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## Changes on the waterfront - transforming harbor areas

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Working Paper 2008-02



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# **Changes on the Waterfront — Transforming Harbor Areas**

Comparison and  
Evaluation of Waterfront  
Developments in Two  
Contexts: San Francisco  
Bay Area and Hamburg,  
Germany

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**University of California, Berkeley**

**October 2007**

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# **Changes on the Waterfront – Transforming Harbor Areas**

Comparison and Evaluation of Waterfront  
Developments in Two Contexts: San Francisco Bay  
Area and Hamburg, Germany

Hans Harms

Preliminary Presentation at Shrinking Cities Conference  
February 2007

University of California, Berkeley

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## 1. Introduction

The decline of seaports and the appearance of derelict waterfronts became a topic for discussion, research and urban planning, in the context of local and global restructuring, since the 1960s.

The ‘waterfront’ represents that edge of the port city where water and land meet, where sea transport interchanges with land transport. It was the place, where up to the 1950s, goods in barrels and crates were loaded and unloaded by longshoremen and stored for a while in warehouses; where the bulk of the cargo was broken into parts and sorted, and then distributed to production places for further work to add value to the raw products. Since ancient times, the waterfront was the place where information and news of other places were exchanged, where locals met foreigners and where sailors went looking for entertainment. The concept of the waterfront took on nearly mythical aspects. But all that changed with the appearance of the container, the computer and the internet. The scale of ships and boxes increased enormously and the time required for information transmission from distant places shrunk to nearly zero, made possible by miniaturized chips in computers.

The change and the transformation of the waterfront contain two different processes and planning issues: one is to plan the transformation of the traditional port for the requirements of the new age of container ships and container handling, and for the necessary transport infrastructure. The second issue is one of urban planning related to land use changes from former port uses to new urban uses (i.e., urban services, offices, housing, recreation etc.), mostly (after a period of decay and stagnation) with considerable increases in land values. In both cases often conflicting interests and actor groups are involved.

The paper presents two case studies and compares the decision making in the two processes and their results in two different planning contexts and cultures—in the Bay area in San Francisco and Oakland and in Hamburg, Germany.

## 2. Global Conditions That Transformed Shipping Activities and Sea-Port Cities. (Macro Context)

Since the end of the 1950s, major changes occurred in the relation between city and port. The economies and job opportunities within the city and the port had in most cases been closely linked. Changes in this relationship were initially triggered by deindustrialization in the port cities and in their hinterlands. The decline of ship building and its relocation from Europe and North America to other regions of the world, especially to Asia where labor costs are lower, contributed to the decline of many port cities.

Another cause for the decline of many traditional ports is the profound restructuring of the world economy and the emergence of a new “international geography of world trade”. Seaports as nodal points in international trade are directly affected when changes occur in the configuration of the major trade routes. In the “new globalization,” the predominant trade routes have changed from a previous form of globalization consisting of trade routes between the centers of empires and their colonies.

The present form of globalization<sup>1</sup> has resulted in the emergence of three main trading blocks between the economically most powerful regions in the world: Western Europe, North America and Asia. Between them, 85 per cent of the world’s goods, services and capital investments are now exchanged. To a very large extent, the materials are transported through container ships and ports.

What does this mean for the decline or growth of port cities, and for the location of major container sea-ports? It means for many existing port cities (especially those that had important functions in a former international geography of trade routes), that they are outmoded in terms of location and infrastructure provision. Only ports within the three main trading blocks that have adjusted to the new global container transport requirements have chances to grow considerably as main container “hub ports”. Smaller regional ports have a chance to grow as “feeder ports” (see Figure 1 and 2).

Figure 1. The Three Main Trading Blocks and Volume of Trade Flows

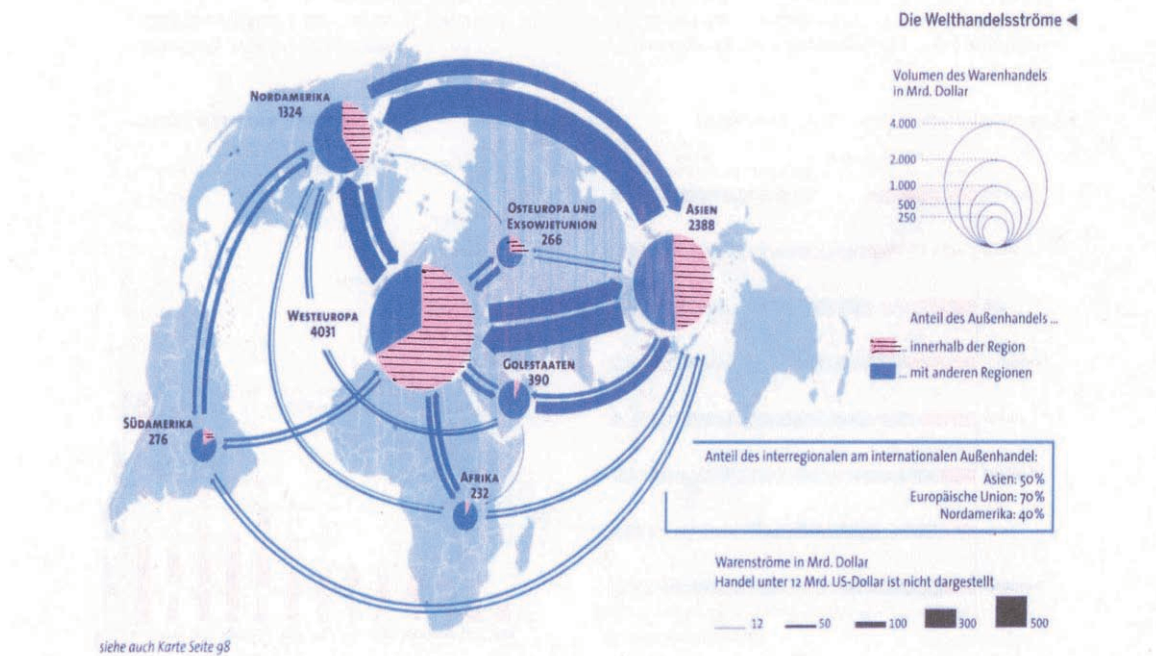
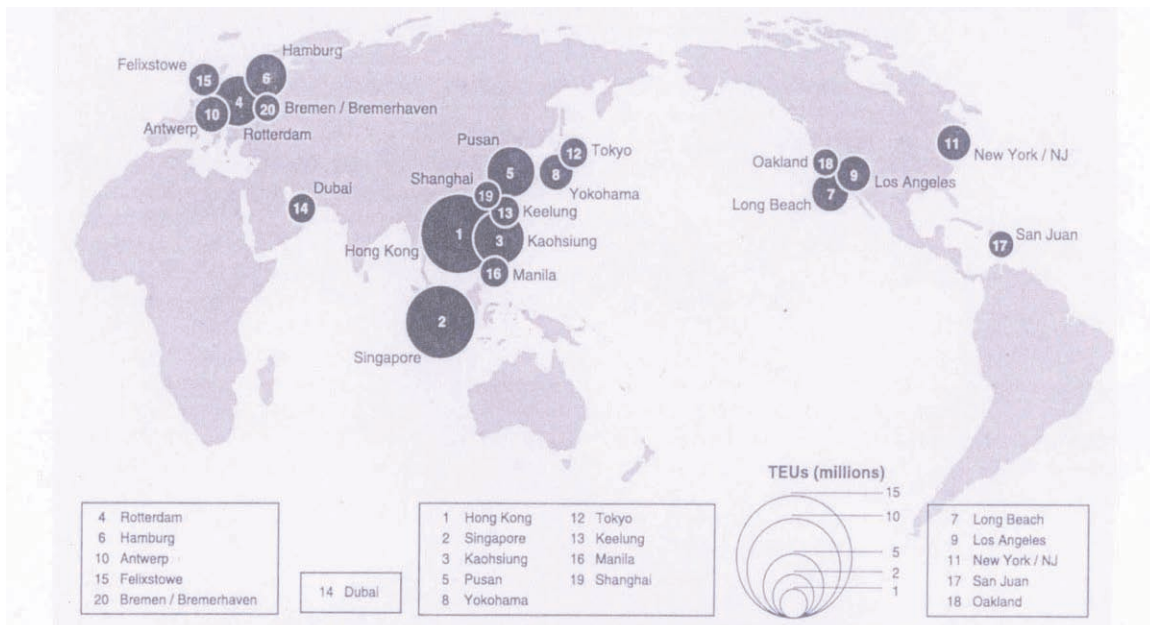


Figure 2. Location of the Worlds “Top 20” Container Ports in 1995



The maps reflect the new geography of world trade. None of the top 20 container ports are located in the three southern continents (Africa, Latin America and Australia).

The two largest container ports in Europe are Rotterdam and Hamburg; in Asia they are Shanghai and Singapore; in North America Los Angeles, Long Beach and New York. Oakland is the fourth largest container port in North America.

Whether individual ports are declining or growing depends on their location and their importance in the new trade routes. In order to achieve an important position as a container port, each local port has to satisfy certain natural and technical conditions: deep water channels; extensive areas of level ground for storage and intermodal transfers, and adequate rail and motorway connections to the population; and production and consumption centers. Each port has to invest in port infrastructure, i.e., large gantry cranes, intermodal terminals, etc.

