

## Networked regions and cities in times of fragmentation: Developing smart, sustainable and inclusive places

### Gateway: City-regions, networks and urban systems – G1 Planning smarter cities and regions

**Title: Smart specialization strategies: the role of Public Private Partnership in planning smarter cities.**

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#### Abstract

In the mid-90s, in the US, the Smart Growth movement emerged, promoting a blended approach to urban sprawl management through a broad range of policies and land use strategies being implemented at different institutional levels. The Smart Growth movement represents an important contribution from North American planning theory on the issue of curbing urban sprawl (Daniels, 2001; Soule, 2006). Smart Growth has been defined in many different ways (Gillham, 2002; Ye, Mandpe and Meyer, 2005; Smart Growth Network, n.d.); nevertheless, general consensus exists in considering it as part of the broader sustainable planning movement (Wheeler, 2000, Krueger and Gibbs, 2008, Krueger *et al.*, 2004). As Gillham (2002: p.155) notes, “many of the growth-management planning techniques developed in the past three decades have become instruments in the toolbox of the today’s smart growth movement”.

On the other hand, Local Economic Development issues are being pushing into the international policy agenda to encourage the change towards a more flexible management of local resources.

According with European Commission (2010) about “Regional Policy contributing to smart growth in Europe 2020”, the development of smart specialisation strategies is crucial “to maximize the impact of Regional Policy in combination with other Union policies”. Smart specialization strategies become a key factor to stimulate private investment. And “They should be integrated into regional development strategies in order to ensure an effective partnership between civil society, businesses and public authorities at regional, national and European levels”.

By following the above conceptual framework, we focus on the role that Public Private Partnership (PPP) at local/urban level can play in the smart specialization strategies. More in particular, we argue that PPP can be as a privileged means of governance, useful to establish different kind of actions: BID, Social Enterprise, Community development corporation, business incubators, urban-rural issues and others actions, to tackle smart specialization strategies by highlighting the concept of Cluster as driver to link local initiative with regional growth.

The paper introduces some case studies analyzed within a wider research project financed within 7FP Marie Curie IRSES program 2010 and oriented to the implementation of an innovative tools: CLUDs, Commercial Local Urban Districts, aimed at emphasizing the strategic role of small retails - handcraft and typical food- in reinforcing the sense of community, reducing transportation costs and contributing to the creation of attractive urban environment, thus producing increase of private investments.

The case study analysis refers to the first strategic objective of the CLUDs project concerning: Setting up an analytical process to understand how Public Private Partnership can be both marketable and social sustainable by highlight integrated approach related to Credit access, local resources promotion, job creation, social activation.

The CLUDs project is a Joint Exchange Programme among four European universities and two US Universities.

The paper intends to show the results of 4 selected case studies in Boston: 1) Fort Point District, inside Boston Innovation District; 2) Concord, Massachusetts inside Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Suburban Case Study; 3) Boston Marine Industrial Park inside Boston Innovation District; 4) Codman Square in Boston.

The aim is to analyze the PPP performance within the selected urban/suburb areas, which are subjected to redevelopment projects managed by a partnership between the Boston Redevelopment Authority and private partners. The objective is to identify what are key factors involved in urban regeneration led by local economics that foster successful Public-Private Partnership initiatives, following the general principles of smart specialization strategies (EC, 2010). The methodological approach is based on evaluation *multicriteria* techniques belongs to the huge family of Multivariate statistics. In particular, a set of variables supposed to affect PPP performances are collected through two basic instruments, specifically built, named Survey Form PPP Analysis and Interview form PPP governance. The evaluation is based on the different sets of variables included in these two instruments. The Survey Form contents 5 sets of variables: Overall outline of the initiative *Budget size, Income, Vacancy rate, Strategic Priorities, Partnership characteristics* – Socioeconomic structure *Demographic data, Labour Market, Production* - Fiscal Analysis Summary *Items of expenditures, Source of revenue* - Marketing and promotion *Business attraction, retention assistance programs, Services and improvements* - Spatial Data *Real Estate, Commerce and advanced services sectors, Accessibility, Supply chain: the supply of local products, Environmental data, Social data*. The interview form contents 3 sets of variables: Vision and Strategy, Management and Organization, Stakeholders and Governance. The general criterion of the PPP performances’ analysis and evaluation is to confer spatial connotation to economic forces, which includes physical transformation, dealing with both socio-economic and spatial information. The latter are connected with more detailed information about the partnership, in terms of interests involved, risk sharing and accountability.

## 1. Introduction

In the mid-90s, in the US, the Smart Growth movement emerged, promoting a blended approach to urban sprawl management through a broad range of policies and land use strategies being implemented at different institutional levels. The Smart Growth movement represents an important contribution from North American planning theory on the issue of curbing urban sprawl (Daniels, 2001; Soule, 2006). Smart Growth has been defined in many different ways (Gillham, 2002; Ye, Mandpe and Meyer, 2005; Smart Growth Network, n.d.); nevertheless, general consensus exists in considering it as part of the broader sustainable planning movement (Wheeler, 2000, Krueger and Gibbs, 2008, Krueger *et al.*, 2004) and, as a matter of facts, the idea of managing urban growth through a blended mix of planning techniques and financial tools is rooted in the concept of environmental, social and economic sustainability. In this sense, a very broad range of instruments, regulatory tools, incentive programs As Gillham (2002: p.155) notes, “many of the growth-management planning techniques developed in the past three decades have become instruments in the toolbox of the today’s smart growth movement”.

