Cooperative Housing in Stuttgart-Rot

Submitted By: Internationale Bauausstellung 2027 StadtRegion Stuttgart GmbH



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Neues Heim - Die Baugenossenschaft eG

Organization Type: Civil society

Website:
https://www.bgneuesheim.de/start.html

Practice Details

Country(ies): Germany

City(ies): Stuttgart

Start Year: 2024

Ongoing: Yes

End Year: N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:

- Rental Housing
- Social Housing
- Housing Rights & Social Inclusion
- Housing, Land & Spatial Planning

Relevant SDGs:



UN-HABITAT

Problem & Context

Post-war housing in Stuttgart-Rot (1950s) is outdated and no longer meets social or spatial needs.

Youth and families are leaving; the area lacks identity, diversity, and quality public space.

Social segregation and a stigmatized image reinforce the downward cycle.

Solution Developed

The “Am Rotweg” project aims to transform a monofunctional, aging 1950s housing area into a vibrant, cooperative neighbourhood. This is done by initiating a co-productive planning process involving local residents, housing cooperatives, city actors, and architects.

Objectives of the Housing Practice "Stuttgart-Rot":

- Strengthen social cohesion through cooperative living models
- Upgrade outdated housing stock in a socially just and climate-conscious way
- Promote affordable housing outside the speculative market
- Empower residents by involving them early in decision-making
- Create a lively, diverse, and inclusive urban quarter through gradual densification and better open spaces

Implementation

1) Actions Implemented:

- Participatory vision process with residents to define values and development goals
- Establishment of an IBA advisory council for ongoing co-decision
- Development of a cooperative urban development model
- Architectural and urban planning competition
- Activation of ground floors and public spaces for community use
- Planning for energy-efficient renovation and partial replacement of outdated buildings
- Public dialogue formats, exhibitions, and IBA events to build awareness and acceptance

2) Actors Involved & Roles:

- City of Stuttgart: Urban development lead, policy & land strategy
- IBA’27: Experimental framework, process design, coordination and mediation
- Housing cooperatives: Owners/developers, implement cooperative housing
- Residents and citizens: Co-creators of vision (co-decision, co-design)
- Urban planners & architects
- Social institutions: Co-creation of vision and process

3) Timeline of Implementation:

- 2021–23: Funding from Baden-Württemberg housing initiative for Real-Life Housing Lab (participation format)
- 2021: Decision on urban planning competition
- 2023: Start of construction
- 2027: Planned completion

4) Resources, Funding & Partnerships:

- City funding for planning, dialogue
- IBA'27 resources for facilitation, expertise, visibility
- Housing cooperatives: equity and bank loans
- Partnerships: universities and planners
- State urban funds: energy-efficient and social housing components

Enablers & Obstacles

Key drivers included strong political support from the City of Stuttgart, the experimental and process-oriented framework of IBA'27, and early, deep community engagement through participatory formats. The involvement of housing cooperatives as committed actors enabled long-term, non-speculative development. The creation of the IBA advisory council ensured continuity, shared responsibility, and decision-making transparency.

Obstacles included initial mistrust from residents, due to past top-down planning experiences. This was addressed through consistent, transparent communication, inclusive dialogue formats, and early involvement of local stakeholders. Another challenge was the complex coordination between multiple actors and planning cultures. IBA'27 acted as mediator, ensuring alignment through structured processes and shared goals.

Results & Impact

The housing practice at "Am Rotweg" has achieved notable quantitative and qualitative results. Quantitatively, the project plans to add selective densification, increasing housing units by approximately 20%, prioritizing affordable, cooperative housing. Energy-efficient renovations aim to reduce CO? emissions aligning with Stuttgart's climate goals. Qualitatively, the participatory process strengthened social cohesion, with a high number of residents actively engaged in vision workshops and decision-making, fostering a shared sense of ownership.

For low-income households and marginalized groups, the cooperative model guarantees long-term affordability and security of tenure, reducing displacement risks. Social institutions collaborated to tailor services and communal spaces to diverse needs, supporting inclusivity and accessibility.

Broader impacts include enhanced community resilience through strengthened networks and shared governance structures. Economically, cooperative ownership models promote local investment and stability versus speculative markets. Environmentally, the focus on sustainable refurbishment and green spaces contributes to urban biodiversity and climate adaptation. Overall, Am Rotweg serves as a scalable model for inclusive, sustainable urban transformation that balances social, economic, and ecological goals.

Replication & Scale Up

The "Am Rotweg" project is replicable due to its integrated planning, socially inclusive housing models, and cooperative development process. Critical contextual factors include strong municipal governance, a deep understanding of local social structures, and reliable partnerships with housing providers and civil society. Without these elements, transferring the approach to other regions would be challenging.

Scaling up the "Am Rotweg" approach requires institutional support, long-term policy commitment, and adaptable frameworks. Key steps include embedding the model in urban development strategies, securing public and cooperative funding, and fostering cross-sectoral alliances. To expand its reach, the approach must remain flexible to local conditions while maintaining its core principles of social inclusion, participation, and sustainability.

Policy Uptake

This housing practice has informed or been partially integrated into policy discussions, strategies, or pilot-level policy instruments.

The "Am Rotweg" project has contributed to policy discussions on inclusive urban redevelopment and integrated neighborhood strategies. Its participatory and socially oriented approach aligns with Stuttgart’s housing policy goals and informs pilot projects within the IBA’27 framework. Elements of the practice are reflected in debates on cooperative planning and socially balanced densification.

Lessons & Takeaways

In hindsight, earlier and more continuous resident involvement would strengthen trust and co-creation. Clearer communication between stakeholders and more flexible planning tools could have improved coordination. A stronger focus on interim uses and adaptive processes would help respond better to changing needs during development.

Note

Image credit: Architektur: IBA’27/Victor S. Brigol