called planning tools or instruments, that planners can use to steer the development process. These instruments can be categorised into four categories: shaping, regulating, stimulating and capacity building (Allmendinger and Tiesdell, 2005), as shown in figure 1-2.

Shaping tools such as spatial vision documents influence the development market and (re)actions by actors in that market. Market regulation tools define the rules of market actions. Market stimulation tools are described as tools to "lubricate market actions and transactions" (Adams and Tiesdell, 2010, p.195). Furthermore, capacity building tools are used to increase the abilities and capacity of market actors and can be seen as a tool to help facilitate the other planning tools (Allmendinger and Tiesdell, 2005). Heurkens (2012) indicates that effective implementation of these planning tools could persuade private actors to join specific projects they would not want to participate in at first glance. In other words, he argues that using these tools can help deliver both economic, and social and environmental objectives. This conclusion is shared by Adams and Watkins (2014), who state that successful market-shaping by governments stimulates developers to realise developments that not only fulfil the economic objective of the developers themselves but also create 'better places'.

Intended/characteristic market affect	Typical sub-types	Typical example
<b>Shaping</b> (e.g. shaping the decision environment or context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development plans (e.g. public infrastructure investment plans)</li> <li>Regulatory plans (e.g. statutory plans/policies/strategies)</li> <li>Indicative plans (e.g. non-statutory plans/policies/strategies and advice)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport infrastructure investment plans</li> <li>National planning policy and development plans</li> <li>Establishing spatial vision for area</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation</b> (e.g. defining the parameters of the decision environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State (or third party) regulation</li> <li>Contractual (or bi-lateral) regulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning/development controls</li> <li>Restrictive covenants attached to land transfers</li> </ul>
<b>Stimulation</b> (e.g. restructuring the contours of the decision environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indirect/fiscal measures</li> <li>Direct state action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subsidies (tax breaks) to encourage more of desired activities (e.g. derelict land reclamation grants) and/or taxes to discourage certain activities (e.g. tax on greenfield development)</li> <li>Compulsory acquisition of land</li> <li>Joint ventures</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building</b> (e.g. developing actor's ability to identify and/or develop more effective/desirable strategies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actor-network relationships</li> <li>Social capital</li> <li>Cultural perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arenas for interaction/networking</li> <li>Partnerships/partnering arrangements</li> <li>Thinking 'outside the box'</li> </ul>

Figure 1-2: Planning tools, from Allmendinger and Tiesdell (2005)

Successful implementation of these planning tools could become more difficult due to the changed urban development process and especially the increased influence of private parties. Public parties having more of a facilitator or promotional role in the urban development process makes it harder to make demands concerning societal and environmental objectives in the negotiations between public and private parties.

## 1-2 Problem analysis

The role of municipalities in the Netherlands recently developed more towards the initiator and/or facilitator of urban area development plans. Municipalities try to ideate urban development plans and eventually turn these ideas into reality while meeting economic, societal and environmental objectives. Municipalities regularly propagate their ideas about what should happen with the built environment by publishing spatial visions, strategy documents and plans. For the realisation of these ideas, however, municipalities depend on private parties to get their desired area development realised. Therefore, municipalities need to persuade these private parties to participate in their area development plan (Adams and Watkins, 2014).

One of the key instruments used to persuade developers to participate and develop a plan are the municipal spatial vision documents. These documents play an important role in shaping the development of urban areas in the Netherlands. These documents outline the overall objectives and aspirations for the future of the municipality's territory or a specific urban area within a municipality, covering aspects such as land use, housing, transportation, and infrastructure. They provide the strategic goals and policies for the future development of a municipality and provide guidance for the allocation of land uses. The documents provide a means for municipalities to align urban development with the needs, goals, and values of the local community. Developers are responsible for the actual implementation of urban developments. As such, spatial vision documents play a part in guiding or shaping the decisions of developers to engage in developments in a municipality. However, despite their significance, there is still a lack of understanding of how these documents influence the decision-making of the developers.

To make persuasive spatial vision documents and to successfully persuade developers to develop in a municipality, municipalities are increasingly required to know about the urban development process and how other actors behave in this process (Adams et al., 2012). However, there is a lack of research on public-private interactions in the urban development process (Heurkens et al., 2015). This leads to planners lacking expertise and publishing vague documents, and as a result, developers do not know what to expect (Verheul et al., 2017). This mismatch between municipal plans and developer ideas results in difficulty persuading and activating developers, slowing the urban development process. To address the housing shortage in the Netherlands, it is necessary to address this issue of mismatch and difficulty in persuading developers.

Because public parties sometimes have difficulty persuading or relating to market parties in the urban development process, further research needs to be conducted to understand the behaviour and motives of developers (Adams et al., 2012; Heurkens et al., 2015). Research on the influence of spatial vision documents on developers and the internal decision-making process of developers contributes to this, with the ultimate goal of having municipalities create persuasive visions to persuade developers to participate in area developments in their municipalities.

### **1-3 Research relevance**

The relevance of this research becomes clear from the aspects discussed above. This research studies the impact of municipal spatial vision documents and other factors on developers' decisions to participate in an urban area development in the Netherlands, thereby focussing on the initiation phase of the urban development process. The goal is to understand how developers make these decisions and how municipalities can improve their ability to attract developers to participate in area development plans. The scientific relevance is gaining insights into the urban development process in the Netherlands, the decision-making of developers on whether to participate in an area development and the influence of municipal spatial vision documents and other factors on this decision-making process. The societal relevance is that the research could help improve the urban development process by making municipalities better at persuading developers to participate in area development plans. This could lead to more implementation of development plans or more efficient implementation of these plans, which is crucial given the current housing shortage in the Netherlands.

### **1-4 Research set-up**

This section will discuss the research: gap, problem statement, goal, and objective. Based on these elements, the main research question and sub-questions are formulated. Furthermore, the research scope and approach will be discussed in this section.

#### **1-4-1 Research: gap, problem statement, goal and objective**

Municipalities depend on private parties to realise their area development ideas, while private parties depend on municipalities for planning permission. As a result, the collaboration between the public and private sectors is essential and even necessary in urban area development. There is, however, often a mismatch between the plans and ideas of public parties on the one side and private parties on the other. This mismatch is often due to a lack of understanding on the part of public parties about the decision-making process of private parties, what factors are important in that process and the influence of spatial vision documents on that process. To bridge this knowledge gap, this research aims to gain insight into the internal decision-making process of developers and the factors that influence it. Whereas previous research primarily focused on the entire process and conceptual side of the development process, this research will focus on the practical side of the initiation phase of the urban development process.



### **Problem statement**

The above-described knowledge gap and the problem described in section 1-2 result in the following problem statement for this thesis:

*To increase housing development, it is necessary to improve the urban area development process in the Netherlands. Municipalities should effectively persuade developers to participate in area development plans using methods such as spatial vision documents. However, municipalities often struggle to do so. Improving collaboration between public and private parties and reducing the mismatch of plans and ideas between these parties is necessary. However, there is a lack of knowledge in the scientific literature and among municipalities about the developers' decision-making process and the factors that influence this process. Therefore, gaining insights into this process and these factors is needed.*

### **Research goal and objective**

The scientific goal of this research is to gain insight into the decision-making process of developers regarding participation in municipal area development plans and how municipal spatial vision documents, besides other factors, impact this decision-making process. This research aims to improve the urban development process in the Netherlands by providing valuable insights into the aspects mentioned above. The main objective is to address the knowledge gap identified in section (1-4-1) by identifying the key factors that influence developers' decisions in the urban development process. This will help to streamline the development process by providing recommendations for municipalities to persuade developers better to join their area development.

### **1-4-2 Research questions**

The problem discussed in section 1-2 and the previous sections regarding the research gap, problem statement and goal and objective lead to the following main research question of this thesis:

**What factors influence the internal decision-making process of real estate developers regarding participation in urban area development plans of municipalities, originating from the publication of a spatial vision document?**

Factors are elements that influence a decision or outcome. In the context of this research, these factors may include economic considerations such as potential profit or loss, regulatory and legal considerations such as zoning laws and building codes, and social and environmental considerations such as community engagement and sustainability. Other potential factors may include the availability of resources such as land, labour, and financing and the overall market conditions for real estate development in a given area. The term 'participation' in this research question means that a developer acquired land in the development area or has agreed to do so later in the development process, so-called exclusivity agreements.

The main research question can be divided into several sub-questions. A complete answer to the main research question can be formulated by answering the sub-questions. The following sub-questions will help answer the main research question:

1. What are the characteristics of the urban development practice in the Netherlands, specifically the initiation phase?

Answering the first sub-question will help map out the current urban development practice in the Netherlands. It is necessary to gain insights into the urban development practice in the Netherlands to get a clear overview of the problem described in section 1-2. This sub-question will be answered with the results obtained from the literature study from Chapter (3).

### **Municipal viewpoint**

2. What is the aim and intended effect of a municipality with the publication of a spatial vision document, and which instruments can a municipality use to support its spatial vision document?

The second sub-question focuses on the origin of a development idea, namely the publication of a spatial vision document by a municipality. Answering this sub-question will provide insight into a municipality's aim and intended effect in publishing a spatial vision document. Also, the question tries to broadly identify which policy instruments a municipality is willing to use to support the realisation of their spatial vision document(s). This question will be answered by gathering information from literature and case studies.

### **Developer viewpoint**

3. How do developers assess spatial vision documents published by municipalities?
4. What does the internal decision-making process of a project developer look like to come to an investment decision after assessing the spatial vision document published by a municipality?

The last two sub-questions focus on how a developer evaluates a municipality's spatial vision document and makes a decision to participate in an urban area development plan. This will provide insight into which elements of the spatial vision document catch a developer's attention and the steps they take after assessing it. The questions will also explore the internal decision-making process of a developer and the factors that influence this process. This research is scoped by focussing on the internal decision-making process of a developer, thereby leaving out the interactions a developer has with other actors regarding the development and decision-making process and the influence of these interactions. These questions will be researched through literature and case studies.

### **1-4-3 Research scope**

To safeguard the practicability of this thesis, this research is scoped on several points. This research will be time constrained by only researching the initiation phase of the development process, which is the period between a municipality ideating an urban area development plan and a developer deciding to join that development. This research is geographically constrained by only researching urban area development in the Netherlands. Moreover, this research is scoped by focusing on development plans originating from spatial vision documents published by municipalities and will furthermore focus on a developer's internal decision-making process in the development process. In urban area development, many actors are involved; however, this research will focus on municipalities and developers in the development process. The specific case study selection criteria, described in (2-2-1), will further define the research scope. This thesis's findings, conclusions, and recommendations only apply to the defined research area. To generalise any research findings, considering the interactions between these factors and the external environment is essential. Hence, the insight provided by this thesis is a valuable step in accelerating the initiation phase of urban area developments but is not a comprehensive guide.

### **1-4-4 Research approach**

This research tries to unravel a complex process and how developers work in that process to be eventually able to explain this process and the role of the developer. Therefore this research has an exploratory purpose and will collect theoretical and empirical evidence to base its conclusions and recommendations on. Furthermore, this research is qualitative and will use an inductive research approach.

## **1-5 Thesis outline**

In the first Chapter (1), the context of this research and the problem that forms the basis for this research are discussed. Furthermore, the research relevance, research set-up, main research question, and sub-questions are presented. The second Chapter (2) discusses the research methodology. The third Chapter (3) presents the literature study, which looks at planning culture in the Netherlands, urban area development: process and actors, municipal land policy, planning instruments, and the developer's internal decision-making process. Also, a theoretical framework for this research will be presented. In the fourth Chapter (4), the cases selected for the case study are introduced, and the spatial vision documents for each case are discussed and analysed. The fifth Chapter (5) will present the results of the analysis of the interviews with the developers from the different cases and preliminary conclusions based on this analysis. In the sixth Chapter (6), the research findings and preliminary conclusion are validated. The seventh Chapter (7) will present the conclusions of this research and, thus, the answer to the sub-questions and main research question. In Chapter eight (8), recommendations for the spatial vision documents, the initiation phase and the urban area development process, in general, will be presented. Lastly, in Chapter nine (9), the limitations of this research are discussed, a reflection on this research is given, and recommendations for further research are presented.



# Research Methodology

In this chapter, the research methods will be presented that will be used to answer the sub-questions and main research question. The methods in order of usage are literature study, case study and validation through an expert meeting. This research will consist of the following steps and phases that will contribute to formulating answers to the questions.

1) A literature study into the urban development process, focusing on the initiation phase and the role of municipalities and developers in this process. The literature study will map out the current urban development practice in the Netherlands and the further context in which this research will be conducted. Furthermore, it will discuss the concept of spatial vision documents and identify policy instruments that a municipality can use to support their vision. Also, the literature study will be used to map the internal decision-making process of developers and the factors influencing this process.

2) Case studies into urban (area) developments practice and processes in the Netherlands, focusing on the internal decision-making process of a developer on participation in an urban development plan ideated by a municipality through the publication of a spatial vision document. The case studies consist of two parts, desk research and interview analysis. Based on the case studies and literature study, preliminary conclusions will be drawn on the developer's decision-making process and the influence of spatial vision documents and other factors on that process.

3) Evaluation of these preliminary conclusions by an expert meeting consisting of experts from the urban area development practice in the Netherlands.

4) Drawing conclusions from the results of the research and validation phase. Results and conclusions will be used to formulate recommendations for municipalities on how to persuade developers to participate better in their urban area development plans.

## 2-1 Literature study

In the first stage of the research, a literature study is executed to analyse the current literature on urban (area) development processes. This literature study is used to identify the research gap as discussed in section 1-4-1. The purpose of the literature study is to analyse the current urban (area) development practice in the Netherlands, mapping the context in which this research will be conducted. Additionally, the literature study is used to better understand the role of different actors in the development process, spatial vision documents, planning instruments and the decision-making process of developers and potential factors influencing that process.

The literature study will use both international and Dutch literature on the urban development process. Amongst others, search engines like Google Scholar and WorldCat are used to find literature. For the initial literature search, terms such as 'urban development' and 'real estate development' and their Dutch translations are used. The search terms will be further extended during the literature study, with terms such as 'public-private interaction urban development', 'urban development plans' and their Dutch translations. These search terms, in combination with a snowballing technique, are used to find more relevant papers related to the papers found by the initial search terms. Literature concerning general or broad conclusions can be up to 25 years old, while literature concerning specific conclusions needs to be more recent, no older than 15 years. This is because urban (area) development, plan-making and public-private interaction were heavily influenced by the great financial crisis of 2008 and the euro crisis from 2010 to 2014. Conclusions on the practice of urban (area) development, plan-making, and public-private interaction from before these crises will differ from the conclusions on these topics after these crises.

## 2-2 Case study

This research will use case study methodology to study: the effects of a municipality publishing a spatial vision document on developers' decision-making process, the internal decision-making process of developers regarding participation in an area development plan initiated by a spatial vision document and what other factors influence this decision. The case studies will deepen the knowledge gathered during the literature study and check whether concepts from the literature are present in urban development practice in the Netherlands.

Four area development cases in the Netherlands will be studied using desk research and semi-structured interviews. The desk research will analyse the contents and persuasiveness of the different spatial vision documents. The semi-structured interviews with developers will focus on their participation in the area development, how they assess spatial vision documents and factors that influence their decision-making.

The interviews in this research will follow a semi-structured format, where pre-determined questions will be asked related to research topics. The literature study will be used to identify potential factors that may influence the decision-making process, and these will be presented to the developers through interview questions.

The importance of these factors will be determined through discussion. However, developers will also be given the opportunity to mention any additional factors they have encountered.

While semi-structured interviews are an effective tool for gathering detailed information and allowing respondents to express themselves in their own words, they can be time-consuming. Additionally, the researcher's personal attributes may also affect the outcome of the interview. It is important to keep in mind that each respondent may have their own biases and perspectives, and there is a risk of false positives, where respondents may choose to hide any criticisms. Using follow-up questions, interviews can provide more in-depth feedback (Johannesson and Perjons, 2021).

The desired result is an overview of the decision-making process of developers and the influence of spatial vision documents and other factors on that process. Preliminary conclusions will be formulated regarding these aspects, which will be validated in the next research phase.

Before the case studies can be conducted, they need to be selected based on several criteria that result from the research scope (1-4-3). Preferably, four cases will be selected wherein two cases, a vision document of a municipality has led to solid development initiatives from developers and two cases where this did not happen for some reason.

### 2-2-1 Case study selection criteria

To select the right cases that fit into the scope of this research, it is important to define a set of selection criteria on which the cases will be selected. Furthermore, since one of the key characteristics of urban development projects is their uniqueness, setting clear criteria for case selection is even more important to select somewhat comparable cases. The results of the individual case studies can eventually be compared with each other. The criteria used can be split into two categories: content-related and practicability-related. The following criteria will be used to select cases for this research:

#### Content criteria:

- *Plan location: Netherlands, inner-city or city edge:*  
Based on the geographical constraints of the research scope, cases need to be located in the Netherlands. More specifically, plans should be situated inner city or at the city's edge in case of city expansion.
- *Plan type: urban area development:*  
The type of development plan wanted for this research can be qualified as urban area development. The plan should involve more than just the 'simple' development of one plot. The plan should preferably involve the development of multiple plots together with, for example, the development of (partial) public space. In other words, the development plan should include several varying spatial functions.
- *Origin idea development plan: municipal spatial vision document:*  
The idea for the urban development plan should originate from a spatial vision document published by a municipality.

- *Municipal landownership in plan area: non-existing or not significant:*  
Within the development plan area, the municipality should have non or no significant landownership. A municipality should therefore have no dominant position within the plan area.
- *Developer(s) landownership in plan area: non-existing or not significant:*  
The developer(s) should have non or no significant land ownership within the development plan area. A developer should therefore have no dominant position within the plan area.
- *Municipality depends on the developer(s) for realisation:*  
A municipality is not willing to lead and realise the developments plan themselves, so they are not willing to start tendering procedure or something like that. The municipality is looking for developers to buy land and develop plans themselves. Therefore, the municipality and developer(s) must collaborate to realise the urban development plan.
- *Size of the developer:*  
The developer involved in a particular case should be of such a specific size that they are capable of and/or have experience with realising the type of urban area development as defined above. The size of the developer is a minimum requirement.

#### **Practicability criteria:**

- Internal documentation (partly) available
- External (objective) documentation available
- Involved actors willing to cooperate
- Representatives of involved actors available for interviews

## **2-3 Validation**

The results must be validated before conclusions can be made based on the research findings. An expert meeting will be held to validate the findings from the literature study and case studies. For this meeting, experts with expertise of and experience in urban area development will be selected. During this meeting, questions and statements regarding the research findings will be presented to the experts to start a discussion by which the results are validated.

## **2-4 Overview**

The research steps are converted into a research flow diagram, shown in figure 2-1. A research flow diagram helps to visualise the research approach and different phases of this thesis. The diagram gives an overview of the start of the research, data that needs to be used and how answers to sub-questions facilitate answering the main research question.



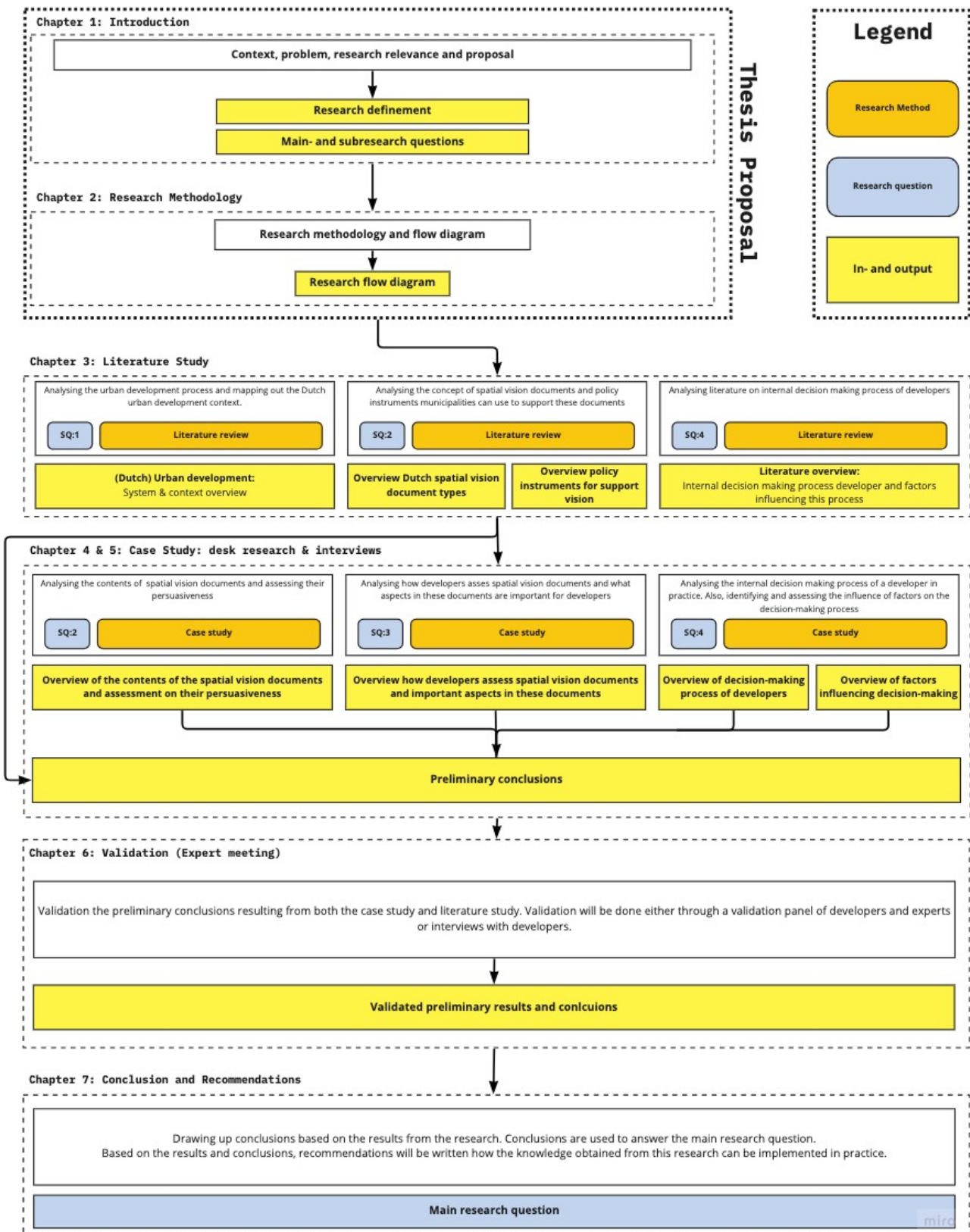


Figure 2-1: Research Flow Diagram



# Urban development in the Netherlands

In the introductory part of this thesis (1), the background and context of this research have been discussed. The concept of urban area development has been introduced, and the urban development process has been discussed. Also, the role of public and private parties and their mutual dependency has been briefly explained. To further analyse these topics and give some more context explanation, this research will further zoom in on planning culture in the Netherlands, the urban development process and the roles of public and private parties in that process. Furthermore, municipal spatial policy documents and planning instruments are discussed. Also, literature on the internal decision-making process of developers and factors influencing the decision are discussed. This chapter is closed off with a theoretical framework for this research.

### 3-1 Planning culture in the Netherlands

The urban development process of a particular country or area is also often connected to a specific planning culture in that region. To better understand the development process in the Netherlands and the roles of different actors, it is relevant to analyse its planning culture.

Planning culture refers to a set of norms and values that are part of the planning system and practice. Furthermore, the phrase planning culture often indicates planning styles and vice versa (Taylor, 2013). Taylor (2013) indicates that planning traditions in a country are influenced by the balance between the national and local authority, indicative and binding instruments, and private initiative versus state control, which result from evolving norms and values. Planning styles and cultures can be used interchangeably but should not be confused with planning systems, which refer to formal legal frameworks (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016). A planning culture entails more of the informal side of planning through informal institutions, which are often implicit rules and not legally enforceable. In the Netherlands, the planning system is governed by the 'Wet Ruimtelijke Ordening (WRO)', which indicates the formal legal boundaries of planning (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016).

Buitelaar and Bergman (2016) see the Dutch and planning cultures generally as informal institutions that guide decisions made by public and private parties regarding the goals and methods of planning. On the one hand, planning culture is formed and can be changed by its actors, but on the other, it is also path dependent and cannot be changed by a single or small group of actors (Booth, 2011; Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016). The interaction between actors within planning collectively determines the planning culture. So, the public-private interaction within the Dutch development process (partly) determines the planning culture in the Netherlands. Different planning cultures and the characteristics of planning culture in the Netherlands will be further discussed.

### **European planning cultures**

Within Europe, the European Commission (1997) defined four types of planning cultures: regional economic, urbanism, land-use management and comprehensive integrated and can be described as follows (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016; Nadin and Stead, 2013). The 'regional economic' culture focuses spatial planning on social and economic objectives, addressing inequalities in wealth, employment and social conditions. With this approach, the central government plays a vital role in public sector investments and managing developments. EU countries that make use of this approach are Portugal and France. The 'urbanism' culture, dominant in southern EU countries, prioritises architecture and urban design but has less effective land-use regulations. In that way, southern EU countries, are less effective in controlling development than other countries. The 'land-use management' culture has a narrow range of tasks and focuses on controlling land-use changes and urban growth at a strategic and local level. Most of the planning is done by the local government but can be steered by central authorities through supervision and setting out central planning objectives. The UK, Belgium, and Ireland are examples of countries using this approach. Lastly, the comprehensive integrated culture is a planning culture that systematically conducts spatial planning, uses a formal framework of plans, significant public investments, and focuses on spatial coordination. This culture furthermore consists of responsive and mature planning mechanisms and institutions. Countries that use this planning culture are Germany, Austria, Nordic countries and the Netherlands.

### **Planning culture in the Netherlands**

The Netherlands thus has a comprehensive integrated planning culture, characterised by a sophisticated system of planning institutions and mechanisms, significant public investments and a hierarchy of formal spatial plans. Planning culture in the Netherlands aims at a high degree of spatial ordering (Healey, 2004). Within this culture, five major spatial design principles have been distinguished: urban concentration or containment, spatial differentiation, spatial hierarchy, spatial justice and spatial cohesion (Hajer and Zonneveld (2000) in Buitelaar and Bregman (2016)). To implement these principles, the Dutch planning culture employs specific tools such as land-use regulations and active development practices (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016). Buitelaar and Bregman (2016) identified three crucial informal interrelated institutions that were the cornerstones of Dutch planning and development till at least the financial crisis of 2008. These are active land policy, comprehensiveness and integration. However, the financial crisis significantly impacted these pillars, causing a decline in the property and housing markets and resulting in a revision of development plans. As a result, many initially profitable developments were no longer viable, and several development plans were abandoned (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016). These three pillars will be further discussed.

### **Active land policy**

Through active land policy, local governments try to implement their planning policies by buying land, preparing it for development and then selling it to developers. In most cases, local governments acquire the land through private law but could also use their public law instruments. Pre-emption rights and land expropriation are instruments that Dutch municipalities can use to obtain land. Especially the usage of pre-emption rights has recently experienced a revival and is seen by the Dutch central government as an instrument to speed up housing development (Cobouw, 2022). Municipalities have several reasons to use active land policy, mainly to steer urban development in the direction the municipality desires. But also preventing hold-out, value capturing and providing public goods (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016). Active land policy became a problem for municipalities during the financial crisis and its aftermath. Municipalities used to buy land, prepare it and sell it to developers; however, because of the declining markets, developers were no longer interested in buying the land from municipalities. Which resulted in huge losses on municipal land accounts and put pressure on local public finance (Deloitte, 2013). This all resulted in municipalities' active land policy becoming less used after the financial crisis (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016).

### **Comprehensiveness and Integration**

The planning culture in the Netherlands furthermore has been and still is characterised by the comprehensiveness of development plans. Large-scale projects are not unique to the Netherlands, but the point that comprehensiveness is the standard makes it unique (Wolting et al., 2012). The reasons behind the comprehensiveness is the desire for spatial order and economies of scale when developing land. Integration of land development concerns the integration of policy sectors and land uses, but also the integration of public and private actors and financial means. As mentioned earlier, especially in the case of urban development ('gebiedsontwikkeling'), integration of public and private actors is needed. Collaborations can happen through PPP constructions or even joint ventures, where for example, a municipality, together with a developer, creates a new legal entity which operates as a development company. This type of joint venture ('grondexploitatie maatschappijen') was a common practice in the Netherlands until the financial crisis. These three pillars of the planning culture make this culture a comprehensive integrated one. In this culture, the Dutch government long strived for a high degree of steering on both the physical aspects of development as well as the organisational aspects by stimulating integration (Buitelaar, 2010). As already mentioned, the financial crisis put a lot of pressure on the existing planning culture and, thereby, on existing collaborations between public and private parties. PPP collaborations and joint ventures became no longer workable, and this caused private parties to drop out, leaving the public parties to take over the private party share and bear all costs and risks of the collaboration. In the long term, this caused joint ventures between public and private parties to become less used (Buitelaar and Bregman, 2016).

The financial crisis altered the influence of these three pillars and thereby altered the planning culture in the Netherlands. The crisis and aftermath resulted in less active land policy and fewer joint ventures. The comprehensiveness did not change much; large-scale development plans are still being planned and realised. This number and size of development will probably only increase due to the enormous housing shortage in the Netherlands. As already discussed, these projects need to be developed by developers since municipalities no longer want to take the risks of active land policy and joint ventures.

This change in planning culture can be viewed as a shift from 'government' to governance (Healey, 2010). In the Netherlands, before the financial crisis, municipalities were actively involved in planning and realisation; they were in the 'front seat'. Municipalities nowadays more have a governance role in the planning culture, where they govern planning and development but are less actively involved in realisation; they have taken the 'backseat'.

### 3-2 Urban area development: Definition

Before the urban area development process is further discussed, a more extensive explanation of what is urban area development is needed. Urban area development can include both greenfield and brownfield development. Brownfield development has several varying definitions in the literature. The term brownfield within urban area development is more used as the counterpart of greenfield. Where greenfield is described as formerly undeveloped area (Greenberg et al., 2001), and brownfield as land which has been previously developed (Alker et al., 2000).

Table 3-1 shows a simplistic overview of the differences between the concepts of greenfield and brownfield development as used in this research, where the term brownfield has been replaced with the term previously developed land. In the literature, brownfield development generally suggests development on contaminated soil, whereas, for this research, this is not necessarily the case.

**Table 3-1:** Comparison between greenfield development and development on previously developed land, in part based on Cao and Guan (2007), p.128

	Greenfield	Previously developed
Current state	Undeveloped	Developed
Land use type	Farmland, woodland, wetland, etc.	Industrial district, commercial properties, warehouse, etc.
Characteristics	Green, clean and pristine	Outdated, under-utilised, (potentially) contaminated
Location	Periphery of city	Inner city

A definition of brownfield applicable to urban development in the Netherlands comes from the UK National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and is defined as follows:

*Brownfield is land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.*

Brownfield and urban development are often lumped together and viewed as the same thing. Urban development can, however, include both brownfield as well as greenfield developments. A working definition of urban (area) development for the remainder of this proposal and the actual thesis is based on the above definitions and the following two definitions of an urban development project and urban area development. Daamen (2010, p.18) defines an urban development project as *"a framework of concrete material interventions inside a geographically distinct urban area"*. In this way, taking the concrete realisation of material products such as buildings, infrastructures and public spaces as a fundamental part of an urban development project. Daamen (2010, p.3) furthermore defines urban area development as *"A way of working in which government bodies, private parties, and other actors involved reach an integration of planning activities and spatial investment, eventually resulting in the implementation of spatial projects"*. An interpretation of urban development from Franzen et al. (2011) also applies to the above definition and this thesis. Franzen et al. (2011, p.10) interpret urban area development as *"the development of a specific area within a town or city or the expansion of a town or city, which generally has an identity of its own, though some of the cases considered are of a larger (regional) size"*.

