

5 Transformative Urban Projects as Stimulators for the Quality of Stay

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1 Residents Reconquer the City Spaces

Cities are the crystallisation point of megatrends and express our living habits and needs. Recent trends and popular buzzwords are smartness, vertical densification, co-living, healing architecture, 15-minutes-city and urban manufacturing. Those examples illustrate and trigger urban life transformation, including housing and mobility, leisure and the way we work (Sodiq et al., 2019). In addition, urban planners initiate and push the necessary sustainability transformation (Tonne et al., 2021). Together with the local community, they develop projects that respond to the residents' changing needs and the need for sustainability – whether sustainable housing, lively neighbourhoods, co-working or the re-planning and construction of a (new) city district and traffic zones.

Although cities are growing globally, Europe witnessed an urban escape, as frequently stated; however, the borders between rural and urban are blurring (Wu, Long, Zhao & Hui, 2022). Regionality is introduced in trends such as urban farming and co-living, redefining the urban community and responding to emerging lifestyles. How is sustainability recognised in this transformation?

The city is not the devil of sustainable development, reduced to pollution, crowding and land grabbing. As a creative centre of a pluralistic society and hotspot of globalisation, it can drive innovation for sustainability and resource-efficient modes of living (Hanna & Comín, 2021). A central turn in urban planning has been the recognition of the relevance of the smallest urban unit, whether complexes of buildings, districts or flagship projects. In those transformed or modern districts, central components such as work, housing and leisure are combined and prioritised differently than during the previous urbanisation phase: The residents seem to reconquer the streets with the design of calmer and more sustainable habitats in contrast to hectic and pollution-intensive traffic and industries (Thees, Zacher & Eckert, 2020).

Struggling with diverging interests is natural in a high-density system such as a city. However, attempts to balance particular claims or use cases have mixed success. A combination of interests and expression of an attractive space is tourism, which brings, in its early understanding, foreigners to the city. Although destination marketing aims at integrating tourists into the specific local context, it often

remains a marketing phrase to convince the residents to support tourism development because of mutual interests – or at least to promote a peaceful co-existence (Kantsperger, Thees & Eckert, 2019). Despite resulting in overtourism and overcrowding, destination marketing for tourists is often given precedence over urban planning for residents, disregarding sustainability. Developing more sustainable and resilient urban futures requires focusing on residents' quality of life as the owners of particular spaces rather than attraction-seeking for foreigners (Zacher & Gavriljuk, 2021).

Against this background, this chapter does not intend to separate “owners” and “foreigners”, but rather changes the perspectives and assumes that resident-centred planning and innovation will also boost the quality stay for tourists (Del Chiappa, Atzeni & Gallarza, 2019). We assume that transformative projects, lively districts, flair and atmosphere are key for experiencing a particular urban space (Volgger, 2019), rather than traditional urban planning that leads to overcrowded attractions, marketing superlatives and chasing inauthentic experiences. In this context, the quality of stay in cities hereafter roughly refers to the experience and satisfaction of individuals or communities while visiting or residing in a particular public space (Section 4). Therefore, this chapter asks: How do transformative urban projects stimulate a change in the quality of stay in city spaces?

We analyse planned or realised projects of transformational scope and quality in cities and their effects. The urban transformation represents the interplay of infrastructural re-configuration, design and quality of urban spaces from a resident's perspective, as described above. Such transformation promotes a stronger focus on sustainability, city and tourism interfaces, eudemonic experiences, alternative points of interest and intensive interaction. Consequently, this means promoting a new era of urban planning with the transformation impetus from the COVID-19 pandemic and a new understanding of stakeholder management and local governance.

To support the guiding question, the subsequent sections ask:

- How do urban transformation projects work? (Section 2)
- What projects are planned/implemented? What is their character (objectives and visions)? (Section 3)
- How do transformative projects change urban districts? Which factors are crucial for the quality of stay? (Section 4)

2 The Theory of Change in Sustainable Urban Planning

Transforming urban spaces is a complex process that leads to various changes on different city levels. In literature, different theories and approaches seem to be suitable: e.g. sustainable urban development, theories of change, sustainable change, system change, theory of the city, community development and others. This contribution focuses on the Theory of Change (ToC), which “[...] is an ongoing process of reflection to explore the change and how it happens” (Rengarajan & Sivasubramanian, 2020, p. 280). ToC is often used to develop a holistic logic planning

model for programmes and initiatives (Vogel, 2012). Besides, it is suitable as a theoretical foundation because it highlights the needed stages in a transformation process – as it is being implemented in many disciplines – including strategic planning and sustainable urban development to promote sustainable and inclusive growth, enhancing quality of life and reducing inequity (Ibrahim et al., 2017).

