

A FREE SPACE CONTEXTUALIZATION TOOL

Planning the unplanned nature of free space

PREFACE

With this report, my graduation project is coming to an end, and with it my time as an Industrial Design Engineering student at Delft University of technology. With this thesis for the Msc. Strategic product design I conclude this milestone.

This thesis was made possible by the Expedition Free Space, as part of the Municipality of Amsterdam. I would like to express my gratitude to all the members of the Free Space team; Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Nasiem Vafa, Eline Schrop, Alexander van Altena, Nick van Loon. From the first moment I joined the team I felt welcome. Your openness and willingness to share gave me new insights and created a pleasant learning environment. In addition, the willingness to participate in test moments has greatly supported my further research. A special thanks goes to Julian Jansen, my company mentor during this trajectory. Thank you for your supportive mentorship, enthusiasm, and willingness to answer all my questions (no matter how diverse or off-topic). Because of this, in a short amount of time, I learned a lot of new information. Thank you for your wisdom, this certainly impacted the quality of this project. Together with the freedom I was given to follow my own path, I experienced a pleasant way of coaching.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Bregje van Eekelen and Katrina Heijne, from the IDE faculty. I really appreciate your input and point of view on specific topics. Especially when at certain moments it felt that I was stuck, you knew how to put the finger on the sore spot. In this way I could continue with my process in a targeted and structured way. Also you gave me the freedom and enthusiasm to really follow my own path. In my point of view, this is the exact coaching you need from supervisors.

To close off, this project gradually became a project close to the heart. The places I have visited and people I have met, have inspired me and given me new insights that go beyond what is just described in this report. Still, I hope I managed to let that shine through between the lines.

Enjoy reading!
Asja Follmi
31-05-2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Free spaces are a characteristic of the Amsterdam identity. However, due to the scarcity of space and the pressure of the commercial market, these creative, free-spirited, subcultural places are pushed to the abyss. Amsterdam seems to be losing its distinctive and diverse character, making room for a monoculture. The municipality of Amsterdam wants to secure these places and create room for new spaces. But how do you ensure that the municipality actually protects these subcultures? Due to pressure on urban land, often available places are temporary, social projects of this kind are often used as merely urbanism, after which the surrounding area is gentrified. It does not take long before the initiative is pushed aside by commercial parties. It is therefore necessary to find permanent places for these initiatives. Embedding free space in the regular area planning will secure this permanency to some extent and will liberate space for this purpose.

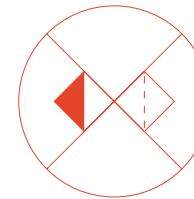
Free spaces find its origin in the squatters' movement. The social bottom-up places that often are a result of counterculture have an undefined and boundless character. When squatting became legally more difficult, free spaces made room for breeding places. These top-down structured places for creatives, were deployed to protect the cultural capital of Amsterdam. When land became vacant after the big recession, due to postponed urban projects, on the outskirts of the city room was created for more green agricultural spaces. Looking at history, it can be concluded that the character of a free space has changed over the years, alongside with the prevailing mindset of the people and politics. Within these societal changes, also the functionality of free space altered. The significance of a free space to the city therefore depends on the type of space and the initiative that takes place. Variable conditions on an individual, collective and contextual level influence how this place is implemented, and thereby generate value for the city. This clarifies the undefined, transformative character of free space. But in order to become part of the regular area planning, the question arises; how do you plan this unplanned nature of Free Space?

Framing or demarcating free space under certain policy goals or standardized procedures, detracts from the multifunctional and hybrid character of free space. In addition, it reduces the chance of free implementation by bottom-up initiators. A free space changed through the years, through the day and through the eyes of the beholder. For this reason, it is more interesting to get a comprehensive definition of free space, through contextualization. Contextual variables on an individual, collective and contextual level, bring understanding in the concept of free space. Contextualizing supports clarifying the specific function and value proposition, without steering on implementation. Currently, the municipal system, which is based on a single-purpose procedure and unilateral policy goals, is not designed to realize such customized processes. However, the free space department already provides customization. For this reason the department should be restructured into an interdisciplinary department that realizes frontier work between the system and the living world, and bridges within municipal policy goals to realize multi-functional, bottom-up space implementation.

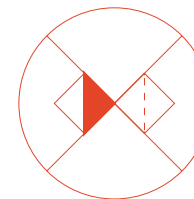
In order to realize these collaborations within and outside the municipality, it is important to gain shared understanding about what the place has to offer. The contextualization framework, where variable conditions on the three levels help to map the possibilities of the place. In a contextualization workshop, where a simulation of the actual project is imitated, allows to gain insight into these possibilities. The initiators who form a collective give substance to the place during this game, based on individual ambitions that come together in shared values. These shared values are what bind the collective and form a good foundation for covenant agreements. To make these values workable, a multi-value format has been created. Within this format, the multifunctional character of a free space is guaranteed through testing initiatives simultaneously on the basis of several values, instead of purely on a single functionality; value contextualization.

Contextualizing free space and establishing the inherent values of initiatives is a new mindset within the municipality, and opposed to the current rectilinear test frameworks. However, in discussions with external parties, these current assessment frameworks often turn out to be the bottleneck for bottom-up initiatives, which cannot be captured in a framework. There is therefore a need for new methods, contextualization can play a role in this transition. To make the tool implementable and actionable, a digital tool in the form of a workshop in Miro is created. This allows the municipality to test the toolkit further while making it open and accessible to possible external parties. In this way, the tool can be used in future projects, while data can be generated and stored quickly in order to identify patterns. This is a stepping stone to a possible open source free space mapping tool.

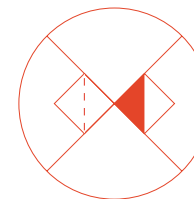
EXPLORE



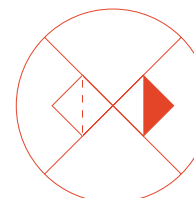
REFRAME



CREATE



CATALYSE



READING GUIDE



PROCESS OR APPROACH

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- Approach for the four main sections
 - Systemic Design Method approaches



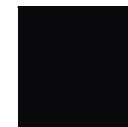
MAIN CHAPTER

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- Main chapters are based on the Systemic Design Method



SUB CHAPTER

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CONCLUDING SUMMARIES

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- Not included in every chapter



CO-CREATED CONCEPTS

- This color defines concepts composed in collaboration with Free Space Department



DESIGN CONCEPTS

- This color defines designed concepts
- also written concepts (e.g. design brief)



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1. INTRODUCTION

Free space, places that are known to many for their free-fighting perception. With its origin in the squatters' movement where these places were created organically, free spaces have an undefined character. For one, the places are a symbol of counterculture and a reference to a past of conflict. For others, the places are a form of community and a sense of home. These places marked by perception differences therefore have abrasive relations as a result.

Free spaces that have defined Amsterdam's distinctive character, threaten to disappear. The city that used to be a pristine amalgam of unplanned subcultures irrevocable turns into a commercialized and planned monoculture. The municipality feels the need to protect these places and to provide space for new initiatives. They claim to offer space for counterculture, but actually deprive it from its true value and definition as soon as they aim to facilitate it.

How probable is the realization of these undefined and multifunctional spaces, by a system that is based on unilateral policy goals and single-purpose procedures. In a country where every square centimeter is planned and assigned a destination plan, is there even a place for the unplanned?

1.1 PROJECT CONTEXT

STAKEHOLDERS

This project is conducted in collaboration with the Municipality of Amsterdam. The project is executed under the direction of Expedition Free Space, part of the department Nieuwe Opgave (new assignment), and under supervision of Delft University of Technology - faculty of Industrial Design Engineering.

INITIAL PROJECT SCOPE

The scope of the project concerns free spaces in the context of Amsterdam. Free spaces find their origin in the squatting movement, where socio-cultural places organically arose bottom-up with their unstructured nature. This gave room to experimental and creative activities, and allowed community-forming. Free spaces contributed to the emergence of an interesting and cultural-rich city, with a vibrant nightlife. They form the back-drop of the socio-cultural heritage of Amsterdam, and gave the city its recognizable distinctive character, where there is room for different groups, subcultures, and abrasive counterculture.

Free spaces can be recognized by their social, cultural or ecological, but moreover multi-functional appearance. The places are (semi-)public and often involved in socio-cultural purposes such as; art, (night)culture, activism and movement, experimental living and working, sustainability, ecology, and food production. The places have a non-commercial focus and therefore do not offer economic contribution to the city. The places essentially bring cultural and social values; they contribute to diversity and connection. They make neighborhoods more vital, colorful, social, and creates a sense of belonging and ownership to the residents. These places give room for people to take initiative, experiment, reflect, and commit to social goals. Therefore they are of great social value (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020).

Free spaces are: **open, public, non-commercial, socially involved, democratic, transparent, inclusive, collective, autonomous, and multi-functional.**
(Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020)

Despite the socio-cultural value free places offer to the city, their existence is under pressure, the Amsterdam free spaces threaten to completely disappear. Space in the city becomes increasingly scarce due to densification and rising ground prices. In a city that is determined by the capital market, non-commercial initiatives that are not driven by profit are not able to find a rightful place. Tenants, small entrepreneurs, craftsmen and associations are pushed to the outskirts of the city. While everything alternative is being swallowed by urban renewal, the famous fringes of Amsterdam are quickly disappearing.

The municipality however recognizes the socio-cultural value of free places, and therefore sees the urgency to protect these places. The coalition agreement of 2018 stated: "the fringes of Amsterdam need to be protected and space for counterculture should be made." As a reaction to this statement the Municipal Executive decided in July 2019 to protect existing and pressured free spaces and make new space available for this purpose, whereafter the 2020/2021 Expedition Free Space was formed. This Expedition is responsible for experimenting with this action of facilitating the bottom-up initiation of free spaces.

With the Free Space Expedition it is aimed to actively involve citizens, creatives, and (neighborhood) collectives in the interpretation and programming of these spaces. Within this process it is important to ensure that initiators are given the actual freedom to be creative and actively plan, create and manage their initiatives ensuring autonomy. This involves a high-level of participation between the municipality and the initiators, asks for lowering barriers and good communication and translation between system- and living-world. For example the fundament for a good collaboration is clearly defined roles and responsibilities.



INITIAL PROBLEM DEFINITION

The municipal processes however make the realization of these bottom-up initiatives complicated. The bureaucratic system that is based on prevention and the elimination of all uncertainties, makes it almost impossible to initiate something for which there are no standard formats. Many initiators encounter resistance from legislation and regulations when trying to realize their initiatives. Furthermore, single-purpose procedures and unilateral policy goals complicate the realization of these multi-functional places.

The communication and the negotiation between the municipality and initiator is often difficult and slow. Permit or license application processes are bureaucratically complicated and time-consuming. The creatives who invest their precious spare time in an initiative are discouraged and deterred by this. This can result in a tense relationship between top-down and bottom-up structures, as well as intermediate organizations. Furthermore, a history of free space evictions and violence between police and free space makers resulted in an abrasive relationship between possible initiators and the municipality. Free space makers claim that the municipality cannot facilitate free spaces and counterculture. Municipal facilitation deteriorates the truthful definition of where free spaces and counterculture actually stands for; free from the system and municipal interference.

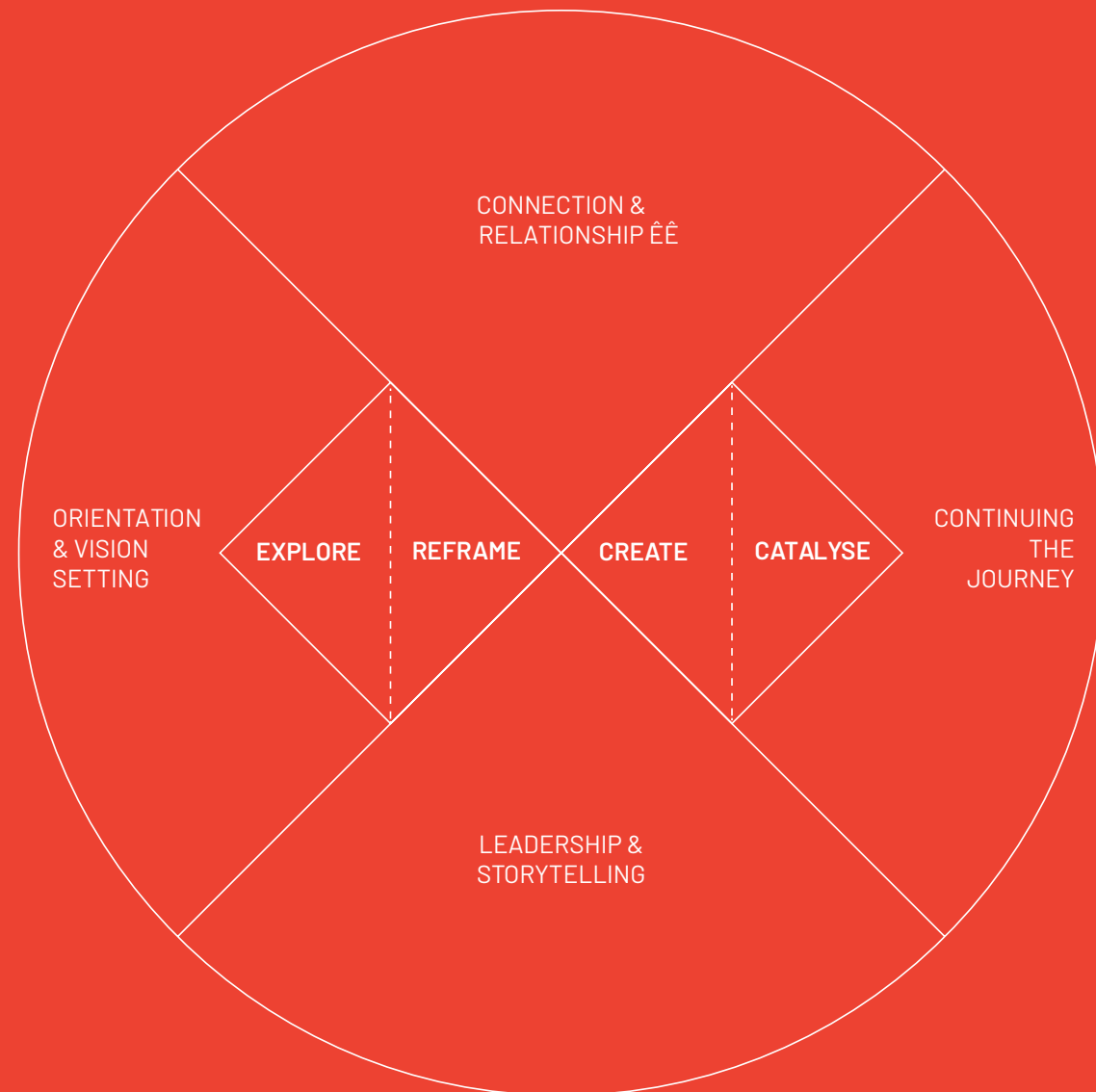
The municipality aims to facilitate the creation of free spaces and make room for counterculture. However, the carefully planned system-world of the municipality is at odds with the messy and dynamic living-world of the bottom-up initiators. There is a paradox between the unregulated nature of a free space and the active regulated role the municipality wishes to fulfill. The challenge for the municipality is to guarantee the creation of free space without steering on implementation and disturbing the organic process of the creation. Therefore the main question is; how does one plan the unplanned nature of free space.

Initial research question

The purpose of this thesis is to understand the underlying problems within this complicated collaboration between municipality and initiator to eventually define a strategy that supports these collaborative processes and enable the municipality to plan the unplanned. Therefore, the research question is; how can the municipality plan the unplanned nature of free space?

“How can the municipality **plan the unplanned** nature of Free Space?”

1.2 PROJECT APPROACH METHODOLOGY



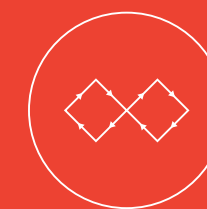
SYSTEMIC DESIGN FRAMEWORK

A project on governance level often concerns networked problems with a high complexity and therefore asks for a systemic approach. These systemic problems, also known as wicked problems, are often ill-defined, multi-stakeholder, interconnected, and dynamic (Rittel, H. et al., 1973). The knowledge known is rather incomplete and could even be contradictory or paradoxical (Camilius, J., 2008) (Schaminée, A., 2019). Examples of these complex challenges are poverty, migration, or sustainability. In the case of this project the problem is less ambiguous and widespread, but still has a certain level of interconnectedness, non-rigidity and conflict of interests. This project concerns individual-state relationships, top-bottom participation, and more concrete handling of countercultures and the emerging monoculture. Systemic Design focuses on optimizing and re-designing systems created by humankind and therefore integrates system thinking and human-centered design (Jones, P. H., 2014). It aims to design towards sustainability at environmental, social and economical levels.

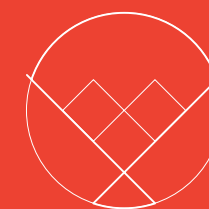
The main methodology to structure the project approach therefore is the Systemic Design Approach. This method is based on the design method the Double Diamond, where the framework is renewed and the four stages are renamed (explore, reframe, create, catalyse). However, it keeps the core premise of divergent and convergent thinking. The framework uses design to address complex systemic challenges, while recognizing that the thinking process is not linear, working with these challenges. Furthermore, it underlines the importance of invisible activities: orientation & vision setting, connections & relationship, leadership & storytelling, and lastly continuing the journey (Design Council, 2021).

Following the Systemic Design Framework the project process can roughly be linearly described as follows; explore, reframe, create, catalyse. However, in reality often these processes are looped back and forth. This event is also known as the co-evolution of problem and solution (Dorst, K., 2020). It is based on the fact that complex problems are constantly moving and evolving, and so are the corresponding solutions. In the process of framing the problem or solution, surprising elements can be found leading to changes in the system resulting in a creative and iterative process. The invisible activities orientation & vision setting and continuing the journey however form a clear back and tail of the process.

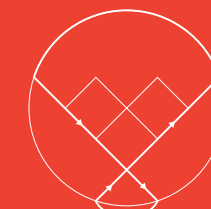
Ways of working



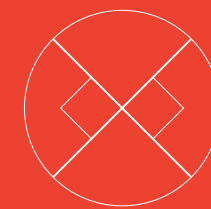
DIVERGENT & CONVERGENT



ZOOMING IN AND OUT

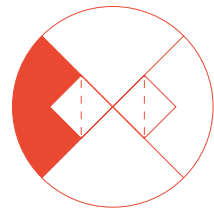


DISRUPTING & REMAKING



RESOURCING 'INVISIBLE ACTIVITIES'

1.3 ORIENTATION & VISION SETTING



Before the start of the project it is important to understand the aspirations of the team you are working with. According to the Strategic Design Approach, to start orientation one should understand people's personal connections to the work, personal values and team values, and the motivation of the project. This will give more clarity about the bigger system and the context the team is operating in. This concerns the history, the societal values and other assumptions their aspirations are based on (Design Council, 2021).

Creating shared values and a shared vision creates this common understanding and builds trust. It is important that these values and vision are clearly defined in a positive manner with a shared language and use of terminology, such that everybody can aim for it. Furthermore, these values and vision define where one should focus on. They are used as a guidance tool for the course of the project process, creating lenses or a certain frame of reference that allows to value and measure certain decisions.

To orient and define the shared values and vision, a co-creation session was set-up. The aim of the session was to identify personal and shared values in order to formulate a shared vision and mission. This helps to define the 'why' behind the Free Space Expedition; why is the department doing what it is doing and why is it important? A complete summary of the session; a thorough step-by-step program, and an overview of the results can be found (Appendix A).

CO-CREATIVE SESSION SET-UP

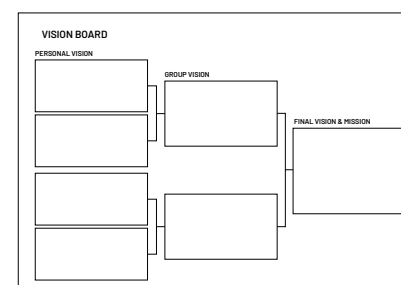
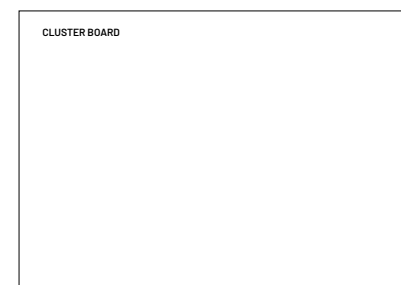
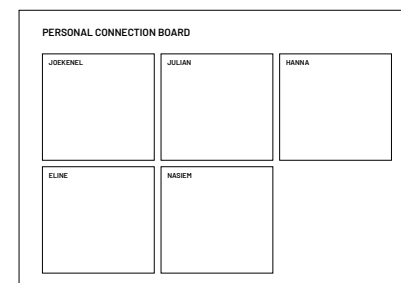
AIM Identify personal and shared values to formulate a shared vision and mission

WHEN Thursday December 2nd - 15:00 - 17:30
WHERE Municipality of Amsterdam - Weesperplein 8
WHO Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Eline Splinter, Nasiem Vafa, Hanna Blommers

FACILITATOR Asja Föllmi

SETUP

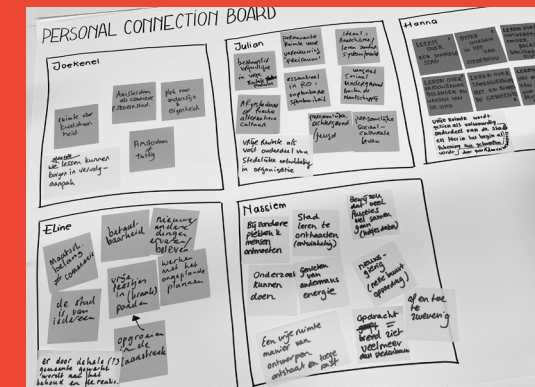
- 1 Define personal values: exploring the underlying personal connection to the project in the form of values
- 2 Define shared values: clustering personal values to identify commonalities and transform into shared values
- 3 Define vision and mission: translating the most important shared values into a group vision and mission statement



1.3 ORIENTATION & VISION SETTING

RESULTS & INSIGHTS

A brief summary of the personal and shared values that led to the creation of a vision and mission statement are described underneath.



Personal values

Although the personal connection to the work was fairly different per person; the backgrounds, expertises, and the answers to the question 'when will the expedition be successful to you' were diverse, the team ambitions are reasonably aligned. The different answers on the question 'when is the expedition a success to you' reflect the different personal connections towards the work people in the team are doing.

The goals of the expedition can be roughly divided as follows; internally in the department creating a working method or best practices, internally in the municipality creating a shared consensus and a mindset change, or more holistically starting a transition or shift in how we design and plan the city.

Shared values

The personal values were clustered into the following eleven shared values; resistance, accessibility of space, accessibility and affordability, identity of Amsterdam, human capital/soul of the city, creativity and diversity, anti-system, justice and fairness, customization, soft and human-sized city, and holistic.

These values were translated into a vision statement and subsequently used to formulate a mission statement.

Vision & mission

From the session it can be concluded that the Free Space Department values citizen-participation and they think that any citizen should have the opportunity to be involved in shaping Amsterdam. Their philosophy is that planning free space can realize this involvement. They aim to support this belief by creating space for active initiators and enhancing accessibility.

The expedition is successful when:

- "We can secure lessons in a follow-up approach"
- "Free space design is created and applied."
- "free space is a permanent part of the urban development in organization."
- "The entire municipality is working together on the preservation and realization of free space."
- "Free space is seen as a fully-fledged part of the city (by the municipality of Amsterdam and residents) and this is taken into account from the start."

The shared values can be summarized as follows:

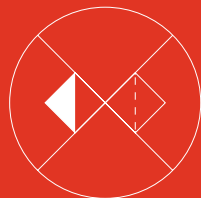
- **The people:** the identity and distinctiveness of Amsterdam is determined by the residents, not by the system. Creativity, diversity and inclusiveness are important.
- **The city:** a healthy city is a city in balance, both vulnerable and resilient, and accessible to everyone at every level.
- **The approach:** a soft city with a human scale that is fair requires a holistic approach and customization.

Vision statement

The city of the future is a network of places and people where everyone can shape the city in a sustainable and free way.

Mission statement

Linking system and living environment by making (physical) space accessible, where safety is guaranteed and thresholds are lowered.



2. EXPLORE

This section describes the explore phase, a phase of thoroughly analyzing both in depth and width. It focuses on exploring the system, the context in which it is operating in and what problems (may) occur. This phase involves information gathering from different perspectives to determine the root causes of the problems. Information from different angles and lived experiences helps to understand relations within the system. This phase aims to identify opportunities based on internal resources and external factors and define a potential and prospective future. Since it is essential to start with making and testing as soon as possible, the explore phase does not only consist of research. Creating a prototype and testing this will help identify the structure and reveal the more extensive system (Design Council, 2021). The explore phase focuses on the following steps, on which the research approach is based.

- 1. Understand the existing system and the context it is operating in.** How is the current structure originated, on what assumptions is it based on, what are the used approaches, and how did previous frameworks come about? What are the contextual factors and external influences on the system that may bring change within the structure.
- 2. Define the interrelatedness within different elements of the system.** Methods such as stakeholder-, system- and value network mapping help to explore how system-parts are related by means of processes and how stakeholders are connected. Important here is to map out intangible exchanges and invisible connections too, in order to understand driving forces (purposes), relationships, and power-dynamics within the system. More importantly, identify where the resistance is to change.
- 3. Identify opportunities by reviewing the system, the relations within and scanning external factors.** What are the existing resources, assets, and knowledge of the team? Where are they lacking? What are underlying challenges and problems and how are these affecting the system? Eventually, identify opportunities by understanding how external influences have an impact and where the system could improve.

2.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach is drafted based on the explore phase of the Systemic Design Approach. As mentioned before, the exploration phase consists of gaining insights and the aim to understand the following three elements; the system and its context, the interrelatedness within the system but also external causal relations, and identifying challenges and opportunities. Therefore, the research approach is divided into three parts.

RESEARCH APPROACH PHASES

1 Literature research

The first part of the research approach aims to understand the system-context by doing literature research. This literature is focussed on analyzing the past, present and future context the Free Space Department is located in. This contains understanding the origin of the system; why is the current structure developed. Identifying contextual and external factors that influence the system. The Backview Mirror method is a future study method that uses past and present events and their cause-effect relationship to predict the future. The future is not absolute, but dependent on nested preoccupations and biases. Therefore, this method relies on qualitative analysis of the past and extrapolation of trends. By doing this, it is aimed to recognize links between past, present and future and postulate history to the future (Khakee, A., 1986). This predicted future will be supported with contextual factors such as trends (Mulwijk, E., 2020) and weak signals (Dufva, M. 2020). Scenario-writing is a future study method that helps concretize a predicted future that is rather relatively (Oomen, J. et al., 2021). Therefore, the predicted future will be made concrete in the form of three future scenarios (Schnaars, S., & Ziamou, P. L., 2001). These future scenarios are a first step in identifying possible opportunities

2 Research by Design

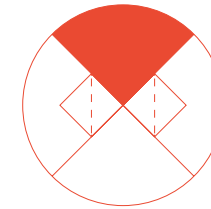
The second part of the research approach aims to understand interrelatedness and causal relationships within the system using the Research by Design method. A method in which, among others, sketching, mapping, i.e. designing is used as a tool of probe (De Queiroz Barbosa, et al., 2014). Internal co-creative sessions (B. N. Sanders, E., & Stappers, P. J., 2012) are used to collaboratively map out the system. Design methods such as stakeholder mapping (Newcombe, R., 2003), and value network mapping (Irani, S., 2017) are used to unravel the system and at the base of these co-creative sessions. In this way visualizing is used to identify and analyze the interrelatedness within the system and power-relations. These visualizations are the first prototypes that are used as a communicative tool which help to identify issues.

3 Qualitative research

The third part of the research approach aims to understand underlying internal and external problems by doing qualitative research. To identify these problems it is important to have a broad focus on various lived experiences and gather information from different problem owners. To gain insight in the internal challenges, the method Participatory Observation (Clark, A. et al, 2009) is applied. This method concerns actively participating within the team, to quickly gather information and gain understandance in the organizational structures and routines (Feldman & Pentland, 2003). Participatory observation is done by attending team meetings. The week-start meeting every Monday with the whole team and the Thursday meetings with the action-line four group. This concerns part of the team that focuses on one of the four actions within the expedition. Besides, approximately every two weeks a meeting with external (research) partners is attended. This meeting concerns advisory feedback from the academic party HvA and the Berlin-based free space creator Space Of Urgency, who follow the expedition closely. By actively attending these meetings it is aimed to become a native in the 'free space' field.

Furthermore, to gain insight in more external opinions from third parties and other stakeholders, other qualitative research methods are used. Gathering these opinions is done by interviewing free space experts, visiting free spaces, attent workshops or events to observe and experience, and lastly watch documentaries where free space makers and initiators raise their voice. With this it is aimed to understand underlying and mutual relations between municipality, third parties, and initiators and identify problems, challenges, and opportunities.

CONNECTION AND RELATIONSHIP



Creating connections and building relationships is one of the important invisible activities within the Systemic Design Approach. Systemic design and making changes within is a complex process that is never finished. One cannot do this alone. Therefore building relationships and empathy by bringing different stakeholders and perspectives together assures a more adoptable solution. The design process forms a shared consensus while embedding trust and hope.

Stakeholder mapping therefore is an important process. Collaboratively detect new connections with human and natural parties, bringing elements from within and outside the system together. New partnership can be imagined, new values created, and system changes can be set in motion.

The role of a designer is to connect and translate between these disparate parties. Sharing network, skills, and ideas asks for confidence and trust. Therefore, it is of importance to spend time with different communities and assure safe and neutral ground. Within this inclusive space there is a shared understanding and a shared language, supporting the individual confidence to be able to imagine and create.

For this engagement methods such as co-creation and open discussion are vital. Because of this, the research approach involves participatory observation, attending team activities, or participating in or organizing collaborative sessions within the municipality. Another important research aspect is attending workshops on free space sites and attending events where different communities come together to start an open dialogue in a safe manner on familiar ground.





SQUATTING PERIOD 1970 - 1985

START OF SQUATTING MOVEMENT ORIGIN OF FREE SPACES

Free places find their origin in the squatting movement. The years from 1970 to 1985 formed an important foundation for the free spaces of Amsterdam. Social and political shifts cleared the way for squatters. The squatters had an anti-system and anti-political stance, driven by anarchist ideas, originally focused on occupying vacant buildings in order to create housing. Besides, the squatter communities fought for the preservation of buildings and influenced the cities' cultural heritage. On the basis of collective philosophies, new communities were formed and a sub-society arose. The bottom-up creation of initiatives had free rein without municipal interference, which resulted in the free-spirited and unplanned nature of initiatives and organical creation spaces; free spaces. (S. Slager, 2008).

2.2 CONTEXT HISTORY

To understand where the Free Space Department is moving towards, it is important to define what the future holds and what their position will be in this. Looking back at history using the Backview Mirror analysis (Khakee, A., 1986), to identify cause-effect relationship and postulate this history to the future supports the prediction of possible future scenarios. This chapter explores how free space came into being, how they changed over the years, what factors may have influenced this, and understand the role of the municipality in this.

The history of free spaces can roughly be divided in three time slots: the squatting period from 1970-1985, the legalization period from 1985-2000, and the co-creation period from 2000-2018. The 1970-1985 period marked the start of the illegal free space creation through the squatting of buildings. The squatting movement had a culture that was driven by opposing and anarchistic ideas; a counter culture. The 1985-2000 period was characterized by the legalization of free places. This juridic process through for instance the BPA policy, free spaces were pushed into legal structures. New free spaces from then on were initiated legally, under municipal supervision and were named breeding places. The 2000-2018 period could be seen as the co-creation of free spaces. This new type of free spaces were more focused on urban greenery and in consultation with the municipality. Therefore these initiators were driven by a more co-culture mindset. A complete summary of the literature research regarding the context history can be found in Appendix B.



Photo top left squatters riots (Boyer, M., 1970)

Photo top right squatters Groote Keijzer (van Dijk, H., 1980)

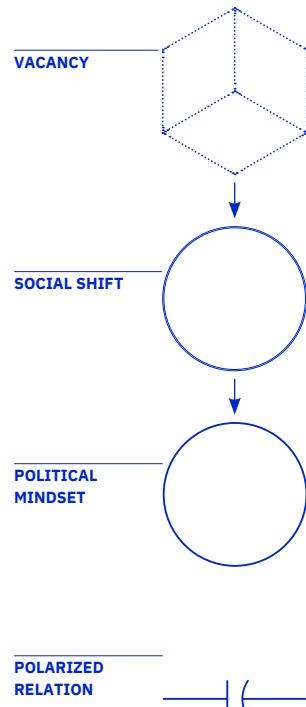
Photo bottom left free space Binnenpret (1985)

Photo bottom right police drives out squatters in the Vondelbuurt (1980)

SQUATTING PERIOD 1970 - 1985

INFLUENCING FACTORS

The following factors allowed the emergence and growth of this movement.



Vacancy

In the 1970's Amsterdam was a city in decay. A national policy of controlled sub-urbanization reinforced an outflux of residents between the 60's and 70's (Jansen, J., 2015). Industrial companies in need of more space, left the center for industrial sites on the outskirts of the city (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2001). This resulted in vacancy of city and factory buildings in the center of Amsterdam.

Social shift

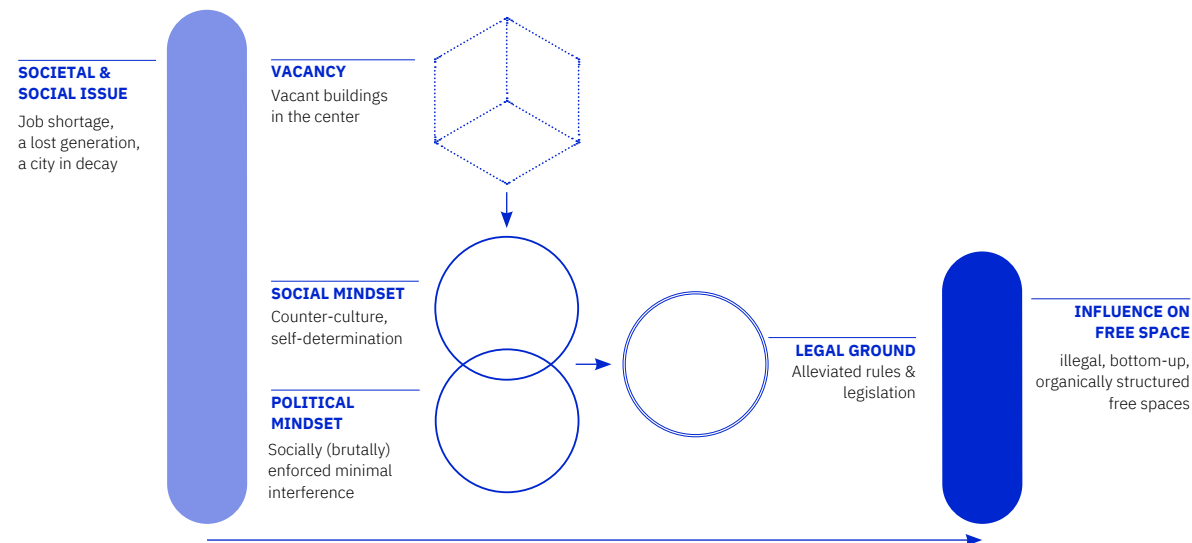
The 70s were tormented by a time where job and housing shortage formed societal problems. Social housing waiting lists were long and slow (Deben, L. & Sol, K., 2013). Young adults belonged to a 'lost generation' with a pointless future ahead. There was no prosperity in finding a job, living on welfare benefits or student loans, they had no hurry in completing their studies and therefore had a lot of time on their hands (Pruijt, H., 2003).

Political mindset

The squatting movement put the housing shortage at the top of the political agenda. 1971 marked a turning point in legal ground; the supreme court made summoning the 'illegale' residents extremely difficult, which made squatting legally possible (Deben, L. & Sol, K., 2013). The late 1970's relaxation of the social assistance law, made it possible that many young-adults could become squatters full-time (S. Slager, 2008). This resulted in a strong growth of the movement, with an estimated 20.000 squatters in Amsterdam in the early 80s.

Polarized climate - counterculture

The big squatting operation did not always go violentless. The conflicting relationship between squatters and authorities marked a polarized climate; a perception based on counterculture. Against the established order, the squatters were determined to break free from law and order (S. Slager, 2008). Their actions however, saved many historic buildings and neighborhood theaters. They improved the neighborhood, filled spaces with cultural initiatives and (neighborhood) activities, and turned the city into a livable and lively place again. Around 1980 re-urbanization started taking shape (J. Jansen, 2015).



SQUATTING PERIOD 1970 - 1985

SQUATTING DECLINED

Between 1980 and 1985 squatting declined due to two factors;

A shared consensus between squatters and municipality of realizing affordable housing

Re-urbanization increased the demand for low-income housing, putting affordable housing on the political agenda. Realizing affordable housing as quickly as possible, became a shared consensus between the municipality and the movement. Government funds, for example the HAT-regeling (1990), ensured the legalization of buildings. Under this scheme, buildings were renovated and furnished in the standardized manner of housing associations. Squatters would leave their buildings voluntarily to make room for construction work realizing housing. Their occupation of buildings became temporary. With as a result blurring the free-spiritedness of the squatters in the buildings (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2001).

The increase in affordable housing resulted in a decreasing housing urgency

Between the years 1980 and 1985 the number of free spaces created reached its peak, big squatted buildings made room for smaller free places. From the places squatted in that time, the percentage that is preserved is the highest (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2001). Around 1985 there were about 125 free cultural places in Amsterdam (J. Jansen, 2015). From the year 1985 marked a turning point; growth stagnated, buildings were still legalized, but there is less focus on the HAT-scheme. It can be stated that creating affordable housing has less urgency.



It can be concluded that vacancy and social-political ethos are factors influencing the emergence of squatting. Juridic changes created a new legal basis, while social issues were a driving force for residents to take matters into their own hands. The empowerment and self-determination of people formed the physical backdrop of the squat movement, while their free-spirited mindset is reflected in the free spaces. A shared consensus between the municipality and squatters to create affordable housing quickly, decreasing the demand for squatting, and a decline in the strength of the movement.

LEGALIZATION PERIOD 1985 - 2000

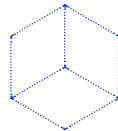
THE BIRD OF BREEDING PLACES CHANGING FREE SPACE

The time span 1985 to 2000 is a period of free space legalization. A new political no-nonsense mindset tightens regulations, resulting in a squatting decline. An influx of new residents and companies pushes alternative cultural initiative to the outskirts. Big cultural free spaces make place for smaller neighborhood oriented free spaces. At the end of the 90's a low cultural point was reached. In order to protect subcultures, new municipal policies that allowed the legalization of free spaces were initiated. From then on the interference of the municipality increases.

CHANGING LEGISLATION

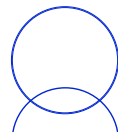
VACANCY

Buildings in other city districts



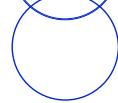
SOCIAL MINDSET

Shared consensus



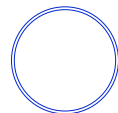
POLITICAL MINDSET

no-nonsense



LEGAL GROUND

Tighten rules



Vacancy

From 1985, economic growth is taking shape, resulting in explosively rising land prices. Re-urbanization accelerated in the 90s, pushing all non-commercial functions outside the city center. Amsterdam is becoming an attractive hot spot for young families and companies. In a fast pace former factories or warehouses are turned into trendy lofts for the new city dwellers. The urban projects are all about 'allure' while vacancy decreases leaving no room for squatting and the creation of free spaces (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2001).

Social political mindset

Between 1985 and 1995 a new social and political climate arose; a no-nonsense mentality. There is a cut-down in social expenses and housing grants. Additionally, the privatization of municipal services and housing corporations is the start of the new market thinking. The municipality found different ways to make squatting more difficult and take matters into their own hands. In big numbers squat watchmen were set in vacant buildings to prevent squatting. This could be considered the start of the municipal revanchism, reclaiming their lost territory (Pruijt, H.j 2012).

Legal ground - changing legalization

The entry of different laws resulted in a steady increase of evictions (Deben, L. & Sol, K., 2013).

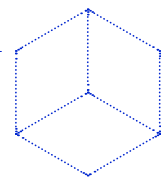
- In 1980 the anonymous summoning of squatters became legal, which was the first sign of an uncertain position for squatters that weakened over the years.
- January 1987 was the first time a group of arrested squatters were sued. According to Article 140, they were charged with being part of a criminal organization.
- This was followed by an expansion of the penal code with additional anti-squatting articles in 1993. An example of this is the 1994 introduced law that made it possible for landlords and property owners of squatted buildings to not have to start a civil procedure in court. They only had to prove that the building was in use, being renovated, or had not been vacant for more than a year. This new law was known as Article 429 Sexies Wetboek Strafrecht.

SOCIETAL & SOCIAL ISSUE

Steady economy, re-urbanization, affordable housing shortage

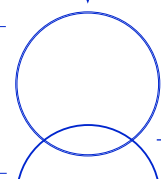
VACANCY

Vacancy in other city districts (not the center)



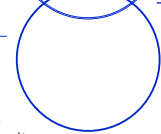
SOCIAL MINDSET

Shared consensus of creating affordable housing, squatting decline



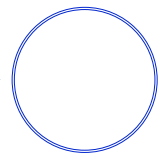
POLITICAL MINDSET

No-nonsense, municipal revanchism, no culture without subculture



LEGAL GROUND

Legalization of squatted buildings through BPA policy



INFLUENCE ON FREE SPACE

Legal, top-down structured breeding places



LEGALIZATION PERIOD 1985 - 2000

SQUATTING AND SUBCULTURE ARE FADING

The organizational strength within the squatting movement decreases and no new squatting waves come from the ground. Besides legal changes, the squatting decline can be explained by internal conflict within the squatting movement. From 1990 more free spaces are disappearing than new ones are created. As a result low-income families, artists, and creative initiatives are pushed to the suburbs (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2001).

Socio-political shift

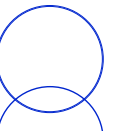
Around the turn of the century almost all subcultures were driven out of the center, leaving the city boring with an expanding monoculture. A shift in the valuation of free spaces took place. In the public debate residents speak up about the value of culture and art, and in times of economic abundance there should be room for this. Politicians came to understand the positive effects of subculture and the need for activities of the minority or marginal groups (Deben, L. & Sol, K., 2013). This increased the social pressure on politics towards the initiation and retention of free spaces.

Legal ground - legalization process

In order to turn the tide, in December 1998 the municipality initiated the Breeding Place Amsterdam Policy (BPA policy) that allowed the legalization of free places (Deben, L. & Sol, K., 2013). Under the motto of; let 1000 Free Spaces bloom. Currently, this BPA policy is still in effect and responsible for the creation of breeding places in Amsterdam. The following five years money was invested for the creation of breeding places, with the intention to create places filled with artists, workshops, small businesses, and housing. However, by only putting in money, and not the hours squatters put into the creation, it seemed unlikely that this policy was able to contribute to the structural creation of true free spaces.

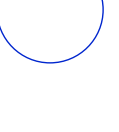
SOCIAL MINDSET

Demand for art & culture



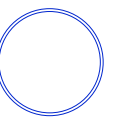
POLITICAL MINDSET

no culture without subculture



LEGAL GROUND

Start of legalization



FREE SPACE / BREEDING PLACE

The bird of breeding places

The municipal controlled breeding places are different from the illegal unrestricted free spaces. Pushing free spaces through the legal boundaries fades its true free-spirited nature. The original free spaces are bottom-up and developed over time, organically. Not controlled from top-down. Free space in the hands of the municipality loses its uniqueness and counterculture identity. Some free spaces were able to keep matters in their own hands, and chose another legalization process by buying themselves through a long ground lease arrangement. Those free spaces remained separate from municipal interference. Breeding places are a new more (top-down) structured form of free space.

This resulted in three types of places

- 1 Free spaces that got legalized through ground lease arrangements
- 2 Breeding places that started as a free space and got legalized through the BPA policy
- 3 Breeding places that originated as a breeding place from the start.

The prevailing no-nonsense mindset changes legal ground, resulting in a steady decrease in squatting and increase of evictions. Free space creation decreases in numbers and size. Subcultures were pushed out of the center. Previously free spaces were mainly located in large buildings within the canal belt. This made way for smaller more neighborhood-oriented free spaces in surrounding city districts. Social complaints about these fading subcultures pushes political response; the BPA policy is initiated to legalize free spaces and create new breeding places. Municipal interference in the creation and implementation of initiatives, is at the cost of the free spiritedness and counterculture identity of free spaces.

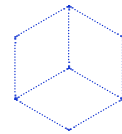
CO-CREATIVE PERIOD 2000 - 2018

RAPID URBANIZATION PARTICIPATION

The years between 2000 and 2018 are characterized by rapid urbanization and increasing pressure on urban land. The big recession puts these rapids on a pause, and puts its mark on societal and political decisions. New participation possibilities and type of space vacancies make place for new forms of bottom-up initiation and free space creation. This time can be considered a co-creative period for the creation of free space.

VACANCY

No vacant buildings, pressure on urban space



START OF GENTRIFICATION FADING SUBCULTURE

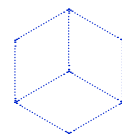
The turn of the century is a defining moment: rapid urbanization is taking shape, housing prices are mounting, and the pressure on urban land is high. These rising prices result in an influx of higher educated residents with an upper-middle income ensuing a socio-economic upward movement (Jansen, J., 2015). The first signs of a gentrifying Amsterdam become visible. Subsequently, low-income households and sub-culture is pushed to the outskirts of the city, forced to find affordable residency there. About 68 of the 125 free places are left without a choice to find a new place on the fringes of the urban area, while public functions of these places are diminishing. Fortunately the BPA policy fights against the disappearance of these places, accomplishing the realization of 60 breeding places around 2001, some of which were free places before.

THE BIG RECESSION SLOW DOWN

The 2008 big recession put the rapidly changing Amsterdam in a slow down. The city had a multidimensional dependency on the global crisis and was therefore affected hard by this recession, forcing the city to decelerate its globalization processes. (Engelen, E., & Musterd, S., 2010). At the time of the recession over 80% of the urban land was owned by the Amsterdam municipality (Arnoldussen, E., 2005). Local authorities were therefore able to control the housing-market to some extent; this market-interference ensured a high availability of social housing in the city during the recession. The recession did not have a considerable influence on the residential situation in Amsterdam. Tormented by uncertain times like a crisis, people are hesitant in moving into new houses (Dol, K., et al. 2010). It can be concluded that the recession did not provide the city with an excess of vacant buildings.

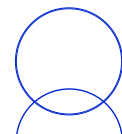
VACANCY

Vacant land



SOCIAL MINDSET

Co-culture, DIY



POLITICAL MINDSET

Privatization, economic recovery



Land vacancy

While the vacancy of buildings remains unchanged, vacancy of ground as a consequence of the financial crisis due to unused urban land. When funding for new urban projects was reduced, the economic crisis had put its mark on urban development. Especially the more difficult urban developments were affected, since return on investment was uncertain. Ambitious new developments on the outskirts of the city were avoided leaving a questionable sequel. However, necessary investment for infrastructure development continued (Engelen, E. & Musterd, S., 2010). As a result, gentrification had slowed down. Due to this postponement of big development projects, large areas of fallow land became vacant. This gave the municipality the space to involve residents and other participants in the urban planning and bottom-up initiatives.

Socio-political mindset

The recession put its mark on the Dutch regulatory system these years. The political mindset shifts its focus to economic-grown and therefore changes substantially. Privatization, liberalization and deregulation are taking more space in policymaking. The municipal interference is declining, with a relaxation of the rules by mortgage lenders as a result. Furthermore, the amount of owner-occupied housing is increasing. This early market-driven economic mindset marks the beginning of an Amsterdam characterized by a combination of neoliberal and state-led regulation regimes (Engelen, E. & Musterd, S., 2010).

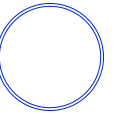
CO-CREATIVE PERIOD 2000 - 2018

Legal ground

In October 2010 the anti-squatting law was pushed through (Article 138a). From that point squatting was illegalized nation-wide. Only buildings that were vacant for 12 months or more, were allowed to be squatted. From 2010 to 2012 around 330 squatted buildings were evacuated in only five eviction rounds (Draaisma, J., 2021). From that point bottom-up and free space initiatives could only be realized under supervision of the municipality.

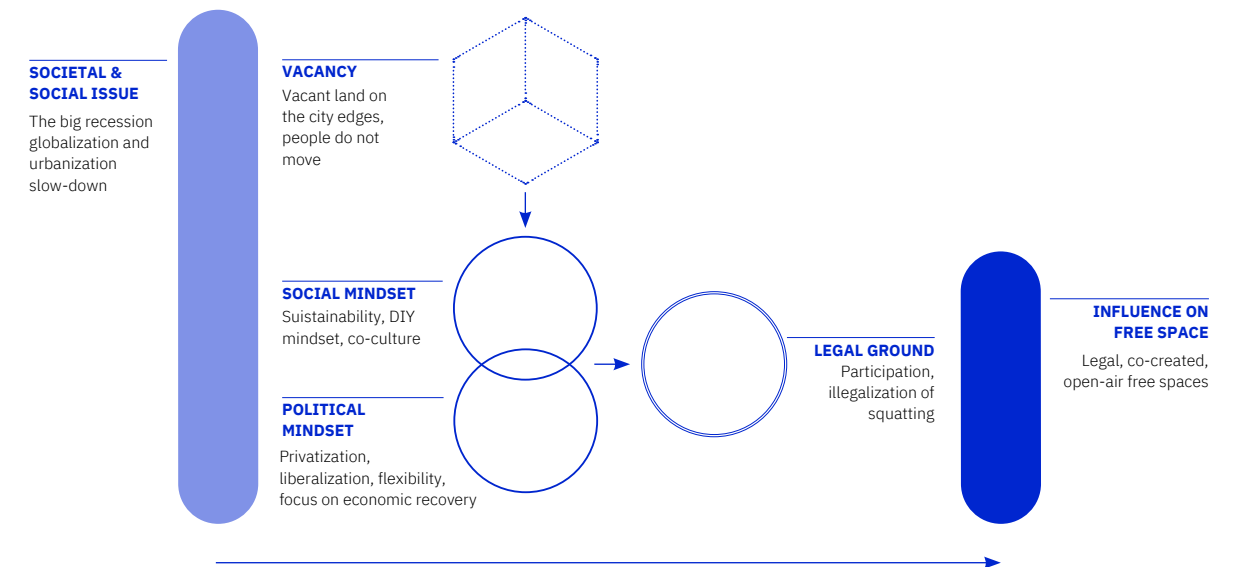
LEGAL GROUND

Participation, squatting, illegalization



Participatory society

The availability of urban land and the new political regime, resulted in new forms of free space initiatives. A new independent movement with a co-culture mindset and DIY mentality came from the ground. Between the years 2014 and 2018 multiple bottom-up smart-citizen initiatives were realized. Examples such as the in 2014 originated Noorderpark and the citizen-participation in Buiksloterham marked the beginning of co-culture atmosphere and an era filled with ecological citizen-initiation of vegetable gardens, urban agriculture and sustainability projects, leaving the city more green creating sufficient breathing space in the city. The advent of CPO (Collectief Particulier Opdrachtgeverschap, translated as Collective Private Commissioning) and self-built projects is characteristic for this DIY era. It can be concluded that a new type of initiator arose after the recession, influencing the creation of free space.



The pressure on urban ground in the center and the post-recession vacant urban land at the city edges, puts free spaces into a new form. Free spaces created in these times are often green, ecological and distant from the city center. Green agricultural and sustainable projects attracting new initiators. This sudden ground vacancy led to the involvement of citizens within the municipal urban planning processes. Pushed by digitalization, a DIY mentality within the citizens is growing resulting in a boom of professional-amateurs. The squatting illegalization, left the free space makers with no choice than to participate with the municipality. Post-recession can be seen as an era of participatory society, making room for experiment and self-building. A new type of initiator with a co-culture mindset arises, influencing free space creation.



CASE-STUDY BUIKSLOTERHAM HACKABLE CITY

The Buiksloterham project is a perfect example of a project-form from the DIY era; the Hackable City. This project-form focusses on participation between experts and non-experts from different areas. The collaboration consists of three levels; individual, collective and institutional, or more concrete citizens, professionals and local government institutions. This is where academics, urban designers, self-builders, and various organizations within the urban and policy domain come together to co-create and build neighborhoods. The Hackable city is a response to the self-learning and self-building mentality that is growing within the citizens and the digitalization and smart city trend of that time. The advent of social media made it possible for anybody to learn and self-teach anything. This led to people discovering DIY possibilities and becoming professional-amateurs. It can be concluded that the vacant pieces of land created a fertile ground for the emergence of this participatory society (Lange. M., Waal. M., 2016).

These active citizens and initiative takers brought new social and cultural values and creative solutions to the city. Within this bottom-up initiation citizens engage in building a community and making their neighborhood more livable. Citizens start sharing resources like tools, cars, and knowledge. But also more complex issues are taken care of. Such as; cater their own energy provision and generating environmental data. They consult open data sources and make creative use of new digital technologies in collaborative urban planning and management processes. Hence the term 'hacking', which refers to creative problem-solving using digital media. As a response municipalities assign urban district areas to experiment with this new form of city-making, under the name of urban laboratories or living labs. This by the government legitimized participatory society gives room for do-it-yourself while reducing costs (Lange. M., Waal. M., 2016). Unfortunately, those projects were often only for a temporary period of time and had to make place for other destination plans. While the economy was recovering, new profitable urban projects were initiated, globalization found its entry again.