This means besides *global* factors and local conditions, *local* decisions (of different actors in government entities, private firms and civic groups) influence what role the port under the new conditions can and will play.

Some ports will become “Main or Hub-Ports” where the “round-the-world” container vessels will come to; other ports will be subsidiary or a “Feeder ports”, to which coastal ships or river barges will distribute containers from the Main Ports. A port’s relative importance depends also on the negotiations with the transnational shipping corporations.

Within this strategic game for becoming a major container port, the decisions of two sets of actors are very important, (whose interests are different and often in conflict): the globally acting transnational shipping corporations; and logistic firms (with predominant interests in time-efficient shipping routes, in the speed of handling cargo in the port, in the costs of mooring in harbors and in increasing the size of container ships). Their logic is to ‘efficiently’ plan worldwide transportation chains. The other set of (mostly) local actors is interested in the port city as a place for living and working with the logic of developing and improving the local economy and job opportunities.

The local actors are port authorities; local and regional governments and their institutions; local transport enterprises; owners of port related lands; local citizens and action groups; and local and international actors in the real estate market in and around the port (interested in absorbing and appropriating part of the land valorization). Many of them have a stake and interests in local business and employment, and in the quality of the local public environment and public access to water.

## **A Global Network of Flows**

We can argue that there are different theoretical perspectives on how ports and port cities are seen. A traditional local perspective is to see the port and the port city as a *gateway* with a hinterland, and as a connecting point between land and sea trading routes. *Here the port is the object of analysis.*

A different theoretical view is to see ports as *nodes in a global network of transportation and communication flows*. This is the macro perspective of globally-acting shipping and container companies. *Here the global network of flows is the object of analysis*, for instance, the flows of containers, ships and immaterial information. (See Manuel Castel’s theory of “space as place” and “space as flows”.)



A map with the location of the main container ports and the shipping routes between them represents a global perspective. Transnational shipping lines are not committed to a particular place or port but interested in the flows, and in shortening or minimizing the length of routes and maximizing the speed from one node to another, within the whole network. An individual port is judged by its relative utility within the network for the shipping company.

So the shipping companies and the port cities pursue different sets of interests. The shipping corporations pursue private shareholder values (of high efficiency and profit maximization), whereas the port cities and many of the local actors strive to maintain and possibly increase the value-adding production processes in the city and port, which means work places and jobs. They are also interested in the quality of places to live, in high quality of public spaces and environments with good public access. In other words, they are interested in public values. These two sets of actors with their conflicting interests have to negotiate with each other for their cooperation in the ports. Each group can use longer term planning strategies, but they do have different sets of goals.

### **3. Comparison of Local Planning for Port Transformation in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Hamburg**

#### **The Port of San Francisco**

San Francisco had at the time of the city's foundation by the Spanish, a strategic location for the entrance into the Bay and to northern California. The California gold rush in 1849 started the development of the present city and port of San Francisco.

In 1863, after disputes between private owners over waterfront property, the State Legislature created a Board of State Harbor Commissioners (BSHC) entrusting it with the control of harbor installations in the city. The board members were appointed by the Governor of California. The State had the financial responsibility. The State Board had guided the development of the port from the beginning (building a seawall over tidal flats from where the finger piers were built later) to its height of maritime activity during the Second World War.

The State ownership of the port and the managing Board became controversial during the 1950s. The State had contributed little financially and the Board had shown no forward-looking leadership. It had no authority to tax or issue bonds for its operation or maintenance of the port. As a result of discussions between the State of California and the city of San Francisco, the Burton Act of 1968 was passed making it possible to transfer the port from the State to the city in 1969. But responsibilities are still divided. Port lands are regulated by State laws and, under public trust law, port property can never be sold or used for private purposes. (The state has interpreted the trust so that housing and non-maritime offices are not allowed on port property). San Francisco municipal zoning and Masterplan policies apply to all adjacent property and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), a State Agency set up in 1969, has the explicit purpose to protect the San Francisco Bay and to regulate any development on its shore.<sup>2</sup>

The designated area of the port extends over 7 ½ miles (12 km) along the northern and eastern shore of the peninsula and consists of 730 acres of land (approx. 295 ha), which includes all piers, pier related bulkheads, buildings, all seawall lots and the Embarcadero access road and some other roads (Figure 3 and 4).

Figure 3: County of San Francisco in shaded relief, highlighting the port property.

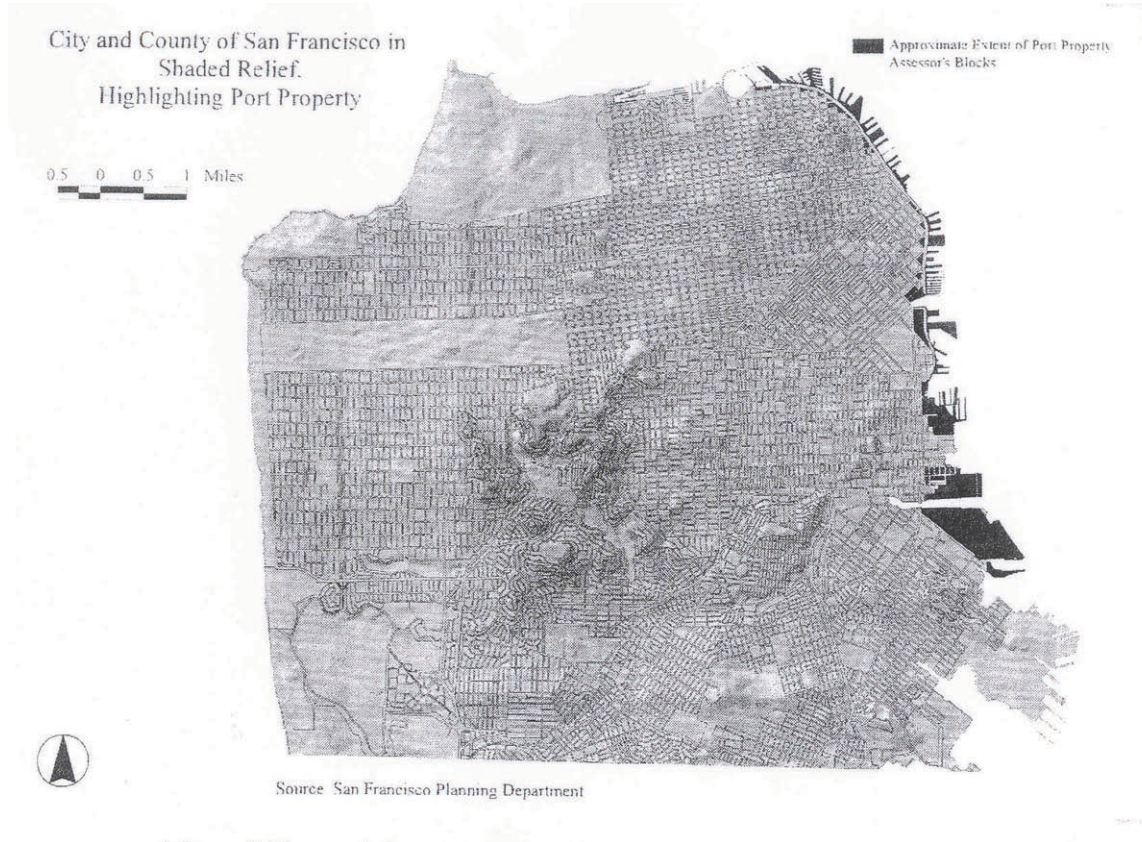
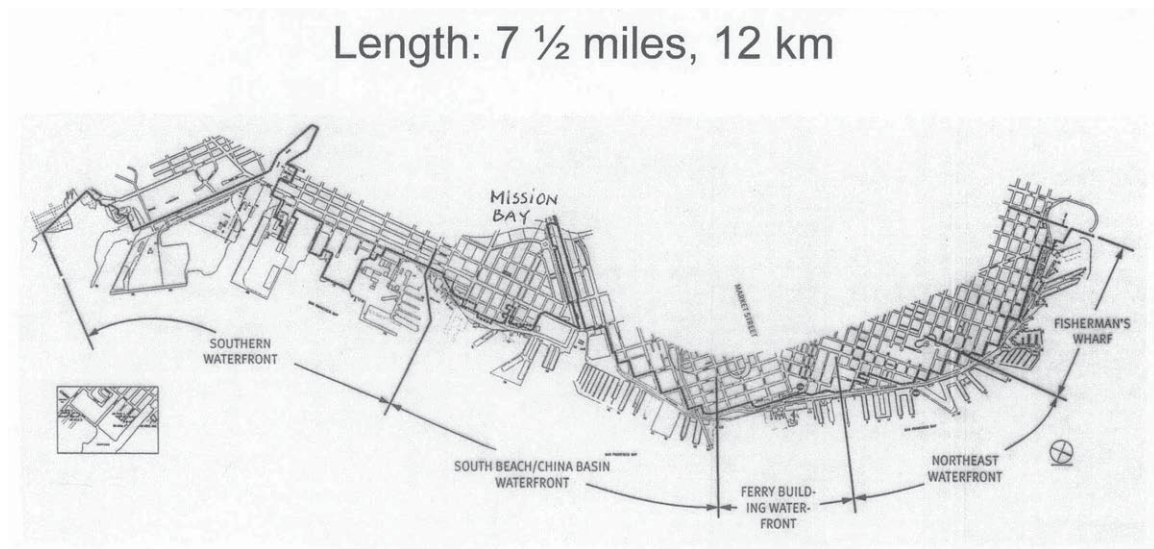


Figure 4: San Francisco Port Areas with 5 sub-areas and Mission Bay.