The ToC emerged in the mid of 90s from social change theory and evaluation theory. The purpose was mainly to provide new ways for analysing and evaluating political and social programmes and initiatives (Stein & Valters, 2012). In relation to evaluation theory, ToC is often used as a model to evaluate social and community initiatives and programmes (Connell & Klem, 2000; Vogel, 2012). Various definitions of the ToC exist. They all depend on the field in which the theory is applied. Nevertheless, all definitions have something in common: they describe ToC as a theory to analyse why and how specific actions could lead to a specific change (Ibrahim et al., 2017). Most theoretical frameworks can be traced back to evaluation theory and authors such as Huey Chen, Peter Rossi, Michael Quinn Patton and Carol Weiss (Rengarajan & Sivasubramaniyan, 2020). Weiss (1995) characterised the ToC as a theory that gives insights into how and why initiatives work. She used the approach to explain how activities or actions can lead to long-term change. More recently, Stein and Valters (2012, p. 4) stated that despite the varieties of views and interpretations, the “ToC is most often defined in terms of the connection between activities and outcomes, with the articulation of this connection the key component of the ToC process”.

According to Connell and Kubisch (1998) and Connell and Klem (2000), the ToC is characterised by seven key elements:

1. **Chain of outcomes:** The pathway of initiatives is characterised by strategies and their outcomes. Outcomes could be *early*, *intermediate* or *long-term*. Nevertheless, a strategy has to keep the achievement of these outcomes in mind.
2. **Backward planning:** This is indicated as “moving backward”, starting from the long-term goals and outcomes and considering the early and intermediate outcomes as a prerequisite to achieving those long-term goals.
3. **Standards of quality:** The approach depends on the quality and considers how *plausible*, *doable*, *testable* and *meaningful* the ToC is.
4. **Change as a process:** The theory considers how much change – for which stakeholders, in what setting and when – is expected to occur.
5. **Resource planning:** Available and potential resources must be always considered when thinking about the different outcomes and strategies to achieve them.
6. **Stakeholder management:** Different and multiple stakeholders can be addressed.
7. **Evaluation and adaptability:** The pathway of the initiative could also change as it is tested and evaluated over the course of an initiative.

The ToC is increasingly attracting interest in different fields – also in urban transformation and urban change planning (Mitlin et al., 2019; Rengarajan & Sivasubramaniyan, 2020). Urban transformation is a radical change in urban (sub-)systems

in terms of fulfilling local needs, urban functions or implications towards more resilience and sustainability (Hölscher & Frantzeskaki, 2021). Radical change is not only addressing the urban (sub-systems); it also implies changes in practices (e.g. mobility behaviour), changes in cultures and values, and changes in dominant structures (e.g. infrastructure) (Ernst et al., 2016). Thus, urban spaces can benefit from a ToC approach, given the complex and interconnected nature of many urban challenges and recognising the need for a systemic change. With the aid of ToC, it is possible to understand how problems arise and to identify the key stakeholders, resources and activities necessary to achieve the desired change (Oberlack et al., 2019; Stein & Valters, 2012).

Current directions and approaches to transformation processes in urban spaces often aim to create an enhanced quality of life for all residents and refer to integrated and sustainable urban development (Mikelsone et al., 2021), which can be achieved – among other ways – by creating resource-efficient, low-emission and climate-resilient cities, where the needs and desires of the residents are the focus of the transformation projects (Kabisch et al., 2017).

Strategies to achieve urban transformation considering ToC may include:

1. The densification of urban spaces. This is driven by the reutilisation of brownfield sites, an increase in the height of buildings, and the fundamental re-densification of neighbourhoods. Innovative neighbourhood development concepts aim to transform entire urban districts into liveable environments. Vertical densification, on the one hand, saves space and, on the other hand, promotes sustainability because it enables better utilisation of the existing infrastructure (McFarlane, 2020).
2. Innovation, technology and digitalisation, which can also help to make urban spaces more efficient and sustainable. In this regard, smart city concepts in particular are gaining greater attention. For example, intelligent traffic systems can help relieve traffic congestion and reduce emissions simultaneously (Keshavarzi et al., 2021).
3. Cultural diversity and creating vibrant, inclusive and open neighbourhoods, which are special in transforming urban spaces (Tretter et al., 2014). Creative urban development concepts rely on the creative industries as a driver for urban development. For example, cultural events, art installations and creative businesses can help improve a city's image, attractiveness and competitiveness (Störmann & Lill, 2022).
4. Participatory methods to ensure that the perspectives and needs of all relevant stakeholders are taken into account (Zohar et al., 2022). Participation in urban spaces means involving all residents in the transformation process and considering their needs and ideas. This involves the broad participation of different stakeholders as well as transparent and open communication between all actors (Jupp, 2008).

Further strategies are compact city, urban regeneration, functional mix, no land take, green city and high density (Cortinovis et al., 2019). Thus, transformation in

urban spaces may involve multiple stakeholders – including government agencies, local communities, civil society organisations and private sector actors – and may require the integration of multiple strategies and interventions over a long period of time. Overall, ToC helps these actors reflect and be aware of the whole transformation process (Deutsch et al., 2021; McLellan, 2021).

3 Classifying Transformative Urban Projects

Cities are focal points of economic activity and social attraction (UNESCO & World Bank, 2021). However, they are subject to growing pressure for change due to overarching societal trends and increased awareness of social and environmental sustainability (Sodiq et al., 2019, sec. 1; cf. SDGs). European cities in particular are often structures that have evolved over centuries and bear witness to historical eras. Therefore, urban planners cannot address the pressure for sustainable change with fundamental new planning processes. Rather, transformation occurs selectively or in specific urban micro spaces, whereby these projects have a pilot character for the long-term and overarching transformation of urban structures.

3.1 Methodological Remarks

This chapter introduces our case study method and develops a classification of urban projects. Therefore, our investigations are based on case study research. Using multiple case studies provides a rich and in-depth understanding of the phenomena, allowing for a comprehensive analysis and classification of the project characteristics. When comparing different case studies, it is important to identify similarities and differences among the transformative urban projects. This comparative analysis can provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to successful outcomes, as well as the challenges and limitations faced in different contexts (Yin, 2009).

As a first step, desk research led to a collection of around 40 projects that are spread all over the world. As illustrated in Figure 5.1, the urban projects cover a range of topics: Modern mobility concepts in the scope of transformational projects (e.g. “Superblocks” in Barcelona, “Supergrätzl” in Vienna) aim to reduce traffic in certain neighbourhoods and open up space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport instead. Innovative urban projects are also partly the result of converting former infrastructure into attractive public spaces (e.g. “High Line” in New York City; Seoul’s Cheonggye Stream) and projects are often created in former industrial sites (e.g. “De Ceuvél” in Amsterdam; Berlin Tegel Airport) to establish sustainable and innovative urban neighbourhoods (Ersoy & van Bueren, 2020). Many of the projects observed intend long-term transformation of infrastructure and place. However, they also exhibit a high degree of design experimentation, including innovative participation methods and a conscious monitoring of changes, as typically seen in real-world laboratory projects.

To further narrow the collection, we decided on the criteria the urban projects should meet. The overall intention of this sampling is to represent a diverse range

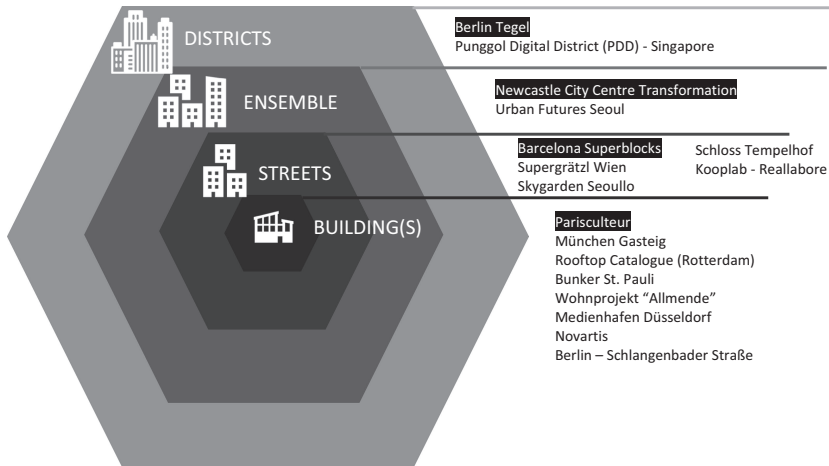


Figure 5.1 Observed scales in urban transformation projects

Source: Own elaboration

of transformative urban projects. This diversity helps in capturing the complexities and variations inherent in different projects. In addition, different geographical locations, scales and project types should be included to avoid bias and generalisation.