CONTEXT HISTORY CONCLUDING SUMMARY

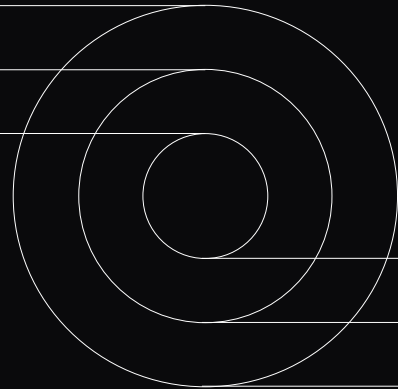
DEFISION OF FREE SPACES IN AMSTERDAM

The different types of free spaces can roughly be divided in three groups. Socio-cultural oriented spaces in the center, more neighborhood-oriented spaces in surrounding city districts, and green, agricultural-oriented spaes on the city edges.

CITY EDGES

CITY DISTRICTS

CENTER



CULTURE

NEIGHBORHOOD

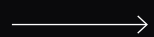
GREEN

TIMELINE



1970 - 1985

Squatting period
Big art, cultural, and social oriented free spaces in the center



1985 - 2000

Legalization period
Small neighborhood-oriented free spaces and breedingplaces in surrounding districts



2000 - 2018

Co-creation period
Green and ecological free spaces on the city edges

CONTEXT HISTORY CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Looking back at history, it can be concluded that free spaces are transformative and have a form that shifts over the years. The past of free spaces can roughly be divided into three different areas. The organically but illegally initiated free spaces during the time of squatting that are mostly located in the center. The top-down structurally steered legal breeding places during the legalization period, are mostly located in surrounding city districts. And lastly the sustainable and agricultural free space that originated in a co-created manner are mostly located on the city edges. These three different free space groups can be roughly divided by time of origin and placement in the city, but in reality they alternate and overlap each other, or find a parallel existence. A visual presentation of these different time-frames is shown on the left page. An approximate distinction is made on the basis of changing mindset, changing legal ground, and the placement of vacancy.

Free spaces are strongly dependent on the prevailing social and political mindset which are interrelated. This mindset influences the appearance and origin of free spaces. For example, how the space is initiated; legally or illegally, against the established order or under supervision of the municipality, organically from the bottom or structurally steered from the top. Often the social mindset is influenced by the contemporary situation. Societal issues such as job shortage, housing shortage, economic crisis are big events that influence the mindset of people and political focus. This is reflected in behavior, thoughts, and norms and creates generational distinction. Politics respond to societal issues whereafter, laws and regulations form the legal ground for initiatives and their initiators. This interdependence of social and political mentality devines the status quo.

Another external factor that influences the appearance and therefore the functionality of free spaces is the vacancy of space. Whether the location where the initiative is established is a building or a piece of land, influences the interpretation of the place and therefore also the eventual implementation of the initiative. The contemporary situation is also influencing this vacancy. For instance the land that becomes available during crises or the space scarcity due to housing shortages.

Therefore it can be concluded that there are three key influential factors that trigger this free space shapeshifting. free space is vacancy, socio-cultural and, political-juridical dependent.

Free Spaces are adaptive and:

VACANCY
DEPENDENT



SOCIO-CULTURAL
DEPENDENT



POLITICAL-
JURIDICAL
DEPENDENT





2.3 CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Looking back at history it can be concluded that different time periods have different types of free spaces as a result. This chapter focuses on identifying the contemporary situation and how this influences the creation of free space today, in order to postulate this situation to the future (Khakee, A., 1986). "The future is not an empty space but like the past an active aspect of the present." (Ivana Milojevic, 2013). The contemporary context focuses on the timephase 2018 till now (2022) and will be explained on the basis of the three influential factors; societal issues that influence the socio-cultural and political mindset that forms legal ground, and vacancy of space. For example the influence of Covid on the contemporary mentality and how this is reflected in the status quo; the behavior of people and the city. Furthermore, more specifically the situation within the city of Amsterdam will be under scrutiny to understand the contemporary problems the municipality is facing. This will give insight into the prevailing mindset within and Amsterdams space-vacancy. For this the environmental vision for 2050 is examined.

MONDERN-DAY MENTALITY 2018 - 2022

Modern globalized society finds its roots in a capitalistic system. Focused on economic gain, proceeds a prevailing mentality of short-sighted thinking based on temporary and flexibility. This is visible through different layers of society: in the workplace and the housing market. A mentality that is visible in the design of disruptive service innovations. The profit-focused mindset helped us through the recession and provided a well performing economy, but has some unpleasant side-effects that caused societal concerns. Parts of society, not only minorities, are affected by this. It magnifies the difference between rich and poor, precarisation of the middle-class and eventually drives society apart and results in polarization.

THE TREND OF TEMPORARY & FALSE-FLEXIBILITY

The big recession brought a new societal mindset with a refreshing view. This emerging participatory society believes that there is a solution for every problem as long as we work together. In these uncertain times resident and municipality co-create and came up with durable solutions. Sustainability is no longer a goat-wool-sock theme but a trend that left the city greener and more livable. More circular innovations come from the ground and a serviced based shared-economy is quickly taking shape within the cities. Shared services, shared mobility, co-owning is in itself a good principle against the ruling consumerism. However, shared economy innovations turned out to be rather disruptive than predicted beforehand. Platforms such as Airbnb and Uber taking over while destroying the current market. In the first years new services innovations do not focus on profit, rather the opposite. Money is put into providing the cheapest service possible to destroy competitors in the same market. At the beginning these companies mainly turn a loss, to eventually be the one ruling company left on the market; hence the term disruptive innovation strategies. Those shared and service innovations do not seem to care about the damage and consequences they cause. They have a rather short-term growth-focused mindset.

Precariat

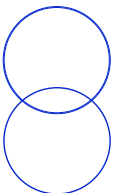
This temporary-focused mindset also influenced other parts of society. The temporary trend is adopted in both the workplace and the housing market and demands a flexible attitude from the people. Freelance and flexwork is suddenly the norm. Employment relationships became increasingly loose and a freelance-boom emerged. Legally they are self-employed but in practice they are just cheap labor for which applies 'for you ten others'. It could be argued that a whole new socio-economic class has emerged; the precariat (Bailey, J., 2013). A precariat is someone whose employment and income are insecure (Oxford Dictionary). This class does not consist of the unemployed or the low-working class. It could be argued that a precariat is someone who often tries to create a meaningful life for themselves (Oxford Dictionary). They live a precarious life, one takes no more than what comes. It could be argued that this is a voluntarily chosen way of working, however some have no choice. Employers increasingly make use of these cheap short-term workers to avoid additional employee costs. This results in a decrease in permanent jobs and long-term contracts.

Flex-working and temporary living

The temporary trend is also seen in the living situations of people, there is a forced flexibility in the housing market. Within the center of Amsterdam housing solutions are temporarily based, with a fast flow of residents. Finding something permanent becomes almost impossible, creating a false-sense of flexibility while actually there are no other options. Even though housing prices are mounting in Amsterdam, this is not visible on the influx of new residents. Urbanization is still taking place with the expectations that by 2050, 66% of the world's population will find its residency in urban areas (United Nations, 2014), this trend will continue over the coming course of years. Apparently, the city is still appealing for residents from outside the city, and it is still financially possible to find housing. This however is mainly due to the turnover in the rental housing market from permanent to temporary (Draaisma, J., 2021). As mentioned before, temporary housing became the norm both in rental of existing homes as well as new constructions of social housing. This is a result of the 2015 Housing Act and Housing Market Flow Act, a national government policy. This policy made temporary rental contracts possible on large-scale. In social housing the throughput of residents has a upper limit of five year residential, resulting in an outflux of young-amsterdammers. In addition, that year the statutory rent determination made it possible that rental properties with more than 30 square meters ended up in the free sector. The following few years the big money could run its course due to the free market that was created. With as a consequence a housing market with the only affordable living is temporary living (Draaisma, J., 2021).

SOCIAL MINDSET
Temporary, forced flexibility

POLITICAL MINDSET
Privatization and preventing



HOUSING CRISIS OR COMMODIFICATION

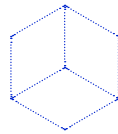
SOCIETAL & SOCIAL ISSUE

Housing crisis, middle-class poverty



VACANCY

Space scarcity



Even though housing is considered a basic human right, it has been commodified. Similar to money and land, it has a 'fictitious' form of capital whose value is based on future expectations (Harvey, D., 2013). In the housing market we could speak of extreme commodification or reification (Oxford Dictionary). Due to numerous production chain separations, products are detached from their producer and the labor that is put into. Eventually, detached from its rightful value, the market is based on commodified identities that pushes into consumerism (Somojiono, M., 2018). With a result that housing and land got this 'empty value' based on certain ideas and expectations, pushing neighborhoods into gentrification (Somojiono, M., 2018). Commodification does not only divide within cities, like the old class hierarchy. It also divides between cities, due to international capital flows and globalized cultures (Koessl, G. 2017) (Marcuse, P., 2016). Making this not only a nation wide, but also a global problem. Marcuse claims: "gentrification attracts higher-income households from other areas in the city, reducing demand elsewhere, and increasing tendencies to abandonment. In addition, gentrification displaces lower-income people, increasing pressures on housing and rents. Both abandonment and gentrification are linked directly to changes in the city's economy, which have produced a dramatic increase in the economic polarization of the population." (Marcuse, P., 2016, p. 196). This by the free-market created price increase pushes gentrification and spatial segregation, while intensifying the monoculture within the city.

The current housing crisis has a layered complexity. The prevailing property-based economy and the influence of the global capital and government policies reconfigures cities. Restrictions on social housing in favor of market-based renting results in an income from rent that exceeds economic growth and wages. This commodification of housing undermines the traditional middle and working-class hierarchy (Minton, A., 2017) also known as middle-class poverty. Where due to continuously increasing rents middle-class income is not sufficient anymore (Minton, A., 2017). It has unfolded as a problem where a generation of young adults will probably never be able to buy a house and experience house ownership in their lifetime (Oxford Dictionary). This so-called generation rent is where a whole generation is pushed to live in rental accommodations. Here is where the precariat socio-economic class lives in a constant fear of eviction and does not meet basic needs (Bailey, J., 2013). At the age of 27 young adults leave the city, simply because they cannot afford it anymore (Draaisma, J., 2021). These moving middle-class young residents leave the center filled with old upper-class residents or short-stay residents, such as students, expats or migrant workers. While at first the low-income working-class was pushed to suburbs, they are now pushed as far as Amstelveen, Zaanstad, and Almere. Currently, even the suburbs of Amsterdam are transforming into residential for the extreme rich, pursuing a monoculture and spatial segregation.

The prospect is that globalization and the short-minded growth mentality will push further price increase, gentrification, segregation, and therefore pushes division and inequality. The influx of new rich residents will repress adjacent neighborhoods. Building more housing will not fight this housing-shortage but exacerbate the housing crisis (Draaisma, J., 2021). Urban expansion puts pressure on surrounding areas, suburban nature and biodiversity. the decision of the current B&W of policy preservation, where they do not step in in buying more land for urban development, makes room for the private sector. With the result of big international project developers monopolizing the housing market and insanely increasing housing prices. The inward money flow in Amsterdam leaves the city just as quickly to countries such as America, China and India (Draaisma, J., 2021). Furthermore, the choice to not interfere has ensured that big investors such as Blackstone own many Amsterdam based properties. However, they only use these for speculation, resulting in hundreds of empty buildings.

It could be concluded that temporary and false-flexibility are prevailing principles. This results in a rapid flow of jobs, employees, homes and residents. Temporary living, such as students, expats, and migrant workers ensure a steady in and outflow of residents. There is a paradoxical trend going on; urbanization; the influx of new rich residents pushing gentrification. Suburbanization; the outflux of residents who are not able to pay the Amsterdam standards anymore. The free market and growth-driven mindset resulted in the commodification of housing, making living in Amsterdam almost unaffordable. The only affordable housing is temporary housing. This rapid flow of residents leads to a decrease in ownership and increasing degeneration. Gentrified city districts put pressure on deprived areas, causing spatial segregation and inequality. With as result; an anonymous, identity-less and divided city.



**HET
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DE DAM
12 SEPTEMBER 2021
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In the course of 2019, beginning 2020 the world was put in a time-out, due to the emergence of the Covid-19 virus. This virus unfolded into a global crisis which held the world in its grip for the following years. This big event and subsequently societal issues has an influence on the social and political mindset. How is this reflected in how we plan and build cities, in which manner are residents involved by the municipality, and therefore how free space originates and develops. Post-Corona left society divided and created a rather polarized climate. However, Covid-19 influenced urban planning in a more positive manner.

CHANGE OF MENTALITY

A world in a pandemic time-out started with a hopeful prospect; a mindset switch from economy-based to wellbeing-based (Baker, P. C., 2020). Even though the impact of Covid was tragic and catastrophically, there was a shared consensus that in times of crises great things are happening. Putting a world in time-out gave room to stand still and reconfigure the current course of business. For example how to face one of our biggest global enemies: the climate crisis. Reducing transportation usage during the pandemic resulted in a steep decrease of emission and air pollution. Closed borders restricted air traffic. Besides, daily car usage was cut-down due to the fact that people were restricted to work from home. This 'time-out' gave room and breathing space to rethink the current climate situation and reformulate climate goals. The fact that a small virus on the other side of the world had such a big global impact was undeniable. All nations had to face the fact that a chain is as weak as its weakest link. This gave the insight that big problems such as climate crisis, poverty, migration, inequality, and so on are not national but global problems. This pushed the growing geo-political mindset and created common-ground to collaboratively counter global challenges.

Short-lived mindset

Unfortunately, this was a short-lived mindset of which the opposite turned out to be true. Within the first months of Corona society solidarity had come to a new standard. This however returned quickly back to its normal behaviors patterns; individualisation of society. Respectfully, experts and researchers had claimed that a pandemic with such a mindset-shift will bring people closer together and create common ground to fight inequality. However, fast forward two years in the Corona-crisis, at the time of writing this, it can be concluded that Covid-19 did not fight but intensified inequality and division. The magnified difference between poor and rich, polarized society on different levels; left-right, vaccinated-unvaccinated, pro-con the political system, etc. Extremist ideologies such as populism, nationalism, anti-immigration, far left and far right that were already on the rise (Jordan, J., 2017), but got an extra push by these increased differences. Activism more often turns into riots and vandalism, which are the first 'weak signals' to the radicalisation that is arising. The housebound isolation, the emergence of deep fake and the accession of conspiracies that are roaming on the internet, has driven the state and people even more apart. Despite predictions otherwise, It can be concluded that trust and confidence in the public sectors has decreased rapidly, slowly fracturing the system (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020).

The hopeful and prospective claims about the livability of the metropolitan city; a more sustainable and humane center, did not turn out the way people had assumed. For example, the claim that tourism would radically decrease due to changing travel behavior. Or the claim of permanently decreasing car-usage since flex-working would be the new norm. Even though the pandemic still holds the world in its grip and travel is restricted to a certain extent, tourism has found its way back to the center of Amsterdam (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020). The same goes for car-usage and high-way traffic. Even though the urgent advice was to work from home in the Netherlands, far fewer employers and employees listened to the rules. Where in the first wave people strictly followed the rules, highways in the Netherlands remained almost unused. Now, after the third Corona wave, the car-usage is as good as back to pre-Corona-times. It can be concluded that Corona only slowed-down globalization for a short period of time and the mindset-shift to wellbeing was only on a temporary basis.

SOCIETAL & SOCIAL ISSUE

Corona crisis, pandemic, inequality

SOCIAL MINDSET

Fraternisation to polarisation, radicalisation

POLITICAL MINDSET

Controlled, build-in with policies

LEGAL GROUND

Bureaucratically layered, extensive rules and legislation

POST CORONA CITY SOFT AND HUMANE

Contrary to the rather negative prevailing mindset, on the municipal side some prospective mindset-changes have been pulled through. The awareness to focus on well-being rather than economic-gain has found its ways in the environmental vision 2050 of Amsterdam (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2021). This vision written in 2021 in the middle of the pandemic is called 'a human metropolis'. A vision that has a more holistic view compared to its predecessor: the in 2011 written environmental vision 2040 called 'economically strong and sustainable'. The insight that new methods have to be found for the problems that are becoming increasingly complex and intertwined is growing. With help from new digital methods these complex problems can be tackled. Currently the world is moving in its 2nd industrial revolution, where rapid digitalization of the global economy is taking shape. This transforms the way we design and plan the city. Municipalities however are still poorly equipped with smart technologies to provide this digital transition and create this new digital urban infrastructure, compared to third party experts such as architects, engineers, and urban planners. Municipalities increasingly get advised by smart marketing agencies to improve their mobility and services, reduce energy consumption, optimize new area development, and involve residents in city-planning (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020).

Little budget

Financially, however, post-pandemic there will not be much room to fully commit to this more social well-being approach. Since recovery of the local economy will top the priority list of local governments, the environment will not benefit from this. The power remained with the global financial system, resulting in minor to no change within land ownership, urban development and governmental environmental strategies to fight global warming. A threat could be that other social goals in urban development will be neglected. This is for instance already noticeable in the decision to cut the BPA policy budget. Other cultural and social policies and initiatives could also be affected in the corona aftermath. Therefore it is of importance to pay attention to this when digitalization is accelerated to recover from the Corona crisis (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020). Lessons can be learned from the post-recession innovations.

Paradoxical pathways

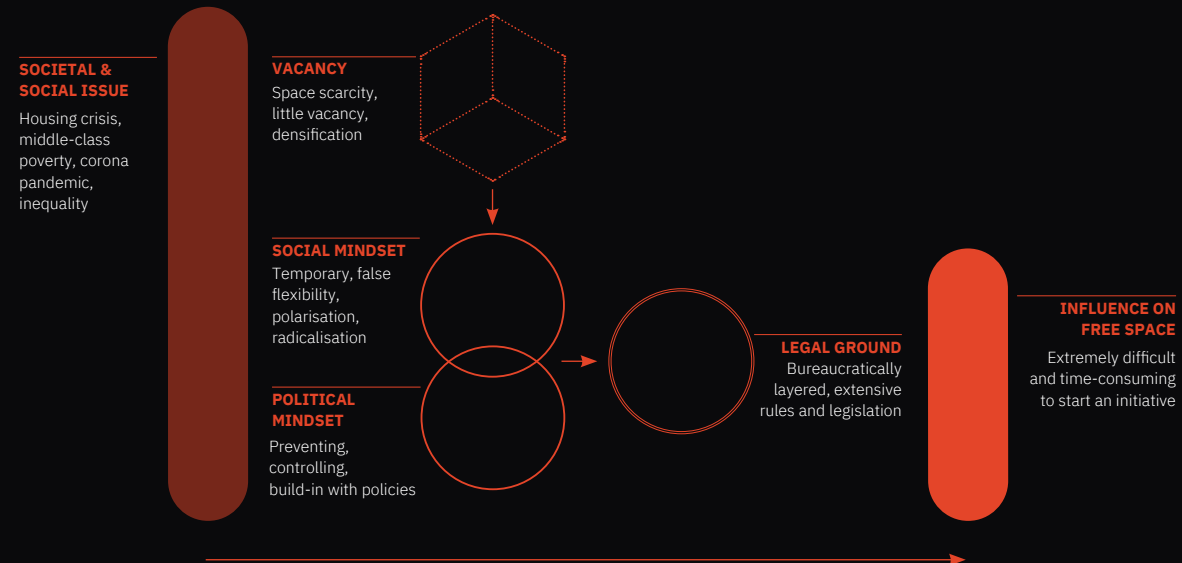
The post-corona city will follow its course on two paradoxical pathways; a focus on urban-densification, and a focus on a more human-scale city. Since property and housing costs are still on the rise, it is unlikely that the suburbanisation renaissance in the wider urban region will come to an end. However, pre-Corona the urban densification trend already took shape. Densification aims on building compact cities to counter urban expansion and save the green urban fringes. However, densification strategies often promote high-rise buildings and residential towers. High-rise buildings put pressure on the livability of surrounding areas and therefore lack a human-size focus. On the other side, more holistic urban strategies are on the rise. Shortly before Corona, Danish architect Jan Gehl wrote the Soft City methodology. In this book he defines (design) principles to realize human scale cities while safeguarding livability. A healthy metropolitan city should find balance between densification and city livability; creating more housing while sustaining space, urban greenery and promoting healthy mobility. Kunzmann however argues that: "Urban densification very much depends on smart technologies that allow and require smart management of urban complexity." (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020 p.25).

Also other methods and movements pre- and post-corona emerged that have a more holistic and humane point of view. Cities are more often faced with complex interrelated problems in need for holistic solutions derived from interdisciplinary collaborations. For example the New European Bauhaus. This method focuses on beauty, sustainability, and together. It is a creative and interdisciplinary movement that takes urban complexity into account. It aims to find solutions that balance between art, culture and science. It challenges us to revisit current processes and methods in a more sustainable, holistic and interdisciplinary manner. The New European Bauhaus mindset ties in well with the realization of free spaces. Furthermore, within the municipality of Amsterdam the awareness is growing that metropolitan areas are in need of sustainable and resilient but also humane and holistic solutions. These complex challenges can only be faced collaboratively.

INFLUENCE ON FREE SPACE

Extremely difficult and time-consuming to start an initiative

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT CONCLUDING SUMMARY



The contemporary status quo finds its roots post-recession in a capitalistic and neo-liberal mindset, where decision-making is based on economic-growth. The most critical consequence of this is the housing crisis, with precarisation of the middle-class (middle-class poverty) as a result. The contemporary mindset is short-sighted with a focus on temporary; flex-working and short-stay living. The corona crisis paused globalization only shortly, after which it cultivated a polarized climate driving rich and poor and social-mindsets more apart. The magnified difference between communities divided society further, which lends itself to extremist ideologies and declining trust in the public sectors. The political mindset focuses on preventing, with as a result a bureaucratically layered proces. Build-in with extensive rules and legislations, idea-initiation becomes extremely difficult. Municipal-processes are time-consuming which creates tensions with the contemporary push on forced flexibility and temporary-solutions. This along with densification and space scarcity creates the municipal need for integrated and multi-purpose solutions. Corona pushed a geo-political mindset, acknowledging the fact that the complex problems society is facing should be viewed comprehensively and can only be solved collectively. More holistic urban methodologies and new collaborations are a result of this.





2.4 AMSTERDAM CONTEXT

This chapter more specifically zooms-in on the context of the municipality of Amsterdam to get a more comprehensive understanding of the situation within the city. Previous analysis is rather general, on a societal or national level. Every ten years the municipality writes an environmental vision (omgevingsvisie) to give course direction to their actions. Within this document is explained what the city challenges are and how those will be tackled. To understand the context the municipality and Free Space Department are behaving in and get a better grip on the future Amsterdam is aiming for, this chapter dives into the environmental vision for 2050 (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2021). This document written in 2021 gives perspective on the municipal plans. It makes clear what the current situation in the city is and what problems they are facing. Furthermore, the defined goals provide clarity about the course the municipality aims to take. Where do they want to be in the future and how does Free Space fit into this?

CURRENT CITY SITUATION

Three problems described in the environmental vision define the current situation of Amsterdam. The livability of the city is under pressure due to densification, bringing it out of balance. Residents do not commit themselves to the place they live, resulting in lack of ownership and neighborhood alienation. Quick residential flow and re-touristification results in a center that is merely focused on visitors, not its residents. Space scarcity and rising prices only allow a limited group of people finding residency pushing alternative non-commercial initiatives out of the city. The fringes are disappearing making the city monotonous and boring. One could speak of an emerging monoculture.

UNBALANCED CITY SPACE SCARCITY

Pressure on accessibility and livability

The past ten years the number of residents and jobs in Amsterdam has grown more than expected, but public facilities are lagging behind. Currently, the growth ambitions for 2040 are almost reached, 20 years earlier than expected. However, despite Corona, migration to Amsterdam has not reduced but is still growing gradually. This can be explained by the arrival of expats and migrant workers due to the establishment of international companies within the city. Even though the number of inhabitants in Amsterdam has grown significantly, public facilities remain underdeveloped. Investments in public space, public facilities such as transport, and city greenery are minimal. This causes an increasing pressure on the city and its livability. Furthermore, suburbanization has put its pressure on the regional level and negatively affected surrounding areas and cities. The expectation of this continued growth calls for a new more sustainable approach. Growth needs to be distributed evenly, in consultation with the region. To minimize suburbanization, space has to be realized to grow within the city limits; densification. Therefore the challenge is to restore the balance within the city while finding harmony between densification and livability.

NEIGHBORHOOD ALIENATION LACK OF OWNERSHIP

Spatial segregation and quick-residential flow

The accessibility of the city is declining drastically, with (spatial) segregation as a result. There are two factors that contribute to this development. The exploding rental and housing prices due to real estate investment puts pressure on the low/middle income and small business owners. The current housing stock mainly consists of social housing (51% in 2019), that is only accessible to the low-income. Only 34% of the housing stock is accessible for middle-class income, however with overpriced rental prices or unaffordable owner-occupied houses. Secondly, the pandemic has driven differences more apart, creating a bigger gap between rich and poor. Profits and losses that are distributed unequally have increased the differences between Amsterdammers. These two factors created the problem that people working in the center can not afford to live in the center. Mostly, people who have jobs that are indispensable for the functioning of a city, such as care providers, police officers, teachers, are compelled to travel long distances in order to do their job. With spatial segregation as a consequence of this.

Another factor contributing to the division of the city is re-touristification and a centric focus. Even though Corona had put a short stop on the tourism flow in the center of Amsterdam. The prospect is that after 2023 the tourism landscape will be back in its normal state (Kunzmann, K. R., 2020). Globalization continues and the doubling of tourism has put its pressure on the city center. Horeca and shops focussing on tourism are taking over the center. The center-based Amsterdammer does not recognize its neighborhood anymore due to the arrival of the many new tourism facilities and international short-stay residents. It has become a place for visitors where the true resident does not feel at home anymore. Furthermore, a centric focus drives the center and the rest of the city apart. In other city districts facilities are threatening to disappear, as well as the support for the neighborhood economy. This puts pressure on the livability of these neighborhoods. One-sided population, isolation, and lack of variety in the streets of these neighborhoods results in a socially unsafe environment, where residents are dependent on facilities of other neighborhoods. To restore the balance between the center and other city districts, a decentralized approach should be enforced and less focus on globalization and tourism.

CURRENT CITY SITUATION

The turbulent growth of the past decade has caused alienation of the neighborhood residents live in. Globalization and touristification has neighborhood alienation as a consequence. Housing solutions in Amsterdam are focussed on short-stay and temporary living. Simply, because the only affordable living is temporary living (Draaisma, J., 2021). There is a lack of ownership in rental houses, resulting in deferred maintenance of city buildings. This lack of accessibility and centric focus have (spatial) segregation as a result and bring a city out of balance. The rapid flow of residents within the city, who are pushed to move from one place to the other, causes a lost sense of belonging. The resident does not feel at home anymore, detached from the neighborhood-feeling they are living anonymously. Corona underlined the importance of district and neighborhood; the success of a city depends on the extent to which residents feel at home. Therefore the neighborhood feeling must be brought back to the streets of Amsterdam.

SEAMLESS CITY FADING FRINGES

Monoculture development and no room for non-commercial

The fringes of the city are under pressure and threaten to disappear. With the eviction of the ADM terrain and demolition of Bajesdorp in December 2018 slowly almost all the last remaining heritage of the squatting movement has been swepted out (De verloren vrijstaat, 2019). With only a few true free places remaining and the unhinged disruptive free market the prospect is bleak. All non-commercial and subcultural places are disappearing from the city. Amsterdam, which was traditionally a place for subculture and counterculture, is slowly changing into a monotonous city with a predominant monoculture. Gentrified neighborhoods seem to offer more of the same, generating a uniform city. There is a lack of choice in the tightly planned city.

Yet, these cultural and social places do not arise from the municipal drawing board. "The fringes of a city cannot be planned. The disordered escapes the moment you map it. They arise from the lack of planning and from an ecology of intersecting practices. Places where people, animals and plants proliferate in an elusive amalgam." (Boomgaard, J., et al. 2021). It could be stated that the abrasive relation between the bottom-up creatives and the regulated municipal world does not lend itself well to collaborations. However, the year 2020 marked a turning point and a shift in the political mindset. Instead of the previous merely economic focus, the municipality offered more room for self-organization with a generous financial support policy. The new municipal mindset now had an emphasis on care and community, a trend also reinforced by the Corona pandemic.

The municipality of Amsterdam wants to bring back ownership by giving bits of the city back to its residents. However, it has become clear to residents that the city actually belongs to everyone and therefore no one in particular. They temporarily borrow a part of the spaces of the city, but will never truly experience ownership. The city is a collective shared space which can rather be described as loanership than ownership. The municipality aims to turn this mindset around by means of participation. Up to now this often turns out to be no more than information exchange and remains left in vacuum. Giving residents more say "eventually led to secluded communities at the one end and impoverished neighborhoods at the other end of the spectrum" (Boomgaard, J., et al. 2021). For the free space makers with their history of evictions and the disappearance of cultural places it is like putting a sticking plaster on a wooden leg to invest in participation and rebuild Amsterdams' social and cultural capital.

Amsterdam is out of balance on multiple levels, with at the core of this issue a tunneled centric vision on isolated issues. The mere focus on economic-growth has caused prices to rise, making the city unaffordable and pushing all non-commercial and subculture initiatives out of the center, with spatial segregation and a predominant monoculture as result. The known Amsterdam subcultures are fading and thereby blurring the city's distinctive character. Globalization pushes touristification and divides the center and surrounding districts. A center focussed on short-stay and visitors results in neighborhood alienation. The quick-residential flow due to temporarily living enforces this lack of ownership. Participation between state and residents aims to tackle this, but is still in its infancy. Furthermore, the growing city puts pressure on the livability and accessibility of the city and surrounding areas. A focus on densifying will release pressure from surrounding areas, however puts pressure on social facilities within the city that are currently lacking. Therefore the main challenge for Amsterdam is to bring back balance to the city; harmonize commercial and non-commercial, diversify its culture, support active citizenship and decentralize focus. Therefore, the municipality aims for a more holistic view, perceiving the city as an ecosystem by creating integrated solutions.

MUNICIPAL GOALS 2021 - 2050

The municipal goals give a good insight in what they value and what the municipality aims to accomplish with the work they do. The environmental vision gives course direction to the municipal actions and explains where Amsterdam is aiming for. The vision, called a human metropolis, focuses on Amsterdam as a core city of a rapidly growing metropolis in transition. Created in times of a pandemic, this vision has a more holistic view compared to its predecessor called "economically strong and sustainable". The document focuses on giving direction to growth, accelerates transitions, and offers space for initiatives from society. With the forecast of space and finance scarcity, coherence is key, this environmental vision gives direction in the form of five strategic municipal choices listed underneath.

Due to the previous central focus, Amsterdam is out of balance. Therefore Amsterdam will change to a more regional focus with multiple urban cores. Furthermore, the current distribution of employment and facilities is out of balance. It is skewed to the disadvantage of the region, creating large transport flows. Multicore development aims to generate a more balanced city.

1 MULTICORE DEVELOPMENT

Amsterdam aims to densify and grow within limits. Amsterdam has been declared the first donut-city of the world in 2020 (Arroudi, S., 2021), a format based on the Donut Economy Model of (Raworth, K., 2017). The guidelines of this model explains that cities should grow without exceeding the planet's capacity. Creating a social foundation and minimizing the physical space requirement of the city. Smart ways of densification could be high-rise building, living closer together is more sustainable (district heating). Sustainable self-sufficient energy generation and reuse of materials. Or create more work-live possibilities, for example converting industrial estates into areas where people live and work.

2 GROWING WITHIN LIMITS

With the aim to densify it is important to focus on (public) facilities in neighborhoods, which are now lagging behind. There should be parks and leisure space for every neighborhood within walking or cycling distance. The car will get a less prominent place in the city, to put cyclists and pedestrians at the forefront while creating more space for green and playing. To realize this, it is important to improve public transport connections within the region. The goals are; creating space, cleaner air and healthier exercise.

3 SUSTAINABLE HEALTH EXERCISE

Similar to the lack of facilities, there is a lack of greenery in the city. Amsterdam aims to create more and improve existing greenery in the city. Space created by making the city carfree will be used for squares and parks where people can meet, relax and recreate. To realize enough greenery, Amsterdam also focuses on vertical gardens, green facades and green roofs. More greenery between and on buildings will combat heat stress and cool down the city in summer times. Making it more resilient to heat waves. Furthermore, it increases the water storage capacity of the city.

4 RIGOROUS GREENING

The municipality aims to collaborate both on governmental, municipal, as well as residential level. Due to their metropolitan ambition, they have to cooperate with neighboring municipalities, national and regional partners. Within the municipality, department ambitions will be brought together from the start instead of first creating separate policy goals. The 'Integral Design Method' is a new approach that aims to tackle this challenge. Furthermore, The municipality is convinced that just active leadership from the municipal side will not be enough to combat the complex challenges the city is facing. Supporting participation and active citizenship aims to include residents more in the city-making and decision-taking processes. With this Amsterdam intends to fight current neighborhood alienation of residents.

5 MAKING CITY TOGETHER

MUNICIPAL GOALS 2021 - 2050

MAKING CITY TOGETHER

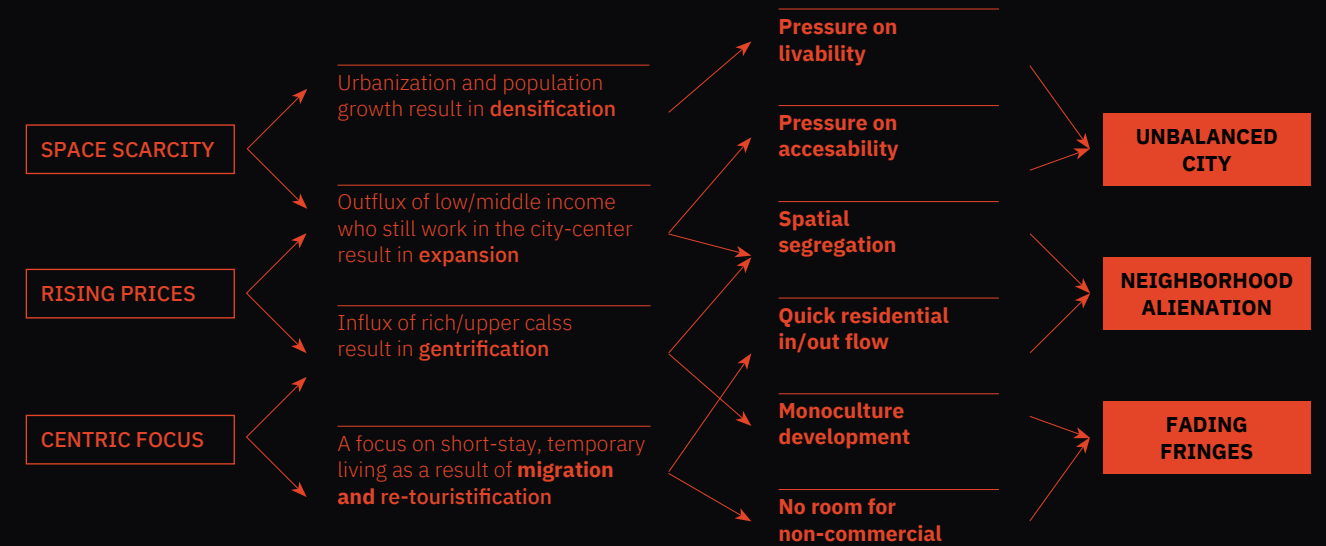
Citizen involvement and collaboration is required to tackle the growth challenge and realize an inclusive city. An example of this is the realization of neighborhood agreements and neighborhood environmental visions. This allows management and programming of the resident's own living environment. The municipality focusses on alternative living forms such as self-built initiatives and collective housing cooperatives to tackle the housing crisis. They develop new forms to build permanently affordable rental homes and realize multifunctional spaces. This generates more room for residents to build affordable (rental) housing, individually or in collective. Furthermore, the municipality wants to create space for residents to manage facilities, create urban solutions regarding for example the energy transition such as generating own energy, and participate in neighborhood development. To support this local entrepreneurship the municipality should generate new financial possibilities. To realize this active citizenship, the role of the municipality in this process is to give direction and create space for initiators and initiatives. Not only will this lead to a more active role of the Amsterdammers, but it will also generate new values for the city. Trust and confidence in the future of the city will grow and it will create neighborhood ownership.

To realize active citizenship and alternative forms of urban planning, the municipality has to keep an open view and mindset on spatial development and organization. Current policies are not designed for this. They are accumulated which lead to difficult considerations. The municipality is in need of new assessment frameworks and decision procedures. To accomplish this, the municipality is pursuing the following action points. Building spatial instrumentation, renewing their policy cycle, creating new forms of co-creation, democrating renewal, realizing alternative funds and money flows, and leaving room for experiment. Most importantly the municipality has to adopt an adaptive attitude conjoined with adaptive strategies. They aim to do this by portraying the environmental vision as a living document. The Integrated Design Method and creating free space is a step in this direction. Leaving parts of the city open and unplanned, gives room for citizen initiatives.



Citybranding Amsterdam (Amida, J., 2019)

AMSTERDAM CONTEXT CONCLUDING SUMMARY



The municipality of Amsterdam focuses on more soft, humane and holistic ways of planning the city, in order to restore the balance within the city. Currently the city is facing three substantial challenges, on which Free Space creation can be part of the solution.

- Densification put the city's livability and accessibility under pressure. While space is scarce and the municipality is finding ways to concentrate urban solutions. Free Space creation can offer multi-functional implementation.
- The rising prices make Amsterdam a rapid gentrifying city, pushing spatial segregation. The quick residential-flow and a center meant for visitors and short-stay, has lack of ownership and neighborhood alienation as a consequence. Free Space focuses on bottom-up initiation and a high form of participation that will allow for residential ownership.
- The growth-focus pushes away non-commercial alternative cultures, while intensifying the monoculture within. With as result; an anonymous, undefined and divided city that is losing its identity. Free Space creation focuses on the stimulation of subcultures and fights the fading of the city fringes.

One strategic direction the municipality is taking in order to face these challenges is with the action-point: Making City Together. With this they strive for active citizenship in the form of participation and bottom-up initiation. To realize this the municipality has to create new methods, framework and policies while remaining open and adaptive. This gives room to experiment with urban planning procedures. This is where the Free Space department could be of importance.

URBAN PROBLEMS SOLUTIONS OF FREE SPACE

Unbalance city Pressure on accessibility and livability	_____	Multi-functional implementation
Neighborhood alienation Segregation and quick residential flow	_____	Participation, bottom-up initiation
Seamless city Monoculture development and no room for non-comercial	_____	Subcultural stimulation



NEAR FUTURE 2022+

OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS

Considering the near future, currently is an interesting point in time for the Free Space department. The Free Space Expedition 20/21 started two years ago in the middle of the pandemic and is now coming to an end. What will happen with the department and how will they continue? The municipal elections in March 2022 for the new city council constitutes an uncertain future. The question is whether there will be a Free Space department for the next four years. Besides, a new Environmental Law (Omgevingswet) that will take effect in July 2022, the entrance of a new legal framework (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2021). These nearby events bring opportunities and threats for the Free Space department. Furthermore, social and political attitudes are constantly influencing each other, resulting in changing legal ground. With the start of 2022 some governmental decisions marked a shift in political mindset. The introduction of a new Housing Law and the reintroduction of basic student grants could influence the social mindset of Amsterdam citizens and possible initiators and free space makers.

NEW CITY COUNCIL

In March 2022 the new city council will be elected. Every four years the citizens of Amsterdam can vote for this new council. The city council is a coalition of different political parties that forms the college of mayor and aldermen (College van Burgermeester en Wethouders, or B&W). Furthermore, 16.000 officials are appointed by the college of B&W and divided over five clusters. The Expedition Free Space is part of the cluster Urban Planning and Sustainability (Ruimte en Duurzaamheid or R&D). Amsterdam is a city that has known a left-winged governance for quite some time, with some outliers to the center-right. The current city council consists of GroenLinks, D66, PvdA and SP. The fragmentation and disappointment of the left-winged voters is visible in the national coalition which is rather middle-right. Therefore, the prospect is that the next city council will be middle, maybe even right-winged for Amsterdam standards (Draaisma, J., 2021). The question is if the Expedition Free Space, which is rather left and free-spirited, will be retained.

2006	PvdA & GroenLinks
2010	PvdA VVD, GroenLinks
2014	D66 VVD, SP
2018	GroenLinks D66, PvdA, SP
2022	D66, VVD?

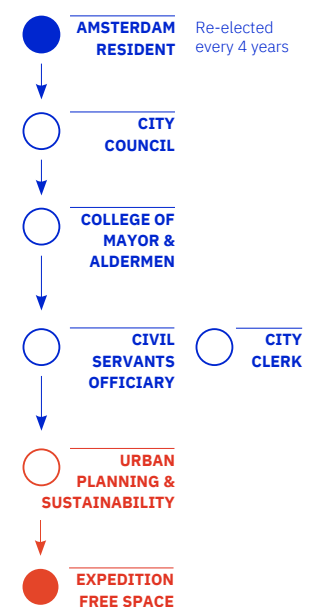
2.5 FUTURE CONTEXT

This chapter focuses on identifying (near) future external influences to forecast a possible future for free space creation. Looking back into history gave insight into how free space originated and how the current municipal system has been established. It gained understanding in the context free space sits in and the department is operating in. Analyzing the past and contemporary situations gave insight into contextual factors and influences that have an effect on the system and change it may bring. These insights are used to identify possible future influential factors to eventually forecast future possibilities. Firstly, upcoming events in the near future that could possibly form threats or opportunities are identified. Whereafter, foresight methods DEPEST trend analysis (Van Boeijen, A. et al., 2013) and weak signal scanning (Holopainen, M., & Toivonen, M., 2012) are used in order to predict three future scenarios (Schnaars, S., & Ziamou, P. L., 2001).

NEW LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Within the municipality the awareness is growing that urban planning is in need of more adaptive and holistic approaches, due to the increasingly complicated and interrelated urban problems. However, current policies are not designed for this and approaches are obsolete. Therefore, new methods, frameworks, policies in order to remain open, adaptive and find integrated solutions. Hence the introduction of the new Environmental Law in July 2022. The Environmental Law bundles laws for the living environment, including legislation and regulations on construction, spatial planning, environment and nature. With the new environmental law, the existing system of spatial rules will be revised completely, generating a new legal framework. This is a response to the demand for more integrated urban planning. The goal of the Environmental Law is to bring more coherence in policies and regulations, to fasten the decision-making process and make it more actionable. Furthermore, to make room for more local decisions and eventually give better insight into what in certain places is allowed and what not. The law decentralizes responsibilities from central government to municipalities (Provincie Noord-Holland, 2018). The introduction of the law is linked with the introduction of a digital system for spatial plans and rules. Therefore, it results in a completely different way of working.

This new legal framework creates opportunities for the Free Space Department. Just like the strategic direction Making City Together, this paves the way and provides room for experimentation with procedures and methods. The municipality is looking for adaptive methods to lower barriers and fasten decision-making processes. In short, making it more actionable. The Free Space Expedition is in search of such a new way of urban planning, and has done a lot of research and experimentation. This can be of value for this new municipal approach.



NEAR FUTURE 2022+

CASE STUDY INTEGRATED DESIGN METHOD

The Integrated Design Method is an example of a new method. This method is developed to create integrated urban planning solutions by allowing departments to cooperate from the start (personal communication, October 4, 2021). Previously, an area plan was derived from different policy goals written by various departments. Combining different complex urban plans afterwards is troublesome, since urban problems are increasingly complex and the need for integration due to space scarcity.

CURRENTLY FROM
SEPERATE POLICIES



NEW HOUSING LAW

The introduction of the new purchase-protection Housing Law January 2022 assures that house-buyers are bound to live in the property and not use it for revenue. Only in exceptional cases owner-occupied houses can be rented out (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2022). This is aimed to relieve tension in areas or neighborhoods where there is a scarcity of cheap and medium-priced housing, like the situation in Amsterdam. This can result in decreasing pressure on the housing market, a decline in rental housing and slower residential-flow. A positive effect of this could be a less temporary residency and bringing back ownership. Residents will feel more responsible for the place they live in, pushing active-citizenship and self-operating neighborhoods. This is fertile ground for bottom-up initiation and co-culture, which is fruitful for the Free Space Department.

RENEWED BASIC STUDENT GRANT

The reintroduction of basic student grants in 2022 could also have a possible influence on bottom-up initiation among young adults. Lessons could be drawn from past squatting periods. As mentioned in the Context History the youth in that time belonged to a lost generation with an insecure future ahead. Besides alleviated legislation and sufficient vacancy, a certain extent of financial security created the right circumstances to form a squatting movement. Supported by student grants, they had the possibility to put enough time in the organization of squatting (Pruijt, H., 2003). The reintroduction of the basic student grant could result in students quitting side-jobs that currently take-up most of their free time. A positive outcome could be an increased participatory co-culture, and a growing willingness to invest this time in bottom-up initiation. However, again comparisons can be drawn with the 'lost' squatting generation. The current young adult students (18-28 - zillennials) that do not have a fulltime job and potentially have time on their hands belong to the so-called 'bad luck' generation (pech-generatie). Tormented with a paltry compensation for their sky-high student loans and generation-rent creates a potential fundament for system distrust and a recurring counter-culture. This could lead to squatting and free space creation, albeit not in collaboration with the municipality but illegal as a political statement.

Dutch student grants protest



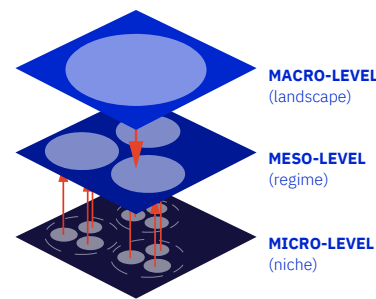
In the near future there are some changes that could bring opportunities or threats for the Free Space Department and creation of free space. On municipal level near-future events could influence the existence of the Free Space Department, whereas on governmental level there are some changes that could influence the mindset of initiators and therefore creation of free-space. The formation of a new city council that is more middle-engaged could become a threat to the Free Space Department. The question remains whether in the next four years a budget will be available for this matter. Therefore, it is of importance that the department starts engaging with important officials now, showing tangible results of the past two years, and what their next steps will be. On the contrary, the new Environmental Law, in which space is made available for participation and bottom-up initiation creates an opportunistic prospect for the department. Furthermore, the introduction of the new Housing Law and Basic Student Grant could stabilize the social situation within the city in terms of living and studying. This potentially leads to a growing co-culture, participation willingness, and active citizenship. This social-mindset change subsequently influences bottom-up initiation and therefore is an opportunity for Free Space creation.



TRANSITIONS & TRENDS

This chapter focuses on identifying prospective factors that can forecast a predictive future. The future is influenced by all kinds of factors that are already visible today in the form of transitions and trends. Transitions can be seen as the gradual change from one state to another, and is happening over time. It is not possible to have major influences on these transitions. However decisions and innovations can be steered in the direction of these transitions. Therefore, the municipality actively focusses on seven urban transitions. On a macro-level, transitions are influenced by trends and developments. A trend observes different factors of the past and present and elongates these to a projected future. They involve social, institutional, organizational and political patterns (Bosma, T. L. E., 2018).

SEVEN ONGOING TRANSITIONS



A transition is a gradual change from one position to another, which implies a natural process stimulated by random events. In governance transitions refer to the non-linear transformation process that leads to systemic change that covers a longer period of time i.e. decades (Rotmans et al, 2001). A transition consists of three analytical levels: niches, regimes, and landscape. The interaction processes within and among these levels causes a transition. Landscape focusses on major developments and trends that happen on a macro-level. What happens in the world and society with regard to politics, culture, world views, and paradigms. Regime is the dominant structure and culture on a meso-level; working methods, rules and interests. Niches are the new initiatives, practices, experiments and innovations that happen on a micro-level. For example new forms of culture and governance; seeds of change. However, a transition is contentless and without any idea of who is doing what.

TRANSITIONS

- MOBILITY
- DIGITALIZATION / IOT
- SOCIAL / ECONOMICS
- NATURE INCLUSIVE
- CLIMATE ADPATION
- CLIMATE NEUTRAL / ENERGY
- URBANIZATION / CITY GROWTH

Transition management is a governance approach that focuses on forecasting and steering transitions. Within the municipality of Amsterdam they steer on seven big urban transitions (personal communication, October 4, 2021).

TRANSITIONS & TRENDS

TREND ANALYSIS

Contextual research into the history of free places showed that the creation and development of free spaces depend on various factors. The social and political mindset, the changing legal ground, societal problems that have influence on this, and lastly the situation in the city and the use of space. In order to understand how these factors will affect free space in the near future, an extensive trend analysis has been performed. The trends analysis is subdivided based on the DESTEP method (Van Boeijen, A. et al., 2013). Most trends are derived from the Contemporary Context research chapter and the environmental vision Amsterdam 2050 (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2021). To create a more complete picture the trend explorer from TRENDONE was used to supplement the trend analysis (TRENDONE, 2021). This chapter will only focus on specifically urban trends and socio-political trends. These are considered the most important for the creation of free space. A complete overview of the trend analysis can be found in Appendix C. A summary of this overview is shown underneath.

URBANIZATION TRENDS

Metropolitan transitions, integrated planning, urban resilience, soft cities human scale cities, quality of life, public health, space scarcity, cityside emphasis, new frontiers, multi-purpose buildings, flex-workplaces communal- or fluent spaces, new living concepts, work-life components

ECOLOGICAL TRENDS

Planet centric, ethical consumption, agriculture innovations circular economy, CleanTech, alternative materials emission handling, post-fossilera, energy transition

TECHNICAL TRENDS

Intelligent infrastructure, energy supply and storage systems, smart grids, CleanTech, Green IT, advanced network tech, smart cities, autonomous systems, connected mobility, digital space

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Urbanization & suburbanization, densification & expansion globalization, gentrification, aging society, quick residential flow short-stay expats, digital-nomads, polarization, spatial segregation

ECONOMICAL TRENDS

Economic-growth vs circular-economy, donut-economy, housing crises generation rent, middle-class poverty, precarication (of the middle class) growing gap between rich and poor, flexible contracts, financially insecure

SOCIAL / POLITICAL TRENDS

Woke culture, inclusiveness, visibility of marginalized groups, diversity awareness, lifestyle diversity, social media as platform for activism, activistic Zillennial, total transparency, neo-political, radicalisation, extremist ideologies, populist politics, geo-politics, glocal (central-decentralized) mindset

TRENDS

TRANSITIONS & TRENDS

Urbanization trends

Our cities are changing rapidly due to digitalization and globalization. In their transition towards metropolitan areas, finding space is scarce in the densifying urban environment. Because of this, big metropolitan cities tend to lose their livability and sense of humaneness. In these quickly changing urban environments current trends aim to counterbalance rapid growth, densification, digitalization and globalization. **Human scale cities** and **soft city** principles are prevailing holistic trends within the mindset of city-makers, urban planners and designers. They aim to focus on the **quality of life** for residents and give prominence to **public health**. Furthermore, due to space scarcity creators aim for flexible use; **multi-purpose** buildings, **communal-** or **fluent spaces**, such as flex-workplaces. The pressure on the housing market raises the need for **new living concepts**, and **work-life components** are reintroduced. City sprawl puts new emphasis on the **cityside**; the border between urban and rural living is fading. Due to urban expansion to places beyond city limits and land borders, **new frontiers** are emerging. Faced by complex sustainability issues, making the right urban decision is a challenge. **Space scarcity** asks for **integrated** urban planning, while extreme climate conditions ask for adaptivity and defensibility, increasing the need for **urban resilience**.

Social / Political Trends

Social and political choices are closely intertwined and continuously affect one another. Segregation and polarization have been accelerated by corona and the housing crisis, and are changing the societal mindset, influencing politics. On one side the prevailing social mindset among young adults could be considered a **woke culture**. The acknowledgment of difference and **diversity awareness** plays an important role for these generations. This results in **inclusiveness** and a focus on the **visibility of marginalized groups**. The LGBTQ+ community is growing, the BLM movement counters racism, the **female force** is empowering and there is a focus on inclusive design for all, for example disabled people. Next to **lifestyle diversity**, they aspire **total transparency**. They have a **neo-political** mindset and raise their voice and enter politics when disagreeing. It is the **generation of activism** and protest. Growing up with social media gives the **zillennial** (gen-z and millennial) a technical advantage over its predecessors. Social media often serves as a source of information and a **platform for activism** to them. This sometimes turns into a shielded place where radicalization can grow. **Radicalisation** on multiple levels is taking shape. Repeatedly, protests turn into more radical riots and vandalism. This polarization, radicalisation, and **extremist ideologies** result in social and political shifts. New political parties are emerging on both wings. BIJ1, an extreme left party that strives for inclusiveness, raises a new social voice in the House of Representatives. But on the other side Forum voor Democratie (FvD) and JA21 take more **populistic** statements, forming a new extreme right movement. The **fragmentation** and diversity of politics complicates making political decisions. The culture of poldering (Dutch polder model) slows decision-making processes. Within politics there is a prevailing **glocal** (central-decentralized mindset). Increasingly complicated and interrelated wicked problems are not defined by country borders. Ambiguous problems such as climate change, war, poverty, emission, and migration cannot be solved on a national level. Globalization transitions to a **multipolar world** (Research Institute, 2018) while decentralizing politics on a global level, resulting in the formation of **geo-politics**.



Social media (Instagram)
as platform for activism (squatting)





WEAK SIGNALS

This chapter focuses on identifying prospective factors that can suggest speculative futures. Weak signals are the first vague indicators of possible future events. Unlike trends that are obvious factors clearly visible in current-day society, weak signals are less strong. Weak signals are part of horizon and environmental scanning (Dufva, M. 2019) (Holopainen, M., & Toivonen, M., 2012) and could bring new, non-obvious insights. Because of this they are in good use for the creation of speculative futures and scenario writing. The weak signals that could possibly have influence on the creation of free space are reviewed in this chapter. Therefore, the focus will be on social and political ground and how people interact with space.

