New approaches in Public Relations

of Urban Planning Vienna
Contributions by
Affenzeller, Peter, Managing Director of Datenwerk GesmbH
Alton-Scheidl, Roland, Public Voice, Academy of Sciences
Antalovsky, Eugen, Director of Europaforum Wien
Anwander, Berndt, architect
Debelak, Susanne, MA 18 - Urban Development and Planning, Public Relations
Dvorak, Wolfgang, Head of Public Relations, MA 18 - Urban Development and Planning
Fgl-Zavos, Mary, MA 21C - Zoning and Land Use Northeast Vienna
Gerlich, Wolfgang, Werkstatt Planspiel
Hala, Bernd, land-use planner
Huber, Timo, architect
Jachim, Franz, Mediamanagement
König, Ilse, Institute for Conflict Research
Krauss, Walter, MA 21B – Zoning and Land Use South Vienna
Krebs, Philipp, Stadt Raum Film, Institute for media-integrating urban planning and land-use planning
Leodolter, Sylvia, MA 21A – Zoning and Land Use Centre-West Vienna
Löffler, Roland, Municipal Directorate – City Planning Bureau, Planning Group
Loider, Helge, Peters Film
Macho, Richard, MA 18 – Urban Development and Planning, Public Relations
Madreither, Thomas, MA 21A – Zoning and Land Use Centre-West Vienna
Marth, Mario, MA 21C – Zoning and Land Use Northeast Vienna
Moser, Peter, SRZ, Urban and Regional Research
Niebauer, Harald, MA 19 – Architecture and Urban Design
Philipp, Gabriele, Office of Councillor Hannes Swoboda
Schwerda, Anette, Werkstatt Planspiel
Seiß, Reinhard, Stadt Raum Film, Institute for media-integrating urban planning and land-use planning
Waldhör, Nick, film director, Projektfabrik
Windbrechtinger, Elisabeth, MA 18 – Public Relations
Zunke, Rudolf, Municipal Directorate – City Planning Bureau, Planning Group
# Table of Contents

Foreword by Hannes Swoboda ................................................................. 4  
Foreword by Prof. Arnold Klotz ............................................................ 5  
Introduction ............................................................................................ 6  
A scientific approach to public relations orientated to mutual understanding .................................................. 8  

**Chapter 1**  
**Presenting plans – Understanding plans** .......................................... 11  
It's not difficult to read plans if you know what they are all about  

**Chapter 2**  
**Planning game on urban expansion** .................................................. 17  
“Süssenstetten im Eck”  

**Chapter 3**  
**The Viennese Planning Kit** ............................................................... 29  
Information material for schools  

**Chapter 4**  
20 years of public participation in Vienna ............................................ 35  
The Viennese Model  

**Chapter 5**  
**New ways of electronic communication with the citizens** .................. 45  
The “Grätztelefon” as the pavement at the data highway  

**Chapter 6**  
**Urban planning quiz** .................................................................... 59  
Questions on the Urban Development Plan of Vienna  

**Chapter 7**  
**Interactive media in Vienna’s urban planning** ................................... 65  
A first attempt by Urban Planning Vienna - Photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion  

**Chapter 8**  
**U1 urban axis** ............................................................................... 71  
Projects along the U1 urban axis – CD-I  

**Chapter 9**  
**Video and computer animation as integral elements of urban planning** .............................................................................. 81  
The example of “Ottakring in planning”  

**Chapter 10**  
“Zu ebener Erde, die weite Sicht” ....................................................... 87  
Video project on topical issues of urban planning in Vienna  

**Chapter 11**  
**The CD-ROM “Vienna in planning”** .................................................. 95  
Documentation of individual projects and plans  

**Chapter 12**  
**The city of Vienna on the Internet** ................................................... 101  
Public participation via Internet  

**Chapter 13**  
**Inside Public Relations** ................................................................ 109  
In-house PR, staff training and motivation, corporate identity  

Working Group on Public Relations Urban Planning Vienna .................. 116  
Exhibitions and events ....................................................................... 118  
Publications of Urban Planning Vienna ................................................ 121
During the past few years, public participation and, thus, public relations have certainly become more and more a specialised branch of urban planning. The reason why is quite obvious. Planning determines our future and, hence, it is the very process in which direct democracy has to start. Urban Planning Vienna responded to this connection already at a very early stage by informing the citizens as comprehensively as possible. As a result, Urban Planning set up a specialised public relations team already in the 1970’s. Without wanting to detract from the intensive efforts in these times of the first attempts, this PR on planning was almost a sideline. In parallel to increasing decentralisation but also to the emergence of the first citizens’ action committees, this “specialised PR team” developed into a professional PR agency which not only informs about big and small projects of the City of Vienna in the fields of urban planning and development, but also developed a tool kit for public participation.

In addition to the organisation of exhibitions, mainly in the districts and neighbourhoods concerned, and the publication of brochures, this meant and means the moderation of citizens’ meetings. With the support of Specialised Public Relations, which meanwhile developed almost into a department of its own, as well as the Vienna Planning Workshop we finally succeeded in completing the work on such major projects as the Urban Development Plan and the Vienna Traffic Concept. Moreover, these projects were completed in such a way that we can justly say that a major part of the wishes expressed by the Viennese were taken into account.

Today, almost two years after these path-breaking decisions, the work load of Specialised Public Relations did not decrease and I should like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank its team for their untiring efforts to support my political work in the past eight years. Special thanks are due to them since the PR team has always been ahead of our times, as “urban planners” should be. In comparison with the 70’s and 80’s, PR on urban planning changed a lot, not only in quantitative terms, but above all also in qualitative terms: this applies especially to the use of new media as an essential part of future-oriented co-determination by the citizens. In order to win continually new “citizens interested” in urban planning, in tomorrow’s Vienna, to mobilise ever more people to participate in the design of their city, videos, CD-Is and CD-ROMs have been produced on the most important urban projects. Info towers which will provide interactive access to information on urban development, not only by means of videos, will be set up in bank branches and other places soon. Moreover, all current projects are digitised and can be retrieved via computer within the framework of the on-line service of the City of Vienna. Due to these intensive efforts, we succeeded in bringing information even closer to the people than before. If we summarise the work of the past years, but above all most recent efforts, we can very well say that we have opened up new paths in PR and information policies for urban planning. These new approaches, however, have only been made possible due to the support, co-operation and high interest of the population in the future of their city.

Finally, we succeeded also in even further improving the excellent image of Viennese architecture and urban development by international presentations organised by Urban Planning Vienna. In winding up, I should like to come back again to the issue of quality in public relations. Today, at a time when we all are virtually showered with information at all levels, not only the presentation of information is of decisive importance. Despite or maybe just because of the new opportunities offered by new media, it is more important than ever to directly deal with the problems, questions, views of the citizens. Hence, Urban Planning will not break with this principle! Along these lines, it has to and will continue to build the city of the future together with the citizens to whom it is linked by Specialised Public Relations.
In an information society in which the emancipated citizens demand transparent administration and decision-making processes Urban Planning has to fulfill a new task.

More than ever before, the urban planner – a synonym for interdisciplinary thinking – is faced with the need to develop new strategies within a changing democratic environment. While in the 19th century, urban planning still was the extrapolation of the current urban development to the future, today's future cannot be clearly foreseen – neither in urban planning.

In a fragmenting and globalising society, the “institution” of Urban Planning is one of many actors influencing urban development. The increased democratic involvement taking the form of individual group-specific demands made to decision-makers necessitates an increasing transparency of political processes and results in an open planning approach. Hence, the urban planner has to assume more and more the role of a co-ordinator who has to balance the various interests and the general welfare of the city, bearing in mind the overall political objectives in order to set the course for structural and urbanist development.

In light of this aspect of democratic policy, co-operation between urban planners and the population is an indispensable prerequisite of each urban development process. New quarters have to be developed jointly with the population. If only the know-how and the experience of the “experts” is taken into account, we run the risk of planning contrary to the interests and needs of the people concerned. Frequently, the expertise of the local residents is of special importance to urban planners, and the first step towards public participation is to provide the citizens with information.

In the course of information dissemination and discussions, Urban Planning increasingly relies on new media. After all, information overflow and over-stimulation necessitate new approaches in public relations: this is the only way to ensure that the “messages” of Urban Planning reach the population given the changed media consumption patterns. Information has to be presented in a way ensuring that it is “heard” in overstimulated everyday life. Complex issues of urban planning have to be communicated using pictures and simple, easily understandable messages. The reduction to simple, pictorial messages, however, does not mean that objectivity necessarily suffers.

Specifically, this means that interactive information systems are increasingly used, ranging from telephone-based speech boxes (Public Voice), photo CD portfolio, CD-ROM to services offered by Urban Planning via Internet on the World Wide Web.

I am convinced that the path taken by Urban Planning in using new media for informing the citizens is necessary because, given the manifold, but also contradictory features of the city, the variety of information and services offered guarantees an open and fair discussion climate in the context of urban planning issues.
Already in the 1970’s and 1980’s, specialised public relations work was performed by the department responsible for urban planning at the City of Vienna complementing the work of the Press and Information Service. This model gains importance also for other departments of the City of Vienna in the course of increasing decentralisation. In line with the media available at that time, exhibitions and publications were prepared on topics such as Urban Development of Vienna until 1945, Green Belt, Vienna 2000, Vienna moving closer to the River Danube, Urban Development Plan 1984 and Danube Area Competition.

At the end of 1988, at a time when Vienna’s population was increasingly involved in the planning process, Specialised Public Relations was set up as a group in its own right at Municipal Department 18 – Urban Development and Planning – and was provided with adequate staff and budget resources required to perform its tasks. In that times, also the Vienna Planning Workshop was founded, an exhibition and information centre in the immediate vicinity of Vienna’s Town Hall. To date, the Vienna Planning Workshop organised exhibitions and presentations on issues of urban planning, such as architecture, urban furniture, U1 urban development axis, tomorrow’s urban planners, building at the Nordbahnhof railway station and on the great architects of Vienna (see also the list at the end of this book: Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos and Josef Hofmann). Additionally, many international contributions from Japan, Barcelona, Stuttgart, Berlin and Dubrovnik were shown. Specialised lectures for an interested Austrian and foreign audience, the organisation of jury meetings, book presentations and press conferences round off its range of activities. In spite of the highly specialised topics, a relatively high attendance was reached. In recent years, exhibition activities moved closer to the citizens concerned, i.e. to the districts in question.

The tasks of Specialised Public Relations also include the preparation of technical publications in German and English (partly also in French) on most diverse topics, such as architecture, urban conservation and renewal, urban planning, urban furniture, urban space, Vienna on the way to the 21st century, green space in the city, traffic, planning of neighbourhoods in the districts and the plans for the school construction programme.

Another focus is the organisation of citizen and expert meetings on the urban development plan, traffic concept, protection zones, Vienna - Safe City, metropolises conference (ECO 7), goods traffic, labour market & urban planning as well as Vienna Urban - Gürtel plus.

The Working Group on Specialised Public Relations

This big number of PR activities, however, can only be performed if the individual subjects are dealt with in an exhaustive way. In order to increase the efficiency of the necessary contacts to the specialised departments belonging to the division Urban Development, Planning and External Relations of the City of Vienna but also to the decision-makers, such as the executive city councillor and the director of planning, the Working Group on Specialised Public Relations was set up.

This Working Group has the following members:
- Press officer of the Group’s office (MA 53)
- PR officer of the Director of Planning
- Expert of the Municipal Directorate – City Planning Bureau, Planning Group
- Representative of the department MA 19 – Architecture and Urban Design
- Representative of the department MA 21A – Zoning and Land Use Centre-West Vienna
- Representative of the department MA 21B – Zoning and Land Use South Vienna
- Representative of the department MA 21C – Zoning and Land Use Northeast Vienna
- Representative of the department MA 18 – Urban Development and Planning, Specialised Public Relations with the focus on:
  - Exhibitions,
  - Publications,
  - Events.

The Working Group is chaired by the head of Specialised Public Relations at Municipal Department 18.
Until early 1996, the Working Group has held more than 90 regular meetings and performed its tasks to the satisfaction of the decision-makers. Its interdisciplinary membership, the considerably shorter and partly even newly created information flow had a positive impact. At Urban Planning Vienna, this organisational form will also be used for coping with other organisational issues related to the topics “Internet” and “New Media”.

On the following pages, 13 projects are presented by the contractors and finally assessed by the members of the Working Group within the framework of reflections on their personal experiences and potential future applications at the City of Vienna or other municipal administrations.

- Urban plans – and in this context mainly the zoning and land-use plans – are hardly legible and understandable for the population. The travelling exhibition which is supported by cartoons is to reduce fears and to supply useful information. It is to be shown before the public inspection stage of big zoning projects.

- A role game (urban planning game) was prepared to raise the information level and the mutual understanding of representatives of citizens’ action committees, city politicians, technical officers, press representatives, etc. This game has already been “played” many times with great success.

- In the form of the Viennese Planning Kit, all Viennese higher secondary schools were provided with pedagogically designed plans, publications and videos on urban planning as teaching material.

- Twenty years of public participation in Vienna yielded a wealth of insights and experiences on how citizens and planners can join forces.

- Faster access to information on planned projects in certain areas of Vienna is provided by the interactive “Grätzltelefon” (neighbourhood phone), or requests can be passed on via a message box. The premiere and a successful test was run at the Langobardenviertel quarter.

- By means of a computer-based urban planning quiz (MS-DOS) featuring 50 questions, an attempt was made to familiarise above all students with the topic of “City and Urban Planning”.

- An interactive portfolio CD, interspersed with cartoon sequences, serves for providing the people living in a major urban development area and the future residents with information on the project as well as on the urban planning context.

- A CD-I offers the citizens the possibility of an interactive exploration of the biggest development area – the U1 development axis Wagramer Straße – at home or on site.

- A new quarter is emerging in the densely built-up area of western Vienna around the new terminal of U3 at Ottakring - five minutes of CAD displayed on a TV screen!

- A film on topical issues of urban planning in Vienna. A classical medium though, but an interesting new approach to this topic.

- All the big and important plans are documented on CD-ROM, updated quarterly to include information and statistics on the projects, the planners and builders. At a nominal fee affordable for everyone.

- All the information on Urban Planning Vienna and its current plans and projects is accessible via Internet in “wien online” at http://www.magwien.gv.at with the possibility to send e-mails to post@m18.magwien.gv.at.

- Public relations without “internal PR”, promotion of corporate identity, and staff training is unthinkable! First steps have been taken.
1. Background

Urban projects increasingly meet with opposition by individual citizens or citizens’ action committees. Municipal policy can be directly experienced by each and every citizen of the city. And more and more people also want to get directly involved in urban policies and in the development of the city. In particular, the right to have a say in these processes is demanded if the individual citizen is directly affected by political decisions and project-specific measures. The critical discussion by the citizens starts in most cases due to negative effects and is articulated as citizens’ protest in most diverse forms.

Gone are the times when the “planning administration” implemented urban planning projects without regard to the interests of the people concerned. Increasing opposition made politics and administration alike realise that, in addition to timely and honest information, “symmetrical communication” has to be a part of each project planned. After all, only public relations characterised by symmetrical communication and the objective of achieving mutual understanding can ensure that conflicts are reduced as much as possible in the planning and implementation of projects. Symmetrical communication processes raise the prospects for a dialogue which provides the basis for all subsequent planning steps, in particular if conflicting interests clash and if the intentions of the city's administration may provoke the citizens’ opposition. Additionally, new challenges for public relations result from the change of values within society. Here, we only want to mention briefly the hypothesis of postmaterialism according to which hedonistic thinking increasingly influences our actions. According to Inglehart's thesis, the personal self-realisation aimed at and the concomitant indifference to common economic development leads to the emergence of a new system of values in society.

In this context, mention also has to be made of the fact that a society shaped by the mass media requires the use of new forms of PR. Above all, the thesis of a “growing knowledge gap” has to be taken into consideration according to which only certain groups of people are able to benefit from the information offered while a major part of the population is put at a disadvantage by information overflow.

2. “Theory of communicative acting” (Jürgen Habermas)

With his “theory of communicative acting”, Jürgen Habermas developed one of the most elaborate theories on how communication orientated to mutual understanding is achieved. The core of Jürgen Habermas’ theoretical considerations is the attempt to analyse the communication process from the perspective of its basic conditions specific to man. Everybody acting in a communicative way, says Habermas, has to meet certain universal requirements if he/she wants to participate in a communication process.

The following universal requirements have to be met in communication orientated to mutual understanding:

- the requirement of “comprehensibility” (expressing oneself in line with the applicable set of grammatical rules),
- the requirement of “truthfulness” (expressing one’s real intentions, representing oneself, not deceiving others),
- the requirement of “correctness” (selecting statements which seem to be acceptable against the background of mutually recognised values and norms).

Thus, everybody acting in a communicative way refers to three different dimensions of reality, called “worlds” by Habermas, viz.

- “objective world” (the totality of all entities on which true statements are possible),
- “subjective world” (the totality of experiences with limited access), and
- “social world” (the totality of all the social relations legitimately regulated).

Habermas introduces the “discourse” as a form of colloquial communication: in the discourse, the participants try to re-establish mutual agreement by giving reasons, which is (naïvely) taken for granted in communicative acting, but becomes problematic for now, in order to continue communicative acting.
In the discourse, claims for recognition which became problematic are themselves discussed. It is designed to produce convincing arguments which can be used to accept or refuse recognition claims. Habermas differentiates between three types of discourse: “theoretical discourse” as a form of argumentation in which controversial assertions of truth are made the topic, “practical discourse” as the form of argumentation in which claims as to normative correctness are discussed, and “explicative discourse” in which comprehensibility, well-wordedness or the observance of the rules in symbolic expressions is dealt with. Discourses have to be free from external and internal constraints, Habermas calls this the “ideal speech situation”.

In summary, we can state that communication as a process to achieve agreement only comes about if:

- the communication partners involved mutually assume that their statements are true, their intentions are honest and that their words are correct/adequate,
- there is a basic consensus – i.e. a common conviction – shared by all the communication partners involved to the effect that, in case of doubt regarding even only one of these claims, they, in turn, can be made the topic of communication,
- there is agreement on the fact that, in these cases, a discourse can be opened which is orientated to achieving rationally motivated consent, i.e. a discourse in which statements can only be validated based on reasons which are accepted by all participants, and if
- these discourses are orientated to the “ideal speech situation” in which all participants have equal opportunity to select and perform speech acts.

3. Objectives of PR orientated to mutual understanding

Public relations has to ensure that the PR representative and the people that may be affected by the implementation of the plans pursued reach an agreement with a view to

- the subjects to be discussed (achieving a consensus with the relevant parts of the public on what the issue to be advocated actually is);
- confidence in Urban Planning (achieving a consensus with the relevant parts of the public on the trustworthiness of Urban Planning);
- the legitimacy of the interests advocated (achieving a consensus with the relevant parts of the public on the rightfulness with which the interests in question are advocated).

4. The individual steps of “public relations orientated to mutual understanding”:

Information, discussion, discourse and definition of the situation

The theory of communicative acting is an ideal model for successful communication which cannot be achieved perfectly in reality. Especially for this reason it seems to be important and necessary to offer ways of getting at least closer to this objective.

1st step: Information

The basic requirement for each further discourse is simply the dissemination of information. Using the tools of public relations, the following aspects have to be explained to the population affected by an urban development project:

- What is to be constructed? Why, where and when? Why is urban development necessary? Which advantages and disadvantages arise for the people concerned? (making the interests of urban planning transparent)
  => objective world.
- Making the internal structure of the city’s administration transparent. Who are the people behind Urban Planning, which tasks do they have? Who are the persons to be contacted? Explanation of the self-image
  => subjective world.
- Justification of the objectives of urban planning, explaining that urban planning cannot follow parochial principles so that also projects have to be implemented which result in a disadvantage for individual citizens while the community as a whole benefits from them.
  => social world.
Measures:
- Mailings (information folders)
- Information in co-operation with the media (daily papers, district magazines, provincial studio of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation)
- Local exhibitions
- Informative events for the citizens
- Press releases
- Bought editorial space
- Use of new media

2nd step: Discussion
After the dissemination of information which is one-way communication - without active participation of the people that may be affected - the basic conditions have to be established for getting directly into contact with the people concerned. Thus, the citizen is taken seriously as a communication partner and has the opportunity to voice his doubts about the truth of the statements presented, about the truthfulness of the actors involved and of the interests advocated.

=> possibilities for communicative contacts between Urban Planning and the parts of the public have to be created.

Measures:
- Initiating the public participation process
- Setting up local citizen offices
- Organising informative events and discussions

3rd step: Discourse
The PR representative has to expect that the project will meet with opposition. Doubts about the truth of statements have to be made the topic of communication. In “practical discourse”, communication focuses on the discussion of doubts about the correctness of statements. These doubts have to be removed at a rational level, i.e. by giving reasons.

- Ideally, the planners and the citizens concerned agree on the concrete procedure. First of all, a mutually accepted assessment of the arguments which are used to justify rejection or support of the project.
- Providing the basis for closed meetings at which urban planners, politicians and representatives of citizen advisory committees design and adopt guidelines for the environmental impact assessment of the project. It has to be ensured that an assessment (by experts from various domains) is achieved which is accepted by all the persons involved.

4th step: Situation definition
In this stage, PR has a controlling function. Now, the task is to check whether the agreement aimed at between the PR representatives and the citizens concerned has in fact prospects of being implemented or not.

- As regards objective world, it is to be clarified whether the two parties accept the results of the deliberations and, hence, whether there is a generally accepted opinion on the urban planning project and the resulting impact on the environment.
- As regards subjective world, it is to be clarified whether the people concerned consider the urban planners to be trustworthy. Do they believe that the planners are really interested in finding a solution that seems to be acceptable to the citizens concerned?
- As regards social world, it is to be examined whether the proposed course of problem solving is seen as legitimate – also from the moral and ethical perspective.
Presenting plans – Understanding plans

It’s not difficult to read plans if you know what they are all about
People read what is of interest to them ... sometimes it is a zoning and land-use plan. But indeed only sometimes. Anybody who, as a layman in planning, ever tried to decipher a land-use plan and to understand the related regulations of the Vienna Building Code probably experienced the vague feeling that there have to be good reasons why all this is so complicated.

Only malevolent people, however, would draw the conclusion that the idealist demand for public participation in planning was accompanied by the secret hope that it should take place as seldom as possible since it would only result in additional work and new problems. Be that as it may – in autumn 1993, MA 18, Specialised Public Relations, commissioned me and a group of other "experts for planning and co-determination" to devise ways and means for raising public awareness for the tasks of urban planning in general and for improving comprehension of the contents of zoning and land-use plans.

Presenting plans - Understanding plans ...
... that's what it was all about. That also was the first working title of the project which was never changed, like many provisional solutions. By means of an exhibition, the citizens concerned were to be provided with information illustrated by examples in an interesting and easily comprehensible way so that they would be able to understand better the intentions and regulations of the zoning and land-use plans submitted for public inspection in concrete cases. This information was expected to make it easier for the visitors to express their concrete wishes and concerns in the form of suggestions, comments, etc.

The most important aim of the exhibition was not to arrive at a final clarification of questions on zoning and land-use plans and to make each visitor an expert in urban planning, but rather to raise a basic understanding for the necessity and the functioning of urban planning before it comes to explaining and reading plan symbols.

The result was an exhibition and a small brochure which is used when new plan documents are presented for public inspection in urban renewal areas. The crucial subjects of the exhibition were arranged along the lines of the following didactic concept:

- What are the reasons for planning?
- What would happen if urban planning did not exist?
- We live in a planned city. The regular development of Vienna into a metropolis was only possible in the form we are familiar with because many large-scale projects were "planned".
- What is Urban Planning, what does it want to do and what is it able to do? Hierarchy of the planning levels in the form of STEP, planning of city quarters as well as zoning and land-use plans, "not losing track of the whole in spite of the overwhelming number of details".
- Why does the city grow even when population figures stagnate?
- What are the reasons for urban expansion?
- What do 5,000 people need? Flats alone are not enough, they need jobs, green space, traffic areas, schools, kindergartens, ...
- How and for whom are plans made? Information on the course of planning, on the importance of institutionalised balancing of interests in planning and on the role of the citizens. The idea that public inspection gives the people directly concerned the opportunity to have a say in planning is to be explained.
- What is the meaning of the plan symbols used in the plan documents presented? Documentation by means of plans and pictures.

Following are some brief quotes and pictures from the exhibition illustrating the implementation of the concept.

Urban planning and urban development ...
... are increasingly seen as an attack on privacy, an interference with the personal environment against which nothing can be done.

"Urban planning" as an anonymous, not graspable concept is faced with prejudice ranging from scepti-
cism to strict refusal. On the other hand, however, projects already implemented – as it were, the products of urban planning – are approved in most cases or are at least accepted.

This is exactly the point where this exhibition wants to set in: The following is to show that the immediate vicinity, the neighbourhood, cannot exist on its own or as an “island”. Even the most idyllic residential environment can be destroyed quickly but permanently by social or urban developments: in particular, if everybody has complete freedom to do as he pleases.

If everybody built at liberty ...
... and urban planning existed no more, this might sound quite alluring as everybody was allowed to realise his/her dreams. These dreams may rapidly turn into a nightmare if at a later time, for example, a company implements its dream of a shopping centre next to your one-family house and the required highway exit is constructed directly behind it. In order to prevent this, urban planning develops ideas on the future look of the city. It establishes rules for development along well-ordered lines in which perhaps not everybody can realise his/her personal dreams, but in which each of us can live together with all the others – as well as possible.

How the Danube got its island
Also the “grown” city was planned in the first place. Much that is so familiar to us today – as if it had always existed – is the result of planning processes during the past 150 years:

- Ringstraße road,
- Danube regulation and the Wiental valley,
- the railway network and the terminal stations,
- city railways,
- coverage of the entire urban area by streets, sewers, water and electricity supply, and public transport,
- the green belt, the Danube Island.

The well-ordered development of Vienna into a metropolis was only possible because construction activities, the protection of green space and the development of the traffic network were regulated by the Building Code.

Is it possible to please everybody?
The urban planners’ search for the common multiple is a never-ending story. In a city, the co-existence of many particular interests has to be made possible – on a limited amount of space, at that. Thus, the planners have to cope with the task of identifying potential conflict areas, protecting resources and regulating internal and external development.

To ensure that the plethora of detailed problems does not result in neglect to the interests of the city as a whole, urban planning was divided into hierarchical planning levels:

- Urban Development Plan,
- Guidelines for district development,
- Zoning and land-use plans.

Land and soil cannot expand, ...
... but the number of people living in Vienna is rising and they need more and more space – the land and soil available to them, however, stays the same. Housing, agriculture, trade, traffic, etc. compete in the distribution of land. From more than 2 million inhabitants in 1910, the population of Vienna dropped to approx. 1.5 million in 1981 – nevertheless more and more area was built up. The main reasons for this are our higher demands and needs: we want bigger flats, more green space, but also enough parking space as well as an extensive public transport network. All this requires a lot of space.

The gaps are filled too quickly
Until the year 2011, an annual demand for 7,000 to 11,000 new flats is forecast. If all these flats were constructed in the already built-up districts, an unacceptable densification of these areas would be the result. Already today, there is not enough green space in these districts – and even that would disappear. On top of it, the traffic problems would be insur-
mountable. Thus, the closing of building gaps in the inner-city area or superstructures on railway compounds have to be complemented by developing building plots for approximately 80,000 to 100,000 new flats at the periphery. But the residential buildings cannot simply be constructed in the “middle of nowhere”, they have to be located directly at the high-ranking public transport network (underground or suburban railways) and they have to be available.