Criteria for case selection:

1. **City Size:** Cities bigger than 250,000 inhabitants.
2. **Transformation/re-configuration:** Intention to transform existing urban spaces with a certain degree of innovation to align with future challenges. No brownfield project included.
3. **Impacting the quality of stay:** To create visible change and increase attractiveness for the local population (and visitors).
4. **Integrated urban development:** Projects that take into account at least two aspects of urban development, such as housing, new work, green spaces, infrastructure and mobility.
5. **Public accessibility:** Re-configured spaces that represent a public and accessible space with a high recreational and leisure function.

Applying those criteria led to the selection of 15 relevant transformative projects. Here it became clear that the different projects can be attributed to different spatial scales. The smallest are individual buildings or building complexes. The spatially largest projects are located at the level of independent city districts with a complete range of living, working and leisure environments.

3.2 Selected Cases

Out of a variety of projects that evolved in the first screening and following the criteria, one example from each scale was selected to provide further details and present insights into the urban transformation.

Berlin – Tegel

On the grounds and in the bordering areas of the former Berlin Tegel Airport, a completely new district with mixed-use functions has been developing since the airport's closure. The state of Berlin founded a state-owned limited company – Tegel Projekt GmbH – to develop this quarter (see Figure 5.2). This is responsible for planning building construction and utility infrastructure, as well as project communication and marketing of the area. A substantive focus of land development is the formation of the *Urban Tech Republic*, a tech and creative quarter intend to attract technology companies and start-ups focusing on urban development solutions. In this way, Berlin is creating a centre for technology-oriented innovations in urban spaces. The aim is that great diversity and a modern start-up environment with up to 1,000 individual companies should emerge. The Berliner Hochschule für Technik will open up a new location onsite. With this new educational home for 2,500 students, close cooperation with the local tech companies and start-up environment is expected.

The second pillar of the project is the construction of the *Schumacher Quarter*, which will provide residential space for up to 10,000 people. About half of the flats are subsidised by Berlin housing associations and there will be a legal rent control. This is intended to provide much-needed affordable housing for people with lower and middle incomes in Berlin and to create a social mix in the district from the outset. One focus is on sustainable mobility and the public space is enriched by two large parks. By the time the quarter is scheduled to be occupied in 2027, all major construction and development activities will have been completed, so Tegel will be a fully planned model project from the beginning. The neighbourhood should offer all activities for daily needs. A Neighbourhood Society will systematically promote participation and involvement in the new neighbourhood, with participation formats for the conscious appropriation of public space by residents. In addition, the neighbourhood is seen as an experimental space, as the innovative urban technologies from the Urban Tech Republic provide a testing environment for identifying social space innovations in modern urban neighbourhoods. Thus,



Figure 5.2 Berlin Tegel

Source: Berlin Tourismus und Kongress GmbH (n.d.)

urban transformation is to be achieved through the technological results of the researching companies and the socio-spatial model character. In the project, the future of urban development is intended to be made tangible for residents as well as for visitors to Berlin, and leading local politicians attribute image-shaping effects to an international target group showing Berlin as a centre for innovative urban development.

Newcastle City Centre Transformation

With the central aim of creating climate-resilient spaces, the City of Newcastle is undertaking functional and physical changes to eight different inner-city squares and streets. Based on the strategic objective of economic regeneration and an overall increase in the attractiveness of the city centre for locals and tourists, the plans for all eight transformation zones have been shaped through citizen participation processes. The single projects are implemented against the backdrop of a consciously perceived process transforming Newcastle from a rather unattractive industrial city to an attractive residential city and to a city that is welcoming for business and leisure tourism (see Figure 5.3).