RECURRING RADICALISATION

Radicalisation slightly finds its way back in society which is visible in the increase of activism that more often ends in riots. The **fragmentation** of political parties clarify these divisions within society and polarized climate. Vulnerable groups have a sense that their security is under pressure, and are often minority parties. They have the most chance to resort to radicalization and be driven by **extremist ideologies**. Assorted movements such as; nationalism, fascism, xenophobic, anti-immigration, radical islamism (Jordan, J., 2017). Islamification is an example of the **revival of religions**. Youth from an atheistic generation is drastically looking for something to hold onto. Some find it in spirituality or astrology, others convert to religion that they originally were not raised with. Radicalisation is visible on both the far right and far left side of the spectrum. Radical left inspirations such as ecologism, anarchism, anti-capitalism, libertarianism, neo-Marxism/Leninism gaining more support. In some cases, the extreme left and right that oppose the established order find common ground in mutual ideas (i.e. capitalism and the contemporary anti-vax movement). Even if they do not revolve in violence, this radical activism could have serious influence on social polarization and state policies (Jordan, J., 2017).

Subcultures are slowly returning, however not bound by rules which blurs the divisions between. The **revival of punk** and the reinvention of pop punk by gen-z shows that an old social mindset is brought back to life (Ewens, H., 2021). Parallels can be drawn between the lost generation in the 70s and the contemporary bad-luck generation. The housing-crisis is a strong factor in the **recurrence of squatting** and the emergence of a **neo-provo-culture**. While for a longer period of time, now gradually a return of squatting is visible in the streets of Amsterdam. Activistic groups such as De Kinderen van Mokum, the Anarcho Feministic Group Amsterdam, and Doorbraak aim to provoke by squatting buildings and fight for the right of affordable accommodation. They squatted buildings in the center of Amsterdam, such as Hotel Marnix on the Formerly Marnixstraat, a building at the Oudezijds Voorburgwal, and the recently caught red-handed squatters on the Saxon Weimarlaan (Vondelpark Buurt). Activistic youth create action groups and enter politics in order to exert more influence. Early March 2022, youth party LEF took possession of a piece of wasteland in the Kinkerbuurt. The occupation has a political approach; "party leader Daniël van Duijn: we welcome Amsterdammers to their place, because this should actually be ours." (Olsthoorn, R., 2022) Even though vacancy is scarce and legal ground is still restricted by legislation; putting one at risk of obtaining a criminal record, it could be concluded that squatting is slowly recurring mainly out of a last resort to find housing.

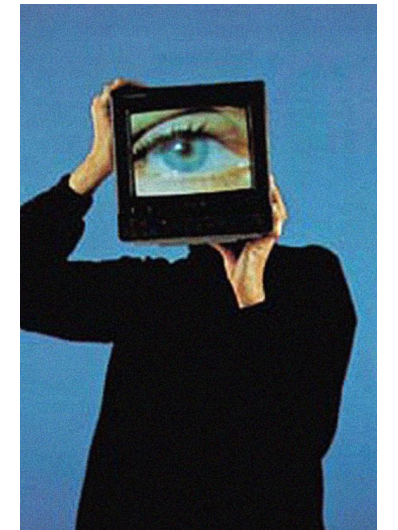




WEAK SIGNALS

NEW DISORTED REALITIES & INDIVIDUAL-STATE RELATIONSHIPS

New tech innovations challenge and sometimes even quickly disrupt the status quo. Digitalization influences the interaction between people and leads to detachment from reality. Social media causes a loss of nuance, often elements are taken out of context. Fragmentation of videos and news-items give a **distorted frame of reference**. Avatars and filters create **digital masks** that deformate reality and challenges the **distinction between real and fake**. DeepFake creates **filter bubbles** and **political bots** spreading disinformation and conspiracies, negatively influencing democratic processes (European Commission, 2019). People share big parts of their life on social media. However, what they share is consistently chosen and therefore gives a distorted picture of what reality is. Everybody is their **own platform**, where people 'sell' a specific version of themselves. The online realm offers platforms that allow the creation of **new social bubbles** with globalized boundaries. Social media is transformed into a platform for activism. **Group formation** and establishing a movement often happens online on a global level. Individualization and collectivism find new forms online. There arises a discrepancy between **openness and exclusiveness**. Premium memberships create new **digital divisions**.



The global accessible online world blurs boundaries and creates new conventions. Social media transformed into an open source for information creating **new standards in the accessibility** of knowledge and information. **Datafication** modified into quantified data is used both publicly and non-public. People unconsciously share pieces of personal information, with the absence of awareness that this will roam around on the world wide web and is operationalized. **Concerns about the use of big data** blurs the online boundaries between public and private (European Commission, 2019). However, digitalization also increases the **accessibility of governmental services**. New digital urban planning tools allow collaborative, interdisciplinary, and integrated city- and policy-making (European Commission, 2019). This new frontiers and a growing focus on local involvement realizes an inclusive urban environment. This new governance approach supports **self-imposed local decision making**, and therefore pushes active citizenship and grassroots initiatives. This participation-push will lead to **new individual-state relationships** (Jordan, J., 2017).

DECLINING TRUST IN DEMOCRACY



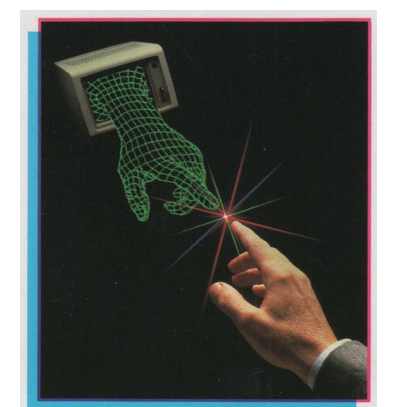
Rebellious City:
Provo and the dashing sixties

These radical inspirations occasionally hold the ruling power or the system accountable and could even turn against it. Some of these activist groups and political parties will capitalize on these suspicion opinions of which **populism** is an example. With the prospect of **immigration** becoming an increasing problem, pushed by poverty, war, and now also climate change, leaves people with no choice other than leaving their country. As a result **populist nationalism** is on the rise (Research Institute, 2018). This will magnify the hostility to political institutions. Distrust, and lack of political knowledge and understanding of the complex political system, challenges the faith democratic system (Parvin and Saunders, 2018). Especially among the younger generations positive views on democracy are declining and may continue to decline in the coming decades (Jordan, J., 2017). Similar to the young squatters in the 70s, the youth now belongs to a **lost generation**. With the hopeless prospect that they will never experience house ownership and the insecurity about obtaining a permanent job, youth are facing an **uncertain future**. Especially the youngest segment of contemporary society will experience unemployment and **precarisation of the middle class**. The pandemic made it painfully clear that the needs of an entire generation were neglected. With as a result no faith in the current system and **losing trust of an entire generation**.

The rise of **anti-establishment parties** and growing left-right extremism, features the dissatisfaction of citizens (European Commission, 2019). A visible factor that contributes to this weak signal is the currently **rebounding responsibility**. In the past, generally older generations disapproved of younger generations. Currently the opposite is happening; younger generations accusing older generations of today's problems. They created crises situations such as the housing crises and climate change. The slogan; **OK boomer**, is Gen-Z's way of putting the baby-boomers in their place. The younger generation is angry and tired of waiting. They are talking of **demonstration-fatigue** (Debat OT301, 2021). Determined to take matters into their own hands, they are increasingly interfering in social and civic issues and entering politics at an early age. With this they aim to influence politics and close the age gap between them and the aging politicians that in their eyes have outdated ideas. The younger generation either discerns themselves from democracy, or tries to infiltrate and influence it resulting in **political rejection or political engagement** (European Commission, 2019).

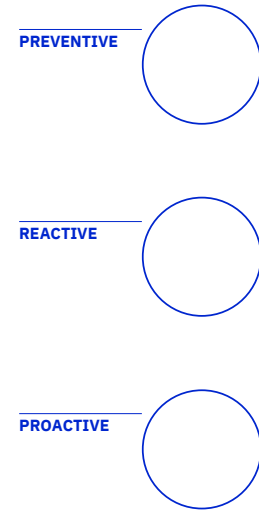
INTERACTION-CHANGE WITH (PHYSICAL) SPACE

The interaction between individual and physical space is changing. Space scarcity enhanced the urgency to better organize space in hybrid manners. The digitalization of approaches allows urban planners to rearrange and re-fill physical and digital space. For example, by creating a **digital twin** the use of space can be optimized and makes it possible to reclaim space for humans. In this way account can be taken of the fact that the space is occupied in other ways on certain parts of the day (Coding the Curbs, 2020). A place can be implemented to focus on living/working or traffic/leisure. But there is also overlap in private/public, old/new, and physical/digital. These **plurality places** become hybrid and multi-purposed. With the development of new digital tools, harmony can be brought into spatial segregation and used to its advantage. The use of urban space is changing. Due to online shopping retail owners are slowly fading from the street few and making space for more experienced base parties. In the near future space becomes increasingly scarce. The housing shortage creates an emphasis on building houses. Urban housing demand and aging society have a positive influence on each other (Linlin, Z., et al., 2016). Currently society is aging, however the baby-boom-era is coming to an end, which brings a prospect that pollution will decline. This could mean a **future surplus in houses** and possible vacancy.



New innovations also influence the interaction with and the temporary usage of space. For example Augmented Reality innovation, such as Pokemon Go blurs the borders between physical and digital space. **Pervasive Augmented Reality** often creates replica versions of the real world but often more appealing, resulting in people spending increasingly more time in a digital or virtual world. Space-interaction is also influenced by innovations such as shared mobility vehicles that only temporarily occupy urban space. This ungoverned air-space that is not bound to a place is called **digital space** (Coding the Curbs, 2020). These new developments not only entail new interactions with a space, but also change legal ground. An example is the **geofence**, which is a virtual perimeter for a physical area (Rouse, M., 2016). A geofence is visualized as boundaries or a radius around an object or point in location. Therefore it could be dynamically generated. These developments dilute the boundaries between public and private space that is not bound by place.

THREE FUTURE SCENARIOS



This chapter combines the literature research insights in order to generate three future scenarios. Forecasting a predictive future is never absolute; many internal and external factors influence the situation resulting in multiple possible future predictions. Therefore this chapter focuses on the writing of multiple scenarios. Scenario writing consists of four steps; listing affecting trends and factors, combining and grouping them, scenario-writing, and lastly creating strategies based on the scenarios (Schnaars, S., & Ziamou, P. L., 2001). Based on previous extended analysis of the free space history and context, influential factors, trends, and weak signals are identified that will form the scenario base. The most common number of scenarios within this method is three. For example, worst-, base- and best-case scenario, or decreased, continued and increased interference (Schnaars, S., & Ziamou, P. L., 2001). Therefore this report focuses on the writing of three scenarios, which can be found on the following pages.

Within the free space context factors and influences are highly interrelated. For example social and political mindset that actually cannot be viewed in isolation. Future events and trends should not be perceived in isolation, since they are interdependent. Besides, certain events that can have multiple responses and outcomes. Due to the involvement of multiple opposing stakeholders within free space creation it is rather troublesome to define a best-, base- or worst-case scenario. This highly depends on the point of view. Furthermore, scenario-writing in the form of decreased, continued, and increased municipal interference remains too abstract. Therefore, this report focuses on the following three scenarios: preventive municipal interference, reactive municipal interference, proactive municipal interference. Within these scenarios writing is aimed to reveal the causality of events.



Squatter Demonstration Amsterdam
(van Zetten, J., 2018)

The possibility of occurrence of one scenario does not exclude the other scenarios. Based on the Cross-Impact analysis (CIA) it can be stated that interrelatedness of events allow different casualties (Bañuls, V. A., & Turoff, M., 2011). Tightening the rules can, for example, also provoke more radical reactions and actually bring about a squatting movement. Regardless of the strict legislation and the illegal position for squatters. Another example is the simultaneous emergence of a counter- and co-culture. On one hand radicalized young adults who illegally create free space through squatting. And on the other hand, participating young adults who create legal Free Space with the municipality. Roughly speaking, there are three scenarios on which the Free Space Department can anticipate. The first scenario is the most destructive. The department is being cut back and only re-introduced afterwards to repair the damage incurred, if that is still possible. The second scenario asks for the most radical changes regarding applying the law. The department is deployed to legalize illegal organically created free spaces. The last scenario is the least surprising and most in line with the municipal expectations. In this scenario, the department is used to initiate municipal Free Space, following the course of the expedition. The latter scenario is focused on throughout the remaining project.

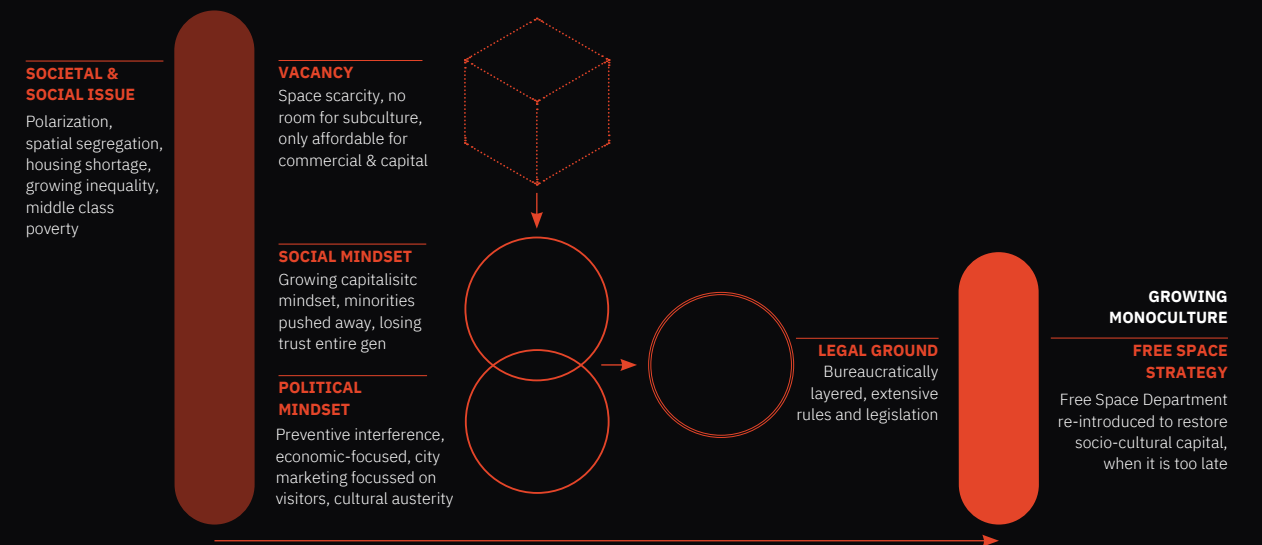
FUTURE CONTEXT CONCLUDING SUMMARY

SCENARIO I PREVENTIVE MUNICIPAL INTERFERENCE

Due to disappointment and fragmentation on the left side, the new city council elected in March will be middle-right engaged. A globalized mindset and economic focus is maintained. The price increases in the city remains a growing problem resulting in unaffordable and only temporary housing and rental possibilities. Municipal property is sold to the private market, for growth ambition. With only few social rent options for the lower-class, no housing options for the middle-class, Amsterdam becomes a city for the extreme rich or the temporary-resident. The focus on short-stay visitors puts the Amsterdam resident in second place. This unequal distribution of income and quick-residential flow aggravated the imbalance, where there is limited room for minorities and a lack of neighborhood feeling. Due to cultural austerity measures, investments are only made in institutionalized and commercialized art. There is no budget for subculture and counterculture. The Free Space department is abolished and non-commercial free-spirited initiatives disappear from the streets. The preventive political mindset is tightening its rules; a no-nonsense policy returns. Squatters are dealt with violently, no new movement can get off the ground. Legal ground is built-in with policies, extensive rules and legislations. The bureaucratic layering makes participation almost impossible, unless outsourced. Non-commercial ideas are being outcompeted by the fiercely globalizing city and disruptive market; no new bottom-up initiatives can get off the ground. Only residents with the bureaucratic know-how and enough money to outsource, have the opportunity to participate. As a result, the fringes disappear and leave Amsterdam an identityless and commercialized city with a growing monoculture.

KEY DRIVERS OF THE SCENARIO

- Middle-right engaged city council with economic growth mindset
- Aggravated housing problem
- No room for subculture, fading fringes, and developing monoculture
- No new free places are being realized
- Identityless Amsterdam
- Over-regulatory



Free Space Department

First the added value of the department is not recognized and cutbacks are made. Only when all non-commercial subcultures have disappeared from the streets, the department is reintroduced. With its network, the department must ensure that cultural heritage and subcultures are brought back to the city. However, the trust of free space makers has been damaged, which makes it difficult or impossible to set up new collaborations. There is no guarantee that this can be repaired.



FUTURE CONTEXT CONCLUDING SUMMARY

SCENARIO II REACTIVE MUNICIPAL INTERFERENCE

The new city council elected in March turns out to be middle-engaged. They have prospective ideals, but do not make rigorous decisions. The municipality continues the current course and no extreme changes are introduced. They have a reactive attitude; they respond when something is urgent. There is a focus on current issues such as the housing crisis, but the steps that are being taken are slow with little result. Large corporations (Blackstone) still buy property to use for speculation, retaining the vacancy within the city, while affordable housing remains a growing problem.

Incomprehension grows by young adults that belong to the 'bad luck' generation. Tired of demonstration and with an uncertain future ahead, this generation is losing their trust and confidence in the democratic system. Extremist ideologies and radicalization grows, which is fertile ground for the emergence of activist movements. A new squatting movement gets off the ground with a politically provocative approach. Supported by study grants the young adults have more time and money on their hands to set up this organization. Big squatting operations are increasing, but often accompanied by police brutality, fights, and riots. The municipality has a reactive attitude and response to this radicalization with the alleviation of regulations. The political tolerance attitude and the leeway in regulations ensure that squatters can organically initiate true free spaces bottom-up, after which the places are legalized. Subcultures are brought back in the streets, the fringes are recovering albeit in an illegal way. The squatters have a rejective attitude towards governmental institutions and do not want to cooperate with the municipality, with as result; a growing counterculture.

KEY DRIVERS OF THE SCENARIO

- Middle-engaged city council with a mindset focus on retainment
- Not pro-active and (re)acts to slow
- Activistic movements come from the ground
- Free spaces are organically initiated
- Growing counterculture
- **DIY democracy**

SOCIETAL & SOCIAL ISSUE

Polarization, spatial segregation, housing shortage, growing inequality, middle class poverty

VACANCY

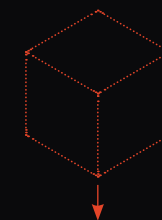
Space scarcity, but still vacancy due to real estate speculators

SOCIAL MINDSET

Radicalisation, political rejection, declining trust in democracy and social workers, lost generation

POLITICAL MINDSET

Reactive interference, changing (alleviate) rules, respond to radicalisation, slowly focus on social issues



LEGAL GROUND

Leeway in rules and regulations, squatting (socially) tolerated

GROWING COUNTERCULTURE

FREE SPACE STRATEGY

Free Space Department deployed in legalization process (of squatted buildings).

Free Space Department

In this case the Free Space Department can be used for the legalization process of the organically but illegally initiated free spaces, similar to the BPA policy. The municipality cannot justify putting the squatters on the street, while the housing problem remains unchanged and the restoration of sub- and countercultures is on the political agenda. To ensure that violence between the state and squatters does not escalate, the municipality acts reactively and utilizes the initiatives created by this movement. The Free Space Department will have a facilitating and mediating role in this legalization process and write associated policies.



FUTURE CONTEXT CONCLUDING SUMMARY

SCENARIO III PROACTIVE MUNICIPAL INTERFERENCE

The new city council elected in March turns out to be traditionally middle-left engaged. They will follow the current course of actions, with a focus on integrated and inclusive solutions. They aim for active citizenship, bringing back the neighborhood feeling and balance in the city. Although space is still scarce, innovations bring new possibilities. Integrated solutions such as multi-purpose buildings, work-life components, communal and fluent spaces provide hybrid applications. The municipality is actively involved in the search for new adaptive methods and policies. This mindset allows for experimentation of law and policy application. They aim to find leeway in regulations and apply more customized approaches to enable new opportunities.

The new housing law takes effect and ensures affordable owner-occupied houses for the middle class, easing the pressure on affordable housing. More and more people can buy a house within the city limits, which puts an end to the rapid flow of residents. Amsterdammers more often stay in one place and become attached to the neighborhood, bringing back ownership. The municipality buys more property instead of selling it to the market to use for social rent housing with renewed admission regulations. The pressure on the housing market is easing and small-scale squatting disappears completely. The improved situation and the space relaxation and transparency within the municipality effectuate a participatory social mindset and political engagement. Radicalizing among young adults is fading, while the Free Space Department actively works on improving the abrasive relations. The willingness to participate is growing, allowing more subcultural and non-commercial initiatives to get off the ground; a growing co-culture.

KEY DRIVERS OF THE SCENARIO

- Middle-left engaged city council with an adaptive and inclusive mindset
- New frameworks allowing experimentation and integrated solutions
- Focus on subcultures and marginalized groups
- Free spaces are initiated collaboratively
- Growing co-culture
- Super collaborative government

SOCIETAL & SOCIAL ISSUE

Inclusive society, diversified housing solutions, growing equality, human scale and soft cities

VACANCY

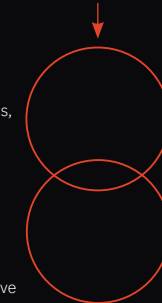
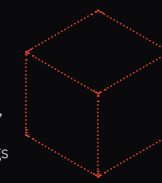
Space scarcity, fluent and communal spaces, work-life components, multi-purpose buildings

SOCIAL MINDSET

Woke culture, diversity and minority awareness, transparency, political engagement of youth

POLITICAL MINDSET

Proactive interference, more integrated and inclusive solutions, active search for new methods



LEGAL GROUND

Loose application of legislation, leeway in rules and regulations, customization

GROWING CO-CULTURE

FREE SPACE STRATEGY

Free Space Department following current course of actions, aim to be part of regular area planning

Free Space Department

In this case the Free Space Department is retained and continues their current course: connecting bottom-up initiatives with municipal spaces. They actively scan their network of those initiatives and internally claim ground or a building. Free space is created in a co-creative and legal way. Furthermore, the department aims for embedding free space in the regular area planning, putting Free Space under social facilities. In this way is guaranteed the right to have the opportunities to start initiatives as a citizen and find a physical place in the city.

STAKEHOLDERS

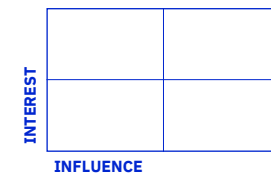
STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

In order to understand how the department is operating, it is important to understand who the involved stakeholders are, the underlying relations, power dynamics, responsibilities and the procedure of how tasks are executed. As mentioned before, within the Free Space scope many different parties from various backgrounds are involved. Within the municipality they work together with different departments and externally with third parties and bottom-up initiators depending on the project type. To identify these system elements, relations and exchanges a collaborative session with supervision Julian Jansen was set-up. The following three methods were at the base of the session: a matrix Stakeholder Map (Newcombe, R., 2003), a circular Stakeholder Map (Spence, S. F., 2021), and a Value Network Map (Irani, S., 2017). Realizing these methodological schemes are the first prototypes and give insight into how system-parts are related by means of processes and how stakeholders are connected and valued. But more importantly these visualizations help to identify issues; where are gaps, what is missing, and why.

INTERNAL SESSION

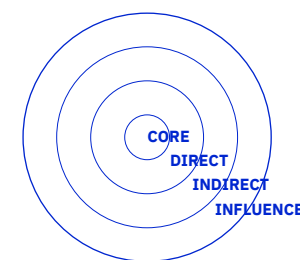
Stakeholder Map; matrix

The Stakeholder Map is a model that consists of an axis which is divided in four areas, also called the influence/interest matrix (Newcombe, R., 2003). The stakeholders diver in interest and influence generating the following groups: regular minimal contact, keep completely informed, anticipate & meet needs, manage most thoroughly. This model was used to quickly come-up with as many stakeholders as possible while still making a distinction between internal and external stakeholders. The matrix Stakeholder Map can be found on the page on the left.



Stakeholder Map; circular (human-centered)

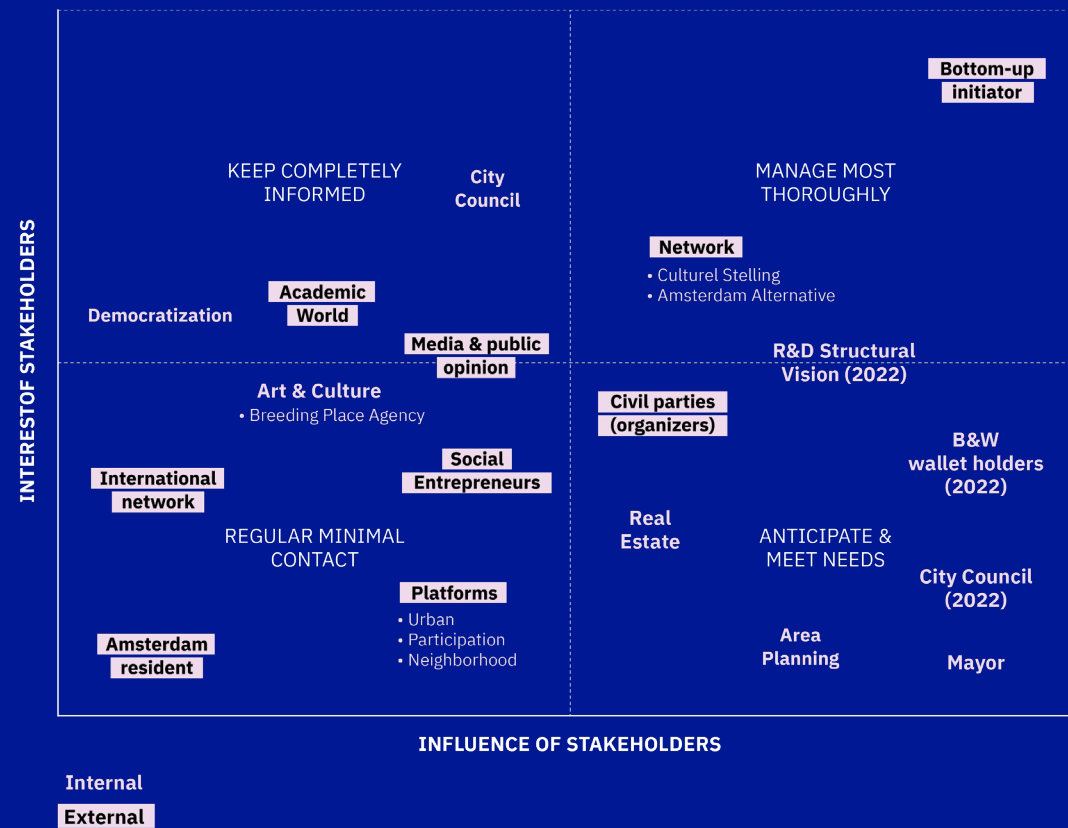
The circular Stakeholder Map allows to analyze the interested parties in a more human-centered way. This model puts the human or user, in this case the bottom-up initiator, in the center. Furthermore, due to its circular appearance, it lends itself to a more networked overview, where underlying relations could be defined. In contrast to the matrix Stakeholder Map model that is quite linear and just roughly divided in four different groups. The circular Stakeholder Map distinguishes between core, direct, indirect and influenceable stakeholders. The circular map identifies the most important stakeholders, with which the Free Space department works on a daily basis. These 'most important' stakeholders were used to set-up the value network map. The circular Stakeholder Map is visualized on the next page.



Value Network Map

The Value Network Map is a model that visualizes the value-streams and propositions between these stakeholders, both tangible and intangible. This model is used to understand the working procedure of the Free Space Department. The value-exchanges could be seen as the different tasks and responsibilities that are executed. This model is used to find gaps between stakeholders, and understand where value propositions are missing. The Value Network Map can be found on the next page.

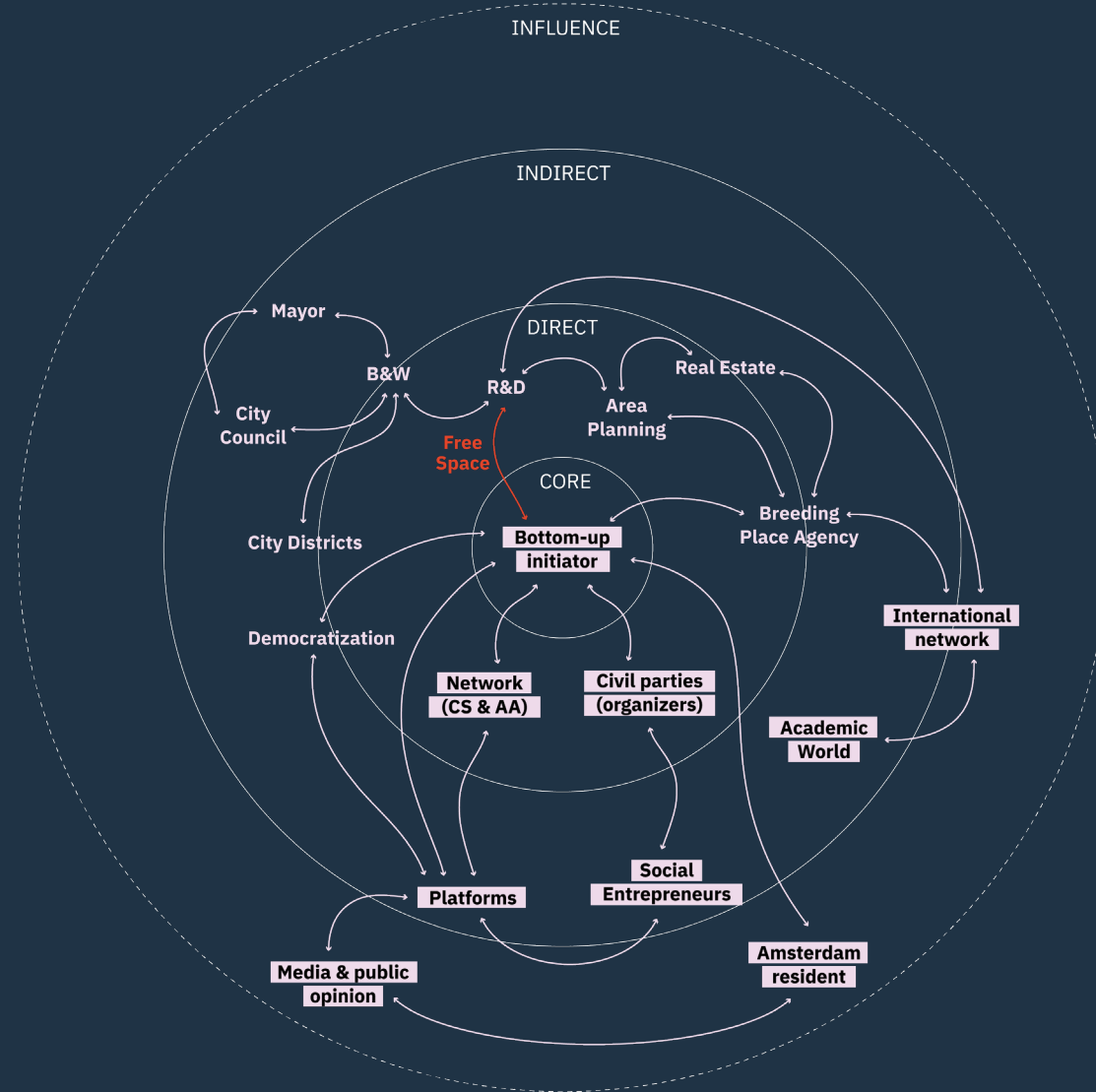
From the Value Network Map, it became clear that there is no known value exchange between the Free Space department, Democratization, and Art and Culture. This is remarkable, since these departments work closely together. It can be concluded that the distinction and role definition between these departments is unclear. Furthermore, it became visible that networks such as Amsterdam Alternative and the Culturele stelling and civil parties, which are direct stakeholders, do not find place in the Value Network Map. Therefore it could be concluded that there is no value-proposition between those parties and the Free Space Department yet. An interesting angle could be finding out what these parties and the Free Space Department can mean for each other and how to involve third parties more in the creation of Free Space.



2.6 CURRENT SYSTEM

The second part of the research approach entails defining interrelatedness within different elements of the system. The current system involves stakeholders both internally and externally, the initiator in specific, and the followed approach by the Free Space Department. In order to understand how the system of the Free Space Department is operating, it is important to understand the involved stakeholders, the underlying relations, responsibilities and the procedure of how tasks are executed. This part of research makes use of the Research by Design method (De Queiroz Barbosa, et al., 2014), where methods supported by visualizations are at the base. These visualizations are used as a communication and validation tool; the first prototype creation. Research by Design and the use of prototypes is applied in two ways. The first way is to fill in the methodical schemes collaboratively with members of the department. The second way is to make prototype-visualizations and validate them afterwards with the department.

STAKEHOLDER MAP



VALUE NETWORK MAP

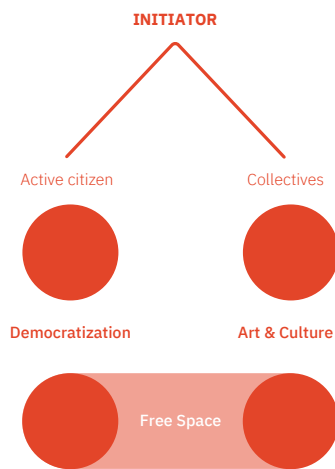


Tangible
Intangible



INITIATOR FREE SPACE MAKER

The Free Space Department works closely together with the bottom-up initiator and strives for a high degree of participation. Both the department and initiators aim for an equal, respected position and complete autonomy of the initiative. On Arnstein's participation ladder, the Free Space participative processes are at least on a Partnership level and lean towards the Delegated Power level (Arnstein, S. R., 2019). To which category the collaboration leans, differ on the base of the project. In Delegated Power participation the municipality gives up some degree of control, management and decision-making authority. Since the Free Space Department strives for autonomy, it is important that they trust the initiator and master the art of letting go. For this the department needs to understand the different possible initiators, therefore this chapter defines three initiator persona's.



WILLINGNESS CO / COUNTER
 POSSIBILITY TIME / MONEY
 KNOW-HOW BUREAUCRATIC / PRACTICAL



Within their work, the department actively searches for initiators who want to fill municipal spaces with cultural and social ideas. Within the willing possible initiators, a distinction can be made between existing (non-)local collective and individual local residents. These two groups mainly differ in capabilities. An existing collective often has more experience compared to an active local resident. Within the municipality the Art & Culture Department often works closely together with collectives that want to realize social, cultural or experimental projects. Whereas the Democratization Department works closely together with residents to realize participative projects. Since Free Spaces are multifunctional the initiatives cover multiple policy goals and therefore Free Space creation include and bridges between these two ultimatums.

The distinction between these two different initiator groups, does not yet define the possible characteristics of the initiator. Who is this initiator and where are they coming from? Are they willing to participate and what are their capabilities? Looking back at history it can be concluded that different initiator mindsets (co- or counterculture) define the willingness to participate, and therefore influence the participative-relationship and the implementation of Free Space. By means of observation techniques (B.N. Sanders, E., & Stappers, P. J., 2012) a better understanding of a possible initiator is obtained, to solidify different persona's. For example visiting Free Space, attending workshops or events, and watching documentaries about Amsterdam's free space makers. More about this in chapter Qualitative Research - Observation (page 78).

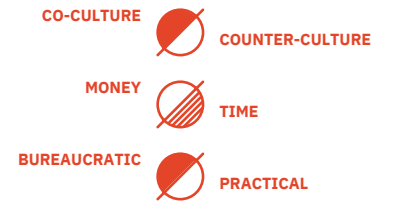
Through observation it became obvious that a possible initiator varies on the basis of three different variables. The first variable is most striking; the willingness to participate with the municipality; co- or counterculture. The second variable is about the initiators' possibility to participate regarding time and money. Often the initiator that frees up time to invest in the creation of free space, cannot put this time in making money and therefore has less money to invest in the Free Space. The initiator that does have the money to invest, often does not have the time and will outsource tasks. The past however showed that by just putting money in a place, the aimed ownership and autonomy cannot be achieved. The last variable concerns the know-how to start and realize an initiative. This can be divided in two experience types. Practical know-how is the ability to be skillful in creating things and get things done with your own hands. Bureaucratic know-how is the ability to understand municipal procedures and find a way through. On the basis of these three variables, three persona's are defined; the Mainstream Establishment, the Counterculture Niche, and the Unknown Minority.

INITIATOR FREE SPACE MAKER



MAINSTREAM ESTABLISHMENT

The Mainstream Establishment initiator is a majority group. They are willing to participate, have the capabilities and an understanding of the bureaucratic world. They are easily accessible and often have some money and practicalities to get an initiative off the ground. This majority group of young urban professionals is comparable with the initiators post financial crisis. High educated residents that have innovative and sustainable ideas on how to improve a neighborhood. They understand the bureaucratic world, which possibly results in a constructive collaboration with the municipality. Due to well-paid jobs, they can be busy, but have some money to outsource tasks. However, due to middle-class poverty this is decreasing. This type of entrepreneurial initiator fits in the majority of residents in Amsterdam. Therefore, it could be considered that they are part of the growing monoculture and do not necessarily provide subculture. However, they can still have alternative urban plans and have valid ideas. The municipality does not necessarily need to actively find these initiators, since they know how to find the municipality whenever they want to participate or realize an idea. Whereas this is more difficult for minorities.

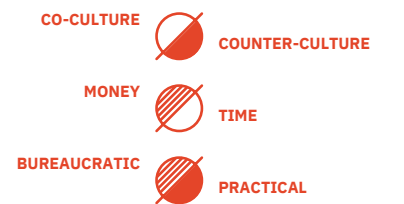


COUNTERCULTURE NICHE

The Counterculture Niche initiator is the most defined and scoped group, but has the greatest variety regarding willingness, possibilities, and know-how. This group entails the biggest part of contemporary free space residents and creators. They are familiar to the municipality and raise their voice in documentaries. Therefore they are the most concrete and known initiators for the municipality. Some of them are old squatters, others are a new youthful creative generation. Mostly they have a radical left and anarchistic mindset. They are anti-system; participating with the municipality is against their own principles. The younger counterculture claims that free space cannot be created under municipal policies and must exist organically bottom-up, not as part of the system. However, the older generation squatters, who have been fighting the system for a longer period of time, know that they are to some extent dependent on the space the municipality offers them; without participation they will never find a place. Therefore, they have a different mindset: take what you can get, even if it means cooperating with the municipality. The older counterculture initiator is experienced, and therefore is familiar with the bureaucratic world and has practical know-how. The younger generation often lacks this, but they have the network to pick up on this. Often these initiators do not have a lot of money nor time to put in the work to start and maintain an initiative. However, they are willing to free-up time if it is an initiative that is close to their heart.

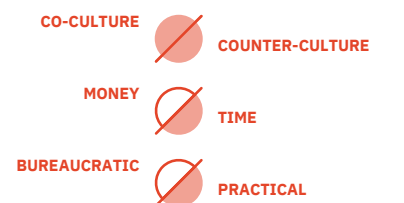
Hotel Mokum: "It's counter-culture, it's against the ruling powers. It's against capitalism. It's against the state, it's against the municipality so to speak. And when a municipality sees that as something that has value, because we want to have such a nice lively city, it robs what counterculture stands for, exactly of its meaning."

ADM / Groene Veld: The pressure on the city is enormous, and I think from this vision that all the space you can channel through, whether that is via free spaces, breeding places, squatting or whatever. If you can have it for an affordable price, for people with free thought, liberal minds, free thinkers, people who want things differently, people who are anti-capitalistic? You name it all. You just have to grab every square meter that you can realize for this. Point.



UNKNOWN MINORITY

The Unknown Minority initiator is by far the most inaccessible and therefore least known. The municipality does not know who they are, where they are, and what they need (Arroudi, S., 2021). They assume that this initiator is low-educated, has low-income and lives in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Therefore they probably do not have any money to put in these initiatives, but potentially do have time on their hands. Contact between the municipality and this group is rather non-existent. An explanation could be that they are not able to find the municipality or understand the bureaucratic system-world. It is assumed that they have practical skills and therefore they know how to roll up their sleeves. This however is only useful if they are willing to participate and have time to do so. Due to little to no contact with this group, these variables remain unclear. Compared to the counterculture niche with strong statements with clear beliefs, this unknown minority group is probably more diversified with more divergent ideas internally, and will therefore most likely be bigger than the counterculture niche group.

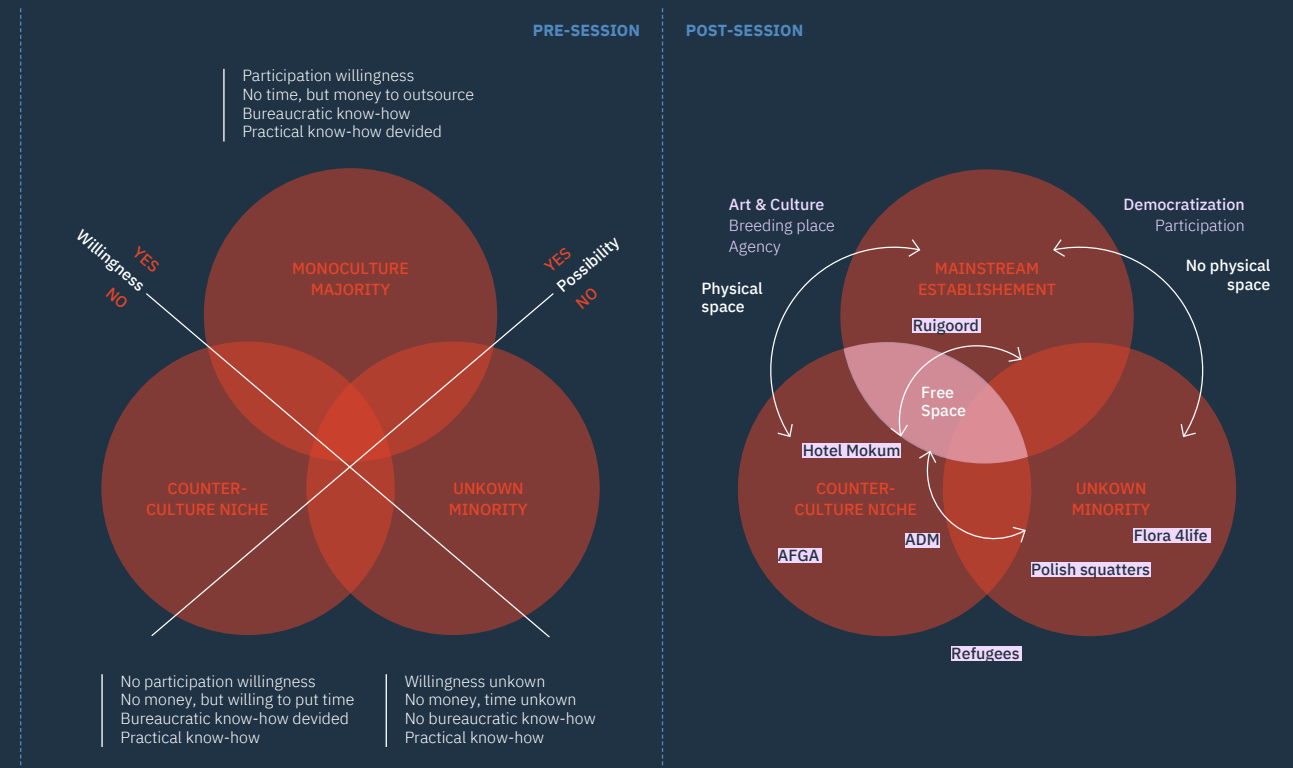


Free Spaces are low-threshold; they often only ask for a donation or have cost-effective prices. Therefore Free Space has the potential to attract and give space to the unknown minority.

INITIATOR FREE SPACE MAKER

PROTOTYPE TEST VISUALIZATION

A prototype-visualization validated this division of initiator types in three different persona's. The visualization was created first, and subsequently validated in a session with supervisor Julian Jansen. The left shows a pre-session prototype-visualization, based on observation research. The initiators differ in their willingness to participate, their investment possibilities, and know-how. The right shows the same visual with modifications and additional notes from the session.



Based on observation and internal validation it could be concluded that possible initiators can be divided in three groups and differ on the basis of three variables. Parallels can be drawn from the history of free space. The Counterculture Niche has similar beliefs as the squatters that started free space initiation. Whereas the Mainstream Establishment is more comparable with the participative resident from the post financial crises. The Unknown Minority however remains merely undefined. This potential initiator is hard to reach and identify, and has not yet worked with before. Therefore it is not surprising that current collaborations are with initiators from the overlap area between Mainstream Establishment and the Counterculture Niche. They score the highest on willingness, possibility and know-how. However, in the best case scenario the municipality would give the Unknown Minority initiators more of a chance, since they are most disadvantaged in the current situation within the city.



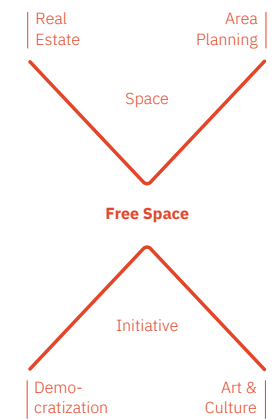
Important to note is that the size of the circles within the visual do not define the sizes of the group. A more roughly estimated representation can be found on the bottom left. Where the Mainstream Establishment is the biggest group, the Unknown Minority assumingly smaller yet bigger than the Counterculture Niche.

CURRENT PROCEDURE

The Expedition Free Space was set up to experiment with this new way of urban planning, with the aim of ultimately writing policy. Currently it is too early to define best practices. The work they provide is customization and their procedure is dependent on the type of implementation they aim to realize. What kind of initiative is it and which parties are they collaborating with? With whom they work within- and outside the municipality depends on this and influences the division of tasks and the roles. Therefore, the Free Space procedure is project dependent and relies on customization.

CUSTOMIZATION

The Value Network Map shows that internally within the municipality, the Free Space Department works closely together with four other departments. They have to anticipate and meet the needs of the departments Real Estate and Area Development. These departments are in charge of the municipal space, either buildings or land. With the departments Democratization and Art & Culture it alters between having regular minimal contact and keeping informed completely. These departments work closely together with initiators. In the Democratization Department, this concerns citizens' initiatives. This department focuses on participation. In the case of Art & Culture, this concerns creative initiatives and incubators such as Breeding Places. The Breeding Place agency is therefore a part of the Art & Culture department. With whom the Free Space department is working with and till what intensity depends on the project.



Every Free Space project is different and therefore needs a customized approach. The work that has to be done strongly depends on some factors. Is the initiative short-term or permanent? Does it involve one-off events or horeca? Based on this license application changes. Besides, if the space is known by the municipality or is an unknown piece of land that firstly needs to be inspected, changes the duration of this type of process. Therefore, it could be concluded that the Free Space Department is in need of hybrid procedures and policies, in order to realize the project dependent customized work.

TWO PROCEDURES

Despite the fact that the procedure depends on the project, two clear paths can be distinguished on how a Free Space initiative comes off the ground. The Free Space Department connects bottom-up initiatives with space. The starting point could either be an initiative that is in search of a suitable space, or the department claiming an empty space for which they have to find a suitable initiative. The latter is mostly the case, which is rather top-down steered free space creation.

1 IDENTIFYING INITIATIVES



Finding initiators or initiatives in the department happens in different ways. They could directly point to the residents scanning the neighborhood for existing collectives. For this they also use the municipal website and promote the open project. Besides, they internally consult the Democratization Department or the Breeding Place Agency and make use of their network. Lastly, they scan their external network of non-local collectives that are active in the free space field. Sometimes this is with the help of third parties, such as De Culturele Stelling van Amsterdam and Amsterdam Alternative.

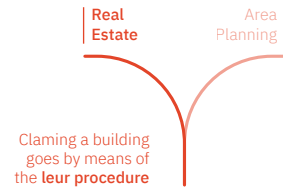
2 CLAIMING A SPACE



There are two types of municipal space that can be claimed by the department; a building or a piece of land. Buildings fall under maintenance of the Real Estate Department, while land is the responsibility of the Area Development Department. The different properties can be divided into what already is there and what yet has to be developed. Buildings are existing property while land is undefined property.

CURRENT PROCEDURE

CLAIMING A SPACE

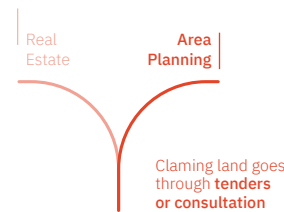


Existing buildings

When municipal buildings are vacant or their lease contract ends soon, the Real Estate Department offers this property to different policy goals. This available property, with a cost-effective rental price, can be used for different urban projects. Each department can 'claim' the property by showing how it will be used. Claiming these municipal buildings with cost-effective rent goes through the leur-procedure, of which the process is summarized underneath (personal communication, November 29, 2021).

LEUR-PROCEDURE

- 1 Rental agreement or lease contract has ended or will end soon. Property will become available.
- 2 The Asset Manager of the department of Real Estate produces the fact-sheets containing information about the plot or the building.
- 3 An available plot of land is discussed in a meeting with staff from different policy fields and different departments.
- 4 After the meeting, a claim can be made for the use of the plot of land. This must be done within six weeks.
- 5 Colleagues who are interested / need space try to find partners who are able to build a business case for the plot of land.
- 6 If there is only one claim (and the business case is strong): the Asset Manager makes a contract.
- 7 If there is more than one claim: the City Council needs to make a decision: 'the one which is most relevant' will be chosen by politicians.



New land

When new land is available this will be in area development sites. The department of Area Development writes out tenders for third expert parties to make an implementation plan for these areas. When the Free Space Department wants to claim a piece of land this is often by means of internal agreement. They cannot participate in tenders, since they are a municipal department and besides plan and implementation is yet undefined. When a suitable initiative is found, they can start making a plan, which is often after the Free Space Department obtains the piece of land through consultation.

REGEL-BRIGADE

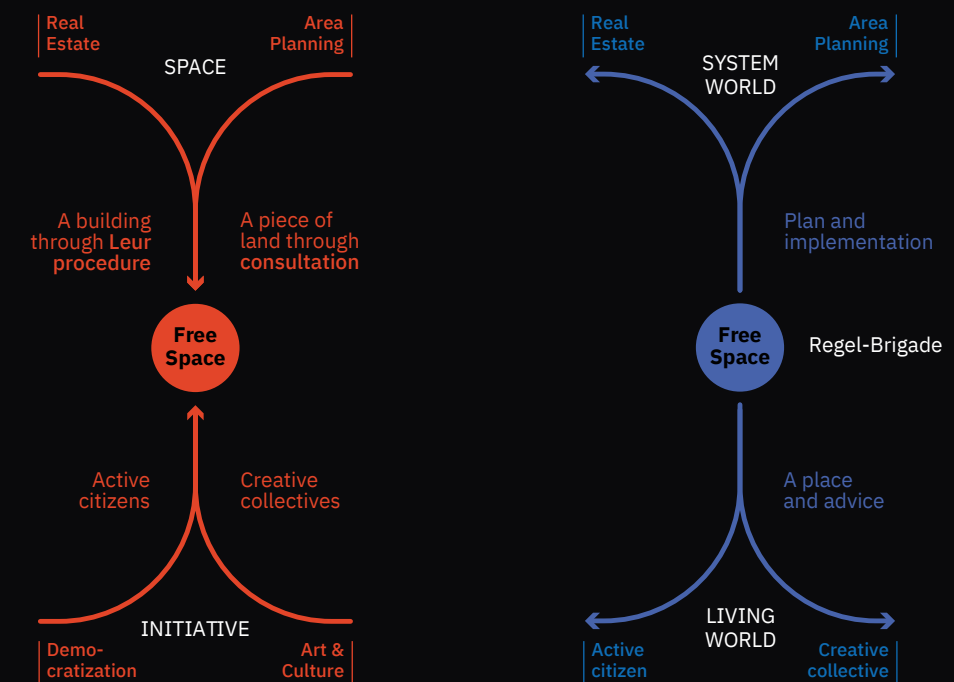
On the other hand the Free Space Department is constantly bridging and translating between system-world and living-world. Often bottom-up initiators do not have the know-how of the bureaucratic world. Therefore, the Free Space Department aims for a facilitating role that lowers boundaries and opens the right doors. This is for example giving juridic advice. Within the municipality they are the advocate of the initiators, involving in space-creation, price-negotiation, license-application, and finding leeway in regulations. The department is actively involved in processes with the internal system, while standing-up for initiators. For this matter they have started the regel-brigade, which currently is merely a formality towards the initiators.

CURRENT SYSTEM CONCLUDING SUMMARY

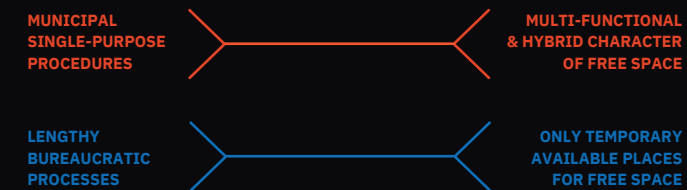
FREE SPACE SYSTEM

The Free Space Department's main task is space implementation, connecting an initiative to a municipal space. From stakeholder analysis it can be concluded that the Free Space Department works closely together with Real Estate and Area Planning that maintain municipal property, and with Democratization and Art & Culture that focus on the realization of urban initiatives. Possible initiators are either existing (non-)local collectives or active citizens. They can roughly be divided into three groups; Mainstream Establishment, Counterculture Niche, and Unknown Minority. Where the latter is not worked with before. These initiator persons differ on the basis of three variables; the willingness, the possibility and the know-how to participate.