The port authority's duties and constituencies are extremely varied. Under the Burton Act the port is supposed to generate its own income from the port operation without financial support from the State or the city to repair and upgrade the run-down infrastructure. The task of the port authority is to promote shipping, fishery, trade and other water-related activities, as well as public access to the water, and to be concerned about environmental protection without the ability to issue bonds. So, the income generation from other than the narrowly defined port uses is very restricted.

The port's actual decision making body is the five member Port Commission, appointed by the mayor of San Francisco and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The relation between city and port stays very complex when it comes to decisions about waterfront development and the areas located closely to it. The port authority is responsible for its designated area, whereas the San Francisco city planning department is responsible for the directly adjacent areas. Many project proposals have overlapped both areas.

In the 1930s waterborne commerce declined. After the construction of the Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge, the ferry service in the bay was drastically reduced. World War II with troop transport and ship repair represented a new height of maritime activities in the port. At the end of the war San Francisco was for a few months the largest port in the United States. Between 1950 and 1960 the waterfront continued to prosper due to passenger ship traffic which declined when airline travel took over.

With the first container freighter arriving in 1958 in the San Francisco Bay the container revolution had appeared in the area. Break bulk operations declined with increasing containerization. For container handling, the old finger piers are useless but other parts of the port south of the bay bridge could have been converted into container terminals. The port of San Francisco, at that time still managed by the California State Harbor Commission, took no decisive action. Why was that so?

The port had neither a facility plan nor a policy document for its development. The consultants employed by the port authority (Ebasco, 1959 and Arthur D. Little, 1966 - 67), were also not clear in their recommendations. Another answer is that the regulatory structure was and is extremely complicated; the income generating possibilities were miserable and the State harbor commission had no strong leadership.

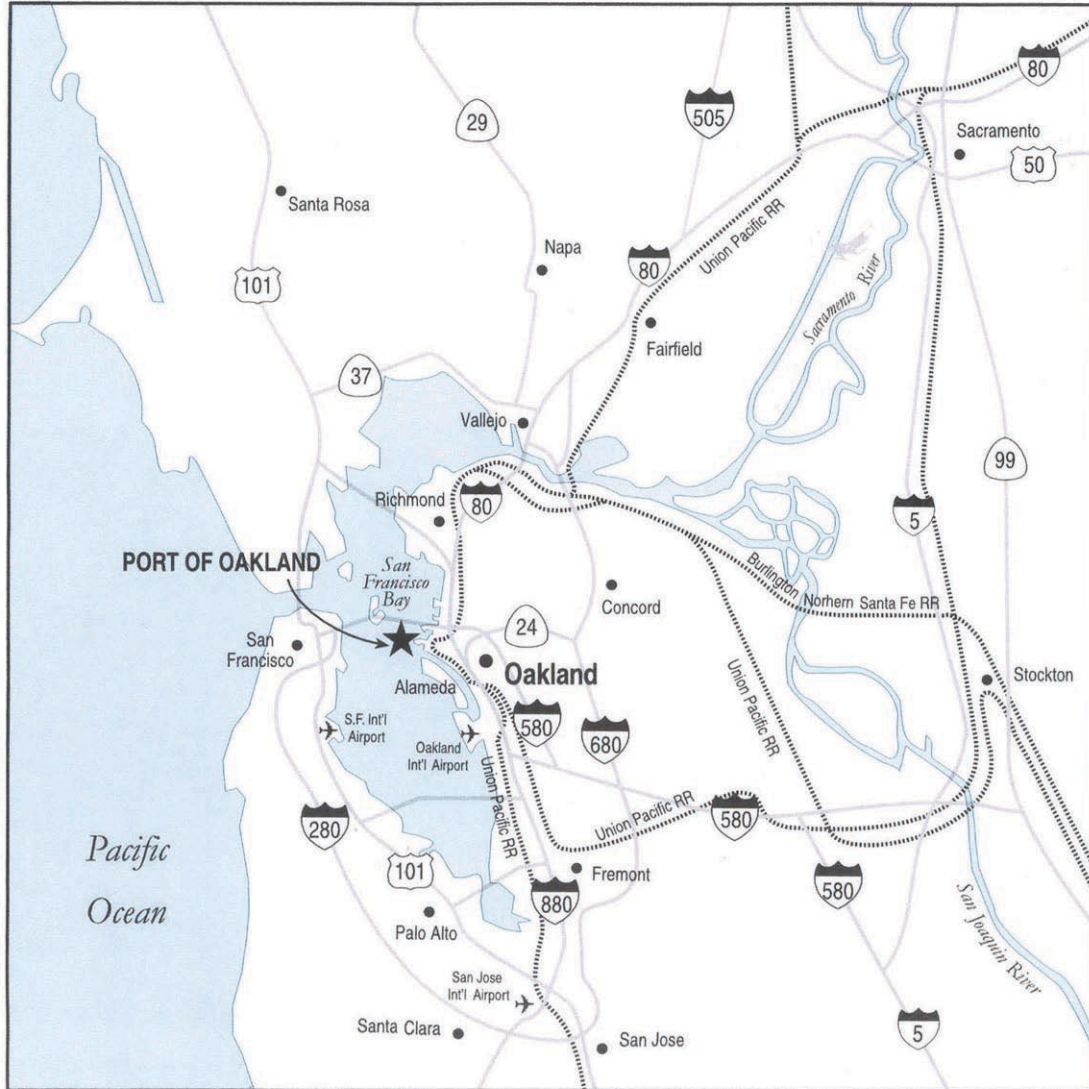
Neither the potentialities for a container port (existing deep water channel, many shipping-related services like banking, insurance, customs brokers, etc.) nor the disadvantages related to the geographic location of being on a peninsula, and the infrastructure and railway deficits of the San Francisco port, had been clearly analyzed and taken into consideration.

## **The Port of Oakland**

In the meantime the port of Oakland, located on the continental side of the bay, had done some strategic planning and taken initiatives to expand and to use any opportunity to attract container shipping lines (Figure 5).

The port had been established officially as a municipal port in 1927. It is governed by a Board of Port Commissioners nominated by the Mayor of Oakland and appointed by the city council. The board oversees the maritime cargo operations of the port, the use of and the income from Port properties, (approximately 16 000 acres (6400 ha) stretching from the borders of Emeryville in the north to San Leandro in the south), and the operations of the International airport of Oakland. With that, the economic viability of the port is secured.

Figure 5: Map of San Francisco Bay with the 2 ports of San Francisco and Oakland.



Oakland's advantage is its geographic location east of the Bay, and the existence of four railway lines with direct service and connections to the interior of the country.

The Second World War had transformed the formerly relatively small Oakland port into one of the busiest military ports. Industry that declined during the depression was reactivated and new shipyards built. Tens of thousands of workers were employed. Soon after the ending of the war in 1945, most of the east bay ship yards were closed down again.

In the 1960s, the mayor and the Port Commissioners actively applied for and obtained federal grants to convert its mud flats into modern container terminals. The container port expanded rapidly and, in 1965, the total cargo tonnage received at the Port of Oakland equaled that of the Port of San Francisco. When the Federal government closed the former Oakland Naval Supply Center in 1998, over 400 acres of land were transferred to the Port of Oakland for expansion. At this time the port authority, under strong leadership and supported by the mayor and local communities, developed an Infrastructure

Development and Port Expansion Plan called “Vision 2000”. The plan includes new container terminals, an intermodal rail terminal jointly with the rail lines and is supported considerably with subsidies from federal government funds. It also includes the deepening of the navigation channel to 50 feet and a new Middle harbor Shoreline Park. The 37 acre park will give public access to the former naval ship basin. It is designed to restore the shallow water habitat with the dredged non-toxic sand and will become an ecological reserve for many fish and bird species.

The port has established a Social Responsibility Division to deal with neighborhood communities and to create jobs for the people of Oakland and the Bay Area with a non-discrimination and small and local business utilization policy. The port directly employs about a thousand people and its tenants employ more than 42 000 (Port of Oakland News and Events, Summer 2002).

San Francisco had lost between 1968 and 1973 five major steamship lines to the port of Oakland. There were negotiations between the shipping lines and the two ports, whereby one port was played off against the other. In the end, Oakland got the contract for a number of reasons, including better lease terms and lower construction costs.

The port of Oakland is now the dominant container port in the bay area and ranks as the fourth largest container port in the U.S. handling 2.4 million TEU in the year 2006. More than 30 shipping lines call on the port of Oakland.