Saville Row, as one example, is being transformed into a new kind of garden street that increases the dwelling quality. Garden streets are areas where land sealing is reduced or reversed, and the proportion of vegetation and green places is increased. This positively addresses various resilience factors, such as reducing heat islands or the risk of local flooding (Vannieuwenhuyze, 2020). Newcastle is openly



Figure 5.3 Northumberland Street of the Newcastle City Centre transformation

Source: Newcastle City Council (2023)

addressing the issue that city centres are affected by an irreversible change in the retail structure (Gardner & Sheppard, 2012). Where occasions for shopping are disappearing, alternative uses need to be created. The aim of the various sub-projects is to create attractive places to stay that invite people to visit and meet in the community. Grey Street, as another example project, will be rebuilt in 2023 and 2024 in several phases. The event areas will be expanded so that outdoor events can take place there. Overall, the projects aim for transparent communication of the implementation steps, which also refers to the temporary burdens caused by the conversion (such as limited accessibility, noise pollution, etc.).

Barcelona Superblocks

Barcelona has evaluated its negative effects of urban densification, such as noise, air pollution, and a lack of space for exchange and encounter. The *Superblocks* are pursuing an urban planning approach that mitigates these effects and turns them into the opposite. To this end, several neighbourhoods have been transformed since 2016 by expanding and greening public spaces, enforcing traffic speed reduction, or making local shopping more attractive. The Superblocks' primary goal is to make the heat-affected city more climate-resilient through decentralised interventions. The central planning instrument is the avoidance of individual motorised vehicles through traffic bans in broad areas of the city (see Figure 5.4). The decision for the project was made politically top-down and certain development goals were non-negotiable. To increase acceptance, a citizen monitoring committee



Figure 5.4 Barcelona Superblocks

Source: Barcelona.de Tourist Info & Distribution (n.d.)

composed of supporters and critics of the transformation is being organised. In addition, when starting a new Superblock, temporary concepts are implemented first, which are then evaluated in terms of their ability to implement functional solutions in the long term.

The Barcelona Superblocks initiative has attracted a lot of attention (e.g. ADFC, 2020), and tourist offerings such as the Architectural Walks are already available. These contribute to bring socially more sustainable tourism to neighbourhood areas of Barcelona, distributing it more evenly across the city. Politically, far-reaching decisions were made by pushing through controversially discussed topics such as the banning of cars. To balance this, the initiative promotes decentralised local production and shopping areas that make the use of cars in everyday life less necessary, along with sustainable transport options, including an extensive network of bicycle lanes. The combination of several Superblocks and associated projects in Barcelona has now resulted in a network of transformed streets and squares spanning the entire urban space, increasing the overall quality of stay for the population and mobility for pedestrians and cyclists. The model is one of the earliest and most far-reaching transformation projects in Europe and has had a noticeable positive impact on the quality of life in the city. Due to the development processes, a behavioural change in the use of the city quarters among the population and visitors to the city is intended. The urban planning approach meets the zeitgeist of a conscious increase in the attractiveness of everyday life in the city centre. In principle, it is transferable to many other cities and already has some imitators, for example, Vienna.

Parisculteur

The case of *Parisculteurs* can be understood as a thematically focused programme. The project started in 2016 and is looking for potential areas in Paris for urban farming (see Figure 5.5). Urban planners set a target of 100 hectares for urban farming employing a city declaration of intent. Today, 30 hectares are already implemented, mainly in publicly owned land, educational institutions or non-profit organisations.

On the one hand, the project aims to green sealed surfaces and thus create cooler and more pleasant places to stay in the urban area. On the other hand, it pursues education on sustainable development through local food production and the individual experience of cultivating the land, which is usually impossible for metropolitan inhabitants. The associated partners and individual projects are brought together via an online networking platform. A central communication strategy is aimed at landowners, established or future urban farmers, and the general public in order to raise awareness of sustainable food production and to provide training programmes for cultivation. In *Parisculteurs*, private persons can take responsibility for public space. Compared to other urban transformation projects, the change in the urban structure takes place in a less visible and more decentralised way. However, *Parisculteur* can be seen as a good example of how urban transformation can also be tested and experienced on a smaller scale.

