

## **EXPLORATION 2: PART 2 – MORE ABOUT PRINZESSINNENGARTEN**

On August 13, 1961, Communist East German authorities encircled West Berlin with a wall, blocking the flight of East Germans refugees into West Germany. The East German government ordered the destruction and removal of roadways along the wall. This created wide expanses of open land that became a death zone for those attempting to escape by going over the Berlin Wall. The wall divided Berlin for nearly three decades. Official demolition of the wall began on June 13, 1990, and ended in 1992.

Because of the footprint of the wall and the buffer land along the wall, the removal of the wall created pockets of open space and undeveloped land in the heart of the city. Since 1992, some of the land has been used to create unique memorial spaces to those who died attempting to escape from East Berlin and memorials to those murdered during World War II. Commercial and residential development has been guided by Berlin's sustainability plan. However, pockets of undeveloped land still exist. One such stretch of land exists, and it runs the length of Germany. It is the famous so called "German Green Belt." Since the fall of the iron curtain and the Berlin Wall in 1989, Germany has turned the border strip between former East and West Germany into a nature preserve. This unique area is home to hundreds of species of animals, many of which are almost extinct. To find out more about Germany's Green Belt, watch this short [video](#).

The idea behind *Prinzessinnengarten* is simple, use open space in cities to grow food for city dwellers. Unlike fixed garden spaces that depend on on-the-ground soil beds, *Prinzessinnengarten* is mobile. Crops are grown in food-grade containers, rice sacks, and discarded crates. Container planters can be placed on top of asphalt and concrete surfaces,

eliminating the need for removal of those surface materials. The cafe, bar, and storage sheds are housed in repurposed shipping containers. During the winter, the garden can move indoors to a large abandoned warehouse and cultivation can continue (*Prinzessinnengarten*).

### **Evaluate**

- Identify examples of sustainable practices used in the garden.
- Explain why your examples represent sustainable practices.

Add examples of sustainability actions that you identified to your [\*Chart of Berlin's Sustainability Goals\*](#).