**Flats alone are not enough**

The creation of pure bedroom suburbs has to be absolutely prevented in urban planning: as a result, urban expansion projects also provide for a comprehensive, vigorous development of an area.

Life in the city requires more than having a roof over one’s head: shopping, work, leisure, education, all that requires space. In addition to the plots for residential buildings, also areas for supplementary purposes have to be made available: schools, kindergartens, shops, cultural facilities, consulting rooms for doctors, churches, green space, space for public transport, for streets, etc. Or simply places for meeting other people, for social communication.

**You can have a say, ...**

... but you should put in a word at the right time, i.e. when a new zoning and land-use plan is “presented for public inspection”, or in other words, when it is made public. This plan is adopted by the City Council and specifies what (flats, companies, etc.) may be constructed in an area, where (on which plots) and how (e.g. building height). Hence, it is the prerequisite for construction in general as everybody who wants to implement a building project has to comply with the regulations, but he/she also has the right to make full use of these regulations. Many people are involved in the preparation of a new zoning and land-use plan. You, too, should put in a word because, in the construction hearing, only the owners, but not the tenants have a say – and at that stage there is no possibility whatsoever to change approved basic regulations.

**The sign language ...**

... of these plans is quite easy to understand if you know what they are all about. In the following, the most important symbols and terms used in zoning and land-use plans are explained. On the one hand, they refer to issues of zoning which specifies the purpose for which the land may be used and the ways and means of development. On the other hand, they cover construction regulations defining the height, density and type – detached, coupled, etc. – of buildings.
In the beginning was the word, then the deed, or was it the other way round?

It's a fact that people have agreed on rules for living together: planning as a regulated action and development potential, laws as a go-between for human activities with a difficult and also thankless task where it is impossible to please everybody! How is urban planning organised (connections and hierarchy of planning levels)? How does it work (which procedures, on which basis)? Why and for whom is planning carried out (need for planning and co-determination)? What do people need apart from flats (parks, schools, work are the broad subjects on which the project focused)?

Urban Planning tries to balance individual interests and to bring them in line with the legislation in force. The background to this quest is a guideline: Uniting/regulating the historical past and the development potential of a certain area in a plan, bearing in mind that the regulated “today” is the predecessor of “tomorrow”.

Time and again, experience shows in concrete stages of planning, such as the public inspection of zoning and land-use plans, that certain types of unclear points, misunderstandings and questions keep recurring. Providing the population with information in advance would enable the people concerned and/or interested to read and understand such a plan and its contents. This knowledge and the understanding of contents and tasks would be a minimum requirement for their active participation. The role of the advising expert is not replaced, but rather complemented or, properly speaking, enhanced.

In autumn 1993, the team commissioned outlined the following tasks focusing on the motto “understanding”:

- Informing (in order to make the anonymous concept of “urban planning” more tangible);
- Explaining (explanation of signs and symbols to render the zoning and land-use plan more readable);
- Stimulating discussion on urban planning on a broad basis and at a higher level as a consequence of the exhibition concept, presentation technique and concomitant activities.

In order to tackle these tasks, an exhibition and a small brochure were prepared. The exhibition comprised panels with didactic contents and panels with sign language (in line with tasks 1 and 2). These panels can be exhibited together or parts of them can be combined as required and in line with the rooms available, e.g. in the corridors of the planning departments, in district offices during public inspection, as a supplement to other exhibitions on planning. Unclear points/problems can be addressed/clarified by personal expert advice.

The brochure “Plan zeigen – Plan verstehen” (presenting plans – understanding plans) contains a cross-section of the didactic topics presenting urban planning and the sign language which is to help in understanding and participating. This take-away brochure does not turn a layman into an expert of building legislation, but due to the additional technical assistance the information can be digested at one’s leisure at home.

This project is a contribution to communication between the planners and the population. Urban planning is a complex decision-making process. If the citizens are to participate and to have a say in planning, they also have to be provided with information/knowledge. “Public participation” should be more than a catch phrase. Contradictions and difficulties between all the parties involved (experts, politicians, laymen, people concerned or interested) obviously have to be expected. Nevertheless, mutual approximation aiming at a discussion on a broad basis is indispensable. Urban Planning themselves can never do too much to make planning processes more transparent and to involve those concerned/interested in these processes.

Whether, how and with how much readiness the people concerned respond, is also up to them. Let us hope that this co-operation bears fruit!
Chapter 2

Planning game on urban expansion

“Süssenstetten im Eck”
A role played on the stage is not real in any way nor does it have the same real consequences as the thoroughly planned role of an impostor; but the successful staging of the two false figures is based on the application of real techniques – the same techniques which help us stand our ground in our real social situation in everyday life.”

(Erving Goffman, 1969)

Introduction
For approximately two years, contacts have been maintained between Werkstatt Planspiel and the Office for Specialised Public Relations of MA 18. The reason for starting talks was the development of a “planning kit” by MA 18 with the objective of introducing the topic of planning and, in particular, urban expansion into schools. As the work of Werkstatt Planspiel’s team is closely related to planning issues, the initiative of MA 18 was seized as an opportunity to suggest the use of the planning game method as a “vivid” complement to the planning kit.

On 3 and 4 June 1993, a planning game seminar took place as a “test run” for future applicability. One half of the participants were officials of the City of Vienna and the other half pupils, students and people interested in this method. A shortened version of the game “Gumpenkring”, a planning game on the topic of urban renewal, was played. Within the framework of working groups, the method and the possible utilisation in schools and teacher training or in urban expansion areas was discussed and assessed as an interesting complement to the range of methods available. Subsequently, Werkstatt Planspiel carried out a survey on the interest in, and the need for, a planning game on urban expansion and possibilities to obtain funds for it. In discussions with persons interested, the need as well as the organisational and financial framework for a potential implementation was studied.

These discussions documented the interest of institutions in the field of education and planning in a planning game on the problems of urban planning. The results eventually lead to the contract on the preparation of a new game.

Since early 1995, the resulting game scenario “Süssenstetten im Eck” has been used in various fields: further education for secondary school and university teachers, at schools and universities. The topics dealt with and the methods used are adapted to the interests of the target group(s) in question.

The scenario “Süssenstetten im Eck”
Content of the scenario
The central topic of the planning game “Süssenstetten im Eck” is urban expansion in Vienna. In concrete terms, the scenario which is modelled on the real situation of Vienna deals with the construction of a housing compound on an intensively used free area in the fictitious village of Süssenstetten. The planned housing project also involves the construction of a rapid tramway line, a bypass road for the old centre of Süssenstetten and maybe a new primary school. The project is faced with clashing interests of various groups: a citizens’ action committee wants to preserve the free space by all means, another one has demanded a bypass road for the centre of Süssenstetten and the construction of a new primary school. The following information is provided to the players at the beginning of the game:

General information on “Süssenstetten im Eck”
It is July 1997.
Annually, 10,000 new flats are to be built according to the housing programme of the Viennese government coalition made up of the parties SDW (Social-Democratic Party of Vienna), LiP (Liberal Platform) and GRÜWi (Vienna Greens). In line with a decision of the City Senate (so to speak, the city’s government) taken at the beginning of this year, 900 of these flats are to be built in the old centre of Süssenstetten at the eastern periphery of Vienna.

As it was learned recently, the recreation area “Im Eck” where also the pond “Brown Lagoon” is located is planned to be built up with a housing
compound of this size. This is in contradiction to previous statements made by politicians and officials who pledged to preserve this area as green space. BUG (Citizens’ Action Committee for Our Green), which was set up after the plans became known, wants to protest against the building up of this green space which is used for multiple purposes.

An advantage of the building project, however, is that the “Housing Compound Im Eck” substantially raises the odds of Süssenstetten of getting a rapid tramway line and of upgrading the Handyweg to a bypass reducing traffic in the centre. The two projects are long-cherished wishes of Süssenstetten’s population; in particular, the bypass road was vehemently demanded by another group of citizens called LESTIG (Interest Group for High Quality of Life at Süssenstetten). Other problems of Süssenstetten which are linked to this issue are a lack of shops for basic supplies in the immediate vicinity, schools and other social facilities.

The municipality is in charge of developing the plans for the project “Housing compound Im Eck” and the Süssenstetten area. It is to prepare the basis for a decision of the City Senate which is made up of politicians of all political quarters. Tough debates are to be expected between the governing parties (SDW, LiP, GRÜWI) and the opposition (CVP and FB), but also within the unstable coalition government.

The groups of players

- BUG (Citizens’ Action Committee for Our Green): fights for the preservation of “Im Eck” as a green area;
- LESTIG (Interest Group for High Quality of Life at Süssenstetten): demands a bypass road for reducing traffic in the centre and the construction of another primary school;
- City Senate (the city’s “government”): is made up of the city councillors (“ministers”). In the game, there are five councillors, one from each political party;
- The municipality: heads of various departments of the city’s administration who are dealing with the area of Süssenstetten as experts in their fields of activities.

In case of more than 24 players, additionally:

- Observer/press group: people observing the game and journalists of various newspapers.

Method

Originally, this method was applied in the military field where strategic simulation has always been of great importance. Another focus is in management training where planning games were first used in the USA. Approximately 20 years ago, the potential of this method was realised also in social and technical fields where it is used more and more. Nevertheless, this medium still has the aura of exclusivity. As far as we know, it is hardly used at the “basis” of education, for example at schools, while it is an objective to deal with topics of society also at this level in an integral way.

When studying other existing planning games and the literature on this topic (see Annex), one notes that the term “planning game” is used in a very broad sense. A planning game can be anything ranging from highly structured, computer-assisted management and decision-making “games” via complex social simulations to short, role-model situation games. The planning game makes it possible to simulate social relationships and processes in order to allow for the intellectual and emotional understanding of connections and conflicts. Reality is condensed in a game scenario, the players act from the point of view of specific interests and try to achieve their objectives.

In the following, we attempt to illustrate our view of planning games and to delimit it from other forms.
Delimitation to the role game
In role games, there is usually only a briefly defined starting situation which is acted out by all the players. In shaping their roles and strategies, the players fall back on their everyday knowledge. In contrast, the planning game is more complex, the starting point is defined in greater detail, and the role descriptions are open to interpretation by the players. Each group basically has several strategic options. The situation is not experienced nor developed at a “central stage”, but in various groups and at different places in parallel.

Delimitation to the management and decision-making game
Management games are mostly used to provide concrete behavioural and decision-making training to managers at various levels. The objective is to take the right decision (e.g. on investments) at the right moment based on existing quantitative data (provided by EDP). The relations between the individual players and the entire reality of the game are reduced to quantified formulas and are based on economic abstractions. Each decision is linked via a system of variables (turnover development, investment ratio) to the players. The game is divided into individual phases and is highly structured in advance. At the end of the game, there is a clear result (e.g. the company is bankrupt) that simply is final.

In our planning games, the main focus is on the process of interaction in social reality. The “result” has to be interpreted together at the end of the game. Relations between the players and between groups are based on communication, not on if-then relations. Here we are dealing with concrete relations, everyday reality, distribution of power and real institutional structures.

Outline of the game
The planning game has four parts:
- Introduction to the planning game,
- Game,
- Follow-up on the game,
- Follow-up on the topics.

Introduction to the planning game
In this initial part the players are to be familiarised, on the one hand, with the group situation (maybe new to them) and, on the other hand, with planning games in general. Likewise, they are to be given sufficient information on the specific game so that the game can begin after a certain time for studying the individual and group roles.

After the players briefly presented themselves, the background of the scenario is vividly presented in a video. Then, the game leader briefly explains again the scenario using a plan and present the rules and groups.

The first task of the groups is to assign the individual roles to the players, to study the roles and to get into their spirit based on the game documentation. Only then, the entire group is to discuss the scenario, the starting situation, the interests of the group and the strategies available to them. As each of the players speaks from the viewpoint of the individual role in the group right from the start, it becomes easier for them to get familiar and to identify with their roles. The aim of the start-up phase is to familiarise the players and groups so much with the simulated reality of the game that they are able to act. At the end of this stage, each group should have at least an outline of a strategy for promoting its interests.

A planning game is deliberately conceived in a way that it can be played without extensive background knowledge or preparation. The everyday knowledge of the players is sufficient for them to play their roles. As it involves only a minor share of “stage acting” and the strategic component is in the centre of the game, the players do not need any experience as actors.

The use of props proved to be funny and beneficial to the course of the game, e.g. clothes, hats, jackets so that the players can make themselves up (partly): they slip, so to speak, into another personality getting away from their own everyday life.
The game itself starts with a joint session in which the players briefly present themselves in their roles to the other players. In most cases, we can see in this round how the players “slip into” their roles before the audience, even though they might have felt insecure about them a short time before: each statement made in the role creates expectations and is a commitment to the other players. At the same time, they react to the other roles in line with their everyday knowledge and their expectations (e.g. to a municipal official) and, thus also define the roles of their fellow players: mutual expectations help everybody to get into their roles and to interpret them during the game.

Now the game gets going. Each group (also the game leaders) has a closed or at least separated room of its own. At the beginning there is a contact phase (duration: 45 – 60 minutes) during which all groups can get in touch with each other (and with “jokers” among the game leaders): this is the time for meetings and negotiations, for obtaining information and starting initiatives. In parallel, the general dynamics of the game soon results in a strong pressure for actions by most of the groups as new information and constellations constantly change the situation and require reactions.

Usually, the individual groups split up in order to be able to cope with the various tasks. The game does not take place at a central stage, but the individual contacts are made simultaneously in different places (group rooms, etc.). Just like in real life, the situation sometimes seems to be too complex to grasp. Individual actors and their intentions, options and responsibilities are only known roughly, and it becomes an essential requirement to obtain information, to define one’s position and to co-ordinate the group.

This is why the contact phase is followed by an internal group phase (30-45 minutes) during which the groups are in their own rooms and have time for internal co-ordination, communication and decision-making. In this phase, contacts to the other groups are only permitted if made in writing, i.e. by means of letters, press releases or flyers. The help of jokers may also be requested. Usually, this phase, too, is considered to be too short by the players to cope with all the tasks in hand. However, a certain amount of stress and pressure for action is required from a didactic viewpoint in order to keep the individual players and groups in the game and to prevent them from leaving the game level.

Subsequently, group phases and contact phases alternate. Depending on the time available, the length of the individual phases may be varied, but attention should be paid to achieve a time structure that is as simple and clear as possible in order to facilitate time orientation during the game: time plays an important role. Also the overall duration of the game is variable: It may last for three to five hours. Experience shows that a duration of less than three hours is not enough to make full use of all the possibilities for actions and developments, whereas a very long duration overstrains the concentration and persistence of the players.

The game itself does not specify in advance what exactly happens during the game, which developments are occurring, which actions are taken, whether their are rallies, office occupations or expert hearings, whether all the players meet during the game (e.g. at a “citizens’ meeting”) or everything is dealt with at the level of the groups or individual persons. The players act autonomously based on the starting situation and role descriptions (which, by the way, leave room for different interpretations) towards a result or a final situation. Everything is possible.

The only event specified by the game is a joint final meeting. From the point of didactics it is important
that the game is closed in plenary session: just like the game started with everybody being present, it should be concluded together.

Leaving the dense reality of the game which was full of events is not easy and should be supported by the game leaders. This may be done, for example, by a short round in which the players can symbolically “slip out” of their roles (by taking off their props or by making a brief statement) and “slip back into” their everyday personalities. Now, the game proper is over, but the reality of the game still has a hold on most of the players: experience shows that, in conversations and discussions during the following break or evening, the game is still the subject of very intensive talks.

**Follow-up on the game**

After the break or on the following day, the game is followed up on (half a day) which has the same importance as the game itself within the framework of the planning game method. The objectives are, on the one hand, to summarise the various individual perspectives to obtain a common perspective on the game and, on the other hand, to analyse the success and failures experienced by individual players and groups. Due to the specific conception of the planning game as an interactive and strategic game that takes place in various groups and at several places at the same time, each player only knows that part of the game reality in which he/she was directly involved or on which he/she was informed by (also subjective) reports and press releases. This part will differ depending on the role played, but it will always have the same levels:

- Level of individual role interpretation, personal strategies and personal success/failure:
  Of course, the individual players know this part very well after the game, but only their own experiences. Here, it is very important for the player to hear how the other players experienced his/her behaviour in the role.

- Level of group activities, group strategy, group success/failure:
  Also this part of the game’s reality will be quite familiar to the players (depending on the size of the group), but usually there are already some issues to be clarified and to be synthesised.

- Level of the entire game:
  This level becomes only really transparent for the players in the follow-up phase.

At the start of follow-up, the participants meet again in the game groups to reconstruct the game process from the group’s perspective based on a guide (Did communication and decision-making in the group work well? Which strategies existed? Who were allies in the game, who was experienced as an opponent? Did you fail/succeed and for which reasons? How did you feel in your individual roles? ...). Then, each group presents its view of the game, its line of action, etc. in a plenary meeting. Questions and comments are expressly desired at this point. As a rule, they eventually result in a lively general discussion.

For the subsequent course of the planning game it is essential that a common experience and perspective shared by all the players is achieved so that the following discussion of the subject proper can be based on this common knowledge. Likewise, an emerging distance to one’s own role is an indispensable prerequisite for making progress in the field of the subject.

**Follow-up on the topics**

(illustrated by the game “Süssenstetten”)

Depending on the seminar’s objectives as regards the subject, this follow-up may take completely different approaches. The core options are, of course, the topics of urban expansion, urban planning, urban development, planning of free space in the city: basic conditions, instruments and interests involved. But also other political and social subjects...
can be focused on, such as the role of citizens and citizens’ action committees, young people or even the position of municipal administration between politics and citizens may be discussed. At a “micro-level”, the starting point might be the group and decision-making processes that took place, communication structures and the distribution of work. On the other hand, the method of the planning game itself may be a topic to be dealt with. The form and duration of this follow-up may vary depending on the framework governing the planning game in question. At any rate, this part has to be defined by the game leaders, the participants and the persons in charge.

The work on the topics benefits from the fact that the players can refer to common experiences: the awareness for this should be deliberately raised during further work. By comparing the processes that occurred in the game with reality, a differentiation can be achieved which can provide useful information: questions like “And how does this work in reality?” or “What was real?” are ideally suited to get the discussion on the subject matter started. At this point it should be clear for all the participants that the planning game can by no means be a complete and exact representation of reality.

In our opinion, the planning game “Süssenstetten” can be used in various contexts: on the one hand, within the framework of a self-contained seminar lasting (at least) for two days with half a day (or proportionately more) being set aside for the follow-up on the topics. On the other hand, the planning game may also be the beginning of a long-term (learning) process in which the treatment of specific topics takes a completely different form.

Thus, the game itself and further work on the topics may be separated from each other. It is, however, desirable that at least a short time is available directly after the game to deal with some issues of urban expansion. As a rule, there is a big need for information on planning procedures and room for manoeuvre after the game.

Potential of the planning game method
From our previous experience with planning games of the type described above, we should like to outline some of the specific didactic qualities of this method.

At the level of social-skill learning
- Contribution to the (further) development of social competence
  By experiencing a fictitious social scenario from the subjective perspective of concrete interests and the resulting contacts/conflicts with other groups/individuals, most diverse interactions can be experienced and explored in a playful way. Thus, the participants can reflect on, and expand, their own repertory of behaviour patterns and develop a greater understanding for other “roles” in real life.

- Communication training
  The variety of “relations” which can be experienced within the framework of a planning game offers the possibility to test different forms of verbal and non-verbal communication (ranging from official notifications to love letters, from internal meetings to rallies) and to experience the effect of individual acts directly.

- Decision-making training
  In the planning game, virtually all the players are permanently under pressure to take decisions due to the actions of other players/groups and the dynamics of the game. If the handling of these “endogenous” requirements is properly reflected on, it can contribute to understanding how decision-making processes can be influenced.

- Group behaviour
  Basically, the players act as members of certain groups even though they pursue individual aims and interests. Thus, the attempt at balancing individuals and groups is one of the challenges of a planning game. Also
here the principle applies that the developments that emerged in the course of the game have to be considered and discussed adequately so that latent structures, dominance or friction and their reasons can be visualised. Both for inhomogeneous and homogeneous groups (such as school classes), a planning game may have an integrating function and promote group dynamics.

- Political training
  As a representation of real life, planning games are political by themselves. Depending on the scenario used, it is possible to illustrate concrete factual knowledge about the political system (structures, responsibilities, legal framework, etc.) or to reflect on political categories such as information, power, powerlessness, rituals, etc. At any rate, the objective is to give at least the same attention to informal structures as to formal procedures or responsibilities.

At the level of cognitive learning
- Imparting knowledge on the topics presented by means of the planning game method
  A planning game cannot be expected to provide, as it were, a clearly defined package of expert knowledge in a highly condensed form. On the one hand, the individual players can obtain the information important for their own interests and, on the other hand, the follow-up phase on the game offers the possibility to exchange experiences on this subjective learning process complemented by factual information by the seminar leader. All the more, however, a planning game can awaken interest in studying central issues of the topic presented by the scenario. Hence, the follow-up on the topics is all the more important: a suitable framework has to be provided for further studies. In this respect, planning games are particularly suited to serve as an introduction, as a “peg” on which to hang a topic which motivates the participants to get to know more about it based on the experience of subjective consternation.

At the level of action-oriented discussions
  The planning game can be used to (further) develop issues specific to the target group in question against the background of common cognitive and emotional experience. It may serve, for instance, for starting a discussion among civil servants on internal and/or external communication patterns. Or, it could offer the possibility for a citizens’ action committee to question previous strategies and to develop new ones. It is certainly easier for homogeneous groups to profit from this potential of planning games, even though the analysis of certain issues can also be envisaged in heterogeneous groups if, for example, the seminar aims at the definition of requirements for municipal PR by committed citizens and officials.

Previous experiences and perspectives
  Finally, previous experiences with the planning game and perspectives for the future are illustrated by some possible areas of application. Essentially, Werkstatt Planspiel tries to set up mixed seminar groups and to find at least some external participants for homogeneous groups (e.g. secondary school teachers and planning students).

Application in further training for teachers
  There is no doubt about the fact that urban planning should be accorded more attention at schools since, after all, urban planning has a decisive influence on the life of each citizen. The most important and most efficient starting point for disseminating...
information to this effect is the level of further training for teachers. The initiative taken by MA 18 in developing the planning kit responds to this need. Only if the teachers are fairly familiar with this topic and feel secure about it to a certain extent, they can be expected to be motivated to deal with it on their own in classes. We also have to take into account that, as a rule, the introduction of topics that are difficult to integrate in the range of subjects taught is not unproblematic, indeed.

Due to its playful approach, the planning game provides an “animating” access to a topic and, thus, arouses interest for detailed information and further studies. Moreover, the participants can get to know a new method and a rare opportunity for teachers – can collect experience in team work. The objective of these planning game seminars is to enable the teachers themselves to coach the game.

In this field of application, co-operation with relevant institutions active in the field of teacher training is an obvious thing to do. In co-operation with the Pedagogical Institute of the City of Vienna, the first 3-day seminar was held in January 1995.

**Application at school**

The method of the planning game makes it possible to combine contents-oriented cognitive learning with social-skill learning (see above). On the one hand, it can be used to provide fundamental information and a basic understanding of the topic while establishing connections to one’s own everyday life.

On the other hand, such an experience can contribute to socialisation at different levels:
- integrating function for the class community,
- promoting interest in one’s own neighbourhood,
- creating readiness for dealing with other social groups, promoting tolerance,
- encouraging personal initiative.

Additionally, this way of dealing with planning and administration can help to reduce barriers to the bureaucracy and hence contributes to the emancipation of the young people in line with the educational principle of civics. Thus, long-term work at a “grass-roots” level can be performed to foster participation in planning processes. The potential target groups are the 10th to 12th grades of higher secondary schools and commercial colleges. The first seminar of this kind took place with students of the 6th class of BG Wien Xi in June 1995. The complexity of the scenario did not create any problems for the students, as regards their strategic creativity they were by no means inferior to university teachers. Interest in the topic of urban planning was raised, which, on the second day, resulted in a spontaneous visit of the entire class at the next area counselling office. The echo to this pilot seminar was definitely encouraging, more games are planned at this school for the winter term.

The future application at schools will be developed in a phased approach. In the test phase, some games are carried out by Werkstatt Planspiel with the support of the teachers in order to further refine the scenario and the rules of the game. The aim of the next step is the organisation of the game by adequately trained teachers with the support of a trainer. This development might result in the game being run autonomously: teachers who have learnt about the topic and the method within the framework of further training themselves organise the games at schools.

**Application at universities**

Especially in courses on planning tasks (but also in other courses), the imparting of diverse social and communicative skills is a central issue. Moreover, there is a lack in the field of practice-oriented and integral presentations of planning processes. Planning game seminars can contribute to the reduction of these deficiencies.

At the University of Agriculture, an optional subject called “Players and strategies of urban planning – a planning game” was introduced in the summer term of 1994. In the summer term of 1995, a total of
three seminars with 25 participants each were organised. Also at the Technical University (land-use planning, architecture), such a seminar was held in the summer term of 1995. After the game proper, it is tried to bridge the gap to the training subjects in question and to other courses within the framework of follow-up on the topics. Also the University of Vienna (geography) is interested in complementing the seminars offered by unconventional types of teaching. Hence, the universities are a major field of application for the planning game on urban expansion.

Application in urban expansion and in other fields
There are different assessments as to the suitability of planning games in this field. It is obvious that the planning game is not a replacement, neither for planning nor participation, but rather fills a specific gap between information, education and community work. Thus, it can contribute to preparing the people concerned for changes (e.g. in urban expansion areas) in the long term. It is, however, hardly suited to function as a tool of crisis management in acute conflicts. In general, the experiencing of other positions and strategies and the questioning of one’s own position results in a potential for improving communication and co-operation between the partners involved in planning (in particular in case of heterogeneous groups of players).

Which target groups are to be included? Both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups are possible:

- Local opinion leaders, e.g. district councillors (contacts have already been established to the Social Democratic Party and to the Greens); interest groups, e.g. Chamber of Labour, Viennese Chamber of Commerce, environmental consultants, priests, etc.;
- Area counselling: as an introduction to this work or as further training (also here, talks are under way);
- Citizens’ action committees or committed citizens;
- Youth groups (via supporting organisations, negotiations with the Association of Viennese Youth Centres are currently in progress).

The experience we made so far shows that the planning game “Süssenstetten im Eck” can be applied in all the fields mentioned above in order to discuss the issues and contents which are of importance for the target groups in question.
Literature

On Werkstatt Planspiel
The interdisciplinary group Werkstatt Planspiel was established in 1988. It brings together members with different interests and main fields of work. This team provides Werkstatt Planspiel with experiences from the following subject fields: landscape planning, sociology, regional planning, public relations, knowledge transfer, didactics, communication training, moderation, socio-cultural animation, commercial artwork and layout, extracurricular work with children and young people in the association “Kids Company”. The team members are still mainly active in their original fields of interest and specialisation – a fact which is indispensable for high-grade work, practice orientation and genuine interdisciplinarity.