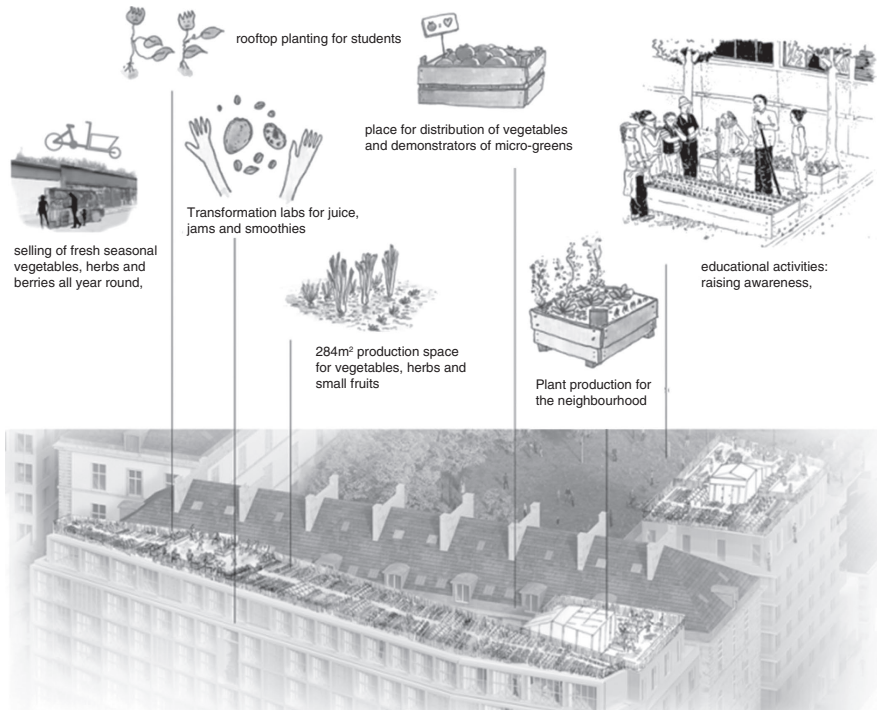


Figure 5.5 Parisculteurs

Source: Parisculteurs (n.d.), translated

3.3 Pattern Shaping Characteristics

Starting from the four projects presented in detail above, overarching characteristics for urban transformation projects can be derived. This classification covers the central phases of project conception, management and implementation. The cases draw heterogeneous approaches regarding spatial-structural preconditions, strategic approach, innovation paradigm, research orientation, political steering and project communication. Each criterion is contrasted with two exemplary characteristics that can also be derived from the project examples (see Table 5.1), whereby mixed forms of these characteristics can be observed in reality.

4 The Quality of Stay in Transformative Urban Projects

Drawing conclusions on the transformative value of urban projects means discussing their particular qualities. Besides describing technical (architectural, infrastructure) or ecological (water consumption, energy supply) factors, we focus on a quality that directly relates to all visitors and residents: the quality of stay. This represents the desired outcome of the social dimension for sustainable urban development. In this context, the quality of stay in cities hereafter roughly refers to

Table 5.1 Characteristics and project examples

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Contrasting expression</i>	<i>Example / Explanation</i>
Structural transformation claim	Improvement of functional quality vs. functional transformation	Change in the use of Newcastle Saville Row vs. airport site in residential district at Berlin Tegel
Spatial concentration of transformation project	High spatial concentration vs. decentralised/multicentralised change	Berlin Tegel: entire transformation vs. Parisculteur: Network of urban gardens
Type of innovation	Technological innovation (construction and infrastructure oriented) vs. social innovation (process-oriented)	Urban Tech Republic (at Tegel) creates new types of residential and work buildings vs. creation of new meeting spaces through closure to road traffic in Barcelona
Interest of the accompanying research	Applied interest (implementation) vs. research-oriented interest (experiment)	Barcelona Superblocks evaluation of behavioural change vs. Urban Tech Republic: Creating completely new structures for testing new forms of co-working and co-living
Political Governance	Bottom up: by creating incentive structures vs. top down: through central guidelines and coordination	All projects have some bottom-up approaches (e.g. Barcelona's Citizen Monitoring Committee) but are initiated top-down to a certain extent (e.g. city declaration in Paris)
Socio-political ambitions	Passive: creation of preconditions through building infrastructure vs. active: targeted promotion of social mix through participation projects	Berlin Tegel's quota for social housing vs. promoting outdoor events in Newcastle
Financing	Public money and non-profit character vs. private investors	Barcelona Superblocks consumption-free recreation areas vs. selling office space in Industry Park (Tegel)
Communication Strategy	Internally oriented (promoting participation and acceptance) vs. externally oriented (visualisation and marketing)	All projects pursue both aspects in a twin strategy with different weighting.

Source: Own elaboration.

the experience and satisfaction individuals or communities have while visiting or residing in a particular public space (based on Netzwerk Innenstadt NRW, 2015). It encompasses various factors contributing to its residents' and visitors' liveability, comfort and well-being. For urban planning, the quality of stay includes areas for rest, movement, green spaces or markets. In this regard, it is a central goal of urban

planning to increase the quality of stay in different kinds of districts to achieve a balance/harmony between various forms of usage.

