

### **Dortmund *Thinks Digitally*: How We Design Cities with Future-Proofing in Mind**

How can cities be made fit for the future through digital transformation? The approaches chosen by the German city of Dortmund in this respect were the subject of the first City Talk to which Drees & Sommer had invited guests, in Dortmund, yesterday evening, April 11. At the launch of the new series of events, Lord Mayor Ullrich Sierau and Stefan Heselschwerdt, Partner at Drees & Sommer and responsible for the Group's offices in North Rhine-Westphalia, held a discussion before 25 interested listeners, who also took part.

#### **City and Residents think digitally - together**

With over 1,000 digital companies and more than 14,000 people employed in the industry, Dortmund is currently the digital center of the Ruhr and Westphalia conurbation. The key factor is the vigor of the location, driven by city, business and science. Through its digital transformation strategy, the Westphalian metropolis is already actively promoting urban redevelopment and modernization of the infrastructure by means of intelligent technologies. 'Our goal is to network ideas for digital transformation from the urban community and city administration in order to develop Dortmund into a future-proofed smart city. Around 140 partners are active in Dortmund's smart city alliance,' said panelist Lord Mayor Ullrich Sierau.

#### **Dortmund is on the Way to becoming a Smart City**

As winner of the *Digital City* award, Dortmund already has a lot of pilot projects such as intelligent parking space management, technology-supported housing for senior citizens and expansion of the vehicle charging infrastructure. The panel and guests all agreed: Dortmund is already well positioned for becoming a smart city, but there is potential to become even more efficient, more technologically advanced, more sustainable and more socially responsible. The international project management and consulting company Drees & Sommer advises cities, towns and municipalities on these aspects of the smart city and supervises various projects.

Smart city proposals include, for example, intelligent traffic control, energy-saving street lighting, networked and zero-emission forms of mobility, the sparing use of resources and support for senior citizens in everyday city life through individual navigation or touchscreens. One of the basic requirements for this is expansion of broadband and fiber-optic networks in the urban area.

In addition to a fast, reliable and powerful data network for autonomous vehicles, short routes within urban districts, less traffic congestion and better air quality, the panel also discussed the security issues surrounding digital transformation.

### **New Talk Format brings Experts together**

The guests were enthusiastic about the new event format, which had chosen the 44309 street art gallery as an unusual and inspiring venue. 'The idea of actively participating and shaping the public dialog on urban development and digital transformation and discussing it with political decision-makers has been very well received. We are already looking forward to the forthcoming talks in other cities in North Rhine-Westphalia,' said Stefan Heselschwerdt. Drees & Sommer's innovative and informal talk format is used in current debates held in the various cities. Lord mayors, city planning officers and other experts engage in these talks. Together with Alexandra Iwan, presenter and owner of the PR + Presseagentur textschwester Immobilienkommunikation, City Talks provide fresh input for the innovation culture in North Rhine-Westphalia.

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