5 STEPS METHODOLOGY
FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RENEWAL
#HAPPYNEIGHBORHOODS

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And then, one day, the moment arises when the neighborhood calls for a thorough renewal. Not just replacing a few streetlights, appointing a new community center manager, or launching a new housing project. What's needed is a comprehensive future plan that combines physical, economic, and/or social interventions.

You're about to make significant investments. How can the neighborhood be renewed in a future-proof way? How do you build resilience within the neighborhood? How do you work towards a happy neighborhood? I take you on a journey through the strategizing process, touching upon:
>Systemic perspective on the neighborhood,
>Deep dive analysis method,
>Impact of societal transitions,
>Clear view on resilience,
>Transdisciplinary work, and
>Working from a position of empathy and wonder, for the neighborhood and the people.
This long read offers you a methodology.

I have been a transition maker for 30 years, working in neighborhood transitions for 15 years now. I love it! First and foremost because it's all about the people—those for whom the neighborhood is their living environment, where everything comes together: from the sewage system to a sense of belonging. And because an existing neighborhood demands that you dive deep into all stakeholders and their interests, into all characteristics of the neighborhood in every corner, into all ongoing projects—and then still manage to see a clear thread running through it all… In short, renewing an existing neighborhood is complex and messy.
But these are the neighborhoods we have created together, and that also gives us the responsibility to renew them. So it's up to us to rise to the challenge of managing that complexity. And in this area, there is surprisingly little guidance from the academic world. Based on my experience, intuition, and knowledge, I've developed a methodology to tackle this complexity. In this long read, I offer a step-by-step plan to create an integrated strategy or future plan.
My goal is to generate more dialogue about neighborhood transitions, to make us more aware of the choices we make, and to become better—together—at renewing neighborhoods. So, this long read is also an invitation for feedback and conversation.

Introduction of 5 steps of strategy process

Let me propose a structure to move through the strategy process of creating a future plan for a neighborhood, which is also the structure for this article. I have experienced that it makes sense to walk through five distinctive steps to reach a comprehensive strategy.

First is obviously to analyze the current situation in the neighborhood by a thorough assessment. Next is to take a step back and also analyze how societal transitions impact the neighborhood, both now and in the emerging future. Third is to establish the fundamental values that guide your vision, because strategizing a neighborhood's future is also based on personal, professional and societal values. The fourth step: identify how the neighborhood can enhance its resilience to become futureproof. These four steps or pillars jointly form the foundation. The fifth and final step is the creative part of the strategizing process: it is a synthesis of information of the previous steps leading to both a vision and a set of guiding principles that serve as a framework while executing the renewal.

Being explicit in all these steps allows others who are less involved, to contribute, to identify potential blind spots, and to engage in discussions about alternative approaches, enriching the overall process.

The content table of a future plan, based on these five steps, would then contain the following chapters,

of which points 1 to 4 are in fact the four pillars on which the strategy in step 5 is built:

1. Analysis of the neighborhood
2. Impact of societal transitions on the neighborhood
3. Values for the neighborhood
4. Opportunities to raise the resilience level of the neighborhood
5. Strategy for the neighborhood: our current view on the neighborhood, our vision for the future and the leading principles moving forward.

In this article all five chapters will be covered, one by one.

Additionally, I will finish with a paragraph that briefly touches upon the execution paragraph of the strategy, because no strategy has any value without being executed. And I will finalize with a paragraph in which I share some notes on the process of strategy creation.

Meeting a neighborhood from a systemic perspective

To start off and before really moving through the five steps: what exactly is a neighborhood? A neighborhood is the place where life in all its facets unfolds for its residents. Professionals, on the other hand, focus on just one facet: the public works specialist on the sewer system, the housing corporation's manager on houses, the employment services on job placement or benefits, the municipality's real estate expert on a school building, the commercial property owner on rental prices, the bus company on stop locations, etc.

A moment of neighborhood renewal is also the moment when the interaction between all these facets no longer delivers the desired outcomes. It becomes necessary to look at the whole system. The temptation to avoid doing so by simplifying things is understandable because it gives a sense of control. But the reality is that a neighborhood is complex. The challenge is to embrace that complexity: to engage with the system that the neighborhood actually is, to understand it, to make difficult trade-offs, and to make choices about the direction for the future.

I dove into the history of cities — and thus neighborhoods — to see if I could find a common thread. And when you read the work of authors such as Lewis Mumford (1961) and Ben Wilson (2021) on the history of cities, it becomes clear that neighborhoods — from the earliest settlements to the city of Uruk, and from Barcelona to Mumbai — consistently contain the same recognizable elements. And using these elements is helpful in approaching a neighborhood as a coherent system. I distinguish six key elements, functions or domains that integrate within a neighborhood: co-habitants, basic needs, housing, public space, facilities and the neighborhoods environment. Whether a

neighborhood is thriving, or habitants live in terror, these elements are a constant. The forms may differ; their function remains the same.

Let's briefly go over them one by one; their integrated whole defines the character of a neighborhood.

Co-habitants to start with. A Dutch poet, Jules Deelder, wrote: the environment of the human is the other human. There is no city and no neighborhood if there are no other people. There are people of different ages and backgrounds. Strongly connected in a social network or loosely connected only by recognizing each other's faces in the streets. Active in the neighborhood or just there to sleep and eat. The connotation of neighborhood is most certainly that people live there. If a part of the city holds mostly shops, offices and public space, it is more often referred to as a quarter. So, a neighborhood is first and above all a home to people.

The second domain is housing and other real estate. People need a safe place for weather conditions and some privacy, whether it is high rise buildings or only ground-level houses. Also, people create places to meet: churches, restaurants, workplace etc. (What struck me in the research is that innumerable centuries ago revisited places to perform rituals for the dead preceded the first settlements. So, the first real estate was not a place for a safe bed, nor place for trade, but a ritual place.)

Thirdly, basic needs are required: an infrastructure for energy, water, garbage and sewage will arise. Whether it is gas bottles in Mexico or solar energy in Denmark, all households need some sort of energy. The same goes for water: running tap water, bottles or a well. Since it is our key need as people, some water system will be in place. And then, even in ancient Mesopotamia, which is considered to have held the first city of the world, a garbage and sewage system existed. All of these are a critical part of a neighborhood, and in many modern cities the piping underground is one of the first things to consider when there is a wish to build in the so-called brown fields (this is existing city ground as opposed to green fields which is open, non-occupied ground). The fourth domain is public space. It is the non-private or opened-up space in which people move between the private spaces. It is filled with nature, with roads and other mobilities to connect people,

with parked cars, with cultural sites, with squares and playgrounds etc. This space has a large influence on the neighborhood. If the space is too empty and large, it makes us feel uncomfortable. But if it is too crowded with parked cars it has the same effect. Sennett (2018) has a beautiful way of writing about this. In Hong Kong the public space has layers: highways on ground level and pedestrian paths with trees on the first level. How does this affect our way of meeting? Because this is where people meet, the public theatre.