While in North American car-oriented urban contexts the Smart Growth approach is particularly focused on bridging the gap between urban density and collective transportation, in the European context, currently characterized by the presence of several shrinking cities already equipped with a thick network of public transport, Smart Growth retrofitting policies could play a major role in ensuring a long term sustainability for urban neighbourhood in decline (Bentley 2000). As a matter of facts, retrofitting inner urban brownfield spaces and declined neighbourhoods contributes to preserve urban density, both in economic and financial sense as concentration of functions and productive activities, and in social sense as sense of community (Calthorpe 2003).

However, retrofitting inner areas can be a challenging matter for many reasons. In case of wide former industrial brownfield, it is important to ensure a proper financial flow capable to start up urban regeneration processes that usually comes either from structural public funds or from major real estate companies; in case of declining neighbourhoods, is it important to manage the broad range of different needs emerging from the social groups interacting on the area and to cope with a high level of property fragmentation in property. This paper aims at discussing different approaches to the challenge of retrofitting blighted areas and declining neighbourhoods, by investigating which instruments, among the wide range of existing multi-actors instruments driven by private-public partnership, better address the initial issues as desired by the overall strategy. To do that, it presents some first findings from a wider research project financed within the 7<sup>th</sup> FP Marie Curie IRSES program 2010 named “CLUDs - Commercial Local Urban Districts”. This latter’s broader goal is to emphasize the strategic role of small retails - handcraft and typical food- in reinforcing the sense of community, reducing transportation costs and contributing to the creation of attractive urban environment, thus producing increase of private investments. The evidence of this paper refer to the first strategic objective of the CLUDs project concerning the set up of an analytical process to understand how Public Private Partnership can be both marketable and socially sustainable by highlight integrated approach related to credit access, local resources promotion, job creation, social activation. Being the CLUDs project a Joint Exchange Programme among four European universities and two US Universities, the case studies are focused on the US context, but the overall conceptual structure of the project stems from the mutual interaction and comparison between the European and the North-American contexts. While the research project intends to investigate general issues on urban regeneration and to offer valuable insights to the international community of planners and scholars, this paper aims at highlighting possible critical factors that might occur while approaching specific inner urban areas to be regenerated. In so doing, it puts the current knowledge on urban regeneration and PPP forward, by investigating some possible circumstances of inner urban areas to be regenerated and which regeneration instruments best match their specific conditions.

The paper is articulated as follows. First, the state of the art on retrofitting blighted areas and declining neighbourhoods through PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actor instruments is discussed, in the perspective of the different roles of public actors, private actors (specifically real estates) and local community/ies. It is anticipated that the level of fragmentation in the area will be considered a key factor in assessing the performance of the PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actor instruments, in particular, the level of fragmentation of the property market in the area and the level of social fragmentation in terms of different social users of the area. Second, the conceptual framework for assessing the performance of PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actor instruments against the level of fragmentation will be tested, by applying it to four case studies located in the Boston inner city area (Boston Marine Industrial Park, Codman Square, Fort Point District, Concord Commons). Finally, drawing from the evidence emerged from the mentioned case studies, the paper will offer some insights, which can both be further developed in future researches on future scenarios for PPP and urban regeneration, and be applied in urban regeneration planning practice, in particular as a possible approach for a preliminary ex-ante evaluation of the most appropriate level of involvement of the local community/ies in the urban regeneration process.

## 2. Retrofitting blighted areas: shrinking cities in search of a new governance

Many contemporary European and North American cities are currently plagued by shrinking processes, motivated by several factors, such as a decline in population and in economic activities (Sustern van A, 2005). “The shrinking city phenomenon is a multi-dimensional process, comprising cities, or entire metropolitan areas that have experienced dramatic decline in their economic and social bases” (Pallagst et al., 2009: p. 1)

Several factors act on shrinking phenomenon: the post-industrial shift from manufacturing to service industries, suburbanization, natural or artificial disasters, globalization and social changes, low birth rates. As Uffer notes (2008: p. 2) the causes of shrinking “have to be seen not only in the context of the structural economic changes due to the de-industrialization, but also within the context of political and institutional transformation of the state”.

In the USA the phenomenon assume a relationship with a huge lost in population, but in a less severe way than in the past decades (Beauregard, 2009). Nowadays, the lack of jobs for economic crisis, followed by migration and consequent delocalization of services, are key factors for an increase in vacant land, properties, buildings and large areas to be reused (Shilling and Logan, 2008).

Therefore “such processes have drained essential resources from many urban areas, leaving the cities with a diminishing fiscal base”(Pallagst, 2007a: p. 6 quoted in Hollander, 2009). In spite of this, many scholars agree (Shilling and Logan, 2008; Hannemann, 2000) in considering the shrinking phenomenon as opportunity for new urban development strategies, a chance for reshaping urban spaces, (Hannemann, 2000 quoted by Shilling: p. 1), and a challenge for new urban scenarios and tools, a floor for neighborhoods and city-wide sustainable strategies (Schilling, 2008). According to this rational, planners and researchers are increasingly trying to develop approaches, through indicators and rule systems, in order to face this issue (Haase et al. 2006 quoted by Kabish, 2006). Others have a pessimistic thought about arguing that conventional urban tools cannot effect the challenges of the vacant lands, led by the shrink phenomena, and the economic issues that come with it (Oswalt, 2005, quoted by Shilling and Logan, p. 453) Assuming that it is widely recognized the lack in flexibility of urban tools, a new approach through a multiscalar governance (Jessop, 2002) could be a starting point to relieve urban diseases. “Some cities cannot seem to stem population decline and effectively address an increased presence of vacant abandoned properties” (Shilling and Logan, 2008, p. 452).

