

The City as Commons

A POLICY READER

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Editor: José Maria Ramos

Address: 28 Fontein St. West Footscray, Victoria, Australia 3012 **Email:** jose@actionforesight.net **Phone:** +61 (04)31-541-068



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Image by Scott Boylston

"The geometric pattern is inspired by Frijtof Capra's discussion of the ways in which the biophysicist Harold Morowitz proposed that inorganic matter on planet Earth created conditions conducive to life. Capra discusses this phenomenon in his book Hidden Connections as a means of establishing a foundation for his ideas on organizational change. The human city reminds me of Morowitz's description of an open and vital membrane that creates conditions for the emergence of new ideas. I see urban commoning as a 'new' metabolism that has the potential for generating new forms of life/living/being.

The pattern of more than one of these bubbles illustrates that there are many cities (and cities within cities), all open to one another, and the concentric spirals explore the concept of nonlinear growth patterns of openness and new pattern making between entities."

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The City as Commons: a Policy Reader

The 'City as a Commons'—the idea of urban commoning—is an emerging body of ideas and practices, that have the potential to transform the ways in which we experience and shape our urban environments, and indeed world.

This reader attempts to bring various dimensions of urban commoning into one place, in a format that is easy to digest, communicate and advocate for. The intent of the project is to provide a resource for urban commons advocates, which helps them (you) to articulate and strategize urban commons transformation projects in a variety of areas. It is by no means complete, as the urban commoning movement has only just begun, and the scope of this 'reader' is limited to who has contributed. It is merely a step on the journey toward our cities as commons.

It is also part of a process of experimentation. Many of the ideas are new: urban collaborative governance, sharing cities, platform cooperativism, open money, the new political contract between citizens and the state, and so on. Therefore, you the reader are in a special position. Urban commoning is not a finished book, completed and to be followed like a recipe. It is a book with only the first chapter half written. You and urban commons advocates are in a place to propose new innovations and formulations. You the readers should go through each of the proposals with scrutiny and discernment. You may agree with some proposals and disagree with others. If you have suggestions for improvements for any work, let the author(s) know, or write and develop your own versions. (All the authors emails and contact information is in the biography section at the very end of this reader.)

Therefore, in this experiment in pathmaking, you the reader, as advocate, policy maker, social innovator, social entrepreneur, community development worker, writer/scholar, and citizen, play a fundamental role in this journey. It is through

you that an urban commons will be created in different cities around the world. It is through you that many of these ideas and proposals will be tested, adopted, discarded or refined. It is through you that urban commoning will transition from embryonic social practices into mature and powerful approaches that can reshape our cities.

What Is A Commons?

A simple definition of the commons is: “that which we mutually depend on for our survival and well-being”. When we consider this, there is much that is the commons. Our atmosphere, access to educational opportunities, public safety, social cohesion, the knowledge resources we need for our survival, the list is endless. But there is more to it than this.

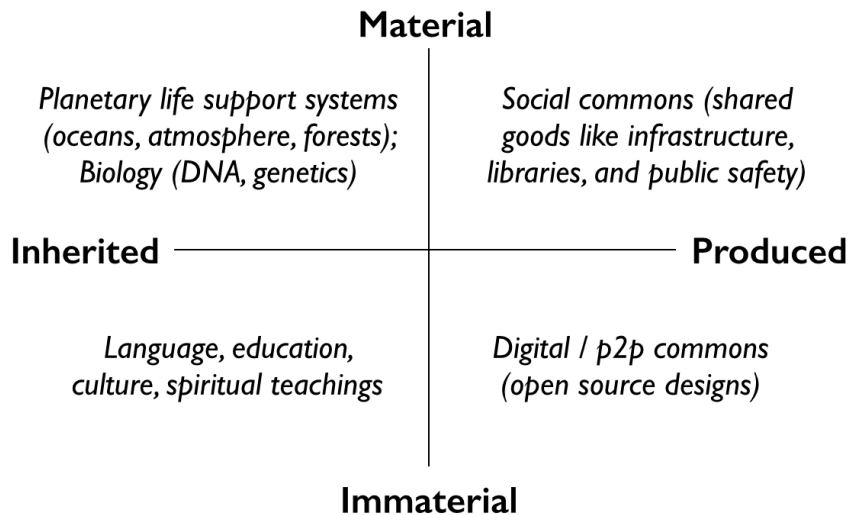
The idea of the commons has experienced a special and profound resurgence over the past few decades. Elinor Ostrom’s work, for which she won a Nobel Prize, was seminal in breaking the mental stranglehold of the dualism that characterized discussions on our commons. This dualism assumed that a shared resource must be managed by the state, or managed by private enterprise, or it was unmanageable. She showed otherwise, how people effectively manage their common resources as communities, outside of the state-market dualism.

Scholar and advocate of the commons, David Bollier, provided this succinct definition for what a commons is:

- *A social system for the long-term stewardship of resources that preserves shared values and community identity.*
- *A self-organized system by which communities manage resources (both depletable and replenishable) with minimal or no reliance on the Market or State.*
- *The wealth that we inherit or create together and must pass on, undiminished or enhanced, to our children. Our collective wealth includes the gifts of nature, civic infrastructure, cultural works and traditions, and knowledge.*

- A sector of the economy (and life!) that generates value in ways that are often taken for granted – and often jeopardized by the Market-State.¹

Peer to Peer (P2P) theorist Michel Bauwens has offered these four categories to explain some of the dimensions of the commons:



There are, I believe, four types of commons to distinguish ... The first type is the immaterial commons we inherit, such as language and culture. The second type is the immaterial commons we create. This is where the hugely important knowledge and digital commons come in (since it this digital commons that is currently exploding). The third type is the material commons we inherit, the oceans, the atmosphere, the forests, etc.; and the fourth type is the as yet underappreciated potential for the created material commons, i.e. productively manufactured resources.²

Thus, from a commons perspective, we are the oxygen generated by Amazonian rainforests, water that melted from the glaciers of the Himalaya, the

¹ <http://bollier.org/commons-short-and-sweet>

² <http://futurism.com/interview-michel-bauwens-on-peer-to-peer-economics-and-its-role-in-reshaping-our-world/>

ideas produced by thinkers of antiquity, the DNA code passed down to us through thousands of millions of years of evolution, and the open source design revolution reshaping our lives today. Our knowledge of our cosmic self defies the small logic of our individuality. Our individuality is our vehicle for experience and becoming, but it is of the commons.

What binds these all as commons is their characteristic of being critical to our mutual wellbeing and survival, such that they require a collective effort and ethos to protect and extend them. They must, therefore, be collectively governed by the members of society that depend on them for their wellbeing and survival. As we have witnessed, however, through the 20th century and through previous historical periods, the state does not always have the wellbeing of the community in mind. A state may be co-opted by moneyed interests as oligarchy, or it may become despotic. And we have also seen that private interests via processes of capitalism are also not equipped to protect the commons – capitalism, almost by definition, produces vast social and ecological externalities (problems) as a by-product of the concern with immediate profit. Protecting and extending our commons is synonymous with active, shared and inclusive governance that does not (just) rely on market and state, but which is based on the governance rights and practice of those that depend on such commons.

This activity and practice is what Bollier and Silke Helfrich point to as the deeper dimension of the commons. Commons are not things, they argue, they are “an organic fabric of social structures and processes”. Thus the commons are not an object we can just point to, and say “there it is”, but rather becomes so through enacting it with others and that “thing”. Urban co-governance ideas in this reader can thus be considered potential practices of enacting commons between commoners and the urban environments they seek to transform as such. As much as a recognition of common needs and mutual inter-dependence on some thing (water, safety, participation), it is also the creative enactment of bringing what is a “common good” into being through “the consciousness of thinking, learning and acting as a commoner.”³

³ Bollier, D. and Helfrich, S. (2015) *Patterns of Commoning*, Mass: The Commons Strategy Group / Off the Commons Books (p2-3)

Commons are thematically diverse, but they also transgress simple categories as the language and worldview from which the commons as an idea arises sees the world systemically, interconnected and interdependent. Commons are relationally active – they are embodied through the social practices of people interwoven into culture and geography. A safe atmosphere as a commons arises only through its recognition as something we mutually depend on for our survival and well-being, and which we enact as such through our practices of collective governance and maintenance. Arturo Escobar talks about this relational dynamic as a “pluriverse... made up of a multiplicity of mutually entangled and co-constituting but distinct worlds.”⁴

Thus from the point of view of the urban commons, we can think of our whole city as relational processes of commoning, where citizens recognize and enact commons through consciousness and action. For each of us who lives in a city, we may see the health of the city as our own health, a city’s resilience as our resilience, the empowerment of its citizens as our empowerment, its social relations as our relations – and bring forth new social practices that care for and nurture these aspects of our relational urban worlds.

The Urban Commons

This reader does not engage extensively with theory, however any engagement with policy does have to grapple with theory at some level. The reason for this is that policy-making sits at the intersection between two crucial elements. On the one hand, the legal (and epistemological) perspectives that frame what is deemed possible or impossible in respect to questions of governance; and on the other hand, the particular practices and strategies that are enacted to ‘make things happen’. Because of this, proposals for urban commoning policies need to be seen as embodying new legal and social perspectives that legitimate them. The current context for policy, in particular in the West, is based on positivist law, a very narrow and technical application of contractual property relations. Based on this, over the past 35 years or so cities around the world have been overwhelmed by neo-liberal and “third way” policy that provides little conceptual space for an urban commons perspective, and

⁴ Escobar, A. Commons in the Pluriverse, in Bollier, D. and Helfrich, S. (2015) *Patterns of Commoning*, Mass: The Commons Strategy Group / Off the Commons Books, (p355)

hence the policies and the practices that flow from them. Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione provide us with some of the theoretical starting points that begin to build an urban commons framework, writing:

As an initial matter, we contend that any articulation of the urban commons needs to be grounded in a theory of property, or at least a theory about the character of particular urban resources in relationship to other social goods, to other urban inhabitants, and to the state. This is especially necessary given the centrality of property law in resource allocation decisions that affect owners, non-owners and the community as a whole. As David Super has poignantly written, property law has an important role in addressing widespread economic inequality by protecting those goods most essential to the well-being of a broad swath of society, rather than just protecting the goods that are disproportionately held by the wealthy. As long as large segments of the population lack the security that property rights provide, he argues, many social problems will remain quite intractable.⁵

As Foster and Iaione argue, conventional legal theory has not had the conceptual resources needed to understand the dynamics and potentials of enacted commons and commoning, and has assumed that commons are “unregulated open access resource[s]” which people will over-consume and overexploit. By contrast, they argue, a normative (ethics based) understanding of the commons asserts a community’s right to use a city’s resources, because of the value that this produces for the whole community. In their view then, “the city is a commons in the sense that it is a shared resource that belongs to all of its inhabitants.”⁶ They write:

... the commons claim is importantly aligned with the idea behind the “right to the city”—the right to be part of the creation of the city, the right to be part of the decision-making processes shaping the lives of city inhabitants, and the power of inhabitants to shape decisions about the collective resource in which we all have a stake.

⁵ Foster, S.R. and Iaione, C. The City as a Commons, *Yale Law and Policy Review*, V.34, p.286

⁶ Foster, S.R. and Iaione, C. The City as a Commons, *Yale Law and Policy Review*, V.34, p.288

It is the very relational heart of the commons equation that transforms our understanding of governance and property rights. It is that the quality of public spaces is synonymous with our living quality; or how public safety equates to our safety; or when the price of housing relates to our livelihoods – that we are interwoven into the health of our cities – which is what must transform our relationship from passive observers of the decaying neo-liberal state to active shapers of a city as a commons. The vision which Foster and Iaione give for this they call “urban collaborative governance”. In this vision:

... all actors who have a stake in the commons are part of an autonomous center of decision making as co-partners, or co-collaborators, coordinated and enabled by the public authority.⁷

The state is then a facilitator or enabler for citizen led commoning, synonymous with proposals made by Michel Bauwen and others regarding a “partner state”, in which the state’s central role is to empower its citizens AS A WHOLE. Not empower its property developers to the exclusion of legacy residents. Nor its industry to the exclusion of the air quality of residents. But for the whole. Policy-making for the urban commons, even as it emerges, sits between such theoretical vision and the practices and strategies enacted on the ground.

A leader in the development of urban commons theory and practice is GovLab: an independently run laboratory for the governance of the commons. GovLab was developed to “train a new breed of professionals... experts in the governance of urban commons.”⁸ On 6 & 7 November, 2015 they held a landmark conference called the “City as a Commons: Reconceiving Urban Space, Common Good, and City Governance.”⁹ From the conference, GovLab distilled these learnings on the urban commons:¹⁰

1. *There are many kinds of urban commons, some existing for many decades (e.g. housing cooperatives) and others just*

⁷ Foster, S.R. and Iaione, C. The City as a Commons, *Yale Law and Policy Review*, V.34, p.290

⁸ <http://www.labgov.it/about-labgov/>

⁹ <http://urbancommons.labgov.it>

¹⁰ <http://www.labgov.it/2015/12/03/ten-points-on-the-city-as-commons/>

emerging. Social innovation is important for designing some types of urban commons and the conditions for commoning;

- 2. We must embrace the diversity of commons and commoning yet still be careful about what we call the commons; so more work is needed on analyzing what is an urban commons and what is not;*
- 3. In addition to many resources being held or managed in common, in a collaborative fashion, the city itself must be considered a commons—both as an urban space and as a governing entity. The governance of the urban commons can be a framework to update political and bureaucratic decision-making processes at the city level;*
- 4. The commons is an emerging framework for inclusiveness and equity in cities as the world is urbanizing and cities are the place where different cultures, classes and people come to live together, work together and grow together;*
- 5. The role of technology is important for the commons, but technology is a means and not an end. It must enable and support the urban commons, and the ability of people to come together and collaborate in the interest of the community or communities;*
- 6. Collective action for the urban commons should be enabling existing communities, stakeholders, and city inhabitants as much as creating new urban communities, formal and informal groups, movements, traditional stakeholders and social or collective organizations;*
- 7. Urban commons need an “industrial plan” and new economic and/or social institutions to help transition some cities, and some areas within them, away from an old economic model to one that leverages the power of commoning and collaboration to support sustainable, flourishing as well as more inclusive, just and democratic communities;*

8. *The urban commons governance principle is not self-government, nor decentralization. It is rather distribution of powers among public, social, economic, knowledge and civic actors and therefore it implies a significant investment in the design of new forms of collaboration and partnerships among these actors;*
9. *Design principles for the urban commons should be written to reflect the design principles created by Elinor Ostrom, but adapting them to the challenges and characteristics of the more political, confrontational, and overregulated space which cities represent. The study of the commons in the city should be the focus of future research beyond the study of the urban commons. More attention should be put on experimentation, institutional diversity, spreading of social norms within urban contexts;*
10. *There should be safeguards against opportunistic, exploitative, and short-sighted behaviors, as well as escapist flights and utopian or ideological visions, in developing and sustaining the urban commons. A bottom-up, as well as a circular, approach is crucial for the urban commons and confirms Foucault's argument that power is "not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non egalitarian and mobile relations".*

Along side this profound convergence are singular breakthroughs in urban commoning that are our leading lights. For example, the urban commoning experiment in Bologna involves a reconceptualization of the relationship between citizen and state, and the role of citizen as social innovator in the re-creation of the city.¹¹ Bologna provides an inspiring example of what is possible for our cities.

¹¹ <http://www.shareable.net/blog/bologna-celebrates-one-year-of-a-bold-experiment-in-urban-commoning>

It is in this context of innovation where this rather humble endeavor sits. While conceived outside of their ambit, this reader was inspired by these examples and hopes to make a contribution to this broader project of change.

Critical Themes In The Reader

When reviewing the thirty-four or more contributions in this reader, some themes clearly emerge.

The urban commons represents a **new political contract**. As mentioned, this is clearly seen in the development of the Bologna Regulation for the Care and Regeneration of the Urban Commons¹² as well as Foster and Iaione's call for "urban collaborative governance". In a number of examples in this reader, urban commoning strategies require civic-state alliances and coordination, in the vein of Bauwens "partner state" ideas.¹³ In particular, new political contracts, such as the one created in Bologna, enfranchise citizens with a right to be social innovators in transforming their cities. Likewise, such political contracts enlist the state as a facilitator charged with empowering citizens in commoning the city. If a city is a commons, then following the wisdom of Elinor Ostrom, it can be governed as one by all the members of a city that depend on its perpetual sustainment. In contrast to the "beyond market and state" notions of the commons, it is clear that for urban commoning, the state's role cannot be disowned or discarded as a critical factor.

In addition, the urban commons represents a **new culture of citizenship**. This is a fundamental transformation from citizen as passive beneficiary of technocratic systems, to one who is actively shaping the city around them, taking responsibility for the care and development of their cities. Whereas 20th century technocracy has *infantilized* citizenry, expected only to be tax payers, service users and once every 3-4 years voters, the urban commons demands that we step up as active citizens to not only create and shape our cities for the better, but indeed to play a role in actively governing our cities with others.

The urban commons also represents **new value exchange systems** that sit outside the traditional marketplace and outside municipal service relationships.

¹² <http://www.comune.bo.it/media/files/bolognaregulation.pdf>

¹³ https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Partner_State

The sharing economy, local currencies, time-banking, circularization of waste, and other reciprocity based systems are part of a new equation in which value finds new ways of circulating and enriching people's lives. To be truly commons based, these value exchange systems must circulate the value they create back into the communities that produced them.

It can also be added that the urban commons represents **new visibility for what has been invisible** in relation to urbanism. From intangibles such as culture and cultural intelligence, to the hidden costs of monopoly rents, to underutilized land, and cities' use of energy and contributions to our atmospheric commons through carbon emissions. The commons perspective naturally unearths dimensions of city life that are hidden by other perspectives, opening the way for more holistic strategies of responsibility taking and wellbeing making.

Of course, the urban commons represents a **new way of seeing the city**. It represents an emerging worldview and vision. This will evolve over time and become clearer as we make the path by walking.

Acknowledgements

This reader would not have been created without the friendship and inspiration of Michel Bauwens. While giving talks in Melbourne in late 2015, Michel dropped a match in the dry kindle of my heart, sparking this call for policy briefs that culminated in this reader.

I would also like to acknowledge the Commons Strategy Group, which brought me to Bangkok in 2012 for a commons deep dive and Berlin in 2013 for the Economies of the Commons conference. These experiences helped to seed my thinking and practice and have led to a number of commons projects and directions.

Finally, acknowledgment goes to the authors of the policy briefs that have made this reader such a delight to edit. As an editor, having carefully read through each of your contributions, I have been continually inspired by your ideas, proposals and spirit. I am sure other readers will be just as inspired as I am by your words and visions.

May our urban commons prosper and flourish through our hearts, minds and actions.

José M. Ramos

Melbourne, Australia

11 July 2016

Space

Design and the City Commons

Marco Bevolo

A number of “design principles” in order to envision and create “city commons” were defined in December 2015 as outcome (point 9) of the conference “The City as Commons”, held in Bologna, Italy. Besides enabling an experimental and diverse context, “design” was there tasked with a social function, namely that of spreading new norms. In this light, it appears necessary to first of all reframe “design” from practices of DesignArt and –in general- to move beyond iconic signature and luxury marketing strategies that since the 1970’s embody creative industry and design practices, e.g. the Italian *pret-a-porter* fashion system or the newly developed circuit of art galleries and fairs. What appears indispensable is instead going back to a socially attuned, collective mindset that finds in the Bauhaus and the thinking of Bruno Munari some of its roots. Munari, in particular, defined the role of the “designer” as opposite or complementary to that of the artist, as “design” was described in the form of a multidisciplinary, teamwork, need-driven practice of functional excellence.

Even one step further, the liberation of design practices from those encapsulations of power represented by planning was embraced since the 1964 study “*Architecture without Architects*” by Bernard Rudofsky, and is nowadays traceable in the recent articulations of “spatial agency” beyond architecture by Awan, Schneider, Till or in the concept of “minor architecture” by Jill Stoner, among others.¹⁴ Here, we look at a re-distribution of decision-making and a re-organization of the competences in the design process that

¹⁴ Awan, N., Schneider, T., Till, J. (2011), *Spatial Agency. Other Ways of Doing Architecture*, New York, USA, Routledge; Stoner, J. (2012), *Towards a Minor Architecture*, Cambridge, MA, USA, MIT

might find its most powerful synthesis within the analysis of Ezio Manzini, in his “*Design, when everybody designs*”.¹⁵

The central challenge is indeed that of “power”, and then the management and equitable distribution of decision-making across competences, skills and actors. In this perspective, the challenge of design and designers in the new definition of a commons oriented practice is that of participation beyond cosmetic co-creation. In this perspective, the “smart city” concepts promoted by electronics manufacturers and digital services “solutionist” enterprises (as in the interpretation by Morozov) appears the plain opposite of a real, vivid approach to the city as commons, as they reify and quantify organic relationships, formatting and structuring informal networks into the necessary IT standards.¹⁶ The appropriate step back moves instead to re-consider the role of the designer as an agent of research, where research is conceptualized as *future-forming* by Gergen,¹⁷ hence action-oriented and change enabling.

Examples

There are a number of examples where new design practices have expressed the logics of commons governance, and where commons oriented design is being done:

- the proposed introduction of “green connectors” in city infrastructure re-thought as interface to activate next dialogs and enable contacts, by FoRM Associates (concept: “Green (Old) Bridge”) and by GUTGUT (concept: “Green Line” for tram tracks), with designed space refocused on social interaction purposes (Vallo, Sandovsky, 2011, p.98, p.103);¹⁸

¹⁵ Manzini, E. (2015 – Eng. Tr.), *Design, when Everybody Designs. An Introduction to Design for Social Innovation*, Massachusetts, MIT

¹⁶ Morozov, E. (2013), *To save everything, click. The folly of technological solutionism*, New York, PublicAffairs

¹⁷ Gergen, K.J. (2014), *From mirroring to world-making: research as future forming*, in: *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, DOI: 10.1111/jtsb.12075 1-24, extracted from the internet on 23.09.2015, 07:30AM CET: <http://bit.ly/2ads1Ql>

¹⁸ Vallo, M., Sandovsky, O. (2011), *Urban Interventions. From Architects with Love*, Bratislava, Vydavateľstvo SLOVART

- the adoption of a platforming approach for the 2009 City Move project, designed and executed with the purpose to address the monocultural industrial tensions in the mining town of Malmberget, Lapland, as commissioned by the Swedish Industrial Design Association (Fry, 2011, p.67)
- the adoption by the city of Reggio Emilia, Italy, of the formal position of “Neighborhood Architect”, to engage in a deep dialog with citizens and propose micro-interventions within a reframing view of the city as commons

Source: <http://bit.ly/29MPH08>

- the adoption of an “open source” approach to bottom up innovation design by the City of Turin, recently awarded 2nd European Capital of Innovation, under the flagship InnovaTo

Source: <http://www.torinosmartcity.it/progetto-innova-to-premiazione-dei-migliori-progetti>

- as token of recognition by the fine arts sector, the prestigious 2015 Turner Prize was awarded outside of the perimeter of museum and art market signature names, recognizing the social contribution in Liverpool neighborhoods by Assemble, a young architectural collective

Source: <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tramway/exhibition/turner-prize-2015/turner-prize-2015-artists-assemble>

Policy Recommendations

In conclusion, theoretical tensions between a) humanities versus positivism; b) collective participation and individual intuition; c) social sciences and urban design; were detected in 2015 – 2016 as peculiar and mission-critical for the re-definition of the role of “design” in generating urban futures.

1. integrating social sciences and action research practices at early stages of the design process, and then all along until the end, using socio-cultural parameters as KPI's;

2. shifting the notion of “commissioner” from the municipality or the real estate company to citizens, exploring and experimenting with new business modeling (crowdfunding)
3. re-defining the role of “designers” from creation to facilitation, with a focus on social processes beyond the aesthetics of the built environment
4. introducing the micro-scale and recuperating the voice of diversity and minority groups into the analytical process, beyond any use or abuse of “big data” or digital technologies
5. re-investing the use of public subsidies where they exist, e.g. The Netherlands, from “shopping window” projects, e.g. Dutch Design at major trade fairs, to urban intervention investments.

The drive to rethink the city as a space of commons will require such change of mindset, as a new imperative for the creative industry.

*This contribution is an extract from the PhD thesis: *“The role of design for generating urban futures”*, by Marco Bevolo, Tilburg University, 2016

Active Transit & City Commons: Putting People Back into the City & the City Back into Place

Anthony James

Cities are now where the majority of people live. And how we get around them is one of their defining features. In that sense, it is one of the defining features of our health, conviviality and connection with the world – essentially, the basis of flourishing human life.

With this in mind, we need two inter-related shifts in how we structure urban mobility.

- **A conceptual shift** – from thinking about transport primarily in terms of being moved by motorised means ‘across place’, to active transit, moving oneself ‘in and amongst place’.
- **A practical shift** – towards a model oriented around active transit, integrated with public and shared transport. This creates a multi-modal system with an array of options available for any desired task, and moving one’s body is inherent to it. It moves definitively away from the private car (‘driver-only-driver-owned’ or DODO) model.

Why Is This Important?

Motorised transport detaches us from place. We are moved across it, rather than in and amongst it. We don’t sense what we’re missing, or the debilitating effects we inflict on ourselves. We think of ourselves as travelling the world, but only get to know the bits we arrive at. The rest of it is lost in the haze of excessive noise, light and other pollution. Beyond the reach of our senses, the world is diminished along with us.

Sedentary, passive, mechanised ‘life’ persists as our dominant cultural model. Where bodies become increasingly overweight and so-called lifestyle diseases

worsen. And where civic engagement wanes, making for more cynical, isolated and powerless people detached from what makes society function. We need to continue to reverse that pattern, moving from sedentary, passive and mechanised, to active, engaged and vital.

This isn't to say motorised transport doesn't have its place. But its place isn't at the heart of flourishing daily human experience. This makes the DODO model redundant. All the more, given its gross inefficiency and counter-productiveness:

- **The DODO car is in effect less than 1% efficient**, once its mechanical efficiency is divided by the differential in weight between the vehicle and its occupant(s). We spend vastly more energy and infrastructure on moving vehicles than people. <http://bit.ly/2a9ZoUh>
- **The average car is dormant 96% of the time** (at home 80%, and elsewhere 16%). And using our cars less while still owning them is an even less efficient use of associated urban space, resources and infrastructure. <http://www.acola.org.au/index.php/news/116-media-release-grinding-to-a-halt-rethink-needed-on-australian-urban-transport>
- **The phenomenon of 'induced traffic'** (building more roads generates more traffic) is increasingly recognised, even by roads authorities like VicRoads.¹⁹ <https://beyondthisbriefanomaly.org/2013/02/15/driving-in-circles-road-building-and-causal-thinking/>

Phasing out the DODO model liberates enormous amounts of energy and other resources, urban space, and human imagination, at a time when these are needed more than ever.

If a culture for the commons is based on active participation and care for shared cities, regions and planet, then our model of transit needs to reflect this. It needs to connect us viscerally and openly in place, enhancing connection, felt experience and agency. This provides the cultural practice and foundation for more appropriate, responsible and caring governance.

¹⁹ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-06/more-roads-not-the-answer-to-melbourne-congestion-woes/6597036>

How Can We Enact This?

- **Move away from the idea of continual and costly material expansion** - towards reduction, re-allocation and optimisation of energy, resource and other material use. We are living in a state of significant 'overshoot' of planetary (and financial and other) means, within a cultural narrative of 'more is better' (though ironically not with regards to physical movement!).
- **Re-vision our streets – in all manner of ways.** Can we imagine, for example, any given city street, liberated from the DODO, configured in, say, quarters allocated to cycling (and other wheeled active transit), walking, public and shared transport, and other worldly inhabitants (i.e. plants, streams and all the life they induce)?

Policy Recommendations

Each of the below could be analysed in depth, but broadly speaking they are notable experiments that can form part of phasing out the DODO model, and phasing in the active transit model. Needless to say, they need to be interpreted by and in local contexts.