The next domain is another crucial element for a neighborhood: facilities. People get together to pray, to play, to trade, to buy food in shops and markets, and to eat and drink in restaurants and to work etc. These are crucial for the experience of a neighborhood. It's no surprise that the idea of a 15-minute city sparks so much conversation.

The final domain is the surroundings. A neighborhood never stands on its own: it is part of a city, of a region, of a country. When working in a neighborhood, this should be considered. In present-day Marrakech government and private enterprises have made significant investments in the tourist industry, which is affecting life in the neighborhood. As a result, locals are relocating to newer parts of the city, streets in the medina become cleaner, but rental prices for small shops are forcing out local businesses, which are increasingly being replaced by international brands. All because of something that is happening 'elsewhere'.

From this systemic perspective I set out to meet the neighborhood. This perspective helps to structure the approach, but can not replace the complexity of the dynamics, the interdependencies and the many layers of what is happening.

The point I want to make with introducing this systemic perspective, is that for habitants all aspects integrate within the neighborhood and this demands for transdisciplinary approach in the strategy process.

Kaleidoscopic analysis, Step 1

No neighborhood is the same, and the first step is to get to know the place in-depth. When renewing a neighborhood, there certainly is no blank canvas. And in my perspective that is exactly what makes it compelling. What is the unique essence that sets this place apart from anywhere else? Presumably there was a time when the neighborhood worked just fine as originally designed. Did it? Or were there inherent flaws in the initial design? Did things simply change? Did external factors push the neighborhood into transition?

I suggest a multi-faceted or kaleidoscopic research method to gain a comprehensive understanding of the neighborhood. This method offers a view at the neighborhood from different perspectives, to experience the different layers of its reality and to avoid paradigms or tunnel views. The method entails that the analysis is never done by one person only. Rather the collective intelligence of many people involved, and most certainly the inhabitants, should be tapped into. And it is crucial to use available research data to complete the picture.

The method I use can be summarized as: Be, Observe, Use, Talk, Read and Explore data.

Be in the neighborhood: immerse yourself in the area. Walk, drive or bike on a Sunday, on a Monday during rush hour, in the evening…Observe the neighborhood: notice where it feels inviting and where it doesn't. **Observe** how people behave, how the traffic flows and what the overall atmosphere is. You could set up a constellation of the neighborhood and observe how elements interact and how maybe the environment has a large influence. **Use** the neighborhood: do your groceries there, visit the church, participate in a workshop and dine at a restaurant. **Talk** to people, both professionals and inhabitants and ask them both how they feel and what they know about the neighborhood and get informed about its history. **Read** plans: old urban plans, recent policy plans and regional plans to better understand the character, the history of the neighborhood and the views upon it. And finally, explore a lot of research **data**: dive into data analysis (perform extra research if needed) and compare data with the data of similar

neighborhoods and of other periods in time to notice the typical characteristics and understand the underlying movements that led to the actual facts.

In using this method, there are no strict guidelines to pursue. There is no ultimate list of questions to ensure that all relevant information is captured. There is no right order, rather the process is iterative, moving from being in the neighborhood to data and back. In fact, in my view the approach of the neighborhood requires a genuine attitude of wonder and attentiveness, with a dot of critical eye towards potential paradigms. Additionally, it necessitates an appreciative attitude. The latter may seem obvious. But to activate stakeholders to invest in a renewal you need urgency. So, the risk is to focus on everything that looks dramatically bad in the neighborhood. Firstly, that would be a straight-on insult to the inhabitants. Also, this perspective easily evolves into a fixing mentality. I reject the idea that a neighborhood is something that can be fixed. I rather think of it as a system that is out of balance. Every neighborhood already has its own characteristic values and potential. By revealing those, appreciating them and moving towards enlarging them, a strategy walks a more constructive and respectful road. And this may include taking leave of parts that are at the end of their life cycle.

With the important disclaimer in mind that there is not one all-covering list, let's delve into potentially relevant questions to ask oneself in the analysis phase of the neighborhood renewal. This analysis is the first of four pillars. The goal of revealing the answers to these questions is to create a strong foundation of the strategy. In this question phase the previously introduced domains create the structure.

Co-habitants
- How many people live in the neighborhood (or visit the neighborhood), for how long have they lived there and what is the size of the households?
- What is their age, education level, general happiness, health, work and financial situation (income distribution and wealth distribution indicators can be insightful)?
- Where do children go to school, where do adults work, where is leisure time spent?
- Where do people meet others, do they know many others in the neighborhood, what do they share, are they organized, and what do they contribute to the neighborhood?
- What do they feel and know about the neighborhood, now and in the past?
- How do habitants value the domains below?
- How does population growth look and what is the forecast?

Housing and other real estate
- How many houses and other real estate does the neighborhood contain and what type: ownership, price range, surface, appearance, quality, energy label, health score?
- How is the occupancy, the mutation rate, and is there a waiting list? Is there a match between supply and demand?
- What can be said about the structure of the built environment (use the Floor Space Index here or in the public space sector), the architecture and atmosphere that emanates from it?
- How many owners does the neighborhood count and are they organized?
- What has changed over the years and can be expected in the future?

Basic needs
- How is the water supply in terms of availability, price and quality and what can be expected in the future?
- How is the energy infrastructure in terms of proper functioning and price of the energy and what can be expected in the future?
- What is the status of sustainable energy?
- How is the drainage and sewage system (also related to climate change)?
- Is a map available with locations of piping for all basic needs?
- Which larger public works are scheduled?

Public space
- What is the history of the land and the original natural environment as well as the cultural environment?
- How does the public space contribute to the character of the neighborhood?
- Is there a lot of public space, and is it mostly gray or mostly green?
- How do art objects, furniture, lighting and buildings influence the public space?
- How is the status of nature: biodiversity, green, water etc.?
- How is public space valued by people (maybe use the Public Space Index)? And what is the observable quality?
- What is the (expected) traffic intensity and which locations are considered unsafe?
- What to think of the parking policy, the outcome and the fluctuations?
- What is the air and noise quality like?
- Which events take place in the public space?

Facilities
- Which facilities can be found in the neighborhood for: work, education, sports, culture, shops, religion, healthcare?
- Are kindergarten, school and work available in the neighborhood and used by habitants.
- Is there any specific knowledge and/or capacity available in the neighborhood?