Due to the presence of a significant number of blighted and or declining areas in the inner cities, current urban regeneration instruments include retrofitting as an essential part of the overall strategy. Abandoned industrial parks, vacant urban areas, rail stops or parking lots and urban areas lacking in mix use functions are often privileged places for retrofitting actions, for the reason that an “unsustainable urban form could turn into a sustainable place” (Talen, 2011: p.952) This retrofitting idea to cope with urban diseases is supported by a sort of panic for urban blight processes that, pushing away any kind of NYMBY syndrome, can foster public-private partnerships (PPP) for the development of initiatives implemented usually by provision of incentives for urban regeneration actions (Dunham-Jones-Williamson, 2009). For Osborne (2000) then a PPP is a means to achieve a number of public policy actions: to fight against social exclusion, integrating the public and the private components of local communities, voluntary groups; to reform local public services, making them accessible for all; and improve the quality of the policy making process, through business-community links. Particularly, in suburban landscapes these actions assume the role of physical identity restoration through taking into account the importance of the sense of community (Calthorpe, 1993, Calthorpe and Fulton, 2001 ). Arguing that the building of urban identities claim for well-structured civic contents (Talen, 2008 quoted by Vall Casas- Koschinsky- Mendoza, p.172), the importance of local community awareness about urban transformation objectives is expected to play a central role. Policymakers and business leaders should capitalize on local assets to revitalize older industrial shrinking cities (Vey, 2007 quoted by Shilling and Logan, p.453) starting from the vacant properties recovery. Then, understanding how historical layers contribute to the evolution of the actual development that give opportunities for effective strategic actions. This approach could be useful not only in Europe, where the public sector intervention in land-use development is widely accepted, and where there is a strong tradition led by history and culture, but also in more recently urbanized countries, such as the US, where the reintegration of the latent historic features of a suburbia are retrofitting tools that give emphasis to a dynamic society and market opportunities (Vall Casas- Koschinsky-Mendoza, 2011). Following this ratio, a multi-level approach of urban and territorial governance is required for social and political construction, in order to build a place for interaction among different disciplines and actors to pursue a common solution for collective demands.

Assuming that deprived urban areas reflect often a declining society, a new territorial governance can be taken into account as “the process of organization and coordination of actors to develop territorial capital in a non-destructive way in order to improve territorial cohesion at different levels” (S. Davoudi et al., 2008: p. 37). Acting on areas characterized by a high level of complexity requires multi actors governance. Since urban policies are evolving into an increasing complexity, with a variety of actors involved, the local dimension is becoming a crucial focus of policy makers decisions (Breda-Vasquez et al., 2010). Sometimes this kind of complexity is considered as a good chance to test “new action capabilities with different formats and origins, creating multiple new initiatives and practices that are linked to new forms of governance” (Breda-Vasquez et al., 2010: p. 210 ), on the contrary it could be difficult to integrate such variety maintaining the focus on local priorities and issues.

### 3. Declining neighborhoods and PPP- driven urban regeneration multi- actors instruments

Inner city areas present a high level of complexity that requires a different approach to solve its problems in respect to traditional ones. In these situations the private sector play a key role and the co-operation with the public sector is highlighted by an agreement, that could be a memorandum of agreement (MOA), a memorandum of intent (MOI), a lease agreement and so forth (Reuschke, 2001). Projects in these complex areas are characterized by the need to combine the quantitative requirements with the qualitative ones. Therefore, complex urban area developments search for multi-function and multi-factor approaches (Bult-Spiering, 2006). Multifunction approaches start from the complex functions integrated in urban (inner) areas. Functions can vary from the need to revitalize central areas with the realization of new living/working spaces to renewal of industrial parks. This difference among urban function requires an optimal co-ordination of spatial functions demands comprehensive co-operation between the various public and private parties involved (Bult-Spiering, 2006). In the United States the use of PPP as a tool for urban economic development began in the post WWII period. The suburbanization process started during the 1940s and encouraged by the state free highway program, determined by the migration of population from the center of cities to the suburbs. This migration and the change from an industry and manufacture-based economy to a service economy determined an economic crisis for central urban areas. In the 1990s local based partnerships were established through a bottom-up approach improving the social capital and giving emphasis to the community role in urban regeneration initiatives. Then, during the 21<sup>st</sup> century the improvement of governance through institutional arrangement for urban regeneration brought finally a holistic vision of the concept: environmental responsibility, social welfare, economic strength, design excellence: it provided for a place-making dimension (McDonald, 2009: p. 52).

The need to attract businesses and industry together with the reduced public resources brought to the implementation of Public Private Partnerships in urban regeneration. Summarizing, “in the 1990s urban government faced a movement towards more differentiated forms of governance, and more sectors were getting involved in governing activities and decisions: urban government became urban governance” (Van Boxmeer, 2005: p.1). Thus, the passage from urban government to urban governance has facilitated the introduction and the application of PPP as a tool for urban regeneration.

Nowadays, urban regeneration is frequently associated with the notion of community in giving rise to partnerships, often involving the state, to deliver social services but also to support business and governments agenda (July MacLeavy, 2009: p. 849). “A major justification for regeneration partnerships is the argument that together agencies can create more than they can separately” (Ball, 2003: p. 2240) despite their complexity (Mackintosh, 1992 quoted by Ball p.2240). However, it is also recognized that within partnerships, local authorities or private developers have the power to address negotiation towards their interest. Nonetheless, according to Collin (1998) PPPs could allow a municipality to gain access to specific skills or to create strong competitors to improve antagonism in the local market. Moreover, decentralization of governments, separation of responsibility for the purchase of public services from that of their provisions, contracting out public services to the private sector and the privatization of public services: many of these actions confuse the private and public boundaries of each other. (Turhani and Shquau, 2011). PPP’s are also seen as “the third way” (Giddens, 1998) between a totally public or a totally private related initiative.