Furthermore, it could be concluded that due to customization, the Free Space Department is a hybrid department with a hybrid procedure. With whom they work together is dependent on the project. Therefore, their way of working is not yet set in stone. Currently, the Free Space Department has too few projects in their archive to follow a standardized approach. Responsibilities are still opaque, and best practices have to be defined on the way. However, it is clear that they connect the system-world with the living-world by finding space for bottom-up initiatives. The Free Space Department members have a translating function between those different worlds, which makes them frontiersmen.



FRICION BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM





2.7 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The third part of the research approach aims to understand underlying internal and external problems by doing qualitative research. Insights are extracted from participatory observation, interviewing, and observation by means of visiting free space's, attending a debate and a workshop, and watching documentaries. Information is gathered from different problem owners and point of views. In this way it is aimed to have a broad understanding of various lived experiences and identify problems, tensions and opportunities.

PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

This chapter gives a brief overview of the most important participatory observation insights. Participatory observation helped to gain understanding in the daily challenges the Free Space Expedition is facing. Weekly attending internal meetings with the department and parts of the department allows for the identification of more project management and process related challenges. Attending meetings with external parties allows for the identification of more frequently occurring challenges regarding collaborations and the connection to the living-world. A short summary can be found underneath, note that 'they' refers to the Free Space Department. An extensive summary of the participatory observation insights regarding the weekly meetings with the Free Space Department and project group meetings with HvA and Space of Urgency can be found in Appendix E.

WEEKLY MEETINGS FREE SPACE DEPARTMENT

FREE SPACE HAS A HYBRID AND UNPLANNED NATURE	Free Space is hybrid Free Space creation is customization Free Space creation is in need of leeway in regulation (and hybrid policy)
THE BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM CREATES RESISTANCE	Bureaucratic processes are slow and time-consuming Temporary availability of property creates tension with lengthy processes Living on a Free Space is necessary, but often hard to realize
THEY SHOULD IMPROVE EXTERNAL COLLABORATION	Between initiator and the department there is an unclear division of roles To collaborate and participate a positive attitude is necessary Gaining trust is important but takes time, due to troubled past
THEY SHOULD SECURE FREE SPACE WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY	Free Space can be seen as social facility within regular area planning A more integrated approach is needed: collaborate early in the process A Free Space can be similar to a Breeding place, but is more than that

AIM
Get grip on the organizational inertia and object worlds

WHEN
Every Monday weekstart, every Thursday action-line 4

WHERE
Online - Teams

WHO
Free Space Department
Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Alexander van Altena, Nick van Loon, Nasiem Vafa, Stijn Verwoest, Asja Föllmi

Action line 4
Julian Jansen, Eline Smit, Nasiem Vafa, Asja Föllmi

PROJECTGROUP SUMMARY SPACE OF URGENCY + HVA

THERE IS UNCLEARITY ABOUT THE FREE SPACE POLICY	Unclear definition of Free Space Unclear policy preconditions and division of roles Unclear distinction between other departments and policy goals Unclear distinction between Breeding Place and Free Space
THE BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM CREATES RESISTANCE	The department should find leeway in rules and regulations There are difficulties realizing living-possibility and cost-effective rent There is tension between temporarily and permanency The department are in need of alternative value models
THEY SHOULD IMPROVE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COLLABORATION	They should internally collaborate with Real Estate & Democratization They should externally collaborate with free space experts and platforms Responsibilities should be clear from the start They have to create mutual trust, which takes time
THEY SHOULD CONTINUE THEIR CURRENT COURSE OF DIRECTION	They should continue their ambassador role and maintain the regel-brigade They should keep learning and experimenting They should have a facilitating role, not steering They should redefine their ambitions

AIM
Understand external living-world challenges

WHEN
Approximately once every two weeks on a Tuesday

WHERE
Online - Teams

WHO
Expeditie Vrije Ruimte
Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Stijn Verwoest, Asja Föllmi

Space of Urgency
Arno Bouma, Liese Kingma

HvA
Karin de Nijs, Stan Majoor

OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

Besides participatory observation, also regular observation is used to gather information and insights. An excursion to the Free Space Resistor in Leiden, attending a workshop at 'het GroeneVeld' where ADM is established on the sludge fields of Noord, reviewing footage of a free space conference in Berlin (Frei(t)raume), and attending a debate about Expedition Free Space in OT301 (a squatted free space) between free space makers and the municipality are moments where observation was practiced. Visiting free spaces contributes to experiencing and understanding the place and the people involved. Furthermore, to get a more comprehensive understanding about squatting and the intentions or motives of free space makers, documentaries are reviewed. This chapter elaborates on the insights gained from the OT301 debate and insights extracted from the documentaries.

DEBAT OT301

WHEN Friday November 19
17:00 - 22:00

WHERE OT301 - Overtoom 301,
Amsterdam

WHO Free space makers and
the municipality

On Friday November 19th, various parties that are involved in free space creation gathered at OT301 to discuss and reflect on the municipal Expedition Free Space. On this evening organized by Amsterdam Alternative, about sixty people gathered to discuss. This is a crucial moment, as different free space makers, action groups, and squatters of different generations with different motivations are debating with the municipality and discussing the usefulness of the Expedition. A summary of the insights is listed underneath. A transcript of the complete debat can be found in Appendix F.

PROTECTING SUBCULTURES HAS AN URGENCY

"Especially because I think it's very clear to a lot of people, and I think not just for the people who are involved in free spaces and activism per se, but for Amsterdam in general, that the things we love and the things that are important are actually bogged down and disappearing before our very eyes."

- Hotel Mokum

First of all, it became clear that many of whom were present believe that action should be taken as quickly as possible. Everything subcultural in the city is swallowed by the commercial market, and changes the city irreversibly. They are happy with the city's advancing insight, but they have not forgotten the mismanagement of the municipality, and national government. Their active management of evictions pushed the fringes to the abyss. The Free Space Expedition is not going to solve this problem of commercial pressure, but it may help to get land back from the non-commercial parties. Municipal elections will be held in March 2022. With a prospect of a more mid-engaged council in the next four years, free space makers are expressing their concerns. Is there any prospect for the Expedition, or will the project be swept off the table again?

COUNTERCULTURE CANNOT BE FACILITATED

"It's counter-culture, it's against the ruling powers. It's against capitalism. It's against the state, it's against the municipality so to speak. And when a municipality sees that as something that has value, because we want to have such a nice lively city, it robs what counterculture stands for, exactly of its meaning."

- Hotel Mokum

Opinions on the usefulness of and confidence in the Expedition vary. The urgency is self-evident for all, due to the past mismanagement of the municipality, it is no longer possible to find a place in the city for non-commercial purposes, the cultural diversity of Amsterdam is destroyed. Many do not have the confidence that Expedition is able to remedy this. Firstly, the municipality cannot facilitate counterculture or free space. When counterculture is facilitated by the municipality, it is robbed of its meaning. In addition, one cannot speak of freedom or free space under the capitalist neo-liberal regime. It is said that free space must be fought for. Room for counterculture cannot be obtained from the municipality. Fighting for freedom, not just our own freedom but everyone's too.

THERE IS DISTRUST IN MUNICIPAL CLAIMS

"I have the impression that there is very little on offer. A little space, but you have to build everything yourself. That sounds like something you can do as an incubator with extra subsidy, but we are put in as free social workers. That's nice and easy, because then the municipality no longer has to pay for it. Because those squatters make it beautiful. And they put in an awful lot of hours, for which the municipality does not have to pay anything. So it's just really cheap social policy. It seems to me."

- Audience speaker

In addition, the words and deeds of the municipality are contradicting. The municipality claims to offer more space for counterculture and social, subcultural initiatives, and to protect the city fringes, while on the other hand they use a lot of police brutality to drive squatters out of buildings. This cannot be reconciled. How can the municipality speak about offering space to the creative and artist when there is a housing crisis? Free space makers consider the expedition a gentrification project and a tool for further urban development. Of course this is not the starting point of the Expedition, they try to adapt changes on a small scale and counter the monoculture. However, they must be careful that they do not become a link in the system they are trying to fight. They should interfere with urban development. The temporality they offer crushes small-scale initiatives. Where some are doubtful others see the usefulness of the expedition; we are doing the same thing from different sides and should work together or it will be too late.

*"Because I think the Free Space Agreement is a **gentrification project**. And I hope there will be a response to that too. Uhm yes, we are in a housing crisis. **Squatting for many people is a way of survival as well**. So why are we talking about artists and free-thinking people when everyone just has a right to exist and should have a safe place. So why is it represented as a kind of privilege that only artists should have."*

*"It's a kind of greenwashing: **gentrification washing**. The municipality uses you to say: "Look, it has been discussed. It's all going well." And then you will simply be thrown out when the movement is weak again."*

- Anarcho Feministic Group Amsterdam



THERE IS A FEAR OF SIMILARITIES WITH BREEDING PLACES

*"What is the difference between the **Breeding Places** and **Expedition Free Space**. Because it seems to be a loop. There were no rules at those **Breeding Places** either, you know in 1999 when it all started, there weren't that many rules either. The policy was not there yet. The **Free Space** policy is not there yet, it has to be made. But there is of course an example. **The Breeding Place policy is of course an example. So to what extent will it not be the same?**"*

- Audience Ruigoord

The question arises several times as to what distinguishes them from Breeding Places. After all, the BPA policy started with the same kind of approach, but gradually grew closer to standardized procedures and regulations, which means that only straightforward ideas were possible, while still limiting the possibilities and cultural diversity. How is the Expedition going to prevent this? After all, Breeding Places are really different from Free Spaces; more focused on the creative industry, little collectivity and a selection policy through CAWA assessments. Free Space is broader and more socially committed, which is confirmed by the municipal Expedition. In contrast to the BPA policy, a considerable budget had been made available for this subcultural purpose at the time. While the Expedition has no budget, except for deploying manpower and offering places with a cost-effective rent.

COST-EFFECTIVE RENT IS STILL TOO EXPENSIVE

*Then why don't you make a priority on one of the **most important issues**, that about the rent, or whatever you want to call it. Find a good solution for that. And don't say you get it cheap, obviously nobody wants it cheap. **Because in the end it still means that people still have to go to work for half the week.***

Look when in the 80's half the city was squatted, but then we didn't pay rent. That was precisely the reason that we can do all these fun things.

- Audience speakers

According to those present, a major stumbling block is the cost-effective rent that the municipality offers. It is admittedly the lowest price for which the municipality can offer properties. These prices are usually so high and have increased enormously in recent years that this is not affordable for creatives and free space makers. There is a demand for transparency; how do these prices come about, why is it not possible to subsidize these rents. Some in the audience believe that free space should not be paid for at all, or one should get it for free because people work hard there. There is otherwise no spare time to work for money to pay the rent. Rent therefore ensures that less time can be spent on voluntary and social purposes. The danger of cost-effective rent is that you will force makers and users into entrepreneurship instead of socially autonomous projects. Rent also means that you are tied to the capital and that should be avoided, according to the majority of the speakers. Some are willing to pay a bit for a space, however the Amsterdam market prices are unaffordable.

LIVING POSSIBILITY ON FREE SPACE IS CRUCIAL

"There is a housing crisis, which is why houses are being squatted. And that's actually the very first thing you need to support. Point."

"Maybe in the end taking care of culture is something that needs more money, but housing is something that needs space."

"We will probably be evicted, at least that's the plan so far. And the question is, why is there explicitly no housing option in those plans?"

- Audience speakers

A second stumbling block is the housing options or living possibility in the places that the municipality offers. The places that they can offer for social purposes are often places that are not habitable. This often concerns green areas on the outskirts of the city where, by definition, people are not allowed to live for environmental and health reasons. However, everyone is of the opinion that living in a free space is essential to get the whole thing off the ground and keep it going. Full time commitment is required to realize and maintain a Free Space. Living elsewhere and also having a Free Space is difficult to reconcile with regard to financing two places in Amsterdam and dividing precious time between work and Free Space. Paying rent for a house and cost-effective rent for a Free Space is already impossible for a modal earner. Let alone for someone who spends a lot of time on social, non-commercial projects.



DOCUMENTARIES

To gain understanding in the point of view of possible initiators, phrases are quoted from three documentaries where free space makers raise their voice. These quotes are clustered to distill insights, which are listed in this chapter. More thorough elaborated insights supported with quotes can be found in Appendix G. The first documentary that is used to generate insight is 'De verloren Vrijstaat' that concerns the eviction of the old squatted ADM terrain in the western harbor area around 2018. This marks an event that left a big dent in the squatters' trust in the municipality that fortified the abrasive relationship. The second documentary concerns the opinions from initiators and other stakeholders about the Free Space Expedition as a reaction on the bottom-up initiated Free Space Agreement. At that time, around 2020, the Expedition was still in its infancy. The last documentary concerns the squatting of a building by the Kinderen van Mokum, a young activist collective. This attempt to get the housing-crisis on the political agenda was an expression of aversion to the capitalistic system by the new generation squatters. With gathering these insights, it is aimed to understand underlying and mutual relations between municipality, third parties, and initiators, while identifying problems, challenges, and opportunities.

DOCUMENTARIES

De Verloren Vrijstaat
2Doc - NPO

Pas op de vrijplaats
Initiators 'Vrijplaatsen Akkoord'

De kinderen van Møkum, en ik
2Doc - NPO

OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

DOCUMENTARY DE VERLOREN VRIJSTRAAT (2DOC)

FREE SPACE MAKERS

ARE DRIVEN BY SOCIAL & POLITICAL BELIEFS	Free space makers are idealistic and have a socio-political motivation Free space makers want to add something, share their vision, and put their own mark Free space makers are not money-driven, do things without expecting something in return
DEVOTE THEIR LIFE TO THE PLACE	Maintaining a free place is a full-time job
MAKE UNCERTAIN LIFESTYLE CHOICES	Squatters live an uncertain existence, due to the risk of eviction They fight until the last minute for their right to existence

FREE SPACE

HAS SOCIAL EFFECTS	A free place is a self-made society On free places there is a tight community Free spaces are intrinsically inclusive
HAS A REACH	Free spaces give Amsterdam the distinctive character the city wants and aims for
OFFERS EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITIES	A free place is an inspiring place that allows cross-pollination Free space offers social, cultural, and ecological activities to the city Everyone contributes in their own way at a free space
HAS A HUMAN SCALE PROCES	Outside and close to nature adds to the feeling of freedom A free place is unlike anything else, free and incomprehensible A free place is raw, flawed, and not finetuned
HAS A SAFEGUARDING MENTALITY	Free places are for multiple ages and generations The free space makers have no other place to go A free space is a place for people who do not fit in the system

MUNICIPALITY

HAS A NEO-LIBERAL AND ECONOMIC FOCUS	The city fails at being inclusive The municipality chooses the side of the money Free space is used as an urbanization (and gentrification) tool
DOES NOT VALUE FREE SPACE	Free places are driven to the abyss, protecting the space is a tough fight The municipality does not see the value free places and the free labor bring to the city The abrasive relationship between squatters and municipality is due to violent evictions There is a triangular relationship between squatters, the municipality and real estate owners
OFFERS 'WORTHLESS' PLACES	Squatters live an uncertain existence, due to the risk of eviction They fight until the last minute for their right to existence
CREATED AN ABRASIVE RELATIONSHIP	During an eviction, they lose their home and belongings, this is traumatizing and inhumane An eviction tears a carefully built community apart A free space does not need municipal interference, but trust and space

OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

DOCUMENTARY PAS OP DE VRIJPLAATS

FREE SPACE MAKERS

ARE DRIVEN BY SOCIAL & POLITICAL BELIEFS	Free space makers are no economic-driven, but socially and cultural driven Free space is socio-political involved
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FREE SPACE

CREATION HAS A FOUNDATION OF ACTIVISM	Squatting is both a urgency of finding residency as an form of activism Squatting first had an urgency for finding a place to live, the movement changed from house-seeking to activist (political and ideological supported) Squatting and activism continues, with or without the Free Space Expedition Free space is socio-political involved
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CREATION IS IN NEED OF TRUST	Free space creation needs to be trusted and tolerated There is fear of privatization of public property The municipality should not treat them equal to other participants; seriously and fair
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HAS SOCIAL EFFECTS	Free space is socio-political involved Free places create their own way of living; society A free space is about creating something beautiful with like-minded people A free space is not just a working place, it is a self-created community Free space conditions are valuable for subcultural communities and the city Living on free space allows the emergence of communities and neighborhood feeling
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BRINGS CULTURE	Squatters and alternative subcultures brought this inclusive and free spirited character
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HAS A HUMAN SCALE PROCESS	A free space is not structured, but arises organically
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IS ONLY FREE WHEN FREE FROM MUNICIPALITY	A true free place is free because there is no municipal interference or capitalistic focus To realize free space, the municipality needs to let go The free space maker wants to be independent from the municipality Free spaces and liberating space originates from the squatters' movement The process of bureaucratic free space creation goes against the principles of the initiator Bureaucratic free space is bureaucratically structured, not unstructured and free-spirited
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IS USED AS GENTRIFICATION TOOL	The municipality has an idealistic view of the realization of municipal free space Free space is used as gentrification tool and becomes part of what they aim to avoid The market benefits from free space but does not contribute to it.
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TENSIONS

BETWEEN TEMPORARY AVAILABLE SPACE AND NEEDED INVESTMENT	The initiator wants permanent free space, but this is however difficult to realize Temporary places are a waste of time and investment
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COST-EFFECTIVE RENT AND THE EFFORT OF FREE SPACE MAKERS	Operating a free space and paying for a home in Amsterdam is financially impossible The municipality asks both for cost-effective rent and the commitment of initiators The initiator provides free labor, what benefits the city Asking rent excludes and shuts out certain (minority) groups
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OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

DOCUMENTARY PAS OP DE VRIJPLAATS

MUNICIPALITY

IS NOT CAPABLE OF FREE SPACE CREATION	It is argued that writing policy for something so free and unplanned as free space is impossible. The realization of bureaucratic free places requires leeway in rules and legislation The bureaucratic jungle is difficult and time consuming Everyone always wants a say in decision making Squatting is more time and cost-effective than collaborating with the municipality
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CANNOT FACILITATE COUNTERCULTURE	Division about whether the municipality can facilitate counterculture or not The municipality cannot facilitate illegal activities
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CAN INFLUENCE LAWS & HELP SQUATTERS	The municipality can influence legislation and regulations In collaboration with the municipality and on municipal land, there is no threat of eviction
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HAS A NEO-LIBERAL & ECONOMIC FOCUS	Space is scarce and being misused for capitalistic purposes Amsterdam is treated as a brand, the citymarketing has to stop
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HAS GROWING AWARENESS ON THE VALUE OF FREE SPACE	The free place agreement is bottom-up created, awareness pushed by the communities There is a lack of clarity about what a free space is and means for the city The municipality slowly has advancing insight regarding the importance of free places to the character of Amsterdam. The initiators should see this created space as something positive and grab it The municipal mindset changes; the current economic-driven way and free market is disruptive; space should be used differently Municipal change takes time The municipality wants to restore the city fringes and fight for permanency The first step in realization is recognizing the value of free space for the city
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CREATED AN ABRASIVE RELATIONSHIP	The municipality has actively steered towards the disappearance of free spaces The municipality had (juridically) no other choice but to evict squatted buildings There are still doubts about municipal intentions, but there are positive developments, trust is slowly being regained, but only with a small part of the municipality Free space maker and municipality are in two different worlds that do not understand each other
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AND FREE SPACE MAKER ARE IN NEED OF EACH OTHER	The free space makers need the municipality to fight back the market The municipality needs to free-up this space, otherwise all the subcultural will disappear Collaboration between municipality and free space makers should be based on shared consensus and common values
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OFFERS SPACE WHERE LIVING IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE	It is difficult to (juridically and ecologically) realize living options in the designated places Living possibilities on the free space equals more time one can put into the place
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IS IN NEED OF A FOCAL POINT	The Free Space expedition is experimental It is important that a group within the municipality is committed to free space
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AMSTERDAM

IS LOSING ITS CHARACTER	Amsterdam is losing their inclusive and free spirited character they claim to have The commercial should be balanced with the non-commercial
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DOCUMENTARY DE KINDEREN VAN MØKUM, EN IK (2DOC)

SUMMARY INSIGHTS

AMSTERDAM IS NOT INCLUSIVE ANYMORE	Amsterdam is no longer of the true amsterdam, too expensive Winners are oppressors; when there is a winner there is a loser which means unfairness
INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE INTEREST ARE INTERTWINED	Individual and collective interests are intertwined and hard to separate Collective strength and activism slacks and fades as soon as a place was secured
ACTIVISM IS TOUGH & TIME-CONSUMING	Setting-up an provo-activistic group is time-consuming and intensive Activism is tough when you feel like nothing changes and you're the only one fighting
LIVING WITHOUT A SYSTEM IS FREEDOM	Living 'outside' the system gives a sense of freedom and security at the same time Even if you try to live outside and without the system, you are still dependent on it

INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW JAAP DRAAISMA

To gain insight in more neutral external opinions, third parties should be consulted. For this reason, free space creator and expert Jaap Draaisma is interviewed. A summary of the interview insights can be found underneath. A transcript of the complete interview can be found in Appendix H.

Who is Jaap Draaisma

- Former squatter
- Former civil servant
- Co-founder 'Urban Resort'
- Part of multiple action groups
- Former part of Crash Group (1998)
- Initiator of BPA policy and Free Space Agreement

WHEN Tuesday November 16
10:00 - 12:00

WHERE Café De Balie,
Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen 10
- Amsterdam

WHO Jaap Draaisma,
Joekeneel van der Pijl,
Asja Föllmi

LEEWAY IN REGULATION LEGALIZE SQUATTING

In this regulated system-world it is important to find space between the legislation. Often Free Space initiatives are new and different, there is now box of legislation it fits in. Therefore it is an enormous hurdle for the initiator to make a way through the bureaucratic jungle. In the Free Space policy it is important that they also aim for finding leeway in regulation. Less regulations in the policy will fasten the process where possible.

In the past squatting was 'legal' because people found loopholes in legislation. For instance with the 'home peace' law. This law protects the squatter when it is already living in the building; putting the right to shelter above illegal squatting. If squatters are caught in the act (within 24 hours), they will be kicked out. After these 24 hours the squatter cannot just be thrown on the street. In this case the municipality must be able to demonstrate domestic peace. This law gave room to stretch the leeway in the law, making squatting 'legally possible'. Now the regulations and legislation is more strict and clear. Since 2010 squatting became illegal, making it almost impossible to squat a building without being evicted. However, still youth are squatting in buildings, in order to find a place to stay and live.

MINDSET CHANGE: temporary as a prelude to permanency

"The initiator must let go of his initial idea of a Free Space. Even though their idea is different and cannot be facilitated under the policy of the municipality. If they do not take what they are handed, all subcultural free spaces will gradually disappear. The demand for a permanent place is real, but land is scarce. They should see the temporary offer of the municipality as a first step towards a permanent place."

- Jaap Draaisma

THREE SOLUTION OPPORTUNITIES

1. USE VACANT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

These buildings are often vacant for a longer period of time. Currently squat-keepers stay in those buildings to keep watch and prevent squatting. You have two kinds of municipal buildings; buildings that are already depreciated and buildings that still need to be paid off. The latter unfortunately is often the case. Currently, for these un-paid-off buildings the initiator needs to pay cost-effective rent. This however, is often too high for bottom-up initiatives that do not earn money with what they do. A solution could be asking social-rent for these buildings. This is something that currently does not exist yet. When you set social rent, you have an exploitation deficit. Is it possible to pass this deficit on to future exploitation?

2. USE FALLOW (TEMPORARILY) MUNICIPAL LAND

Currently Amsterdam still has fallow land in some parts of the city. For instance South East, New West, Port City (Havenstad). These pieces of land are vacant for a temporary period of time and now awaiting for their new destination plan. Often the land is already paid off. It could be a perfect short-term solution for temporary initiatives, or temporary as prelude to permanent.

3. USE NON-MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS (CORPORATIONS AND HOTELS)

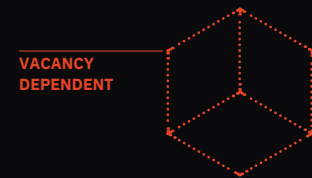
Plenty of buildings in the center of Amsterdam are vacant and are awaiting sale or demolition. For instance buildings of corporations, who since a new law in 2015 are not allowed to own property. Therefore, they had to evacuate their buildings, which now are often vacant and guarded by squat-keepers and await their new destination plan. The corporation in collaboration with initiators (and the municipality) could make these buildings suitable for free places.

Another entrance is the vacant hotels in the center of Amsterdam. Since the beginning of Corona, various hotels have had to close. Since the municipality is not putting any money more in the facilitation of tourism, these buildings are now vacant. These buildings could perfectly offer (social rent) work-live places. The property owners are willing to sell their building to the municipality, however as a property with a hotel status. Not as a social rent building, since in this case they will lose a lot of money. A solution could be the municipality making up for this financial difference. It costs the municipality money, but at the same time they fight against tourism in the center and give the inner city back to its residents.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Literature research already showed that, looking back at the history of free space creation, the eventual functionality and value to the city is dependent on space vacancy, political-judicial mindset, socio-cultural mindset, and the eventual implementation. Further qualitative research defined these dependencies further in variable conditions, which are summarized underneath.

VACANCY DEPENDENCY



- SPACE CHARACTERISTICS
- ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS
- PLACEMENT IN THE CITY
- NEIGHBORHOOD CULTURE
- LIFESPAN

Often the available municipal spaces are placed on the city edges and have little to nothing to offer. In terms of facilities investments have to be made to get the place operational. Therefore Free Space is dependent on the **space characteristics**.

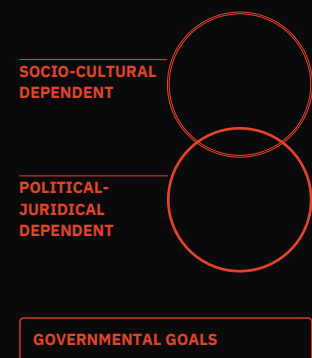
The assigned places are often not livable due to environment and health constraints, while living is essential for the development of a free space. Therefore Free Space is dependent on **environmental & natural conditions**.

The placement of these places are often in the outskirts or city edges, which are difficult to reach. Therefore Free Space is dependent on the **placement in the city**.

An important aspect of this placement is the surrounding area. What are the local manifestations, are there exciting neighbors or existing collectives who want to get involved in the creation of Free Space. To avoid polarization and tensions between local and non-local parties, it is important that these groups are engaged with one another. Therefore Free Space is dependent on **neighborhood culture**.

The places are often only available temporarily; for a few years and awaiting the destination plan. The initiators must start quickly, while investments have to be made and bureaucratic procedures followed, which takes time. Therefore Free Space is dependent on its **lifespan**.

SOCIO-CULTURAL & POLITICAL-JURIDICAL DEPENDENCY



As mentioned before political and socio-cultural mindset influence one-another and a reaction on the prevailing social situation and together form the legal and juridical ground. Space vacancy is also a result of this prevailing situation. What exactly is done with it and the possibilities regarding this piece of property depend on political and juridical choices. Squatting, for example, depends on national legislation. Free space realization relies on the local municipal goals and thus the municipal elections. Therefore free space is dependent on **governmental goals**.

The research showed that the socio-cultural zeitgeist of society influences that certain groups get into action or set up a movement. On a more scoped level, the socio-cultural mindset of the initiators, the ones who make or experience the free space, is even more influential for this place. Both individual and collective values ensure that these initiators are set in motion. To set-up a movement or initiative you need collective strength, however collective and individual interest do not always align. The implementation of a place therefore is dependent on these **individual and collective interests that are intertwined**.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONCLUDING SUMMARY

FREE SPACE IMPLEMENTATION COLLECTIVE

Free space implementation and its value is dependent on the collective or initiative that takes place in the space.

Free Space offers a physical place or platform that allows for social effects, for example group-forming and activism. Free Spaces are inclusive places focused on minorities. It offers a place for people who do not feel at home or who do not have a place elsewhere. It creates a social safety net to people, who otherwise individually should be taken care of by the municipality. Therefore Free Space implementation is dependent on the **physical space** and its **safeguarding mentality**.

Free Space implementation is an organic process, where decisions and choices are unstructured and unplanned. This ensures that every choice has been made based on an intrinsic value or philosophy, because the initiator wants it and not because they think it will pay off. This results in the undefined character of a free space and that everybody experiences these transformative places differently. Therefore free space implementation is dependent on **human scale processes** and its **liminality**.

Free Space often offers something different to the city; a combination of functionalities. Places where creatives come together and create together. Low-threshold workplaces, or shared studio spaces allow for experiment, and the possibility to influence each other and cross pollination. The magnitude of these influences depends on the events and activities involved and the reach of the individuals who invest in them and their network. The boundaries of accessibility changes with the collective. Therefore Free Space implementation is dependent on the **experimental activities** and the **(de)centralized reachability**.

PHYSICAL SPACE

SAFEGUARDING MENTALITY

HUMAN SCALE PROCESSES

LIMINALITY

EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITIES

(DE)CENTRALIZED REACHABILITY

FREE SPACE MAKER INDIVIDUAL

The collective or initiative that takes place is dependent on the individuals that form the collective

The reason that Free Space makers throw themselves into initiating subcultural, social, idiosyncratic projects often has a principle of political and social motivations and points of view. Often they have a left or sometimes anarchistic mindset, and an activist drive to do good for others and the world. They prefer to break free and detach from the system and therefore do not want to cooperate with the municipality in order to maintain their independence. Some devote themselves to the so-called counterculture, which is detracted from its meaning in consultation with the municipality. Free Space therefore depends on the **social beliefs** and **political stand** of individual Free Space makers.

Free Space makers are often involved in social objectives where they do not focus on money and the commercial or capital market. Not having a fixed or steady cash flow in a city like Amsterdam, creates an uncertain precariat existence. Squatting is often a method of survival for these creatives, which increases this uncertainty. However with a sense of freedom to it, it is a certain choice of living. They focus less on money, which allows them to invest valuable time into the creation of these divergent places. Often initiators devote their life to the place. Free Space therefore depends on the **daily life structure** and **lifestyle choices** of individual Free Space makers.

In addition, Free Space makers tend to live their lives differently from the 'boring' mainstream. They want to create their own social community with like-minded people. Although they feel different and that they do not belong in the system, they have social needs to be recognized and appreciated. They want to be part of something where they add value and create meaning. They want to learn, and share and celebrate these values with others. Free Space therefore depends on the **situational needs** and **personal discovery** of individual Free Space makers.

SOCIAL BELIEFS

POLITICAL STAND

DAILY LIFE STRUCTURE

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

SITUATIONAL NEEDS

PERSONAL DISCOVERY

PROBLEM DEFINITION

This project started with the question of how to plan the unplanned nature of Free Space. Literature research showed that Free Space has an organic, unstructured and hybrid character. This depends on the social prevailing mindset, the municipal possibilities of the times, the vacancy and the collective that takes place. These dependencies can be interpreted by various variables. Therefore Free Space changes in presence over the years and with the eye of the beholder. It is not only the unplanned and organic character of a Free Space, but also its multi-functionality that makes planning difficult for the municipality. The municipal system is based on single-purpose procedures and unilateral policy goals. This results in the problem definition:

How can the municipality that is based on **single-purpose procedures, plan the unplanned** and free nature of Free Space without diminishing its **organic, unstructured and hybrid character?**

SUB PROBLEMS FREE SPACE DEPARTMENT

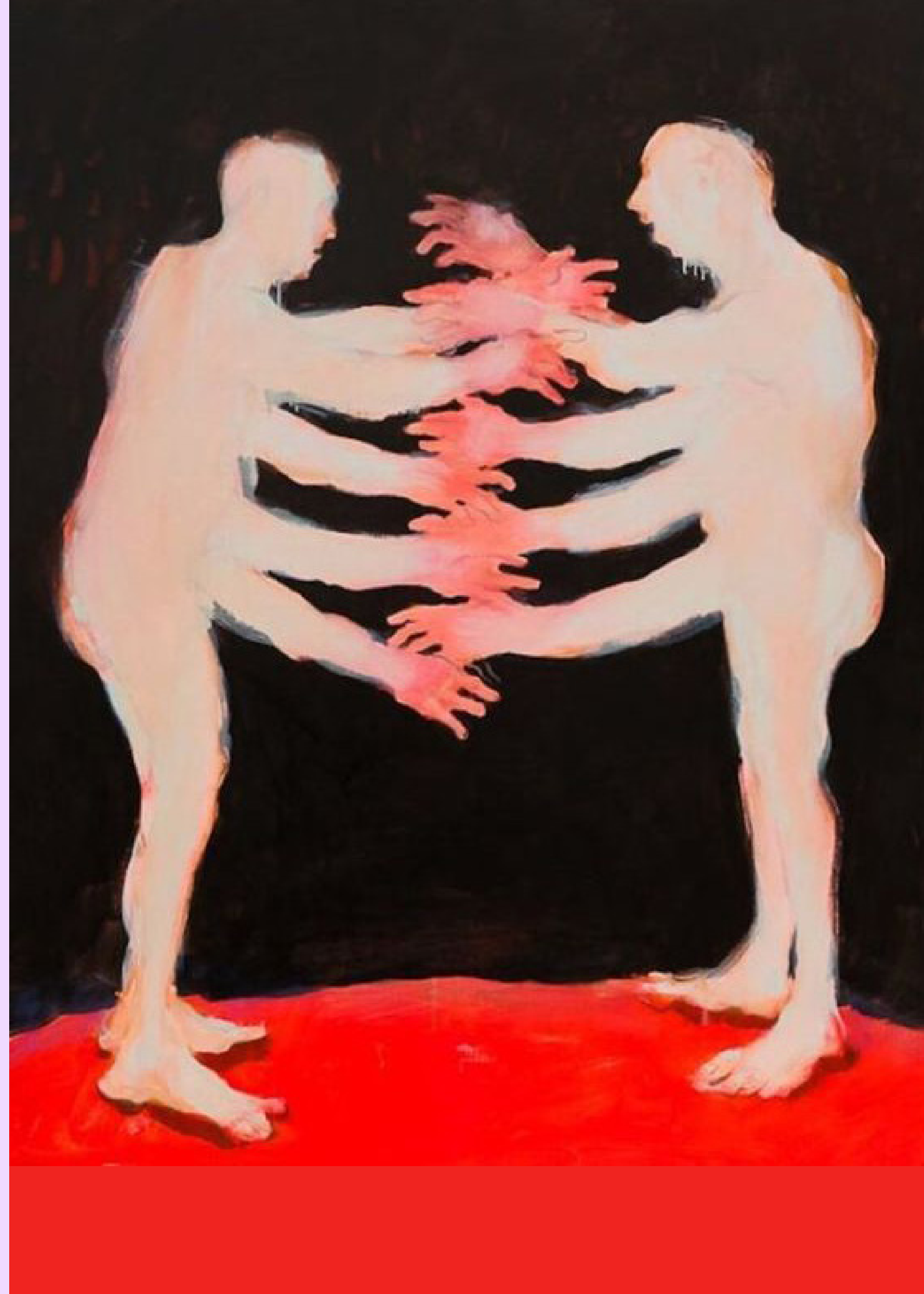
From participatory observation more sub-related problems emerged that are especially crucial for the Free Space Department. These sub-problems they encountered several times over the past two years, and seem to keep coming back unanswered. This creates uncertainty within the municipality. These three sub-problems are a result of the hybrid and undefined nature of Free Space and contribute to the main problem.

UNCLEAR DEFINITION OF FREE SPACE	What actually is Free Space? Should it be over- or under defined?	REFRAME DIRECTION 1
UNCLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN OTHER POLICY GOALS	What are the responsibilities of the Free Space Department? What are the role divisions between other departments?	REFRAME DIRECTION 2
UNCLEAR FUNCTION WITHIN THE REGULAR AREA PLANNING	What is the value proposition and functionality of Free Space? How do you plan and write policy for Free Space?	REFRAME DIRECTION 3

TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES

Qualitative research brought tensions to the surface. In particular, the resistance of the bureaucratic system with regard to Free Space creation. The municipal system works on the basis of standardized procedures and is drawn on the basis of safety and prevention. This however, works against Free Space realization, which does not fit into a standardized frame.

BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES ARE SINGLE-PURPOSE AND STANDARDIZED	In need of adaptive and hybrid procedures, methods and policies	WHILE FREE SPACE HAS A MULTIFUNCTIONAL AND HYBRID CHARACTER
BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES ARE TIME-CONSUMING	Quickening the standard procedures (for example permit application)	WHILE MUNICIPAL SPACE IS ONLY AVAILABLE TEMPORARY
BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES ARE OVERREGULATED AND BASED ON PREVENTION	Allow a collaboration based on trust and personal responsibility	WHICH DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO FIND LEEWAY IN RULES AND REGULATION



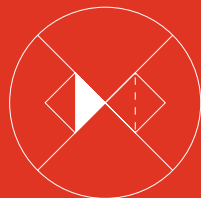
3. REFRAME

The reframe phase focuses on framing and re-framing the system, to clarify where there are opportunities and how new values are created. It aims to get a clear understanding of the problem and is therefore prior to the search for a solution (Schaminée, A., 2019). The framing process aims to find different ways of looking at the situation by changing its meaning. Framing actually finds its entry already in the exploration phase in the first co-creative session or when the first prototype is made. During these processes it is aimed to concretize the abstract complexity of the system while concurrently validating. This quick-prototyping is a way to ask for feedback. Collaborative sessions help to identify the structure and reveal the bigger system. Therefore framing involves mapping and visualizing the system, and eventually frame problems and identify opportunities (Design Council, 2021).

Visualizations on different system layers concretize the structure and make the system less ambiguous, but moreover they can be used as a communication tool. Doing this framing and visualizing helps to clarify interdependencies and unforeseen influential factors. Zooming in and out gives a more holistic view on the situation, which helps in complex problem solving (Schaminée, A., 2019). Collaboratively synthesizing these insights clarifies for everybody what is being discussed. Furthermore, it could raise questions, bring discussion or even disagreement to the table. Using different lenses (e.g. a different purpose or goal) will bring new insights, break prevailing obsolete thinking patterns, and could possibly change point of views and shift collective behavior. Bringing people together ensures that all noses are in the same direction, creates ownership, and will lead to a shared consensus.

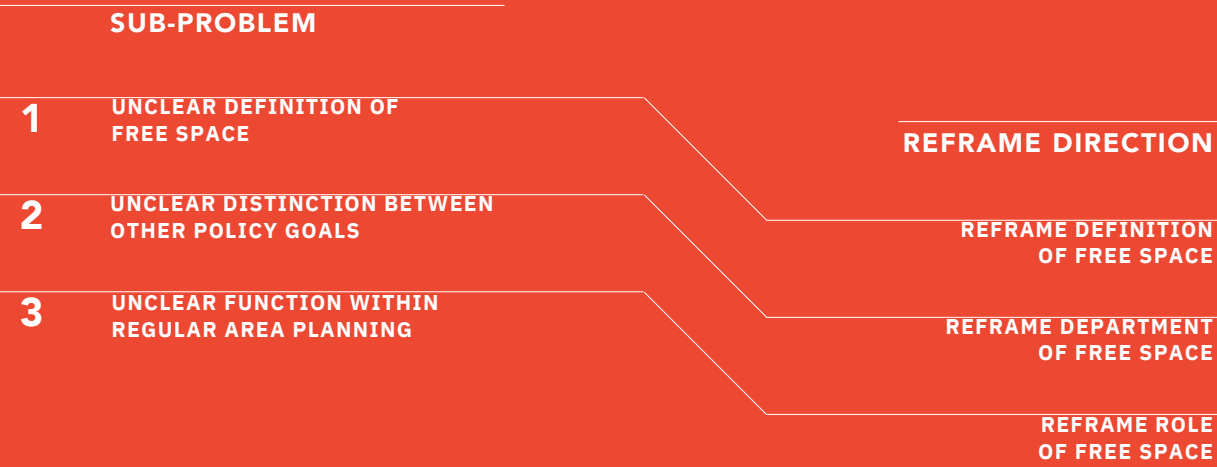
Re-framing the system on different layers with different lenses can regenerate values. This will bring new challenges and opportunities to the surface and could even influence the project purpose or goals. Mapping the system with a new vision could change how everything is connected and how groups are impacted. This could lead to involvement of new parties, creating new relationships and power dynamics. Due to the interconnectedness of a system, working on one part of the problem has an impact on different levels or even raises other new problems (Schaminée, A., 2019). As mentioned before this event is called the co-evolution of problem and solution (Dorst, K., 2020). Therefore, reframing the system changes the focus, and could eventually lead to a changing project brief or scope. Framing the right problem already frames the direction of the solution.

The framing process is divided in three parts that are based on the three subproblems that were defined; unclear definition of free space, unclear distinction between other policy goals, and a unclear function within the regular area planning. **In order to give an answer to (part) of the main problem and design for this purpose, these three subproblems define three concept directions. Reframing the definition, department, and role intends to give clarity in what Free Space is, What the Free Space Department does, and what the value proposition of Free Space is within the regular area planning.** During the reframing process it is important to see the bigger picture (the main problem), and analyze on multiple levels, zooming-in and out.



3.1 REFRAME APPROACH

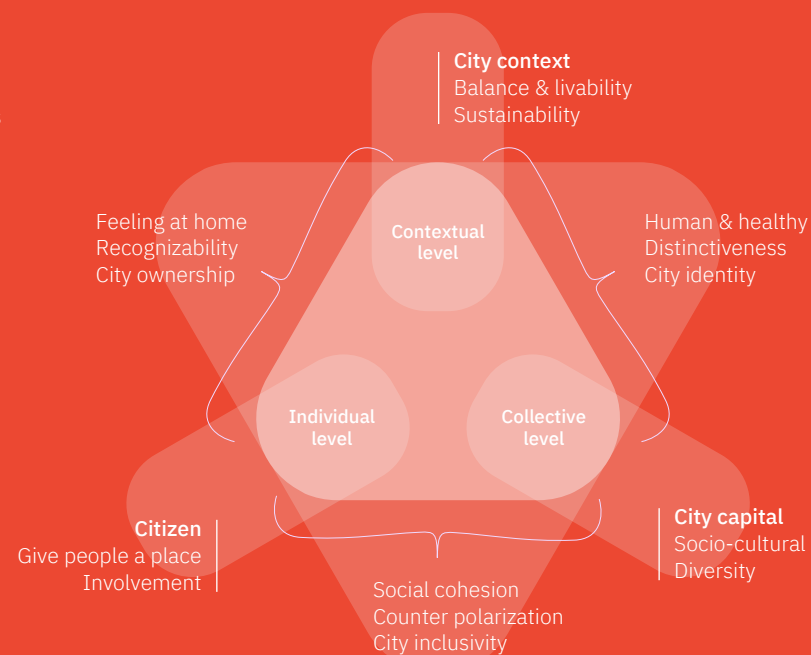
Defining the main problem definition revealed three subproblems that construct three different directions. Reframing these three directions will generate three solution or concept directions. Therefore, the reframe phase focuses on reframing these three directions and accordingly is split into three parts listed underneath. In order not to lose sight of the big picture and the system of which Free Space is part of, but still be able to provide a targeted answer to the problem definitions, a certain lens is used to reframe the different concept directions.



REFRAME LENSES

Reframing is a rather design-like approach, while the main problem regarding Free Space is more in the field of urban planning. This reframe chapter therefore aims to combine terminology and methodology from the fields of design and urban planning. For which a certain lens is used, based on conjunct theory; it combines two existing models; the urban planning network society and the 3P design model.

- Individual level**
Individual as part of a whole
- Collective level**
Connection between individuals
- Contextual level**
Connection with placement



REFRAME LENSES

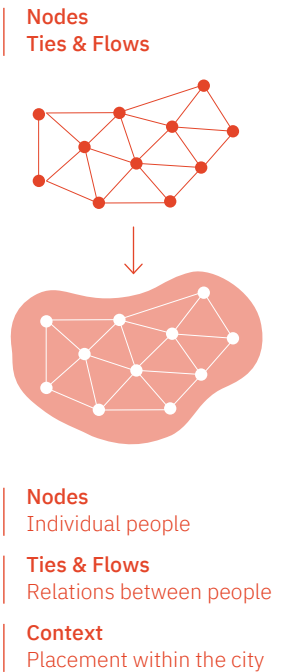
NETWORK SOCIETY

In the late 20th century a new social structure emerged; a network society (Castells, M., 2009). At the base of this transition were technical, economical, and socio-political changes. The rise of information and communication technologies together with an open market approach restructured the global economy, the start of globalization. Furthermore, the early 1970's is an area known for their social shifts towards an equality and freedom oriented culture. A network society is characterized by a society supported by technologie in which social, political, and economical practices with an infrastructure of information exchanges and networked communication at its base. The relations across these social, political, and economic configurations and the institutionalization in and between these network societies form contemporary humanity.

Networks consist of three elements. **Nodes**, a distinct point with at least one connection with another node. **Ties**, the connections between nodes. **Flows** are the exchanges between nodes along ties. These three elements are variable and exist in many forms. Nodes can be powerful/powerless, active/passive, static/mobile, etc. Ties can be weak/strong, public/private, singular/multiple, etc. Flows can be constant/intermittent, one-way/reciprocal, meaningful/meaningless, etc. How these variables are combined define the character of a network.

There is not one singular network society, but there are many societies continuously reconfiguring the relationships between their interdependent actors, changing their form. Network societies can have a centralized or decentralized character, inclusive-exclusive, interactive-non-interactive, or bounded-boundless. The latter forms a source of conflict; the paradox between the networks' placeless character and the rootedness of humanity.

The city is in reality a form of a network society, which consists of smaller sub-networks. On a more social level, through a human-centered lens the nodes, ties, and flows can be compared with people, relations, and exchanges. Even though the boundaries of a network and the placement are constantly changing and not rigid, within municipal urban planning the connection with physical placement cannot be neglected. The context of which these variables are interacting and configured, influences these elements. To remain a holistic view on institutionalized systems, contextual factors should be included and nature viewed as an equally important stakeholder (Design Council, 2021).



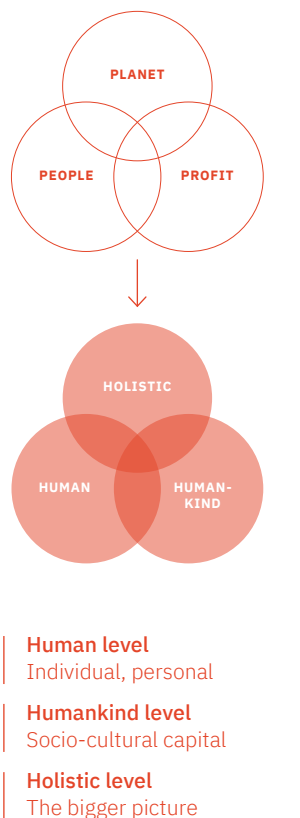
3P MODEL

Examples could be drawn from the 3P design model (Elkington, J., 2008) that stands for People, Profit, Planet. This model aims to harmonize the three elements in order to create sustainable solutions. When the two models are superimposed, similarities can be drawn. The nodes can be compared with people that together constitute a human level. The ties and flows between these nodes are the relations or exchanges between the people. They form the capital of society, not merely financial gain in the form of profit or loss, but also social and cultural capital. These configurations constitute a humankind level. To assure sustainable results, the well-being of people and our planet cannot be neglected. Therefore, planet introduces a new level that connects these variables with the place and allows to include rootedness of humanity within networks; the holistic level.

The combination of those two models is used as point of view in the framing process. As stated before, reframing the system on different layers with different lenses can regenerate values. Reframing lenses are extracted from those two models in order to take the interdependence of these different levels into account and bring understanding in them. The reframe lenses consist of three levels: individual, collective, and contextual. The **individual level** refers to the people in the city, however viewing it as part of a whole. For example, a place for everybody to make them feel involved. The **collective level** refers to the connections, interactions and exchanges that make society. Such as group-forming and the diversity in this generates socio-cultural capital. And lastly the **contextual level** refers to the placement, contextual boundaries, and natural conditions that define the livability. Moreover it views the city as a whole. A visual of these framing lenses can be found on the page left.

The boundaries of the context are hybrid and can change regarding what elements is focussed on. For example, the scope could be as big as the city, where the contextual boundaries would be the city edges. But the scope could also be the edges of a neighborhood. In this case the interactions between residents will only be focussed on the interaction between the neighbors and residents actively using that area. Therefore the interpretation of these levels are hybrid, interrelated and dependent on the scope that is focused on.

Not solely the level, but also the intersection of these different levels is where problems occur and are solved. For example a city out of balance concerns individual placement, collective space, and contextual division. Neighborhood alienation is a problem where individual involvement, collective inclusiveness and contextual segregation come together. The city's 'fading fringes' is a problem where collective socio-cultural diversity and contextual space distribution come together.





3.2 REFRAME DEFENITION OF FREE SPACE

The Free Space Department and other involved parties struggle with the definition of free space, since there are some prejudices about free space from both top-down and bottom-up sides. To prevent misunderstanding and miscommunication it is important to define what Free Space is or could be. However, making the definition of free space too explicit, leaves no room for creativity and open interpretation. Therefore the challenge is to find the sweet spot between over and under defining the concept of free space. The hybrid multifunctional Free Space depends on many factors; the implementation, the initiative, the initiators, the users, the placement, etc. When framing and delineating the definition of Free Space, the concept will lose its nuance and therefore is in need of a comprehensive yet hybrid definition. Preliminary sketches and cluster configurations of the models presented in the following chapter can be found in Appendix I and Appendix J.

OVER OR UNDER DEFINED

CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION

The fluidity and hybridity of a Free Space is precisely what makes the space unique and different from other places. Each initiator and user experiences the multifunctional place in a different way, depending on personal and collective values and norms. In addition, contextual factors depending on the placement within the city influence the implementation of the space. To better understand the definition of Free Space, both design and urban planning terminology are used to explain Free Space.

The inconsistency and ambiguousness of Free Space can be seen as liminality. Liminal spaces amalgamate making and experiencing space. These transitional spaces are local manifestations and neighborhood urbanism of wider global and cultural shifts and a characteristic of the modern-day city. Space liminality blurs the boundaries between public and private (Zukin, S., 1991). The liminality together with interpretation differences of Free Space causes it to be a boundary object. A boundary object is a definition that is shared between different people or communities, but all have their own understanding of this definition. The definition has a layer of subjectiveness, sturdy enough to remain a common-shared identity but plastic enough to accommodate personal or local interpretation (Star, S. L., & Griesemer, J. R., 1989).

Currently, Free Space is defined by ten key-words to assess initiatives: (semi-)public, collective, autonomous, democratic, transparent, multifunctional, socially involved, open, inclusive, and non-commercial (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020). Although these keywords are confirmed and recognized by Free Space makers, it raises question marks internally in the municipality. The definitions are subjective characteristics that are interpreted differently from different problem owners, they are also boundary objects. In the situation where the two worlds are at odds and have conflicting interests, the use of subjective definitions can counteract and create ambiguity. Parties could interpret the guidelines differently, which could possibly lead to conflicts.

Therefore, the tension between over and under defining Free Space is understandable. Over-defining leaves no room for own interpretation but under-defining could lead to unclear boundaries and conflict. The advice from HvA and Space of Urgency is to leave the central definition of Free Space as open as possible to assure the interpretation freedom of initiators, but clearly define preconditions of Free Space such as money and time investment. This will clarify mutual expectations from the start and set a good foundation for collaboration.

This approach however, does not define the value of Free Space provided to the city, which remains a prevalent question within the municipality. Similar to the definition and interpretation, the value of Free Space is dependent on various factors and point of views. However, delineating and framing Free Space, detaches it from its context and nullifies its comprehensive character. A more holistic approach is needed to create mutual understanding of this ambiguous concept. Therefore, the first strategic decision is to contextualize the concept of Free Space, and not frame it. This contextualization is on the basis of conditions at different levels that influence and alter the value Free Space brings to the city.

FREE SPACE IS LIMINAL SPACE

Liminal spaces **amalgamate making and experiencing space.**

These transitional spaces are local manifestations and neighborhood urbanism of wider global and cultural shifts and a characteristic of the modern-day city.

Space liminality **blurs the boundaries between public and private.**

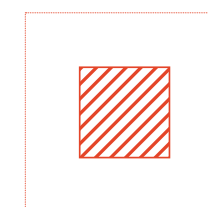
Threshold between two spaces
Transitional space
Transformative space

FREE SPACE IS A BOUNDARY OBJECT

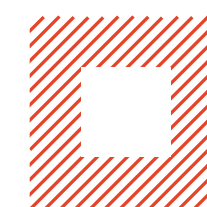
A boundary object is **a definition that is shared** between different people or communities, but **all have their own understanding** of this definition.

The definition has a layer of subjectiveness, sturdy enough to remain a **common-shared identity** but plastic enough to accommodate **personal or local interpretation.**

STRATEGIC DECISION CONTEXTUALIZING INSTEAD OF FRAMING



Framing and demarcating Free Space reduces the chance of free interpretation and organic bottom-up initiation which **detracts from its hybrid multifunctional character**



Contextualizing clarifies the definition, function, and value proposition of Free Space **without steering on implementation**

CONTEXTUALIZING FREE SPACE

CONTEXTUALIZE ANGLES

Contextualizing is “considering something in relation to the situation in which it happens or exists” (Oxford Dictionary). For example analyzing a definition in terms of surrounding words, analyzing an event on the basis of surrounding factors, or in the case of Free Space analyzing a concept in relation to variable conditions.