Once gathered the challenge is to interpret all this information carefully, applying the art of distilling the common thread, yet not be too coarse meshed. Obviously, the analysis leads to a vast number of facts, opinions and data, which can often be contradictory and ambiguous. The ambiguity can be within the data itself or lie in the different perspectives: an owner might say that real estate is 'technically sufficient' and there is no need for renovation, but if habitants and visitors judge otherwise and it contributes to a feeling of unsafety, the conclusion might be to rate the real estate as 'up for renewal'.

Also note, this analysis is just one pillar for the strategy. Once it interferes with findings from the other three pillars, some information may prove more relevant than it initially appeared when viewed solely from the analysis perspective. For instance: a lack of meeting places in a neighborhood isn't always problematic. However, when combined with a growing trend of individualization in society (to be discussed in the next pillar), this absence can quickly become a significant problem.

My advice is to start out with an extensive version of a document with all the information and interpretations. Later in the process, in the creative fifth step when you build a storyline, this part can be condensed.

Impact of societal transitions on the neighborhood, step 2

Writing a paragraph about societal transitions is big. Is it even possible to gain a helicopter view on these transitions, while they are taking place? And not just gain insights in the transitions, but more specifically, get an understanding of their influence on the neighborhood level.

On the other hand, it is simply an indispensable part of the strategy. In this paragraph I will show how one can apply information from this perspective in the strategizing process. Whether you agree with me on my choice of transitions or whether you have a different interpretation of the impact on the neighborhood, is secondary. Crucial is to, during the process of strategizing, make the effort to phrase your own perspective and do so in a transparent manner. It is the second pillar of building a strategy.

Having said this, let me start with an example of how a societal transition has a direct impact on the neighborhood and requires smart future choices. In The Netherlands the affordability of the public (health)care system has been under pressure for years now and successive administrations have cut costs. Consequently, accessibility and availability of (health) care is unobtrusively (by use of deviant wording) diminishing. This is linked to the transition from neo-liberalism to a new order, on which I will elaborate below. This transition has a direct impact on the neighborhoods. People who need only a little help (not the seriously ill ones who are in facilities) remain in their neighborhood. Yet, the structure to offer just this little help is insufficient or even absent. A demand for care rumbles into the neighborhoods, and the neighborhoods are not prepared for it. Social networks are not strong enough for neighbors to easily lend each other a hand and family members can't easily move to live together, because the housing market is locked-in and available houses aren't oriented on any form of group living. Awareness of this leads to specific future choices for real estate development and for investments in social networks.

With this example I want to underscore the relevance of societal transitions on the neighborhood. So, I will investigate the impact on the neighborhood of major transitions in society. I distinguish, based on studying various transition studies, four transitions. And as you will read below, these transitions are interconnected.

1. New Order,
2. Globalization,
3. Digital transition and
4. Sustainability.

Obviously, this distinction is context sensitive. I have tried to diminish a bias, but my personal Northern European-based perspective influences what I will

share. Also, a transition will have a different impact from country to country. Within an actual strategizing process, the creators working on a plan, need to use their own sources to formulate the key transitions that impact the neighborhood.

1.New order, moving from capitalism and neoliberalism

I think that worldwide over centuries, and in the past century at increased speed, we have fallen and are still falling under the spell of capitalism and liberalism (and neo-liberalism since the last two decades of the 20th century). This is a spell that is not limited to a singular perspective on the functioning of the market or economics. But capitalism and (neo-) liberalism include a paradigm on other crucial parts of society, like: the behavior of people (calculating individuals), the role of the government (should be small) and of corporations (free market is ideal, also regarding to commons like energy, internet, healthcare etc.), ownership of land (land is always owned by someone and can therefore be traded), the use of raw materials and food the earth has to offer (these supplies are considered to be infinite and propagate if they are properly worked), and the way products (and this includes food) can be industrially produced in an efficient way. For this, read, among others, the work of Kate Raworth (2017), who perfectly dissects the paradigms and places an alternative next to them.

However, I argue this paradigm is in its twilight years. I see cracks in the system's surface. Examples of these cracks include growing polarization in politics combined with more demonstrations, the climate change as an overall bankruptcy of the system, the growth of armed conflicts on the globe, the financial crisis of 2008, a growing gap between poor and rich, the awareness that civilization still allows blatant abuses to exist, a new look at the era of colonization and at how indigenous people have been devalued, the way the internet has evolved from a common playground to being dominated and defined by a handful of companies, and so on. The spell consists of a dream that moving towards a mix of capitalism and democracy with a dot of neoliberalism would go hand in hand with personal freedom and welfare for

all mankind. And in a way it did and it still will, but then it didn't and it won't….or at least not as good as expected for all.

The system is out of balance and the wait is for it to tip over into something new. When I refer to a new order, this is -at this point in time- no coherent new vision on society and economy. Being raised in an era of isms: communism, liberalism, fascism, socialism, it took me a while to understand that we lack a replacement for one of these grand theories. So, we are really talking about a transition into a future that is emerging, without clear contours.
However, it seems to make more space for our interdependency as humans and the social aspects of our humanity as well as for a more natural position of humans within their environment. Let me share some observations that to me indicate that we are moving towards a new order. In European countries I see a cry for a more inclusive democracy (e.g. citizens assemblies), a growth of cooperative organizations (e.g. for energy, housing and care), an increasing interest in consciousness growth, a degrowth movement, a growing correction of the injustice effects of colonialism, revaluation of indigenous wisdom, growing awareness on the downside of consumption behavior, interest in regenerative farming, the growth of the market for organic and plant based food, and the radicalization of resistance against the weak climate change policy.

I refer to it as a 'New Order', because I feel that we are reinventing the order between institutions (such as the government), companies, the planet and citizens. Sometimes the government may take a firmer position as guardian of the general interest at the expense of the market, sometimes more space is needed for citizens at the expense of the government, in any case more space is needed for the planet and although entrepreneurship is fun, not everything in the neighborhoods can be captured in a commercial framework. It is good to consciously think about this New Order during the strategy creation and to offer space for this reordering.
What does this transition do in the neighborhood? Not all neighborhood elements are equally affected, so I will highlight the most relevant ones.
>Other residents
What I generally sense in neighborhoods is a simmering unease: a mix of dissatisfaction and distrust. In my view, this stems from the fact that the neoliberal promise of freedom and prosperity has not been fulfilled as preached or expected. This unease can easily be triggered by events into polarizing protest. But what's also clearly visible is a lot of self-initiative from residents, which leads to a constructive energy within neighborhoods. That energy is extremely valuable and full of potential. The model of the citizen being a consumer and of a government taking care of everything and a market offering everything, proves to be incomplete. The

citizen as co-creator is urgently needed in the New Order. To enable this, the government and other institutional organizations such as housing corporations, care institutions, etc., must adopt and strengthen a facilitating role.