1. **Reallocate existing road space, without costly 'Copenhagen lanes'.** If there's one thing the DODO age has brought us, it is an excess of paved earth. The City of Melbourne has re-allocated road space on Princes Bridge (pictured below), and continues to reduce speed limits, while rapidly evolving its cycling plan²⁰ and transport strategy.²¹
2. **Reduce private car ownership** – such as the current proposal by the City of Port Phillip.²²
3. **Reallocate urban space generally** including removal of roads. A number of overseas locations have been 'rewarded with not only less traffic, but

²⁰ <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parking-and-transport/cycling/Pages/bicycle-plan.aspx>

²¹ <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parking-and-transport/transport-planning-projects/Pages/transport-strategy.aspx>

²² <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/hundreds-of-new-car-share-parks-in-plan-to-steer-people-away-from-car-ownership-20160407-go0zw2.html>

safer, more efficient cities'. One streetscape vision for Melbourne looks like this.²³

4. **Review incentives** - review whole policy suites, not just transport policies, to align planning frameworks (including for e.g. carless or near-carless residential developments), reimbursement schemes, salary sacrificing, taxation etc.²⁴
5. **Prioritise the bike-rail combination** - arguably the most efficient and dynamic form of city transit. Cities become vastly more accessible if a train network caters well for bikes, such as with sufficient carrying capacity, locking or sharing facilities.²⁵
6. **Increase bike racks on buses** – common to many cities overseas, and being expanded in the ACT, Victoria is now preparing to trial the system.²⁶
7. **Continue introducing freely accessible public transport.** An increasing number of cities around the world²⁷ are finding this to be a highly effective targeted policy.²⁸ Another readily available option for maintaining free access at point of entry is to introduce a Medicare-style public transport levy.²⁹
8. **Further encourage shared transport such as bike shares, cycling and motorised taxis, and car share programs**, in particular those with an explicit mission to care for the commons, noting how Uber has reportedly

²³ <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/a-plan-to-turn-melbournes-elizabeth-street-into-a-rainforest-canal-20150303-13uk1x.html>

²⁴ <http://www.canadianbusiness.com/business-news/industries/consumer-goods/car-use-declining-in-north-america/>

²⁵ <http://bit.ly/29URwZW>

²⁶ <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/victoria-prepares-for-trial-of-bike-racks-on-buses-20151023-gkgvtt.html>

²⁷ <https://farefreepublictransport.com/city/>

²⁸ <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/01/why-cant-public-transit-be-free/384929/>

²⁹ <http://bit.ly/2a9ZoUh>

worsened traffic in New York.³⁰ The creation and rapid uptake of Seoul's car-sharing program is interesting in this context.³¹

9. **Continue to encourage staggered commuting and flexible work hours.**

Much infrastructure runs far below capacity outside of peak hour, including public transport, bike infrastructure and roads. Singapore has found this to be very effective.³²

³⁰ <http://www.shareable.net/blog/interviewed-john-thackara-on-how-to-thrive-in-the-next-economy>

³¹ <https://seoulsolution.kr/content/shared-transport-car-sharing-seoul-nanum-car?language=en>

³² <http://www.citylab.com/cityfixer/2014/07/singapores-early-morning-free-transit-program-has-been-a-huge-success/374909/>

Repurposing Public Spaces in a City as a Commons: the Library

Sandrina Burkhardt

Before the 20th century, the marketplace of the early city in central Europe was home to trust and mutual commitment between its citizens, and the foundation of a healthy and prosperous city. The agora of ancient Greece or the medieval marketplace in the city center of old Berlin was where intimate relations between citizens were established with one another. These relations were lasting, even over generations, and provided security and wellbeing for the people. Still today, human existence is experienced, organized, and negotiated around places, in particular through the shared experience that happens within those places. The rise of capitalism, however, affected this ideal of mutual obligations and commitment in which human relations were securely wrapped, and gave rise to today's 'communal ignorance'. Often enough, the city of the 21st century crystallizes itself as a nothing but a hub where people are lonely together - alone in their challenge to conquer today's transnational challenges.

The modern city, however, is the melting pot where the global social structure is experienced by people on a local level. Hence, it is either the place that breeds fear and suspicion by transporting global issues into people's own backyard, or the place that offers a stage to translate these global challenges into local solutions, co-created by citizens themselves. One way to create this stage and make it accessible as well as approachable to the community is by opening up already existing structures – structures caught in places that seem to have outlived their original purpose and hence have the capacity to reinvent themselves. To find these places we need to look into a city's cultural scene, the scene most exposed to social dynamics and trends. Physical space to these areas offered libraries and community buildings. Nonetheless, within the midst of the 21st century, these access centers turn more and more into the ruins of a time before Wikipedia and Facebook, due to a society that is moving more and more within digital networks. Yet, by reimagining these cultural assets their power to be a catalyst for dialog and mutual exchange can be revived.

Libraries As Exemplars

To put this into perspective and to provide a concrete example, the most forgotten yet promising of those places is located within one of the oldest inventions of civil lives – public libraries. In today's society, the public library offers the perfect stage to repurpose public space.³³ Not just because digital media, Google, and Wikipedia question the fundamental purpose of a library, but also because they always have been and still are social meeting places for friends, family, and Entrepreneurs, while at the same time giving solitude and a 'safe space' to those who seek it. One initiative, which utilized this capacity and set out to implement an unconditional space of direct citizen engagement, is the 24/7 public library of Salt Lake City, in the USA.³⁴ This around-the-clock-library aims to provide a public space that welcomes the entire citizenship and is already half way through its 2-year pilot period, inspiring many mushroom projects all over the globe.³⁵

In a smart city, citizenship is not a spectator sport, and by giving space and the materials to express and learn unconditionally, citizens get directly involved in the making of the city. Also, it invites other initiatives, be it public or private, to include the city community in decision-making processes, political parties find space to open up their agendas and interest groups can visualize their goals in direct connection with the citizens themselves. The motivations for citizen engagement do not lie within time but space. Even more so, it's empowering capacities lie in its unconditional character that is able to stipulate one of the fundamental pillars of a stable and educated society. They not only give access to free knowledge but also a comfortable, welcoming, and especially neutral space that is giving room to a public forum. The purpose of these unconditional spaces has no other purpose than to be purposeful for the citizens, able spark conversation, frame issues of common concern, and, even more, provide the tools to meet, share and co-create.³⁶ Hence, the repurposed city does not only give old walls new life but also reimagines the cities iconic capacities, giving

³³ <http://bit.ly/29WDMLo>

³⁴ <http://www.sltrib.com/home/2318164-155/story.html>

³⁵ <http://news.berkeley.edu/2015/08/26/moffitt-library/>

³⁶ <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/21st-century-libraries-learning-commons-beth-holland>

new life to old symbols, symbols once again able to create the dialogs and reflect a cities local identity (like they once used to) – an identity that is more diverse than ever. A smart city is not anymore about spaces that bring together the old and the young, the abled and disabled, the resident and the immigrant – it is about creating a way to include the night owls as well as the early birds, the shift workers and the nightclub bartenders, the workaholics and the unsettled. This place can and has to be found in a neutral place, a place between the folk and the leaders, the private and the public – a place like only libraries can be.

Policy Recommendations

- Establish the library as an access center that encourages a resource based, shared economy. Think of 3D printing, (wood/sewing/workshops), a library of things³⁷ and even a library of people (where people meet and share and help each other who would usually not engage with one another);
- Create a space that is unconditional and includes the entire population, not just in terms of opening hours but in terms of symbolic meaning;
- A city needs physical spaces to meet and engage with one another on their own agenda, outside of event-based settings that target only specific subgroups of the cities population;
- Repurpose spaces that already have a meaning attached in order to lower the threshold;
- Make the library an accessible and relevant tool for citizen engagement to help them share common challenges and co-create solutions outside the domain of municipal social funding and support.

³⁷ <http://www.libraryofthings.co.uk/>

Heritage and City Commons

Marta Botta

Radically changing city scapes of contemporary urban centres reflect rapid change in all sectors of our post-modern society. The 21st century brought with it techno-optimism in the wake of the Third Industrial Revolution, as predicted by Jeremy Rifkin.³⁸ The majority of cities were transformed, with city centres characterised by high rise office blocks. As land in city centres increased in value, many of the original buildings were earmarked for demolition. This worldwide trend activated wide-spread civic movements, aimed at preserving local heritage.

The importance of heritage in civil society should not be underestimated. Human beings have an intrinsic need to maintain connection with their past, both collective and individual. Lately, genealogy is experiencing a revival, and there are plenty of examples of individuals desperate to trace their biological parents if they are adopted, or their sperm donors if there were conceived by artificial insemination. The emotional investment in cultural heritage is equally evident in bonds with the physical environment, representing past history.

Resisting De-Commonification

Efforts of residents resisting the privatisation and/or commoditisation of commonly shared urban areas such as

Open squares, parks, abandoned or underutilised buildings, vacant lots, cultural institutions, streets and other urban infrastructure have been intensifying over recent decades.³⁹ These mostly unsuccessful efforts are attempts to prevent the 'enclosure of the commons', the expropriation and commercialisation of shared

³⁸ Rifkin J. (2011) *The Third Industrial Revolution: How Lateral Power Is Transforming Energy, the Economy, and the World*. St. Martin's Press, New York

³⁹ Foster S, Iaione C (2016) *The City as a Commons*. *Yale Law & Policy Review* Vol. 34, N.2

resources, usually for private market gain.⁴⁰ Additionally, local municipalities/councils tend to sell off property to raise financial resources for infrastructure development. Whether the reason for selling, privatising and demolishing is rooted in capitalist greed or perceived local government need, the emotions always run high. Grassroots movements, such as the 10 years campaign of concerned residents to save the PKO Cultural Centre in the middle of Bratislava, Slovakia;⁴¹ the passionate protest against the demolition of His Majesty's Theatre in Queen street, Auckland (N.Z.); the efforts to save sections of the historic downtown in Los Angeles;⁴² and many others, did not succeed in face of vested material interests of developers'.

However, it appears that the tide is about to turn. As a result of the changed economic climate, there are too many empty office buildings in a number of towns centres. This may halt the rampant rate of demolition, and give opportunities to re-populate city centres to give the historic centres back their 'soul'. Conversions of commercial space to flats has already been implemented in Chicago and New York City. As Rifkin proposed,⁴³ cities such as Rome could be revitalised by leaving the facades of historic buildings intact, and excavating the central core of buildings to develop communal gardens resembling atriums in ancient Roman villas. Similar renovation methods have already been employed in a number of restoration projects of heritage building worldwide, thus expanding the shared commons.

Toward a new world of commoning

The commons is a social system set up to provide long-term stewardship of resources that preserve shared values and community identity. Commoning, as a verb, is the activity to preserve and pass on the inherited cultural capital to the next generation. Commoning is facilitated by a worldview embedded in social

⁴⁰ Bollier D. (2011) The Commons, short and sweet. <http://bollier.org/commons-short-and-sweet>

⁴¹ Wikipedia (n.d.) Park kultúry a oddychu. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_kult%C3%B4ry_a_oddychu

⁴² Messy, N. (2013) The lost Victorian mansions of downtown LA. <http://bit.ly/2a06HQ6>

⁴³ Rifkin J. (2011) *The Third Industrial Revolution: How Lateral Power Is Transforming Energy, the Economy, and the World*. St. Martin's Press, New York

innovations in law, public policy, commons-based governance, social practice and culture.⁴⁴

Weak signals of this new mindset are already evident in the Millennial Generation, embracing attitudes of collaboration and sharing, rather than owning resources.⁴⁵ Practical examples of this approach can be found in Italy, where the co-cities movement inspired by Nobel Prize winning political economist Elinor Ostrom, was put on solid foundations by the LabGov⁴⁶ in a document issued by the city of Bologna entitled, *Regulation on the collaboration among citizens and administration for the care and regeneration of urban commons*.

Apart from Bologna, other commons-based experiments have sprung up in Italian cities such as the Co-Battipaglia Co-Palermo, and Co-Mantova collaborative movements. The Mantova project was supported by the local Chamber of Commerce, the City, the Province, local ONGs, SMEs, the Mantua University Foundation and local schools. However, apart from local initiatives there is a need for acknowledgement of trans-national commons, not just to save cultural heritage, but also to protect biodiversity, the sky, forest - nature as commons; and align governance with new global ecological realities across national and political boundaries.

Examples Of Successful Preservation Projects

What constitutes successful preservation of heritage? Firstly, there has to be recognition of the importance of heritage itself, and also an emotional connection with the historic object and locality. There are multipronged benefits

⁴⁴ Short C. (2008) The traditional commons of England and Wales in the twenty-first century: meeting new and old challenges. *International Journal of the Commons* 2 (2). doi:<http://doi.org/10.18352/ijc.47>; Iaione C (2014) A coordination center for the commons. LabGov. <http://www.labgov.it/a-coordination-center-for-the-commons/>. Accessed January 20 2016; Ostrom E. (2015) *Governing the Commons*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

⁴⁵ Rifkin J (2014) *The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons, and the Eclipse of Capitalism*. St. Martin's Press, London

⁴⁶ GovLab (2014) *Regulation on the collaboration among citizens and administration for the care and regeneration of urban commons*. Bologna

of preservation of local heritage. As the examples below testify, preserving heritage is not only creating civic pride and social cohesion, but by also attracting tourism, can significantly contribute to the local economy.

- **Woombye, Queensland** is adorned by extensive murals painted on public buildings of the village by local artist Brian Tinsdall and local school children. These murals create a sense of place, and help to preserve local history. The murals also became a source of pride and a tourist attraction.
<http://www.briantisdall.com.au/murals/woombye.htm>
- **Jezzine Barracks/Kissing Point in Townsville**, North Queensland is a 40 million dollar redeveloped of an army site, that was rescued from developers by dedicated local activists, and later converted by local council to an outdoor (and indoor) museum and native botanical gardens. Local native flora was reintroduced to the attractive hill top, and local and indigenous artists contributed artwork and created pavers throughout the complex, depicting thousands of years of local history with innovative interpretive elements.
<http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/jezzine-barracks-project-will-become-the-crowning-glory-of-townsvilles-strand/story-fnjfzs4b-1226751585168>.
- **Torri Superiore, Italy** is a sensitively restored 13th century medieval village. It was abandoned by its original inhabitants, and deteriorated until it was salvaged by a small group of dedicated individuals, who progressively converted it into an internationally recognised eco-community. The vision of pairing historical features with sustainable elements, such as recycling, solar power, and sustainable building materials, turned out to be a successful experiment. The three large buildings with over 160 vaulted rooms, linked by an intricate labyrinth of stairways and terraces became a popular destination for retreats, seminars, or for individual eco-tourism.
<http://academyofvisionaryart.com/seminar/photos-of-torri-superiore>
- **Lijiang** (Dayan Old Town, Baisha housing cluster and Shuhe housing cluster) in China, have retained the original historic architectural style of the Ming and Qing dynasties, in spite of numerous earthquakes including a big earthquake on February 3, 1996. The 800 years of the unique Naxi

culture of the area is acknowledged both by locals and internationally – by UNESCO, granting it world heritage status in 1997. After each earthquake careful rebuilding takes place, according to original architectural designs and materials. The intangible spiritual heritage of the ancient Dongba religion is also nourished, and the almost forgotten pictorial language of the Naxi was recently resurrected. Lijiang is extremely popular as a tourist destination, and is enriching the local economy. <http://bit.ly/2aaiFGx>

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings above, in order to enhance the heritage value and aesthetic appearance of the city and to foster civic pride, social cohesion, cultural and economic capital, the following recommendations may be implemented:

- With the vision of 'inclusive governance', collaboration between residents, local councils and industry should be encouraged through formal administrative structures, such as the GovLab co-cities movement, to share the care for urban commons.
- More involvement of youth in city planning and care of heritage can be encouraged by financial incentives for work, such as painting of murals on large exposed surfaces of historic buildings, or enhancing traditional local parks with art work; thus creating a potential for creation of a new heritage. This initiative would also eliminate chances of defacing historic buildings by graffiti, which is a worldwide problem.
- Supporting establishment of live history centres to collect remnants of local oral heritage (stories), provide computer/software for the research of family heritage, and develop 'experts' on local heritage to act as advisors to developers and councils on issues relating to sensitive local history.
- Local governance should engage with constituents via extensive use of social media, to enhance communication and consultation processes, as the majority of young and an increasing number of mature residents are already social media savvy.

- In the spirit of multiculturalism, centres could be set up to share tangible and intangible cultural heritage of non-European cultures living in the city, to foster understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural backgrounds and heritage.
- Grassroots movements in preservation of local heritage should not be underestimated, as many major improvements to urban commons throughout the world were initiated and/or accomplished by concerned residents with a vision.

Value Exchange

Sharing Cities: An Asset-based Approach to the Urban Commons

Darren Sharp

Cities are at the vanguard of the Sharing Economy as hubs of disruptive innovation, knowledge transfer and creative communities. Sharing Cities provide a new policy approach to support urban leaders in balancing the needs of the public, private and community sectors.

Sharing Cities create pathways for participation that give everyone in the community the opportunity to enjoy access to public goods and the urban commons including everything from underutilised buildings to open data and vacant public land.

Sharing Cities provide a genuine path to prosperity and sustainability based on optimising existing assets and infrastructure to support generative forms of value creation⁴⁷ in local communities. Sharing City trailblazers like Seoul, Amsterdam and Bologna have recognised that sharing builds urban resilience, economic interdependence and social cooperation.

Shareable⁴⁸ is a news, action and connection hub for the sharing transformation that has been advocating for Sharing Cities since 2012 through a range of agenda-setting initiatives that re-frame the urban conversation around important questions of shared resources, participatory governance, shared ownership and economic justice.

Shareable launched the Sharing Cities Network⁴⁹, a grassroots initiative “to mobilize, inspire and connect” sharing innovators around the world and to date

⁴⁷ Kelly, M. (2012). *Owning our future: the emerging ownership revolution: journeys to the generative economy*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

⁴⁸ <http://www.shareable.net>

⁴⁹ <http://www.shareable.net/sharing-cities>

over 50 cities have created sharing city hubs, run MapJams⁵⁰ and ShareFests⁵¹ to activate local sharing communities from Vancouver to Melbourne.

Cities are facing a range of looming challenges including everything from climate change to food security, inequality, and resource depletion. For cities to thrive and address these challenges head on, new ideas are needed that can re-frame production, ownership and consumption for a carbon and resource constrained world.

Sharing Cities provides a refreshing antidote to the top-down, technologically deterministic vision of the future we so often hear about in discussions of Smart Cities and the Internet of Things – a vision dominated by sensor networks, data mining and myriad opportunities for corporate and government surveillance.

Critical Strategies For Sharing Cities

But how does a city actually go about the task of making its assets, resources and infrastructure more amenable to sharing? This question is being addressed through a forthcoming book to be published by Shareable that will provide municipal governments and civic leaders with the best Sharing City models and actionable policies available.⁵²

The Sharing Cities Network has inspired sharing advocates to self-organise in cities the world over using asset mapping as a method to connect community groups and sharing enterprises to local government and build support for cross-sector collaboration.⁵³ Asset mapping is an important first step towards creating a Sharing City because it makes community assets more visible, helps convene local stakeholders for community building and enterprise development, and creates new opportunities for partnerships to emerge.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Llewellyn, T. (2014). Dispatches from the second global #MapJam.
<http://www.shareable.net/blog/dispatches-from-the-2nd-global-mapjam>

⁵¹ <http://bit.ly/2ahDFfY>

⁵² <http://bit.ly/1OGKcsM>

⁵³ <http://bit.ly/2avs3SG>

⁵⁴ Maclurcan, D. (2012). How to map assets and expose real wealth for shared futures.
<http://bit.ly/29Wt8EH>

City governments have a major role to play in designing the infrastructure, services and regulations that enable sharing in all its forms and strengthen the urban commons through policies for Sharing Cities that support food, jobs, housing and transportation initiatives to keep and grow wealth in local communities.⁵⁵

Examples

- Leading Sharing Cities like Seoul, South Korea have focused on increasing the sharing capacity of existing infrastructure through access to idle public buildings and free Wi-Fi for the city.⁵⁶ The Seoul Municipal Government has also enacted legislation to better enable sharing, runs an incubator program and provides financial support to dozens of local sharing enterprises that offer space, goods skills and content sharing services.
- Amsterdam has become Europe's first Sharing City and convened an Ambassador Group with representatives from the corporate, government and knowledge sectors to develop a program of activities to strengthen the local sharing economy.⁵⁷ Amsterdam Sharing City is working with partners to prototype projects as a means to explore the potential to leverage sharing for greater economic, social and environmental benefits to the city.

Policy Recommendations

The following are specific policy recommendations for city governments to support the development of Sharing Cities:

- Provide an enabling environment for sharing advocates to run asset mapping (MapJams) in local communities to build the groundswell for Sharing Cities. This could take the form of meeting spaces, staff, promotional and partnership support.

⁵⁵ Orsi, J., Eskandari-Qajar, Y., Weissman, E., Hall, M., Mann, A., & Luna, M. (2013). Policies for Shareable Cities: A sharing economy policy primer for urban leaders. *Shareable and the Sustainable Economies Law Center*.

⁵⁶ Johnson, C. (2014). Sharing City Seoul: a model for the world. <http://www.shareable.net/blog/sharing-city-seoul-a-model-for-the-world>

⁵⁷ Miller, A. (2015) Amsterdam is now Europe's first named sharing city. <http://bit.ly/2adhDrA>

- Convene a Sharing City working group comprised of diverse actors including city officials, Councillors, sharing advocates, community groups, knowledge sector and other key stakeholders to consider policy responses;
- Research how to better utilise city assets and infrastructure for shared use (e.g. public buildings, public space, vacant or underutilised land, skills, open data);
- Develop Sharing City policies that support community-based sharing (car and ride sharing, shared housing, urban agriculture, social enterprise and co-operatives);
- Identify synergies for how the sharing economy can support city goals around knowledge economy, creative economy, smart city, digital services, open data, waste management, zero carbon, sustainability and resilience;
- Enact legislation to enshrine support for Sharing Cities in municipal regulations (See 'Seoul Metropolitan Government Act for Promoting Sharing'⁵⁸ and the 'Bologna Regulation for the Care and Regeneration of the Urban Commons')⁵⁹;
- Provide grant funding to support community-based sharing groups and enterprises.
- Designate, support and promote 'responsible sharing enterprises' that are committed to solving urban challenges⁶⁰;
- Revise city procurement policies so that public spending is leveraged to support local sharing businesses including start-ups, social, enterprises and co-operatives.

⁵⁸ <http://bit.ly/29Pv2nJ>

⁵⁹ <http://www.comune.bologna.it/media/files/bolognaregulation.pdf>

⁶⁰ Cohen, B. (2015). What's a "responsible sharing economy start-up"? <http://bit.ly/250Gll9>

Community Currencies and City Commons

Michael Linton

Cities use national currencies and likely always will. But cities can now also have money that is “native”- money that is “of, by, and for” the many communities that co-exist in their economic ecosystems.

However, commons money is NOT the usual sort of money, the fiat commodity paper of the conventional economy, an expression of external authority, resources and power. Nor is it a city government money - another bad idea, a “make money from, get money from” power tool.

City commons money is community money, common money, open money - money that is free as in free speech - money that reflects and builds relationships, that provides us with a measure of ourselves, in community. Like free speech, it's both personal and community.

An openmoney⁶¹ network layer enables users to create and use as many mutual credit systems as they find fitting - neighborhood, locality, regional, special interest, collaboratives, projects, whatever counts for whoever cares.

Mutual credit systems are simple, come at very low cost, and are easy to deliver. They support circularity, reciprocity and collaboration. Mutual credit tempers competition, and has no power to control or exploit. It enables a culture that is socially equitable and convivial, multi-faceted and as complex as is fitting. For the most part, mutual credit systems require no governance, and where any administration is needed it's light work.

Without its own money, a city continually needs money from elsewhere, from beyond its place, and so is locked into import / export dependency, with all the

⁶¹ <http://openmoney.cc>

exploitation of people, place, materials, time and opportunity central to conventional economics, and the consequences we see all around us.

Common money ends monetary poverty. This is an essential first step to addressing material poverty - the need for food, shelter, energy, time. And social poverty - lack of skill, knowledge, opportunity, autonomy, tools. And organizational poverty - broken systems and dysfunctional services. And of course spiritual poverty - the fear and greed fed by scarce money in a competitive world.

Circular community currencies reduce environmental footprints, increase internal efficiencies, and eliminate unwanted (but not the wanted) "slack" in the economy.

When it is truly commons based - of, by and for - city money can fund commons infrastructure and institutions far better than current money markets, corporate philanthropy, or regional and national taxation. Basic Income Guarantee / Social Income models locally and regionally are affordable with community currencies where they are not in national money. City taxes paid in city money are better than extraction in hard \$, and the inevitable dispersal of those \$ out of the city economy.

Mutual credit systems (and other forms of circular money) have thousands of years of history all over the world, and many thousands of initiatives in recent decades - mainly timebanks, LETSsystems, commercial barter. All demonstrate the call for such liquidity, and all have worked, to some extent.

However, all are singular, by design and circumstance, so each is trying to best fit the most pressing need or attract an accessible user base. This inevitably creates limitations. To meet the variety of needs, users must have a variety of currencies. One instrument is not an orchestra, or one species an ecosystem. And until very recently, one system was all that any software, organization, or financial model could offer.

Commons money requires that all users, without administration intervention, can create currencies and declare their terms.

Only one platform now offers this - openmoney.cc ⁶². The open source software is rudimentary, but functional. A demonstration of the Android application and NFC system is online.

It is best to begin in play, to become familiar with the context, the economic and social possibilities, and the software by exploring the ideas of open money on a “scratchpad”, individually or with others. Games can have useful outcomes.

How many players - 20? 200? - need to understand these ideas to begin formal city money systems is a local choice, but will most likely emerge through p2p networking moving the memes in social networks. This service is already available, in demonstration, on browsers, and free, and there is no technical or cost impediment to local exploration, adaption and adoption.

However, to give this money away, as is required, and make a living doing so calls for different business models than the usual - “crowd changing”- an extension on crowd funding - applies community currencies to fundraising for projects and causes in particular or general. See community way.⁶³

In retail, loyalty loop systems, running tabs, and gift cards can all bring revenue to a business, and the openmoney service can support this at no cost. Every such a card is compatible with, and easily upgraded, to full openmoney services if the user chooses.

The cost of the technology to end monetary poverty⁶⁴ is ~ 50 cents for an NFC tag per user.

Governments should enable and learn,⁶⁵ but should generally NOT implement.⁶⁶

⁶² <http://openmoney.cc>

⁶³ <http://openmoney.org/cw>

⁶⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/nc44rjt>

⁶⁵ <http://archive.lets.net/gmlets/design/dm4%5E1.html>

⁶⁶ <http://openmoney.blogspot.ca/2013/07/community-currencies-and-local.html>

Examples

- Curitiba Remix, <http://tinyurl.com/o2rcn9t>
- Irish Question, Irish Answer, <http://tinyurl.com/lcc8n5y>
- Sustainability & Money, <http://tinyurl.com/q7orbes>
- Sources
 - <http://openmoney.cc>
 - <http://openmoney.org>
 - <http://openmoney.org.uk>
 - <http://openmoney.editme.com>
 - <http://openmoney.blogspot.ca>
 - <http://openmoney.ca/letsplay>
- Chronology <http://tinyurl.com/mmne6sh>
- Core
 - <http://archive.lets.net/gmlets/design/home.html>
 - <http://letssystem.org/> <http://lets.net>

Time Banks and City Commoning

Teppo Eskelinen

Recently, new economic systems called “time banks” have emerged in numerous cities and countries. Time banks are a form of peer-to-peer service production. The members each have an account which uses time as currency. If A does something for B using two hours, two hours are credited to A's account, while B's account is debited two hours. The system organizes matching skills and needs, promotes the virtue of egalitarianism (everyone's time is equally valuable), and fosters reciprocity: the “time account” is ultimately balanced at zero on long term basis, even though the system allows for high flexibility. Time banks can be seen as a mixture of economic activism, a complimentary social safety net, volunteering, and a community empowerment mechanism.