Previous clients
Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Art, University of Agriculture, Technical University of Vienna, Pedagogical Institute of the City of Vienna, City of Vienna – MA 18.

Ideal seminar programme (2 days)
1st day
10:00 Opening: welcome, organisational matters, presentation of the participants, introduction to the scenario (video, rules of the game, groups), setting up the groups
11:00 Preparation time (at first on an individual level, then at the group level), in between:
12:30 Lunch, lunch break
14:15 Start of the game: presentation of the roles in joint session
14:30 Contact phase
15:30 Internal group phase
16:00 Contact phase
17:00 Internal group phase
17:30 Contact phase with final meeting
18:00 End of the game, short wrap-up
then: Dinner, social event
2nd day
9:15 Begin
9:30 Follow-up on the game in the groups (structural issues, posters)
10:30 Presentation of the group results to the plenary, discussion
12:30 Lunch
14:30 Follow-up on the topics in various forms
17:30 Final round
18:00 End of the seminar

Out of the four parts of the seminar, the introductory phase (if absolutely necessary) as well as the follow-up on the topics may be separated and moved to other dates. The game proper should always take place in conjunction with the follow-up on the game.
The plan
“Süssenstetten im Eck” puts issues and problems of urban expansion on the agenda. In concrete terms, the scenario, which is based on the real situation in Vienna, focuses on the construction of a housing project plus infrastructure in the fictitious village of Süssenstetten: a controversial project because it is to be implemented on free space which has been intensively utilised so far. Thus the interests of diverse groups clash: a citizens’ action committee fights for the preservation of free space, another group demands a bypass road for the centre of the village and the construction of a new school. The players who participate in this 2-day discussion select their own roles and, subsequently, have to fulfil the functions related to it. At the end, the course of the game is discussed once more so that the participants are able to process the experience gained in an adequate way.

The result
The planning game convincingly simulates political, social and urban planning processes in the fields of urban development in which conflicts currently arise. By experiencing the line of reasoning and the strategies of other people as well as by questioning one’s own position, communication and co-operation between potential negotiating partners are to be promoted. Serious discussions fought out in a playful way can bring to light new aspects of urban expansion and draw the attention of the real urban planners to seething problems.

The future
Urban Planning Vienna participated in the design of the planning game and also made a financial contribution to the games organised up to now. For the future, however, the involvement of the Vienna Board of Education seems to be opportune and desirable – both in financial and in pedagogical terms. After all, this is the only way to combine the imparting of specialised knowledge on urban planning with social and process-oriented learning in the long term.

Numerous inquiries from other cities – also from abroad – evidence the interest in this way of learning to think and act with a view to urban planning. For players aged 9–99!
The Idea

“Public participation, the catch phrase of the late 70’s, has become a matter of course in the urban planning of Vienna”, wrote Helmut Zilk, then mayor of Vienna, in his foreword to the brochure provided together with the Planning Kit. Efficient public participation, however, not only depends on the current distribution of political power and responsibilities between elected representatives and citizens’ action committees. Another essential requirement for co-determination is in fact the ability to communicate with each other.

Just like any other domain, urban planning has developed a language of its own. Experience shows that lacking familiarity with this language makes it unreasonably difficult even for committed citizens to participate in planning processes. The reduction of these language barriers between experts and laymen could contribute to decreasing the number of subject-specific misunderstandings.

On top of it, the subject itself is highly complex, too: proposals for designing the surface of a residential road, for instance, also have to take into account the foundation of the street, sewers and supply lines. Likewise, access for fire fighters or a diversion for the public bus have to be considered. Knowledge about the multiple interrelations cannot be taken for granted, either. This applies both to experts and laymen.

The main motive standing behind the idea of the Viennese Planning Kit is to improve communication capabilities and to achieve a better understanding for the complexity of the subject. The awareness that this cannot be brought about overnight but only in a long-term programme shifted the focus to the young users of the city.

“No form of living together is more fascinating, but also more vulnerable than the city”, wrote Kurt Scholz, President of the Vienna Board of Education, and further elaborated in his foreword that living together in a city “requires more consideration for others, social responsibility, more efforts and more solidarity”.

Against this background, the idea emerged to prepare basic material on the topic of “urban planning” in a way suitable for being used as educational material at higher secondary and vocational schools in Vienna. As previous experience on the pedagogical and didactic presentation of this topic was only available to a limited extent and as the existing media material had not been prepared specifically for this target group, the Planning Kit was always conceived as the first stage of a longer-term project. Based on the experience gained in the use of the Planning Kit, the second stage was intended to include also other media to a greater extent.

The production of the Planning Kit

Already in autumn 1991, the group Specialised Public Relations of Municipal Department 18 – “Urban Development and Urban Planning”, notably Mr. Wolfgang Dvorak, took measures to create the necessary basis for the production of a collection on “urban planning” suitable for use at schools:

- Information material for some 100 senior forms of higher secondary schools was available;
- It was assured in principle that it was possible to include the topic “urban planning” into subjects taught;
- A group of committed teachers was found;
- Technical advice for the selection of material and its description was provided; and
- The organisational co-ordination of the project was ensured by the Public Relations team.

In numerous team meetings, which took place in the course of time until summer 1992, the objectives of the teachers were defined in concrete terms, a selection was made based on the existing material, a table of contents and instructions for use were prepared for the Planning Kit and abstracts were written for the texts enclosed and for the videos.

In autumn 1992, we were able to distribute the “Viennese Planning Kit” to approximately 100 higher...
secondary and vocational schools and Executive City Councillor Hannes Swoboda presented it to the public at a press conference.

The contents of the Planning Kit
This teaching aid comprises printed material and videos as well as numerous plans. The subjects dealt with were grouped into four fields:

- Urban planning
- Housing and urban renewal
- Traffic
- Environment

The texts and the pictures on these four main topics are presented in more than twenty brochures, books and magazines, supplemented by folders, three video tapes as well as twenty plans and maps. A summary is available for each relevant text. In order to allow for the discussion of specific issues, most summaries also contain cross-references to related texts in other brochures or books of the Planning Kit. This “guide” should eliminate protracted searches for articles or contributions on a specific topic distributed over the various printed documents and videos.

Regarding the topic “urban planning”, the Planning Kit not only offers the Vienna Urban Development Plan 1984 including the abridged version in English. Material on the growth of the city, history of planning approaches, design of urban space and urban lifestyles are to stimulate discussions. Ample room is given to documents on urban expansion in Vienna.

Two brochures facilitate access to the complex field of urban renewal. In the field of “housing”, a detailed catalogue prepared in English and German on recent housing construction projects in Vienna invites the readers to make enlightening tours across Vienna.

The documents on the topic “traffic” include the reports of the Gürtel road commission, brochures on the Vienna port and on air traffic. Another report deals with the intricate relations between traffic problems and urban development, not only as regards Vienna.

The central issue of the topic “environment” is water supply and sewage treatment in Vienna. The question of how the technical requirements of flood protection, sewage treatment and groundwater regulation are to be brought in line with recent findings on the preservation of ecosystems runs like a red thread through the texts on this topic.

The use of the Planning Kit
Apart from the summaries mentioned above, the informative brochure enclosed in the Planning Kit also provides hints and examples for the teachers on how and in which subjects the material could be used.

As most of the texts also include a section on history, the Planning Kit offers numerous options for application in history classes, in particular in the three areas of the required elective stipulated by the curriculum of the senior classes of higher secondary schools: social history, history of everyday life and history of technology. Subject-matters and educational objectives related to the topic “city” are covered by several classes in the subject “geography and economic studies” both in junior and senior classes of both school types supplied with the kit. For almost all the topics – life in urban agglomerations, housing in Austria, regional planning problems and many more – the Planning Kit contains material complementing the subject-specific textbooks in an informative way. In particular, it is recommended for use also in the required elective in senior classes of higher secondary schools. However, also in the curricula of higher vocational schools, similar applications are possible: It is an obvious choice to use the printed material and the maps included in the Planning Kit in the discussion of the topics “urbanisation” and “regional planning” at technical and commercial colleges.
For art and handicraft classes, the material of the Planning Kit is mainly recommended for the preparatory work of the teachers. According to the assessment of the team involved in the production of the material, the didactically structured use in teaching itself will be possible probably only when the second part of the media package will be available. But even with the maps and plans currently supplied, the discussion of visual means of communication or of the function of scales can be enriched in a meaningful way.

In particular, the use of the material offered is highlighted in projects covering several subjects.

In November 1995, Vienna’s higher secondary schools were requested to answer questionnaires on the application of the Planning Kit as a teaching aid. In short, the results were as follows:

- 20% of the higher secondary schools which should have received the Planning Kit in 1993 indicated in 1995 that they did not have this teaching aid. Among the three basic types of higher secondary schools – general education, natural science specialisation and the combination of the two types –, the general education schools stand out particularly: the number of schools without Planning Kit seems to be especially high among them.

- One third of the schools which indicated that they had not received the Planning Kit declared that they would like to get this media package. Especially big schools which had already worked with the material suggested that an additional Kit should be made available to them.

- The most important request made by the schools which had already used the Planning Kit refers to the updating of the material.

- Almost 90% of the higher secondary schools at which a Planning Kit is available used it at least once during the past three years. When we asked for the number of classes in which the Kit was used at the schools which really received it, we obtained the picture presented in Diagram 1.

- Approximately one fifth of the schools use the Planning Kit only in one subject. Just under one third of the schools apply it in two different subjects. Slightly above one third use it in three or more subjects.

Most frequently, the Planning Kit is utilised in “geography and economic studies”, i.e. at approximately three quarters of the schools. Almost 60% use it in history classes, and slightly less than half the schools apply it in art classes. Only some 10% utilise the material in handicraft classes (Diagram 2).
Utilisation of the Planning Kit
percentage of schools according to the number of subjects

Diagram 1

Utilisation of the Planning Kit
The Planning Kit was used at least once in ...

Diagram 2
The idea
The planning activities of a metropolis like Vienna are so complex that it appears to be a necessity – in the sense of a service provided – to make already young people familiar with the problems of urban planning. The City of Vienna – Specialised Public Relations – took up the constructive work of creating awareness for these problems and to raise the level of knowledge about the enormous tasks and diverse relations faced by municipal administrations.

The contents
In 1993, the “Viennese Planning Kit” was developed to serve as a tool for this purpose. It contains a wealth of information on the fields of urban planning, urban expansion, housing, traffic, environment, etc. The texts and picture material are split up into twenty brochures and books, supplemented by folders, three video tapes as well as various plans and maps.

The objective
The target group of this project were the higher secondary and vocational schools in Vienna where the material was to be used in teaching and where it should also be possible to discuss these issues with planners of the City of Vienna, if necessary.

Summary
In November 1995, the Institute for Urban and Regional Research in Vienna (Peter Moser) carried out a survey on the utilisation of the Planning Kit as a teaching aid at higher secondary and vocational schools, which yielded the following results:
The Kit was used most frequently in geography and economic studies.
Experience showed that the extent of utilisation – by a remarkable 90% of higher secondary schools – often depended on the practices followed by the headmasters of the individual schools or, in other words, on the assignment practices of the executives in charge.

Recommendations and suggestions
Based on the experiences made so far, several constructive suggestions were submitted to the group Specialised Public Relations for future development of the project.
The following main categories emerged:
- Updating the material.
- Supplementing by slides, transparencies, and CD-ROMs.
- Distributing not only one copy but two copies to all higher secondary and vocational schools (a total of some 80 schools) plus reference copies for teacher training.
- The highly varied material should be prepared in a rough didactic form also with a view to the analysis of learning targets. A documentation including an index referring to subjects and learning targets seems to be desirable.
- Furthermore, the suggestion was made that a team of authors should develop a “guide” to selected aspects of urban development. This guide should be structured into topics such as: history, biology, literature, ethnic minorities, health, traffic, economy, civics.
- It also appears meaningful to co-operate with other institutions which fulfil similar educational tasks and might also be ready to function as sponsors. The co-ordination of these activities would have to be ensured by the Vienna Board of Education.
- Upon the next edition of the Kit, the project should be publicised by extensive PR and the marketing should be intensified in the form of press conferences (including statements by teachers and pupils).
- For the future, the dialogue between teachers and pupils on the one hand and the planners of the City of Vienna on the other hand should be intensified. Persons that may be contacted should be indicated. Specialised tours with the guides of the City of Vienna would complement the theoretical material of the Kit and would provide the indispensable orientation to the practice.

Finally, we can say that this project was well received and that it is recommendable to continue its development. It is safe to assume that these activities are capable of greatly enhancing the desirable mutual understanding between the young citizens of Vienna and the municipal administration with its diverse problems.
20 years of public participation in Vienna

The Viennese Model
Today, we take it for granted that projects having a certain size or specific features have to be submitted to an environmental impact assessment. This legally differentiated type of project assessment and participation was preceded by a long political development process with various experiments and experiences in the field of public participation. Vienna is also able to rely on experience made in diverse projects with public participation. In particular, since the second half of the 80’s, Vienna has increased its activities in this area in order to utilise new possibilities and meet the changed needs for communication and transparency in planning and decision-making processes.

In spite of this practice, opinions on public participation are divided, on how, why and, above all, for which purpose it is organised. Disputes arise mainly about questions on its binding nature, i.e. on the significance of the results of public participation in realpolitik. As relatively few projects are suitable for plebiscitary decisions – by referendums – due to their complexity, rather “informal” participation procedures are applied in urban planning.

As a result, most public participation procedures have no legally binding consequences – in the sense of concrete decisions on a project: whether the results of the procedure are taken into “consideration” largely depends on the goodwill, but of course also on the governing parties’ will to survive politically. Moreover, informal types of participation can be “terminated” at any time, as there is no legal claim to their organisation. However, the more they become, so to speak, institutionalised due to frequent application, the more difficult it becomes to withdraw them so that they virtually become more and more binding.

Though the citizens have clearly limited opportunities for directly taking decisions on concrete projects, as a rule even the most informal offers for participation are misinterpreted by them as mandatory opportunities for (participating in) decision-making. The regular complaints by participants that (once again) their demands were not “fully taken into account”, make this misunderstanding quite obvious. Once they are involved, people think that they are entitled to decide – in spite of other information and experiences to the contrary. Participation which does not culminate more or less in a “decision by the citizens” is perceived by many as a failure or at least as undemocratic, as an expression of political despotism, as a diversion or occupational therapy.

The complaint about a lack of democracy which is rather quickly voiced by the citizens has to see with misconceptions of democracy (what it really is) and with the functions of public participation. Public participation tends to be interpreted as an expression and evidence of “more democracy” in decision-making processes. Even though it has no legally binding character, it has a great variety of functions. Strictly speaking it has relatively little to do with (direct) democracy, but rather with fairly reasonable possibilities for informing each other, for shaping and influencing developments and also decisions. In view of the lack of directly taking decisions in a public participation procedure, these functions are frequently undervalued wrongfully.

The persistent misunderstanding that participation was only of value if absolutely binding results were achieved in line with the principles of majority rule – even though representation in public participation proceedings by no means lives up to the standards of representational democracy – might be due to the fact that, in systems like Austria which are dominated by representational democracy, there are relatively few opportunities for getting familiar with, and for learning to appreciate, “grass-roots” participation and its limitations.

But not only the population, also the officials, planners and some politicians frequently have a wrong understanding of the meaning and purpose of public participation. In particular, planners and officials tend to interpret public participation procedures as a failure if the result achieved does not represent a high approval and acceptance of the “official project” presented or at least a confirma-
tion of its basic features by the citizens involved. It is equally problematic to question the sense of public participation in general after “failures” occurred, even though the “vain” efforts may have been great. After all, even costly plebiscitary instruments cannot guarantee a success and the risk that the participation of citizens in planning projects does not yield the desired results cannot be eliminated. The value which basically justifies the efforts made has to be defined somewhere beyond the categories of “winning” or “losing”.

If, however, the main function of public participation is considered to be a broad, concomitant “clearing process”, the expectations are relativised to a pragmatic level and frustrations can be minimised. During the past twenty years, the City of Vienna has expanded and differentiated the instruments for public participation on a voluntary basis, but also by necessity and gained special routine in the application of diverse public participation procedures.

1974–1995: Progress due to continuity

It is not by accident that, in Vienna, a dramatic change of planning practices originated in the course of one of the first big projects implemented by the City of Vienna after the reconstruction phase of the 50’s and 60’s. The development of participatory models and measures was fostered by the political reform climate of the 70’s, but also the necessity to respond to the increasing and quite successful opposition of the population – but also of parts of professional circles – to big projects and to projects – putatively or really – damaging the environment. Likewise, the less and less clear distribution of political power made the opening up of the planning process a necessity for political survival.

The “Viennese model”, one of the key projects in Vienna’s municipal policies, laid the foundation for more open planning processes and participation when the “Danube Island” was planned more than twenty years ago. For this project – an urban leisure and recreation area meanwhile admired all over the world –, a procedure was developed whose basic features in fact still are a model for the organisation of (semi-)public planning procedures in big projects of the City of Vienna.

Another participatory “thread” also emerged in the mid-70s when area counselling offices focusing on specific neighbourhoods were set up in the course of “gentle urban renewal”. Current - “modern” - concepts for involving the population in planning processes, i.e. for public participation, are partly using methods that are closely related to the way area counselling offices already worked at the start. Both models of organising planning processes and involving the population concerned have been applied continually since their origins in the 70’s and still are two essential elements of today’s planning approach in Vienna.

Mixing familiar and innovative elements

Has nothing changed during the past twenty years, did eventually everything remain as it was, maybe because it was well-proven? When we take a closer look we find, to put it in a nutshell, constant and variable, familiar and innovative elements.
20 Years of Public Participation
The Viennese Model
The structure and the procedure for organising big projects did not change much. Apart from differing terms, the adaptation of some details or the adjustment to specific project requirements as well as varying scales, the basic structure of project organisation virtually is still the same as when the “Viennese model” was created: The parties involved in project organisation are an internal preparatory committee of the City of Vienna, a bureau embedded in the administration which is in charge of overall organisation and co-ordination of communication between the parties involved, its secretariat, a committee made up of internal and external experts for concomitant processing, optionally one or more planning teams, optionally a consulting jury (or an advisory board or a project management) for assessing the work/drafts submitted (internal and external experts as well as international specialists).

In comparison with this basic model, today’s procedures differ, for example, by a much more offensive outward orientation and by an integral and interdisciplinary approach in order to achieve a new level of planning and product quality.

For instance, in the “idea competitions” organised for projects planned in the 80’s (e.g. Gürtel road project, Danube area), a broad range of experts – such as land-use planners, construction engineers, even students – were involved and, for the first time, the opinion of the population was sought. “All the citizens of Vienna” should have the opportunity to participate by answering a questionnaire and/or by submitting personal proposals in writing or in graphical form. Today, however, the consulting of interest groups, elected district officers and citizens’ representatives already is a matter of course.

Thus, interdisciplinarity and public participation finally became the code words of the new planning approach of the 80’s and the early 90’s. In today’s proceedings (e.g. traffic planning on Gaußplatz square, urban expansion area Süßenbrunn), citizens already participate directly in the preparation of the competition documents and are members of the consultative jury assessing the proposals submitted.

Public participation as an independent element
The most marked change in the participation procedures that occurred in the past twenty years concerns the form, organisation and implementation of public participation. The first version of the “Viennese model” (Danube Island) still kept a distance to the citizens, or rather kept them at a distance. “Participation” consisted in the final presentation of the planning results in an exhibition and in a survey using questionnaires asking the Viennese what they thought about the project selected. In the projects planned during the 80’s (Gürtel road, Danube area), the organisational concepts already included explicit references to public participation (keyword “extension of the Viennese model”), but it was virtually confined to methods of empirical opinion research, competitions for ideas presented in writing, and information dissemination via mass media.

Public participation was organised in the form of a snapshot, not as a continual, interactive process during the entire planning stage. At that time, public participation was also characterised to a relatively large extent by the demand to obtain results that were in a way legitimised in line with representational democracy. In this conception of public participation, continual discussions with groups vehemently expressing their opinions – i.e. citizens’ action committees – were not accorded particular importance.

In organisational terms, public participation was integrated into the general organisation of big projects and was handled by a specialised group (in part, the unit responsible for public participation and the co-ordinating office were even made up of the same persons). Hence, public participation was planned and organised, evaluated and interpreted internally in the administration. Representatives of interest groups were hardly involved in public participation so that there was virtually no opportunity for directly resolving conflicts between the various people concerned and representatives of interest groups in the private and public sector. Thus, conflicts were mostly transported by the media and were waged at this detached level – which nonetheless has a strong effect on the masses and in politics.
On-going conflict management

From the late 80's onward, the fundamental changes in public participation procedures on big projects include the fact that they are usually conceived and implemented by external, mostly interdisciplinary teams and are more and more process-oriented in character. The “producers” of public participation act autonomously to a large extent, though they aim at close co-operation with the client in order to design public participation with a view to the project to be implemented. Instead of selective, one-time opinion polls, the process of public participation itself becomes a permanent opinion poll covering the people concerned and the experts of the City of Vienna as well as external consultants. The “distance” of the survey is replaced by methods which allow for or, if you want to put it that way, enforce direct, dynamic communication and conflict resolution between the groups involved in planning at regular intervals for a specific period of time. The emerging “opinion picture” is certainly not representative in statistical terms, but all the more colourful, rich in nuances, depth and clarity.

More recent public participation procedures are oriented along the lines of mediation (negotiation as a means of achieving consensus) and are usually based on “compact integration groups” in which, if possible, all the interests involved are represented. As there is direct contact between the representatives of different interests (citizens, politicians, investors, planners and civil servants), the conflicts are also waged in a more direct way. At the same time, the integration into an overall procedure and its moderation creates the opportunity to institutionalise and normalise conflict management, i.e. to accept conflicts as a natural element of opposite interests. The participation procedures comprise both elements of working with small groups, i.e. intensive discussion of problems orientated to group dynamics at a technical level in smaller groups with a well-balanced composition, and bigger forums which allow for informing and discussing with a broad group of people.

Information and public relations is of central importance in more recent procedures, but it differs from previous practices less by its quantity but rather by higher quality. The main focus is not on the “masses” and on achieving a “broad effect”, but rather on the subject matter, on informing each other and, additionally, also on offering a platform where controversial opinions can be voiced – for example, in neighbourhood journals published specifically for this purpose. Public participation not only gets closer to the population and to the decision-makers, but also in physical terms closer to the actual scene of action so that it is literally “decentralised” even in case of big projects.

Decentralisation also is evidenced by the fact that district councils and elected district officers are involved as a “decentralised political level” to a substantially larger extent than before. In parallel, however, there is a “concentration” in the procedure which has already been outlined above in order to involve and concentrate as many interests as possible in the participation procedure. Special attention is paid to the open and published documentation of the entire planning and participation process: this is the basis for transparency and confidence building, it creates a certain amount of binding force and allows for control and critical reflections.

This form of integral public participation is applied in the planning of major projects (such as the “Marchegger Ast” or the “Vienna Traffic Concept”) as well as projects on a smaller scale. Thus, the “historical” distinction between the popular procedures used for less complex projects and areas (“area counselling office” in the neighbourhood) and the detached approach taken for big areas and projects covering the entire city (“Viennese model”) is reduced to a large extent.

The Viennese Model II

From this perspective, we can speak about the emergence of a “Viennese model II” after twenty years of public participation in planning. In the more recent procedures on large-scale projects, the basic principles of the well-proven organisational model of the original “Viennese model” are main-
tained at the technical planning level while being combined with an integral version of participation. In this type of planning organisation, public participation is upgraded as it is provided with its own, independent project organisation. Public participation is organised in a way ensuring that it can be included in the complex organisation of large-scale projects as well as in small, local projects.

Thus, there is a module for “public participation” which is equally suitable for intensively co-operating with citizens in the course of projects taking several years and for participation in the sense of conflict management or area counselling. Depending on the project in question, this module can be adapted and allows for setting priorities on a case by case basis as it is not a rigid, but a highly flexible and adjustable model.

The current orientation which delegates the conception and project management for public participation to teams of external consultants is of substantial importance for the effectiveness of public participation. A level of go-betweens is created which can act in a more neutral way – both towards the citizens and towards politics and administration - and, hence, react more flexibly to the tensions existing between those concerned and those promoting the project.

Another characteristic of recent public participation procedures is the attempt to establish continual, close contacts as well as an exchange of opinions and experiences between the public interested and planners, architects, civil servants, politicians and investors. The objective of these efforts is to make opposing views and agreements visible so that the room for consensus can be seen clearer. This new form of public participation actively seeks and promotes dialogue with the public. In the course of planning, information and discussion processes are deliberately started and maintained, which naturally also means that criticism moves in. From the point of view of democratic policies and orientation to the future, this is a requirement for up-to-date planning management and policy; in everyday politics, this is admittedly a delicate and sometimes difficult task.

The main objective of recent procedures, too, is to find a solution that is acceptable to as many parties as possible and results in maximum consistency. However, one reservation has to be made: We are, of course, fully aware of the fact that a “unanimous result” can hardly be achieved today – simply because it would be in contradiction to the existing diversity of opinions in democratic societies (nor would it be a proof of high quality if the smallest common denominator would be sought and found in a project). As a result, the methods of recent procedures are deliberately oriented to the objective of mainly developing high-grade consensus and compromise solutions for some parts while tolerating that opposing views persist in other parts. Thus, the transparency of the process in which the project is planned and in which first decisions are taken, as well as thorough and responsible research for better expertise are the main priorities of the public participation procedure. Even though this concept is fairly convincing in theoretical terms, it is by no means easy to make the parties involved in the project, including the citizens concerned, see its merits: they want to achieve tangible, hundred percent success so that partial success and gradual changes hardly count which might even become effective only in the long term. A chance for overcoming these discrepancies is to apply public participation procedures more frequently so that they are lent a certain routine and become a matter of course.

An essential criterion for the further development of public participation procedures is the definition of the rights and duties of the parties involved and the resulting responsibilities.

Seen in perspective, public participation procedures should be upgraded by making them more binding and by enhancing their legitimisation based on the involvement of representative groups. The more citizens inter-
ested are able to participate in planning processes in which all the interests of relevance to the project are represented, the greater the possibilities for achieving a differentiated arbitration of interests and a balance between individual and overall interests.

This binding and intensive form of public participation requires a model comprising at least two functions: On the one hand, forums would have to be established and events would have to be organised where citizens discuss and concretise the object of the public participation procedure exclusively among themselves with the advice and guidance of independent co-ordinators and mediators to prepare further negotiations with other groups involved in the project. In parallel, “committees” would have to be created in which committed citizens and all the other decisive interests and decision-makers meet to check the ideas developed on the basis of realpolitik, i.e. with a view to their feasibility.

An essential criterion for the further development of public participation procedures is the definition of the rights and duties of the parties involved and the resulting responsibilities. Then, public participation would mean that all the parties involved, including the citizens, were bound by the results agreed upon together. The “rules of the game” had to be negotiated by the players anew for each project. Existing legal provisions, such as those governing EIAs (environmental impact assessments), naturally must not be affected - this would also raise identification with the participation procedure.

These greater rights to which the citizens involved were entitled and the higher responsibility and duties which they had to fulfill would raise the prospects that public participation was seen more as a real opportunity for co-determination and that the citizens give up their still predominant role as opponents in favour of a role as well-founded and differentiating critics of urban planning. This new procedure result in some essential effects for politics and administration: altogether it saves time, in the best case it results in higher acceptance, and in the worst case one knows at least at an early stage that a project has to be revised or rejected or that the marketing strategy for a project has to be changed substantially. If public participation is to develop into the direction outlined, certain consequences and changes have to be implemented within administration and project management which will be a task of the next few years.

