

# Innovation Inspiration

## Perspectives and visions

Lord Mayor Dr. Siegfried Balleis and Economic Advisor Konrad Beugel  
about Erlangen as a business location



*Focussing on the future of Erlangen as business location:  
Lord Mayor Dr. Siegfried Balleis and Economic Advisor Konrad Beugel.*

### What is the reason for the special attractiveness of Erlangen as business location?

**Dr. Siegfried Balleis:** In the competition to attract business Erlangen has two unique features. On one hand the confidential exchange of ideas between research and business, based on its tradition as university city and the importance of Siemens. On the other hand Erlangen has an incomparably large number and variety of companies, institutions and qualified employees in the area of medical engineering and health.

**Konrad Beugel:** In addition, the municipality not only fosters the exchange of knowledge, but creates reliable conditions for a climate friendly to company founders. As partner of medium-sized business, the economic development office in Erlangen advises and provides assistance in planning and approval matters, informs about promotional programmes and

offers industrial space – This offer is directed quite expressly not only to the medical and high-tech industry, but, within the meaning of commercial diversification, also to decision makers in all forms of trade and industry.

**Balleis:** Yet also with regard to "soft location factors", the city has shown special far-sightedness from early on. The quality of life is quite excellent in Erlangen: high purchasing power, optimum health services, decades of profiling as environmental city, unique cultural programmes, plus short distances between home, work and life – a combination that couldn't be better.

### What importance do you attach to the soft location factors?

**Beugel:** Following the general trend they will become increasingly important for business location. In the present competitive atmosphere a community cannot stand out against the competition solely by allocating land for commercial use and favourable rates of assessment. It must work hard at offering a comprehensively attractive living environment for the new company – not only towards the company itself, but also for future employees and their families.

**Balleis:** A concrete example of our commitment: The policy in Erlangen has been for a long time in favour of an "alliance for the family". Among other things it provides for extending the availability of high-quality day nursery facilities in co-operation with local business, or else of developing flexible models for part time work and working at home. In this way highly qualified employees with children can remain in their companies and combine profession and family in the best possible way. Such a concept has just been put into practice at the Fraunhofer