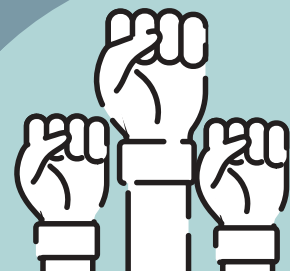# Local Referendums For Urban Area Development

How public value conflicts contribute
to the design and decision-making
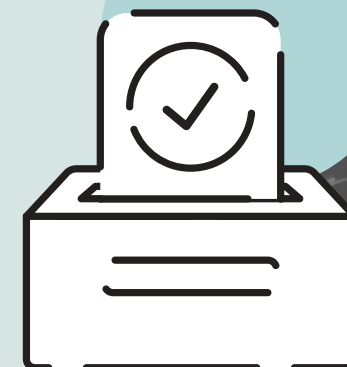
Master Thesis Presentation
Tessa den Hartog
TU Delft, Management in the Built Environment
November 9th 2023

Overview

Introduction

Introduction

Problem

- Municipality
- Declining trust
- Need for extra legitimization
- Local referendum
- Building in Nature / Land reclamation

Introduction

Problem

- Municipality
- Declining trust
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- Local referendum
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Gap

- Urban Area Development
  - Special character
  - Design & Decisions
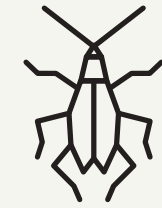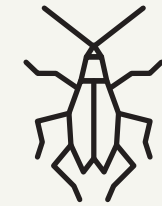
Introduction

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Gap

- Urban Area Development
  - Special character
  - Design & Decisions

Aim

- Added Value
  - Incl. Design & Desicions
- Room for Improvement
- Recommendations

— Research Question

How can a local referendum for Urban Area Development contribute to the design and decision-making?

Sub-Research Questions

SQ1: *Why are local referendums used for urban area development plans?*

SQ2: *What are the advantages, disadvantages, or barriers of local referendums?*

SQ3: *How did the use of a local referendum affect the design and decisions regarding the urban area development of the cases IJburg and Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk?*
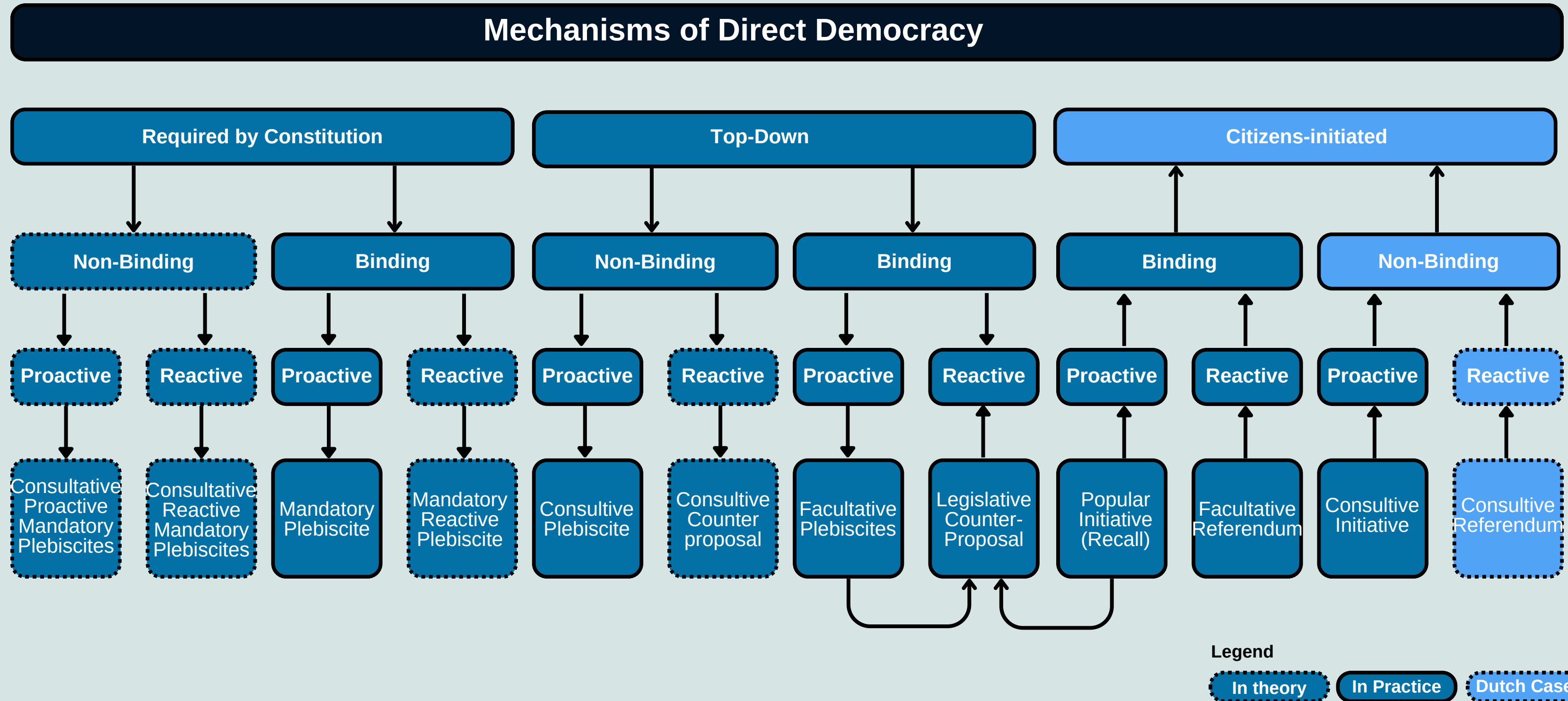
SQ4: *How do the actors of the cases IJburg and Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk look back at the instrument of a local referendum for urban area development?*

