UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: HOW TO INVEST EFFECTIVELY IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCATION IDENTITY

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MSc. Thesis
October 2016

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DATE	13th of October 2016
PROJECT REFERENCE	Master Thesis

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TRACK	Innovation and Technology Management
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Preface

With the completion of this Master thesis my time at the University of Twente comes to an end. During the process of writing my thesis, I had the opportunity to work on an interesting topic and work in an inspiring environment. Writing this thesis has enabled me to develop myself on professional and personal level.

I would like to thank Henk Kroon for his time and supervision. I also want to thank Dura Vermeer Hengelo for giving me this opportunity and Marieke Mentink and Sjoerd Dijs for their support and feedback. I also want to thank my supervisors Peter Schuur and Reinoud Joosten for their time.

S. Geerdink
Hengelo, October 2016

Abstract

Currently there is a shift from a supply-driven to a demand-driven market in the construction industry (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). To react to this shifting market demand, constructions companies changed their existing operations and the importance of the concepts of *location identity* and *place branding* grew. To shed some light on the usefulness of these concepts, this research tried to give some insight in how location identity and place branding can be executed effectively. First, this research focused on the factors affecting location identity and place branding. Next, the research examined the different roles in the place branding process and the corresponding finances. The research question answered was:

How can private parties invest effectively in the location identity, prior to the development of a residential area construction project, resulting in an enhanced value added to the location and subsequently enhance the profitability of a project?

To answer this research question, a total of 16 interviews were conducted. The interviewees were employees from both private and public parties operating in the Netherlands. Due to limited time, the interviews of the public party were conducted at municipalities, since municipalities are the public parties dealing with location identity and place branding. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded.

The results of this research indicate that the characteristics of a project should be examined up front. There are different characteristics that need to be studied. First, it is critical to examine if the customers have other options. If the customers have no alternatives, in terms of budget or offers, the necessity of the tools declines. Furthermore, the initiators should be aware that the location identity is a product of how people perceive the location and location identity can be influenced but not be determined by an organization. Additionally, it is essential to recognize and acknowledge the qualities of the location in order to determine the most suitable location identity.

Next, there are other characteristics that should be considered. These aspects mostly revolve around the difference between a new development project and revitalization. This difference in the type of project determines the current situation, since this defines the current identity. For new development the identity still needs to be developed, while for revitalization project an identity already exist. This also influence the time needed to change the existing situation to the desired situation. It takes approximately 10 years to change an identity or image of revitalization, while the creation of an identity and image for new development takes between the 1 and 3 years, with 2 years as an optimum. Nevertheless, when the revitalization project already has a positive image or identity, there is no need for change. Also, the current situation impacts the perception of the potential buyer. The potential buyer of a new development project will pay more attention to the surrounding, while a potential buyer of a revitalization project will pay more attention to the location itself.

Another aspect is the difference between the needs of each target group. In order to increase the effectivity of the instruments used, the instruments should be adjusted to the needs and preferences of a specific target group. The choice for a certain lifestyle should also incorporate the unique characteristics of the location, since these characteristics might be more appealing to a certain lifestyle. Psychographic segmentation can be used to choose a suitable lifestyle for the location and subsequently determine the needs and preferences of the target group. After a lifestyle is chosen, the

branding of the location should be consistent and targeted to this lifestyle. In other words, the branding used should take the chosen lifestyle into account and be consistent.

When strategic choices are made and time and effort are invested, the value of the project increases. The most effective investment method is to establish a desired level of quality top-down and thereafter complement this with bottom-up investments. This also depends on the type of project. For revitalization there is less need for top-down investment and bottom-up investment tends to be more effective. On the other hand, new development requires more top-down investment to implement the location's identity. For effective investment organizations need to examine the opportunities of the surrounding and involve stakeholder in an early stage. Additionally, to be financially effective, the project should have sufficient size in order to pay back the investment in place branding. This can be studied by comparing an exploitation budget to a place branding budget. In order to accomplish all the above, parties have to adopt a long-term vision, because place branding is a process and not the result of a single investment.

The results of the research gave insight in the factors affecting location identity. The results showed that location identity can be improved by seizing the opportunities of the surrounding and recognizing the unique character of the location. The identity of the location needs to be determined according to the needs of the target group, the size, timeline and type of project (new development versus revitalization, as discussed above). The results of the research pointed out that there are twenty-one factors which can be assigned to three main factors:

- **Customer perspective:** customer perception, truthfulness, social identity, image, familiarity, experience and certainty.
- **Characteristics of the location:** qualities of the location, uniqueness, surrounding, history, ownership, geographical location, facilities, architecture, safety and accessibility.
- **Process:** seizing opportunities and participation stakeholder.

Besides factors affecting location identity, the research also gave some awareness on the different factors affecting place branding. The results illustrated that place branding can be used effectively when the project is examined on the type of project, size and target group. Besides, a long-term vision needs to be adopted and the place branding has to be consistent. The research found that there are three main factors and a total of fourteen factors affecting place branding. The results of the research revealed the following factors impacting place branding:

- **Branding:** truthfulness, story, proof, experience, core values, commotion, brand lifestyle and tools
- **Process:** participation stakeholders, seizing opportunities and collaboration
- **Finances:** pricing, investment and sales

Additionally, the results of the research also gave some understanding on the different roles in the place branding process. It became clear that the different roles within place branding depend on the interest of the parties involved. This interest, however, differs. While private parties usually have monetary interest, the public party has more interest in the benefits to society. The party with the most interest should be the party initiating the place branding. Still, the public party should give direction and guide the private party towards the desired goals. Hence, if there is only one private party involved, the public party should have a facilitating role. On the other hand, when there are different private parties involved, the public party should have a more coordinating role. When a public party is not able arrange this internally, the public party should assign an independent party to arrange this.

Although the concerns of public and private parties differ, the parties have the similar end-customer and final goal. However, in order to establish an effective collaboration, trust and transparency are essential. A tool that can support the needed agreements is a masterplan. This masterplan should contain the information about location identity, the target group, the planned place branding activities, the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved, a timeline of the project and an exploitation budget.

While the research has its strengths, it also encounters some limitations. The first limitation is caused by the difficulty of the concept of location identity. This is due to the difficulty and fuzziness of the concept. Next, it became clear that location identity can be influenced, but cannot be determined by external parties and potential buyers determine their own perception of location identity. This makes it hard to establish the effectiveness of place branding. The difficulty to measure is also due to the various factors impacting the price of a house. Additionally, the effectiveness can only be measured afterwards in terms of price or sales pace. Further, the research cannot be generalized, since all the participants were working in the Netherlands and the research only creates knowledge off the Dutch market. Besides, due to time constrains all the public participants were employees from municipalities, since location identity and place branding is the responsibility of this level of public organisations.

For future research it may be interesting to study the difference in the expectation of other public parties, such as the province. Furthermore, to measure and determine effectivity of place branding in monetary terms, a longitudinal research needs to be conducted which examines the pay back of every investment. Moreover, a quantitative research can be conducted in order to determine the beta of each of the above mentioned factors. Another direction is to conduct a research which tests the above mentioned factors in the next phase of the place branding process: the place making process. Finally, in order to gain more knowledge on the target group, the use of big data might be a valuable addition to the place branding process.

While the factors initiated by previous research appeared to be important, earlier research did not account for contingency factors. Additionally, the results indicate that there are more factors affecting location identity and place branding that are not described in the current literature. Moreover, this research adds understanding of the corresponding conditions and the different roles to the existing research. The research also gave some practical implications on how a developer can implement location identity and place branding to the development process.

Concluding, this research gave insight in the effectivity and investment behaviour corresponding to the place branding process. In sum, the most effective way for private parties to invest in location identity to establish a certain level of quality top-down and complement this with bottom-up initiatives. For effective investment organizations need to examine the opportunities of the surrounding and involve stakeholder in an early stage. To accomplish this, different tools can be used. First, a timeline can be drafted to give insight in when and who has to invest in the branding activities. Another method is to work with different scenarios and look for stakeholders that can benefit from the investments as well. Lastly, a place branding initiative can have its own business model. Eventually, effective place branding results in a higher customer value, a higher price, and shorter sales pace.

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1. Introduction

While the construction industry is one of the largest industries in the world, the current research in this industry is mainly focused on the behaviour of firms (Taylor and Levit, 2005) and little attention is paid to innovation and management within the industry (Pries and Janszen, 1995). Besides, the current research on location identity lacks operationalization (Lalli, 1992). Since, companies in the construction industry have to encounter the complexity of the construction projects, organisations need to possess problem solving capabilities (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). What makes it even more complex, is that the process of buying a house includes more than an economic transaction, it also includes complex social processes (Levy, Murphy and Lee, 2008). It is therefore important to incorporate behavioural factors when setting a price. Also important to notice is the relatively infrequent occurrence, investment and expenditure when purchasing a house (Levy et al. 2008). Dyer and Kagel (1996) add that the price of a house depends on the customer's perception of the value of a house, since customers are only willing to pay what they estimate as the true value. One can therefore argue the difference between the market price and customer value (Han, Kwak and Yoo, 2008) and that the price paid by the customer, reflects the realization of the preferences of the customer. One factor affecting this realization is the environment of a construction process. Jim and Chen (2007) argue that an improvement of the environment should also be incorporated into the housing price, since it increases the quality of life. Research of D'Acci (2014) supports this statements and points out that the improvement of the quality of the area can change the value of a property up to 143%. Toivonen and Viitanen (2016) stress this importance and refer to the environment as the sociocultural, political, ecological and economical entirety where the actions of the real estate market occur. In the case of an urban area the environment can be seen as an expression of the set of relationships between social- and institutional factors (Basile, Dominici and Tani, 2016).

The adaption of construction companies to the environment can be both passive and active (Guo, 2010). Passive adaption occurs when a choice is rationalized and there is an adaption to the situation, while active adaption indicates the transformation on the environment to bring it closer to the ideal. An example of active adaption is the improvement of location identity (Rainisto, 2003; Lalli, 1992; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005). While the impact of the identity of a location can be both negative as positive, a negative identity has a significant higher impact (Collier, Collier and Halperin, 2008). Hence, Bayer et al. (2011) state that 75% of the households choose a neighbourhood which ranks in the top quartile of their ranked choices. The instrument used to create a place which fits the needs and wishes of the customer, and therefore creates a place which ranks higher in the ranked choices, is place branding. Rehan (2013) demonstrates that 80% of designers and planners see branding as a facilitator to improve a location's identity. There are, however, some difficulties within the concept of place branding. One of these difficulties is the difference in perception of the different actors and target groups. These different identities make it difficult in practice to develop an effective marketing strategy (Eshuis et al., 2016).

This research focuses on how the value added for the customer can be increased by improving the location identity. The research consist of four parts, the first parts examines the conditions and factors affecting location identity both positively and negatively. Next, the conditions and factors affecting place branding are illustrated. Third, the different roles of organizations involved within place branding are explained. The last part of the research focuses on the financial element of place branding.

1.1 Research goal

This research focuses on the Dutch residential construction market in order to examine how the value of a location can be increased by improving location identity. This is currently a major topic for both contractors as for the government, since location identity influences both the investment behaviour and the revenue of organizations. The goal of this research is to examine the effect of investing in location identity and whether this contributes to higher revenue. The research focuses on the first phases of the construction process: the real estate development. The study is initiated by Dura Vermeer Bouw Hengelo (DVBH), since they encounter some struggles determining a projects location identity.

The purpose of this research is to design a conceptual framework which supports decisions for investments in location identity. In order to construct this framework, this research first focuses on the factors which affect, both positively and negatively, the identity of a location and place branding. Thereafter, the role of the government will be examined since this is a major stakeholder in the location identity process. Lastly, the findings of the first three parts will serve as input to determine the effectiveness of investing in location identity. For this research the following research question will be answered:

How can private parties invest effectively in the location identity, prior to the development of a residential area construction project, resulting in an enhanced value added to the location and subsequently enhance the profitability of a project?

To answer the research question, four sub-questions are formulated. These questions correspond with the four different parts of the research. The four sub-questions are:

1) How can the identity of a location be improved by modifying the factors which affect location identity positively or negatively?
2) How can place branding be used effectively and which factors contribute to the place branding process?
3) Which role has the government in the improvement of location's identity and how can the risks and investments be fairly spread?
4) What is the most effective way for parties to invest in place branding?

The following paragraphs will elaborate more on the context and relevance of the research. In Chapter 2 Literature review, the theory needed for this research will be explained.

1.2 Dura Vermeer

"We want to be leading in innovation and sustainability. Therefore, we focus on flexibility, nature and our environment" – Dura Vermeer (2016, p. 18)

Dura Vermeer is a construction company operating in the Netherlands. The company has a revenue of more than 1 billion euros and has approximately 2.500 employees. The company focuses on different market segments: houses, utility, industry and infrastructure (Dura Vermeer, 2016). The core activities of the company are building, maintenance and renovation, service and advice and engineering. In 2015 the company celebrated their 160 years of operating as a family business (Dura Vermeer, 2016). The company tries to stimulate initiatives in the area of innovation, collaboration and social corporate responsibility. In 2015 the customer satisfaction grew with 1.2 per cent to 95 per cent and the number of innovation grew from 22 innovations in 2014 to 36 innovations in 2015 (Dura Vermeer, 2016).

Next to the central holding, the company is divided in thirty different divisions and clusters. DVBH operates as an independent division. DVBH has approximately 375 employees, revenue of 150 million euro and operates in the north, centre and east of the Netherlands. The company has a horizontal structure in order to stimulate communication between the different departments (Dura Vermeer, 2016). The current real estate development process of Dura Vermeer exists of six stages: the initial-, preparation-, architectural design-, engineering-, realisation-, and aftercare stage, see Figure 1. This research examines if there needs to be a stage added before the initial stage; the value creation stage, see Figure 2.

Figure 1: Current phases in the real estate development process
Source: Dura Vermeer (2016)

Figure 2: Real estate development process with place branding
Source: The researcher

1.3 Theoretical relevance

This research will try to bridge the gap between the theory and operationalization. Although the construction industry is one of the largest industries in the world, the conducted research in this industry is mainly focused on the behaviour of firms (Taylor and Levit, 2005) and little attention is paid to innovation and management within the industry (Pries and Janszen, 1995). As a result, the current research on location identity lacks operationalization (Lalli, 1992). Moreover, the relevant theory in the field of location identity does not take into account contingency factors affecting the project. Furthermore, currently there is no existing tool which examines environmental factors combined with investing behaviour. Because the government also experiences some problems with successfully executing place branding (Eshuis et al., 2016), this research is relevant for both business administration and public administration research.

1.4 Practical relevance

This research gives more insight in which factors affect location identity and how these factors can be modified. By examining these factors, and by giving guidance in investing behaviour, parties involved in the real estate development should be able to use place branding more effectively. Public and private parties can translate the information of this research into their real estate development strategy. Furthermore, as mentioned the stakeholder are essential in the real estate development. This research aims on finding out on how to involve stakeholders in an early stage, resulting in an increased value of a specific area or projects. Hence, this research will support real estate developers and the government to invest in location identity more efficiently and effectively.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

The thesis is structured as follows: the following chapter describes the theory needed to conduct the research. The chapter starts by giving an overview of the available theory and will give insight in the choices made. The chapter ends with an operationalization of the key concepts. Next, Chapter 3 gives insight in the method which will be used to conduct the research. The chapter will give an overview of all the different methods and explains why choices are made. Chapter 4 illustrates the results of the research. Last, Chapter 5 debates on the conclusion and discussion based on the results, gives direction for further research and discusses the limitations, theoretical contributions and practical implications.

2. Literature review

In order to find relevant literature, different search techniques will be used. First, the sources will be sorted by most cited to find the most relevant literature. Second, the sources are sorted by their publication date to find the most recent literature. Third, the other articles from the same issue will be reviewed. Lastly, the sources which are essential in the articles will be examined. Furthermore, different databases (Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar) will be used to find scientific literature. This chapter shows the theory of the research. The first two paragraph of this chapter elaborate on the characteristics of the construction industry and the area development process. In these paragraphs the relevance of the research becomes clear. Thereafter the concepts corresponding to location's identity are explained. Lastly, the role of the government is described.

2.1 Construction industry

The construction industry is one of the biggest industries in de world (Taylor and Levit, 2005), and can be described as:

"The construction industry produces the facilities that accommodate a wide variety of human activities, and the infrastructure that connects these facilities into an increasingly complex network. The facilities are needed for production of all other goods and services, starting from those needed by producers and ending with those needed by the ultimate consumers." – Horta et al. (2013, p. 89)

The construction industry is a complex environment and organisations need problem solving capabilities in order to deal with this environment (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). Furthermore, this industry is characterized by both intense institutional regulation and strong market competition (Oliver, 1997). Oliver (1997) distinguishes different divergent pressures, constraints and relevant constituents that are predicted to be dominant in shaping the organization's structure and performance, see Table 1. While the task dimension focuses more on the effective management in a competitive market, the institutional emphasizes on the conformity and advisability of institutional rules and norms (Oliver, 1997). The importance of the environmental impact is also highlighted by Horta et al. (2013). Horta et al. (2013) argue that in order to gain competitive advantage construction companies have to gain a deep understanding of the evolving environment.