The following aspects seem to be of central importance:

- Limits and transformation of public participation: "External" public participation - as a measure added in parallel to planning procedures - can only achieve temporary success, unless planning, administration and politics are re-oriented and also act in accordance with changed information and participation needs at the same time. Only then, “external” participation becomes superfluous to a large extent as it “pervades” modern administrative measures and becomes a matter of course. It will, nevertheless, still be necessary in fields where new topics and problems have to be introduced into administration and politics from outside in order to create awareness for them.

- Inter-departmental project organisation in administration. At present, planning is still organised hierarchically and structured into sectors in most cases. This type of project management should gradually be converted into an inter-departmental and integral planning organisation in order to be able to meet the scheduling and technical requirements of today's projects. This means that procedures have to be concentrated to raise efficiency.

- On-going systematic analyses of strengths and weaknesses: Given the population's increasing attention, its growing self-confidence and its interest in co-determination, there is a need for systematic, concomitant examination and analysis of planning and implementation agendas for their functionality as regards contents,
organisation, techniques, personnel and responsibilities are necessary in order to take initiatives.

Public relations and public participation as a task of planning: If public relations and public participation are not considered to be integral, natural elements of the planning process and planning administration itself, the rights demanded politically and the reality of planning will drift apart which, in turn, would make planning more prone to conflicts and more sensitive. Hence, conceptual and strategic requirements for implementing “open planning” have to be developed continually within the administration and translated into adequate reforms. In operational terms, this means the establishment of an interactive process for the planning of planning, public relations, public participation and implementation.

Public participation in major large-scale projects in Vienna¹

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<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Builder</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1970’s</strong></td>
<td>Planning of the Danube Island</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Area counselling</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td><strong>1980’s</strong></td>
<td>Gürtel road commission</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td>Vienna’s Danube area</td>
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<td>Area counselling</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990’s</strong></td>
<td>Referendum on the tramway line 8</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Referendum on EXPO and Freudenau Power Plant</td>
<td>City of Vienna, Donaukraft</td>
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<td>Urban Constitution Forum</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Superstructure for the railway station Wien-Mitte</td>
<td>Private investors</td>
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<td>Lainz tunnel</td>
<td>HLAG-ÖBB</td>
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<td>Traffic planning at Gaußplatz square</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td>New Alser Strafle</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td>Urban expansion at Süßenbrunn</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td>Urban expansion - Marchegger Ast</td>
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<td>Neubaugasse</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vienna – Safe City</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area counselling</td>
<td>City of Vienna</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹ This is not a complete list.
Does the way to the future go past virtual reality?
The major planning projects of recent years, above all the Urban Development Plan and the Traffic Concept, but also a series of detailed projects, would be unthinkable without “it”. And what is more, today, public participation is a fixed element of each project planned. This not only includes information dissemination but also the involvement of citizens in planning and implementation, in short, working with the “people concerned”.

The Viennese model of the 1990’s - nothing doing without mediators
We have to say it loud and clear that there was hardly a project during the past few years which did not improve due to the public participation procedure, eventually, because the residents were able to identify with the project in question, because it simply also became “their” project. Doubtlessly, highly conflicting positions were taken by urban administration, experts and citizens in most projects. In all these procedures, moderation, i.e. the role of the mediator as a go-between between the City, the experts and the residents, was and still is important. Mediators can only be persons with expert knowledge who additionally have “pedagogical” capabilities and who, above all, are more or less “confidants” of the citizens outside of the city’s administration! Without these mediators who were commissioned for all procedures by the City of Vienna, the “Viennese model of public participation” would have failed miserably while the conflicts would not have been resolved but would have been aggravated enormously instead. After so many successfully completed procedures, however, we have to raise the following question: All of us have learned to apply public participation procedures, but how can we develop them in a meaningful way?

The Viennese model for the year 2000 and beyond ...
Especially at a time when our urban systems undergo a process of social change, the city has to be kept alive in co-operation with its citizens. Which strategies can and have to be developed by politics in order to preserve the urban environment? Above all, it has to “tie” the citizens to their city even more than before by offering more possibilities for co-determination. The new media are certainly of great help in this respect, if the city succeeds in giving shape to its special features and characteristics in “digitisation”.

Public participation at the telecentre ...
1. Will we have to provide all the members of our urban community, irrespective of age, education and social origins, with an opportunity to learn how to use the new technologies? This should and has to be done at places of communication which already exist, e.g. people’s high schools, urban libraries, but also at special tele(working) centres which still have to be created.

... offering more information and better services
2. Exhibitions, brochures, etc. cannot represent the fundamental plans of the experts half as good as, for example, computer simulations and 3D pictures of an urban neighbourhood project. Initiatives already have been taken, ranging from the “Digital City” with all the information on Vienna to integral discussion forums in which the neighbours of the Danube Hospital were able to transmit their comments on the new zoning plan in electronic form, either on their own or with the help of experts, directly to the Town Hall.

The new media show us the way to the future - but this way has to be taken by all of us together, by politicians, experts and citizens
It is evident that all these measures in the field of the new media cannot replace public participation in its traditional sense. However, they assist in speeding up procedures and in making them more efficient. Planning still has to become more transparent. The mediator of the future not only has to be an intermediary between the “fronts”, but should also be able to apply the new media in a purpose-oriented way.

Thus, the motto of tomorrow’s public participation should be: The new media show us the way to the future – but this way has to be taken by the politicians, experts and citizens responsible together!
New ways of electronic communication with the citizens

The “Grätztelefon” as the pavement at the data highway
New ways of electronic communication
The “Grätzltelefon” as the pavement at the data highway

New telecommunication services such as on-line services, Internet, audiotext or fax-on-demand, raise hopes in many quarters that these services will have a positive effect on the transparency of political decisions and on the possibilities for co-determination, in the communication between citizen and administration, in the process of public participation and in the renewal of democracy. You cannot miss the numerous attempts undertaken both by city administrations and by commercial and non-profit organisations to utilise these new media in order to improve local communication: prominent examples are the “Digital City of Amsterdam” or the community net movement in the USA.

Within the framework of a research project, the first inventory of such projects was prepared, previous experiences were collected, some theoretical considerations were made and a field test with a telephone service was made and evaluated as an example for a socially acceptable communication service. Within the framework of a technology assessment scheme, the research project was carried out at the Research Institute for Socio-Economics at the Austrian Academy of Sciences with the support of the Urban Planning and Cultural Departments of the City of Vienna. This contribution presents the most important findings of this work which was completed in June 1995. In particular, the description of the field test which was implemented using an audiotex service will be accorded special attention.

Information systems for local areas have already become a tradition. In the 70’s, the objective was to provide improved and more competent services to the users of public administration by better informed civil servants. Hence, these information systems were geared towards the interface between administration and citizens, i.e. administrative employees having direct contacts with citizens. In the 80’s, local information services were established by means of national videotex systems in many countries. But with the exception of some services in France, none of these projects were widely accepted and used.

Only in the second half of the 80’s, the ground was prepared for the emergence of a new type of municipal information systems. The spreading of personal computers and simple telecommunication software allowed for the establishment of mailboxes, on-line services and audioboxes. Moreover, only then citizens’ action and residents’ committees took an active position in the local political process and tested new forms of technical communication in which the difference between sender and recipient was offset in accordance with the working structure of such groups.

In the mid-90’s, local information also enter the Internet, the biggest communication network worldwide. Now, basic information on the cities are again provided mostly by the administrations themselves. The biggest benefits are probably registered in the internal use by the administrations, because the number of citizens utilising Internet services still tends to be below 2% in most European cities.

Applications of local telecommunication services
Some applications of telecommunication services clearly are democratic and participatory in nature, others are tools for social exchange at a local level. However, also the latter category can contribute to the emergence of informal social networks. These are the predecessors of explicit organisational forms of self-help or political participation. Some services are designed for major target populations and address the entire community, others are conceived for small, local groups – just like the pilot project “Grätzltelefon” (neighbourhood phone) described below which only focused on a part of one district.
Information and services provided

- Basic information services of the city and other organisations
- News services: notifications and documentation
- City calendar, calendar of events, notices
- Orientation aids at offices and other public places
- Interactive participatory tools
- Discussion of issues of local politics
- Tools for stimulating self-organisation and local identification
- Exchanges for neighbourly help
- Presentation space and markets for local companies
- Hospitality desk for visitors and newcomers

Basic information services of the city and other organisations

Basic information on responsibilities, persons to be contacted and opening hours of public facilities and offices were among the standard subjects covered already in the early stages of urban information systems. In particular in this field of static information, telematic media face heavy competition from printed media, but basic information, nevertheless, should also be accessible in electronic form. Information should also be provided on private services and organisations, such as self-help groups or consulting centres, which are more difficult to find.

In the course of an acceptance study carried out on the “Direkte-Bürger-Informations-System” (DiBIS) in Hamburg, Frisch\(^5\) examined the information requirements of citizens contacting authorities which resulted in the following ranking of topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of information</th>
<th>People interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information for everyday life</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about one’s rights</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timetables for public transport</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar of events</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculation of benefits</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural information</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure, sports</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal politics</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City guide</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants, hotels</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

News services: notifications and documentation

The most recent and most important news should be especially easy to find, e.g. opening of new facilities and introduction of new services, new traffic connections, etc. They might be offered, for instance, as the “News of the Day” which are automatically displayed to each user of the telecommunication service.

There is also other current information which could be disseminated: agendas of the meetings of district councils and of the City Council, minutes (if public) or reports on these meetings, reports on public hearings on major building projects. Even archives can be set up for this information. The users should have the opportunity to offer information on specific areas themselves.

City calendar, calendar of events, notices

A city calendar offers an overview of all events taking place in the city or in the quarter. This is not meant to be confined to cultural events, but rather should be a list of all current events of importance to the geographic unit, e.g.
Meeting of the City Council and/or district councils,
Calling hours of authorities and politicians,
Public hearings on building projects,
Local events, such as the opening of infra-structure facilities,
Public events organised by private bodies, such as theatre performances by schools, street festivals, flee markets.

Orientation aids at public places
One of the services offered by urban information services with the longest tradition: terminals set up at public places, sometimes with touch screens, provide orientation aid and locally important information (e.g. public services available in office buildings, closest public transport lines, last-minute travel agencies) in a way accessible even to computer illiterates. Also phone-based services are suitable for this purpose, as the public terminals are already available in the form of telephone booths.

Discussion of decisions in local politics
This application is characteristic for current concepts for telematic media. Public discussions in which anybody may participate and which are conducted over a longer period of time can be held by means of interactive mass media. Living democracy needs democratic discourse, regular encounters between residents, administration and political decision-makers, which can find a new home in a telematic medium.

Above all, the subjects covered can deal with current municipal or local problems, especially in the run-up to political decisions, e.g. on the implementation of urban expansion projects, location of new streets or planning the stops of new public transport lines.

Promoting and utilising the services of local companies in a better way
Improved information on local facilities for shopping and recreation support the units existing in the neighbourhood and reduce the traffic volume.

For this purpose, local companies are given room to present their products and services. Advertising space also helps to raise funds for a part of the operating costs.

Self-organisation and neighbourly help
Like any other mass medium, telematic urban information systems may also be used to co-ordinate initiatives of the citizens. Here, numerous fields of application can be found: from neighbourly help in baby-sitting and care for the elderly via car sharing to the integration of new residents into the neighbourhood. Users of electronic media frequently have a feeling of community towards their fellow users. This even works in the world-wide UseNet with its more than 6,000 topics whose users as a rule never meet each other in person. The readiness to help other members of this community by word and deed is very high. Herein lies a substantial reason for the attractiveness and actual functionality of bulletin board systems. This readiness to provide neighbourly help or voluntary community services could be stimulated and co-ordinated via telematic media.

New telematic services may also be used for novel methods of fund raising. Apart from fund-raising campaigns, value-added telephone services can be set up whose utilisation provides the operator with income which can be used for a specific service.

If systems allow for bi-directional communication, they also become a meeting place where the users get to know each other. Thus, they can be used as an instrument of local integration for people who moved and are seeking social contacts and information in their new neighbourhood.

Assessment and options of interactive media
Speech boxes have the lowest access threshold both in technical terms – a computer is not required – and in social terms – there is no need to write something. Nevertheless, it is to be expected that the ability of linguistic expression remains an essential access criterion. Speech boxes are mainly suitable for small-scale, clear topics and areas and transport more verbal than non-verbal connotations.

When topics of a community net are transmitted via the cables of a local cable TV provider, the user group can be significantly expanded if the user
terminal is appropriately designed or if existing devices can be used (TV set with teletext option or PC). Information desks also reach big target groups which even vary depending on the location where the desks are installed. However, they can only present a relatively limited amount of information in an efficient way which, moreover, has to be edited and processed in a cost-intensive way. Internet-based graphical systems can present information well, but access to them depends on the technical and financial resources of the user. Feedback options are relatively well developed, but expertise is required to edit information for such a system.

The assessment of radio and TV are well known from the literature of communication science. Radio is a medium with a more cognitive orientation and is well suited for the dissemination of information. TV addresses more affective states by far. Factual information is very frequently missed by the recipient. But local TV programmes can count on receiving somewhat more attention by the viewers as they are directly concerned. In case of these two media, the “symmetry of discourse” (involving the audience) can only be achieved temporarily by using other media.

**Socio-economic effects of local telematic media**

Local information systems can unfold a broad range of effects. Even though the individual effects are inadequately documented in scientific literature, discussions held by media operators on the Internet feature recurring observations. In the following, a structure of impact levels is outlined.

**Socio-economic impact levels of local telematic media**

- Structuring functions
- Differentiating the structure
- Community building
- Functions promoting participation
- Encounters with local/municipal decision-makers
- Confrontation with information of local relevance
- New local communication point for meeting other residents
- Strengthening the local area
- Promoting local economy
- Raising awareness for the neighbourly environment
- Strengthening local identity
- Developing telematic cultural technology
- “Understanding the medium of virtual community as the message”
- Practising the use of telematic media
- Further development of telematic media

**Structuring functions**

A typical characteristic of telematic services is the fact that they create new structures in many respects: First of all, they establish a new structure of the users who opted for this service for various reasons and who become a virtual community due to regular communication and interaction. Within the medium, they differentiate the structure: sub-fields within the medium emerge which have a relatively stable user group.

The observed effect of data networks which leads to the formation of dormant communities based on the same interests (for example, the Austrian raver scene on the “Black•Box” system) can result in the success of network projects in neighbourhoods which seemed to be lacking communication before. The readiness to integrate new members into an existing electronic community is very high, as was shown by the example. The new medium, however, has the best prospects in areas where well-functioning communities already exist which only get another communication tool. Apple Computer, too, promoted exclusively pre-networked communities in its “Apple Community Grants Program” (here, “networked” refers to groups with common interests).

**Functions fostering participation**

Administration, politics, private organisations, associations and groups with common interests can act as information providers in a network. This counters the trend towards a monopolisation of information sources and offers the opportunity to differentiate the information offered at a local level and according to specific interests. Politics and administration also become more independent
of commercial media and open up new communication channels.

Two requirements of political participation can be met in a better way by local telematic media: information level as well as verbal and communicative skills. The bi-directional character of telematic media offers the opportunity of an on-going democratic discourse between administration, the people concerned and politicians, which would not take place due to the big efforts involved in participating personally in meetings.

Finally, the creation of new parts of the public may result in the spontaneous organisation of interests in some cases. Communities emerge which develop via the medium, but whose impact goes far beyond the bounds of the network.

**Strengthening local identity**

Telematic media not only can disseminate more information on the immediate vicinity than conventional mass media, they also offer opportunities to exchange goods and services at a local level. A new place for exchanging offers of “neighbourly help” replaces at least in part the local meeting places lost (small district markets, the local “agora”). Thus, social contacts maintained in the geographic environment become more important again.

What applies to social or neighbourly exchanges, can also be of advantage to local economy: living and experiencing focuses more on the neighbourhood.

Advertising campaigns can be targeted more precisely so that local companies have improved prospects of getting new customers.

“Understanding the medium of virtual community as the message”

When a new communication technology enters everyday usage, a new “cultural technology” develops. Similarly to the impact of reading, it may also be assumed to have the power to shape society. But the most direct effects act upon the medium itself. Though it changes the people among whom its use spreads, but the resulting experiences in turn also affect the medium: its further development and, hence, its change is influenced.

**The field test “Grätzltelefon” for the Aspern area**

The objective of the field test was to set up a telephone service allowing each caller to select local information and to retrieve it acoustically or by telefax or to record a contribution to a discussion.

The first phase focused on the preparation of a service concept for an audiotext service which, above all, was to be easy to use. In loose co-operation with a software development team and media specialists, a tool was created which was sophisticated enough to allow for the implementation of complex functionalities for a telephone service using several lines. As a result, no restrictions on technical feasibility existed in the first place and it was possible to find technical solutions for special wishes quickly, such as a mechanism for assessing contributions by callers.

**Set-up of the field test and functions of the “Grätzltelefon”**

The test area we selected was an urban expansion area for which essential decisions had already been taken, but where more detailed issues, such as design of green space, still offered room for manoeuvre. Moreover, we could not foresee the dynamics of such a medium so that we avoided to address topics triggering great concerns (for example, the issue of traffic) since these were already discussed by local working groups within the framework of public participation procedures. We did, however, plan to cover specific subjects upon the request of callers, for example, by opening new discussion areas or by having the working groups of the public participation procedure present their work methods and results via this medium.

The decision was taken in favour of the urban expansion area Langobardenstraße where 2,700 new flats were completed in 1995. This testing ground had the essential advantage that we were able to rely on existing structures as measures had already been taken to promote co-determination (e.g. in form of a special office called “Stadttreff Aspern”) and to improve communication among the parties involved (e.g. in the form of a local magazine called “hier fehlt noch was”) in the urban expansion area selected at the periphery.
Thus, a competition for “the best stories and the funniest noises in the neighbourhood” was started in which the jury was made up of the active participants themselves. Additionally, we attempted to offer space for local news, an exchange for arranging lifts to and from work and for advertisements by local companies.

On 8 November 1994, the “Grätzltelefon” service started with a capacity of four telephone lines. The target group were a total of 50,000 persons at the “Marchegger Ast”. Among these, the residents of the quarter “Aspern” (15,000 people), where the majority of the construction work was performed, were addressed specifically.

**Subjects covered by the “Grätzltelefon” for the Aspern area**

The caller, who only has to pay local telephone charges, dials the number 589 30 22. After a musical welcome, the telephone set of the caller is checked for the possibility of controlling the dialogue by means of keys, otherwise speech recognition is activated. Then, the caller can listen to an acoustic directory and can choose among the following options:

- **“Bassena” chat**
  The very first forum is “Bassena”. Here, each user may say whatever is important to him/her. That may be accounts of problems in everyday life, suggestions for improvements or “letting off steam”. Maybe, somebody calls to share a good idea or a proposal with others.

- **Information on the new Langobardenviertel**
  Here, explanations are given on what is going on in and around the emerging Langobardenviertel: what is being constructed, which infrastructure facilities are added, but also how to get flats in this quarter. Persons interested may leave their name and address to obtain further information.

- **Having a say in planning and design**
  This is where “Stadttreff”, the office co-ordinating all the public participation projects in this quarter, is presented. Information on the dates and venues of planning events and workshops is provided.
**Aspnerer GRÄTZLTELEFON: 589 30 22**

Ein elektronischer Telefondienst zum Orts tariff.

**Wie funktioniert’s?**


Sie haben zwei Möglichkeiten:

Entweder Sie wählen die Hauptnummer 589 30 22, hören sich die Einführung und Erläuterung an und dann mit der ersten Zahl des Teilnehmer die gewünschten Bereich.

Oder Sie wählen eine der angeführten Direktbühnen und kommen genau zu Ihrem Wunschziel.

**Benennung ist allem:**

Sie können die Zellenordnung des Telefons auch dazu verwenden, im System „hinterzusprießen“. Mit “$” springen Sie einen Text zurück, mit “$” nach vor mit “$” springen Sie eine Ebene (siehe rechts). Zuletzt mit “$” kommen Sie zurück zum Eintrag.

Sie haben was zu sagen: eigenständige Beträge aufnehmen

Wählen Sie ein Thema und dann die „F“. Zum aufnehmen, hören Sie den Text und bewerten Sie die Zellenordnung, wobei Sie den Text noch einmal und entscheiden dann, ob Sie ihn sparen wollen. Wenn Sie einen Moment warten wollen, wird Ihr Betrag gespeichert, wenn Sie die „$“ drücken, wird er in den Papierloch.

**Schlüssel- und Blumen**

As required, discussions on various topics, such as “traffic”, “design of green space” or “education”, are set up in the “Grätzltelefon”.

Service hotline
This is the service and announcement section of the “Grätzltelefon” where essential information on everyday life in the neighbourhood is to be found: opening hours of facilities, the chemist’s on night service, consulting hours of the outpatient department of SMZ Ost, but also the date of the next farmers’ market or the location of the closest student counselling centre. Some basic data was permanently included, and everybody was able to post personal announcements or hints. Furthermore, an exchange for car sharing was set up in order to achieve a better capacity utilisation of the cars crossing the Danube.

“Competition for the best stories and funniest noises”
The entire campaign was supplemented by a competition mainly addressing young people. The residents were to record noises and stories from their neighbourhood on a cassette and to upload it to the “Grätzltelefon”.

Results of the field test
The field test of the “Grätzltelefon” for the Aspern area was conducted from November 1994 through February 1995. In this period of time, 1998 calls were registered.

The number of attempts made by the callers to record contributions in the section “Bassena” chat was 80 and a total of 37 messages were successfully posted. The other callers either hung up immediately or deleted the message themselves. This means that 20% of 394 visitors of “Bassena” chat started the recording procedure and 10% actually left a message to be retrieved by other callers.

“Bassena” chat was more or less a receptacle for local concerns. Three messages (among them two very long and well argued contributions by women) referred to traffic problems: the new flats would result in 10,000 additional cars; necessity to construct an new bridge; appeal for fair behaviour in traffic. Three callers complained about the complicated handling, three thought the “Grätzltelefon” was great. One user criticised the planned construction of a Moslem cemetery inasmuch as separate cemeteries were not constructed for other religions, either. A gentleman, who even left his name and phone number, complained about water quality. Another caller suggested to set up a needle container at the Hirschstetten youth centre as this was common practice elsewhere. Two expressed their malevolent opinion on the Viennese in general. One young man complained about the fact that a low-grade basketball basket had been mounted. Another one offered information on leisure activities and also suggested cross-country skiing whereupon another caller replied complaining about the lack of snow. One caller recognised a voice and called “Hi, Leo”. One contribution was “None of these recordings is real” and another one “Send me roses to Berlin, thank you, John”. Last but not least, also a short, hearty laugh was to be heard.

The possibility to make assessments was hardly applied by the users as regular moderation attempted to place suitable contributions first in order to make the presentation clearer.

The department for Public Relations of Municipal Department 18 considered the “Grätzltelefon” to be a useful medium for fostering communication and providing detailed information to a local target group. However, the central administration of the city did not use it as a tool to get into contact with the local population. This would have required further agreements to ensure that civil servants of the City of Vienna regularly retrieve new contributions and explain their views on issues of local policy. This aspect was repeatedly discussed during the planning of the “Grätzltelefon” and, in fact, a member of the planning department and a mediator involved in the local public participation procedure were ready to perform this task. However, due to the low number of contributions on local policies regarding urban expansion, interventions did not seem to be necessary.
Interest in the subjects discussed was also expressed by district politicians who expected that the contributions would be evaluated statistically but showed little readiness to participate themselves in the discussions on the “Grätzltelefon”. The reason for this may have been a wrong assessment of the time required or a wrong understanding of its functioning.

Conclusions
Telematic media such as Internet, mailboxes or speech boxes are “interactive” in two respects: they allow for the selection of information areas, i.e. they permit direct interaction with the system and, additionally, the exchange of messages with other persons (interaction between subjects). Thus, these new media are the first bi-directional mass media available. They are particularly well suited for political participation in fields of direct concern to the population: in the close environment, i.e. where people live and work. The opportunity to enhance the discourse on the shaping of one’s own environment via telecommunications should be utilised given the crisis of traditional forms of democracy.

Integration into public participation projects
Telematic media have to be an element and a tool of major social projects – not their objective and subject. This is overlooked by many enthusiastic advocates of new communication technologies. Thus, technology-driven projects justly become the target of criticism of people who are seriously concerned about democratic issues. As a result, these media can be used best within the framework of comprehensive participatory campaigns. We followed these considerations in designing the “Grätzltelefon” which was embedded in the public participation project at Aspern. Also in the run-up to referendums or local elections, such a telephone service would be suitable for offering an additional media level for a rational discourse on specific subjects in which everybody can participate.

Involvement of a maximum number of social groups
A successful and binding discourse can only be achieved if all important social groups are able to participate in it: the responsible departments of the city administration, action committees and associations active in public, but also established interest groups, individual residents and economic and cultural groups.

Addressing new user groups by speech-based systems
An important experience regarding the subject of communication technologies available can be gleaned from the “Grätzltelefon” project at Aspern: new media, such as speech box systems, can be used to raise the number of potential users of telematic information systems dramatically: access is provided to population groups which usually would not be able to benefit from bi-directional services.

The field test carried out within the framework of the project showed a participation rate that was highly satisfactory for the demanding topic of urban planning even though there was virtually no budget available for advertising campaigns.

High coverage and functional variety due to media mix
Each medium has its characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. Above all, they reach different target groups. Hence, no medium is to be excluded a priori, but an optimal combination of the various functions is to be achieved in an ideal media mix. Up-to-date urban information systems are to be given as broad a technological basis as possible. Mixed general system reach by far more people than each individual technology and, at the same time, they offer the maximum range of functionalities.

Observing the requirements of journalistic editing
Many urban information projects do not achieve their objectives or are not relevant. This failure must not be attributed exclusively to the low acceptance of media technology. The topics covered, their presentation and, last not least, updating are essential diffusion criteria. Journalistic editing includes the selection of information, up-to-date presentation in line with the medium used and an active journalistic role in which topics are automati-
cally brought up and media events are produced. Not only the information offered has to be prepared adequately, but also the options for active communication and exchange. Hence, telematic media have to be seen as “journalistic media tools” by the operators. Otherwise they will remain only of interest to a small group of bitheads.

Organisational and economic planning of continued media operation
In spite of positive response from the users at the start, a significant number of ambitious urban information projects became useless or were only available with highly reduced functionality already after a few months. The reasons were a lack of planning and, above all, insufficient funds for on-going operation. Installation costs are only one part of the expenses required for such systems. Substantial resources are needed later on during normal operation to fund personnel for maintenance, moderation and updating of data and information.

Necessity of active participation by politicians
The participation of political representatives is indispensable. They may benefit from this process if they prove their interest in the citizens’ concerns by direct responses (statements or concrete measures and interventions. If there is no participation and response, the medium and the politicians lose their credibility.

