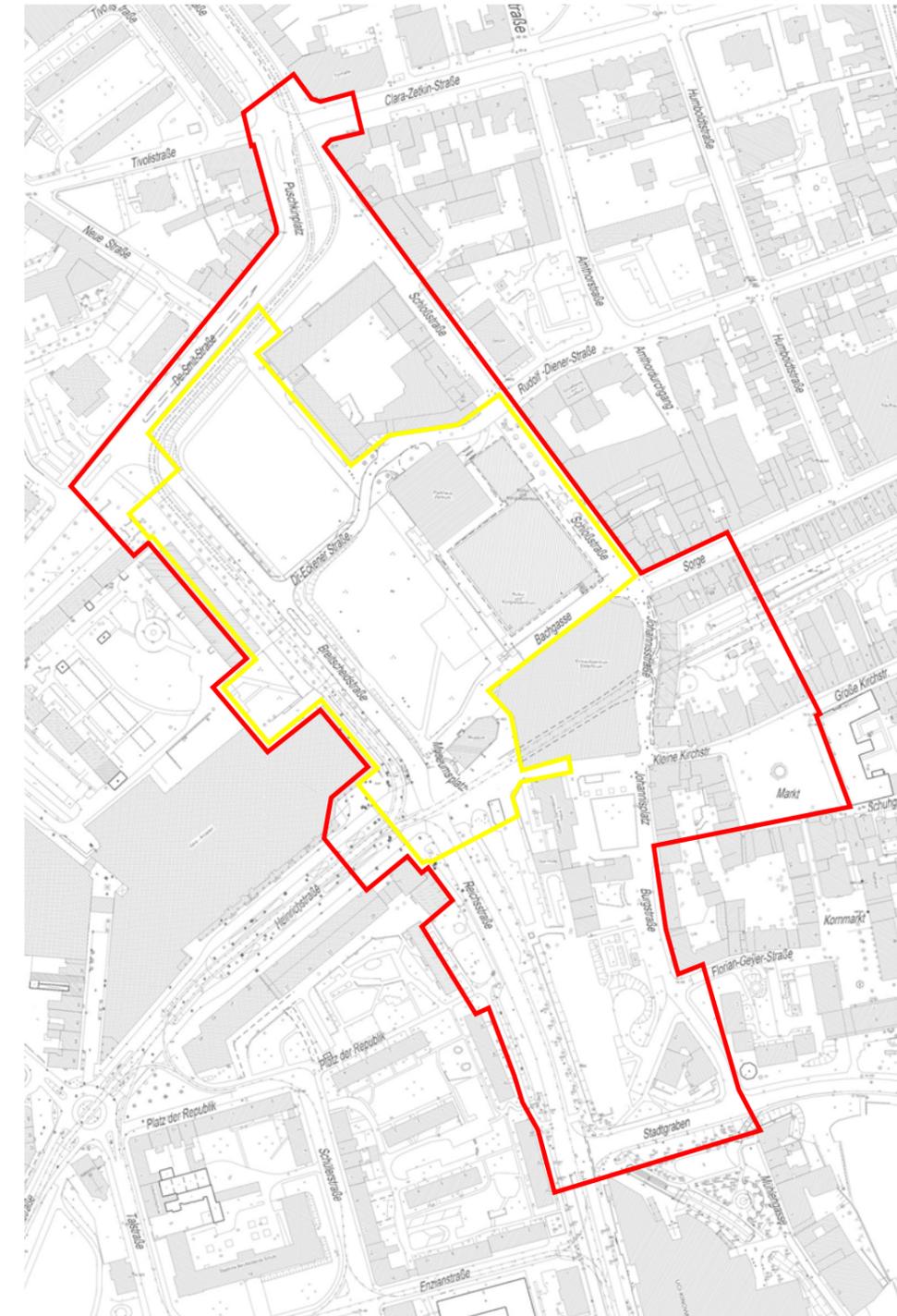
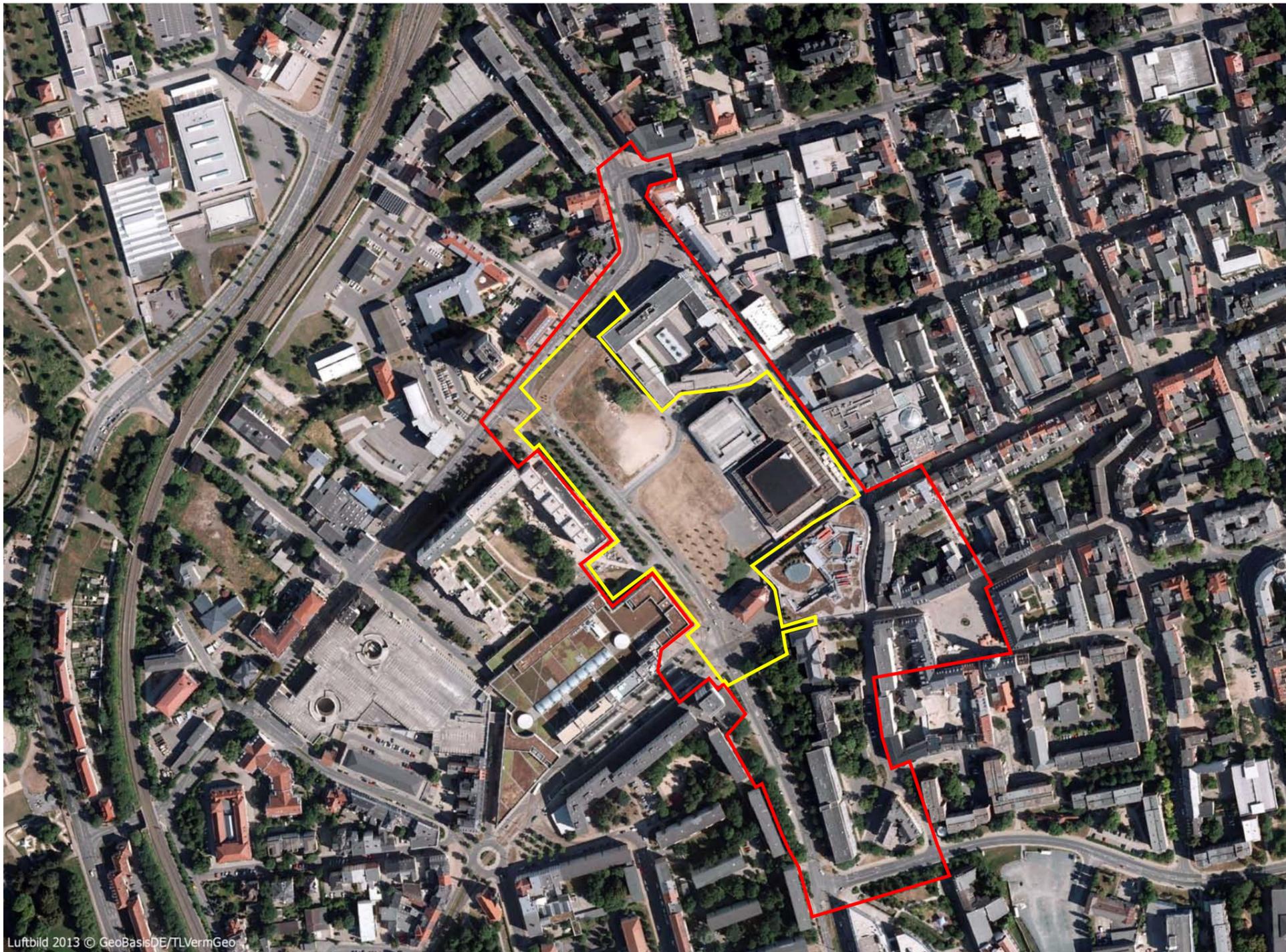