Time banks:

- Build social relations between members on the community
- Create a sense of reciprocal support within the community members by making use of skills already existing within the community
- Enforce a stable local economy without corporate control
- Encourage active citizenship, particularly amongst those who normally volunteer least
- Enable flexible economic participation for people categorized as not being in the labor market
- Create social safety nets for isolated people (eg lonely elderly people)

Key Methods

Sometimes services provided in “time currency” are of such nature, that they can be seen as a service requiring professional skills, rather than mere neighborhood activity. It is indeed impossible to make a clear distinction

between a professional and non-professional service, and the method of time banks is clearly against making such distinctions. This has led authorities to accuse time banks of tax avoidance: indeed, the services provided within time banks are not taxed, even though they do produce a kind of gain. This has caused attempts to tax time bank transactions. Time bank users argue, that if time banks are forced to value the services provided in official currencies for taxation reasons, their egalitarian ethos is destroyed along with strong networks producing high social value and cultures of participation.

What the time banks need is to be able to flourish and grow without arbitrary restrictions to their activities or forced valuation in official currencies. I have suggested that this could be secured with the creation of a “time levy”, a small automatic levy in time currency on each transaction. This would be paid by the time bank users and be directed to the time bank account of the municipality.

In exchange for receiving this “time tax” income, the municipality would commit to secure a government-level official guarantee time banks’ operational freedom without taxation pressures. Time banks would thus be recognized as a community empowerment function, contributing to and protected by the city.

The time gained by the “time levy” should not be seen as a given amount of available work for the city’s disposal. Rather, the idea of the levy is to enforce community-building aspects of municipal services. The control of the municipality’s account should thus be given to grassroots-level municipality workers; for example people running community centers, youth centers, etc. Thus the time levy could be seen as a tool to create incentives to volunteer in community-building. No time bank member would of course have any obligation to gain “time” by working for the municipality, but anyone contributing to these functions of the municipality would naturally gain time in their time bank accounts. The “time tax” system would generally enforce the commoning aspect of municipal services.

Policy Recommendations

Municipalities should seek to act proactively to ensure the full operational possibilities of time banks, even though some aspects of time banking can be

seen as providing professional services which are usually taxable. Time banks should be seen as community development despite their economic aspects.

In order to realize the time levy system, a strong trust between the time bank and the municipality is required. Further, the municipality needs to join the time bank and set up an account like any other user.

More generally, cities should see time banks as allies with a common goal, enhancing the local economy and fostering participatory practices. The city officials, rather than asking, whether time banks are legal, should ask, how can the time banks' method of participation be reflected in the operating logic of municipal services.

Links

- General on time banks: <https://www.community-exchange.org/home/>
- Time bank functioning principles and ethical code: <https://stadinaikapankki.wordpress.com/in-english/helsinki-timebanks-abc/>
- On complementary taxation and time banks: <http://blog.p2pfoundation.net/discussing-time-banking-and-taxation-no-euro-taxation-but-complementary-taxation/2013/07/21>
- Case study on time banks as community development: <http://bit.ly/29MTH0C>

Construction Waste Transformation and City Commons

Scott Boylston

With an eye towards challenging old habits of thought, building demolition waste can be transformed from a disposal liability for the commons to a resource at the disposal of the commons. A holistic approach to transforming urban construction and demolition (C+D) waste into resources for local wealth generation is needed. Such a process could aid municipalities in creating inclusive strategies that defray demolition costs, increase material reuse, and enrich public, private, and community interdependence.

As estimated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, over 230,000 public housing units will be demolished in the next few decades in the U.S. alone. Municipalities around the world are confronted with managing the material streams resulting from this expensive, destructive, and energy intensive process. Along with the significant environmental impacts that this scale of devastation creates, the further disenfranchisement of chronically disadvantage communities will result if the demolition is handled in a business-as-usual manner.

Considering a wider angle, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates there are 84 million tons of demolition waste being landfilled in the U.S. annually. This number does not include waste from renovations or construction. And, while the U.S. can be said to have a tragically unique relationship with its built environment, many other countries lack regenerative strategies for managing demolition debris. Governments confronted with these material streams make poor use of them, creating liabilities rather than assets. Everyone suffers the consequences.

Common Based Transformation Of Waste

A promising approach to this problem involves a systemic focus on generating physical, human, financial, social, and intellectual capital. Waste streams can be transformed into structures for historically under-served communities such as

greenhouses, park benches and tables, and pergolas, as well as supply chains for vocational training and entrepreneurial development (physical capital). Building deconstruction and reclaimed material preparation can become a vehicle for training under-employed populations, and stimulating small business development (human and financial capital). Diverse communities can be brought together through communal material preparation and 'barn-raising' events (social capital). And new operational processes can be co-designed and shared with construction companies and municipal agencies (intellectual capital).

Emergent Structures has developed a multi-pronged strategy for C+D waste transformation with localized wealth creation resulting from these material flows. Through on-ground iteration, inclusive design practices, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, this organization has developed the tools, knowledge, and capacity to facilitate the successful application of this process in other cities. A 3-tier planning and implementation model (market transformation; tri-sector partnerships; and cultural transformation) serves as an *a la carte* menu for wealth generation and community development. Emergent Structures is also in the process of creating a cloud-based Enterprise Resource System that will make this process more efficient for municipalities and engineering and construction companies.

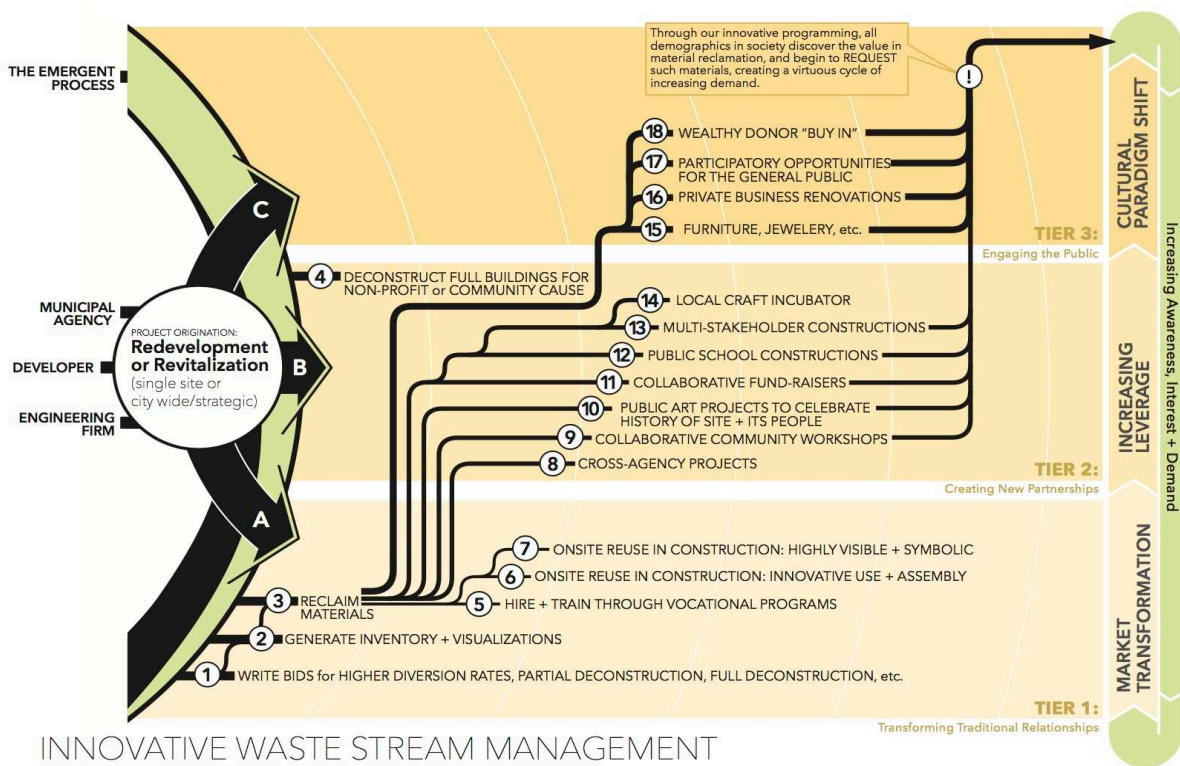
Industry-wide commitment to this re-imagining of built environment material flows can be stimulated through new language in RFPs (requests for proposals) that municipalities draft for their redevelopment projects. New ordinances such as Cook County's proposed Demolition Debris Diversion ordinance (318999) can also stimulate innovation in this area. Furthermore, waste processing facility fees (tipping fees) can be increased to reduce the subsidizing of destructive demolition practices and stimulate business innovation in the area of material reuse.

Examples And Links

- Emergent Structures www.emergentstructures.org
- Superuse www.superuse.org
- Basurama <http://basurama.org/en>

Policy Recommendation

- Ordinances requiring higher percentages of 'clean wood' land fill diversion that specifically include requirements for weight and volume percentages of on-site re-use
- Incentivize C+D material re-use in new greenspaces within neighborhoods undergoing large-scale blight removal and redevelopment through RFP (request for proposal) verbiage.
- Provide deconstruction grants for private homeowners.
- Fund the creation of a municipal building material broker who works with developers to strategically plan for material reclamation and re-use.
- Require a deconstruction plan and report for all buildings over certain sizes.




INNOVATIVE WASTE STREAM MANAGEMENT AS CAPACITY BUILDING + WEALTH CREATION STRATEGY

Planning for C+D waste management in traditional large scale redevelopment projects too often begins too late in the overall process, and is reactive rather than strategic. An attitude of resignation is all too common, and things slip downhill from there. As a remedy with cascading benefits, innovative strategies can be identified up front, and partnerships can be postulated

early. And rather than self-interested parties in control of planning these strategies, an objective and deeply knowledgeable consulting body can guide the process of identifying high value propositions for partnership building, strategic planning, data collection, community relations and strategic promotional opportunities. Emergent Structures has piloted such a holistic

process, and we have created a process that can transform traditional C+D waste management into an innovative strategic process that benefits everyone. By benefits, we mean measurable benefits, and by everyone, we mean everyone.

emergent structures 

Production

Platform Cooperatives for Democratic Cities

Nathan Schneider

Modern cooperative enterprise developed alongside the rise of the modern industrial economy—a fairer and more democratic step-sibling, of sorts, though never quite as friendly to the ruling class of robber-barons, and thus always resigned to secondary status. Cooperative businesses vary widely, but as a rule they strive to practice shared ownership and governance among the people who depend on them most. As a result, they are profoundly place-centered, keeping the wealth they generate local rather than shipping it off to a far-away headquarters.

The Internet economy, in contrast, appears to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time, but of course we know that isn't exactly true; the founders and owners are somewhere, and their server farms may or may not be subject to the surveillance of local security agencies. The rise of platforms like Uber and Airbnb—and their disruption of municipal transportation and housing systems—have brought the geographical realities of the Internet economy even more into focus.

It is in this context that what my colleague Trebor Scholz dubbed “platform cooperativism” has begun to gain momentum—a marriage of the cooperative tradition with the online platforms that are increasingly shaping our economy, operating as a new types of public utilities. Imagine, for instance, if Uber drivers co-owned Uber, or if Airbnb were governed through locally elected boards?

Thus far, cities have mainly reacted to the intrusion of these platforms by finding various ways of saying “no” to them. Platform cooperativism gives cities a kind of platform economy they should be eager to say “yes” to.

Cities Can Lead A Transformation Of The Platform Economy

Maria del Carmen Arroyo, a former New York City Council member who supported legislation to fund worker co-ops in the city, has said,⁶⁷ “Worker cooperatives offer a viable method to address the long-term challenge of reducing the number of chronically unemployed and underemployed residents and the number of workers trapped in low-paying jobs.”⁶⁸ Platform cooperativism, she added, “can put the public in greater control of the Internet, which can often feel like an abyss we are powerless over.”

Cities are increasingly the terrain on which the online platform economy is taking root in the world around us. Cities, therefore, need to take a leadership role in shaping this economy’s future. Promoting more democratic ownership and governance of online platforms is a way that cities can ensure that the Internet economy lives up to its promise as a true commons and a means of generating shared wealth.

The Need For Ecosystems

Developing cooperative platforms will not be easy. The online economy is dominated by a business model driven by powerful private investors with specialized knowledge that others generally lack. Furthermore, education and legal support for cooperative businesses—online or offline—is in poor supply.

The emergence of a more democratic online economy requires more than just a few killer apps; it will require an ecosystem of financing, legal resources, education, and community that, together, can create a runway for promising businesses. Just as cities have sought to cultivate conventional tech industries, they can take steps to facilitate cooperative ecosystems.

Actually Existing Platform Cooperativism

There are currently a handful of existing platform cooperatives in various stages of development.

⁶⁷ <http://platformcoop.net/participants/maria-del-carmen-arroyo>

⁶⁸ Arroyo, Maria del Carmen. (November 2015). Platform Cooperativism for NYC, abstract for Platform Cooperativism conference.

<http://platformcoop.net/participants/maria-del-carmen-arroyo>

- Stocksy United is a successful online stock-photo cooperative owned by its photographers.
- Loconomics is a gig platform like TaskRabbit owned by its workers.
- Robin Hood Minor Asset Management is a cooperative hedge fund whose members choose to support commons-producing projects.
- Juno is an emerging Uber alternative in which drivers are co-owners.

These are only a few. (For a comprehensive list see: <http://internetofownership.net>)

I am currently involved in developing a directory of the global ecosystem for platform cooperativism, which is in prototype form at internetofownership.net. It includes pages for groups cultivating ecosystems regionally around the world.

Policies For Cooperation

Cities should develop policies that support the development of cooperative enterprises, online and off. This can include direct business development funding, as well as preferential treatment in city contracting—both of which are being pursued in New York. Locally rooted organizations like universities and hospitals can act as “anchor institutions” by using their own contracting needs to seed and support cooperatives that are just as rooted in their communities. Cities should also make sure that the requisite law is in place so that forming cooperative businesses is no harder than forming less democratic forms of enterprise.

As online platforms come to function like public utilities, we need a new generation of anti-trust laws to manage these monopolistic actors. Rather than breaking them up, however, policymakers should consider requiring that utility-like platforms convert into more cooperative structures so they can be owned and governed by the people who depend on them.

Silicon Valley tends to imagine the rise of the online economy as uniform and inevitable; cities, by supporting democratic forms of enterprise, can demonstrate otherwise. They can show that their residents really do have the

capacity and the right to determine their own economic and digital futures, in diverse ways.

Coworking: Challenges and Opportunities for a Prosperous and Fair New Economy

Julian Waters-Lynch

"The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights".

David Harvey⁶⁹

What Is Coworking?

Coworking is the practice of heterogeneous groups of independent workers (usually non-standard workers such as freelancers or early stage entrepreneurs rather than employees) sharing physical workspace, often sharing knowledge and sometimes collaborating on shared projects within a bounded environment. This style of working began around 2005 in various guises in major knowledge cities including San Francisco, Berlin, New York City, London and Toronto. The number of 'coworking spaces' and 'coworkers' has grown exponentially since its inception.

Coworking spaces are most commonly found in the inner creative suburbs of cities, frequently alongside bohemian cafes, boutique bars, and largely service workers at the intersection of emerging digital technology, marketing, communications, finance, design and the cultural industries. Coworking spaces, alongside startup accelerator programs and makerspaces, have become emblematic sites for creative knowledge work in the 'new economy'.

However, much more than work takes place in coworking spaces. From large public events, to small informal discussions, coworking provides a shared bounded context for strangers to meet. Coworking practices can encourage

⁶⁹ <http://newleftreview.org/II/53/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city>

forms of social learning, nurture social solidarity, and facilitate civic engagement forming part of an emerging 'network of public spaces'.⁷⁰

Consequently, in its formative period, the concept of 'coworking' was viewed optimistically by a variety of actors interested in revitalising more intimate forms of social relations within large cities, more sustainable and cost-effective use of existing space and resources, and novel forms of post-corporate organising between independent workers.

The 'Used Future' Of Coworking

The 'new economy', however, is neither an homogenous entity nor an unambiguously good thing. Firstly, it is rapidly decoupling from the 'old economy', characterised by more routine manual and cognitive labour, forging stark social and geographical divisions between the inner city domain of the new creative knowledge economy and the outer suburban and regional domains of the older economy. Secondly, even amongst its knowledge work participants, the benefits of economic activity are being concentrated at an alarming rate amongst a small investor and founder class. The business models that most capture the attention of venture capital seek to aggressively leverage network effects and superstar theory to construct near monopolies in which 'users' create value through their interactions that is largely absorbed or appropriated by the platform providers. Although the creation of desirable product-platforms certainly requires entrepreneurial, design and engineering skills, once established they tend to seek rent as 'digital landlords'. Although many workers increasingly participate in the new economy, they often do so through precarious forms of contract work.

Coworking services usually offer a hybrid model of shared physical space and an interactive but enclosed digital environment for members. As the awareness of the concept has grown, coworking has increasingly been discussed through the prism of a new investment opportunity for the real estate industry, an opportunity to participate in the emerging 'platform economy'.⁷¹ The focus here is largely on the 'innovation' of 'lease arbitrage' - the practice of dividing large long-term leases into small parcels to sell on a monthly basis to the individuals

⁷⁰ <http://networkedpublics.org/>

⁷¹ <http://blogs.wsj.com/cio/2016/02/12/the-rise-of-the-platform-economy/>

and small teams that pay for coworking services. Such a focus frames coworking as a new model for landlords and old capital to seek ongoing rents from new workers. There are two problems with this narrative. First it obscures the way coworking offers an enabling platform for *citizens* to creatively organise through accessible shared environments. Secondly, as participating in new social platforms become increasingly important strategies in finding work in the new economy, we should question their optimal ownership and governance arrangements.

The private platform monopoly version of coworking where 'community is understood as a product'⁷² to be sold is a *used future*⁷³ that we can avoid by considered design. A future where work and social relations are constructed around private clubs, where precarious knowledge workers pay monthly fees to enterprises in order to find meaningful community experiences and form the personal relations that enable socio-economic mobility should be met with suspicion by citizens and policymakers with an interest in the evolving urban commons, and maintaining the many hard won conditions of dignified work.

Coworking And The Urban Commons

Alternatively, coworking platforms could be sites that help bridge the growing divisions between the old and within the new economy. Coworking practices could help to alleviate rather than reify economic privilege. We can identify some clear design principles that can steer coworking towards a preferred future, without needing to mandate single model solutions.

Here are four examples of coworking ventures that proffer alternatives to the real estate centric, used future model:

- Enspiral is a network of ventures committed to public value that includes a coworking space in Wellington. <http://www.enspiralspace.co.nz/>

⁷² <http://www.shareable.net/blog/look-out-coworking-here-comes-big-money>

⁷³ 'Used future' is an idea developed by futurist Sohail Inayatullah, and refers to an image or idea of the future that someone else created in some other context, but to which we are unconsciously holding on to, which is blinding us to other more authentic and empowering ideas of the future.

- Gangplank is a coworking provider in North America that does not charge monetary fees but asks for exchange through 'time, talent or relationships'. <http://gangplankhq.com/>
- Seats to Meet is a coworking platform in the Netherlands where users can 'pay with social capital'. <https://www.seats2meet.com/en>
- Koala and Ecto in Montreal, (<http://www.espacekoala.com/>; <http://ecto.coop/>) and Prime Produce in New York City are coworking spaces operating as a member owned cooperatives <http://www.primeproduce.org/>

Such examples are offered as points of departure towards exploring alternatives, rather than final destinations to be emulated. The origins of the coworking movement were characterised by experimentation at the intersection of novel social practices and enterprise models, and this should continue. Yet experimentation can occur within a framework of desirable principles.

Recommendations

Here are four broad directions urban policymakers should consider when supporting the development of coworking within their jurisdictions:

- Be cautious about monopolistic or anti-competitive tendencies, especially by highly capitalised providers. Steer policy towards encouraging a diversity of ownership amongst coworking providers. Coworkers themselves would benefit from federated models that enable 'interoperability' between different providers.
- Be cautious about the dominance of spaces owned and governed by private individuals, steer policy towards spaces that embed robust multi-stakeholder governance, and ideally distribute the ownership, control and benefits amongst coworking members.
- Be cautious about increases in pre-designed, non-flexible work environments with little space for group meetings. Steer policy towards encouraging ample space for public events and 'editable' environments,

that participants can shape and reassemble as needed and leave signals for others to find.

- Be cautious about spaces that are dominated by private startups seeking venture capital, steer towards supporting spaces that also nurture civic innovation and the creation of public value.

When informed by commons oriented design principles, coworking spaces and practices can offer platforms that contribute towards shaping a new economy that is both prosperous and fair.

Orchards and the City as a Commons

Timothy Dolan

Urban orchards are a natural extension of the urban gardens movement, which has been an ongoing enterprise for as long as cities themselves have existed. Like urban gardens they are iconic expressions of the commons, especially when cultivated in public and quasi-public spaces as in shared residential yards.⁷⁴ However, more than with gardens, urban orchards can provide a more robust marker of the viability of the “city as commons” concept.

It is first useful to understand urban orchards as roughly classified into 3 types:

- Remnant/legacy
- Informal/ornamental
- Intentional/functional

The remnant/legacy orchards are the most problematic as they are most likely to fulfill the “tragedy of the commons” narrative. As the land is converted into residential, commercial or industrial use, its status as an orchard is obliterated as supporting infrastructure (cultivation supplies and equipment, expertise, processing, storage and transport) dissipate. Orchard lands overtaken by urban expansion are often abandoned, decrepit and thus become a serious source of disease to other fruit and nut trees in their vicinity. Remedies include statutory removal by the owners of “ghost orchards”, strategic thinning into ornamental yard features, or segments converted into neighborhood parks, gardens or incorporated into school campuses, library grounds or other public spaces with an infrastructure equipped to maintain them.

Informal/ornamental orchards are essentially incorporated into the urban landscape in private spaces, parks or in medians along streets. They are valued more for their seasonal blossoms than for their fruit. In fact, those fruit trees that

⁷⁴ Lang, U. (2014). The common life of yards. *Urban Geography*, 35(6), 852-869.

do bear such as apples, cherries and plums in cooler temperate areas; citrus, or olives in Mediterranean climates or lychee, guava and mango in tropical ones are often considered “dirty” and a nuisance with their bird pecked or insect flecked fruits left to rot and/or stain vehicles parked under their branches. Informal/ornamentals can be nurtured to bear edible fruits and nuts, albeit below commercial quality, with relatively little investment by their owners or public entities charged with their care. However, this value has to first be recognized and sufficiently valued by the community so that the investment can be made. Such a recognition would ideally manifest itself in local government or community volunteers securing the services of a trained arborist with knowledge of the orchard trees in their midst.

Intentional/functional urban orchards are explicitly designed to produce edible products ranging from fresh fruits and nuts to jams, juices, sauces and concentrates for consumption. Some are also designed to showcase food security and environmental education. For the most part, present urban orchard efforts are largely *ad hoc* affairs initiated and sustained by community activists. Here, the challenge is in maintaining long-term commitment to cultivation and production beyond a singular charismatic figure.

In all of the variants outlined above, relatively few people have the vision and expertise to work with trees that can take several years to begin to bear, and that sometimes only bear in alternating years. Cultivation requires specific skills to properly water/drain, fertilize, control for pests, recognize and treat diseases, prune, harvest and then possibly process. Unlike typical gardens the work is long-term and episodic which also can be an impediment as it is less habitual than vegetable tending.

There are two effective pathways to fruit and nut tree tending. The first is to incorporate orchard trees into existing garden spaces. The second is to site orchard trees onto campuses or public parks where a custodial and equipment infrastructure is readily available for their care. In the former instance these operations are augmentations of active community involvement. In the latter instance they are more institutionalized expressions of services in the public interest.

Maintaining Urban Orchards as Commons

The practical challenges might be in developing and maintaining urban orchards of any type, they are manageable and potentially very rewarding in a number of ways. For instance if sited at or near a school, they become excellent educational vehicles for understanding natural processes such as the implicit survival strategies behind fruit and nut bearing trees. With mentorship, students become their caretakers, connecting them to the trees and to the land. Given such proprietorship they become the guardians of such places and not their vandals. I know this in a direct sense as a former director of a city youth corps. Furthermore they can connect students with the legacy of their region if formerly an orchard area. They learn intimately where their food comes from and potentially link with local food movements that support small-scale farming and food production. In other words they form a generational cohort that sustains the commons concept.

Recommendations

Too many good intentions fall apart for lack of translation of vision into action and finally into cultural integration. The industrial age destroyed the commons by creating a massive immigration of young, single, mostly male workers into cities where daytime hours were consumed with manufactured production. Now a holistic, environmentalist and possibly post-consumerism ethic that includes a heightened awareness of where food comes from, a unique demographic of surplus labor either as retirees or “unemployed” youth, and a more stabilized urban growth curve coupled with an organizing mechanism in social media may prove to be a recipe to resurrect the commons.

This is an undertaking that requires a great deal of consensus building and planning at the front-end. I have personally witnessed a flash mob approach to planting where the act might feel good that day, but the project itself is doomed for lack of planned cultivation. The best approaches appear to be augmenting existing community gardens with trees or site them in parks, or school campuses where there is some infrastructure for their care. The good and bad thing about urban orchards are that their maintenance is episodic which allows for caretaking and harvesting events, but can also lead to complacency and neglect.

The rise of the local farming movements, urban gardens, and now urban orchards point to the nascent reemergence of the commons as a useful metaphor for this next phase of the urban experience. What will fulfill it is its wider acceptance within the marketplace of ideas led by urban planners and a public that finds merit in a more integrative, less alienating, less overtly commercial and more expressive use of public spaces.

Examples And Links

Many urban orchard initiatives are now at various stages of development internationally. Here are three urban orchard links that provide a basic range of types:

- The first is the explicitly named “Urban Orchard Project” in the U.K., It’s participants “ . . . work in partnership with communities to plant, manage, restore and harvest orchards in urban areas to help us all to rediscover the pleasure of eating home-grown fruit.”:
<http://www.theurbanorchardproject.org/>
- The second effort is the relatively well-established urban orchards program overseen by SF Environment funded by the city’s carbon offset fund.
<http://sfenvironment.org/article/managing-our-urban-forest-types-of-urban-agriculture/urban-orchards>
- A continental European model is expressed in an initiative by Madrid’s mayor for the purpose of making the city more livable reported through this Lifegate site: <http://www.lifegate.com/people/lifestyle/madrid-green-spaces-tackle-smog-high-temperatures>

*These are basic examples of works in progress and are hardly comprehensive.

Cosmo-localism and Urban Commoning

José Ramos

A New Model

Cosmo-localism, or Design Global / Manufacture Local,⁷⁵ describes the dynamic potentials of our emerging globally distributed knowledge and design commons to play a major part in facilitating localized production and manufacture of goods.⁷⁶ It already exists today in many quickly maturing forms such as with the Global Village Construction Set,⁷⁷ FabCity,⁷⁸ as well as medicines and other goods under Creative Commons licenses (which are then manufactured). Cosmo-localism takes place when easily accessible designs are paired with localized and distributed production capabilities using breakthrough technologies, both virtual and physical, that facilitate local manufacture / production.

Cosmo-localism inverts the conventional logic of industrial production. Traditional manufacturing and production usually located intellectual property within a single company, manufactured a product in a relatively centralized place (even if the raw materials were from elsewhere), and then exported this nationally or globally. The neo-liberal turn (starting in the 1970s) saw the emergence of a Global Factory whereby goods are manufactured in different countries and then assembled in one country for export; yet even with the globally distributed corporation, intellectual property is normally housed in a corporation (or sometimes licensed), and even while production can straddle a number of countries, assembly centers will then export their products nationally or globally. Cosmo-localism represents an inversion of this logic of production. With cosmo-localism, intellectual property is available globally for all to use. And

⁷⁵ https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Design_Global,_Manufacture_Local

⁷⁶ <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/cosmo-localism-futures-material-production/2016/06/01>

⁷⁷ http://opensourceecology.org/wiki/Global_Village_Construction_Set

⁷⁸ <http://fab.city/>

distributed production centers utilizing new production technologies allow enterprises or enterprise clusters to manufacture and produce such items locally for local markets and specialized purposes.