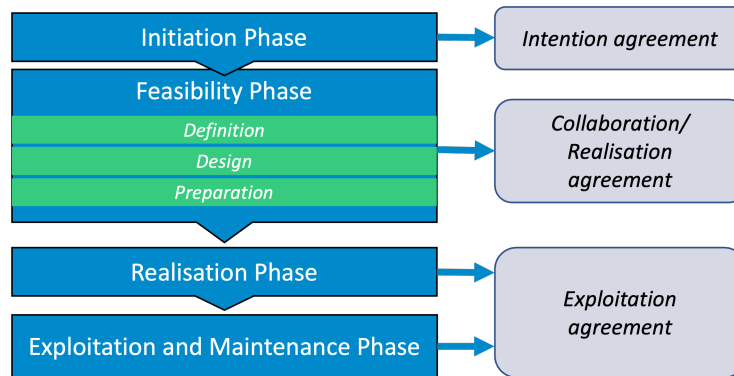
An adaptation of the definition of urban area development from Daamen (2010) is used as the definition for urban area development for this research and is defined as follows:

*The process in which government bodies, private parties, and other actors involved reach an integration of planning activities and spatial investment, eventually resulting in the development of one or more spatial functions on previously developed land inside geographically distinct urban areas.*

### **3-3 Urban area development: Process**

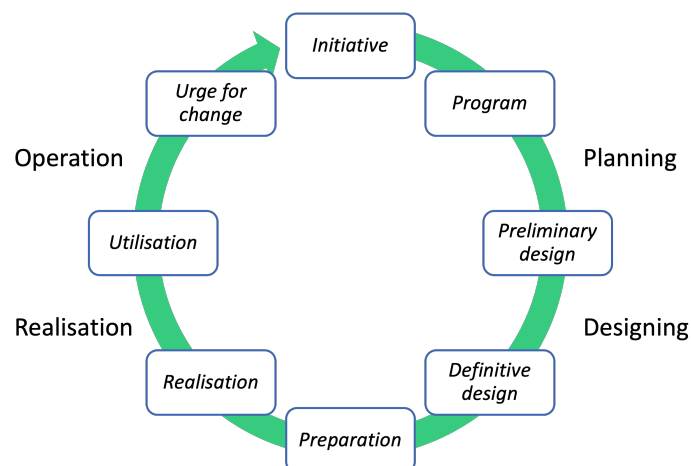
The urban development process is the process of developing housing and/or other buildings. In short, this process starts with the idea of creating housing in a particular place and ends with these houses being used. In the literature, different models of the urban development process can be identified (Healey, 1991), which are either more linear or cyclical shaped. The literature distinguishes different amounts of phases and different titles for these phases that make up the urban development process. The different manuals on urban development distinguish four (Cadman and Topping, 1995; Heijer et al., 2004; Gehner, 2006; Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019), six (Kohnstamm and Regterschot, 1994; Ratcliffe et al., 2021) or eight (Miles et al., 2015; Reed and Wilkinson, 2008) phases in the urban development process. Despite the different views on the urban development process, there are also commonalities since the different concepts of the process all aim to structure the process, and all agree that every phase is to be finalised with a decision document or agreement (Nozeman, 2017). Literature on the real estate development process in the Netherlands roughly identifies four phases in this process, namely the initiation, feasibility, realisation and exploitation phase (Gehner, 2006; Wolting et al., 2012; Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019). Breaking down the urban development process in these phases is also found in practice (van der Kuij, 2014, Nozeman, 2017).

Figure 3-1 shows an overview of the different phases of the urban development process in the Netherlands. This research is, for practicability reasons, scoped to only focus on the initiation phase in the urban development process. Therefore it will now further zoom in on this phase and leave out further elaborations on the other phases.



**Figure 3-1:** Phases of urban area development adapted from Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling (2019), p.23

It can be seen that the different phases in the urban development process lead to different agreements between initiators and developers. The urban development process, as presented in figure 3-1, is, in reality, more funnel-shaped. At the beginning of the process in the initiation phase, plans, ideas, and roles are still unclear and could move forward in several directions. When moving through this process, the development plan will become more apparent and more straightforward, and the different roles of different actors will be defined (Wolting et al., 2012). As mentioned, the urban development process is often depicted in linear or cyclical shapes. If the different phases are put together in a cyclical shape, you get the real estate cycle defined by van der Kuij (2014) and represented in figure 3-2. It can be stated that the urge to change on the top side of this cycle is the start of the initiation phase of a (new) urban development plan.



**Figure 3-2:** Real estate cycle, adapted from van der Kuij (2014), p.60



### Initiation phase

The urban development process starts with the initiation phase. According to Wolting et al. (2012), the initiation phase starts with a desire to redevelop a particular area and is closed off with a collaboration agreement. In the initiation phase, there is mostly a lack of clarity about the goals, expectations, and collaboration process and partners of the development. The initiation phase is used to find parties to collaborate with and to get the goals and expectations of the project clear. The goal of the initiation phase is to transform an idea to construct housing in a particular area into a more concrete plan suitable to attract collaboration partners and suitable for feasibility studies in the next phase of the urban development process. The initiation phase is highly important since, during this phase, the idea will be shaped into a plan. Therefore, the initiation phase significantly influences the subsequent three phases and completing this phase successfully is an inescapable step to be taken. Nozeman (2017) therefore rightfully labels the initiation phase as a *conditio sine qua non* in a successful urban development process. Nozeman (2017) also indicates that the idea or the stated desire to redevelop a particular area can come both from public parties, such as a municipality, or from private parties, such as developers. Nozeman (2017) states that the trade-off between expected return and risk is to be identified in the initiation phase. He also identifies several other activities that can be conducted in the initiation phase, such as:

- Creating a vision of location or concept followed by a feasibility study, which includes both market research and financial assessment
- General programme of requirements and mass study
- Inventorise legal zoning possibilities (and state of contamination)
- Acquisition (talks with land and property owners, sounding out existing and potential users, taking preparatory decisions)

Private parties can start the initiation phase, often with a feasibility proposal, or public parties, often with a policy document approved by the municipal council. If the initiative of the municipal council is aiming for area development, then the purpose of the initiation phase is to research the desirability of the plan or to find better alternatives. In the case of a private initiative, the initiation phase is often closed off with an investment proposal as an internal decision document, with either a go or no go for the initiative. With a public initiative, the first phase of the process often entails the creation of a master plan or urban development plan, depending on the size of the development; this can mean a so-called 'vlekkenplan' or sketch design combined with images of the intended vibe of the plan. As an external decision document, for both kinds of initiatives, often an exclusive intention agreement is signed between the initiator and developer(s). In this agreement, parties agree to collaborate in the next phase of the process in which the plan's feasibility will be researched in more detail. Depending on this feasibility study or other developments in the feasibility phase, such as changing requirements or granting financial aid, a decision will be made to move on to the realisation phase.

### Development initiative

Based on the initiative of the initiation phase of the urban development process, it seems that this is the same for both property and urban area development. There are, however, some differences due to the difference in scale. Property development concerns real estate development with often one spatial function, to be created on one plot and initiated by one actor. Urban area development concerns property creation with more than one spatial function, often accompanied by realising infrastructure and/or public space. Furthermore, urban area development involves more actors and requires higher investments, longer project duration and a higher level of complexity due to the points mentioned earlier and opposing interests. The differences between property development and urban area development are not as black and white as it seems, and there are many hybrid forms of these two types of development (Nozeman, 2017). The effect of the differences between these two types of development for the initiation phase is listed in table 3-2.

Table 3-2 shows there is no difference between the origin of the initiative for both property and urban area development; however, there are differences regarding the core activity and process. Within property development, the role of local governments is often limited to assessing whether the initiative fits into the boundaries of the zoning plan and spatial policy. Plan shaping with property development is often done by market parties. With urban area development, this is, however, different since plan shaping is often more complex. In that case, the role of local government(s) is more active. Urban development, both on individual and area scale, involves actions to be taken by private and public parties, meaning that unavoidable interaction will occur between these parties.

**Table 3-2:** Initiation phase property and area development, adapted from Nozeman (2017), p.10

	Property development	Urban area development
<b>Core activity</b>	Examines whether a project is in principle feasible. Sketch design or mass/volume study as starting document	Examines whether the area development is desirable and/or whether there are better alternatives. Urban design or master plan as starting document
<b>Origin initiative</b>	Market initiative from land, or real estate position Market proposal without position Coalition programme Policy proposal	Market initiative from land, or real estate position Market proposal without position Coalition programme Policy proposal
<b>Process</b>	Initiative can stand on its own. After the successful completion of the initiation phase, the development and realisation phase will follow. The need for selection, tendering and awarding depends on the capacity and position of the market player or public party	Initiative is fitted into three phases process model. The preparation phase is followed by the selection and tendering phase, followed by awarding phase by the government. Further plan development after awarding phase, unless a market party can proceed to self-realisation because of land positions

### **Complexity of urban area development**

One of the issues with urban development is the often high complexity associated with these kinds of projects. Several characteristics of urban development make up this complexity, which includes the following: a high amount of stakeholders, legal, administrative and organisational barriers, financial constraints and governmental-organisational constraints. Urban development plans have to deal with current users, the current condition of the site (often not suitable for residential purposes) and many and varying stakeholders (Adams et al., 2001). Urban (area) development plans are often characterised by fragmented land ownership, contributing to the high number of stakeholders (Adams et al., 2001). Other issues also contribute to the complexity of urban development, such as legal, administrative, organisational and financial barriers. On a legal level, the Dutch spatial planning rules and regulations create barriers for urban development due to prolonged and lengthy procedures such as expropriation or change of land-use plan.

Furthermore, both national and local norms on, for instance, parking or environmental pollution hamper the urban development process (Verheul et al., 2017). Financial constraints, such as high expropriation costs, soil remediation, and process and consultancy costs, hamper the process. Furthermore, the high level of investments needed upfront with urban development projects constrains the urban development process. Lastly, there are constraints on a governmental-organisational level, such as political instability in the long term due to elections and changing policy. Also, expertise in urban development is sometimes lacking within governmental organisations. Furthermore, governmental actors often do not or publish vague vision documents on their urban development ideas; as a result, developers do not know what to expect (Verheul et al., 2017). This often creates a mismatch between public and private parties' expectations and ideas regarding urban development plans.

The complexity of the urban development process is also due to the above-described constraints interacting with each other. Successfully dealing with the interaction of these constraints requires collaboration between private and public parties. Public and private parties depend on each other in this collaboration but have different end goals. Public parties facilitate or sometimes take the lead in the development process's procedural and policy side, creating societal gain as their end goal. Private parties are needed since they make the actual investments in the development plan to create financial gain for themselves eventually. Achieving both the public goal of societal gain and the private goal of financial gain is key to the success of an urban development plan. Since if the goals of one of the two parties are not achieved with the realisation of the project, it is expected that that party will withdraw from the development process (Rebel, 2016)

## **3-4 Urban area development: Actors**

The urban development process and the roles of municipalities and developers have been briefly introduced in Chapter 1. This section will further zoom in on the role of public and private parties and their interdependency in the urban area development process.

### 3-4-1 Development actors in general

The actors that play a role in the urban area development process are, amongst others, the municipality, developer(s), external actors (such as architects, urban planners, consultants), land and property owners, residents and current and future users (Nozeman, 2017). As pointed out earlier, the initiation phase is a crucial step in the development process since it defines the remainder of the project. If not passed successfully, no plan will be realised. Good collaboration between public and private parties and the activation of private parties is essential for the success of the initiation phase. Within the Dutch urban development practice, municipalities are the main public party involved, and developers are the main private party. There are, however, also several other public and private parties involved. Franzen et al. (2011) have mapped out several actors from both the public and private sectors. For the Dutch development practice, they identified public actors such as municipalities, central government and unique governmental bodies such as Public Works and Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat) and The Dutch Government Buildings Agency (Rijksgebouwendienst). They also point out that privatised public parties, especially the national railway companies, play an essential role. These parties play an important role when urban development takes place around railway stations, something which is not uncommon in the Netherlands.

However, Franzen et al. (2011) missed out on two crucial public players: the provincial governments and the metropolitan regions. The metropolitan regions, of which three are established in the Netherlands in the regions of Amsterdam, Rotterdam - Den Haag and Eindhoven, do not have planning power but play a role in the more informal side of the development process. These higher-level governments can be involved in urban area development by issuing certain spatial policy principles. They can also be financially involved by granting subsidies. Private parties identified by Franzen et al. (2011) are project developers, investors, builders, architects, landowners, estate agents and a unique and essential private actor in the Dutch practice, namely housing associations. Lastly, the end users are, of course, an important private actor. They furthermore specified another category of actors, namely citizens of the area where urban development takes place and interest groups. Franzen et al. (2011) emphasise that there likely is a disparity between the current and future users. Citizens or users can group in civic societies or interest groups to strengthen their position in the urban development process. Other civic societies are, for example, environmental organisations that try to influence the development practice and can therefore cause long delays.

For urban development to be successful in the end, it is essential to involve as many of the above-mentioned actors as possible. The focus of this research is on the initiation phase of the urban development process. The municipality predominately plays that phase as the public party and the developer as the private party; therefore, this research will zoom in on these two actors.

### 3-4-2 Developer

As indicated, many actors are involved from the private sector. Since this research focuses on developers, only this specific private actor will be further elaborated on. According to Heurkens (2012), developers play an essential role in the urban development process since they are the link between the demand and supply of real estate and contractors and end-user. Heurkens (2012) also argues that it is the developer's core business to prepare and realise real estate projects for their account and risk. Furthermore, the main goal of a developer is to maximise profit against a manageable level of risk. This profit is realised after the realisation of the project and, thus, after the sale of the real estate (Heurkens, 2012). Heurkens (2012) concludes that this indicates the short-term involvement of developers since it is not common for them to keep owning the real estate or public space after the project is realised. The following characteristics can be attributed to developers according to Putman (2010), Heurkens (2012), and Peek and Gehner (Peek et al., 2018):

- Network relations
- Communicating & marketing expertise
- General market knowledge
- End user market knowledge
- Concept & product development
- Risk-bearing investments in plan creation and preparation
- Contracting & organising expertise
- Project management
- Risk-bearing investments in land positions

According to Putman (2010), the most important characteristic of a developer is making risk-bearing investments. Furthermore, several of the above-mentioned characteristics are also present in other private actors; however, what makes a developer unique is that all these characteristics are present in one and the same actor. This makes a developer a spider in the web of the urban development process. Putman (2010) also identified several negative characteristics or weak points of developers; these are not necessarily present with developers but are at least preserved by other actors in urban development to be present at developers. These adverse characteristics are the following;

- Lack of transparency
- Bad reputation
- Disputable knowledge about the market
- Strong internal focus
- Business process focused on repetition and continuous flow of projects

The broad definition of a developer can be sub-categorised into the following types of developers (Putman, 2010; Heurkens, 2012; Peek et al., 2018).

- **Constructing developer:** related to a construction company and has a strong connection with the building process. Often the main objective is continuous development to guarantee production for the construction company.
- **Independent developer:** with no ties to other organisations and no property portfolio. These are often smaller developers focusing on specific types of real estate.

- **Investor developer:** related to an investor who primarily develops for the investor's own property portfolio. The main objective is to secure and increase yields of the real estate portfolio for the longer term. Important with this type of developer is the involvement of the end users of the real estate.
- **Financial developer:** which has a financial institution as a parent company, and therefore large amounts of capital are available. The main objective is continuity and (quick) return on investments.

Each of the different types of developers has its own characteristics and its own differing goals. The similarity between the different types is that they all make risk-bearing investments when participating in the urban development process by acquiring plots of land for development. The difference between the types is that their motive to do so is different (Putman, 2010). A constructor developer wants to achieve construction production for its construction company, while an investor developer wants to create housing that it can add to its portfolio. In the last 20 years, project developers have played an increasingly influential role in urban development due to increased land ownership (Heurkens, 2012). Therefore developers have more and more influence in the initiation stage of the development process (de Zeeuw, 2007). During the recession and the financial crisis that followed, developers decreased their amount of land ownership to keep their companies viable. However, developers have recently expanded their land ownership positions due to the changed planning culture in the Netherlands and the housing shortage.

### 3-4-3 Municipality

Dutch municipalities play a crucial and interesting role in the urban development process. Segeren (2007) argues that the way municipalities play their role in the urban development process can be indicated as their 'land policy' ('grondbeleid' in Dutch). The land policy used by a municipality is, therefore, not an end goal but more of a means to reach specific municipal goals. Goals such as organising and directing market behaviour, spatial goals, such as directing land use, and financial goals, mostly compensation for investments the municipality needs to make to facilitate the urban area development (Korthals Altes et al., 2009). The municipality can play a role through public law by granting building permits, creating land-use plans and creating spatial vision documents. This is the so-called passive land policy ('passief grondbeleid' in Dutch). The municipality can also play a role through private law by doing its own land development, so-called active land policy ('actief grondbeleid' in Dutch) (Franzen et al., 2011). This gives the municipality a double role since it is both a market supervisor as well as a market player (Segeren, 2007). Either way, the municipality decides whether development is taking place, making it an indispensable player in the development process.

The municipality consists of several departments that influence the development process, such as the real estate, spatial planning, transport, and economic affairs departments. These different departments have their own interests and will try to make these part of the urban area development. Depending on the municipality's size, the staffing of these departments is either in-house or contracted.

Where small municipalities can have only one person in spatial planning, larger municipalities can have large spatial planning departments with a lot of expertise and experience. These smaller municipalities often depend heavily on contracted personnel in urban development processes (Franzen et al., 2011). Another critical part of a municipality is that of the municipal council and municipal government consisting of the mayor and aldermen. Their interests and opinions can sometimes not be aligned with that of the municipal departments. But the municipal council has the last word on what is happening within the municipality. For successful urban area development, the support of the municipal departments (administrative) and the municipal council (political) is needed.

#### **3-4-4 Public-private interdependency**

The realisation of urban area developments often relies on private sector development and investments since public parties have moved away from active land policy and developing and realising plans themselves (Heurkens, 2012). However, municipalities still require housing development due to the current housing shortage in the Netherlands. This leaves developers as the crucial actor that can develop these houses, meaning municipalities depend on developers to develop the much-needed houses in their municipality. This does, however, not mean that private actors solely do urban development since urban development still requires private parties to have formal and informal relations with public parties (Heurkens et al., 2015). Developers need planning permission from municipalities for the realisation of their project development plan. Furthermore, developers depend on municipalities to make infrastructure changes or make the development fit in with the existing built environment. As it becomes clear, public and private parties depend on each other to successfully realise an urban development project.

With private-led development projects, an operating agreement between the municipality and private party is often constructed. If a developer wishes to develop their plot of land, not in every case but in some cases, this requires a change in the land-use plan. Anyhow, in any case, the municipality can apply cost-recovery for investment in public space, infrastructure and services. This cost recovery is often agreed upon in an operating agreement or arranged in an attachment to the building permit. Since cost-recovery is often arranged in a voluntary agreement between the municipality and the developer. The municipality can also deny support for changing the land-use plan if the municipality does not accept the proposed development plan. Despite developers leading the development process, municipalities can still influence the outcome of private-led development projects via this operation agreement and/or other planning instruments.

### **3-5 Municipal land policy**

As argued, the way a municipality plays its role can be indicated by the used type of land policy. Several types of market interventions by municipalities make up this type of used land policy. Needham (2005) states that governments can intervene in the land market in four ways. Market regulation, governments use regulations to steer the actors in the land market in the desired direction. An example of this indicates which areas are cleared for development.

Market stimulation is another way to intervene; governments can provide subsidies accompanied by specific demands to steer spatial development. For example, it can stimulate construction in a certain location by providing a location subsidy. The downside for governments is that this type of intervention is not direct; market players can ignore the subsidy and still develop an area they prefer. A third option is that of market actions, a government itself plays an active role in the market. For example, the earlier explained active land policy: buying and/or selling land prepared for construction to developers. Lastly, governments can use market structuring by which it establishes the rules associated with the land market. In this way, it structures the interaction between actors in the land market.

As indicated in section 3-1, it used to be more common for Dutch municipalities to develop their own land or set up a developing company with a project developer. However, in the last five to ten years, active land policy moved more and more to the background due to municipalities having fewer and fewer plots of land in ownership (ten Have et al., 2020). Municipalities nowadays are predominately doing so-called passive or facilitating land policy. This type of land policy focuses on facilitating urban development and places the municipality more in the role of process manager for urban area development. These two types of land policy will be further elaborated on.

#### *Active land policy*

As mentioned above, with an active land policy, a municipality is a market player performing market actions. It transforms owned plots of land into ready-to-build plots and sells these to a developer. By incorporating specific rules and demands in the sales agreement, the municipality can control what the developer is going to construct (Korthals Altes et al., 2009). By using private law to control the developer, the municipality can more effectively steer the development than when it would use the land-use plan and, thus, the public law route (Buitelaar, 2010). A crucial remark here is that a municipality can only use an active land policy when it owns a plot of land.

#### *Passive or facilitating land policy*

If a municipality does not own a plot of land, it is condemned to passive or facilitating land policy and can only influence the urban development process through a public law route (Korthals Altes et al., 2009; Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019). The other three types of market interventions, as identified by Needham (2005), play a role in this type of land policy. By facilitating land policy, a municipality sets the framework for the development but leaves realisation to developers and depends on these developers for realisation. With facilitating land policy, municipal investments and, therefore, the risks are limited. As mentioned before, this low-risk profile of facilitating land policy has become more favoured by Dutch municipalities after the financial crisis (Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019). An advantage of facilitating land policy is that creativity and expertise in the market are better used when (complex) plans are realised by market parties. The phrases passive or facilitating land policy indicate the same type of policy.

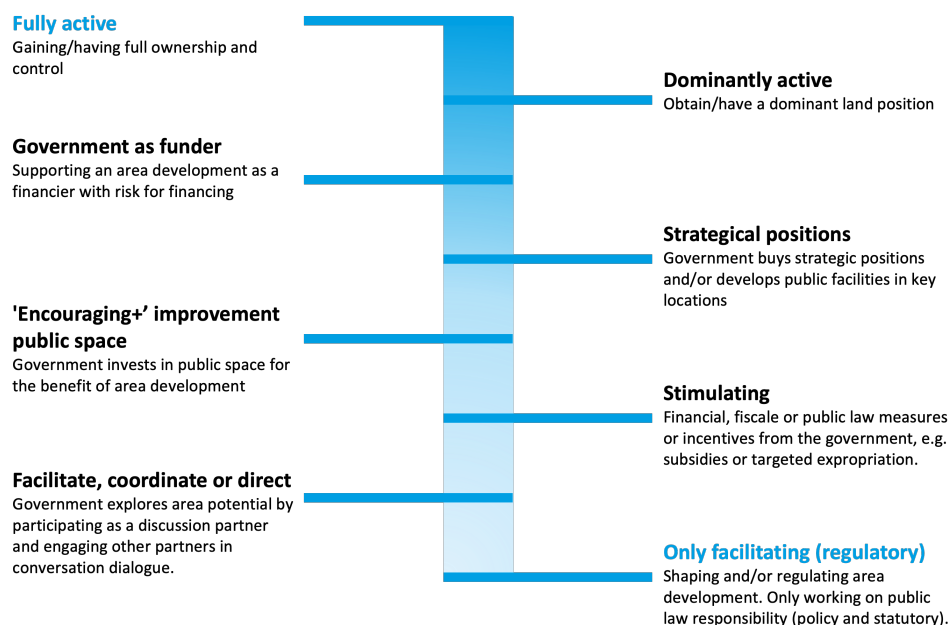
The phrase passive does, however, suggest that a municipality does not play a significant role or is not putting much effort into the urban area development process. This is a misconception since the municipality plays a crucial role in setting the boundaries and rules for developers to work with by passive or facilitating land policy.



Municipalities could even be more involved compared to the active land policy since it, for example needs to put much effort into lobbying for their interests and making sure their public agenda becomes part of the urban development (Heurkens and Hobma, 2014). By setting these rules and boundaries, a municipality can still achieve its goals and secure proper spatial planning (Korthals Altes et al., 2009).

#### *Intermediate land policy forms*

Active land policy on the one side and passive or facilitating land policy on the other is a very black-and-white differentiation between the two types of land policy. In reality, many hybrid forms of land policy exist between active and passive. For example, a municipality could pursue a facilitating land policy whereby it takes measures to make private parties develop a plot of land—for example, investing in infrastructure or public places. In that way, a municipality makes an area attractive for developers to develop. This type of land policy could be labelled stimulating land policy. Several intermediate forms of land policy are shown in figure 3-3.



**Figure 3-3:** Intermediate forms of land policy, adapted from Reijswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling (2019), p.36

## 3-6 Planning instruments

Municipalities depending on project developers taking the lead in the urban development process are not powerless towards these developers. Municipalities, through planning instruments, can still influence the development process and thereby influence what gets built (Heurkens et al., 2015). Municipalities could even try to influence project developers through planning instruments to make them invest and develop within their municipality. It can be argued that municipalities try to influence market behaviour through planning instruments.

This relationship between municipalities and project developers, where municipalities try to influence the behaviour of developers and vice versa, has been labelled by Adams and Tiesdell as follows: "the relationship between planning and the market is one of continuous and dynamic interaction. As a result, planners essentially operate as 'market actors' in the sense that they are intricately involved in framing, and re-framing real estate markets and so become a significant constitutive element of such markets" (Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, p.65). Since municipalities and project developers try to influence each other in the urban development process, it can not be stated that the outcome of this process is the result of public planning or market ideas (Heurkens et al., 2015). Heurkens et al. (2015) furthermore state that the outcome of the urban development process in practice is due to "rich, complex and often messy interaction constantly taking place between the two" (Heurkens et al., 2015, p.630).

The question remains what planning instruments can municipalities use in this continuous interaction process to try to influence the behaviour of project developers. As already indicated in the introduction of this thesis, planning instruments can be categorised into instruments that shape, regulate or stimulate the behaviour of project developers or build the capacity to do so (Adams et al., 2005; Adams and Tiesdell, 2010; Adams and Tiesdell, 2013; Heurkens et al., 2015). Figure 3-4 shows the planning instruments, their aimed influence and examples.

#### *Shaping*

When trying to influence market behaviour, shaping instruments are instruments that shape the decision environment of developers by setting the broad context for market actions and transactions. Shaping instruments can include plans, strategies, visions and other similar documents (Heurkens et al., 2015). These indicative documents are viewed by most developers as directive but also provide developers with a degree of certainty on which they can base project development plans (Heurkens and Hobma, 2014). Shaping instruments, besides setting conditions, also offers a 'political position statement' since plans forewarn developers about the intentions of plan-makers (Healey, 1992). Plans can set out direct actions to be conducted by the plan-maker, but also set out criteria by which the plan-maker will assess the project development plans of developers. The publication of plans and vision documents thus provides a statement of the plan makers' intentions, which can influence the strategies of developers (Adams and Tiesdell, 2013).

#### *Regulating*

Regulatory planning instruments constrain and define the parameters for the decision environment of developers by regulating the market and, thereby, market behaviour (Heurkens, 2012; Heurkens et al., 2015). Regulatory instruments try to manage or prevent certain activities conducted by developers, thereby limiting the autonomy of developers. Building or development permits are typical regulatory instruments, but also development contracts between a municipality and developer can contain regulations.

#### *Stimulating*

Stimulating planning instruments are described by Adams and Tiesdell (2010) as instruments that 'lubricate' market actions. Stimulating instruments expand the decision environment of project developers. Adams et al. (2005) identified two types of stimulating actions, namely (direct) state actions and fiscal measures. State actions could entail providing infrastructure for the development or using state power to acquire land which can be sold to developers.

Fiscal measures are more indirect and seek to alter the incentives for developers to develop a particular location or type of development. This can be achieved by making some actions more rewarding than others (Heurkens et al., 2015). Typical fiscal measures are price-adjusting, risk-reducing and subsidies.

Instruments	Impact on markets	Sub-types and examples
Shaping	Shape decision environment of development actors by setting broad context for market actions and transactions	Development/investment plans
		<i>Public (infrastructure) investment plans</i>
		Regulatory plans
		<i>Statutory plans, policies, strategies</i>
		Indicative plans
		<i>Non-statutory plans, policies, strategies</i>
Regulatory	Constrain decision environment of development actors by regulating or controlling market actions and transactions	State/third party regulation
		<i>Planning permission, property rights</i>
		Contractual regulation
		<i>Development, Section 106 agreements</i>
Stimulus	Expand decision environment of development actors by facilitating market actions and transactions	Direct state actions
		<i>Reclamation, infrastructure, land acquisition</i>
		Price-adjusting instruments
		<i>Grants, tax incentives, bonuses</i>
		Risk-reducing instruments
		<i>Policy certainty, place management</i>
		Capital-raising instruments
<i>Loan guarantees, funds, partnerships</i>		
Capacity building	Enable development actors to operate more effectively within their decision environment and so facilitate the operation of other policy instruments	Market-shaping cultures, mindsets, ideas
		<i>New perspectives, ways of thinking</i>
		Market-rich information
		<i>Market and development process logics</i>
		Market-rooted networks
		<i>Formal and informal interaction arenas</i>
		Market-relevant skills
<i>Human capital, individuals</i>		

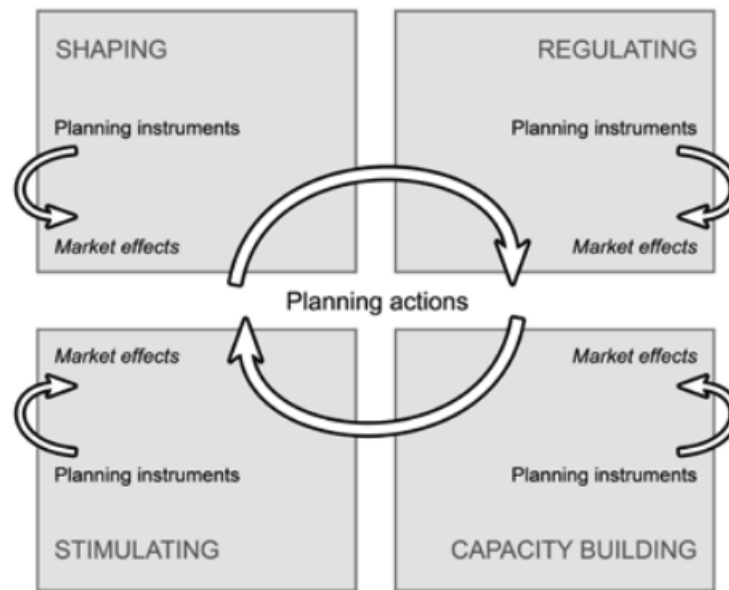
**Figure 3-4:** Planning instruments from Adams et al. (2005), p.64; Adams and Tiesdell (2013), p.134-135; Heurkens et al. (2015), p.631

### *Capacity building*

The three types of planning instruments directly shape, regulate or expand the decision environment of developers. Capacity building instruments seek to enable actors to operate more effectively within their decision environment (Heurkens et al., 2015). capacity building instruments aim to facilitate the better operation of the other planning instruments. capacity building tools create the abilities and capacity of actors operating in the market.