Table 1: Relevant dimensions in shaping organization's structure and performance of a construction company
Source: Oliver (1997)

Relevant dimensions	Institutional environment	Task environment
Environmental context	Political and legal	Market
Key demand factor	Legitimacy	Resources
Type of pressure	Coercive, mimetic, normative	Competitive
Key constituents	State agencies and professional associations	Sources of scare production factors
Mechanism of external control	Rules regulation inspections	Critical exchange dependencies
Organizational success factor	Conformity to institutional rules and norms	Acquisition and control of critical resources
Dominant threat to autonomy	Government intervention	Resource exchange partners

The products in the construction industry (i.e. buildings, bridges, and roads) are bound to a specific location, have a long life span, high costs and a great influence on the quality of life (Pries and Janszen, 1995). Competition is mainly focused on price (Pries and Janszen, 1995). As a result, it is difficult to innovate products in this industry. Innovation in the construction industry is mostly referred to as the ability of a construction company to shift the frontier of financial achievements to better levels than those observed in previous years (Horta, Camanho, and da Costa, 2012). As a result, the innovation in this industry can be characterized as incremental, rather than radical (Geels, 2002). Companies showing innovations are typically companies with high level of performance (Horta et al., 2012). In other words, innovation is highly dependent on a company's profitability.

In their research Dubois and Gadde (2002) argue that an organisations response to the inherent and complex construction industry revolve around six themes: 'the focus on individual projects', 'the use of standardized components', 'local adjustment', 'multiple roles played by firms', 'complexity in individual projects' and 'securing economies of scale in manufacturing'. This research tries to create more understanding in local adjustment, multiple roles played by firms and complexity in individual projects in the area development process. In order to understand the context of the research better, the following paragraph describes the area development process.

2.2 Area development process

Like the construction industry, the real estate development projects are unique. It is, therefore, unavoidable to go through the area development process without any inefficacies, since the development does not occur in a perfect market (Ratcliffe, Stubbs and Keeping, 2009). Basile et al. (2016) argue that the urban area or town can be studied by looking at the economic, political, and social dynamics which take place between the different actors within geographical boundaries. Moreover, Ratcliffe et al. (2009) illustrates that the development process itself consist of five steps: 'concept and initial consideration', 'site appraisal and feasibility study', 'detailed design and evaluation', 'marketing management and disposal', and 'contract and construction', see Table 2.

Table 2: Area development process
Source: Ratcliffe et al. (2009)

Steps	Activities
Concept and initial consideration	▪ Setting objectives for the organization and generating ideas to meet these objective. ▪ Determine a basic strategy for the organisation. ▪ Market research.
Site appraisal and feasibility study	▪ Undertake a more refined appraisal of the viability of the proposed project (adjust to market trends and physical constraints). ▪ Consult about proposed development with planning authority and other statutory agencies, estimate likely response of interested parties of the proposed development. ▪ Make an estimation of the needed and available financial resources.
Detailed design and evaluation	▪ Assign a professional team, prepare basic proposal with design, budget, taxation, planning marketing and disposal. ▪ Arrange design team for detailed drawings for the planning approvals and budget forecasting. ▪ Submit the planning and negotiate with local authority and other parties involved. ▪ Make any necessary changes in the concept.
Marketing, management and disposal	▪ Determine when the marketing campaign starts. ▪ Preserve an optimum return on investment. ▪ Establish management and maintenance programme ▪ Secure safety and security
Contract and construction	▪ Decide who is going to build to concept. ▪ Establish management structure. ▪ Set up an appraisal system. ▪ Make sure that all arrangements are made to complete the development. ▪ Supervise contractual affairs and solve problems that arise.

In this process a developer (in this thesis DVBH) is referred to as: "*An individual or firm that locates and secures control of a parcel of land, obtains necessary approvals, and adds improvements to the land to increase its value*" – Collier, Collier and Halperin (2008, p. 9).

Within the real estate development the location is the most important factor. Corresponding factors of the location are: 'geographical location', 'adaptability', 'accessibility', 'transportation options' and 'available facilities' (Toivonen and Viitanen, 2016). Traditionally, urban development projects are not a suitable source for positive identification (Lalli, 1992). Contrarily, the environment was contrasted negatively with the rural ideal. Additionally, factors which are perceived as negative such as presence of crime or vice, often outweigh the positive side factors (Collier, Collier and Halperin, 2008). Another important aspect is the perception of the stakeholders on a location. This research will elaborate more on how to influence the buyer's decision by enhancing the location's identity, in combination with the financial aspects and the influence of the government. In the following paragraphs the concepts applying to location identity, place branding and the role of the government are explained.

2.3 Location identity

The identity of a location (area, city or region) is the DNA of the location, and is determined by the history, physical characteristics, culture, inhabitants, smell, colour and experience (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). Location identity focuses on the places which can be experienced by a person and has personal meaning to them. It can be seen as a tangible relationship in which the environment attains its symbolic meaning related to the social, emotional and action-related content (Lalli, 1992). The term identity refers to the relationship of the individual with a place and not to the identity itself (Lalli, 1992). The sense of belonging and being identified with a place and the feeling that a location contributes to the definition an individual will promote a positive evaluation and atmosphere (Fleury-Bahi et al., 2008).

Table 3: Enumeration of factors contributing to place identity (alphabetic order)
Source: Lee et al. (2016); Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijk relaties (2013); Lalli (1992); Rehan (2013); Collier, Collier and Halperin (2008).

	Factor	Source
Location identity	Architecture	Rehan (2013)
	Attachment	Lee et al. (2016)
	Brand lifestyle	Rehan (2013)
	Branding	Rehan (2013)
	Cohesion	Lee et al. (2016)
	Commitment to place	Lee et al. (2016)
	Continuity with personal past	Lee et al. (2016)
	Culture	Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013)
	Experience	Lee et al. (2016); Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013); Lalli, (1992)
	Facilities	Rehan (2013); Collier, Collier and Halperin (2008)
	History	Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013); Rehan (2013)
	Image	Rehan (2013)
	Neighbours	Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013)
	Perception of familiarity	Lee et al. (2016)
	Physical characteristics	Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013)
	Social acceptance	Lee et al. (2016); Lalli (1992)
	Employment	Bayer et al. (2011)

Since a place is a difficult product to market, there are some issues in choosing the best identity for a location (Eshuis et al., 2013). Product and brands are used as symbols to communicate different messages to stakeholders. Through identification a locations becomes an individual's social experience and symbol which differentiate it from others. Over time, the location even becomes part of the individual's social identity (Lee et al., 2016). Moreover, Lee et al. (2016) suggest that there are five dimensions to measure the strength of an individual's identity with their residential suburb: 'social acceptance', 'cohesion', 'attachment', 'continuity with personal past' and 'perception of familiarity'. Additionally, Rehan (2013) describes six different aspects which contribute to improve the location's identity: 'media-generated image', 'branding urban project', 'brand lifestyle', 'signature architecture', 'historical buildings' and 'facilities'. In Table 3 the different factors mentioned by Lee et al. (2016) and Rehan (2013) are summarized. However, Lalli (1992) critically points out that location identity is nothing but the result of social communication and therefore not accessible via spatial categories.

Looking at the research question there are different theories which are applicable. The different theories are illustrated and compared in the next paragraph.

2.4 Selection of theory

One of the suitable theories is value management. Value management is a process which makes the functional benefits of a project explicit and consistent with a value system determined by the client (customer experience) (Kelly et al., 2014). Surlan, Cekic and Rosbica (2015) show an example of value management in the construction industry via workshops to determine the customer value system, which they perceive as critical to the briefing process and successful delivery of projects. Next is the theory of quality function deployment. Quality function deployment is a tool which translates the customer's voice into technical features (Sivasamy et al., 2016). It consists of mathematical analysis using a series of matrices, dependent on functional relationships, to achieve the highest level of quality. Total quality management consist of six steps: 1) customer needs and requirements, 2) technical measures, 3) planning matrix, 4) relationship matrix, 5) correlation matrix, and 6) weights, benchmarks and targets (Dikmen et al., 2005). A third theory, Multi-Attribute Decision-Making (MADM) methods prioritize the alternatives of comparative projects quite accurately (Kanapeckiene et al., 2011) for choosing and decision making problems (Zanakis et al., 1998). It helps to give insight in different options and supports making the right decision (Zanakis et al., 1998). As a final theory, place branding involves marketing instruments which apply to geographical locations (Eshuis et al., 2013). Place branding is known as a strategic process which is based on strategic development planning of a location (Metaxas, 2007). De Meere, van der Graaf and Fortuin (2005) state that place branding is a method to connect real estate development with the creation of a brand. All four theories are compared with each other in Table 4.

Taking into account the strengths and limitations of all different theories, for this research it is chosen to continue with the concept of place branding. This is due to the focus on the initial phase of real estate development, while other theories are more suitable for later phases of the process. Furthermore, place branding mainly targeted on incremental innovation, while the other theories (i.e. value management and quality function deployment) are more suitable for radical innovation. While all the theories focuses on the costumer's perspective, place branding also focuses on activities which can be used to communicate information to the customers. This is an important aspect to create the bridge between industry and customers.

However, like the other theories, also place branding has some limitations. To limit the magnitudes of these limitations, this research will take these aspects into account. The concept of place will be well defined (see 2.8 Operationalization of key concepts) and the research will also incorporate other parts of the marketing mix (i.e. process and people). The next paragraph elaborates in more depth on the concept of place branding and its strengths and limitations.

Table 4: Comparing theory
Source: Surlan et al. (2015); Jay and Bowen (2015); Padhye (2000); Dikmen et al. (2005); Haron (2015); Mallon and Mulligan (1994); Sivasamy et al. (2016); Nouri et al. (2013); Zanakis et al., (1998); Kanapeckiene et al. (2011); Temur (2016); de Meere, van der Graaf and Fortuin (2005); Rehan (2013); Metaxas (2007); Basil et al. (2016); Hospers (2011); Parker et al. (2015)

Method	Strengths	Limitations
Value management	▪ Balances performance with costs (Surlan et al., 2015) ▪ Is based on the relationship between the satisfaction of customer needs and the resources which are needed to achieve these standards (Surlan et al., 2015) ▪ Powerful approach for achieving innovative solutions to product and process design (Jay and Bowen, 2015)	▪ Does not always reach it full potential (Padhye, 2000) ▪ Value management in the construction industry is still in its development phase (Surlan et al., 2015), further research is needed ▪ Most value when it applied to the whole process (Jay and Bowen, 2015) ▪ Is more focused on radical innovation rather than incremental innovation (Jay and Bowen, 2015)
Quality function deployment	▪ Help to identify customer needs and gives a structured guideline for benchmarking (Dikmen et al., 2005) ▪ Takes into account the product, environmental factors of a project and the different roles of the stakeholder (Haron, 2015) ▪ Focuses on creating the maximal quality by incorporating customer requirements into the design of a product (Mallon and Mulligan, 1994)	▪ Lacks comprehensiveness in terms of budget, schedule, and technology constrains (Dikmen et al., 2005) ▪ QFD cannot be used when multi-criteria need to be considered (Sivasamy et al., 2016) ▪ The outcome of QFD is not always that effective and consistent (Sivasamy et al., 2016) ▪ QFD is mainly focused on radical innovation rather than incremental innovation (Sivasamy et al., 2016)
Multi-attribute decision-making	▪ Well defined tool which supports decision making with respect to the complex technological, environment and social concerns (Nouri, Maghsoudlou, Aboushahab, 2013) ▪ Is suitable to support making the right decisions using a simple weighting method (Zanakis et al., 1998)	▪ Experience problems when determining the degree of utility and market value (Kanapeckiene et al., 2011) ▪ Is based on personal ideas and is therefore subjective (Temur, 2016) ▪ Does not cope with the uncertainty of qualitative and quantitative research (Temur, 2016)
Place branding	▪ Generates both economic and symbolic value (de Meere, van der Graaf and Fortuin, 2005) ▪ Focuses on achieving competitive advantage (Rehan, 2013) ▪ Makes use of strategic planning based on knowledge, critical thinking and strategic analysis (Metaxas, 2007) ▪ Takes into account the stakeholders of a project (Basil et al., 2016)	▪ Customers eventually decide for themselves what they want to consume (Hospers, 2011) ▪ Place is a difficult product to define, this result in fuzziness (Hospers, 2011) ▪ Does not incorporate other parts of the marketing mix: product, people and strategic planning (Parker et al., 2015)

2.5 Place branding

"Place marketing succeeds when stakeholders, such as citizens, workers, and business firms derive satisfaction from their community, and when visitors, new businesses, and investors find their expectations met." – (Kotler et al., 1993, p. 37 cited in Basil et al., 2016)

The concept of branding is a result of the change from a supply-driven to a demand-driven market, since the consumer became progressively demanding (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). Furthermore, the diversity of buyers increased, causing an increased importance of socio-cultural values. In addition, the sentimental value of a location became more important (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). The goal of place branding is to generate economic and symbolic value. It is a method to connect real estate development with the creation of a brand (de Meere, van der Graaf and Fortuin, 2005). When giving a place a certain meaning were people can identify themselves with and stimulate certain activities, the social aspects can be adjusted (de Meere, van der Graaf and Fortuin, 2005). Place branding is also known as a strategic process which is based on strategic development planning of a location and therefore requires knowledge, critical thinking and strategic analysis (Metaxas, 2007). Allen (2007) constructs a model which illustrates the place brand experience with the different phases of an image of a place. The first phase is prior to arrival (pre-place experience), thereafter is the actual experience of the place (place experience), and lastly the memories of the place (post-place experience).

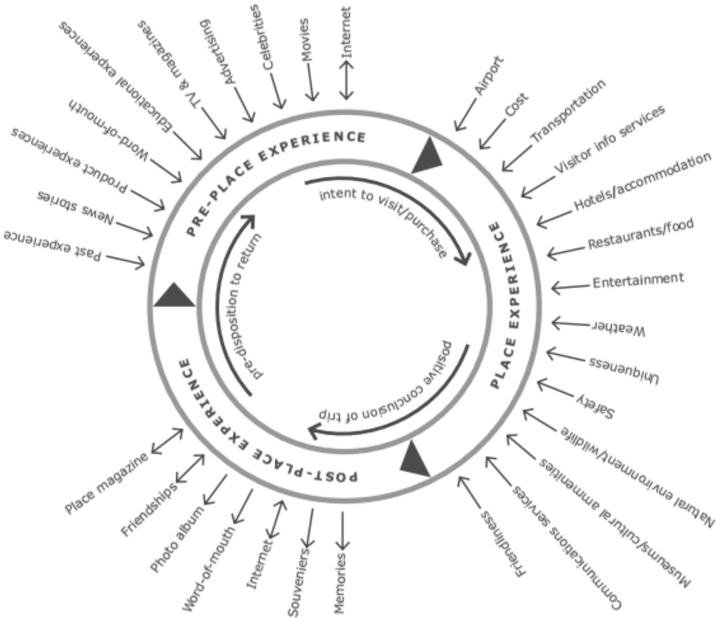

Figure 3: Place experience circle
Source: Allen (2007)

Allen (2007) state that people construct places in their mind through three processes. The first process is the planned intervention, such as planning and urban design. Next, is the way in which they or others use the specific place. Third, is the process of representation, such as films, novels, paintings, news and reports. In sum, people observe places through perception and pictures (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005). Branding deals with the mental picture and tries to treat those mental maps in a way that is most favourable to the present circumstances and future need of the place (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005).

Next, Rainisto (2003) examines the success factors of place branding. The author describes 'planning group', 'vision and strategic analysis', 'place identity and place image', 'public-private partnerships' and 'leaderships' as the "core building stones" in place marketing practices. Furthermore, Rainisto (2003) illustrates 'global unity', 'global network', 'local development', 'process coincidences', 'strategic exploitation', 'organising capacity', 'presence of substance' and 'measurement and follow-up' as challenges in the network and macro-environment of place marketing. However, Hospers (2011) state that not all consumer experiences can be controlled and all consumers (inhabitant, business and tourists) decide for themselves what place they want to purchase. Moreover, Parker, Roper and Medway (2015) argue some criticism of place marketing. First, the researchers argue that place marketing is only place promotion and does not incorporate other parts of the marketing mix, such as product, people and strategic planning. Also, the authors state that there is little evidence of the effectiveness of place marketing. Hence, there is a lack of marketing theory and marketing research in place marketing. This is also illustrated by Metaxas (2007). The author state that the procedure of place marketing remains open to much criticism and dispute as far as its effectiveness, its connection with local development and competitiveness and the methods of its implementation, are not fully investigated. Furthermore, Parker et al. (2015) state that there is a lack of the appreciation of the place, or place experience. Although its limitation, various researchers have proven the effectiveness of place branding (Metaxas, 2007; de Meere et al., 2013; McManus and Connell, 2014).

To accomplish successful and effective branding, previous literature argues the importance of segmentation (Vyncke, 2002; Peterson and Sharpe, 1973; van Hattum et al., 2011; Miguéls 2012). To examine this importance, the next paragraph elaborates more on psychographic segmentation.

2.6 Psychographic segmentation

The effect of customer segmentation is long known and can be described as the process of dividing the total market into several relatively homogeneous groups with similar interest, needs and desires (Vyncke, 2002; Peterson and Sharpe, 1973; van Hattum et al., 2011). Miguéls (2012) discusses the effectiveness of segmentation, because it supports strategic actions, promotes competitiveness, and is the key to successful marketing since it leads to satisfied customers (Miguéos, Camanho and e Cunha, 2012). As a result of the recognition of demographic distinctions, psychographic segmentation profiles customers from standardized personality inventories or lifestyles (Vyncke, 2002). Furthermore, Vyncke (2002) argues that in order to attract and motivate different types of customer groups, a company must gain insight into psychological profiles or lifestyles of their customers. In psychographic studies customers are divided in social-psychological dimension (van Hattum et al., 2011) On the other hand, psychographic segmentation is limited because of the limited access to the consumer (van Hattum et al., 2011).

An example of a psychographic segmentation method is the Brand Strategy Research (BSR). BSR is a psychographic model which divides consumers into different experience worlds (Lamme, 2010). The model contains a diagram which is divided into two dimensions (van Hattum, 2010). Van Hattum (2010) states that the horizontal axis displays how a person is related to its social environment (ego vs. group) and the vertical axis shows a person's attitude towards the society (introvert vs. extrovert), see Figure 4. These quadrants divide the society into four different experiential worlds, with each their own unique wishes, motivation and preferences:

- The blue world is focused on its carrier and admires a (high) status in life corresponding with status symbols.
- The yellow world strives after harmony in life and wants a harmonious relationship with the people they meet.
- The red world is self-conscious and confident in their choices in life. Their behaviour is energetic, vital and passionate.