	Traditional manufacturing enterprise	Distributed manufacturing enterprise (neo-liberal global factory)	Cosmo-localization
IP / knowledge sharing regime	Held by one company	Held by one company or consortium (e.g. Apple)	Shared under open or CC or Peer Production license etc.
Location of manufacturing	A single or local manufacturing center	Global factory, wherever the product can be most cheaply and effectively produced, elements of product can be produced	Globally distributed networks of localized manufacturing, depending on take up and use of global design commons
Transport and trade	Product sent from local manufacturing centers to other places	Parts move across many countries and once assembled are shipped for trade	Requires development of localized production ecosystems for complex manufacturing, Micro-manufacturing clusters
Enterprise model	Publically Listed Corp., Family Owned Corp., Nationalized Corp.	Corporation or consortium with complex supply and distribution ecosystem	Open value network model, ³ Platform Cooperatives, Maker Spaces, Phyles / Trans-national collectives

Comparative logics – current production and cosmo-localism

The potential benefits of cosmo-localism include:

- can drive the development of localized circular economies that can reduce or eliminate waste;
- localized production of critical products can make a city or region more resilient in the face of financial and environmental shocks;
- import substitution can generate local jobs and expertise and provide new development pathways;
- can drive the reduction of imported goods from far away places can also reduce carbon and environmental footprints.

Strategies For Cosmo-Localism

Cosmo-localism is a new and emerging approach, with its strategies still evolving. However, here are some initial ideas for strategy development:

Start micro-scale. Cosmo-localism can tap into the development of community and worker owned and run maker enterprises (such as Platform Cooperatives),⁷⁹ or social / sustainability oriented businesses. It needs to be able to create startups at small scales, lowering risks and lowering barriers to entry, allowing regions to target imports for substitution. Utilizing new manufacturing technologies can play an important part.

Create micro-clusters. Because much of what we consume has high manufacturing requirements, there needs to be an orchestration of micro-clusters: local enterprise ecosystems created through networks, sharing and exchange platforms with human supported administration and support that do resource and needs matching. This may also tap the possibility of circular economic / closed loop production. Micro-clusters can look for opportunities that are afforded by city scales, in particular mega-cities and large metropolitan regions.

Build entrepreneurial talent networks. Startups need to be deeply networked into both industrial and community based talent pools, which can provide the expertise needed to effectively build social enterprise creation teams. A good example of such a startup network is Enspiral, a deep solidarity social impact group.⁸⁰ Startups also require expertise and knowledge of enterprise models, and entrepreneurial and management abilities.

Practice commons solidarity. Enterprises can work locally and globally in line with Open Cooperativist principles,⁸¹ to produce knowledge and design commons for other similar enterprises and efforts anywhere. Open source enterprise makes a commitment to keep their enterprise journey open – so others can learn and follow. Open source design allows other enterprises anywhere to use and modify designs for local manufacture. Open source

⁷⁹ <http://internetofownership.net>

⁸⁰ <http://www.enspiral.com>

⁸¹ http://p2pfoundation.net/Open_Cooperatives

platforms like Anyshare can allow production ecosystems to emerge.⁸² Cosmo-local effort on one side of the planet can then be a beacon of hope, a design, knowledge, business model, for another entrepreneurial effort on the other side of the planet. Commons-Based Reciprocity License (CBRL) or similar systems should be used. Much of the open source economy, because of its openness, ends up supporting corporate capitalism, as is the case with Android software. CBRLs would allow licenses that limit free sharing to other pro-commons co-operatives, endogenising and re-circulating value exchange to help build the pro-commons economy.⁸³

Develop investment systems. New systems for capital investment are needed that, while not following the Silicon Valley venture capital model, allow maker enterprises to scale, or to 'pod' (cooperative franchising). The state also has an important role to play in supporting startups and in providing seed funding for maker spaces.

Utilize idle resources. Existing industrial resources that can be leveraged, which include out-of-use buildings, experts in between employment, idle machinery. The state in conjunction with community and entrepreneurial advocacy can coordinate and obtain necessary resources to allow experiments to happen at small and manageable scales. Enterprises can also find ways to connect people who are time rich but money poor and who have a desire and drive to realize entrepreneurial opportunities.

Cultivate maker culture. The grassroots maker movement has a strong commitment to open source and knowledge justice approaches, localization, community learning and sustainable closed loop / circular economy strategies. Reuse, repair, repurpose are common words. The potential of the maker movement for cosmo-localism lies in this broad church beginning to learn from each other's knowledges and capabilities and to collaborate on the design and manufacturing of things that require a high level of coordination or organization.

⁸² <https://anysha.re>

⁸³ https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Commons-Based_Reciprocity_Licenses

Drive deep sustainability. Map resource flows and ecologies and look for opportunities to circularizing resources across industries. This can cut costs and connect efforts as waste reducing enterprises which should get support or tax breaks from government.

Examples And Links

- FabCity - <http://fab.city/>
- Global Village Construction Set - http://opensourceecology.org/wiki/Global_Village_Construction_Set
- Wikispeed - <http://wikispeed.org>
- Farmhack - <http://farmhack.org/tools>
- Maker Movement - <https://backchannel.com/how-empassioned-amateurs-built-a-new-planetary-nervous-system-8c7636d1215e#.lwlbcpahw>

Policy Recommendations

The following preliminary recommendations are offered:

- Map maker spaces and other DIY manufacturing and design hubs, and begin to build regional ecosystems, relationships and trust across cities.
- Look for what is already being cosmo-localized, both in the city in question as well as globally, to create an evolving understanding of how the space is changing, and new practices.
- Build alliances across sectors: for example those in industry looking for strategies to revitalize enterprise, those in government looking for strategic intervention opportunities in the area of sustainability and economic development, those in the community driving social entrepreneurship and the maker movement.
- Develop city scale investment and ownership strategies that can allow city based cosmo-local startups to scale.

City Commons and Energy Demand

Josh Floyd

The Social Legacy Of Fossil Fuelled Abundance

Fossil fuels have enabled essentially unconstrained increase in energy demand in rich and even middle-income societies. Even in the lowest income societies where purchasing power limits demand, fossil fuels have enabled the energy intensive mechanisation of daily life to a degree that shapes almost all social and economic relations.

To the extent that such relations define what are taken as 'normal ways of life' in contemporary highly urbanised and industrialised societies, they also act as reference points for preferred futures. In this sense, typical life expectations held by citizens of such societies – and the attendant energy demand levels – can themselves be viewed as products of fossil fuels. Influences such as capitalist finance, development values of consumerism and technological innovation, and worldviews emphasising human dominion over the earth may play more significant proximate roles in the *particular forms* those expectations take. But the physical scale, geographic scope and cultural ubiquity of such life expectations have been realised – and hence normalised – only in the context of energy sources with the special characteristics of fossil fuels.

The need to transition energy supply away from fossil sources due to climate change is now broadly accepted in the public sphere. The default mode for approaching energy transition policy (and by extension, climate change response) is to take the nature and scale of existing demand expectations formed in the context of fossil fuels as given. Policy responses are therefore heavily weighted to the supply side – the replacement of fossil fuel energy systems with renewable alternatives. This is regarded principally as a technical and engineering task, once conducive institutional structures are in place.

There are numerous under-appreciated technical challenges to the adequacy of this supply-side focus, even within the dominant logic of government and private sectors as the lead transition agents. In thinking about a commons-led –

and moreover, *commons-oriented* – approach to energy transition, very significant yet under-appreciated *social* consequences of the supply-side emphasis also come to the fore. By giving priority to desirable social outcomes, commons-led initiatives offer advantages well beyond the economic benefits of common ownership and management of supply. In order for commons-led approaches to realise their full social potential, it will be advantageous to start from a set of premises different to that which drives the default supply-side focus in other spheres.

Energy Supply's Limitations As A Development Driver

The supply-side focus is currently underpinned by an uncritical view that treats high levels of per capita energy use as inherently desirable. This may not be explicitly stated, but follows from the very strong correlation between energy use and GDP. Historically, GDP per capita and energy use per capita track one another closely.⁸⁴ On this basis, it can be inferred that reducing energy use will entail reduced GDP (subject to any productivity increase due to energy efficiency improvements). As a broad rule-of-thumb, where GDP growth is prioritised, then so too is growth in energy use.

This is a consequence of assessing societal well-being in terms of standard of living as measured by GDP. Shifting to the UN Human Development Index (HDI) as the lead indicator for well-being, it is readily apparent that there is a saturation point beyond which increased per-capita energy use leads to no further increase in HDI.⁸⁵ In fact, there may be a negative correlation beyond a certain energy use level.⁸⁶

Energy Sufficiency And The Commons

From a commons perspective though, there is more at stake. Forty years ago, Ivan Illich recognised that beyond a certain threshold of energy use 'technical

⁸⁴ <http://beyondthisbriefanomaly.org/2015/07/19/economic-trend-report-energy-descent-transition-and-alternatives-to-2050/>

⁸⁵ <http://beyondthisbriefanomaly.org/2012/05/17/the-distribution-of-energy-wealth/>

⁸⁶ <https://beyondthisbriefanomalydotorg.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/hdi-vs-energy-use-2007-expanded-data2.png>

processes begin to dictate social relations'.⁸⁷ Energy intensive mechanisation is capital intensive and requires high levels of technical specialisation, regardless of the primary energy source. A vicious cycle results whereby increasing energy intensity of daily life requires increasing investment of resources in the institutions and infrastructure that enable energy intense mechanisation. The decisions open to citizens about how they spend their time become increasingly constrained by the investment decisions of those who control capital flows, and by the technical specialists who design the systems of mechanisation. Civic participation then requires citizens to be both consumers and – through the employment opportunities available – producers of mechanised products and services.

This is not an argument for doing away with all mechanisation, but of recognising that it provides negative social returns beyond a certain relatively modest level. The perverse effects of constructing cities around personal automobiles provide the most obvious example, but the broad implications in the transport realm apply to other areas of life. The general insight from a commoning perspective is that the range of lifeways amongst which people can freely choose can itself be regarded as a common resource. Extremes of energy intensive mechanisation, by displacing 'human power' as a viable and practical alternative for meeting people's needs, diminish this common resource. Therefore, there are commons-oriented benefits available where cities make efforts to converge on sufficient, rather than maximum, energy demand levels. This will have flow on benefits for the viability of common ownership and management of energy supply systems.

Examples And Links

I'm not aware of any city-scale situations to date where 'demand sufficiency' has been pursued as an explicit aspect of energy transition efforts. There are, however, numerous situations where this is an implicit co-benefit of initiatives based on other starting premises. Examples include:

- The Slow Cities movement encourages urban ways of life that are implicitly less energy intensive. <http://www.cittaslow.org.au>

⁸⁷ Illich, I. Energy and Equity, in *World Perspectives*, vol. 45, Harper & Row, New York, 1974.

- Hans Moderman's⁸⁸ Shared Space approach to urban design, relying on social interaction to calm traffic and promote active transport viability. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shared_space The community-focused urban development work of David Engwicht in Australia is based on similar principles.⁸⁹

Parallels can be seen in permaculture design principles, which take advantage of natural energy flows to the maximum possible extent, and favour low-energy development in general.⁹⁰

And at larger scale, Bhutan's efforts to pursue a development path based on Gross National Happiness in preference to GDP growth are potentially aligned with a demand sufficiency ethos.⁹¹

Policy Recommendations

- Introduce approaches to establishing urban development purposes and priorities that acknowledge the 'psychosocial dynamics' of human well-being, in place of a reliance on conventional development indices (including subjective well-being).⁹²
- Introduce the concept of 'effective speed' as a performance measure in urban transport planning.⁹³
- Promote urban design principles and practices that encourage or require reduced transit speeds for mechanised transport, in order to allow active

⁸⁸ <http://www.pps.org/reference/hans-monderman/>

⁸⁹ <http://www.pps.org/reference/david-engwicht/>

⁹⁰ <http://holmgren.com.au/about-permaculture/>

⁹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_National_Happiness

⁹² [2] R.M. Eckersley, (2016) Is the West really the best? Modernisation and the psychosocial dynamics of human progress and development, *Oxford Development Studies* 1-17 <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13600818.2016.1166197>

⁹³ P.J. Tranter, May, M. (2005) Questioning the need for speed: can "effective speed" guide change in travel behaviour and transport policy?, in Proceedings of the 28th Australasian Transport Research Forum, 28–30 September, Sydney,; M. May, P.J. Tranter, J.R. Warn, (2011) Progressing road safety through deep change and transformational leadership, *Journal of Transport Geography* 19(6) 1423-1430 <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0966692311001098>

transport modes (and alternative non-transport uses of public space) to compete on a more equal footing.

- Promote and support reduced and flexible working hours, in order to increase the viability of 'human powered' options for meeting basic needs by reducing time pressure.

It's Time to Create Chambers of Commons

David Ronfeldt

In 2012, while wondering about the revival of “the commons” as an idea (and reality) full of potential implications for social evolution, I was also fuming that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was increasingly trying to distort our market system on behalf of favored business interests. So I proposed that Chambers of Commons, particularly a U.S. Chamber of Commons, be created and networked together in the years ahead.

As I saw it, purposes might include illuminating commons issues, advancing the monitoring of commons matters, congregating interested actors, advising on policy issues, and helping to develop a commons sector (separate and distinct from our long-standing public and private sectors). This might help forge new ways of working on valuable ideas that have lost ground in recent eras: the public interest, the common good. My vision also hoped that someday we will see media events where a chamber of commerce and a chamber of commons are both asked their views about some crucial public-policy topic — meaning a U.S. Chamber of Commons achieves parity with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Fortunately, the idea was picked up by pro-commons P2P activists/theorists David Bollier and Michel Bauwens in 2013. And by 2015 a few prototype efforts were in planning stages, notably for a US Chamber of Commons and a Chicago Chamber of Commons (h/t Steve Ediger). Some interest also emerged in Europe — however, a parallel proposal by Bauwens for Assemblies of the Commons is proving more attractive there.

Thus I foresee Chambers of Commons becoming strategic wedge organizations plying wedge issues for the purpose of fostering a commons sector. Today I'd like to offer three thoughts about their future potential.

Creating Chambers of Commons is a good idea whose time is nigh — but better conceptual clarity and a bigger audience are needed.

For generations, the concept of the commons has mostly meant natural commons — e.g., the clear air, clean water, and open land that even President Nixon once deemed a “birthright” of every American. Lately, because of the Internet and related digital technologies, the concept has expanded to include information and knowledge — the cyber commons. Whether and how to include other social matters — e.g., health, education, housing, public/civic infrastructure, insurance, law, etc. — is under discussion, along with ideas about whether to emphasize the contents of “the commons” or the practices of “commoning”. More debatable is whether to include social entrepreneurs (e.g., with “B Corps”) interested in marketing information-age products and services in post-capitalist ways; their activities may belong more in the market sector than a commons sector.

Yet the concept’s revival has barely touched public awareness. U.S. political leaders and party platforms don’t mention it; nor do news and opinion shows on radio and TV — but for rare exceptions on rare occasions. Instead, pro-commons ideas are mostly advanced piece-meal by dispersed issue-specific civil-society NGOs (e.g., Sierra Club, Electronic Frontier Foundation).

Ferment around commons ideas is growing mainly on the Left (e.g., via The P2P Foundation) — but only parts of the Left. Awareness among Centrists is difficult to find, despite Elinor Ostrom’s winning the Nobel Prize. Interest on the Right is lacking, held back by notions about “the tragedy of the commons” as well as by ingrained adherence to traditional public vs. private distinctions — even though conservative concepts about “stewardship” and “protection” could contribute to pro-commons ideas.

An advantage of the chamber-of-commons idea is that it looks ahead to the emergence of a sector of activity that will cut across all sorts of issue areas, political ideologies, and advocacy organizations. That the concept still lacks definitional clarity and public support is a problem — but it may also be an opportunity that well-designed chambers may help address and resolve.

It is advisable to emulate historical aspects of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC), the better to counter-balance it.

The USCC was created by assembling dispersed pro-business forces (e.g., already existing local chambers and businesses) around a national center in 1912, at the behest of President Taft and with approval from Congress. The goal was to improve the representation of business interests in Washington; but motivations also included counter-balancing the increasingly well-organized labor movement. The new Chamber was deemed a “social welfare” organization and given tax-exempt status. And it was said to be an advisory organization, particularly to advise Washington about business matters — though it soon became an advocacy organization too. All those points — assembling and networking dispersed forces, creating a high-profile national center, gaining recognition from Executive and Legislative leaders, serving significant advisory (and advocacy) roles — amount to historical “lessons” for creating a network of Chambers of Commons.

A key development for the USCC was the “Powell memo” (authored in 1971 by Lewis Powell, a prominent corporate lawyer who ended up on the U.S. Supreme Court). In this memo, Powell argued that “the American economic system is under broad attack” by anti-business forces. So he laid out a sweeping strategy for defending and advancing American business interests. It resulted in the creation of influential new pro-business think-tanks, media, and advocacy networks. If/as a U.S. Chamber of Commons takes hold, it may benefit from someone writing its own kind of “Powell memo” — but a variant designed for pro-commons (and pro-social) rather than pro-commerce actors.

But even though a U.S. Chamber of Commons might emulate the USCC, the purposes would be different, as would governance, sponsorship, membership, audience, and areas of interest. The two could become rivals on many issues; but commons chambers should not be designed simply as contrarian opponents of commerce chambers. The commons chambers have a more distinctive long-range challenge on which to focus.

It is important that the Chamber-of-Commons idea serve the creation of new network (+N) sectors — more than and apart from a reform of existing market (+M) sectors.

Creating Chambers of Commons seems a good idea whether it stems from P2P, TIMN, or some other forward-looking theory (or from no theory at all). Yet, in my view, it would be best if the idea were guided by the nascent theoretical framework that inspired it: TIMN.

According to TIMN, people have evolved four cardinal forms of organization. Tribes (T) came first. Hierarchical institutions (I) were next. Then markets (M). Now information-age networks (N) are on the rise. Seen across the centuries, societies have progressed — or failed to do so — according to their abilities to use and combine these four forms, both their bright and dark sides, in properly bounded and balanced ways.

Today, America is in the early throes of evolving from a stalled distorted triformist (T+I+M) system toward a potentially innovative rebalanced quadriformist (T+I+M+N) system. Adding +N will mean letting +N actors give rise to a distinctive network-based sector. Earlier analysts have said this new sector will arise mostly around non-profit civil-society NGOs, and grow into a “social”, a “third”, a “citizen”, a “plural”, or a “care” sector. At present, I think “commons sector” best captures what’s emerging.

Whatever the +N sector ends up being called, TIMN means it will grow in part by taking over some functions and activities that the old sectors no longer perform well. At the same time, +N will work best if the older forms and their spaces are respected, even as they are altered in order to work better together. That’s what’s at stake in the decades ahead.

This has implications for the Chamber-of-Commons idea. Since much of +N seems associated with the revival of the commons, the new Chambers could act as strategic harbingers. Yet, to best focus on figuring out +N, they may have to avoid getting too involved with +M actors and issues. According to TIMN, +M is here to stay; it is essential to advanced societies. There are lots of good reasons to criticize capitalism these days — but not to get rid of +M, the market system. Indeed, from a TIMN perspective, +N will work best only where the T

(e.g., family), +I (e.g., the state), and +M (e.g., business) parts are also working well together for society's sake. Which may require lots of restructuring, from top to bottom.

*This essay is an extract from the blog at: <http://twotheories.blogspot.com.au>

Governance

Sharing Cities: Governing the City as Commons

Duncan McLaren and Julian Agyeman

Cities have the experience and agency to establish 'sharing of the whole city' as the purpose of urban governance. By combining the technology of the smart city with the visions of the sharing city, and an understanding of the city as a commons co-created by its citizens, enlightened city authorities could deliver a transformative shift in urban governance. This is not some utopian vision of online direct democracy, although mobile internet technology may prove a powerful enabler for more participatory governance. Rather it is a call for cities to reclaim their heritage as facilitators of peer-to-peer interaction, and to act as guarantors of equality and participation in urban sharing – commercial, civic, charitable and communal.

Central to this vision is an understanding of the city as a commons⁹⁴ both emergently and intentionally produced by citizens through acts of urban commoning⁹⁵ ranging from civil behaviour in public spaces, to active involvement in construction and management of shared facilities. In our work on *Sharing Cities*⁹⁶ we argue that city authorities need to understand and govern the city as a shared space and system, and facilitate inclusive sharing by all citizens. In this we suggest cities should learn from Latin American cities such as Medellín, with its approach of '*urbanismo sociale*', designed to enable social inclusion in a shared public realm, embodied in practice through public transit, education and cultural facilities, funded and planned in participatory ways.

⁹⁴ Iaione, C. (2012). *City as Commons*.

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2589640; Foster S. and Iaione C. (2016). *The city as a commons*. *Yale Law & Policy Review*, Vol. 34(2).

⁹⁵ Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel Cities*. London: Verso.

⁹⁶ McLaren, D. and Agyeman, J. (2015) *Sharing Cities*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

In Medellín the city has raised funds through the civic owned public utilities to invest in major projects such as library parks and innovative public transit including cable-cars which link the poor hillside *comunas* to the city centre.⁹⁷ Porto Alegre is celebrated for its participatory budgeting, which has shifted resources towards those most in need.⁹⁸ In Bogota, the city's facilitating approach to graffiti has transformed public spaces and streetscapes, in stark contrast to most global Northern cities' dominance by commercial advertising.⁹⁹ And in Belo Horizonte, the city's support for shared food provision in community restaurants has earned it the title of the 'city that ended hunger'.¹⁰⁰

This Latin American form of communitarian and commons oriented governance, also known as *buen vivir*,¹⁰¹ is actually strongly inter-cultural, resting in part on a drive to enable genuine inclusion for indigenous communities. It extends beyond commoning practice and co-production in service delivery and management – the model spreading rapidly in Italy¹⁰² – to participatory planning, budgeting and governance. It relies heavily on enabling distributed autonomy, delegating both authority and resources to citizens and communal bodies¹⁰³ and on citizen participation rooted in popular education.¹⁰⁴

The biggest threat we see to the development of the city as commons is a failure of justice: for instance where disadvantaged groups are excluded from districts, facilities or spaces through processes of discrimination and

⁹⁷ *Ibid*; and Feek, W. (2001). Medellín. Online at <http://p2pfoundation.net/Medellin>

⁹⁸ Baiocchi, G. (2001). The Porto Alegre Experiment and Deliberative Democratic Theory. *Politics & Society* 29: 43-72.

⁹⁹ Rueda, M. (2015). Online at <http://fusion.net/story/56993/heres-what-happened-when-bogota-decided-to-let-graffiti-artists-do-their-thing/>

¹⁰⁰ World Future Council, (2009). *Celebrating the Belo Horizonte food security programme*. <http://bit.ly/29WlsyD>

¹⁰¹ Gudynas, E. (2011) Buen Vivir: Today's tomorrow. *Development*, 54(4): 441–447.

¹⁰² d'Antonio, S. (2015). How a regulation turned Bologna's civic pride into action. Online at: <http://citiscopes.org/story/2015/how-regulation-turned-bolognas-civic-pride-action>

¹⁰³ Bulkeley, H. Luque, A. McFarlane, C. and MacLeod, G. (2013). *Enhancing Urban Autonomy: Towards a New Political Project for Cities*. Friends of the Earth and Durham University. Available at

http://www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/autonomy_briefing.pdf

¹⁰⁴ Scandrett, E. (2013). *Citizen Participation and Popular Education in the City*. Big Ideas Thinkpiece. London: Friends of the Earth. Available at

http://www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/citizen_participation_and.pdf.

gentrification. Where commoning is not fully inclusive it can add a further dimension to division and exclusion. Using inclusive social urbanism as a touchstone for developing truly participatory urban governance, cities can instead help deliver just sustainabilities.¹⁰⁵

Learning From The South: Policy Recommendations For Buen Vivir

- *Focus* policy and planning interventions on increasing equity and social justice by investing in low-income neighborhoods, like Medellín.
- *Practice* 'urban acupuncture' for example by pedestrianizing streets and promoting children's art workshops in the street, leading to a more walkable city, like Curitiba.
- *Intervene* financially in local city food systems to offer access to shared provision and lower prices on a range of essential foods to those on benefits, like Belo Horizonte.
- *Encourage* participatory budgeting, popular deliberation¹⁰⁶ and decision-making in the allocation of funding for city projects, like Porto Alegre.
- *Demonstrate* the power of reclaiming public spaces and the urban commons by prioritizing graffiti over advertising, like Bogota.
- *Facilitate* the emergence of communal and civic sharing projects to meet needs and build capabilities across the city as commons.

¹⁰⁵ Agyeman, J. (2013) *Introducing Just Sustainabilities: Policy, Planning and Practice*. London: Zed Books.

¹⁰⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deliberation>

Devolved Commons Governance for Cities

David Week

The word "commons" is an older word for what the Elinor Ostrom termed "common pool resources"—resources into which many members of a community contribute, and from which many members draw. The commons is held "in common", and not privately.

However, a well-functioning commons has a strong governance and policing structures. It is not a free-for-all. By studying hundreds of commons from around the world Ostrom arrived at eight design rules necessary for the proper functioning of the commons. These are governance rules, and include: clear boundaries; appropriation rules; collective choice arrangements; effective monitoring; graduated sanctions; accessible conflict resolution; recognised community self-determination; and, where the commons are large, nested layers of organisation.

Historically, most common pool resources have been natural resources: fisheries, forests, waterways. However, more recently, people have started to argue that the city itself is also a commons: a shared space which all citizens can use. The urban commons includes the cities, parks, beaches, rivers and riverfronts, streets, sidewalks, alleyways and public buildings.

Yochai Benkler has written: "On the one hand, we have the pastures and irrigation districts that symbolize the work Ostrom pioneered; on the other hand, we have highways, streets and sidewalks... No theory of the commons can afford to exclude either."¹⁰⁷ Elsewhere, he gives us this list of the urban commons:

¹⁰⁷ Benkler, Y. (September 23-24 2011).

Between Spanish Huertas and the Open Road: A Tale of Two Commons? Convening Cultural Commons conference at NYU.

http://www.benkler.org/Commons_Unmodified_Benkler.pdf

roads; sewage; urban water systems; public utilities; roads, highways; mass transportation.

There is no question that the urban commons exists: it is everywhere, and we use it every day. The question is: how adequate are current governance arrangements for the urban commons?

Rationale For Devolved Commons Governance

Ownership can only be understood as sets of rights and responsibilities. The Medieval English commons, for instance, often used as a reference point for the term, belonged in theory to the monarch, who granted rights to various feudal vassals in return for their allegiance and military support. These vassals further granted rights to lower levels of vassals, and ultimately to the commoners who tilled the soil. Those commoners then had individual and exclusive rights over their own house in the village, and a strip of land associated with that house, called a *selion*. The vassal reserved some land for his or herself, called the *demesne*. There were also open fields to which commoners had shared and overlapping rights and responsibilities. It's these open fields that we now refer to as the commons.

Orstrom's seventh design rule is that higher-level authorities recognize the right of the resource appropriators to self-govern. In the transition from feudal society to modernity, the feudal system of legitimating and enforcing these rights and responsibilities has been transferred to the states. The urban framework for self-governance is the city government, which I'll call the City, and that is legitimated by the State.

Many factors today impacted the governance of the commons by the City. For our purposes here, these are:

- **Consolidation:** First, as urban populations have grown and city governments have been amalgamated for reasons of economic efficiency, the number of citizens per city government has increased. In Australia, Councils that represented 2-3000 people at their inception now represent 80-100k.

- **Managerialism:** Second, cities have been increasingly subjected to demands for rational and efficient resource management. Though there are benefits, this has put control of the public domain primarily in the hands of technocratic managers, who see the public as “users”, “clients” or even a nuisance—they complain too much.
- **Neo-liberalism:** Finally, under the current neoliberal trend, there are caps on city government revenue, and pressures to do more with less. In many cases, this leads governments to either lease or sell the commons to private enterprise, thus partially or totally removing them from public control.