There is also close conceptual proximity visible in those cases to city hospitality, a multi-stakeholder approach to co-create places, provide a feeling of welcome and recognise the guest–host encounters, leading to satisfaction, delight, engagement and thus, experience (Wiegerink & Huizing, 2022). The examples presented may not have tourism development as their core strategy, but they indicate a long-term commitment to securing the image and quality of life in cities, which, in turn, contributes to the ongoing development of the city as a tourist destination. Additionally, these projects are not implemented in the current tourist hotspots of the cities but rather in everyday neighbourhoods, which helps counteract potential tourist overcrowding. The quality of encounter and the quality of experience need to be recognised further to illustrate the overlapping of city and tourism management.

The transformative potentials and intermediate steps results of the various transformative urban projects studied are analysed against the background of their quality of stay. In this way, a change of perspective is adopted and the longer-term impact of the projects on the population is considered. From the various starting points and cases, a triad of quality factors emerges that can be considered as socially perceived results of successful urban transformation projects:

1. **Encounter:** The projects aim in different ways to facilitate and promote encounters between residents and visitors within the neighbourhoods. This is being pursued in Newcastle in particular, where the transformation is intended to make places more attractive for guests and locals alike. Entering the public space should become attractive. In most cases, this is achieved by creating dedicated meeting spaces or developing new open spaces through the conversion of existing areas or structural alterations. In some projects, however, encounter can also be understood in the socio-demographic sense, for instance through the promotion of local retail in Barcelona. A social mix is to take place through the targeted development of different housing concepts, the promotion of social housing and the integrated approach to residential and commercial areas such as in the Schumacher Quarter at Tegel. An additional contribution is to be made by the settlement of start-ups or cultural workers, which will enable frequency and offers for the local area. Since the aim is to achieve a basic participation of all sections of the population, recreational areas without compulsory consumption also play an important role. Encounter is also promoted by the projects contributing to improving urban ecology (especially air quality) and safety in public spaces.
2. **Atmosphere:** Another quality of urban transformation spaces is the atmosphere that accompanies their initiation and development. This is characterised by an adequate appropriation of the created meeting spaces by the population and visitors (see Newcastle's Grey Street Event Areas). In the respective individual projects, a planned intention can become more or less clear. While some projects have relatively clear objectives through specifically designated spaces for festivals and events, other areas are deliberately designed so that appropriation

takes place in a bottom-up process that is open to results (e.g. neighbourhood society at Tegel). The latter holds the potential for social innovations and the consideration of the specific needs of the different stakeholders, which usually cannot be excluded in the planning process.

3. **Purpose:** An indirect quality of stay can be seen in the enabling of a purpose that includes the positive impact of the encounter opportunities and atmosphere, such as a stronger social togetherness. The purpose is expressed both in the internal and external communication of the projects analysed. Besides communication, urban transformation projects are often subject to the normative claim of contributing to the community and social development (e.g. climate protection in Pariscultureur). The promotion of encounters and exchange go beyond simply providing entertainment and fun in an eventized experience, adding a deeper meaning. Ultimately, encounters in urban space are also a mirror for the situation of the self and the other. They are thus – consciously or unconsciously – always also processes of understanding and negotiation about socio-political issues intended to prevent subgroups from drifting apart (e.g. Tegel’s “Neighborhood Society”). Densified urban spaces are also always spaces for creativity and innovation, whereby they can be regarded as pioneering places where sustainable social interaction and experimentation should occur.

The three quality factors described above build on each other but are also mutually dependent. For example, questions about the purpose can require a new orientation