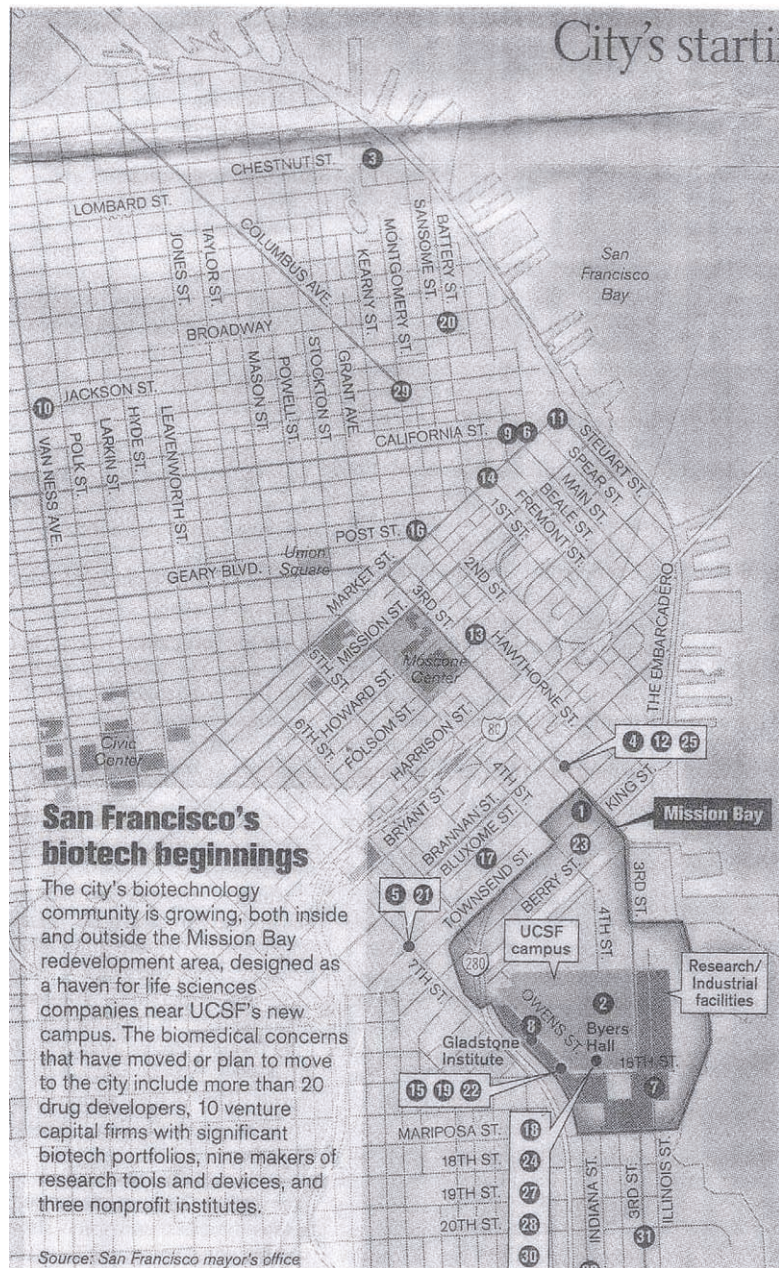
## **The Port of Hamburg**

The city of Hamburg is located on the river Elbe about 100 Km (70 miles) inland, where the tide of the North Sea still reaches port and city and where the smaller river Alster flows into the Elbe (Figure 6). Hamburg’s port dates back to 1189, when the city’s merchants received the royal charter for a tax free port. Initially, the port was located within the city walls on the north shore of the river Elbe. In the 1880s, major changes of port and city were planned and carried out — an urban district where over 20,000 people had lived, had been demolished and a new warehouse area (Speicherstadt) was built in its place and inaugurated in 1888. With increasing trade and larger ships the port gradually extended from the 1890s on to the south shore of the river. The port was always owned by the city and managed by a department of the city government; the port buildings were financed with public loans and underwritten by the city. By the end of the Second World War in 1945, most of the port was inoperative.<sup>3</sup>

Economic activities in Hamburg started very slowly. Despite the separation of Hamburg from its natural hinterland and the traditionally connected east European areas by the ‘iron curtain’, the port recorded high growth rates. In 1960, over 30,000 employees worked in the shipyards and other seaport related industries were growing. The year 1973 marked the end of euphoric growth and expansion. The oil producing countries (OPEC) triggered the first oil crisis through a drastic increase in the price of oil. While the port activities slackened and the port required simultaneously higher investments, other economic activities in the metropolitan area of Hamburg did experience an upswing: in media and publishing, small and medium sized firms in innovative high-technology sectors (i.e. medical technology), international logistics and other business and enterprise related services.

Since the middle 1960s containers had arrived in Hamburg and increasingly larger container ships required a new infrastructure in the port. Hamburg’s container port expanded within the borders of the city state on the southern seaward bank of the river Elbe with increasing costs to the city of Hamburg.

Figure 6: New Mission Bay developments and biotech firms.



The harbor development law (Hafen EG) was approved by the Hamburg legislature in 1982 (and upgraded in 2006). It defines the harbor area that falls under its jurisdiction (Figure 7). Within this area of over 73 square kilometer (of which 30 sq. km. is water) the law defines the uses for harbor purposes permitted (residential uses are explicitly not allowed) and it defines the procedures for the administration, for the extension and further development of the port. The 'Hafen EG' is not only a planning law but also a law for the organization and management of the port as a public institution. It should be mentioned here that the planning for the port and the planning for the city is regulated by different planning laws — port planning by Hamburg law and urban planning by federal law.

Figure 7: Map of north German coast and port locations.



With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the unification of Germany and the opening up of Eastern Europe, Hamburg experienced a 'boom from the East'. The port yielded a record turnover in sea freight in 1991, which has further increased each year.

This meant the port was booming again and the container terminals had to be extended, with new expensive handling infrastructure and increasingly deeper dredging of the waterway in the river Elbe at high costs, but diminishing benefits to the city of Hamburg. The danger was that the increasing costs to the city would not result in more jobs and value-adding activities in the port. The question therefore remained: who is to carry the costs and who is to benefit in the long run? In order to solve this question, new organizational forms for the port had to be developed in order to be prepared for the new challenges of the port. They were introduced in 2005; a new Hamburg Port Authority (HPA) had been founded as an enterprise independently from the city of Hamburg, (three city departments were combined and taken out of the administration of the city). The shares of the enterprise are 100 per cent owned by the city. The intension of the legal change is to allow the administration of the port to be more flexible without the constraints of being a part of the city administration. The Port Authority is responsible for the construction and maintenance of the port infrastructure, while the terminal operators and other private firms leasing lots in the harbor area are responsible for the 'supra-structure', i.e., the buildings and cargo handling equipment. The city and now the HPA own the land in the harbor. The individual lots and the user-specific infrastructure are leased out for use to various firms for a time of maximum 30 years. Under the new structure, the leases can be economically evaluated and the rents for quay locations and logistic firms—so far relatively low—will be increased after negotiations.

With the new organizational changes, there remain still many problems to be solved and risks for the future of the port to be considered. A major problem is the plan of dredging a navigable channel to the depth of 15 meter (now 12 meters). It requires approval (not yet given) of the two adjacent federal states of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. Besides the complicated approval procedures the costs are high and there are environmental problems for the deposition of dredged materials. The dredging can also increase the risks of floods from the sea and the question is whether additional flood control measures need to be taken.

Hamburg is in the unique situation of having its main container port still located closely to the center of its metropolitan region. Hamburg has the second largest container port in Europe and the 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. In 2005, the port handled 8 million TEU (twenty foot equivalent unit) of containers, considerably more than the port of New York/New Jersey which handles 4.8 million TEUs. It is predicted that the average annual growth rate up to 2015 will be 9 per cent, which could mean that the amount of container transfer would double in that time.

#### **4. Comparison of planning in older port areas for new urban uses in the cases of San Francisco and Hamburg**

In the previous section three cases of planning for the transformation of ports in the Bay area and in Hamburg were presented. Part 4 deals with the second issue in port cities: the planning for land use changes from former port uses to new urban uses.

##### **San Francisco**

In San Francisco, planning in waterfront areas for new urban uses was always very complicated because of the overlapping planning jurisdictions of the port authority, the city planning department and the additional regulations of the Bay Commission (BCDC), all with different goals and regulations.

After the Second World War, building activities on the San Francisco waterfront had stagnated. A major change occurred when, under the federal program of national freeway construction, transportation engineers had planned and built the unpopular Embarcadero Freeway over the old Embarcadero access road to the piers, blocking the city from the bay. The continuation of this freeway up to the Golden Gate Bridge was planned. This provoked very strong community protests. Grass-roots action groups were formed, stopping the continuation of the eight lane double-decker freeway in mid-air.

In the 1960s, new actors with interest in the waterfront and adjacent areas appeared on the scene. Private developers planned for huge investments on the waterfront. The U.S. Steel Corporation had planned to build a 550 feet tower near the Ferry Building into the bay. The plan was fought by architectural preservationist and environmental groups and rejected by the city planning department. Then other proposals were made for large scale and high rise building volumes near the bay between Market Street and North Beach. A multi-slabs high rise project, the Embarcadero Office Center was built, after long negotiations with the city planning department and with considerable changes from the original proposal to allow pedestrian access at street level.

