

IDEENWERK creative engine**1 | Initial Situation and Objective**

Speichersdorf boasts a significant industrial and artisanal heritage. For decades, the town was a vital economic hub in the region, thanks in large part to its strategic role as a railway junction and the establishment of the internationally renowned porcelain manufacturer Rosenthal. Rosenthal not only shaped the town's economic development but also played a key role in forming its cultural identity. However, the upcoming relocation of Rosenthal's production abroad in 2025 represents a profound turning point. With the loss of this central employer, a defining element of the town's history and identity also disappears.

At the same time, new opportunities are emerging in terms of urban development. Plans for a carfree town center and innovative housing concepts are creating attractive conditions, particularly for young families looking to settle in Speichersdorf. Nonetheless, the loss of economic magnetism is strongly felt. Against this backdrop, the vacant community hall from the 1960s gains renewed significance. Its central location, solid structural condition, and distinctive architectural character offer tremendous potential for forward-looking transformation.

The goal is to convert the hall into a multifunctional center that both honors the strengths of the past and provides fresh momentum for a creative, future-oriented development. The new space is intended to offer young artisans, founders, start-ups, and creatives a platform a vibrant hub for exchange, collaboration, and innovation. The reimagined Werkhalle will become a crucible of creativity, redefining regional identity and stimulating both economic and social dynamics.

2 | Working with the Existing Structure

The current structure of the community hall is ideally suited for sustainable repurposing. Its spacious layout and robust construction provide excellent conditions for adaptive reuse. Central to the design is a respectful and thoughtful approach to the existing building. The structural framework, stairwells, and terrain are preserved and seamlessly integrated into the new concept as valuable elements. However, functional shortcomings are also evident upon analysis. The entrance is inadequately designed, and access limited solely to the first floor significantly impairs the building's connection to public space, making it feel isolated and uninviting.

3 | Urban Integration and Architectural Transformation

The building's architectural core is retained and forms the backbone of the redesign. Targeted interventions enhance the building's presence within the urban fabric. A newly created plaza on the east side establishes a clearly defined public space, anchoring the project visibly within the townscape. A redesigned main entrance on the eastern façade provides a prominent point of access and improves visibility and accessibility for visitors. On the south side, the ground floor opens toward an adjacent park, creating an inviting space for a café or restaurant overlooking greenery functioning independently from the workshops as a social meeting point. Partial removal of the ceiling above the former basement level also enables barrier-free access at street level and strengthens the building's connection to its surroundings.

On the north side, the replacement of glass blocks with large-scale windows introduces new visual transparency, blurring the boundaries between interior and exterior spaces. The removed glass blocks will be reused inside the building to preserve its historic character while adding new design accents. A timber structure will be added to the interior, allowing flexible

partitioning of the hall into smaller workspaces. This modular system ensures adaptability to future needs while establishing clear spatial organization.

4 | Usage Concept

At the heart of the new concept is the Werkhalle on the ground floor, which spans all three levels of the building and creates an impressive spatial effect. This central hall will accommodate a wide range of activities from large-scale artisanal or artistic projects to exhibitions and public events. Facing the park, a café open to all will foster informal interaction and offer a welcoming space for visitors. Adjacent to it, a retail area will showcase and sell goods produced in the workshops.

The first floor will house flexible workspaces that can be subdivided using folding walls and varying ceiling heights, allowing for diverse working conditions. The structured layout will create dedicated zones for different crafts such as woodworking, ceramics, textile design, 3D printing, or artistic production. Mobile workbench modules will allow for spontaneous reconfiguration of space as needed. The second floor will offer space for start-ups and rentable co-working areas. These will feature light partitioning and direct visual connections to the workshops below. Shared amenities such as an open kitchen, communal lounges in stairwells, and outdoor seating areas will be spread throughout the building. The close proximity of the different functions will encourage informal exchange, short distances, and productive synergies.

5 | Climate Concept and Sustainability

A core principle of the project is the resource-conscious preservation of the existing structure. In line with sustainable building practices, the design avoids unnecessary demolition or land sealing. The energy strategy is based on intelligent thermal zoning. By adding a secondary interior façade layer, heated core zones are created within the building, while the central hall remains unheated. This approach significantly reduces energy consumption and preserves the building's distinctive appearance, as external insulation is unnecessary. Only sustainable materials such as wood and ecofriendly insulation are used. Existing elements like the glass blocks are repurposed, and the building is supplemented with a rooftop photovoltaic system, greywater reuse, and a green roof that enhances biodiversity and serves both ecological and climatic functions.

6 | Development Perspective

The new Werkhalle is envisioned as a dynamic development hub at the heart of the town. Start-ups and young businesses can establish themselves here and, as they grow, gradually expand into the vacant buildings of the former Rosenthal factory. The location also holds great potential for partnerships with universities and educational institutions in Bayreuth, Hof, Weiden, or Nuremberg. Collaborations with research and training centers could lead to the creation of an interdisciplinary network that connects practice, academia, and regional expertise.

The Werkhalle is meant to be a place for everyone-open, accessible, and inclusive. Beyond professional users, it is also aimed at local residents, school classes, and community groups. Open workshops, courses, and cultural events will provide low-threshold opportunities for participation and encourage active involvement. Thus, the former community hall will become a vibrant place of shared action, learning, and creation a space rooted in the local community with a reach that extends far beyond.