These factors tend toward alienating the City from the citizens, in the following sense: In a small city, of several thousand people, the mathematics of networks make it highly probably that every citizen will be no more than two degrees of separation from the mayor. In other words, you will know someone who knows the mayor. This allows people a direct democratic voice. For a large population, this is no longer the case, and one is reduced to voting, or working through other institutions such as political parties, single-issue-organisations, or residents' associations.

This alienation weakens democratic control, and enhances technocratic control: the degree to which decisions about the commons are made by public servants and professionals, using technical-rational processes. An extreme, but exemplary case is the proposal in Melbourne to introduce fees and permits for people picnicking in public parks.

Technical-rational decision-making has its place, but it can only deal with explicit knowledge. It cannot deal with the tacit knowledge of the citizenry: their embodied, lived experience of their urban world. This can only be elicited through conversation between citizens. And this requires a more intimate level of governance than is afforded by the large bureaucratic state.

Orstrom identified her eighth rule as a practice in which - where a commons is too large to be governed by its constituents—that it be divided and nested within a larger system of governance. It seems logical, therefore, to consider a new level of governance (not government): the community level, in which local

groups can take a lead role, deploying not just in shaping and managing their local commons. It's only at this level that can citizens deploy their embodied, lived, experiential knowledge of their commons, in the making and remaking of the urban commons.

This reconnects the citizen to the commons in a direct way. And it helps resolve the three pressures facing the City:

- It responds to **consolidation** with a new level of governance, without a new level of government.
- It responds to **managerialism**, by returning some control to local citizens' groups, supported by the technical capacities of the city.
- It responds to **neo-liberalism**, by harnessing volunteer citizen resources and energies.

How To Devolve City Governance

There is neither appetite nor budget for another level of elected government with its own bureaucracy. However, there are many emerging examples of government devolving or partnering control and decision-making to more local groups, thus creating an intermediate local commons governance level through partnerships with local groups, local organisations, and even individuals.

Inserting a new level at the community level

- properly authorised by the higher authority—the City (the seventh rule)
- properly organised, fulfilling those other Orstrom design rules which related to internal rule-making and operations.

This does not involve the City creating new organisations to fulfil this role of community commons partner. Rather, it requires that the City engage with existing groups of citizens, who have formed around issues about which they care. Care is the first manifestation of tacit knowledge in action. Structures formed from above do not rest on a foundation of care, and therefore cannot fulfil the function of doing that which cannot be done by technical rationality.

The democratic mobilisation of tacit knowledge is the work of associations of citizens voluntarily formed around issues about which they care.

Examples Of Urban Commons Partnerships

- Business Improvement Districts:
 - [http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/topics/land-use-and-planning/business-improvement-districts-\(bids\)](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/topics/land-use-and-planning/business-improvement-districts-(bids))
 - <http://www.pps.org/reference/bid-2/>
- Community management of parks, in Rethinking Parks: Exploring New Business Models in the 21st Century:
https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/rethinking_parks.pdf
- Aboriginal joint management of parks:
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/jointmanagement/index.htm>
- Community-led spaces: A guide for local authorities and community groups
<http://bit.ly/29VXR11>
- Seattle Department of Neighbourhoods:
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods>

Specific Policy Recommendations

For governments, citizens and community groups, working in concert:

- **Map citizen care:** Identify citizen constituencies and groups—whether currently organised or not—who might benefit from or be interested in having more say over their local commons. These might be currently formal, like residents' associations, or informal—the smallest level being, for instance, those who have built small libraries into their fences.
- **Map urban opportunities:** Analyse the city both spatially and functionally into those components that can be left in 100% technical management,

and those that are amenable to increased citizen management and control. This involves not just looking at the issues from a technical level (which will always favour technocratic management) but seeing which issues have mobilised community care in the past: playgrounds, pedestrian-friendly streets, local markets, use of sidewalks, parks, water courses, trees, food gardens. Though issues like power, sewerage and water might currently remain technocratically managed, aspects of them might be open to localization as citizens come increasingly to care about these issues, and technologies allow for greater decentralisation.

- **Build bridges between care and opportunity:** Establish long-term processes to devolve and localise commons governance where possible, while at the same time strengthening community and local capacity to effectively manage local commons for all. Consider a "Department of Neighbourhoods" with higher institutional standing than planning and engineering. Analyse permit and regulatory systems for excessive complexity or rigidity in allowing for citizen contribution or co-management of the urban commons. Put a hold on any closures or transfers of common pool resources, until citizen groups have the opportunity to propose citizen management plans.

Anticipatory Governance and the City as a Commons

José Ramos

Anticipatory Governance denotes large scale participatory processes and systems for exploring, envisioning, direction setting and developing a strategy for a region. Anticipatory Governance builds on experiments in Anticipatory Democracy popularized by Alvin Toffler and Clem Bezold,¹⁰⁸ combined with new developments in network based foresight.¹⁰⁹ Anticipatory Governance allows a city to harness the intelligence and wisdom of its citizens in charting intelligent directions for their cities.

In today's world change is rapid and unpredictable and there is a need for a city to prepare for the horizons of change which bring both threats and opportunities. Tapping into citizen knowledge can create the requisite awareness of change that provides agility and new pathways for city policy making and change efforts. Without anticipation a city's policies are likely to be reactive at best and misguided at worst. Anticipation allows a city's policies to be adaptive while driving toward preferred futures, policies that intelligently surf the tsunamis of change.¹¹⁰

It is also important that the direction or vision for a city or municipal region reflect the common good for all of its people. One potential pitfall in envisioning the future of a city is when a future vision or direction for a city is framed by narrow interests or a 'used futures' – images created somewhere else but super-imposed uncritically or serving special economic interests, a particular lobby group or other. We can see the 'Smart City' discourse as one such 'used future'. It is fashionable and employed by some very large corporations to paint a

¹⁰⁸ Bezold, C. (1978). *Anticipatory Democracy: People in the Politics of the Future*. NY: Random House.

¹⁰⁹ https://www.academia.edu/3525646/Foresight_in_a_Network_Era_Peer-producing_Alternative_Futures

¹¹⁰ Adage by Jim Dator

picture of a high tech, automated, internet-of-everything city, however it has strong technocratic tendencies that exclude real inclusion in city governance and participation.

Democratizing the future means that the future is not just framed base on narrow commercial interest, a policy clique, lobby groups or other special interests, but rather that a city's vision and purpose is driven through the multifaceted and dynamic knowledges and wisdom of its many citizens. Ultimately a city's direction and vision, and the policies that stem from them, should ensure a mutuality of benefits that support the urban commons. The very process of foresight exploration and action should be seen within a commons governance framework. Critically, this democratization of foresight based exploration and response-ability can specifically focus on threats to and opportunities for the protection and extension of the urban commons. Framed in such a way, Anticipatory Governance is a key ally in supporting positive urban commoning outcomes.

Strategies For Anticipatory Governance

While there are many ways of establish an Anticipatory Governance process, here are some basic building blocks:

First, it is important that it is an ongoing process, not just a once-off exercise. The world is not going to stop changing, so formulating and developing a continuous process is key.

Next, a city government in partnership with citizens should establish well resourced systems and structures that allow for continuous citizen involvement, townhall style conversations, as well as crowdsourcing of futures-relevant knowledge. Task forces need to be created which promote and develop engagement approaches and strategies across various sectors, citizen groups, government, businesses and among other specialist groups. These task forces, based on specialist and embodied knowledges, can be data to knowledge to wisdom engines of futures-relevant knowledge.

Large scale citizen-city partnerships can utilize knowledge management systems that helps to analysts to organize data, from workshop data to big digital data, and across various input sources. This is ongoingly presented and used in live

participatory workshops and other engagement modes to develop collective intelligence and deeper wisdom of futures relevance. Collaborative teams emerge from these sessions to carry out policy development, social innovations, projects and other actions, based on this clarified awareness of threats and opportunities. Citizens and other groups are not just providers of knowledge, but also potential sources of social innovation, policy ideation and other change factors.

Supported by government but co-run by citizens, Anticipatory Governance fits within the Partner State model as advocated by Bauwens,¹¹¹ in so far as dedicated public resources are required to establish and support a platform for citizen involvement, but citizens are critical to the energy needed, data requirements, creative responses and the governance of the process. As such an Anticipatory Governance system should not be solely controlled by a municipality, but rather exist within a commons management framework. While obviously it is not a standard “common resource pool” as articulated by Elinor Ostrom, it is nonetheless a shared group of elements that requires a participatory governance framework. These elements include:

- The vision(s) for a city, the image of its future and associated ideas,
- The processes undertaken to explore the future and develop creative responses,
- The systems and structures (e.g. knowledge management systems) that allow sharing, data gathering and rich analysis,
- The outputs of the process, knowledge, projects, social innovations, etc.

Examples

- Seven types of Anticipatory Governance strategies <http://bit.ly/29VYWGf>
- Examples of Anticipatory Democracy http://altfutures.org/pubs/govt/Anticipatory_Democracy_Revisited.pdf
- A guide to participatory foresight <http://bit.ly/29OssPI>

¹¹¹ https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Partner_State

- The Institute for the Future has used its “Foresight Engine” to run a number of crowdsourced futures visioning and collective intelligence exercises for cities <http://www.iff.org/foresightengine/>
- Futurescaper system is being used for a variety of government foresight projects <http://www.futurescaper.com>

Policy Recommendations

- Create a multi-year commitment toward implementing an anticipatory governance approach, not just a one off.
- Pilot crowd sourcing and knowledge management platforms based on citizen / user experience along with functionality and data, and scale a working model across sectors.
- Twine online data gathering with live intelligence building workshops that allow citizen foresight potential to develop and build.
- Make citizens and government true partners in the management and development of the system.
- Make sure that end goals for the system are made explicit and served: nimble future-informed policy making, ‘smarter’ citizens, robust future visions, social innovation, inter-organizational knowledge sharing etc.
- Leverage the process to support citizen learning, deeper citizen connections and synergies, and critical social capital across all sectors, in particular the marginalized.

A Civic Union

David Week

The Unequal Power Of Private, Public And Civic Sectors

There three major groups who own—and are therefore responsible for the governance of—urban assets.

- Private sector, consisting of businesses
- Public sector, consisting of governments
- Civic sector consisting of citizens as individuals, or in formal or informal associations

The sectors interrelate economically. Citizens buy goods and services from businesses. Businesses buy labour from citizens. Both use public assets, and pay taxes to governments.

Each of these are not equally well organised, and therefore their perspectives are not equally represented in the public sphere. Governments are highly organised. Businesses are highly organised, and often associate into formal, well-funded industry bodies. The civic sector, on the other hand, is organised only when it is incorporated in the forms of NGOs or charities, and their industry associations.

But the civic sector is much larger than that, for it includes all the voluntary work of citizens, whether incorporated or not. Once we include household work within this category, the economic value of this sector is equal to the value of the formal sectors which is measured in the GDP. Furthermore, feminist economists argue that this sector is more important than the other sectors, including as it does the production of the next generation of humans, the production of basic relationships which constitute social capital, voluntary care for others, and the rest and recovery of the formal sector workforce.

The Need A Better Organised Civic Sector

This larger civic sector has no representative voice comparable to that of government or businesses. Individuals, households, and unincorporated groups do not have forums or systems for communicating with each other as a key urban stakeholder group. They do not have unified plans and policies, nor mechanisms for organising themselves for concerted action.

Yet it is households who are among the most important users of many classes of commons: schools, parks, sidewalks, streets, waterfronts. Without organising consistently must react, put on “the back foot”, when confronted with plans by either government or business that conflict with their interests. This poor organisation and lack of planning makes them reactive. This reactivity gives them the derogatory status of “NIMBYs” and denies them effective participation.

Organised civic sector participation would not only quell the reactivity, but would provide a channel for this important perspective. It would also help fulfil the following four of Ostrom's eight principles for managing commons pool resources:

2. Match rules governing use of common goods to local needs and conditions.

Currently, rules are set by government, and governments assess "local needs and conditions" using technocratic methods such as surveys and traffic monitoring. Voting takes place only once very few years. An organized civic sector would allow local communities a direct voice to government as to what constitutes their "needs and conditions".

3. Ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules and 4. Make sure the rule-making rights of community members are respected by outside authorities. Citizen power over elected governments is weak: the ability to throw a government out every few years. However, the government itself may have weak control over the rule system, which is governed by technocrats notionally under their control. An organized civic sector would give governments more differentiated and timely feedback channels to guide rule making and rule changes.

7. Provide accessible, low-cost means for dispute resolution. Currently, there are limited options for local dispute resolution. One can complain to government, who then may enforce existing regulations. However, not all disputes are covered by existing rules. A Civic Union could provide mediation and arbitration at low cost to its members.

8. Build responsibility for governing the common resource in nested tiers from the lowest level up to the entire interconnected system. There are many initiatives aimed at re-endowing citizenship with a sense of responsibility for their common resources. These travel under the label "active citizenship". However, there are not always clear mechanisms through which active citizenship can be expressed. They are patchy at best.

Forming A Civic Union

To allow citizens to organise and communicate with each other around emergent issues requires an organisation capable of providing them with a platform to do so. We name this a "Civic Union" not as political union, but on the metaphor of a labour union: with no agenda but to represent the interests of its members.

Essential elements are:

- Broad-based membership: anything less so would lack democratic legitimacy, and be just another special interest organisation.
- Universal individual membership: People need to join as citizens, and membership should be available to all citizens, including those who work in the public or private sectors. A organisation belonging all citizens would not be a "peak body" for existing formal civil society organisations, or a union of activists around a single issue.
- Low cost of entry: Any organisation will have a costs, but if those costs translate to a high entry fee, any civic union would tend towards an elite membership. Ideally, membership should be free: but if a membership fee is necessary, it has to be so low that it excludes no-one.

- Platform model: In order for a Civic Union to allow for the expression of the various forms of active citizenship practiced in the city, the Civic Union should function as platform that enables such expression by allowing citizens to:
 - coalesce in groups around issues of common interest
 - discuss and decide those issues
 - organise for collective action.

Implicit in a platform model is the absence of any forced unity. It's in the nature of cities that they contain diverse people, and it may well be that citizens differ on certain issues, and sometimes coalesce into opposing groups. That's democracy.

- Allowing for nesting: Local parks are the concern of the citizens that use them. The network of schools or childcare are of concern to the parents of children. Ostrom's design rules require that a large organisations be subdividable into nested structures—whether by geography or function.

How To Start

Starting a Civic Union is itself an act of citizenry, and is itself hampered by the absence of a platform to carry out such a formation. How would one go about finding the other citizens interested in being early adopters? Without a Civic Union, that task is likely to be expensive.

Therefore, kicking off a Civic Union will benefit from initial support from organisations who can provide funding, person-power, or communication networks. Key here is to ensure that once established, these funders are happy to withdraw, and don't seek to "own" the platform.

Another key component is what the culture change guru John Kotter calls "a guiding coalition". This is the group that has to be kick off the process of growing the Union. They too have to be guarded against shaping it in their own interests. A Civic Union should be a platform for citizens to express their interests, not be recruited to the interests of the founders.

Examples And Links

To my knowledge there are no fully formed civic unions as described here. However, the components are well developed, and commonplace.

- The idea of "active citizenship" is now widespread, and well-funded.
 - <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/active-citizenship-can-change-your-country-better>
 - <http://changesuk.net/themes/active-citizenship/>
 - http://www.skwirk.com/p-c_s-16_u-140_t-413_c-1446/civics-active-citizenship-and-individual-action/nsw/civics-active-citizenship-and-individual-action/issues-in-australian-environments/geographical-issues-and-active-citizenship
- Mechanisms for allowing citizenship to participate directly in city decision-making are being explored. Most significant are innovations emerging from South America:
 - <https://democracyspot.net/2013/06/10/civil-society-and-participation-in-brazil-a-literature-review/>
 - <http://southasia.oneworld.net/news/participatory-budgeting-in-india-the-pune-experiment#.VzIb0mP1Yqw>
- Unions and alliances of citizens, and of particular classes of citizen:
 - <http://warrimoo.org>
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Slum_Dwellers_Federation
 - <https://hpuvic.org>

- There are a number of software platforms emerging aimed at social connection within a geographical region. Though not adequate for citizen politics in themselves, they are an important step.
 - <https://nextdoor.com>
 - <https://cityscapeapp.com/>
 - <https://www.streetlife.com>
 - <https://www.nabo.com.au>

Specific Policy Recommendations

The formation of any Civic Union will be assisted by a government that sees the advantages of a having citizen concerns and proposals represented by well-organised and structured citizen groups. Policy support might come in two levels:

- A political policy which recognises citizen voice, empowerment and action as integral to effective and efficient government;
- An administrative policy which orients public servants towards seeing such groups as partners in city governance and services.

Land

Tax Reform for a Commons-based City

Karl Fitzgerald

Land use is a prominent commons issue. If we get this right, so many other aspects of life become attainable.

The value of living in a community is quantified by the price we pay to live there. Land values reflect the locational bidding placed within that community. Since the earth was a gift of nature, a number of philosophers and economists have long argued that 'the fruits of the earth belong to all'. Famous supporters include Jean-Jacques Rousseau,¹¹² John Locke¹¹³ and Joseph Stiglitz.¹¹⁴

Classical Economic theory strongly defined the difference between earned and unearned incomes. Earned incomes result from productive efforts adding to the wealth of society. An element of risk is involved in entrepreneurial business, where people are employed and the end result produces something tangible. Unearned incomes occur when prices can be charged above marginal costs, to deliver 'economic rents' - simply due to property rights. Nothing tangible is produced except higher prices.

The classic example of unearned income is land - the 'mother of all monopolies' (Churchill, 1909). All land was a gift of nature. Any price charged above zero is an economic rent, an unearned income. When combined with the fact that land is fixed in supply, this infers land could be taxed and supply levels will not be deterred. Instead the inverse occurs - land becomes more profitable the more it is hoarded, enforcing scarcity rents.

Oil enjoys similar scarcity properties. The behaviour of the OPEC in controlling oil supply levels at an inverse ratio to prices ensures economic rents increase.

¹¹² <https://www.prosper.org.au/about/geoists-in-history/jean-jacques-rousseau/>

¹¹³ <https://www.prosper.org.au/1Oc/>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2015-03-03/to-fight-inequality-tax-land>

The key point in understanding unearned incomes is the ability to sell at prices above both marginal costs and a reasonable return on investment. The super profits could be taxed back to levels equivalent to the opportunity costs for investment without affecting supply.

Property speculators are the ultimate beneficiaries of unearned incomes. With access to capital and a bevy of tax incentives encouraging such behavior, they can often outbid a family for a prime location. They can then sit on this site until they feel like selling, often at great profit and with little risk or tax. This is called 'land banking'. Property speculators can pivot further into land investments with the capacity to leverage against the rising value of 'their' location,.

Prosper Australia document this practice of land banking each year with the Speculative Vacancies report.¹¹⁵ The most recent report found a 28% jump in empty investment properties, with 82,724 properties deemed vacant in greater Melbourne. This places unneeded pressure in terms of sprawl, gridlock, debt, gentrification and small business creation.

From a commons perspective, if nobody lived in Melbourne, land values would plummet. If we all moved back, what would happen? Values would increase. Land values are the most valuable renewable resource in our cities.

Land Taxation For Commoning

Many economists see Land Taxes as both the most efficient and fairest means to raise revenues. Not only do they raise revenue, but they encourage good behaviour. They sit foremost amongst green taxes, alongside resource rents in the mining sector and charges on socially damaging behaviour (tobacco, alcohol). Despite this, neo-classical economists such as Paul Krugman dismiss economic rents at 1% of GDP. Prosper Australia's latest calculations find Australian land values at 14.52% of GDP, up a staggering \$525 billion in the 2014-15 year.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ https://www.prosper.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/11Final_Speculative-Vacancies-2015-1.pdf

¹¹⁶ <http://bit.ly/29WkaA9>

Tax incomes and the incentive to work decreases. Tax companies and tax flight ensues. Tax goods and they are driven underground. But taxing land does not reduce its supply, only encouraging more efficient use. This is important in an era of urbanisation. Such taxes are also unavoidable, something any modern city must accept with tax avoidance so prevalent.

Land Taxes encourage both urban density within cities (reducing sprawling pressures) whilst encouraging some to decentralise to take advantage of lower land taxes (due to lower land prices in regional areas). A simultaneous synergy accompanies this - the incentive to build upwards in centralised locations, rather than outwards.

The mechanics of Land Tax can be thought of as a counterweight to mortgage debt. Land related economic rents must be channeled away from the financial sector and towards government in lieu of taxes on productive activity. When combining all monopoly rents, we could tear up the current tax system and replace it with land-like taxes on the 23 different types of monopoly rents, such as broadcast spectrum and airport landing rights . This would address the serious problem of over exploitation and profiteering from commons in industries such as Blue-Fin tuna fishing, pearl diving, water trading, gold, geo-satellite orbits through to patent-thickets, cyber squatting and DNA privatisation. If these economic rents were taxed, the economic cost structure would fall back to marginal costs, supporting the innovative export economy needed. The Total Resource Rents of Australia report documents this.¹¹⁷

Unfortunately no country takes these economic opportunities to their full extent. However, some pertinent examples of these principles can be provided:

- Singapore - 90.1% of the population own their own home due to a land tax system acting as a counterweight to mortgage debt (A Haila, 2016)
- Hong Kong - government expenditure as a percentage of GDP is under 20% vs Australia's record high 28.5% (2016) and 41% in the USA. Government ownership of all land is enhanced by a Land Tax system, helping to keep the cost of government services low.

¹¹⁷ http://www.prosper.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/TRRA_2013_final.pdf

- Australia - the Melbourne City Rail Loop (1981) was paid off 20 years ahead of time due to additional land rents levied on local council rates. These revenues constituted 25% of the project cost and were the major driver to the early repayment. (Prosper Australia Parliamentary submission into The role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity, 2016).
- Botswana - avoided the resource curse by investing the economic rents from diamond mining towards public infrastructure. The nation enjoys the highest per-capita income amongst its sub-Saharan neighbours.¹¹⁸
- Alaska Permanent Fund - In 1974 Republican governor Jay Hammond set up the trust to ensure future generations received a share of oil rents. They distribute a rolling 5 year average of interest earned on the now sizeable \$53 billion fund (May 2016).¹¹⁹ Last year's dividend was over \$2,000 for every man, woman and child that lived in the state for 12 months. Alaska has the lowest inequality rate in the USA.

Policy Recommendations

In light of these challenges and developments, the following policy recommendations are offered:

- The cultural protection for rent-seekers is inbuilt via the nightly real estate reality TV. This demands a careful strategy critiquing the ethics of such profound money making. Memes need to be developed such as:
 - 'who are rising property prices good for?'
 - 'land is so valuable, it's wasted'
 - 'your taxes fund the infrastructure that makes my land more valuable. cheers'

¹¹⁸ <http://schalkenbach.org/pdf/TheSilverBullet.pdf>

¹¹⁹ <http://www.apfc.org/home/Content/home/index.cfm>

- Typical vacancy rates only look at advertised properties. With capital gains outstripping rents by 3:1 in many global cities, the desire to rent out a property reduces. These must be quantified as Speculative Vacancies.
 - once the community understands these hidden vacancies not only exist but aid the growth of property (land) bubbles, the Land Tax remedy can be more easily understood.
- Land must be valued at least biennially, in order to quantify the price growth of location, location. Land accounts for some 70% of the standard mortgage.
 - this data must be made publicly available. Property data is being increasingly privatised, further constraining public analysis. Land title departments are now in the neo-liberal firing line for those few remaining nations who do value land. In time, geo-spatial analysis will build the public's understanding of relocalised economic democracy.
- A yearly Land Tax on all land, including the family home must be levied.

Banks must be reminded that their government granted financial license includes a public interest clause. Financial institutions must permit land prices to fall. Sovereign guarantees must be set up to ensure most banks survive.

Closing the loop between community efforts and the resultant beneficiaries must become a key objective of the commons movement. Speculators have made an art form of buying near community gardens, cool cafes and new infrastructure, acting as parasites upon 'community development'. Land Taxes set at a sufficient rate will deter such rent-seeking, slowing down the need for a growth based economy. For this reason taxes on natural monopolies are key to a modern commoning city.

Tax Delinquent Private Property and City Commons

Paula Z. Segal

When property owners fall behind on their taxes, some cities sell the tax debt to private speculators through a “tax lien sale.” This has detrimental effects on neighborhoods. Instead, the city can keep the debt, enforce it, and use the properties as an opportunity to protect and create shared community resources of the city commons.

Tax-Lien Securitization Incentivizes Abandonment And Disinvestment

When property enters the tax-lien sale, the city gets its money up front but privatizes the question of what happens to the buildings, the land, their tenants and the neighborhoods around them. When the city sells tax debt to private collection agencies, owners of properties become more financially burdened due to the high, ascending interest the speculators charge on the debt (in NY, 18% interest compounded daily is the permissible rate). This throws owners who want to stay into worse conditions than they were in before their liens were sold, and puts entire neighborhoods at risk of losing community assets and simultaneously filling up with vacant and abandoned properties.

Faced with mounting bills to private collectors who charge high interest rates, some owners of land and buildings choose to walk away. Their abandoned properties lie fallow and accumulate more debt that will never be paid, leaving holes in neighborhoods. They become obvious targets for deed theft and other illegal practices since their physical neglect clearly shows that an owner is unlikely to protest an unsanctioned transfer. Neighbors are left with few choices: continue to live with holes and dumping grounds in their midst, or make improvements without any cognizable legal interest in the properties they are improving. In desperation, tenants take over maintenance of buildings, community organizations advocate for demolition of dangerous structures and people get together to replace vacant lots with gardens and other shared outdoor amenities.

Debt-holders – the investors who purchased unpaid municipal debt via tax lien sales – have the right to foreclose. Often, they wait years to do so because there is little incentive for becoming the legal owner of property in a run-down neighborhood; if they do foreclose, further decay is probable when private speculators lack incentive to maintain or create useful space. Existing community spaces that neighbors created to transform neglected spaces in their neighborhoods are threatened by private foreclosure and deed theft. Ultimately, the selling of securitized debt on tax-delinquent private properties is a vehicle for a small group of wealthy investors to generate private wealth by charging high interest rates while community spaces are jeopardized and neighborhoods suffer abandonment.

Strategies For Transforming Tax Delinquent Properties Into Community Assets

Instead of facilitating the transfer of property and wealth from neighborhoods to distant investors, cities should facilitate the transfer of tax delinquent properties to responsible non-profit owners who can use them for the public good, or should foreclose and maintain key places as part of the public infrastructure. The following are specific policy recommendations:

- Completely eliminate tax lien securitization; replace it with *in rem* foreclosure in which the city acquires tax delinquent private property on the grounds of taxes owed to it, along with programs that transfer these properties into responsible not-for-profit ownership that will provide resources for the community.
- If some securitization is deemed necessary to make sure that City budgets are predictable year to year, exclude the following types of properties from tax lien sales:
 - All occupied properties owned by not-for-profit corporations holding property in service of their missions, whether the provision of community services, like day cares and community gardens, or affordable housing. These occupied community properties are already our commons and must be protected from disappearance to speculators.

- All unoccupied properties. Cities should use their resources to facilitate the transfer of these properties to capable not-for-profit organizations that can transform them into community resources or distribute them equitably using commons principles.