After that project, the city planning department was working on a new urban design plan to improve the regulation for this kind of large project proposals by defining rules for densities, ground level access, building heights in the city center and to preserve urban views to the bay from the nearby residential hills.

The San Francisco City Planning Department presented in 1971 the new *Comprehensive Urban Design Plan*, as a “formal framework for dealing successfully with matters such as the Embarcadero Center incident. The plan consists of an elaborate series of zoning regulations and design guidelines. The position of the city within its scenic context is the focal point of the plan.” (Meyer, H. 1999, p. 245)



The natural disaster of the earthquake in 1989 finally allowed some dynamic in the change of the relation between port and city in San Francisco. The barrier of the freeway crumbled and was not rebuilt.

After the earthquake in 1990, under public pressure from citizen groups and through a successful referendum proposition put on the voting ballot<sup>4</sup> in San Francisco, the Port Authority was required to develop a comprehensive waterfront land use plan for port properties with maximum feasible public input. The “plan was prepared under the direction of the Waterfront Advisory Board, a 27-member citizen body, appointed specifically for this process by the Mayor, the City Council and the Port Commission. The Advisory Board was carefully selected to represent a diversity of interests in the waterfront including maritime industry, labor unions, and neighborhood and city-wide representatives. During three years, planning staff and the Advisory Board met twice a month in public meetings to craft the land use plan.” (Liebermann, E. 1995)

The outcome of a lengthy public consulting and participation process was *The Port of San Francisco Waterfront Land Use Plan*. The preliminary plan was published in 1994 after over one hundred sessions. Seven years of meetings had passed before the final plan was adopted and published by the Port Commission in 1997. It was complemented in the same year by a document on *Waterfront Design and Access*.

What did it achieve? It can be said, that the Waterfront Land Use Plan generally provides a vision to conserve and improve the existing situation and prevent large scale developments like the high-rise Embarcadero Center. The plan had been guided by several goals: to reunite the city with the waterfront and to revitalize the waterfront to create jobs, revenues, public amenities and benefits to port, city and state; also to provide parks, plazas, walkways and public open space at the water's edge; and to respect the historic character of the waterfront. It defined five sub-areas with their own conditions and development objectives, and within them the priorities of the location and size of land parcels for specific water related land uses (Figure 4). As a second priority it required more public facilities and access to the bay. Additionally it gave a set of regulations for the evaluation of projects, which could be proposed by investors and developers on the San Francisco waterfront, to be used by the Port Authority, the City Planning Department and the Bay Commission. The expectation is that the so-defined conditions will attract project proposals from private capital for a Public-Private-Partnership model of development, to revitalize the waterfront and to reduce the risks for the port. The hope is that in this way new activities will gradually emerge and with it the financial situation of the port will also improve.

The main improvements after the plan (and the earthquake) were that the freeway barrier was replaced by an attractive palm-tree lined boulevard with the service of traditional trams. The ferry building has been well restored with shops and restaurants on the ground floor, offices above and at street level, a market on the weekends. Public access to the water has improved and more tourist ferries are operating. Many of the bulkhead buildings have been restored and modernized internally for office uses. Generally the waterfront north of the Bay Bridge has become more attractive.

## **Mission Bay**

Originally a land-fill area, further south in Mission Bay a large urban development project is in the process. At the outset of the plan the land was not owned by the city or the port authority but by Southern Pacific (SP) railway, the city's and the state's largest private (or corporate) landowner. Here a developer-dominated planning procedure took place. In 1982, SP announced a project, designed by I.M.

Pei “containing seven thousand market-rate housing units, possibly 18 million square feet of office space (it was the time of the early 1980s office boom), 58 000 jobs, two thousand hotel rooms, canals, lagoons and islands, and 18,000 enclosed parking spaces.” (Hartman, 2002, p.182)

The project, containing a series of high rise buildings, created concern by various groups: residents of Potrero Hill, fearing their view would be blocked; housing activists, angry that the plan showed no low-income housing; blue-collar workers fearing the loss of jobs in the area of existing industry and warehouses; planners and others wary of the impact of creating in effect a second downtown on the site, fifty per cent larger than the current downtown district.

In the following years a considerable struggle emerged between the city, community groups and the large corporate land owner. In order to get planning permission from the city, SP needed the approval for the necessary rezoning of the area from industrial to commercial use. This act in itself would increase the land value, and city planning officials would have considerable leverage over the giant transport conglomerate to make it possible to gain important aspects for the city and for public uses. However, SP has immense economic and political power. Early in the process, it hired the law firm of the city assembly speaker and later mayor, Willie Brown, as legal and political advisor, as well as retired congress man and president of the California State Senate, John Burton. After SP had transferred the land title from the SP railroad subsidiary to its land-development subsidiary, (later called Catellus), the land value had to be reassessed.<sup>5</sup> After a land value assessment scandal where SP tried to lower the assessed value to avoid city taxes, the courts were called in.

At around the same time of this scandal, one of the city supervisors, Bill Mahrer, proposed to change the project in a way that the city would buy the land on the basis of the low assessment proposed by SP (even using eminent domain), and then develop a project by the city with up to fifteen to twenty thousand dwelling units (more than twice that what SP had planned). The city could then lease out the land to smaller developers in order to control the costs. After the eminent domain threat SP produced a new compromise plan. Under political pressure the Board of Supervisors did cave in and, in 1984, it announced SP had compromised further. The city and SP had reached an agreement on the Mission Bay Project with less building height, including 30% below market rental housing with costs shared between the city and SP, and less office space. The eminent domain threat was then withdrawn.

In January 1985, then city planning director Dean Macris announced as a next step “that the city and SP would jointly create a ‘Community Plan’ for the actual development process, to be financed by SP but controlled by the Planning Department, - a somewhat path-breaking step for a purely private development.”<sup>6</sup> (Hartman, 2002, p.186)

Then the “Mission Bay Clearinghouse”, a forty member coalition of neighborhood, housing and environmental groups, organized and stepped in with proposals. In 1990, they became the official citizen advisory body and had doubled their organizational membership. “With architect Tom Jones, they developed a new plan that stressed public open space and amenities, substantial amounts of affordable housing, avoided large scale structures and incorporated variety – all in the tradition of the San Francisco neighborhoods and contrary to SP’s emphasis on private open space, monumental scale, upper income housing, lack of diversity and segregation from the rest of the city.”<sup>7</sup> (Hartman, 2002, p.186)

In 1986, after a year’s work on the plan, SP resisted paying for the planning process and for further studies. Instead, the planning department and SP came up with four alternative plans for the site. By

the end of 1986, SP submitted a proposal which was not too different from what they and the city had agreed to in 1984. Debate over the project continued through 1987. In autumn 1989, SP and the city were near an agreement on yet another plan for Mission Bay. The 1989 earthquake raised a new issue: the land fill of the site contained toxic materials that could present leakage problems under earthquake conditions. After considerable arm-twisting, SP agreed to pay for the cleaning up of the hazardous wastes. In August 1990, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Mission Bay Plan, amending it and obliging SP to pay more for infrastructure costs, removal of toxic waste and conforming to state and federal regulations, and for community facilities and parks. (For more details: Hartman, 2002, p. 187-190; Morris, 1998, Ch.7)

Not much happened after that. In 1995, Catellus experienced financial problems and tried to renegotiate the agreement to clean up the toxic areas and to postpone housing developments on the site. The development agreement then expired in 1996.

A new phase in this long saga started with the incoming new mayor, Willie Brown. He brought in the Urban Redevelopment Agency and a much larger project was created. An area of 300 acres (120 hectare) was set aside for a large urban development project. The centerpiece was an \$800,000,000, 43 acre University of California San Francisco (UCSF) extension— a research campus, biotechnology and biomedical center with more than 2.5 million square feet of teaching, research and administrative space and some 8000 jobs. The ground breaking ceremony took place in Oct. 1999.

After 20-plus years of conflictive political and economic wrangles and four discarded plans, the developer Catellus (a subsidiary of SP with experience in mainly suburban development), without an urban vision, or a regulatory plan for the whole project, assumed charge of marketing and selling the land to individual firms. Each firm or enterprise can build the buildings they need according to their own wishes. There is no urban design concept or coordination between them. The emphasis is on creating a cluster of biotech and high-tech research firms around UCSF in Mission Bay. City officials and the mayor's office of economic development are campaigning to lure some of the companies already existing in the Bay Area to the Mission Bay site<sup>8</sup> (Figure 5).

## **Hamburg**

In Hamburg, the modern parts of the port are located on the south bank of the river Elbe. Some parts on the north bank had become obsolete for port functions and were changed to urban uses. In order to transform their use, they had to be removed from port jurisdiction and be under control of the city planning department. Since the port was reluctant to give up any area, this created conflicts between the two city departments. It had been a long standing taboo for the city administration to suggest transfers of territory from port to city uses.

