



## Learning from Istanbul Regeneration Projects

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A new approach for urban planning has come to the foreground in Turkey since the establishment of İstanbul Metropolitan Planning and Urban Design center. This new approach has emerged during İstanbul master planning efforts and it can be summarized as developing projects to realize strategic urban planning decisions. The ecological and urban analysis during the planning process of İstanbul revealed some crucial facts and problems. Particularly;

- İstanbul has a very fragile ecosystem and is under the pressure of continuous development
- Earthquake risk should be taken into serious consideration since most of the building stock is illegal
- Most of the settlements are facing deprivation,
- The economic structure of İstanbul is changing as finance, tourism and creative industries are developing.

To deal with these problems and facts, IMP proposed projects in the metropolitan area including ecological and historical preservation projects, new urban centers, housing projects and so forth. Besides, remarkable development of real estate and construction industries in İstanbul accelerated transformation of urban space in recent years. İstanbul has become an attraction center for the international market. Aforementioned projects are expected to be pioneers in urban redevelopment by directing the market for renewing unhealthy building stock, creating more publicly available spaces and preserving the nature. Meanwhile housing regeneration processes like Sulukule and Tarlabası, launched outside the responsibility of IMP, instilled questions about social exclusion and displacement. The issue of “regeneration” became a questionable paradigm for society at large, generally perceived as a pretext for granting more building rights for developers, increasing land rents and gentrification. I propose that we, as planners are capable of redirecting market development for regeneration projects for providing a better quality of life, not for particular groups but for all citizens. However, to deal with these developments; we should develop new perspectives and tools regarding finance, legal arrangements and technical processes; and let the market pay for social needs in return for the additional rent generated. In this paper I will evaluate the processes of brownfield regeneration projects in İstanbul and suggest proposals for new approaches in urban planning practice for three different contexts: financial and organizational context, design and planning practice context and legal context.

In the first part of my paper I will evaluate the brownfield projects in İstanbul such as Cendere Valley, Maltepe and Kartal projects and I will present the strategies behind these projects as well as their financial and organizational models.

In the second part, I will try to explain the technical processes regarding ownership, design and planning in the Kartal Sub-center project based on my own experience.

In the third part, I will point out the application tools (i.e. land merging, transfer of development rights, bonus development rights and incentives) and legal arrangements for these projects and provide examples from international cases.

Finally, I will put forward pros and cons and conclude with a proposal of guidelines for planning strategies and policies for urban planning practice in Turkey.

**KEY WORDS:** Urban regeneration, brownfield projects, İstanbul, planning approach, finance, legal arrangements, planning practice, tools.