- A person from the green world is focused on the people in their environment and the values and believes of other people.

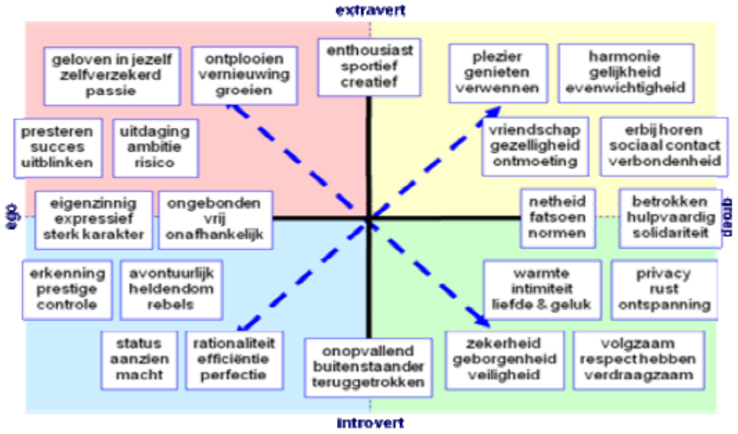

Figure 4: BSR Model
Source: Van Hattum (2010)

When one can accomplish successful segmentation and branding, this will result in brand awareness (Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). However, creating successful place branding requires multiple actors, such as firms, resident organizations and public organizations (Eshuis et al., 2014). As described above, the public organizations have a lot of impact on the real estate development process. To elaborate more on this influence, the following paragraphs describe the role of the government in the real estate development process.

2.7 Role of the government in the real estate development process

In the construction industry the government has a major impact (Pries and Janszen, 1995). In other words, the institutional environment is critical for the profitability of a firm (Oliver, 1997). Eshuis et al. (2014) state that the government has the most influence on place branding. In the relation between real estate development and the government there are three dimensions: 1) the micro level which involves the key actors and people, 2) the meso level containing the town governance, and 3) the macro level which revolves around social issues and external stakeholders (Basil et al., 2016). Another relation between the government and real estate development is illustrated in the research of Lalli (1992). The researcher found that people with a positive outlook on urban quality were more satisfied with the local government efforts than those who held a comparatively negative opinion.

Pries and Janszen (1995) state this institutional environment itself is influenced by environmental planning, technical regulation, building quota, government as dominant customer, financial regulation and other regulation and influence. However, currently there is a shift in the public sector caused by the increase in efficiency and the introduction of competition (Eshuis et al., 2013). Citizens are now approached as a customer instead of a citizen. The government is now trying to implement the concept of place branding (Eshuis et al., 2014). This also includes the use of marketing instruments to generate urban offerings. This involves policymaking in a more complex environment and often includes multiple horizontal processes (Eshuis et al. 2014). Since place branding is a relatively new concept, it may be suffering from fragmentation and lack of coordination (Eshuis et al., 2013). Eshuis et al. (2013) found three major obstacles: 1) political obstacles relating to citizen support, 2) problems relating to the content of marketing campaigns and reaching target and 3) administrative obstacles.

Moreover, 70% of the project financed by the government in the UK delays in final completion. Other factors resulting in poor project performance are poor investment returns, delay in utilisation of the public facilities and inconvenience for surrounding neighbours (Shen, Platten and Deng, 2006). This indicates the numerous risks. Generally, the types of risks in the construction industry can be divided in eight risks: 'business risk', 'financial risk', 'liquidity risk', 'inflation risk', 'management risk', 'interest rate risk', 'legislative risk' and 'environmental risk' (Brueggeman and Fisher, 2011; Peca, 2009). The research of Shen et al. (2006) found that the public sector is able to manage site acquisition risk and legal and policy risk more effectively than the private sector. The private sector however, is better able to manage the design and construction risk, operation risks and industrial action risk. Next, it is best to spread the development risks, market risks and financial risks equally between both private and public parties. Based on statements mentioned above, it can be concluded that the success of place branding is dependent on the cooperation of the public and private parties. It is therefore essential to know how to arrange the best collaboration between those parties concerning the place branding process.

2.8 Operationalization of the key concepts

Based on the previous paragraph, this paragraph will describe the definitions of the key concepts used in this research. The definition of location identity in this research will be based on the researches of Lalli (1992), Fleury-Bahi et al. (2008), and Eshuis (2013). In this research location identity refers to the relationship of an individual with a place. This includes a sense of belonging and being identified with a place and the feeling that a location promotes a positive evaluation and atmosphere. A location is characterized as a product and the marketing instrument to sell this product is place branding. In this research the definitions *location* and *place* are used exchangeable and are used to indicate a district, place or neighbourhood. In Figure 5 the differences between these three concepts, with respect to each other, are illustrated. In this research the terms marketing and branding refer to the process of creating a place that fits the needs and wishes of residents (Eshuis et al., 2016). In other words, place branding in this research is used as a marketing instrument to connect a location (i.e. district or neighbourhood) with the creation of a brand.

Figure 5: Concepts of location
Source: The researcher

3. Methodology

In this chapter the methodology for the data gathering is described. The chapter starts by elaborating on qualitative research and the chosen data gathering methods. Thereafter, the methods of the research per sub-question are explained. Finally, the chosen method and sample are described.

3.1 Qualitative research

The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is mostly based on the type of data that is acquired. Quantitative data is focused on numerical data and qualitative data on words. Another distinction is the difference between epistemological or ontological rather than methodological grounds (Rolfe, 2004). This research used a qualitative research method, since qualitative research is believed to gain a deeper understanding of a certain topic than can be obtained with quantitative research. Since only little is known about the topics of location identity and place branding, qualitative research is a better method to encounter this problem (Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008).

Qualitative research focuses on the naturally occurring events in natural setting, taken the influence of the local context into account, which gives insight in what the reality is like (Miles and Huberman, 2004). Furthermore, the data gathered in qualitative research has the potential to reveal complexity (Miles and Huberman, 2004). Another strength is the flexibility of the research method (Miles and Huberman, 2004). Contrarily, Malterud (2001) mentioned some limitations of qualitative research. The author mentions the influence of the interviewer's values and experience, which is also mentioned by DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006). It can thus be questioned whether qualitative research is fully objective. Furthermore, Malterud (2001) emphasizes that the scope, and therefore limitations, should be clear. Also, the author points out the neglect of the theoretical interpretation of most researchers. When taking these limitations into account, validity and reliability will be increased. In Table 5 the different activities are listed that can be undertaken in order to ensure the different types of validity and reliability.

Table 5: Securing validity and reliability
Source: Beverland and Lindgreen (2010)

Design test	Theoretical explanation of concept	Activities
Construct validity	To secure that correct operational measures have been established for the concepts that are being studied	▪ Triangulation through multiple sources of data or interviews ▪ Providing readers with a chain of evidence using cross-case tables or quotes from informants ▪ Allowing interviewees to review the draft case and give feedback
Internal validity	To make sure that a causal relationship—certain conditions lead to other conditions—has been established. Internal validity is a concern of explanatory or causal case studies but not for exploratory or descriptive cases that do not attempt to make causal statements	▪ Pattern matching through cross-case analysis. ▪ Searching for negative cases, ruling out or accounting for alternative explanations. ▪ Time series analysis
External validity	To prove that the domain to which a case study's findings belong can be generalized	▪ Specification of the population of interest. ▪ Replication logic in multiple case studies.
Reliability	Demonstrating that the findings from a case study can be replicated if the case study procedures are followed	▪ A standardized interview protocol. ▪ Constructs well defined and grounded in extant literature. ▪ Providing an audit-trail by providing access to data.

Within qualitative research, different approaches exist, see Appendix A. There are, however, four commonalities between the approaches (Thorne, 2000):

- *Comprehending* the subject of the study
- *Synthesising* and finding the relations and links between different concept
- *Theorising* the explanation for these relations
- *Re-contextualising* bringing back the knowledge in the context

In the following paragraph the different approaches of qualitative research were compared and the most suited method was chosen.

3.2 Selection of qualitative research method(s)

As mentioned above, this sub-paragraph elaborates on the different qualitative method and starts by explaining ethnography. In this method, theory and fieldwork are combined by studying the behaviour and attached meaning systems of the costumer (Visconti, 2010; Anderson, 2009). The goal of ethnography is to see people's behaviour on their terms and it reveals how a new product will be used and how products contributed to their lives (Anderson, 2009). Next, a case study studies an organisation, group, individual, event, programme or decision (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2015). Case study has the potential to deeply understand the dynamics of organizational context by means of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative collection (questionnaires and observations) (Visconti, 2010). Interviews can be characterized as one-on-one discussions between an interviewer and an individual to gather information on a specific topic (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). Interviews can be used to make an own theory when there is little literature available, the literature is too broad or the literature contains a different context (Zalewska-Kurek, 2016). Subsequent, action research tries to bridge the gap between the theory and practice (Brydon, Greenwood and Maguire, 2003). It serves to build and test theory in action (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002) and therefore add to practical concerns (Susman and Evered, 1978). Lastly, world café is a conversational process that provides people from different backgrounds and multiple hierarchies to engage in a constructive dialogue (Pulles et al., 2015). World café promotes the use of multiple methods in capturing insights that recognise individual and cultural preferences in communication (Estacio and Karic, 2015).

Based on the information gathered in this paragraph and the comparison of methods in Appendix A, the chosen method for this study is to conduct interviews. Since interviews are believed to create a deeper knowledge of the topic (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). Also, there is no existing literature that is applicable to the research goal (Zalewska-Kurek 2010). That is why this was a suitable starting point for scientific research.

3.3 Triangulation

To gather different viewpoints, the method of the research includes a triangulation approach. Triangulation indicates a research method which is used to get completer data which confirm the results of the research. In data triangulation different sources of data are used (Wilson, 2014). Triangulation results in a higher construct validity of the research (Beverland and Lindgreen, 2010). The first method that is used is a literature review (see Chapter 2 Literature review) in order to find the existing research on the topic. The second method is conducting semi-structured interviews (see paragraph 3.4 Semi-structured interviews). Finally, the results of the interviews were verified through interviews with experts.

Table 6: Phases of the research
Source: The researcher

Phase	Analytical goal	Analytical process used and outcome	Implication for conceptual development
1	Identify which factors affect location identity either positively or negatively.	Interviews with employees of the municipality, real estate developers and experts in the area of location identity.	List of factors affecting location identity and relative importance of those factors. Serves as input for part three.
2	Examining the role of the government in the location identity process.	Interviews with employees of the municipality, real estate developers and experts in the area of location identity.	More insight in the role of the government in the location identity process. Serves as input for part three.
3	Connecting the first two sub-questions to a financial model.	Interviews with employees of the municipality, real estate developers and experts in the area of location identity.	Development of a tool which gives insight in the factors affecting location identity and the mediating role of the government. Furthermore, this tool should support the investing decisions.

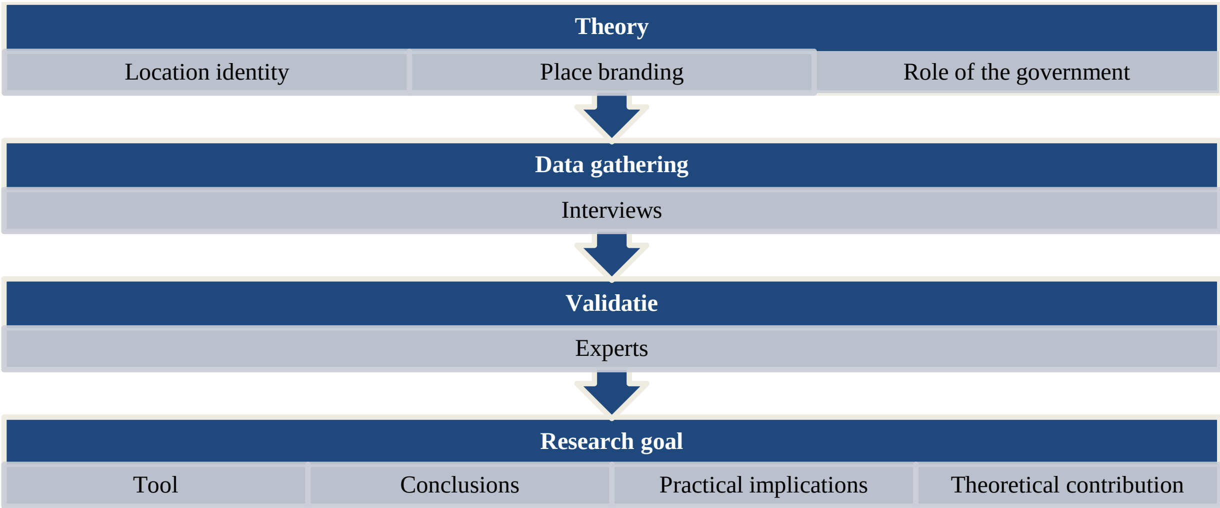

Figure 6: Research model
Source: The researcher

3.4 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews can be conducted in three different ways: unstructured, semi-structured and structured. Whereby structured often contains quantitative research, since the questions are pre-formulated. In this research semi-interviews were conducted by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews have standardized questions so the researcher covers the necessary topics and therefore creates a deeper understanding into a topic (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). Next, the questions of semi-structured interviews are often open-ended and more questions emerge during a dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). In order to secure the reliability of the research, the interviewees received an interview protocol (as illustrated in Appendix B). Before the question a short introduction was given. In this introduction the essence of the research was made clear to the participant. The first questions of the interview served as an introduction to make the participant feel comfortable. These questions were not very specific and open-ended, in order to reflect the nature of the research and open the conversation. The set of questions used in the interviews can be found in Appendix C.

Moreover, DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) describe three different technical issues that should be taken into account: 1) processes and recording data, 2) transcribing data, and 3) using software programs to assist with data management and analysis. The recording of the data was done with a digital recorder. The interviewee was asked in advanced to agree with the recording. Also, the interviewer made sure that the recorder had sufficient battery and memory. After recording, the interviews were written down in text. The researcher listened to the recording again and the transcription was read again, to make sure the interpretation was correct. Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (Atlas.ti) was used to code the gathered data. The codebook used can be found in Appendix D.

3.5 Sample

The sampling for the interviews was partly done by the snowball effect (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). This means the participants were asked to introduce the researcher to another participant. However, the researcher was aware that the participants were not from the same network group. Hence, the researcher also used the opportunity effect (Harrell and Bradley, 2009) when possible value participants arose. During the interview the interviewers own experiences and opinions were not strongly present, because this might affect the interview. Furthermore, the confidential information given by the participant maintained anonymously to prevent conflicts of interest. In total 16 participants were included in this research, with at least one participant in each category to ensure a wide diversity of opinions, arguments and viewpoints. All participants were Dutch and currently working in the Netherlands. In Table 7 an overview of the different interviewees is given sorted by participant category, institution and position. Due to limited time, the interviews of the public party were conducted at municipalities, since municipalities are the public parties dealing with location identity and place branding. To prevent bias the interviews are conducted with participants from different network groups (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). Furthermore, to secure objectivity the research sampled consisted of employees of both private and public parties.

Table 7: overview of the different interviewees
Source: The researcher

Participant category	Institution	Position
Private party (n=9)	Sum city	Owner
	De Ruimte Ontwikkeling	Owner
	Dura Vermeer bv.	Director real estate and construction; Director customer and market
	BAM	Head of commerce
	Sales Sisters	Partner
	SBM bouwmanagement	Advisor
	Decisio	Partner; advisor
Public party (n=6)	Gemeente Enschede	Senior planner
	Gemeente Rijssen	Policy officer
	Gemeente Hengelo	Manager
	Gemeente Ede	Senior planner
	Gemeente Almere	Senior project manger
	Gemeente Amsterdam	Senior planner
Academic (n=1)	Saxion Hogeschool	Lector

4. Results

In this chapter the results are explained per sub-question. The results chapter elaborates on the findings with respect to the conditions and factors affecting location identity and place branding, the different roles in the place branding process and the corresponding finances. To ensure construct validity, the findings in the result chapter are supported by quotes of the participants. When more quotes apply to a certain construct, the most relevant quotes are illustrated. Furthermore, contradicting statements are shown as well to strengthen the internal validity of the research.

4.1 Conceptual framework

The data acquired from this research is gathered by conducting 16 interviews. The participants were employees from both private and public parties. The conceptual framework in Figure 7 is based on the information gathered from these interviews. This paragraph first gives some considerations in order for the conceptual framework to be effective. Thereafter, the next paragraphs elaborate more on the conditions and constructs associated with the framework.

To enhance the effectiveness of the framework, the characteristics of a project should be examined up front. First of all, it is crucial to know that this framework is only effective when there are alternatives for the product. When the customers have no other options, the necessity for the tool is not that high. Additionally, another aspect is the limited influence on location identity. Location identity is determined by the potential buyers. While location identity can be influenced, it cannot be determined by organizations. It is therefore essential to recognize and acknowledge the qualities of the location. Besides, because the effect of place branding will become visible on the long-term, it is essential that parties have a long-term vision.

Next, there are other characteristics that mostly depend on the difference between revitalization and new development, since this defines the current situation of the identity and image of the location. For a new development project there is no identity or image yet, but a revitalization project already has an image and identity. Additionally, the time the branding needs to change the image and identity, is longer when the project consist of revitalization. It takes approximately 10 years to change an identity or image of revitalization, while the creation of an identity and image for new development takes between the 1 and 3 years, with 2 years as an optimum. Since changing the image of a revitalization project takes some time, it may be effective to bridge the gap with a temporary accommodation. However, when the revitalization project already has a positive image or identity, there is no need to change this identity. Next, the difference between revitalization and new development also affects the perception of the potential buyer. When the project consists of new development the potential buyer pays more attention to the surrounding area, whereas with revitalization the customer will pay more attention to the location itself.