In order to understand the definition of Free Space it is contextualized from three angles: living-world, legal-world, and system-world. Contextualizing from a living-world angle gives an answer to the question: what does Free Space mean for the city. This entails conditions that influence this value to the city. Contextualizing from a legal-world angle is where living- and system-world come together in the form of rules and regulations. And lastly, contextualizing from a system-world angle focuses on the distinctiveness and differentiation of other departments and policy goals. These contextualizations are concretized in frameworks and visual explanations.

CONTEXTUALIZATION LIVING-WORLD

To understand what Free Space is and what values it brings to the city, it is contextualized on the living-world level. Conditions are defined on the basis of the clustered research insights (Qualitative Research - concluding summary). The Free Space definition is dependent on these variable conditions. Based on the reframing lenses, the conditions are divided into individual, collective, and contextual conditions. Defining these conditions can help answering the questions; “what does Free Space mean to the city?”, and are listed underneath.

INDIVIDUAL CONDITIONS		COLLECTIVE CONDITIONS		CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS	
POLITICAL STAND	SOCIAL BELIEFS	PHYSICAL SPACE	LIMINAL SPACE	NEIGHBORHOOD CULTURE	ENVIRONMENTAL & NEUTRAL CONDITIONS
PERSONAL DISCOVERY	LIFESTYLE CHOICES	EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITIES	(DE)CENTRALIZED REACHABILITY	EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITIES	SPACE CHARACTERISTICS
SITUATIONAL NEEDS	DAILY LIFE STRUCTURE	SAFEGUARDING MENTALITY	HUMAN SCALE PROCESS	GOVERNMENTAL GOALS	LIFE SPAN



CONTEXTUALIZING FREE SPACE

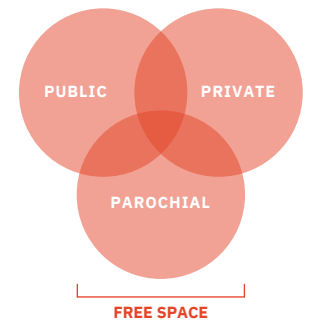
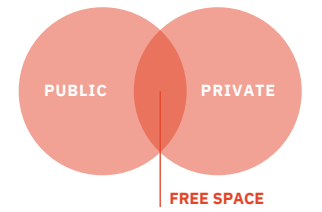
CONTEXTUALIZATION LEGAL-WORLD

Contextualizing Free Space on legal-level explains what property Free Space is, this entails defining how public or private the space is, since rules and legislation are defined by these categories. However, as mentioned before, Free Space is liminal and blurs the boundaries between public and private (Zukin, S., 1991). To what extent this happens differs per implementation, causing the associated rules and legislation to be project dependent. The discussion about what form of property Free Space falls under arose in an internal session with the department (Appendix K). The question remained if Free Space is the gray area between public and private, or if it falls under parochial property. Public property is municipal space that is accessible to everybody. Private property is municipal space that is occupied by one or a few owners by means of ground lease. Even though a middle party such as real estate owners or property holders bought the building or land, the space always remains in possession of the city. Parochial property is publicly open property that is privately used, such as a church. Within the municipality some are vigilant for parochialism when it comes to Free Space creation. Parochialism means appropriating public land (Helleman, G., 202). They believe that this should be avoided, since everybody has the right to public ground and therefore should be open and accessible to anybody.

Publicly intended space can turn out less public than it is intended. Places get specific destinations for certain groups or purposes, depending on the written and unwritten rules in that area. These are determined by the users and surrounding environment, depending on the neighborhood and can change over time (Visscher, S., 2008). By strict urban planning and place implementation from the municipal side, places will get a single-purpose destination; skateparks for stakers, playgrounds for children. This leaves no room for interpretation and pushes spatial segregation. A public space becomes a lively space when it is accessible for anybody and can be used freely. Implementation from above can get in the way of this. When a place has been given a certain meaning in advance, there is less room for this place to flourish and be experienced and used organically. A good public space must have a flexible interpretation that offers room for change. Both during the day and over the years. This will realize a space that is accessible to multiple groups and purposes (Helleman, G., 2021). The question is if the municipality is able to realize a hybrid multi-interpretational place, or should such a place arise organically and initiated from bottom-up.

However, the city property consists of more categories than just public, private, and parochial property. The different types of properties are better to be explained by means of a spectrum. How public or private a place is legally defines the accompanying rules and legislations, but in practice it defines the self-management and ownership one takes over the place. Public property is maintained by the municipality and open and accessible to anybody. Private property falls under self-management, but is only accessible to the rightful owner(s). This is reflected in the usage and appearance of the space. A public space is a generic space with open implementation for a broad public, and therefore lacks identity. The usage and occupation of the space is often temporary and occasionally, therefore lacks ownership. Citizens do not feel compelled to take care of these places. A private space has a less open appearance, focused on a specific user or group and therefore has a certain identity. Through a more permanent form of usage and occupation, the owner takes responsibility and the place will operate autonomously. People feel ownership over private property.

In practice, however, at the legal level there are more forms of property between these two extremes. Shared space for example is public space that falls under municipal-maintenance but is appropriated to some extent. An example of this is a courtyard. The people living around a courtyard, have a view on it from their house and probably make most use of it. It is probable that the neighboring residents feel most ownership over this courtyard. Public space that falls under self-management is even more privatized. An example of this is a municipal lawn that is maintained by the neighborhood. It is inevitable that those who take care of this greenery and put in the most time, unconsciously assume that they have more right to it. Free Space can be seen as public property that is closest to private property, it aims for highest autonomy while remaining publicly open. Its maintenance asks for complete autonomy, enforcing appropriation. Self-management and autonomy almost always is at the expense of how public and open the place is to the general public. A visual presentation of this is shown in the axis on the right.

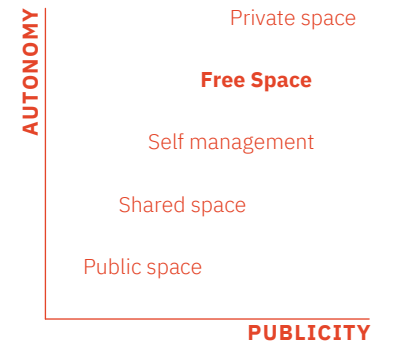


PAROCHIAL PROPERTY

Parochial space is **public space** that seems to **belong to a certain group** with their own ‘code of conduct’ (e.g. a church).

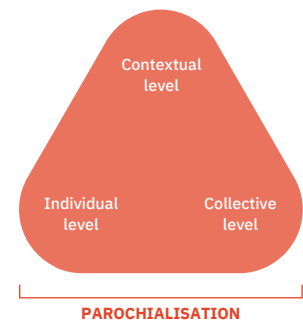
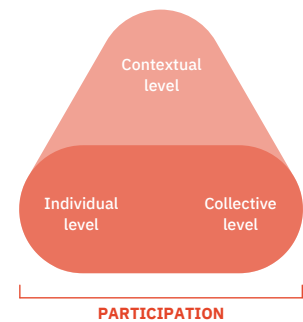
PAROCHIALISM

Parochialism is the **social appropriation** of something that is **publicly owned**.



CONTEXTUALIZING FREE SPACE

CONTEXTUALIZATION LEGAL-WORLD

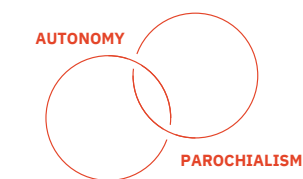


A healthy city has a variety of these different property types. According to Danish urban planner Jan Gehl, balancing private, shared and public spaces within areas of the city will give residents the choice on how public or private they wish to be. With as result a city for and by its residents with more room for individual responsibility, and therefore a municipality that has to worry less about maintenance. This is one of the soft-city design principles (Gehl, J. & Sim, D., 2019). Free Space property creates a new category between self-managed public property with little ownership and private property with complete ownership. Thereby it is filling a gap between property types allowing more balance within city spaces.

Currently, neighborhood alienation is a prevailing problem in Amsterdam. The city lacks a feeling of home, which diminishes ownership and the responsibility from the resident towards the city. The municipality focuses on participation and active citizenship to bring back this ownership and responsibility. However often these projects are left in vacuum. They are merely information exchanges and result in initiatives that do not find a physical placement in the city streets. Using the reframing lenses, it can be concluded that participation only covers the individual and collective level, however disregards the contextual level. Parochialisation, similar to participation, creates ownership and responsibility. However this is bound to property and therefore to a placement in the city. Therefore, parochialisation is a value that comes with the creation of Free Space; initiators feel ownership of a physical place in the city, which creates responsibility and autonomy.

Parochialism, the social appropriation of something that is publicly owned, currently the municipality is vigilant towards it. After all, it puts publicity under pressure. However, parochialism happens almost at any level and property form to some extent. If the municipality wants residents to take self-management and responsibility for places in the city, it is inevitable that social appropriation will take place. But is parochialism that bad in a city that lacks ownership? Because of this social appropriation, people treat these places with respect, take responsibility, and protect when necessary. It could possibly bring back ownership to physical spaces in the city of Amsterdam. Furthermore, a human city with high livability is a city that balances the different forms of properties, creating this sense of ownership. Free space could be considered as the optimum between autonomy and publicity, where the place is still self-managing but yet not private. Therefore, the second strategic decision is to make a mindset change and rethink parochialism.

STRATEGIC DECISION RETHINK PAROCHIALISM



Parochialisation is inevitable when the municipality asks for Autonomy

PARTICIPATIVE & PAROCHIAL VALUE THE INHERENT VALUE OF FREE SPACE

For a city that lacks ownership and neighborhood feeling, **parochialisation can be seen as something positive** It **creates responsibility towards a physical place in the city.**

Parochialisation is the inherent value of Free Space; an **autonomously operating and publicly open space** where residents take ownership and responsibility

CONTEXTUALIZATION SYSTEM-WORLD

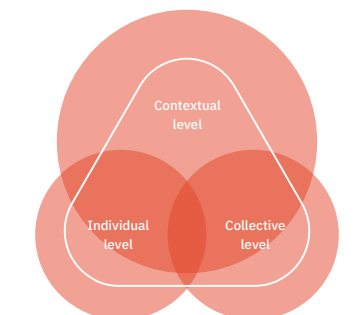
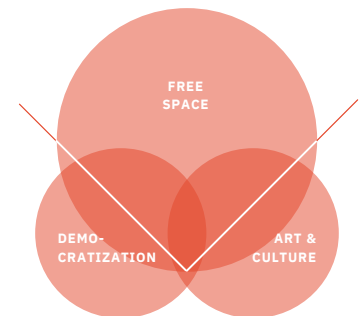
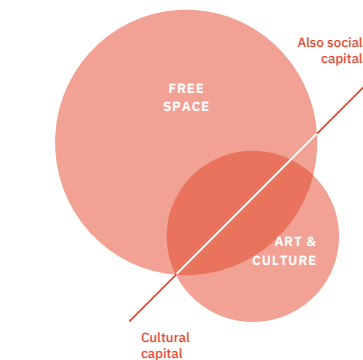
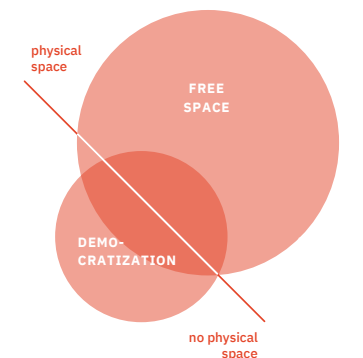
Contextualizing Free Space on the level of the system-world entails the distinctiveness of other departments. Within the municipality for some the Free Space Department is hard to grasp. It remains unclear how they differ from the departments Democratization and Art & Culture and experience difficulties with distinguishing the policy goals. All three departments work on participation and the realization of bottom-up initiatives. In some cases the Free Space department also works closely together with those departments, depending on the project. To defend its right of existence, the Free Space Department should be able to clarify the distinctiveness with these other policy goals.

The Democratization Department focuses on participation with residents. They aim to give residents a voice, identifying or creating initiatives and collectives, and focus on bottom-up initiation. These Democratization policy goals of participation and bottom-up initiation, have similarities with the Free Space Department goals. However, often the Democratization Department merely focuses on information exchange and the formation of initiatives and therefore participation is often left in vacuum. The Free Space Department aims to offer these initiatives a place and therefore obtains a physical space within the city.

The Art & Culture Department focuses on creative bottom-up initiatives, by means of the BPA policy. The Breeding Place Agency is part of this department. Both Free Space as well as the Art & Cultural Departments aim for bringing cultural capital to the city and focus on enabling and mobilizing artists and creatives to start initiatives. However, the BPA policy mainly focuses on the CAVA and cultural sector; they strictly test on these guidelines and have a financial structure based on subsidies. However, this limits the creative space of initiatives. The Free Space Department focuses on more than just art and culture, but also social capital, community-forming, open-air, ecological initiatives. There are no open-air BPA projects, they are placed in buildings. Furthermore, they have a dependency on the market to some extent, since art is commercialized. The Free Space Department aims to acquire a more autonomous identity separate from subsidies and capital flows, detached from the market.

Democratization and Art & Culture have equivalent policy goals of active citizenship using participation, however in practice they sometimes work against each other. Participation aims to give marginalized groups a voice, while Breeding places are positioned to improve neighborhoods. With a similar incentive of supporting neighborhood initiation by bringing artists and residents together, they aim to collaboratively improve the neighborhood. However, in the past this has often resulted in the use of artists as a means of gentrification (Pas op de Vrijplaats, 2021). There is a causal relation between the cultural and economic capital of a neighborhood (Ley, D., 2003). Artists were deployed to make the neighborhood more interesting, which increased the land value, pushing the less fortunate citizens out of the city. Somehow, between those two policy goals there is a missing link. The Free Space Department tries to counteract these unwanted side effects by bridging the gap between neighborhood and initiators and actively bring them together.

Using reframing lenses to validate Free Space compared to the other departments, it could be argued that without the Free Space Department, there is a lack of connection with the contextual level and lack of integration within the initiatives. Democratization participates on an individual level. It views the citizen as part of a whole; involve them in decision-making procedures while exchanging information. However, without giving these initiatives a physical space within the city this will not lead to located ownership and neighborhood recognizability. Art and Culture involves citizens on a more collective level. Individuals together form the cultural capital of a city. However, social capital and community-forming are not part of this. Furthermore, with an economic focus, it will not achieve a diversified character that counters the city's monoculture. The Free Space Department has a broader social and non-commercial focus on subcultures in relation to the context it is placed in, bridges between different policy goals and therefore has a more integrated view.

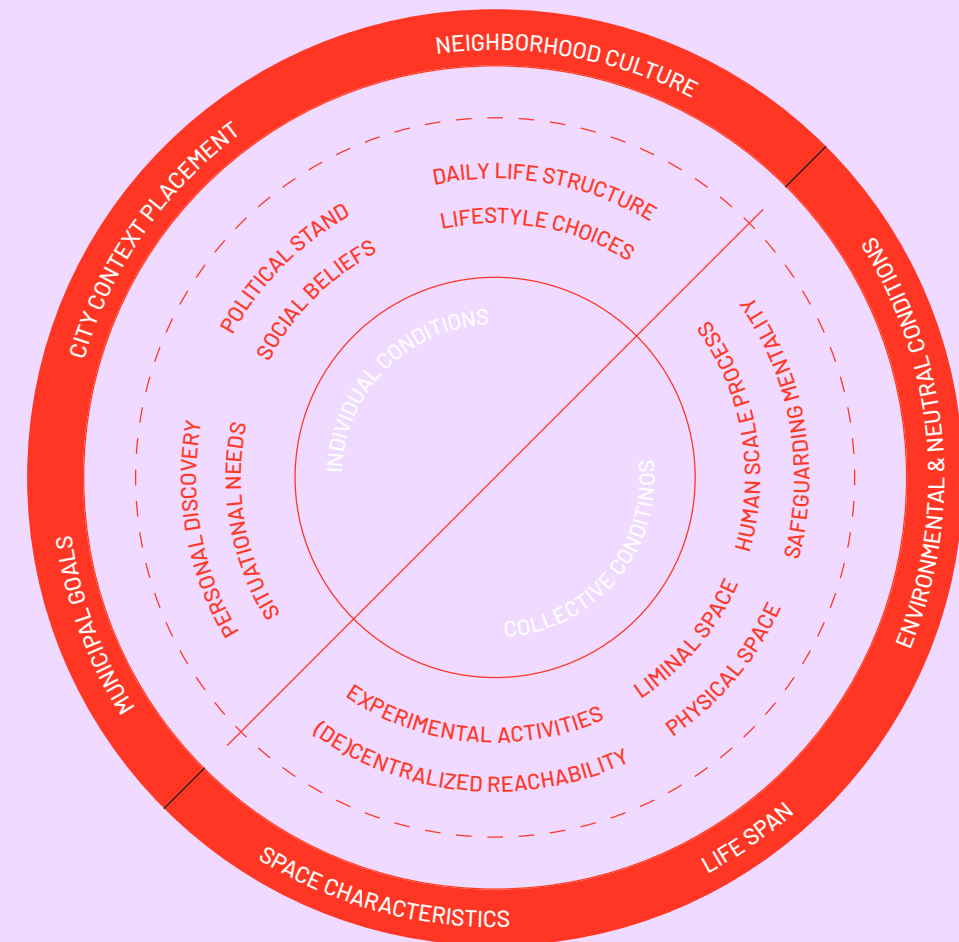


- Democratization**
Individual involvement
- Art & Culture**
Collective cultural capital
- Free Space**
Physical placement



CONCEPT DIRECTION I CONTEXTUALIZATION FRAMEWORK

INHERENT VALUE
OF FREE SPACE | PARTICIPATIVE /
PAROCHIAL VALUE



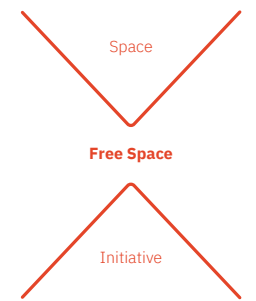
It could be concluded that the definition of Free Space is dependent on individual, collective and contextual conditions. Together they form the value it will generate for the city, which is project dependent. However, the inherent value of Free Space is participative and parochial value. Regardless of the collective or place, the project will generate place specific ownership and autonomy. The Free Space Department aims for bottom-up initiation by combining individual, social and cultural capital, while giving it a physical space within the city making them more legitimate.

Democratization and Art & Culture projects can be covered by the Free Space department. However, Free Space also includes projects that do not fit within the policy goals of Democratization and Art & Culture. The Free Space Department allows for seeing the complete network in which individuals and collectives are being, moving, and connecting by attaching it to a context. In collaboration with other departments, they can realize integrated and multi-functional place implementation, that allows for organically initiated places that contribute to a more livable, sustainable, and humane city. Therefore, the Free Space Department is a hybrid department that focuses on integrated multifunctional solutions where the project is at the center, not the different policy goals.



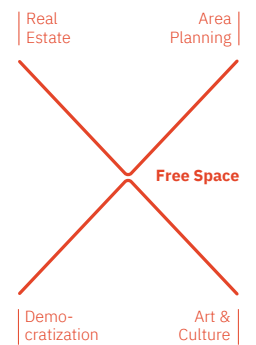
INTERDISCIPLINAIR DEPARTMENT

The Free Space Department is a hybrid department with a project dependent process. They work closely together with four other departments: Democratization, Art & Culture, Real Estate and Area Planning, which differ based on the initiative. In collaboration with either Democratization or Art & Culture they aim to find initiatives or support bottom-up initiation. With either Real Estate and Area Planning they have a less active collaboration. It is merely based on claiming municipal buildings or ground, in order to find a suitable space for these initiatives. It could be concluded that the Free Space Department is an interdisciplinary department between those four departments. With whom they work together is project dependent. Therefore policies, rules and legislation differs per project. Therefore the third strategic decision is that the Free Space Department should be rearranged as an interdisciplinary department. The visual at the bottom of this page, shows a visual presentation of Free Space as interdisciplinair department.



HYBRID POLICY NO OWN POLICY GOALS

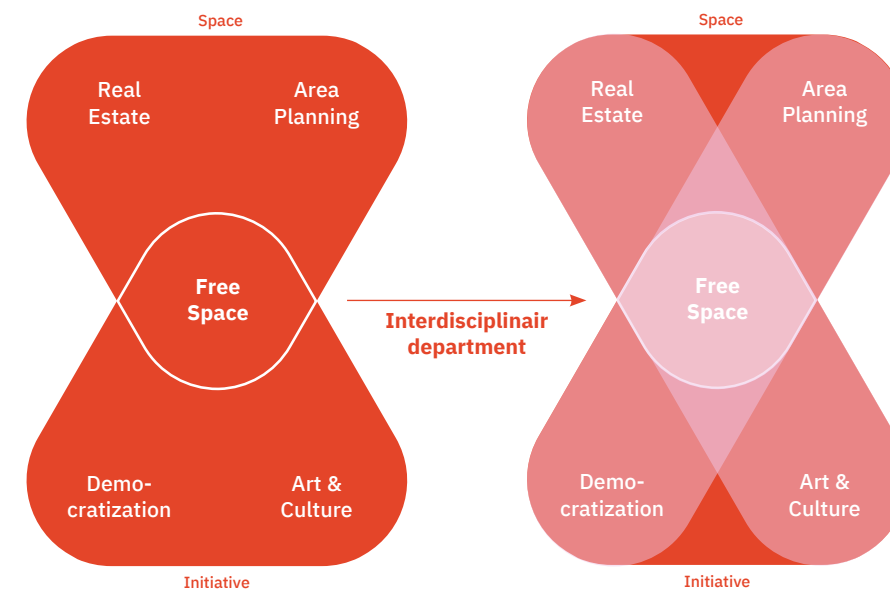
The approach and responsibilities of the Free Space Department depend on the project and the departments they work with, therefore policy and legislation should be tackled hybridly. Currently, the Free Space Department experiences difficulties with writing policy. The concept of Free Space is undefined and constantly changing, making their work project dependent. Something so ambiguous and 'free' cannot be determined in established rules. How public or private the Free Space will be, which permits must be applied for, whether the Free Space is in a building or on a piece of land is all project dependent. It is therefore understandable that the department is experiencing difficulties in writing a policy around this concept. In addition, all the accompanied departments have their own policies, creating a Free Space policy will result in a policy-on-policy structure. This will make it bureaucratically more complicated to find leeway in rules and regulations in order to realize Free Space.



Therefore, the fourth strategic decision states that the Free Space Department does not write a policy nor has its own policy goals. They use the policies of the other departments that are included in the project. When defined which departments will be involved in the project, it is decided which policies should be included. Furthermore, when the department has no policy goals, it can remain an independent unauthorized party and integrated solutions from different goals can be realized. This results in a Free Space policy that defines its rules and legislations on the policies of the departments it is working with and therefore has a hybrid policy.

3.3 REFRAME DEPARTMENT OF FREE SPACE

Reframing the Free Space Department focuses on defining the policy goals, responsibilities and role definitions. The system-world contextualization clarified the distinctiveness of the Free Space Department with other policy goals. The goal of the Free Space Department is creating space to bring initiatives and municipal places together in order to create an amalgam of social and cultural capital. Participation and Breeding Places are closely related to Free Space creation, and could both play a role in this. Therefore, the Democratization and Art & Culture department are often involved in Free Space projects. Collaborations however are project dependent, making the Free Space Department hybrid and their approach adaptive. It could be concluded that the Free Space Department is working interdisciplinary, while continuously translating between system- and living-world to connect space with initiatives.



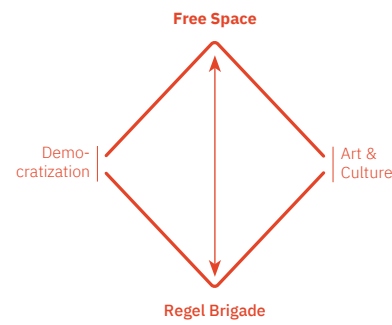
STRATEGIC DECISION

RESTRUCTURE TO AN INTERDISCIPLINAIR & HYBRID DEPARTMENT

STRATEGIC DECISION

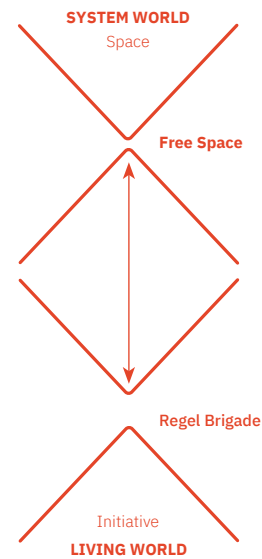
INCLUDE A HYBRID POLICY THAT HAS NO OWN POLICY GOALS

FRONTIER WORKERS



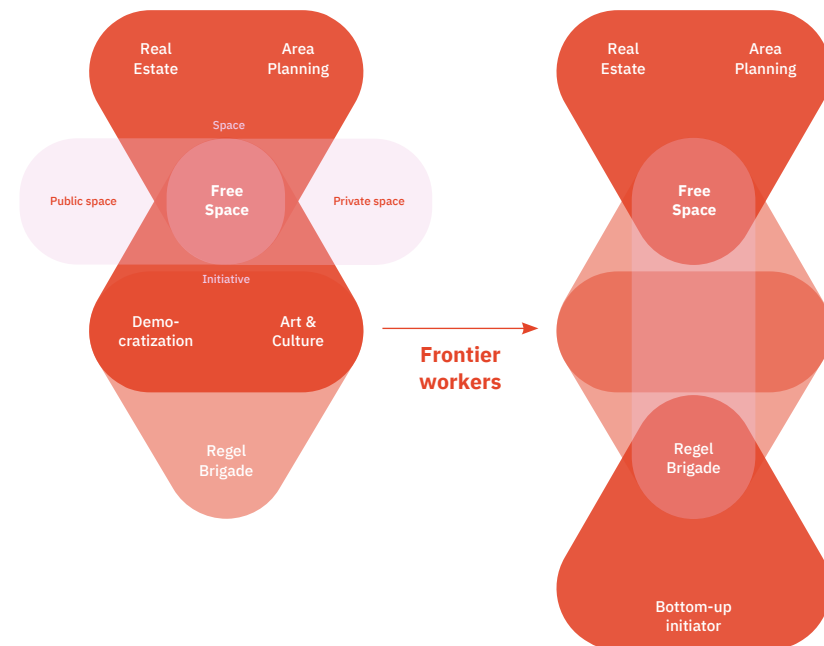
Besides the focus on bridging between different policy goals and finding leeway in the internal processes, the Free Space Department focuses on connecting this system-world with the living-world. The interdisciplinary work of bringing different departments together, the juridic work of finding leeway in regulation, and claiming municipal space is all on a system-world level. However, they also have a facilitating role towards the initiator where the department aims to steer them through the bureaucratic jungle. Therefore, they need to understand the living-world in which these initiators operate. The department connects the system-world and living-world by connecting space with initiatives. Within this task, the department has a translating function. They aim to convert the interests and plans of the initiator in clearly worded requests and applications to persuade the bureaucratic system-world. They constantly switch their language and translate between the different sometimes contrary worlds, therefore member of the Free Space Department are frontier workers.

RETAIN REGEL BRIGADE



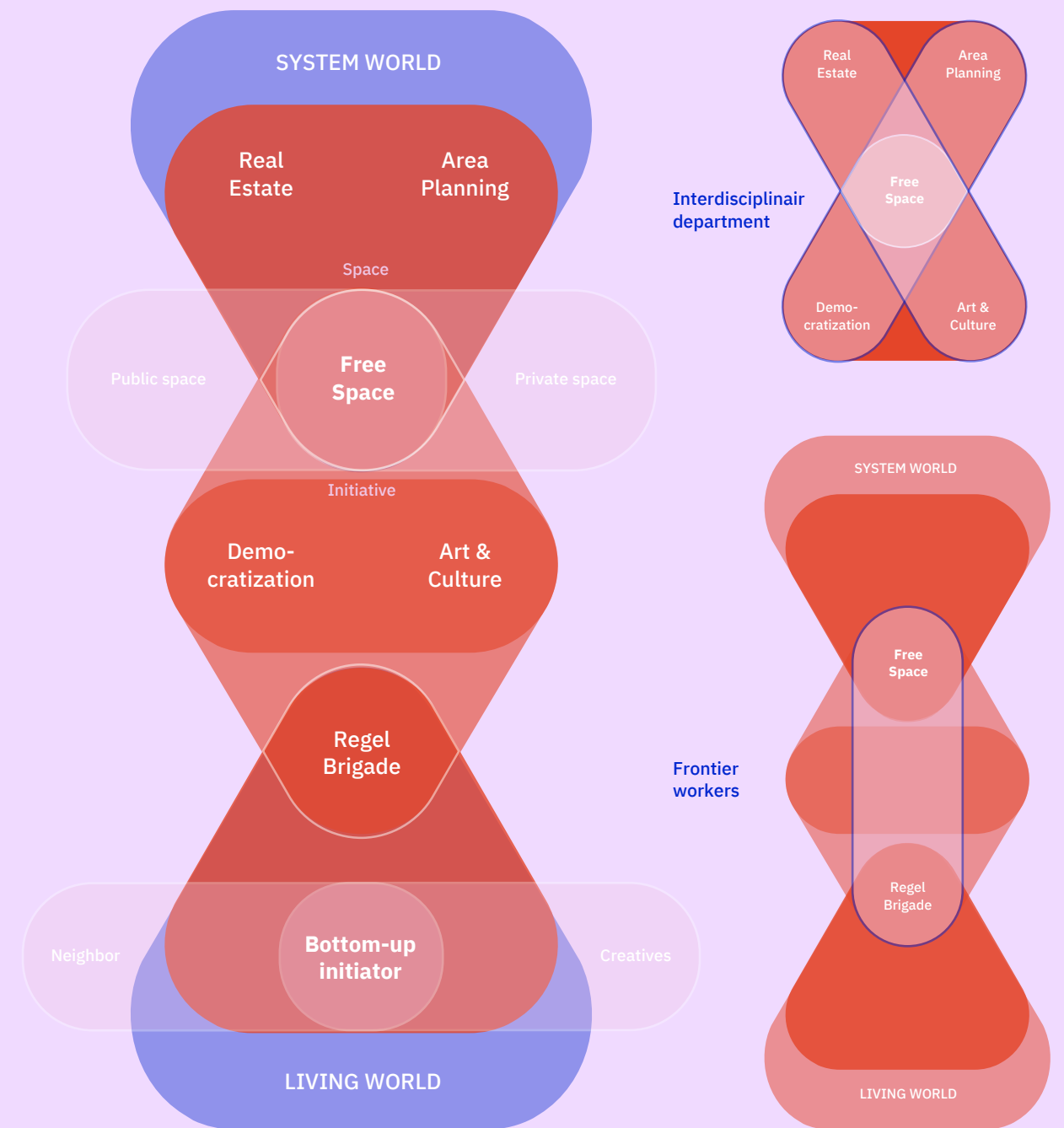
The 'Regel-Brigade' (translated as control or arrange brigade) is the part of the department that is in actual contact with the initiators and therefore the living-world. The roles and responsibilities of the regel-brigade will differ from the people focusing on the interdisciplinary tasks. Responsibilities of the frontier workers are for example giving advice, help writing license applications, connecting the right people, if needed associate them to interesting or useful parties. The departments' network of Free Space makers and other third parties is a strong asset that can be inserted in a supportive manner. Overall the Regel-Brigade helps the initiators through the process while bridging the gap between the initiator and the system-world. Often initiators are confronted with bureaucratic challenges and a questionable attitude towards the feasibility and success changes of the initiative from the municipal side. They most oftenly hear what is impossible rather than what is possible. To give the feeling that within the municipality there are people who are fighting for the same goal, it is important that the Regel-Brigade retains a positive attitude. Currently, this Regel-Brigade is no more than a formality, however making this more concrete will create a clear contact point for initiators.

To conclude, the responsibilities of the Free Space Department can roughly be divided into two overall tasks. On the back-end internally in the municipality securing and claiming municipal ground or buildings, finding leeway in the rules and regulation. Therefore they are an interdisciplinary department. On the front-end they have a facilitating, supporting and helping role towards the initiators, while managing the project towards a shared goal and connecting the system with the living-world. Therefore they are frontier workers.



COCNEPT DIRECTION II INTERDISCIPLINAIR DEPARTMENT

HYBRID INTERDISCIPLINARY DEPARTMENT WITH A HYBRID POLICY



AN AMALGAM OF PARTNERING DEPARTMENT POLICIES



3.4 REFRAME ROLE OF FREE SPACE

The Free Space Department aims for embedding Free Space in the regular area planning by labeling Free Space as a social facility. When doing so the department is no longer dependent on the reelection of a new city council every four years which creates more room to focus on long-term goals. Within the planning of a new city area it is determined how many homes and therefore residents will cover that area in advance. There are standardized measures and referention norms that determine the amount and extent of social facilities per resident per square meters. Social facilities include greenery, parks, schools, sports facilities, shopping facilities, etc. Free Space is a facility that allows the possibility for residents to take space and responsibility when they want to. To reinforce this active citizenship there has to be physical space to do so. Therefore, the department focuses on embedding their place within the regular area planning. However, for this the role i.e. functionality and value-proposition of Free Space should be concretized.

FUNCTIONLESS OR MEANS

The conflicting part of planning Free Space is the unplanned nature and ambiguity of it. In urban planning, decisions are made on the basis of functionality in relation to policy goals. Since the interpretation of Free Space depends on the initiative, the functionality is determined in the course of the process or afterwards. In practice this means that Free Space in area planning is labeled 'functionless' or 'function to be determined'. However, this diminishes Free Space from its rightful value. Free Space combines participation and integral planning. Despite that there is no fixed form for this, it fits perfectly under the municipal strategic direction of Making City Together.

As mentioned before, Free Space bridges between different policy goals in order to realize integral and multi-functional implementation. It combines elements of individual, collective, and contextual level in order to create sustainable urban solutions. On an individual level, they give residents the possibility to actively get involved in planning the city. On a collective level they give subcultural groups the opportunity to bring socio-cultural diversity within the city. This counters the monoculture and commercial market, while giving individuals and collectives a rightful place in the city. On a contextual level it generates place-specific ownership, due to parochialism. These effects can counter neighborhood alienation, the fading fringes, and bring balance to the city. The unplanned nature of Free Space brings organic and integral solutions, such as multipurposeness and hybrid places. The creation of Free Space therefore is both a means and a goal; the process of Free Space cration essentially fulfills the function.

STRATEGIC DECISION EMBED FREE SPACE AS SOCIAL FACILITY

FREE SPACE AS SOCIAL FACILITY

The social facility that every resident should have the possibility to get involved in planning Amsterdam

FREE SPACE IS BOTH A MEANS AND A GOAL

Free Space as a means the process fulfills the function this generates ownership; **participatory / parochial value**
Free Space as a goal the implementation fulfills the function this generates **social, cultural, or green value**

Free Space creation is a participatory method that allows residents to be involved in urban planning. In this way, Free Space can be embedded within the regular area planning as a social facility. Therefore, Free Space does not have its own policy goal, but is integrated within the policies of partnering departments e.g. Area Planning and Real Estate. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Free Space Department should not have policy goals. Creating policy goals detracts from the actual value; Free Space creation is a method of participatory and integral urban planning and space implementation. As a result, various policy goals converge in Free Space, depending on the project. Having no policy or policy goals ensures a neutral approach, where the project is central. When the project is at the center instead of policy goals, the Free Space Department remains neutral and sees every interest as equally important, which allows for the creation of integrated solutions. The Free Space Department is therefore disinterested and not directing, the involved departments and the initiators eventually have to make the final decisions. However, the department is involved in evaluating if an initiative is Free Space worthy, for which they use the ten keywords; open, public, transparent, democratic, collective, inclusive, non-commercial, socially-involved, multifunctional, and autonomous.



CONTEMPORARY DUTCH URBAN PLANNING IS A HORROR VACUI

THE FULLY PLANNED CHARACTER LEAVES NO SPACE FOR SPONTANEOUS UNPLANNED INITIATIVES

METAPHORE FREE SPACE AS WHITE SPACE

To embed Free Space as a social facility that allows every resident to have the possibility to get involved in planning Amsterdam, there should be made space available for this. The Netherlands is a country where every square meter is planned. Space scarcity aggravates the compulsion of urban planners to plan as effectively as possible and fill every empty space. However, this leaves no room for bottom-up place implementation by active citizens. Metaphorically comparisons can be drawn between the Dutch urban planning and a horror vacui; the fear for the empty. Whereas Free Space can be considered the white or negative space in graphic design. Within the Free Space Department, the idea prevails that in order to plan Free Space within the work processes of the municipality, one must label the space functionless or function to be determined. However, just like white or negative space, Free Space does have a function and defining it functionless detracts from its rightful value. In order to define reference standards, and better understand the role and value of Free Space, metaphorical comparisons with white space are made.

STRATEGIC DECISION SEE FREE SPACE AS WHITE SPACE

THE CONTEMPORARY
DUTCH URBAN PLANNING
IS A HORROR VACUI

The fully planned character leaves no room for spontaneous unplanned initiatives and bottom-up space implementation

WITHIN AREA PLANNING
FREE SPACE CAN BE SEEN
AS WHITE SPACE

The open & undefined planning will give room for spontaneous unplanned initiatives and bottom-up space implementation

White space is the background that holds different design elements together, it is the space between and within these elements (The power of white space, 2020). Comparing functionality with the functionality of Free Space in the city, gives the alias 'fringes' (ravelranden) more meaning. Free Space divides but also connects the different elements (individual, collective, and contextual) within the city. Similar to white space that does not necessarily have to be white, but can be any color, texture, pattern or image, a Free Space has different forms. It can differ in size, timespan, reachability, publicity, and so on. Often clients consider white space a waste of space that can be filled with more information or objects. However white space is a good tool to balance the other elements and improves visual communication and user experience. Again comparisons can be made with Free Space. Some within the municipality consider Free Space a waste of space that could be used for various clearly defined purposes and policy goals. However, Free Space balances between public - private, commercial - non-commercial, planned - unplanned, and structured - organic. It brings different purposes together and improves the overall experience of the city and its neighborhoods.

| WHITE / NEGATIVE SPACE

The space within and between design elements, that creates balance and improves user experience

White space calms and lets the viewer breathe. Within the current urban planning of Amsterdam there is no space to 'breathe'. It could be considered a horror vacui (Personal communication, 28 January, 2022), which in Latin stands for the fear of the empty (the vacuum). The term is a late medieval appearance, and used in various contexts, however with similar meaning. Horror vacui within visual art is the phenomenon that artists fill every empty space on their canvases or art piece, for example with small ornaments. In ancient literature, such as paleography, codicology, and cartography this was visible on the decorative filling with drawings, manuscripts, miniatures, floral borders or decorated initials and line fillers. Within philosophy it stands for the uncertainty of humankind, that one is unable to live without doubts and unanswered questions, which translates in the search for an explanation for everything (Encyclo - Nederlandse encyclopedie). Current placemakers and urban planners are not used to leaving space open within their design. The Netherlands is a country where every square centimeter is planned and has a destination plan. Therefore, there is no room for bottom-up initiation and spontaneous implementation. Equality to white space within graphic design, Free Space should be considered fundamental and embedded within urban planning. This will allow the social facility where residents can become active city makers.

| HORROR VACUI

The fear of the empty (the vacuum). This term is used in various fields, such as art, filosofy, nature studies, etc.

REFERENCE STANDARDS URBAN PLANNING

The challenge for urban planners within Area Planning and Real Estate is to plan Free Space as a social facility, without steering on implementation. A way to plan social facilities is to create reference standards or norms. However, in the case of Free Space these should be defined without function implementation. Using white space as metaphor, different typologies of white space are explored, to define Free Space typologies. These typologies can be used as a fundament for urban planners to create reference standards and norms.

MICRO FREE SPACE

- Quantitative
- Neighborhood scale
- Ratio

MESO FREE SPACE

- Quantitative / Qualitative
- City district scale
- Ratio / ambition

MACRO FREE SPACE

- Qualitative
- City size scale
- Ambition

MICRO, MESO, MACRO FREE SPACE

In graphic design white or negative space can be divided into micro and macro white spaces, which are based on ratios and proportions. Micro white space concerns the small spaces between design elements, for example between lines and paragraphs. These white spaces have a direct impact on content legibility. Macro white space concerns the large space between major layout elements; left and right of page layouts or between content blocks. They have impact on the overall design and therefore are focussed on the bigger picture (The power of white space, 2020).

In order to create reference standards for Area Planning and Real Estate, Free Space can also be divided in terms of ratios and proportions. Micro Free Space is based on a reference standard in a quantitative way. They are relatively small and on a neighborhood scale. These micro Free Spaces most likely focusses on intrinsic values, but do not necessarily exclude extrinsic values. Macro Free Space is more qualitatively focussed on an ambition niveau. They are bigger in size and have a broader reachability; they focus on the scale of the city and contribute to the distinctive character of Amsterdam. Therefore, Macro Free spaces most likely focuses more on extrinsic values. Between micro and macro, there is meso Free Space. These places are medium-sized on a city district scale, either quantitative or qualitative related to the area.

ACTIVE

EXTRINSIC VALUE

- Socia effects
- Economic-cultural value
- Ecological / sustainable value

PASSIVE

INTRINSIC VALUE

- Cognitive / educative value
- Mental (physical) health value
- Intrinsic / experiential value

FREE SPACE

INHERENT VALUE

- Parochial value
- Participatory value

ACTIVE & PASSIVE FREE SPACE

White space can be divided into active and passive white space. Active white space is used to enhance the structure of the page and helps to guide the reader through the content of the page. Passive white space is used to improve the aesthetics of the layout, but does not guide the reader through a specific reading, flow, or content order (The power of white space, 2020). Free Space can also be divided into active and passive space. Active Free Space is Free Space as a goal; it focuses on societal issues or a social goal. The space is socially involved and therefore generates social, cultural or green value to the city on a macro level. Passive Free Space is Free Space as a means; it does not focus on a social goal, but generates value to the city on a micro level. The existence of the space provides a place where people (who do not have a place elsewhere) feel at home, feel and be useful, and create together. The process of creating Free Space and the existence of the place is the indirect social added value, on a smaller scale.

Active Free Space (Free Space as a goal) focuses on generating extrinsic values, whereas passive Free Space (Free Space as a means) focuses on intrinsic values. Examples of value-types can be drawn from the 'Toolkit Bouwen aan Broedplaatsen' (Toolkit Bouwen aan broedplaatsen, 2022). This toolkit lists the following values: economic value of culture (e.g. tourism, creative industry, employment), social effects (e.g. civic sense, social choice, integration), intrinsic or experiential value, cognitive and educational value, mental health (e.g. happiness) and physical health.

ACTIVE FREE SPACE
FOCUSSES ON CREATING SOCIO-CULTURAL, GREEN VALUE TO THE CITY

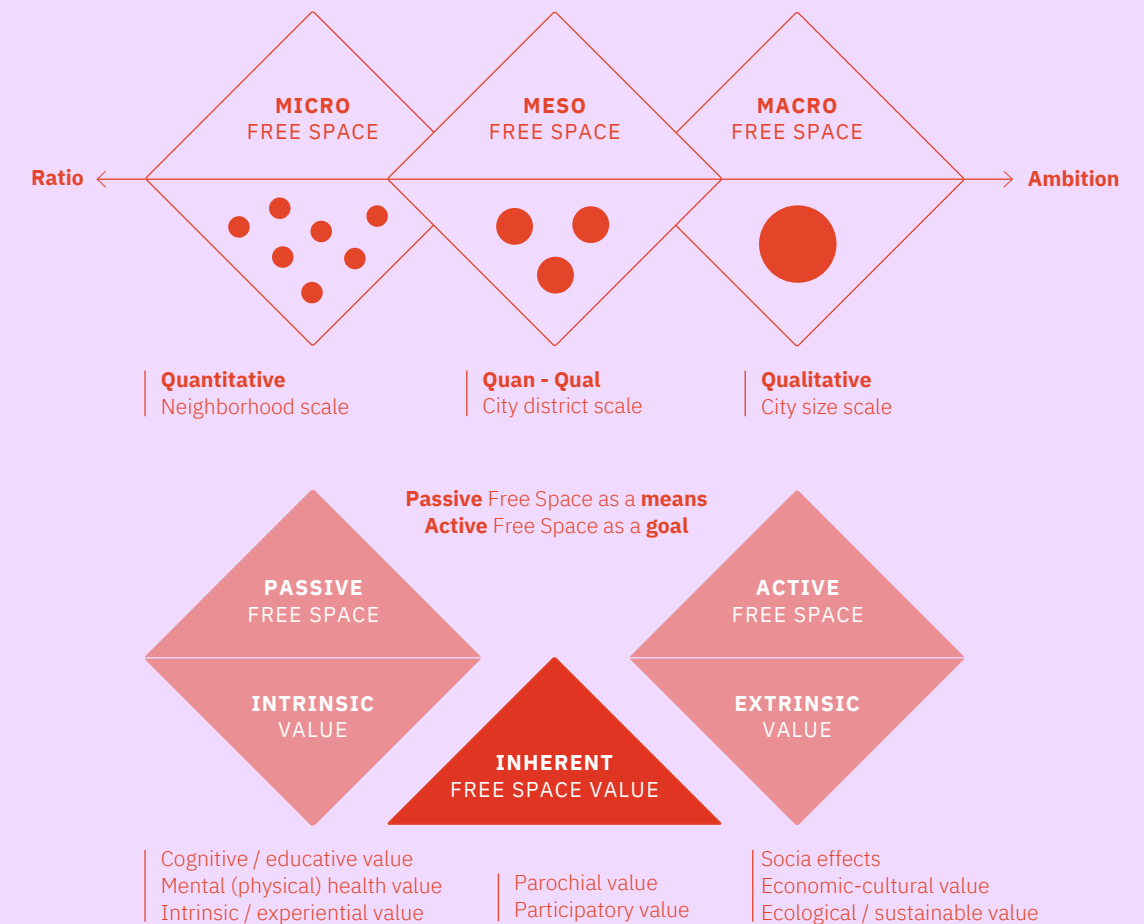
Gradually in the course of the process, this results in measurable effects. The place is visibly involved in social-related or activistic projects, or it contributes to the distinctive character and cultural-capital of the city. Different from Breeding Places, they are not only placed in buildings, but also on land. This makes green open-air places possible, that are involved in urban-agriculture or sustainable-related purposes that make the city greener. Therefore besides the extrinsic values, social effects and economic-cultural value, Free Spaces offer ecological / sustainable values to the city.

PASSIVE FREE SPACE
FOCUSSES ON CREATIVE AND PARTICIPATIVE PROCESSES

This constitutes an atmosphere where involved parties learn from each other, which allows for cross pollination between state and individuals. Giving residents the opportunity to contribute to the city, makes them feel valuable and part of society. Offering a space that is different then other places, gives room for people who do not feel at home elsewhere. These self-managed social safety nets result in a diverse and inclusive city, valuing individual health. Therefore the different intrinsic values are: cognitive / educative value, mental (physical) health value, and intrinsic / experiential value.

CONCEPT DIRECTION III REFERENCE STANDARDS

FREE SPACE TYPOLOGIES



Free Space can be divided on the basis of ratio and proportions. How micro, meso, or macro a Free Space is, defines how quantitative or qualitative the ambition is and influences the reachability to some extent. The smaller the Free Space ratio, the more locally focused. Whereas the bigger the more broadly focussed. This can put influence on the activity and functionality of the space. The more micro or local the Free Space is, the more chance of a passive place, where the focus is mainly on intrinsic values. The people operating or visiting the space will experience these values. The more macro or broad the Free Space is, the more chance of an active place, where the focus is mainly on extrinsic values. These values are visible and measurable at a city level. However, this does not necessarily always have to be the case that space ratio and proportion influences the activity and reachability.

The different value-types are implementation dependent. How active or passive a free space is and on what value creation is focussed on, depends on the collective and the ones making use of the place. Free Spaces are multi-functional, which is reflected in the multiple values the place offers. This multi-value creation can differ per day, week, year, over a lifetime. However, separate from the space, implementation, or collective there is the inherent participative / parochial value. Participation between municipality and initiators allows for ownership and autonomy of the initiative. Moreover, parochialisation will generate place-specific ownership and responsibility. The connection to the placement leads to responsibility and pride to the place one is devoted to. This value concerns involvement, ownership and autonomy that benefits the city and the involvement of the municipality. Therefore, independent of the project, the assured inherent value of Free Space is participative / parochial value.

REFRAME CONCLUDING SUMMARY

THREE CONCEPT DIRECTIONS

1 FREE SPACE **CONTEXTUALIZATION TOOL**

2 FREE SPACE **INTERDISCIPLINAIR DEPARTMENT**

3 FREE SPACE **REFERENCE STANDARDS**

To answer the three sub-questions three concept directions are defined in the reframing phase. All three directions give answers to the main problem; How can the municipality that is based on single-purpose procedures, plan the unplanned and free nature of Free Space without diminishing its organic, unstructured and hybrid character? These concept directions all consist of two strategic decisions, six in total and form the foundation of the strategy. Contextualization of Free Space helps to define the definition and the value proposition without steering on implementation. Composing an interdisciplinary and hybrid department allows for retention of the multi-functional and hybrid character of Free Space. And defining Free Space reference standards will support urban planners in planning the unplanned.

These reference standards can be used to create general practices and norms for the realization of Free Space as a social facility within regular area planning. However, Free Space is not part of the regular area planning yet, and therefore is not actively planned by urban planners. Furthermore, generating these practices lies within the competencies of urban planners. Restructuring the Free Space Department as an interdisciplinary department is within the field of organizational expertises. These two concept directions are not in the competences of a designer, and therefore will not form the focal point in the creation phase of the strategy. The focus on these concepts will be in the form of advisory. Creating a contextualization tool will generate a tactile outcome that is usable for the Free Space Department and can be implemented in their current way of working. Therefore, the overall focus will be on a contextualization tool, as this is where the competences of a designer come into their own best.

REFRAME CONCLUDING SUMMARY

SIX STRATEGIC DECISIONS

1 **CONTEXTUALIZING** INSTEAD OF FRAMING
2 MINDSET CHANGE **RETHINK PAROCHIALISM**

3 **INTERDISCIPLINAIRY & HYBRID** DEPARTMENT RESTRUCTURE
4 MINDSET CHANGE **NO POLICY GOAL BUT A HYBRID POLICY**

5 **EMBED AS SOCIAL FACILITY** INSTEAD OF FUNCTIONLESS
6 MINDSET CHANGE **URBAN PLANS NEED 'WHITE SPACE'**

DESIGN BRIEF

In order to ensure that this report solves the right problem, after the reframing phase the initial design brief is rewritten. The exploration and reframing phase framed three sub-problems and three corresponding solution concept directions: Free Space contextualization tool, Free Space interdisciplinary department, Free Space reference standards to plan it as a social facility. The overall focus will be on the creation of a Free Space contextualization tool. The focus on the other two concept directions will be in the form of advisory. This project brief includes a problem statement, a design goal and design requirements.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The initial assignment started with the aim to explore and understand how Free Space can be embedded within the regular planning and vision formation in area development. In order to give Free Space a place in urban planning it is important to define what Free Space is and what value it brings to the city. Exploration defined three underlying subproblems; Free Space has an unclear definition and value proposition, therefore it is difficult to distinguish it from other policy goals and departments which results in unclear responsibilities and role definitions. The hybridity and multifunctionality of Free Space makes it difficult to realize within the municipal single-purposes procedures that are based on unilateral policy goals. The liminality and ambiguity makes it hard to define the role definition of Free Space within regular area planning and vision forming. Therefore the overall problem statement is as follows:

How can the municipality that is based on **single-purpose procedures, plan the unplanned** and free nature of Free Space without diminishing its **organic, unstructured and hybrid character**?

DESIGN GOAL

Reframing the subproblems defined three concept directions; Free Space contextualization tool, Free Space interdisciplinary department, Free Space reference standards. The three concept directions are interrelated; Free Space is hybrid, which makes its value and approach project reliant, depending on various contextual conditions. Because of this hybrid approach the department should remain as open as possible and work interdisciplinary. This hybridity makes it hard to grasp the value it brings to the city upfront. Often Free Space is multi-functional, generating both intrinsic and extrinsic values. The design goal therefore is to create a tool that contextualizes Free Space in advance, in order to understand what the possible initiative entails and the value it will likely generate without determining the function and steering on implementation from above. The tool is both a project management & communication as well as an urban planning tool. Therefore the design statement is as follows:

Develop a **contextualization tool** that supports **planning the unplanned** nature of Free Space

DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

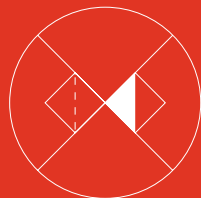
Using contextualization regarding the planning of free space should bring clarity in the situations mentioned above. Based on explorative research and the extracted insights, tensions and challenges were defined. This resulted in the following five design requirements.