Examples Highlighting The Benefits Of Alternatives To Tax Lien Securitization

- The Imani Community Garden in Weeksville, Brooklyn, has the majority of its food production on a lot that was once privately-owned and is now in the inventory of the NYC Parks Department (this lot is also called Imani II). The private owner of the property stopped paying taxes in the mid-1970s. The City, which had not yet instituted a tax lien securitization scheme, initiated *in rem* foreclosure in 1979, meaning they acquired the property based on the unpaid taxes owed to it. Gardeners negotiated with the City for an "interim use" license to grow on the lot and, over five years in this interim state (2011-2016), developed a community resource. When the City administration attempted to sell the land to a private developer in 2015, the community and local elected officials advocated for its preservation as a garden. The public negotiation over the fate of this public asset resulted in the City administration changing course; instead of selling the land, it was transferred to the NYC Parks Department for permanent preservation as a community garden in a neighborhood that desperately needs both community space and fresh food. Had the City instead allowed private debt collectors to take charge of the unpaid taxes in 1979, the creation of this thriving public resource with open green space and fresh food production would not have been possible.
<http://livinglotsnyc.org/lot/3013420008/>, <http://www.green-phoenix.org/projects/imani-gardens-i-ii>
- The City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania securitized and sold tax debt on its hardest-to-collect tax delinquent properties in 1997. As a result, many of those properties remained vacant for years. The City's efforts to get these derelict properties back into productive use were stymied because its public agencies could not acquire them without first paying the private

lien holder the value of the lien, plus their fees. Further, the City could not seize the property for code violations nor tax delinquency while the investor was attempting to collect, leaving its hands tied. In 2015, when the City announced another tax lien sale, local advocates, with the support of community development corporations, attempted to stop it, citing the deleterious effects of the 1997 sale. Though their efforts did not stop the sale, nor bring about a requested study, advocates succeeded in removing five urban farms and gardens from the sale, ensuring that these spaces remain key community and food production resources in neighborhoods that need them, rather than falling into neglect and decrepitude in the service of distant wealthy investors. These properties can now be kept in the public infrastructure or transferred to a responsible buyer through the Philadelphia Land Bank, a City entity created in 2013 to streamline the redevelopment of vacant properties.

<http://www.pilcop.org/dear-philly-postpone-tax-liens-auction/#sthash.U4fszdvl.dpbs>

Community Land Trusts

Karl Fitzgerald

If land is recognised as an essential part of the commons and that rising housing prices are primarily caused by locational (read land) scarcity, then a modern city should act to ensure the naturally rising value of land is shared amongst the community.

On the long road to significant Land Tax reform, many see Community Land Trusts (CLTs) as a micro version of this macro vision. CLTs are a form of housing where the Trust owns the land and members own their home.

In its purest sense, CLT members can freely sell their home, but the land remains with the Trust. With land prices averaging around 70% of a mortgage, this offers a similar sized reduction in interest fees. In considering land as a gift of the commons, banks or those lucky enough to own land have no economic or ethical right to profit off something they played no part in creating.

Establishing Community Land Trusts

There are varying formulas for members to pay for the land. Typically a large government or philanthropic grant is given to buy the land. CLT's must ensure they purchase at a time in the real estate cycle that reflects the reality of local wage earners. Buying at the peak of the market is a recipe for failure or slow growth for the Trust. The US CLT model typically sees a formula comparing the median income to median house price and ensuring sales prices are some 20 - 30% below median market rates.

Examples And Links

- The Champlain Housing Trust of Burlington, Vermont is the largest CLT in America and most likely the world. They have over 2,200 properties under management, of which 1/3 are rental properties and 2/3 are owned by the Trust member (house only). Bernie Sanders, as Mayor of Burlington, helped catalyse this group with a \$200,000 investment in 1984.

- The growth of CLTs is accelerating with the UK building from zero to 175 CLTs post millennium. Much of this growth has occurred post-GFC, with recognition that the lower overall financial burden saw a 82 % lower foreclosure rate on US CLT properties than in the wider property market.¹²⁰ The UK growth is impressive, with 527 homes delivered to date and, another 2500 homes in the pipeline.
http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/_filecache/fa6/54b/274-final-ncltn-report-of-the-trustees-201415.pdf
- St Clements is the first London-based CLT. It is offering a 3BR apartment for £235,000. According to home.co.uk, the average asking price for such a home is £623,000. A detailed application process is needed to choose the lucky first entrants to this CLT.
<http://www.londonclt.org/where/applications/>
- The Fairhope CLT (Alabama) was established in 1894 with the purchase of 2,200 acres. This has doubled over the last 122 years to a holding of 4,400 acres with 3,400 leases. Their financial standing is very stable, with the trust collecting some 20% of all rates paid for the local council.
<http://www.fairhopesingletax.com/fairhope-history/>

Critical Issues

Concern arises that the CLT growth is too slow. Over 35 years the modern CLT movement quantifies at just 25,000 homes. Much of this relates to the poor financial architecture of the median resale formula. The 'CLT classic' formula sees significant revenues only paid to the trust when a member sells their property. In a successful community, who wants to sell? A minor body corporate fee keeps the administration office ticking, but there is no financial surplus to invest in new homes or buy land at the right time. Under these conditions, CLTs must curtail their growth agendas, instead relying on government handouts for growth opportunities. This is part of the reason that the Champlain Housing Trust has only added on average 71 properties per year to their portfolio over 31 years. That ratio is obviously even lower for Fairhope.

¹²⁰ <http://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/PubDetail.aspx?pubid=1846&URL=Outperforming-the-Market--Delinquency-and-Foreclosure-Rates-in-Community-Land-Trusts&Page=2>

Of significance is that the resale price, whilst 20 - 30% less than neighbouring properties, still includes a substantial proportion of the land price. If we accept that land is a gift of the commons, why should we have to pay any interest to the banks for it? This places unnecessary interest and general repayment burdens on the purchaser.

The classic CLT model has still been hugely successful. They prove that land can be held in perpetuity with housing prices aligned more closely to wage growth rather than demand pricing based on expected future capital gains.

Policy Recommendations

- Yearly land valuations must be calculated so that yearly land leases reflect market rates
- Community banking and ethical superannuation companies canvassed for possible support
- The CLT board must be comprised of the wider community who have a strong understanding of the economic justice principles undermining the trust. This is to safeguard against insiders voting against their own financial interests
- The constitution must have the financial formula set in stone to minimise watering down
- The constitution must include the need to expand the base for affordable housing
- A refined CLT model is needed to acts as a counter-weight to land prices whilst providing substantial liquidity to the CLT must be developed.

The City as a Regional Commons

Colin Russo

Why Imagine A Regional City Commons?

The Regional City shares significant functions, activities and exchanges with neighbouring cities. It may include one or more administrations, central business districts, and major facilities that members of other cities share, such as large scale pools, stadia, universities, hospitals, airports and churches.

A Regional Commons City is identified by its extraordinary contributions to the creation, facilitation and support of commons activities within the city and region. Alternatively, when a commons ethos is not widely distributed or built up, a regional city commons network can be established with similar outcomes, less visibility, involvement or accesses, but with support for the commons ethos within a regional city.

The commons ethos includes having an equal financial or 'in kind' interest in an activity, service, business or group of services or businesses. Generally, commons activities create exchanges or shared uses where desired, but they are not controlled directly by governments, although they can be facilitated by them, based on a pervasive agreement, guidelines, policies and practices. Cities that are not part of the significant activity of regions miss out on the benefits of peer to peer developments, co-location possibilities, network building, skilling and educational opportunities. In the same manner, commons groups can also miss out on activities and other benefits if they are isolated outside of city regions.

Classically, regional commons include shared airsheds, bays, water catchments and land/forest ecosystems, and other green corridors that are shared by communities. Collaboration across social, environmental, economic and governance sectors creates a "centrally pooled resource" which appeals to the humanisation of regional interactions.¹²¹ The UK Government defines a Commons as being "under specific ownership but with a 'right to roam' –

¹²¹ <http://bit.ly/2adAXVT>

including walking, picknicking, and running – granted to anyone who wishes to do so”¹²². For uses across regions, Commons are also defined by multiple examples of contested political, cultural and circumstantial perspectives. Commons can be limited to formal agreements whereby “a resource cannot be considered to be held in common unless there is a statute, a license or an agreement establishing it as part of the commons”.¹²³

Benefits Of Commons For Participants

What practical benefits would this entitle Regional Commons users?

Mutually beneficial exchanges and collaborations arise from assisting city administrations and city inhabitants with direct and indirect goals of establishing a commons ethos. Investments integrate groups, sectors and other levels of government. Apart from business goals, cities share in common issues of communication and technology, population and liveability goals and communities of interest. Global changes such as economic and climate fluctuations are also shared and each requires its own considerations and broad scale solutions that can reach across city boundaries and help other cities to become empowered, less isolated and less of a contributor to problems that affect the some or the whole of the region. The objective is for the regional city commons to correspond with neighbouring cities to create more, better, faster, cheaper alternatives, using a commons ethos, than are generally available in a single traditional city.

Businesses and Citizens can benefit from uses of spaces that are used for multiple purposes, peer-to-peer citizenship and co-production. Today cities contribute to other cities' politics, events, communities of interest and crucial crime and security data. There are many other areas of co-production to be explored from one region to the next.

Methods For Regional Commons

One key to new foresight about Creative Commons approaches is how to build regionally coordinated public funding mechanisms and policy to help

¹²² <http://bit.ly/29VZFaE>

¹²³ <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/book-of-the-day-build-the-city-perspectives-on-commons-and-culture/2015/10/14>

contribute to what has been traditionally seen as a state and federal government role, e.g. policy development for regional economics, by the people and for the people, plus future generations. Cities engage well, technologists create technology well, and in the age of ubiquitous cheap \$15 computers, sensory technology will record many of our preferences helping industry to be increasingly co-designers of futures. Accelerated regional city commons thinking will be a beneficiary. We know the past to be about innovation hubs in local areas and engaging across single cities. But as cities regionalise more, offering better active and mobile transport and transit oriented developments, people are experiencing more of their regions and are able to discuss and learn more about their experiences online. Local experience and knowledge as regional citizens, visitors and communities of interest extend the innovation and ownership of city commons outcomes. Regions around capital cities can invite in collaboration from other regions across their State. Further, sister city concepts, which cities often use, press for exploration and localisation of international experiences: thus the stage has been set for creative commons cities across international boundaries.

Policy Recommendations

Regional collaboration is required across cities, where “many services extend across the region—such as transportation, land use planning, and economic development—and need to be coordinated on a regional basis”¹²⁴.

Cities are seeing many forms of innovation hubs, learning centres and networks around cities. Cities need to work with smart futures by integrating new practices and by creating alternatives. Examples follow:

- *City administrators* - Engaging across regional and international boundaries during key projects designed to create the preferred futures of cities 20 to 30 years from now.
- *Library workshops* – Deliver group activities that extend from libraries into local parks (for climate change discussions and community gardens and i-tree programs), makers hubs, business centres and online community spaces.

¹²⁴ <http://bit.ly/2ahWRKw> p.9.

- *City planning and city engagement Branches* – create apps for the commons networks to provide feedback about how to best participate in particular cities. Strengths and weaknesses of particular cities can be mapped and along with neighbourhood development apps for city planning processes – these apps go beyond the identification and reporting of problems with potholes and live crime, into what people like and dislike about their city and what they want for the future.
- *Software developers* - Development of software under a commons license with Councils and other stakeholders could lift process of local real time desired futures data-streams with regional knowledge, clustering of innovation hubs and city-scale 3D modelling to produce creative commons spatial, representative metropolitan, city and city-regional planning.
- *State government and capital or larger Cities* - By working across STEEP issues, each region drives technology and economies of Commons by developing a regional committee to coordinate each city in that region. The aim would be to advance creative Commons to contribute to better forms of public/private/commons planning, design and delivery of traditional public services, with less expense through wider forms of feedback.

Commons conscious futurists can assist in this in many ways e.g. (a) see beyond waves of advances and developments in technical innovation – by seeing the bigger picture to create economies of scale for city commons (b) humanize the process by advocating for face to face and digital innovation and to balance this across each STEEP area for whole regions (c) write about creative commons policy across these innovations to open them to the future to prevent the tragedy of the commons – a metaphor for over-use of an area. We can learn from the metaphor by creating regional collaboration between city commoning stakeholders and by opening to a global market and lifestyle.

Knowledge

Open Data and City Commons

Paula Z. Segal

Neighbours with access to accurate information, in context, provided together with support from a small, nimble and experienced staff, can and do organize collectively to create tangible results and real change in their neighborhoods.

Open Data Matters

Uneven growth in cities is a problem that is compounded by an uneven access to information about how people can influence the development of the places where they live. Hundreds of city-owned vacant properties languish, located primarily in low-income communities, collecting garbage and blighting the very neighborhoods they could enliven. The “Right to the City,” first articulated by Henri Lefebvre in 1968, is the right to influence the urban environment that will, inevitably, shape you; therefore it is really a right to personal autonomy and community self-determination.¹²⁵ Individuals and groups lacking access to data about vacant city-owned properties affecting their lives, and information about how to influence them, are prevented from fully participating in this collective, creative act, and are denied the right to determine the path of their own development as people and communities.

Strategies For Open Data And City Commoning

Open data, used to create and share contextually relevant information about property online and in place, combined with tools to connect neighborhood organizers to one another, and assistance in navigating city politics, is the foundation of a grassroots strategy that allows residents to exercise their right to the city by understanding and transforming the built environment.

There are several examples of both online platforms and in-place strategies that make open data about land, and information about how to transform it, accessible and actionable:

¹²⁵ Lefebvre, H. (1968), *Right to the City*, in *Writing on Cities* 195 (ed. E. Kofman & E. Lebas 1996, Oxford).

Examples Of Open Data Online:

- Living Lots NYC: <http://livinglotsnyc.org/> (explore open data by clicking on individual lots)
- Grounded in Philly: <http://groundedinphilly.org>
- LA Open Acres: <http://laopenacres.org>
- 3000 Acres in Melbourne: <http://www.3000acres.org/>
- 2000 Acres in Sydney: <https://twothousandacres.squarespace.com/>
- Maps For Other Cities: <http://596acres.org/en/about/other-cities-copy/>
- The Open Source Code: <https://github.com/596acres/django-livinglots>

Examples Of Open Data In Place:

- Lot Labeling in Weeksville, Brooklyn 8/6/14: <http://596acres.org/en/photos/album/51/>
- Reclaiming Vacant Public Land through Design: <http://bit.ly/29OukYt>

Policy Recommendations:

- Source and transform available “open” data and other data about any city’s vacant land portfolio into an online resource that transforms it into contextual information that people can use to exercise their right to the city.
- Put the now-useful information where people most impacted by neglect and obfuscation will most likely find it -- on the properties themselves -- with signs that announce clearly that the property is public and that neighbors, together, may be able to get permission to transform it.
- Aid neighborhood organizers in connecting to one another through social networking and in-person collaboration.
- Fund organizations that help neighbours navigate city politics.
- Remove policies that encourage warehousing of places and fenced-off public real estate assets. Data-driven, inclusive, and democratic local power is multi-locally applicable and scalable to global issues of environmental justice and public space.

Human Service Directory Data as a Commons

Greg Bloom

Today, information about community resources (i.e. the health, human, and social services available to people in need) is scattered across a fragmented landscape of siloed information systems. If the many different kinds of 'community resource databases' could recognize a *common language* — and if they could openly share their resource data through *interoperable technologies* — then directory information could be *published once* and *accessed in many ways* (through channels such as call centers, web engines like Google and Yelp, mobile apps, etc). Social entrepreneurs, non-profits, governments and funders could each add value to community resource data without restricting access to it. This would transform our collective abilities to ensure that people can live healthy and dignified lives.

A Landscape Of Siloed Directories

It's hard to see the safety net. *Which agencies provide what services to whom? Where and how can people access them?* These details are always in flux. Non-profit and government agencies are often under-resourced and overwhelmed, and it may not be a priority for them to push information out to attract more customers.

So there are many 'referral providers' — such as call centers, resource directories, web applications, etc — that collect directory information about health, human, and social services. New apps emerge all the time, increasingly offered by for-profit startups. Yet these directories are still all managed in redundant and incompatible silos, locked in competition with each other (whether by default or design), where they each struggle to stay up-to-date.

As a result of this costly and ineffective status quo:

- **People in need** have difficulty discovering and accessing services that can help them live better lives.
- **Service providers** struggle to connect clients with other services that can help them meet complex needs.
- **Decision-makers** are unable to gauge the effectiveness of programs at improving community health.
- **Innovators** are stymied by lack of access to data that could power valuable tools for any of the above.

A cascade of benefits from interoperable, open resource data

As institutions adopt open standards and interoperable platforms, we expect that:

- Higher quality resource data can be produced at lower cost than siloed status quo;
- Innovative technologies can proliferate, and become easier to re-deploy and adapt;
- People can more easily find services, and service providers can more readily meet complex needs;
- Researchers, policy-makers and funders can better understand public health and community needs;
- All of this can yield healthier people and more resilient communities.

An Emerging Movement Towards Open Data And Interoperable Systems

In collaboration with **Code for America**, **Google.org**, the **Alliance of Information and Referral Systems** and others, **Open Referral** has just made this possible.¹²⁶ We've developed a data exchange format that establishes *interoperability* among conventional systems, emerging applications, and the Web itself.¹²⁷

In Open Referral's **pilot projects**, lead stakeholders — government champions, referral providers, community anchor institutions, etc — are collaborating to establish open interoperable resource data infrastructure, testing hypotheses with implementations intended to yield tangible value to service providers and

¹²⁶ <http://openreferral.org>

¹²⁷ See <https://openreferral.org/deep-dive-into-version-1-0/> for more information

people in need. Through these pilots, stakeholders are evaluating the viability and sustainability of various models for open resource data ecosystems.

For example:

- The Boston Children's Hospital has transformed its HelpSteps website into an open platform, and has built an open source mobile app that can be freely re-deployed. <https://openreferral.org/helpsteps-introduces-new-open-source-mobile-app/>
- MediaLab Prado in Madrid has repurposed open data published by the municipal government into a mobile-friendly resource locator tool. <https://openreferral.org/huertas-de-datos-open-referral-in-madrid/>
- The Digital Humanitarian Network has developed a simple spreadsheet for sharing information about disaster relief resources across various actors including PeaceGeeks, StandbyTaskForce, and the UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. <https://openreferral.org/introducing-the-humanitarian-service-data-model/>
- Purple Binder, a for-profit company in Chicago, is openly publishing its resource directory data to an emerging ecosystem of third-party applications. <http://bit.ly/2acjT5S>

Policy Recommendations for government and funding institutions:

- **Institutions should publish granular, machine-readable, openly-licensed data about the health, human, social services** that they provide and/or fund. Such institutions can also set policies that require any grantees and contractors who aggregate such information to republish it in open interoperable formats
- **Convene stakeholders across sectors.** Many sectors stand to benefit from open, interoperable resource directory data. Yet the market will likely fail to generate such solutions without intervention. Governments and funders can create space for collaboration and deliberation by convening key stakeholders around the shared purpose of promoting access to information about services.
- **Allocate resources for research and development.** Many questions have yet to be answered: how can communities best participate in ensuring the accuracy of resource data published by governments, funders, and

third parties? What feedback loops will be effective? What institutional forms are sustainable (i.e. data cooperatives)? How should the Open Referral format itself evolve to meet diverse needs? Answering these questions takes time, many sources of input, and skills such as facilitation and data science. Market-driven actors will likely allocate such resources only for the purpose of enclosure. Governments and funders can ensure this challenge is addressed through transparent, participatory processes.

The Unseen City: Commons Oriented Cities and the Commons Beyond

Sharon Ede

"With access to global resources, urban populations everywhere are seemingly immune to the consequences of locally unsustainable land and resource management practices."

William Rees & Mathis Wackernagel, 'Our Ecological Footprint', 1996

City Limits

As you reach the edge of a city, you may see a sign: END CITY LIMITS.

This is an illusion! Though it is invisible to the eye, the city extends far beyond its physical limits.

Very few – if any – cities are able to sustain all their inhabitants with what can be sourced within or near their built manifestation.

Cities are dependent on biophysical capacity and labour, both local and transnational, in order to deliver the needs of their populations. In doing so, they draw on the ecosystems and commons of other communities.

The needs of citizens are many – to take one example, food production systems alone are dependent on extensive external supply lines, and are a large contributor to our ecological footprint both during their production and also with 'food miles', or greenhouse emissions resulting from fossil fuel consumption required for transport & refrigeration.

'Estimates at the time of the Earth Summit (Rio) in 1992 found that 75 percent of the natural resources that we harvest and mine from the Earth are shipped, trucked, railroaded and flown to 2.5 percent of the Earth's surface, which is

*metropolitan. At that destination, 80 percent of those resources are converted into 'waste'.*¹²⁸ Jac Smit, *Urban Agriculture + Biodiversity*

Human settlements depend upon agriculture for survival, however few city dwellers are ever faced with the effects their lives make on areas beyond the city limits, such as the consequences of large scale agriculture required to feed the hordes of urban dwellers, the impacts generated by growing, amassing and transporting resources required for consumption in the city.

In addition to their resource consumption, environmental impacts resulting from food production - such as dryland salinity, over use of water supplies, runoff of pesticides and fertilisers made necessary by typical centralised production of monocultural agribusiness – are predominantly generated by the demands of urban markets.

If the true demand of the city was made visible, it would show that most urban areas are running ecological deficits – that is, they depend on 'occupied territory' elsewhere.

One way to imagine this is to picture your city under a glass dome – an experiment that was most closely tried with the Biosphere II project.¹²⁹

What would need to be enclosed under that dome along with the built structure for the city to keep functioning?

There is also the 'floating city' to consider - a city's population is not just that of its residents, at any given point in time. For cities which are tourism destinations, the city is also a 'floating' population of tourists who also consume resources and produce waste.

In the 21st century, cities are the primary resource manipulators on the planet. They are a meta-technology – a technology that organises other technologies. But it is precisely because they are so powerful as drivers of all kinds of activities that the way we build and live in cities is the key to addressing social and environmental impacts everywhere. Cities should not only do less damage, but

¹²⁸ <http://www.ruaf.org/sites/default/files/UA%20and%20biodiversity.pdf>

¹²⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biosphere_2

work as an environmental repair kit – become biogenic, or generative, not biocidal, or extractive.

Cities need to support and reinvigorate their own commons, but a true commons-oriented city also considers how urban demands impact on commons of other communities around the globe.

Cities As Commons Protection

Measure It

How can civic leaders and citizens know what impacts their Unseen City is having unless it is measured? Mass balance studies of cities offer one way to track what is going in and out, though not what the impacts are on distant commons, however, determining whether urban supplies are local or exotic is a good starting point. A simple proxy for a city to make an initial assessment and highlight areas for further investigation could be to divide the national Ecological Footprint (see examples) by total population, and multiply the per capita Footprint by the city's population.

Relocalise It

The more a city can become locally productive in most of its needs, the less it is likely to act as a 'remote control' on other communities' commons, whether those are fisheries, forests, the loss of local food production in favour of commodity crops, impacting on local customs and cultural heritage, or skewing the nature of available work opportunities.

Examples

- Fab City is an international initiative that emerged from the global Fab Lab Network in order to develop locally productive and globally connected cities. It is a practical approach to systemically address a range of social and environmental issues by challenging cities to relocalise 50% of their city's production by 2054. <http://fab.city>
- The Global Footprint Network maintains a series of biophysical accounts that track resource flows for 150+ countries dating back to 1967, called the Ecological Footprint. These accounts show which countries are

running 'ecological deficits', sometimes by eroding their own resource base, but often by drawing down the surplus of ecological creditor nations. www.footprintnetwork.org

Policy Recommendations

Cities who truly 'walk the talk' of the commons will also seek to minimise the impact of their Unseen City on the commons of other communities, and can do so by adopting principles which include:

1. **addressing the 'slow things first'** and ensure that planning of long-life infrastructure avoids building resource traps e.g. car dependence which locks in higher levels of difficult-to-change energy consumption.
2. **factoring the risks associated with running ecological deficits** into decision making (physical as well as financial) to spot emerging risks associated with resource scarcity eg. identifying resource dependence on overstressed regions.
3. **trade-correcting** the city's carbon accounts to reflect the true nature of their carbon profile, not just their local energy consumption - net importers of carbon intensive products and services from abroad have exported part of their carbon responsibility.

Culture

Culture as Commons

Arlene Goldbard

Cultural questions are prominent in contemporary discourse about the city. Whose heritage and representations should be embodied in the built environment? Who has the right to make decisions about development? Whose contributions to the past and visions of the future count? “Culture” is another word for our intangible commons.

Yet in debates about cities’ future, culture is seldom given its rightful standing as the crucible in which our individual and collective identities take shape, the container for our civil discourse, the medium in which families, communities, and institutions take root. Indeed, here in the United States, the well-being of plants and animals has more standing in policy decisions that intervene in the built environment than does the well-being of human cultures.

We are facing widespread public proclivity to see communities of color and low-income communities as disposable in the face of economic “progress.” One repeated problem has been the destruction of longstanding neighborhoods—and along with buildings and public spaces, their cultural and social fabric—to make way for highly subsidized or otherwise profitable development projects.

For example, if local authorities are asked to approve the destruction of homes, parks, and businesses in a long-lived neighborhood so that a sports stadium or freeway can be built there, existing law mandates research into possible environmental harm such as destruction of endangered species habitat or potential pollution. If negative impact is found, the project can be disallowed or steps can be required to mitigate the impact before anything can be approved.

But what about the impact of development on cultural fabric? What about the sense of belonging, the sites of public memory, the gathering-places, the

expressions and embodiments of heritage cultures that would also be destroyed along with structures and streets?

To enable humane development and an awareness of the commons that is more than an abstraction to the people who co-create it, the cultural and social fabric community residents weave over time—which includes physical spaces such as markets and parks, as well as intangible resources such as customs and embedded histories—must have social and legal standing and explicitly named value in policy deliberations. Every community should be authorized to assess, study, and act on these too.

Examples And Links

- *An Act of Collective Imagination: The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture's First Two Years of Action Research*, contains a detailed CIS model resolution for adoption by local, regional, or national authorities. <http://usdac.us/report-on-first-two-years/>
- Cultural Impact Assessments are increasing part of environmental assessments in the South Pacific, where—for example—there has been a strong movement to protect sites of value with respect to Native Hawaiian culture and spiritual practice. For example, see p. 11 and following of this *Guide to The Implementation and Practice of the HEPA*. <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/occl/files/2013/07/Guide-to-the-Implementation-and-Practice-of-the-HEPA.pdf>
 - In New Zealand and Australia, assessment requirements may variously be characterized as “heritage impact,” “social impact,” or “cultural impact,” but all focus primarily on potential disruptions to cultural sites and practices of indigenous people, as this 2014 paper describes: “Cultural impact assessment: international literature review.” <http://www.culturaldevelopment.net.au/publications/research-reports/cultural-impact-assessment-international-literature-review/>
- Are there other links to other people's / orgs work in this area? Who else around the world has innovated in this area?

Policy Recommendations

- Assessing cultural impact is meaningful only if culture has standing in law and policy as a social good worthy of preservation and development. As a foundation for instituting this practice, this should be explicitly stated as part of a formal cultural policy for a city, state, region, or nation.
- The next step is to set up processes for “Cultural Impact Studies” (CIS) (analogous to the Environmental Impact Studies which have been federal requirements since the passage of the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969). An Environmental Impact Study must be prepared and considered before approval, modification, or rejection of any proposed project that has possible negative environmental impact.
- When adopting a CIS requirement, authorities and communities must define “negative cultural impact,” describing the mandated sections of a CIS, and set out the process for implementing a CIS, including costs, timelines and deadlines, and possible outcomes.

Ubuntu as a Primer for City Commons

Charles Ikem

The entire African society, living and living-dead, is a living network of relations almost like that between the various parts of an organism- when one part of the body is sick the whole body is affected¹³⁰. The Philosophy of Ubuntu is more about commons than communes and can serve as a background to build future commoning networks within cities. As David Bollier wrote, “the art of commoning is approached from the inner dimensions-how people relate to each other”¹³¹. This short essay shares how the art of connectedness can be achieved by drawing on the African philosophy of Ubuntu to provide a primer for policy makers wishing to reinvent and apply this concept for their locales.

Ubuntu is the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity. Humanity towards others that stress interconnectedness has been a core practice in Southern African countries but the tenets of Ubuntu can be found in small communities all around the world. In most cities, the concept of interconnectedness and communalism can be evidenced in community health projects such as the antenatal projects for nursing mothers as seen in some western African countries like Nigeria, where ideas relating to maternal health are shared or weekly community sanitation exercises. Interconnectedness and sharing also inspired early theories and philosophy of participatory design and maybe we can relate to that. How can policy makers and municipalities nudge or facilitate citizens towards togetherness in a bid to solve common problems? By taking ownership of the things they can help affect.