It then becomes apparent that residents are not merely individuals making decisions based on self-interest, as the neoliberal paradigm suggests. Rather, this aligns with the ancient wisdom that people are social beings, who like to do things with and for one another. It marks a new consciousness about the possibilities of taking control and engaging in cooperative enterprise close to home.

People in the neighborhood always surprise me in a positive way: if you push the right button, they participate in activities for the neighborhood and contribute to the community. So, it is about giving responsibility to inhabitants for certain aspects of neighborhood life. There is a transition going on in this area and with the right facilitating approach from institutional organizations this energy has a lot of potential.

And no, dear municipality, this new order, in which residents have a more prominent seat at the table, won't happen on its own. Residents also need to get used to this shift. After all, we are only at the very beginning of this transition.

>Real estate

The failure of capitalism and neoliberalism when it comes to housing is: the housing crisis. Cities lack the right homes, affordable homes, and enough homes. And at the same time, many homes stand vacant. This crisis is far from over. Hope for the New Order lies in initiatives like housing cooperatives and community land trusts that take land 'out of the grip of the market'.

When it comes to commercial real estate, ownership on one hand, and use and care on the other, have become disconnected. Holding real estate of a certain value in a portfolio remains attractive (as an international property company), even if a building stands vacant for a long time. Meanwhile, it is the neighborhood that feels unsafe due to a dilapidated and/or empty building.

At present, it is mainly the municipality that can take a stronger stance here. Some tools at its disposal include: imposing (visual) quality requirements, strategic purchasing and selling of municipal real estate for neighborhood development, and land pricing policies. There are more levers available to steer neighborhood development than are currently being used.

>Public space

Virtually all common services in the public space - energy, public transport, green maintenance, and waste processing- have been privatized or are governed by key performance indicators (KPIs). The effect in neighborhoods is that there's a gap between residents and the companies/KPIs. Market thinking has gone overboard.

In nearly every neighborhood in need of renewal,

waste and litter on the streets are a recurring complaint. These are the results of our excessive consumer behavior and the idea that waste is someone else's responsibility. A KPI might state that a trash can needs to be emptied once a week, but the bench next to it is very popular. Local residents know that. A KPI does not.

In a neighborhood renewal process that encourages the New Order, there is certainly room for more resident responsibility and for roles like a "neighborhood concierge." Or, in other words: space for initiatives between the consumer resident and market parties. This could take the form of tenant's self-management of social housing, residents maintaining green areas, an energy cooperative, etc.

>Facilities

In the neighborhood economy, the impact of global mergers (aimed at achieving higher profits through scale) is tangible, and a typical expression of capitalism and liberalism. As a result, the local shop is often no longer truly local, the health center is part of a chain, and even the social welfare organization is caught up in KPI thinking.

Facilities are regularly disappearing, and with the closure of the local bank or post office, a social meeting place and a bit of social control also vanish. And when neighborhood renewal is necessary, the involvement of these non-local players is generally low.

Here too, the New Order can create space for what residents initiate themselves. Many neighborhoods would benefit if more room was made for a small-scale economy by easing enforcement of regulations (so: less government presence): a bike repair shop out of a garage box, BBQ chicken sold from the lawn between apartment buildings, haircuts on weekends in a vacant storefront, a playground that sells pancakes, neighborhood fix-it help, etc.
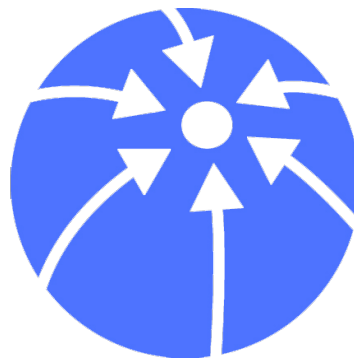
2.Globalization

Whereas the transition to a New Order is still in its infancy stage, the globalization transition is thriving. Of course, one could debate about when globalization started. The Silk Route? The start of the colonization wave from Europa across the world? I'd like to argue that specifically the acceleration of globalization in the last decades left an imprint on

the world. I find the container example particularly striking. Because over the centuries goods have been transported from one continent to another, but in the 1950's Malcom McLean invented the standard container to make transport more efficient. This principle of stackable, standardized "boxes" caught on rapidly, resulting in no less than around 25 million containers being in use worldwide by the early 2020s. And that is a good indication for the scale of this transition.

From containers back to the neighborhood. Trade wars and internationally operating corporations certainly impact the daily lives of neighborhood residents. Let's go through the different elements of the neighborhood where this is relevant.

>Other residents

Overall, the impact of the speed of things and the fact that production processes are no longer visible while a label tells you a product was manufactured on the other side of the globe, creates a sense of alienation: in the neighborhood you can no longer imagine where food and products come from and how one thing on the other side of the world influences another in your vicinity. And the neighborhood could certainly provide some antidote to this alienation by giving space and visibility to local initiatives around food and making things.

Another aspect concerns work and income. Global companies easily relocate their manufacturing operations to regions where labor is cheap and/or taxes are low. This leads to job losses and an erosion of stable employment contracts in the non-favorable countries, creating income uncertainty in many neighborhoods. Ironically, even with little income, the capitalistic promise of choice of products at a competing price still holds: habitants who lost their job still have access to cheap, low-quality goods, manufactured somewhere where the labor is cheapest. Meanwhile, the skills needed to repair broken items have diminished, as the habit of simply replacing rather than fixing things has become the norm.

When we look at people, there's another important aspect of globalization. It also means an increasing global flow of people, which leads to growing cultural diversity, clearly visible in neighborhoods. Where once the influence was mainly from the USA and Europe towards other parts of the globe, I feel we have left that phase behind and are looking at a growing blend of African, Asian, Indian, Russian, American, South American, Arabian and European cultures. This blend gives a rise to innovation and resilience.

Two flows of travelers could be described. Let's start with the flow of the fun travelers. In some areas the effect of tourism has completely altered the neighborhood. Once tourism (sometimes combined with a growing number of expats and/or international students) and AirBNB and hotels are successful and overall real estate prices start to go

up, the neighborhood is mostly lost from being a living area to becoming a local version of Disney world. Local shops are replaced by chain shops and most of them sell snacks and cheap products for tourists. The bookstore, the local coffee shop, the bakery and the grocery store will get lost. And the daily care for the neighborhood is diminishing, because the visitors have no attachments to the neighborhood. It seems wise that a municipality intervenes to safeguard a city's livability and not be swayed too much by "the market." Because when livability breaks down, everyone ultimately looks to the municipality for solutions.