THE TOOL quickens decision and agreement making, permit application allows organic space implementation and an open, living projectform bridges between neighborhood and creatives clarifies preconditions and role definitions from the start embeds the multi-value the space will generate for the city



FIVE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- 1 The tool quickens decision and agreement making, permit application**
Bureaucratic processes are slow while holding the space often costs money and has a time limit. The investment required to make the place usable is often at odds with the lengthy permit application processes. Furthermore, it annulates the creative process of enthusiastic initiators and Free Space makers that invest their precious free time in the place. Therefore, the tool should quicken this process of making decisions and agreements, while positively influencing the duration of internal bureaucratic processes in order to quickly start with generating output.
- 2 The tool allows organic space implementation and an open, living projectform**
Participation often involves filling in lengthy forms that aim to guarantee responsibilities, purposes, values, and determine the implementation in advance. This undermines the organic nature of Free Space creation where processes develop in a humane way. In squatted buildings Free Space arises organically, as a result of individual interests and social processes. Therefore it is important to get rid of standardized fill-in forms that limit creative processes and develop a tool that embraces and simulates these living processes in order to 'capture' free space.
- 3 The tool bridges between neighborhood and creatives**
In the past, creative initiatives were placed within disadvantaged neighborhoods to improve the area. However, the gap between this neighborhood and the creatives was not always closed. This resulted in segregation and in some situations gentrification of the area; minorities and the 'true Amsterdammer' were pushed outside the city. In order to avoid that Free Space is implemented as means of gentrification, it is important to involve the neighborhood as much as possible and connect these with local or non-local creatives in order to reinforce each other.
- 4 The tool clarifies preconditions and role definitions from the start**
Research from Space of Urgency and HvA showed that responsibilities, role definition, and the project preconditions were not always clear from the start. Since there is an abrasive relationship between the municipality and some Free Space makers, it is important to communicate as transparently and openly as possible. Therefore, the tool should guarantee this transparency, and communicate the preconditions and role definitions clearly from the beginning of the project process.
- 5 The tool embeds the multi-value the space will generate for the city**
Due to Free Space's multifunctional and hybrid character and the organic implementation process, it is difficult to embed and secure the values it will generate in an early stage. However, within area planning it is important to embed this value in order to free-up space and determine the function it will fulfill. Therefore, the tool should allow the Free Space Department to extract the intended collective values of the initiative in order to make this communicable internally in the municipality, without disrupting the creative and organic implementation process.



4. CREATE

The create phase focuses on generating solutions and ideas for one or multiple framed problems. This ideation already finds its roots in the phase of framing the problems. Framing the right problem already frames the direction of the solution, which is called the co-evolution of the problem and solution (Dorst, K., 2020). Therefore this phase aims to make the solution directions more concrete and actionable. A solution does not fundamentally have to answer the bigger goal. It can consist of multiple actions, interventions, or small practical steps towards this bigger goal. A solution idea can be bold or provocative, something that might never happen. These ideas will support involved parties to think differently, reimagine the status quo, and prompt bigger questions that push boundaries (Design Council, 2021).

More specifically, creating involves ideation at different layers of the system.

- 1 On a design level, this entails the development of specific products, services, places.
- 2 On a governance level, this entails the development of policies, regulations or standards.
- 3 On an organizational level, this entails narratives or changing mindsets.

These are areas of expertise that are not always within the competence of a designer. Therefore it is not necessary to develop and deliver every idea. In some cases, it may involve advice, planting a seed, and establishing the right relationships with people who can take these ideas further.

It is essential to reuse materials and interventions and amalgamate existing ideas to create new solutions to manage systemic change. First, find out which actions contribute to pursuing the greater goal, minimal actions with a significant impact. Then, prioritize creating a specific leverage point that allows people to reimagine their starting point. This prioritizing can be a mindset change or a new rule that disrupts the current state of affairs. Or something that brings the envisioned future alive, for example, a scenario or metaphor.

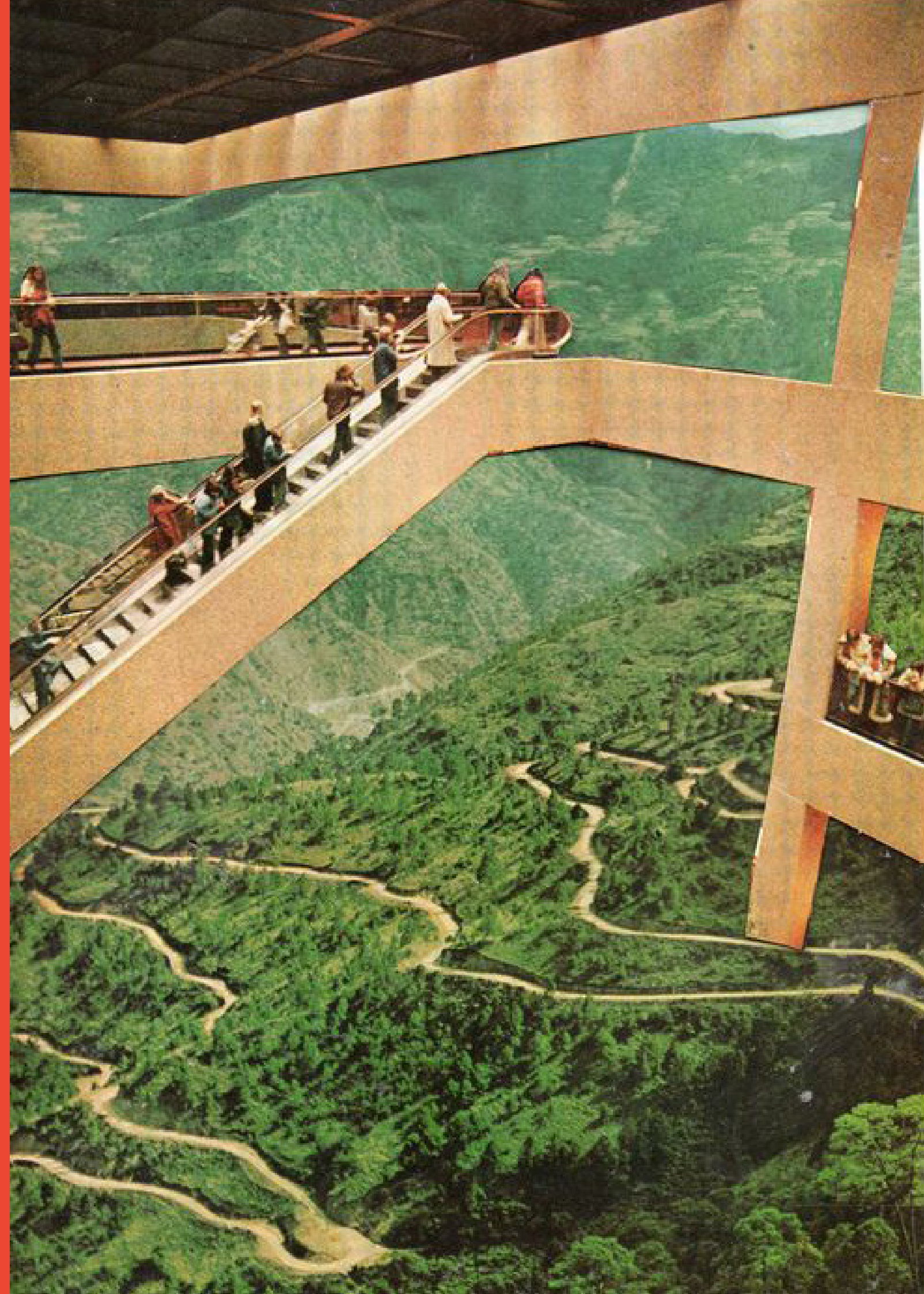
The create phase focuses on concept direction; a Free Space contextualization tool and is the starting point for the create phase. However all three concept directions will form the basis of the strategy.

4.1 DESIGN APPROACH

The create phase consists of two parts; advisory on department structure and regular area planning placement, and the creation of the contextualization tool. The advisory will be in the form of a Free Space method, where all six strategic decisions come together and form the base of the strategy. It is chosen to create a methodology since all important insights, findings, and strategic decisions can be incorporated in this in a coherent story. It explains advice on department structure, policies, regulations, standards, roles, responsibilities, mindsets, leverage point, and process phases. Furthermore, it clarifies the setting for the contextualization tool. In order to design a suitable tool it is important to understand where in the process the tool will be used and why. Therefore, prior to the creation of the tool it should be defined when and why the tool is used in order to define what the tool will be. The 'why' is already defined and stated in the project brief. Concretizing the Free Space method, helps determining 'when' the tool will be used. This gives insight into what the tool should entail; what are the conditions and what is the format of the tool.

DESIGN APPROACH PHASES

- 1 Compile a Free Space method.** Firstly, a Free Space method is compiled based on research insights and reframing decisions. The following parts are covered within this method in the form of advice: interdisciplinary department structure, tasks and responsibilities, policies, regulations and standards, four phases, and a new leverage point. Within the method the contextualization phase will be defined, and establishes when the tool will be used.
- 2 Define the tool conditions and format.** The new leverage point marks the starting point of when the method is deployed. Defining the process phases gives understanding of the possible in- and output of the tool. This in combination with the contextualization framework, will determine the tool conditions after which a decision on the tool format can be made.
- 3 Create the contextualization tool.** Lastly, based on the decisions regarding tool conditions and format, the tool is created. When creating the tool, both urban planning and design theory will be incorporated.





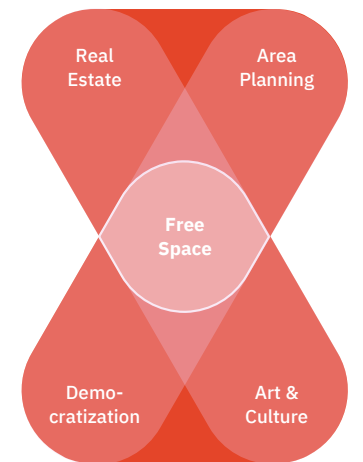
INTERDISCIPLINARY DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

The work that the Free Space Department does is customized work. The department describes experiencing difficulties in realizing best practices and therefore keep experimenting to eventually devine these best practices. However, the work they do is so project-dependent and interdisciplinary. Therefore, they should accept that they deliver tailor-made work. In order to realize interdisciplinary work and bridging between policy goals, the department structure should be adapted in a way that they can actually perform interdisciplinary and hybrid work.

ORGANIZATIONAL ADVICORY

Currently the Free Space Department is multidisciplinary. This means that within the team there are people with specific expertise and competencies that belong to the departments they work with. For example the team includes a jurist and an urban planner. However they are not actively part of the other departments or disciplines. Multidisciplinair work however does not lead to real integration or mutual influences of the involved disciplines. These experts should actually be in direct contact with the adequate department, which is the case with interdisciplinary work.

In interdisciplinary work one does not stick to its own discipline or field, but an intermediate position is created. This means combining different perspectives of different disciplines. In the case of Free Space, working interdisciplinary means having members in the team that are both part of the Free Space Department, as well as the partnering department to fulfill this intermediate position. These intermediate positions should be members of the department they currently work closely together with; Real Estate, Area Planning, Democratization, Art & Culture. This means that the Free Space Department must have at least one person from each of these departments. In addition, the following departments are important within the collaborative processes; Legal Affairs, Land and Development, and Urban Planning & Sustainability (Development Projects), and Permits, Supervision and Enforcement (VTH) only during implementation of the project. Lastly, there must be some members in the department who are only concerned with Free Space matters. A project leader, and a few people in the regel-brigade, who are involved in directing and supporting the initiators or the collective.



4.2 FREE SPACE METHOD

This chapter describes the Free Space method and concretizes the process the department follows. These steps will help understand where contextualization could be applied in the process and, therefore, where the tool will be useful. Free space creation is customization, causing the method to contain a project-specific part and relies on an interdisciplinary way of working. Advisory about organizational changes, such as restructuring the department, policies, regulations, standards and mindset changes support this process. However, certain roles, responsibilities and steps are already defined which generates a standardized procedure within the method. The Free Space Method is composed to pick up on the new leverage point where Free Space will be part of the regular area planning. This is used as a starting point. However, the method should be designed in a way that it also fits with the current working procedures of the department. Therefore, the method consists of clearly defined phases and actionable steps.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

Therefore the interdisciplinary Free Space Department will contain the following members;

At least three Free Space members

They are entirely in the Free Space Department concerning solely Free Space matters

- One project leader
- One the Free Space Department member
- One Regel-Brigade member

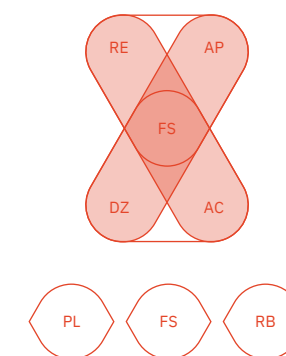
At least four interdisciplinair members

Both in the Free Space Department, as well as the representative department

- One Real Estate member
- One Area Planning member
- One Democratization member
- One Art & Culture member

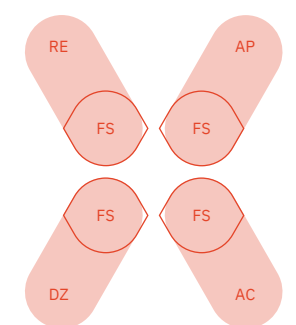
Optional members

- Legal Affairs members
- Land & Development member
- Urban Planning & Sustainability member



FREE SPACE MEMBERS

- Project Leader
- Free Space
- Regel-Brigade



INTERMEDIATE MEMBERS

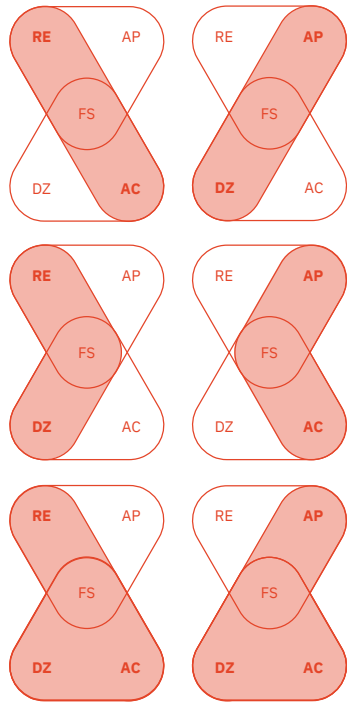
- Real Estate
- Area Planning
- Democratization
- Art & Culture

POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND STANDARDS

Realizing Free Space is often a race against the clock. There is tension between temporary available places, the lengthy permit application processes, and the investment needed to set-up and operationalize an initiative. Furthermore, there are no standard formats for the hybrid multifunctional character of a Free Space initiative. This results in a customized realization process in need of leeway in regulations. This chapter focuses on advisory regarding policies, regulations, and standards concerning mindset-changes on an organizational level for policy makers and other municipal officials.

HYBRID POLICY NO OWN POLICY GOALS

As mentioned before, the department should not have their own 'Free Space' policy to prevent a policy-on-policy structure that makes it increasingly difficult to find leeway in regulations. The Free Space policy is an amalgam of policies of partnering departments and therefore a hybrid policy. To remain open and neutral, the department does not have policy goals or their own budget. In this way the project will be at the center, allowing integrated space implementations.



No policy goals

Having no policy ensures that there is no steering and testing for a certain functionality, as was the case with the Art & Culture BPA policy, for example. No own policy goals makes hybrid implementation possible; multiple policy goals are covered and multifunctional places can be created. At the center of creating Free Space is bringing back ownership to the citizen, retaining the characteristic subcultural identity of Amsterdam, and making people feel influential. The policy goals of the collaborating department are the means to realize this.

Hybrid budget

For the same reason, the department should not have its own budget. Often budgets are matched with certain policy goals. To realize the above, the budget will come from the department they work with.

DIFFERENT POLICY CONFIGURATIONS

RULES & REGULATIONS QUICKEN PROCEDURES

A hybrid policy results in hybrid rules and regulations. To remain hybrid, open and leave room for initiators interpretation, there should be no rules or regulations regarding Free Spaces. Furthermore, the aim of the department to find leeway in existing rules and regulations, will become more complicated when generating its own rules and regulations. However the Free Space department does have regulation in the form of a checklist that consists of soft preconditions; open, public, non-commercial, socially involved, transparent, democratic, inclusive, collective, autonomous, and multifunctional. These are used as a checklist to validate the initiative's Free Space competence.

Free space seal of approval

If an initiative covers all the soft preconditions, it is considered Free Space worthy. It could be considered that a Free Space worthy initiative gets a Free Space seal of approval, which could be useful in quickening bureaucratic processes. For example permit application; the main reason that permit application is a time-consuming process, is assurance. The safety officials have to make sure the initiative is a true socially involved initiative and not a commercial party that tries to earn money over the back of the municipality. The seal of approval can ensure that the permit applications do not end up at the bottom of the pile but receive more urgency. This seal of approval shows that the competence of the initiative is already guaranteed, which means that there is no risk of commercial purposes and rules can be dealt with more loosely.

POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND STANDARDS

Covenant agreements

Currently, the only contractual agreements that are made with initiators are often through merely a permit application, no further statement. Obtaining the right permit is often a lengthy process. To start the implementation process sooner rather than later, sometimes when the permit application is not even finished yet, the project could start-off with covenant agreements. In this way the process will not delay, but there is security based on communal agreements. Therefore, the prospect is that in future projects this will be covered with covenant agreements. However, there is no format for this yet. Because the Free Space Department is actually seen as an unauthorized party, it is the question if these agreements apply to the department. Or if the agreements mainly concern the cooperation between different individuals or collectives that form a foundation or association.

Parochial contract forms

The fear among the municipality is mainly focused on the privatization of public land; parochialization. As mentioned earlier, agreements about the publicity of the site can be anchored in covenant agreements. However, this is not a contractual agreement. The only contractual agreements the initiative or collective makes with the municipality is through permit applications. It could be considered that contract forms regarding property ownership are added. The municipality could also consult and revise old parochial contract forms to convert them into a format that is usable for Free Space. In this way the municipality can keep a foot in the door to a certain extent.

NEW STANDARDS MINDSET CHANGES

A recurring but understandable question is; how can the municipality plan the unplanned and free and facilitate counterculture. Therefore, in order for the municipality to realize Free Space, mindset changes within the organization are crucial. First of all, Free Space creation is an intensive process that requires customization and overcoming bureaucratic challenges. To realize Free Space a positive solution-driven attitude is crucial.

Interdisciplinary working

The Free Space Department as an interdisciplinary department creates a new standard. Working without policy goals and budgets is something that needs to be experimented with. Appointing an interdisciplinary department to work in an interdisciplinary and integral way actually counteracts the entire principle. A righteous solution to truly allow hybrid and integrated working, is restructuring the entire organization. However, in an organization that is as hierarchical, layered and decentralized as the municipality, that is almost impossible to realize. To this end, setting up an interdisciplinary department that is appointed to bridge between some of these pillarized policy goals is a first step towards interdisciplinary working.

MINDSET CHANGES

Adopt contextualizing

The first mindset change is contextualizing instead of framing. The current municipal system relies on demarcated departments, each working on their own policy goal. In case of multifunctional and hybrid Free Space, delineation detracts from the versatility of the implementation. It limits the possibility to generate integral and multifunctional solutions. To work in an interdisciplinary and hybrid way, new experimental work forms and methods are needed, described above. This includes the mindset change of contextualizing instead of framing.

Allow parochialism

The second mindset change is rethinking parochialism as something valuable. In the case of Free Space parochialism embeds autonomy, ownership and responsibilities. Publicity of the space can be secured in covenant agreements, parochial contract forms, and the implementation plan.

Value Free Space

The third mindset change is questioning the value Free Space brings to the city. The participatory process of place implementation and involving residents and creatives in the urban planning process is the intrinsic value Free Space creation delivers. Free Space is a social facility, and therefore not only a goal but also a means. All extra values generated are a benefit.

TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES

FREE SPACE WORK TWO MAIN ROLES

- Official-related work**
Complex problem management
- Frontier work**
Soft people management

FREE SPACE PROCESS TWO PARTS

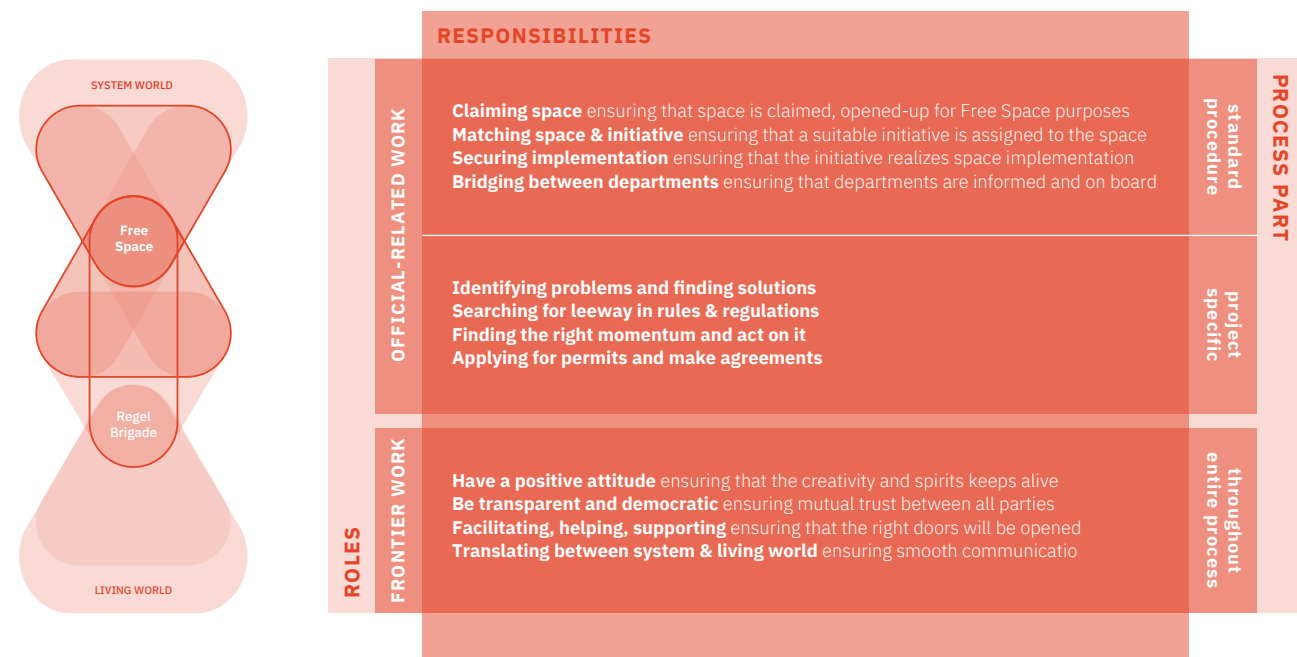
- Standardized procedure**
- Project specific**

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

The Free Space Department has the main task of space implementation. Their work is divided into the following two main roles: official-related work (complex problem management) and frontier work (soft people management). Furthermore, the process of Free Space Creation is divided into two parts: a standardized procedure and a project specific part.

The general practice of the Free Space Department is connecting a space with initiative. The responsibilities within this role are; claiming space, involving the suitable stakeholders, securing implementation, and bridging between the different departments. This is all official-related work regarding the standard procedure. Furthermore, they have a more project specific official-related role which takes up most of the process. The responsibilities within this role revolve around identifying problems, finding solutions, searching for leeway in rules, finding and acting on the right momentum, and permit application. In short, complex problem management.

Besides, they are frontier workers that connect the system- and the living world by having a translating function. This role is more focused on soft people management. Within this role they have the responsibility to be transparent and democratic, be supportive by providing facilitation and advice, while maintaining a positive attitude. A visual presentation of the roles and the corresponding responsibilities can be found underneath.



CONNECTING THE RIGHT PARTIES AT THE RIGHT TIME

To guarantee a fully autonomous initiative, it is important that the right parties are involved in the process at the right times. This already starts in the matching phase where the necessary internal departments are involved. Furthermore, during subsequent phases other external stakeholders are involved in the process. For example experts, creatives, and colleague initiatives. An important stakeholder to involve as early as possible in the process is the neighborhood. Existing collective in that area or creative individuals that need a physical space, can help with the implementation of the space or forming a collective. To repress gentrification and secure neighborhood feeling it is of importance that the department bridges the gap between the local neighborhood and non-localized initiators. Therefore, throughout the entire process the department should focus on this soft side of involving the right parties at the right times, finding a suitable momentum each time stakeholders are involved.

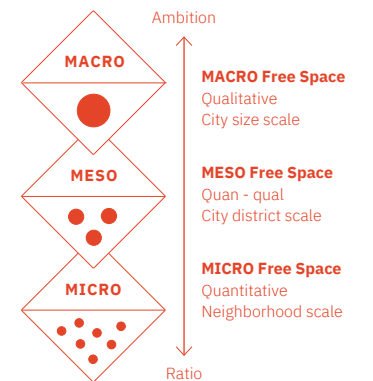
A NEW LEVERAGE POINT

In the reframing process came forward that Free Space should be repositioned as a social facility. This repositioning creates a new leverage point for the Free Space Department that influences their current procedure and their stand within the municipality. They will have to work closely together with the departments Area Planning and Real Estate, which will have to include Free Space in their planning procedures. First it is explained what this new leverage point entails and what its gains, followed with some advice and handles on how to generate reference standards in order to make Free Space plannable.

The current procedure of matching a space with an initiative has an inefficient start. The department has to claim a place by means of the leur procedure, after which they actively search for a suitable initiative. In order to actually claim the property or piece of land and make it available for the residents, the department must guarantee the value of the project, without knowing which initiative will be involved and what the implementation will be. Embedding the function and value of the place in that stage is not (always) possible, but often the question from Real Estate or Area Planning. When a place is claimed, it often takes some time to find or compose the right suitable initiative. This means that a municipal budget has to be released to retain the plot of land. Which results in an inefficient starting point in terms of time and money. Because of this, the department aims to make Free Space part of the regular Area Planning and the repurposing plan of buildings within Real Estate. Finding entry within area planning of new property or repurposing planning of existing property will be more time-efficient and will create a new leverage point for the Free Space Department.

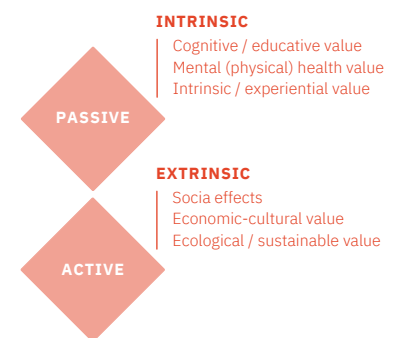
REGULAR AREA PLANNING

When Area Planning leaves room for Free Space in their area plan, the Free Space Department has time to find a suitable initiative in the time that the area is being built. In this case no ground needs to be held and no retention costs are needed. To realize this, the department should collaborate with Area Planning and provide reference standards that urban planners can consult. These reference standards define the percentage of space that must remain free per resident per square meter. Similar references are made for other social facilities within area planning e.g. sports, greenery, schools, shopping opportunities, etc. The urban planners of new areas can use these reference standards to decide how micro, meso or macro the Free Space will become. This choice has an impact on the ambition level of the space and therefore can influence the possible accessibility and functionality. The larger the place, the more people can make use of it, which may increase the reach, the number of activities, etc. Therefore the values generated will be more city-oriented. The choice to focus on the realization of several small Free Spaces will subsequently have a more narrow neighborhood-oriented reach.



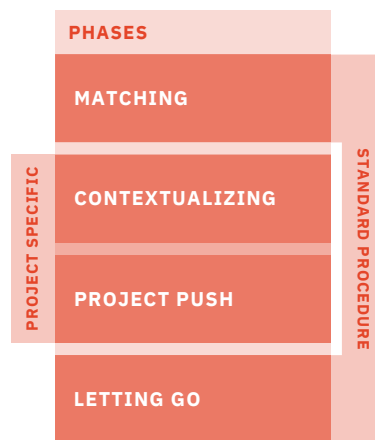
REAL ESTATE REPURPOSING PLAN

When buildings become vacant to the Real Estate department, the building receives a repurposing plan. Currently, this is often chosen by the municipality on the basis of the previous destination and associated permits. However, involving local residents more in these choices, ensures that buildings are given a destination that suits the neighborhood. This process in which the neighborhood is consulted for redevelopment plans is a point in time that allows for scanning the neighborhood for collectives and initiatives that are in need of a place. The Free Space Department can respond to this in collaboration with the City Districts. Combining the repurposing process with searching for an initiative will reduce time and cut costs. The same reference standards can be used to detect Free Space shortages in existing urban areas and influence repurpose destination plans of buildings within that area. Furthermore, when redefining the functionality of the place, the intrinsic and extrinsic Free Space values can be consulted, in order to determine how active or passive the place will be.



The new leverage point is when Free Space is part of the decision processes within regular area planning of Area Planning and Real Estate's building repurposing plan. To become part of this process, the department should draw up a Free Space reference standard, similar to other social facility reference standards. This standard and the subsequent choice about ratio and proportions determine how micro, meso, or macro the Free Space will be and provides more guidance regarding the possible value and functionality, without making the implementation concrete. The Free Space Method should pursue this new leverage point. However, currently Free Space is not part of these two processes yet. For this reason, the method should also connect to the possibilities that are now available and can be implemented right away.

FOUR PHASES



Based on the defined roles and responsibilities, and the current procedure of the department four project phases can be defined: matching, contextualizing, project push, and letting go. The first and last phase, matching and letting-go, are part of the standard procedure. Whereas the phases contextualizing and project push are project specific.

The Free Space Department starts their current project-process with finding suitable initiators for a claimed place. They actively search in their network and scan the neighborhood for existing collectives and exciting individuals who have initiatives to implement in the municipal property. Most often a project starts with claiming a place, however when the new leverage point of embedding Free Space in repurposing and regular area planning is realized, claiming a place is not necessary anymore. Therefore the first phase of the process concerns scanning the space and neighborhood in order to match the place with suitable initiators.

When suitable candidates are gathered, the project specific part takes off. The second phase includes understanding what the different individual or collective initiators want to realize on the piece of property. This is the first step in defining the implementation, where the individual interests are united to a collective initiative. Decisions will be substantiated in covenant agreements in order to make a quick start with the project. In this phase contextualization could come in handy, in order to let the implementation rise organically without it being pushed top-down or upfront. The third phase is the start of implementation and concerns overcoming challenges and finding ways to juridically realize the initiative. In this phase the department actively helps with permit application, finding leeway in regulations and moreover having a supportive and positive attitude.

When the initiative has the right to exist legally, the implementation is in full swing, and the right parties are involved it is time for the Free Space Department to let go. The initiative has grown into an independent collective and autonomy is secured. From this moment the Free Space Department must allow the initiative to stand in its power, and let the autonomously operating initiative flourish. A complete overview of the phases can be found underneath.

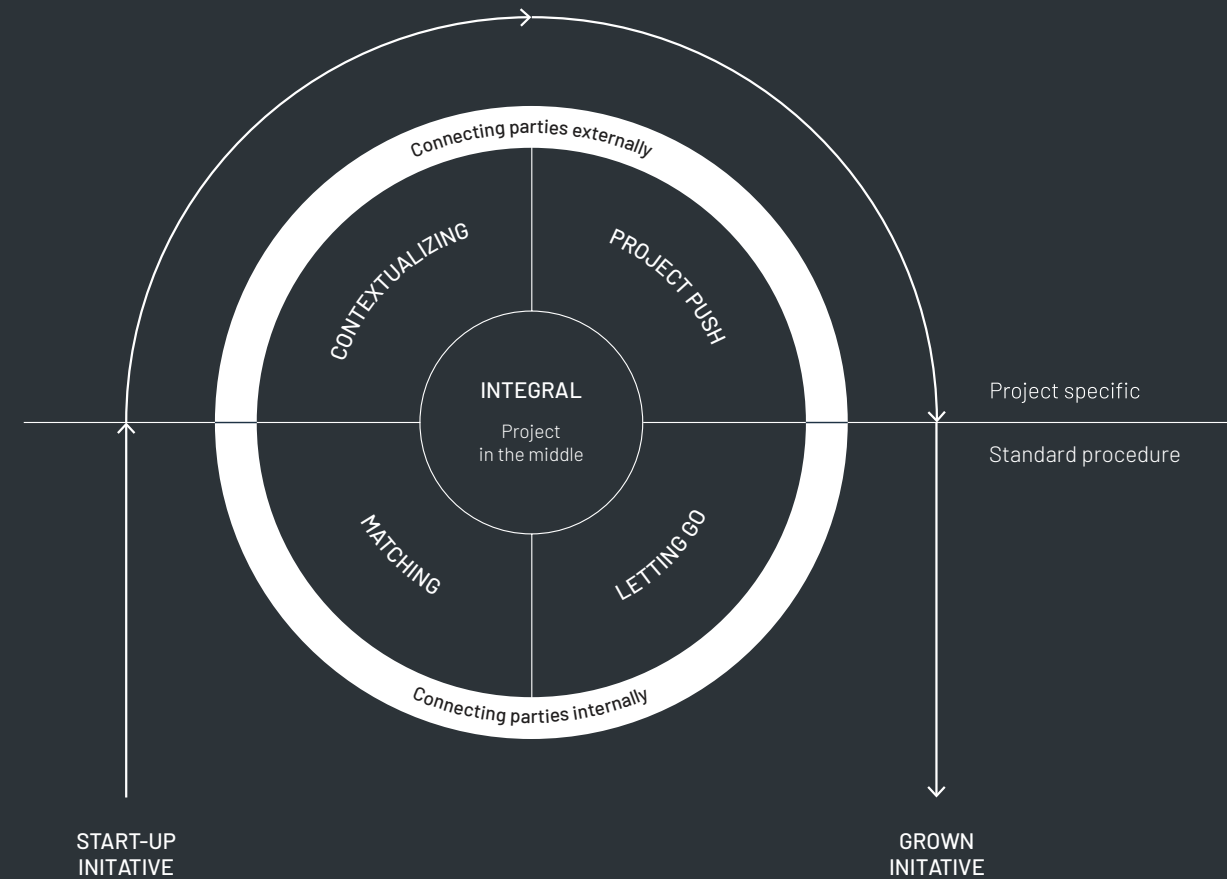
CASE STUDY BREEDING PLACE TOOLKIT

TASKS	
Matching	Quick-scan place & environment Identifying existing collectives Getting departments on board Matching place and initiatives
Contextualizing	Contextualizing (workshop) First step of implementation Giving Free Space seal of approval Making covenant agreements
Project push	Facilitating, helping, supporting Finding leeway in regulations Finding the right momentum Applying for permits
Letting go	Initiative can exist autonomous Initiative has needed permits Initiative is allied with rightful parties Value implementation is secured

A case study of the Breeding Place toolkit (Toolkit Bouwen aan broedplaatsen, 2022) is consulted to legitimize the defined phases. The Breeding Place toolkit consists of building blocks that can roughly be divided in four phases: underlying base, quick scan, realization, and further development. The underlying building blocks have no specific order and are therefore not consecutive. It is no surprise that the toolkit involves similar conditions as the compiled Free Space Method. The Quick Scan concerns investigating the building, financialities, and surroundings. This is similar to the Free Space quick scan, that revolves around scanning of the place, environment, and neighborhood. In both cases, there is a focus on connecting with the surroundings and local stakeholders. However, in the Breeding Place toolkit connecting to the environment and reaching out to stakeholders is placed in the last two phases, whereas within the Free Space method it is stretched that most stakeholders should be involved as early in the process as possible. If otherwise, the department must have a good sense of when it is necessary to involve the right parties and find the right momentum.

Further differences can be found within the more market-driven and commercialized approach of Breeding Places. Within the toolkit there is a focus on understanding the willingness of the property owner and writing a business plan. In the case of Free Space this is not necessary, since it concerns municipal property that is offered for cost-effective rent. To be qualified for this, being non-commercial is a clear Free Space precondition. It is of course important that the Free Space is financially feasible and earns enough money to cover the costs. However, this is not translated as a business plan, Free Space initiators write a cost-benefit plan.

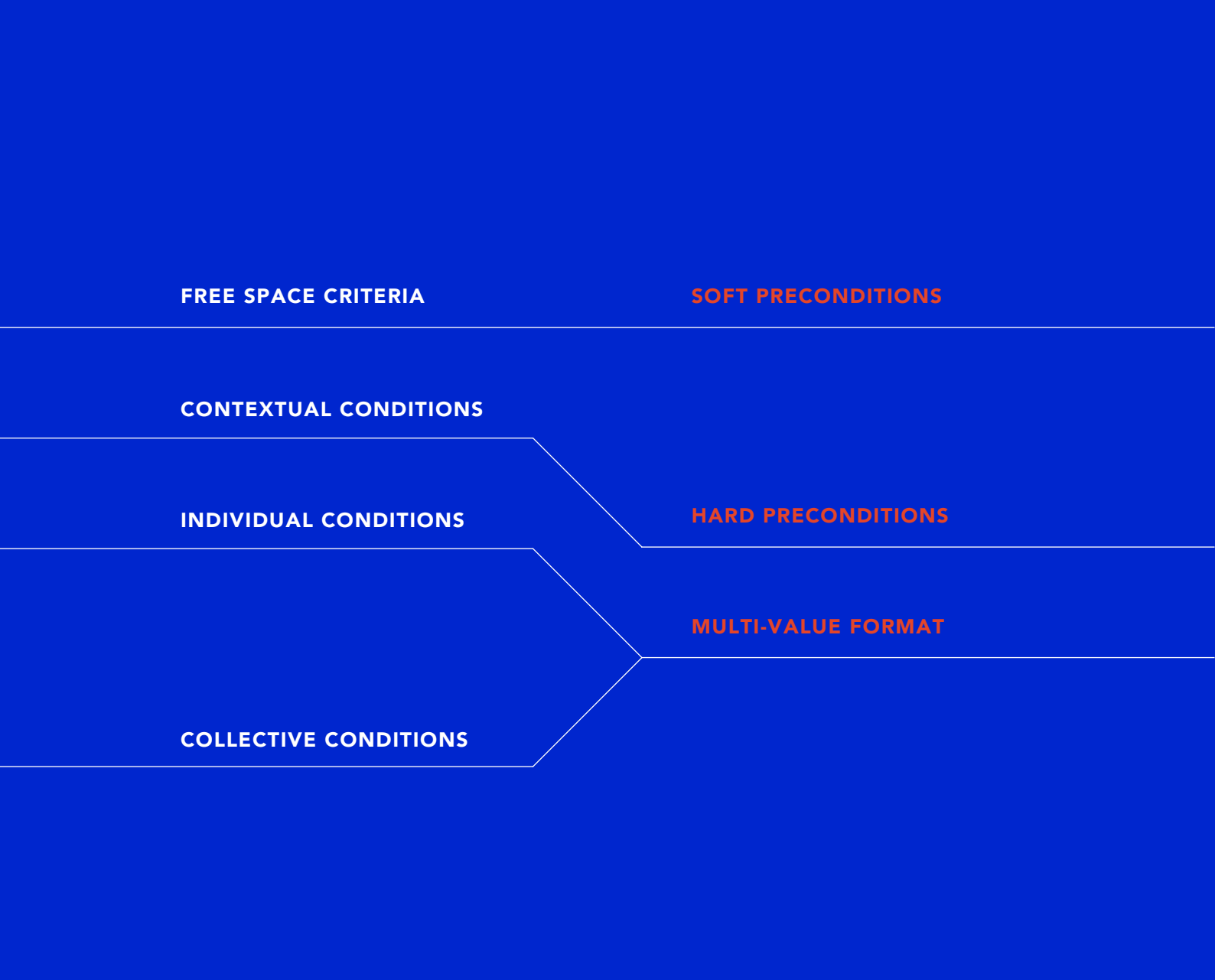
FREE SPACE METHOD



The Free Space Method mainly focuses on space implementation by connecting place and initiative. Throughout the whole process the department actively engages the right people, finds momentum, and opens the right doors, which involves soft people management skills. Their main roles can be divided into office-related work and frontier work. The process can be divided into standard procedure and a project specific part that concerns a customized approach. Working interdisciplinary, associated with hybrid policies and budgets are necessary to realize this. Therefore, restructuring the department and setting new standards are required.

The process can be divided into four phases; matching, contextualizing, project-push, and letting go. The project specific part aims for securing implementation and value-creation without disturbing the organic bottom-up process. This is where contextualization can be deployed, in order to clarify possible value-creation on which covenant agreements can be built and permit application can be extracted from. This is where the contextualization tool could be of use to support formation of a joint collective and define place implementation. The contextualization process can be molded into a workshop in which different parties and initiators come together to work collaboratively on this implementation. The contextualization tool supports this workshop.

- MATCHING**
 - Quick-scan place & environment
 - Matching place and initiatives
- CONTEXTUALIZING**
 - Forming the collective
 - First step of implementation
- PROJECT PUSH**
 - Facilitating, helping, supporting
 - Overcoming challenges
- LETTING GO**
 - Complete autonomous initiative
 - Allied with rightful parties



4.3 TOOL CONDITIONS

To define the conditions that deliver the in- and output of the tool, the contextualization framework is used as a base. This framework includes conditions on individual, collective and contextual level. The individual and collective conditions that are interconnected define the collective or initiative. Whereas the contextual conditions define the limits of what is possible. All variable conditions on the three levels influence the possible place implementation and what value the Free Space will bring to the city. Therefore this contextualization framework is used as a base for the tool creation. The challenge is therefore to create a tool that helps to solidify enough contextual information to establish the formation of a collective initiative and determine the possible value creation, without steering on implementation. In this way it is attempted to safeguard the organic process. In this chapter it is decided how the conditions are integrated in the tool.

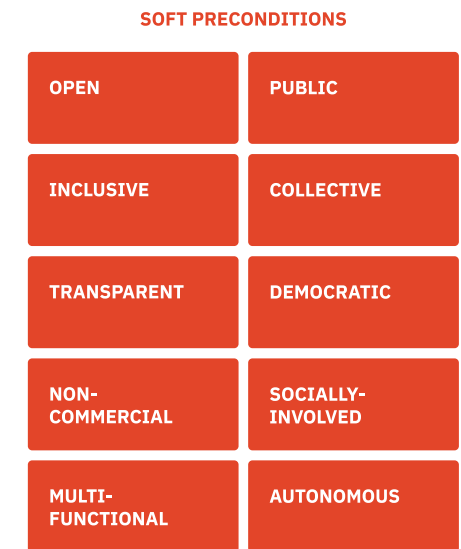
PRECONDITIONS

FREE SPACE CRITERIA SOFT PRECONDITIONS

Besides the conditions from the contextualization framework, the Free Space Department defined ten criteria. These soft preconditions are currently used to define what a free space is; open, public, non-commercial, socially involved, transparent, democratic, inclusive, collective, autonomous, and multifunctional. Most of these criteria are subjective and could be considered boundary objects. Therefore, these preconditions are hard to validate, without creating mutual understanding of what these words mean in the specific project context. These soft preconditions however, are good conversation starters and will help understand underlying individual or collective ideas and interests. They can be used as a stepping stone to defining the value that the free space will offer. Therefore, these soft preconditions will be used as conversation starters and a first step in validating individual ideas.

TOOL INPUT

- Soft preconditions
- Conversation starters



CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS HARD PRECONDITIONS

The contextual conditions from the framework are the most sturdy and concrete. These conditions can be divided into surrounding factors and space specific factors. Space characteristics, environmental and neutral conditions, and life span are space specific factors. Examining these factors define the facilities, living possibilities, lifespan of the place, and required permits based on the destination plan. These are plotted against each other to determine the rent and possible needed investments. Essentially, the rent is always cost-effective. However, there are some exceptions. For example in the case of ADM Noord, which is placed on the sludge fields on polluted soil, which reduces rental costs.

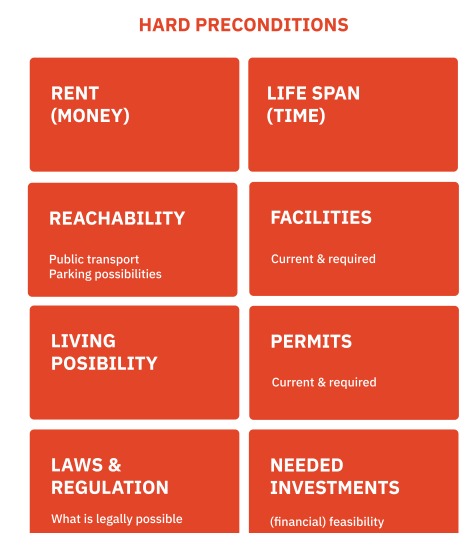
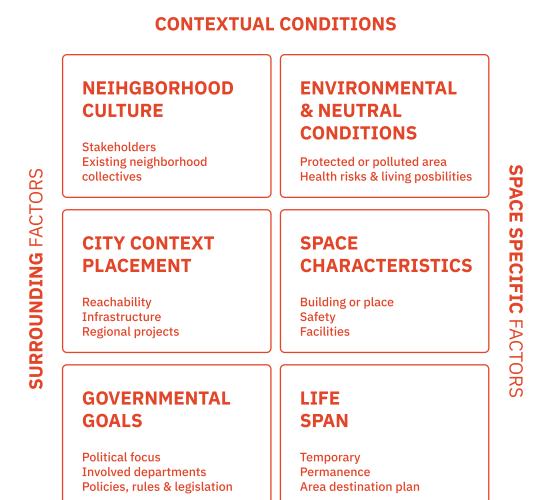
Neighborhood culture, city context placement, and governmental goals are surrounding factors. These factors focus on the involvement of the right parties; municipal departments, existing initiative, experts, and neighborhood (collectives). It focuses on the neighboring proceedings, such as regional projects or the infrastructure of the surrounding district. These conditions define the prevailing political focus and possibilities in terms of laws and policies that could influence the implementation possibilities of the project. These contextual conditions, both surround and space specific, are concrete and most can be determined before implementation based on a quick scan. Therefore these factors give insight and define the hard preconditions regarding the space and project.

It can be concluded that the decision of choosing which place will be opened-up for Free Space influences the eventual outcome. As mentioned before, decisions regarding ratio and proportions (micro, meso, macro free space) influence the ambition niveau of the place in relation to the surrounding area, whereas choosing the specific placement influences the possibilities. Exploring the contextual conditions will give insight into the limits of the place and the boundaries of what the municipality has to offer. Using a quick scan of the place to explore these contextual conditions therefore define the hard preconditions. This elucidates the possibilities and more specific initiators can be sought. These hard preconditions are the primary input for the workshop.

TOOL INPUT

- Hard preconditions
- Contextual boundaries

The next page shows in what configurations the variable contextual conditions define the hard preconditions.



CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS > HARD PRECONDITIONS



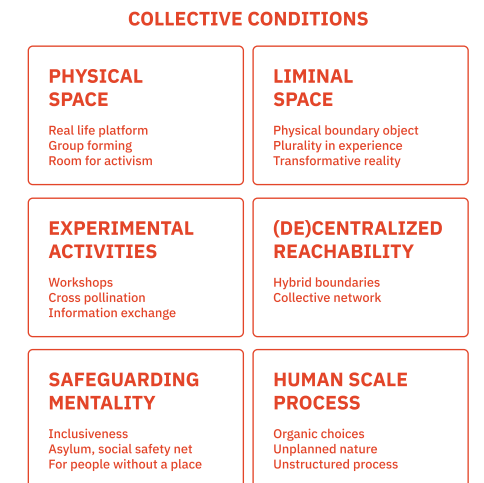
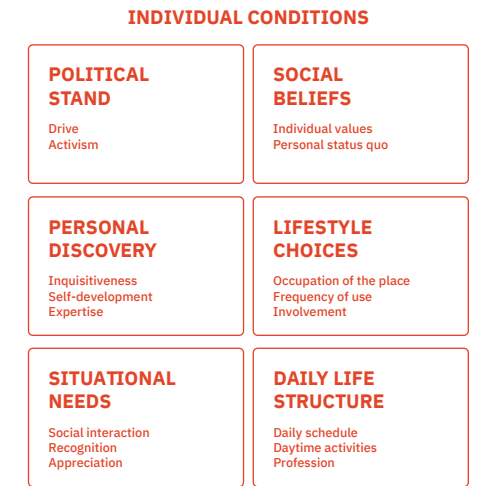
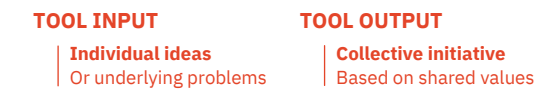
COLLECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE CONDITIONS

The individual and collective conditions configure the initiative or collective that will take place in the Free Space. individual and collective interests are intertwined and sometimes hard to separate (De kinderen van Møkum en ik, 2022). In some cases this could lead to conflict, but they can also reinforce each other. For example the individual social belief that everyone is equal and should be treated as such and an socialistic political drive can lead to collective activism and the urge to tackle societal issues. For instance supporting refugees or people in need. This selfless social belief; to do without expecting something in return, is translated into the safeguarding mentality of the collective and the level of social inclusiveness. The individual and collective conditions are fluid and subjective. However, these conditions form the rationale to form a collective and therefore are at the foundation of an initiative. These two types of variable conditions continuously reconfigure and change with the individuals that are part of the collective. This allows for the organic place implementation, which eventually defines the generated value the Free Space brings to the city.

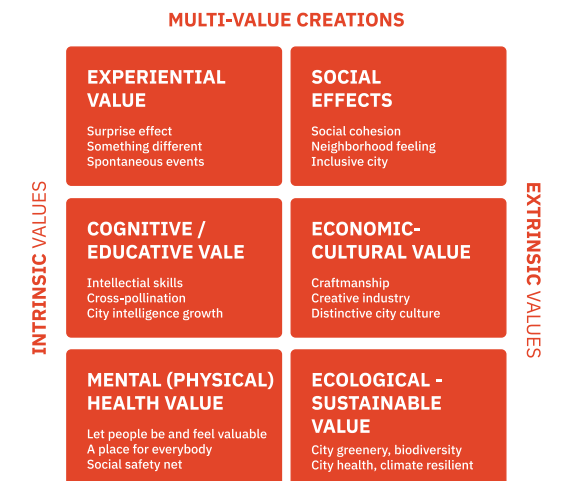
Individual and collective conditions are interrelated both within and between the levels. It is hard to view them in isolation which makes them hard to define. These conditions are nested within the unconscious behavior of people and the values and norms they cling on to. Identifying and concretizing these separate conditions is therefore too complicated to integrate in the tool. However, these conditions are woven into the proposed problems, ideas, and ideals of the initiators regarding the space. The conjunction of these different conditions form the interpretation of the initiative or collective. Therefore these proposed problems, ideas, and ideals are the secondary input for the workshop.

The configuration of individual-collective conditions is translated into shared values. This is what forms the collective and determines the value creation. For example the individual condition of personal discovery establishes one's inquisitiveness or eagerness to learn new things. This is translated into the collective condition of experimental activities e.g. workshops or presentations that allow cross pollination or information exchange. The combination of these conditions eventually generates cognitive / educative value. Therefore this collective initiative based on shared values is the output of the workshop.



MULTI-VALUE CREATION

Multifunctionality is a Free Space characteristic and therefore brings multi-value to the city. The shared values of the initiative define this value creation. Non-commerciality is another characteristic of Free Space. Since the values cannot be expressed in financial profit, the defined Free Space values do not have an economic focus (see Chapter 3.4). Depending on the collective interests, the value focus of the initiative unfolds organically. Free Space has both intrinsic and extrinsic values. How intrinsic or extrinsic the created value is, again depends on the configuration of individual and collective conditions. For example a Free Space can have cognitive / educative value when individuals learn from each other during the realization of the space, as well as the information exchange between municipality and initiators. This is intrinsic value. When the Free Space offers workshops or presentations to residents this becomes extrinsic cognitive / educative value. Therefore, Free Space generates both intrinsic and extrinsic values simultaneously, and thus cannot be measured on one single value. However, concretizing the values the initiative will focus on can be used as a foundation for defining covenant agreements and permit applications. To legitimize the existence of the space, it should be clarified what specific value the initiative will generate. Therefore, these multi-values should be established and form the output of the workshop in order to move to the next phase. The tool should offer a format that captures this multi-value.



COLLECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

MULTI-VALUE FORMAT

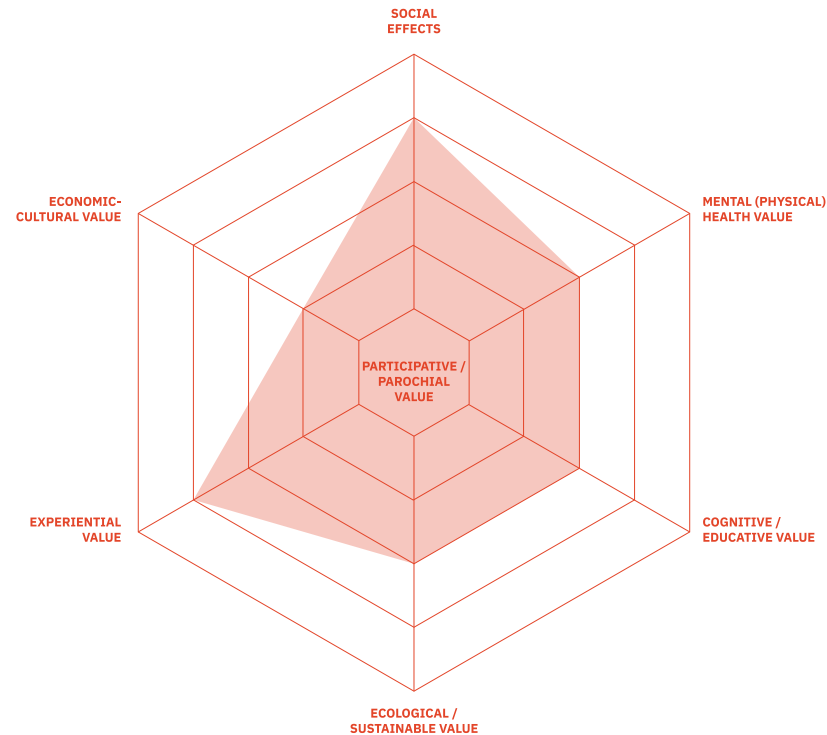
In order to make this multi-value translatable internally in the municipality, the multi-value of the initiative should be established. Municipal frameworks are often single-purpose and detract from the multi-functional charter of a Free Space. For this reason the following multi-value format viewed underneath was compiled. The intrinsic participative / parochial value, that is rather specific for Free Spaces, is placed in the middle of the model. Within Free Space creation which involves enduring participation processes and place implementation, this value is guaranteed in every project. This value therefore is separate from implementation, initiators and the collective that arises. The intrinsic and extrinsic values are placed on the borders of the format. These values are project implementation specific. The initiative or ideas initiators have can be plotted in this format, to understand and determine to which shared values they are inclined to.

The format is not intended to ensure that the implementation is providing that certain value that is established. However, making a collective decision on a focus area on certain values, will ensure that regardless of the implementation these values are secured to some extent. The format generates a collective focus area and therefore forms a foundation for covenant agreements and permit application.

