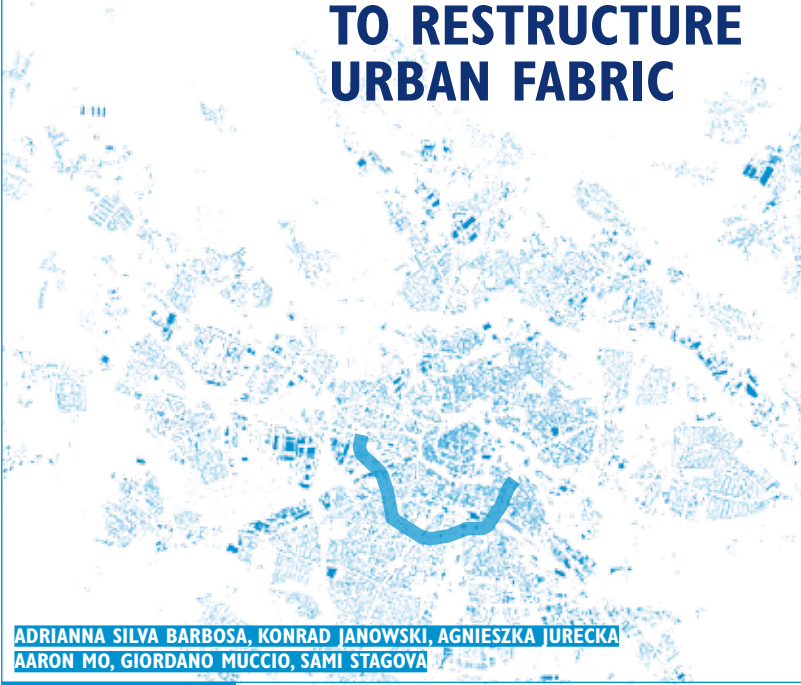


## USING MOBILITY TO RESTRUCTURE URBAN FABRIC



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### MOBILITY AS A PLANNING ISSUE

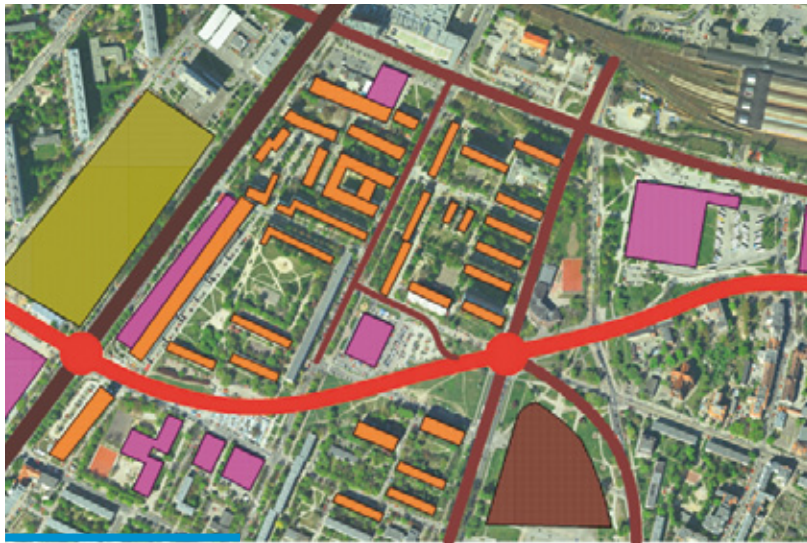
- > Aware that the City of Wrocław is facing serious traffic problems, especially on the inner city ring due to commuting and east-west transit traffic, the group undertook a critical assessment of the solution put forward by the city to build a relief ring road at the edge of the inner city to divert this traffic and facilitate connection with the radial system and a planned outer ring for through traffic in the future.
- > The planned eight lane southern downtown ring (DSR) connecting the eastern inner city to the new development area in the west was considered too ambitious, short-sighted and unsustainable. The experience of European cities has shown, that providing more high speed roads in the city centre results in even more traffic congestion and encourages the use of cars.
- > From a spatial development point of view the questions asked were whether the proposed road is necessary, what it should look like, what capacity it should have, who should have priority,

who will use it, whether it would fit in with the existing radial road pattern and, most importantly, whether the development of Wrocław should be so car-oriented. Other issues were also considered essential, such as whether the growth of the city is justifying such an investment?