Avoiding unrealistic expectations
In spite of the potential offered by telecommunications, it can only be a tool, a medium. It can only have an effect if it is used in a political environment in which participation is welcome and the basic requirements are met. It may reduce the barriers for entering political processes by facilitating information exchange or making it more attractive. However, basic conditions have to be fulfilled, e.g. politics and administration have to be ready to co-operate and all the parties involved have to be interested in a discourse. The media can only provide a special structure, such as news groups or regular on-line meeting places, which outline and support the communication process. Thus, telematic media play the role of an additional, new level in the democratic process which offers more people the opportunity to express their opinion than traditional mass media, but still is embedded in, and dependant on, the other levels of political discussions. This embedding is the prerequisite for relevance to sociopolitics. More or less “autistic” discourses – as they are common in many areas of UseNet – are of no importance to the world outside.

Summary
The interactive media are preceded by the reputation that they will herald the age of electronic democracy. Decision-makers use this metaphor to demonstrate progress or justify investments and grants in the high-tech sector. But, similarly to the metaphor of the “data highway” which creates a false analogy with respect to the variety of telecommunication networks, democratic rules of procedure cannot be simply replaced by electronic communication processes.

The application of new media in the course of democratic renewal certainly makes sense, but to make it also a success, politics and administration have to be ready to adjust the course of planning, decision-making and administrative procedures to these media and to make full use of their direct and horizontal nature. The solution is certainly not the introduction of new technologies, but the promotion of the organic evolution of new communication levels, which also include telematic media. The “Grätzltelefon” field test or examples from the Internet show that these media are capable of supporting discussions above all on issues of local politics and that they have an integrating function. Hence, interactive media are to be taken into account in planning local media in the media mix in order to promote local communication and to make it more tangible.
New Ways of electronic communication
The “Grätzltelefon” as the pavement at the data highway

1 The study “Politische Beteiligung per Telekommunikation” by Roland Alton-Scheidl and Gerhard Lukawetz is available from Public Voice Verlag, Weimarer Straße 17, A-1180 Vienna, Austria, phone (+43 1) 470 46 80, fax (+43 1) 470 43 04.

2 Audiotex services are telephone services which go beyond establishing a conventional connection between two subscribers. They offer, for example, the possibility to retrieve acoustic information at a keystroke, to leave a message either for a specific person or for all callers, or to order a fax document. According to this definition, the “Grätzltelefon” is an audiotex service.

3 Videotex systems are screen-based telecommunication services with a national network infrastructure, e.g. BTX and PAN in Austria, the Teletel service using Minitel terminals in France, etc.

4 In early 1995, some 100,000 Austrians had access to the Internet. The majority of these Internet users were students and university staff. Cf. Seidel / Haacker / Alton-Scheidl: Österreich Online – Ein interaktives Handbuch, Public Voice Verlag, p. 16.


6 Cf. contributions in Community Net Listserver. Subscription by sending an e-mail to "listserv@uvmvm.uvm.edu" with the text "sub comunet <first name><last name>".

7 Black•Box is a mailbox designed for young people with a node in Vienna.

8 Quoted from the invitation to the “Canadian Community Networks Conference and Founding Meeting of Tele-communities Canada 1994".
NEW WAYS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The "Grätzltelefon" as the pavement at the data highway

STADTENTWICKLUNG IN ASPERN


Das GRÄTZLTELEFON: 589 30 22

Anrufen und wissen, was sich tut in Aspern

Mitreden bei der Planung


Das Grätzltelefon ist ein neuartiger Informations- und Diskussionsdienst und bietet viel mehr als ein einfacher Tonbandservice. Die Stadtverwaltung, das Kommunalwissenschaftliche Dokumentationszentrum und viele andere gestalten für Sie Informationen aus dem Raum Aspern. Zum Ortstarif können Sie mit Ihrem Telefon aus dem vorhandenen Angebot aktiv auswählen aber auch selbst mitreden und etwas aufsprechen.

Das Grätzltelefon ist eine gemeinsame Initiative von

Stadtplanung Wien

Forschungsstelle für Sozioökonomie

PUBLIC VOICE

Interaktive Mediendienste

Unter Mitarbeit des Kommunalwissenschaftlichen Dokumentationszentrums, des Stadtreufs Aspern und vieler interessierter Donaustädterinnen und Donaustädter
What is behind it?
The combined use of telephone lines, computer and speech boxes allows the residents of a neighbourhood to access information around the clock, but also to voice their own suggestions, comments and complaints or even to chat with other residents. The advantage of this newly developed information system is the fact that it is not a one-way street for communication, in contrast to most “old media”: right from the start, the citizens are invited to join the discussion. And all they need is the familiar, well-proven telephone – neither computer expertise nor access to the Internet.

Where was it tested before?
In the urban expansion area Langobardenstraße in Aspern (Vienna), the “Grätzltelefon” was in operation from November 1994 to February 1995. A nascent quarter where future residents were still able to influence planning decisions seemed to be particularly suitable for this pilot project which was unique for Austria. A new form of public participation became possible by means of this technology which, for the first time, was accessible and understandable for everyone.

How did it work?
The “Grätzltelefon” not only passed on information, it also took suggestions, wishes and complaints, and even a kind of conversation with other users of the new system was possible, however, only in deferred mode. The callers can listen and respond to everything said before they called. Whatever is said will be recorded – unless you erase your own contribution – and subsequent callers will refer to these comments or start a new discussion. Some time later, you can hear what the others contributed, make your own comments and so on. In order to avoid misunderstandings or confusion, “Luise”, the system’s voice, guides you through the conversation which may take any form from a relaxed chat to a heated discussion.

How much does it cost?
Calling the “Grätzltelefon” is not more expensive than a local call of the same length. The City of Vienna tries to keep the costs for the users to a minimum in order to encourage as many citizens as possible to participate. After all, such a facility only makes sense if it is used by many people so that we can justly speak of public participation and this is, in fact, the objective pursued by the City of Vienna in introducing the “Grätzltelefon”.

What are the benefits?
Communication between the administration and the citizens can never be good enough, quick enough or efficient enough. The “Grätzltelefon” is another step on our way to bringing decision-making closer to the citizens while it also promotes critical dialogue among the residents of an area. It is a grass-roots facility which fulfils exactly the function of the market place in ancient Greece:

- prompt information on the local situation and events,
- fostering discussion which does not exclude opposing views,
- involving the citizens in decision-making processes.

The success of this new way of communication depends less on the technology used but rather on the interest of the population, i.e. whether they want to get information, to intervene, to be heard. Only if this is true, the “Grätzltelefon” can fulfil its task as a link between citizens, planners and politicians.
Urban planning quiz

Questions on the Urban Development Plan of Vienna
Herzlich willkommen

PlanFragen
10 aus 50

Fragen zu
STEP und Verkehrskonzept
Ein Quizspiel der Stadtplanung Wien

Viel Vergnügen ...

programmiert von Stegl Untermaier
Inhalt und Grafik von Beate Heira und Eva-Maria Mundich

Weiter

StepQuiz

Fragennummer 3
Im Stadtentwicklungskonzept 94 wird ein 'räumliches Leitbild' für Wien abzeichnet. Was ist ein 'räumliches Leitbild'? /

Wählen Sie eine Antwort:

1. Richtlinien und Grundzüge für die künftige Entwicklung der Stadt Wien.
2. Eine Ausstellung in den Räumlichkeiten des Rathauses.
3. Eine neue dreidimensionale Darstellung der Stadt Wien.

Ihre Antwort war RICHTIG

PlanFragen is a computer quiz which is to provide information on the Urban Development Plan and on the Traffic Concept in a playful way. The introductory screen is shown on the top of the opposite page. In the design of the quiz, the following considerations were of central importance:

- There are a total of 50 questions on the following fields: urban planning in general, space model – axes – centres, economy, housing, design of urban space – urbanity, green space – recreation and urban climate, traffic, technical and social infrastructure.
- Each game is made up of ten questions, multiple-choice answers are provided.
- Explanations are given, no matter whether the answer was right or wrong.
- The score is determined by the number of correct answers and by the time passed between displaying a question and deciding on an answer.
- The questions are presented in a clear form and cover problems familiar to the “average citizen” from everyday life and surprising facts from the Urban Development Plan STEP 1994 which are comprehensible for everybody (e.g. “You are buying a 70 sq. m flat. How much money does the City of Vienna spend to supply you with electricity, water, gas, etc.?”).
- Due to their wording, the answers offered constitute an essential “encouragement” to play the game. An example for a question is shown in the centre of the opposite page.
- In a few words, the explanations outline relations to urban development. In case of the question on infrastructure costs, reference could be made to the reasons for assigning priority to compact settlement types in order to reduce development costs or to the advantages of “inner urban expansion”. Each explanation is complemented by a graph, a picture or a map. To allow the players to read the explanation in their own time, the timer is stopped after the answer was selected. The picture at the bottom of the opposite page shows an “answer screen”.

As the questions are selected at random, the didactic value of the quiz cannot lie in a logically structured information thread which guides the user systematically through the topic “urban planning and traffic”, but in the explanation of certain “key-words”, such as “city of short distances”, “sustainable development”, etc. whose fundamental importance to urban planning is illustrated.

The objective of the quiz is, of course, to give correct answers to ten questions as quickly as possible. If the player answered at least six questions correctly, he/she may register in the high-score list of the 100 best players. The players may also enter their names and addresses to participate in a monthly prize competition. The final screen is shown at the bottom of this page.

Contribution by Bernd Hala
Project team: Eva-Maria Munduch Siegi Lindenmayr
Urban planning quiz
Questions on the Urban Development Plan of Vienna
Urban planning quiz

Questions on the Urban Development Plan of Vienna
The idea
In 1994, Urban Planning Vienna was offered a software for a computer quiz on municipal subjects. As the "Urban Development Plan for Vienna" and the "Traffic Concept Vienna - General Measures" was approved by the Viennese City Council in April 1994, the software offered the opportunity of presenting the new plans and, thus, of disseminating information within the framework of the PR of Urban Planning Vienna.

The medium
The minimum requirements for running the software were a 386 PC with the operating system MS-DOS 6.0 and Windows 3.1. Graphs and pictures can be supplied in pixel or vector format. This relatively simple editing procedure facilitates subsequent changes or the updating of individual items in the programme. Moreover, the potential users do not need any sophisticated equipment.

The objective
The target group was and is Vienna’s population, with the individual persons being defined as people interested in the subject, students as well as “passers-by”.

Summary
Based on the experience gained at exhibitions, citizens’ meetings and similar events, a new way of disseminating and fostering information and knowledge was developed which, however, has already a long tradition in the media sector.

For example, “What is gentle urban renewal?”
- Improving urban structures while preserving the characteristics and the local ambience of the neighbourhoods.
- A ban on using explosives for demolishing old buildings.
- Painting the façades in gentle pastel colours.

This question-and-answer game was based on hard facts, but designed with a slightly humorist touch in order to prevent that the playful character was completely lost. In this way, everybody not only can test his/her understanding of issues of urban planning in Vienna, but also obtain information on current problems and events.

Though no restriction is made to the age group of the players, it is expected that great interest in these topics can be raised above all among young people, in particular among pupils who might belong to tomorrow’s urban planners. Games and, in particular, computer games have been a popular pastime for a long time. Also the possibility to win a prize if the best score is reached is meant to be an incentive and an encouragement. Moreover, mention has to be made of the fact that this quiz is easy to install and, thus, also easy to copy to three 1.44 MB floppy disks. This offers a highly cost-efficient way of reproduction, especially for schools.

This product was not yet tested in public settings due to technical reasons, but numerous internal tests by the project team fully confirmed the expectations in this product. The marketing and utilisation of this work of Urban Planning Vienna at schools is the exclusive responsibility of the Vienna Board of Education. The PR group of Urban Planning Vienna will ensure that the quiz will be circulated within the fields of activities of the City of Vienna and will present it at exhibitions, events, etc.
Interactive Media in Vienna’s urban planning

A first attempt by Urban Planning Vienna –
the photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion
by commissioning the production of an interactive photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion in autumn 1994, Urban Planning Vienna ventured into the domain of interactive electronic information systems for the first time to promote public participation and information. General statements on urban development in Vienna as well as the concrete example of a new urban expansion area were to be used in testing the introduction of this new information technology. “The development of public participation at this level is one of the most fundamental criteria for the new quality of Vienna’s urban development,” stated City Councillor H. Swoboda.

Participation, co-determination, involvement in planning and decision-making are to be essential aspects of modern urban planning. The dissemination of comprehensive information is the first step to public participation and co-determination. The application of new technologies to this end also offers the opportunity to reach and inform previously “inactive” citizens. A user-friendly, interactive information system with a simple design which was presented at three completely different sites in the district of Wien-Donaustadt utilised the new information technology of interactive photo CD portfolio for the first time. In this context, “interactive” also refers to a new form of public participation and co-determination.

The catch phrases of interaction, multimedia, information society and of virtual realities and real worlds linked via the data highway are ubiquitous. On the one hand, the use of new media and innovative information technologies are welcomed euphorically and, on the other hand, they are demonised as the end of undistorted information. If, however, the words “interaction” and “interactive” are stripped of their fashionable usage as buzz words and traced back to their origins in sociological theories, we get a clear impression of the role that can be played by “interaction” and, thus, by interactive media in the context of urban planning and urban public, politicians, planners and citizens concerned.

What is Photo CD portfolio

The photo CD is an image storage system developed by Kodak. It is a CD-ROM in the XA format which can be read by CD-I players, special photo CD players and, using special driver software, by PCs and MACs. CD-ROM is the abbreviation of “Compact Disc Read-Only Memory”, i.e. a data carrier which allows the user to read out data, but not to store or write over data. As CDs are read by means of a laser beam without being touched they are also called “optical data carriers”, which leads us to the term “optical publishing”. XA, the abbreviation of “extended Architecture”, is a multimedia format which makes it possible to store files with various contents in an interleaved way so that they can be read out and transferred not only one after the other, but more or less at the same time.

One of the formats covered by the broad term of photo CDs is the photo CD portfolio which is suitable for multimedia applications combining pictures with texts, graphics and sound. Up to 800 pictures, one hour of sound in audio-CD quality or a combination of these two options can be stored on a CD portfolio and accessed in simple interaction steps by the user. Pictures are stored in TV resolution (768 x 512 pixel).

Design

The photo CD portfolio was an experiment in several respects. There were only eight weeks available between commissioning and the delivery of the final CD. Thus, we had to rely on existing photo material which was very heterogeneous both as regards its quality and the image language used and, naturally, required very big efforts in processing. Likewise, we had to use existing plans and maps, graphic changes were only possible in marginal areas. Due to this framework, the main design options were selection menus as well as sound and text editing.

Fourteen cartoons were integrated into the flow of the CD as a special design element which is unique in this form. Based on sophisticated stereo sound collages, they create special, distinct “hearing experiences” for the user which were conceived as surprising and alternating features.
Contents
The “bipartite” photo CD on urban planning / urban expansion offers the following subjects which can be controlled and selected on an individual basis: the “information branch STEP ‘94” and the “information branch Langobardenviertel”.

The photo CD portfolio which was presented in parallel with the exhibition “New developments in the Langobardenviertel” contains information on the principles followed by Vienna's urban planning in general as they were defined in STEP ‘94 (Urban Development Plan 1994).

The urban expansion project “Langobardenviertel” which is implemented along the urban expansion axis “Marchegger Ast” illustrates how the objectives of urban planning can be translated into practice, what the implementation of STEP ‘94 will mean, how urban planning functions and how it changes the face of the city.

An overview of the two “information branches” is provided by summaries that can be selected individually. Using a remote control, the users themselves decide on the topics - urban planning in general, STEP ‘94, or the development of the Langobardenviertel - on which information is to be displayed on one of the screens.

The Urban Development Plan STEP lays down the broader guidelines and principles for the spatial development of Vienna. It contains the long-term objectives of urban development in fields such as traffic, green space, housing, etc. The top priority of STEP is a new planning approach in which the main emphasis is placed on “ecological urban development”, providing a humane and sound environment and, above all, involvement of those affected by planning, dissemination of information to the citizens, co-determination by the citizens interested – in short, optimally the democratisation of urban planning.

It goes without saying that such a broad and long-term planning instrument can only make very general statements. However, the presentation of these complex issues and relations was one of the biggest challenges in the design of the photo CD. The “information branch STEP ‘94” on the photo CD provides basic statements on the urban development plan as a planning tool, a concise historical overview of long-term and large-scale projects in Vienna as well as a “popular” presentation and illustration of issues of relevance to medium-term to long-term planning and development arranged by subjects mainly as regards their applicability to the new urban expansion areas.

Layout plans, development and expansion areas, plans for green space and traffic, pictures and statistical data on past and future urban development, etc. can be accessed and selected individually, thus providing the user with a tailor-made “information package” on urban development in Vienna and on how urban development will respond to the new challenges.

In 1994, the new STEP was published which focuses on the new situation Vienna faces due to the opening up of the East, foreign migrants, changed migration patterns and rising birth figures. As a result, STEP ‘94 also had the motto “Vienna is growing – but whereto?”.

One of the responses of urban planning to the changed conditions is the zoning and building of new residential areas and whole quarters, mainly in the north-eastern and south-western parts of Vienna.

One of these new quarters is the so-called “Langobardenviertel” located next to the compound of the new Danube hospital SMZ Ost along Langobardenstraβe in the 22nd district of Vienna. In the next few years, flats and work places are to be provided for some 7,000 people in this area.

In accordance with the different stages of planning and implementation, the CD’s “information branch Langobardenviertel” contains statements on the number of flats and work places, social infrastructure, which is to be created in parallel to the moving in of the tenants and which will range from a midwife station via nurseries, people's high school to a home for senior citizens, on internal and external

A first attempt by Urban Planning Vienna – the photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion
Interactive Media
A first attempt by Urban Planning Vienna - the photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion
traffic links, extension and design of public transport, routing of private car traffic, regulation of parking space, green and open space, etc. The spectrum of information density ranges from floor plans of flats and layout plans for schools to the broader structural plans. Given the additional differentiation according to topics such as housing, work, traffic, social infrastructure, green space, etc., the presentation of basic data is in line with the procedure used in the “information branch STEP ’94” and, hence, also with a fundamental conception of urban planning.

The complexity of the projects presented on the photo CD is matched by technological implementation, i.e. a complex (planning and programming) system provides a tight network of potential and actual links in the background. At the “citizens’ level”, however, the user interface presents a clear, easy-to-use, and logical concept that can be an important contribution to well functioning public participation if used as a “discussion-free access to information” by the people concerned.

Presentation

The photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion was presented to the population together with the exhibition “New developments in Langobardenviertel” at several sites in the district of Wien-Donaustadt attracting varying numbers of visitors: on the one hand, at the “Stadttreff Aspern”, an information and co-ordination office for issues of urban expansion and urban renewal, and in the entrance hall of the Danube hospital SMZ Ost as well as in the “Atrium” of the Donauzentrum, the biggest shopping mall of Vienna which is frequented by several tens of thousands visitors and passers-by per day.

Already at the first presentation of the new information medium offering an “individually controllable exhibition on a TV screen”, the response of the population was exceptionally positive. Originally, some had feared that in particular older users would shy away from using the new medium and its interactive control, but they were proved wrong. Practice showed that there were hardly any mental barriers to using the photo CD, neither by children and young people for whom interactive computer games naturally belong to everyday routine nor by older persons.

Among others, this fact was also due to the new remote control which was developed specifically for the presentation of the photo CD portfolio and the clear design of the exhibition stand – a simple system for three units (CD player, screen, remote control).

A significant fact emerged later on when the photo CD portfolio was used alone as an autonomous information medium without the “pertinent” exhibition in the semi-public areas of Donauzentrum and SMZ Ost: the interest in it was at least as high as when it was used to supplement a conventional exhibition. This means that the concept of the “portable, re-usable exhibition” was proved right in practice.

As we could also see, the presentation of unspectacular, complex, long-term plans in form of “static images” had a higher informative value in some areas than the presentation by means of “moving images” which were very rapidly associated with advertising aesthetics and clips by the viewers.

The experiment of using interactive media in the PR on Vienna’s urban planning was a successful attempt and a move in the right direction. It also showed that the photo CD portfolio can be a highly capable tool both as a medium complementing exhibitions and as an independent presentation medium.
Infotainment determines our media consumption patterns

Approximately 97 per cent of Austria's households have a TV set. A major share of these households has access to more than 20 stations at home and abroad, either via cable or satellite. The individual stations wage a fierce struggle for high ratings and even the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation is compelled to adjust its programming more and more to the wishes of the viewers. Infotainment is in the foreground, our complex world is reduced to a few keywords. Objective information increasingly loses ground and is replaced by entertainment and shows.

Pictures versus written words

Quality papers have less and less readers while zeitgeist magazines conquer the market. The influence of TV viewing patterns is reflected in the reading habits of the recipients and, with only a few exceptions, the written word loses ground to pictures. These are gaining more and more importance in the field of print media - the more colourful and unusual they are, the better the chances that the message will be noticed and understood by the reader. Furthermore, personalisation is taking place, news are increasingly communicated only in connection with persons.

Information society

The new media enable us to access an extraordinary wealth of information. Via on-line services we can retrieve information from databases, CD-ROMs bring the contents of entire libraries to our living rooms and via Internet we can access the databases of the CIA in the USA or the European Union in Brussels on the World Wide Web. Facts upon facts were at our disposal if we only had learnt to use the new media and to select from this wealth of information according to our own interests.

Information as the first step to public participation

Urban Planning Vienna has to act within the media environment outlined above taking into account that the population has the right to be informed about the decisions taken at the Viennese Town Hall. But, this alone is not enough. It must be possible for the citizens to participate actively in the decision-making process. The first step towards co-determination is the dissemination of information to the citizens. In providing information, Urban Planning Vienna has to take paths ensuring that the recipients - the "Viennese in the street" - are really reached by information on urban development projects. Complex subjects of urban planning have to be communicated by means of pictures and simple, generally comprehensible messages. However, reduction to simple, pictorial messages does not mean that objectivity has to suffer.

The emotional level of information dissemination

The optical design of the photo CD portfolio using cartoons makes it possible to address the recipient at an emotional level. Indirectly, the viewer is reminded of the fact that also he/she might be the grumbling Viennese who opposes each and every (structural) change without reflecting in a critical way. At a time when advertising messages are incessantly suggesting an intact, happy world to our subconscious mind, the application of these communication forms play a significant role also in urban planning PR.

Interactivity - more than just a catch phrase?

In the future, interactive media such as the photo CD portfolio on urban planning / urban expansion will gain special importance in the PR work of Urban Planning Vienna when it comes to the presentation of complex issues of urban planning with the objective of informing Vienna's population in an open and honest way within the framework of public participation projects. This presentation technique complies with the new rules of information dissemination taking into account the changed media consumption patterns in Austria.
Chapter 8

U1 urban axis

Projects along the U1 urban axis - CD-I
Introduction
In late February 1995, the exhibition “U1 urban axis – Vienna is growing” was opened on the premises of Vienna Planning Workshop. Part of this exhibition was the installation of freely accessible information stations at which the visitors were able to retrieve general and detailed information on important plans and building projects along the “U1 urban axis” by means of CD-I players. The following four sections describe the subject, the medium as well as the production process and discuss problems faced during the implementation of this project.

The topic
Public participation is one of the basic requirements for the well functioning development of a city. For years, Vienna’s administration has endeavoured to discuss significant plans and building projects with the citizens. In order to initiate this discussion process it is necessary to inform all the parties involved as early as possible about the projects planned.

The CD-I “U1 Urban axis – Vienna is growing” was conceived as a tool for providing information to the citizens. Most of the sites selected for the information terminals were public places, underground stations, etc. in the urban area of Vienna. The main target group was defined as passers-by who are not ready to spend a lot of time on searching information. As a result, fast and efficient access to information was considered indispensable.

The production of the interactive CD “Urban axis U1 – Vienna is growing” was the first attempt at providing an information collection covering a great variety of projects along the U1 axis which are in most diverse stages of planning and implementation.

The northern U1 urban axis
From the Danube canal to Kagran, this axis runs through historically grown quarters as well as through areas that have not been used for many years. It intersects with important traffic axes and the Viennese recreational areas of Prater and Danube Island. It crosses the New Danube and the Old Danube and links the city centre with the Kagran centre, the international flair of the UNO City with the Viennese “Gründerzeit” structures of the second district dating from the 19th century.

Along this urban axis, important projects of future urban development are to be implemented by private and public builders in the next few years. These developments were triggered by the construction of the U1 underground line and Danube Island which also provide the required basic infrastructure. Danube Island, being the green heart of the city and the central recreation area, will not be affected by these projects. The step towards and across the Danube is to lead to the development of new, modern quarters which provide relief for the traditional city centre.

The Urban Development Plan outlines structural priorities for the area along the U1 axis, however this process is not characterised by mere urban expansion but by high-grade urban development. The objective is to create all the structures required for housing, working, shopping, leisure and culture in the new centres.

The schedules for the building projects along the northern U1 axis go far beyond the turn of the millennium. With a view to the time frame of this major urbanist task, it is certainly not possible to present a “final result” of urban development plans. In particular, the plans for long-term projects have to be adjusted, step by step, to future social developments.

Structuring information
Especially citizens living in the individual neighbourhoods concerned are usually more interested in local projects to be implemented in their vicinity than in the city at large. This fact was the starting point for providing information in this user-guidance system.

Right from the start of the information programme, the users always may intervene in the current presentation. They may interrupt it and continue at another point of the programme, they may skip areas or projects less interesting for them, etc. When the info terminal is not in use, an introductory sequence is displayed showing the title of the CD-I. This sequence runs in a continuous loop until a user presses one of the keys.
After an introductory video which can be skipped by pressing a key, the so-called main menu is displayed from which you can select the following information options:

- The option **STEP** explains the basic principles of Vienna's Urban Development Plan.
- When **U1 AXIS** is selected, general information on this urban development axis as well as, subsequently, a menu for choosing detailed information is provided.
- Under the heading **PROJECTS**, the individual building projects in planning are presented.
- The chapter **HISTORY** contains historical remarks and views on some parts of this urban axis.

Each of these options branches out like a tree – providing a structure for detailed information. Thus, information can be displayed specifically on an entire area, parts of it or even only on a single building project. Upon request of the user, technical data, information on builders or architects of individual projects can be shown. This structure is illustrated by the selection menus on page 74/75.

**The medium of CD-I**

The advance of new media – keyword “multimedia” – gave rise to considerations by the City of Vienna to test the use of digital data carriers for the dissemination of specific types of information. As in all multimedia projects, the selection of the suitable technical platform was among the first questions discussed at the beginning of the project “U1 urban axis”. In June 1994, when the project started, a decision in favour of CD-I was taken. Based on the technological properties of this compact disc format, this decision implied essential features of the way of production, didactic structure and audiovisual presentation of the topic.

As a compact disc, CD-I’s look like any other CDs. All CD formats have in common that they are carriers of digital information. In case of the first CD type available on the market, this information was sound (audio CD). But already that format showed fundamental differences to other storage media for sound. Top sound quality, resistance to wear in spite of frequent playing, a high storage capacity of more than 70 minutes of music – all these characteristics made the audio CD a world-wide commercial success and, eventually, turned it into the standard format. The logical further development of the CD as a storage medium by electronics industry resulted in its use as a storage medium for data, too. After all, the 12 cm wide disc has a capacity of more than 650 megabyte for storing texts, figures and pictures on narrow space.