These abilities and capacities are, for instance, skills, knowledge, networks, rules of operation and working practices (Adams et al., 2005). Important to notice is that "capacity building requires greater trust, mutual respect, and a willingness to work together in partnership with the private sector, both formal and informal, to achieve mutually beneficial and desirable outcomes" (Heurkens et al., 2015, p.632)

Urban planners such as municipalities can use the above-described planning instruments to try to incorporate their public objectives in urban development projects by changing the context and parameters of urban development and thereby trying to influence the investment decisions of developers. The implementation of planning instruments is accompanied by planning actions; these cause market effects. However, the usage of specific instruments and actions influences the usage of other instruments, as seen in figure (3-5). Heurkens et al. (2015) made this even more apparent with the following explanation: "For instance, by using market information obtained by partnering activities with market actors (capacity building), planners are enabled to readjust public planning policies, plans and frameworks (shaping) and to identify financial conditions (stimulating) and plan development conditions (regulating) which are aligned with market needs" (Heurkens et al., 2015, p.6).



**Figure 3-5:** Roles of planners: connecting planning instruments, actions and market effects from Heurkens et al. (2015), p.633

### 3-7 Facilitating land policy in practice

This research is limited to examining situations where a municipality has little or no land ownership in a area development. Since, in such cases, a municipality can only implement facilitating land policy, this research will only discuss facilitating land policy in practice. As has become clear, facilitating land policy is when a municipality sets the rules and boundaries

for developers to work within a specific development. When doing so, the municipality plays different roles and can have various instruments and options at their display to create the framework for development.

Figure 3-6 shows the different roles a municipality can operate to realise their desired facilitating land policy. The different roles are similar to the types of market interventions identified by Needham (2005) and are based on four categories of planning instruments from Adams et al. (2005). The different roles are deepened by adding descriptions and examples from Dutch urban development practice. For each role, the municipality can use different instruments; this is not exhaustive, and the examples do not strictly belong to a specific role. In practice, the municipality needs to combine roles and instruments to effectively implement their facilitating land policy and thus influence the urban development process.

Role Government	Types of instruments	Example
<b>Giving direction (creating area potential)</b>	Vision-forming tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban policy documents, city vision, housing visions, covenants, etc.</li> <li>• Master plans, area visions, game rule cards</li> </ul>
<b>Regulate (delineate area potentials)</b>	Legal-planning and private-law instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure/environmental visions, land-use plan, environment plan</li> <li>• Project decision, general rules, regulations, contracts parking norms, public-private agreements</li> </ul>
<b>Stimulating (increasing area potential)</b>	Cost and risk reduction instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidies</li> <li>• Fiscal measures</li> <li>• Active land acquisition, expropriation</li> <li>• Infrastructure investments</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitation (exploring and connecting area potentials)</b>	Instruments that increase organisational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network formation, chain cooperation</li> <li>• Collaborations, partnerships</li> <li>• Market consultation, market information</li> <li>• Process guidance, conflict resolution and trust</li> <li>• Information offices, area managers</li> </ul>

**Figure 3-6:** Governmental roles and planning instruments adapted from Reiswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling (2019), p.37

### 3-7-1 Spatial policy documents

Municipalities can use various (legal) instruments when applying facilitating land policy in practice and taking on the different roles of shaping, regulating, stimulating and facilitating/capacity building. Especially the first two roles of shaping and regulating provide a municipality with instruments to influence the spatial plans for a particular area. The level of detail of these spatial policy documents can range from grossly to very specific. On a very broad level of detail, a municipality can create a municipal-wide spatial vision which roughly indicates in which areas housing is allowed but does not indicate what type of housing. A municipality could go zoom in a bit more and create a vision for particular areas, which could include more exact locations of, for instance, housing, shops and offices. Or maybe some ideas on building heights, architecture or public spaces. Zooming in even further, a municipality can

create detailed spatial policy documents for a specific plot that could describe exact building heights and volumes, locations of public space, and type of housing. Dutch municipalities are legally obligated to create two types of spatial policy documents: the structure vision and land-use plan, which will be elaborated on below.

*Structure vision (Dutch: 'Structuurvisie')*

A spatial vision document in the Netherlands, similar to the ones described above, is the 'structure vision', a document that municipalities, provinces and central government are obligated to create periodically (Reiswijzer Gebiedsontwikkeling, 2019). A structure vision contains the main outlines for the intended development of a specific area. Lieferink (2011) remarks that a structure vision aims to outline the direction of the development, making the structure vision a strategic planning instrument. Although municipalities are obligated to create structure visions, the document itself is not legally binding to citizens; it is only binding for municipal authorities in the sense that they need to act in accordance with the structure vision (Lieferink, 2011). A structure vision creates a rough picture of what is intended for the area. It provides a municipality with a set of preconditions that can be used in talks with private parties owning land in the to-be-developed area. Furthermore, structure visions are often the starting point for further plan development. Structure visions thus establish a first rough picture and framework for the development of a particular area. Based on this, private parties could start making plans on plots already owned, or they could start acquiring plots. A structure vision gives direction to a development but also creates a set of starting preconditions; therefore, this instrument suits both the shaping and regulating role of a municipality.

*Land-use plan (Dutch: 'Bestemmingsplan')*

Where the structure vision indicates a rough picture of the development of an area, the land-use plan contains much more details, and its goal is to create legal certainty (Buitelaar et al., 2007). Dutch municipalities are obligated to create land-use plans for their entire municipal territory, which are legally binding. The land-use plan regulates what type of structure is allowed on a certain plot; this can be housing, shops or sports facilities. A municipality can include detailed rules in the land-use plan but is free to choose on the level of detail. Preparing and establishing a land-use plan is a time-consuming and costly process (Buitelaar et al., 2007). Creating a land-use plan demands consultation with actors surrounding the plots and a decent spatial underpinning. To come to a good spatial underpinning and a test of feasibility, various studies must be carried out in the areas of archaeology, plants and wildlife, noise, mobility, the need for the functions to be realised, and so on (Hamerslag, 2018). In urban development, the land-use plan will eventually be used as the basis for granting a building permit.

*In-between spatial vision documents*

Between the structure vision and the land-use plan, there are several other spatial vision/policy documents that do not have an origin in the Dutch spatial planning law (Dutch: 'Wet ruimtelijke ordening'). Municipalities are thus not obligated to draw up these documents; however, urban planning practice shows that these documents can be seen as the closure of intermediate steps in the plan-making process. These documents are created by the municipality and established by the municipal council. Creating these documents is sometimes done in consultation with residents, developers or other actors. Thereby creating support for the plan and attempting to create an urban development plan that works for all parties involved.

Like the structure vision, these other in-between types of documents are not (directly) legally binding towards citizens or other private actors. However, these documents are used in land-use plan amendment procedures executed by municipalities. In this way, these documents become applicable to, for example, developers. To allow urban area development on specific plots, these plots often need a change in land-use plan, for example, from offices to housing. Change of land-use plan needs to be done by the municipality, which bound itself to these spatial vision documents. A land-use plan change will only be granted if the project development plan falls within the spatial vision documents. In other words, if a developer wants to change a land-use plan to housing, he must meet the conditions in the spatial vision documents. In this way, the municipality can use spatial vision documents to shape and regulate urban development in an area.

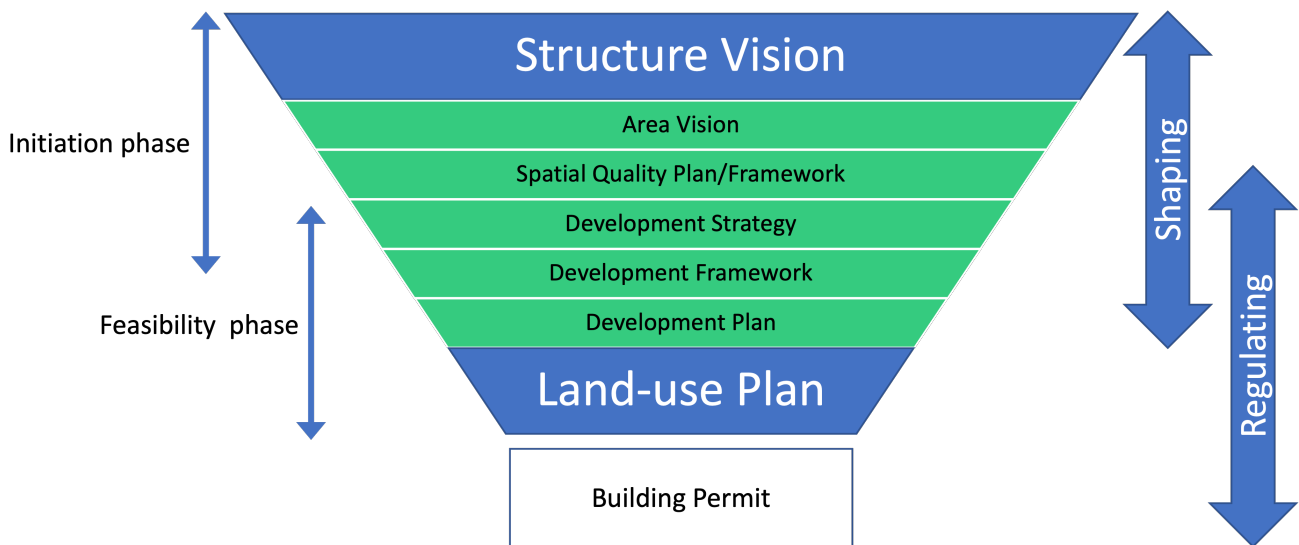
### **Overview spatial policy documents**

Figure 3-7 shows the different spatial policy documents from urban development practice in the Netherlands. The different documents are placed in an inverted pyramid shape, ranging from broad at the top to more detailed at the bottom. One or more of the spatial policy document(s) could eventually lead to granting a building permit to, for example, a developer to realise their project development plan. The building permit is not included in the pyramid as it is not a spatial policy document but rather a permit outlining specific rules on what is allowed to be built. According to the literature reviewed, it can be argued that the publication of a structure vision at the top of the pyramid marks the beginning of the initiation phase. As one moves down the pyramid, more policy documents are published. It can be argued that the initiation phase overlaps and eventually transitions into the feasibility phase of the urban development process. The granting of the building permit, located beneath the pyramid, marks the start of the realisation phase.

Furthermore, it can be argued that policy documents at the top of the pyramid, thus in the initiation phase, primarily focus on shaping the development. Documents further down the pyramid, thus published later in the development process, are still focused on shaping but contain more rules or hard numbers, thus containing more regulating aspects. Also, stimulating aspects could become more present in the documents further down the pyramid.

It should be noted that only the structure vision, land-use plan, and building permit are legally defined documents in Dutch spatial planning law ('Wet Ruimtelijke Ordening (WRO)'). The other spatial policy documents are situated between the structure vision and the land-use plan. Their names are just a few examples of documents identified from practice. Also, the order in which they are placed is not indicative of their level of detail or importance.

As the development process progresses, public and private parties involved begin to consult each other more frequently to further develop plans for the area. Public and private parties sometimes work together to determine what will eventually be developed in the area. The municipality aims to achieve as many of its goals as possible in the area development. At the same time, the developer strives to create a feasible plan that will receive building permission. It can be argued that these consultations between the parties are a form of negotiation. The developer may agree to certain wishes of the municipality, such as providing more affordable housing in exchange for the ability to build more units or taller buildings.



**Figure 3-7:** Overview of spatial vision documents, their mutual relation and relation to phases of development process and planning instruments

The various phases of these consultations can be concluded by adopting and publishing spatial policy documents. These documents reflect the agreements reached between the public and private parties on what will ultimately be built in the area. Going from the top to the bottom of the pyramid is also a representation of these consultations/negotiations between municipality and developer(s), where they try to increasingly agree on what will be built, which is captured in these documents.

### 3-8 Factors influencing developer's decision-making process

To be able to conduct the case study portion of this research, specific interview questions must be formulated to examine how developers evaluate spatial vision documents, what they believe constitutes to a successful document, the actions they take after reviewing the document, and how they decide and what influences their decision whether or not to participate in the municipality's development plans. To determine a part of these questions, factors that contribute to or can assess the influence of spatial vision documents and influence the decision-making process have to be identified. This is done through literature study and consultations with experts from Dutch urban area development practice.

#### 3-8-1 Spatial vision document factors

An important input for this overview comes from Adams and Tiesdell (2013). They argue that the success of a spatial plan is partly determined by its persuasiveness. The success of a spatial plan thus depends on how well it can persuade a developer to become a participant in the development plan. Adams and Tiesdell (2013) identified nine key variables contributing to a plan's persuasiveness and, ultimately, its success.



Since these nine variables determine the persuasiveness of a plan and developers are to be persuaded to participate in a development, Adams and Tiesdell (2013), in that way, also suggest that these variables play a role in the decision-making process of a developer as developers need to be persuaded to participate in a development plan. Table 3-3 shows the nine key variables defined by Adams and Tiesdell (2013), which are grouped into four main topics: substance, authority, resources and support. The more persuasive the plan maker is on these variables, the more successful he will be in activating developers.

### **Nine variables indicating persuasiveness**

These nine variables can not one on one be applied to the case study part of this thesis research. The above variables are defined on a more abstract level. They can, therefore, not be simply presented to developers together with the question if they seem these variables are important as well. The nine variables, as defined by Adams and Tiesdell (2013), need to be transformed to make them representable and practically applicable to the Dutch development practice. Below it will be discussed how each variable can be applied to this thesis research and the Dutch development practice.

#### *Clear and apparent evidence base*

Translating this variable to planning practice, this variable looks at whether market research has been performed to support choices made in the plan's development. Results from market research can include an overview of demographic development in an area as well as demand for different types of housing, sometimes included with market prices for these different types of housing.

#### *Plans persuasive logic and rationale*

This variable aims at whether a plan rationally derives from an understanding of the real estate market. Translating this to practice, the question asks whether sufficient knowledge was present at the planners during the plan's development.

#### *Identity of the plan maker*

Here the variable looks at who took the initiative in developing the plan. In practice, did the initiative come from a single landowner, a developer or a municipality with planning powers. For this research, only initiatives from municipalities will be researched; therefore, it is already known who took the initiative for the plan development.

#### *Charismatic, persuasive advocates*

If successful political leaders support a plan, they are potentially more successful. Translating this variable to practice means that if the plan is initiated by a municipality with a good reputation regarding spatial development, that plan can be more persuasive. This good reputation could be applied to the municipality as a whole but could also be more specifically applied to an alderman with a good reputation.

#### *Endorsement by higher-level actors*

If higher levels of government support plans, they could be more persuasive. For the Dutch practice, this could mean that if plans are endorsed by the province or central government, the plan could be more persuasive for developers.

*Plan makers capacity to marshal wider resources*

This variable looks at the resources that can be implemented to support the plan's realisation. In light of this research, this means which resources the municipality can deploy to support the realisation of its vision. For the Dutch municipalities as planners, these potentially deployable resources can be split into two categories. First, financial resources, a municipality could support a plan financially by granting subsidies or could take certain costs of the plan for their account. In Dutch practice, the subsidies could come from the municipality or the central government. Secondly, a municipality could deploy specific planning instruments to make the plan more persuasive, for example, expropriation.

*Attractive communication and presentation*

This variable speaks for itself; if the plan is presented and communicated in a clear and attractive way, it is more likely to be persuasive to developers.

*Stakeholder engagement*

This variable partly points to the first variable, an apparent evidence base, but focuses more on the involvement of stakeholders. If the needs and wishes of external stakeholders have been taken into account during plan development, this makes the evidence base for the plan more robust. In other words, if the opinion of external stakeholders has been conducted during plan development, the plan maker can more credibly argue that the developed plan is what the external stakeholders want for that area. In turn, this makes the plan more persuasive.

*Community support*

This variable is quite similar to the previous one. If the local community supports the new development plan, this makes the plan more persuasive.

**Six questions determining how well a plan is shaped**

Adams and Tiesdell (2013) also formulated six questions to help determine how well a plan is shaped. These questions, in a way, already have been addressed in the above explanation of the variables but are still worth mentioning. Below are six questions from Adams and Tiesdell (2013) to assess how well a plan is shaped, in other words, how persuasive a plan is for developers.

1. How far is the information in plans based on market analysis?
2. To what extent are market actors involved in plan preparation?
3. How far does the information in plans change the behaviour of market actors by encouraging them to re-think their own proposals and/or act in a more integrated way?
4. How well do plans reconcile the tension between flexibility and certainty for market actors?
5. To what extent do real estate values take account of the information in plans?
6. In what circumstances do plans need to be reinforced by other policy instruments?

**Table 3-3:** Nine key variables indicating the persuasiveness of spatial development plans from Adams and Tiesdell, 2013

More persuasive	Key variable	Less persuasive
<b>Substance</b>		
Plans that derive from substantive analysis of socio-economic trends, including those affecting real estate markets, are more likely to include realistic proposals	Clear and apparent evidence base	Plans that emerge rapidly without substantive analysis may not be taken seriously
Where a plan's rationale derives from a substantive understanding of how markets operate and can be shaped by public policy, its content is more likely to generate confidence	Plan's persuasive logic and rationale	Where a plan's rationale demonstrates a misunderstanding of how markets operate and can be shaped by public policy, its content is more likely to provoke criticism
<b>Authority</b>		
If the plan maker is a government body with statutory powers, it is well placed to convince market actors of serious intent	Identity of plan maker	If the plan maker is an entrepreneur or voluntary body, doubts may exist about long-term commitment to delivery
Plans that are championed by successful political leaders may be taken more seriously	Charismatic, persuasive advocates	Plans that have no serious political advocate may be considered of less significance
Where plans are endorsed by higher levels of government, there is likely to be greater confidence in their survival	Endorsement by higher-level actors	Where plans fail to be endorsed by higher levels of government; there will be doubts about how long they may last
<b>Resources</b>		
Plan makers who can call upon significant resources to support implementation are likely to be held in high regard	Plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources	Plan makers who have access to few resources to support implementation may command little attention
<b>Support</b>		
Plans that are communicated attractively are more likely to be noticed by key actors	Attractive communication and presentation	Plans produced as official documents that are hard to read may tend to be left on the shelf
The more plans engage relevant external stakeholders, the better their chances of implementation	Stakeholder engagement	Plans prepared without serious stakeholder engagement may prove unrealistic, especially if significant capital investment is needed
Plans that reflect community aspirations are more likely to be achieved without significant local conflict	Community support	Plans that conflict with community aspirations may encounter significant local conflict

### 3-8-2 Internal and external factors

Further input for the overview of variables/factors that play a role in the developers' decision-making process comes from Nozeman (2017). In his research on the initiation phase of development, he surveyed whether the initiation phase changed between the period before and after the financial crisis. For this research, many developers were interviewed, and one of the questions asked the interviewees if and to what extent certain internal and external factors played a role in the success of the development initiation phase. Although Nozeman's research only looked at initiatives from developers and not development plans initiated by municipalities. The defined internal and external factors and results from Nozeman's research are valuable input for this research. Table 3-4 shows the factors used by Nozeman; as can be seen, they are formulated quite abstractly. Nozeman's research showed that the important internal factors were creativity and innovation, market knowledge, network and social skills, flexibility and adaptability. Less important were technical knowledge and non-risk-bearing financial positions. Important external factors were market, financing possibilities and spatial planning procedures. Less important were competition and vacancy/ageing. An interesting note here is that financing possibilities, market, transparency and social climate have become more important than they were in the period before the financial crisis.

**Table 3-4:** Factors influencing developer's decision-making adapted from Nozeman, 2017

<b>Internal factors (within own organisation)</b>	<b>External factors (outside own organisation)</b>
Creativity and innovation	Market
Technical real estate knowledge	Financing possibilities
Risk management	Contracting
Focus, specialisation	Spatial planning procedures
Market knowledge	Social Climate
Financial position (risk-bearing)	Competition
Financial position (non-risk-bearing)	Transparency
Financial knowledge	Tax and legal laws/regulations
Network and social skills	Partner risk in collaborative ventures
Flexibility and adaptability	Vacancy/ageing
Human capital and type of organisation	

### 3-8-3 Further factors

Further aspects or factors that could help determine the successfulness of spatial vision documents are obtained from research by Hamerslag (2018), which looked at the conditions for a future-proof development perspective for the municipality in which market players are persuaded to invest in area development plans. This research concluded that setting frameworks in inner-city area development contributes to persuading market parties to invest in these areas.

Adapted from the research by Hamerslag (2018), the conditions of such frameworks regarding content and quality should contain the following:

- Spatial criteria
- If no programmatic frameworks or ambitions are set, the market should be confident that no additional criteria will be made on these components at a later stage
- The framework-setting instrument preferably contains financial frameworks to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding
- It should be clear from the framework instrument which other policy frameworks apply
- There must be sufficient political support
- There must be sufficient support in the surrounding area
- Robust and rationale substantiation improves certainty
- The framework must be flexible

Hamerslag (2018) concluded that developers do not necessarily need planning legal status to increase investment willingness. Both public and private parties value a high degree of flexibility, although this should be balanced with legal certainty. Market parties prefer frameworks that are in place for a longer period, while public parties prefer to adjust them periodically. Spatial frameworks are considered the most important. The lack of financial frameworks is not perceived as problematic but does, in practice, lead to a lack of clarity and misunderstanding among parties. Adding process agreements regarding, for instance, cooperation would help a lot. Hamerslag (2018) recommend including calculation rules as part of the development perspective so that parties have clarity regarding the financial and programmatic frameworks.

#### **3-8-4 Overview factors used for case study research**

In addition to the above-discussed factors regarding the persuasiveness of spatial plans (Adams and Tiesdell, 2013), internal and external factors (Nozeman, 2017 and factors identified by Hamerslag (2018), more factors have been identified, based on the reviewed literature and consultations with experts from Dutch urban area development practice. These factors have been compiled to create a comprehensive/extensive list of factors that could influence the success of a spatial vision document and the decision-making process of developers. The list of factors is used to formulate interview questions for the case study phase of this research, in which semi-structured interviews will be conducted with developers. The list is not exhaustive, and developers may bring up additional factors from their own experience during the interviews. The complete list of factors can be found in the appendix B.

The factors potentially influencing the decision-making process can be grouped into the following categories:

**Factors regarding spatial vision documents:**

- Factors regarding contents
- Factors regarding creation process and substantiation

**Factors influencing the decision-making process of developers:**

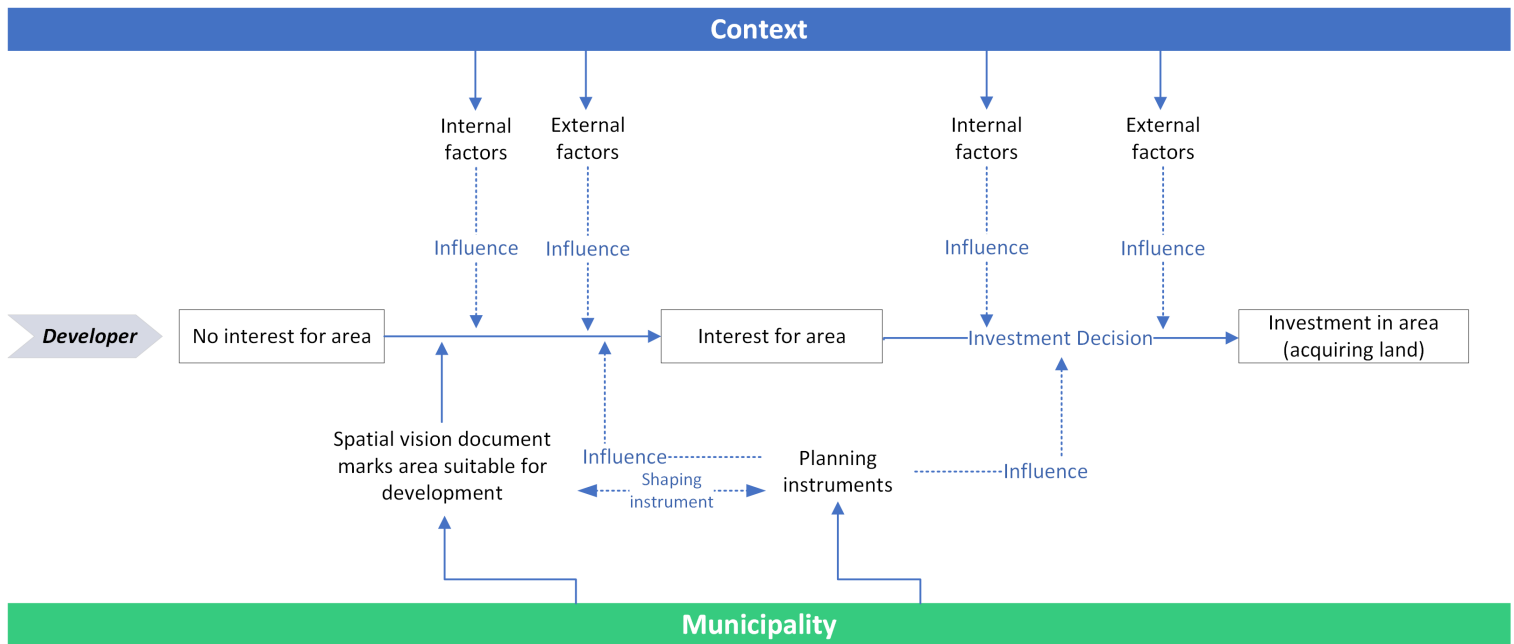
- Planning tools: Shaping, Regulating, Stimulating, Capacity building
- Internal factors
- External factors

### **3-9 Theoretical framework**

Based on the above-discussed variables and factors and the analysed literature, important variables and factors for this research have been identified. Also, based on the above-discussed literature, a theoretical framework for this research is designed, depicted in figure 3-8.

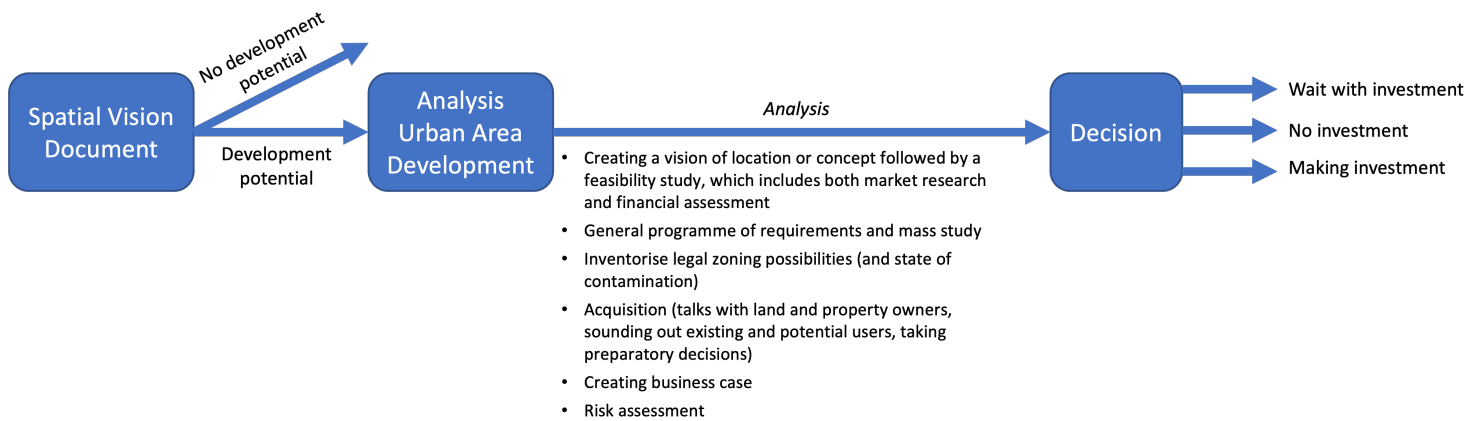
This framework theoretically shows the process of a real estate developer becoming involved in an urban area development. At the start, the developer has no interest in the area since it is not known as an area where real estate development can take place. A municipality aims to make developers interested in the area development and eventually make them invest in the area. As stated by Nozeman (2017), the start of the development process and thus the start of the initiation phase can be initiated by both private parties, often with a feasibility proposal, or by public parties, often with a policy document approved by the municipal council. This research focuses on urban area developments originating from a spatial vision document; thus, in this framework, the municipality starts the initiation phase by publishing a spatial vision document. As shown in figure 3-8, the step from having no interest to having an interest in the area is started with the spatial vision document. The publication of the spatial vision marks the area as an area where development can occur. This step in the process from having no interest to having an interest in the area is influenced by the spatial vision document itself and the planning instruments: shaping, regulating, stimulating and capacity building as defined by Adams et al. (2005). Contextual factors furthermore influence this step.

If the developer deems the urban area development interesting, the developer will move on to the next step of the framework, namely, making an investment decision. This investment decision is also influenced by the planning instruments and contextual factors, but also by the internal factors of the developer.



**Figure 3-8:** Theoretical framework decision-making process developers and influence of factors

The theoretical framework only shows a developer’s decisions leading to an investment in the urban area development by acquiring land in the area. A developer could also make other choices regarding an urban area development initiated by the municipality by publishing a spatial vision document. Figure 3-9 theoretically shows a developer’s different choices regarding participation in an urban area development. The sub-steps in the analysis are based on previously discussed steps identified by Nozeman (2017) in section 3-4-2.



**Figure 3-9:** Choices developer regarding urban area development





# Case Study: Selection and Desk Research

This chapter introduces the cases selected for the case study part of this research. Also, a timeline is presented for each case, indicating which spatial vision documents are published and when and moments when developers joined the area development. Furthermore, a conclusion on the persuasiveness of the spatial vision documents per case studied is given based on the nine key variables and six questions established by Adams and Tiesdell (2013) that determine the persuasiveness of the plans. Due to the length of the reporting on the analysis of the spatial vision documents, this chapter only contains the conclusions regarding their persuasiveness. The complete analysis can be found in appendix C. The chapter is closed-off with a cross-case analysis and a brief conclusion on the persuasiveness of the documents in the different cases.

### 4-1 Selected cases

It was discovered that strictly using the specified selection criteria to choose cases resulted in a lack of cases or insufficient respondents. Specifically, the criteria for landownership turned out in practice to be not so black and white, as developers sometimes owned plots in the development area before any spatial vision documents were published. Despite this, finding large enough developers was not a problem in most cases. Still, in one case, only one major developer was involved, and the remaining landowners were smaller developers. To gather enough respondents for this specific case, smaller developers were also interviewed about their reasons for participating in the urban area development.