Literature Study

— Typologies

Categorization of the case studies by the model of Altman(2011, p.11)

Local Referendums in NL

- *Carnaval*
- *Municipal borders*
- *Mayor candidate*
- *Urban Planning*

Local Referendums for UAD in NL

———

- *Infrastructure*
- *Neighborhoods*
- *Recreation*
- *Loss of green*

Advantages, Disadvantages & Barriers

Advantages

- Legitimate decision
- Clear outcome in %
- Public debate
- Awareness topic
- Careful government

👍

(Ashworth, 2001; Broeksteeg & Van der Krieken, 2017; Hendriks et al., 2017)

— Advantages, Disadvantages & Barriers

Advantages

- Legitimate decision
- Clear outcome in %
- Public debate
- Awareness topic
- Careful government

Disadvantages

- No long term vision
- Polarized
- Money & Time
- External effects
- Political crisis

(Ashworth, 2001; Broeksteeg & Van der Krieken, 2017; Hendriks et al., 2017)

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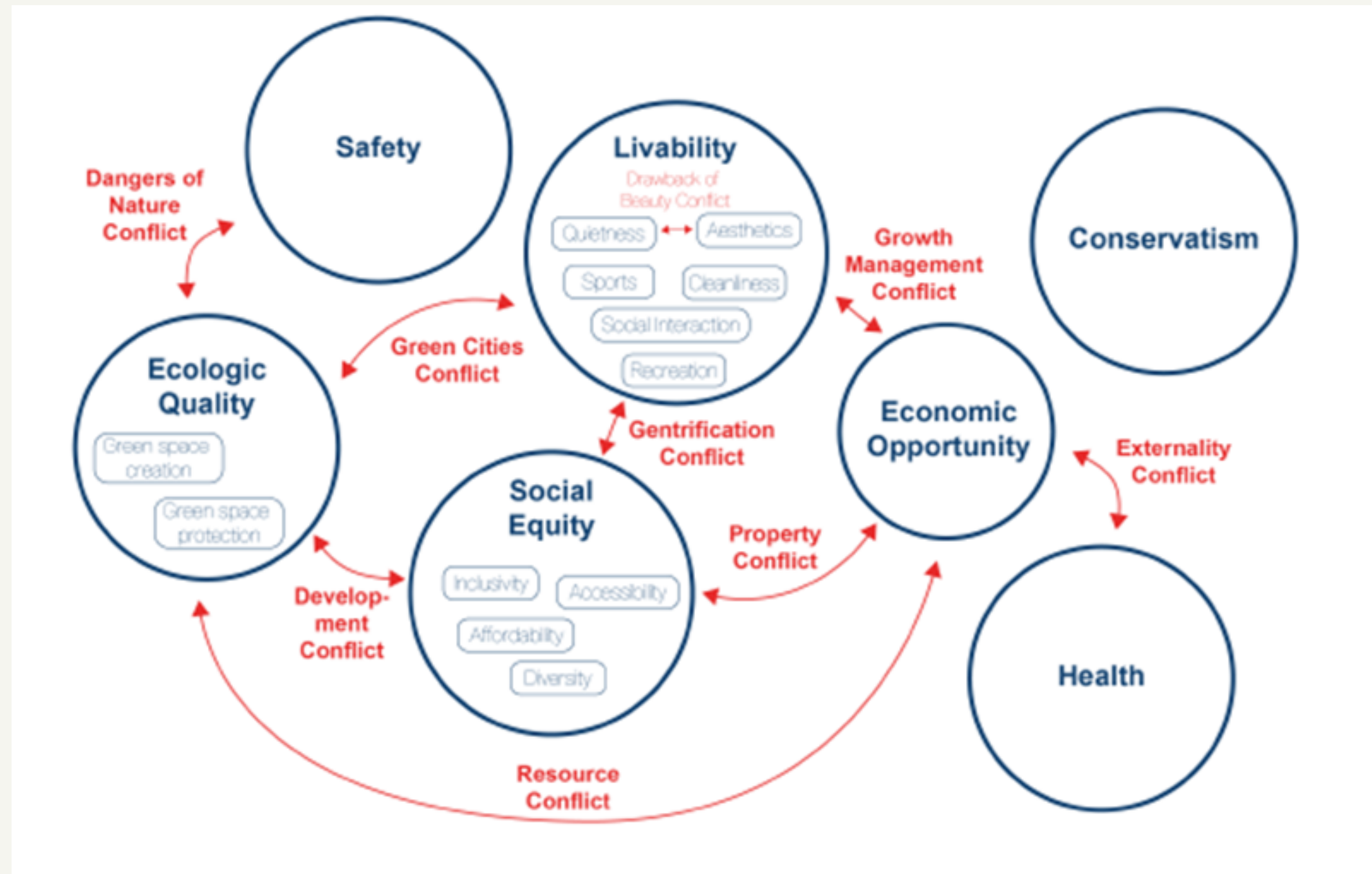- External effects
- Political crisis

