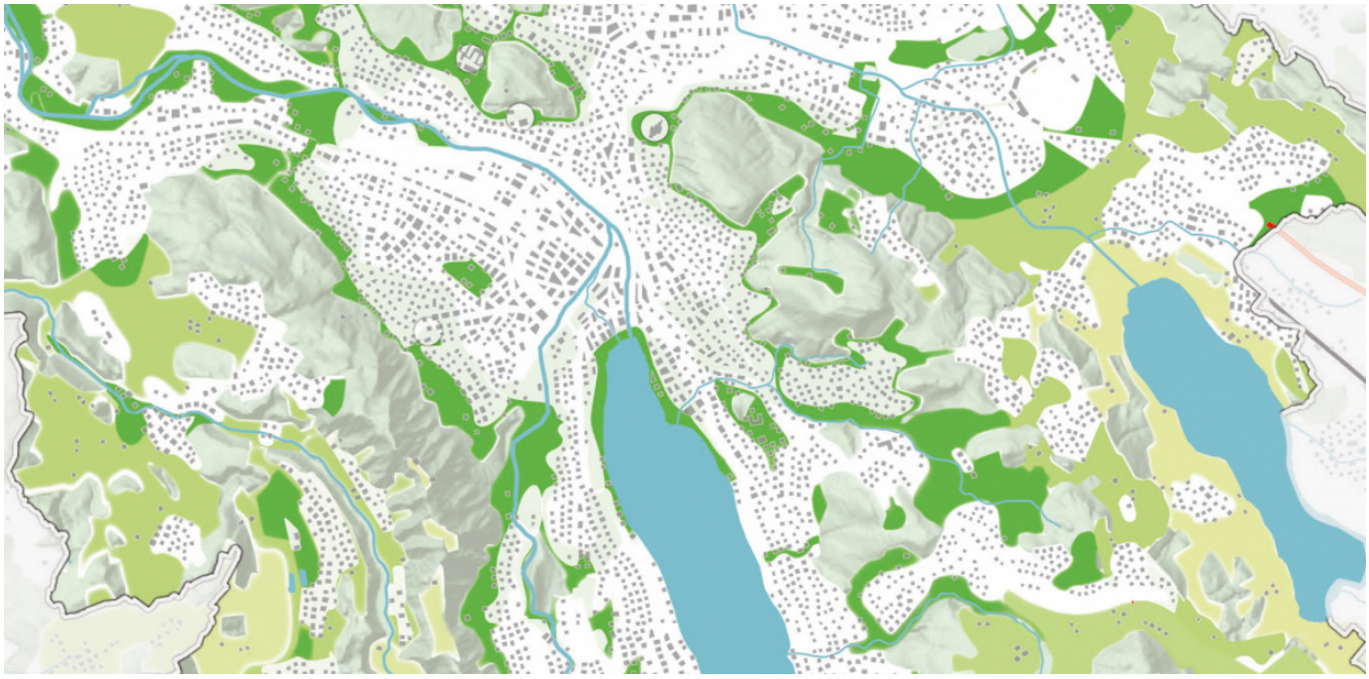
The Metropolitan Zurich Housing Project



Zurich's population has grown significantly in recent years. The "Metropolitan Zurich Housing Project" was initiated by the Association of Metropolitan Zurich Planning Agencies (RZU) to examine the latest housing-related developments in Zurich so as to provide a basis for a broader dialogue on the growing demand for housing and housing policy. EBP was a member of the team responsible for drafting the scope and substance of the project.

Around 12% of Switzerland's total population lives in the Zurich Metropolitan Area, an area that accounts for only around 2% of Switzerland's landmass, but an extraordinary 17% of its gross domestic product (GDP). Metropolitan Zurich's sustained economic vitality has long been characterized by a vibrant construction sector, an intense demand for housing and a wide range of housing opportunities.

Sustained growth necessitates smart housing concepts

According to experts, Zurich's robust population growth is expected to continue well into the future. This development makes it absolutely essential to secure a supply of housing that is sufficient to keep pace with existing demand. Indeed, population growth in Metropolitan Zurich underscores the need on the part of planning agencies to join forces in the framework of a more coordinated regional response that would enable a more efficient application of important management tools such as urban concentration and the sharing of facilities and services. Regrettably, lawmakers and planning agencies have so far neglected to engage in a more active discourse about resource sharing and meeting the growing demand for housing.

Client

Association of Metropolitan Zurich Planning Agencies (RZU)

Facts

Period	2016 - 2018
Project Country	Switzerland

Contact persons

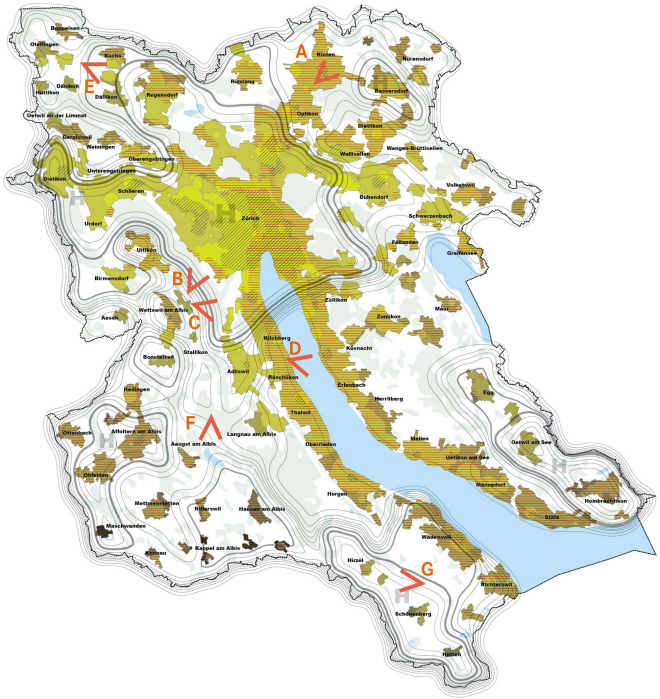
Sarah Fuchs
sarah.fuchs@ebp.ch

Preparing for the future of the Zurich Metropolitan Area

In order to change the current situation, the Executive Board of the RZU, the Zurich Office of Urban Development (STEZ) and BaslerFonds launched the “Metropolitan Zurich Housing Project”. Commissioned to provide key support for the project, EBP carried out a study of the developments that are especially relevant to securing a sustainable, balanced supply of housing and continued prosperity throughout the Zurich Metropolitan Area. Particular attention was given in this regard to factors that could play a role in unified solutions.
While conducting our research, we included extensive consultation with experts and identified four key issues that are relevant to a unified approach to housing for the entire region:

— Site development 3.0
— Affordable housing
— The future of single-family homes
— Residential segregation and mixed neighborhoods

We compiled the data and used maps to enable visualization of these issues.



Sample issue map: overview of the multifaceted locations and situations. (Please select for full view.)

Study results

The study clearly demonstrates that public agencies, lawmakers and public interest groups should give greater attention to the task of developing more appropriate housing policies in general. Moreover, a commitment to a more open exchange of ideas, enhanced coordination and networking among the relevant municipalities would also make a contribution to securing the appeal and viability of the Zurich Metropolitan Area.
An article entitled “Housing Policy Is A Cross-Regional Task”

was published on December 27, 2018 in the Swiss daily newspaper Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ) to give the public an opportunity to consider the conclusion drawn at the end of the study.