The following cases have been selected based on the criteria defined in section 2-2-1. A description of each case will be given; also, specific case characteristics will be highlighted. All cases involved the redevelopment of an industrial area into a mixed urban residential-business area. All area redevelopment plans were in existing urban areas within four different

cities located in the western, most populated part of the Netherlands. Moreover, all areas are located along a canal. However, the cases vary in the development stage they are in, the size and the involvement of developers. The following four cases were studied for this research:

### **Oudorp, Alkmaar**

The urban area development of Oudorp in the city of Alkmaar is a plan where a functioning industrial park is to be transformed into an area where living and working are taking place alongside each other. This area development is part of a larger plan in Alkmaar, where several industrial parks alongside the city's canal are to be transformed into living and working areas. The first time the area was mentioned for redevelopment in a vision document was in 2010. In the area, the municipality owns a large plot as well as one large developer. Furthermore, several smaller developers own plots in the area. The area redevelopment is still mainly in the initiation phase, although some plots at the edges of the area are being or have been developed.

### **Spoorzone, Beverwijk**

The area development of Spoorzone in Beverwijk consists of three major differing areas to be transformed into a mixed residential-business-industry area. One sub-area is situated around the railway station and mainly comprises undeveloped land or decommissioned railway tracks. Another sub-area consists of several large and smaller shops, all owned by one developer who leases out the buildings. The municipality would like to transform a part of the area into housing or add housing on top of the existing shops. The third and the main sub-area is an industrial park located on the east side of the motorway, which runs straight through the city of Beverwijk. This industrial park is to be partly transformed into a residential area, but space in the new area is also reserved for new and existing companies. The municipality only has a small plot in the area; the municipality is thus almost entirely dependent on developers to transform the Spoorzone area. The area development was first mentioned in a spatial vision document in 2020 and is still at the beginning of the initiation phase.

### **Schieoever, Delft**

Schieoever in the city of Delft is an urban redevelopment plan where an industrial park alongside the canal is to be transformed into an area where living and working are combined and coexist. The municipality only has one small plot in this area, so it depends on developers to redevelop the area. Three different large developing companies own the three large plots that are to be developed. The municipality created vision documents for the area, which are the game rules for the developers on which they can base their plans. The first time the redevelopment of the area was mentioned was in 2010. What is interesting about this area redevelopment is that the municipality wants the manufacturing industry to be combined with housing.

### **Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad**

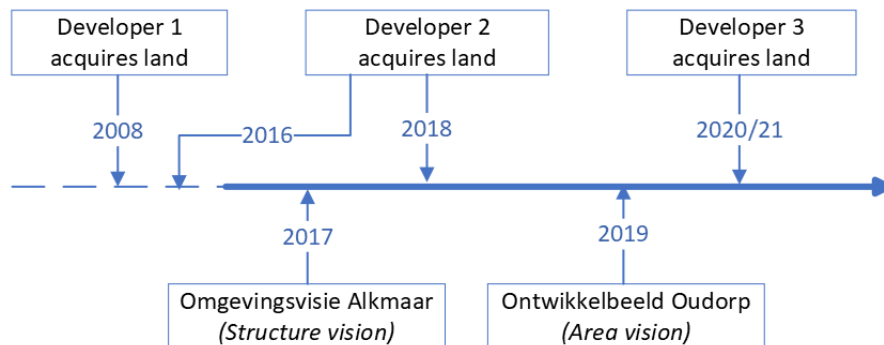
The Achtersluispolder area in Zaanstad is also a functioning industrial park that is to be transformed into an area where living and working exist alongside each other. The municipality has no plots in the area, so it depends entirely on developers to redevelop the area. The redevelopment plan is at the beginning of the initiation phase, so most of the plots are still owned by businesses located on that plot; however, some plots have been bought by large developers. Redevelopment of the area has been reported for the first time in a vision document in 2016.

## 4-2 Desk Research and analysis

For each of the four cases researched; first, the analysis of the spatial vision documents will be discussed, after which a preliminary conclusion on their persuasiveness will be presented. For each case, spatial vision documents have been studied, going from more general and global structure visions to more area-specific and detailed documents. Typically, the more specific and detailed documents are also more recent and further along in the development process, they have been published. Additionally, the more specific the document, the further the municipality is in the initiation phase and urban development process. For each case, a timeline has been created indicating when spatial vision documents were published by the municipality. It also indicates when developers decided to acquire land in the area or otherwise became invested in the area development. The company names of the developers have been left out due to privacy reasons. This is no issue, as leaving out the names does not affect this research.

### 4-2-1 Oudorp, Alkmaar

The Alkmaar municipality has published two spatial vision documents regarding the Oudorp area's redevelopment. Figure 4-1 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments when spatial vision documents have been published and when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the area development.



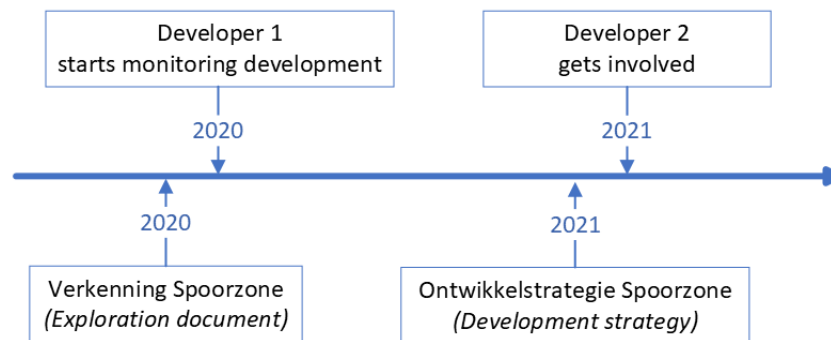
**Figure 4-1:** Timeline publication spatial vision documents and participation developers for Oudorp, Alkmaar

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Alkmaar, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is not clear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research. Making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by a higher level government, in this case, the province. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level

actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development idea. The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these resources is unclear. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Community support is present for at least one of the spatial vision documents, as its contents were partly based on consultation with citizens and other stakeholders. This also means stakeholder engagement occurred while creating the spatial vision document(s).

#### 4-2-2 Spoorzone, Beverwijk

Two spatial vision documents have been published by the municipality of Beverwijk regarding the (re)development of the Spoorzone area. Figure 4-2 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments when spatial vision documents have been published and when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the area development. For the Beverwijk case, no structure or municipal-wide vision could be obtained from the municipality or through other means. This type of document, therefore, has not been analysed for this case.



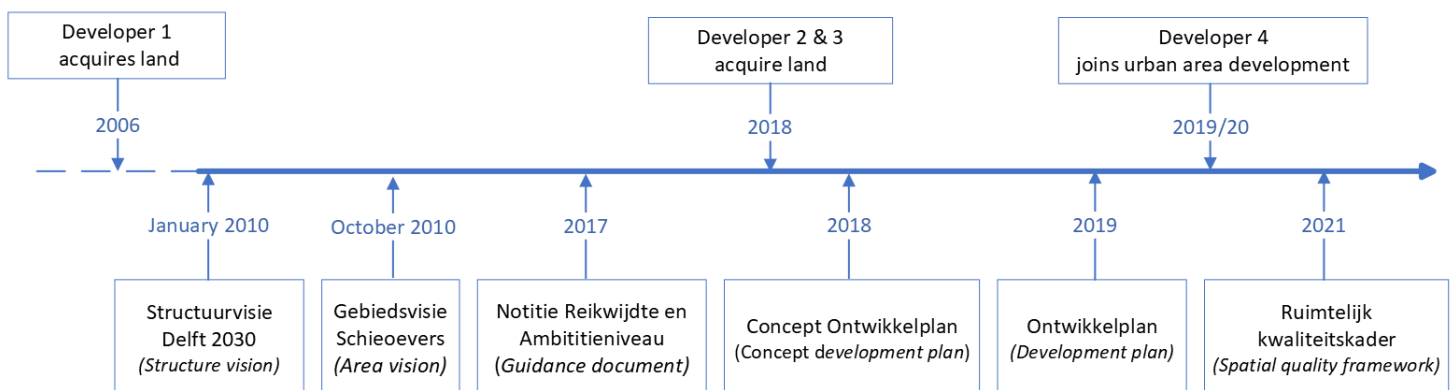
**Figure 4-2:** Timeline publication spatial vision documents and participation developers for Spoorzone, Beverwijk

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Beverwijk, it can be concluded that the documents' persuasiveness cannot be clearly determined. The content of the documents, especially the first explorative spatial document, gave the idea that the document and ideas for the development of the area were based on market analysis, given the number based studies for the area in the document's appendix. The evidence base of the documents thus seems clear and apparent. The spatial vision documents were not a product of consultations with market parties but were derived solely from the municipality. Therefore, the plan's persuasive logic and rationale derive from partly understanding markets due to the market analysis. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality; however, the endorsement of the development by higher-level governments, for now, is not given yet. Due to the industrial area having a special provincial status; therefore, the province is not keen on transforming the area into housing. Also, the success of the area development partly depends on the speed limit on the motorway being lowered, which is controlled by the central government whom not yet given support for this.

Thus scoring high on the identity of the plan maker but low(er) on endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development idea. The vision documents and interview did provide some clues on the plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these wider resources is unclear. The plan communication and presentation attractiveness seem more extensive than generally the case since the documents contain sketches for every sub-area; what that area could look like. Whether the redevelopment plan has community support or documents were created with the help of stakeholder engagement cannot be concluded based on the documents or interview.

### 4-2-3 Schieoevers, Delft

The municipality of Delft, regarding the redevelopment of the Schieoevers area, has published several spatial vision documents. Figure 4-3 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments in time when spatial vision documents have been published, as well as moments in time when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the process. As can be seen, several spatial vision documents have been published after all developers became involved; therefore, only the documents before these involvement decisions have been analysed since this research focuses on the involvement decision of real estate developers.



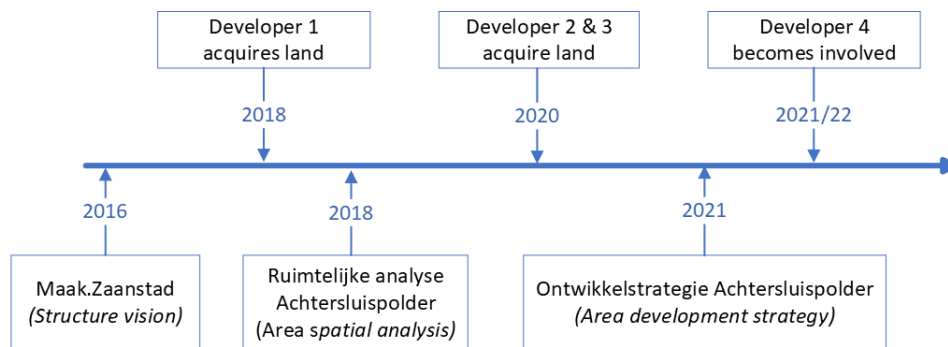
**Figure 4-3:** Timeline publication spatial vision documents and participation developers for Schieoevers, Delft

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Delft, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is unclear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research, making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is thus unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by a higher level government, in this case, the province. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular

successful political leaders advocated the development. The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these resources is unclear. The municipality is willing to invest in infrastructures, such as a bridge and a tunnel, to improve accessibility. However, willing to is something different than being capable of. This also emerges from the fact the municipality of Delft is lobbying for subsidies to partly make up for the costs involved with infrastructure investments. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Citizens and stakeholders have been involved in developing the overall structure vision. Still, it is unclear whether they were consulted in the creation of other documents or if there is community support for the specific plans for the Schieoevers area. As a result, community support and stakeholder engagement are partly applicable.

#### 4-2-4 Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad

The municipality of Zaanstad, regarding the redevelopment of the Achtersluispolder area, has published several spatial vision documents. Figure 4-4 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments in time when spatial vision documents have been published, as well as moments in time when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the process.



**Figure 4-4:** Timeline publication spatial vision documents and participation developers for Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Zaanstad, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is unclear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research, making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by higher-level governments, in this case, the province and the metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development.

The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, such as investing in infrastructure and working on a connection over the water to Amsterdam to improve accessibility. However, it is unclear whether the municipality is capable of realising these resources. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Whether the development plan has community support or is based on stakeholder engagement can not be concluded based on the documents or interviews.

### 4-3 Cross-case analysis spatial vision documents

Table 4-1 shows the results of a simple cross-case analysis regarding the persuasiveness of the spatial vision documents in the different cases. The nine variables are defined by Adams and Tiesdell (2013) and can help determine the persuasiveness of spatial plans. Based on the researcher's assessment of the spatial vision documents, each variable has received a score ranging from 1 to 10. Where 1 indicates the variable could not be scored based on the spatial vision documents or interviews or has no persuasive influence in the specific case. 10 indicates the documents in a specific case are very persuasive.

**Table 4-1:** Cross-case analysis: Persuasiveness spatial vision documents

Persuasiveness variables	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoever Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Clear and apparent evidence base	1	7	1	1
Plan's persuasive logic and rationale	1	4	1	1
Identity of plan maker	9	9	9	9
Charismatic, persuasive advocates	1	1	1	1
Endorsement by higher-level actors	8	2	8	9
Plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources	3	2	6	4
Attractive communication and presentation	6	8	6	6
Stakeholder engagement	7	1	4	1
Community support	7	1	4	1
<b>Average persuasiveness score</b>	<b>4,8</b>	<b>3,9</b>	<b>4,4</b>	<b>3,7</b>

Based on the persuasiveness assessment of the different spatial vision documents by the researcher, it can be concluded that overall the documents in the different cases have a low average score regarding their persuasiveness. The scores and conclusion are not based on extensive scientific research but rather serve as an indication of the persuasiveness of the spatial vision documents in the given cases.





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## Chapter 5

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# Case Study: Interview Analysis

This chapter presents the results from cross-case analysis of the interviews with the various real estate developers from the different cases. In Chapter 4, the case studies were selected, and the spatial vision documents were analysed. The results from the cross-case analysis of the interviews in this chapter cover three topics, namely, the assessment of spatial vision documents by developers, the decision-making process of developers and factors influencing the decision-making process. The main takeaways and interesting anomalies are shown from the four studied cases. Also, preliminary conclusions will be presented at the end of the chapter. Due to the lengthiness of the report on the analysis of all interviews for every case, this chapter is only an abstract of the full report on the interview analysis. The comprehensive reporting on the interviews with all the developers from the four cases can be found in appendix A.

This section covers the following themes discussed in the interviews with developers:

- The spatial vision document and its assessment by developers
- The decision-making process of the developer
- Factors influencing the decision-making process:
  - Planning tools: Capacity building, Shaping, Regulating and Stimulating
  - Internal factors
  - External factors

The results from the cross-case analysis of the interviews with developers regarding their assessment of spatial vision documents and the factors influencing their decision-making process are presented in several tables. These tables contain factors that influence the decision-making of developers and were discussed during the interviews with the developers.

The factors are obtained from the literature study as presented in section 3-8. The leftmost column in the tables shows the origin factor from the literature. The second left-hand column shows the factor used in this which was adapted from the factor from the literature. Several factors do not or not directly originate from a factor or aspect from the literature, these factors were either identified through consultations with the experts from Dutch urban development practice or were identified during the interviews with the developers.

Based on the analysis of the interviews with the developers, a score has been given to each factor by the researcher. This score relates to the importance of that factor in the decision-making of the developer. The scores range from 1 (unimportant) to 6 (crucial). It is important to note that the numbers presented in these tables should not be viewed as hard facts but rather as an interpretation by the researcher. This interpretation is made to provide a clearer understanding and presentation of the influence of these factors on the decision-making of developers.

## 5-1 Spatial vision documents

In the decision-making process, several municipal policy documents are labelled as important by the developers, of which the spatial vision documents are the most important. The municipality's general housing policy and municipal building regulations (in building code or land-use plan) also play a role. Based on the analysis of the different interviews, it can be concluded that one of the most important aspects of a spatial vision document is that it shows that in an area, housing can be developed. Moreover, it shows the desire of the municipality to develop housing in that area. However, the developers stated that the time frame between the publication of vision documents and the creation of an actual development framework, based on which land-use plans can be changed and building permits granted, is often long and uncertain. A spatial vision document thus shows that a municipality, in principle, endorses project development plans in the area. Investing in an area without such a statement would be risky and is something the developers are not likely to do. Publication of a spatial vision document can thus be seen as an important (political) statement by a municipality. This was also stated by Healey (1992) in the section on planning instruments (3-6); there is thus conformity between the literature and the research findings.

### Origin housing development

The idea that housing development can occur in an area does not always originate from a spatial vision document. Several developers indicated that the Dutch national policy of only developing within existing urban areas also points towards housing development potentially happening in the location of, for example, business parks or industrial areas, like the locations of the area developments studied in this research. Some developers have their own research departments that study demographical developments and look for potential development locations based on a city's contours and surroundings. Thus, the idea of housing development happening in an area can also result from national spatial policy and/or research by developers. As seen in some cases, this could also result in developers acquiring land in the development area before the publication of a spatial vision document. After acquiring a plot of land, a developer then asks the municipality to develop a vision for the area in the hope that housing development would become possible on his plot.

### **Municipal's internal aim regarding spatial vision documents**

According to the developers, the process of creating and eventually publishing a spatial vision document also serves an internal aim. The process of creating a spatial vision document is namely also used by a municipality to free up budgets internally for the area development and to force different municipal departments to think about the development of the area. Thereby aligning the different policies, views and interests of the different municipal departments. It is furthermore argued that when creating a spatial vision document, the municipality itself often does not know what it wants, and the vision document ends up being a stacking of different ambitions. The developers also indicated that an additional effect of the publication of a spatial vision is that land prices in the area start to rise, which sometimes results in current landowners counting themselves rich and asking developers too much for the land.

### **Deveopers' view on spatial vision documents**

Generally, the developers interviewed for this research review spatial vision documents as being vague, only roughly indicating what could be developed and only providing a high-over view of the area development. Several developers state that a spatial vision document does not provide much to work with. In the developers' opinion, vision documents often lack thoughts on how an area development will impact the existing city and its infrastructure. Furthermore, spatial vision documents only provide an overall storyline for the area development from a municipal point of view, including the ambitions and aspirations the municipality wants or would like to see realised. Developers often see the aspirations included in spatial vision documents as ambitious and not matching the reality of the market. Municipal aspirations in area development can be ambitious, but often they do not take into account the necessary prerequisites for successful area development. These prerequisites, such as infrastructure, transportation, and environmental issues, are already challenging enough to address on their own. Without considering them, the realisation of the aspirations for an area development becomes even more difficult. Municipalities need to take a holistic approach and consider all factors, including prerequisites, when developing and implementing spatial vision documents for an area development; then, the aspirations can be realistically achieved. An aspiration mentioned by most developers as being ambitious and applicable to all cases is the combination of spatial functions (housing combined with industry/businesses) in the to-be-developed area.

### **Assesment spatial vision documents by developers**

The factors related to spatial vision documents are shown in Table 5-1 below. These factors were discussed during the interviews and received a score related to the importance of the factor in the decision-making process. A selection of these factors is elaborated on in this section.

#### **Spatial framework**

The first thing developers look for when assessing spatial vision documents is clues on what could be developed. These clues can be building heights, building concentration, housing type, etc. Images in a spatial vision document could roughly indicate the type of urban environment desired in the new area. Still, more hard numbers are what developers would like to see in these documents since images are open to interpretation. However, the developers understand that a municipality might want to avoid putting hard numbers in the documents

since it is hard to revisit them later in the process. Ideally, for developers, a vision document contains both images showing the direction of the development (highly urban or more rural) accompanied by some rough numbers on what could be developed.

In the Beverwijk case, the first exploratory spatial vision document did contain some indicative hard numbers on what could be developed. However, providing such numbers as a municipality does not always persuade developers since, as stated by one developer, the fact that the document contained some sketches and numbers does not mean that that is what is eventually allowed to be developed.

### **Types of housing**

In the Schieoevers area, the percentage of social housing to be developed was lower than normally would be the case, which was perceived as pleasant by the developers. For one developer, which can be labelled as an investor developer, the amount of mid-rental dwellings that could be developed in the area was very important. If a substantial amount of mid-rental housing is allowed, the location is considered interesting, even if the required housing program also includes owner-occupied or social housing. This developer, however, indicated that they would never get involved in an area development that only allowed owner-occupied housing. It can thus be stated that the housing program and percentage of social housing are important factors in the decision of a developer. Also, the type of developer thus has a crucial influence on the decision-making process.

Whether a spatial vision document is based on market research or knowledge is moderately important for developers. It is unimportant for developers whether a municipality has already conducted studies (environmental, noise, traffic) for the development of the plan area since, as stated by many developers, they will always conduct these studies themselves as well.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

According to the literature, involving many and differing actors in the creation of plans and thus spatial vision documents should make these plans more successful in shaping the development plans and thus persuading developers to invest in the area development. Getting many actors to endorse the area development to eventually successfully realise the area development has been mentioned by several developers. However, based on the interviews, it can be argued that involving actors does not have a big influence on the decision to invest. It seems that developers underline this factor's importance, but more see this as a problem later in the development process, so after the initiation phase.

### **Municipal level of ambition**

The level of ambition a municipality has for the development of an area is an important factor that developers try to determine when assessing a spatial vision document. The aspirations display the level of ambition, wishes and ideas a municipality wants to get realised when the area is developed. This level of ambition is important to developers since it could influence what can be built, construction costs and the complexity of the development.

**Table 5-1:** Cross-case analysis: Spatial vision document factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Spatial vision document factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Plan's persuasive logic and rationale <sup>1</sup>	Spatial vision document based on research/knowledge	3	3	3	3
Clear and apparent evidence base <sup>1,3</sup>	Studies conducted to support plan (environmental, noise, traffic)	1	1	1	1
Stakeholder engagement <sup>1</sup> Community support <sup>1</sup>	Involvement actors in vision formation (market, external and local actors)	2	2	3	2
Attractive communication and presentation <sup>1</sup>	Attractiveness vision presentation and communication	2	2	2	2
Political statement through document (Healey, 1992)	Political statement development could be possible, made through publication of the spatial vision document	6	5	5	6
Balance flexibility and certainty <sup>1</sup>	Balance between flexibility and certainty	5	4	5	5
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	Level of specification in document	4	3	4	4
	Municipality's aspirations and ambition level	4	4	5	5
	What can be developed, based on:				
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	<i>Building volume/heights</i>	6	6	6	6
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	<i>Types and mix of buildings/housing</i>	6	6	6	6
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	<i>Building concentration</i>	6	6	6	6
Attractive communication and presentation <sup>1</sup>	<i>Images, sketches, etc.</i>	3	3	3	4

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature: 1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

### Flexibility and certainty

An interesting observation is made that the developers, on the one hand, desire flexibility and, on the other hand, certainty in the spatial vision documents and the development process. Flexibility is desired because developers invest based on current market conditions; if the market conditions change, developers want to be able to change their project development plans to keep them profitable. A way of giving flexibility to developers is by not defining what is to be built and when. This allows the developers to construct the type of housing the market demands at that time. The municipality gave flexibility in the case of Delft by applying a lower parking norm for the area, which made the business cases profitable, which otherwise would not be the case. Also, the municipality was willing to add more houses to the project development plan of one developer in return for incorporating a parking garage in those plans.

However, a degree of certainty is also needed for the developer to determine better what they can develop. This includes providing a rough framework of what could possibly be developed in the area but also providing an indication of the time frame in which they have to work. Ultimately, finding a balance between flexibility and certainty is essential for developers to realise area development plans successfully. Therefore, the right balance between flexibility and certainty should also be present in spatial vision documents and the area development process.

In this section, it has become clear that the contents of spatial vision documents, especially the statement made with the publication of such a document, play a crucial role in the decision-making process of a developer. Regarding the contents, hard numbers indicating what could be built are more important than images or sketches. An interesting remark made was that developers desire flexibility as well as certainty at the same time. Certainty on what could be built to better determine the business case and flexibility to change plans if market conditions change or unforeseen circumstances occur.

## 5-2 Decision-making process developers

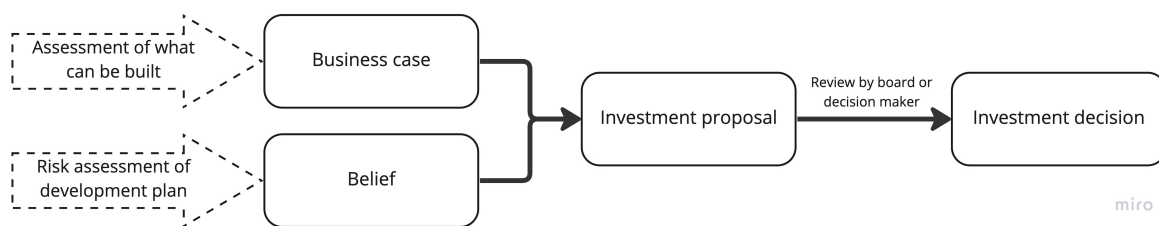
Based on the interviews, it can be argued that the decision-making process is somewhat similar for all developers. The decision-making process consists of two elements that both need to be positively decided on to come to a decision to invest in the area development, namely the business case and the 'belief'. Figure 5-1 shows the different steps in the decision-making process of a developer. These steps, the business case, and the 'belief' will be further elaborated on in this section.

### **The business case**

The decision-making process for developers begins by assessing the potential of a location and analysing potential development opportunities. Based on their own market research, expertise, experience and the spatial vision documents available from the municipality, developers estimate what kind of plan could be developed in the area. Developers then let an (internal) urban planning team make several project development plan sketches and create several development scenarios. Financial calculations are performed based on these plans and scenarios to evaluate their feasibility and profitability. Based on this information and using their expertise and past experience in developing similar areas, the developer has an idea of how the planning will progress. Based on this information, they create a business case and set a price for a plot of land in the area.

### **The 'belief'**

Besides the business case, a developer also makes a risk analysis of the development. This risk analysis could be described as reviewing whether the developer has the 'belief' that the development will be successfully realised. As indicated, this risk analysis cannot be fully expressed in hard numbers but is more of a logical review of the development and the feeling a developer has with the development based on knowledge and prior experiences. As stated by several developers, they need to have the so-called 'belief' that the development will be successful to invest in it.



**Figure 5-1:** Developers' internal decision-making process

### Investment decision

The business case is combined with a (risk) analysis of the development and bundled in an investment proposal internally reviewed by the board, which eventually decides on the investment. If the internal decision-maker (the board) is convinced the business case is profitable and line with their internal goals, and the development could be successful, a decision to invest is taken if the investment outweighs the risks. For smaller developers, the process is similar, but a small team handles everything, and the decision-maker is involved throughout the process. In this case, there is no need for an official investment proposal to be reviewed by a board since the decision-maker is already involved in creating the proposal. It is important to note that an investment decision is often not made by one individual but is often reviewed internally. Some developers noted that this type of decision-making process, common in large companies, can cause delays in the development process due to the extensive risk analyses conducted on the investment proposal. Additionally, it was acknowledged that it might not be possible to consider all potential risks in the proposal fully. It was also emphasised that a developer should have an entrepreneurial mindset to navigate the inherent risks in any development project successfully.

Important for developers in this process is that the information they obtain from the municipality and its vision documents does not change in the future. In other words, in the spatial vision documents, the rules of the game for the remainder of the development process are laid down. Changing the rules of the game during the development process is not appreciated by the developers and could also mean the feasibility of their development becomes jeopardised. Reliability and consistency on the part of the municipality are crucial for developers. A municipality needs to be thrust-worthy and sticks to the plans envisioned in the past. However, the possibility of the rules of the game being changed is something developers take into account when assessing the development and is moreover seen as a risk that is part of being a developer. As several developers indicate, a developer should have an entrepreneurial way of working since risks are always involved. In other words, it is part of their job.

The decision-making process of developers regarding participation in an area development thus consists of creating a business case and conducting a risk analysis of the project development plan, which are combined into an investment proposal. The business case being profitable and in line with the developer's goals and having the 'belief' the development will be successful could result in an investment decision to participate in an area development.

### 5-3 Factors influencing the decision-making process

The factors identified in the interview analysis that influence the decision-making process can be subdivided into three categories: planning tools (shaping, regulating, stimulating, capacity building) and internal and external factors. The subdivision of the factors is based on the planning tools from Adams and Tiesdell's (2013), and the two categories (internal and external factors) as distinguished by Nozeman (2017). The different factors often overlap and may appear in several tables. This overlap highlights that different factors cannot be easily allocated to one specific category. Some factors, for example, can be labelled as regulating as well as shaping the decision environment. Also, a spatial vision document contains shaping factors and other factors. The different tables highlight the factors that are also present in or connected to a spatial vision document by making them bold.

#### 5-3-1 Planning tools: Capacity building factors

capacity building tools are used to increase the abilities and capacity of actors and to help facilitate the other planning tools. capacity building seeks to enable actors to operate more effectively within their decision environment. capacity building instruments aim to facilitate the better operation of the other planning instruments. capacity building tools create the abilities and capacity of actors operating in the market. These abilities and capacities are, for instance, skills, knowledge, networks, rules of operation and working practices. Trust, mutual respect, and partnerships with the private sector are crucial for successful capacity building.

The developers affirmed the inevitable public-private interaction during the development process and the initiation phase, as well as the interdependency, as identified in section (3-4-4). In the public-private interaction, the relationship between the developer and the municipality and the reputation and the role of the municipality influence the decision-making process. The different capacity building factors that contribute to the relationship with and the reputation and the role of the municipality are shown in table 5-2. Each factor has received a score related to the importance of the factor in the decision-making process. A selection of these factors is elaborated on in this section.

#### Relationship between municipality and developer

The reputation and relationship between the municipality and the developer are based, among other things, on good cooperation, good communication, municipal experience in area development, trustworthiness, previous experiences working with the municipality and the municipality having an open and proactive approach towards the development and developers. According to the developers, it is difficult to assess those things upfront when making an investment decision. This proactive approach is manifested through the political will to transform an area and is a decisive factor for developers. A striking example of this is if the current municipal council does not want to step on the gas with a development, developers sometimes wait until there is a council that does want to do so. An interesting observation here can be made that the political will to develop an area is a capacity building tool, which among others, is expressed via the publication of a spatial vision document, which is a shaping tool. This indicates that factors can have a capacity building purpose as well as a shaping purpose.



The developers also argued that civil servants are a more important part of a good relationship than aldermen. Since aldermen come and go and could only be around for four years, while an area development often takes longer, thus long-term commitment from the municipal officials is viewed as more important since they are considered a more stable factor during the often long area development process. Good project managers or managers with whom developers had previous experiences are seen as important by the developers.

Adams and Tiesdell (2013) stated that plans advocated by charismatic or persuasive political leaders would be more successful in persuading developers. However, based on the interview analysis, it can be argued that this is not the case. Moreover, it appears that the organisational layer beneath the political leaders plays a more crucial role in the decision-making process.

### **Role and reputation of the municipality**

Prioritisation of an area development within a municipality is also considered an important factor by developers. A municipality should also be decisive and make decisions swiftly. Developers give an example of a Dutch municipality with no prioritisation in its development plans, where no choices are being made and where there is no trust from the developers in this municipality to handle development plans successfully. For developers, this is, therefore, a reason to, for now, not take on any developments in that municipality.