Barriers

- Signatures
- Non-binding-> then what?
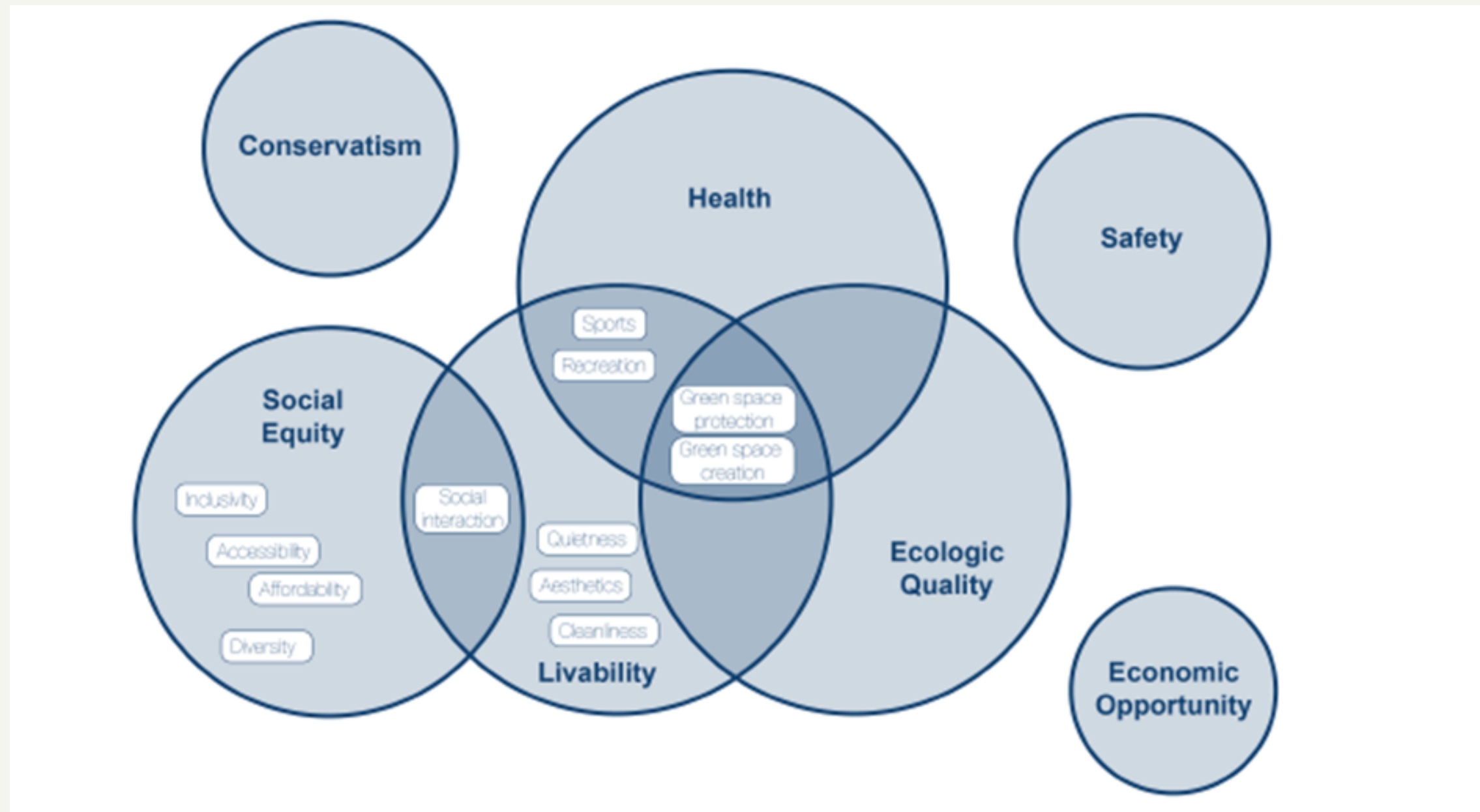- Threshold
- Motivation citizens
- Low turn-out