At the beginning of the 1990s, it became evident that an area south of the "Speicherstadt" (warehouse district) and on the north-eastern shore of the river Elbe, (an island area of 155 hectare (ha) or approximately 383 acres, one third of which is water surface), would become obsolete for modern port uses (Figure 6). The largest part of this area is owned by the city of Hamburg. The area had already been exposed to a planning and urban design workshop in 1989, where planners and architects were asked to develop ideas and concepts. This method of taking certain urban districts (with problems or potentials for change and improvements) and expose them to intensive professional, public and political discussions

and also workshops with community groups, became an important part of Hamburg's planning culture. The objectives of these workshops on specific areas are to develop plans, sometimes more realistic ones, sometimes more as a form of brainstorming to initiate public discussions.

In May 1997, the mayor of Hamburg (Voscherau) announced a plan and a vision for 'a return of the city to the river Elbe', meaning that for the first time a large part of the port area between the city center and the river was to be taken out of the port administration and placed under the jurisdiction of the city planning department in order to generate a whole new urban quarter, the 'HafenCity' (harbor city). The boundary of the port had to be redrawn and with this change the area of the inner city could be enlarged by forty per cent, to be used for the expansion of urban functions that needed centrally located space. The aim is to open the city again to the water, and to develop with the value increase a completely new central urban district with mixed uses of offices, housing for different income groups, recreation and business locations, with extensive public open spaces and full public access to the water.

A new law was enacted by the city government, regulating that the city-owned land of the area be put into a special trust fund, called "Harbor and City". The purpose of the trust fund is to finance the urban restructuring (including a large part of the required urban infrastructure) for the new urban district "HafenCity" and also to contribute to the financing of an extension of new container terminals in the south-western part of the port (this part is still a controversial issue). The trust fund is managed by a newly founded city-owned developer: the GHS, the Hamburg Port Area Development Corporation.

As a first step in the planning procedure, and to guarantee proposals of high urban and architectural quality combined with mixed uses of work places and housing for different income groups, an international architectural and planning competition for the whole area was organized in 1999 by the city planning department and GHS.

The open international competition had attracted more than 175 entries from teams consisting of architects, urban planners and landscape architects. Eight teams received prizes and were selected for additional elaboration of their schemes. The jury was of the opinion that the winning team (a joint Dutch-German group) had achieved above all three aims:

- Very good linkages between the new HarborCity, the listed and protected building ensemble of the "Speicherstadt" and with the existing inner city of Hamburg;
- An impressive range of contemporary and future oriented layout typologies of urban districts and;
- An intelligent division of the whole area into eight sensibly designed urban districts with a variety of uses. Each area could be built connected to the previous one and the plan would allow a step by step development over a period of 10 to 20 years.

As a second step, the competition results were used as a basis for the master plan (Figure 7), prepared by the city planning department. The master plan determines general and reliable regulations as to type and intensity of use for the whole area, and regulations for the development of detailed structure plans for the various districts. The sale of individual building lots to selected developers and their architects would then depend (as a third step) on additional limited architectural and urban design competitions.

The Senate of the city of Hamburg had approved the master plan in early 2000 and now the first phases of the whole project are under construction; the very first phase of housing and office space is completed and fully occupied. The guiding concepts of the project HafenCity can be summarized as follows:

- To preserve the history of the place (i.e., the Speicherstadt), and the quays and their granite walls and cranes in the area of planning;
- To integrate the new mixed-use district with the existing inner city of Hamburg with 10,000 to 12,000 inhabitants and more than 20,000 work places;
- To revitalize the area as a place for urban living and housing through the construction of at least 5,500 to 6,000 new dwellings (including lower middle income affordable housing);
- To strengthen the daily pedestrian, environmental and recreational quality of the new and older inner city through appropriate design of river promenades, squares and public places, connecting pedestrian bridges and through additional cultural and recreational facilities,<sup>9</sup> and;
- To connect the area with a highly attractive public transport system and to provide the project with a future-oriented and sustainable energy system.

The realization of these concepts and the management of the procedure is an urban planning and design challenge. The aim is to develop a “contextual” city, taking into consideration the historical and locally-specific contexts and buildings in an imaginative and future-oriented manner.

The present state of the project shows the first phase of office and housing construction (on the two eastern harbor basins) completed and fully occupied, public access roads, several public squares on the water and new pedestrian bridges to the city center completed and the second phase with the main center at the Magdeburger Hafen under construction. A new concert hall on top of a former cold storage warehouse and a maritime museum are in advanced planning stage. About fifty private investment projects with over two billion Euros are secured. It is claimed that the ‘HafenCity’ is presently the largest urban development project in Europe.

## 5. Comparisons and Conclusions

In Hamburg and San Francisco the decision-making processes for the modernization of the port, and for the revitalization of older port areas, are very different, even contrasting, in their characteristics. While in Hamburg, longer-term strategic planning with visions for the future is predominant; in San Francisco, much less decisive steps were taken by the institutions and authorities responsible for the port and for city planning. What are the reasons and causes for the differences?

While the ports on the San Francisco Bay and in Hamburg are managed by port authorities, the way how all three are organized and related to each city government differs considerably. Until recently, the Hamburg port was managed as part of the city’s economic department, under direct control of the city government. The harbor development law (HafenEG) defines the area of the port, the land uses permitted within the area and the procedure for the administration of the port. Organizational changes were introduced by the city government that created in 2005 the Hamburg Port Authority (HPA). This meant the port became an independent public enterprise, still 100 per cent owned by the city

of Hamburg. It is now administratively more flexible and financially more independent from the city government by setting its own budget and paying taxes.

In San Francisco the port authority was transferred in 1968 from the control of the state of California to the city of San Francisco, but still with responsibilities divided between the state and the city and no clear mandate for acting financially or for planning. In other words, the institutional structure of the Port Authority is relatively weak, and in the past, so was its ability for leadership and professionalism. As a result of this and of other disadvantages, the dominant port in the Bay Area is now Oakland and not San Francisco.

The institutional structure of the port of Oakland was always very clearly connected with the city government in Oakland. The state of California was not directly involved in its management. The port authority had strong professional leadership and was keen to use any opportunity to expand and use its location and infrastructure advantages to acquire additional land and federal subsidies.

Another issue is the relation of the port-cities to their regions and the question of cooperation within the region. San Francisco and Oakland are part of the San Francisco Bay region (with a population of 2.5 to 3 million) within the state of California. Between the two ports or between the municipalities in the region does not exist any legally binding planning cooperation. The lack of a regional planning approach is quite typical of many metropolitan areas in the United States. The only organization with a legally binding mandate (through legislation by the state of California) is the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), which was initiated by a citizen action group. BCDC, as a state agency, is now in charge to manage the 1000 feet wide coastal strip all around the bay, a tidal area that was declared to be the property of the state of California.

Hamburg is a city state (750 000 inhabitants) within the Federal Republic of Germany. It borders on two federal states (Laender), in the south on Lower Saxony and in the north on Schleswig-Holstein. The river Elbe forms the border between the two states. The metropolitan region of Hamburg, consisting of a population of 2.5 million, reaches far into the two states, but only in the last decade some tentative cooperation is developing between the three states. In both regions (Hamburg and the Bay area), federalism and the pursuit of local interests seem to prevent cooperation through regional planning.

Oakland and Hamburg have in common the shipping access routes to their ports require dredging. In Hamburg, this is far more costly and complicated to coordinate with the neighboring states than in Oakland, but in the long run, especially with increasing size of container ships and the need for deeper channels, this can be a disadvantage in the competition between ports. It would be sensible from an ecological point of view and in the interests of existing ports to agree internationally on restriction of the size and depth of container vessels. This is an example of a conflict of interests between international shipping corporations and ports.

Symbolically, San Francisco is economically and culturally the gateway to Northern California. But the port of San Francisco has lost its once dominant position in the Bay Area to Oakland on the east side of the bay. This is partly due to rail and road transport disadvantages and to the location of San Francisco on a peninsula. But the advantage of a deep water channel that does not require dredging was not emphasized. This is partly due to certain complacency on the part of the port authority who took the port and the city for granted and did not act decisively and strategically to develop a vision for the future of the port. The qualities of the locality of San Francisco (views, hills, etc.), have made the city a

preferred place for urban living and for financial and other service functions. The port and its traditional “ambiente” of piers and bulkheads are seen by many San Franciscans as an historical and visual asset, and an attraction for tourists. It seems the workings of a container port with traffic problems, and the required costly infrastructure improvements, were not considered as important for a more gentrified city. The complexity of the different layers of governance on the waterfront was an additional factor and a barrier for strategic port planning.

In Oakland, the relation between city and port is very different. The port and its related transport links and industries are the dominant part and the economic engine of Oakland. The city center is slowly revitalized, but its importance to the region does not compare to San Francisco.

Looking at the ports in the bay area from a regional and environmental point of view, the location of the container port on the east side of the bay with much better rail and highway connections seems to be an advantage for the region. It probably causes less environmental pollution and disturbances than on the west side of the bay with longer transport routes. A problem seems to be the general lack of overall planning strategies or of a visionary planning culture within the region of the bay. There seems to be no cooperation in planning or of port operations between the two ports San Francisco and Oakland.

Major differences in the two ports are the institutional structures governing the ports and the contextual political and geographic settings. In the end, they were decisive for the fact that Oakland became the dominant port in the Bay Area.