The utilisation of compact discs as data storage media also became a standard, though the differences in PC worlds and operating systems (e.g. DOS/Windows, OS/2, Apple Macintosh, UNIX) make it difficult to develop a uniform data format for all types of computers.

By developing the CD-I, industry wanted to hook up to decisive success factors of the audio CD: inexpensive prices, uncomplicated handling, and user-friendly devices for playing the CD were defined as the key criteria for market penetration. This resulted in a stand-alone solution made up of an inexpensive CD-I player which is connected to a TV set (not to a PC monitor). Hence, CD-I programmes are displayed on TV screens. They are controlled by means of a small infra-red remote control which allows the user to move a cursor across the screen and to make inputs.

Up to now, the assumptions of the marketing strategists only have come true in part. In spite of the world-wide introduction of the CD-I system in the early 90’s, sales figures for CD-I players developed only slowly on the consumer market. Left behind by the demand for CD-ROM drives for PCs, slowed down by the unwillingness of the electronics giants Matsushita and Sony to offer CD-I hardware and finally also by the low number of high-quality CD-I programmes initially available for home use, CD-I's are available in only approximately one million homes all over the world so far. For Austria, no exact sales figures are disclosed, estimates assume that some 8,000 to 10,000 players were sold.
Projects along the U1 urban axis - CD-I
Irrespective of these difficulties in the start-up phase, CD-I technology was able to score in other market segments. Inexpensive hardware, portable players, compatibility with any TV set, excellent picture and sound quality, superior video reproduction made the CD-I a success in the field of corporate applications – utilisation by companies or institutions for training, product presentations or image presentation. Many sectors, such as tourism, capital goods industry, pharmaceutical industry, increasingly utilise the advantages of CD-Is. Programmes for museums and exhibitions were developed and presented successfully. Also in the field of schools and education, national and international CD-I projects were implemented, most recently a programme for driving licence exams in Austria.

Before deciding on using CD-Is, some platform-specific criteria should be taken into account:

- **Target group:** As CD-I hardware is not wide-spread, CD-Is are mainly used in fields in which a clearly defined target group is to be addressed. For this purpose, the CD-I hardware is usually purchased in addition to the investment made in preparing the programme, handed over to presenters or installed at fixed sites such as schools, showrooms, museums, exhibitions or at points of sales.

- **Videos:** For programmes with a high share of videos, CD-I still is the best CD-based medium. The video pictures reproduced from CD-Is are comparable to good VHS quality. As for all digital media, however, the principle applies that the production quality of the original material decisively influences the quality of the final product. Only video material produced with expensive broadcast equipment will result in an adequate quality of the digital image material on CD-Is.

- **Texts:** A specific characteristic of the TV screen as an output device is its low resolution. While each PC monitor has at least a resolution of 480 lines and 640 points per line, a TV screen can display only about one quarter of this pixel number. In particular, the presentation of texts has to be adjusted to this limited resolution. The selection of accordingly big letters and, as regards editing, the maximum amount of text per screen page have to be borne in mind during production.

- **Viewing distance:** In direct relation to the previous item, attention has to be paid to the fact that a TV screen is viewed at a greater distance than a PC monitor. The latter is always viewed at close range so that it is destined for individual utilisation while being rather unsuitable for groups.

- **Storage capacity:** Like any other CD-ROM, the storage volume of the CD-I is around 650 megabyte. Especially moving images need a big amount of storage space. A maximum of 70 minutes of video can be stored on a CD-I (this is sufficient for industrial and training videos, but not for feature films). Dubbed stills with a total length of approximately 70 minutes can be placed on a CD-I. The maximum of 16 hours of audio playing frequently indicated by CD-I developers means that one and the same image sequence can be dubbed with up to 16 audio tracks. For practical applications this results in the production of titles with multilingual sound tracks. When a monolingual title is produced, the storage space available for the remaining 15 audio tracks unfortunately cannot be used for image data.

- **Colours:** The number of colours that can be simultaneously displayed by a PC depends on the equipment (monitor, graphics board, etc.). Hence, colour images are reduced to a colour depth of 8 bit (this corresponds to the display of 256 colours) on a major share of the CD-ROMs commercially available. In contrast, the conversion of the digital image data of a CD-I into analogue TV signals allow for the display of any number of colours on the TV screen.

- **Interactivity:** The design of the CD-I makes it an interactive medium, which is also indicated by the “I” in its name. Interactivity means that the user or viewer of a programme is able to influence the course it takes. Interactive programmes are based on a radically different concept of media utilisation than linear programmes (e.g. a film). Information is broken down into individual segments and provided in a structured form so that the users are free...
to chose the programme parts and, thus, the contents they want to consume. The order in which the programme parts are accessed varies in accordance with the interests of the user. The purposeful and meaningful use of interaction elements has to be considered in the design phase of the programme and becomes manifest in the structure and presentation of the subjects as well as in the graphic design of the programme. The way how a topic is presented in an interactive programme both as regards the subject matter and the form is decisive for its user-friendliness and, eventually, for its approval ratings.

Distribution: Due to its insufficient market penetration, CD-Is cannot serve as a mass medium. Nevertheless, it is a path-breaking format in the field of off-line media whose further development has to be observed. The question on which future trends are in the offing cannot be answered fully. The video tape is expected to be replaced by digital storage media. This change is clearly reflected by CD-I technology, but PCs increasingly become an alternative, too. Moreover, the entire CD world faces the introduction of new high-performance CD formats which will offer many times over the storage capacity while maintaining the dimensions of the data carrier. Apart from questions of downward compatibility and from the requirement of upgrading the hardware once again, today it is still open whether there will also be high-performance CD-Is.

Conclusion
Under the circumstances described above, the application of CD-I programmes is still worth being taken into consideration. The multiple use of multimedia programmes on CD-Is, however, has to be given more thought in the preparatory stages of project design than necessary in case of other CD-ROM projects. These considerations have to be based on exact information on the target groups, type of application, installation sites and environments as well as on an assessment of distribution requirements.

Project course and production process
A big project team was set up for the implementation of the CD-I project “U1 urban axis”. The team members were experts of the City of Vienna (Municipal Departments 18, 19, 21A, and 21C) as well as employees of the contractor. The persons responsible for planning the individual areas along the urban development axis were delegated by the City of Vienna to participate in the meetings of the project team.

The contractor designated architect Holubowsky to act as a supervisor in charge of research and technically correct editing of the topics. The media-specific, dramaturgic implementation of the programme as well as the preparation and wording of the text was entrusted to a scriptwriter and director. The project manager was responsible for co-ordinating the entire project and organising the implementation steps. Right from the start, regular meetings of the project team were scheduled throughout the project.

Typically, a multimedia project develops in line with the individual elements of a phased model. In a briefing and research phase, the contents and the form of the project are defined. The client communicate their information requirements, and the contractor scrutinise them. Material is collected, the contents specified are translated into an interactive structure and into a form adequate to the target medium, and the basic graphic design is outlined in a concept.

In the second phase, the media required for audio-visual implementation are produced if they cannot be taken from archives, i.e. pictures are made, videos are shot and graphs are prepared. A small part of the planned application is produced as a prototype model on the target medium. This prototype is to give an impression of the look and feel
of the final version and to assist in the finding of weak points in the structure of the contents and in the interactive design. After all the individual media elements are completed and the text are finalised, the programming is performed in the third phase. The fourth phase consists in testing and correcting this programme. The criteria for these tests are complete coverage of the topics and the perfect running of all elements.

Finally, the product goes to acceptance testing, copies are produced, the project documentation is completed and the digital material is stored in archives.

Due to the complex research and co-ordination required, the production of the CD-I “U1 urban axis” was characterised by overlapping project phases. In order to capture an up-to-date picture of planning, the research phase lasted from the start of the project in June 1994 until a short time before the start of programming. The technical part of the implementation, programming and testing, was performed during the last six weeks before the scheduled deadline for completion, almost without any time reserves.

Here are some raw data to illustrate the complexity of the project:

The final version of the CD-I contains 660 individual images (stills and graphs), including 36 menu pages with numerous interaction points. The total length of the spoken text is 66 minutes, the overall length of all video sequences is 8.5 minutes. Due to this data volume, the storage capacity of the CD-I was virtually utilised in its entirety. The extensive raw material filled 11 photo CDs and two CD-ROMs. The size of all the image files required for the CD-I was around 9 gigabyte.

Apart from the CD-I, these raw data constitute a valuable stock of digital image material which was handed over to the client for further use and exploitation.

In the course of the 8-month production process, the project team met 14 times in all. Most of the meetings served for co-ordinating the contents, in particular for discussing the combination of image and sound, as well as for editing the spoken texts.

During the entire course of the project, a flow chart was used as a working document which illustrated the programme structure in graphical form, i.e. the break-down of the project into chapters and sub-chapters.

In order to make it easier to get an idea of the final product, all image sequences of the CD-I were pre-mounted as video layouts and supplemented by a layout text. Thus, the project team obtained a realistic impression of the length of individual chapters, the combination of image and text as well as the implementation of details. In the final stage of the project, all texts and pictures/graphs were finalised and released for programming.

Already during the research phase, a representative information branch of the CD-I programme was implemented as a prototype CD-I. The objective was to examine the graphic design of the programme and the user interface on the target medium. This prototype gave the working group the opportunity to experience for the first time how the topics would be presented in their interactive, media-specific environment. After the approval of all pictures and texts, the beta version of the CD-I was programmed. In the last production step, errors identified in the beta version were corrected and the final version was delivered.

**Implementation problems**

As mentioned before, the schedules for the building projects located along the northern U1 urban development axis extend far beyond the turn of the millennium. Due to this time frame, which is typical for urbanist tasks on this scale, it is not possible to present a “final result” of urban development planning nor the design of individual projects down to minute details. It is, however, possible to outline development paths, visions and the appearance planned for urban areas but also for individual buildings.

**The problems of “snapshots”**

This was an essential problem faced during the entire production phase. Within the eight months from the beginning of the work to the presentation of the finished information programme, the plans
were restructured many times as regards new approaches to planning or even new projects along the U1 axis. In particular, the plans and implementation studies for the long-term projects change constantly as they have to be adjusted to future social developments step by step.

An information programme such as the present CD-I “U1 urban axis - Vienna is growing” can only represent a snapshot of the planning process and show possible future developments. If the subjects presented change too much, the medium’s topicality decreases, it appears old or outdated.

As a result, this kind of medium should only be used within the framework of urban planning to present developments. It has to be embedded in an information master plan which also covers reports on latest news in daily papers and on TV. An advantage offered by the design and technical production of CD-Is as compared with other media (not focusing on the topics of the day) is the fact that it is relatively easy to produce updates. Individual sequences, images or spoken text can be exchanged without big efforts. The rest of the contents can be taken over without changes.

Research problems
Another problem was to obtain up-to-date information and representations on numerous individual projects at a given production date. It was difficult to get documentation from the architects and the builders in charge since they are reluctant to present work processes still under discussion in public. In particular, every day financial or political decisions may result in changes, frequently concerning the entire planning concept.

Interactive imaginative faculty
Everybody who gets involved in the design of an interactive medium will have to realise how much his/her imaginative faculty for visualising the course and effect of an interactive medium is negatively affected by the habitual linear sequences of traditional media. Thus, it was hardly surprising that the interactive design of the programme meant a big change for many members of the project team as was evidenced by discussions of the programme structure, picture and menu sequences and in the editing of the texts.

The necessity to define a concept for further utilisation
As mentioned above, the information terminals were planned to be set up mostly in public places, underground stations, etc. in the urban area of Vienna. The main target group was defined as comprising passers-by and residents from the areas concerned. A concept for further utilisation, including defined sites and equipment as well as the required financial resources, was discussed, but unfortunately not laid down.

Actual utilisation is an essential criterion for the design and production of a CD-I: the better the application can be described, the better the information and the access to it can be adjusted to the users.
The medium
At the end of 1993 when the project was commissioned, CD-Is clearly offered more advantages than CD-ROMs, especially due to features such as full motion and full screen, TV screen compatibility and inexpensive hardware requirements. Today, in 1996, CD-ROMs are far more attractive than CD-Is on this rapidly changing market. The industry's forecasts indicating widespread availability of suitable equipment did not come true, while multimedia computers rapidly spread also in private homes.

Work organisation
The establishment of the working group "U1 axis - Wagramer Straße" and its regular meetings proved highly advantageous, not only in terms of concomitant project supervision. Thus, the work load for the colleagues consulted for specific issues and responsible for editing certain subjects was limited. The preparation of a flow chart to illustrate the overall project and the options offered by the interactive medium was very helpful and substantially facilitated decision-making.

Selection of the project
From the perspective of the client, the project selected proved to be ideal. All of Vienna was highly interested in the most important development axis of Vienna for the next decades. Most diverse issues of urban planning, approaches to find solutions and implementation schedules characterised the project. Thus, the CD-I could be the first and important step in the marketing strategy of a development company. Changes in the basic conditions for urban planning, extension of the time frames, dragging land acquisition and, above all, the lack of an efficient marketing concept for the most important development project, "Donau-City", gave rise to doubts about the project selected and the timing of its implementation. Deficiencies at a technical and political level cannot be compensated by PR measures. To provide the necessary support to the media experts and to introduce them to the complex issues of urban planning and architecture, it is essential that the contractor designates a technical co-ordinator.

The preparation of a prototype was of great support in all decisions and helped the contractor decisively in the frequently difficult process of collecting material.

Utilisation concept
Unfortunately, we did not have a concept on further utilisation or exploitation ready upon commissioning and have it approved by the decision-makers of the City of Vienna. Another negative fact was that industry did not lend any support in the development and production of terminals for the semi-public and public fields of application. In analogy to many PR measures, the definition of the target groups and potential installation sites is very important. In case of organised presentation to small groups, district authorities, citizens' action committees, schools and urban renewal offices, this medium offers significant advantages. But at public sites, e.g. at underground or suburban railway stations and in shopping malls, the medium has grave disadvantages. For example, as a TV screen has a lower resolution than a computer monitor, the viewers have to maintain a greater distance to the equipment which complicated the placing of the operating unit and resulted in reduced audibility at noisy sites.

Summary
Basically, this medium is suitable for disseminating information on a major urban development project. Due to the high financial expenses involved, a utilisation concept should be developed already at an early stage and it should be used only for projects which have good prospects of being implemented and are already provided with organisational structures. The modular structure and the interactivity by which CD-Is differ from conventional videos have to be assessed positive without any reservations. Taking into account the technical development, preference will have to be given to the production of CD-ROMs instead of CD-Is in many cases.
Chapter 9

Video and computer animation as integral elements of urban planning

The example of “Ottakring in planning”
Urban planning means changes in space and time. Urban planning means changes in the direct vicinity of people. Given this import of planning activities, the dissemination of information and the involvement of the people concerned has had a relatively low profile in terms of quality and extent up to now, in particular within the framework of projects of relevance to the entire city. For example, the “right to inspection” is provided in the planning process while it would be befitting to specify that Urban Planning has the “obligation to present projects in a comprehensive way”. It is not sufficient that “comments may be submitted”, Urban Planning has to “seek discussion” with the citizens of its own accord. Otherwise, rivalling lobbies and pressure groups as well as “popular anger” caused by superficial information will continue to determine “public discussions”.

In the past few years, for example, the high-grade discussion of ecological problems confronted people from all walks of life with the field of environmental protection – from waste paper and returnable bottles to summer ozone. Decisions on environmental policy which intervened in the everyday life of all citizens not only were “enforced” but were in fact considered necessary and were supported by the population. From this example we should learn that the readiness of the people to accept changes strongly depends on the amount of information they receive and that their awareness of problems is the basis for co-operation with politicians and planners. Thus, the City of Vienna itself has to promote the emancipation of the citizens in order to profit from public participation in urban development.

In conjunction with the projects in the vicinity of the future terminal of U3 at Ottakring, the Municipal Department 21A – Zoning and Land Use Centre-West Vienna attempted to meet these demands on PR and dissemination of high-grade information. The video “Ottakring in planning” is a step towards the professional “marketing of urban planning”. In the 16th district of Vienna, a neighbourhood centre will be created in the course of internal urban development along the suburban railway line. In the next few years, this project will result in large-scale interventions whose implementation will require state-of-the-art strategies in planning as well as in the presentation and dissemination of information.

The video “Ottakring in planning” compares the status quo with the planned projects, it informs on the dimensions of the changes envisaged, uses computer animation to illustrate the area, building masses, traffic routes and green areas, in short – the new face of the future neighbourhood centre.

This video will be used
- to inform citizens both at events organised for the people directly concerned in the district as well as via local TV – for Vienna’s entire population;
- in discussions among experts – at the Vienna Planning Workshop, in the specialised departments of Urban Planning Vienna, and among Vienna’s independent architects and urban planners;
- in the exchange of experiences among cities – as a basis for discussing new approaches to urban planning at an international level in order to be able to solve comparable tasks together in the future.

As a modern medium, video can combine statements that are of relevance to planners and politicians and are comprehensible for the population at large. Thus, it becomes a communication medium between the parties involved in the planning process. Moreover, it allows an integral but clear representation of relations – in particular for such a complex subject like a city. The visualisation of urban problems and potentials makes it easier to create an understanding in the population for the necessity of interventions by urban planning.

Functional changes planned, for example, in the future Ottakring centre can be shown in their space and time dimensions. By combining historical and present pictures with project visualisations, image
with sound information, by using moving images to illustrate processes and many other features, the citizens can be given a realistic impression of the development of their neighbourhood which goes beyond conventional representations such as drawings, plans and models.

Especially the most recent developments in the field of digital image processing allow for the integration of computer animation, digital processing of real pictures, the montage of real and virtual pictures and, finally, the digital storage of videos. This creates new options for the utilisation of video going beyond conventional presentation (showing, broadcasting, etc.)

The video can be stored, for instance, on CD-ROM so that computer users can study the subjects covered individually. The viewers can select different “paths” through the planned city, when they follow their route, they interactively join together video sequences (processed real pictures, computer animation).

The example of “Ottakring in planning”

Based on the broad effect of video, this information instrument has to be used in a responsible way. A banal and trivial presentation of the subjects reduces the potential offered by this medium. Any attempt to “buy” the approval of the people concerned by investing in the production of videos on planning would quickly result in a rejection of this presentation form by the population and deprive politicians and planners of a big chance as regards fruitful co-operation with the citizens.

Information on video production

The efforts required for producing videos on urban planning can be divided up into two basic areas – planning subjects and visual design.

A major part of the video’s contents certainly have to be defined by the planners themselves – from the reasons for planned interventions via the urbanist, architectural “philosophy” of the project to the plans for the spatial and functional implementation of these objectives.

The bureau in charge of planning has to provide data on the three-dimensional shape of the area in planning as well as on the measures to be taken, it has to see to it that video shots are taken in the area concerned, if possible, before changes are made and it has to obtain historical pictures.

As a rule, external specialists should be entrusted with the fields of computer animation and video production – professional expertise as well as special equipment is required for these tasks. Nevertheless, the planner has to co-operate in this work – for instance, in the preparation of the script (image layout, text, etc.) - to achieve an optimal presentation of the contents.

The length of the video obviously depends on the dimensions of the project. However, “long-drawn-out” contributions adversely affect the qualities characterising audio-visual media as such – conciseness and high information density while ensuring general comprehensibility. Thus, a maximum length of 15 minutes is recommendable for videos on planning. But, if they are less than three minutes long, the output is completely out of tune with the financial expenses involved.
For the production of an approx. 10-minute clip, the following technical and financial resources are needed (based on 1995 prices):

- 3-chip camera plus accessory (recording on Betacam SP, M II or similar systems), including a cameraman:
  Costs per day: ATS 10,000 to ATS 12,000; according to our experience, at least two days are required.
- Triple editing equipment (cutting and dubbing) with cutter:
  Costs per day: ATS 20,000; one to two days are required.
- Narrator: ATS 5,000 to ATS 7,500.
- The costs for professional direction and co-ordination of the implementation of the project depend on the amount of work involved as well as on the qualifications of the person in charge.
- Additional expenses result from payments for music rights, copyright for aerial views, etc. as well as for video copies (usually VHS tapes).

The costs for the preparation of the computer animation depend on the material provided by the planner (digital data material on existing and planned buildings) and, in particular, on the demands to the quality of the animation. The financial expenses vary significantly from case to case so that no general figures can be indicated.

### 3D city models

#### What is a 3D city model?
A 3D city model is a representation, as lifelike as possible, of all fixed objects (buildings, green space, traffic areas and waterways, etc.) of a city on computer. For each object, sufficient information is stored to ensure that it can be displayed and viewed in all three spatial dimensions. Thus, it is a 3D CAD model of the entire city. The level of detail of the information required for the 3D city model and whether it is to cover the entire urban area or only parts of it depends on the application in question. For example, the presentation of planning results requires a model that is as true to the reality as possible, while more simple plane or lattice models provide an adequate basis for assessing mass relations in the preparation of local plans.

#### How is a 3D city model prepared?
For some years, municipal information systems focusing on graphic data have been prepared at municipal administrations. The graphic data are stored in 2-dimensional or 2.5-dimensional geographic information systems. The main emphasis has been placed on traditional documentation and administrative tasks, while 3-dimensional applications rather stayed in the background.

In recent years, much data have been collected for these municipal information systems: mainly land-registry data and nature inventory data, in some areas also photogrammetrical roof designs. Big investments have been made in inputting and maintaining these data. Thus, it is an obvious choice to use these data also as a basis for a 3D city model.

For this purpose, the company GRINTEC developed the software package GO-3DM (GIS objects in 3D models) which automatically models 3D objects from the basic data of the municipal information system.

GO-3DM has already been applied successfully in several projects in Vienna and Graz – one of these is the computer animation for “Ottakring in planning”.

#### The computer animator for “Ottakring in planning”

### Basic data on existing buildings
Around the planned underground stations at Ottakring and Kendlerstraße, approximately 97 ha of the existing urban area were included in a 3-dimensional, digital model. The basic data were taken from the Viennese multipurpose map and used to generate the following objects automatically:

- Buildings without roofs, as no basic data was available for them.
- Landscape model: some corrections had to be made to this model as the heights changed due to installations along the U3 line.
- Trees, bushes, parking areas and green space.
- Streets, street markings and other traffic areas.
Input and transfer of data on the building projects

The quality of the material available, current state of planning and also support by architects vary very much so that also the time required for entering the data on the individual projects differs much. The model of the existing building stock was the background for the presentation of seven different architectural projects. To this end, the individual models were input in a CAD system – if available, the CAD data were taken over from the architects - and then placed at the corresponding sites in the overall model.

The following projects were input in this way:
- U3 traffic structures (overground parts of the underground) including the Ottakring and Kendlerstraße station buildings,
- Paltaufgasse (superstructure above the turnaround of the underground),
- ATW (Ottakring tobacco factory, technical college, home for nurses, residential buildings),
- Residential buildings at the Odelga area
- Park-and-ride facilities at Sperterbrücke (superstructure above U3)
- Tram repair shop at Maroltingergasse (residential buildings above the repair shop),
- Residential buildings at Hettenhofergasse.

Interactive processing of the model

The 3D objects generated by GO-3DM and the CAD data of the new buildings were combined and further processed using the software 3D Studio™. In co-operation with the architects, the correct materials were assigned to the objects and, if necessary, their geometry was corrected.

Processing of the animation

Together with the client, we prepared a script for the computer animation which gives an overview of the entire area in planning, but also an impression of the individual projects. The perspectives were chosen to show the objects from various heights in part or as a whole. The presentations of the individual building projects were linked by “flying over” the areas between them, which again and again provides new views of the project area.

Additionally, a representative still was rendered for each of the projects, which presents the same view as the pictures taken of the status quo. These “before and after” pictures are compared in the video.

The computer animation, which has a length of approx. five minutes, was prepared by means of 3D Studio™ on a PC network and recorded, like the stills rendered, on a videodisc. The sequences stored on videodisc were cut and dubbed together with the real video tapes in a professional video studio.
Chapter 10

“Zu ebener Erde, die weite Sicht”

Video project on topical issues of urban planning in Vienna
Given today's political, economic and social developments in Europe, "planning" obviously is a complex process that is difficult to quantify for Vienna. The report "Zu ebener Erde, die weite Sicht" (video, 20–25 minutes long, commissioned by the City of Vienna) tries to document the complexity of the problems by presenting a "gentle" cross-section of the current results of planning and factors influencing it. Only in part, planning and municipal policies can influence "urbanity" – the one lost (loss) in densely built-up areas, the one to be gained (profit) for urban expansion areas, the one to be newly defined (vision) for new ways of life in a society (quoted according to Siebel).

The focus of the procedure is shifted from classic structural definitions/models, density values and cost-benefit analyses to quality criteria, guidelines, scenarios of change and open/variable definitions of utilisation.

In order to illustrate the numerous facets of its approach, the video project was structured into five topics:

A. New strategies of planning
B. Basic conditions of planning
C. Objectives/guidelines for Vienna's development
D. Implementation programmes/projects
E. My Vienna/identity

The "hardware" is provided by numerous planned and implemented projects which were documented to explain different objectives and subject-specific conceptions (e.g. housing construction, construction of schools).

The "software" are statements on the various topics by the "experts" concerned which are cast like a net with nodes over the "building blocks" of the reality. The medium of "video" itself is represented as a "multiplier" with many fields of applications under topic A “New strategies for planning”: information/ transparence of institutions, transparency of the objectives for urban issues, public participation, training and educational programmes.

A special concept on the utilisation and application of the final product is prepared together with various institutions.

Vienna's vigorous "urbanity" which was implied in this documentation on planning are outlined by the following factors:

- Structure of Vienna's centre – identity, polycentric development, open grid system with individual focal points defined in various ways, developments in the fields of the grid.
- Definition of social space, the values of different groups of the population are faced with differentiated constraints of segregation, control, stabilisation, cultural identities, economic constraints of the market.
- Relation of the metropolis to its environs, ecological relation of urban behaviour patterns and nature.
- Re-definition of space-time structures, far-reaching changes in urban lifestyles, factors of mobility/telecommunications, new units of time in everyday life.
- "Urbanity" as a keyword for the value of "public space", availability, variable utilisation, occupation by car traffic – reclamation for whom?
- Both for densely built-up areas (loss of small-scale utilisation) and for "compounds in the middle of nowhere" (initiating small-scale utilisation), mixing functions, promotion programmes which safeguard and support jobs, and meeting the needs of the residents (e.g. cultural and social facilities).
Based on these considerations on urbanity, the five themes of the project deal with the following subjects:

A. New strategies of planning
- Changes of planning conditions in Vienna, organisational changes in the structure of the municipal departments
- Planning strategies for large-scale projects, expert opinion process, public participation, area counselling
- Transparency of decision-making, media and strategies for the dissemination of information

B. Basic conditions of planning
- Vienna as an economic site, EU membership
- Demographic development of Vienna
- Changed economic conditions, scenarios for operational/development programmes
- Regional planning, availability of development areas, resources, instruments for succeeding with plans
- Urban space, environs, linkage programmes
- Development of new technologies, telecommunications

C. Objectives/guidelines for Vienna's development
- Regional axes, development of centres
- Densely built-up areas/urban expansion, associated problems
- Green and free space, ecological concepts
- Traffic concept, axes, modal split
- Design of urban space - concepts for urban places and free space

D. Implementation programmes/projects
- Economic sites, strategies for integrating workplaces
- Urban expansion projects, housing - new models
- Ecological projects, overlap in various areas of planning
- Urban design, urban furniture, design of free space
- Equal opportunity projects (information, education, culture, underprivileged groups)
- Projects on safety in public space, traffic safety
- Traffic concept, distances, regulation of parking space
- Waste management, waste separation, etc.