(Ashworth, 2001; Broeksteeg & Van der Krieken, 2017; Hendriks et al., 2017)

— Public Values in UAD

Public Values spheres theory in urban area planning with possible relations and Value Conflicts (Herzog et al. 2022)

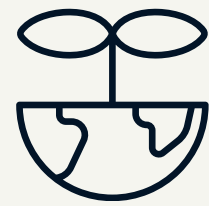# — Public Values in UAD

Public Values spheres theory in urban area planning with possible relations (Herzog et al. 2022)
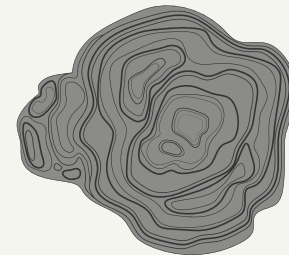
— Land Reclamation Drivers

Environmental

Topographic

Demographic

Economic

Governmental

Technological

Own adaptation from a collection of literature (AlQahtany et al., 2022; Chee et al., 2017; Meng et al., 2017; NOS, 2016; Sengupta et al., 2017; Tian et al., 2016)

Conceptual Model

Public Values UAD

- Safety
- Liveability
- Ecologic Quality
- Social Equity
- Economic Oppertunity
- Health
- Conservatism

Public Value Conflict

Drivers Land reclamation

- Environmental
- Topographic
- Demographic
- Economic
- Governmental
- Technological

Local Referendum for UAD

Added Value

Design

Desicions
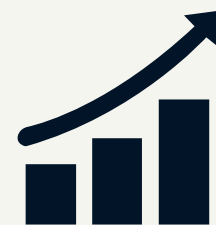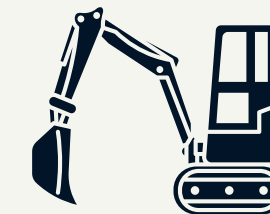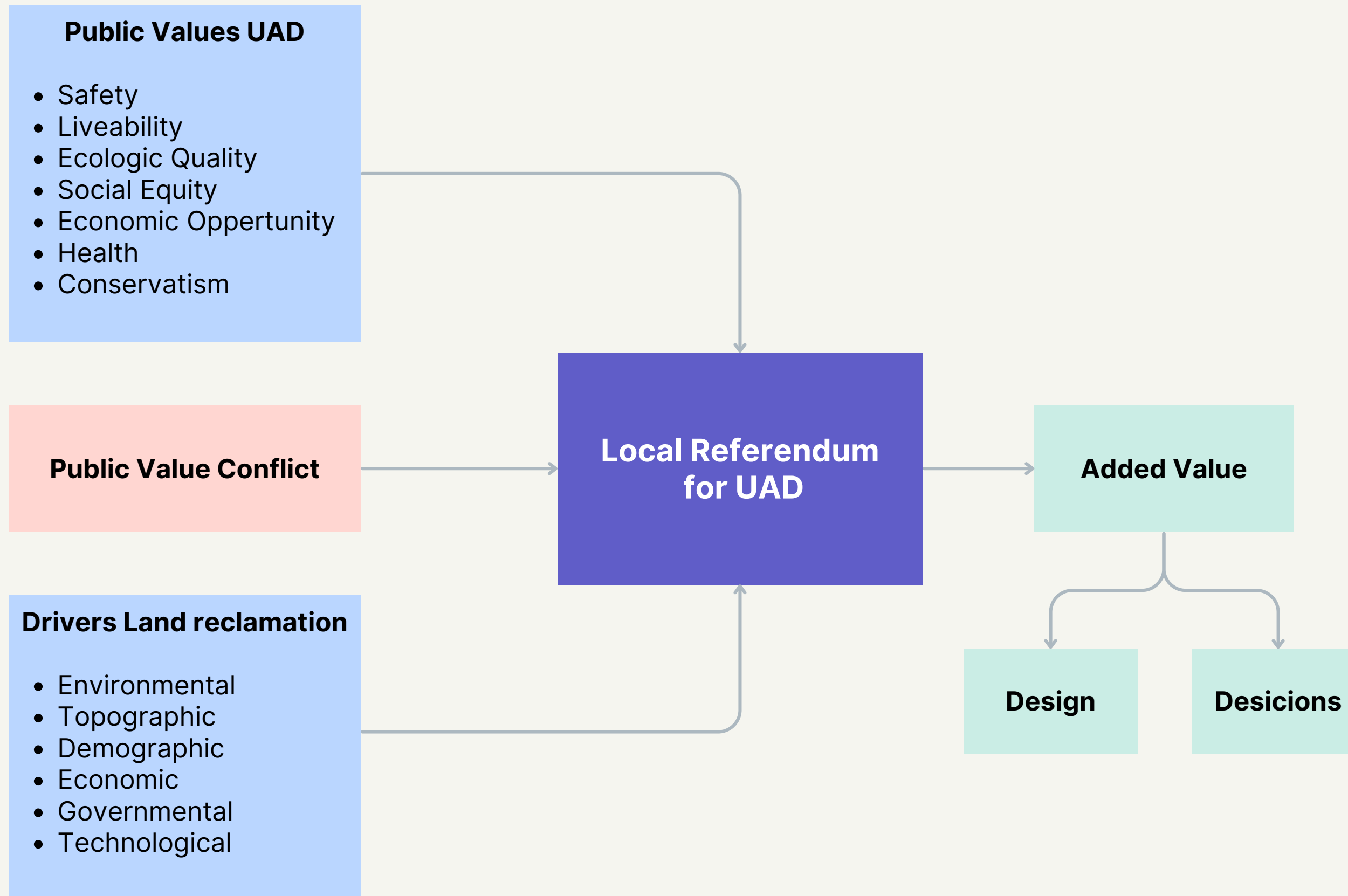
Research Methods