THREE BENEFITS OF MULTI-VALUE FORMAT

- It contextualizes multi-value
- It establishes a shared focus area
- It creates a foundation for agreements

The format allows one to look at multiple values at the same time, instead of testing the idea on isolated values; this is value contextualization. The different values are possibly reinforcing each other, depending on the implementation form. Therefore Free Space ideas should be valued in a multi-value perspective. In this way it is prevented that ideas are formed or molded in order to fit into certain values. Deciding collectively how ideas score on certain values indicates the focal point, without giving the impression that the idea has to score on every value or that certain values are more important than others. It helps to determine shared interests, what they aim to bring to the city, and therefore where the focus lies. In addition, the model helps to understand whether different ideas are complementary or have similarities, to understand if they reinforce each other.



TOOL INPUT

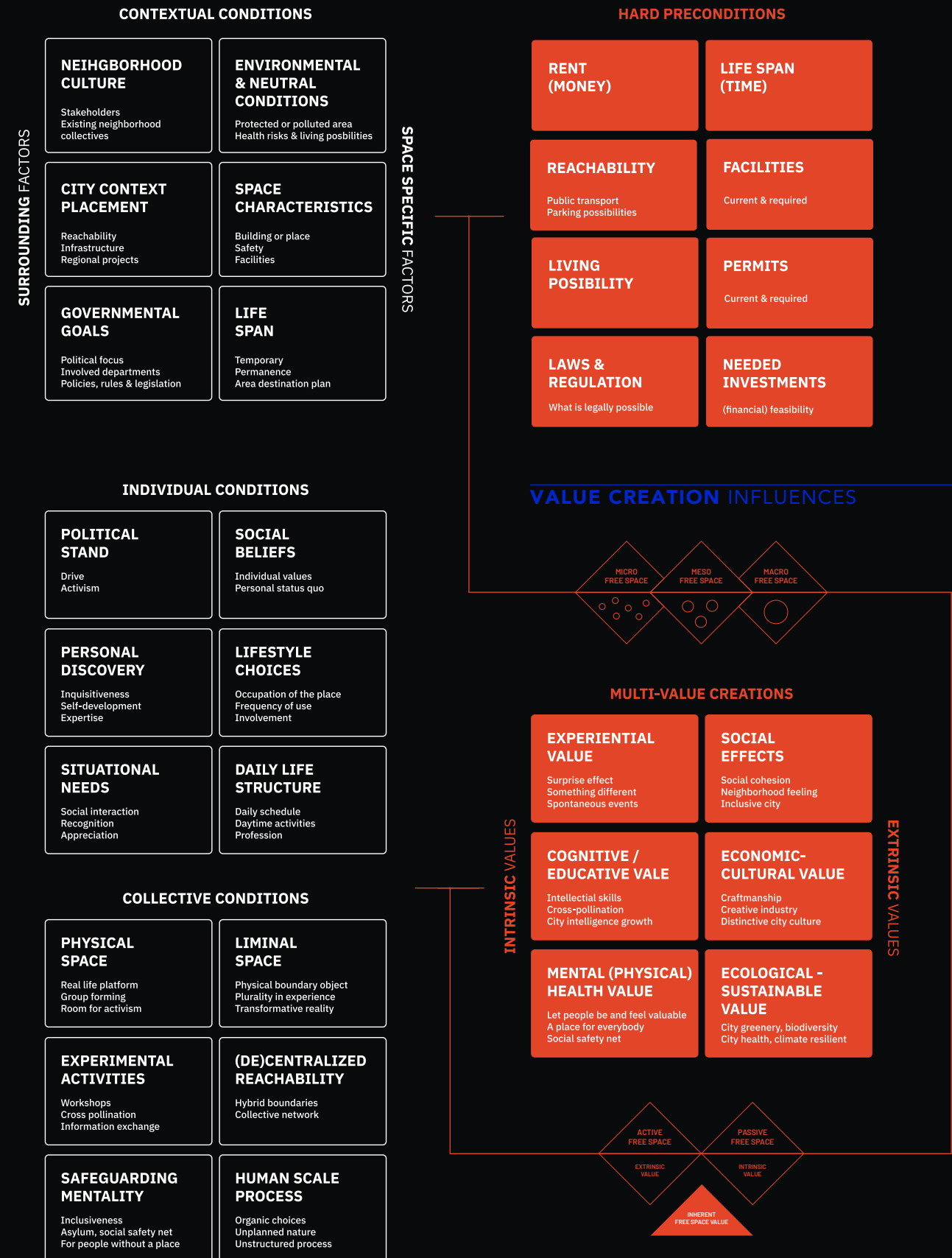
- Soft preconditions**
Conversation starters
- Hard preconditions**
Contextual boundaries
- Individual ideas**
Or underlying problems

TOOL OUTPUT

- Multi-value creation**
Covenant agreements
- Collective initiative**
Based on shared values

The contextualization tool will make use of the soft and hard preconditions to organically define the implementation of the place. The multi-value format will be used to establish the value creation and translatable to internal and external parties. Prior to the session, the contextual conditions are used to define hard preconditions. These hard preconditions are the input of the tool in order to make initiators understand what boundaries (and possibilities) there are. The soft preconditions are used as conversation starters, to understand what problems and ideas individuals have in order to compile a collective initiative. These problems and ideas will give insight into the individual conditions without specifically focusing on it. Eventually these ideas will form a collective initiative and give insight into the shared values. However, there is no specific focus on these separate individual and collective conditions. These will organically take shape in the form of an initiative and place implementation. Eventually the collective ideas and shared values are translated into the multi-value format, which is the output of using the tool. This forms the basis of covenant agreements and permit application and clears the way for the next phase.

TOOL CONDITIONS CONCLUDING SUMMARY



INPUT

HARD PRECONDITIONS
CONTEXTUAL BOUNDARIES

SOFT PRECONDITIONS
CONVERSATION STARTERS

INDIVIDUAL IDEAS
OR UNDERLYING PROBLEMS

COLLECTIVE INITIATIVE
SHARED VALUES

MULTI-VALUE CREATION
CONVENANT AGREEMENTS

OUTPUT

4.4 TOOL FORMAT

The tool is a combination of a physical game in a workshop format. To compose the physical game, theory is taken from urban planning. To compose the workshop format creative techniques from design are consulted. With this is again attempted to bridge between urban planning and design methodologies. For the physical game examples are taken from Play the City, a company that is an expert in city games for complex, multi-stakeholder, urban challenges. City games are often used in participatory urban planning challenges. Play the City is a party that was involved in the Buiksloterham project, a hackable city (chapter 2.2 context history). In this project various stakeholders were included, such as residents and urban planners, in the planning process for a circular Buiksloterham. The case Play the City Buiksloterham is explored to set up the physical game (Lange, M. L., & Waal, M., 2016). To set up the workshop, the book Road Map for Creative Problem Solving Techniques is consulted (Heijne, K., & Van der Meer, H., 2019). The research insights that defined the contextualization framework and the multi-value format is used as a foundation for the tool.

SIMULATION GAME & MDA MODEL

City gaming are serious games that engage people and bring various stakeholders together in order to tackle complex problems and work towards a shared vision in a productive way. This is relevant for the contextualization tool that should support the transition from individual input to a collective initiative through collaborative decision making. The process where the tool is used involves idea generation, (collective) decision making, co-creation, problem identification, feasibility validation, and shared value creation. The tool is therefore both an urban planning tool that concretizes place implementation, as well as a management tool that supports the forming of a collective. The case Play the City Buiksloterham concerns a simulation game, which are powerful management tools, that uses the MDA model as a format (Lange, M. L., & Waal, M., 2016). This chapter explains the decision for a simulation game and how the physical game will be set-up on the base of the MDA model.

WHY A SIMULATION GAME

A simulation game ties in well with the design requirements set-up in the Design Brief. Simulation games offer various advantages in an integrated way. (Peters, V., & van de Westelaken, M., 2011). These advantages, listed on the right side of the page, tie in well with the contextualization phase, where from a few individual ideas and hard preconditions, an organic implementation and value definition must arise. To be more specific, a simulation game is a suitable tool with regard to the design requirements; contrary to reality, playing a simulation game shows results of actions and decisions quickly. Therefore, a simulation game seems like a suiting tool that by means of contextualization supports planning the unplanned character of Free Space.

A SIMULATION GAME

- Gains insight by experience;
- Defines a focus area;
- Allows to deal with complexity;
- Provides an clear overview;
- Accelerates feedback cycles;
- Allows organizational change processes;
- Offers a simulation of this organizational change;
- Generates a safe environment for experimenting;
- Supports the development of strategic thinking;
- Challenges competition;
- Is a fun and relaxing method;

WHAT IS A SIMULATION GAME

A simulation is a simplified model of the real-life situation. This simulation learns participants about possible occurring situations, and identifying problems or obstacles. These learnings are then translated back to reality. There are three different types of simulation models; mathematical model, conceptual model, and physical model. Concepts that indicate elements are linked with arrows to indicate relations. Whereas in physical models objects and the spatial arrangement between them envisions elements. Game elements such as rules, roles, scenarios, and events indicate the relations. A simulation game mimics real-life situations in order to simplify and quicken decision making. Within simulation games the participant should not be steered towards isolating one solution, but allow exploration of different possibilities and situations. Therefore the game environment should have a degree of open interpretation (Peters, V., & van de Westelaken, M., 2011).

MDA MODEL

The MDA model, a model commonly used in video game design, is used to deconstruct the game into separate elements, which gives more insights into the development and play of the game. The Buiksloterham city game made use of the MDA model, in order to understand separate game elements and gain insight into how the development and play of the game are connected. The MDA model stands for Mechanics, Dynamics, and Aesthetics (Hunicke, R., et al., 2004). The MDA model will be used to define different game elements.

Furthermore, this model is suitable to determine a prototype test and evaluation set-up. As a designer you have the most influence on the mechanics. Hence, this has the main focus in the creation of the game, while keeping dynamics and aesthetics in the back of the mind. The player enters the game from the angle of aesthetics. The play of the game, or the dynamics, is in between what the designer and what the player can do. The players mold the dynamics into some degree based on their own experience. Therefore, within the mechanics there has to be some degree of open-interpretation such that multiple dynamics can exist. When validating the game, it is focused on the dynamics and aesthetics in order to make changes within the mechanics.

Mechanics → **Dynamics** ← **Aesthetics**
Determined by designer Organically develops Experienced by player

MECHANICS

The formal rules and game-play.
Defining these gives the structure to the game.

DYNAMICS

The (social) interactions of the system. These can be defined when the game is executed. This allows us to understand how players interact, take turns, and react to one another.

AESTHETICS

The player's experience of the game.
This is also observed in the execution phase. How do people respond; are they enjoying it or are they annoyed?

WORKSHOP SETUP iCPS

The simulation game will be played during a creative workshop. To set up this workshop format, the book Road Map for Creative Problem Solving Techniques is consulted (Heijne, K., & Van der Meer, H., 2019). This book is based on sessions using Integrated Creative Problem Solving (iCPS). iCPS has a sub-process based on the typical diamond model: diverging, reverging, converging. For these different stages there are different creative techniques and approaches to support the process. This chapter defines the suitability of the iCPS approach to the situation, and gives an overview of the workshop format.

WHY ICPS CONDITIONS FOR USING ICPS

CONDITIONS FOR USING ICPS

Checklist 3 I's

Influence: is the problem owner accountable for and capable of implementing a solution?

Interest: is the problem owner motivated to solve the challenge?

iCPS: does the problem owner actually need an iCPS session to reach his or her goal?

Prior to creating a workshop format the situation has to be verified on the iCPS conditions, to ascertain its suitability. To determine this the book gives two checklists. The Millers 3'is checklist (Miller et al., 2011), where the third 'i' can be assessed by an additional checklist (Heijne, 2011). See both checklists on the left. Following these checklists it can be concluded that the situation is suitable for the iCPS approach. The problem owner, the Free Space Department, is motivated to solve the challenge and capable of implementing the solution. Furthermore, in the case of the complex ambiguous challenge of Free Space contextualization, iCPS will be suitable and useful. Therefore, the iCPS method is further deployed to create this workshop format.

iCPS y/n

Could a solution of the problem statement be found by...

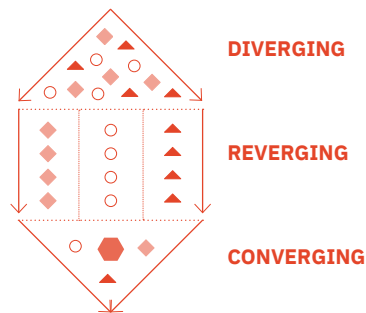
- ... the effort of one person
- ... logical or analytical reasoning
- ... executing a certain procedure or routine
- ... searching the internet
- ... calling an expert

Is there only one 'right' solution to the problem

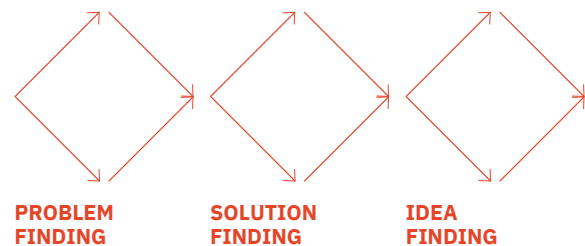
Free Space contextualization concerns an organic, customized, and multi-stakeholder process, where collaborative decision-making leads to the creation of a collective and space implementation.

Therefore, it cannot be solved by the effort of one person, with logical or analytical reasoning, or by executing a certain procedure or routine. There is not one rightful solution, therefore searching the internet or calling an expert will not solve the issue.

WHAT IS ICPS DIAMOND MODEL



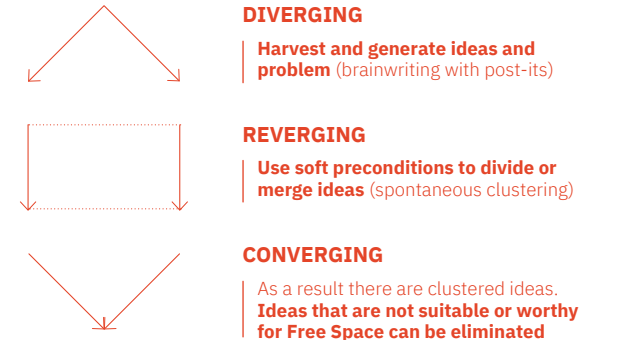
iCPS has a sub-process based on the typical diamond model: diverging, reverging, converging. Diverging is the gathering of information, reverging is the organization of this information, and converging aims to choose a focus area. The most frequently used model is the 3 diamond of content finding. The first diamond stands for problem finding, the second diamond for idea finding, and the third diamond for solution finding. Since in the case of free space creation it does not revolve necessarily around finding and solving a problem but about forming a collective from different stakeholders, the creative process looks slightly different. The workshop session will consist of two diamonds; two times diverging, reverging and converging.



WORKSHOP SETUP iCPS

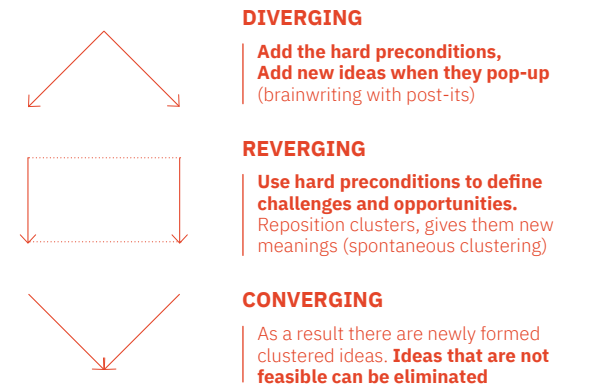
DIAMOND I IDEATION

The process starts with retrieving input and information of possible initiators. The Free Space Department aims to find out what these neighbors and creatives want with the place. They probably have an underlying reason why they want something with the designated place, have an idea for implementation, or experience a certain problem. In the first phase of the workshop it is therefore important to harvest existing ideas and problems and generate ideas and solutions. That is why the first diamond of the workshop focuses on information finding. Diverging is finding out about these personal plans. Reverging is the clustering of these ideas. In this phase similarities and differences the soft preconditions can be detected. Furthermore the soft preconditions can support this reverging process, while at the same time determining if the ideas are Free Space worthy. Idea clustering is the beginning of the converging process, which ends with the elimination of ideas that are not Free Space worthy.



DIAMOND II LIMITATION

The next step of the process is determining if the ideas are feasible with regard to the space specific conditions and the municipal frameworks. This phase is not necessarily about problem finding, but identifying challenges and possible opportunities. This aspect is supported by consulting the hard preconditions. Adding this extra information could also possibly lead to the generation of new ideas, and therefore could be considered diverging. The idea clusters are tested on feasibility, which could lead to resultstering and restructuring these clusters. In this reverging phase, the ideas will be merged or divided based on facing challenges or opportunities. In the converging phase, ideas or idea clusters that turn out to be infeasible can be eliminated. This is the last diamond of the creative process. At this moment one or a few ideas (clusters) left.



FINAL CONVERGING MULTI-VALUE FORMAT

The last phase of the sessions focuses on filling in the Multi-Value format with the remaining idea(s). Where at the beginning of the session all participants had their own individual interests or ideas regarding the municipal space, during the session these individual input is gradually funneled towards one or a few collective ideas, that include individual and shared interests. This last part of the session is to converge even further and establish one collective focus point regarding a shared multi-value. Filling in the format is done, regardless of whether there are multiple ideas left or the implementation has not yet been fully defined.

GAME MECHANICS MATERIAL SETTING

Simulation game creation relies on three principles; reduction, abstraction and symbolization. Reduction means reducing the involvet elements by including only the elements that seem relevant. Abstraction relies on simplifying the elements, leaving out unnecessary details. And lastly symbolization focusses on forming the elements into a new symbolic structure i.e. roles, rules, scenarios, etc. The latters brings in the gaming element (Peters, V., & van de Westelaken, M., 2011). The game mechanics will therefore be explained on the basis of reduction, abstraction, and symbolization.

REDUCTION

Chapter 4.3 - Tool conditions, defines the in and out-put of the game, and therefore already focuses on reduction. From the contextualization framework it is only focussed on the contextual conditions. It is decided not to focus on individual and collective conditions, since these are too abstract and complicated to define for participants. Instead is focussed on the input and contribution of participants. Lastly, the soft preconditions that define Free Space are the added input for the simulation game.

ABSTRACTION

The contextual conditions are abstracted into concrete hard preconditions, to make them easier to understand to participants. Instead of variable conditions that have various possible outcomes, they are translated into specific prerequisites suchs as permits, facilities, money, time, etc. Furthermore the input of participants is abstracted into the distinction of problems and ideas. Within these problems and ideas, individual conditions are incorporated. Combining and clustering these problems and ideas, incorporates collective conditions.

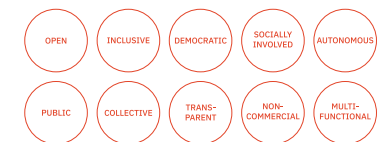
SYMBOLIZATION

The participants' input in the form of problems and ideas are symbolized with pentagon shaped cards. This form makes it possible to build upon each other's ideas, combine problems and solutions, and cluster similar or complementary ideas. Therefore it allows to organically 'build' the implementation of the place. The soft preconditions that define if an idea is Free Space worthy. It is a first check to find out whether ideas fall under the Free Space guidelines. Therefore, the soft preconditions will be in the form of voting chips. In this way participants can democratically vote on the rightfulness of ideas. The hard preconditions define the boundaries of the possibilities. Therefore they will be in the form of boundary shaped cards which together form an enclosing circle. They symbolize the limits of the project possibilities and thereby 'frame' the organic ideation and implementation process. These boundary cards are not completely determined. Since they define space specific conditions, they alter with the place of the project. Besides, depending on the ideas it is possible to search for leeway in rules. Therefore, these cards are single cards (and not a fixed ring placed around the game), to give a sense that they remain movable.

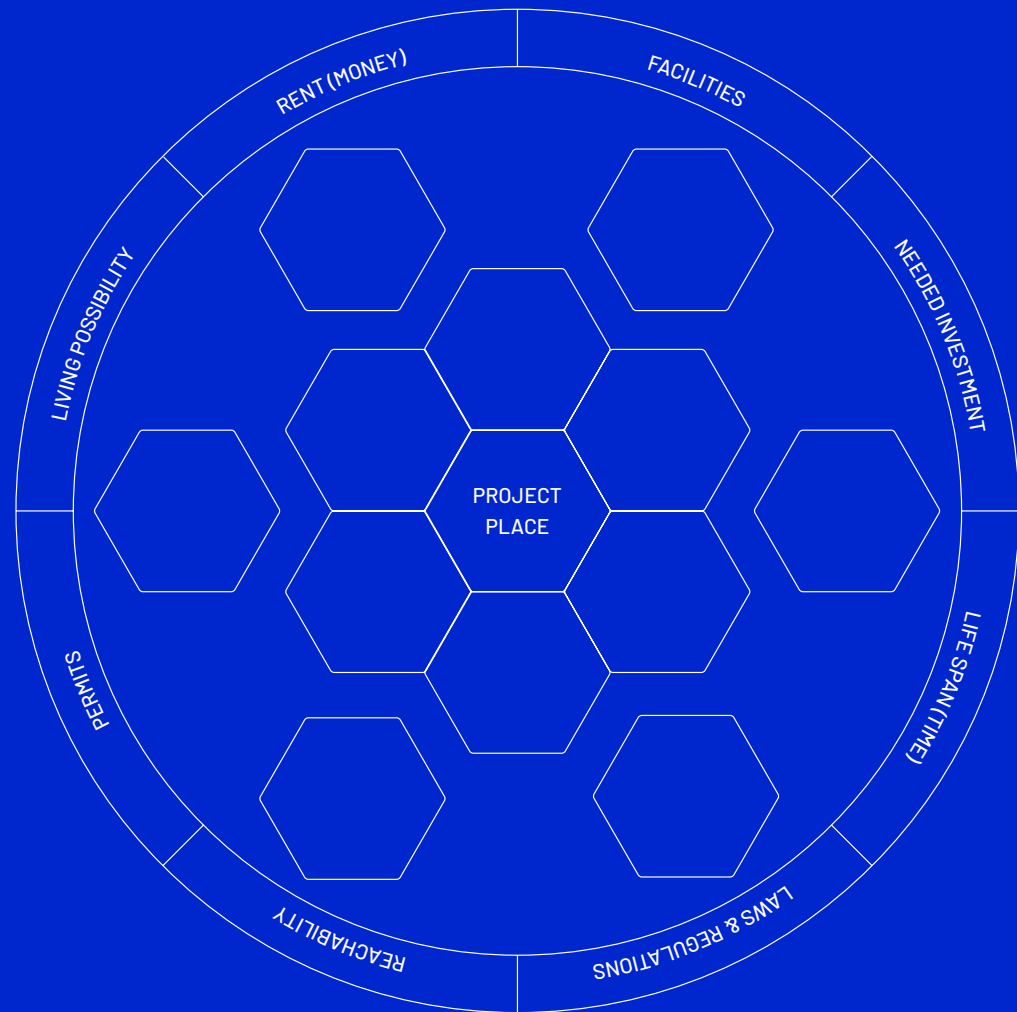
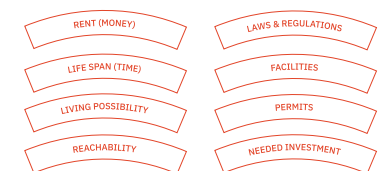
IDEA & PROBLEM CARDS PARTICIPANT INPUT



VOTING CHIPS SOFT PRECONDITIONS



BOUNDARY CARDS HARD PRECONDITIONS



4.5 TOOL CREATION

The contextualization tool will be in the format of a workshop, supported with a (physical) simulation game. It has as a goal to support the process of planning the unplanned nature of Free Space, without diminishing its unstructured and organic character. According to the MDA model, a designer has the most influence on the mechanics, and on the dynamics to some extent (Hunicke, R., et al., 2004). Therefore, this chapter focuses on defining the game mechanics and explains the aimed dynamics, in relation to the format of a workshop.

STRUCTURING ELEMENT

Physical setting
Table with empty board

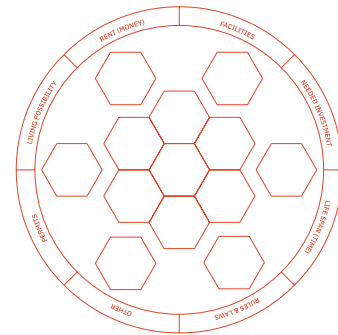
Game objects
Elements to populate game

Pentagon cards problems & ideas
Voting chips soft preconditions
Boundary cards hard preconditions

Fill-in form
Multi-value format

GAME MECHANICS MATERIAL SETTING

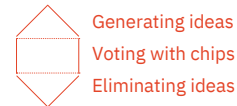
BOARD VOCAL ELEMENT



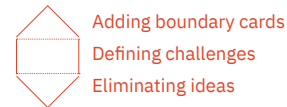
PHYSICAL SET-UP

The simulation game is played around a table with a board that supports the different rounds. The board consists of a surface on which the problems and ideas can be plotted, where the preconditions can be applied and on which can be drawn and written. The board is used as a vocal element, on which the individual participants co-create together. The participants play their own role; neighbor, creative, initiator or existing collective. There are no specific rules or explicit gaming elements (ways to win or lose the game). The simulation game concerns sequential play rules (Lange, M. L., & Waal, M., 2016). These rules aim for structured conversation that leads to a desired result. An example is an implicit rule that everyone behaves in a civil way i.e. wait for their turn and make democratic decisions. Additional rules can be decided upfront with the involved players. The goal of the game is to combine individual ideas (and problems) to let the implementation arise organically in order to eventually define what values the collective ought to give to the city, which both generates a collectively defined focal point as well as confirms the Free Space raison d'être.

IDEATION



LIMITATION



VALUATION



GAME ROUNDS WORKSHOP SECTIONS

Since a simulation game is a simplified model of the real-life situation, the phases of the game are equal to the phases that the initiator goes through in the real project process. In short; when initiators enter the process, one often already has an interest in or ideas about the space that is made available. Scouted by the Free Space Department, various initiators are brought together to give a collective interpretation to the place. During this process, it is tested whether the ideas are worthy of Free Space. When a joint initiative has been formed, the municipal processes can start, for example permit application. Based on this process and the in- and output of the game, three different game rounds can be determined; ideation, limitation, valuation. Ideation is when creatives and initiators generate and combine problems, and ideas. Here the soft preconditions are used as a tool to make ideas discussable and generate a common language and understanding. Limitation is when the combined or configured ideas are limited by the hard preconditions, to understand what is possible and where problems may occur. Valuation is when the residual implementation ideas are plotted on the multi-value format, to create a shared goal and start with concretizing the implementation. The different game rounds are synchronized with the workshop sections of diverging, reverging and converging (see chapter 4.4 - Tool Format).

AIM & TIMEFRAME

Each game round takes up about 45 minutes and consists of smaller sub-rounds. The rounds start with free interaction and communication, after which they converge the ideas based on collective decisions and physically position this on the shared board. After each round on the back-end the Free Space Department (or external facilitator) uses the results and decision-processes to define what should happen bureaucratically and make this translatable.

IDEATION (50 min)

Aim understand problems & ideas regarding the space and Free Space worthiness

Diverge harvest problems & generate ideas

Reverge cluster and merge ideas to amplify

Converge eliminate ideas that are not Free Space

Back-end understand the shared language and generate a common understanding of the subjective soft preconditions

LIMITATION (45 min)

Aim understand contextual limitations and the corresponding challenges

Boundary cards are added to identify limitations

Diverge define opportunities and challenges

Reverge recluster and merge ideas

Converge eliminate ideas that are not feasible

Back-end identify where it is needed to search for leeway in regulations, and which municipal departments might be involved.

VALUATION (45 min)

Aim understand the shared value and define a focus

Plot remaining ideas on the multi-value format

Final converge combine or eliminate ideas

Identify the value focal point(s)

Back-end use completed multi-value format as fundament for covenant agreements and permit application

ROUNDS	IDEATION	LIMITATION	VALUATION
AIM	The participants generate, cluster, and combine problems and ideas regarding the space as organically as possible without limitations.	The participants understand the project specific preconditions of the space; the limits of what the place and municipality can offer.	The participants collectively define a shared goal and what values are most dominant and meaningful within the initiative.
CONDITIONS	Soft preconditions are used to generate a shared language, understand the differences and similarities of ideas, to merge into more concrete ideas.	Hard preconditions are used to define opportunities and challenges that procure when the idea is implemented, to eliminate the ideas that are not feasible.	The multi-value format is used to understand the collective conditions to define the shared goal that forms a base for covenant agreements.
IN & OUTPUT	Input - Initiator: problems and ideas - Municipality: soft preconditions Output: clustered and combined ideas for space implementation.	Input - Initiator: output previous phase - Municipality: hard preconditions Output: challenges & opportunities regarding municipal processes	Input - Initiator: converged ideas - Municipality: multi-value format Output: one or a few concrete ideas for space implementation.
MECHANICS			
PHYSICAL SETTING	A large table with a board and a pentagon shaped card in the middle that represents the place.	A large table with a board where the challenges and opportunities can be drawn or written on.	A large table with a board that depicts the multi-value format which can be filled-in.
GAME OBJECTS	- Plenty pentagon formed cards that define problems or ideas - Ten different voting chips that define the free space soft preconditions that are used to vote	- Eight boundary cards that define the hard preconditions to identify challenges and infeasible ideas. - Markers to write and draw on the board. Arrows and lines define relations, challenges, opportunities	Different color markers to map out the multi-value format for the remaining ideas(s).
DYNAMICS			
AIMED DYNAMICS	In a organic way individual problems and ideas are discussed and collective ideas are identified After which in a democratic way the chips are used to define if the proposed ideas meet the soft preconditions. Through constructive dialogue a shared understanding and language is generated.	One by one, the hard preconditions are put at the side of the board. Each precondition is openly discussed. When needed the workshop facilitators give extra explanation of the hard preconditions. This generates a collaborative understanding of the preconditions and if they lead to interference with one of the ideas.	Collaboratively the remaining ideas are plotted in the multi-value format. Discussing the scores of the values in relation to other values, makes it possible to contextualize the multi-value of an idea. This defines which values the initiative relies most on and therefore what is most important to the collective.
ROLES & RELATIONS	- All participants are an individual (neighbor, creative, existing collective). They do not have a relation to each other yet, rather than being interested in realizing free space implementation. - This round the municipality does not have a role within the game yet rather than facilitating.	- First connections between individual participants are made; ideas are clustered based on complementarities or similarities. The first step towards a collective. - When adding the hard preconditions the municipality jumps in with an advising and supporting role. They elaborate when needed.	- The participants form one or a few collectives with a shared focus. Together they form a foundation or association that will be responsible for the space implementation. - The municipality followed the process and can translate the outcome into covenant agreements and permit application.
RULES	- Participants can suggest as many problems and ideas as they can think of. Ideation will stop when everyone is finished. - Participants can distribute the voting chips as they please. They can put multiple and any type of chips at the ideas. They are just not allowed to assess their own ideas. - Voting is not to eliminate, but to understand the differences between ideas. It is not about the quantity but the type of viches. - Participants discuss outcomes	- The boundary cards are added one-by-one to isolate a discussion about a certain hard precondition. - Participants decide together what the influence of the hard preconditions are on the ideas. - One or two participants will write and draw (use words and arrows) influences on the underlying board. - Participants can ask the facilitator questions or extra info if needed - Participants merge ideas together. Democratically they decide if ideas are not feasible / eliminated.	- Participants plot the remaining ideas in the multi-value format one-by-one. The scores are chosen collaboratively and democratically. - Participants discuss the outcome; the similarities and differences between the remaining ideas. - Participants together determine what the shared focus point is. When there are several remaining ideas, it is determined which idea they will continue with or how they can merge the ideas into one implementation.

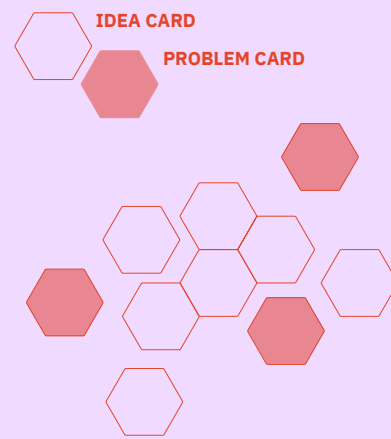
GAME ROUNDS WORKSHOP SECTIONS

IDEATION SECTION I

The first round consists of individually placing pentagon shaped cards. Each pentagon represents a problem or an idea related to the place. The spatial arrangement between these physical objects envisions relatedness, contradiction or equivalence. For example similar, corresponding or contradicting problems, solutions, or ideas that complement, reinforce, or weaken each other, can be placed next to each other.

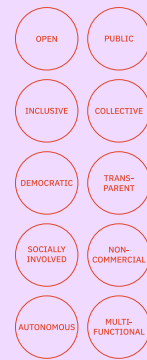
The chips that stand for the soft preconditions are used to democratically vote on ideas, detect where gaps are, see which ideas compliment each other, but moreover define which ideas are maybe not Free Space worthy. In this way ideas can be merged, transformed or eliminated.

PHYSICAL BOARD



GAME OBJECTS

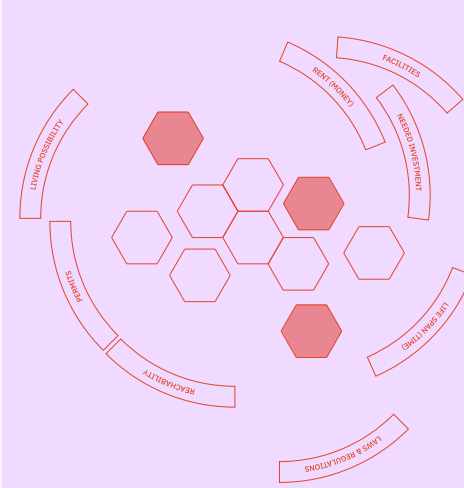
VOTING CHIPS SOFT PRECONDITIONS



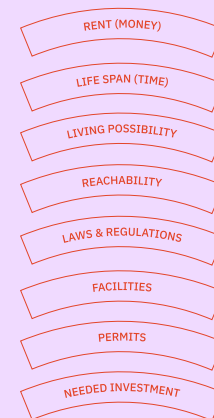
LIMITATION SECTION II

The second round consists of adding boundary cards one-by-one around the clustered ideas. Each piece defines a hard precondition. Each boundary card is discussed in relation to the (clustered) ideas. When challenges, opportunities, or possible solutions and ideas emerge, they are written on the board underneath to define the relatedness with the ideas.

During this round the Free Space Department (or external facilitator) can define where it is needed to find leeway in rules and regulations, which other departments should be included, and what bureaucratically needs to be realized. This happens on the back-end. On the front-end of this round participants learn through play about possibilities and limitations. In this way ideas can be merged, transformed or eliminated, in order to define a feasible implementation.

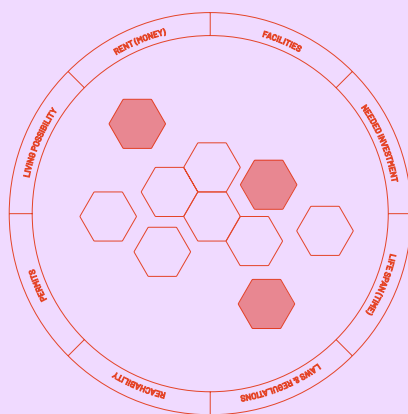


BOUNDARY CARDS HARD PRECONDITIONS

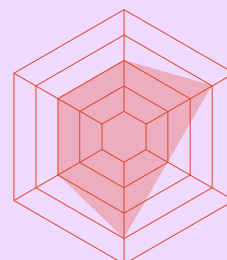


VALUATION SECTION III

The last round consists of plotting the remaining ideas in the multi-value format. To plot an idea on the board it needs to be rated from zero to five, for each value type. Scoring and plotting the ideas is rather subjective, but an established shared opinion by the collective, since collaboratively coming to an agreement on the score. Therefore, the defined values are more of a choice than a predicted return of investment that guarantees those specific values. Which values actually are guaranteed in the end always remains undefined to a certain extent. However, the multi-value format defines what subconsciously is most important for the collective. Therefore, it defines a shared focus area and that is used as fundament for the covenant agreements.



MULT-VALUE FORMAT



GAME CREATION CONCLUDING SUMMARY

The contextualization tool consists of a workshop supported by a physical simulation game. The tool has two functionalities; steering the project process through playful communication and defining place implementation. This makes it a project management and urban planning tool. The tool engages potential stakeholders, allows information and insight exchange, and encourages shared decision-making. In addition, it brings opportunities and challenges to light that allow the participant to explore the possibility and feasibility limits. Complex challenges are addressed while realizing a shared focus area. With collective place implementation as a result. Gradually the participants' individual ambitions are concretized into a joint plan. The two functionalities of the tool are discussed in more detail.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOL

The project management supporting processes of the simulation game are visible in the building a communal agenda between stakeholders, defining challenges and opportunities, and composing a shared understanding, language, and focus area. Therefore, it is assumed that the tool meets the following design requirements.

THE TOOL:

quickens decision and agreement making, permit application clarifies preconditions and role definitions from the start bridges between neighborhood and creatives

Communal agenda building

Participants introducing their problems and ideas regarding the space, they individually populate the game with their stakes. In a public round participants explain their input, to define similarities and differences, out of which collective themes and ambitions emerge. When the voting chips come into play, the board serves as a physical 'marketplace'. The ideas are presented, participants can explore ambitions, while possibly joining alliances. This is a first step in the direction of collective goals.

Challenges and opportunities defining

When the boundary cards come into play, the board is framed by project limitations. This allows to define to what extent these limitations interfere with the realization of the defined ideas, ambitions and collective goals. Where do regulations contribute to the development and where is a need for leeway in this. Discussions about this can accelerate knowledge and experience exchange, as well as introducing them to the complicated bureaucratic processes. To navigate participants around and help identify opportunities, the presence of certain municipal experts (e.g. permit application, real estate, etc.) is of essence. Furthermore, it is an interesting and informative process to attend for lawmakers and regulators.

Shared understanding, language, and goal defining

Throughout the workshop, the participants gradually work towards a funneled idea for implementation, in an organic way. Obstacles are introduced playfully, and choices are made democratically. Through open group discussion, gradually a shared language and understanding is generated. Not focusing on eliminating ideas, but taking the principle of reinforcing to strengthen feasibility, allows for establishment of a shared focus area. The multi-value format supports this by bringing inherent values to the surface. A shared value focus is a strong foundation for a collective, it defines the course of action without steering on a singlediefed implementation.

URBAN PLANNING TOOL

The urban planning supporting processes of the tool are visible through the different sections of idea generation, validation, elimination, and establishing the multi-value in order to organically build the space implementation. Therefore, it is assumed that the simulation game meets the following design requirements.

THE TOOL:

allows organic place implementation and an open, living projectform embeds the multi-value the space will generate for the city

Idea generation, validation, and elimination

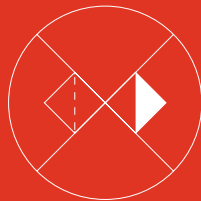
Through the different rounds of the workshop the participants discuss the individual ambitions regarding the space in a democratic and transparent manner. The game provides handles in the form of different cards, that helps validating and concretizing their ideas. In this way they learn to know the limits of the possibilities, leaving the choice to the participants whether they eliminate ideas or not.

Multi-value establishing

The merging of ideas leads to collective decisions and multi-functional implementation. The multi-value format helps participants with mapping out this multi-functionality in the form of values. Doing this they discover the inherent shared values which allows for consistency in their ideas. By assessing all values at the same time, they are considered equally important, which prevents that ideas are deformed into the municipal single-purpose frameworks.

Organic space implementation

Letting participants steer the process and decision-making themselves, allows the collective to stand in its power. It prevents potential Free Space makers from having to (de)form their idea using standardized models by just filling out paperwork. In this way it is attempted to aspire to the organic processes that are so typical of Free Spaces.



5. CATALYSE

The catalyse phase is about prototyping and testing. System thinking can be ambiguous and overwhelming, concretizing and making something tangible helps to take small steps forward. It tests the functionality and helps to understand how it fits in the bigger context and possibly influences this. Furthermore, it engages the stakeholders in the designed vision or changing mindset (Design Council, 2021).

More specifically the catalyse phase involves in the following activities:

- 1 Prototype, test, evaluate and iterate.
- 2 Define the interactions or influences on the bigger system (other stakeholders, departments, marginalized groups, nature, etc.)
- 3 Define a scale that ensures the positive growth of the idea
- 4 Create a narrative to involve stakeholders, this way others can adopt the idea and implement their own input; create a leverage point of change.



5.2 PROTOTYPE & TEST

To test whether the simulation game achieves the intended results and meets the design requirements, the game is internally validated by means of a prototype test. A prototype test will show whether the mechanics (rules and game-play) are clear enough and will result in the intended dynamics (interaction). In addition, it will test the aesthetics; how do participants experience the game. The material setting (mechanics) and appearance experience (aesthetic) cannot be fully validated, because it concerns a simplified prototype model.

PROTOTYPE

MECHANICS MATERIAL SETTING

The prototype consists of a model made from cardboard and foam board. The various parts are cut from this. The pentagon-shaped cards are pre-made greyboard cards, 60 in total. The voting chips consist of small circles cut-out in cardboard (14 of each = 140 in total). The boundary cards are cut out of foam board; eight circular shaped border pieces. Post-its and markers are used to write the necessary elements on the parts (problems, ideas, and preconditions). Flipchart paper is used as a subsurface on which can be written and drawn, to visualize clusters, challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, a paper-prototype of the multi-value format is used to fill in the score with markers.

ELEMENTS

- 60 pentagon shaped cards** from geryboard
- Plenty pink pentagon shaped post-its** that stand for problems
- Plenty yellow pentagon shaped post-its** that stand for ideas
- Eight foam board boundary cards** hard preconditions written on them
- 140 cardboard voting chips** circle shaped, 14 of each
- Plenty normal shaped post-its** to write input, e.g. cluster names
- Flipchart paper as subsurface** to write input, e.g. arrows or challenges
- Paper-prototype of multi-value format** to fill-in

TEST SETUP RULE & GAMEPLAY

The prototype test is held physically at the municipality at Weesperplein 8, with the Free Space Department. The setup is on the basis of an existing ongoing Free Space case. The ideal test setup to test the simulation game is together with real Free Space makers at the start of a new project for a claimed space (the end of the matching phase). This will provide the most true-to-reality validation of the intended results and possible outcomes; the actual functioning of the game. However, it is too short notice to realize such a test setup. In addition, since ongoing collaborations are sometimes difficult and slow, the municipality does not want to put the voluntariness at risk. Therefore, the department is hesitant in performing a quick prototype test. They prefer to focus on a well-thought-out test when the prototype is more concrete. Because of this it was chosen, in consultation with the department, to execute an internal validation test on the basis of an existing case study of Lot 663 in the gardens of West.

CASE STUDY LOT 663

The case study used as base in the prototype test is the project regarding Lot 663 in the gardens of West. This part of ground on the edge of Amsterdam New-West was opened for Free Space in December 2020. However, up until now the department did not succeed in realizing a collaborative implementation with possible participants. The conflicting stakeholder interests make it a suitable case to test certain design requirements of the tool with a prototype test.

Lot 663 is a green urban-agriculture and recreation area. The site contains a piece of land with a dilapidated barn. It is not possible to live there due to the destination plan with a business purpose. Currently, the place only has a water connection in terms of facilities. The current user is Terragon Nature Lab.



As any Free Space project, the aim of the Free Space Department is to give substance to the lot with a collective of initiators. From January 2021 the department has been in consultation with various creatives, local and active residents from the adjacent neighborhoods, including the 'Culturele Stelling van Amsterdam'. However, during the process substantial time was spent on verifying the Free Space worthiness and seriousness of possible initiators. Combining different initiatives turns out to be a complicated task. Although the ideas are broadly seen as similar, individual expectations appear to differ. This mainly concerns the expectation of autonomy and municipal involvement, which creates tension between the various parties involved. In autumn 2021, the department adopted a new strategy; find a leading initiative that offers placement for other initiatives. Although there is time pressure, it is still not decided which party this will be (de Nijs, et al., 2022). There are currently four leading contenders.

FOUR LEADING CONTENDERS

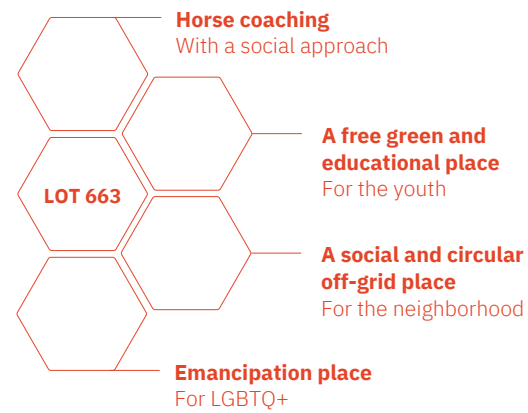
- Emancipation place** for LGBTQ+
- Horse coaching** with a social approach
- A free green and educational place** for the youth
- A social and circular off-grid place** for the neighborhood

PROTOTYPE

STRUCTURING ELEMENT

Since the case is already at an advanced stage, much is already known about the problem, challenges, and the state of affairs. The current conditions of the case were examined in collaboration with project leader Joekenel van der Pijl and supervisor Julian Jansen. This helped to define the input and the starting point of the session. The input for the simulation game can be divided into initiator input and municipal input. These are the soft and hard preconditions from the municipal side and idea generation from the initiator's side. During the prototype test the participants consist of the Free Space Department, however they have to step in the role of a possible participant and partially letting go of what they already know.

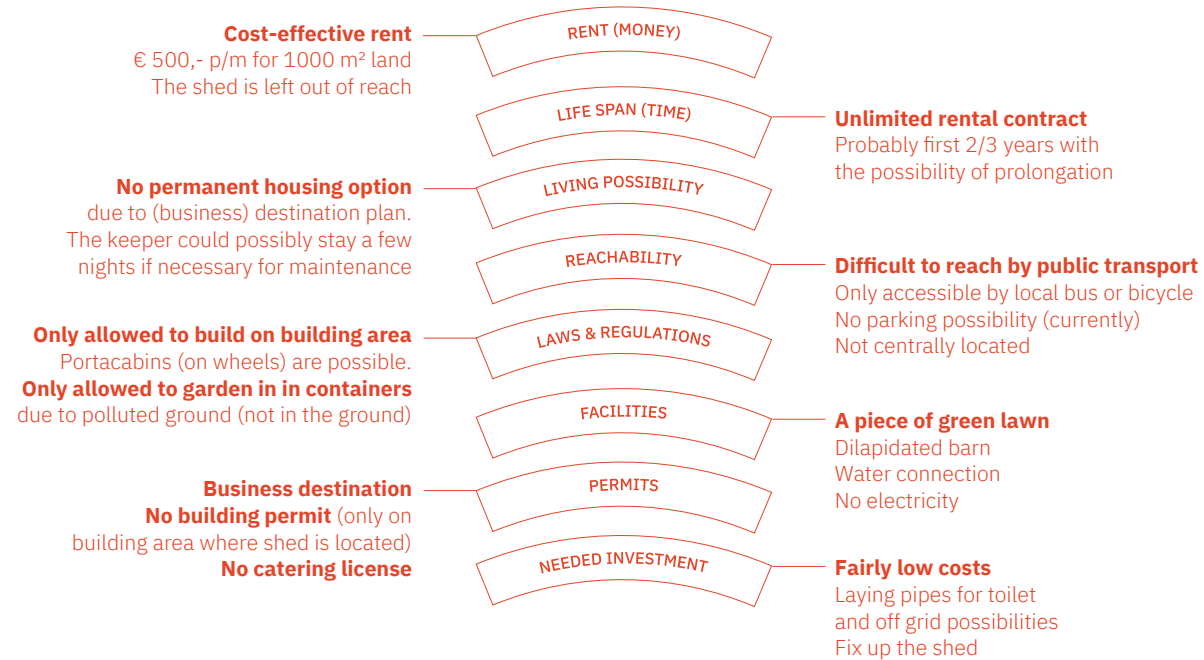
INITIATOR INPUT



First the involved parties (active citizens, existing collectives, and neighborhood culture) were discussed with Joekenel and Julian. In the real case this is already at an advanced stage; there are four leading contenders that defined four possible implementation ideas (mentioned above). These four ideas are used as idea input for the first round of the session. This is different from reality; there is not yet idea input generated prior to the session. Generating certain idea input prior to the session is different from reality. However, the test is based on the case study, whereas this input provides structure to the test session. However, during the session the participants (the Free Space Department) still get the chance to get into the skin of a Free Space initiator. They can add problems and ideas to the board regarding Lot 663. This could either be made-up problems and ideas or based on input that was initially part of the 663 project but got eliminated.

Furthermore, prior to the session the contextual conditions were studied together with Joekenel and Julian, to define the hard preconditions. In order for the department to fully step into the role and mind of a possible initiator during the test, they should not have to worry about adding municipal input. Defining the hard preconditions prior to the session, is comparable to reality. These hard preconditions are filled-in by writing them on post-its and sticking them to the boundary cards, and are used in the second round of the session.

MUNICIPAL INPUT



TEST FREE SPACE DEPARTMENT

The aim of the prototype test is to validate the mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics of the simulation game and the functionality of the workshop format. Since it is a test setup based on a case study, mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics can only be validated to a certain extent. Whether the intended goals are actually achieved and lead to the intended dynamics is difficult to test since the test participants, in this case members of the Free Space Department, are already biased with pre-knowledge. In addition, it is a simplified prototype, which means that the aesthetics can only be validated to a certain extent. The test therefore mainly concerns validating the operational side and usability of the various game elements and the setup of the workshop.

AIM Testing and validating the mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics of the simulation game, and workshop format

WHEN Thursday April 14
13:00 - 14:30

WHERE Municipality of Amsterdam - Weesperplein 8 - Amsterdam

DYNAMICS PLAYING & INTERACTING

To test the dynamics, how the test participants play the game and what interactions emerge was actively observed during the session. By observing the dynamics, insights regarding mechanics changes can be discovered. A disclaimer throughout the entire observation of the dynamics is that when certain sections lead to outcomes that are similar to the real case, the test participants are biased with pre-knowledge and therefore likely unconsciously steer towards a specific outcome. Another disclaimer is that the test members are familiar with one another and are used to working together. In a real situation, the participants are not (all) familiar with each other. When during the test dynamics run smoothly, it is therefore difficult to determine whether this is due to this fact or whether the mechanics actually achieve this. A complete descriptive summary of this observation can be found in the Appendix L. Underneath the most insightful observations are listed.

WHO Participants
Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Eline Splinter, Nick van Loon, Alexander van Altena

Facilitator
Asja Föllmi

IDEATION PROBLEM & IDEA GENERATION

OBSERVATIONS

- The test participants started a bit hesitant, but after clearly explaining the use of the pentagon cards they made a quick start
- Generating ideas went quickly and easily. Disclaimer; the participants are biased with pre knowledge about the ideas/problems in the case of Lot 663. Most input therefore was based on existing input which got eliminated during the course of the project.
- Participants organically built upon each other's input and clustering based on similarities in functionality started automatically.

INSIGHTS

Mechanics simulation game
Clearer rules from the start

Functioning tool (game and workshop)
Idea generation and clustering went organically. The set-up allows for ideation and encourages collaborative decision making. Disclaimer; the starting point of the test is not comparable with the starting point of a real project.

IDEATION VOTING WITH SOFT PRECONDITIONS

OBSERVATIONS

- There were no specific instructions on how to vote, however the voting started automatically.
- It was unclear if one should vote on a single idea or idea cluster. The participants collaboratively made the decision to put a chip on top of the idea to vote on the idea, and next to the cluster to vote on the complete cluster.
- The participants all used a different amount of chips to vote; some used a few per vote, others gave as many as they thought fit the idea.
- Validating the votes was first done on the basis of vote quantity, which led to an empty discussion. They quickly changed their discussion towards type of votes and diversity within ideas.
- All ideas scored high on almost all soft preconditions, there was not a clear difference in targeted ambitions. However, transparent and democratic were not covered by any of the ideas. This is comparable with the real situation; they encounter difficulties with defining the Free Space worthiness and the trustworthiness of initiators.

INSIGHTS

Mechanics simulation game
The voting rules should be clearer. For example each participant gets a certain amount of each type of voting chip at the beginning of the round. Another rule could be that the participant should add a certain minimum and maximum amount of chips to problems.

The voting chips should be clearly divided by means of their category. In this way it could be aimed to evoke a discussion about differences of preconditions rather than the quantity (for example using different colors)

Functioning tool (game and workshop)
The issue about democracy and transparency that came forward in the test is similar to the real-life issue. Disclaimer; test participants with pre-knowledge.

TEST FREE SPACE DEPARTMENT

LIMITATION FRAMING WITH HARD PRECONDITIONS

OBSERVATIONS

- The participants collaboratively concluded that all hard preconditions influenced all possible ideas. This made it difficult to evaluate all the ideas and draw the influences on the same board.
- Organically it was decided to put the boundary cards on the side of the ideas where they had most negative influence on, to make it easier to draw the influences and challenges.
- Clusters were repositioned based on the facing challenges and feasibility, which gave configurations a new meaning.
- The division of two camps became visible; One side is more accessible, socially-involved and therefore Free Space worthy, however not feasible since they do not earn enough to pay the rent. The other side with more entrepreneurial, commercial ideas that can cover the costs. However, less feasible in terms of required facilities and permits, since Free Space worthiness is questionable due to commerciality.
- Comparing this to the real case; the clusters that differentiate the most based on (financial) feasibility are now no longer in the running. One was too small-scale and not financially feasible, the other was too commercially oriented and legally less feasible.