Moreover, the most successful urban regeneration initiative rest on a proper balance between public and private actors, thus, on an effective implementation of PPP instruments. For Hastings (1999) URPs are likely to be more problematic because more types of agents are likely to be involved in decision-making: from the voluntary and community, as well as the private and public, sectors. “Regeneration projects by their nature are highly heterogeneous; even if only ones with a significant physical rebuilding element in them are studied, it would still be hard to aggregate or to generalize” (Ball, 2003: p. 2241). PPP’s, especially in the urban planning field, presents a set of complex variables that make the implementation of these processes difficult. Three factors seem to be relevant: the context, the actors and the balance among partners. Amongst the various definitions we can consider partnership a form of co-operation between government and one or more private partners in a project with common interests via a distribution of decision rights, costs and risks (CPB, 2001 in Van Boxmeer 2005). Furthermore, the three main factors mentioned above present a high level of flexibility. Indeed context changes for each city that is subjected to different laws of different countries in different continents in which society is influenced by different cultures and a different level of democracy. That is why, we suggest, that there is a big difference between the use of PPP’s in Europe (mainly used for infrastructure realization) and in the United States (used also for urban economic and regeneration processes). Context influences the urban policies that can influence the actors involved in the PPP of urban regeneration initiatives. “The context of urban regeneration is of influence on the division of power in the environment of actors and on the formation and carrying out of a PPP” (Van Boxmeer, 2005: p.6). Moreover, policy determines the conditions that identify the general aim of urban regeneration. Public and private actors could be involved in different ways through out the process. As concern the balance of roles among partners, in PPP’s both public and private parties share costs, revenues and responsibilities (Bult-Spiering, 2006). “Local strategies differ in their policy composition and institutional configurations, reflecting local circumstances and political choices” (Turok, 1999: p. 74).

“Some scholars (Fosler, Lyall, Davis), consider public-private partnerships a broad political alliance between city hall, or the mayor, and the business community to achieve collaborative efforts in revitalizing their cities for mutual benefit. Accordingly, public-private partnerships are regarded as a continuous process, requiring a stable network of interpersonal relationships developed over a considerable period of time” (Lyall, 1982: p.52 in Reuschke 2001). “PPP’s can be defined as arrangements whereby private parties participate in, or provide support for the provision of infrastructure, and a PPP

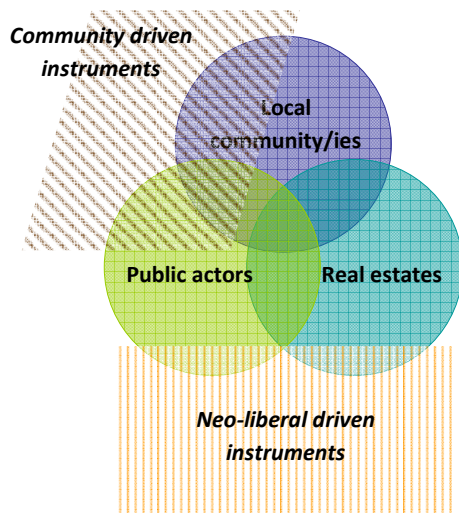
project results in a contract for private entities to deliver public infrastructure-based services” (Grimsey and Lewis, 2007: p. 2). For Koppenjan (2005: p.137) PPPs are ‘a form of structured cooperation between public and private partners in the planning/construction and/or exploitation of infrastructural facilities in which they share or reallocate risks, costs, benefits, resources and responsibilities.’ Thus, there are different kinds of public-private partnerships in urban development processes from “task forces, formal organizations, corporations and even direct subsidies from public entities to private corporations that have been described as public-private partnership” (Reuschke 2001, p. 8). Furthermore, it is useful to make the distinction between formal and informal partnerships. The first one, is that the partnerships are based on an informal arrangement concerning planning issues in order to revitalize downtown areas; belonging to the second one is that the partnerships take place through formal agreements as well as public-private institutions and corporations (Reuschke 2001). Reuschke argues that States, enterprise Zones, public rehabilitation, loans and grant programs may be considered as indirect or informal partnerships; a more focused or formalized partnership may be Business Improvement District (BIDs) and the federal empowerment zone program (EZ/EC). Again, PPP’s are a “financial tool for urban development”, and city governments can support development in many different ways that are: (1) provisions of financial aid, (2) powers of taxation including the ability to abate taxes, regulations, and zoning, (3) power of eminent domain, and (4) employment of tax-increment financing (Reuschke, 2001: p. 26). Concerning activities, it can be distinguished among primarily financial, and administrative incentives. If financial incentives are primarily used to foster and focus investments in targeted areas, administrative ones, including land use control incentives, such as relaxing regulations, zoning and controls, may be used by local governments when a project promotes public initiatives. The most common contractual agreements between the public and private sectors are: Development Agreements (DA), Disposition and Development Agreements (DDA), Owner Participation Agreements (OPA), and Lease Agreements (Reuschke, 2001).

Often public-private partnerships are described as organizations (Ledebur 1984:204). In this way, partnerships are based on institutional commitments including downtown development corporations, economic development corporations or committees. Consequently, we can distinguish between different kinds of tools for PPP implementation, depending on the context, on the actors involvement and on the objective of the partnership: consequently there are different tools used, which can belong to market-led instruments and community-led instruments.

Drawing from the literature review on governance in urban regeneration and PPP, three main categories of actors emerge: public actors (i.e., public agencies, cities, other public bodies), private investors generally identifiable as property developers, and the community, which can be formed by different social groups.

Figure 1 visually relates the different types of PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actors instruments with different levels of engagement from the three main categories highlighted.