— Methods

Literature Research

- Academic papers & books
- Archives
- News articles
- Websites
- Policy documents

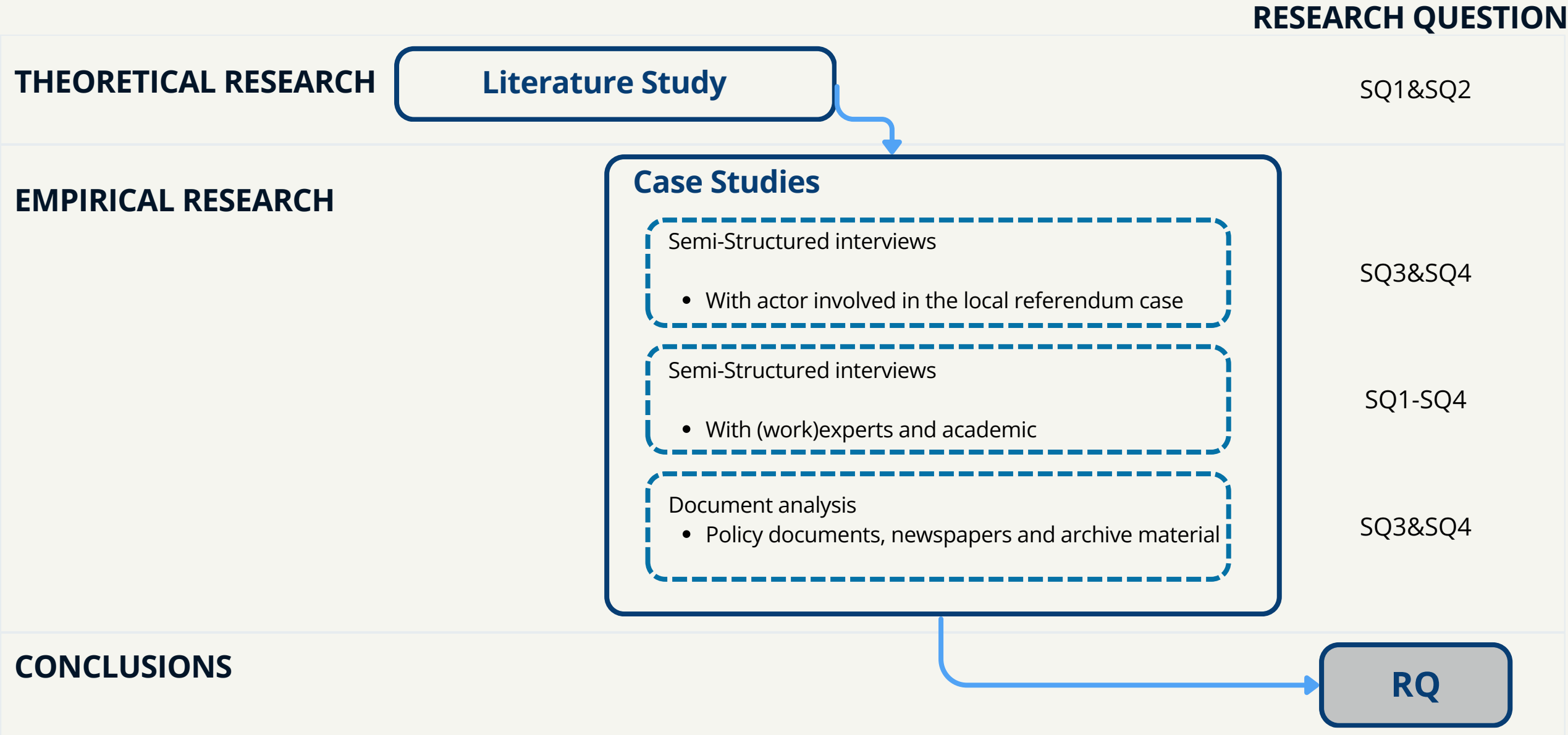## Emperical Qualitative Research

- 2 Case studies
- 1 exploratory interview
- 14 Semi-Structured interviews

— Research Design

RESEARCH QUESTION

THEORETICAL RESEARCH	Literature Study	SQ1&SQ2
EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	Case Studies	
	Semi-Structured interviews • With actor involved in the local referendum case	SQ3&SQ4
	Semi-Structured interviews • With (work)experts and academic	SQ1-SQ4
	Document analysis • Policy documents, newspapers and archive material	SQ3&SQ4
CONCLUSIONS		RQ