Moreover, the branding should be adjusted to the target group, since each target group has its own preferences and needs. Psychographic segmentation, as discussed in paragraph 2.5 Psychographic segmentation, is an instrument to divide the potential buyers into different lifestyles. The choice for a lifestyle should be based on the characteristics of the location. Subsequently, the branding of the location should be targeted to a chosen lifestyle and should be consistent. This means that all the branding activities should be taken the chosen lifestyle into account. Furthermore, all these activities and tools should be consistent with the location identity and target group.

Besides, when strategic choices are made and time and effort are invested, projects tend to have more value. To be financially effective the project should have a sufficient size to pay back the investments in the place branding. This can be achieved by comparing an exploitation and place branding budget. Moreover, the most effective investment method is establishing a certain level of quality, which is desired for the location, top-down and thereafter complement this with bottom-up investments. Like all the other factors, this also depends on the type of project. When there is revitalization, there is less need for top-down investment and bottom-up investment tends to be more effective. Contrarily, new development requires more top-down investment. For effective investment, organizations need to examine the opportunities of the surrounding and involve stakeholders in an early stage.

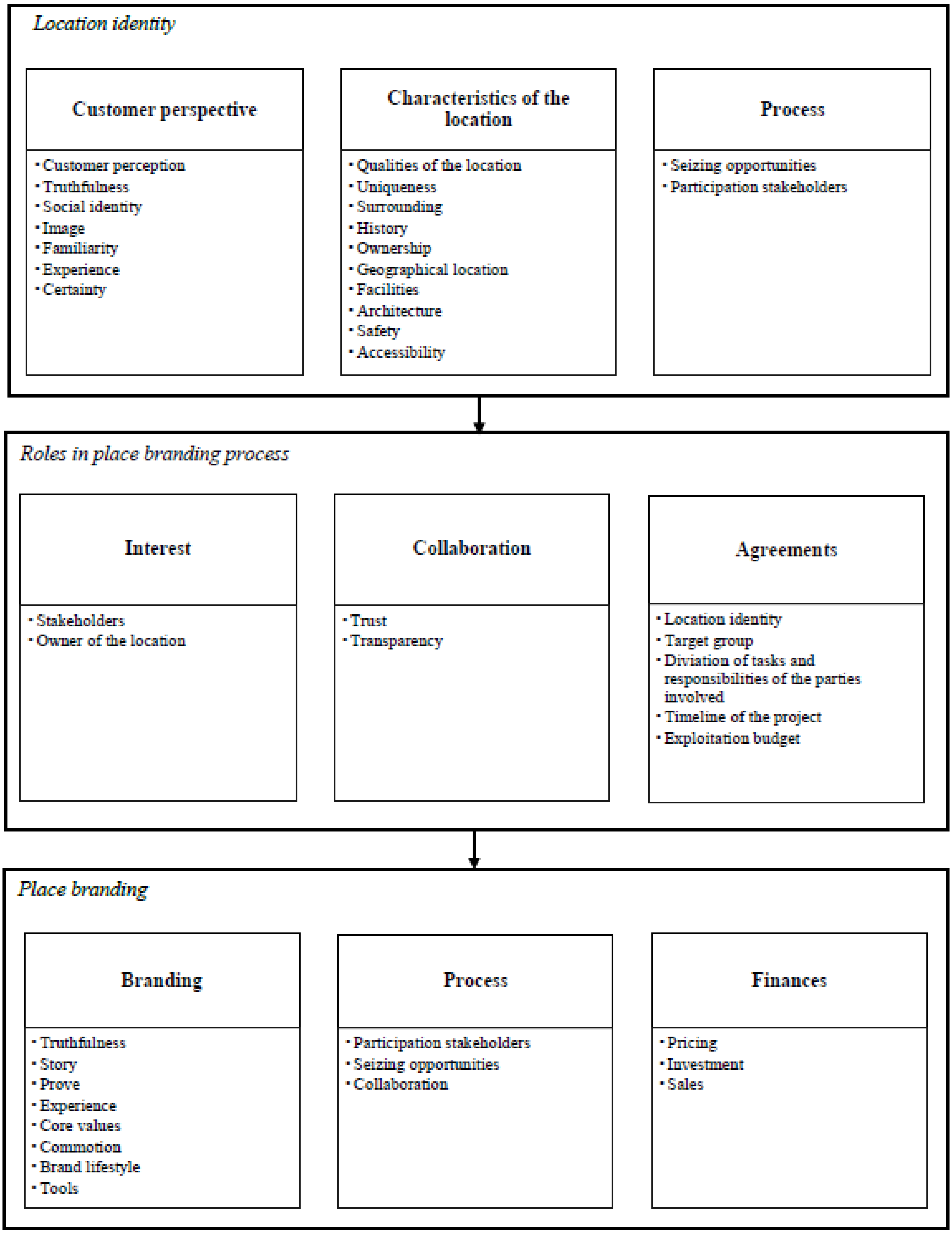

Figure 7: Conceptual framework
Source: The researcher

4.2 Location identity

The impact of location identity in the daily work of the interviewees can be labelled with either high or growing. This growing importance is caused by more demanding customers, leading to a higher impact of location identity on the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities of the participants. However, the perception of the location identity differs between the interviewees. Some of the interviewees needed some guidance towards the right definition, since the definition was not clear to all interviewees.

> *'Location identity is becoming more important. I am more aware of the location identity than before. Before houses were built and easily sold. Buyers were looking for a house which fit their needs and the identity followed afterwards. Identity serves as input for the entire plan.'* – Participant 2
>
> *'Everything you do is influenced by location identity, whether you are working on process or financial matters, direct or indirect it is all influenced by location identity. If you want to highlight the location's identity, this automatically impacts the finances and the exploitation budget, due to the higher cost and hopefully the higher return.'* – Participant 14

Some interviewees stated that importance of location identity is high, while some interviewees argued that the importance depends on other factors as well. Location identity, is strongly related the identity of the consumer, and whether the consumer think those two identities make a good match. People want to feel like they fit in into the society and feel like they belong to a certain lifestyle. This is also related to the image of a certain area. One interviewee named the example of the Bijlmer and pointed out that the word "Bijlmer" is nowadays associated with a negative identity. Another interviewee pointed out that location identity is important for consumers, but this is also unknowingly.

> *'It is important, very important. When buying a house you are always looking for places where you want to buy a house. There are always places were you have a positive association with and places you do not want to live.'* – Participant 5
>
> *'I think it is very important for the consumer, but that a consumer is not always aware of this importance.'* – Participant 11
>
> *'The consumer of today thinks: 'does this match with my identity?'. They want to live in a place that is unique. A place has to move you and should give you the feeling that you fit in.'* – Participant 10

Additionally, during the interviews it became clear that there is a difference between new development and revitalization. Another issue shown by the interviewees is the alternatives the consumer has. These alternatives can be in terms of the choice between different projects that are in the customer's price range. However, it might occur that due to the limited budget or offers in the market, consumers do not have the privilege to choose a project. Location identity has only influence when the consumer has other options. When there are no alternatives, the effectiveness of place branding declines.

> *'Location identity is a critical factor, but there are also other factors.'* – Participant 7
>
> *'It strongly depends if the project consist of new development or revitalization.'* – Participant 2
>
> *'Exactly, you should be able to afford the house. I think in the rest of the Netherlands, were there are more options to choose from, people choose a place where they want to live. This is strongly related to location identity.'* – Participant 9

> *'When you sell 100 houses and you have 200 buyers and there is no alternative, there is no need to use these kind of instruments. In this area it is the other way around, therefore the need for these kinds of instrument is high. We have to make sure that the total of offers is not too big.'* – Participant 15

The following sub-paragraph explains more on the conditions for location identity which were indicated by the participants. First, the issue of the difference between new development and revitalization is pointed out, since this is an important factor while exploring the location's identity. Subsequently, the paragraph illustrated the conditions of size, options and time.

4.2.1 Considerations for determining location identity

The difference between revitalization and new development determines whether an identity exists already or whether a new identity needs to be developed. An identity of revitalization is more fixed and the location identity of new development is modifiable. This is also connected to a new or existing image and results in a difference when determining the location identity. This presence or absence of the identity results in a difference in effort: when revitalization already has a positive identity this can relatively easy be adopted, while for a new development determining the location identity needs more effort. However, when the existing location identity is negative, it will take even more effort to change this into a desired identity.

> *'The place itself has no intrinsic qualities or identity, this has to be modified. This is different for a place that has existing buildings, and therefore an identity.'* – Participant 6
>
> *'When it is new development it is less difficult to implement a new identity than with revitalisation, since the problems are there for a reason'* – Participant 13
>
> *'It depends. When a location has an identity, you can use this identity. However, when the project consists of a location with no identity, it takes a lot of effort to develop one.'* – Participant 15
>
> *'We are looking for an identity. The identity is not really the problem, except there is no identity yet. There is nothing to see at the place itself, it is just a polder.'* – Participant 3
>
> *'When you are developing a new area, one of the goals is to develop a new identity, but this takes time'* – Participant 2

When it comes to the perception of the identity, the type of project results in a difference in perception of the potential buyers. When there is nothing at the place itself, consumers tend to look at the buildings in the surrounding of the location as a reference. Whereas, when there are buildings present, consumers tend to use this as a reference. When there is no location identity, consumers are inclined to base their decision on measurable factors, such as facilities and accessibility. Next, a place where revitalization takes place might already have meaning to the consumer, while consumers do not have an association with a new development project.

> *'When a certain place consists of only grass, people are inclined to use surrounded buildings as a reference. However, when there are already buildings at the location, consumers tend to take these buildings as a reference.'* – Participant 3
>
> *'The architecture of the surrounding buildings is also important, since this determines a big part of the identity. I think buyers have a negative association with a plot situated next to an old office building.'* – Participant 11

'There is only grass without any identity. Because of this, objective factors will have more influence, since there is no identity yet.' – Participant 6

Also, there is no social identity in new development projects. A buyer does not buy a house in new development based on the neighbours, since there are no neighbours yet. On the other hand, potential buyers may want to live in a new development project because of the certainty that they are going to live next to likeminded people.

'In a new area you do not have neighbours yet.' – Participant 14

'Cohesion is not yet present in new development. You never know who your neighbours will be. I think this could be a reason for buyers to choose such a house, since your neighbours will probably have the same lifestyle.' – Participant 15

During the interviews it became clear that the importance of location identity has grown during the economic crisis in the Netherlands. This caused by the change from a supply-driven to a demand-driven market, resulting in higher demands of the customers. Municipalities, who still have a supply-driven market, are not yet investing in the improvement of location identity, due to the low level of competition in these areas. However, when there is more competition, it becomes important to be unique and innovative in order to sell houses.

'Previously when you start selling houses, the houses were immediately sold. Back then identity was not important. These days it becomes more important to position your project better. This is a result of the shifting market demand. The current market, especially in this area, has become a demand-driven market. The customer decides where he or she wants to live. In the past the consumer had to settle with a house since there were no alternatives. It was very easy to be effective, since everything sold very easily.' – Participant 15

'In the last few years this changed, however in the accelerating market this changes back again. Yet, I still think it is important people can identify themselves with a certain concept. It becomes clear that in the places where people want to live and where the houses are scarce, location identity becomes less of an issue.' – Participant 11

'We have no trouble selling the houses, but sometimes I wish we did. Because when we had trouble selling houses, parties would spend more effort on the quality of the location.' – Participant 16

'At the same time it also relates to the choices the consumer has. When you are bound to a place where there are no options, identity is not that important. When you can choose between different projects, you can choose a project that suits you. When there are no options, this becomes more difficult.' – Participant 8

Next to competition, it was learned from the interviews that other factors also make the concept more important. The first factor is the buyer's budget. When there are multiple projects in the same price category, the importance of location identity grows. Another condition addressed in the interviews is the size of the location. Location identity is more effective when the size of a location is larger. When the location is too small and there are too many different identities in the area, the effect of location identity decreases.

'This is why we prefer not to develop one plot at a time, but we try to develop the identity of a whole area at once. […] It does not stimulate the effect of location identity when the location is too small to carry its own identity and it is divided in small identities.'– Participant 12

An important aspect for the change in location identity is time. As illustrated before with the Bijlmer example, a location with a poor image does not lose this image easily. A revival of a location takes approximately 10 years. Hence, in the interviews an example was given were the revival takes up to 30 years. Also the creation of a new identity takes time. It can be said that improving location identity takes time and cannot be hurried. Unfortunately, the instruments for real estate development for both public and private parties do not have this long term vision. This causes some struggles for the private sector, since most real estate developers do not have this time.

'Changing an existing identity takes a very long time and real estate developers usually do not have that much patience. A revival can take up to 15 years' – Participant 1

'Municipalities have more time, because they are the owners of the plot, but real estate developers usually want to make quick profit. This is one of the main problems of these kind of things; it takes a lot of time. Some projects that started 10 years ago are now starting to get some exposure.' – Participant 12

'It is developed 30 years ago, so it had some time to mature.' – Participant 14

'The available instruments are not suited for a long-term vision. Besides, shareholders and the board have to be willing to cooperate. When they are not willing to cooperate, parties involved have limited time to finish the project. Politics changes every four years, this makes collaboration difficult.' – Participant 16

Keeping the discussed considerations in mind, the following sub-paragraph debates the different factors affecting location identity.

4.2.2 Factors affecting location identity

The results of the interview show that the different factors affecting location identity, impact location identity both positively and negatively. During the interviews different factors were found, these factors will now be discussed in alphabetic order.

4.2.2.1 Accessibility

Locations which are strategically well situated are more popular with consumers. However, the definition of 'well situated' differs per target group. While one target group prefers a location close to the highway, another group prefers a location close to the city centre.

'It is important that consumers can travel easily. So when you are living in a suburb, it should be easy to travel to the city centre. Within the city centre transportation is usually by bike or walking. The first factor is how far you are from the urban fabric, the urban core. Accessibility can also be the safety in the urban map.' – Participant 10

'The location should be well situated strategically. So looking at the location it is, compared to other locations in the city, very well situated to serve the Randstad. When you are living here, you are practically living in Amsterdam. This makes the location very attractive.' – Participant 14

4.2.2.2 Architecture

The architecture is important in a way that it should not be too extreme and is most effective when it is timeless. Only the extremes contribute either in a positive or negative manner. The location of the house is more important than its architecture. However, when the location is not satisfying enough on its own, then architecture becomes more important. Looking at location identity, the architecture can also serve as a representation of the location identity and can contribute to the consistency and the implementation of the location identity.

'The identity in Amsterdam-Zuid is partly determined by the architecture of Berlage, but also by the people living there.' – Participant 10

'The architecture is important when this relates to the identity of the location. When a location is suited for the urban lifestyle and you decide to build farms on this location, the architecture does not support the identity. It should fit together. People first choose a location and thereafter they look at the total concept.' – Participant 11

'If you mean the shape of the house, I find this completely irrelevant. There is a small group of people who find this important, but the majority does not.' – Participant 14

'When you are looking for a house you are trying to satisfy the need for housing and the outside of the house matters, but primarily is the need for housing.' – Participant 15

4.2.2.3 Certainty

As mentioned before, a house is a big investment for a consumer and uncertainty makes this more risky. As shown by the interviewees, consumers tend to buy a house that is connected to an area which is built already, since the identity of this area is already known. In the crisis projects were delayed for 6 or 7 years, resulting in unfinished residential areas. It is therefore important to give a consumer certainty about the (future) identity of a location.

'Uncertainty often has a negative effect on the consumer, since they do not know what is going to happen. People start doubting if the plans are going to be realized as planned. I recognize this in one of our projects. We are building two parts of a residential area. One of these parts is connected to an existing area, while the other is not. Consumers are inclined to choose the part which is connected to existing residential area over the other area, because they know what to expect.' – Participant 1

'It is harder to convince someone to live somewhere where nothing is built yet.' – Participant 2

4.2.2.4 Culture facilities and recreation

The demand for arts and culture differs per target group. Furthermore, the need for cultural facilities is usually on the larger scale. This means that there should be cultural facilities in the surrounding, but it does not necessarily be present at the location itself. Arts and culture usually give people a feeling of relaxation, so this might be an effective way to persuade people to visit the location.

'Up till now I found that a cultural or recreational function has the most positive association. But this is only in the areas I worked at so far. You need to create places people visit to relax. Thereafter the sales of the houses can start, since people already have a positive association with this location. People have to feel happy when visiting the location.' – Participant 4

'Culture should be in the surrounding, but not necessarily at the location itself.' – Participant 15

4.2.2.5 Customer's perception

Location identity has a lot to do with the way others perceive the location. It tells something about how people revolve around the location and how the location is received by the visitors. It is about the story that the location identity should make people aware of. This is related to a person's lifestyle and wishes. Next to a location's identity, also a location's image plays a role. First, the difference between image and identity should be identified. Location identity is the core value of the location itself, while image is the way others perceive the location. Location identity should thus tell a story, which is easy to understand for all stakeholders. For a new development this perception is closely related to experience and the customer's expectations. Besides, a consumer purchases a product with the intention to use it for several years.

> *'It has to do with experience, but it also has a physical character. It is how people perceive a location. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.'* – Participant 3
>
> *'The identity of a location is when consumers say: 'I want to live at this location because...' and then tell you a story which is supported by the location.'* – Participant 9
>
> *'When you are speaking off a location, the smallest location is the house itself. When you have done everything to persuade the consumer to buy the house, they are willing to pay more.'* – Participant 14

4.2.2.6 Employment

Like culture facilities, employment should be within reach, but does not have to be present at the location itself. On the other hand, the presence of businesses in the area contributes positively to the commotion on the location. The interviewees came up with various examples where temporary accommodation involved housing start-ups or more evolved businesses.