**Fig. 1: Multi-actors urban regeneration instruments and level of actors’ engagement**



The choice of which different urban regeneration instrument to use, produces a significant impact on the level of engagement of these three categories of actors. The literature often highlights risks and failures of an exclusively real estate-led instrument, which embeds a neo-liberal approach to urban regeneration. Reasons for this is mainly due to the underestimation of the role of the community and of the social impacts of the urban regeneration initiative, that can induce gentrification and inequalities, even in case of culture-led regeneration interventions (Stern and Seifer, 2007). On the other hand, the literature also highlights how financial constraints can seriously challenge the good intentions of public decision makers, who attempt to foster community engagement and participation without proper involvement of the real estate

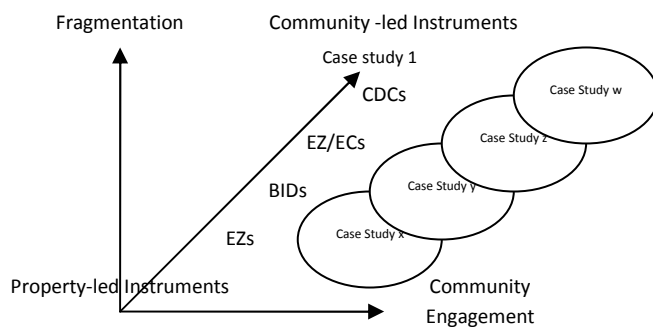
developer, thus leading to the construction of financially unfeasible scenarios though the limits of a property-led regeneration effort that have been highlighted by many authors (Imrie and Thomas, 1993, Turok, 1992).

### 3. To what extent is the role of the community effective in PPP-led urban regeneration? Evidence from Boston, MA

#### *Research methodology*

Drawing from the literature on PPP case studies and urban regeneration, it emerges that failures and successes in urban regeneration are deeply influenced by some key factors featuring the initial context. Blighted industrial areas are often owned by a single property owner, or a few owners, with a modest level of affection to the area. These areas are often perceived as detrimental elements in the urban context, because they often are underutilized empty spaces and sometimes become places of abandonment and risk. Declining neighborhoods are often former place of memories, which lost their competitiveness because of economic crisis or shifts in the urban geography of flows and nets. They sometimes coincide with affluent neighborhoods targeted by immigration of low income populations and are hindered by internal social divide. The empirical research aims at investigating the relationship between levels of fragmentation and appropriate levels of community engagement in multi-actors PPP driven urban regeneration instruments. In particular, it seeks to question the empirical case studies in order to highlight, from one side, the respective level of fragmentation in social and property ownership terms and, from the other side, to what extent was the role of the community effective. In so doing, it assumes that at different instruments (from property-led to community-led) correspond different degrees of community engagement. Figure 2 visually represents the initial approach to the case studies.

Fig. 2: The relationship between fragmentation/community engagement and multi-actors PPP-driven urban regeneration instruments



This paragraph provides evidence of the research findings, by discussing the empirical evidence from four case studies performed in the city of Boston, MA. The research methodology is first illustrated, in order to justify the case study approach to the research and the reasons for the selection of the four case studies. Afterwards, a brief description of the case studies follows, in order to provide readers with a proper general framework of the more in-depth analysis of the specific features of the four case studies investigated. Finally, the four case studies will be discussed, by specifically investigating both the level of fragmentation in the area (in particular, the level of fragmentation of the property market and the level of social fragmentation in terms of different social actors), and the role of the three main categories of actors (the local communities, real estate owners/developers and the public actors) involved in the urban regeneration process.

The research methodology is based on a case study approach (Yin, 2004) and aims at investigating the different level of engagement of the community in different contexts of the city of Boston. Thus, after a preliminary analysis of the areas recently targeted by PPP- driven urban regeneration multi-actors instruments, a selection of four areas has been made, oriented to capture different typologies of instruments and actors involved: Boston Marine Industrial Park, Fort Point District, Concord Commons and Codman Square Neighborhood,. A description for each area will follow, highlighting its specific features. The investigation rests on two tools: a survey form and an interview form. The survey form's aim is to understand how the PPP can be considered a useful tool for urban regeneration initiatives and covers the following sections: Overall outline of the Initiative; Socioeconomic Structure; Fiscal Analysis Summary; Marketing and Promotion; Stakeholders and Governance; Spatial Data; Visual Analysis. Starting from the physical context analysis the study moves to the partnership composition to better understand the role of the public and the private sector and to analyze the balance of the partnership among various actors and to determine the costs, risks, power and responsibilities. The interview form is based on 3 sets of variables: Vision and Strategy; Management and Organization; Stakeholders and Governance; and Evaluation of Results. The first section is focused on what the main objectives pursued by the stakeholders are in relationship to the case study's service area. The second (Management and Organization) is focused on the actors' organization and on the possible changes over the years. The Stakeholders and Governance section focuses on the role and the influence of stakeholders within the initiative. The final section (Evaluation of Results) focuses on the coherence

analysis between the goals of the initiative and the results obtained. Data on the four areas have been gathered throughout a three months period, complementing the analysis with in- depth field work. After collecting all the necessary information, the data have been organized with the goal to outline the aspects relevant to the research, as clarified in the discussion on the case studies, and finally discussed in order to draw possible insights.

### ***Description of the case studies***

#### *Boston Marine Industrial Park*

The Boston Marine Industrial Park is an industrial port area located near the South Boston Waterfront, originally a former US Naval base. Efforts are concentrated on economic initiatives of the of City of Boston to enhance economic growth and job creation. Activities in the area started in 1977 when the City of Boston bought the area in hopes of developing a large industrial park that would attract new businesses and industries thanks to the existence of new facilities and infrastructures. An EDIC, Economic Development Industrial Corporation, was instituted in order to manage the program. According to the Massachusetts General Laws the EDIC is a public instrument within an Economic Development Area (EDA) that has the authority and rights to confiscate land by eminent domain, issue debentures and revenue bonds, buy and sell property, collect rents, enter into contracts, receive grants, and make and receive loans. An Economic Development Area is a “blighted open area” or a “decadent area” as defined by Massachusetts General Law, which is located in the municipality and is zoned for general or restricted manufacturing uses for general or waterfront industrial uses.

