

Digging through the Heart of Reunified Berlin: Unbundling the Decision-Making Process for the Tiergarten-Tunnel Mega-Project

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Abstract: The Berlin Tiergarten tunnel project (VZB) consisted of a joint planning approval procedure for one road and several rail tunnels (inter-city, metro rail and city subway). The tunnels lead through the heart of re-unified Berlin, starting at the site of the new Central Railway Station, cutting underneath the River Spree and the new Federal government quarter, as well the Tiergarten Park and the new entertainment complexes at Potsdamer Platz. This paper traces the decision-making processes for this crucial post-Berlin Wall mega-project, and raises important questions regarding optimistic forecasts, cost overruns, the role of prestige in large infrastructure projects, and the limits of public review procedures. It provides particular insights into a complex case where multiple urban transport mega-projects were bundled together for joint approval and implementation.

Keywords: Mega-projects; Berlin; rail; urban restructuring

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