— Interviews

6 categories

1. Plan proces (municipality/developer)
2. Municipal Board
3. Opponents
4. IJburg 2
5. (work) expert
6. Academic

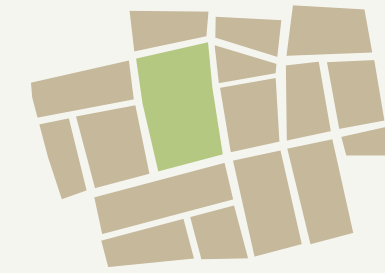# Case studies & Results

IJburg

Amsterdam, 1997

Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

Arnhem, 2016

Comparison Case Studies

Development Plan

Amsterdam IJburg

- 18 000 Dwellings
- 220 + 150 ha
- VINEX Policy
- Mainly focussed on housing & businesses

March 1997

Arnhem Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

- 430 Dwellings
- 289 ha
- Ruimte voor de Rivier Policy
- Focussed on culture, leisure, nature & dwellings

November 2016

Comparison Case Studies

Conflict and Referendum

Amsterdam IJburg

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
- Dwellings can be built somewhere else

Arnhem Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
- Dwellings can be built somewhere else
- Water safety

Comparison Case Studies

Conflict and Referendum

Amsterdam IJburg

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
- Dwellings can be built somewhere else

  - Development conflict
    - *ecologic quality vs. social equity*
  - ☐ Green cities conflict
    - *ecologic quality vs. liveability*

Arnhem Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
- Dwellings can be built somewhere else
- Water safety

  - Dangers of Nature Conflict
    - safety vs. ecologic quality
  - Green cities conflict
    - liveability vs. ecologic quality

Comparison Case Studies
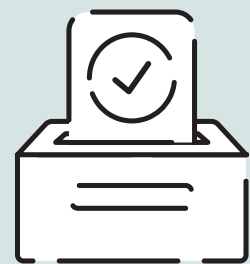
Conflict and Referendum

Amsterdam IJburg

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
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Referendum
- corrective, with threshold
- Municipality agreed to respect the outcome
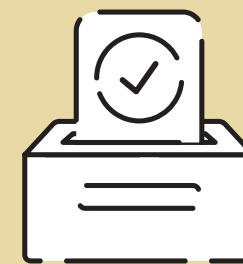- 41% voted
- 40% Yes, 60% No

Arnhem Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

Conflict:
- Nature and housing
- Dwellings can be built somewhere else
- Water safety

Referendum
- corrective, no threshold
- Municipality agreed to respect the outcome
- 24, 1 % voted
- 64,7% Yes, 34,5% No

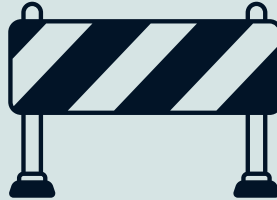# — Results

Insights & Changes - Similarities
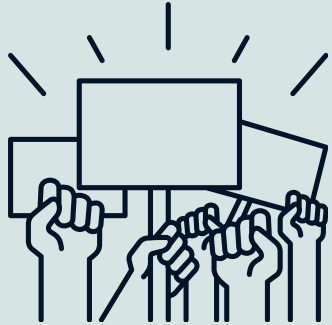
Public debate
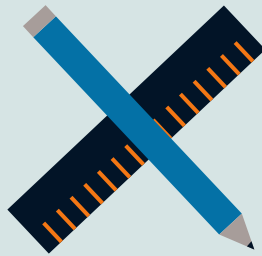& awareness

Extra compensation
due to conversations

Black-white /
untruths

Organization / barriers

NIMBY

Design changes

Results

Insights & Changes

IJburg

- Public debate & awareness
- Extra compensation due to conversations
- Black-white / untruths
- Organization +/-
- Nimby-municipalities
- Design changes

- *Threat & collaboration*
- *Not all promises came true*
- *Land reclamation nowadays*

Stadsblokken-Meinerswijk

- Public debate & awareness
- Extra nature due to conversations
- Black-white / untruths
- Organization +/-
- Nimby-individu
- Design changes

- *Flood plains future*
- *Outcome-standstill*

Discussion

Literature, Limitations and Further Research

Dilemmas

Referendums (for UAD)

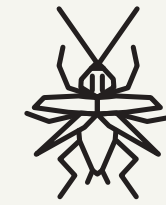Dubble role Municipality

Coherent plan, many interests

Black-White Campaign

Unequal position parties

Unknown steps to follow-up

UAD Long time span, uncertainties

current society

Pressure vs. problem solving

Protocol not always prepared

NIMBY

Dilemmas

Referendums (for UAD)