When it comes to decisions about the development of the urban waterfront in San Francisco the relation between city and port are now, with the jointly reached Waterfront Land Use Plan, better regulated. It is important to remember this plan was not initiated by the Port Authority or the city planning department of San Francisco, but by a referendum on the basis of community and civil action groups, who were discontent with the long inactivity of the port authority and who were demanding an urban regulatory plan.

Comparing decision making in the two regions (California and Hamburg) raises a set of questions, about:

- A. The role of urban planning, including strategic planning and the position of the profession of planners in the two contexts, and the different legal and institutional settings for planning in Hamburg and the Bay area;
- B. The historical and cultural differences, considering the role of the state (federal and local), and the market in the USA and Germany;
- C. What is considered the ‘public’ and the ‘public interest’ and what is seen as local participation or influence of citizen groups and other interest groups in planning decisions in both contexts;
- D. The notion of ‘efficiency’ in decision making under, and;
- E. Finally, the notion of transferability or learning from one context of planning or non-planning, to another.

In the context of this paper only a few comments for each set of questions shall be provided.

## To A:

The legal basis for urban planning in Germany and the United States are very different. The German planning system is based since 1960 on a federal law (the Bundes Baugesetz, BauGB), which defines instruments and procedures of urban planning for all municipalities in the German Federal Republic. It also requires that urban planners consider and balance the different interests against each other (Gebot der Abwaegung) in their decisions for urban plans. In America this type of planning system would be called “conformance planning system”, meaning that the planner should act in conformance with certain rules given. In Germany the rules in the form of the BauGB are set on the federal level, but the implementation of the law, the planning authority (Planungshoheit), is located at the Laender and municipal level, which is why the planning system in Germany is considered “decentralized”. A federal framework is set within which the Laender or the municipalities have a certain leeway to act, but the procedures are relative homogeneous.

In the United States there is no planning law enacted by the federal government. The states would resist it, since it would interfere with their legislative power. Some states had given their municipalities the possibility to plan with the so-called “State Zoning Enabling Acts”. Most states do have these acts now, but they contain generally only two short paragraphs, with which cities and municipalities are allowed to regulate the building volume, the set back and space between buildings and the use of the buildings. There exists no procedural norms and planning is not required, it is only allowed. In a few states laws do exist that go beyond the ‘allowance to plan’. In different federal states the planning systems vary considerably in relation to local conditions and time of origin (Cullingworth, 1997: 71, 136-152). This does give certain flexibility and allows different planning procedures on the local level. It also gives rise to the concept of ‘urban regime’ in American cities (or informal arrangements between public bodies and private interests to carry out governing decisions) (Deleon, 1992). The German planning system has more clearly defined and similar formal procedures within the country.

In the United States, courts and judges have a relatively high influence in interpreting the law. Their interpretation can set precedents, which then are valid for other similar cases. The legal system is derived from the English common law based on an accumulation of precedent cases (with the assumption that each case is different) and not on an explicit and logically derived system of law, (where legal principles are defined), like in the Napoleonic tradition.

The position of the planner in the American planning system is relatively weak, partly because differing actors of civil society can have a relatively high influence. On one side, economic interests like developers and investors influence strongly the politics of planning decisions (i.e., through direct access to or contributions to election funding of local politicians) and on the other side local action and citizen groups can resist specific planning projects and can put referendum-like propositions on the local election ballots, in order to prevent planning projects or to cut the financing for them. The strong possibility for citizen group influence shows a relative democratic participatory or a populist tendency, that is wanted against a developer-politician alliance of planning. The planning profession in the U.S. is not given a mandate or an obligation (by law or from a higher level of government) to develop optimal solutions for certain urban problems by balancing the interests of different groups in society and developing proposals (i.e., for strategic or longer terms plans or goals), which then can be publicly discussed (that is at least the ideal understanding of the profession in Germany and other European countries). The American planning profession does not have a legally based legitimization and therefore their task is more ambiguous than in a German or European context.



## To B

This leads to the second set of questions, the cultural and historical differences considering the role of the state and the role of the market in society and in planning. The American understanding of a democratic state rests on one side a strong distrust of state activities and on the other side a great trust in the abilities of the average citizen (Cullingworth, 1997:17) and the individual. (The paradox is that corporations are legally treated as individuals.)

The distrust against the state and even against elected representatives is also a reason for the already mentioned possibilities of referendums or 'initiatives' by local groups that can be put on the voting ballot at the local or the state level. This has been used for ecological or other decisions that otherwise would not have been made (i.e., the BCDC in the Bay Area) but also for local exclusionary purposes (NIMBY matters, 'not in my back yard'). In the Federal Republic of Germany, referendums are rather rare. Although in the last 20 years many municipalities have introduced the possibility for local referendums, this was also the case in Hamburg. The constitutional assembly for the foundation of the West German state in 1948 considered the possibilities for referendums very negatively (distrust in popular voices for historical reasons) and strengthened the representative democracy and the role of political parties.

The American historical belief in the 'free play of individual interests' for political decision making is strongly related to the view of the market as a regulatory instance and has its roots in a historical time when TV, powerful advertising groups and big corporations did not yet exist. It counts for the fact, that market forces play a strong role in public decision-making. In urban development and in the "production of the city" it is assumed that 'private' developers are the driving forces and not public planning departments. The idea and the practice of 'private-public-partnership' (PPP) especially in urban planning seems already a concession in the sense that the 'public' is included.

With decreasing local tax revenues in Germany (in the context of globalization, large corporations are trying to avoid local taxation) local governments increasingly have to rely on negotiations with private developers to pay fully or partially for the provision of public infrastructure, in other words for 'PPP', which is now transferred (with the connotation that the 'private' investors become important actors) from the Anglo-Saxon context also into Germany and Europe.

## To C

The notion of the 'public interest' and how public participation in planning is practiced varies greatly in the U.S. and the German context. Besides the already mentioned possibilities for referendums, in America citizens have the 'right of information' at the local as well as at the federal level.

In Germany this is so far not possible. In Hamburg as in most German cities, the 'public interest' is supposed to be introduced and pursued through representatives of the different city departments in their rounds of policy and project coordination. Groups claiming to represent the public interest outside of this official circle are called 'carriers of public interests' (Traeger Oeffentlicher Belange) and have to be recognized by the local government before they can have a voice in these rounds. The usual suspects are: the chamber of commerce, the chamber of trade and crafts, other professional organizations (recently also in some cases representatives of women's interests or minority interests). These professional representatives of 'the public' do know the planning system very well and often are efficient and important in their

contributions. But the groups and local communities who are directly affected by specific planning projects are generally not included in these rounds. Under special circumstances those directly affected by the plans (local communities) will be consulted through planning workshops or other forms of more participatory planning. This is practiced increasingly so in many conflictive situations.

The changing role of the planner from the 'all-knowing expert' to the 'participatory planner' (who works with local community groups for improving local conditions) and the 'moderator' between the various interests (i.e., in infrastructure and transport planning) is widely discussed in Germany and internationally.

In the United States pressures for new practices, challenging 'experts' were early developed. When in the 1960s the planning of national freeways and projects of urban renewal were destroying urban neighborhoods of low-income people, especially blacks and other ethnic minorities, and local groups were protesting, some planners began to criticize the professional role of planners and the question was raised 'planning for whom?'

They demanded changes in the urban planning system and planning methods, and fought for the participation of ordinary citizens and their organizations. Paul Davidoff had articulated that minorities were prevented from having their interests considered in the planning processes. He demanded that 'advocacy planning' was required, meaning that planners have to act as advocates of these population groups and work with them against official planning projects, especially those that had destructive effects on poor areas.

The notion of planning for the 'public interest' was challenged as a general and abstract definition, behind which special interests could hide (i.e., in transportation planning: the lobbies of construction companies, the automobile and oil industries). This notion was contrasted with a more concrete and local 'public interest' definition and with identifiable groups.

In the case of the SF's urban waterfront development the early high rise proposals of developers had been rejected by the city planning and by vocal local groups of residents. The port authority and its professionals did not come up with any proposals or regulatory plans. The local action groups became impatient with the inactions of the port authority and demanded per referendum that a waterfront plan be prepared with maximum participation of community groups. Then a lengthy process of participation was organized by the port authority and the planning department. It seems it was done rather reluctantly by the professionals and with a sense to prevent large scale projects on the side of the local action groups. The result was a land use plan that would reinforce and improve what was there.

In the case of the Hamburg 'Harbor-City' a very professional planning procedure with a long term vision was proposed and is now carried out. The area was part of the port and did not contain any housing and local communities that were directly affected by the plans. So there was no protest by local groups. But there were demands by other professionals and members of the educated civil society for a greater transparency of the planning process and for greater care in preserving historical elements within the area.

The two cases are rather different in character. The land use plan for the SF waterfront was driven by local action groups against the inactivity of the port authority. The plan for the harbor-city was driven by the mayor and the city planning department under the control of the city and for the benefit of a publicly oriented multi-functional extension of the inner city of Hamburg. Here the city government acts as a public entrepreneur and developer with a planning procedure that controls and cooperates with private

investors for an urban extension of high design and public use quality. It also controls and manages the land value increases in this process.