> *'Employment is not that important for the potential buyer, but the business activity in the area does contribute to the location identity.'* – Participant 8
>
> *'Employment should be within reach, but does not have to be close to the location.'* – Participant 15

4.2.2.7 Experience

The experience of a location tells something about the atmosphere of the location and is connected to the people at and around the location. Experience tells something about how people feel while visiting the location.

> *'People should be able to experience the uniqueness of a location. They should be able to feel the unique characteristics. It should be more than a story, it has to fit the location perfectly.'* – Participant 14
>
> *'It is a kind of experience I want to send people home with.'* – Participant 16
>
> *'It is how you feel when you visit the location. Does it make you happy? Do you feel intimidated? Do you feel safe? It is a certain atmosphere.'* – Participant 11

4.2.2.8 Facilities

For the consumer the facilities are easy to measure and very important in the decision-making process. The number and type of facilities, however, differs from consumer to consumer. A young family has different needs for facilities, compared to a single man living in the city centre. Facilities named in the interviews were: stores, supermarkets, schools, recreation, restaurants, culture, transportation or sports.

> *'The type of facilities that are important, depend on what the buyer is looking for. The need for facilities differs per target group. The need for certain types of facilities differs between residents of an urban location or suburb.'* – Participant 6

> *'Facilities are very important. It is beneficial when a plan is situated in a strong urban fabric.'* – Participant 2

4.2.2.9 Familiarity

The concept of familiarity is closely related to personal experience and recognition. Familiarity can be caused by a past event or the feeling of belonging. Familiarity arises when a person feels connected to a certain building, place or lifestyle. Despite, an interviewee also pointed out that the current image can still be modified.

> *'An example is the rebuilding of a historical building into an apartment complex. It may be the case that you have a special connection with this building because your father used to work there and you have been there before. Someone might think that building is a nice place to live and wants to buy an apartment for that reason.'* – Participant 6
>
> *'You can have a certain image of a location because of personal experience, yet this image can still be changed. However, in order to change this image, a good campaign is needed.'* – Participant 11

4.2.2.10 Geographical location

The location is fixed and cannot be moved. The geographical location contains the qualities of the landscape, such as the presence of water, and the qualities of the surrounding, such as facilities and the accessibility. Another important aspect with regards to geographical location is where the location is situated in the bigger picture (i.e. town, city or country).

> *'Another mismatch is the place where the location is situated, how the area is organized, looking at the facilities in the area. It is hard to develop an area without any facilities.'* – Participant 1
>
> *'It has a lot to do with the surrounding. I think it has to do with two things: one where is the location situated in the town or city and two where is it situated in the Netherlands. There is a difference between the housing market in the west and the east of the Netherlands'* – Participant 5
>
> *'The identity of a place depends on the surrounding, is it close to the shore or to the German border. These are all factors that determine the identity of a location and you can modify this identity till a certain level, but it you cannot relocate the location.'* – Participant 7

4.2.2.11 History

The history of a location can influence the location identity both positively and negatively. Yet, the history is only important when everyone is aware of it. When there is a history which attracts people, this history can be used to tell a story about the identity of a location. The potential buyer may identify themselves with this story, but this is only effective when the people feel connected to the story. Various interviewees incorporate the history into the design. However, when the history can have a negative effect, developers might want to avoid this. Nevertheless, the history will always be there. When the soil is polluted, people will always remember this. Concluding, a good image or history can be ruined, but when people have a positive association with the image or history, this can be used in the location identity. Nevertheless, the influence of the history on the buying process is limited. It is more of a bonus, than a necessity.

> *'From a marketing perspective you want to tell beautiful stories about the history of an area, but sometimes you have issues you want to avoid. However, you cannot erase the history, it will always be there.'* – Participant 2

'When everyone knows the history, it becomes important, but when nobody knows about it, it is not relevant' – Participant 6

'History is important when people feel connected. Also, when the history is really defining, the history becomes important. It will always be part of the location. You are working with something that has always been there.' – Participant 13

4.2.2.12 Image

Image tells something about how potential buyers perceive the location. Like location identity, an image is different for new development or revitalization. When there is a negative image, this is not easily restored. To improve an image, in order to sell or rent houses, proof should be delivered. One of the interviewees explained that to get rid of a negative image, the organisation constantly emphasizes the positive aspects of the location. Contrarily, when there is a positive image, this should be stressed towards the potential buyers.

'When you image is negative, it is hard to get rid of.' – Participant 1

'When you have a negative image, you can improve this when you prove that the new image is based on the truth.' – Participant 2

'We try to get rid of the image by highlighting what we do. We are not defending ourselves and do not respond to negative impulse, but we keep explaining what potential buyers can expect from us.' – Participant 14

4.2.2.13 Ownership

Social housing impacts the location identity. Social rental houses should not be situated directly next to the upper class houses which are for sale. This is not only because of the price difference, but also because of the difference in lifestyle and expectations. An interviewee showed that the location identity of areas with a great number of social housing, often are associated with social concerns.

'[…] because the social housing had a value suppressive effect. Eventually it all worked out, but in the beginning it had an enormous negative effect. So houses for rent and for sale next to each other are often a mismatch. Especially social rent houses.' – Participant 1

'Another example is the 'Jan van Gales terrein', this used to be sport grounds and is situated in a difficult area with a lot of social rent. This developed in an image of social concerns.' – Participant 10

'I think ownership is important, or at least the sense of ownership. Are the houses intended for social rent or sale?' – Participant 3

4.2.2.14 Participation stakeholders

To generate support for the project, organisations may choose to involve stakeholders in an early stage. In this way stakeholders feel more committed to the project and can share their ideas and wishes. Next, the organisation can use these stakeholders as a reference for the potential buyers or investors. The stakeholders will eventually be the end-customer and are the ones who utilize the area. However, the effectiveness of the stakeholder participation is not always there, since the location identity process takes place at the very beginning and the stakeholders are not always the potential buyers. Only a small part of the stakeholders actually consist of the buying audience. Yet, the participation of stakeholders can contribute to a more effective identity.

> *'This started with a small group of stakeholders who started interesting initiatives. At a certain moment this spread around the area. [...] In this way you are always working on the creation of an identity. The stakeholders, who are committed, are the ones who are willing to invest in the location.'* – Participant 12
>
> *Stakeholder participation is difficult in this phase, since you do not know the buyers yet. We have a big panel of potential buyers, but only a small part of this panel is our actual customer.'* – Participant 16

4.2.2.15 Qualities of the location

Qualities of the location are the core values that are already present at the location. A characteristic is called a quality when it is unique and distinctive. The qualities of a location are already there and cannot be erased. Additionally, some of the interviewees stated that it is a necessity to work with the qualities of the location, since these qualities are needed to validate the identity. The qualities need to be recognized and acknowledged. Contrarily, when the qualities are stressed, proof should be delivered.

> *'You should highlight and exploit the unique characteristics of an area. Be distinctive, exploit the unique characteristics and deliver proof. When you are talking about unique characteristics, they need to be really unique.'* – Participant 14
>
> *'There is no need to make it up, it is already there. You have to explain what you see. It is a necessity to recognize and acknowledge the identity of a location.'* – Participant 10
>
> *'The identity cannot be changed that easily. It is proven by the place itself. You cannot develop a 'green' image in the middle of industrial surrounding. You have to take the surrounding into account while developing the identity. Also, you have to look at the qualities and strengths of a certain place. You can improve the weak spots, but the identity of a location will always be there.'* – Participant 7

4.2.2.16 Safety

People have to feel save in a certain area in order to feel comfortable. Therefore, the security of a location is important. If there is, for example, a lot of criminality at the location, this needs be accounted for.

> *'There are some conditions the location has to live up to and safety is such a condition.'* – Participant 8

4.2.2.17 Seizing opportunities

Another factor shown by a couple of interviewees is the ability to seize opportunities. One should be able to recognize the opportunities of the location and connect the dots in order to establish the most suitable and effective identity for the location. This is an essential issue, since the location identity is unique for every project.

> *'I think adoptability is an important aspect. You should be able to exploit different opportunities that arise at a certain moment. So adoptability, seize the opportunities and possibilities of that moment. With the same ingredients, but with a different context, your choices might have been different. Opportunities arise during the project, the degree of adoptability determines if you are able to recognize these opportunities and exploit them.'* – Participant 14

'A grounded geographic analysis should be conducted when looking for a location's identity. You need to examine which capabilities and capital is already present at the location.' – Participant 10

4.2.2.18 Social identity

The people living in the surrounding are part of the location identity. Also the people circling around the location contribute to the location identity. People with the same lifestyle often attract each other: *"two birds of a feather flock together"*. Consumers choose for a certain area because they have the idea that likeminded people are living there. The difference between the lifestyles should not be too large, because this could result in conflicts. It is therefore important to have a smooth transition between the different lifestyles and customer segments. Consumers have to experience a happy view and a sense of belonging.

'Does this suit me? Does this match with my identity? Do I recognize myself in this identity? It is a combination of all these factors.' – Participant 2

'People choose for an area because they feel that they are living with people on the same level and with the same lifestyle. They choose for a certain area because they want to fit in.' – Participant 12

'You have to make sure that the people living in an area have the same lifestyle and the difference between those lifestyles is not too big. The segments should be close to each other in order to reduce the difference between those segments.' – Participant 14

4.2.2.19 Surrounding

The surrounding plays a huge role, since consumers are usually less interested in the product and more interested in the surrounding. The surrounding in this sense can be a characteristic building, a unique landscape or a residential area connected to the location. When the location has a unique landscape, characteristic building or is connected to a residential area with a strong identity, one of those identities can be adopted. In new development projects consumers are inclined to compare how the location is situated compared to a park or other residential areas. The surrounding also serves as input for the segmentation process.

'The surrounding could consist of a characteristic building or a unique landscape. These are things everyone knows and remembers.' – Participant 6

'When there is only grass, there is nothing to look at but the surrounding. When the location is close to a park, you could adopt this identity. If the location is close to a residential area with a strong identity, it might be a good idea to adopt this identity.' – Participant 1

'A location is fixed and therefore the surrounding is fixed as well. Some surroundings are suited for certain target groups, but do not serve others.' – Participant 15

4.2.2.20 Truthfulness

The strength of establishing the right identity is choosing the identity which captures and acknowledges the qualities of the location. As mentioned before consumers become more demanding and this is one of the reasons consumers become more and more critical. It is important to create the identity as you promised. Another aspect is the growing influence of the media. Organisations have to answer the critical question of the consumers online, otherwise the image of the project suffers damage. This is strongly related to consistency.

'You have to live up to what you promised, that is crucial. This applies to everything. You can tell a beautiful story, but when it is untrue people feel betrayed.' – Participant 14

'This illustrates how important the identity, guarantee or expectation is that you create as a public or private party.' – Participant 1

4.2.2.21 Uniqueness

The uniqueness of a location depends on the degree of distinctiveness of the location. This also connected to the degree of innovativeness. The uniqueness determines if the location can separate itself from projects of competitors.

'Another factor is the uniqueness. Does the place looks like other places in the city? […] Places need to have a unique character.' – Participant 10

'These are actually unique aspects that are already there, the use of these qualities can contribute to the identity of an area.' – Participant 13

The following paragraph gives a brief conclusion about the findings and limitations of location identity.

4.2.3 Conclusion and limitations of location identity

During the interviews a few limitations of location identity became clear. The first one is the difficulty of the concept of location identity. Some of the interviewees had a hard time answering the questions about the essence of location identity. Because the concept of location identity was essential to the relevance of the interview, the interviewer had prepared a definition which was discussed with the participants. After the interviewer was certain the interviewee got the concept of location identity, the interview continued. Another limitation of location identity is the limited influence. The identity of the location is already determined by the location's unique qualities. The identity of a new development is easier to develop than the identity of revitalization. It is critical to recognize those qualities and adapt to the opportunities. The unique qualities are characteristics of the location that are strongly present and separate the location from projects of competitors. Furthermore, the identity depends on how it is perceived by the consumer. It can be said that every project and location is unique and the identity has to recognized and be truthful.

To conclude, this paragraph answers the first sub-question about location identity: *how can the identity of a location be improved by modifying the factors which affect location identity positively or negatively? L*ocation identity can be improved by seizing the opportunities and recognizing unique characteristics of the location. Moreover, the identity of a location should be determined based on the needs of the target group, the size and timeline of the project and on the type of project (new development versus revitalization). The factors positively and negatively affecting location identity can be assigned to three main factors: 'customer perspective', 'characteristics of the location' and 'process factors'. The deviation of the factors can be as follows:

- **Customer perspective:** customer perception, truthfulness, social identity, image, familiarity, experience and certainty.
- **Characteristics of the location:** qualities of the location, uniqueness, surrounding, history, ownership, geographical location, facilities, architecture, safety and accessibility.
- **Process:** seizing opportunities and participation stakeholder.

4.3 Place branding

As described earlier, the instrument to market location identity is place branding. This definitions of place branding corresponded with the definitions of the participants and it can therefore be stated that place branding is an instrument to communicate the location identity to the potential buyer. Place branding can be used prior to the designing phase. This communication can be established by using of different tools and activities. Additionally, place branding can be used to manipulate the identity of a location by emphasizing the positive characteristics and understating the negative aspects.

> *'Place branding is slowly trying to create value by positioning a location in a certain way and to ultimately develop a pleasant place to live.'* – Participant 12
>
> *'Place branding is giving an area an identity. You can undertake different actions and use different tools to give a location an identity, a certain atmosphere. This could be any kind of tool, but I think mostly the manipulation of the identity. In order to emphasize on the positive points and too suppress the negative factors. Place branding is creating an experience.'* – Participant 11

A few of the interviewees labelled the effectiveness of place branding as high. One of the interviewees stated that potential buyers will only be interested after they are familiar with the location. Some locations are not known as a residential area, here place branding can be the tool to change this. However, most of the interviewees argued that the effectiveness of place branding depends on other factors as well. One of those factors is to locate the right buyers as illustrated in the previous paragraph. One of the interviewees state that in order to be effective, the choice for a target group should be made first because the branding can be targeted more effectively this way.

> *'It can be really effective when it focuses on a target group. The more you know of your target group, the more the effectiveness of place branding increases.'* – Participant 6
>
> *'It can be effective when it is done right, in order to do so, the correct target group should be chosen.'* – Participant 11

Other issues illustrated are the size and the type of project. But nevertheless, the effectiveness should be reviewed per situation. Like location identity, place branding is a result of the changes in the housing market. Therefore, place branding is most effective when there is a demand-driven market. In the next paragraph these issues are elaborated in more detail.

4.3.1 Considerations to access the effectiveness of place branding

The difference between new development and revitalization also applies to the place branding process. Because nothing has been built in a new development area, there is not yet an identity. It is therefore essential to make the potential buyers aware of the new identity and story of the location. For revitalization it is a different process, since the place already has an identity. However, it might be the case that potential buyers are already familiar with the place, but do not associate it with a place to live. In this case place branding can still be effective. Also, when revitalization is focused on a new target group, place branding can be an effective instrument.

> *'Currently I am working on a project in an urban area. Although it is an urban area, people do not yet associate the place with recreation, relaxation and eventually even living there. For these kind of situations you need these kind of tools. For places where people already live, this tool becomes less important. Unless, you want to address a completely different target group, then it can be effective as well.'* – Participant 4

'For revitalization there is already an identity present, but for new development there is no identity yet. Nobody knows the location yet. Therefore, something needs to happen first and a story has to be created.' – Participant 8

Because of the difference in identity of new development and revitalization, there is also a difference in the time needed for place branding. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the time to change an existing identity is approximately 10 years. The time to start of the place branding is approximately 2 years before the start of the sale of the houses, with a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 3 years. In this period the location should be branded approximately once a month. When revitalization takes place it may be effective to bridge this gap with temporary accommodation. The difference between the tools for new development and revitalization will be explained further in this chapter.

'It is important to start the place branding not too soon in the process, the time-to-market the time when you start persuading the potential buyer and the actually sale, should be approximately 2 years.' – Participant 1

'From my experience I learned that the time between the actual sales and the beginning of the place branding should be roughly 2 years' – Participant 15

In order for place branding to be effective, a long-term vision is crucial. When strategic choices are made and time and effort are invested, projects tend to have more value. Yet, the instruments of private parties are not suited for a long-term vision and focus on the short-term revenue while it can be even more profitable to look at the long-term profit. Hence, also the public sector should focus on the long-term, the exploitation budget of the municipality is usually drafted for 10 years from now.

'A good example is the food hall in Rotterdam. This project took a lot of time and different real estate developers walked away. One developer put a lot of effort and time in this project and eventually this led to a good result. They tried to figure out a different way to complete the project by improving the location's identity. Now the prices are increasing as well.' – Participant 12

'This asks for a long-term vision, but the instruments used by developers, contractors and the municipality are not designed for this. Our exploitation budget covers 10 years and after those years the money has to be returned. The same goes for the developer or the investor, these parties are constantly focused on the cost, returns and cash flow.' – Participant 14

To be financially efficient the project should have a sufficient size. The sufficient size for place branding depends on the amount of investment and the number of houses in the project. To determine the financially effectiveness it is important to make an estimation of the budget needed to execute place branding. When the expected investment is higher than the total growth of the sales price, place branding is not useful. Another aspect is the size of the place branding activities. When the activities do not have a sufficient size, the amount of people attracted by those activities will be too small.

'It depends on the scale of the project, how much investment is needed and how many houses profit from this investment.' – Participant 11

'We tried to start small, so we organized some small events were that little people attended that the event had no effect. Coming back to your previous question, the branding should have enough body so people find it interesting enough to visit. When the activities reached a certain level of maturity, the size of the events can be reduced.' – Participant 4

Also, the consistency in place branding is important for the effectiveness. When an identity is chosen, this should be visible in all communication towards the potential buyers. While some of the tools are more effective than others (see sub-paragraph 4.2.3 Tools for place branding), the effectiveness increases significantly when a set of tools is used. All these tools need to be consistent in carrying out the identity of the location.