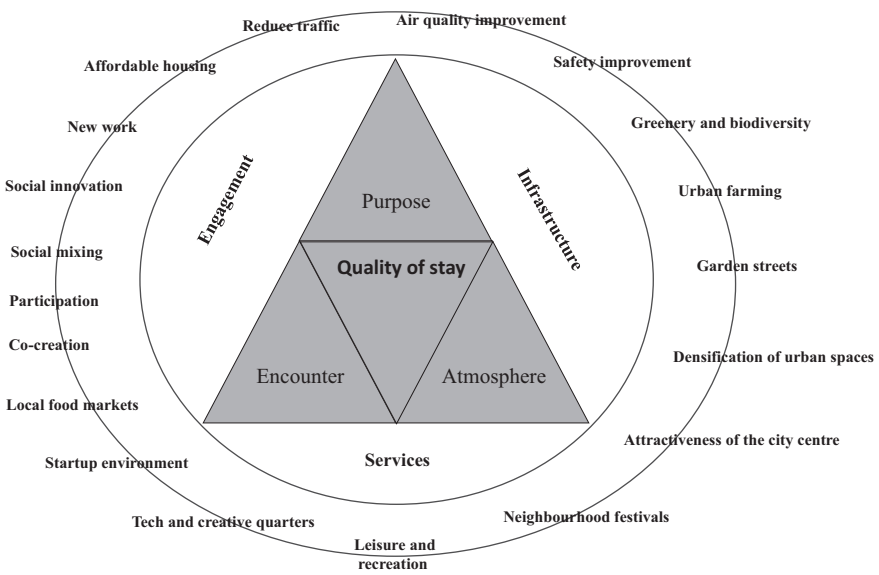


Figure 5.6 The triad of quality factors with regard to the quality of stay in transformative urban projects

Source: Newcastle City Council (2023)

and adaptation of the infrastructural development. Commercial offers, services and entrepreneurship can contribute to specialisation in certain areas, which can help professionally shape the district's transformation. Local production systems and a culture of local engagement are required here that successively reduce the use of public funds. Ultimately, the voluntary commitment of residents and visitors to co-creatively shape their urban space is an important contribution to successful transformation. Figure 5.6 illustrates aspects that complement the triad of quality factors.

For example, purpose and encounter can be associated with a certain level of engagement. Encounter and atmosphere, on the other hand, require special services. Services in this sense are not always consumption-oriented, but relate to well-being of residents and guests. Finally, infrastructure is necessary to meet the basic requirements of atmosphere and purpose. The outer framework illustrates selected examples of how this may be applied in practice.

5 Critical Thoughts on the Transformative Power of Urban Projects

The contribution has shown that the transformative power of urban projects analysed is on the right track, achieving change while taking a long-term perspective on achieving sustainable impacts on society. In this context, the ToC is particularly well suited as a theoretical frame of reference. For example, cause–effect relationships can be better understood but flexibility and adaptability also have a special importance. Projects can change, so continuous evaluation and adaptation is necessary to cope with changing conditions and challenges. However, a critical look at challenges is always necessary. Based on the seven key elements of the ToC, the following critical points can be highlighted in the context of this contribution:

1. **Chain of outcomes:** The goals of transformative projects might sometimes be overambitious. Nevertheless, it is important to justify and explain even futuristic projects and their particular values for local transformation. This requires a high sensitivity and openness in communication.
2. **Backward planning:** Starting from the long-term goals and outcomes is essential for planning transformative projects. Some of the projects analysed explain and communicate the relevant steps in a plausible way. However, urban transformation requires the integration of multiple projects and interdependencies: how should the city as a whole look in the future?
3. **Standards of quality:** Change needs to be meaningful and doable. Some urban mega projects have a scope that is hardly manageable, while small-sized projects (e.g. *Parisculteur*) can have a significant impact through many entities. A political frame and the necessary demand should be taken into account when defining the scope of projects.
4. **Change as a process:** Project managers should assess how change will occur for specific stakeholders. Most of the projects presented include a certain

participation. However, this participation needs to be conducted in an open and honest way to define the reasonability for the stakeholders and give enough time to adapt to change. Regarding the cities as tourist destinations, there needs to be a broader understanding of attractions that value quieter, more integrated experiences as a draw for visitors. This way, these projects can not only transform urban development, but they can also act as pioneering projects for a new era of “touristic” offers with a much wider portfolio of travel motivations.

5. **Resource planning:** The accuracy of resource planning is often unsatisfactory. Against the background of a sustainability transformation in cities, a clear focus on the ecological aspects helps to improve land sealing through the generation of green space and irrigation systems. Many examples show the benefits of vertical compression in cities.
6. **Stakeholder management:** Participation in urban projects should therefore include architecture, urban planners, politics, residents, mobility experts, guests and even artists and gardeners to meet the complex targets of urban transformation.
7. **Evaluation and adaptability:** Whether long-term mega projects or small-scale impulses, monitoring of projects in cities is insufficient and needs to cover the sustainability dimensions in the long run. Such projects can learn from evaluation methods that are used and experiences that are gained in real-world laboratory projects.

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