The main objectives of the city of Boston for instituting an EDIC are economic development, job creation, attraction of new businesses and the revitalization of the specific area. In 1990s the specific EDIC in question was merged with the BRA (Boston Redevelopment Authority) that became the actual owner of the said land mass area. The initial public investment amount was \$50 million and it was imagined that they could generate \$170 million of private investment funds. There are actually more than 300 companies are located in the Boston Marine Industrial Park Area and more of 3000 workers are employed.

The public partner and private sector are particularly focused on this area. For the public sector the main goal is to achieve economic growth and create local jobs, for the private sector the initiative is to locate private businesses in a very competitive area with all the facilities they need. Partnerships among them have been consummated through a Lease Agreement held between the EDIC and directly with the private entity. There is not a common expiration date written in to the agreements. It can vary from a few years to a decade or two. As in any commercial rental agreement, the private tenant can build their own buildings in the parcel according to the city’s governance and Zoning codes, the BMIP (Boston Marine Industrial Park) Master Plan and existing federal and state laws that pertain to this site. During the last decade the City of Boston decided to implement a series of initiatives aimed at the city’s economic growth. These initiatives like the Boston Innovation District, Green Tech Boston and Life Science offer a series of services for local businesses. Among these, again as in any typical commercial rental agreement, are site selection services to suggest what is the best location for each activity. The most high profile site is Boston Marine Industrial Park. The capacity to attract local and international businesses is quite high despite the other commercial business areas. This case shows a limited level of innovation in terms of governance and PPP, as well as it does not particularly emphasize community engagement in the process.

However, the waterfront industrial location represents one of the more attractive factors in the Boston area: it is near to the South Station T, downtown and close to Logan International Airport. It is well infrastructured thanks to the recent initiatives operated by the City of Boston and the Federal Government. In the last years a new T line called the Silver Line, has been implemented. The Silver Line is a bus line that serves the area and links it with the airport and the Convention Center.

The presence of the port and the already existent facilities, dock buildings, the airport and the urban and regional links make this area really attractive for businesses that want to locate their activities in a convenient place. According with the City’s objectives the strategy in the Boston Marine Industrial Park is to attract new businesses for jobs creation thanks to the economic and location advantages that the area and the authorities can offer.

#### *Fort Point District*

Fort Point district historically is a light-industry related area along the Fort Point Channel in South Boston. The active South Boston Manufacturing Center, and the USPS parking lot give it a strong business aspect delimited with 19<sup>th</sup> century yellow and red brick buildings, most of them renewed. Otherwise, the important number of artist associations within the area have influenced the cultural life. The economic activities and planning initiatives center around the artistic community. The 100 Acres Master Plan within Fort Point South, indeed, is the result of a common effort among public authorities, agencies, neighborhood representatives, owners and associations in the area that have contributed to the rise of a participatory urban process.

The BRA, Boston’s Planning and Economic Development Agency, involved community and stakeholders to draw up a plan for growth and development within the 100 Acres, a Planned Development Area. Taking into account the preexistent facilities and infrastructures capacity in order to encourage a lively urban district. Moreover, according to the Boston Zoning code, a PDA must provide for public benefits and the pre-condition to have it approved is an agreement among proponents at the beginning of the planning process. In this particular case, the major public benefit is the public realm enhancement in the area, through open spaces and road enhancement. As a result the key component of this Master Plan is a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the major private land owners and the City of Boston. The site’s ownership, approximately

90%, is concentrated among several large landowners: P&G/Gillette Company, USPS, Archon Group(W2005) and Beacon Capital Partners Inc. All property owners agreed upon reaching a compromise, accepting some condition coming from two important actors within the negotiation process: the Gillette Company agreed under the condition of improving its truck accessibility and adding an addition to the existing facility. The USPS company agreed to sell the area within 100 acres back to the city for the Public Realm Enhancement initiative in order to relocate its facilities into an adjacent one with higher property values. All the others accepted an order to improve their property values. In the end, the B.R.A. approved the Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan in 2006. Moreover, the B.R.A., embedding the public sector within the partnership, is the coordinator of the agreement and the manager of a Sinking Fund, in which private actors are expected to put money into in advance for future projects. All infrastructure and public realm improvements will be phased and executed as part of the planned new private development, since the public role is just managerial and regulatory and all the development process of 100 acres area is marked led.

#### *Concord Commons*

Concord Commons Commuter Rail, is a model of "Transit Oriented Development" (TOD), a mixed-use community, that encourages people to live near transit services and to decrease dependence on their driving" (Still 2002, Bernick and Cervero 1997: p. 5). TOD is a program of the "Smart Growth" initiative, a dominant paradigm of sustainable urban planning, launched by the state of Massachusetts, with the purpose of providing financial assistance for parking facilities, pedestrian, bicycle facilities, and housing (Chapter 291 of the Acts of 2004). This initiative awards funding up to \$10million, for urban initiatives that are within a quarter-mile of a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal, or bus station, for affordable housing development. The program is intended to provide gap financing in a way that reduces the need for multiple funding sources while encouraging maximization of private financing. Funding award caps are \$1million for projects up to 25 units and up to \$2million for projects greater than 25 units.

The key to success of the TOD's are Public Private Partnerships that are "designed to decrease the costs of operating or constructing public transportation systems, stations or improvements through creative public-private financing arrangements" (The National Council for Urban Economic Development 1989), and "any formal agreement or arrangement between a public transit agency and a private individual or organization that involves either private-sector payments to the public entity or private-sector sharing of capital costs in mutual recognition of the enhanced real estate development potential or market potential created by the siding of a public transit facility" (Cervero et al., 1991).