INSIGHTS

Mechanics simulation game

The boundary cards do not have to be added one-by-one to the board. The ideas however should be evaluated one-by-one in the middle of the boundary cards.

For this there should be more than just one underlying board to visualize the influences on the various ideas.

Functioning tool (game and workshop)

The issue about legal and financial feasibility (two complementary ideas) came forward in the simulation game. This is similar to the issues in real-life.

Disclaimer; test participants with pre-knowledge.

VALUATION PLOTTING ON MULTI VALUE FORMAT

OBSERVATIONS

- Collaboratively in a fast pace ideas were scored on certain values, although it was a bit of a guessing game.
- The different ideas were scored according to how other ideas were scored. In addition, the values were scored in relation to the scores of other values within the same idea. This makes the format indeed seem to look at values in a relative contextual way, rather than in isolation.
- The participants scored the values quite easily and organically. A disclaimer here is that the test participants have no interests when defining the scores. In reality participants can lack in objectivity since they are influenced by their own interests. This could result in heated discussions or claims that ideas score high on every value, which dilutes the intended use of the multi-value format.
- Two ideas scored relatively high on multiple values. At first glance they seemed quite different and have a different focus group but scored quite evenly on the format. Both ideas have high ambitions, whereas the feasibility is questioned by the municipality.
- Two ideas score slightly lower and lean more towards one side of the values, however contradicting values. These are the two parties that in the current process create a field of tension. The multi-value format justified the difference in the inherent values that is aimed for and therefore a difference in individual interest.

INSIGHTS

Mechanics simulation game

The score of values were discussed based on other values and other ideas (contextual and relative). It can be concluded that the Multi-Value format helps contextualizing.

Filling in the values went easily and organically. Disclaimer; the test participants had now particular interests and therefore scored the ideas objectively.

Functioning tool (game and workshop)

The issue about differences in interests regarding value-proposition came forward in the simulation game. This is similar to the issues in real-life.

Disclaimer; test participants with pre-knowledge.

REMARKS

Multi-Value format

A participant commented, when seeing the Multi-Value format, that this is the first section where a translation is made from participants into bureaucratic and municipal language.

Another participant commented that the format can also be used to fill in by individual participants at the beginning of a project process. This will already reveal a lot about personal values and ambitions at an early process stage, without letting them write a complete project plan. Later in the process, when the collective has been formed, this format could be filled in again to achieve consistency in the shared ambitions and goals.

TEST FREE SPACE DEPARTMENT

AESTHETICS EXPERIENCING THE GAME

Since this validation regards a prototype test, the aesthetics can only be validated to a certain extent. It mainly concerns how participants experience the game with regard to the final dynamics and mechanics. Since the prototype is a lo-fi prototype, the true aesthetic impression cannot be validated. Therefore, the game experiences are validated through observation and the opinion of the test participants retrieved by asking five questions post session. The complete answered questions can be found in Appendix L, underneath a summary.

The board was deployed as a focal element that supported group conversations. It clarified what participants were talking about, using pointing and positioning. This placement of elements makes abstract discussions more concrete and actionable. This allowed participants to make connections and clarified the relation between elements. The board provides a physical placement for ideas, which enables participants to 'create' new things. It is a co-creative tool that is easily accessible; it engaged the participants and gave room to speak up. Through a central focus on the board it is prevented that participants have to face each other in discussions. In this way participants do not start reasoning from their own point of view, but rather create a shared vision. The board therefore creates shared ownership.

Furthermore, the facilitator has a major influence on the game experience. The facilitator should give clear instructions and support when participants get stuck or tensions arise. A clear and comprehensive facilitator guide is needed to support this. Therefore, when sharpening the rules, also a facilitator manual or guide will be included.

OBSERVATION INSIGHTS

Mechanics simulation game

The board is used as a focal and physical co-creation tool.

Functioning tool (workshop)

Rules and facilitator role should be more clear and made sharper. A comprehensive facilitator manual can help with this.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE OVERALL PERCEPTION OF THE GAME?

The game is a useful way to get information out of people's minds and insightful, clear and negotiable on the table. It visualizes the process, and brings different values or obstacles to the surface while making them concrete. The game provides insight into how participants relate to each other, where they stand and where disruptions can arise in the system. The department uses the following words to describe the game; useful, valuable, fun, and interesting.

WHICH ELEMENTS OF THE GAME ARE USEFUL?

Most participants stated that various or all elements were useful. It emerged that scoring with the voting chips is an important round. However, the rules of that part must be stricter, or at least ensure that the participants score honestly and not out of their own interest. Here it is crucial that it becomes an open discussion; transparent, democratic, and not a negotiation. The facilitator or game master must be appointed to monitor this.

WHICH ELEMENTS OF THE GAME NEED IMPROVEMENT?

The most crucial point of improvement is sharpening the rules. How is the game played and what is the underlying aim that is worked towards? Is the game just to visualize dynamics or do you work towards a joint decision? How are the results implemented within the Free Space process afterwards? Especially when participants have (individual) interests, instructions should be clear. In particular, there should be clearer instructions about voting and the different game sections (tasks, divisioning and timing). The facilitator must be given a clear role here; allocate tasks and create structure, while maintaining a free dynamic. This could be achieved with a facilitator manual and game rule cards with instructions for participants.

DOES THE GAME HAVE POTENTIAL TO SUPPORT THE FREE SPACE PROCESS?

The game is useful and provides insight into dilemmas and motivations surrounding Free Space. It supports the verification of input or ideas through scoring, while making the vague Free Space criteria workable. Therefore, the game supports a professional rating. It connects initiatives and stakeholders; they jointly delve into the project intention, having an active role in plan development. Besides, the tool supports officials and professionals to order and score a case together. The game makes bottlenecks more concrete, clarifying within which municipal frameworks the plan operates and where the municipality can provide support. The game can be seen as a more fun way than just a meeting with an agenda. However, it is questionable if the game is still fun when participants with a strong self-interest are involved.

WHICH SECTION OR PART OF THE GAME IS MOST ESSENTIAL?

Some stated that in their eyes the rounds are not separate from each other. Each round offers something useful or different. The first round is valuable for initiators, to start co-creation between individuals. Here the vague Free Space criteria become workable and clarify what certain ideas are lacking. The second round helps concretize different ideas towards implementation, and shows confrontation between motivations, values, and preconditions. It shows where municipal preconditions interfere with underlying Free Space principles e.g. low costs, voluntary, inclusiveness, low-threshold. But everything really generates output after it is processed in the Multi-Value format.

5.3 EVALUATION & ITERATION

This chapter incorporates the evaluation of the game along the MDA model. This part summarizes the insights of the prototype test. The functionality of the workshop and the aesthetics of the game are evaluated. Furthermore, the aimed dynamics and the eventual occurring dynamics during the prototype test clarifies and validates the game mechanics. This gives insight into further prototype testing and development of the tool. The chapter ends with a concrete list of iterations regarding the simulation game and workshop format.

EVALUATION

FUNCTIONALITY

From the prototype test it can be concluded that similar problems and challenges emerged from the board as with the real project process of case Lot 663. The overall problem is that the various stakeholders do not agree on the interpretation and do not come to a joint decision. In addition, there is doubt from the municipal side regarding the true intentions of certain parties; is the idea Free Space worthy? The issues that emerged are as follows:

The voting shows that each idea is missing the soft precondition of transparency and democracy. This is similar to reality, where the Free Space Department doubts about the credibility of some participants' intentions.

The boundary cards unveil that the challenges regarding legal and financial feasibility, are opposing ideas that differ in focus and therefore interests. This is similar to reality, where the ideas that were either too commercial or not financially feasible have been eliminated.

The multi-value format shows that the two parties at odds have a difference in interest regarding value proposition. This is similar to reality, where those exact parties have the loudest voice but do not come to a collective agreement.

TWO SIGNIFICANT DISCLAIMERS

Disclaimer tests participants

The test participants consist of municipal officials, and not comparable with real bottom-up participants. They are biased with pre-knowledge, they know how bureaucratic processes work, and they probably quickly understand what the intention of the simulation game is. Furthermore, the test participants are familiar with one another, since they are used to working together. This fact will affect the decision making speed and the course of the process during the workshop. Therefore it could be assumed that the prototype test runs more smoothly than a real-life session, where participants sit around the table for the first time, some of whom have never seen each other before.

In addition, it is easy for the test participants to keep an objective view on the ideas and problems. For the bottom-up participants, these ideas are intertwined with personal interests. It is therefore possible that certain rounds (voting, filling in the multi-value format) cause more commotion. In general, the session went organically and the test participants built upon the game with their own rules where necessary. However, the question remains if the game runs as smoothly when played with real participants or whether more time and support is needed for the underlying processes.

Disclaimer test case

Furthermore, the test-participants were not only biased with municipal knowledge and system understanding, but also with knowledge regarding project Lot 663. The current project has been going on for some time. This could possibly cause the test participants to subconsciously provide input based on pre-knowledge and potentially unconsciously steer towards similar results. Whether the tool will actually reveal these problems at an early stage cannot be validated with this test setup. To actually test the functionality of the simulation game, a real case is needed at the beginning of the project process with legitimate participants (local residents, creatives, etc.).

Nonetheless, the prototype test has validated that with this setup, similarities and differences of the ideas are mapped out on several levels. Collaborative decision making is encouraged and a shared interpretation and understanding about challenges and opportunities is gradually formed. Therefore it can be concluded that the simulation game has the potential to;

Map the process visually
Generate a shared understanding
Unveil contradictions and challenges
Stimulate collective decision-making

AESTHETICS, DYNAMICS TO MECHANICS

The simulation game and workshop format are evaluated along the MDA model. The insights of the prototype test regarding aesthetics and dynamics, resulted in changes of the mechanics.

Aesthetics

Using a lo-fi prototype made it difficult to actually test the aesthetics. By observing and asking five questions to the test participants, it was intended to evaluate the aesthetics to a certain extent. In general, the simulation game was regarded as a tool that makes the Free Space process insightful and negotiable by concretizing and visualizing it. As a result, the individual input is discussed centrally, and values and obstacles come to the surface. The game is therefore insightful, interesting, and a fun way to go through the process as opposed to a meeting with an agenda. Some questioned if the game is also fun and attractive for true participants, when this is intertwined with personal interests. There is little game element and it looks more like a formation, one of the test participants' stated. The experience of the game and workshop can be improved when there is a clearer facilitator role and rules are sharpened.

Dynamics

In general, the dynamics of the simulation game ran smoothly. Within the rounds, the players switched between free interaction, taking turns and plenary dialogues. Due to time constraints, there was not much focus on individually explaining ideas or results to the group one-by-one. In the free interaction in particular, certain steps were supported with explanations and quick decisions were made. These two dynamics (explaining and decision making) are important for the game-play in the real situation. By taking turns everyone has the opportunity to speak out, clarify differences and similarities and guarantee democracy and transparency. The free interaction is a more non-plenary and informal way of getting to know each other and organically creating a group dynamic. However, since the test participants already knew one another, these two dynamics were more in the background. Plenary dialogues had the upper hand in the prototype test. This mainly concerns the joint mapping of ambitions, obstacles and solutions. Since the participants were familiar with the project and each other, it was easier to get to this deeper layer. Elements were quickly mapped out collaboratively, with minor discussions. The decision within the test setup corresponds to the real project case, therefore there was no need to discuss these additionally. As a result, certain outcomes and decisions were not filtered out between rounds. In a real situation it is important to report this. The workshop facilitator should actively direct the participants to conclude in between rounds, to make these results usable and insightful for further processes.

Mechanics

The mechanics of a game consists of material setting, and rules, and game play. The various game objects and elements are evaluated on the basis of dynamics and aesthetics, to firstly identify changes in the material setting and secondly in changes in the rules and game play. How aesthetics and dynamics influenced the mechanics is summarized on the page on the right. Here a list of actionable iterations is included.

Board useful as focal element

During the prototype test, the board supported the group discussion, turning it into an actual co-creation tool. The board is easily accessible, and contains an amalgam of individual input, creating shared ownership. It ensures that all noses are pointing in the same direction and avoids talking from the I-person. The board enables visualizing connections and relationships, whereas abstract discussion becomes more tangible and actionable.

Voting chips

It emerged that scoring with the soft precondition voting chips is a good way to make the vague Free Space criteria workable, which contributes to the strategy to contextualize rather than define. However, voting rules need to be sharpened to make this round more actionable. For example dividing a certain amount of chips per person, and establishing a rule on how to vote (min/max chips per idea) generates more support. Lastly the instruction on how votes are evaluated should be more clear; based on differences rather than quantity. **This can be done by changing the game mechanics; give the different types of voting chips different colors.**

Boundary cards

The initial idea when evaluating the ideas based on the hard preconditions, was to add the boundary cards one-by-one. However, all cards were added simultaneously. During the prototype test came forward that not the boundary cards, but the ideas should be added and evaluated one-by-one to avoid chaos. **This changes the game mechanics; there should be more than just one underlying board to visualize the influences on the various ideas.**

Different uses multi-value format

The multi-value format is a good model that makes the process translatable towards municipal processes, such as permit application or establishing covenant agreements. It supported defining multiple values simultaneously and relatively; within and between different implementation ideas. This contributes to contextualizing values, rather than defining them. The format can be deployed in different ways; individual, collective, at the beginning or at the end of the process, with or without the simulation game. For example filling in the format prior to the session, makes individual ambitions insightful without having to write a complete project plan. **Completing the format individually at the beginning and collaboratively at the end of the session clearly visualizes the difference between individual and collective, and changes the game play.**

Game rounds are insightful and follow upon each other

Each element and game rounds brings something insightful. All rounds are necessary to move from different individuals' ideas towards a shared implementation. Each round is a step in the direction of translating from living world to system world using municipal language. The last round generates actionable output for the Free Space Department. Gradually, a shared understanding is created.

Workshop sections should have a clearer aim and time frame

Each section has different aims and objectives that should be made clearer to the participants, in order to go through the workshop efficiently. Clearly stating the time frame per section, ensures that the most important parts of the workshop are covered properly and that no lengthy discussions arise that lead nowhere. Furthermore, clearly starting with the aim and concluding with a debrief of the results of a section supports this. **Therefore, the rules of the game must indicate when a certain round is finished by e.g. adding game rule cards to the mechanics to the game.**

Clearer rules and guiding facilitator

In general, it emerged that the game rules need to be sharpened and made clearer from the start. How is the game played, what are the underlying aims of the session and different rounds and the ultimate goal of the game, and what will eventually happen with the results? Clarifying the rules and game play can be supported by the facilitator. The facilitator makes sure that every section starts structured, leads plenary discussion, and keeps an eye on the agenda to avoid unnecessary delay. **Including a comprehensive facilitator guide will support the facilitator to achieve this.**

Furthermore, the facilitator should set an informal and personal atmosphere. It should be avoided that participants play the game solely with their own interests, and participate with good intentions. The facilitator ensures everyone has a turn and every voice is heard, preventing one or more participants from hijacking the game or conversation. In this way an open, transparent and democratic discussion is pursued.

ITERATIONS MATERIAL SETTING

- Different color voting chip types
- Multiple boards (for second round)
- Game rule cards
- Facilitator guide

ITERATIONS RULES & GAME PLAY

- Rules for voting
- Rules for boundary cards
- Clear aim / finish of each round
- Multi-value format used at start

ITERATION SIMULATION GAME

<p>IDEATION Problem & Idea generation</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 1.1 Individually define what should happen with the space and explain why. This can be anything, e.g. ideas, concrete plans, vague themes, or expressing problems with regard to the place.</p> <p>Write this on a pentagon shaped card and place it on the board.</p> <p>RULES Everyone lets each other finish and waits their turn All ideas are welcome, no idea is too crazy Tip: build upon someone else's idea or problem</p>	<p>IDEATION Clustering</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 1.2 Collaboratively cluster all ideas, problems, and other input of previous assignment based on similar themes.</p> <p>Give the clusters suitable names</p> <p>RULES Clusters can exist of Ideas or input that reinforce each other A problem and idea that solve each other</p>	<p>IDEATION Voting</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 1.3 Individually vote on the clusters with the voting chips and explains why you voted in a specific way.</p> <p>Collaboratively discuss the votes, and determined how the idea clusters differ from each other. Recluster if needed, only eliminate ideas that did not get one single vote.</p> <p>RULES Each participants get 100 chips (10 of each type) Place at min 3 and max 5 chips at each idea cluster You cannot vote on your own idea</p>
<p>LIMITATION Define challenges / opportunities</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 2.1 Put the boundary cards on the table and evaluate the idea clusters one-by-one in the middle of the boundary cards.</p> <p>Define what the influence of the preconditions on the boundary card is on the specific idea cluster and draw or write this on the board underneath.</p> <p>RULES Do this collaboratively in open discussion Use a new evaluation board for each idea cluster Use markers to write or draw the influences</p>	<p>LIMITATION Re-clustering</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 2.2 Collaboratively re-cluster the ideas based on challenges they face.</p> <p>Current idea clusters can be merged, or reconfigure to new clusters.</p> <p>Give the clusters new names if needed</p> <p>RULES Clusters can be based on financial feasibility Clusters can be based on time feasibility Clusters can be based on legal feasibility</p>	<p>LIMITATION Eliminating</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 2.3 Collaboratively discuss the challenges, opportunities, and the differences in specific clusters.</p> <p>Decide if certain idea clusters are not feasible and have to be merged with other idea clusters in order to become feasible or otherwise eliminated</p> <p>RULES Only eliminate ideas when nothing else is possible to increase feasibility</p>
<p>VALUATION Filling in multi-value format</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 3.1 Plot the remaining idea clusters Collaboratively on the multi-value format.</p> <p>Discuss the scores collaboratively.</p> <p>RULES It is not about how high the ideas score, but where Only fill in the score if everybody in the group agrees Use different colors for different idea clusters</p>	<p>VALUATION Define differences & similarities</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 3.2 Discuss the scores results. Are there ideas that focus on similar value-creation that can be merged?</p> <p>If only one remaining idea cluster is plotted on the format, discuss the value scores of this idea cluster.</p> <p>RULES Do not re-configure idea clusters However, merge them when possible Try to remain as objectively as possible</p>	<p>VALUATION Decide on shared focus area</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT 3.3 Decide collaboratively on a shared focus area based on the join values extracted from the multi-value format.</p> <p>RULES Search for the great common denominator. When only one idea cluster is remaining, define the shared value focus based on that idea cluster.</p>

ITERATION SIMULATION GAME

GAME RULE CARDS

One iteration that emerged from the evaluation is sharpening of the rules by means of game rule cards. These cards lay on the table during the session and can be consulted by the participants. Each part within the different rounds contains its own map, in order to clearly distinguish between the different activities. This results in a set of three cards per section. The card shows which section of the workshop it concerns, the sub-part with associated assignment, and the rules that apply to that specific assignment.



ITERATION WORKSHOP FORMAT

FACILITATOR GUIDE GAME MASTER MANUAL

The workshop facilitator or game master plays an important role. They welcome the players on board and are responsible for making the game understandable; explaining the purpose and making sure it runs smoothly. The facilitator should moderate the three rounds of game and different sections of the workshop as well as remaining supportive during the informal moments in between rounds. At the back-end, the facilitator is responsible for extracting the intended results (Lange, M. L., & Waal, M., 2016). To ensure the session runs effectively and smoothly, a clear facilitator guide is needed. This guide provides the facilitator with all the information, discussion prompts, and activities regarding the session (Train Your Trainers, 2021). This chapter provides a comprehensive facilitator guide, to enable the Free Space Department or external parties to facilitate the simulation game and corresponding workshop. Find the facilitator guide in Appendix M.

According to the book Creative Problem Solving Techniques, there are three main principles for good creative session facilitation (Heijne, K., & Van der Meer, H., 2019).

- ROLE RIGIDITY** | The role of each participants should be clear
Problem owner; the Free Space Department, municipality of Amsterdam
Facilitator; a member of the Free Space Department or an external expert party
Resource group; active residents, creative individuals or existing collectives, etc.
- CLEAR PROBLEM STATEMENT** | Clear problem statement: getting from individual ideas to a joint focus, for collective space implementation.
- RULES & TECHNIQUES** | Rules & techniques for each step of the creative diamond

A facilitator guide is a file (a source of support) for a potential facilitator that provides a step-by-step planning and clearly explains the purpose of the workshop, session or game. The guide is the last step in preparing a workshop or session. The document should be as structured and detailed as possible but not too lengthy. The guide can be used both as a preparation as well as a reference material during the session. The guide should be handed over to the facilitator prior to the session, reducing train-the-trainer time while ensuring that the facilitator is confident during the session and knows what to do in which situation. It is a descriptive and prescriptive document, which leaves enough room for the facilitator's own input. A comprehensive facilitator guide supports the facilitator with keeping track of the session; that objectives are addressed effectively within the time allotted for the session (Train Your Trainers, 2021).

A facilitator guide contains information about the following elements (Trimm, C., 2021):

- Introduction**
Aim: It outlines the specific goals or aim of the session.
Objectives: It specifies the workshop or learning objectives; what knowledge, or skills the participant should obtain at the end of the session.
Timeline: It includes timing guidelines and durations of each round or topic. This allows the facilitator to focus on what sections are most important and stay on schedule.
Descriptions: Each session section should include a description and clarify specific purposes in regard to discussion sections and activities.
Additional: Lastly the guide includes notes or additional materials and activities, for example sample questions about certain discussion topics.
Closure; a quick summary of the session and a follow-up

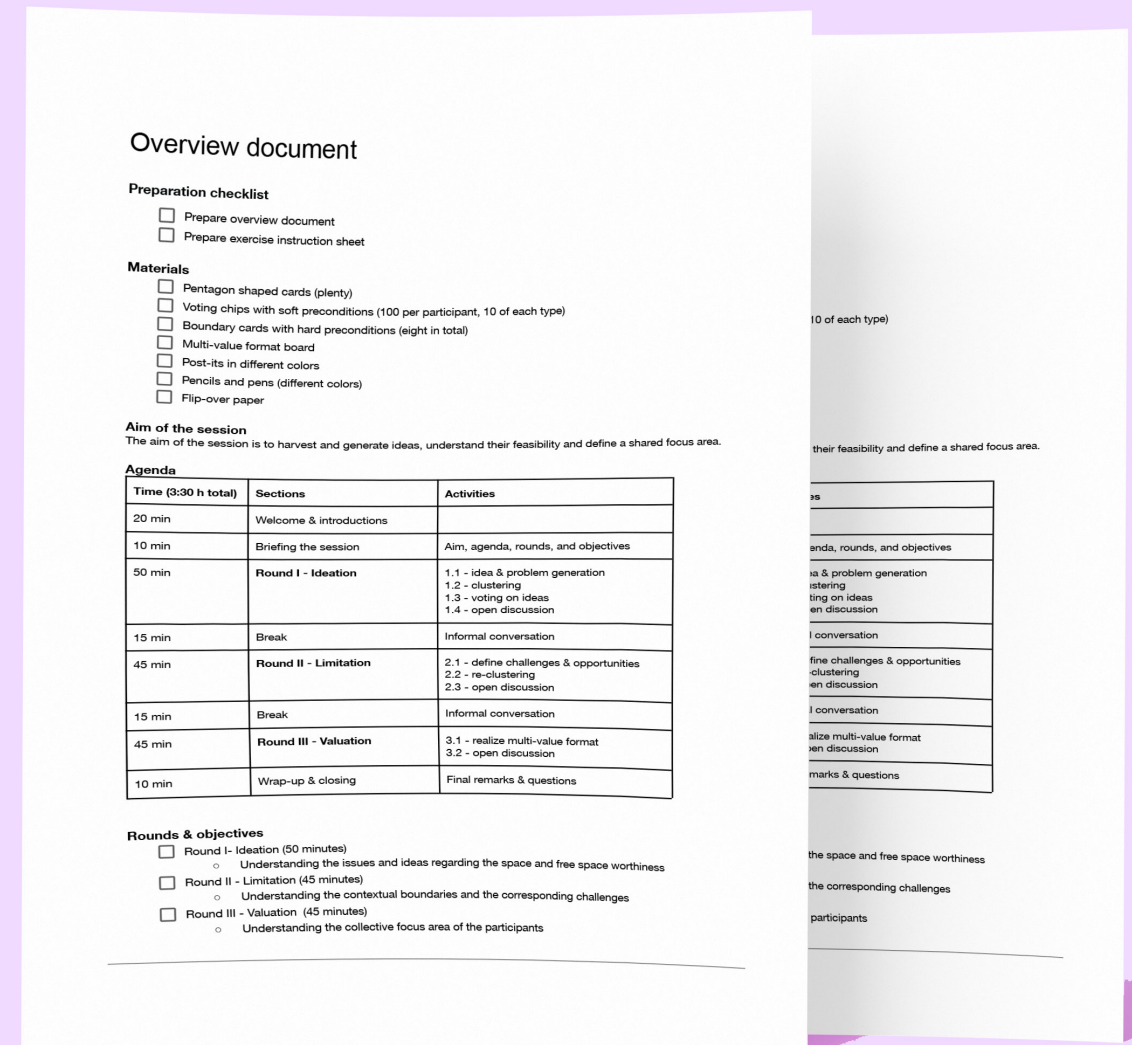
The facilitator guide is divided into three different documents;

- AN OVERVIEW DOCUMENT** | The overview document has a maximum of two pages and gives the facilitator an overview of the complete workshop or session. It summarizes the preparation and material needed post session, it provides an agenda overview with time and activities. The document explains the aim(s) of the session and the different sections.
- DETAILED EXERCISE INSTRUCTION SHEETS** | The exercise instructions sheets are consulted when the corresponding section is delivered. Each document involves preparation and materials, the aim of the section and involved activities and gives detailed step-by-step instructions.

ITERATION WORKSHOP FORMAT

VALIDATION

After composing, the facilitator manual was discussed with Jord de Kat, to validate whether the guide is understandable for potential facilitators who do not know anything about the underlying ideas and research. Jord has been creative director of Studio Angelineau for sixteen years, has years of experience in supervising creative processes and regularly facilitates sessions. In his years at IDE he won the creative facilitation prize at the time. Nowadays, he shares a workplace with the company Raccoon Serious Games, with whom he occasionally shares projects. Raccoon Serious Games is a consultancy and expert in the area of supportive and stimulative games that explore awareness participation and onboarding. His expertise in creative workshops and simulation games, are good competences for validating the guide. Find the complete facilitator guide in Appendix M.



MAKING CITY TOGETHER PRESENTATION

The Free Space Department is currently in conversation with the team of Making City Together. The two teams have correspondence in their work; a focus on involving citizens in planning the city. As concluded in the 'Municipal Goals' chapter, the work of the Free Space Department fits in well with this. For this reason, the two parties are talking about joining forces. In this session the simulation game, multi-value model, and preliminary research were presented to discuss the correspondence and validate the usability of the contextualisation tool.

Resistance of the system

In general, the reactions of the team 'Making City Together' were enthusiastic and positive. There was a recognition in terms of experiencing resistance from the bureaucratic system when realizing projects. Their projects often have a multifunctional character, which the municipality's single-purpose system is not designed for, causing them to be compelled to provide customization. The Environmental Vision that aims to achieve certain goals, are not possible within single-purpose policy goals that are often conflicting. Involving citizens in these processes turns out to be difficult in practice. Involving citizens in these processes turns out to be difficult in practice. The municipal urban planners often already have a purpose for the property or a destination plan for the designated places. As a result, a small range of possibilities with regard to involving citizens in the implementation process. For this reason, the Making City Together team is also actively looking for new ways to realize projects. To the team the simulation game and the multi-value format seem to be a potential tool that still embraces this implementation obscurity, while supporting their processes.

Let go of municipal frameworks

The team recognizes their process within the process of the simulation game. They come together with various parties, citizens, collectives, other municipal departments, to collaboratively realize an urban project. However, they often start from their own settings or conditions and test ideas against existing municipal boxes. Here ideas are scraped and distorted into an idea that fits the standardized procedures. The simulation game and multi-value model tries to prevent this. The process is based on discovering intrinsic individual and collective values and uses it as a base to determine and guarantee the values and functionality for the city. This secures a collective that is supported by its individuals, while regular top-down steering and placemaking is prevented. The team recognized this and sees the need to let go of these municipal one-sided and single-purpose frameworks if they want to make the city together and offer citizens the space and freedom to initiate. The multi-value format captures this multi-functionality and is a potential tool that could support this transition.

Potential cases

The 'Making City Together' team shortly started discussing existing cases where the simulation game could be applied. Within the work of the team not every project is tied to a placement in the city. Sometimes it is about participation in ideas and information exchange, which do not necessarily need a physical place. However, in CPO projects or when corporations are formed, they see the importance of finding the large common denominator in terms of shared values, which often forms the bottleneck within the process. In their opinion, filling in the multi-value format and the support of the simulation game could clarify the decision towards a shared focus. Therefore, the team sees potential in the simulation game and the multi-value format. Furthermore, overlap was seen with existing cases. They are currently dealing with a case regarding Osdorperplein; the municipality tries to initiate a participatory and collective process, but up until now this has not been successful. The team therefore suggested doing a test session with the tool on this existing case.

IN SHORT

The Making City Together team recognized similar problems with the realization of multifunctional implementation, where citizens are involved and multiple stakeholders come together. They see overlap in their current cases and show enthusiasm to test the tool along such a case. The team stated that a new view is needed on current municipal procedures to allow such realization. The tool can support this. The contextualization approach fits within their processes, where it embraces implementation obscurity but supports the process.

AIM

Presenting the simulation game and multi-value model to understand correspondence with the work of Making City Together and validate.

WHEN

Monday May 9
10:00 - 11:30

WHERE

Municipality of Amsterdam -
Weesperplein 8 - Amsterdam

WHO

Free Space Department
Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Asja Föllmi

Making City Together Team:

Caroline Combe, Martin van der Maas, Floor Zwiers, Max Smit

5.4 EXTERNAL VALIDATION

As mentioned before, it was unfortunately not possible to realize a test setup where real external stakeholders, such as creatives, active citizens, and existing collectives come around the table to test the tool. In order to validate externally, a presentation was given to two parties outside the Free Space Department. First to the municipal team Making City Together. This presentation mainly discussed the correspondence with the challenge of this other team and the relevance of the tool. Secondly, the tool is presented to free space expert space of urgency, this time to discuss more practical matters regarding the tool. How can the tool be used in reality, and what is needed to achieve this in the future. In addition, this presentation was also to validate the application and relevance of the tool.

SPACE OF URGENCY PRESENTATION

AIM

Presenting the simulation game and multi-value model to validate with Free Space experts

WHEN

Friday May 13
12:30 - 14:00

WHERE

Online - Teams

WHO

Free Space Department

Julian Jansen, Joekenel van der Pijl, Asja Föllmi

Space of Urgency

Liese Kingma, Arno Bouma

Space of Urgency is an external party that the Free Space Department has worked closely together with for the past two years. In collaboration with the HvA they have provided the department with feedback, case studies and advice. They are experts in bottom-up and subcultural free-spirited initiatives in the free space context. The company has experience in governance, practical execution, and developing physical and digital tools within this sector. The company is Berlin based, but in collaboration with other parties on a European level. The main purpose of this presentation was to validate the more practice-oriented appropriateness and relevance. Does the company recognize themselves in the different conditions, and do they estimate the application of these conditions in the format of a simulation game workshop and the usability of the multi-value format within this domain.

Further testing

They mentioned that, to develop the tool, more user tests are needed. The tool must be tested in practice, using different cases, places, initiatives, different individuals, residents, creatives, etc. Only when enough results or best practices are gathered, the tool is useful for the municipality. It should be broadened on a larger level, developed further, and eventually brought back to the municipality. The municipality has a relatively small reach, it is much more interesting on a larger scale (e.g. European). Their advice is to digitalize the tool to test it. Miro is a relatively easy medium to realize this.

Digitalize tool

A digital tool, or digitizing the game in Miro is an easy way to generate and store a lot of data rapidly. This allows the municipality to hold digital sessions. In addition, it helps to physically record the process, a live board is created and parallels between cases can be quickly drawn. It will help to generate data, measure and discover patterns. Space of Urgency has made extensive use of Miro with regard to online tools. This creates an adaptive board that monitors the process where iterations are performed and adjustments made easily. They wondered how this game could be made into a mapping tool. A digital version of the game and the workshop in Miro can be a prelude to this. However, you do not want to fully automate the tool, it remains a soft game in their eyes. But a digital version can help with quickly testing, and making iterations.

Reversed working

The game currently works on the basis that the municipality offers a place and searches for a collective to realize the implementation. But how can this game cater to the reverse process i.e. if there is a collective but no place yet. Can it help to identify what places are where and what kind of people want to take place there, for instance by using backcasting. This is about defining certain patterns.

Multi-value format

The different value propositions make it an interesting format that allows working the other way around. Currently, ideas are tested against the existing municipal frameworks, instead of asking initiators what value they offer to the city. This format looks at what the initiators really want, their intrinsic values. The values that are generated for the city are distilled from this format. It would be ideal if this could be a replacement for the assessment frameworks of the municipality or eventually partially or fully replace municipal procedures. However, to really complete the circle, the multi-value format should be made testable and the values translatable. To what extent is the format tested, for example a certain matrix to measure the values in practice. This allows to concretely demonstrate the impact and map the interaction with the environment. This is something that Space of Urgency itself is also looking for. Then you really prove that free space is valuable and there is an urgent need to make room for this.

External facilitation

According to Space of Urgency, it is important that the game can be played without the municipality. The ideation phase in particular is a phase where you do not want a municipality to be involved, in order to guarantee that possible initiators reason from their personal intrinsic values. And not respond with what they think the municipality wants to hear. It is important here that the facilitator knows enough about the municipal processes.

IN SHORT

Space of Urgency certainly sees the potential of the game. In conjunction with the multi-value format, it brings out intrinsic values that strengthens bottom-up initiatives within municipal planning. It creates a possibility to replace municipal frameworks. However, to achieve this, it is first necessary to test the tool further and more broadly to recognize patterns. A digital version would be ideal for this, to allow quick data collection and iteration. This can be a stepping stone to an open-source mapping tool. Finally, they are prepared to take the tool to a higher level with their expertise. They see the values and they think it would be nice to sit down at the table as soon as possible and discuss next steps.





5.5 FINALIZATION

This chapter focuses on bringing all validation and iterations together into one usable concept. Internal validation showed that the rules of the game in particular need to be tightened up. This can be achieved through changes in the mechanics. The first iteration resulted in physical game rule cards for the participants that give structure to the different sections and activities of the game and clarifies which rules belong to those parts. A facilitator guide for the game master also contributes to this, by clarifying the underlying aims and objectives of the sections, while at the same time keeping an eye on the time frame. However, with only these two iterations, the municipality cannot immediately continue testing and improving the tool. There is no physical game, other than a lo fi prototype. For this reason the final deliverable of this project is a digital version of the contextualization tool in Miro. In this Miro board, the workshop format, the simulation game and the facilitator manual are poured into one accessible concept form.

DIGITAL TOOL MIRO

The external validation with Space Of Urgency clearly showed that a digital tool has several advantages.

- It is an easy way to **quickly test and validate** a prototype. The whole or parts of the digital tool can be used during online meetings to understand how participants respond to it.
- It is an easy way to **quickly collect a big amount of data**. The data is automatically saved online, and parallels can easily be drawn between different session boards.
- It is an **easy way to iterate**. If during the session parts are not clear or do not function properly, these parts can be adjusted immediately.

Miro board

A user-friendly tool for a workshop that includes elements such as ideation, brainstorming, clustering, etc. is Miro. Digitalizing the toolkit in Miro, makes the toolkit a living document which can be altered depending on project specific information. When elements of the tool turn out to be irrelevant or not working probably, these can be adjusted easily. The Free Space Department can therefore work with the Miro board itself and build on it. In future projects, the department can use this digital tool at certain times as support and simultaneously test (parts of) the tool.

In addition, this is an accessible online application that is understandable for many. This is important, since the Free Space Department works with a broad spectrum of bottom-up initiators. When the department decides to outsource this part of the process by an external party, this accessibility is also relevant. Lastly, if it is decided to make the tool open source, people can access it remotely or abroad. Furthermore a digital Miro toolkit is a stepping stone towards an online mapping tool or eventually a physical board game.

For the reasons mentioned above, the final deliverable of this project is a contextualization toolkit in Miro. This Miro board will be in a workshop format and includes a digitized version of the simulation game. Furthermore, the facilitator workshop manual is summarized in different sections and steps within the Miro board. In this way the game can be played both with and without the municipality, and if needed even without a facilitator. A visualization of the Miro board can be found on the following pages.

1. START HERE

SESSION AIM		AGENDA	
<p>The aim of this session is to generate ideas, understand their feasibility and define a shared focus area regarding > place name <</p>		TIME	SECTION
		20 min	Welcome & introductions
		10 min	Briefing the session
		60 min	Round I - Ideation
		15 min	Break
		50 min	Round II - Limitation
		15 min	Break
		60 min	Round III - Validation
		10 min	Wrap-up & closing

DIGITAL TOOL MIRO



2. IDEATION

ATTRIBUTES

IDEATION
Problem & Idea generation

PROBLEM

IDEA

VOTING CHIPS

IDEATION BOARD

1 ASSIGNMENT I

Participants are given 15 minutes to generate ideas for the problem. They can be working individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to generate ideas.

2 ASSIGNMENT II

Participants are given 15 minutes to vote on the ideas generated in the previous step. They can be using the voting chips provided or any other tool to vote.

PLACE INPUT HERE

3 ASSIGNMENT III

Participants are given 15 minutes to discuss the ideas generated in the previous steps. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to discuss the ideas.

3. LIMITATION

ATTRIBUTES

LIMITATION
Defining challenges & opportunities

BOUNDARY CARDS

HARD PRECONDITIONS

FEASIBILITY BOARD

1 ASSIGNMENT I

Participants are given 15 minutes to define challenges and opportunities for the problem. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to define challenges and opportunities.

2 ASSIGNMENT II

Participants are given 15 minutes to define hard preconditions for the problem. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to define hard preconditions.

COPY-PASTE IDEA CLUSTERS FROM IDEATION BOARD HERE

ADD CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

3 ASSIGNMENT III

Participants are given 15 minutes to discuss the challenges and opportunities defined in the previous step. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to discuss the challenges and opportunities.

4. VALIDATION

ATTRIBUTES

VALIDATION
Finding shared focus areas

MULTI-VALUE FORMAT

SHARED FOCUS AREA

VALIDATION BOARD

1 ASSIGNMENT I

Participants are given 15 minutes to find shared focus areas for the problem. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to find shared focus areas.

2 ASSIGNMENT II

Participants are given 15 minutes to discuss the shared focus areas found in the previous step. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to discuss the shared focus areas.

PARADOXICAL PARADOXICAL VALUE

3 ASSIGNMENT III

Participants are given 15 minutes to discuss the shared focus areas found in the previous steps. They can be using sticky notes, whiteboards, or any other tool to discuss the shared focus areas.

6. CONCLUDING

DESIGN EVALUATION

Five design requirements were described in the design brief. The finalized concept is evaluated along these five criteria.

The tool quickens decision and agreement making, permit application

The test clearly showed that the game made the vague subjective free space criteria workable and actionable. This way that the bad apples can be filtered out quickly, albeit by the initiators themselves. For the players, these criteria become clear and understandable more quickly, which is supportive for permit application. Also a shared focus point as output of the last section makes the permit application transparent and actionable. Working together on a physical (or digital) board in a visual way, and for example discovering large common denominators through clustering, stimulates making joint decisions. Therefore, the tool has the potential to speed up these project management related issues. Whether this is actually the case must be determined by means of additional prototype testing, where the game is used in the actual project process with real participants and initiators.

The tool allows organic place implementation and an open, living project form

An organic planning process is supported by the co-creative board that is worked on together and a shared focus point is slowly generated. The output of a shared value focus that supports agreements is more similar to how it works in real free space creation compared to when agreements are pre-established in a solidified implementation plan. This gives more flexibility for possible changes in the process plan. At the same time a shared value is a stronger foundation to connect a collective than a practical implementation plan. The adjustable game elements that can be moved and positioned support this feeling of flexibility. Putting that in writing, on the other hand, feels much more definitive where there is no room for organic changes. Digitizing the tool in miro reinforces this and makes the tool a living form. Everyone can always access the plan and see exactly the same output simultaneously.

The tool bridges between neighborhood and creatives

Whether the tool actually bridges the gap between local residents and creatives has not been validated since it has not been tested with actual initiators. However, during the prototype test based on case lot 663, a clear difference between certain parties emerged. Including differences in the plans of active local residents and non local creatives or free space creators on the basis of intrinsic values. The game therefore has the potential to bring these differences in ambition to light and actively guide them in the right direction, by clarifying the differences at an early stage. Filling in the multi-value format prior to the process can contribute to this. If interested parties already have very different intrinsic values at that time, the municipality can take this into account when the project starts.

The tool clarifies preconditions and role definitions from the start

Because the preconditions are interwoven in the game, the participants learn about these municipal frameworks in a playful way. However, the game ensures that they are not presented as frames, but as configuring elements. In this way the creative process is not framed or boxed. During the game, the role definition of the municipality is not necessarily clearly presented. However, because the municipality stays in the background, or when the game is facilitated by an external party, it really allows the collective to stand in its power. Similar to the game, the aim in real life is to ensure complete anonymity during the project process. That is why choices are made by the collective itself, and do not have to ask for approval from the municipality. However, the department is there to support the process when necessary. The rather absent role of the department in the background, while subtracting output of the game at the back-end is equivalent to the real life process. In this way, participants unconsciously learn the division of roles. During the game, certain expertise or experiences of participants also come to the surface. In this way the role divisions within the collective become clear naturally.

The tool embeds the value the specific space will generate for the city

The game ends with a joint choice for a multi-value in the shape of a shared focus area. Regardless of which direction the implementation will take and how the collective will take place in the city, these shared values provide the common thread in what brings the collective together. With this it can be concluded that these values are generated for the city in any case. However, in what form, with what magnitude or with what range it is not embedded. But as with any urban and social project, this can never be fully confirmed in advance. However, with a free space project the participatory and parochial values are central. The fact that people invest in urban development or for social purposes makes people feel valuable and gives them a sense of purpose, while guaranteeing ownership and autonomy of small parts in the city.

DISCUSSION LIMITATION & IMPLEMENTATION

DISCUSSION

In the evaluation of the prototype test, several disclaimers of the test are mentioned. Therefore, the validation of the tool is not yet finished, especially the functioning and the aesthetics need to be further validated. This mainly concerns the fact that testing was carried out along an ongoing case where the test participants consist of members of the Free Space department, resulting in three significant disclaimers.

THE TEST PARTICIPANTS...

...are familiar with one another

First of all, the test participants consisted of a municipal team; a group of people who know each other and who have worked together before. This influences the testing of the dynamics. In a real situation, the game is actually played with participants who do not (all) know each other from before. This will potentially affect how deep the conversations and easily the dynamics will be.

...do not have personal interests

In addition, the test participants had no personal interests with regard to the decisions or outcome. In a real project situation, participants all provide their own input that is intertwined with personal ambitions. This will not only make it more difficult for participants to maintain an objective view within certain choice processes, but it will also potentially slow down or complicate these processes. The game encourages shared decision-making, but if there are participants with conflicting ideas, or opposing ambitions and values, this fact is not guaranteed. For example, completing the multi-value tool prior to the session gives the department more insight into this matter.

...are biased with pre-knowledge

Finally, the participants are biased with pre-knowledge, both about bureaucratic processes as well as about the case. They understand what is expected within the municipal processes with regard to for example permit application. Because they know what output is favorable and necessary for municipal processes, they understand what should be the output of the game. They probably know how to play the game efficiently and purposefully. In addition, they also have prior knowledge about the case and the bottlenecks that have occurred there. As a result, they may have unknowingly steered towards these results. The game has the potential to reveal differences and challenges, but to what extent is not yet certain. The functionality of particular components are therefore not tested with certainty.

To actually validate the functionality of the tool, it is therefore important that the tool is tested with real participants (e.g. creatives, residents, etc.), who are currently at the start of a free space trajectory. This means on the basis of a case that is not far in the process, but has yet to start. This is when a space has been claimed and scanned and local residents and creatives have signed up to implement this space. In this setup, it can be tested if the tool is understandable and generates usable and the correct output, i.e. the functionality. In this way, the physical game and associated rules, as well as the facilitator guide can be tested.

However, it is understandable that the municipality is hesitant about such a test-setup, out of protection for the volunteers, and given the possible abrasive relationships that come to the surface. The choice to digitize the game in a Miro board makes testing more accessible. Not everyone has to be physically present and it can even be played without the municipality being present. The physical output in the digital board can be used by the department to generate insight. For this it is necessary that a person is appointed to record the process during the game and certain upcoming discussions. In addition, a Miro board brings all the individual parts of the tool (workshop format, facilitator manual, game rule cards, physical simulation game) together in an accessible, low-threshold concept.

DISCUSSION LIMITATION & IMPLEMENTATION

LIMITATION

Physical setting (atmosphere)

Further limitations that are not included within the validation of this project are the following. First of all, the ideal setting for the workshop was not included in the design. It has not actually been tested what the ideal physical setting is for the simulation game, rather than around a table with a physical board in the middle. In addition, the choice for a digital tool does not include the fact that creative digital sessions where everyone sits behind their own screen can reduce creativity. In addition, it may be more difficult (or could be easier) for people who do not yet know each other to open up. Digital sessions can make it impersonal, and negatively affect the engagement of participants.

Processing tool output

Another aspect that has been underexposed in the project is how the output of the game will play a role in the further free space process. To what extent will the results of the various rounds be used to actually make decisions in the real project process, or is it merely a simulation to gain insight into each other's ambitions. Whether the multi-value format facilitates common choices or, on the contrary, creates divisions should become apparent from practice when it is completed by different stakeholders. This cannot be validated with a pilot within the department. The intention of the format is to establish shared values on which covenant agreements can be made. However, how this will work in practice, whether it facilitates communal choices and how this is further translated to the rest of the municipality remains unclear. The department will also have to experiment with this by trial and error. Only by actually applying the format in municipal procedures, perhaps first along existing frameworks and formatting as a supplement, will it become clear whether it actually supports the processes, or potentially can (partially) replace them.

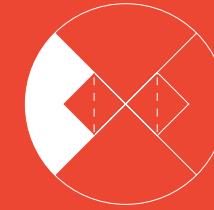
IMPLEMENTATION

To actually implement the tool, more prototype tests are needed as mentioned in the discussion. This mainly concerns various cases; different places with different contextual factors, different combinations of different initiators, with different purposes. As a result, patterns can be identified and the tool improved on the basis of this. The digital version in Miro supports this further development. The department can implement the entire workshop or parts of it in future projects. It is also possible to outsource this; assigning an external party to take the tool to a higher level. Then further development can be continued in the miro board to eventually develop a more high-end digital mapping tool. For this, the external party can consult background research and information distilled from the workshop format, the facilitator manual, and the game rule cards.

A more accessible implementation for the municipality is to include the multi-value format in existing processes. They can start with having the model completed by various initiators at the start of the trajectory, and during the trajectory when the collective has been formed. This will give the department more understanding of the inherent interests of participants, and simultaneously gives participants more insight into their own processes. If this proves to work, the next step is to use the model in addition to the other formats within municipal procedures. Examine if it connects to, clarifies, or facilitates, certain procedures, or if it can even be a substitute for currently outdated frameworks or formats.

The most accessible implementation for the department is to include the acquired contextual knowledge in the free space processes. Due to the current insight into the conditions that influence the realization of free space, it makes it easy for the department to find out where certain pain points or challenges come from. For this reason, the contextualization framework can be used as a supporting framework in the management related processes with initiators. This framework provides a tool to recognize and distinguish variables.

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY



The solutions and strategic steps are part of a bigger network; the system. Therefore the work is never done; working on one side of this system evokes challenges or opportunities on the other side of the system. Designing in systemic environments is to find ideas that spark further innovation, start a chain reaction of small transformations, or forge new collaborations; in short a movement of change. Therefore the outcome must be open-ended and others can build on it and continue the journey. To realize this it is important to reflect on the work, learn from mistakes, and most importantly share the knowledge. Reflect back on the oriented vision and determine what the impact of the project is on other parts of the system.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

My final recommendation for the Free Space Department is that they should embrace working hybrid and transdisciplinary. They are currently doing customization and have a multidisciplinary team. However, changing towards an interdisciplinary team, is required to realize multi-functional implementation. Therefore my advice is to restructure into an interdisciplinary department, and adopt the hybrid policy recommendation. If they do eventually adopt a policy goal, there is a chance that the policy will be embedded in rules and regulations over the years, making it increasingly complicated to get something off the ground. Take the BPA policy as an example. In addition, a policy goal is too one-sided and single-purposed for the liminality and hybridity of free space. This increases the chance that a certain functionality will be controlled, while you want implementation to remain fully open. However, the Free Space Department should accept the fact that they do not have a policy goal. Some expressed there is a fear that the department will not be taken seriously if they do not have their own policy goal; money is often distributed according to these goals. Having a hybrid budget that comes from partnering policy goals is a solution for this. It seems within the municipality that you have striking power when you are a policy goal. As a result, however, you get that different policies only reason from their own perspective, forget to see the bigger picture, which makes it so difficult to realize integrated solutions. Especially with the scarcity of space, claiming a piece of land becomes defensive, instead of finding a joint solution.

The aim of the municipality of Amsterdam is to give integrated planning and multi-functional interpretation to places. To do this, they have to work interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. Of course, appointing an interdisciplinary department counteracts the entire aim of interdisciplinary. Take the example of sustainability. If a company wants to become more sustainable, this must be adapted within every layer of the company and system. Sustainability must be considered from start to finish in the chain. Appointing a sustainability department will mean that sustainability takes place somewhere at the end of the chain. A similar look can be taken at integrated working. The entire system should be adapted to this in order to realize interdisciplinary solutions. However, in a layered and hierarchical system as the municipality, this is practically hard to realize. A solution therefore could be appointing a disinterested interdisciplinary departments at scale level, which bridged like a spider in a web between certain departments or policy goals. Exactly what the Free Space Department does between Real Estate, Area Planning, Democratisation, and Art & Culture. Appointing more of these small interdisciplinary departments can realize integrated and multi-functionele planning and implementation at scale level. The department is already doing integrated work, they now only have to pursue this and make it concrete towards the remaining municipality. In this way they can create a leverage point for a changing mindset and adaptive approach.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Looking back to the beginning of this project, I feel that I have learned a lot with regard to systemic problems within the municipal field. Reflecting on my personal learning goals, this project has indeed brought me broader knowledge and more experience, regarding handling big ambiguous issues. During the process it was sometimes a chaotic mixture of detailed information and intertwined insights. But because of this I do feel that I am more comfortable and confident when it comes to future projects. In addition, this project gave me more insight into the operational and organizational side of the municipal system. By really working with the team, the bureaucratic side regarding policies and legislation has become more understandable. In a short time I learned and gained insights about municipal processes, urban planning (theories), and the bureaucratic complexity. You could say I did a real deep dive into the project context. However, I could not have done this without the involvement of my supervisor Julian Jansen. He shared a lot of information, expertise and knowledge, and took the time to answer all my questions (which could often be quite divergent). In addition, the freedom that Julian gave me was especially helpful to actually being able to dive into the material so deeply.

Below, my personal pitfalls that I encountered during this project.

Defining focus

The ambiguity of the project and the zooming in and out of the problem provided a comprehensive understanding, but made it rather complicated to remain consistent in idea generation. During the project process I broadened extensively. Every piece of information I found incredibly interesting, which is also my pitfall. This made it difficult to find the actual focus point. In general, I consider myself a person who values every part and view on the story, especially in a complex systemic problem like this. In my opinion, you cannot just neglect or downplay insights within this fragile and abrasive subject. However, this made it difficult to put one final strategic concept on the table. That is why my strategy consists of several small (mindset) changes. These are mainly aimed at organizational changes and looking at certain processes differently. This first of all gave me the feeling that I had not put forward groundbreaking solutions on the table. However, the Systemic Design Approach taught me that such solutions are not credible within systemic design. Differences can only be made when small adjustments can lead to a chain of change. This reassured me more about the divergence rather than the uniformity of my strategy.

Remaining objective

Sometimes I experienced difficulties distancing myself from the team and keeping an objective view. By being part of the team, participating in various meetings and activities, I feel that my final strategic choices fit well with the team and the research has been thoroughly validated. However, because of this, I sometimes had to distance myself from the team and stop gathering new information. For designing, at some point you have to stop absorbing new information and start designing with the knowledge you have at that moment. I often had difficulties saying no to meetings, events or activities, as that were often very interesting and instructive moments. As Bregje once pointed out, I slowly started to become a native within the project. However, this is a pitfall, as a designer you have to be able to maintain an objective view. To actually come up with solutions, you should not get too deep into the material. Fortunately, it gradually became easier to take a break from these meetings, as the end of the project was in sight.

Determining feasibility

During the process I sometimes experienced difficulties in determining the actual feasibility, and finding out whether certain ideas, strategic choices and mindset changes that I presented were actually applicable within the municipality. The municipality has a quite hierarchische, systematic and standardized way of working. Sometimes I wondered if what I had come up with was not too far fetched. For example, how feasible is the strategic choice to set up an interdisciplinary department that does not have its own budget, policy, nor policy goals in order to realize an integrated and multifunctional interpretation. Does the municipal system lend itself to make this possible in practice. However, in the last phase of my project, during the validation, I was given the opportunity to present my contextualization tool to various departments within the municipality and external parties. The recognition that these people expressed in the formulated problem and the strategic choices gave me the feeling that there is indeed support and striking power to achieve these changes within municipal institutions. After my graduation, the idea is to meet again with the Making City Together Department and Space of Urgency to look at further possibilities to take the tool to a higher level and potentially further development.



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