Strategies For Ubuntu

Family. The core of the community is the family. The status of families should be paid more attention to by policy makers. Family is where life flows into the community. Love, care, sharing starts from there. Black communities in America

¹³⁰ Nyasani, J.M. (1981) The Ontological Significance of ‘I’ and ‘WE’ in African Philosophy.

¹³¹ Available at <http://bollier.org/blog/art-commoning>

have this tradition of family summer camps and that is one way that demonstrates 'Ubuntu'. Emphasizing family values and ethics municipalities can tap into the different values brought into the community from the family.

Tradition versus Modernity. Connecting people within communities via traditional means such as religious centres as well modern forms such as cultural digital hangouts. The onus is to use these platforms to connect locales and families including non-indigenes. Giving people the opportunity to bring their own culture, values and norms and removing barriers to cultural participation and (can you add a bit more explanation here?)

Connection and Identity. How can families and individuals identify themselves and given the opportunity to live meaningfully beyond themselves? The philosophy of Ubuntu is the idea of 'We' versus 'just me'. Municipalities can enable this 'we' mentality by setting up social structures that solve problems in groups. Identify people with common problems and enabling them to overcome their challenges. The family-by-family project by TACSI (The Australian Centre for Social Innovation)¹³² is a good example.

Art and philosophy. Is a way to express experiences, culture and emotions through words, play, and dance. Promoting art and craftsmanship within communities and amongst individuals is one genuine way to encourage communalism while driving commoning. Art exchanges are one way to exchanges values amongst different families and ethnicities living in a community or city and can help to build ties and connections required to participate, challenge and build democratic power.

More town hall meetings. As hard as it is to get citizens talking, the old town hall meeting can get people to share their problems and how they are overcoming it which can be adopted by others and scaled. The question of trust, openness and transparency will be built along those walls.

¹³² The Australian Centre for Social Innovation: family-by-family project: <http://tacsi.org.au/project/family-by-family/>

Identify passionate voices. Policy making and participatory projects involving many people are difficult to facilitate and sometimes it is harder to draw a line between what to include and what not to. Municipal authorities can identify passionate voices by working more with citizens at the early stages of a policy development or at the idea level of the implementation. Commoning and democracy starts with active and passionate citizens. Identify them and take them more seriously.

Connected places. The bonds of the community based on the family, will shatter in an urban setting, where people get isolated from each other due to living and working conditions. However, it is of crucial importance that the moral aspects of *Ubuntu* and communalism, and the specific values associated with it be abstracted and put to good use. As we begin to realize that problems are connected to even larger ones and no one household or government can solve them alone. Giving people the agency to own, solve and share solutions is fundamental. Policy makers can learn by imbibing the foundations of Ubuntu and sustaining the moral aspects through translations founded in arts and philosophy, and embedded in meaningful projects.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and the City as Commons

Cherie Minniecon

What Cultural Intelligence Is And Is Not

What one does with the intangible space that exists between one person's perspective and a perspective that is different from their own is where cultural intelligence resides.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is not simply about learning knowledge about cultures that are different from our own, whether they be social, religious or ethnic differences. It also focuses on our motivations, strategies and actions that enable us to self reflect, problem solve, adjust our worldviews and perspectives and adapt effectively in cross cultural interactions and contexts.¹³³

For years I have seen consultants who have run cultural awareness and cultural competency workshops with groups and organisations with citizens that are in positions of power and privilege. These workshops are supposed to help those in power to understand the perspectives of those who remain marginalised, misunderstood and continue to live on the fringes of society, in the hope that this knowledge will lead to new perspectives and different actions. However, as generous as cultural knowledge sharing has been, it has not necessarily translated into inclusion or a change in power dynamics, as the listening remains in the existing worldview of the learner, cultural knowledge and education alone does not always transform into inclusive practices. It also does not require the educator to shift, grow or transform in their perspectives, as they remain in the frustrating position of pointing out the blind spots in others perspectives - without always seeing change in the world around them.

Cultural Intelligence is different to cultural competence and cultural awareness because it is founded in intelligence research as opposed to an educational

¹³³ Livermore, D. (2015) Leading with Cultural Intelligence, AMACOM.

perspective.¹³⁴ Cultural intelligence combined with the inclusive values, principles and frameworks enable us, both individually and collectively, to be able to work through points of difference in constructive ways that bring about a shared understanding to affect positive change.

David Livermore argues that a high CQ comes from having a strong sense of self and identity. This is because when people have a clear sense of identity they can stand in a conversation with greater strength and are less likely to respond to points of difference from a place of fear, intimidation or defense. If you or even an entire city knows its identity and has principles of inclusion and participation then there is an assumption that points of difference would be met with a healthy openness, curiosity and sensitivity to one's knowledge of how their own perspectives and cultural positioning may be perceived or impact on others.

It is a harder starting point to build CQ if one is struggling with identity, however it can still be done. At the same time a person may have a strong sense of self but not necessarily a high CQ, because they have remained living in a dominant culture or monocultural environment where their reference points, worldviews or privilege has never really been challenged.

Alternatively, a person's motivations and values may also mean that they have a high CQ but they do not utilise it to create inclusive or participatory spaces.

Ultimately Cultural Intelligence development enables the capability to sit in discomfort when our reference points and worldview are being challenged. It can be challenging and has no real end point, it requires patience and is a life-long learning process. However, it is the space where emergence of new ways of being together can take place if we are wise enough to acknowledge this active space between us.

¹³⁴ Livermore, D. (2011) *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, AMACOM.

Why Do Cities Today Need Cultural Intelligence?

Cities need cultural intelligence in order for its citizens to be able to coexist with dignity, for the sacredness of true self expression, and to be able to create respect in relationship to self, each other, and all other living beings.

No one likes to have their identity ignored, abused, challenged or denied. A culturally intelligent city can cultivate deep listening skills, shared respect, meaning and experiences of learning together that creates a culturally safe and dynamic city.

Cities that do not grow their cultural intelligence are less likely to engage participation from cultures or category of groups that have long been excluded, disadvantaged or on the margins of the community. This ultimately leads to ongoing divisions and costs the community greatly, in both not being able to tap into talent and a diversity of resources, but also the costs due to division or lack of understanding and ability to adapt within complex cultural differences that transcends win/lose scenarios.

Culturally intelligent cities have the potential to drive up innovation and creativity, due to their ability to integrate their diverse cultural resources and make best use of multiple perspectives that can bring about whole new perspectives.¹³⁵

Some of the key changes that are needed include:

- A shift from focusing on “othering” to understanding self.
- A focus on building motivation, strategies and actions around CQ in combination with cultural education.
- A shift from the traditional approaches to learning about culture to experiential learning and experiences.

¹³⁵ Lolipis, G (2011) <http://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis/2011/05/30/the-lack-of-cultural-intelligence-is-damaging-our-enterprises-and-our-economy/#1605ad4e1e78> viewed 10 May 2016.

- Reflective and safe spaces where people can engage in CQ practice.
- Increased visibility of diversity for example diverse representation on mainstream media and institutions.
- Strategic foresight participatory processes that develop a shared understanding of identity and shared city visions and futures.

Some Strategies For Creating Culturally Intelligent Cities

1. Develop foresight programs on the identity of the city in focus. Developing an understanding of the identity the city wants to have, which provides a reference point for all community members to be engaged with from their respective cultural viewpoints to imagine a more inclusive city future.
2. Generate and cultivate the motivation for cultural intelligence through the development of both the business case and moral case.
3. Support and engage with frameworks and processes determined by Indigenous and (in Australia) Aboriginal people to support participation and engagement praxis. This may be through a treaty or other mechanism identified by Aboriginal populations.
4. Assess levels of cultural Intelligence of key decision makers. There is currently only one recognised cultural intelligence assessment tool that has been academically proven,¹³⁶ which focuses on measuring:
 - a. Motivation: What is driving the personal interest in cross cultural encounters
 - b. Knowledge: What aspects of cultural knowledge is required for the context of the cross cultural encounter

¹³⁶ Livermore, D (2015) <http://www.culturalq.com/tmpl/about/about.php> viewed 10 May 2016

- c. Strategy: What needs to be considered and what will the approach be in the cross cultural scenario that you plan to enter based on existing knowledge and ability to sit with ambiguity.
 - d. Action: Putting the plan into action allows the learning and experience to come alive.
5. Visual experiences of diversity are vital in building Culturally Intelligent cities and being seen as a Cultural Intelligent city. For example seeing Acknowledgement to Country plaques for traditional custodians on buildings, accessible pathways for those with disabilities, seeing tai chi and other cultural practices happening in parks etc are all visible indicators of moving towards cultural intelligence based on the surface layers of culture. Visibility of a lack of Cultural Intelligence should be reduced for example racism on buses if speaking another language, people having burka pulled off etc. Over time as Cultural Intelligence build also deeper layers of culture need to be experienced and visible as well over time.
6. Cultural Intelligence has been found to be higher in those who have had interactions with a lot of diversity in different contexts compared to people who may have only worked with one or two specific cultural or social group different to their own (livermore: 2015). For example someone who has worked mainly with people with disabilities and outside of work hangs out mainly with people from the same social and religious status may have a different CQ to someone who has been married to a person with disability, who has two parents from two different cultural backgrounds and has friends who are reflective of different religious and social experiences. City designs and experiential experiences and events that allow for multiple multicultural interactions and engagement are vital

Examples And Links

- The human library is a great example of creating safe spaces for people to explore their perceptions, challenge their worldviews and points of differences and to develop self awareness and reflective spaces.

<http://humanlibrary.org>

- Tanderrum is a great examples of cultural intelligence in action. This ceremony occurs in Melbourne and is led by the Aboriginal people of the Kulin nations and creates a space for the building of identity for Aboriginal people and non Aboriginal people based on traditions that can be directly linked to the ongoing identity of the city
<http://ilbijerri.com.au/event/tanderrum/> And
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzOvrcgG8dk>
- This story below is a great example of cultural intelligence especially in the context of the journey of the mayor who had a shift in his perspective and what they were able to achieve in eradicating homelessness.
<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/as-it-happens-thursday-edition-1.3074402/medicine-hat-becomes-the-first-city-in-canada-to-eliminate-homelessness-1.3074742>
- This emerging technological development could contribute to cultural intelligence building into the future by providing experiential communication opportunities.<http://www.boredpanda.com/real-time-translator-ear-waverly-labs/>
- **Dreamtime at the G** - This sporting event is a great example of a strategy to build the Cultural Intelligence of a city. It blends Aboriginal culture with sporting cultural in a celebratory and experiential way.
<http://www.kgi.org.au/eventsactivities/dreamtime-at-the-g/>

Accounts

Bologna Celebrates One Year of a Bold Experiment in Urban Commoning

Neal Gorenflo¹³⁷

It all began with park benches.

In 2011, a group of women in Bologna, Italy wanted to donate benches to their neighborhood park, Piazza Carducci. There was nowhere to sit in their park. So they called the city government to get permission to put in benches. They called one department, which referred them to another, which sent them on again. No one in the city could help them. This dilemma highlighted an important civic lacuna -- there simply was no way for citizens to contribute improvements to the city. In fact, it was illegal.

Fast forward to May 16, 2015. The mayor, city councilors, community leaders, journalists, and hundreds of others gathered at the awe-inspiring MAST Gallery for the opening ceremony of Bologna's Civic Collaboration Fest celebrating the one year anniversary of the Bologna Regulation for the Care and Regeneration of the Urban Commons, a history-making institutional innovation that enables Bologna to operate as a collaborative commons. Now Bologna's citizens have a legal way to contribute to their city. Since the regulation passed one year ago, more than 100 citizen-led projects have signed "collaboration pacts" with the city under the regulation to contribute urban improvements with 100 more in the pipeline.

It was an impressive event filled with ceremony, emotion, historical significance all in a context of tough political realities.

City Councilor Luca Rizzo Nervo opened the ceremony with a rousing speech. He said a new day was dawning where "no you can't" was turning into "yes we can together," where citizens are self-determining, and where a new,

¹³⁷ Original version of this article is at: <http://www.shareable.net/blog/bologna-celebrates-one-year-of-a-bold-experiment-in-urban-commoning>

empowering relationship between citizens and city had begun. He said he was tired of the old, pessimistic rhetoric and that the regulation opened up a new, hopeful development path that takes “active citizenship” to the next level. He ended with a vision of Bologna as an entire city powered by sharing, a leader in a global network of other cities on the same path.

We heard from the leaders of three projects that had signed pacts. Michela Bassi spoke of the impact of her Social Streets project, which has moved from a network of neighborhood Facebook groups to a nonprofit with a set of tangible projects including an outdoor ad turned into a neighborhood bulletin board. Veronica Veronesi introduced Reuse With Love, a group of 50 neighbors who joined forces to fight waste and improve the lives of children and the poor. Annarita Ciaruffoli of Dentro Al Nido (Inside the Nest) spoke of how the regulation was helping to restore schools.

While the proceedings included a diverse set of stakeholders, Mayor Virginio Merola was clearly the headliner. He gave an engaging speech filled with emotion and historical reflection. His main point, which was a reminder of Bologna's long history of civic innovation, was that Bologna's people and their cooperative culture are the city's most important assets, the thing that sets it apart. He said the regulation was taking this tradition to the next level.

He got emotional at points in his speech, pausing to hold back tears. This stirred the audience. He connected. He spoke of the need for citizens to love each other and to have the freedom to do the best for oneself and others. He said it's easy to get depressed by the daily news, but that the DNA of Bologna is the ability of citizens to fulfill their dreams. He spoke about the increasing diversity of the city – only 30% of residents are Bologna born – and the need to focus on commonalities, common assets, human rights, and equality. He urged the audience to create an intelligent city – one based on great relationships – as opposed to a merely smart city. He concluded that while there's a need for much more citizen action, that this doesn't mean the end of hierarchy. The city still needs dedicated civil servants.

The mayor has been criticized as “the mayor who cries” and for not having a vision. I got word after the ceremony that the mayor said the urban commons is now his vision. It certainly makes sense given Bologna's past. Bologna has a

thousand year history of civic innovation that includes the first university in the Western world, self-rule as an independent city-state during the Middle Ages, and more recently the rise of the region's large cooperative sector. The mayor's speech about the cooperative spirit of Bologna was not hot air. It had the weight of history behind it. It spoke to a necessary and feasible revival of it.

The ceremony was concluded in the most fitting way possible. All the leaders of projects operating under the regulation were invited on stage. The mayor gave each a USB key to the city with a copy of regulation on the drive. The USB key was the brainchild of Christian Iaione and Michele d'Alena, the civic collaboration fest project leader. What a great idea. It created a joyful moment that symbolized a shift in power from elected leaders to citizens.

The next day Christian Iaione, Elena De Nictolis, Alessandra Feola and Elia Lofranco of LUISS LabGov gave a delegation, including Sheila Foster and I, a tour of projects that were active that day. Our first stop was one of seven citizen groups painting buildings in the city's historic center. Painting is a big deal because of an abundance of graffiti and the need to maintain the ancient buildings, which is crucial for quality of life not to mention tourism.

There I saw the regulation's multi-stakeholder collaboration in action. The painting crew was a nonprofit, Lawyers at Work. The municipal waste management company Hera had dropped off the painting kit earlier in the day. It included paint that met the city's historical code, brushes, smocks to protect clothing, cones to mark off the work area, and more. Hera had also cleared the painting project with the building owner and city. The city hosted an online map that showed all the projects active that day and their location. Citizens could track and join projects online or do it spontaneously. A neighbor had joined Lawyers at Work when they happened by the worksite, something that happens regularly with Bologna's urban commons projects. Neighbors also share project activity on social media which can spark even more activity and civic pride.

My idea of placemaking was radically upgraded by witnessing the regulation in action. Here the making part of placemaking was brought to life in a vivid and dynamic way. No longer was placemaking for urban design experts who plan everything out in advance, but rather it was for everyone in a real-time multistakeholder dance that included both planned and spontaneous

elements. I began to see the possibilities of an entirely new way to live in a city that was even more creative, spontaneous, and social than what cities already offer.

In between stops in what turned out to be a long, vigorous walk, I had the chance to chat with Sheila Foster and Christian Iaione who focus on the urban commons from an administrative law standpoint. Two points stood out in our conversation. First, that a new era was dawning where citizens are active co-managers of the resources they use in cities instead of passive recipients of services. Secondly, that the old idea of commons needed an upgrade in the urban context. Most academic studies of commons revolve around relatively isolated natural resource commons like forests, fisheries, and pastures. Urban commons must by necessity be embedded in a dense weave of institutions. They can't be as independent of the market and government as the natural resource commons that Elinor Ostrom was famous for studying. Room must be made for urban commons in a city's administrative law and processes. In addition, they must be productively linked to other sectors of with a city. This arguably makes urban commons more complex to set up, but could provide more protection for them than what's typical for natural resource commons, which are prone to enclosure. This highlighted the importance of Bologna's urban commons regulation. It has opened space for the urban commons to flourish in Bologna and is already leading the way for other cities in Italy and beyond.

After a couple of other stops, we ended our tour at Piazza Carducci. I wanted to see where Bologna's urban commons began. I got my wish. The park was ordinary, and that's just the point. The most extraordinary social innovations can begin in ordinary places with a simple wish. This was such a place, and it was beautiful to me for that reason. All of us gathered on one of the benches for a picture to commemorate the pioneers of Bologna's urban commons, the women of Piazza Carducci.

Milano, New Practices to Booster Social Innovation

Monica Bernardi

The Municipality of Milan has chosen to promote social innovation as one of the main aspect of a Smart City, but without limiting the Smart City's debate to the technological dimension only. In fact, it intends to develop knowledge on how innovation in the cities can contribute to the development of new methods of socially relevant problem-solving. Smart Cities in this vision are cities able to create the right governance conditions and the right infrastructural and technological assets to produce social innovation. Of course the Expo Milano 2015 (May-October) has represented a catalyst of energies and actions in the direction of social innovation, economic development and the smart environment, but the principal virtue of the city has been the ability to embrace the Expo's energy and systematize the local impulses putting people at the center. In this frame, inside the Milano Smart City Project and in light of a human city dynamics, another interesting experimentation took life, that of Milano Sharing City. It represents a kind of evolution of the practices of smartness in the city, with a deep focus on people, innovation, collaboration and social cohesion, and with the aim to improve the citizens' quality of life and reduce local social exclusion.

A Civic Crowdfunding Experiment

Among the initiatives that the city is running under the heading of Smart City, one which is having great success is the *Civic Crowdfunding's* experiment.¹³⁸ It is based on the will to favor the promotion of the city's sustainable development through citizens' shared projects and sees the participation of the Municipality as co-founder of the projects that citizens choose to fund. For example, if a

¹³⁸ The announcement of the civic crowdfunding experimentation is reported on the official web site of Milano Smart City. <http://www.milanosmartcity.org/joomla/7-notizie/45-crowdfundig-civico-al-via-la-sperimentazione-con-un-stanziamiento-di-oltre-400-mila-euro>.

selected project on the platform achieves the 50% of the total budget, the Municipality will give the remaining 50%. In this way a wider audience can see the crowdfunding tool, and at the same time, an open and participative mode of allocation of public resources can be experimented with. The Public Administration's allocation to support initiatives of widespread innovation is around 400 thousands euros and there will be a trial period of 18 months during which processes of civic empowerment will be strengthened. Through this project, social enterprises become key actors in the building process of a Smart City fueled by projects and ideas emerging from the grassroots. By the date the Municipality has selected, through a public tender, the operator for the creation of the platform (Eppela, one of the main "reward based" Italian platform), it is now selecting the projects that can apply and use the platform for their crowdfunding campaigns. The call is open to social enterprises, innovative startups, social cooperatives, associations and Not for Profits, while excluding those projects that are not in line with the prerequisites established by the Municipality, or not of explicitly clear social utility, or those proposing services already supplied by the PA. The civic crowdfunding platform represents a way to let people choose from the bottom up the projects that the PA can support, in a system not based on administrative discretion, but on the involvement of people and on the identification of alternative access to credit.

This experimentation is not an isolated one in Italy, a forerunner has been the city of Bologna with the 17th century's Portico of San Luca and the citizens' will to restore it - a true case of civic mobilization for the care of a common public good. Even if the projects of Milan and Bologna are different, they both represent an example of bottom-up participation, interaction, citizens' involvement, commonality and shared purpose. And they show how a city and its services can be perceived as commons favoring citizens to rethink their modes of intervention and the care of city and people.

The Emergence of Assemblies of the Commons

Maïa Dereva

In France, the theme of "commons" as a possible structure for society re-emerged gradually since the late 90s and French books on the subject have been published since the 2000s.¹³⁹

This question has been confined to the field of digital commons for a long time, and has expanded more and more in recent years into areas such as community gardens or food cooperatives.

Events clearly identified as related to commons began to be organized in 2009 ("Brest in commons")¹⁴⁰ and are scattered over thirty territories in 2013. The same year, Michel Bauwens popularized the concept of "Chamber of Commons" (earlier proposed by David Ronfeldt in 2012)¹⁴¹ and quickly supplemented it with the concept of "Assembly of Commons", in an appeal: Proposed Next Steps for the emerging P2P networks and Commons.¹⁴²

After another highlight at the "Forum of Cooperative uses"¹⁴³ of 2014 and the self-organized festival "The Common's time"¹⁴⁴ in October 2015 which saw the emergence of 344 events with the logistical support of VECAM association,¹⁴⁵ the idea of federating the commons as permanent assemblies was mature.

¹³⁹ <http://blogfr.p2pfoundation.net/index.php/category/livres/>

¹⁴⁰ http://wiki.a-brest.net/index.php/Brest_en_biens_communs_2009

¹⁴¹ <http://twotheories.blogspot.com/2012/12/speculation-is-there-assurance-commons.html>

¹⁴² <https://blog.p2pfoundation.net/proposed-next-steps-for-the-emerging-p2p-and-commons-networks/2013/04/02>

¹⁴³ <http://www.forum-usages-cooperatifs.net/>

¹⁴⁴ <http://tempsdescommuns.org/>

¹⁴⁵ <http://vecam.org/>

After this festival, several Assemblies of Commons begun to emerge explicitly in Lille, Toulouse, Brest and several other big cities in France. It must be understood that these assemblies are all at the “incubation” stage, and each of them is inventing its own operation as informal structures. For most, they met only once or twice.

They have a French wiki¹⁴⁶ to document and exchange practices, and a website to communicate to the outside.¹⁴⁷

The main purpose of these assemblies is to be a forum to exchange experiences and bring together commoners. They also aim to promote the creation of an ethical economy that can create livelihoods around the commons. They try to identify and develop commons through mapping and meetings.

Connecting Across Geographies

The project is related to similar ones in France and in other countries as from the beginning, we felt the need to create communication tools on the web, such as a wiki.¹⁴⁸ Thus other Francophone assemblies of commons (Toulouse, Brest, Rennes, but also Liège in Belgium ...) could join the dynamic. The projects are connected through the wiki and Facebook groups and can learn from each other.

For the moment we have no links with other assemblies in the world, but also because they do not yet exist to our knowledge. Francophone assemblies are interconnected but also to local associations which were already dedicated to the commons for many years.

The Assembly of Lille

One of the most active assemblies is located in Lille (North of France) where meetings are held once a month since October 2015. There, news from different commons of the territory are shared, but also skills, ideas and knowledge in the form of self-managed workshops organized by those who are present. All

¹⁴⁶ <http://assemblee.encommuns.org/>

¹⁴⁷ <http://assembleedescommuns.org/>

¹⁴⁸ <http://assemblee.encommuns.org/>

members of the assembly have the opportunity to offer workshops and other members join the workshops that they like.

The assembly of the commons in Lille was started by a group of people who were the co-organizers and participants of "Roumics",¹⁴⁹ an event focusing on digital inclusion and digital rights; the launch coincided with the 'Temps des Communs', a multi-day coordination of events in the French and francophone world, held in October 2015. More specifically, it started around the workshop "Identify and promote convergence around commons" that has gathered the first group of people interested in the subject including members of the Interphaz association.¹⁵⁰ Interphaz is a popular education structure whose purpose is to gather citizens around projects that become mediation places.

After "Roumics", two informal meetings took place to discuss the notion of assembly of commons. Then the idea was structured around a third meeting entitled "Building in action the assembly of commons" which was announced on Facebook and in which a first organization with workshops was tested.

As I created www.semeoz.info in september 2015 to observe collaborative and constructive actions around the world, I quickly heard about the commons and I wanted to participate in the third meeting in Lille. Coming from Toulouse a few months ago, it was also for me a good way to create a new social network in connection with my ethical values.

All citizens are invited to participate in the assemblies. People come from different backgrounds: associations, local elected officials, commoners... During a round, which aims to create cohesion, everyone presents and describes the common or other structures in which they participate. In no case a person represents an organization. People attend the assembly as individuals (and they often say they are relieved to be able to do).

There are wide disparities between different groups: some have known the concept of Commons for many years, others have just discovered the concept

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.roumics.com/>

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.interphaz.org/>

and like to participate in the introductory workshop. Workshops can be held on site the day of the meeting, or in a remote way. Each workshop is documented.

The operating mode adopted for the moment is peer-to-peer and decentralized. However, the members of the assembly are careful to leave many written traces of their work (mainly on the wiki) as it follows a stigmergic strategy¹⁵¹ - which is a mechanism of indirect coordination. This may scare some people, or be considered as inefficient because it is informal, but in reality, the workshops are all operational one after the other, and the objectives of the group are achieved without requiring votes or endless meetings.

Governance is currently based on consent: as long as nobody makes a reasoned objection, the meeting records progress. After six months of operation (seven assemblies), no major objections were raised. Should this happen, the meeting would focus on dialogue rather than voting. The emphasis is put on welcoming contributing impulses and trusting people as a starting point. The assembly members prefer to build together rather than "fight against".

To date, the assembly is supported financially by a local association which pays for room rental. It works closely with the Chamber of Commons whose future vocation is to support the assembly.

Despite the involvement of several people (also in Lille), the chamber of commons is still a concept because it seems easier to federate individuals than established structures which are often dependent on local political and civic institutions. There is nevertheless a website that offers explanations to better publicize this proposal.¹⁵²

In Lille¹⁵³ and Toulouse,¹⁵⁴ a "Social Charter" is being written. It will define the basic objectives of the Assembly (ethics, shared values, inclusion in the local "ecosystem"), its governance, tools, methods, partners,...

¹⁵¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stigmergy>

¹⁵² <http://chambredescommuns.org/>

¹⁵³ <http://bit.ly/29Ov1kL>

¹⁵⁴ http://assemblee.encommuns.org/index.php?title=Charte_sociale

Basic Strategies For Establishing Assemblies

This is just the beginning...

And if we could share some advice for people / commoners who would like to establish an assembly of the commons, we would say:

- Set yourself some simple goals, do things and describe what you are doing (instead of writing in detail what should be done).
- Let people be free as individuals, their creativity will surprise you.
- Even if the operating mode is decentralized, it is important to plan times to get acquainted and to exchange in order to create a group dynamic.
- Consider inviting local elected officials, association representatives who do not know commons to start building bridges with social life (they are often very happy to discover new practices).
- Use digital tools from the beginning to create emulation inside your assembly and between assemblies.

The Future Of The Assemblies

It is impossible to know the future of the assemblies. I cannot make any prospective forecasts regarding the commons movement. If the time has come for the deployment of a peer-to-peer society, then it will naturally emerge. From my perspective, this emergence depends primarily on the personal development of individuals. According to me, self-awareness is the best way of distinguishing equality from egalitarianism and of avoiding working unconsciously on the establishment of forms of totalitarianism despite good intentions.

I therefore believe that commons can develop harmoniously only on the condition that the individuals integrate profoundly that "peer" is not synonymic of that which is "identical to me" (identity as homogeneity) but rather is talking about connecting and loving radical otherness (p2p identification as heterogeneity). Finding what we have in common does not mean erasing our singularities, but rather learning to work together with them in order to create something in common, which is very difficult to achieve (indeed, the work of a lifetime)!

If the development of assemblies of the commons moves in this direction, the network meetings are expected to grow more and more in territorially, based on the existing network of the commons. In principle, the assemblies should not consolidate too large geographic territories, and allow smaller communities to interconnect with each other.