The developers also try to help the municipality with the plan-making. Still, they do not want to get caught up in the overarching processes for the area since the developers are predominantly interested in developing their own plots in a sub-area of the whole area development. The main reason, of course, for helping out the municipality with the plan-making for the area is to speed up the overall development process and try to get their own development started as soon as possible. Helping out the municipality furthermore creates an opportunity to influence the plan-making of the municipality, thereby steering the development in the direction of the developers.

For developers, it is important to be able to change their developments if market conditions change or other unforeseen circumstances occur. Therefore, an important factor for developers is that a municipality should have a flexible stance towards the area development. The municipality should be willing to talk about changes in the plans in the future.

The reliability and trustworthiness of a municipality not only influence the relationship with the developer but also affects the making of project development plans by the developer. The data, as outlined in spatial vision documents or otherwise communicated by the municipality, should not be easily altered since it affects the feasibility of the project development plans of the developer. Thus, the municipality should ensure the published information remains the same during the remainder of the development process.

**Table 5-2:** Cross-case analysis: Capacity building factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Capacity building factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Identity plan maker <sup>1</sup> Social Climate <sup>2</sup>	Collaboration with municipality (relationship, cooperation, communication)	6	6	6	6
Identity plan maker <sup>1</sup>	Developers previous experiences with municipality	4	4	5	4
Identity plan maker <sup>1</sup>	Municipality's prior experience with urban area development	3	3	5	4
Identity plan maker <sup>1</sup> Political support <sup>3</sup>	Open and proactive approach municipality	5	5	5	5
Identity plan maker <sup>1</sup>	Decisive and swift decision-making within municipality	5	4	5	4
Political support <sup>3</sup>	<b>Municipality having the political will to develop the area</b>	6	6	5	6
Transparency <sup>2</sup>	Transparency regarding municipal views/ambitions/aspirations	4	4	4	4
Charismatic, persuasive advocates <sup>1</sup>	Relationship with alderman	2	2	3	2
Charismatic, persuasive advocates <sup>1</sup>	Relationship with civil servants (program/project managers)	4	4	4	4
Political support <sup>3</sup>	Prioritisation plan within municipality	5	5	5	5
Flexibility <sup>3</sup>	Receptive to change plans in the future	5	5	6	5
	Municipal staff: skill and capacity	4	4	5	5
No additional criteria added to plan <sup>3</sup> Robust substantiation <sup>3</sup>	Assurance information remains the same (what is shown in documents may also be built)	5	5	5	4

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature:  
1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

The developers are overall positive about the reputation and role of the municipalities in the analysed cases. They described their relationships with municipalities as positive and constructive. Despite this, there was also some criticism. Criticism towards municipalities entailed that plan- and decision-making is sometimes done slowly and last-minute, that municipalities could take more action to enforce the realisation of their vision. These issues are, however, also explained by the developers as having to do with a shortage of municipal staff. However, this capacity shortage is not really being resented since it is seen as something everyone has to deal with in the current world. As long as the municipal staff is cooperating and motivated to make the development a success, a shortage in capacity is not considered a huge

problem. During the area development process, there is, however, often a high turnover of municipal staff working on the area development. This is problematic since a lot of knowledge and experience of the area development goes lost with a change in municipal staffing.

In this section, it has become clear that the capacity building factors, representing the developer-municipality relationship and the role and reputation of the municipality, have a crucial influence on the decision-making process on whether to invest in an area development. Based on the interviews, it can thus be argued that capacity building tools are a crucial planning instrument in persuading developers.

### **5-3-2 Planning tools: Shaping factors**

Shaping tools, such as plans, strategies, and spatial vision documents, shape the decision environment for developers by setting the context for market actions and transactions. These indicative documents provide developers with a degree of certainty for their plans and can also be seen as a political position statement for the intentions of plan-makers. Shaping tools can set out criteria by which the plan-maker will assess the project development plans of developers. Shaping tools thus provide a statement of the plan makers' intentions and aspirations for an area, which can influence the developers' strategies. In Table 5-3 below, the different shaping factors that play a role in the decision-making process of the developers are scored. A selection of these shaping factors are elaborated on in this section.

As explained in section 5-2, the decision-making process is influenced by the 'belief' and the business case. Based on the interview analysis, it can be argued that the business case is heavily influenced by what could be built in an area. As indicated in section 5-1, developers assess spatial vision documents and thus shaping tools, mainly on the information indicating what could be built. Several factors discussed in section 5-1 can thus be labelled as shaping tools. To get an idea of what could be built, developers are predominately interested in factors such as building volumes, building heights, types and mix of buildings/housing and building concentration. Also, images, sketches or artist impressions can help determine what could be built and thus shape the decisions of developers. As explained, these are less important to developers than the more hard numbers concerning building heights and volumes since images and sketches are still open to further interpretation and thus provide less certainty.

Other factors that influence the business case and thus shape the decision of the developer are the level of aspirations/ambitions a municipality has for an area. The level of ambition, represented by the municipality's goals, desires, and plans for the area, can impact what can be constructed, the cost of construction, and the complexity of the development. For instance, a high level of sustainability desired for the new housing has a big impact on the construction costs of these houses and, thus, has a big influence on the business case. Also, the desired parking solutions (on-street or underground) or the percentage of land a developer needs to transform into public space greatly influence the business case. Sustainability and parking norms/solutions have been independently added as factors since these factors have a big influence on decision-making, according to developers. Developers would like to know these municipal requirements clearly upfront cause then they can better determine what is possible and what you can pay for the land.

As stated by several developers, municipalities often do not realise the impact of what they ask for on the feasibility of a project. Developers also want to make the most beautiful and sustainable building, but the project also has to be profitable. A lot of the requirements in vision often come from ignorance and lack of realism among municipal councillors. They do not actually know what they are asking for when putting down their ambitions in those vision documents.

This section made clear that shaping tools have a crucial influence on the decision-making process of developers on whether to invest in an area development. This is because shaping tools dictate what could be built and therefore have a crucial influence on the business case of the development. The crucial shaping factors are the ones that indicate what could be built. Other very important shaping factors are the ones that indicate the aspirations and requirements of the municipality for the area development.

**Table 5-3:** Cross-case analysis: Shaping factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Shaping factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoever Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Attractive communication and presentation <sup>1</sup>	Images and artist impressions in spatial vision document	3	2	2	3
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	Building volume/heights	6	6	6	6
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)	6	6	6	6
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	Building concentration	6	6	6	6
Balance flexibility and certainty <sup>1</sup>	Balance between flexibility and certainty	5	4	5	5
Spatial criteria <sup>3</sup>	Level of specification in document	4	3	4	4
	Municipality's ambition level	4	4	5	5
	Desired car-parking solution	5	6	6	5
	Sustainability ambitions	4	5	4	5

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature:  
1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

### 5-3-3 Planning tools: Regulating factors

Regulatory planning tools constrain and define the parameters for the decision environment of developers by controlling the market and, thereby, influencing market behaviour. These tools aim to regulate or prohibit certain actions taken by developers, reducing their freedom to act. Examples of regulatory instruments include building or development permits, as well as agreements between municipalities and developers that contain regulatory provisions. In table 5-4 below, the regulating factors playing a role in the decision-making process of the developers are scored. A selection of these regulating factors are elaborated on in this section.

Factors, as seen earlier, can influence the developers' business case and, thereby, the decision-making. Higher parking norms lower the profitability of the project development plan, or higher than normal sustainability norms in the municipal building code or land-use plan could increase construction costs. Also, the general housing policy of the municipality is important since it regulates percentages of types of housing that are to be realised in a development. If, for example, the general housing policy dictates a high percentage of social housing, then this lowers the profitability of the project development plan. These factors thus influence the feasibility of a plan and, thereby, are important in the decision-making process of developers.

An interesting result of the interview analysis was that cost recovery by the municipality, where developers pay contributions to plan costs (for example infrastructure) and neighbourhood facilities, does not play a decisive role in the decision-making. This is because several indicated that they prioritise the creation of high-quality public spaces over cost recovery, as they believe it adds value to the area and can result in higher housing prices. They also see negotiating cost recovery as a hindrance to the development process.

In this section, it has become clear that regulating tools have an important influence on the feasibility of a project development plan and, thus, on the decision-making process on whether to invest in an area development. An important regulating tool is the parking norm applied in a municipality or for the specific area development.

**Table 5-4:** Cross-case analysis: Regulating factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Regulating factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Tax and legal laws/regulations <sup>2</sup>	Parking norms	5	6	6	5
Tax and legal laws/regulations <sup>2</sup>	Municipal building requirements for housing (in building code or land-use plan) (for example sustainability)	4	4	5	5
Tax and legal laws/regulations <sup>2</sup> Financial frameworks <sup>3</sup>	Cost-recovery by municipality (contribution to plan costs and neighbourhood facilities)	2	2	3	3
Clear what other policy frameworks apply <sup>3</sup>	Municipal housing policy	4	4	4	4
Clear what other policy frameworks apply <sup>3</sup>	Municipal rules and regulations	4	5	5	4
Clear what other policy frameworks apply <sup>3</sup>	Clarity spatial plan assessment frameworks	4	4	4	4
Spatial planning procedures <sup>2</sup>	Speed of spatial planning procedures	4	4	4	4
No additional criteria added to plan <sup>3</sup>	Risk of changes in municipal rules and regulations	4	4	4	4

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature:  
1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

### 5-3-4 Planning tools: Stimulating factors

Stimulating tools are tools that 'lubricate' market actions and expand the decision environment of developers. There are two types: (direct) state actions and fiscal measures. State actions include providing infrastructure and using state power to acquire land. Fiscal measures seek to alter incentives for developers to develop a particular location or type of development by making certain actions more rewarding than others. For example, by granting subsidies. In table 5-5 below, the stimulating factors playing a role in the decision-making process of the developers are scored. A selection of these factors are elaborated on in this section.

#### *Direct state actions*

The developers indicated that they would prefer to see more concrete ideas about infrastructure investments and improvement of accessibility for the area, already in the vision documents. In many cases, exact infrastructure investments and who will pay for them become clearer later in the development process, after the initiation phase and thus after a developer invested in the area.

The municipality should also take stronger steps to implement its plan to develop the area, such as communicating to businesses that they cannot expand or increase the noise or emissions they produce. Ideally, the municipality should actively work to relocate existing businesses in the area to clear the way for housing development. It is, however, acknowledged by the developers that this is a very costly process and therefore does not happen often. Furthermore, place-making by the municipality helps to make an area already known to the public and is a way of potentially getting people interested in moving to the area. In that way, this stimulates demand for housing in the area, which developers see as welcoming. These are all factors that developers would like to see improved; thus, these factors are important to developers.

A state action, while not done by a municipality, but also important for the developers is the endorsement of the area development by higher authorities, such as the province, metropolitan region or national government. Endorsement of a plan by higher-level actors was labelled by Adams and Tiesdell 2013 as important in persuading developers. This statement and the importance of this factor thus have been acknowledged by this research.

#### *Fiscal measures*

Fiscal measures were also asked about during the interviews with developers but were not extensively responded to. As indicated by developers, fiscal measures often play a role later in the development process, mostly in the feasibility phase. Therefore, factors such as subsidies do not really influence the initiation phase of the development process and, thus, do not really influence the decision of developers to invest.

Factors that do not or have little influence on the decision-making are studies already conducted, supporting the plan with expropriation or pre-emptive rights and the input of own land by the municipality. These factors were not important since developers will always conduct studies themselves. Concerning expropriation or pre-emptive rights, the developers indicated that these are not used very often and only influence the land ownership of the municipality. It was, however, mentioned that the use of these instruments by the municipality and municipal land ownership in the area underlines the will of the municipality to develop the area.

This section clarified that stimulating tools influence the decision-making process of developers on whether to invest in an area development. However, it can be argued that their influence is not crucial in the initiation phase but is likely to play a more dominant role later on in the development process.

**Table 5-5:** Cross-case analysis: Stimulating factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Stimulating factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
Endorsement by high-level actors <sup>1</sup> Political support <sup>3</sup>	Endorsement of plan by higher authorities	5	6	5	5
Endorsement by high-level actors <sup>1</sup> , Plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources <sup>1</sup>	Financial support for plan/vision by higher authorities (subsidies)	1	1	1	1
Plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources <sup>1</sup>	Public investments in infrastructure, public space	5	5	5	5
Plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources <sup>1</sup>	Willingness of municipality to relocate businesses	2	2	2	2
	Place-making in plan area	2	3	4	3
Clear and apparent evidence base <sup>13</sup>	Studies already conducted (environmental, noise, traffic)	1	1	1	1
Reinforcement plan with other policy instruments <sup>1</sup>	Support plan with expropriation or pre-emptive rights	1	1	1	2
	Input of own land or intention to acquire land	3	3	1	2

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature:  
1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

### 5-3-5 Internal factors

Internal factors influencing the decision-making process apply to the developer's organisation itself; they could be internal goals, desires, aspirations or the developer's modus operandi. In Table 5-6, the identified internal factors playing a role in the decision-making process of the developers are presented and rated. A selection of these internal factors is elaborated on in this section.

#### Developers' preferred type of development

Some developers prefer to focus on urban area developments instead of individual plots, as they want to shape the overall look and feel of the area. They only become involved in a development project if they can acquire a large enough plot to make a significant impact. This preference for area developments is often connected to the type of developer. Investor developers stay connected to the area development for longer since they keep a portion of the developed housing in their real estate portfolio and rent it out for 20 to 30 years. As indicated by investor developers in the interviews, this is a reason for them only to get involved in area



developments and to strive for a higher level of spatial quality and public space in the area development since it will make their houses more attractive to tenants, thereby potentially resulting in higher rental incomes. The aim of developing thus influences the decision-making and differs per developer. Investor developers are looking for developments where they can maximise the development of their desired housing products, mostly mid-rental apartment housing. The constructor developers indicate they mainly take on developments to generate production for their construction companies. The internal goals of a developer thus greatly influence their decision-making process.

### **Municipal distrust towards developers**

For certain developers, shaping the direction of area development is a reason for getting involved early on in the overall development process of the area. This can happen before or after it becomes known that an area is to be developed, such as through the publication of a spatial vision document. Developers aim to acquire a plot in the area as soon as possible to have a say in the area's future planning and to steer the area development in the direction desired by the developer. Some developers stated, however, that the municipalities do not always respond very welcoming to developers offering to help with further plan-making. The developers indicated the reason behind this could be distrust from the municipality towards developers. Based on their own research regarding how other parties view developers, one developer indicated that there is still a significant part of people and civil servants that view developers as not trustworthy and only wanting to get involved in development plans to make a quick profit and have no real interest in creating buildings and areas with high levels of spatial quality, sustainability and so on. This distrust in developers or their supposed bad reputation was also identified in the literature study. Putman (2010) identified the bad reputation of developers as one of their negative characteristics. However, it is unclear if this reputation is deserved, as the developers themselves have not acknowledged it. Nonetheless, it has been acknowledged that in urban development practice in the Netherlands, developers are sometimes distrusted, possibly due to this perceived bad reputation.

### **Desired plot of land**

Regarding the plot of land developers potentially want to acquire in the area development, several factors were indicated as important by some developers. As a developer, you try to acquire plots that are important for the municipality and are on top of their priority list. The strategicness of a plot of land for some developers is also essential since this could give them a strong strategic position with the whole area development and in the negotiation talks with the municipality regarding cost recovery and planning permission. Furthermore, it is important for developers to develop their plots of land solitary, without the need to acquire other plots first. Also, it is important that they can develop without being dependable on the relocation of existing businesses, which makes housing development impossible due to the hindrance they cause.

A further important factor for developers is the possibility to develop and realise the plan in several phases since this is a way to deal with potential fluctuations in the market. Thus, the ability to develop in phases improves the feasibility of a development.

### **Financial risks**

When deciding whether to participate in urban area development, the financial risks for the developer are a crucial factor. These are the amount of money to be invested, how long it will take to develop, how long till we can start construction, what is the risk of being stuck with an unfeasible plan, and what revenue can we realise with the development. The project development plan thus must be profitable to be interesting for a developer. Especially the amount and period of money being stuck in the development, between investment and realisation, was underlined. The liquidity of their finances is thus an important aspect of their business case. As indicated, the time between investment and realisation is important since it also affects their financing possibilities. Developers can only spend money once and do not want the money to be tied up for too long in an investment. Invested money has to come out again in a reasonable time to be able to invest in new developments.

The time between investment and the actual development of the plan is thus a crucial factor in the decision-making process. Ideally, this period is five to seven years but could be stretched if rentable buildings are present on the acquired plot of land. During the period of further plan-making between the investment and realisation, the rental incomes from these buildings ensure that interest payments are covered, allowing the developer to enter into a long-term area development. In other words, rental incomes ease the need for a developer to start the realisation of the development as quickly as possible. A frequently seen construction is leasing the existing property back to the previous landowner. An interesting conclusion here can be made that the maximum duration of this period differs per type of developer. Where constructor developers wield a maximum of five years between investment and realisation, this period is often longer for investor developers. An investor developer could be more likely to acquire land, rent it out and wait, for instance, ten years, during which they wait out further plan-making by the municipality. Also, for the investor developer, the acquired land can also be a good investment on its own, even if the housing development is eventually not going to take place. Here it becomes again clear that the type of developer thus influences what is important in the decision-making process.

As described in section 5-1, the decision-making of developers is influenced by the business case and the 'belief'. The business case and financial risks have been discussed. Having the 'belief' can be seen as a positive risk assessment of the development. The risk profile of the project development plan and having the 'belief' that risks can be managed is thus a crucial factor in the decision-making.

### **Developers' portfolio**

The composition of their existing development portfolio for developers is also a factor that influences their decision to invest. Several developers indicate that area developments take a lot of time and energy. Therefore, having a well-balanced development portfolio consisting of both complex and easier developments is important. Thus, if a developer already has a lot of large inner-city area development projects, they prefer to invest, for instance, in some more ground-level residential projects to balance out their portfolio. Despite the complexity of area developments, all developers indicated that working on such developments is the most fun and interesting.

### **Developers' area of operation**

For the developer whose business is located in Beverwijk and the Spoorzone area, the possibility of developing in their 'hometown' also plays an important role. They would like to give something back to the city and, therefore, also try to persuade actors in the city to endorse the urban area development. Based on this, it can thus be argued that a connection with an area or other likewise emotions could play a role in decision-making. Furthermore, developing close to home is also seen as pleasant for their employees, since travel time to work will be lower. This means the distance between the company's location and the development's location could also play a role. However, this is likely more the case for local (constructor) developers than, for example, larger (investor) developers since they will seek a construction company in the vicinity of the development when it is to be realised. Whether the area development is located in the area of operation of the developer thus plays a role in the decision. As indicated by many developers, sticking to their area of operation is crucial since they have knowledge about the market in that region compared to other regions. Market knowledge about the area where the development is located is thus also an important factor.

Several factors were viewed as having non or little influence on the decision-making. Branding their own development company or wanting to strengthen their relationship with a municipality were not factors that had a big influence on their own. All the interviewed developers also indicated that internal personnel capacity does not play a role in the investment decision since it is hard to predict when a development will start. It was stated that if there were a staff shortage at the time a plan was developed and realised, they would hire more people.

In this section, it has become clear that the type of developer, their associated internal goals and their way of working have a crucial influence on their decision-making process on whether to invest in an area development. In the literature review, several studies have identified these different types of developers and their differences in *modus operandi* (Putman, 2010; Heurkens, 2012; Peek et al., 2018). Both the literature and case studies acknowledge the influence of different types of developers and their methods of operation. Therefore there is conformity between the literature and research findings.

**Table 5-6:** Cross-case analysis: Internal factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	Internal factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
	Time between investment and plan realisation	6	6	6	6
Financial position <sup>2</sup>	Rental income from buildings on plot of land (during plan development)	4	5	4	5
Financial position <sup>2</sup>	Development business-case	6	6	6	6
	Solitary development of plot of land	5	4	5	6
	Strategic position of plot of land	5	2	2	3
	Possibility to realise project in different phases	3	3	5	5
	Getting involved early on in development process	5	3	5	6
Focus, specialisation <sup>2</sup>	Composition of development portfolio	4	6	6	6
Focus, specialisation <sup>2</sup>	Area development within developer's area of operation	4	4	4	4
Focus, specialisation <sup>2</sup>	Type of developer (constructing, independent, investor, financial)	5	5	6	6
Focus, specialisation <sup>2</sup>	Preferred type of development (development focus/specialisation)	6	5	6	6
Market knowledge <sup>2</sup>	Market knowledge about plan area	4	4	4	4
Risk management <sup>2</sup>	Risk profile development plan (belief that risks can be managed)	6	6	6	6
Network and social skills <sup>2</sup>	Branding of own company	2	1	1	1
Human capital and type of organisation <sup>2</sup>	Developers organisation (staff capacity and expertise)	3	2	2	2
Flexibility and adaptability <sup>2</sup>	Flexibility and adaptability of developer's organisation	2	2	2	2
Network and social skills <sup>2</sup>	Strengthening the relationship with a municipality	1	1	1	1
	Finance				
Financial position <sup>2</sup>	<i>Liquidity of finances</i>	6	6	6	6
Financial position (risk-bearing) <sup>2</sup>	<i>Financial position (risk-bearing)</i>	6	6	6	6

Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature:  
1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018

### 5-3-6 External factors

External factors are factors that cannot or are difficult to be influenced by the developers or municipality but do play a role in the decision-making process of a developer. The external factors mainly influence the development business case of the developer as it mainly influences the potential revenues but also the costs. In Table 5-7, the identified external factors playing a role in the decision-making process of the developers are presented and rated. A selection of these factors is elaborated on in this section.

The analysis of the interviews showed that, among others, several external factors play a crucial role in the decision-making process of developers, which are: the location and potential of the area development, the attractiveness of the town/region in which the planned area is situated, market conditions for area development, the presence of environmental circles, the time between investment and realisation, and accessibility of the area. In the studied cases, things contributing to a location being a 'good' or 'interesting location are its vicinity to (larger) important cities and accessibility of the area by road and/or public transport, but also how the area is situated, for example alongside a body of water, which unintendedly was the case for all four of the studied area developments.

The previously discussed time between investment and realisation is crucial to a developer. This factor can be labelled as both an internal and external factor. Internal since the acceptable time between investment and realisation internally differs per developer. External, since the time that spatial planning procedures take, partly have a fixed length by law and can therefore not be influenced by developers or municipalities. The time that spatial planning procedures take was found to be important both in literature and case studies, establishing conformity between the two.

#### **Current and future economic situation**

The overall economic situation in the Netherlands and maybe even beyond also has a crucial influence on decision-making. This entails the current state of the overall economy, the current and future housing market and the general price level for construction. The overall state of the economy and, more specifically, the housing market influence the demand for and price of housing. The housing market refers to the overall state of the housing economy and how it may affect the demand for new housing and development. The general price level for construction also greatly influences the profitability of project development plans. Interesting here to notice is that investment decisions are made more based on the current economic situation, while the moment these houses get realised and sold is often years later. This can be explained since several developers have stated that it is challenging to forecast future economic and market conditions and that this becomes even more challenging as the expected completion date for the development project is further out. Therefore basing their investment decision more on current factors gives them more certainty than unpredictable future factors.

#### **Market conditions area development**

As discussed, the business case of a project development plan is crucial in the decision-making. Market conditions, including housing demand for the plan area, housing prices for the plan area, and land prices in the plan area, heavily influence the business case for an area develop-

ment. Housing demand for the plan area refers to the number of people potentially looking for housing in the new area. Housing prices for the plan area refer to the price point for the to-be-developed housing in the area, thereby affecting potential revenue. Land prices in the plan area refer to the cost of the land on which the development will be built and how that may affect the project's overall cost. All of these factors must be considered when deciding on investing in an area development, as they can significantly impact the business case and, thus, the investment decision.

### **Environmental circles**

Another important external factor is the presence of so-called environmental circles around companies currently located in the area. Inside these circles, housing development is not allowed. These circles, which prohibit housing development in certain areas, can only be resolved by the relocation of these companies or reduction of impact from these companies. However, the municipality and/or developers depend on companies to leave the area to make housing development possible since actively relocating companies by the municipality is a complex and costly process. The presence of these circles, holding back housing development at the time of decision-making, did not withhold the developers from investing in some cases. In these cases, developers are thus confident that these companies will relocate or that the municipality will try to rearrange those circles, making housing development possible.

The accessibility of the plan area, soil pollution, existing land ownership in the plan area, the willingness of existing land owners to sell their land, and the attitude of stakeholders towards the development of the area all have an important or moderately important influence on the decision of a developer to invest in an area development. Accessibility refers to the ease of access in and out of the plan area by various modes of transportation, especially whether current transportation options can cope with the increase of users due to housing being developed in the area. As shown earlier, this is an important factor for developers. Since it influences the popularity of the housing, they develop. Soil pollution can greatly affect the business case due to the cost and time required to clean up the area before development begins. Existing land ownership in the plan area is important as it can affect the ease of acquiring land for development and the potential for resistance or support from existing landowners. The willingness of existing owners to sell their land can also greatly affect the feasibility of the development since it could increase land prices or make it difficult to acquire land at all. Finally, the attitude of stakeholders towards the development of the area, such as local residents and community organisations, can greatly impact the developer's ability to gain support and approval for the development.

### **Competition with other developers**

Competition, both within the development area and between different development areas in the region, is not perceived as threatening but rather as something mutually reinforcing. The advantages of competition in an area development are that solely developing housing in business/industry parks will not make those houses very popular. If other plots in the area are also transformed into housing, this strengthens the area's popularity. More housing being developed in the area also opens up possibilities to incorporate social facilities such as bars and restaurants. If, however, the demand for housing in an area would decrease, the presence of other developers could be perceived more as threatening. A disadvantage of competition is the presence of (too) many different developers, which is seen as complex since it will make

planning- and decision-making in the whole area development more difficult and long-winded. Many different developers also make it more challenging to keep everyone on the same page. It is stated that the presence of already many different developers complicates getting involved. The presence of other developers is thus an important factor in the decision-making process, which has a positive influence if the number of developers is limited since this is perceived as being mutually reinforcing, but is seen as unfavourable if the number of developers becomes too big since it will cause plan- and decision-making in the area to slow down.

The complexity of a development, such as the existing infrastructure to the plan area, also influences the decision-making of a developer. A highly complex development, with, for example, many difficult stakeholders, poor existing infrastructure or other factors that make it complex, may be viewed as less practical and riskier for investment. On the other hand, a development that is relatively simple to realise may be viewed as more practical and a safer investment. Ultimately, the level of practicability in an area development can impact a developer's decision to invest.

Governmental policies on a national level regarding urban development also influence decision-making; however, since they apply to every development opportunity, they are more seen as a given. Developers do, however, fear the upcoming regulations for rental housing ('midden-huur regulering') since this will be disastrous for rental housing as a development product.

This section made clear that the location and potential of an area, the presence of environmental circles, market conditions and the current and future state of the economy have a crucial influence on their decision-making process on whether to invest in an area development. Furthermore, it became evident that competition from other developers is viewed as welcoming as long as not too many developers become involved, creating a shattered landscape in which further plan-making for the area has to be conducted.

**Table 5-7:** Cross-case analysis: External factors and their influence on the decision-making process of developers

Factor in literature	External factors	Oudorp Alkmaar	Spoorzone Beverwijk	Schieoevers Delft	Achtersluispolder Zaanstad
	Location and potential of area development	6	6	6	6
	Attractiveness of town/region in which area development is situated	5	5	5	5
	Accessability of plan area	5	5	5	5
	Soil pollution in plan area	4	3	3	3
	Complexity of development (practicability)	4	4	4	4
	Presence of environmental circles	6	6	6	6
	Existing land ownership in plan area (fragmentation)	3	4	2	5
	Willingness existing owners to sell land	3	4	2	3
Community support <sup>1</sup> Social climate <sup>2</sup>	Attitude of stakeholders	3	3	4	4
Competition <sup>2</sup>	Competition other developers	1	1	1	1
Competition <sup>2</sup>	Number of developers already involved in plan area	3	3	3	5
Spatial planning procedure <sup>2</sup>	Spatial planning procedure time (between investment and realisation)	6	6	6	6
Tax and legal laws/regulations <sup>2</sup>	National policies, laws and regulations (current and future)	4	3	4	4
Market <sup>2</sup>	General price level construction costs	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	General housing prices in the Netherlands	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	Housing market (current)	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	Housing market (future)	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	Current general economic situation	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	Future general economic situation	6	6	6	6
	Market conditions area development	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	<i>Housing demand</i>	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	<i>Housing prices (revenue)</i>	6	6	6	6
Market <sup>2</sup>	<i>Land prices</i>	4	5	3	3

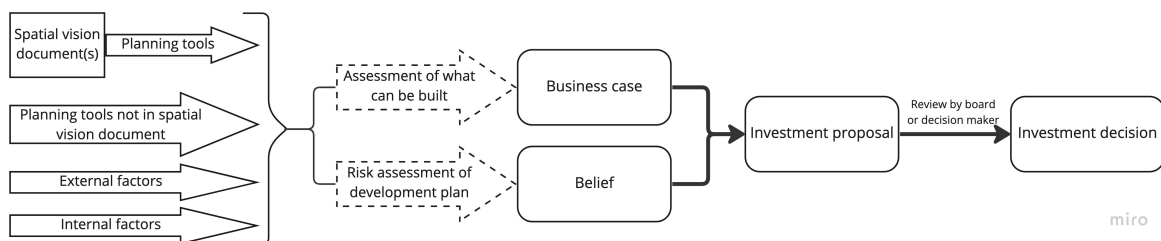
Factors' importance: 1= Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Fairly Important, 4= Important, 5= Very Important, 6= Crucial

Factors' origin in literature: 1= Adams and Tiesdell, 2013, 2= Nozeman, 2017, 3= Hamerslag, 2018



## 5-4 Preliminary conclusions

Based on the analysis of the interviews as discussed above, several things can be concluded. The decision-making process itself is quite similar for all developers interviewed. Based on, on the one hand, information from spatial vision documents and the municipality and, on the other hand, their expertise and experience, developers create project development plans and scenarios. Developers furthermore conduct a risk analysis of the development. This leads to a business case of the development and a judgement whether the developer has the 'belief' the development will be successful. A review of these two aspects leads to an investment decision. These two aspects are influenced by internal and external factors and the four types of planning tools that do or do not come forth from the spatial vision documents. An overview of the process, including the influence of the different factors, is shown in figure 5-2.



**Figure 5-2:** Overview decision-making process of developers and factors influencing this process

What can be built (building height/volume, building concentration, types and mix of housing) and the municipal ambition level are the most important aspects in spatial vision documents, predominately influencing the business case and thus the decision-making.

Regarding the planning tools, it can be argued that the shaping and capacity building tools have a big, or bigger than the other tools, influence on decision-making. Where shaping more influences the business case and capacity building the 'belief'. Important shaping factors are factors indicating what could be built and the aspirations a municipality wants to see realised in the area. Important capacity building factors contributing to the relationship with and reputation of the municipality. These are good collaboration, the municipality having an open and proactive approach and the political will of a municipality to develop the area. Concerning regulating tools, these are more viewed as a given. Only parking norms or required parking solutions have a crucial impact on decision-making. In the literature study, the (negative) influence of required parking norms/solutions was also found, Verheul et al. (2017) identified this as a factor that could hamper the urban development process. This has thus been acknowledged by the developers. Stimulating tools influence the decision-making; however, it is viewed that their importance is higher in the later stages of the development process, after which a decision on whether to invest has already been taken.