Unequal **financial** resources

Larger **organizations** can move more than citizens alone

Spreading **non-factual** information

War Campaign

Social Media

Polarized Society

Municipality not **impartial**

political crisis

A **'what'** question, not a **'how'** question

Often **not 100% against** whole UAD plan

UAD Plan, **coherent**. leaving out 1 aspect does not work

UAD topics require **long term vision,** difficult for citizens

individual interest vs. common interest

In 25y the plan looks totally **different** than where you voted for

Individualism

Pressure Medium instead of mitigation

Process seems **difficult** for citizens to initate

NIMBY

Mitigation often not in protocol

Protocol and **digital** voting

Alternatives for UAD not in protocol

external effects

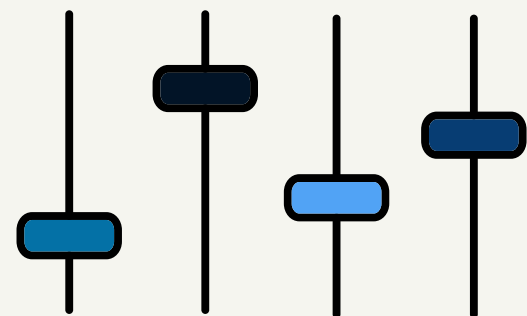**Scale** UAD, who to include?

Discussion: Literature

Overlap

- Public Debate
- Awareness
- Unequal Resources
- Scale is difficult
- Municipalities often act on outcome

Discussion: Literature

New Findings

- Society changed
- Difficult for opponents
- More flexibility needed for UAD
- **Need for alternative forms**
  - *Online / digiD*
  - *Informal voting (non-binding)*
  - *Incl. Participation process*
  - *Scale*
  - *Include dialogue*
    - *Citizens forum/Stadsgesprek*
- For Public Value conflict
  - *Nature - Buildings*

Discussion: Limitations & Further Research

Limitations

- Newspapers
- Only 2 cases
- Arnhem not develop yet, design changes not clear in detail
- Arnhem unavailable

Discussion: Limitations & Further Research

Limitations

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Transferability

Need for alternative forms is clear
However:
- Depends on the protocol
- Protocol is different for every municipality
- More likely larger cities

Discussion: Limitations & Further Research

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Further Research

- Design participation traject
  - and evaluate
- Nimby vs. Outcome
- No Threshold effects
- include citizens
  - interest tool
  - expierence
  - interest recommendations

Conclusion

How can a local referendum for Urban Area Development contribute to the design and decision-making?

To conclude

Added Value

- More Involved
- Powerful
- Legitimization for plans
- Careful planning

Insights

- Public debate
- Awareness - external voices
- Inform citizens UAD
- Consensus/conversations
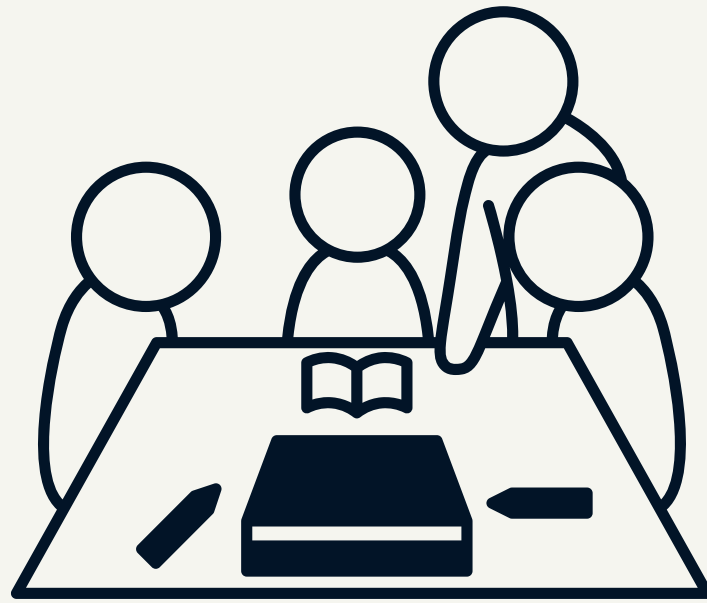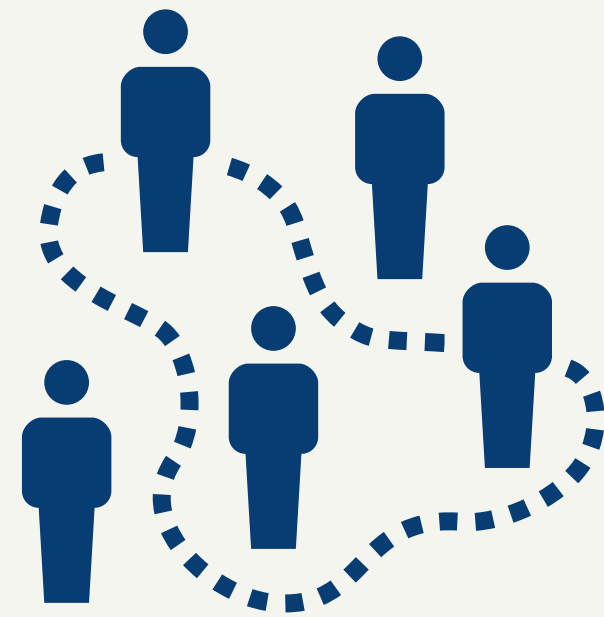- Improved plan quality
  - promises