Another flow of people consists of migrants, who are not travelling for fun, but travel due to lack of perspective in any form (life, basic happiness, making a living) in their own country. The rise of migrants over the past decades is staggering. The World Bank stated in 2023 that 184 million people are living outside their country of origin of which 37 million qualify as refugees due to severe circumstances at home. So, to anticipate a constant flow of newcomers in a neighborhood seems logical.

>Real estate

In discussing the effects of capitalism and liberalism on real estate, we already touched on this: the globalization of property. One more example: who hasn't heard the stories of London neighborhoods with massive vacancy while the owners live on another continent? Residents are left with few options and sometimes resort to illegal interventions to improve their neighborhood. Here too, it's desirable for local governments to rein in the excesses of market forces.

>Facilities

When it comes to facilities and services, globalization heavily influences work. The availability—or absence—of employment has significant impact on a neighborhood. Large international corporations can easily move their production to regions where labor is cheap and/or taxes are low. This leads to job losses and the disappearance of stable employment contracts in less favorable regions, which creates income insecurity in many neighborhoods.

Ironically, even with low incomes, the capitalist promise of having access to a wide range of cheap products still exists: residents who have lost their jobs still have access to inexpensive, often low-quality goods, produced where labor is cheapest. At the same time, the skills needed to repair broken items have declined sharply, as the habit of replacing rather than fixing has become the norm.

Neighborhoods often come onto the radar for comprehensive renewal because many people with the lowest incomes live there. While capitalism promises that hard work will bring individual wealth, globalization—through the lack of work and stable income—exposes the marginalization of large groups of people in these areas. The house of cards made up of temporary contracts, welfare benefits, childcare subsidies, etc., is often too fragile. Many professionals

believe that the multiple, disconnected 'counters' mostly serve to maintain the system, rather than offering real help to residents, but are unable to make the necessary change.

And again, we see private initiatives stepping in to fill the gap. While the negative aspects of globalization can't be undone at the neighborhood level, the high dependency on global dynamics can be met with strong, local responses.

3.Digital transition

It is hard to keep track of the speed of the digital transition. Let me elaborate with a list of facts. Personal computers have been around since the Kenbak 1 of 1971. It was not long thereafter that the public internet was born. The number of websites grew to around 1.74 billion websites in 2023. Mobile phones: first commercially available Motorola in 1983. Financial institutions are transforming into tech companies. And the forecast is that block chain will diminish or even eliminate the role of these institutions. The Rotterdam harbor has a digital twin. And I could go on for a while. The digitalization transition is peaking and seems to be only held back by the shortcomings of people, not by the possibilities of tech. I think the emerging future of this transition holds a few opportunities: an extension of the application of robotics, an increasing overall integration of systems, and a blend of an extension of the application of computing power and AI with human sensemaking.

Digital transition is, first and foremost, an accelerator of globalization and capitalism. Several of the issues mentioned earlier become even more pronounced due to digital technologies.

Think, for example, of the alienation: online shops and delivery apps further enhance the sense that everything is within reach, without any understanding of the origin or production process. And taking that even further: the widespread lack of knowledge about how the tech world operates leads us to believe that we know the world through our screens, while in fact, we only see a programmed, AI-curated fraction of it.

Another example is the digitalization of administrative processes, which, as a result of poor

programming, can result in inhumane outcomes, as a huge child benefits scandal in the Netherlands has demonstrated. I explicitly emphasize the human (programming) contribution to the effects of digitization, because there is nothing inherently wrong with technology. It is a fantastic addition to our lives. But the questions remain: what purpose does it serve, and who decides that?

A very concrete local consequence of the digital transition is the rapid growth of online shopping and delivery services. As a result, many local shops have been forced to close, leading to vacant storefronts that cause a sense of insecurity among residents and diminish the neighborhood's appeal. In addition, the rise of the delivery economy has led to an increase in scooters and small delivery vans, which often annoy residents. Ironically, these changes are a direct result of the consumption habits of the residents themselves. Therefore, they can also be addressed and reversed by that same community—provided there is awareness of cause and effect.

Close to home, in the neighborhood, the digital transition can also contribute to greater awareness of what's happening in the world, and thus reduce alienation. Gaining a better understanding of digital technology and its possibilities and applying it locally (like a sensor that signals when a public trash bin is full) fits the more manageable scale of the neighborhood. It's precisely in this context that the offline and online worlds can come together more meaningfully.
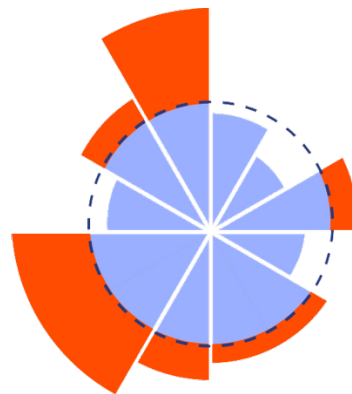
4.Sustainability

Moving to this fourth transition, let me start by stating that it is interconnected to the former transitions: this is in a way the answer to the negative effects of neo-liberalism and capitalism and how these are accelerated by globalization and digitalization. Sustainability is not an easily discussable transition. Firstly, it is highly politicized: it is almost a non-issue in some countries, part of fierce debates in others and a lively societal movement in some regions. A perspective that partially led to the politicization is that humans (and in specific some countries or regions) are to be blamed for what is happening.

This approach often goes hand-in-hand with lists of to-do's and to-avoid's. I would like to stay away from this, because I feel this restrictive and blaming perspective is not helpful and is too simple. Yes, the inequality of the global North-and South countries is a fact (in terms of contribution to the current situation and in terms of impact). But I see that we are all under the spell of capitalism, globally. We are -however unequal- all part of this system, whether we want to or not.

Transparency about values, Step 3

We bring the societal, the organizational and the personal perspective with us when we work on the city. The ideas about what a city should be, have developed over time, influenced by contemporary issues. Health has been a large influence at the beginning of the 20th century and has highly impacted planning of the city. Another example is: for a while urban planners designed with the value that living and working should be separated, creating neighborhoods with houses but without facilities on the one hand and city centers and industrial areas on the other hand. Nowadays the quantity of required houses and the real estate market seem to define more than the quality of our neighborhoods.

I'd like to invite to discuss underlying values by questioning each other and finding out which value can hold another century, and which one might be a too contemporary answer to a current problem. Also, I believe it is crucial to articulate the values, recognizing that there isn't a singular stance on the matter. My intention with articulating the values is to foster greater awareness and dialogue among both professionals and residents. I see making the lens from which we work explicit as an invitation for others to contribute their perspectives, which will enrich plans and avoid tunnel vision. As I did earlier in this article, I'll try to have enough consciousness about my own values to put them into words. Again, not to impose them on anyone, but to show how to work with them in this process.