> *'You have to choose an identity from the beginning and make sure to be consistent. Even when someone is being sceptical. This asks for a different way of thinking and this change requires a lot of work. There is not one effective tool, but it is far more effective to be consistent in all the tools used.'* – Participant 11
>
> *'Another aspect of the effectiveness was the consistency of the real estate developer. He spent a lot of time and energy in the putting forward the identity and story of the location. He did this very consistent.'* – Participant 14

In order to be effective, the target group should be chosen before the start of the place branding. Because when the target group is known, it is easier to organize activities that are attractive for the target group and therefore the activities will be more effective. Different ways to choose a target group exist. In the interviews the methods of BSR, Motivation and Mosaic were named (see paragraph 2.5 Psychographic segmentation). Contrarily, as raised by some of the interviewees, choosing a target group is also risky, since there is also a group that is left out. Another risk is that the qualities of the location that seem attractive a target group, might not be appealing to them.

> *'To achieve the maximum result, a target group should be chosen. Or actually to waste minimum money. This way you spend your money the most efficient. It should contribute to the end goal, because when a very broad spectrum of people comes to your location, you still need to select those people who really match with the identity of the location.'* – Participant 4
>
> *'It can be very effective when you focus on a target group. Focus, like acupuncture. Reach the people who find the location interesting because of their own values. But to achieve this, you need to know everything there is to know about the target group.'* – Participant 6
>
> *'Also the fit with the target group is important. You can get this terribly wrong. You can either do this very well or very poor.'* – Participant 11

Keeping these considerations in mind, the following sub-paragraph will explains more about the factors affecting place branding.

4.3.2 Factors affecting place branding

The interviews showed different factors affecting place branding. In this sub-paragraph the different factors affecting place branding are discussed in alphabetic order.

4.3.2.1 Brand lifestyle

People in the Netherlands can be categorized into different lifestyles. These lifestyles all have their own preferences. The surrounding of the location should fill in the needs of a target group. Therefore, the place branding should focus on certain lifestyles and their needs and interest. This lifestyle should be consistent in all the activities and communication. When there is a match between the lifestyle, location and target group, the place branding is far more effective. In order to be even more effective, the developers should know as much as possible from their target group and the corresponding lifestyle. The suitable activities can be chosen based on psychographic segmentation, to make sure the correct target group is attracted to the location. However, one has to pay attention to the positioning of the lifestyles, since some lifestyles might clash.

'I think it useful to divide different lifestyles and make a distinction of the lifestyles that want to live at the location. When the location consists of only grass, it should focus on creative people, when the location is a suburb it should focus on the people who find status important, or when it is in the centre it should focus on the people who like living in the city. In this way you reach the right kind of people and the branding becomes more effective.' – Participant 4

'There are a lot of parties that come up with a product for a certain location and afterwards they start searching for buyers. I think this works the other way around. The location is fixed, so you start looking at what type of people could live there and what kind of product they prefer.' – Participant 15

'I think segmentation is very important to make clear who your target group is. All target groups find other things important and I think you should be aware of this. Place branding can also have a negative effect when a place is promoted the wrong way and different kind of people starts to visit.' – Participant 5

4.3.2.2 Collaboration

The place branding needs to be consistent and it should be carried out collectively by the different parties involved, especially when different private parties are working on the same project. The collaboration between these parties is crucial to the success of place branding.

'The place branding should be consistent. There is no need for three different names for one area. The location should be promoted as one and not by three different parties. The name of the area needs to be a collective of all the parties involved. Place branding has more strength when the private and public parties send the same massage and the messages are not divided by the identities of the organisations working on it. Internal competition only causes difficulties.' – Participant 1

'Place branding is when you find an overall identity and communicate this to the target group.' – Participant 3

4.3.2.3 Commotion

The potential buyers need to see something is happening at the location. Commotion is linked to prove something is happening at the location. When people visit the location frequently the place branding is starting to be effective. In other words, commotion is proof place branding works. It is even more effective when people who visit the location have the preferable lifestyle, since this is when the target group starts to get familiar with the location.

'You need to start the place branding, not only writing a plan, but also executed it. From there you can start working on other activities. In this way you will have ambassadors who spread the word around in the community.' – Participant 12

'At first it was a location where no developments took place. In the crisis artist started to work there and created a brand. Nowadays everyone contributes from this brand.' – Participant 8

4.3.2.4 Core values

The chosen place branding should make the target group aware of the core values of the location. The core values are the unique characteristics of the location that are interesting for the chosen target group. To be successful, used place branding activities should correspond with these values, and thus place branding needs a story in which the core values of the location are explained and shown.

'In this project we focused on the network and the core values. We tried to convey people of these values, but we wanted the potential buyer to communicate this to the rest of the target group.' – Participant 4

'We tried to attract initiatives which correspond with our core values.' – Participant 12

4.3.2.5 Experience

The identity of a location can be expressed by letting the visitors experience the core values of the location. This can be accomplished by different tools such as themes or buildings. Also for experience the consistency is essential. Experience should be connected to the core values and should result in corresponding place branding activities. Experience also helps in the recognition of the location. It sends out a certain message that should attract the target group.

'I think experience is becoming more important and becomes appealing to more people. People can justify themselves for living in an area. Culemborg has a sustainable area and people can justify that they are living there. They can justify it towards themselves and others. […] The buildings were offered to artist and this also contributed to the identity of a location. This also contributes to the improvement of experience and dynamics in the area.' – Participant 2

'You revolve everything around experience. I think it is essential for the recognition of the area. When there are a lot of offers, you need to separate yourself from others. You have to send a very clear message. A potential buyer needs to relate to your story and that is why consistency is important' – Participant 7

4.3.2.6 Participation stakeholders

When a location is offered to the public, this generates support from the stakeholders. Besides, the created network might also contain potential buyers. When stakeholders are involved in an early stage, the stakeholders are more committed and willing to maintain and develop new initiatives. When stakeholders are involved it remains important to set a couple of conditions for the initiatives to attract the right lifestyle. The advantage of the participation of stakeholders is that a developer does not know which kinds of initiatives are already present in the surrounding. Developers should be able to locate, facilitate and encourage initiatives without supporting it too much. The participation of stakeholders should not happen too soon, because the right audience is not yet involved in this stage. Another point of criticism is that potential buyers in the surrounding might not be the whole target group. The location can also have a certain meaning for someone living further away.

'Municipalities or developers do not know the energy of an area. The energy of the people. This is why projects go wrong, because there is no end-customer. I think when you support the bottom-up movement and spend more attention to the end-customer, you can accomplish a lot more. In this way you can contribute from the energy of others.' – Participant 12

'You need to determine the core values first and thereafter you can start stimulating the initiatives from bottom-up. This way you get new ambassadors.' – Participant 11

'You create support and commitment of the surrounding when you ask the surrounding if they have ideas for the location and if they want to contribute. Next to that, you create a network of people who like working on this and start new initiatives. When they invest in the location, they are more willing to maintain and keep encouraging initiatives.' – Participant 4

4.3.2.7 Proof

When the target group has certain expectations, these expectations should be lived up to. People should know that it is not just a story, but should see evidence of the results. Only place branding is not enough to convince the potential buyers of the location's identity and physical evidence is needed to persuade potential buyers. In other words, the identity of the location needs to be implemented onto the location.

> *'Only branding is not enough, something needs to happen. The most effective tool is actual change. People need to see the change. You can start with marketing, but eventually something has to change.'* – Participant 3
>
> *'I think the identity should be a logic result of the existing factors. When you tell a place is fantastic because there is a lot to undertake, than there should be a lot of things to do.'* – Participant 7
>
> *'There should be evidence of the identity. We try to formulate this in such a way people see something is happing. You should not promote an image of a place that cannot be realized.'* – Participant 10

4.3.2.8 Seizing opportunities

For efficient place branding it is important to seize the opportunities. A lot of the examples given by the interviewees had relatively low cost and were usually initiatives introduced and supported by the surrounding. A lot of the given examples used existing buildings place branding purposes. Parties should be able to recognize and stimulate these initiatives.

> *'At the location there was a shed which we offered to the public. We gave direction towards the interest of the target group and also gave some requirements that needed to incorporate by the initiative.'* – Participant 4
>
> *'At that location we consciously worked with the strengths of the coast. We supported the events and built serval parking lots.'* – Participant 14

4.3.2.9 Story

The identity of a location should tell a recognizable and unique story. This story should make clear what the qualities of the location are and attract the target group. Using a story contributes to the distinctive value of a location and can incorporate the history and qualities of a location.

> *'Every location needs a story. I think this is important for a lot of people, whether it is made up or true. I think a story helps. [...] You should examine if you can incorporate the qualities or history of a location. On the other hand you should examine the wishes and demands of the target group. When you can connect the dots and make a story out of this, you have a good experience.'* – Participant 8
>
> *'The story and core values should be solid to execute place branding successfully. The story should be believable.'* – Participant 2

4.3.2.10 Truthfulness

The potential buyer becomes more demanding and sees through exaggerated marketing campaigns. The stories and place branding of a location should be backed up with proof.

'Place branding is important when there is a story to be told. There is no need for place branding that has no function.' – Participant 2

'Organizing events and activities are the most effective, not a marketing campaign. People see right through that.' – Participant 12

'It only works when it is true. People know the truth and can easily determine the quality. They know that when they see the location now that there is nothing there, but this changes in a few years.' – Participant 10

4.3.3 Tools for place branding

There are different tools that can be used in order to generate experience and dynamics. The effectiveness of place branding is enhanced when tools are combined. A big part of choosing the right tool is recognizing the opportunities of the surrounding. In this paragraph different tools are explained. Again, it is important to choose place branding activities corresponding with the location identity.

'You can not achieve this by yourself. Effectiveness can be enhanced when several marketing instruments are combined.' – Participant 4

'It was a coincidence that we could use the farm. It was not conceived this way. This serves now as an example for other projects. We are now working on projects where we imitated this concept.' – Participant 1

In the example stated above, the tool of using a characteristic building is shown. This characteristic building can serve as proof of the location's identity. Also, a characteristic building is recognizable and can serve as a symbol. This also stimulates word-of-mouth communication. Besides the appearance of the characteristic building, the buildings also have a function. The buildings can be used for temporary accommodation of initiatives or business. By offering these building to initiatives, a community can be created. This can be used to strengthen the identity of the location and might also serve as proof. Another example mentioned by an interviewee is to give an existing building to the public for a do-it-yourself flat.

'The proof needs to be delivered. This proof can be delivered through the realisation of a characteristic building. This building is recognizable and can serve as a symbol. The stories will follow after.' – Participant 2

'The farm was an existing building, but it does not have to be an existing building. You can fabricate everything these days. It is however characteristic, so you should search for something similar to that while branding your location.' – Participant 1

Word-of-mouth communication is a tool that ensures the awareness of the location. A way to stimulate this is by creating ambassadors. Ambassadors are individuals the target group can identify themselves with. A few examples are: likeminded people, politicians, family and friends. Ambassadors can spread the word around through word-of-mouth communication, but also through testimonials, website or face-to-face sessions. These ambassadors can serve as a kind of role models for the target group and should convince potential buyers of the value of the project. The first buyers may also be a good ambassador. The first buyers can show their houses and answer questions of the potential buyer.

'Because of this people start telling the story, people became familiar with the place and the houses were sold in no time.' – Participant 12

'The first buyers are our best ambassadors. They can show people around their house. When interested buyers have a question, they are quickly answered this way. […] You should also involve politics in this matter. Not just the councillors, but the whole board. Everyone who has a positive feeling about the project should be able to tell others.' – Participant 1

Moreover, the influence of the media is growing. Both online and offline media play a role in the place branding process and can be used together. The use of both online and offline media is relatively cost efficient. However, media can also have a negative influence when messages impact the location in a negative way. In these cases it is important to counter these allegations.

'Internet and social media became indispensable. […] It depends on the target group. I still believe in a combination of old and new media. You can also seek for free publicity. This has almost no costs, but is very effective.' – Participant 15

'For the surrounding negative news has a negative impact.' – Participant 1

4.3.4 Conclusions and limitations of the concept of place branding

A limitation of place branding is the difficulty to measure the results, since the exact reason for a consumer to buy a house is difficult to measure. Customers can buy a house while place branding is targeted to a different target group or not used at all. Sometimes there is a different trigger. Another limitation is that there is not one way to execute place branding effectively, because the place branding depends on the current situation.

Concluding, this paragraph answers the second sub-question: *how can place branding be used effectively and which factors contribute to the place branding process?* In order to execute place branding effectively, the deviation between new development and revitalization needs to be made and a long-term vision needs to be adopted. However, the instruments today do not fit this long-term vision. Furthermore, the size of the project should be big enough to return the costs made in the place branding process. Next, a target group should be chosen in order to waste as little money possible. Lastly, the consistency of the place branding is essential to the success of the place branding. The factors contributing to the place branding process can be divided in three categories: 'branding', 'process' and 'finances'. The following factors can be assigned to each of these categories:

- **Branding:** truthfulness, story, proof, experience, core values, commotion, brand lifestyle and tools.
- **Process:** participation stakeholders, seizing opportunities and collaboration.
- **Finances:** pricing, investment and sales.

4.4 Different roles in the place branding process

The roles in the place branding process depend on which party has the most interest in the success of the project. For private parties this is usually enhancing revenue and for public parties this is contributing to society. Thus, the party that should be taken the lead in the place branding process should be the party who is the biggest stakeholder of the project. In order for place branding to be effective, there should be a commonly interest in the success of a project.

'When the municipality has a coordinating role and the private parties are all small islands, place branding is not that effective. There should be a common interest.' – Participant 11

'When the location is property of a private party, the municipality should facilitate the place branding and ask critical questions, but the private party is mainly responsible. When the location is property of the municipality, then it is their responsibility.' – Participant 2

In the following sub-paragraphs the different tasks and responsibilities of the public and the private parties are explained. Thereafter the collaboration between the two parties is discussed.

4.4.1 Role of the public party in the place branding process

Due to the scale of place branding, the public party involved in the place branding process is the municipality. The task and responsibilities of this role consist of examining the feasibility of a location, decide which function a plot should have and the creation of a vision of the whole area. The public party has no interest in how the location is created and sold, but is interested in a sustainable area. It is essential for a public party to share and monitor their perspective. The public party should give direction and monitor the opportunities of the area and guide the other parties into the right direction. When the biggest stakeholder is a private party, the public party still has interest in the success of a project. However, the role of the public party should then be more facilitation. The public party needs to facilitate in terms of rules, regulation and resources. The number of resources depends on the interest of a municipality.

'The municipality should control and monitor the consistency and ambition of the project. This is even more important when there are different private parties involved. Moreover, the municipality should control and coordinate the achievement of the goals' – Participant 2

'I want to leave the government as a third person out of this. *The last years the government has grown into this role, but this was never intended. We should go back to the facilitating role. Then we come back to the word 'adoptive', we should be able to recognize what is happing in the society.'* – Participant 14

'[…]It is also important that we seize opportunities. The different interests make this more difficult, but it is our role to guide the parties involved.' – Participant 12

This transition asks for a more open-minded attitude of the municipality. As a result, the public party is shifting from a role where they used to dictate, to a role where there is more dialog with private parties. This transition also requires more time and effort in an early phase. Nevertheless, the public party should make sure that all private parties are going into the same direction.

'I think the public sector should be more flexible with the rules and regulation applying to place branding. Most of the time it is in the best interest of the quality of an area, the surrounding and the public sector itself. When a public sector holds on to the existing rules and are not willing to cooperate, nothing will happen.' – Participant 3

'We try to come to an agreement in an early stage. We, as a public party, should make sure everyone is working towards the same goal. Not only the government benefits from a successful collaboration, but we all do.' – Participant 14

'We can help and support the initiatives that serve the public interest. Also, when we try to attract a particular target group, we are willing to invest more.' – Participant 15

This transformation also causes some internal struggles within the municipalities. One of the interviewees illustrates the clash between the "conservative" and the "modern" employees. The conservative employees think the current roles should not be changed, while the modern employees think change is needed. The need for change is due to the impact of the crisis and the fact that some municipalities have no more land holdings of their own. As mentioned above, when the interests of stakeholders change the role of this party also changes. These changes may result in a reduction in rules and regulation.

> *'We encounter some struggles with employees who still work with a paternalistic perspective and tell everyone how it should be done. We cannot decide that a building has to be demolished, when the owner does not want to. This can result in a place where there is no activity for years. This is an example between the younger and older generation in our organisation.'* – Participant 12
>
> *'The municipality wants a vital city and should initiate what can be added to a city. The municipality should not dictate, but start a dialog. Because often when they plan something there is no market. When there is no market, no party wants to develop this project.'* – Participant 11
>
> *'Municipalities are good at telling people what they can and cannot do. We should think about the interest we have, is it a commercial or social interest. We often take this too far. We should focus more on what kind of people we will attract with a particular set of rules and regulation.'* – Participant 15

Contrarily, there are also examples of municipalities who are actively involved in the place branding process. These municipalities also undertake activities and carry risks when it comes to the execution of place branding activities.

> *'The public party should make a geographical analysis and take the lead in talking to the people in the surrounding. A big advantage of the public sector is that there is no other interest than the improvement of the city. We should take care of the working and living environment, since this is the economic engine of the city. We take care of the economical positioning, taking into account the wellbeing of our citizens. This is the role of the government and thereafter the public party should be in touch with the private sector.'* – Participant 10
>
> *'What we did is taking the risk while building the sand dunes. We took care of the parking lots and the accessibility of the area. We are constantly working on delivering proof of the story we are working on.'* – Participant 14

The following paragraph will elaborate on the private party in the place branding process.