The Concord Commons Business District is located in Concord, an historic suburban area a few miles outside of Boston. It was established in 1635 as a farming community. The community wanted to preserve its colonial and historical maintaining it's "niche market", and preventing the intrusion of big industrial chains. But in 1987 the need for urban renewal, the town have prepared a "Longe Range Plan" intended to direct development in Concord. In 1994, a private Developer launched a an initiative to integrate housing and small retail in proximity to the stations, with the goal to preserve the original colonial character of the existing buildings, with the challenge to create jobs and improve the quality of life.

The strategy has always been that local property owners and developers are to work with local government, resulting in Concord Common development's mixed use buildings. The mixed-use building includes: retail, office space, a 180 seat restaurant and 20 rental apartments. The agreement between the Town and Developer requires that four affordable units at another location in Town is provided, allowing all the units at the station to be rented at market rates. With the purpose to encourage the small retailer and hinder the Global Market, and to keep local rents stable. This particular focus, has provided a mix of necessities and unique services and products that is valued by neighborhood residents. Businesses in the core area include a mix of small retailers, cafe's, a variety of restaurants, and personal and professional services. Over the last several years there appears to be a growing cluster of related products such as the natural foods and food-product based businesses, along with home decoration and improvement businesses. Concord Commons is recognized as an important node for future higher density commercial, providing direct access to downtown Boston and improving the quality of life of the entire local community. It is also recognized as a major tourist destination.

#### *Codman Square Neighborhood*

Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation is a non-profit community development corporation, also known as CSNDC, which services a 2 square-mile radius/5.18 square kilometre area in the city of Dorchester, located south of Boston, Massachusetts. The mission of CSNDC is to build a stronger, better community by creating affordable housing and commercial spaces that are "safe, sustainable, and affordable, promoting financial and economic stability for residents and for the neighborhood, and promoting residents of all ages with the opportunities and skills to empower themselves to improve their lives (CSNDC 2010-2011 Annual Report P.2). They just celebrated their 30-year anniversary with a strong real estate portfolio consisting of 830 affordable housing units and approximately 80 commercial spaces consisting of approximately 51,000 square feet/0.004738 km<sup>2</sup> or 0 km<sup>2</sup> and 4738.0 m<sup>2</sup>. Over the previous 30 years CSNDC has developed over 1,200 units of affordable housing, partnering with local real estate and construction organizations, private investors, public funding bodies and most of all the people who reside in the Codman Square community.

To insure their real estate portfolio is kept up to date CSNDC has developed an asset management department within their organization. The asset management team focuses on the financial health and physical aspects of all of their owned properties, partnering with a private property management company, Winn Residential. In 2009 alone, CSNDC generated \$902,492 USD in gross residential rental revenue, with \$27,676 less rental expenses for a net rental income of \$874,816.



One of the most recent high profile local Private Public Partnership's (PPP) that CSNDC has been involved with is the Boston "Smart Growth" initiative that is creating the new transit development, Fairmount-Indigo line. CSNDC has partnered with three other sister CDC's, local civic organizations and advocacy groups to redevelop commercial spaces, create new jobs, new transit stops and affordable housing along the new Fairmount-Indigo line. The neighborhood partnerships have also conceptualized a plan for a 9-mile/14.4840 km green urban village corridor space, which will link park like settings, walking paths and bicycling paths along the transit corridor. "The groundbreaking Fairmount-Indigo initiative is supported by a host of funders including the Boston Foundation, Hyam Foundation, LISC, Miller Foundation, and the Mass Smart Growth Alliance's Great Neighborhoods Program" (CSNDC 2010-2011 Annual Report P.6). as well as support from Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino, Governor Davial Patrick and Congressman Mical Capuano. CSNDC has a healthy financial balance sheet, a strong real estate portfolio, and robust project initiatives that lend them to have a very strong position in the local community development environment. With the recent weakened economic situation and real estate market, the pressure is on community development non-profit organizations to reach out side of their traditional service borders and partner with other like-minded organizations. Through the development of these joint venture partnerships, CSNDC will be able to continue to develop affordable housing, enhance local community environment, and expand their portfolio building the foundation for stronger, more viable, healthy and safe urban communities.

**Discussion of the case studies**

After gathering all the data through the research tool mentioned in the methodology, complemented by an in-depth field study, the four selected cases described above have been investigated against two basic element, that could led to appreciate the level of fragmentation in the areas: the social and the property fragmentation. The social fragmentation has been investigated by analyzing the demographic data, in particular those related to the percentage of ethnic groups living in the area. The table 1 clearly shows the differences in the areas, from the absence of residential population in the Boston Marine Industrial Park area to the extremely socially fragmented situation of Codman Square Neighborhood. The property fragmentation has been investigated by analyzing the situation of the ownership in the area. The last column of table 1 shows again the differences in the areas, from the simple pattern in the ownership of the Boston Marine Industrial Park and Fort Point District areas, to the extremely fragmented ownership situation of Concord Commons and Codman Square Neighborhoods.