A striking paradox is that the past decades have brought many improvements in life (less war, less hunger, more prosperity), and yet, at the same time, a sense of loss. Loss of community, increasing individualism, disconnection from nature, loss of meaning, and declining self-confidence, reinforced by systemic inequality. And within all of this, the dominant mode of living for many people seems to resemble an automatic, unconscious survival mode, rather than living life to the fullest. In my view, a

renewed balance is inevitable. And when renewing a neighborhood, the focus of interventions should at least help clear the path toward this balance.

For me, concrete ways to bring my personal values into neighborhood renewal work are:
>Ensure that basic services run smoothly because this brings dignity, and a sense of self-worth. For example, involve departments such as city maintenance, green services, and waste management, and have them work with residents to decide who does what and when.
>Make use of technological progress for the benefit of collective well-being. For instance, explore how technology can support mutual attention and care in a neighborhood with many elderly people.
>Facilitate and support initiatives and organizations run by residents that directly contribute to the neighborhood. A fund with a solid yearly budget, where residents themselves decide how, on what, and for whom the money is spent.
>Celebrate the diversity of values and care people bring to their neighborhood, for example, through a story bank.
>Facilitate connections between people as a counterbalance to individualism.
>Ensure that those who need help can easily access it. And at the same time, never underestimate the power of self-organization—respect it actively. Let go of the assumption that people will abuse support. Yes, it happens, but if that becomes the foundation for building systems, it misses the point. During the analysis phase, always stay alert to the existing support structures within the neighborhood and explore how these can be strengthened.
>Facilitate openness, learning, and inspiration in a community. An example: if residents want to create a small community library, make that happen. Or structurally allocate a budget for any serious neighborhood activities that are desired and support the plans (but never take them over).
>Make natural processes visible—for example, by planting fruit trees, composting, or reusing materials in the neighborhood. Make sure this has a central place in the neighborhood, not hidden away on the edge.
>Bring beauty, calm, and nature into an urban area, as an invitation to a way of living beyond just surviving. During step 1, the analysis phase, it's helpful to identify which places in the neighborhood already offer beauty, calm, and nature, and explore whether these can be enhanced or more can be added during the transition.

Enhance resilience to prepare for the future,
step 4

Even if you thoroughly analyze the neighborhood, the environment, and societal developments, it still doesn't provide a crystal ball to predict the future. At the same time, neighborhood renewal is something that may only happen once every 40 or 50 years. So the question becomes: how do you equip a neighborhood for a future you cannot foresee? For this, the concept of resilience is highly appropriate. The current use of the concept of resilience is focusing on disturbances, disasters and risks (e.g. climate adaptation). The focus is on threats that demands for urgent safety measures to survive. But you don't want habitants of a neighborhood to survive, you want to facilitate life. There is more to this statement than what might appear at first sight. The starting point when you look at surviving compared to when you look at living is quite different. Surviving energy is tight, urgency driven, assuming danger and demanding quick reaction. Living energy is open, constructive, assuming possibilities for a future proof response.

So, a good starting point is to strip down resilience to its essence: the capacity of a system to adapt to transitions while maintaining its core functions, in any form. And in the case of the neighborhood those core functions have been described in the first paragraph: co-habitants, houses and real estate, basic needs, public space, facilities and economy. This essence offers us a handle to develop interventions in a neighborhood without knowing exactly what the future holds. It enhances the intrinsic capability of the neighborhood to deal with any kind of future. Resilience boils down to a five-features list of characteristics of a system that consists of: robustness, redundancy, diversity, connectivity and innovativity.

resilience in five features

robustness
redundancy
diversity
connectivity
innovativety

When this list sinks in, it seems rather intuitive that this is the core of resilience. Because, yes, of course:
• a neighborhood is more resilient when its starting position is strong (robustness);

- the functions of a neighborhood maintain working if you have 'a spare part' or when you can rely on a different 'parts' for the same function (redundancy and diversity);
- a neighborhood can handle more when it can get in touch with other neighborhoods (connectivity);
- and a neighborhood needs learning capacity to adjust (innovativity).

As easy as this list may look, the application is not that easy. You can look at the different elements of the neighborhood and score them on the features. Let me take the housing stock as an example. When the available houses are of basic good quality, in other words: robust, that would lead to a good score. Is the quantity and the variety good, that leads to another good score. If the housing markets of various neighborhoods are connected, that will offer larger choices and lead to a good score. And when houses show some flexibility in their use that also leads to a good score. This would be the very structural way to move forward. However, it turns out the scoring is highly subjective (there is no standard scoring). As in the example: when is the quantity enough, not too much, not too little? Also, each element has many sub elements, which makes the work incredibly extensive and is not necessarily shedding more light on the neighborhood. The construction of a house can be robust, but the energy system can be weak, and this might lead to an overall low score. Even so, in my opinion resilience still has value as one of the pillars for a future strategy, as I will show in the next paragraph.

The creative part of strategizing
Recapitulating, I have moved through different pillars to look at the neighborhood using the system perspective:
1. analysis following the kaleidoscopic method
2. appreciation of the impact of the societal transitions
3. articulation of values
4. resilience lens of the neighborhood

Now I get to the fifth step and the most creative part of the strategy. The question is: how to interpret and meaningful combine the different aspects? I go by using various methods at the same time.

Let me describe an example first.

The story of a model neighborhood
This neighborhood consists of several parts with very different characters that have little to do with one another. A busy, stony traffic artery cuts through the neighborhood, separating a central park from the shopping street. Some of the parts feature outdated (often problematic) and very uniform housing with a bleak appearance. While there are many family homes, there is a growing number of one- and two-person households. Overall, the area is facing a shortage of affordable housing.

The neighborhood offers a lot of green space, but in many places the quality is low, making it less noticeable. It is a primarily functional neighborhood: people live there but often work elsewhere, thanks to good public transport connections. That's fine in itself, but there is very little that contributes to a sense of liveliness or social cohesion. This is especially problematic for young people, who have nothing to do on the streets.

In the parts with outdated housing, data reveals a few specific streets with a relatively high number of households experiencing multiple issues: poverty, physical and mental health problems. Many of these households tend to stay in the neighborhood only for short periods.

Its future story
More and more diverse residents are choosing to stay in the neighborhood for a long period of time. This shift is driven by improved urban design, greater housing variety, reduced alienation, and increased local initiative. The traffic artery has been transformed into a boulevard, the previously uniform and unattractive housing districts have been upgraded and diversified, scattered green spaces have been connected into a continuous green route for walking and exercise throughout the neighborhood, and the park and shopping street have become the heart of the area. A low-cost coffee kiosk with community activities (run by a cooperative of local residents) has been added to the park.