4.4.2 Role of the private party in the place branding process

While the public party is seen as a coordinator or a facilitator, the private party is seen as the initiator of place branding. The private party is seen as a kind of place branding project manager. The developer is responsible for controlling the core values and the execution of the place branding. The private party needs to think about how the process can directed and how the right identity, target group and products for the location can be chosen. Private parties should be able to handle the hardware and the software of a location.

> *'The private party should lead the process. So not just dive into solutions for the buildings, but also take into account the chosen identity. They should think of questions like: what do you want to accomplish? Who is going to live here? What should it look like? After that you have to adjust the product and the design.'* – Participant 11

> *'I see the private sector as the initiator. This means they also have to carry the financial load. It is not reasonable to expect that the public sector will pay for all of the place branding. I see the private sector as a project manager, they need to monitor the core values and take care of the maintenance needed while executing the place branding.'* – Participant 4

Since the private party will also benefit the most from a higher price paid by the consumer, they are often the ones with the most interest in place branding. As a result, the costs of place branding should be, in most cases, an investment of the private party.

> *'The private party should achieve their goals and also pay for the activities to achieve this. The private party invests to profit from the revenue in a later phase. That is the responsibility of those parties.'* – Participant 15

Like the role of the public party, the role of the private party also changed in the crisis. Developers had to separate themselves more from competitors and started use more place branding. Still, private parties tend to have a more short-term vision which no longer fit in the vision of municipalities or end-consumers. In the interview participants working for a public organisation pointed out that the importance of the role of the developer decreases.

> *'Developers are important to accomplish something, but the short-term vision of developers does not fit the vision of the municipality or end-consumer. We start skipping the developers and it is no longer or most important party. Yet, it is important to get things done and therefore we still need each other.'* – Participant 12
>
> *'I think the private party should have a more pro-active attitude. Five years ago the private parties never wanted to go back to just "stacking stones" and only build unique projects. Now the crisis is over and the old pattern of "stacking stones" is starting to show again.'* – Participant 2
>
> *'The role of the developer is becoming smaller. We already have a sample sheet for houses that can be built through private ownership.'* – Respondent 14

The demand of the customer is changing and the need for the developers to pay more attention to the stakeholders becomes higher. Therefore, the private party should involve the public party in an early stage in order to make place branding successful. When private parties want more responsibilities, the parties have to make sure to involve all stakeholders in the process in order to make a solid plan.

> *'Private parties need to learn to discuss their plans with the government first. The public parties want more responsibilities, but this means that the public party needs to be involved in an early stage and not after finalizing the plans.'* – Participant 11
>
> *'There are still parties that do not think about their target group and branding, but I noticed that more and more parties are starting to think about their end-customer.'* – Participant 15
>
> *'Some parties are only focused on "stacking stones" and generating money. That is fine for now, but in five years this will not work anymore. Consumers are becoming more demanding and they will not settle for this any longer.'* – Participant 2

The following sub-paragraph describes how public and private parties can collaborate in the place branding process.

4.4.3 Collaboration between public and private parties in the place branding process

The private and public parties both have a concern in the success of a location, since in the end both parties have the same end-customer. There are different factors that contribute to a successful collaboration between a public and private party and one of these factors is the number of parties involved. When there is only one private party involved, the role of the public party is to facilitate and make sure the plans for the location matches the plans of the city branding. When there are multiple private parties involved, the role of a public party shifts to a more coordinating role. The public party should make sure that the ambitions of those parties are in line with each other. When the public parties are not capable to achieve this, an independent party should be assigned to fulfil this role.

'When different private parties are working on an area, there are different ambitions. Some of the parties are only interested in making quick profit. It is the role municipality to create cohesion between the private parties and make sure they have the same ambitions. When only one private party is involved, the role of the government decreases.' – Participant 2

'You need to make sure people communicate with each other, which is the role of the public sector.' – Participant 10

'It is the responsibility of the municipality to coordinate this process, since this is the scale the municipality operates on. In practice municipalities are not always able to facilitate this. A private party should then be assigned to take on this role. It is essential that this party has no interest in the project and only coordinates the process.' – Participant 5

Another factor is the difference in the timeframe of the visions. While municipalities have a long-term concern, developers usually have a more short-term interest. These differences often result in conflicts. Besides the dissimilarity in the visions, sometimes there are also cultural differences. To overcome these cultural differences, parties involved should be able to work these differences out or find someone who can help them to resolve the problems.

'Sometimes cultural differences arise and need to be resolved. The only way to do this is to communicate with parties.' – Participant 12

'I am aware that the private parties focus on the short-term and we focus on the long-term. We are responsible for the social identity of the neighborhoods.' – Participant 13

The success of collaboration depends on the degree of mutual understanding. The public and private parties should discuss the difference and similarities in ambition and goals of the organisation in order to make the process successful. The public party should monitor the agreement and ambitions, and the developer should be willing to verify the progress.

'The municipality is responsible for the physical aspect and needs to monitor the agreements and ambitions. The developer should be prepared to continue the conversation and to verify the progress. The developer needs a transparent attitude and should be willing to achieve the best result. I find it very important to monitor and verify the progress.' – Participant 2

'Both parties together should make a plan, but the public sector should give the conditions. Not in terms of construction, but in terms of the functions to be added to city. The parties together should make a plan which can be tested in the market.' – Participant 11

When organisations have agreed on a vision and exploitation budget, the responsibilities and activities should be divided. Nevertheless, place branding also includes teamwork. For example, when a public party wants to attract young families, the developer should make the location appealing to this particular target group. On the other hand, the public party is responsible for the corresponding facilities to attract this target group (i.e. schools and day-care).

‘The public and private party together should draft a vision and exploitation budget of the area and the tasks should be divided afterwards.’ – Participant 3

‘When the public sector wants to develop an area for young families, the private sector should locate this target group. Subsequently, the public sector is responsible for the needed facilities.’ – Participant 5

As mentioned before, the teamwork between the private and public parties is important. A successful development of the private party is also beneficial for the municipality. Therefore communication about the benefits and costs of place branding is important. Communication is also important to discover the mutual interest of the private and public party. However, the communication between the public and private party needs some improvement.

‘When a private party develops a successful location this has a halo effect on the surrounding areas. This is a good reason for the developer to start a conversation with the public party about the costs and benefits, but in practice this happens too little.’ – Participant 7

‘I think there have to be conversations about the common interest. Parties involved should discuss the chosen identity and the impact of this identity. I think the communication is limited and should take place more frequently.’ – Participant 11

It can be argued that the success of place branding depends on the degree of transparency, trust and collaboration. Organizations need to be transparent about their quality, money and time reserved for the project. Also the risks, benefits and costs need to be discussed. In order to accomplish trust and transparency a strong relationship is required.

‘A successful relationship is a relationship where both parties can be transparent towards each other. Parties should be open about the pains and the gains of a project and be honest about the risk and how these can be tackled. Parties involved should profit from each other’s qualities and keep their promises.’ – Participant 12

‘Collaboration, transparency and trust are essential for the success of a project. The parties need to trust each other and be clear about the plans. Transparency is needed to draft accurate calculations. […] This collaboration can between two private parties or between a public and a private party. There are always stakeholders involved and the public party has to make sure the parties involved are willing to work together.’ – Participant 1

A tool to establish successful collaboration is to formulate a masterplan that is supported by both all stakeholders. This masterplan should include information on location identity, the target group, the planned place branding activities, the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved a timeline of the project and an exploitation budget. In the interviewees an example is given where the master plan is drafted after visiting the location with a team of experts.

‘The parties involved should formulate some kind of masterplan. We are currently working on some kind of development strategy which slowly guides the project into the right direction.’ – Participant 12

‘The beginning of place branding is visiting the location with a team of experts. We usually do this by foot and take our time to explore the location. When visiting the location you become more aware of the potential of the location. After visiting the location, we start writing a strategy together with the experts.’ – Participant 10

In the following sub-paragraph a brief conclusion on the different roles in place branding is given.

4.4.4 Conclusion of the different roles in place branding

This paragraph answered the third sub-question: *which role has the government in the improvement of location's identity and how can the risks and investments be fairly spread?* The roles within the place branding depend on which party has the most interest. Yet, the kind of interest differs. While private parties usually have monetary interest, the public party has more interest in the benefits to society. The public party should give direction and guide the private party towards the desired situation. When there is only one private party involved, the private party has a more facilitating role. But when multiple private parties are involved, the public party has a more coordinating role. When a public party is not able to do this, an independent party should be assigned. While the public and private parties have some differences, the end-customer and end-goal are the same. Nevertheless, the party with the biggest concern is the party taking the lead in the place branding process. To establish an effective collaboration, trust and transparency are essential. A tool to support this collaboration is the construction of a masterplan. This masterplan should contain information on location identity, the target group, the planned place branding activities, the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved a timeline of the project and an exploitation budget.

4.5 Finances of place branding

After elaborating more on the different roles in the place branding process, this paragraph explains the finances of place branding. First, place branding impacts the revenue in different ways. Since place branding increases the customer value, buyers are willing to pay a higher price. Another effect is the shortened sales pace. Still, the importance of pricing should be recognized. Customers should feel the product is worth the price they are paying and both the product and the price should fit the customer's expectations.

> *'For this project the place branding resulted in a short sales space and the houses were sold very quickly.'* – Participant 13
>
> *'I think it contribute to the sales pace. I think this year we can profit from the growing prices. This is also due to other market developments.'* – Participant 11
>
> *'The Germans have a good word for this: preiswert. The product should be worth the price.'* – Participant 14

As discussed earlier, the change in the development process requires change in the operations of organisations and therefore also in their investment behaviour. Previously, parties invested a lot of money in the beginning of the process. Nowadays, companies tend to make smaller investment on the short-term. Important to note is that investing in place branding is a process and success cannot be achieved by a single investment.

> *'I find it difficult to invest a lot of money in the beginning of the place branding process. This type of investment does not match the current way of thinking about the exploitation budget. Nowadays, the investments are much smaller and are finished first.'* – Participant 1
>
> *'Place branding is a process and takes more than just a single investment. I see place branding as a process and therefore more investments are needed.'* – Participant 5

During the interviews it became clear that there is a difference between top-down and bottom-up investment. The advantage of investing bottom-up is the support and commitment of the stakeholders. Contrarily, top-down investment is needed to guide the stakeholders into the right direction and make sure the initiatives match the core values of the place. When the project contains new development, top-down investment is needed to encourage other initiatives. This top-down investment should make the visitors familiar with the location identity and atmosphere of the location. When the project consists of revitalization, bottom-up investment tends to be more effective since there is an existing situation in which initiatives can be developed. Yet, bottom-up initiatives are mainly focused on the local residents, while potential buyers might also come from other parts of the country.

'Top-down and bottom-up investments are needed. Investing in quality does not ensure commotion' – Participant 2

'When a project contains new development a lot can be changed, but when the project is revitalization, it may be better to encourage bottom-up initiatives.' – Participant 9

'I think you need both types of investments. The disadvantage of bottom-up investments is that you only reach people in the surrounding, while the potential buyer can also be someone that does not live in the surrounding.' – Participant 10

Based on these statements, it can be stated that a combination of both investment methods is most effective. As mentioned, the identity and core values should be imposed top-down, otherwise the initiatives might not be consistent with the identity. Thereafter, bottom-up initiatives can be used to stimulate the commotion.

'I think both are important. There should be a certain degree of quality first.' – Participant 7

'When there is nothing to work with, you should create something. You have to start with creating a kind of atmosphere or identity.' – Participant 8

'I think you have to start top-down to establish a level of quality. You already conducted market research and know the target group. The identity should be implemented top-down and thereafter you should stimulate initiatives that fit your identity. Otherwise you will not achieve consistency. When everything is created bottom-up, the initiatives might not fit to the message you are trying to send. So first establish the identity and thereafter support initiatives.' – Participant 11

Another factor affecting the investment behaviour of organization is recognizing opportunities. At some locations there are already buildings present that can be used for place branding purposes (i.e. the farm and shad mentioned above). To achieve this, creativity is a condition. In the interviews examples were given were parties agreed to temporary use of buildings. The private of public party were responsible for the water, gas, electricity and accessibility, and the people who started the initiative had to invest in the decoration of the building. This way, little investment is needed and when it is done right, a lot of information about the target group can be gathered (i.e. conduct surveys).

'You can anticipate on the vision of the municipality, to increase the value of the project and the ground. It stimulates the sale.' – Participant 7

'We did not have to do a lot of work. There were people who are willing to start a restaurant at the location. They know it is only for five years and agreed to decorate the building.' – Participant 13

'The costs are relatively low, but the value of the information you obtain from these activities is high.' – Participant 15

'Yes, but the costs were low. We offered the shads to the public and when people wanted to change something they had to pay for it. We came to an agreement with an end-date and the people knew the investment was for five years. We took care of the electricity, accessibility and visibility of the location. Overall the investment was small.' – Participant 4

However, investing involves risks. The most successful place branding activities were risky locations. This requires vision and recognition of trends. Furthermore, investment can be drafted in an exploitation budget. This budget should give insight into the costs and benefits during the whole lifetime of the project. Still, when there is a long timeline the risks of the investment increase. Therefore, as initiated before, little investment on the short-term might be more effective.

> *'Developers who have the courage to buy a plot that no one wants to buy, are the ones who make the most money. This has a lot to do with recognizing trends and having vision.'* – Participant 3
>
> *'In this timeline you always come across a crisis which causes new problems.'* – Participant 1

Next, there are also other tools to determine the right degree of investment. One of these tools, initiated by a participant, is to compare scenarios. Different scenarios (from maximal to minimal investment) can be used to choose the most efficient investments. In these scenarios other parties, which benefit from the investment as well, should be observed to. Subsequently, these parties can be asked to invest as well. In this way, the risks and investments are spread.

> *'You should examine what the impact is for other parties when you execute the maximum scenarios. Thereafter, you should discuss the maximum and minimum scenario with those parties. In the maximum investment scenario you invest more, but the other parties will benefit from this as well and might be willing to invest. […] Or you can work together with a commercial party with a green appearance. This is the creative influence of the developer.'* – Participant 7

Another method to reduce the risks is to come up with a business model for the location. While the earnings obtained from these initiatives are relatively low, this is enough to cover the costs of the place branding activities.

> *'It is about creating a business model to ensure things are starting to evolve. It should keep itself running and not collapse when an initiative leaves. […] It should evolve slowly and become its own business model. The obtained earning can cover the costs, even if it is temporary. This gives you the opportunity to come up with new initiatives.'* – Participant 12

The next sub-paragraph gives a brief conclusion and limitation of the financial aspects of place branding.

4.5.1 Limitations and conclusion finances of place branding

There are some difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of the return of place branding. A limitation is measuring the effect of the investment, since the effectiveness can only be determined after the houses are sold. The other reason is that the price of a house is influenced by many other factors (i.e. employment rate and economic growth). This makes it hard to quantify how much of the increase in price is caused by the place branding activities.

Concluding, this paragraph answers the fourth and last sub-question: *What is the most effective way for parties to invest in place branding?* The most effective way to invest place branding is to implement the identity and establish a degree of quality top-down and complement this with bottom-up initiatives. When a project contains revitalization, there is less need for top-down investment and bottom-up investment tends to be more effective. On the other hand, new development requires more top-down investment, since there is no situation to work with. For effective investment organizations need to examine the opportunities of the surrounding and involve stakeholder in an early stage. Lastly, the investment method of parties changed over the years. Figure 8 illustrates the difference between the old and the new investment method, with on the Y-axis the amount of investment.

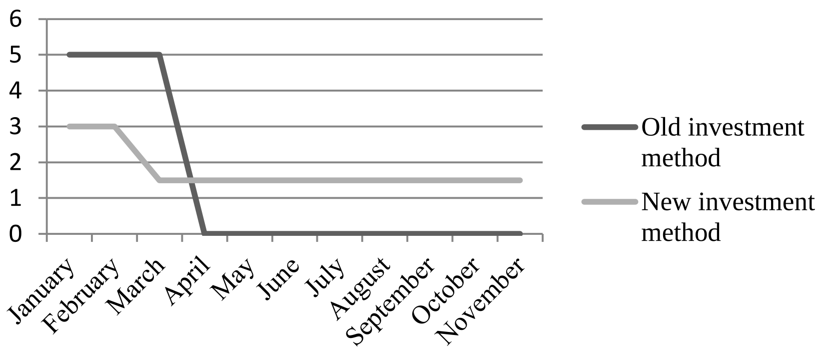

Figure 8: Old versus new investment methods
Source: The researcher

5. Conclusion and discussion

This chapter describes the conclusion and discussion based on the chapters above. Additionally, the chapter gives insights in the theoretical contributions, practical implications and limitations of the research. This chapter also gives some directions for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

This research tried to give more insight on the factors affecting location identity, the factors affecting place branding, the different roles in the place branding process and the financial aspect of place branding. Different interviews were conducted in order to answer the central research question:

How can private parties invest effectively in the location identity, prior to the development of a residential area construction project, resulting in the enhanced value added to the location and subsequently enhance the profitability of a project?

It became clear that the location identity of a location should be determined based on the needs of the target group and the type of project (new development versus revitalization). In the research different factors affecting location identity were found. These factors were divided into three main categories: 'customer perspective', 'characteristics of the location' and 'process factors'. To improve the location identity it is important to seize and recognize the opportunities that arise. Hence, another important aspect is the acknowledgement of the location's qualities.

Next, to execute place branding effectively, a deviation between new development projects and revitalization needs to be made. A long-term vision is needed to enhance the effectiveness of place branding. However, today's instruments are not suited for this long-term vision. In order to waste no money, a target group should be chosen to focus the place branding activities more accurately. The factors affecting the place branding process can be categorized into three types: 'branding', 'process' and 'finances'. Finally, to be financially efficient the size of the project should be large enough to return the costs made in the place branding process.

