

AI as a Participatory Tool for Urban Reimagination

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Abstract Contemporary urban landscapes often reflect a blend of structured road networks and concrete architecture. Yet, the prospect of integrating natural elements and community-driven development is gaining traction. In this context, Researchers in South Tyrol have crafted four innovative visions for the future of South Tyrol as part of the 'Let's shape the future, Together' project. These visions were further reimagined through the lens of AI, focusing on their foundational principles. Additionally, we introduced two scenarios: one addressing tangible challenges in the Don Bosco-Bolzano area and another portraying a potential dystopian outcome due to inaction and lack of progressive ideas. Building on these ideas, a major community event was held to engage citizens in the transformation of their cityscape. In this event, participants were exposed to all six scenarios, including the newly developed ones, and their input was sought for transforming five distinct public spaces in Bolzano. This initiative opened a direct line of communication among the community, researchers, and stakeholders, aligning the redevelopment projects with the community's desires and necessities. In our study, we highlight the active participation of the community in these decisions, our study emphasizes the critical role of public involvement in urban development and demonstrates the effectiveness of AI in supporting such collaborative processes.