Homes have been renovated, additional units have

been built, and there has been some demolition and reconstruction. All of this has led to the preservation of the number of social housing units, while also adding more small-scale units for one-person households. Two locations have been designated for cooperative living, with some space reserved for newcomers. Additionally, high-end apartments with shared amenities have been introduced. As a result of these changes, the demographic makeup of the neighborhood has become more diverse.

Young people, supported by the local government, have created a youth hub (with a lively social media account) that they manage and program themselves. Support for households with multiple problems has been significantly improved by the introduction of a mobile coffee truck that, following a fixed schedule, moves through the neighborhood each week. It is staffed by professionals, it offers not only social interaction but also access to services like healthcare, tax assistance, employment support, and digital help.

Guiding principles for implementation:

>In all housing interventions, 'meeting' (in addition to privacy) is a central design consideration.

>When it comes to social support, the government takes the initiative, staffing the effort with professionals who are empowered to arrange integrated services across departments. Cooperation with residents is embedded from the start.

>For other neighborhood initiatives, the government plays only a facilitating role—never taking over or handing them off to social organizations.

>The government provides a legal and spatial planning foundation for urban interventions and ensures design quality through an aesthetic framework for existing housing.

>Every public space intervention includes enhanced greenery, improving its sensory and experiential value for residents.

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In this example, you can see how the analysis leads to a strengths/weaknesses assessment of the neighborhood in the context of its surroundings and broader societal developments. You see a response that anticipates the New Order, where personal values are made visible to foster more beauty in the environment, where conscious care is taken to promote diversity in the population, and where a surplus of housing is created based on resilience principles. The future narrative provides a vision, while the guiding principles offer real direction in projects.

To arrive at such a narrative and set of guiding principles, I strongly advocate for a combination of methods — both those that require linear thinking and clear cause-effect logic, and those that are more intuitive and creative. In addition, I always consciously utilize the collective intelligence of all involved stakeholders. After all, a strategy is never the work of one person alone; rather, there is someone — or a small core team — who integrates all input into a coherent and compelling whole.

1. An Excel Overview
Create an Excel sheet with the elements of the systems approach: residents, real estate, basic needs, public space, etc., and link all relevant insights from the subsequent steps to each of them. What does the analysis say about these elements? How do societal transitions impact them? Where do personal values have significant influence? And how can resilience be translated for each element?
This will result in a massive spreadsheet — but one that can quickly become too detailed and give the false impression that the ultimate, well-supported answer lies within it. Nevertheless, I see it as a valuable tool to avoid losing information and to detect win/win opportunities. However, I don't use it as the foundation of the strategy.

2. Creative Thinking Techniques
Use, for example:
>The 'what if' method (e.g., "What if we had an unlimited budget?" or "What if we had a very small budget?"),
> Mood boards and sketch designs,
>Scenario games,
>Budgeting games,
>Brainstorm sessions.
You can apply these techniques per element or to the overall picture — and even twice during the process: once with little information, and again with all available input.
Specifically, I find *Design Thinking* very valuable as a methodology because it inherently combines various perspectives in an iterative process.

3. Using Intuition
As a team becomes more experienced, it can better "listen" to the neighborhood. A neighborhood is a living system with its own dynamics. By tuning into it and allowing the qualities, opportunities, and pain points to speak, you gain insights from a different perspective. One way to do this is by setting up a system constellation with components in or around the neighborhood.

4. Leveraging Collective Knowledge
Make sure that many people can engage with the essential choices (in an appealing and digestible way), and use their collective knowledge to strengthen or nuance certain elements. At the same time, a small

core team must remain in control, integrate the input, and write the final version of the narrative.

5. An Iterative and Structured Process
Work in this phase with an iterative and cyclical process, constantly returning to earlier layers to refine the narrative that truly provides direction. Use the linear Excel method to support (or reject) the more creative and intuitive approaches.

The final strategy must meet several conditions:
>It doesn't contain *everything* and isn't applicable to 20 other neighborhoods as well,
> It has a clear direction *and* room to adapt to new insights,
> It provides guidance for concrete projects,
> It forms the basis for quantitative goals,
> It aligns with budget expectations, even if a solid business case is not yet available,
> It offers an overarching objective, often value-based,
> It includes clear boundaries: what is and isn't part of the renewal effort,
> It contains a future vision that energizes those involved, and
> It offers a set of principles that can later guide project plans.

I see this as the creative part of strategy development, because here you integrate, emphasize, create an engaging narrative, and choose interventions that serve multiple purposes.

The execution chapter of the strategy
At a certain point, the strategy seems to be finished. At that moment, it is no more and no less than a well-thought-out story. An implementation chapter should be added to complete the strategy.
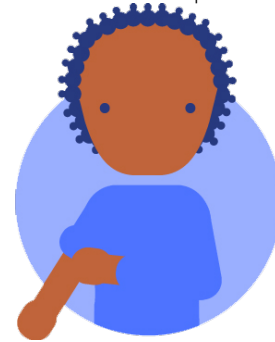
Below are the key components of this chapter outlined very briefly.
>List of concrete projects
A strategy should also provide direction for the interventions you are planning. Which key projects do you select? Which guidelines must each project adhere to? What is the goal of the project? Who takes the lead, and where does the budget come from?
It is specifically within projects that the integration of disciplines in a systemic neighborhood approach comes to life. A strategy might set goals such as a) more housing is needed and b) the social network should be supported—but in a project like 'Building 1,000 Homes' it is essential to add that these homes must promote interaction among residents and create a diversity. I emphasize this because there is always a tendency for individual projects to lose the integration that was present in the strategy.
Also note, not all projects need to be 'fixed' in a top-down manner. They need a clear course, yes, but while working in the existing neighborhood there can also be room for development along the way. You might want to start with some placemaking for a certain project and along the way it might turn out that a local entrepeneur has a great idea that perfectly fits into the course, but wasn't planned for.
>Planning
Although a strategy does not contain a detailed schedule, decisions about how planning will be approached are part of the strategy. The impact of prioritizing one project over another can be significant. If you need to build confidence amongst all stakeholders, you might chose a project with high visibilty and big impact in the neighborhood. And that choice is part of strategy.
>Monitoring of results
Monitoring is crucial as a feedback mechanism for the organization, to satisfy funders, and to keep all stakeholders motivated. It's important to quantify goals in a way that reflects actual outcomes—or the lack thereof. The art is in quantifying (project) goals in a way that allows for meaningful monitoring. For example: visitor appreciation of a neighborhood can

be measured through an annual survey and quantified by a rising satisfaction percentage. But appreciation could also be gauged from annual retail turnover monitoring—and the latter often resonates more.