E. My Vienna/identity
- Historical development in urban areas, issues of identity
- Squares, space experiences, planning factors
- Urban expansion, possibility to create identity
- Culture as a strategy of quarter consciousness

The realisation of “Weite Sicht”
The medium of video meets the requirements for presenting the diverse approaches and complex topics of planning (in) Vienna efficiently.

Due to the combination of
- moving image,
- graphics,
- sound, and
- language,
video is capable of presenting complex technical relations in a concise and easily comprehensible form.

One of the reasons why video is a suitable medium for disseminating information to the citizens is the fact that it can be used to provide not only individual persons, but also bigger and smaller groups (unlike print media) with information in a rapid way. The equipment required for playing and watching videos – TV set and VCR – are available virtually everywhere today or can be installed easily. Thus, videos can be utilised in most diverse settings; as copying is simple, a broad effect can be achieved. Moreover – if produced professionally – the video can also be broadcast on TV (e.g. the Vienna studio of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation).
Montage
In the implementation, the technique of montage was selected in order to do justice to the wealth of subjects. Instead of linear narration, a pictorial, interlocked structure was chosen which, however, also is to create a clear overall view.

Montage means to build
- a sequence from individual takes,
- a complex from individual sequences, and
- a piece from complexes.

As the decisive design element of this video, montage joins the individual parts to a chain, to a narrative sequence. The different topics are linked by big arches. In montage, the raw material shot by the camera is divided up into parts determined by the topics and then assembled according to a structuring order. Big arches link the individual subjects.

The first three sections present the multitude of requirements for planning activities and the big number of basic conditions which have to be taken into account or provided. These three sections make up the first big arch.

Section D, the most extensive block, illustrates the implementation of projects by means of examples and, together with section E focusing on the impact on the city’s population, it is the second big arch of the video. From the first section – A. New strategies for planning – dealing with topics like public participation, area counselling, transparency of decision-making, etc., to the final section – E. My Vienna/Identity – the entire video is spanned by another arch which starts with the population and again ends with the population.

Scenes shot in the Prater recreational area which feature a completely different aesthetics separate the individual topics. They capture moods and symbolise motion, dynamics, colour and, of course, identity. Titles mark the individual topics.

Elements used within the themes
Within the individual theme blocks, different elements ensure that justice is done to the complex processes. The video pictures mainly serve to visualise general, fundamental statements but also to present concrete examples. Due to the big number of planned and implemented projects, it was only possible to present details of selected projects. The focus was on general, broad approaches. In the form of statements, the considerations and sometimes also controversial opinions of experts on urban planning were expressed. Graphics were used to illustrate complex subjects such as the development of centres and the creation of regional axes. Individual keywords in the form of inserts and titles are to give additional emphasis to essential issues for the viewer. General facts are presented by an off-screen narrator.

Options for further utilisation
When considering further utilisation and further expansion of this way of informing the citizens, thought should be given to the design of an interactive programme. Such a programme can be produced on the basis of existing material, it allows the individual user to directly access information on specific issues and offers more room for details. Another option would be to split up the video into several parts each of which provides in-depth information on a specific topic.

Video material - capital in pictures
Upon completion of a video documentary, the producer not only has a final product, but as a rule – more or less high – mountains of raw material from which the documentary was assembled. A fairly substantial part of the production efforts was invested in this raw material which was evaluated by selecting and assembling image sequences as well as by dubbing them only in one of the many conceivable ways.
Thus, this raw material is capital tied in pictures. In the present context of "public relations" and "urban planning", the question of what to do with a video not only refers to the use of the concrete assembled version, but also to the further utilisation of the raw material.

Four principles have to be taken into account here:

- Ensuring the technical accessibility of the video material,
- Ensuring the physical accessibility of the video material,
- Ensuring the legal accessibility of the video material,
- Ensuring the subject-specific accessibility of the video material.

Ensuring the physical accessibility of the video material means that the client has to have continued access to the material. This can be achieved in two ways: either the City of Vienna orders duplicates of the material or actually takes charge of the material. Both options need to be laid down in a contract with the producer, the author of the material.

This leads us to the question of legal accessibility of the material – after all, having a video tape does not necessarily mean that you are entitled to use it (i.e. to edit, duplicate, show or broadcast it).

Safeguarding the technical accessibility of the video material means that it is recommendable for anyone commissioning a video to have “their” video produced on the basis of high-grade, professional formats. In this context, Betacam SP, the production format used by broadcasting corporations, is certainly a yardstick. Productions in this format currently ensure that the material can be used for all kinds of further applications.

But the technical criteria also include the question of how the video signals recorded are “treated” during editing - i.e. whether their quality is maintained or reduced.

Among the most recent developments in the field of editing is the use of so-called “non-linear” cutting equipment. Instead of copying one part of the original material after the other in a conventional way, the non-linear editing process starts by digitising the video sequences to be assembled and storing them on a hard disk. “Cutting” proper is performed on a computer which accesses the digital images frame by frame without any winding times. The final product is assembled in digital form so that the problem of decreased picture quality due to copying the tapes several times is eliminated. Likewise, later changes, such as inserting or rearranging sequences, can be carried out faster using digital technology while the signal quality of the raw material is maintained. For the director and the cutter, this editing technology not only offers new creative possibilities, it also saves time and reduces the share of editing costs in production budgets.

Ensuring access to the contents of the video material: Depending on the material available, the establishment of a video archives (no matter whether the original material or edited versions are archived) sooner or later results in an information problem. “Did not we make a shot of ... two years ago?” perfectly illustrates this problem. This problem can only be solved by the use of intelligent keywords, maybe the establishment of a data bank. At any rate, it makes sense to produce screening copies on VHS for all original and master tapes and to insert a visible time code during copying which makes it possible to clearly identify sequences.

Only these copies should be exposed to wear due to screening and selection – thus, the valuable broadcast tapes are spared for cutting and are shut away otherwise. It means a lot of work to document the material available well. This work only pays off when material is required at short notice and would not be found without good archives.
The finished video can be used for a great variety of applications:

- **VHS copies:**
  In order to obtain a bigger number of copies of the video, the master tape can be copied to cassettes at copying companies. The VHS format can be considered a de-facto standard for such copies. As the costs per copy are significantly lower in case of a higher number of copies, it is certainly possible to use videos in mailings or as give-aways at events.

- **Video projection:**
  In many cases, the use of TV sets or monitors is inadequate for the presentation of a video – for example, when it comes to presenting it to a larger audience. This problem is solved by video projectors which can achieve quite respectable image diagonals of several meters depending on their optical systems, luminance and the lighting at the presentation site.

- **Foreign language versions:**
  If a video is to be suitable for presentation to an international audience, there is no way around the production of foreign language versions. In this context, it has to be borne in mind that the production of a foreign language version not only means that the sound track has to be replaced. All written elements, e.g. title, legends in graphs, etc., have to be exchanged. If it is foreseeable that versions in other languages will be required, the producer is well advised to prepare a “neutral” copy (without written inserts) when the video is produced. This facilitates the production of foreign language versions later on.

- **Abridged versions and video modules:**
  The entire contents of a video is not needed in all cases. Frequently, parts of it are enough. In following-up on this aspect, it is sometimes meaningful to prepare abridged versions of a video or to give thought to the idea of a set of video modules. Such a set contains short videos which can be combined freely to prepare long versions tailored to the occasion and the target group.

- **Utilisation of “new media”**
  Videos are a valuable resource for integration into “new media” - CD-ROM or CD-I. Though the possibilities for playing videos on PCs are fairly modest at present, we must not let ourselves be deceived about the possibilities to be expected in the near future. Even the transmission of video data via Internet belongs to these future aspects which should not be neglected in the long-term orientation and planning of media production.
“Zu ebener Erde, die weite Sicht”

Video project on topical issues of urban planning in Vienna
Urban planning on video

One question arises even before one has actually seen the video: Can planning be captured on this medium at all? Doubts appear justified, first of all because the "philosophy" behind planning will indeed be difficult to present on this medium; in particular, when it comes to making this topic accessible and comprehensible to experts and laymen alike.

To cut a long story short: The laymen will be satisfied if they afford the interest and the patience to dedicate 25 minutes to the various representations. To the expert's eye, the information provided will maybe appear somewhat superficial and splashy.

Even the abridged version – with its length of 10 minutes and almost comics-like presentation of the topic – gives a good impression of the concerns of planning and the solutions offered.

The task entrusted to the authors was not easy - due to its many facets: The presentation of new strategies of planning, its basic conditions and objectives for development, implementation programmes and maintenance of Vienna's identity in a concise form was a high aim, all the more as the means of PR are limited in this context.

The authors not only convinced the viewer of the possibilities of video as a medium, they also succeeded in impressively demonstrating the need and the requirements for planning as well as in vividly presenting projects developed in line with these principles. The video is rounded off by interviews with experts who discuss the topic from different viewpoints.

A positive fact was the idea to produce an English version which will contribute to extending the horizon far beyond the borders of the city without which urban planning should no longer be conceivable today.

Just like in case of other media, it is not enough to have a video. Special attention will have to be given to product marketing, i.e. it has to be ensured that the video will be broadcast within the frame-
The CD-ROM
"Vienna in planning"

Documentation of individual projects and plans
The planning departments of Urban Planning Vienna presented a selection of some 60 projects to the citizens within the framework of an exhibition. Some of the topics covered by the exhibition were processed for presentation on a CD-ROM as a pilot project. The next step will be to present the contents of the CD-ROM internationally via the Internet. The CD-ROM is to be used on the one hand by the planning departments in their internal fields of activities and by decision-makers and, on the other hand, by Vienna’s schools and universities as well as for presentations abroad.

The CD (Compact Disc)
The CD replaced not only the good old record, it meanwhile also is in full swing of conquering the computer sector in the form of CD-ROMs. While initially there seemed to be pros and cons of audio CDs - music freaks frequently had heated debates on CD player versus record player - , the advance of the CD as a data carrier is not under discussion any more.

In order to assess this development correctly, we have to make a short excursion to the realm of technology.

What does the CD's suffix “ROM” mean?
Once data is stored on a CD-ROM, it can be retrieved any time as if it was stored on a hard disk. This means that, though the user cannot store data, he can access these data any time. This is why “ROM” is part of its name: Read-Only Memory.

How does a CD-ROM work?
The carrier layer of the CD has elevations and pits of varying lengths so that a laser beam is reflected in different ways by the surface of the medium which turns below it. Due to this alternation of elevations and pits it is possible to read out the binary computer code of 0 and 1 based on the fluctuations of the laser beam.

Why CD-ROMs are spreading more and more
But what are in fact the advantages of CDs explaining this dramatic development step?

- CD-ROM drives are becoming less and less expensive. On the one hand, the price continues to drop while performance is increasing. One of the factors making this possible is the fact that a large part of the development costs were already covered by the world-wide success of the audio CD. Essentially, a CD-ROM functions in line with the same technical principles as an audio CD.

- Demands - demands - demands!
And the CD-ROM meets them all!
Due to the rise in the performance of CD-ROMs from single speed to double, fourfold, sixfold and now even eightfold speed, programmes can be implemented whose complexity used to be unthinkable earlier on.

- Multimedia requires film, video, animation.
A video requires images and sound and everything together needs a tremendous amount of storage space. As a result there is nothing doing without speed! Thus, the much talked about development of multimedia only becomes a realistic option due to the increased performance of CD-ROMs.

Only the development of fast CD-ROMs made it possible to play video sequences and animation compressed in the MPEG standard in VHS quality on PCs. Likewise, it is only now that sound files read in can be played in a good quality directly from CD-ROMs. Hence, multimedia applications truly deserve this name only now.
The CD-ROM “Vienna in planning”
This CD is an example for genuine state-of-the-art multimedia capability. It combines the advantages of traditional media such as film, video and slide shows with the typical advantages of computers, such as
- fast search and access,
- links between related data.

From one and the same collection of data, no matter in which form the data is available (from films to databases), the information required can be screened according to various search criteria.

Thus, the City of Vienna gives an overview of the most important building projects on the one hand, and provides a completely new information platform on the other hand which gives individual citizens access to this information and, as a result, makes genuine public participation feasible. After all, urban planning is a topic affecting all Vienna and the dissemination of comprehensive information is the first step towards the participation of all citizens.

**How does the interactive CD-ROM inform about current building projects in Vienna?**

The individual projects are assigned symbolic colours representing the fields of housing, work, traffic, environment and social infrastructure. Information can be accessed interactively, i.e. individually. It may be selected via points marked on the city map or from a list of projects arranged by districts.

When the information screen of a concrete project is displayed, detailed information can be accessed by simply clicking on the grey information buttons. Depending on the material available, data can be selected in the form of text, photos, image-text combinations, plans, animation and even real video sequences.

Due to the combination of a database structure with a user-friendly interface, simple and content-based access to the data is ensured in spite of a complex data set (selecting plans, detailed plans, alphabetic lists of architects).
On the use of a CD-ROM by Specialised Public Relations of Urban Planning Vienna

In recent years, Urban Planning Vienna has tried to present current projects to the Viennese population by means of “new media”. As described in some earlier chapters, the portfolio CD (on Langobardenstraße) and the CD-I (on the U1 axis) have met with a high acceptance and keen interest from the Viennese. Building upon these experiences, the group Specialised Public Relations of Municipal Department 18 – Urban Development and Urban Planning – tried to offer another new product by carrying out this pilot project on urban planning on CD-ROM.

This multimedia technology opens up a multitude of new options. Everybody is familiar with audio CDs which have become indispensable to lovers of music. VHS videos are not new to us, either. Data compression made it possible to store videos with a length of approx. 60 minutes on a digital videodisc. But technical progress does not stop. While a raw CD currently costs ATS 100 and a recorder around ATS 13,000, it is to be expected that also these prices will plummet as soon as the multimedia PC (with CD-ROM burner) will be introduced on the market.

What was multimedia? Many decades ago, this was the term used for slide shows accompanied by music. Almost absurd from today’s perspective. Can anybody still remember hearing the slogan “Visions of CD-ROMs” at the ifabo fair in 1987 for the first time? And today, CD-ROMs also stand for multimedia applications! Hence, they are a combination of “many media”. After all, texts, graphics, photos, animation and video sequences can be stored on a shining, silvery disc – as for instance on the CD-ROM “Vienna in planning”.

In this context, an application by a German mail-order company is to be mentioned briefly. Up to now, this company printed 180,000 copies of its catalogue year by year. In 1995, it was able to distribute 19,000 catalogues on CD-ROM to its customers (more than 10%). In spite of the production cost involved, the advantage seems to be enormous. The postage saved alone justifies the use of CD-ROMs and, by combining this application with the Internet, a hybrid form developed: the catalogue on CD-ROM, the prices on the Internet: if necessary, prices can be changed on a daily basis and, as long as no new products are offered, no additional costs are incurred for the users of the CD-ROM catalogues!

How is “multimedia” applied in urban planning? Many new paths have been broken as described in previous chapters. But, when we take a look around at present, there seems to be no way around CD-ROMs and the Internet in many fields. That is why we try to edit current projects for CD-ROMs, to update them and, as a next step, to provide a link via Internet. This is a vision which will permit us to document current projects on CD-ROM and to retrieve up-to-date information via Internet. This might offer a truly multimedia experience, though there are a lot of other concepts, too: tests using teletext and interactive phone for a project on tele-shopping. Or ordering right through the Internet? Payments could be made using a currency that does not exist: cybercash? Such a multimedia society will also result in dramatic changes in social and economic life.

Finally, one thing still has to be mentioned: The Society for German Language declared the word “multimedia” the Most Annoying Word of the Year in 1995. Multimedia (= many media) actually is bad Latin since the masculine “multi” entered into a forced union with the neuter “media”. But, this term was coined in the English-speaking world, became common usage in German computer lingo and meanwhile also entered most other languages as a term vaguely describing the future world which (still) is a marvel in many respects. “Multimedia” seems to be the motto for our journey to this brave, new media world.
Public participation via Internet
Pilot project on public participation via Internet

New media and technologies have prepared the ground for the development of innovative participation models in municipal decision-making processes and for increasingly involving the public in planning processes by new ways of information dissemination.

The opportunity to communicate via computer networks prompted Municipal Department 21C (Zoning and Land Use Northeast Vienna) to initiate a pilot project in the summer of 1995 which was to be the first step towards the introduction of an additional level of communication between the planning departments and the citizens. For the first time, the opportunity was offered within the framework of the public inspection of a draft zoning and land-use plan to submit comments via Internet to the bureau in charge. On the one hand, each Internet user was able to enter his/her comments at home and, on the other hand, a tele-station was made available at the Danube Hospital for preparing comments with the support of an expert during office hours. In both cases the comments were transmitted via Internet to the Town Hall.

This project also was the starting point for considerations on how the planning departments could use these new technologies for preparing and disseminating information in the future in order to achieve greater transparency for (political) decision-makers and the citizens concerned in planning processes.

In addition to the digital coverage and presentation of basic data (demographic data, social and technical infrastructure, generalised actual utilisation, urbanist parameters, etc.), the zoning and land-use plan undergoing public inspection was prepared in digital form and integrated into a geographic information system (GIS). The contents of the draft plan were linked to text windows so that fundamental legal information on the regulations laid down by the zoning and land-use plan in accordance with the Viennese Building Code were accessible via a GIS station set up at the Danube Hospital.

Moreover, this computer also offered a 3D visualisation of the existing cityscape in combination with a proposed building variant in order to give a spatial impression of the implementation of a possible project in the area concerned. The main objective of the 3D model, which made it possible to see the spatial configuration from different perspectives, was to facilitate the assessment of their regulatory basis in the zoning and land-use plan.

The conclusions drawn from this pilot project confirmed again the fact that has become more and more apparent in the tension field between population and planning administration for quite some time: the population has a strong desire and a right to receive comprehensive and detailed information on the issues of urban planning.

This pilot project was the first attempt of the City of Vienna to move towards “electronic democracy” in the sense of improved service and more information for the citizens. In parallel to the pilot project, a small exhibition presented the possibilities offered by computer-assisted urban planning and by new communication technologies.

Though the number of comments received via Internet did not come up to the expectations, the project still proved to be a success. The interest of the population in this project was substantially greater than in comparable projects.

As more and more citizens have access to the Internet, we can justly expect that they will increasingly make use of participatory facilities if the new possibilities opened up by telecommunications will offer an unbureaucratic way of obtaining information on the one hand and of submitting comments on the other hand.

Though the direct exercise of democratic rights via telecommunications in the form of electronic elections and votes will justly remain utopian for a long time, the new telecommunication technologies will very soon become an essential democratic tool for obtaining information and promoting public participation.
"Wien online"
(http://www.magwien.gv.at/)

Already since early May 1995, the City of Vienna offers extensive information on the World Wide Web (WWW). "Wien online" is a collection of information and services made available by the City of Vienna to its citizens. This collection has been steadily increasing since the opening of "Wien online" and will continue to expand.

In addition to up-to-date information, such as news on the parliamentary elections in 1995, the information offered by "Wien online" is divided into four groups.

The first group contains the Town Hall Correspondence, various press reviews as well as the WIBIS library information system. Town Hall Correspondence not only comprises current notices, also older notices can be accessed by date or by means of full-text searches.

The WIBIS library information system can be used to search for books according to various criteria in the extensive holdings of the Municipal Libraries. After successful searches, it is possible not only to display more detailed information on the books themselves, but also information on the branch of the Municipal Libraries where the books can be lent.

The second group is a collection of specific information on Vienna. Apart from environmental measurements and statistical data, you will find information on the Viennese Fund for Economic Promotion, urban planning including the traffic concept as well as a hot link to the Digital City "wien.at". Additionally, you also have the opportunity to contact Hannes Swoboda, the councillor responsible for urban planning, directly via e-mail.

The environmental measurement values provide comprehensive information on air quality as well as monthly statistics on the development of the ozone load. Apart from these figures and statistics, you can look up general information on environmental protection in Vienna.

Another group informs on events in Vienna which are mainly interesting for leisure-time activities. In addition to the Viennese ball calendar, which can be searched by date as well as by the name of the ball, and an overview of Advent and Christmas fairs (seasonal), you will also find an overview of the Viennese Lectures from 1987 on.

The fourth and last group is a collection of information which are of a more general interest, but still highly topical. Information on civil defence is provided as well as the addresses and vaccination schedules of the district health offices. Important information are also available for those expecting a baby.

A highly appealing service is offered in conjunction with the new night bus lines. Both the location of the stops and the timetable can be accessed very conveniently by a simple mouse click. Also information around this new service of Vienna's public transport system is available on the Internet.

The organisers of clubbings, concerts, fashion shows or simply of summer parties are offered a very special service. To illustrate the steps to be taken, the organisation of a clubbing at the Simmering Gasometer is provided as an example.

As an independent service, "Wien online" is also included in the Digital City "wien.at". In the underground map, which symbolises Vienna as a metaphor, the stop at the Town Hall represents the link between "wien.at" and "Wien online".
Invigoration of urban life, economy and democracy by Internet technology

World-wide, a rapidly growing number of "digital cities" present basic information on urban communities which utilise the new Internet-based media in good time. From Russia's Saint Petersburg to small towns with 2,000 inhabitants in the Mid West of the USA, all over the world technology enthusiasts took the initiative and set up urban information systems based on computer networks.

From early citizen information systems to "digital cities"

Since the 70's, "citizen information systems", the forerunners of digital cities, have cropped up and provided information on opening hours, jurisdiction and offices of authorities via public terminals ("kiosks") or videotext ("Btx"). Motives: "closeness to the people" and "transparent" administration.

Due to the spreading of computer technology in the 80's, it occurred to technical enthusiasts as well as to interest groups and associations that it would be a good idea to use this new channel of computer-based media not only as a one-way information channel, but also as a bi-directional means of communication. Many systems were based on models from the USA where the community net and free net movements set up on-line services.

The St. Silicon's Hospital and Dispensary was one of the first privately organised systems which has offered socio-medical information and has provided organisational support to socio-medical initiatives since 1986. From this system, the "Cleveland Free-Net" emerged which has more than 20,000 users today.

Computer-based urban media have a great variety of applications: they may serve as official presentation space for municipal administrations, as a vehicle for disseminating up-to-date information to the citizens, as an advertising medium for locally based companies and tourism and even as a communication centre for all social groups, action committees and inhabitants of the city.

Also "wien.at" will be more than an electronic showcase or - not to be underrated - advertising space for tourism. The American free nets, the Amsterdam example of the "digital staad" and, last not least, the Viennese mail box Black•Box - Europe's second biggest theme-oriented community network after Amsterdam - show that these systems become catalysts of economic and social regional development and also an instrument for invigorating democracy.

Between political maturity and disorientation

The educational explosion and cultural change that occurred in recent decades have contributed to the political maturity of the people in many respects: their ability to express their opinion and their receptivity increased enormously. As a result, new forms of democratic structures emerged: local and regional initiatives and theme-centred organisations going beyond the landscape of traditional parties, which are in competition or even opposition to traditional republican institutions.

On the other hand, social developments lead to the disintegration of time-honoured political camps and roles. Together with their traditional political home, many people lose their orientation within a new landscape of political interests: political anomy - disorientation - makes people search for new, simple explanations so that they become prone to populism and extremism.

Hence, we are trying to find democratic forms for introducing new political needs and structures into the dialogue with the traditional institutions. For one thing was not brought about by the information explosion in our media society: an understanding for relations, for the interplay of interest groups and balancing diverging interests. Instead, the stereotype of "dirty politics" developed.

But stereotypes always blocks the view to an - admittedly - more complex reality that is more difficult to grasp.

In particular in this complex of problems, an important field of application opens up for computer-based telematic media: they are the first mass media which allow the user to play an active role in
the formation of public opinion. All at once, the population has equal opportunities in making themselves heard in the political discussion.

Urban information and new paths of public participation
“Wien.at” opens up a new communication level for the entire city. Here, Vienna’s population, politics, urban administration, industry and non-profit organisations meet. An important task will be to improve the opportunity of the Viennese to participate in decision-making. To this end, public discussion forums will be offered on urban development and other aspects of city life. Furthermore, the technical infrastructure will be used for on-line discussions and for directly addressing questions to representatives of politics and administration (e.g. via electronic mail). The free flow of communication is to encourage self-organisation and neighbourly help and can play an important role in the future development of social life. These groups are to be given simplified access to “wien.at”. The basis for constructive discussions: “wien.at” will offer in-depth, topical information on the city prepared by editorial staff.

New economic momentum by new key technologies
Industry places great expectations in the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC). In Europe, the use and development of CMC is supported by a series of grant programmes whose funds reach two-digit billion amounts. Similarly to car industry in the post-war years, telematic technology is to become an essential driving force of economic growth which is to comprise almost all areas of demand.

This requires the fast spreading of the new communication tools and easy, unproblematic access to them. Access to the new media should not be confined to medium-scale and large-scale enterprises but should also be easy and inexpensive for small companies, trade and, above all, private users. Unhindered access to state-of-the-art Internet technology also helps to give the economy this new momentum. New presentation areas and market places develop which are visited by a particularly active public and additionally bring public space to life. “Wien.at” also provides decisive help and incentives for commercial applications in order to allow everybody to go for these modern communication technologies in good time. Companies can even benefit from “wien.at” in internal communications: electronic mail and separate private communication areas on “wien.at” provide a time-saving instrument for bridging distances.

Media mix and public access ensure widespread use
The creation of new information and participation opportunities would not be a breakthrough if they were available only to a small information élite. However, each additional communication channel increases the overall reach of the system. Hence, the “Digital City of Vienna” is to use a media mix which goes beyond the telematic media in a narrow sense and also establishes links to traditional print and electronic media. The speech box technology, which has already been tested in a pilot project in Vienna (“Grätztelefon”) is to help in broadening the user group to circles outside the education and information élite (e.g. the Internet users mainly are university graduates).
Depending on the objectives and the target groups to be addressed, the media to be used can be defined. First of all, a short list of the options available:

- graphic and text-based mailbox systems (BBSs, telematic medium for newcomers),
- classic Internet technologies, such as theme-centred mailing lists and UseNet discussion forums,
- modern graphic Internet services, such as the World Wide Web and HyperG,
- telephone-based services, such as speech box systems and fax information servers,
- videotext-based services (Btx, PAN),
- videotext-based services ("Teletext" of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation and other cable TV stations),
- kiosk-based systems (public information terminals).

No technology should be excluded a priori. It is a question of economy how many systems should be used in parallel. The best solution is an interplay of different functions in various media for broad target groups. Such an extensive system would be unique all over the world and can only be set up gradually.

The media concept of “wien.at”
Up to now we have tried to outline an integral concept for supporting economic and social development as well as public participation in the city. From this concept, we derive a media and journalistic concept which defines the principles for the design of telematic media.

Focus on communication
Previous experiences clearly show that the appeal of a telematic on-line system mainly depends on the communication possibilities (discussions and on-line chats) and only to a lesser extent on the information offered. Moreover, a central objective is to ensure participation in direct exchanges of opinions and information. This is the democratic benefit and also the advantage of this type of media.