It can be concluded that many internal and external factors play a decisive role in the decision-making of developers. These factors influence the business case and the 'belief'. Important internal factors are the time between investment and realisation, business case, type of developer, preferred type of development, the risk profile of development, liquidity of finances and the financial risk-bearing position. It can be concluded that the internal goals of a developer

greatly determine which area developments a developer is interested in. Important external factors are the location and potential of area development, the attractiveness of the region in which area development is situated, the presence of environmental circles, the time between investment and realisation, the state of the overall economy and housing market, market conditions for area development and the general price level of construction costs.

The preliminary conclusions from this chapter, as well as the results from the literature review, are further analysed and validated by an expert meeting. The results from this expert meeting are discussed in the following chapter.

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## Chapter 6

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# Validation

In this chapter, the expert meeting findings are presented. The meeting served two purposes: validation of research findings and further analysis and interpretation of the interview results. The expert meeting thus served a validation and analytical purpose. It is understood that this is not a correct scientific way of conducting research. However, the expert meeting provided valuable insights into the developers' answers and validation of the research findings. Only the findings from the interviews with developers, as presented in Chapter 5, are validated in this chapter. The results from the desk research part of the case study, as presented in Chapter 4, were not discussed in the expert meeting, as this would require the experts to read all the spatial vision documents, which due to practicability reasons was not possible.

For the expert meeting, experts from a large urban development consultancy firm were selected based on their expertise and experience working in the field of urban area development and their objectivity towards the studied cases and real estate developers in general. During the meeting, questions and statements were presented to check the recognition of the conclusions and recommendations by the experts and to gather their views on the studied topics. The aim of the questions and statements was not to seek direct answers to those questions but to start a discussion on a specific topic. These questions and statements were grouped around the research questions of this research. After the discussion of a set of questions, the research findings concerning that research topic were presented, and the experts were asked whether these findings were reliable or conceivable.

This research can be broken down into four parts: the characteristics of urban area development in the Netherlands, the municipality's spatial vision documents, the developers' perspective on and assessment of these documents, and the internal decision-making process of developers. These four parts lead to the main result; the factors that influence the decision-making process of developers concerning participation in urban area development. The characteristics of urban area development in the Netherlands are not specifically treated in this chapter, as it was not specifically evaluated during the expert meeting. The other three parts of this research are treated in separate sections, after which an overview of the most important conclusions from the expert meeting is presented.

## 6-1 Spatial vision documents

The aim of the municipality with the publication of a spatial vision document is threefold. First, the aim is to start or boost the development of an area and set the outlines for the development, thus starting the development process, which was concluded in the literature study of Chapter 3. In contrast, from the case study results in Chapter 5, it was nuanced that the start of the development process is not that clear in practice. The second aim is to persuade developers to participate in an area development and make them develop and eventually realise plans. Thirdly, creating a spatial vision document serves an internal aim, as it is used to free up budgets internally and align different departmental views and policies. The municipality can use the following planning tools to persuade developers to participate in urban area development: shaping, regulating, stimulating and capacity building. A spatial vision document is an example of a shaping instrument; besides being implemented solitary, the other instruments can also be used to support the municipal spatial vision.

To validate the research findings, the following discussion questions were used to collect the views of the experts on the importance and role of spatial vision documents.

- *What is the role of a spatial vision document in the urban development process?*
- *How important is a spatial vision document?*
- *Can Dutch urban development work without spatial vision documents?*

The experts conclude that spatial vision documents are an essential part of the development process since they put a dot on the horizon and create a first framework for the area development. They thereby thus shape the decision of the developer. They also bundle the views and ambitions of the municipality regarding the to-be-developed area, thereby showing the developer which aspirations a municipality wants to see realised. Experts agreed that a spatial vision document could be a trigger for developers to acquire land in the area or at least is an invitation to look at whether the area has development potential and whether land should be acquired. The experts argued that besides the spatial vision, more aspects play a role in successfully realising an urban area development. It was argued that most spatial vision documents ignore the financial feasibility of the area development; it is just spatial and programmatic ideas and some requirements regarding sustainability, circularity, etc. The experts concluded that, on average, a spatial area vision document is a disappointing piece of paper due to the lack of realism regarding the actual realisation of the plans. Visions often do not take the money aspect into account and are, therefore, often not more than a pie in the sky.

The experts also indicate that a spatial vision is an essential document in convincing actors in the area to support the area's development as it offers stakeholders certainty about what will happen. A vision document can thus help get the stakeholders' support. Getting this support at the beginning of the development process will prevent delays due to complaint procedures later on in the process.

The experts remarked that a spatial vision document plays an important role in getting the different municipal departments and ambitions in line with each other. A vision document is thus an important incentive for a municipality to think about what to do with an area and what that area eventually should look like.

The experts see a spatial vision document as vital for successful area development. If no vision document is established at the beginning of the development process, the development will get delayed later in the process. After all, the municipality has to think about and establish what it wants with an area, which is an inescapable step to be taken.

### **Market consultation**

Experts also stress that if the document is solely the work of the municipality, it will probably be more difficult to get developers on board than when the spatial vision is created in cooperation with market parties. In an ideal world, spatial visions would always be created in consultation with market parties; however, more often than not, this is not the case. A well-thought-out vision that does align with the municipality's policy objectives and is drafted in collaboration with developers will, in the end, result in a better quality of the area. In the experts' opinion, ideally, you want spatial visions to be the start of an area development; this is, however, not always the case. Sometimes developers are already active in the area, and the municipality then uses a vision document to get all parties and their interests aligned.

Another important remark made by the experts is that the importance of a spatial vision document increases as the size of the to-be-developed area increases. The bigger the area, the more important it is that the municipality publishes a clear view of what it wants with the area, and the more important it is that the different municipal views are aligned. It is furthermore stated that a vision document probably helps to get commitment from all parties involved. Thereby making it easier to implement all the actions needed to realise the development of an area.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded from the experts' discussion on this topic, that spatial vision documents play an important role in the urban development process and are needed to align views, interests and ambitions within the municipality to provide developers and other stakeholders with a sense of direction for the development of the area. These documents are also important for inviting developers to participate. The different aims of the publication of spatial vision documents and their importance in the development process, as identified in this research, were acknowledged in the expert meeting. It can thus be stated that the experts validated the research findings.

## **6-2 Assessment of spatial vision documents by developers**

As discussed in chapters 3 and 5, developers primarily assess spatial vision documents on points that influence the business case of the developer; location of area development, market conditions, what can be built (size, number of dwellings, housing program, etc.), municipal aspirations and ambitions. Developers thus look for clues on the spatial framework, which indicates what could be built. As could be concluded from the interview results in Chapter 5,

such a spatial framework or clues about it are often lacking in vision documents. Therefore, spatial vision documents are mainly described as vague and only providing a high-over view.

The following discussion question was used to collect the views of the experts on how developers assess spatial vision documents and which elements in such documents are important for developers.

- *What are important elements in a spatial vision document that trigger a (re)action from developers?*

Within the expert panel, there was consensus on the assessment of the spatial vision document by evaluating points that contribute to the business case of the developer. The experts mentioned potential development revenue as the most crucial factor. Other points mentioned are the municipal aspirations for the area, covering all requirements and wishes. The more extensive that aspirations package is, the more constrained a developer becomes in deploying his creativity and making the choices he considers to be necessary. Thus, a developer must get a degree of freedom in how he realises the municipality's aspirations. To do this properly, the municipality does, however, need to provide the developer with some requirements to work with. Examples of these ambitions include the desired level of sustainability or desired parking solutions.

### **Balance between flexibility and certainty**

Regarding the spatial framework in a spatial vision document, the experts agreed that developers are looking for a level of concreteness in what they could develop. However, the degree to which the developers search for concreteness in the spatial framework gave rise to discussion.

On the one hand, it was stressed that there should be enough room for development, meaning everything should not be set in stone, and developers should have room to come up with their own project development plans. If the vision documents leave enough room for developers to maximise their project development plans, it is easier to get a financially balanced plan. The more room for development, the better because a developer can then shape the development in his desired direction. Developers thus assess the spatial visions on whether there is enough room to come up with one's own development ideas.

On the other hand, a spatial vision document should include outlines of what could potentially be built; otherwise, the developer cannot calculate the business case properly. This last point was countered by one of the experts, saying that large developing companies often have their own urban drawing studios capable of coming up with their own numbers for an area development—implying that municipalities do not need to spell out this information in spatial vision documents.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded based on the experts' meeting, that the views of the experts on how developers assess spatial vision documents and what developers find important aspects in these documents are in consensus with the findings of this research. However, no consensus was reached regarding the level of specification desired by developers in the spatial vision documents.

### 6-3 Internal decision-making process developers

As discussed in Chapter 5, in the decision-making process of developers regarding participation in an urban area development, two elements are important: the business case and the 'belief'. The business case is, amongst other things, influenced by the spatial vision documents, and the 'belief' is influenced by the business case, a risk analysis of the development and an analysis of the municipality on which the developer is dependable for cooperation. If the business case is profitable and in line with the developer's goals, and the developer has the 'belief' the development will be successful, then a developer can decide to participate in the urban area development.

The following discussion question was used to collect the views of the experts on how developers decide whether to participate in an urban area development.

- *How does a developer come to a decision on whether or not to participate in an urban area development?*

The experts did not extensively discuss the actual decision-making process of developers. The process of combining the business case and the 'belief' into investment proposals and presenting these to the board of directors is, however, recognised or considered logical by the experts. The exact internal process is also something that can only be told from the developers' point of view and therefore is hard to validate by people who are not developers. Although the question was not fully discussed during the experts' meeting, it can be stated that the results of this research were partly confirmed or at least not contradicted.

Interesting remarks were, however, made about the developers' internal assessment process of handling the laid-out municipal aspirations in the spatial vision document. It was the experts' opinion that developers first try to get on board the urban area development and, together with the municipality, further shape the plans for the area. However, at a later stage, developers will start looking if they can make more money on the development by moving the municipality towards dropping some aspirations. This internal assessment process thereby contributes to a better business case and the 'belief' since developers take into account that not all the aspirations of the municipality will be fulfilled in the phases after the initiation. The opportunism of developers in dealing with complex municipal aspirations was initially explained as the developer's ability to incorporate these aspirations into their plans. However, it could thus also be explained that developers know how hard they can play the game of urban development.

## 6-4 Main research question: factors influencing the decision-making process

This section discusses the validation of the research findings regarding the main research question of this research, namely, which factors influence the decision-making process of developers to participate in urban area developments originating from a municipal spatial vision document. The decision-making process of developers is influenced by two elements, the business case and the 'belief'. These two elements are influenced by spatial vision documents and planning internal and external factors. The shaping instruments and capacity building tools were found to have a crucial influence. Based on the interviews, it was found that many factors were seen as important for developers. These factors were discussed during the expert meeting to check whether they seemed logical and if any factors were missing.

The following discussion questions and statement were used to collect the views of the experts on what factors influence the decision-making process of developers.

- *How does a developer come to a decision on whether or not to participate in an urban area development?*
- *Besides the spatial vision document, what are other important factors in a developer's decision to participate in an urban area development?*
- *What role does a municipality's reputation play in a developer's decision?*
- *A spatial vision document on its own is not enough to convince a developer to participate in an urban area development.*

Besides the earlier discussed factors, such as spatial framework and municipal aspirations, the experts labelled the following factors as influential. Land prices, cost recovery, accessibility of the development area, contributions to municipal investments for mobility or nature, are there enough facilities in the neighbourhood or does the developer have to sacrifice part of the housing programming to realise several other facilities, for example, a supermarket or primary school. There is a contradiction between the interviews and experts' views regarding cost recovery and plan contributions. However, since the experts are no developers and therefore have less knowledge about what factors are important, the interview results are prevailed over the experts' views.

A crucial factor influencing the decision-making process is the time between investment and the realisation of the plans. The longer the time to development, the more uncertain the business case becomes for a developer due to, for instance, interest rates.

It is believed that the general stance of developers towards realising municipalities' ambitions has become more benevolent. Developers are not blind to problems in the world, such as sustainability. Thus, they also feel the need to incorporate sustainability in their plans. Therefore the ambitions and wishes of a municipality are probably more easily fulfilled than some time ago and are no longer experienced as annoying or coercive. This does, however, not mean that these aspirations do not play a crucial role in the decision-making process.



### **Municipality's reputation**

A municipality's reputation was also highlighted as a crucial factor in the decision-making of a developer. For a municipality to have a good reputation, it should have clear policies, the different policies should be in line with each other, and a municipality should have an open and progressive stance towards the urban area development and developers.

An example of a Dutch municipality not having a good reputation was given. This municipality has many policies that a developer needs to comply with to get planning permission. Also, the policies of different municipal departments are diametrically opposed to each other, and the departments are not willing to move an inch in each other's direction. As a result, nothing is getting done, and developers have no idea where they stand when developing a plan in that municipality. The development of urban plans is therefore limited in this municipality. Several developers also mentioned this specific Dutch municipality as challenging to work with and is, therefore, not an interesting place to invest. To summarise, a municipality needs to have a good reputation and clear and aligned policies to be interesting for a developer to invest.

### **Municipality's attitude**

The attitude of a municipality towards a developer also seems to be important. Examples are given by the experts of a Dutch municipality where municipal officials are reserved and suspicious towards developers, which influences the developer's interest in that municipality in a bad way. Another Dutch municipality has an open and inviting stance towards developers and wants to create plans and visions for the city in cooperation with the developers. The progressive nature of a municipality is thus important and influences the decision environment of developers. The mayor and aldermen are not deemed important by the experts. The number of municipal officials and their experience is, however, important but not to the same degree as the progressive nature of the municipality. Above all, the capacity to handle projects at the municipality is important for developers.

### **Conclusion**

The experts' shared conclusion on the answer to the main research question was that ultimately a lot of factors, like the ones discussed, play a role in the decision of a developer to participate in an urban area development. A good spatial vision does contribute to this decision-making process. Still, there is no direct cause-effect between the document and participation decision since other factors are also in play. In the expert's opinion, it is believed that the success factor of an area development besides a good spatial vision is the soft side of the development process. It is crucial parties collaborate early on in the process, that their relationship is good, and, importantly, that there is mutual trust. The experts thus concluded that shaping instruments are an important influence on the decision-making process of developers, but capacity building tools play an at least equally important role.

Based on the experts' meeting, it can be concluded that the views of the experts on which factors are influencing the decision-making process of developers are in consensus with the findings of this research. Thus, the conclusion of this research as the answer to the main research question has been validated.



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# Chapter 7

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## Conclusion

The results from the literature study of Chapter 3, case study desk research of Chapter 4, case study developers interviews of Chapter 5 and the validation expert meeting of Chapter 6 will be bundled to answer the research questions of this research. First, the conclusion and answer to the four sub-questions will be presented. Secondly, the conclusion and answer to the main research question will be presented.

### 7-1 Urban development practice in the Netherlands

This section will present the conclusion and answer to the first sub-question, which was formulated as follows:

**What are the characteristics of the urban development practice in the Netherlands, specifically the initiation phase?**

#### **Planning culture in the Netherlands**

The planning culture in the Netherlands is a comprehensive integrated culture, characterised by a sophisticated system of planning institutions and mechanisms, public investments in development, a hierarchy of formal spatial plans ranging from national to local levels and a focus on spatial coordination. This planning culture was, however, affected and changed by the 2008 financial crisis. From a municipal viewpoint, the planning culture shifted from 'government' to governance, and developments increasingly had to be realised by developers since municipalities no longer want to take the risks of active land policy.

For a more extended period, policymakers in the Netherlands have pushed the development of new real estate in the direction of urban areas, as planning policy on a national level dictates that new housing is to be realised in existing urban areas. Based on the case studies, it can be concluded that this national spatial policy influences the decision-making of developers regarding where to invest and develop.

### **Urban area development**

The type of urban area development studied in this research is primarily housing development on previously developed land. More specifically, the transformation of industrial areas into mixed residential-business areas. It was identified that urban area development is a complex process due to a variety of factors, including a high number of stakeholders, legal and administrative barriers, financial constraints, and organisational constraints.

### **Urban area development process**

The urban development process in the Netherlands consists of four phases: initiation, feasibility, realisation, and exploitation. Breaking down the urban development process in these phases is based on the literature and has been acknowledged in this research.

This research focused on the initiation phase, which is the starting point of the urban development process and is considered highly important as it significantly influences the subsequent three phases and is an inescapable step to be taken. The initiation phase begins with the idea of creating housing in a particular area, which can come from private parties such as developers or public parties such as municipalities. Municipalities in the Netherlands often manifest their idea to (re)develop an area through the publication of spatial vision documents, thereby starting the initiation phase for that area development. This type of initiative was the focus of this research.

In theory, the initiation phase starts with a spatial vision document and ends with a collaboration agreement between the municipality and the developer to further study the development of the area. In the studied cases, however, this was not so black and white since the initiation phase was not always started by the municipality, as developers sometimes acquired plots of land before the publication of a spatial vision document. This possibly comes forth from national spatial policies, pointing towards development being possible in specific areas. Also, developers conduct their own demographical research, predicting where housing needs to be developed and invest based on that information. After acquiring a plot of land, a developer asks the municipality to create a spatial vision document for the area in the hope that housing development will become possible.

From the case studies, it could also not be concluded that the switch from the initiation to the feasibility phase is always accompanied by an agreement between the municipality and the developer. Therefore, the moment when a developer acquires a plot of land in the to-be-developed area can also be seen as the end of the initiation and start of the feasibility phase.

The goal of the initiation phase is to transform an idea to construct housing in a particular area into a more concrete plan suitable to attract partners and suitable for feasibility studies in the next phase of the urban development process. During the initiation phase, various activities are conducted, such as creating a vision/(concept)plan for the area, conducting a feasibility study that includes market research and a financial assessment, determining the general program of requirements and mass study, inventorying legal zoning possibilities and the state of contamination, and engaging in acquisition talks with land and property owners, sounding out existing and potential users.

### **Urban area development actors in the Netherlands**

The urban area development process involves a variety of actors from both the public and private sectors. In the initiation phase of the development process, the main public actors are municipalities, and the main private actors are developers.

#### *Developer*

Developers are responsible for preparing and realising real estate projects with the goal of maximising profit. For developers, the initiation phase can have three possible outcomes: acquiring a plot of land, deciding that the area has no development potential, or deciding the area has development potential but now is not the right time to invest. The initiation phase also mostly includes creating an investment proposal.

#### *Municipality*

Municipalities play a role through their applied land policy ('grondbeleid' in Dutch), which serves as a means to reach specific municipal goals such as directing market behaviour and land use. The municipality can play a role through private law (active land policy) and public law (passive or facilitating land policy), giving them a double role as market players and market supervisors. Either way, the municipality decides whether a development is taking place, making it an indispensable player in the development process.

Good collaboration between public and private parties is vital for the success of the initiation phase since there is public-private interdependency in play. Municipalities depend on developers for development realisation, and developers depend on municipalities for planning permission and infrastructure realisation. Thus, public and private parties rely on each other to successfully realise an urban area development.

The characteristics from the literature as described in this section have not been acknowledged as such in the interviews or expert meeting. However, no contraindications were identified.

## **7-2 Spatial vision documents: aim, intended effect and support with planning instruments**

This section will present the conclusion and answer to the second sub-question, which was formulated as follows:

**What is the aim and intended effect of a municipality with the publication of a spatial vision document, and which instruments can a municipality use to support its spatial vision document?**

### **Aim and effect**

For a municipality, the publication of spatial vision documents has several aims. Firstly to start or boost the development of an area and to set the outlines for that development. This description, which emerged from the literature study, has not been acknowledged in the interviews with the municipalities and developers but has also not been opposed. It was, however, nuanced that the start of the development process is not that clear in practice.

Secondly, the process of creating a spatial vision document serves an internal aim of the municipality, as it is used for freeing up budgets internally and aligning different departmental views and policies. The publication of such a document thus bundles the views and ambitions of the municipality regarding the to-be-developed area. Therefore the publication of a spatial vision document is an important political position statement of the municipality regarding the future of a particular area. This was found in the literature review and was acknowledged in the case studies and expert meeting, as developers see this political statement as one of the most important effects of a spatial vision document.

Thirdly, the ultimate aim of a spatial vision document publication is to get an area successfully developed by getting housing and/or other buildings developed and realised in an area.

Experts concluded that spatial policy documents play a crucial role in the urban development process in the Netherlands since they define a spot on the horizon and create a first framework for the development. They thus shape the decision environment of the developer. However, experts also note that spatial vision documents can be unrealistic and fail to effectively persuade developers to invest in the area due to not taking into account the price tag of the desired aspirations and not clearly setting the outlines for the development. It is furthermore argued that when creating a spatial vision document, the municipality itself often does not know what it wants, and the vision document ends up being a stacking of different municipal aspirations.

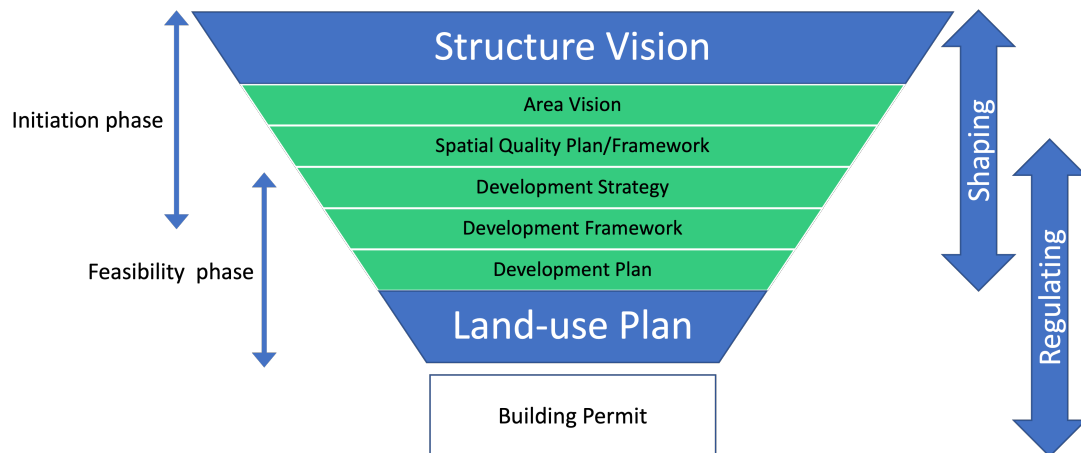
### **Planning instruments**

Municipalities can use different planning tools or instruments to support their aims and to persuade developers to invest in area development plans. These tools and instruments can be divided into the shaping, regulating, stimulating and capacity building categories as identified in the literature study, found in the case studies and acknowledged in the expert meeting. It was also found that these categories of planning tools can be placed in multiple categories simultaneously. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the usage of specific planning tools can influence the usage of other planning tools, which are found in both the literature and case studies.

### **Spatial vision documents**

Figure 7-1 shows the various documents used in urban development in the Netherlands, arranged in an inverted pyramid structure, with the broadest documents at the top and more detailed ones at the bottom. Furthermore, the documents at the top are more focused on shaping, while those lower also focus on regulating.

The structure vision at the top marks the beginning of the initiation phase. Moving down the pyramid, more vision documents are published, and eventually, the development process transitions into the feasibility phase. The granting of the building permit, located beneath the pyramid, marks the start of the realisation phase and is based on the land-use plan at the bottom of the pyramid.



**Figure 7-1:** Overview of spatial vision documents, their mutual relation, relation to the phases of the development process and relation to planning instruments

The pyramid also represents the negotiations between the municipality and developer(s) as they try to agree on what will be built. These negotiations can be concluded with the adoption and publication of spatial vision documents reflecting the agreements reached on what will be built in the area. Therefore, it can be concluded that the other spatial vision documents, that fall between the broad structure vision and detailed land-use plan, can be seen as the closure of intermediate steps in the plan-making/development process.

### 7-3 Assessment spatial vision documents by developers

This section will present the conclusion and answer to the third sub-question, which was formulated as follows:

#### **How do developers assess spatial vision documents published by municipalities?**

##### **Developers' view on spatial vision documents**

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, municipal spatial vision documents are important for the decision-making process of developers, along with other policy documents such as the municipality's general housing policy and other building regulations (in the building code or land-use plan).

Based on this research, it can be concluded that the key aspect of a spatial vision document is that it demonstrates the municipality's endorsement of housing development in a specific area. However, the time between the publication of vision documents and the implementation of a development framework can be long and uncertain. Developers view the publication of spatial vision documents as important political statements by the municipality. Without such a political statement, investing in an area would be considered riskier by developers. This aligns with the findings of Healey (1992) in the section on planning instruments (3-4-4); there is thus conformity between the literature and the research findings.

### **Persuasiveness spatial vision documents**

Based on the nine persuasiveness variables from Adams and Tiesdell (2013) as presented in Chapter 3, the persuasiveness of the spatial vision documents from the case studies was scored in Chapter 4. Though not a scientifically rigorous analysis, the scores serve as an indication. Based on the scores, it can be argued that the different spatial vision documents have an average low score on persuasiveness. According to the literature, one of the aims of plans, such as spatial vision documents, is to persuade market parties to participate in a development. However, based on the analysis of the documents, it can be argued that the documents do not fully effectively achieve this aim. From the nine persuasiveness variables, clear and apparent evidence base, the plan's persuasive logic and rationale, endorsement by higher-level actors and the plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources were identified in the interviews as the factors raising the persuasiveness the most.

### **Assessment by developers**

From the analysis of the interviews in Chapter 5 and analysis and validation of the results in Chapter 6, it can be concluded that developers have several elements that they look for when assessing a spatial vision document. These elements are presented and scored in Table 5-1.

All but one of these elements that were identified during the interview analysis are described by the variables of the literature. Besides the theoretical variables, the only factor that emerged in the interview analysis is the municipality's aspirations and ambition level.

In spatial vision documents, developers are mainly interested in clues on what could be built since this greatly determines the business case of the developer for the area development. Such clues are building volume and type of housing (social, rental, purchase). The desired type of housing and acceptable percentage of social housing in an area development are crucial factors for developers but are, however, different per type of developer. Images or sketches in spatial vision documents are not very important to developers as they are open to interpretation.

Details regarding the spatial framework are often lacking in spatial vision documents. Therefore, spatial vision documents are mainly described by developers as vague and only providing a high-over view of what could be developed. Furthermore, they lack information on the impact of the development on the existing city infrastructure and only provide an overall storyline for the area development from a municipal point of view.

The level of ambition and aspirations displayed by a municipality in a spatial vision document is very important to developers, as it affects the types of structures that can be built, construction costs, and the complexity of the development. However, these aspirations often do not match the reality of the market.

Market research or market knowledge used in the creation of spatial vision documents is moderately important for developers. It is unimportant whether a municipality has already conducted studies (environmental, noise, traffic) for the development of the plan area since, as stated by many developers, they will always conduct these studies themselves as well.



According to the literature, involving many actors in the creation of spatial vision documents should make these plans more successful in shaping the development plans and persuading developers to invest. However, based on interviews, it seems this is not a major factor in developers' decision-making during the initiation phase. Developers acknowledge the importance of this factor but view it as more relevant later in the development process rather than during the initiation phase.

Based on the findings from interviews and expert meetings, it has been determined that developers desire a balance of flexibility and certainty in spatial vision documents and the area development process. Certainty on what could be built to better determine the business case and flexibility to change plans if market conditions change or unforeseen circumstances occur.

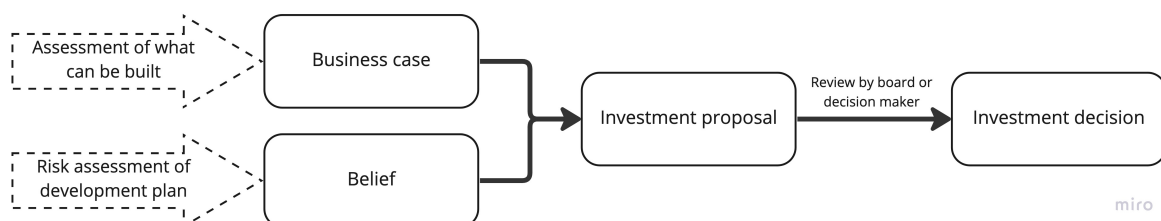
## 7-4 Decision-making process developers

This section will present the conclusion and answer to the fourth sub-question, which was formulated as follows:

**What does the internal decision-making process of a project developer look like to come to an investment decision after assessing the spatial vision document published by a municipality?**

This section only describes the internal decision-making process of a developer. The factors influencing this decision are discussed in the section regarding the main research question.

It can be concluded that the internal decision-making process of developers regarding participation in an area development is quite similar for all developers. It consists of creating a business case and conducting a risk analysis of the project development plan, which are combined into an investment proposal. These two elements: the business case and the 'belief', together with the different steps in the decision-making process, are shown in figure 7-2.



**Figure 7-2:** Overview decision-making process of developers and factors influencing this process

If the business case is profitable and in line with the developer's goals, and the developer has the 'belief' the development will be successful this could result in an investment decision to participate in an area development. When a decision to invest has been made, a developer will acquire a plot of land and start the further plan-making and development of that plot. This means that when a developer acquires a plot of land, the development process will move on to the feasibility phase.

It can be concluded that the decision whether or not to invest in an urban area development is not solely based on the numbers in the business case but also on having the 'belief' the development can be realised, which is based on the risk analysis as well as the developer's (gut) feeling about the development.

The experts could not fully validate the conclusion on the shape of the internal decision-making process, as they have not or are not working at a development company. However, the experts did not contradict the presented research findings and conclusions on this topic. Combining the business case and the 'belief' into investment proposals and presenting these to the board of directors is, however, recognised or considered logical by the experts.

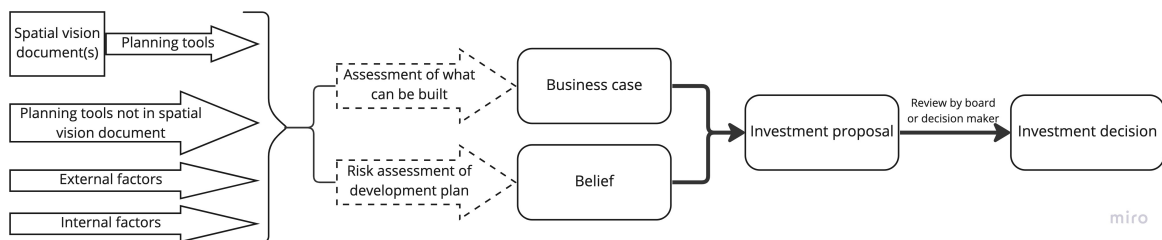
Besides recognising the business case and the 'belief' in the decision-making process, interesting remarks were made about the developers' internal assessment process of handling the laid-out municipal aspirations in the spatial vision document. It was the experts' opinion that developers first try to get on board the urban area development and, together with the municipality, further shape the plans for the area. However, at a later stage, developers will start looking if they can make more money on the development by moving the municipality towards dropping some aspirations. This internal assessment process thereby contributes to a better business case and the 'belief' since developers take into account that not all the aspirations of the municipality will be fulfilled in the phases after the initiation. The opportunism of developers in dealing with complex municipal aspirations was initially explained as the developer's ability to incorporate these aspirations into their plans. However, it could thus also be explained that developers know how hard they can play the game of urban development.