>Organization and governance

Earlier, we mentioned the importance of a small coordinating team to steer the neighborhood transition and maintain strategic focus. This team should partly consist of independent individuals. However, it can be strengthened with some employees from existing stakeholder organizations to ensure continuity and shared responsibility.

A governance structure must be established in which key stakeholders have a seat. Depending on the anticipated financial flows, this could even take the form of a formalized partnership. The municipality is, in any case, an unavoidable stakeholder that rises above the others because it carries the public responsibility for the neighborhood. Since the municipality is publicly accountable through the executive board and city council, any governance structure must clearly relate to them.

>Budget and business case

It makes no sense to delay the renewal until the full budget is secured. However, the first five years must be funded to give the renewal a strong start. In those five years, projects will become more concrete, and a more detailed budget can be drawn up.

Once plans are sufficiently developed, a business case should be created to gain insight into additional financing needs. Subsidies will be required.

Fundraising is a core task of the coordinating team. Also, all stakeholders wanting a seat at the table should contribute financially to confirm their engagement and responsibility.

> Communication

Communication is essential throughout the process. A narrative must be created about the "why" behind the neighborhood's transition. Words should be chosen carefully: you want to create a sense of urgency, but without portraying the neighborhood as a lost cause or denying its existing strengths.

Additionally, during the strategic development process, communication plays a key role in repeating milestone timelines like a mantra to keep everyone aligned. It's also important to be transparent about the input received and how it has influenced the strategy in order to build trust.

Lastly, communication is crucial to energize all stakeholders and generate enthusiasm for the work ahead in the neighborhood.

>The process is 50% of the success

The substantive side of developing a neighborhood strategy is one thing. But in my experience, the process itself accounts for 50% of the strategy's success. In the context of this article -which primarily focuses on content- I'll limit myself to a few notes on this other 50%.

The main reason for the significant role the process plays in the success of a strategy lies in the people and their collaboration. I will highlight two aspects: first, multiple specialists must contribute their expertise; second, in an existing neighborhood, there are many stakeholders who are, in some way, involved in the transition.

About the specialists:

Developing a neighborhood strategy is a transdisciplinary task, coordinated by one or two non-specialists. Everything comes together in a neighborhood, making integration not just desirable but inevitable. For example, shops may be present, but if they're not the right ones, it could lead to excessive car use. A beautiful park might feel unsafe and remain unused. Or a sports facility could be nearby but hard to reach by public transport. Depending on the neighborhood's challenges and qualities, you'll want a team that might include: an urban planner, local economy specialist, social worker, healthcare expert, civil engineer, culture specialist, land-use economist, educational facilities planner, landscape architect, real estate developer, and housing market analyst.

Specialists involved must meet two criteria: they need to be able to think strategically (which is different from simply being good at their daily work), and they must be comfortable working outside their comfort zone. The latter is often necessary because their input is rarely applied directly but must be integrated into a transdisciplinary process. Something not everyone is comfortable with.

About the stakeholders:

There are, above all, many stakeholders. Because a neighborhood transition is never the work of a single party. The collaboration between stakeholders, given their differing interests and degrees of organization, is a delicate process.

A core coalition must be formed, and it's crucial how this is done and whether the coalition can truly offer the necessary leadership. Primary members are those with a substantial stake in the overall well-being of the neighborhood and/or those who would be severely affected if the area deteriorates, or those whose primary responsibility it is to ensure quality in the neighborhood. The municipality and the residents are inevitably the primary stakeholders. Other parties with more specific interests can be included for their particular expertise, funding capacity, or influence.

This coalition always requires an independent coordination team to keep the collaboration running efficiently throughout the strategy and implementation phases, maintaining focus, energy, and integration.

The process of strategy creation itself must be simple and that's quite a skill. A clear process architecture must be in place outlining: key milestones, who is involved when, who participates in which discussions,

how and when decisions are made, who integrates everything, and when each phase is concluded. There are many people involved, and not everyone sees neighborhood renewal as their top priority at all times. Still, it's important that people contribute at the right moments, acknowledge decisions taken, and incorporate them into their own plans. The process architecture must create momentum and maintain focus. From the start, it must be clear that the key stakeholders—especially decision-makers—are committed. In my experience, the independent coordination team is best positioned to lead the process.

In closing

Looking back, this longread has taken you through five structured steps and presented you with countless points of attention and considerations. As I mentioned earlier: existing neighborhoods are messy. You start with a lot of unknowns, you start walking, and you don't know how far you'll get. Embrace the complexity and grow so that you can handle it. That, at least, is my approach. Because our neighborhoods deserve our professional love – they are our habitat.

Of course, I built on the work of others while forming my view on things and I acknowledge that gratefully.
Firstly, I want to thank the many co-workers that I have worked with over the years, without whom I would never have molded this 5 step methodology. The elements that together form the neighborhood system, those I haven't seen anywhere else. But authors that helped me go down this road, were:
Lewis Mumford (1961)
Richard Sennet (2018)
Ben Wilson (2020)
Jane Jacobs (1961)

For the analysis of the societal transitions I have been inspired by many authors. For over two years now I read anything from school books to in depth views on these transitions. And all the information developed to some knowledge, but I am still learning on a daily basis and I am still deepening this knowledge.
One thing I must say: the translation of these transitions to the impact in the neighborhood is still unexplored territory. And in the light of our neighborhood work I think we could use more understanding.
Kate Raworth (2017)
Jan Rotmans en Mischa Verheijden (2021)
Johan Rockstrom (Stockhold Resilience Centre, various)
Resilience Earth collective work
Tine de Moor (2023)
Yuval Noah Harari (2018)
Floris Alkemade (2020)
Greta Thunberg ed. (2022)
Elinor Oostrom (1990)
Noam Chomsky (various)
David van Reybrouck (various)
Otto Scharmer (2009)
Alan Seale (2008)
Saskia Sassen (2007)
There is a separate article on resilience on this website, that also shows how I got to the characteristics of resilience.

My personal values have developed over years with help of friends, family and 'the universe', but I feel very related to the work of the Dutch author Marja de Vries (2014).

To approach the strategy creation process in 5 steps comes from my brain. That also goes for the kaleidoscopic analysis. And the approach to the execution chapter as well as the notes on the process come from experience.
I haven't seen these anywhere else in this form, although I have no illusion that I will not be the first to think in this direction.

Illustrations are by Leendert Masselink and Fred Sophie.