Recommendations

6 Recommendations to improve Local Referendums for UAD

1. **Avoid and initiate seldomly**

2. Communicate with the opponent: Build in conversation models

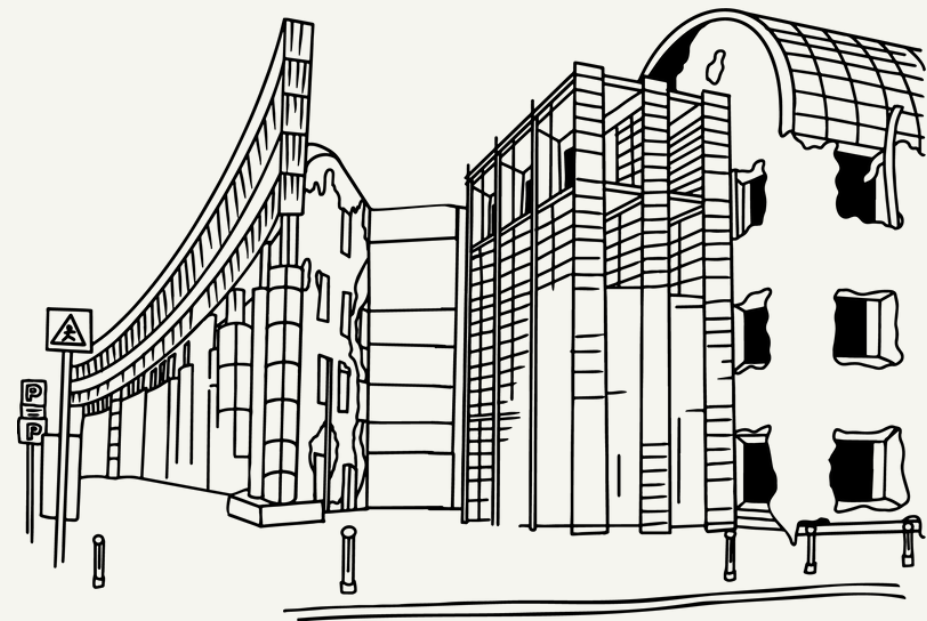# 3. Communicate to citizens: inform and involve them

Accessibility

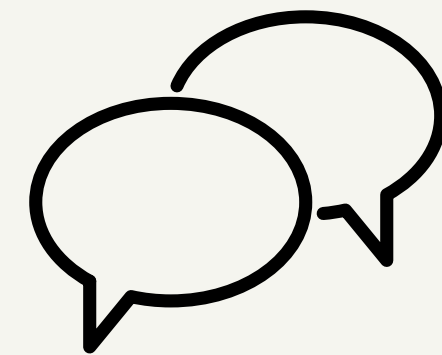# 4. Communicate to citizens, together: make it understandable

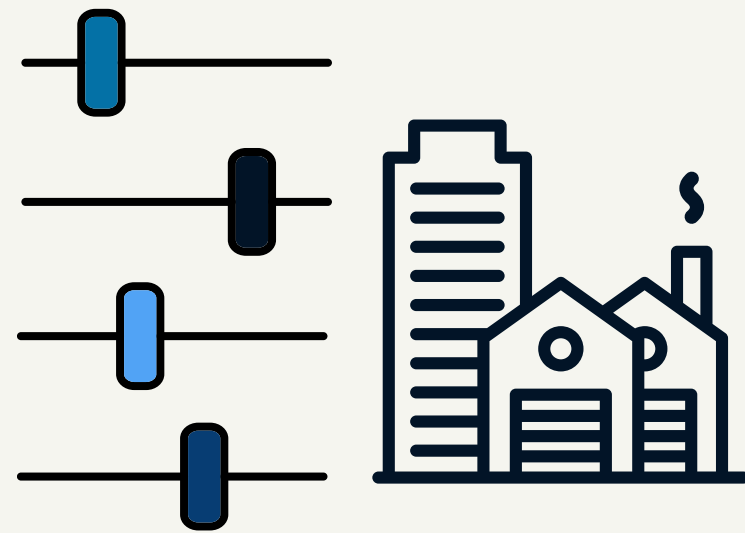# 4. Communicate to citizens, together: make it understandable

Visualize

Spread information together

Create Dialogue

5. Include forms of Participation

_____

6. Adjust protocol for UAD

The End

Questions ?