**Table 1: Level of fragmentation in the four case studies**

	<i>Social fragmentation</i>	<i>Property fragmentation</i>
<b>Boston Marine Industrial Park</b>	There are not residents within the Boston Marine Industrial Park boundaries.	EDIC (Public) is owner of the land
<b>Fort Point District</b>	There is a young population, most being White Americans, and a small percentage of Asian and Hispanic-Latino. The employment index and the education level reveal that there is a high percentage employed in insurance, finance and management sectors, with a high level of specialization and education.	The property of the area is all private. There are four main owners utilizing an MOA (Memorandum of Agreement).
<b>Concord Commons</b>	The population of Concord has remained stable over the past decade at approximately 17,000. There have been some significant shifts in the composition of the Concord Commons population between 2000-2010, with the adult population increasing from the 20 to 54 year age bracket by 48%, and the 75 and over bracket declining by 38%. Incomes have risen almost 12% to a median of \$109,384 for adults in the 54-55 age bracket.	The ownership in Concord is extremely fragmented. The majority of the residents own their own house. Concord Commons Commuter Rail is 90% owned by the Period Realty Trust, they purchased it in 1992 for a total of \$1,425,000, and the other 10% is owned by the MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority).
<b>Codman Square Neighborhood</b>	CSNDC has 44,543 residents in a 2 square-mile radius/5.18 square kilometre area consisting of 65.2% Black or African American; 7.4% White; and 17.6% Hispanic or Latino residents. 57.5% of residents are renters with 35.5% over-occupied housing units and 64.5% renter-occupied housing units.	The ownership in the Codman Square Neighborhood is extremely fragmented. The majority of the residents own their own house. CSNDC owns 830 affordable housing units and approximately 80 commercial spaces consisting of approximately 51,000 square feet/0.004738 km <sup>2</sup> or 0 km <sup>2</sup> and 4738.0 m <sup>2</sup> .

In order to discuss the level of engagement of the different actors in the PPP-driven urban regeneration instruments, the four case studies have been scanned by highlighting the role of the public sector first, then of the private investors, and finally of the community. Table 2 shows the results of this study. In all the case studies the public sector plays a mayor role. In the EDIC case, the corporation is entirely public and is the major player in the regeneration process. In the Fort Point District, the public also plays a relevant role, as it coordinates the partnership agreement which is the basis for the entire regeneration process. In the Concord Commons, the public sector gave an important contribution to building the vision and the strategy for the area. In the Codman Square Neighborhood, the public sector plays a large role as it funds almost all the initiatives that the Development Corporation puts forward.

**Table 2: Role of the different agents in the four case studies**

	<i>Boston Marine Industrial Park</i>	<i>Fort Point District</i>	<i>Concord Commons</i>	<i>Codman Square Neighborhood</i>
<i>Role of the public sector</i>	EDIC: the corporation is empowered to take land by eminent domain, issue debentures and revenues bond, buy and sell property, collect rents, enter into contracts, receive grants, and make or receive loans.	The public sector is manager of a Sinking Fund, in which partners put money into in advance for each project expected, and the coordinator of the partnership agreement (MOA) that allocate responsibilities for construction and long term maintenance.	The Public Sector has always worked with the local community to identify goals and develop a vision for the future of the city.	The public sector plays a large role in the funding of CSNDC initiatives, according to their 2009 Form 990, they received 98.01% or \$26,703,586 USD funding; and only \$968,898 or 1.99% or private funding. Public Support
<i>Role of Local Real Estate Entities</i>	Private real estate owners can build and develop their own buildings and facilities in their area even if they are tenants and not owners.	None	Period Realty Trust is responsible for the acquisition of properties and right-of-way required for the construction, operation and maintenance, management and ongoing administration of joint development contracts and leases including parking. This function includes collection of income from agreements, invoicing, billing, property inspections and property management.	CSNDC acts as a developer and property owner, developing affordable housing for the local community. In the last 30 years they have developed over 1200 affordable housing units and currently own 830 residential units and 80 commercial spaces with 8 commercial tenants. This will change as the new Fairmount-Indigo transit lines opens up more needs for affordable housing and redevelopment of commercial real estate opportunities for CSNDC.
<i>Role of the local community</i>	The BRA (for the entire city of Boston) guides the real estate development review process in accordance with the principles set out in Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code (see A Citizen's Guide to Development Review). This includes facilitating the evaluation of design, density, use, and physical and social impacts of a proposed project in conjunction with City agencies and the impacted community.	There has been strong community participation throughout the development of the 100 Acres master plan. The working group, composed by neighborhoods representatives, public authorities and associations, shared ideas and solutions to figure out the final design of the master plan.	Collaboration between the Developers who listened to community leaders and integrated housing and revitalization of retail entities.	The local community sets the priorities based on their needs. And Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation makes every effort possible to get funding from private and public entities that believe in the community goals to fund projects and initiatives.

#### 4. Conclusions

Assuming that the level of fragmentation can be considered a key factor in assessing the performance of the PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actors instruments, empirical evidence from case studies show that:

1. in those cases, where a high level of fragmentation exists, the success of the implemented instruments (CDCs) also stems from a genuine engagement of the local communities in the urban regeneration process
2. in those cases, where a low level of fragmentation exists, the absence of a proper community engagement process in the urban regeneration process did not affect at all the successful achievement of the original strategic goals.

These findings offer insights, that can both be applied in urban regeneration planning practice, and be further developed in future researches on future scenarios for PPP and urban regeneration.

More in depth, insight from the empirical case studies can be drawn in terms of lessons learned for practitioners and planners, as follows. The selections of the most appropriate PPP-driven urban regeneration multi-actors instrument should be properly assessed against a set of criteria, which should include the level of social and property fragmentation in the area to be regenerated. On one hand, community engagement processes are time consuming and costly and could even be counterproductive when applied in not suitable contexts; on the other hand, skipping a genuine and appropriate community engagement process in highly fragmented context could pave the way to failures and underperformances. Therefore, the assessment of the proper degree of community engagement in urban regeneration is a crucial step that should lead the selection of the most performing instrument with respect to the context.

The empirical research was conducted under some constraints, that include limitation of the observation time. Further researches on future scenarios for PPP and urban regeneration could explore different case studies over a longer period of time, in order to better investigate the impact of the different actors in the successful urban regeneration processes and how

it changes over the time. Also, they could better investigate the mutual impact among actors throughout the urban regeneration process (which is usually very long lasting) and which mechanism of internal feedback can better support the management of unexpected challenges, particularly in terms of political and economical overturns occurring in the external context.

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