## To D

The question of 'efficiency' in decision-making under rapid change can be analyzed in the three cases of port development: the two ports in the Bay area and the port of Hamburg.

The port authority in San Francisco was rather laid back and did not react to the new challenges. When the port was transferred from the state of California to the city of San Francisco, the new Commission did not show strong leadership or any strategic planning, concerning the potential for a container port. It relied, as the commission before, on two consultancy firms that did not propose any clear decision and the new commission itself seemed to have had no professional knowledge about potential future port developments. There seems a general lack of professionalism. This may have something to do with the political process how port commissioners are appointed.

The port authority of Oakland was much more decisive and efficient in seeing its opportunity for becoming a container port. The city mayor and the port authority acted together to receive federal support for the restructuring and expansion of the port.

How efficient was the decision-making concerning the port in Hamburg? Here we have to ask: efficient for whom? The development of the port and also of the container port has always been the priority number one for the dominant groups in Hamburg. The decisions concerning the port have been quick and fairly professional (with the press and independent professionals observing and commenting critically), particularly for Hamburg, under the advantageous conditions of the unification of Germany and its location as the most eastern port of Western Europe. The port needed to expand rapidly and the organizational structure was changed recently and favorably to improve its condition under high international competition between the ports in northern Europe, and under conditions of exploding infrastructure costs for the port. The questions raised locally are: who is going to pay for the increasing infrastructure costs? Can the city as a whole go on subsidizing these costs? Or, should they be carried in the future by the port itself?

The new organizational structure of the Hamburg Port Authority is a step in the right direction, separating its financing and budget from the city. It can therefore be called more efficient than before. In the middle and long term, the port has to pay for itself and cannot be subsidized by the city budget.<sup>10</sup>

If we look at the question of efficiency in planning for converting obsolete port areas into new urban uses then the Hamburg case shows by far more imaginative and efficient answers than the case of San Francisco. This has a lot to do with the different roles legally given to planners in Germany and the different understanding of the role of the market and the role of the state. There are higher historical and cultural expectations related to the actions of the state and to planning and strategically thinking in Germany and Hamburg, as compared to the context in San Francisco. Planning in San Francisco seems to be mostly reacting to proposals of developers or leaving the planning of a large area to a developer as in the case of Mission Bay, and then negotiating for public 'planning gains' in the process of zoning change that increases considerably the land value, rather than directing or coming forward with the city's own proposals. It was attempted in the long process through pressure of neighborhood- and other action groups, but did not succeed.

Longer term strategic planning seems to be absent from the urban and local planning context in the U.S. The origin of strategic planning lies in military and corporate planning where centralized power is high and planning from above for efficiency reasons is accepted. The more populist and participatory possibilities (referendums, weak professional roles, etc.) in planning from below seems to be one factor that prevents or restricts professional local strategic planning in the American context. Another factor that prevents or possibly encourages strategic longer term planning could be connected with the before mentioned, specific form of the 'urban regime' of informal arrangements between private interests and public bodies (i.e., as in the case of planning the BART, Bay Area Rapid Transit System. (Whitt, 1982)

A combination of official planning procedures that allows alternative plans and visions to be developed by urban planners, university groups or others, that could then be widely discussed in public meetings and in professional circles seems a sensible solution. It could be combined with planning and architectural competitions to further open up the horizon for alternative solutions for specific urban problems, and to increase the quality of urban design.

## To E

Finally, what is transferable in terms of planning procedures and decision-making structures in the cases discussed from one context to another? Because the contextual differences are very great, the answer is probably that direct transferability would hardly be possible. Any procedural transfer would require mediation into the other context. In my opinion, it is very well possible to learn from one context to another and to try to see tendencies that would be worthwhile to have strengthened. For example, in the German and Hamburg situation, a more open and participatory planning procedure that includes earlier public discussions (not only among professionals) before decisions are finalized would be preferable to the present decision-making. In the San Francisco situation, I could see that the role of professional planning and strategic thinking could be strengthened, so that alternative visions could be discussed publicly in an informed way. In both contexts professional planners, private developers, and local neighborhood and other local action groups are the important actors in urban development.

Generally speaking a more open participatory, and at the same time more professional, planning would be desirable. To combine these two tendencies in a new planning paradigm is the challenge.

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## Figures:

Figure 1: The three main trading blocks, volume of world trade flows (in billion \$) and the main trading routes. (2004) Source: *Atlas der Globalisierung*, Le monde diplomatique, 2006, p.91.

Figure 2: Location of the world's "top 20" container ports and their volume of annual turnover in million of container units (TEU: twenty feet equivalent unit). (1995) Source: P. Rimmer, Asia-Pacific Rim's Transport- and Telecommunications Systems. In *GeoJournal* 48, p.48.

Figure 3: County of San Francisco in shaded relief, highlighting the port property. Source: San Francisco Planning Department and Rubin, Jasper, 2003, p.9.

Figure 4: San Francisco Port Areas with 5 sub-areas and Mission Bay.

Figure 5: Map of San Francisco Bay with the 2 ports of San Francisco and Oakland. Source: Minor, Woodruff, 2000, p.166, *City and Port of Oakland*.

Figure 6: New Mission Bay developments and biotech firms. Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 29, 2007.

Figure 7: Map of north German coast and port locations.

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> The new form of globalization is based on: the opening of national and local markets to global capital investments through deregulation and privatization processes promoted by the “Washington Consensus” of neo-liberal policies; and the enormous cost reductions in international transport and communication through the new technologies of container, computer and internet.

Reorganized production processes can now extend over several continents. They are strategically organized and planned by entrepreneurs or transnational corporations looking for cost reductions by searching for cheap labor and by externalizing environmental costs thereby increasing profits and selling cheaper products in a world-wide market.

The main contributing factors for the new international geography of trade are:

- The collapse of Soviet communism in Eastern Europe and the related economic system since 1989-91. This meant the end of the Cold War and of the two opposing political power blocks; and,
- Changes of the former “Third World” into highly differentiated regions: Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and south of Sahara Africa; especially with newly developing production sites and extensive markets in Asia.

With these changes, the whole world has been opened up for capitalist investment and unregulated capital transfers in line with neo-liberal ideology.

<sup>2</sup> In 1961, in protest against uncontrolled infill of sewage, garbage and construction rubble into the Bay and the frequent use of the infill areas for new building sites, a group of three women from Berkeley started the “Save the Bay” campaign, the origin of the environmental movement in California. The activists, with the help of San Francisco politicians, were able to mobilize enough political pressure that the California legislature passed a law in 1969 that created the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), a government agency to protect the bay. Any building or change along the shores of the bay had to get their approval. It was “the first agency in the country to limit regional development, with unprecedented power over cities, counties and private developers. Its permission was required for anything built or dumped into the Bay.” (San Francisco Chronicle, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> In 1945, 80% of the cranes and two thirds of the ports railway lines and storage house space were destroyed. More than half of Hamburg’s housing stock existing before 1939 was destroyed.

<sup>4</sup> A public referendum on any issue can be called in California through the petition of only 10 % of the number of people that voted in the previous election.

<sup>5</sup> The city assessor’s office arrived at a value 113 million US\$ (for the original 122 acres of the proposed project). This was based on land sales in the South Market and Potrero Hill areas, which ignored potential value increases due to the SP planned future development of the site. SP then appealed the

value assessment of the city and proposed a vastly lower value, based on land sales in the Hunters Point area, several miles south of the site. The city's Assessment Appeals Board reduced the value of the land to about half of the original assessment without publicity. This would mean that SP tax payment on the property would be reduced by half. The city assessor then took the unusual step of filing a court action challenging the Appeals Board. He succeeded and the judge ruled in 1984 that the Board's decision was not supported by sufficient evidence and had not followed standard rules. The value was then increased (to 90 million), still considerably lower than the original assessed value. (Hartman, 2002)

<sup>6</sup> San Francisco Chronicle architectural critic Allan Temko observed: "No other U.S. city has forced developers to accept such an arrangement in a project of this magnitude, the largest in the history of San Francisco." (In "Fresh Start on Mission Bay Project," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 22, 1985.)

<sup>7</sup> By the time a second citizen group became a force, the Mission Bay Consortium, representing the city's active neighborhood non-profit housing development corporations pushing for an affordable housing and economic development project.

<sup>8</sup> Bernadette Tansey, "S.F. becomes a biological choice," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 29 April 2007.

<sup>9</sup> A new concert hall 'Elbphilharmonie' will be built on top of a postwar cold storage building and a maritime museum within the oldest 19<sup>th</sup> century multistory warehouse building.

<sup>10</sup> The problem and the costs of dredging the shipping channel in the Elbe can only be solved in cooperation with the two neighboring federal states. Lower Saxony has not agreed yet. There has to be a better regional coordination and regional division of labor with agreements between the three main ports in Northern Germany — Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven. So far this has not been efficiently resolved. It is an issue to be resolved at the Laender, and at the federal level. One solution could be to have the increasingly larger container ships not come to Hamburg but to one of the other two ports and so avoid the dredging of the Elbe. What the positive and negative effects on Hamburg would be needs to be analyzed.





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