

Urban Fallows: Developing Creative Structures in the Tampere Region

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ABSTRACT

Urban structures are dynamic due to endlessly moving functions. This might result in underutilized areas and buildings, which are waiting for new functions and users, in other words, new cultivating – they are urban fallows. The most familiar reserve of urban fallows consists of former industrial sites. In addition to these brownfields, also abandoned schools, institutes, offices, infrastructures, docks, ships, depots and fields are included.

In contemporary parlance the concept of fallow has a negative undertone. However, in its original usage in agriculture it has clearly positive meaning. Fallowing is a method to fertilize soil. Similarly, urban fallows could be considered positive with their diverse potentials to fertilize urban qualities. Due to their long-standing materiality, there is usually a lot of meanings and history embedded in urban fallows. In the process of urban development, the fallows are typically used as arenas for provisional uses prior to further development. There is also a strong dependence between these uses and the increase of value of the property in question.

In our project, we aim to develop urban fallowing as an explicit method consisting of two parts. Firstly, a GIS-based method has been developed for identifying and classifying different fallows. By using GIS, the qualities and quantities of fallows can be analyzed, as well as their relative locations in urban region. The collected information will be deposited in a fallow bank, which can be published in the internet. Secondly, a specific process model for developing spaces has been created. The model is sensitive to different phases of fallowing and to intermediate uses.

Specific qualities of the fallowing method:

- a simple GIS approach can utilize basic GIS data sets available in majority of EU countries;
- analysis of potentials facilitates communication between land-owners, developers and end-users, stakeholders and between long-term and short-term development;
- multiple development paths, from minor to extensive investments, can exist simultaneously;
- sites can be brought into development discussions independently of the initial intentions of land owners.

Benefits of the following method:

- speeds up the development of underutilized urban spaces;
- improves the integrity of urban structure;
- enriches the quality of urban environment;
- brings out unconventional ways of using urban spaces;
- opens up possibilities for new business highlights places in areas with no obvious business interest

Key Words: urban planning, property development, creative economy