The roles within place branding depend on who has the most interest in the success of the project. The leading role in the place branding process is for the party with the most concern. Nevertheless, the interest differs between parties. Private party usually have monetary interest, while private party have more interest in the contribution to the society. When a single private party is involved, the public party has a more facilitating role, but when there are different private parties involved this role shift to a more coordinating role. It is the responsibility of the private party to assign a party which can fulfil this role. Despite the differences, the public and private parties have the same interest: a vital area and a satisfied customer. To ensure effective collaboration, trust and transparency are crucial. A tool to secure this is a masterplan. This masterplan should give insight in information on location identity, the target group, the planned place branding activities, the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved a timeline of the project and an exploitation budget.

To answer the research question, the most effective way for private parties to invest in location identity to establish a certain level of quality top-down and complement this with bottom-up initiatives. Additionally, when there is revitalization there is less need for top-down investment and bottom-up investment tends to be more effective. However, new development requires more top-down investment since there is no situation to work with. For effective investment organizations need to examine the opportunities of the surrounding and involve stakeholder in an early stage. There are different tools that can be used to determine the investment needed. A timeline can be drafted to give insight in when and who has to invest in the branding activities. Another method is to work with different scenarios and look for stakeholders that can benefit from the investments as well. Next, a place branding initiative can have its own business model. Eventually, effective place branding results in a higher customer value, and therefore price, and a shorter sales pace.

5.2 Discussion

The concepts of location identity and place branding are a result of the change from a supply-driven to a demand-driven market, since the consumer becomes more demanding as initiated by Ministerie van Binnenlandse zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (2013). Furthermore, Eshuis et al. (2013) state that there are some difficulties in choosing the right identity for a location. The framework constructed gives some support to establish this identity. Next, Hospers (2011) state that consumer's experiences cannot be controlled and all consumers (inhabitant, business and tourists) decide for themselves what place they want to consume. This is confirmed by the result of this research. The experiences of the consumer can be guided towards a particular direction, but the consumer has their own perspective of the location. While Parker et al. (2015) state that the place branding does not involve people and strategic planning, this researched tried to give more insight in these aspects. Also this research gave some appreciation of the place and the place experience. Furthermore, Parker et al. (2015) state that there is no lack of evidence on the effectiveness of place branding, however the many successful examples given in the interviews counter this statement.

As initiated by Oliver (1997) there are different pressures, constraints and relevant constituents that are predicted to be dominant in shaping organization's structure and performance. The influence of the public sector on place branding is quite high since the municipality has to cooperate in term of rules and regulation in order for a place branding process to succeed. The research tries to highlight the gain in competitive advantage a private party can obtain by looking at the environment and stakeholders of a project. Basil et al. (2016) state that in the relation between real estate development and the government there are three dimensions: 1) the micro level which involves the key actors and people, 2) the meso level contains the town governance, and 3) the macro level which revolves around social issues and external stakeholders. The results of the research confirm the importance in the place branding process of these stakeholders.

5.2.1 Theoretical contributions

This research tried to shed some light on the experience of the participants on location identity and place branding. Toivonen and Viitianen (2016) argue corresponding factors of the location are: 'geographical location', 'adaptability', 'accessibility', 'transportation option's', and 'available facilities'. Lee et al. (2016) suggest that there are five dimensions to measure the strength of an individual's identity with their residential suburb: 'social acceptance', 'cohesion', 'attachment', 'continuity with personal past' and 'perception of familiarity'. Additionally, Rehan (2013) describes six different aspects which contribute to improve the location's identity: 'media-generated image', 'branding urban project', 'brand lifestyle', 'signature architecture', 'historical buildings' and 'facilities'. Hence, Rainisto (2003) describes 'planning group', 'vision and strategic', 'place identity and place image', 'public-private partnerships' and 'leaderships' as the "core building stones" in place marketing practices. While these aspect turn out to be important, there are potentially more factors impacting the place branding process. Additionally, the factors initiated by previous research were tested in the interviews. It turned out that the importance of these factors depend on contingency factors. In other words, the research conducted in the place branding and location identity field, do not take into account the corresponding conditions and the different roles. In sum, this research examines and adds factors affecting the location identity and place branding to the existing literature. Furthermore, the research gives some valuable understanding in the process and different roles in the process.

5.2.1 Practical implications

Besides the theoretical contributions, the research also has several practical implications. The practical implication of the research are the different steps within the place branding process a developer needs to go through, based on the framework in Figure 7. The first step in this process is determining the location identity. In order to establish the location identity the developer should conduct an analysis of the surrounding. Thereafter the current and the desired situation can be compared with each other. This phase should involve both the private as the public party. When the gap between the desired and current situation is established, the plan of action can be written. This plan should be formulated together with all stakeholders, in order to create support for the plan. Next, the place activities and planning can be drafted. This should be executed by the private party. The next step is the deviation of the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved. Thereafter, the budget can be drafted. This is a responsibility of the private party. When the budget is drafted, the expected costs and benefits should be considered in order to determine the profitability of the place branding. To ensure the transparency of the process, public and private parties should cooperate with another in order to make it a success. All these aspect can be integrated into a masterplan.

5.2.2 Limitations

While the research has some strengths, it also encounters some limitations. The first limitation is the difficulty of the concept of location identity. Some of the interviewees had a hard time answering the questions about the essence of location identity. Another limitation is the limited influence on location identity. While the identity can be steered, the potential buyers still have their own perception on the location identity. Next, the effectiveness of place branding is difficult to measure, since there are many factors impacting the price of a house, such as the economic growth. Furthermore, the effectiveness can only be measured when the houses are for sale and the success can only be measured by the sales pace. Another limitation is the generalizability of the research, since all participants were working in the Netherland, this research only contributed to the knowledge of the Dutch market.

5.2.3 Further research

Due to time constrains all the public participants were employees from municipalities, since location identity and place branding is the responsibility of this level of public organisations. For further research it might be interesting to examine if there are differences in the expectation of other public parties, such as the province. Moreover, to measure and determine the real effectivity of place branding, a longitudinal research needs to be conducted. Another direction for further research can be the implementation of big data to learn more about the target group to gain more insight in the purchasing behaviour of potential buyers. Quantitative research can be performed in order to establish the return of the different types of activities. The effectiveness of each type of activity can be determined by calculating the beta of each of the factors. Another suggestion for further research is examining if the results of this research also applies to the next stage, the place making process.

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Appendix A: Comparing methods

Source: Anderson (2009); Visconti (2010); Rose et al. (2015); Yin (1994); Harrell and Bradley (2009); Zalewska-Kurek (2016); Coughlan and Coughlan (2002); Susman and Evered (1978); Waterman et al. (2001); Pulles (2015); Estacio and Karic (2015)

Method	Strengths	Limitations
Ethnography	▪ Gains full understanding of the customer and the business itself (Anderson, 2009) ▪ Innovative method that not only ask questions, but observes and visit customers in their homes and listen to them in a non-directed way (Anderson, 2009) ▪ Ethnography combines scientific knowledge with field knowledge and tries to increase practical value (Visconti, 2010)	▪ The approach is time consuming, especially when conducted on multiple sites and/or multiple stakeholder are involved (Visconti, 2010) ▪ Impediments due to forms of domination of one party over the other as well as shadowing and overlapping roles (Visconti, 2010)
Case study	▪ Has the ability to investigate topics in depth and offers insight when multiple factors needs to be examined (Rose et al., 2015) ▪ Case studies can be used for theory building at all possible levels, containing theory generation, extension and contestation (Yin, 2009) ▪ It enables researcher to study processes over time, captures the complexity of the relationship, and make it possible to understand causality (Yin, 2009)	▪ Problems arise because of the subjectivity and generalizability of the method (Rose et al., 2015) ▪ The internal validity is hard to establish, since experiments or statistical control is difficult to implement (Rose et al., 2015)
Interviews	▪ Creates a deeper understanding into the topic (Harrell and Bradley, 2009) ▪ Can be used to develop an own theory when the existing literature is not applicable to the research question (Zalewska-Kurek, 2016) ▪ Can be used to gather opinions, perceptions, attitudes and background information (Zalewska-Kurek, 2016).	▪ Bias can arise when there are only participants asked from one network group (Harrell and Bradley, 2009) ▪ Method is time consuming and cost more effort, also the process is often more messy (Zalewska-Kurek, 2016)
Action research	▪ Bridges the gap between theory and practice by building and testing theory in action (Coughlan and Coughlan, 2002) ▪ Develops a different kind of knowledge, knowledge which is contingent on a particular situation (Susman and Evered, 1978) ▪ Improves the capacity of members of the organizations to solve their problems (Susman and Evered, 1978)	▪ When controlling for Hempel's covering-law model of explanation, action research would not be granted as a valid science (Susman and Evered, 1978) ▪ The knowledge gathered is based on situations and conflicts may arise due to failing expectations, conflicts, and relational problems (Waterman et al., 2001)
World café	▪ Participants in the world café are not just interviewees, but they are experts that are interested in the same phenomenon (Pulles, 2015) ▪ Provides an opportunity for conversations in which participant often come to new insight from expertise of the other participants (Pulles, 2015) ▪ The multiple rounds of the word café supports participants to sharpen or reject the statements made (Pulles, 2015)	▪ Formal and structured context may cause that participants cannot express their views freely, particularly the case when participants feel that they are in an inferior position (Estacio and Karic, 2015) ▪ Another problem is the domination in the conversation, in the way that the participant dominate the discussion or the interviewer dominate the participant (Estacio and Karic, 2015).

Appendix B: Interview protocol

Since all of the interviewees are working for Dutch companies. The protocol is writing in Dutch. Also, to loose as little information possible, the interviews were held in Dutch as well.

Introductie:	Allereerst wil ik u bedanken dat u deel wilt nemen aan dit onderzoek. Voordat ik mijn vragen stel, wil ik u eerst wat vertellen over mijzelf en de inhoud van het onderzoek.
Persoonlijke informatie:	Mijn naam is Suzanne Geerdink en momenteel volg ik een Master Business Administration aan de Universiteit Twente. Voor het afronden van deze studie ben ik momenteel bezig met het schrijven van een Master thesis. Hierin word ik ondersteund door Dura Vermeer.
Achtergrondinformatie:	Ik doe een onderzoek naar welke factoren positief of negatief invloed hebben op de identiteit van een te ontwikkelen locatie en hoe deze beïnvloed kunnen worden met behulp van investeringen. In dit onderzoek verwijst de identiteit van een locatie naar het gevoel van verbondenheid en identificatie met een plek. Tevens verwijst het naar het gevoel dat een plek waarde toevoegt aan een positieve ervaring en sfeer. Het begrip 'locatie' verwijst in dit onderzoek naar een wijk, buurt of plek. De titel van het onderzoek luidt: "*Location, location, location: investing in the improvement of location identity".*
Doel van dit interview:	Dit interview maakt deel uit van de eerste interviewronde van het onderzoek. Het doel van deze interviewronde is om de factoren die genoemd zijn in de literatuur te verifiëren aan de praktijk en waar nodig aan te vullen. Een ander doel is om te inventariseren wat de praktijkervaringen zijn met betrekking tot samenwerkingen tussen publieke en private organisaties. Daarnaast zal dit interview dienen als oriëntatie voor welke investeringsmodellen geschikt zijn om een goede inschatting te maken van de kosten en baten van place branding.
Verwerking informatie:	De bevindingen uit dit interview worden vergeleken met resultaten uit andere interviews. Wanneer u geen bezwaar heeft zou ik dit interview graag willen opnemen zodat ik het gesprek later terug kan luisteren en samenvatten. Wanneer dit is gebeurd, zal ik het bestand verwijderen en kunt u, wanneer gewenst, de samenvatting ontvangen. De resultaten van dit interview zullen uiteraard anoniem blijven.
Tijdsbestek interview:	Het interview zal ongeveer een uur duren.
Opbouw:	Het eerste deel van het interview zal gaan over uw achtergrond. Hierna zal er dieper worden ingegaan op de factoren die invloed hebben op de identiteit van een locatie en place branding. Vervolgens zal de rol van de publieke en private sector in het place branding proces worden besproken. Tot slot zal er door middel van uw eigen ervaring gekeken worden naar de rol van place branding in de praktijk.
Voorbereiding:	Ter voorbereiding op het interview wil ik u vragen over de volgende vragen na te denken:

- Kunt u een locatie noemen (waar u aan gewerkt hebt) waarbij er is geïnvesteerd in het verbeteren van het imago?
- Welke middelen zijn destijds ingezet om dit imago te verbeteren?
- Welke van deze middelen heeft u als meest effectief ervaren?
- Heeft de inzet van deze middelen geleid tot een verbeterde verkoop?
- Wat heeft, naar uw mening, de koper uiteindelijk over de streep gekregen?
- Welke lessen heeft u geleerd uit dit betreffende project?

Appendix C: Semi-structured interview

1. Persoonlijke informatie participant

1) Wat is uw functie binnen het bedrijf?
2) Hoe zou u uw dagelijkse taken en verantwoordelijkheden omschrijven?
3) Hoeveel houdt u zich in uw dagelijkse werkzaamheden bezig met de identiteit van een locatie?

2. De identiteit van een locatie

4) Wat is voor u de identiteit van een locatie?
5) Hoe belangrijk acht u de identiteit van een locatie vanuit de ogen van de consument?
6) Welke 5 factoren dragen, naar uw mening, bij aan een *positieve* ervaring met de locatie?
7) Welke 5 factoren dragen, naar uw mening, bij aan een *negatieve* ervaring met de locatie?
8) Kunt u van de volgende factoren aangeven of deze een zeer belangrijk, belangrijk, enigszins belangrijk, onbelangrijk, totaal onbelangrijk voor de identiteit van een locatie?

	Zeer belangrijk	Belangrijk	Enigszins belangrijk	Onbelangrijk	Totaal onbelangrijk
Architectuur van de woning					
Architectuur van omliggende gebouwen					
Betrokkenheid bij de locatie					
Uitgedragen levensstijl					
Samenhorigheid in de locatie					
Persoonlijke ervaring met de locatie					
Cultuur					
Experience					
Faciliteiten rondom de locatie					
Geschiedenis van de locatie					
Imago					
De buren					
Fysieke karakters (woning)					
Veiligheid					
Sociale acceptatie (gelijkgestemdheid)					
Werkgelegenheid					

3. Place branding

9) Wat is voor u place branding?
10) Hoe schat u de effectiviteit van place branding in?
11) Welke factoren spelen, naar uw mening, een grote rol tijdens place branding?
12) Welke middelen zijn, naar uw mening, het meest effectief om de identiteit van een locatie te verbeteren?
13) Hoe zou er, naar uw mening, geïnvesteerd moeten worden in place branding?

4. De rol van de publieke en private sector

14) Hoe ziet u de rol van de publieke sector in het proces van het place branding?
15) Hoe ziet u de rol van de private sector in het proces van het place branding?
16) Wat zou, naar uw mening, een goede verdeling zijn tussen publieke en private partijen in de werkzaamheden voor place branding?
17) Wat zou voor u de optimale samenwerking zijn tussen publieke en private partijen?

5. Case

18) Kunt u een locatie noemen (waaraan u gewerkt hebt) waarbij er is geïnvesteerd in het verbeteren van het imago?
19) Welke middelen zijn destijds ingezet om dit imago te verbeteren?
20) Welke van deze middelen heeft u als meest effectief ervaren?
21) Heeft de inzet van deze middelen geleid tot een verbeterde verkoop?
22) Wat heeft, naar uw mening, de koper uiteindelijk over de streep gekregen?
23) Welke lessen heeft u geleerd uit dit betreffende project?

6. Afsluiting

24) Wilt u nog wat toevoegen aan uw antwoorden?
25) Heeft u nog vragen of opmerkingen voor de interviewer?

Appendix D: Codebook

HU: Coded interviews v3
File: [F:\ coded interviews v3.hpr7]
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Date/Time: 2016-09-22 21:17:14

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1 = Location identity
2 = Place branding
3 = Roles in the place branding process

1-conditions-options
1-conditions-size
1-conditions-time
1-factors-accessibility
1-factors-architecture
1-factors-certainty
1-factors-customer's perception
1-factors-expectation
1-factors-experience
1-factors-facilities
1-factors-familiarity
1-factors-geographic location
1-factors-history
1-factors-image
1-factors-opportunities
1-factors-ownership
1-factors-participation stakeholders
1-factors-qualities location
1-factors-social identity
1-factors-surrounding
1-factors-truthfulness
1-factors-uniqueness
1-impact-growing
1-impact-high
1-importance-depends
1-importance-high
1-limitation-difficulty
1-limitation-limit influence
1-limitation-situation dependent
1-location identity new vs existing
1-location identity of new development
1-relation positive and negative factors

2-condition-long term vision
2-conditions-consistency
2-condition-size
2-conditions-target group
2-conditions-time
2-effectiveness-depends
2-effectiveness-high
2-factors-culture facilities
2-factors-brand lifestyle

2-factors-collaboration
2-factors-commotion
2-factors-core values
2-factors-employment
2-factors-experience
2-factors-history
2-factors-opportunities
2-factors-participation stakeholders
2-factors-pricing
2-factors-proof
2-factors-public space
2-factors-recreation
2-factors-safety
2-factors-story
2-factors-target group
2-factors-truthfulness
2-factors-uniqueness
2-factors-word of mouth
2-investment behaviour
2-limitation-difficult to measure
2-limitation-situation dependent
2-new vs existing
2-place branding
2-results-sales
2-tools
2-tools-ambassadors
2-tools-characteristic building
2-tools-communication
2-tools-klusflats
2-tools-media
2-tools-temporary accommodation

3-collaboration
3-difference public private
3-master plan
3-ownership
3-private-changing role
3-private-role
3-public and private
3-public-changing role
3-public-role

Further research