## 7-5 Main research question

In this section, the conclusion, and answer to, the main research question will be presented. The above-discussed answers to the sub-questions and further results from this research make it possible to answer the main research question of this research, which was formulated as follows:

**What factors influence the internal decision-making process of real estate developers regarding participation in urban (area) development plans of municipalities, originating from the publication of a spatial vision document?**

As became clear from the answer to the fourth sub-question, the decision-making process is influenced by two aspects, the business case and the 'belief'. Having the 'belief' that development will be successful ultimately decides whether or not a developer will participate in an urban area development. This 'belief' comprises several factors, one of which is the degree of certainty that the business case is profitable and in line with the internal goals. The business case thus does not directly and solely determine the decision but is an indispensable part of the decision. The business case and the 'belief' are influenced by spatial vision documents, the four types of planning instruments, and internal and external factors. However, the developers indicated that different factors play a more or less important role in their investment decision with every development. An overview of the decision-making process and the influence of the different categories of factors can be seen in figure 7-3.



**Figure 7-3:** Overview decision-making process of developers and factors influencing this process

### Spatial vision document factors

The contents of spatial vision documents, especially the statement made with the publication of such a document, play a crucial role in the decision-making process of a developer. What could be built and the type of housing in the spatial vision documents are crucial factors. Also, hard numbers indicating what could be built are more important than images or sketches. The balance between flexibility and certainty is crucial for municipalities and developers and thus should be present in spatial vision documents and the area development process, to successfully implement area development plans.

### Capacity building factors

It can be concluded that capacity building factors, representing the developer-municipality relationship and the role and reputation of the municipality, have a crucial influence on the 'belief' of a developer and, thus, on the decision-making process. It can thus be stated that capacity building tools are crucial planning instruments in persuading developers.

Crucial factors in the relationship and reputation are good cooperation, communication, reliability, previous experiences working with the municipality, the municipality having an open and proactive approach, and having the political will to develop an area. Moreover, a municipality should prioritise the area development, be decisive, make decisions swiftly, have a flexible stance in the development process and towards the area development and should ensure that the published information remains the same during the development process. As the developers rely on a municipality not to change the rules of the game since this jeopardises the feasibility of their developments. It is, however, difficult for developers to assess all these factors upfront when making an investment decision.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that civil servants play a more crucial role in the decision-making than aldermen. Despite literature suggesting that plans advocated by charismatic or persuasive political leaders are better at persuading developers, it can be concluded that this is not as important as expected and that, in fact, the organisational layer below the political leaders is more important in the decision-making process.

### Shaping factors

Shaping tools play a crucial role as they set the context of the development and indicate what could be built, thereby significantly impacting the development business case. They also serve as a political position statement for the intentions of plan-makers and, more importantly, the endorsement of housing development in the specific area.

Important shaping factors include what can be built (building volume, building concentration, type of housing). Images or sketches can also help determine what could be built. However, these are less important than more hard numbers since images and sketches are open to interpretation and thus provide less certainty.

Other very important shaping factors are the aspirations and requirements of the municipality for the area development since these factors impact what can be built, the cost of construction, and the complexity of the development. Specifically, sustainability requirements and desired parking solutions have an important influence on the development business case. This influence was also found in the literature and has been acknowledged by the research findings. It is important for municipalities to consider the feasibility of their aspirations and requirements and to have a realistic approach when deploying their shaping tools.

### **Regulating factors**

Regulating instruments, predominantly municipal rules and regulations, influence the developers' business case. Important regulating factors are municipal parking norms and building regulations. Also, the municipal general housing policy, indicating percentages of social, rent and purchase housing to be present in a development, is an important factor.

It can be concluded that cost recovery by the municipality does not play a crucial role in the decision-making. This is because several developers indicated that they prioritise the creation of high-quality public spaces over cost recovery, as they believe it adds value to the area and can result in higher housing prices. They also see negotiating cost recovery as a hindrance to the development process, and the impact of cost recovery is not so big compared to construction costs.

### **Stimulating factors**

Stimulating tools influence decision-making; however, it can be argued that their influence is not crucial in the initiation phase but is likely to be more dominant later in the development process. Therefore they seem to have less influence compared to the other categories of planning tools or factors.

Important factors are the municipality's willingness to invest in the area by improving the area's public space quality or accessibility. However, it was indicated that these investments and who will pay for them become clearer later in the development process, after the initiation phase. A crucial stimulating factor is the endorsement of the development by higher-level actors, which was also deemed important in the literature. This research has thus acknowledged its importance.

Developers prefer municipalities to take steps to get the area development realised, such as getting rid of environmental circles, by, for example, relocation of businesses away from the area. However, developers acknowledge that this is a complex and costly process.

Studies by the municipality, expropriation and pre-emptive rights do not significantly influence the decision-making but indicate the municipality's willingness to develop the area. Subsidies also do not play a crucial role in the decision, as, based on this research, it is believed that these play a role later in the development process, in the feasibility phase.

**Internal factors**

It can be concluded that the type of developer, their associated internal goals and their way of working have a crucial influence on their decision-making process on whether to invest in an area development. This is acknowledged in both the literature and research findings.

Important internal factors are factors that indicate the internal goals and modus operandi of developers. Such important factors are desired/acceptable time between investment and development realisation, the business case, the composition of the development portfolio, the type of developer, development focus/specialisation, desired/acceptable risk profile development, liquidity of finances and the risk-bearing financial position. The risk profile of the project development plan greatly determines the 'belief' that risks can be managed and is thus a crucial factor in the decision-making.

Another important factor is the desire to acquire land in the area development as soon as possible since developers want to get involved in further plan-making for the area and thereby try to steer the development in their desired direction.

Financial risks and the possibility to develop and realise the plan in several phases are also important factors for developers. Specifically, the financial risks are crucial in determining the business case and the 'belief'. Important financial factors include the amount of money to be invested, the time between investment and realisation, the risk of an unfeasible plan, and the potential revenue from the development.

The time between investment and realisation must be acceptable. Ideally, this period is five to seven years, but rental income from existing buildings on the land can allow for a longer period. The type of developer also influences the importance of these factors, with constructor developers typically desiring a shorter period between investment and realisation than investor developers.

The composition of their existing development portfolio is also a key factor, with developers preferring to balance out complex projects with easier ones. Area developments are considered complex and time-consuming; therefore, having a well-balanced development portfolio is important. Despite the complexity of area developments, all developers indicated that working on area developments is the most fun and interesting.

Furthermore, the area development must be situated within the operating area of the developer. Developing in an area within the developer's area of operation allows them to better understand the market in that region compared to other regions. Having market knowledge about the area development is thus an important factor.

Several factors were viewed as having no or little influence on the decision-making process. Branding their own development company or wanting to strengthen their relationship with a municipality were not factors that had a big influence on the developers. Additionally, internal personnel capacity does not play a role in the investment decision since it is hard to predict when a development is going to start. Also, developers would hire more people if there is a staff shortage when a plan is developed and realised.

**External factors**

External factors cannot or are difficult to be influenced by the developers or municipalities. However, it can be concluded that these factors play an important role in the decision-making process of a developer since they influence the business case and the 'belief' of the development. Important external factors are the location and potential of the area, the attractiveness of the town/region, market conditions for the area, spatial planning procedure time (time between investment and realisation), overall economic and housing market situation, accessibility of the area and presence of environmental circles. Furthermore, it became evident that competition from other developers is viewed as mutually reinforcing as long as not too many developers become involved, making planning and decision-making in the area more complex.

Market conditions for the area include the housing demand, housing prices and land prices in the plan area. Furthermore, the current and future state of the overall economy and housing market also greatly influences the demand for and price of housing and, therefore, the profitability of the business case. The current general price level for construction costs also has an important influence on the profitability of the to-be-developed housing. Soil pollution can also greatly affect the business case due to the cost and time required to clean up the area before development begins. An interesting remark here is that investment decisions are made more based on the current economic situation, while the moment these houses get realised and sold is often years later.

Environmental circles are crucial, as they prohibit housing development in certain areas. They can only be resolved by the relocation of companies or reduction of impact from these companies, which is a complex and costly process. The presence of these circles at the time of decision-making did not withhold some developers from investing in some cases. These developers are thus confident that these companies will relocate or that the municipality will try to rearrange those circles.

The accessibility of the plan area, especially whether current transportation options can cope with the increase of users due to housing development, is an important factor for developers. Existing land ownership in the plan area is important as it can affect the ease of acquiring land for development and the potential for resistance or support from existing landowners. The willingness of existing owners to sell their land can also greatly affect the feasibility of the development since it could increase land prices or make it difficult to acquire land at all.

Based on the literature, it was expected that community support for the development of the area would be an important factor. However, it can be concluded that this factor was not seen as crucial in the decision-making, as it is believed that this factor plays a role in the feasibility phase later in the development process. Furthermore, policies on a national level regarding urban development also influence decision-making. However, since they apply to every development opportunity, they are seen more as a given.

## Conclusion

Based on this research, it can be concluded that ultimately many factors influence the internal decision-making process of real estate developers regarding participation in urban (area) development plans of municipalities, originating from the publication of a spatial vision document. Spatial vision documents contribute to this decision-making process, but there is no direct cause-effect between the document and participation decision since other factors are also in play. From the different categories of factors discussed, it can be stated that shaping, capacity building, internal and external factors have the most influence on decision-making; not saying that the other factors do not play an important role.

Crucial are clues indicating what could be built that can be derived from the spatial vision document, as these factors partly determine the development business case. Moreover, factors related to the reputation of and relationship with the municipality play a crucial role. These factors influence the 'belief' of a developer for successful area development. Therefore, a municipality must have a good reputation and progressive attitude and, above all, be a reliable partner. In other words, capacity building tools crucially influence the 'belief' of a developer. Additionally, factors related to the internal goals and modus operandi of developers have a crucial impact on their decision of where to invest.

It is believed that the success factor of an area development besides a good spatial vision document is the soft side of the development process. The importance of the soft side and, thus, capacity building tools in the development process was also identified in the literature and thus has been acknowledged in this research. It is thus crucial that parties collaborate early on in the process, that their relationship is good and, importantly, that there is mutual trust. However, it was identified that municipalities/civil servants sometimes distrust developers as developers have a bad reputation for being untrustworthy and profit-driven. This phenomenon was identified in the literature study and interviews; therefore, there is conformity between the literature and research findings.

Summarising, spatial vision documents, shaping instruments and capacity building tools are an important influence on the decision-making process of developers, but internal and external factors play an at least equally important role.

Figure 7-4 shows an overview of how a developer decides to invest in an area development. The figure shows the business case and the 'belief' that makes up the investment decision. The left-hand side of the figure shows the most important factors influencing the business case and the 'belief'.

Table ?? shows the different categories of factors influencing the decision-making process of developers. For each category, the crucial or most important factors are presented.

**Table 7-1:** Factoren die het besluitvormingsproces van ontwikkelaars beïnvloeden

<b>Spatial vision document factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Political statement development could be possible, made through the publication of the spatial vision document
<b>Capacity building factors</b>	
Collaboration with municipality (relationship, cooperation, communication)	Open and proactive approach municipality
Municipality having the political will to develop the area	Prioritisation area development within municipality
Decisive and swift decision-making within municipality	Receptive to change plans in the future
<b>Shaping factors</b>	
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)
Building concentration	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Municipality's level of aspirations (e.g. level of sustainability required)	Desired car-parking solution
<b>Regulating factors</b>	
Parking norms	Municipal construction requirements for housing (e.g. sustainability)
<b>Stimulating factors</b>	
Endorsement of plan by higher authorities	Public investments in infrastructure, public space
<b>Internal factors</b>	
Time between investment and realisation	Rental income from buildings on development plot (during plan development)
Composition of development portfolio	Type of developer (constructing, independent, investor, financial)
Preferred type of development (development focus/specialisation)	Risk profile development plan (the belief that risks can be managed)
Liquidity of finances	Development business-case
<b>External factors</b>	
Accessibility of plan area	Attractiveness town/region in which area development is situated
Presence of environmental circles	Spatial planning procedure time (between investment and realisation)
Market conditions for area development	General price level construction costs
Current and future economic situation	Current and future general housing market situation
Location and potential area development	





Figure 7-4: Overview of the internal decision-making process of developers and important influential factors, regarding participation in an urban area development



# Recommendations for urban development in the Netherlands

Based on this research, several recommendations can be drafted regarding the persuasion of developers for urban area developments, public-private interaction, and the urban area development process. These recommendations are based on the research findings and the researcher's insights gained during the research process.

### 8-1 Recommendations for spatial vision documents

The urban area development process could be improved if the municipality more clearly stated what it wants and what requirements apply to the area development. Municipalities should create spatial frameworks in their spatial vision documents and let the actual designing and making of development plans to market parties. These frameworks should contain certain bandwidths on building volume and housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing) to provide both the desired flexibility and certainty. Thereby mainly using spatial vision documents to give clearer direction to what could be built and municipal aspirations and requirements and trying to arrive at precise details of the plan in joint consultation with market parties. For example, do not impose parking norms but express the ambition to reduce parking in the area and come to the precise details of the parking solution in consultation with the developer. The less room for discussion about what could be built and which aspirations are to be realised, the faster plan-making and development can occur.

Dictating what should be developed also leaves no room for developers to decide which product can be best developed and when in an area. Developers, therefore, recommend that spatial vision documents include the possibility for developers to decide on what and when they develop in an area.

### **Prioritisation and flexibility regarding municipal aspirations**

In this research, it was identified that there often is a gap between the municipality's aspirations, as laid down in the spatial vision documents, and the reality of the market that developers work with, thereby putting a lot of pressure on the feasibility of project development plans. Achieving the realisation of municipal aspirations in an area development could be improved by incorporating flexibility and prioritisation of the aspirations in the spatial vision document. In this way, a developer can focus on the most important aspirations and make sure these are realised. It is understood that the municipality wants as many guarantees as possible that their different policies will be translated into the project development plans of the developers. However, developers do not know what the world will look like in ten to fifteen years. Prioritising aspirations could therefore help the developer choose which aspirations could be dropped when the feasibility of the project development plan becomes jeopardised.

Furthermore, the municipality should give something in return to developers for realising more of their aspirations. If, for example, parking needs to be realised underground, the municipality could allow more houses in the plan to compensate for the expensive parking solution. So when demanding the realisation of aspirations as a municipality, you should also allow a little more housing or use lower parking requirements. Or in the case of soil pollution, a developer should be allowed to add some houses to the plan to compensate for the extra expenses. The municipality should make more use of haggling and have a more flexible approach towards developers to get more of their aspirations realised.

### **'Long-standing' spatial framework**

Another recommendation is that a municipal council should set the spatial framework for an area development for a more extended period and not alter this framework when for example, a new municipal administration has been established. This allows municipal officials not to dictate what should be built but to come to development plans for the area in consultation with market parties. It also gives the developers more certainty on the rules of the game for the area development process. For this to be successful, two things are important. Municipal officials should be given more decision room to come to feasible plans in consultation with market parties. And probably more time is needed upfront when creating a spatial vision document to define a clear, workable and robust spatial framework.

### **Use current cadastral boundaries**

Another recommendation for more efficient urban area development is to include the least possible dependency in the spatial vision document. The spatial concept for the new area should consider the existing plot boundaries. In this way, a developer owning one plot can develop that plot without depending on acquiring other plots first. Instead of needing to acquire multiple plots because the spatial vision indicates a plan can only be realised on several plots combined. Spatial planning, thus, should be based on the current cadastral boundaries.

Lastly, municipalities should make more use of openly available data on nuisance, mobility and similar topics when creating a spatial vision document. Thereby better aligning the vision documents with reality and not discovering that housing development is impossible in parts of the area due to hindrances after the document's publication.

## **8-2 Recommendations for the initiation phase and the urban development process**

It is recommended that a municipality, before the publication of the spatial vision document, should unofficially consult with market parties about the document. In this way, checking whether the proposed spatial vision is realistic and workable for developers. Working with market parties to create visions and plans can improve urban area development. Therefore it is recommended to create combined plan teams with people from the municipality and developer, where all parties put their cards on the table. This way, parties would better understand each other's positions and needs, as a result arriving at understandable solutions for all parties and creating more mutual trust.

Based on both the literature and case study results, it can be stated that stakeholder engagement is important when creating a spatial vision document. It ensures more support from these stakeholders for the development plans, which will speed up the development process because fewer objections will be made. A municipality should thus take more time upfront when creating a spatial vision document to save time later in the development process.

### **Limit number of developers**

For successful but mainly more swift urban area development, the number of developers involved should be limited. According to the developers, more involved parties mean a slower and more laborious urban area development process. Also, limiting the number of developers involved means the municipality has to consult with fewer parties, making the process easier and acquiring less staff.

### **Persuade large (investor) developers**

It is recommended only to involve larger developing companies in an area development cause they are able to play the long game and have funding to invest in plan-making and research for the area development. More specifically, municipalities should strive for mainly having investor developers participating in the urban area development. Investor developers are good partners in urban area development due to their long attachment to the area since they often keep owning the real estate for 30 years after the development has been finished. Therefore, they benefit from adding (higher) quality to the area and are thus more willing to contribute to this.

### **Pre-emptive rights**

The municipality could also use the power of its pre-emptive rights more in an area development. First of all, using this instrument shows dedication to the area development from the municipality. Secondly, it could also be used strategically to prevent unwanted developers from entering the area development. For example, when a land-owner wants to sell, the municipality could relinquish its pre-emptive right but propose a particular developer to acquire the land instead. In this way, the municipality could somewhat steer which developers join the area development. This would, however, require changes in national and EU competition laws, as public parties cannot prefer a private party over other parties.

It is also recommended that more trust is to be created between the municipalities and developers. As municipalities sometimes view developers as a bogeyman, only wanting to make a profit and not in it to create spatial quality.

It is furthermore recommended to create sub-areas within the larger area development as a whole. Creating sub-areas will make decision-making more manageable since it is split into smaller parts, allowing (smaller) project development plans in sub-areas to start taking off more easily. This is important since the presence of other developers and already completed projects attract other developers and interested parties to the area.

Several other recommendations regarding realising aspirations and improving the urban development process are as follows. When publishing a spatial vision document, the aim of the vision should be clearly defined, is adding housing numbers more important or adding spatial quality. A municipality should furthermore make prioritisation of the different development plans within its territory and should act accordingly.

### **8-3 Further recommendations**

It was argued that working with market parties should not be limited to creating vision documents for a specific area. In consultation with market parties, the municipality should create spatial vision documents for the municipality as a whole. In such a document, the aspirations and wishes of a municipality should not all be laid down in one area, but for every ambition, it should be analysed which area is most suitable for realising that specific ambition. In this way, the number of aspirations a developer should realise in their plan will be fewer, but the likelihood of realising the aspirations successfully will probably increase. In other words, the often massive pile of municipal aspirations should be more realistically distributed and allocated to different development areas to make more of these aspirations a reality. A municipality, thus, should not throw all its aspirations into one area (postage stamp thinking), but you should look citywide with market parties to see which aspirations are to be realised, where, and how this can be done while having a realistic business case.

The relocation of existing businesses when an industry area is being redeveloped to a residential area should be governed on a higher level than the municipality, for instance, the province or metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Since other municipalities are also working on transforming business parks into residential areas, demand for new locations for these businesses is high. If new business parks are being allocated, the companies could eventually be leaving the greater area, which would cause the economy to decline.

# Discussion and Reflection

In this chapter, the limitations of the conducted research are discussed. Furthermore, a reflection is given on the applied research methods and research findings. Also, recommendations for further research are given at the end of this chapter.

## 9-1 Limitations conducted research

The literature study on the characteristics of the urban development practice in the Netherlands was partly based on literature describing what the development process ideally should look like instead of scientific literature. This raises the question whether the described development process describes how the development process actually is or how it ideally should be. However, it is the researchers' view that the development process, as described in the literature, was not acknowledged as such in the research findings. However, it was also not contradicted. Therefore, it can be argued that this specific literature did not provide a wrong or incomplete picture of the urban development process in the Netherlands.

### Case selection

At the start of this research, the idea was to select two successful and two failed cases for the case study part of the research. In practice, this turn-out differently, and three cases were selected where developers invested in acquiring land in the area development. Additionally, one case was selected where developers were planning on acquiring or developing land in the near future. So no cases were selected where a spatial vision document did not result in the activation of developers for the urban area development. Consequently, this research's results primarily consist of factors that contribute to the successful activation of developers. However, studying failed cases could provide results on factors that withheld or made the activation of developers impossible. These failed cases were, however, hard to find since failed cases are not much spoken about and remembered. However, future research into this topic should put more effort into finding failed cases since it is plausible that important lessons could be learned from them.

### **Public-private interaction**

This research focussed on developers and their internal decision-making process. Thereby, this research left out the interactions between public and private parties in the development process. Therefore, the influence of these interactions has not been taken into account when determining what factors influence the decision-making of developers. The initial idea was to incorporate these public-private interactions in this research. However, due to practicability reasons and the time required to conduct such more extensive research, it was decided to leave out these interactions. For this reason, it could be argued that the results of this research give a too-simplified picture of what the decision-making and important factors influencing it look like. Therefore, it is recommended that future research studies these public-private interactions and tries to determine their importance in the decision-making of developers.

## **9-2 Reflection research methods and findings**

This research used several research methods: literature study, case study desk research and interviews and expert meeting. As noted in Chapter 2 regarding the research methodology, interviews, especially the processing of interviews, are open to the researcher's interpretation. At every step during the processing of the interviews, from a complete report to a summary and eventually abstract of the main takeaways, data is cut away by the researcher. In this process, information could be left out that, according to the researcher, is not significant; however, according to another researcher's interpretation, it could be important. By using interviews, valuable information could be left out of the research report. This means that the results and conclusions do not provide a fully complete picture of the important factors. It was sometimes also challenging to make the interviews tangible since the views were asked on urban area development, which is a complex and extensive process. However, good conversations were held with all developers and experts involved and clear examples were provided to understand the answers given.

Using case studies as a research method also has its limitations. Case studies provide a more in-depth view of the decision-making process for particular developers in specific areas. This is, however, also a downside since the results from the case studies cannot simply be applied to all developers in the Netherlands.

### **Focus on planning instruments**

In the literature, specific planning instruments and internal and external factors were identified, which were focused on during the case studies and interviews. By focusing on these factors, other factors that also play a role may have remained understudied since they were not asked or mentioned by the developers. The latter can be explained because many factors influence the development and decision-making process; therefore, one factor is easily forgotten to mention. This diversity of factors also reflects the complexity of the decision-making and development process. Due to the researcher's lack of knowledge about these processes, especially at the beginning of this research, some things may have been left unsaid or not sufficiently discussed during the interviews. For future research to deal with the issue, an interview protocol is recommended to be drafted and tested in a mock interview. To check whether the results from the interview are similar to the results expected to obtain from the interviews.



## 9-3 Recommendations for future research

Based on the insights obtained during this research and the limitations of this research, several recommendations for further research can be made.

- **Public-private interaction:** Due to practicability reasons, the contents and process of public-private interaction in the initiation phase of the development process, were left out of the scope of this research. However, this research identified and acknowledged the importance of these aspects. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that further research studies these public-private interactions in the initiation phase and tries to determine their importance in the decision-making of developers. This way, a more complete and comprehensive picture can be created of the decision-making process of developers and the important factors influencing this process.
- **Zeitgeist:** This research was conducted during a period of economic progress and extreme housing demand in the Netherlands. In other words, it was conducted in a period of excellent market conditions for developers. In prosperous times for developers, there could be less reason for criticism. Thus factors that are more influential for the decision-making process during economic lesser times could not be mentioned by developers simply because they did not play a role at the moment of decision-making. It would be interesting to conduct similar research like this during economic lesser times and see whether other factors come up or the importance of factors is different. Additionally, other cases should be used to check whether important factors identified are also present in other cases. Research into these factors is also interesting because these factors can then be taken into account when making spatial plans and visions. This is important because, during an urban area development, there will often be worse economic times as well due to the often long duration of area developments.
- **Earlier involvement of market parties:** Further research could study how to involve market parties earlier and let them contribute to area spatial visions without creating unfair competition between market parties. Asking market parties to think about a spatial vision document indirectly indicates that you have the idea to develop an area as a municipality. Then they will speculate on or acquire land immediately and thus have an advantage over other parties. Future research, therefore, should look into how developers can be involved earlier in plan-making without violating competition laws.
- **Realised spatial vision ambitions:** Further interesting research would be to study what remains of the ideas and ambitions in area vision during the development process, which ideas from the initial vision are eventually realised in the end, which ambitions dissolve and why.
- **Serious game urban development process** Since the initiation and subsequent feasibility phase contain a lot of public-private interaction, negotiations and haggling. Interesting future research could develop a serious game for these first two phases, in which public and private parties participate. Using a serious game, different spatial visions and approaches could be tested. The results could be used to develop a framework for spatial vision documents and development approaches that successfully persuade developers to participate in an urban area development.



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## Appendix A

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# Reports Interviews Developers

Due to confidentiality reasons, the reports of the interviews with the developers have been removed from this version of this thesis. If the full reports would like to be viewed, the researcher should be contacted.



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# Appendix B

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## Lists of Factors

**Table B-1:** Spatial vision document factors

Spatial vision document factors	
Spatial vision document based on research/knowledge	Studies conducted to support plan (environmental, noise, traffic)
Level of specification in document	More or less specification, tight frameworks
Building volume/heights	Housing program (type and mix of housing)
Involvement actors in vision formation (market, external and local actors)	Attractive vision presentation and communication
Political statement development could be possible, made through publication of the spatial vision document	Balance between flexibility and certainty
Images, sketches, artist impressions, etc.	Municipality's ambition level
Types and mix of buildings/housing	Building/housing concentration
Realistic	Urban planning
Architectural	Sustainability
Innovation	Social
Clarity/transparency	Flexibility to change plans
Tension between flexibility and certainty	Assurance information stays the same

**Table B-2: Shaping factors**

Shaping factors	
Images and artist impressions in spatial vision document	Building volume/heights
Housing program (type and mix of buildings/housing)	Building/housing concentration
Balance between flexibility and certainty	Level of specification in document
Municipality's ambition level	Desired car-parking solution
Sustainability ambitions	X

**Table B-3: Regulating factors**

Regulating factors	
Parking norms	Municipal building code requirements for housing (for example sustainability)
Cost-recovery by municipality (Contribution to plan costs and neighbourhood facilities)	Municipal housing policy
Municipal rules and regulations	Clarity spatial plan assessment frameworks
Speed of spatial planning procedures	Risk of changes in municipal rules and regulations
Municipal rules and regulations	Clarity spatial plan assessment frameworks
Building code requirements for housing	Parking norms
Current land use plan	Amendment procedure for land use plan already started

**Table B-4: Stimulating factors**

Stimulating factors	
Research/Studies already carried out (environment, noise, infra)	Willingness of municipality to fund these studies managers)
Endorsement of plan by higher authorities	Financial support for plan/vision by higher authorities (subsidies)
Public investments in infrastructure, public space	Willingness of municipality to relocate businesses
Place-making in plan area	Studies already conducted (environmental, noise, traffic)
Support plan with expropriation or pre-emptive rights	Input of own land or intention to acquire land

**Table B-5:** Capacity building factors

Capacity building factors	
Collaboration with municipality (relationship, cooperation, communication)	Developers' previous experiences with municipality
Municipality's prior experience with urban area development	Open and proactive approach municipality
Decisive and swift decision-making within municipality	Municipality having the political will to develop the area
Transparency regarding municipal views/ambitions/aspirations	Relationship with alderman
Relationship with civil servants (program/project managers)	Prioritisation plan within municipality
Receptive to change plans in the future	Municipal staff: skill and capacity
Assurance information remains the same (what is shown in documents may also be built)	Risk of changes in municipal policy
Persuasiveness municipal officials	Municipal programme managers' decision space
Alderman (Good civil servants (alderman less important))	Civil servants (municipal program/project managers)
Speed of spatial planning procedures	Transparency regarding municipal views/ambitions

**Table B-6:** Internal factors

Internal factors	
Time between investment and plan realisation	Rental income from buildings on plot of land (during plan development)
Business-case	Solitary development of plot of land
Strategic position of plot of land	Possibility to realise project in different phases
Getting involved early on in development process	Composition of development portfolio
Area development within developer's area of operation	Type of developer (builder, investor, etc.)
Preferred type of development (development focus/specialisation)	Market knowledge about plan area
Risk profile development plan (belief that risks can be managed)	Branding of own development company
Developers organisation (staff capacity and expertise)	Flexibility and adaptability of developer's organisation
Strengthening the relationship with a municipality	Liquidity of finances
Financial position (risk-bearing)	Financing options
Not dependable on relocation of companies	Emotional connection with development
Aim of development	Staff capacity
Staff expertise	Risk management (expertise, capacity)
Network, informal relationships	Relationship with municipality/alderman/civil servant

**Table B-7:** External factors

<b>External factors</b>	
Location and potential of the plan area	Attractiveness of town/region in which area development is situated
Accessibility of plan area	Soil pollution in plan area
Complexity of development (practicability)	Presence of environmental circles
Existing land ownership in plan area (fragmentation)	Willingness of existing owners to sell land
Attitude of stakeholders	Competition other developers
Number of developers already involved in plan area	Time between investment and plan realisation
National policies, laws and regulations (current and future)	General price level construction costs
General housing prices in the Netherlands	Current state of the overall economy
Housing market (current)	Housing market (future)
Predicted/future state of the overall economy	Market conditions of the area
Market conditions	Housing demand
Land prices	4 Housing prices (revenue)



# Report Desk Research Spatial Vision Documents

This appendix contains the analysis of the spatial vision documents published in the different cases studied.

### C-1 Oudorp, Alkmaar

The Alkmaar municipality has published two spatial vision documents regarding the Oudorp area's redevelopment.

#### *Omgevingsvisie Alkmaar 2040 (Structure vision published in 2017)*

The transformation of Oudorp was first mentioned in 2017 in the spatial vision for the whole municipality of Alkmaar. The municipality of Alkmaar is planning to transform the Oudorp area into a combined residential and business area, with a focus on developing houses alongside the canal. The vision document was created in dialogue with residents, other governments, and municipal officials and emphasises the central role of Alkmaar in the region, its location close to Amsterdam, and its accessibility by train and car. It also underlines that Alkmaar has much to offer. The vision document shows stacked housing with a modern look and high urban character, as well as space for greenery and mooring places or small harbours along the canal.

The municipality indicates that it has a directing role in the development process. It does not want to dictate what should be developed and wants to encourage developments by private parties while actively removing barriers where possible. Investments in public space done by the municipality will be recouped from developers active in the area development. The municipality expects the housing need in Alkmaar to shift to housing in the low and mid-rental segment and that the demand for expensive homes for sale will also increase. The current stock does not provide for these dwellings; therefore, the municipality will steer on

programming, incorporating these housing types in the new developments.