Aerial view

CATEGORY urban/landscape/architectural
SITE FAMILY How to create positive dynamics from a difficult situation?
LOCATION Town centre, Breitscheidstrasse East
POPULATION approx. 95,000
STRATEGIC SITE approx. 13 ha
SITE OF PROJECT 5.27 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY Gera City Council/IBA Thüringen
OWNERS OF THE SITE Gera City Council and GWB Elstertal
 Municipal Housing Association
COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION Strategic Outline Plan for Breitscheidstrasse
TEAM-REPRESENTATIVE professional of architecture/urban design/landscape architecture

HOW CAN THE SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?
 Innovative ideas and radical concepts for the revitalization of the project area in the city centre and for the development of a mixed-use core area are called for. Various ideas for the use and design of the vacant site on Breitscheidstrasse and the culture and congress centre are to be experimentally formulated within the framework of Europan 13, to demonstrate the need for changes in the city's self-image.
 The quality of the future public open spaces is of special significance. For the purposes of an interactive urban development process, the competition entrants are invited to participate in a discussion with local protagonists with the aim of drafting a joint development framework for a strong centre for Gera.

CITY STRATEGY
 Against a background of massive economic structural change, dwindling importance and population decline due to the social upheaval in the wake of Germany's reunification (loss of approx. 40,000 inhabitants between 1990 and 2013) Gera's municipal area appears to be overdimensioned. Among the urban goals, development of the local economy and city centre now take top priority. With the participation in the International Building Exhibition (IBA) Thuringia and Europan 13 it is hoped to overcome the mental and urban development stagnation in the centre of Thuringia's third largest city. The project area and surrounding neighbourhoods are to set a visible signal of a turn-around in the central area, making the heart of the city beat faster.



SITE DEFINITION

For over 15 years the project area has been an extensive wasteland in the city centre resulting from demolition. Despite its great significance for the central area, efforts to initiate economic growth in the last few years with a high-quality functional space have been unsuccessful. In addition, the 1,700-seat cultural and congress centre raises questions concerning future use and running costs. The project area is bounded by structures from the 1970s and two large shopping complexes of the 1990s. To the east it is flanked by the ten-storey trade centre in Schlosstrasse. What is now the Stadtmuseum (municipal museum) to the south-east is the last remaining example of the baroque town expansion of the 18th century.

FUTURE OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO ITS FAMILY AND ADAPTABILITY

Openness and flexibility

Despite planning concepts, investor competition and marketing activities over the past 10 years, all attempts to redevelop the inner city wasteland have failed. However, the goal of revitalizing the project area has not been abandoned – not least because the impulse to develop ideas for the site came from the citizens itself within the framework of the IBA Thuringia. In this context it should be noted that investments in Gera have been more than modest. The declining population generates no functional needs and purchasing power is not increasing. Redevelopment proposals must therefore be realised without the normal development drivers. Ideas for construction and uses must be attractive to dif-

ferent stakeholders. Concepts must be flexible and consistent with the open character of the overall process. It may be expedient to propose development that can be realized in stages, such as temporary use and appropriation, layout and structuring, design and development.

Demand for a strong centre

According to the will of the citizens and Gera City Council, the project area is to be transformed into an attractive mixed-use central location. This should be taken into consideration in the proposals for programming and parcelling the area. In response to the demand for a strong centre for Gera and integration with the adjoining neighbourhoods, the typology and quality of the public sphere also play a crucial role.



2001 Breitscheidstrasse, eastern part



2002, Breitscheidstrasse, view in south-east direction



2005 Breitscheidstrasse, view in north direction



2006 Breitscheidstrasse, view in south-east direction



Semi aerial view in east direction