### METROPOLITAN CONTEXT FOR THE URBAN DESIGN PROPOSAL

With those issues in mind we decided to focus on a specific section of the future road, between the coach station and the new high rise building, 'Sky Tower', currently under construction, located near one of the main axis of the city. This part of the road needs to be fully designed, as it does not exist at the moment. Its development will result in the disappearance of the local market, cutting the neighbourhood in two halves, creating big intersections and dividing the inner city. This area has been selected to accommodate a road with higher capacity, because it seems necessary to assist the distribution of traffic throughout the city in this location.

Nevertheless, the highway character which the municipality has conceived for its road scheme is not considered favourable to the city. A more integrated mobility scheme would establish a closer connection between the inner core ring road and the proposed bypass between the inner city and the wider urban fabric. Sharing commuters' traffic demand equitably would give both rings the opportunity to realise a sustainable solution for car traffic while creating a liveable environment for a wide variety of other road users. Such a solution would also help attenuate the divisive effect of both these roads which are cutting deeply into the existing urban fabric, hampering cross movements and segregating the neighbourhoods from each other on opposite sides of these roads. This would involve wider urban regeneration, especially for the DSR where intervention due to road widening and completion of missing segments would bring about substantial transformations. Undertaking sustainable improvements and upgrading of the surrounding neighbourhoods could alleviate the current traffic blight of this area and create a liveable and desirable urban environment. Such a strategy should retain rather than displace the existing inhabitants and therefore alleviate pressure of urban sprawl, already noticeable in Wrocław, even beyond its large administrative boundaries.



**Urban design proposal**  
 based on Google Maps

- NEW INNER RINGROAD** 
- NEW JUNCTIONS** 
- EXISTING ROADS** 
- NEW BAZAR** 
- NEW OTHER INVESTMENTS** 
- HOUSING** 
- BUSINESS AND OTHER FACILITIES** 

Our wider spatial considerations have influenced our proposal for a specific section of the DSR which we see as part of a metropolitan mobility strategy. In particular, we identified 'pulling magnets' of citywide importance which contribute to the generation of traffic on these two ring roads. They range from the central historic market square, one of the most popular department stores, other key cultural institutions such as museums, the opera, municipal buildings located on one of the major north south radials which intersects with both ring roads. The main railway station is another attractor, together with other destinations such as a large scale high density housing estate, and the massive commercial tower complex under construction. This analysis enabled the team to identify which orbital segments were most needed, especially on the DSR, and which crossing points would offer the greatest potential for new dense development along the DSR.

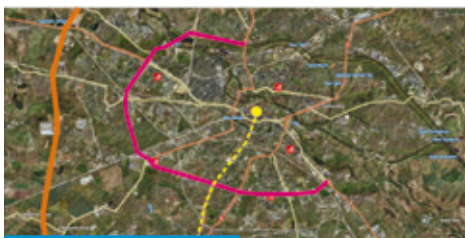


**Detailed masterplan**

Much attention was put into pedestrian movements, identifying likely destinations including for multipurpose trips while taking into account distances suitable for pedestrians. Favourable connection points were identified between the city scale road network and the neighbourhood road system to locate attractive activities at such intersections, including public transport interchanges and stops.

The urban design of the 'Sky Tower' junction was inspired by Atkins transformation of Oxford Circus, which has given priority to pedestrian movements over all other transportation modes and has been very successful to retain shopping in this main artery accessible mainly by public transport.

The main functions of DSR have been revisited. Our proposal is to shift the emphasis from a heavy transport through traffic route to an urban multimodal link. It would foster connections at all levels by linking wider parts of the city with neighbourhoods, trigger urban regeneration alongside it and valorise nodal points by establishing magnets and public spaces to attract new life and improve the overall quality of the ring road.



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