The municipality has the following ambitions for the canal zone, which includes the Oudorp area. They want to create a cohesive city district with room to work on smart city concepts. Industrial areas should transform into urban living environments with places to stay alongside the water. In this way, the canal should become an urban river inviting visitors to stay. The area should not be dominated by ground-level housing and have smart parking solutions, so cars are not dominant in the streetscape, plazas have a green look, and the area should have an urban feeling. Water can also enter the area for both recreation and transportation. It is also desired that the new homes will be energy-neutral.

The municipality is trying to increase the frequency of trains passing the city, making Alkmaar more accessible by train. The municipality will also investigate whether the areas can be made more accessible by, for example, constructing extra bridges. Climate adaptation and sustainability are important in the redevelopment of the areas. The municipality will also draw up an implementation agenda to clarify what will happen and when and ensure the prioritisation of projects and plans within the municipality. The municipality will further try to have a flexible attitude and provide the possibility to change plans if necessary. The spatial vision is not rigid but gives direction to ambitions and lays down the main outlines for the redevelopment of the areas.

*Ontwikkelbeeld Oudorp (Area vision published in 2019)*

A sequential spatial vision document in the redevelopment of Oudorp was published in 2019. This development view document provides further direction for the area development. The document indicates that an estimated 4,700 people can live in the new area. The identity of the redeveloped area should become a tough port city. The document shows a mix of building types, with about 20% to remain unpaved or undeveloped. The new area should have more streets and canals, and parking should not be visible from public areas.

High-rise buildings are possible along the canal in two rows between 0 and 300 meters distance from the canal. Furthermore, there should be insertion docks or moorings along the canal bank. Building facades along the canal should stagger, and buildings should not be contiguous; they should have openings to the area behind. Along the canal bank, there will be no space for cars. The area between the canal bank and the buildings should be at least 10 meters wide and be publicly accessible, for example, for recreation.

Oudorp should become a mixed urban residential and business area, with 50% residential and 50% business. On average, buildings may be five levels high. There can be about 2300 homes, 1/3 of which must be social housing. The homes must meet the Alkmaar Housing Standard, and 20% of each development must remain unpaved or undeveloped. Each development must also make its own mobility plan, based on which the parking standard for the specific development will be determined. In any case, parking must be out of sight of the public areas. The total plan area is 43 hectares, of which 26 acres are available for development; this should include approximately 2,300 homes and 295,000 square feet of business space and facilities. Maximum building height is 35 meters, occasionally up to 50 meters, and there is room for one tall landmark building.

## Conclusion spatial vision documents Oudorp, Alkmaar

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Alkmaar, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is not clear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research. Making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by a higher level government, in this case, the province. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development idea. The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these resources is unclear. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Community support is present for at least one of the spatial vision documents, as its contents were partly based on consultation with citizens and other stakeholders. This also means stakeholder engagement occurred while creating the spatial vision document(s).

## C-2 Spoorzone, Beverwijk

Two spatial vision documents have been published by the municipality of Beverwijk regarding the (re)development of the Spoorzone area. Figure 4-2 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments when spatial vision documents have been published and when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the area development. For the Beverwijk case, no structure or municipal-wide vision could be obtained from the municipality or through other means. This type of document, therefore, has not been analysed for this case.

### *Verkenning Spoorzone Beverwijk (Exploration document published in 2020)*

In 2020, a reconnaissance study was conducted to see what is possible and necessary to transform the Spoorzone area into a mixed urban residential and business area. Images in this document show stacked housing developments. Beverwijk's position in the metropolitan Amsterdam region is emphasised, as well as the city's accessibility by train and car. The entire Spoorzone area development is divided into several subareas. Furthermore, there should be a space for greenery in the area. The harbour should become a residential area with space for dining, drinking and shopping. More jobs should also be created around the station. The study also contains sketches with building blocks and function distribution across the various subareas.

The study identifies nuisance contours as factors currently standing in the way of housing development; the solution is zoning the industrial park. Furthermore, the document contains an initial concept housing programme. 1.3 million square metres of GFA can be realised in the entire area; a subdivision has also been made for each subarea. Sketch designs have

also been made for each subarea, showing stacked housing. Moreover, the sketches also show space for greenery. Tunnels are also drawn to connect the subareas, but who will pay for this investment is unclear.

The exploration document also includes a comprehensive traffic study. This study shows a growth in car traffic, which poses some traffic and live-ability problems for the area's development. The traffic study assumes that about 2,000 houses will be developed around the station and 8,000 houses on the east side of the motorway.

Furthermore, the exploration document includes a calculation study, which shows an exploration of the programme and land income. Based on GFAs, FSIs have been established, indicating the degree of urbanisation and densification. Initial ideas for programming also include parking standards. The study is further based on population figures and needs. A plan exploration was made for each subarea, showing housing types, programme social housing, water, greenery, parking and facilities. It also estimated the lead time of the area development. It also indicates that parking is likely to have to be solved by construction. A social and economic potential study of the area further supports the reconnaissance document.

*Ontwikkelstrategie Spoorzone (Development strategy published in 2021)*

The Spoorzone development strategy was adopted by the Beverwijk municipal Council in 2021 and gave further direction to the area development. The document reiterates the number of houses to be developed from the exploration document, of 2,000 houses around the station and 8,000 houses east of the motorway. The development strategy identifies the need to increase the number of facilities and incorporate greenery and water into the new area. The strategy defines the following objectives: creating a healthier living environment, a more economically vital area, and improving accessibility and public transport use. Additionally, the municipality aims to make the area more sustainable by demanding developers incorporate themes such as climate adaptation, energy transition, and circularity into the development plans. The duration of the area development is estimated to be 25 years. The document includes studies on urban planning, housing program, traffic, financiality and social costs and benefits of the area development. It further noted that the speed reduction on the A22 motorway is crucial, as the current speed makes housing development impossible. The municipality, however, depends on Rijkswaterstaat for speed reduction on the motorway. The document also indicates that financial resources for further investments in the Spoorzone should be generated through cost recovery.

The municipality has also set a part of the housing program in the document. A minimum of 20% of the housing is to be developed as social housing, with the remaining housing to be divided between affordable (25%), mid-rental(35%) and expensive (20%). This should be realised through 10% single-family houses and 90% multi-family houses, with a goal of making the homes energy-neutral and climate-proof. The municipality also aims to create a circular and sustainable economy in the area and achieve a high spatial quality level. Developers are encouraged to embrace sustainable initiatives.

The document also notes the complex governance structure of the Spoorzone area development, with many different owners in the area and large parties such as NS, ProRail, and the Bazaar having significant influence. The municipality's investment power in the area

development is limited, and it will mainly use its budget to perform its statutory tasks. Research is still being conducted into which infrastructure interventions need to be made, but investments are estimated to be at least €80 million. The municipality plans to recover costs from parties who benefit from the infrastructure interventions and is currently examining various cost recovery scenarios. The municipality will have to investigate whether it can receive subsidies for the area's development. Further contributions to the area development must be obtained from developers via anterior agreements.

### **Conclusion spatial vision documents Spoorzone, Beverwijk**

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Beverwijk, it can be concluded that the documents' persuasiveness cannot be clearly determined. The content of the documents, especially the first explorative spatial document, gave the idea that the document and ideas for the development of the area were based on market analysis, given the number based studies for the area in the document's appendix. The evidence base of the documents thus seems clear and apparent. The spatial vision documents were not a product of consultations with market parties but were derived solely from the municipality. Therefore, the plan's persuasive logic and rationale derive from partly understanding markets due to the market analysis. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality; however, the endorsement of the development by higher-level governments, for now, is not given yet. Due to the industrial area having a special provincial status; therefore, the province is not keen on transforming the area into housing. Also, the success of the area development partly depends on the speed limit on the motorway being lowered, which is controlled by the central government whom not yet given support for this. Thus scoring high on the identity of the plan maker but low(er) on endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development idea. The vision documents and interview did provide some clues on the plan maker's capacity to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these wider resources is unclear. The plan communication and presentation attractiveness seem more extensive than generally the case since the documents contain sketches for every sub-area; what that area could look like. Whether the redevelopment plan has community support or documents were created with the help of stakeholder engagement cannot be concluded based on the documents or interview.

## **C-3 Schieoevers, Delft**

The municipality of Delft, regarding the redevelopment of the Schieoevers area, has published several spatial vision documents. Figure 4-3 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments in time when spatial vision documents have been published, as well as moments in time when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the process. As can be seen, several spatial vision documents have been published after all developers became involved; therefore, only the documents before these involvement decisions have been analysed since this research focuses on the involvement decision of real estate developers.

*Structuurvisie Delft 2030 (Structure vision published in January 2010)*

In this spatial vision document from January 2010, the municipality, for the first time, indicated that a part of the Schieoevers area is to be transformed into a combined urban residential and business area where living, working and recreation are combined. The vision document proposes adding housing, greenery, and boulevards to the city, developing the area along the Schie and reconnecting it with the city. Furthermore, the vision document emphasises the city's special knowledge position with the presence of the university and companies and wants to strengthen this position by attracting more knowledge-based companies. This is seen as a way to attract and retain a talented workforce in the city. Additionally, the vision includes plans for a new railway station and tram lines to improve connectivity.

The document was created with input from various actors, including residents, entrepreneurs, housing corporations, and government organisations. Their feedback and comments were used to create the final version of this spatial vision document. This means that the document has a wider support base than when these actors would not have been consulted.

The document also includes an environmental impact assessment which supports the spatial vision document. The environmental impact assessment considered factors such as soil, water, nature, traffic, noise, air quality, external safety, cultural history, and energy. For most themes, a qualitative assessment was made, and calculations were made for traffic effects, including noise and air. For the structure vision, the plan's environmental impact statement considered two alternatives for Delft's housing task. The first alternative assumes a certain concentration in the southeastern part of Delft (TU-wijk e.o.). In the second alternative, the new houses are spread more over the city. For each alternative, the environmental effects of building 4,000, 6,800 and 9,800 houses after 2020 were examined. Concerning mobility, improvements can be expected from measures aimed at expanding (the use of) the public transport and bicycle network. A major focus for the near future is the coordination between spatial developments (housing, economic developments) and the load on the road network. The overall conclusion of the plan's environmental impact statement is that there is reasonable (but bounded) freedom for new development within the bandwidth of the alternatives studied.

The Schie canal in Delft is currently viewed as a physical and mental fault line between different city districts. However, the ageing of the surrounding business parks presents an opportunity to transform the area and integrate it more with the rest of the city. The restructuring of the Schiezone aims to create a new mixed urban area in Schieoevers north, focusing on living, working, and recreational spaces along the water. The development of the Schie banks has the potential to create attractive living and working environments for Delft residents, strengthening cultural and tourist activities, intensifying urban land use and expanding the city's green space. The municipality of Delft aims to develop or further develop cultural and tourist functions in the area, such as a recreational harbour for passers-by.

With various connections along, on and across the Schie, it can create unique opportunities for Delft at a neighbourhood, urban and regional level. The municipality of Delft highlights the need for a high-quality, integrated approach to the development of the Schie area as a whole, which is considered one of the key tasks of spatial policy in the coming years. Maps in the document show a vision for a new mixed-green urban environment along the Schie, as well as a to-be-created green park along the banks of the Schie, which is open to the public and accessible to all, creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. The quality,

form and diversity of the existing functions and buildings and the high-quality design of the public space will give the Schiekade a new look and identity.

The focus is on improving the quality of public space, reusing existing buildings for housing and the creative economy, and adding new high-quality buildings that contribute to Delft's identity. Existing water-related activities in the northern part of the Schie zone will be re-located to make room for these developments. Along the boulevards and at intersections of routes, there will be a more varied supply of innovative stacked housing types, with opportunities for new, innovative forms of housing (e.g. raised ground floors). Along the parks and 'green-blue edges' of the neighbourhoods, thinning will take place through further greening. Here, living and working occurs in high densities among a mix of cultural, care and commercial facilities. The building style is often a combination of flats and semi-detached houses on a terrace or roof garden, making it an inviting area to stay and meet due to the innovative new buildings and high-quality public space.

With new bridges and tunnels for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and cars, all areas of Delft will be connected to each other and to the urban railway station Delft south, the rest of the city and the region. Bike/foot-bridge and car bridge are to be built over the Schie to connect the area with other parts of Delft; however, it is unclear who will pay for it.

The municipality of Delft will be more implementation-oriented and facilitative in nature, monitoring the desired quality of new initiatives and drawing up a multi-year implementation program for the period 2010-2030. The structural vision will be updated every four years to ensure policy continuity, and cost recovery will be sought through voluntary agreements with developers.

*Gebiedsvisie Schieoevers 2030 (Area vision published in October 2010)*

This document further elaborates on the points presented in the 'Structuurvisie' and focuses on the Schieoevers area. The document elaborates on the plans for the Schieoevers area, which will be transformed into a combined urban residential and business area where living, working, and recreation are combined. The existing business activities will be transformed into creative and knowledge-intensive activities. The area will have a dynamic character with many activities and will include hospitality and cultural facilities. The vision document also highlights the area's attractive location, close to the city centre and between two railway stations.

The municipality plans to invest in public space and infrastructure, including a bicycle tunnel and bridges, to improve access to the area. The area will also have a recreational zone along the canal, and the main road will be moved away from the canal to create more space for housing. Images in the vision document show stacked housing to be developed in the area, with a height of about six layers. Buildings can be higher along the railroad line. Furthermore, there must be collective facilities and a high-quality public space. Parking should be solved on-site, and indoor parking is desired. Visible water must also be incorporated into the plan. Furthermore, green roofs or facades are desired, the houses must be energy-neutral, and there is a requirement that the houses are to be connected to the heat network.

The document highlights several sustainability themes as important, such as spatial quality,

water, ecological quality, greenery, and sustainable buildings and businesses. The document includes a sustainability matrix with opportunities, wishes, and requirements for new developments, including a green bicycle route, densification of housing, double usage of space, and sustainable use of materials.

The document indicates that living in an industrial park is currently impossible regarding legislation and regulations. The municipality will draw up new zoning plans to make housing close to existing companies possible. There is also a global time frame for the area's development, but this depends on initiatives from market parties according to the municipality.

The vision document furthermore indicates that market actors should realise the redevelopment, and the municipality would only use their instruments to safeguard the quality of the new area. The municipality further indicated that it would concentrate its financial resources on investments in public space and infrastructure in the area. The municipality will invest in a bicycle tunnel at the railway station Delft-Zuid and a bicycle bridge across the Schie (canal) to improve access to the area by bicycle. The municipality also wants a bridge further south for bicycles and cars, making the area more accessible.

To conclude, this spatial vision document mainly indicates that the area can be transformed; the municipality is planning on realising two bridges and one tunnel to improve accessibility. Images in the vision show that apartment buildings are to be developed in the area, approximately six layers in height.

*Notitie reikwijdte en ambitieniveau MER (Guidance document published in 2017)*

In anticipation of the EIA procedure, a memorandum of scope and detail for Schieoever was adopted in 2017. This included the following ambitions for the area development. The area must become a mixed urban living-working area, with space for business activity and a corresponding living environment, while being accessible and sustainable. Furthermore, 15,000 homes are to be developed in the coming years in Delft. This indicates that many of these homes are to be developed in Schieoever as well, which means intensified densification and function mix in the area. This document also mentions that the development plan needs to comply with the Delft general housing policy, with climate adaptation, energy transition, circular economy and green, blue and healthy as its main points.

*(Concept) ontwikkelplan ((Concept) development plan published in 2018/2019)*

A draft development plan was prepared in May 2018, which should be a flexible plan, not a blueprint. In the development plan, points mentioned in prior documents are repeated, including the point that 15,000 homes are to be developed in Delft. A calculation shows that of these 15,000 homes, around 4400 can be developed in the Schieoever area, indicating that the new area will have around 9000 inhabitants. This indicates that the demand for housing in the area is high. Furthermore, the development plan contains five central principles: space for innovative manufacturing, lively and mixed urban area, healthy and sustainable environment, good connections and mobility, socially inclusive and culturally diverse. The development of the area still has challenges in terms of environmental zones. Images show mixed and stacked housing with different height scenarios. In addition, pictures show green roofs and gardens, water gardens, a water square and energy roofs.



The proximity of two train stations emphasises the accessibility of the area. The document also shows that parking during the day is business-related, and parking at night is residential-related. This suggests that double use of parking spaces is possible, meaning fewer parking spaces must be realised. Images show mixed living and working in medium to high-rise buildings. It is emphasised that it is an adaptive plan with flexibility on ambition, program, density, routes and values. With more flexibility on ambition, housing program and density, and more firmness on routes and values.

### **Conclusion spatial vision documents Schieoever, Delft**

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Delft, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is unclear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research, making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is thus unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by a higher level government, in this case, the province. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development. The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, but the exact content of these resources is unclear. The municipality is willing to invest in infrastructures, such as a bridge and a tunnel, to improve accessibility. However, willing to is something different than being capable of. This also emerges from the fact the municipality of Delft is lobbying for subsidies to partly make up for the costs involved with infrastructure investments. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Citizens and stakeholders have been involved in developing the overall structure vision. Still, it is unclear whether they were consulted in the creation of other documents or if there is community support for the specific plans for the Schieoever area. As a result, community support and stakeholder engagement are partly applicable.

## **C-4 Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad**

The municipality of Zaanstad, regarding the redevelopment of the Achtersluispolder area, has published several spatial vision documents. Figure 4-4 shows a timeline of the area redevelopment; it shows moments in time when spatial vision documents have been published, as well as moments in time when developers acquired land in the area or otherwise became involved in the process.

*Maak.Zaanstad (Structure vision published in 2016)*

Maak.Zaanstad is the spatial vision of the municipality of Zaanstad for its entire territory. In this vision, the Achtersluispolder was first identified for transformation into a mixed living-working area. One of the structure vision's aims is to add more quality to Zaanstad's built

environment. Zaanstad will grow organically by 20% over the next 25 years, meaning 15 to 20 thousand homes are to be added in the coming decades. The social housing stock in Zaanstad is sufficient to meet rising housing demand, so it is expected that new development does not have to include large portions of social housing. Zaanstad's location close to Amsterdam is emphasised, mentioning that there will be a lot of overflow from Amsterdam due to the housing shortage in that municipality. Zaanstad and Amsterdam are also expected to have grown together by 2040, in which Aachtersluispolder is to become a high-density urban living-working area attached to Amsterdam-Noord.

The municipal strategy for the development of Zaanstad and, thus, Aachtersluispolder is patience, agility and decisiveness. Agility is putting one's own wishes into perspective and being prepared to respond to the wishes of others. Decisiveness means the municipality must have a yes mentality in the development process. The municipality wants to improve Zaanstad's infrastructure, one component of which is a connection across the IJ to Amsterdam. This could be by means of a bridge, metro, tunnel or cable car, in any case, an expensive solution for which it is questionable whether the municipality can make those investments on its own. The municipality further indicates that it wants to invest in aiding the area's development, but what, how much and where exactly is unclear. The municipality further indicates that it wants to hold talks with companies to see if they want to leave Aachtersluispolder to create space for housing. If necessary, the municipality is willing to contribute to this relocation financially.

Specific to the Aachtersluispolder area, the municipality is willing to invest in greenery and public space. It also intends to redesign the 'Thorbeckeweg' and thus invest in the area's accessibility. It also reiterated the need for a connection between the Aachtersluispolder and Amsterdam across the IJ by cable car or metro. The Aachtersluispolder should have a high urban programme, including schools and sports facilities. The area will have urban densities in line with Amsterdam. New homes must be of a higher quality than the current housing stock in Zaanstad, so programming will also be different from the current housing stock. This means the focus will be more on middle-rent and expensive housing. The municipality will also carry out stakeholder analysis in the area, so try to get every actor in line with the development plans.

The municipality recognised in the vision that it lacks capacity and knowledge within its organisation. Therefore, the municipality will focus on strengthening its knowledge position and seek cooperation with Amsterdam's municipality. The municipality also created an implementation agenda attached to the vision document and states, among other things, that the new homes will be climate-neutral as much as possible and are to be connected to a heat network yet to be realised. This heat network is currently unprofitable, which is why the municipality is investing 4 million euros in its realisation. For the improvement of Thorbeckeweg, 2.5 million will be allocated. Furthermore, the municipality has drawn up a participation and communication approach to get everyone on board with the developments.

*Ruimtelijke analyse Aachtersluispolder (Spatial analysis published in 2018)*

In 2018, a spatial analysis of the Aachtersluispolder was made by an architectural firm. The images in this analysis clearly show stacked housing for the new area. Furthermore, there is also space for greenery, and a park could be realised along the waterline. The analysis

also shows that there should be a public transport connection between Achtersluispolder and Amsterdam-Noord. Images thus show a high density of housing development with a maximum height of around six layers. The analysis highlights that environmental contours still stand in the way of housing development, and infrastructure investments must be made to make the area suitable for housing.

*Principenota ontwikkelstrategie Achtersluispolder (Area vision published in 2021)*

The city council published and adopted the principle memorandum on the development strategy Achtersluispolder in 2021. This document is a further step in the development of the Achtersluispolder and marks the beginning of the actual development of a development strategy for the Achtersluispolder. The development strategy emphasises the area's location close to Amsterdam and along the water. It further shows a phasing whereby the Achtersluispolder should be developed between 2025 and 2029, with the first subarea between 2020 and 2024. The document further mentions the realisation of a high-quality public transport connection as a key issue for the development of the Achtersluispolder. It also mentions the demand for 15 to 20 thousand homes in Zaanstad, with the Achtersluispolder identified as one of the key projects. This shows that the development of the area is important to the municipality. The development strategy also indicates the number of houses per subarea, however not for the Achtersluispolder, but that can be roughly calculated. It also states that the diversity of the residential environment should be increased. The area should eventually become a mixed living-working area, with a housing programme that matches the environment and housing demand. Furthermore, the area should get more greenery and become climate adaptive, the area should also be neatly zero-emission, and the re-usage of materials is seen as important.

To support the area developments in Zaanstad, the municipality has set up a programme team and project teams. The programme team creates the frameworks and coordinates the area developments with other regional actors. The project teams work with the frameworks on the different area developments in Zaanstad, conducting studies, developing plan products and creating the development strategy. By adopting this principle development strategy memorandum, the municipality has decided that there is sufficient reason to investigate further and shape the redevelopment of the Achtersluispolder. The municipality will take another project and investment decision later in the process, showing that the municipality intends to transform the area. There is also a schedule included in the document. Making the spatial vision specific for the Achtersluispolder will take about 2.5 years, and then another year is needed for making the investment note and zoning plan. Only after that, the realisation of plans in the area can take place. The Achtersluispolder has also been divided into several subareas to develop and manage the total area transformation in phases.

Some core concepts have also been established for the Achtersluispolder: an urban residential and business development programme, built parking and an urban parking standard, high-quality public greenery with robust and safe streets and squares, climate adaptive and energy neutral. In the Sluiskwartier subarea, where developers are currently active, an estimated 1,500 to 3,000 houses can be developed with a high urban character. The municipality wants to shape the transformation of the Achtersluispolder together with market parties. The municipality intends to use the following municipal instruments to aid the area development: reducing environmental space for companies, dezoning, drawing up an environmental impact statement, and possibly using preferential rights. The municipality also sees an active role

for itself, namely facilitating the process, taking on a directing role, initiating investments in infrastructure, steering the qualitative and quantitative programme and making capacity available to draw up frameworks and supervise development initiatives.

### **Conclusion spatial vision documents Achtersluispolder, Zaanstad**

Based on the analysis of spatial vision documents and an interview with the municipality of Zaanstad, it can be concluded that the persuasiveness of the documents is unclear. It is unclear whether the documents are based on market analysis or other research, making it unclear whether the documents have a clear and apparent evidence base. Furthermore, the spatial vision documents were not developed through consultation with market parties but rather solely by the municipality. It is unclear whether the documents are based on knowledge of how markets operate, making it unclear whether the plan has a persuasive logic and rationale. The identity of the plan maker is the municipality, and the development is endorsed by higher-level governments, in this case, the province and the metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Thereby scoring high on two variables, regarding the identity of the plan maker and endorsement by higher-level actors. From both the interview and the content of the documents, there is no reason to believe particular successful political leaders advocated the development. The vision documents and interview provided some clues about the plan maker's ability to marshal wider resources, such as investing in infrastructure and working on a connection over the water to Amsterdam to improve accessibility. However, it is unclear whether the municipality is capable of realising these resources. The attractiveness of the plan communication and presentation seems no different than usual. Whether the development plan has community support or is based on stakeholder engagement can not be concluded based on the documents or interviews.

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# Appendix D

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## Interview script

This appendix contains the interview script that was used for the interviews with the developers. As these interviews were conducted in Dutch, this interview script is also in Dutch.

### **Context interview + administratie**

Uitleg geven over onderzoek en waarom respondent geïnterviewd wordt.

- Scope: *Gebiedsontwikkelingen in NL*
- Onderzoeksvraag: *Welke factoren beïnvloeden besluitvorming ontwikkelaars*
- Aanleiding: *Mismatch gemeentelijke visies en realiteit van de markt*
- Doel: *Inzicht krijgen in beweegredenen van ontwikkelaars*
- Nut: *Dit inzicht kan helpen bij beter laten aansluiten gemeentelijke visies/ideeën op de markt behoeften*

Uitleg over opname en verwerking van het interview, toestemming vragen:

- Opnemen
- Gebruik interview data in openbaar onderzoeksrapport
  - Anonimiteit gewenst?

*Zijn er nog vragen vooraf?*

## Interview

1. **Achtergrond ontwikkelaar** (organisatie, type ontwikkelaar, omvang, geografische focus, etc.)
2. **Wanneer en hoe voor het eerst in aanraking gekomen met dit plan?**

## Plan: visie/plan idee

3. **Het plan zelf, wat vonden jullie daarvan? Wat waren belangrijk punten in dat plan?**
  - a. Onderbouwing plan door onderzoek
  - b. Mate van specificatie:
    - i. *Bouwwolume/hoogte*
    - ii. *Programmering*
  - c. Balans tussen flexibiliteit en zekerheid
  - d. Betrokkenheid actoren bij planvorming
  - e. Attractiviteit van plan presentatie
  - f. Contractvorming met gemeente (indien van toepassing)
    - i. Soort samenwerkingsverband
4. **Het ambitieniveau van de gemeente voor dit plan**
  - a. Was deze realistisch?
  - b. Duidelijk voor jullie van tevoren?
  - c. Waren er risico's op veranderingen van ambitie/beleid?
  - d. Welke facetten van het ambitieniveau waren belangrijk voor jullie?
    - i. *Stedenbouwkundig*
    - ii. *Architectonisch*
    - iii. *Duurzaamheid*
    - iv. *Innovativiteit*
    - v. *Sociaal*

## De gemeente in het algemeen

5. **Kun je iets vertellen over deze specifieke gemeente en haar reputatie op het gebied van (gebieds)ontwikkeling?**
  - a. Gemeentelijke organisatie (capaciteit, expertise, marktkennis)
  - b. Ruimtelijke ordeningsprocedures (snelheid)
    - i. *Duidelijkheid toetsingskaders*

- c. Samenwerking met de gemeente (snel overleg, oplossingsgericht?)
- d. Hadden programmamanagers veel of weinig mandaat?
- e. Speelde bouwtechnische eisen aan de woning een rol? Waren die hoog of laag?

**6. Kun je iets vertellen over de betrokken wethouder/burgemeester en ambtenaren hadden deze overtuigingskracht/charisma?**

**Plan: rol gemeente**

**7. Weer even kijkend naar het plan zelf, kunt u iets vertellen over de ondersteuning van het plan vanuit de gemeente?**

- a. Was de gemeente van plan beleidsinstrumenten (onteigening, voorkeursrecht) in te zetten? In hoeverre was dit van tevoren bekend?
- b. Welke prioriteit had dit plan binnen de gemeente denkt u?

**8. Was de gemeente bereid om investeringen te doen in het plan?**

- a. Zoals verplaatsen bedrijven vanuit plangebied
- b. Doen van publieke investeringen
- c. Inbrengen eigen grond voor infrastructuur en dergelijke

**9. Was van tevoren duidelijk welke onderzoeken de gemeente nodige achtte in het plangebied?**

- a. Waren er al (verkennende) onderzoeken uitgevoerd?
- b. Was gemeente bereid deze onderzoeken te financieren?

**10. Werd het plan onderschreven door hogere overheden zoals provincie of het Rijk?**

- a. Gaf dit wellicht ook de mogelijkheid tot subsidies (zoals woningbouwimpuls) en speelde dit een rol in jullie besluit?

**Plan: uitvoerbaarheid/situatie van voor investeringen**

**11. Dan wat meer de uitvoerbaarheid van het plan, welke punten zijn daarbij belangrijk geweest voor jullie in de besluitvorming?**

- a. De businesscase (financiële uitvoerbaarheid)
- b. Ruimtelijke uitvoerbaarheid
- c. De tijd tussen investeringen en potentiële oplevering

**12. Kun je wat vertellen over de bestaand grondeigendom situatie in het plangebied?**

- a. In hoeverre was dit belangrijk voor jullie?
- b. Waren er potentiële kasstromen bij aanschaf gronden? Blijvende verhuur opstallen?

**13. Waren er risico's met betrekking tot het bestemmingsplan?**

- a. Moest deze gewijzigd worden?
- b. Was bestemmingsplanwijziging reeds gestart?
- c. Hebben/konden jullie van tevoren een inschatting maken of bestemmingsplanwijziging moeilijk of makkelijk zou worden?

**Ontwikkelaar: intern factoren**

**14. Kun je wat vertellen over factoren in jullie eigen organisatie die een rol speelde bij de besluitvorming?**

- a. Eigen organisatie (capaciteit, expertise)
- b. Eigen ontwikkelingsfocus/specialiteit (in lijn met voorgestelde plan?)
- c. Marktkennis (plangebied, type ontwikkeling)
- d. Risicomanagement (expertise, capaciteit, waren risico's te managen?)

**15. In hoeverre speelde jullie eigen financiële positie en financieringsmogelijkheden op dat moment een rol?**

**16. Speelde netwerken/informele relaties een rol in de besluitvorming**

- a. Of probeerde jullie juist binnen te komen bij deze gemeente in de hoop op meer werk in de toekomst?
- b. Of was dit project een manier om jullie naam/imago als bedrijf te versterken (ook wel branding genoemd)

**Externe en overige factoren**

**17. Dan nog wat korte externe factoren waarvan ik benieuwd ben of deze een rol hebben gespeeld?**

- a. Huidige markt
- b. Toekomstige markt
- c. Concurrentie
  - i. *In plangebied zelf*
  - ii. *In nabijheid van het plangebied*

**18. Hoe kijken jullie aan tegen het combineren van wonen en werken in hetzelfde gebied?**



19. **Speelde place-making nog een rol in jullie besluit?**

**Afronding**

Je zou kunnen zeggen dat alles wat we besproken hebben, tezamen het risicoprofiel maakt van dit plan.

20. **Hoe zagen jullie het risicoprofiel van dit plan en hoe beïnvloedde de jullie besluit?**

21. *Zijn er nog dingen niet aanbod gekomen, die wel belangrijk waren voor jullie besluit vorming?*

**Afsluiting interview**

1. Heeft u nog op- en/of aanmerkingen voor dit interview en/of het onderzoek?
2. Wil u het transcript van dit interview inzien/goedkeuren?
3. Wilt u het uiteindelijke rapport toegestuurd krijgen?



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