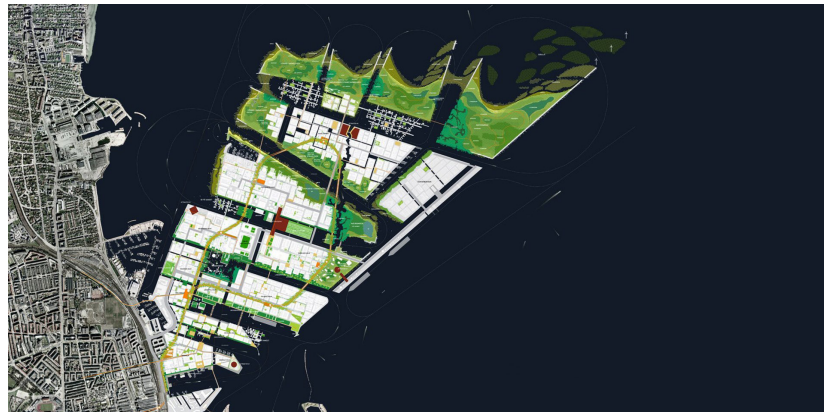


# ECOURBANISM WORLDWIDE



*Case Study projects part of Ecourbanism Worldwide.*

Ecourbanism Worldwide is a 5-year research project (2014-2019) led by Dr. Meg Holden in the Urban Studies Program at Simon Fraser University. The project investigates what is happening to cities on the ground in model sustainable neighborhoods, in urban infill settings worldwide.

It examines the explosion of neighborhood-scale eco-themed urban development in different world regions, with the goal of providing perspective into what the creation of these new pieces of the city means for the values associated with urban living overall, in their existing social, cultural and political landscapes. It examines the explosion of

neighborhood-scale eco-themed urban development in different world regions.

Now in its second year, the research team has developed an inventory of eco urban developments around the world. The research team has traveled to several locations to establish relationships with stakeholders and build a network of contacts to help inform the work and contribute data.

#### **International Advisory Group**

This work is guided by a multi-stakeholder international advisory group, including Perkins+Will, which serves as a crucial bridge from the academy to the world of urban development and policy practice. The IAG informs the research agenda with professional and practical insight, helping to close the gaps between recognized leading-edge practice, social and policy research critiques and variable public perceptions of what ecourban neighbourhoods offer to the city and its liveability. In so doing, IAG members

engage with one another and with eourban researchers in peer- and cross-disciplinary learning about pressing urban trends and issues, and emerging solutions and opportunities.

Together, we are building a better common understanding of the differences and commonalities amongst eourban practices, standards and frameworks, and amongst diverse perceptions of eourbanism by different groups in the city.

### **Why Eourbanism and Why Now?**

Green, eco, net-zero or net-positive, One Planet, low-carbon and carbon-neutral living alternatives are on the rise, in planning and urban design prescriptions, worldwide. Coinciding with this quest for better eco-performance and eco-lifestyles is an emerging sense that the urban neighborhood is the best scale at which to pursue these various eco-goals.

The Eourbanism Worldwide research project takes stock of these trends in eourban neighbourhood scale developments in different countries worldwide, seeking the social and political implications of contemporary urban environmental and design theory about what makes places and lifestyles sustainable. At the same time, this work also seeks a better understanding at this moment of intersection between environmental, design and engineering-based perspectives on eourban shifts and urban, sociological and geographical perspectives on what urban neighbourhoods are worth to cities and urbanites.

Alongside and mixed up within this intersection are opportunities for a critical questioning of the political and economic motivations and processes followed in establishing eourban neighbourhoods and ecodistricts, the trends toward standardization of models, frameworks, and practices in planning, policy and design for these districts, and the demonstrated results of any of these projects to date.

While governance, policy, design and technological solutions are devised in these urban redevelopment projects, political, ideological and practical challenges are also encountered. Despite a plethora of assessment frameworks, understanding the outcomes of these redevelopment efforts suffers from a lack of a socially-embedded understanding of what constitutes success in sustainable urban neighbourhoods. From the diverse perspectives of commentators, designers, builders, and users of these areas, these neighbourhoods may be characterized as anything from abject failures to glowing successes.

### **Research Questions**

- What are the cases for and against eourban development?
- What different justifications are offered for eourban developments depending on: people involved, place, leadership, institutions, place-specific history? What are the implications for the “success” or “failure” of the eourban development?
- What are eourban trends doing to and for the city?

What norms, values and understandings of neighbourhood and community are being advanced in particular new eourban developments, and absorbed by residents? How do they differ from those in the existing city as a whole?

- What do we need to know about all eourban developments?
- How can we better measure and track the performance of eourban developments in terms of the preceding points, at the global scale, via the compendium?

### **TARGETED OUTCOMES**

To build an online compendium of resources to disseminate knowledge of the governance, design, building, operation and integration of model sustainable neighbourhoods.

This compendium is to be a living resource of practical relevance, usability and reliability for those working to create better eourban projects around the world.

### **PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS ON WATERFRONT TORONTO**