In order to achieve maximum user-friendliness - an indispensable requirement for achieving a broad reach - the communication services have to be integrated as homogeneously as possible into the technical medium in question. This demand is easy to meet in case of computer mailboxes. But especially the most sophisticated Internet technology, the World Wide Web (WWW) with its multimedia capabilities, has weak points in this respect. Thus, most WWW-based urban information systems are rather similar to electronic picture books with static information services whose contents is equivalent to a slim brochure. Special efforts are required to provide viable solutions.

As a result, “wien.at” integrated the interactive communication areas into its theme structure right from the start.

- The “homebase” becomes a meeting place and starting point
  In addition to merely providing the opportunity to communicate, it is also important to have a common meeting place where there is always somebody to “talk” to and where communication paths converge. Such a meeting place is to be created for the first time also under WWW technology: at “wien.at” the homebase will be the meeting place for on-line chats, but also the starting point for searches for specific information: orientation and search functions and latest news are to be found here.

- Moderators coach discussions
  Special discussion chairpersons, so-called “moderators”, coach discussions, structure complex topics, provide background information, if necessary, and consult experts in case of complicated issues. They also see to it that the discussions are objective and fair and prevent excessive insulting and polemics. A new medium attracts/needs extra attention by politics, too. Though this results in additional efforts, the tool of moderation ensures a fair and time-saving course of discussion.

- Editing: journalists on Internet media
  The type and quality of journalistic editing of information and discussion services is one of the most decisive success factors for this communication channel. But this adjustment and continual tuning of journalistic work is frequently neglected in new media.
There is a high risk of succumbing to the technical design options and of losing sight of functional requirements. New media have specific design requirements. The style and formal language still have to be developed and tested on a large scale. Existing concepts are still predominantly geared towards technology. For example, tests are required on the correct use of interactive services, various text lengths, search and navigation technologies and the intelligent use of illustrations in quantitative terms (graphics result in long transfer times in WWW systems and may be hard on the users’ patience).

It is particularly important to organise and ensure the preparation and updating of information and data in the long term. Many ambitious projects failed because the information provider did not succeed in keeping existing services up to date and in responding quickly to new needs. Hence, “wien.at” will have its own editorial staff like all the traditional mass media. A dual concept featuring information provided autonomously by the users themselves or published opinion and contributions supplied by the editorial staff are to guarantee both spontaneity and professional style.

Vienna’s way towards a new cultural technology
If you compare “wien.at” with other “digital cities” or telematic urban information systems, you will notice immediately that it is a highly ambitious project which is designed right from the start to become a communication centre with a broad audience in the city. Hardly any other city uses such a comprehensive media mix and has planned the communication flow as thoroughly as Vienna in its model. If “wien.at” will live up to the expectations and will be accepted, occupied and used by Vienna’s population in a short time, our city will have conquered a top rank in the field of applying new media in a socially acceptable way.

Sources:
Vienna's Internet activities - 
*Pilot Project “Urban planning and Internet”*

The new media offer a good basis for quickly providing a broad public with up-to-date information. At the same time, bi-directional communication technologies create the opportunity to intensify public participation and to make planning processes more democratic which finally raises the prospects for broader acceptance of decisions taken.

Apart from the time-consuming input and inventorying of digital data, the main problem in editing information is the need for selecting and presenting information in line with the target group to be addressed. Though the use of existing digital data makes it easier to meet this requirement, this is frequently in contradiction to economy and efficiency in the field of (planning) administration. Especially for this reason, the practice of using new communication technologies - under the heading of a modern planning administration - for their own sake, which is predominating in some places, must not lead to an “abuse” of these media. Of course, it is our objective and concern to raise the level of information provided to all target groups (citizens, politicians, planners) even further. However, the quality of the information as well as the appropriateness of the medium to be used is to be studied carefully - particularly due to the efforts involved. Especially in the preparation of a zoning and land-use plan, it seems advisable to limit the utilisation of new communication technologies mainly to correspondence (letters - e-mail) as well as to organisational aspects of the planning procedure (e.g. announcement of public inspection of draft plans, presentation and explanation of procedural steps) due to the complexity of the plan contents.

This was evidenced within the framework of the pilot project as the use of the Internet as a new (additional) medium for submitting comments proved to be fairly suitable, even though a substantial shift in correspondence is not expected in the short term - last not least due to the low number of private users. In contrast, it seems to be absolutely pointless to make the draft zoning and land-use plan to be inspected available on a public network: the reason why is less the big volume of data and the resulting high costs of transferring it via the existing lines, but rather the fact that adequate answers to concrete questions of the citizens concerned can only be given in a personal discussion with experts.

The zoning plan prepared in digital form for interactive retrieval would rather be suitable for the presentation of this legal instrument and for the explanation of the symbols used in the plan in a general form to the citizens at local information centres.

Computer-assisted urban planning which uses new technologies (CAD, GIS) as tools for planning work and decision-making in a targeted way is the prerequisite for the efficient use of new communication technologies. The utilisation of existing digital data speeds up both the processing of information for a specific purpose and target group (e.g. simple 2D and 3D representations with brief descriptions) as well as its dissemination.

Finally, in conjunction with new communication technologies, the presentation of information of relevance to planning using graphics and text makes it possible to set up an up-to-date information system for citizens as well as to develop new forms of information flow and public participation in planning processes on this basis.
Genesis
At the end of the last but one decade of this century, the Eastern European countries underwent surprisingly quick reforms and the Iron Curtain fell. In parallel to a changed demographic situation, Vienna was marked by an increasing afflux of migrants in the following years. As a result, Urban Planning had to tackle the important task of taking measures to cater to the needs of a growing population. Hence, the objectives of urban development policies are to ensure that urban development is well-balanced in social and ecological terms, preserves green space and improves the quality of life for everyone.

In order to meet this high quality standard we defined ourselves, but also in order to provide the necessary quantities, it was necessary to engage more and more in a continued dialogue with the residents concerned and the public interested. In this process, public relations and a well trained staff experienced in applying communication techniques become more important. Many of the numerous activities carried out in recent years have to be seen in light of this development.

Employee training - first steps
As early as autumn 1991, just a little less than half a year after Dr. Klotz became the new director of the Planning Group, a seminar on “creative self-organisation” was organised for the team of the planning departments. The seminar took place at Reichenau an der Rax in November 1991 and was to promote the working groups to be set up for the urban development areas on the one hand and to foster co-operation between the planning departments and the directors of the City Planning Bureau. At that time, the setback related to the planned EXPO 95 was still fresh on everybody’s minds and the team spirit of the individual working teams was still in development. However, the discussion of concepts from the fields of sociology and communication sciences in a setting different from normal work yielded valuable results for team formation. The fact alone that the teams were able to fulfil the tasks assigned to them without any significant staff changes – as a rule by spring 1994 – shows that the decision to introduce elements of group dynamics already at the stage of team formation was correct.

In parallel to the work on urban development areas, it was also necessary to inform the district politicians in charge but also the population concerned about the changes planned along the planned development axes. The main burden of these information activities was borne, of course, by the politicians responsible (city councillor for planning, city council members represented in the committee on planning, district chairpersons, members of the district development commission of the district councils). More and more frequently, however, the discussions of the engineers employed by the City of Vienna to define the foundation for urban development areas showed that there was a need for answering also other questions of future development. Increasingly, members of the planning services had to be delegated to these informative discussions.

It became apparent that the population not only wanted to receive information, but that they also wanted to achieve breakthroughs for their own proposals in numerous cases. Conflicts were virtually unavoidable due to the often different interests involved in expert opinions on the one hand and personal concerns on the other hand.

As a result, a working group on public relations was set up in autumn 1992. At first it was made up of representatives of the division Urban Development and Urban Planning, Planning Group of the City Planning Bureau and representatives of the planning departments involved. The working group met at irregular intervals and was mainly in charge of collecting information on public meetings (citizens’ meetings), specialised exhibitions, brochures planned (e.g. Blue Series), etc., of encouraging information exchange and of developing measures with public appeal.

Very soon this working group organised by MA 18 – Specialised Public Relations – was institutionalised. The turn of the year 1992/93 was marked by a comprehensive re-organisation of the planning
departments. Not only the responsibilities and tasks were re-structured, but also the local jurisdiction within Vienna's territory was re-defined. The preparation of district plans, the development of proposals for new zoning and construction regulations is now divided into three areas. The somewhat differing internal organisation of the three new zoning departments (MA 21A, B and C) made it necessary to co-ordinate PR so that representatives from all the three new departments had to be involved in the PR Working Group.

The first year following the re-structuring of the planning departments (1993) was characterised to a large extent by the preparatory work for the Urban Development Plan and by the development of measures for the Vienna Traffic Concept. In the field of PR, a core team emerged which was made up of representatives of the division's office, Planning Group of the City Planning Bureau and the Public Relations Group at MA 18. It had turned out that the significance of PR was assessed differently by the individual planning services so that steady commitment to these fields of activities had to be striven for. In several internal and closed working meetings, three training priorities were defined:

- The staff of the planning departments needs training on the fundamentals of presentation techniques, communication methods and the leading of discussions in order to hold their own in citizens' meetings and at district exhibitions.

In the planning services, the executives' awareness has to be raised for the importance of PR and the need for a professional training of the staff working in the fields of PR.

- The objective of a future-oriented personnel strategy for executive positions is to be achieved so that employees who seem to be suitable for important positions (heads of sections, departments) are prepared for managerial tasks (personnel management, budgeting, etc.).

The most important result was the preparation of a rough structure of seminar topics for staff training in the fields of presentation and team work. In this process, we also established contacts to the Municipal Directorate - Administrative Academy in order to define the technical details for the staff training courses planned.

In this context, the Administrative Academy drew our attention to the fact that seminars on similar topics were already organised for the staff of the municipal housing administration (residents'/tenants' meetings instead of citizens' meetings, presentation of renovation plans instead of district development plans). Hence, the well-proven seminar programmes were adapted to the needs of the staff of the planning departments.

**Rhetoric, communication, presentation techniques**

In spring 1994, a pilot seminar focusing on presentation techniques was held outside Vienna. Under the direction of two experienced psychologists of MA 11 (Dr. Maly-Kroisenbacher and Dr. Kastner), this 3-day seminar took place at Stubenberg/Styria. The participants were employees from all the planning departments and all levels of qualification. As not only the subject matter presented, but also the way in which it is presented matters when you work with big groups, this aspect was given special attention. In addition to the theoretical basis of communication, personal presentation styles (body language, paralingual phenomena, rhetoric, discussion style) were to be taught and practised.

Essential topics of the seminar were as follows:

- Dimensions of communication,
- Interaction processes, dynamics of discussions, role distributions,
- Analysis of one's personal communication and presentation style, use of feedback,
- Application of media, visualisation methods; attention efforts; strategies from the psychology of learning,
- Efficient and inefficient communication strategies; co-operation and competition,
- Fundamentals of leading discussion professionally,
- Activities fostering discussions, appreciation and guidance.
The methods used were working in small groups, plenary discussions, role games, presentation of theories as well as the application of video and reflection. During one of the seminar evenings, there was also the opportunity to have an informal talk with the director of planning.

This was especially valuable as we were able to get firsthand information and also address our concerns and personal ideas.

In concertation with the Municipal Directorate – Administrative Academy, another seminar on the same topics was offered in spring 1995 following this successful start. In order to give colleagues who cannot spend several days outside Vienna the opportunity to participate, we agreed to organise seminars in turns in Vienna and at seminar hotels outside of Vienna. Also in spring 1996, the first part of a seminar is planned to be held at the seminar centre Rosensterngasse.

**Argumentation techniques, leading discussions**

As we had planned right from the start, the second part of the seminar was offered in autumn 1995 for the first time to round off the theoretical and practical knowledge gained in the first part of the seminar. The main focus of the second part is team work, working with groups, argumentation techniques and the leading of discussions. The pilot seminar was held at the training centre of the Chamber of Labour at Hirschwang in November 1995 and was headed by Dr. Feller (ÖSB-Unternehmensberatung GmbH) and Dr. Kastner, psychologist of MA 11.

After a brief recapitulation of the subjects presented in the first part of the seminar and a brush-up of various theoretical issues, the seminar started with an exchange of experiences made at citizens’ meetings. In theory and in practical exercises, the four perception levels according to Schulz von Thun were studied. A large part of the seminar was dedicated to the way of responding to objections, clarification of the roles of moderators, discussion leaders and technical experts, the importance of agendas (open and hidden objectives of a meeting) as well as to the practice of paraphrasing.

The presentation of theoretical foundations on various conversation techniques was followed by speech exercises by the participants and, subsequently, the evaluation of their contributions by analysing video recordings. In role games on relevant subjects chosen by the participants themselves, the techniques learnt were tested again in three “citizens’ meetings” and then discussed. The reflections on this exercise came both from the “panel” and from the “audience”. The developments of steps to be taken to make discussions a success, rules for group discussions as well as the way to handle disruptions in big meetings rounded off the seminar.

For this second part of the seminar series which, for the time being, consists of two parts, only participants of the first part of the seminar had been invited. Also for autumn 1996, such a seminar is planned which is to be open mainly for those employees of the planning departments who were not yet able to participate in an extension course. In accordance with the general wish of the participants, we will try to develop another seminar module still in 1996 which will repeat and elaborate on the contents of the first and second part and meet the requirements of new features in the activities of the staff of the planning departments. The aspects to be covered are tasks involved in presentations at committee meetings in the districts as well as participation in panel discussions at citizens’ meetings. This type of seminar will be held from 1997 onwards and is to support above all colleagues who are directly involved in these fields of activities.

The quality and implementation of projects depends to a large extent on popular and generally comprehensible presentations in public. In order to achieve this objective, well-trained and, above all, motivated employees are indispensable. The importance to be accorded to public relations within the departments is also documented by the fact that a special evening meeting took place for the target group of departmental heads, their deputies and the section heads of the planning services in 1994. City Councillor H. Swoboda and Prof. Klotz, Director of...
Planning, highlighted the necessity of motivating the staff for further training, in particular for public relations. At this meeting, first experiences of the previous pilot seminar were presented and opportunities for translating the seminar subjects into practice were discussed.

**PR Working Group, strategy seminar**

Since the PR Working Group was set up in 1993 it has always been an important “clearing house” for issues of scheduling, organisation, division of work and responsibilities. Though the work priorities shifted – last not least due to the recent increase in the use of new media –, five main fields of activities can be defined:

- Exhibitions (preparation and organisation at various places),
- Publications (“Blue Series”, “Wien wächst”, concise information brochures, folders, etc.),
- Events (meetings, seminars, congresses and concomitant events),
- Press conferences (support and preparation of various documents),
- Visitors (domestic and foreign experts, in-house officials and tours).

In order to improve co-ordination of work processes and to raise mutual understanding for mostly externally determined time constraints, a reflection and strategy seminar held by external trainers was organised for employees with PR tasks in 1994. At this seminar, many causes of frictions were revealed which have been eliminated by suitable measures to a large extent. Since autumn 1994, the staff of the traffic departments are no longer involved in the PR Working Group due to re-organisation measures, but the definitions prepared together at this seminar still ensure smooth co-operation today.

**Corporate identity**

In the course of re-organisation and re-structuring of the planning departments in early 1993, various ideas were developed to strengthen the feeling of solidarity among the staff of the planning departments, but also of the other departments of the division. As neither a uniform (as in big companies) nor a product prepared together could be the objective of the development, we focused on team formation by providing information. To this effect, three information channels were developed:

- Specialised tours and exhibitions,
- Specialised lectures and lecture series on topics of relevance to planning,
- Information in the form of written summaries on current topics of planning.

The series of lectures and events “Urban Planning internally” was launched by the staff of MA 18 – Specialised Public Relations in 1993. It is to give colleagues of the division Urban Development, Planning and External Relations of the City of Vienna the opportunity to participate in important lectures with discussions or in series of lectures, which mainly take place at the Vienna Planning Workshop. In co-operation with the College of Applied Arts, for example, two lecture series on “Free space in the city” were organised in 1993 and 1994. These lectures were supplemented by the series “Landscape architecture – Aspects of a discipline” in 1995. Urban renewal and urban conservation were the topics of lectures and tours of exhibitions in 1994 and 1995. The same applies to “80 days in Vienna – Architecture and city” which was covered in the course of the exhibition of the same title. These lectures were supplemented by technical presentations on the effects of Austria’s membership in the EU on Vienna and tours of various specialised exhibitions, such as the one on Hans Hollein in the Museum of the City of Vienna.

In parallel, guided tours and excursions were offered which informed about essential projects in the Vienna area, but also about development areas on site. In 1993 and 1994, for example, the reconstruction of “Redoutensäle”, the rehabilitation of Dr. Karl Lueger Church, the renovated “Ronacher”, but also the construction site of the Freudenau power plant were visited. Subsequently, tours of the rehabilitated Palais Harrach and the “Vienna underworld”, i.e. the passable part of the Vienna sewers, were organised. The highlights in this context were two information tours of selected urban development areas in the north and south of Vienna where
the authors of the master plans as well as the responsible experts of the planning departments provided firsthand information.

The staff of the planning departments are to know – at least general – information of selected (major) projects or plans in Vienna in which they are not personally involved. One of the reason why is the fact that they are confronted with them at internal meetings as well as by citizens interested. Examples for such projects are the considerations on parking space management and plans for the “Marchegger Ast”.

Hence, it has been a concern of the heads of the Planning Group for a long time to provide the staff with concise information on selected planning measures. Such summaries were already prepared for various exhibitions and selected major projects (e.g. Langobardenstraße). In parallel to the project information to be made available via new media (information on Vienna on the Internet), summaries will be provided to the staff of the planning departments so that they can get a good overview of planning activities in Vienna and a better understanding for planning results.

In addition to this technical training, mention has to be made of the fact that also leisure-time activities essentially contribute to improving the working climate across departmental bounds. Above all, the recurring efforts of individual employees to offer sports competitions as occasions for spending leisure time together are commendable. In the form of sailing regattas on the Old Danube, tennis tournaments at the courts in the Prater or curling in the environs of Vienna, important sports highlights are set which also offer the possibility to get to know colleagues from other departments and their families. In this context, we also have to refer to the cycling tours to villages around Vienna which are a good exercise, but also yield important findings for planning as regards access to recreational and leisure areas in the vicinity.

We have to stress in particular that these initiatives of individual employees or small groups in the planning departments make an essential contribution to achieving the objective of a corporate identity.
Summary

At the close of this century, not only the basic conditions for Vienna and, thus, also for Vienna’s urban planning changed, but also new forms of planning are to be developed and to be put into practice. Only openness in planning will result in a high degree of identification of the citizens with the projects and measures of the City of Vienna.

Hence, we have to aim at
- new organisational structures to promote communication,
- new management tools to assure quality, and
- the timely dissemination of exhaustive information and the participation of the parties involved and concerned.

As the implementation and the quality of projects depends in many respects on popular and generally comprehensible presentations, training and motivation of the staff (to be) employed in these fields is indispensable. The seminars carried out in recent years proved to be an important step into this direction. With a view to modern public relations they have to be further expanded as an essential and necessary part of training within Urban Planning.

In recent years, the Working Group on Public Relations has changed from a circle for discussing organisational issues to a genuine clearing house for solving short-term and medium-term problems in the field of public relations. The related tasks of strengthening the team spirit among the staff of the planning departments will also have to be fulfilled in the future.

The following principle continues to apply to planning: planning is only successful, if it is also implemented. At the same time, however, this implies the following thesis: Make a good plan and talk about it. In this context, public relation will be of significant importance also in the future.
The members of the Working Group on Public Relations of Urban Planning Vienna (clockwise from the left at the front):

Walter Krauss
Susanne Debelak
Mario Marth
Mary Figl-Zavros
Richard Macho
Elisabeth Windbrechtlinger
Wolfgang Dvorak
Gabriele Philipp
Harald Niebauer
Roland Löffler
Rudolf Zunke
Thomas Madreiter
Sylvia Leodolter
Exhibitions and events

Exhibitions
At Messepalast
- 1978
  Urbanist development of Vienna till 1945
- 1979
  Vienna moving closer to the River Danube
- 1980
  Aspern 1980
  75 years of green belt
- 1981
  Vienna 2000
- 1983
  Vienna yesterday, today and tomorrow
- 1985
  STEP 1985
- 1986
  Danube area competition
- 1988
  Ideas and projects for the Danube area

Exhibitions
at the Vienna Planning Workshop / districts
- 1989
  Danube area competition / Europaplatz square / Master project Danube Canal / Danube hospital SMZ Ost / EXPO 1995 / Gürtel road planning: Wienfl - Gaudenzdorf / District development plan for Meidling / District development plan for Floridsdorf / Competition Meiselmarkt / Cartography of the City of Vienna / District development plan for Donaustadt / Danube-March-Thaya meadows - tomorrow's national park / Sanstrat Vienna (structural analysis of the urban renewal policy) / Re-designing of the pedestrian zone Meidlinger Hauptstraße / District development plan for Ottakring / Master project Danube Canal / Vienna's underground - Phase 2 / Wienerberg / District development plan for Leopoldstadt

- 1990

- 1991

- 1992
  Conservation today / Gentle mobility / Vienna architecture / Future of the trams / Lainz tunnel / Vienna as an example / Tomorrow's urban planners - 3rd part / Nordbahnhof railway station / Burle Marx / The new "Wiener Messen" / Süßenbrunner Straße / New Vienna / Protection zones in Vienna / Gaußplatz square / Ernst W. Heiss / Protection zones / Places for playing / Dubrovnik / Urban development areas / Projects in the 20th district / Mariahilf - Neubau / Residents' participation

- 1993

- 1994
  New housing construction in Vienna / Frauen-Werk-Stadt / Süßenbrunn / Stuttgart / Barcelona / East Floridsdorf / Residential avenue at Simmering / Urban conservation - urban renewal - Japan's architecture / Projects at Alsergrund / Projects at
Exhibitions and events

Leopoldstadt / Langobardenviertel quarter / Southern area of Vienna: Meidlinger Hauptstraße – Favoritenstraße – Per-Albin-Hansson estate – Alt Erlaa estate – Liesinger Platz square / District development plan for Simmering / Eastern Floridsdorf / Döbling / Süßenbrunn / U3 Simmering / In der Wiesen / Kreuzgasse / B 301 bypass road

1995
Otto Wagner / U1 urban axis / Bogdanovic / Urban furniture / Vienna, new architecture / District sub-plans Centre-West: Stiftgasse – Rocheusmarkt – Gürtel road – Stadionbad – Praterstern – Generali Center / School at Carlberggasse / B 301 bypass road / Floridsdorf / Public Inspection of SMZ Ost (Internet) / How is life at Roßau? / Karmeliterviertel quarter / Simmering / Penzing / Networking of green space / Hadersdorf-Weidlingau

1996 (1st half)
Adolf Loos / Danube atlas / Boundless, but not without river banks (landscape competition) / Vienna, green and free space – the state of the art / Public inspection of Nordbahnhof railway station (Internet) / District development plan for Erzberg / District development plan for Neubau / Vienna’s 3rd district – between tradition and vision / Margarethen – the coming years

Exhibitions on the topics of urban planning, architecture, urban conservation and urban renewal abroad

1991
Milan
1992
Berlin, Budapest, Prague, Hamburg
1993
Budapest, Florence, Rome, Triest, New York
1994
Buchum, Genua
1995
Ljubljana, Dresden, Dubai, Madrid
1996 (1st half)
Sevilla, Rome, Naples, Florence, Berlin, Istanbul

Events

1990
Danube area / Town Hall

1991
Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Urban Development / Vienna Planning Workshop (VPW)
Protection Zone Symposium / VPW
Public participation procedure on the Traffic Concept / VPW
Discussion on centres and settlement expansion beyond the Danube / VPW

1992
Advisory Committee on Urban Development Zones (March) / Messepalast
Advisory Committee on Urban Development Zones (June) / Messepalast
Advisory Committee on Urban Development Areas / Messepalast
Vienna Forum / Haas-Haus
Expert discussion “Adolf Loos Architectural Award” / Town Hall
Symposium “Raising quality by public participation” – Innovative housing construction and urban expansion / VPW

1993
Advisory Committee on Urban Development Areas / Messepalast
Expert meeting “Vienna – Safe City” / Town Hall
Presentation by Berlin’s Senate Administration for Construction and Housing “Capital, Workshop, Berlin” / Town Hall
Vienna Forum / Haas-Haus
Lecture series on free space in the city / VPW
Expert discussion “Vienna on the way to the 21st century” / Tram repair shop at Vorgartenstraße
International meeting “On the way to the 21st century (urban development plan)” / Town Hall
Discussion “Development of public transport in the Rhine-Main and Havel-Spree area” / VPW
Workshop “Information technology for urban planners” / Town Hall
Workshop “Urban development report 1993” / Hotel Wilhelminenberg
Presentation of the publication “Priority to pedestrians” / VPW
Construction biology congress “The ecological city” / Town Hall
Preparatory conference for “EUROPAN 4”

1994
Citizens’ meetings “Urban development plan – Tomorrow’s Vienna” / Town Hall
Expert meeting “Frauen-Werk-Stadt” / Town Hall
Expert discussion “Urban Development Plan” / Renaissance Hotel
Expert discussion “Traffic Concept” / Hotel Marriott
Metropolis conference “Ecological urban development illustrated by the example of the 7th district” / Hotel Plaza
Expert discussion “Urban construction – South” / Chadim
Lecture series on free space in the city / VPW
Expert meeting “Goods traffic” / Renaissance Hotel
Closed meeting “Urban Development Plan” / Hotel Wimberger
Citizens’ meeting “Tomorrow’s Vienna” / Town Hall

1995
Lecture series on free space in the city / VPW
Project presentation “DIFU study on site factors” / VPW
Expert meeting “VCO European project on gentle mobility” / Town Hall
Workshop “Instruments for mobilising land resources” / VPW
Expert and citizens’ meeting “Five years before the 21st century: Living and working in Floridsdorf and Donaustadt” / Siemens
“ECOS meeting” / Town Hall
“INTA 19 Vienna 1995” / Hofburg
“Guidelines for the 6th, 9th, 17th and 19th districts” / VPW
Lecture series on landscape architecture – aspects of a discipline “Sundry stories” / VPW
Opening of the event “Digital City” / Vienna Architectural Centre
Children jury “The school of my dreams” / Children’s Museum at the Museum Quarter
Competition “The ideal property” / VPW

1996 (1st half)
Gala presentation and press conference “URBAN Vienna – Gürtel plus” / Chelsea
Lecture series on landscape architecture – aspects of a discipline “Special Places” / VPW
Lecture and discussion “Adolf Loos” / VPW
Presentation “URBAN Vienna – Gürtel plus” / Hotel Austrotel
Exhibition and workshop “Global Village 1996” / Town Hall
Opening of “Telecentre Autokaderstraße” / Autokaderstraße

Urban planning internally
Urban planning game “Gumpenkring”
Reconstruction of the “Redoutensäle”
Rehabilitation concept for Dr. Karl Lueger Church
The new Ronacher
Freudenau power plant
Seminar programme for Urban Planning Vienna
Event for “New team members of Urban Planning Vienna”
Palais Harrach
Information tour – North
Vienna in a new Europe
Guided tour of the Hans Hollein exhibition
Information tour – Centre-West
Sewer system of Vienna
Information tour – South
Urban conservation in New York
Architectural festival “80 days in Vienna”
Guided tour of the Wilhelm Holzbauer exhibition
Information tour – School construction programme
Extension of Vienna airport
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Wienbahn- und Donaukanallinie
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