History and Evolution of the Chamber of Commons Idea

From blogs by David Ronfeldt

Compilation by Michel Bauwens¹⁵⁵

"My December 2012 post about the concept of the commons (here) proposed that it might be a good idea to create a series of Chambers of Commons, including a U.S. Chamber of Commons, and network them together. This would be in keeping with TIMN's implication that a +N sector will eventually take shape, as discussed in the first two posts in this set of three.

My TIMN-inspired forecast was that a U.S. Chamber of Commons could operate as a wedge organization plying wedge issues. This could help provide organizational impetus to pro-commons and other +N actors and ideas, while also counter-balancing negative aspects of the +M influence of the powerful U.S. Chamber of Commerce and its affiliates and allies.

My proposal gained some traction, I'm pleased to say, because the 2012 post was noticed by P2P activists Michel Bauwens and David Bollier, among others. Today's post offers an update, prompted by news in 2015 that Chicago-area activists started working to organize a Chicago Chamber of Commons, along with a US Chamber of Commons.

Today's post draws on my 2012 post, as well as on updates I added during 2013-2015. But for the most part, today's post reports on new materials and other observations about the idea to create chambers of commons. The first sections are mostly reportage. I refrain from offering much TIMN analysis (or my own personal views) until the final section.

Overall, I am upbeat about people's efforts on behalf of the chamber-of-commons idea. But I have a key concern as well: efforts to date seem aimed

¹⁵⁵ https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Chamber_of_the_Commons

more at reforming +M than evolving +N. That may make sense for some anti- and post-capitalism perspectives on the Left; but from a TIMN perspective, I'd wish for a greater and sharper focus on creating +N.

Initial Interest In The Chamber-Of-Commons Idea In 2013

In remarks about my 2012 post, David Bollier focused just on the chamber-of-commons idea, while Michel Bauwens emphasized its potential as one of various initiatives within a broader plan he was formulating.

Bollier greeted the proposal warmly as “a timely idea” — a way to “advance the commons paradigm” and “span the cultural barriers that divide digital and natural resource commoners”:

- “Scholar of networked behavior Ronfeldt has proposed an idea whose time may have arrived: let's create a new federated network of commons enterprises called the “Chamber of Commons.” The term is a wonderful wordplay on the more familiar group, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the notoriously reactionary business lobby.

“A federation to help advance the commons paradigm and projects is a timely idea, especially in international circles and localities that enjoy a critical mass of commons projects. ...

“... It would be especially exciting if a chamber of commons could begin to span the cultural barriers that divide digital and natural resource commoners, not to mention international political boundaries.”

Bollier also wisely noted some organizational and membership challenges that might be faced:

- “I would respectfully suggest that any parties that enter into a Chamber of Commons have a focused commitment on the commons paradigm and philosophy. It's imperative that a group of this sort take the commons seriously, and not see the Chamber as an opportunity to wrap themselves in feel-good PR terms. ...

“As this little thought-exercise suggests, clarifying the criteria for membership in a Chamber of Commons could be one of the biggest but most important challenges. ...

“... The best solution, I think, lies in having serious commoners, as members, decide the criteria on an ongoing basis, and pass judgment on any new members. After all, any participants in such a project would have a big stake in protecting the integrity of the commons concept and its reputation. ...

“... It’s time for various commons and commons-based businesses (coops, CSAs, etc.) to find ways to band together. We need to create a new focal point for making commoning more visible in an organized way. The mutual support, dialogue and new initiatives could only be enlivening.”

Meanwhile, beginning to formulate a broad P2P-inspired plan that he and his colleagues would call the Commons Transition Plan,¹⁵⁶ Bauwens embedded the chamber-of-commons idea in a “powerful triad” of “next steps” for “constructing three institutional coalitions”:

- “The civic/political institution: The Alliance of the Commons ...
- “The economic institution: the P2P/Commons Global-local Phyle ...
- “The political-economy institution: The Chamber of the Commons”

Of the three, Bauwens viewed the chamber-of-commons proposal as a way for “emergent coalitions of commons-friendly ethical enterprises” to form counterparts to the business-oriented chambers of commerce:

- “In analogy with the well-known chambers of commerce which work on the infrastructure for for-profit enterprise, the Commons chamber exclusively coordinates for the needs of the emergent coalitions of commons-friendly ethical enterprises (the phyles), but with a territorial focus. Their aim is to uncover the convergent needs of the new commons enterprises and to interface with territorial powers to express and obtain their infrastructural, policy and legal needs.”

¹⁵⁶ http://p2pfoundation.net/Commons_Transition_Plan

Together, Bauwens said, these three “institutional coalitions” would provide a “powerful triad for the necessary phase transition” to a commons-oriented economy and society:

- “In short, we need a alliance of the commons to project civil and political power and influence at every level of society; we need phyles to strengthen our economic autonomy from the profit-maximizing dominant system; and we need [a] Chamber of the Commons to achieve territorial policy; legal and infrastructural conditions for the alternative, human and nature-friendly political economy to thrive. Neither alone is sufficient, but together they could be a powerful triad for the necessary phase transition.”

And that’s how the chamber-of-commons idea began to take root in pro-commons and P2P circles.

Subsequent Idea To Create Parallel Assemblies And Chambers Of The Commons

In early 2015 (at least that’s when I first read about it), Bauwens added the idea of creating “Assemblies of the Commons” alongside “Chambers of the Commons”:

- “At the local level, we propose the creation of Assemblies of the Commons, institutions that bring together all those that are creating or maintaining commons, immaterial or material, but we propose to restrict membership to civic organizations and not-for-profit oriented projects.

“At the same time, we propose the creation of local Chamber of the Commons, the equivalent for the ethical economy and ‘generative’ capital, the what the Chamber of Commerce is for the for-profit economy. Our aim is to reconstruct commons-oriented social forces at the local level, and to give them voice. These assemblies and chambers could produce a social charter, that would be open for political and social forces to support, which in turn would guarantee some forms of support from these new institutions.”

Acting in parallel, the Assemblies and Chamber would reinforce each other. Yet each would have different roles, purposes, and participants; and they would operate independently:

- "I am proposing the creation of two new institutions:

"1. Assembly of the Commons. This will be a place or an institution where people who actually co-create common goods can meet, create a shared culture and create social charters and demands towards the policy world.

"2. Chambers of the Commons. – Which is for all ethical entrepreneurs. People who create commons and who create livelihoods for the commons. They would also create their own institution.

"The reason why they need to be separated is a bit like the separation of church and state. When you are in business you have certain priorities, when you are a citizen you have other priorities. I think it is better not to contaminate these two institutions and let them operate independently."

As trends have developed, it appears that the assembly idea may be proving more popular in Europe, the chamber idea in America.

Elaboration In P2P And Pro-Commons Plans Throughout 2013-2015

Bauwens and his colleagues steadily reiterated these ideas in numerous additional writings and talks during 2014 and 2015 (e.g., including those cited below).

As I understand it — though I'm not sure how best to summarize it — their goal is a new type of post-capitalist economy (and society), organized around the commons and P2P principles. This economy (and society) would rest on "network-based peer production" and "commons-based peer production" — particularly, "open cooperativism" and "platform cooperativism", pursuant to fostering an "ethical entrepreneurial coalition" and an "ethical market economy". This new economy would be oriented toward benefitting civil society, and be served by a new type of state (the "Partner State"). The chambers and assemblies of the commons would be constructed as "meta-economic networks to bridge these fields of action." (sources: writings by Bauwens and Bollier).

In Bauwens words, "The Commons transition plan is based on a simultaneous transition of civil society, the market and the state forms."

Moreover,

- “In the Commons Transition Plan, we are making also very specific organizational proposals, to advance the cause of a commons-oriented politics and a ‘peer production of politics and policy’.”

The organizational structures and interactions he proposes are very elaborate — more than I can convey here, but including the following points regarding the chamber-of-commons idea:

- “As an alternative, we propose that we move to a commons-centric society in which a post-capitalist market and state are at the service of the citizens as commoners. ...

“• Ethical market players create a territorial and sectoral network of Chamber of Commons associations to define their common needs and goals and interface with civil society, commoners and the partner state ...

“• Local and sectoral commons create civil alliances of the commons to interface with the Chamber of the Commons and the Partner State ...

“• Solidarity Coops form public-commons partnerships in alliance with the Partner State and the Ethical Economy sector represented by the Chamber of Commons ...”

Overall, then, Bauwens urged anew in 2015 what he originally urged in 2013 — a “Chamber of the Commons” as part of “a powerful triad for the necessary phase transition”:

“In short, we need an alliance of the commons to project civil and political power and influence at every level of society; we need phyles to strengthen our economic autonomy from the profit-maximizing dominant system; and we need a Chamber of the Commons to achieve territorial policy; legal and infrastructural conditions for the alternative, human and nature-friendly political economy to thrive. Neither alone is sufficient, but together they could be a powerful triad for the necessary phase transition.”

Quite an ambitious ideological and organizational agenda.

Optimistic Global Outlook For P2P Efforts At The End Of 2015

As a result, 2015 closed with two optimistic wrap-up assessments. In the first — The Top Ten P2P Trends of 2015 — Bauwens noted that “It is therefore particularly heartening to see the simultaneous creation this year of several local commons groups, such as Assemblies and Chambers of the Commons.”

He thus lauded:

“5. The launch of independent, commons-centric civic organisations

“I called for this about three years ago, but they are finally emerging.

“A proto-Assembly of the Commons has been operating in Ghent, Belgium, and on the occasion of a big francophone city festival on the commons (Villes en Commun), Toulouse and a few other French cities launched Assemblies of the Commons. A Europe-wide Assembly meeting is planned at the EU-level. In Chicago, a Chamber of the Commons was launched and, just this month, a Commons Transition Coalition for Melbourne and other places in Australia. This means that commoners will increasingly learn to have a political and social voice.”

A related document — What the P2P Foundation did in 2015 — adds further promising details:

- “Our proposals to create an independent political and social voice for commoners gained traction in 2015. Chambers of the Commons and similar were created in Chicago (USA) and several cities in France, and a local Commons Transition Coalition in Australia was formed, all following Michel’s visits.”

All quite impressive and purposeful, despite some TIMN-related misgivings I have that I will raise in a concluding section (or follow-up post)

Organizational Progress In Chicago

The place where activists committed to pro-commons and P2P principles have seized on the chamber-of-commons idea the most (and prospectively the best) is Chicago. In May 2015, a gathering of Chicago-area activists began to rally

around Creating a Chamber of Commons (source), which raised the question Could Chicago be the first city to create a Chamber of Commons? (source), partly on grounds that a Chicago Chamber of Commons Points Way to Thrivability for All (source).

I am too removed to tell much about his innovative activity. But materials at a few sites and blogs enable me to glean the little that follows.

With support from the Chicago Community Trust, and before long a grant from the Knight Foundation, interested activists organized a steering committee, led by Steve Ediger (as head of the newly-fielded US Chamber of Commons), and set out to generate workshops and a start-up plan, much of it inspired by Michel Bauwens and his writings (see above). They also established two websites for the project:

- one for the Chamber of Commons US (here)
- the other a Facebook site for the Chicago Chamber of Commons (here)

Their objective is to create an “umbrella” organization, an “advocacy group”, and/or a “seed” for promoting pro-commons stewardship based on P2P principles. Their current focus is on Chicago — yet their hope is that it will become a “prototype” or “template” that can spread, leading to additional new chambers across the country.

The efforts in Chicago appear to reflect some of the organizational and membership challenges that Bollier anticipated in his 2013 post (see above). While my meager knowledge doesn't tell me to what extent the Chicago-area organizers have had to face such challenges, an October 2015 event report revealed that theirs has been “a complex task”:

- “It took a long time for the group to reach consensus on the Commitment and by the time we got to Coordination, looking at the calendar and tasks to identify incongruities among dependent tasks across teams, we were almost out of time. ... Whether, or not, we had true consensus remains to be seen as we execute tasks.” (source)

In general, their efforts have been oriented to addressing pro-commons matters, broadly defined, but with an emphasis on emerging economic reforms:

- “We advocate and bring visibility to elements of the generative economy, partly to protect endangered areas of the Commons and partly to develop the expression of new forms and practices of Commons, such as the knowledge Commons.”

“The Chamber of Commons recognizes, supports and highlights the green shoots of a budding Generative Economy. As such, we see ourselves as an advocacy group for emerging models of generative-ownership designed businesses forming around the Commons.”

“Forming around these Commons is an entire economy created by new types of businesses engaged in market activities, but in an ethical way. These include fair trade organizations, solidarity organizations, B corps and social entrepreneurs, Bauwens said.”

This emphasis on economic matters appears to be attended by a selective focus on new kinds of business enterprises and opportunities in particular:

“The US Chamber of Commons, a startup organization dedicated to “recognizing, supporting and highlighting the “green shoots of a budding Generative Economy,” is trying to get a new form of chamber off the ground: one to connect social entrepreneurs, L3C’s, B-Corps and other enterprises focused on triple bottom line, sharing-economy approaches to commerce and community development.

“The group sees its role as advocating for the four broad categories of organizations outlined in Marjorie Kelly’s *Owning our Future*:

- (1) Commons Ownership and Governance
- (2) Stakeholder Ownership
- (3) Social Enterprises and
- (4) Mission Controlled Corporations. ...

The discussion will address an array of Commons-relevant topics such as the environment, public land, the food supply, public education and transportation, open-source software, the internet, arts and culture and taxpayer-funded scientific research. Unclaimed realms such as the oceans, Antarctica and outer space will also be on the agenda."

Against this background, the goal is to formally announce a Chicago Chamber of Commons at a grand assembly in May 2016. I wish them well, though I have some concerns I'll raise in the next section.

A TIMN Assessment Of The Chamber-Of-Commons Idea

My thoughts at this point

Oh gosh, as I look over this draft before tackling this final section, I see that once again, in my slowed-down condition, I have written an overly long wordy post, all the while refraining from injecting much TIMN analysis until the end. Yet TIMN is what matters most.

I can tell, now that I have started to focus on this concluding section, that my ability to finish it in a succinct timely manner is somewhat in doubt. So I'm just going to go ahead and post what exists above, plus posit the following sketchy outline of what remains to be added.

In my view, there are three key points I should make about the Chamber-of-Commons idea with regard to TIMN: It remains a good idea whose time is nigh, whether motivated by P2P, TIMN, or some other-forward looking framework — but especially if/as it becomes instructed by TIMN.

It seems advisable to emulate historical aspects of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the better to counter-balance it — and counter-balancing it may be a key function.

It is important to assure that the Chamber-of-Commons idea serves the creation of the prospective +N sector, more than and apart from a potential reform of the +M sector." (<http://twotheories.blogspot.com/2016/04/awaiting-emergence-of-n-sector-part-3.html>)

Big Blue Sky: Re-igniting the Art of Citizenship

Christine McDougall

From Entitlement to Empowerment

We live in a time of entitlement, where people feel they have the right to health care, roads, education, safety, security and jobs. We have been labeled consumers, placed in big data sets, given numbers and brought the story that we are beholden to the State or the Corporation.

What we need is to rediscover the Art of Citizenship. For in naming ourselves citizens of a place, we immediately switch identity from disempowered to empowered. This single shift of perspective allows us to choose to be active or passive citizens. To acknowledge the possibility that every citizen has the capacity to engage in robust change-making in their community. Active citizens take responsibility and feel empowered to take action without waiting for permission from some illusory authority. Once active citizenship is engaged it is hard to quell the tide of citizen centred action.

Active Citizenship in Queensland, Australia

On the Gold Coast in Queensland Australia, a place known mostly for its beaches and theme parks, for tourism and shady deals, a group of citizens decided to take action in 2015. The motivation? Either be the citizen sitting on the couch complaining, or become the citizen who knew they could make a difference. A small core group of about 5 people sensed that there were many smart, capable citizens in the community who felt the same, but were missing the platform for convening and the skills of co-ordination that would enable healthy collaboration.

We set about to create the convening space and the ability to co-ordinate action. You can download a copy of the Trust Manifesto here.

<http://bigblueskyevent.com/big-blue-sky-trust/>

What is remarkable about this story is that this core team had never met each other until this project began.

Lead, or stewarded by the author, the first act of engagement was to cross a very specific threshold. This threshold consisted of several critical parts.

1. Each citizen participant needed to complete what we called an Integral Accounting audit of what they had the willingness and capacity to bring to our project, and what they expected in return, clearly defined in six domains. Commodity, Custom and Culture, Knowledge, Money, Technology, Wellbeing. <http://223am.com/2014/06/bottom-line-and-triple-bottom-line-dont-cut-it-an-introduction-to-integral-accounting-part-1/>
2. Each participant acknowledged that this Integral Accounting audit was mutable, and they committed to clearly articulate to everyone who needed to know if this audit changed, as we knew it would.
3. Each participant agreed to commit to one rule, which was that everyone was responsible personally to maintain clean communication. If anyone felt upset in any way, for any reason, they were responsible for making sure that upset was handled to completion, including asking for help.

We all were united around a clear goal. To create a world-class event that would bring citizens together in the one space, for one day, to create at minimum two 'moonshot' projects for the betterment of the whole community.

We went for moonshots because if we do not keep people aligned to a great and almost impossible intention, people often fall into default patterns of petty behaviour.

The design of the relational engagement is important and had been 30 years in the making. It gave structure to everything else that occurred. The event, Big Blue Sky (www.bigblueskyevent.com) was an incredible success. A core team of citizens, all strangers at the beginning, created a world class event with 25

speakers, 28 students, 150 participants, commencing at 7 am and lasting until 8 pm, without a single human upset and zero directives - in other words entirely self managed. We did this on a shoe string budget. During the day, 16 projects were born, most of them 'moonshots'. Just prior to the event, we finally managed to get the City Council involved, working with them in open co-operation and partnership as we continue to do. The event review document can be downloaded here. <http://bigblueskyevent.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Big-Blue-Sky-2015-Review-1G.pdf>

Some of the projects born from this event are likely to become the funding mechanisms for the ongoing project team to remain viable, and to continue to fund other projects, which is exactly what we set out to create.

The success of the event and its ongoing projects affirmed to the core team that people will become responsible citizens if the right structure is created, a convening event is in place, and there is a skilled capacity to co-ordinate activity and ensure healthy collaboration.

Collaboration is easy when you know how. The Big Blue Sky team know how to make collaboration easy. We demonstrated this, participants felt it, and we have continued to work with vital collaboration in all the ongoing projects.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ <http://223am.com/2016/04/tension-is-the-greatest-integrity-relational-synergistic-design-and-the-future-of-organisations/>

Zaragoza Activa, an Ecosystem of Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation and Creativity, in an Old Sugar Factory

Raúl Oliván

In 2008, Zaragoza (ranking fifth in population in Spain) held an International Exhibition that placed us into the league of major European cities. However, at the end of that year the Eurozone economic crisis hit us very hard. The unemployment rate began to increase abruptly. The real estate bubble burst and left the city without resources... In this context, the project Zaragoza Activa (ZAC)¹⁵⁸ was born as a plan to revitalize an old 4,000-square-metre sugar factory.¹⁵⁹

These are the reasons that justified the project:

- The unemployment rate was over 25%. 50% for young people! We invested a great deal of money to train young people to access University and then we kicked them out of “productive” society.
- The highest-educated generation in our history was out there and they had no opportunities in the labour market. However, most of our social services programmes were focused on supporting socially excluded people, not university graduates.
- Under these circumstances, employment and economic development had to necessarily lead the agenda of any new public project started, no matter if it was a social or a cultural project.
- The model of public community centre didn't connect anymore with the majority of citizens. The basic services stopped being attractive for the citizens of the 21st century. For example: civic centers, public libraries, young people leisure spaces...

¹⁵⁸ http://www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/sectores/activa/#_blank

¹⁵⁹ http://www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/sectores/activa/detalle_Centro?id=4907#_blank

- Our public facilities lacked a corporate image, exploitation plan and strategies to be competitive such as hosting shopping centres (and other private spaces), as other running urban squares had done.
- A hybrid model of governance was then essential. A model that joined 3-in-one: a proud public project, an empathizing social model and one as fast as the private management model.

These were the reasons why Zaragoza Activa was born.

Our Keys To Make This Happen

The aim of the project was to improve the old model of public community centre, and create an ecosystem of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity. That meant reinforcing the collaborative spirit rather than competitive logic. Our intention was to build a system of smooth transitions as well. A horizontal and accessible system, where the new kid on the block and the entrepreneur could fit and coexist. To achieve this, we created BJCubit¹⁶⁰ – the Library for youngsters; Zona Empleo¹⁶¹ – an office to give help and support to unemployed people; Semillero de Ideas¹⁶² – the school for entrepreneurs; Vivero – a professional service to host start-ups; La Colaboradora¹⁶³ – a P2P coworking where members interexchange time and services and make up a community that thinks like an assembly and is capable of making its own decisions; ThinkZAC¹⁶⁴ – our own thinktank, a nomad Lab of knowledge; Made in Zaragoza¹⁶⁵ – a community for creators; and even a vertical local social network (ZAC)¹⁶⁶ with an intense program for training, divulging and networking activities. Furthermore, Zaragoza Activa also operates as a civic lab, working on social innovation and collaborative economy issues.

We began in 2010 and we celebrated our 5th Anniversary in June 2015.¹⁶⁷ Nowadays, we have got 7000 members in the ZAC network, we've launched

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/BJCubit/>

¹⁶¹ <https://www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/sectores/activa/empleo.htm>

¹⁶² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZG7B_nACF_c#_blank

¹⁶³ http://raulolivan.com/2013/06/02/la-colaboradora-y-la-resiliencia/#_blank

¹⁶⁴ http://blogzac.es/#_blank

¹⁶⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C_RAIFaWVg#_blank

¹⁶⁶ http://www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/sectores/activa/zac#_blank

¹⁶⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtqJ_f1pY5Y#_blank

and assisted 375 companies, we've organized over 1500 activities. And last but not least, we have multiplied by 3.1 each invested euro and turned it into social impact.¹⁶⁸

Recently we called our model the "Citizen laboratory of multitudes". This model is based on three dimensions: First is the space (the sugar factory = hardware); Second are the projects (Incubator, P2P coworking, school for entrepreneurs, library for youngsters, ZAC network, ThinkZAC... = software) that favour a soft transition from the neighbourhood kid to the entrepreneur; Third are the logical set of values they all represent (community, smart citizenship, collaborative spirit, hybrid ecosystem, economy for the common good, hacker ethic... = transware).

Links

- Zaragoza Activa - http://www.zaragoza.es/activa#_blank
- ZAC network - http://www.zaragoza.es/zac#_blank
- BlogZAC - http://blogzac.es/#_blank
- Made in Zaragoza - http://madeinzaragoza.es/#_blank
- ZACkypedia (ThinkZAC) - http://blogzac.es/category/think-zac-las-arms/zackipedia-think-zac-las-arms/#_blank
- Youtube channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBfMvq1QPWIG9hL_AVbBmkA
- Presentación Laboratorios de multitud en MediaLab Prado - http://medialab-prado.es/article/laboratorios-de-multitud#_blank
- Zaragoza Activa's images - <http://bit.ly/2a0d7yN>

¹⁶⁸ This was measured with SROI analytic Social Return of Investment.
<http://www.zaragoza.es/contenidos/sectores/activa/zgz-activa15.pdf> (page 16)

Authors A-Z

Julian Agyeman is a Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, USA. He is the originator of the concept of 'just sustainabilities,' the full integration of social justice and sustainability. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*. His book *Sharing Cities: a case for truly smart and sustainable cities* is published by MIT Press. <http://julianagyeman.com> | [@julianagyeman](https://twitter.com/julianagyeman)

Michel Bauwens is the founder of the Foundation for Peer-to-Peer Alternatives and works in collaboration with a global group of researchers in the exploration of peer production, governance, and property. He has co-produced the 3-hour TV documentary *Technocalyps* with Frank Theys. He published a book on the post-capitalist transition in Dutch, French, and English, with Jean Lievens and Vasilis Kostakis respectively. He is also a founding partner of the Commons Strategy Group with Silke Helfrich and David Bollier, organizing deep dive conversations with commoners from different sectors and regions. <http://p2pfoundation.net> | michel@p2pfoundation.net

Monica Bernardi is an urban sociologist with a PhD in "Quality of Life in the Information Society". She researches smart cities and sharing cities and the governance model implemented in order to support the practices and services of the sharing economy in cities. She works for the "Qua_si Universiscuola Center" of the University of Milano-Bicocca, an interdisciplinary center of high training and advanced research. m.bernardi4@campus.unimib.it | [@MonyBernardi](https://twitter.com/MonyBernardi)

Marco Bevolo, PhD, was born on the same day as W.A. Mozart, only a few years after. He is currently Lecturer in International Leisure Management at NHTV University of Applied Sciences. He is the founder of Marco Bevolo Consulting, working for selected customers in Europe and Asia, including FCA, Lighting Design Collective (Madrid) and CitiesNext GmbH (Vienna). He has been Design Director (2006 – 2009) and consulting Principal Research Urban Futures (2011 –

2016) for Philips Lighting. He is the author of four books, including the global edition of *city.people.light* (2007), an anthology of urban futures concepts, and “Create the Livable City” (2014), published by AJ Books EMAP (with Tapio Rosenius). He is the recipient of a 2011 Award of Excellence by Emerald Literati. marco.bevolo@gmail.com

Greg Bloom is the founder of Open Referral, a civic technology initiative that is promoting a shift towards open sharing of resource directory data (i.e. information about who does what for whom, across all fields of health, human, and social services). Greg is a cooperative developer and community organizer. He has been published in *In These Times*, *Civic Quarterly*, *Personal Democracy Forum*, *Bloomberg's Data for Good Exchange*, and *Code for America's Beyond Transparency*. bloom@openreferral.org | www.openreferral.org

Marta Botta is a PhD candidate (social change) at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia. She completed her Bachelor of Science/Psychology degree at the Central Queensland University, Graduate Diploma of Media Studies at Massey University, New Zealand, and Graduate Certificate in Futures Studies at the University of the Sunshine Coast. In line with her endeavour to facilitate socio-cultural renewal, Ms. Botta was a producer of several video documentaries of environmental and community projects advancing the sustainability agenda. mbharmony@gmail.com | <https://au.linkedin.com/in/marta-botta-8a920925>

Scott Boylston is graduate coordinator of the Masters in Design for Sustainability at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), and author of three books. He is president of Emergent Structures, a non-profit organization dedicated to community-based material reclamation and re-use. Scott founded SCAD's Design Ethos 'DO-ference,' a workshop-based conference that brings designers and community leaders together to address social issues. He has published essays in numerous design journals and books, and speaks internationally. scottb@emergentstructures.com

Sandrina Burkhardt is the founder of MonkeyTree, an online crowdsourcing platform that empowers bottom-up change by connecting ideas and challenges with one another as well as with already established impact drivers such as individuals, NGOs, municipalities and public institutions as well as

businesses and universities in order to overcome the lack of overview, connection and interaction between those key players and empower grassroots initiatives all over Europe - while finishing up her Masters degree at the University Maastricht in Politics and Society. monkeytree.info@gmail.com | <http://monkeytree.agency>

Maia Dereva. After training in biology, anthropology, psychology, and communication, and after several jobs as a community manager, web project manager, and in fair trade –always with the writing in counterpoint: columnist, journalist, blogger– she suffered a burn-out at the end of which she said: "Now I want to work exclusively for the common good." She then created a website which is an observatory of collaborative and constructive practices, and devotes time to many projects such as the P2P Foundation. <http://blogfr.p2pfoundation.net/> | [@maidereva](#)

Timothy E. Dolan is currently visiting professor of public policy and director of public affairs programs at ADA University in Baku, Azerbaijan. He self-identifies with the Manoa School of Futures Studies having been mentored by seminal futurist Dr. Jim Dator. Besides an ongoing research interests in urban orchards, economic development, and emerging forms of governance, he engages participants (he doesn't use the term "students") in preparing for the worlds they are going to live in and shape. policyforesight@gmail.com

Sharon Ede is an urbanist and activist working to build the sharing and collaborative movement in Adelaide, Australia and beyond. In 2012, she set up Share Adelaide to document and inspire local sharing activity. In her public servant role, she initiated and collaborated on a project that maps community sharing assets, which was funded and open sourced by the State government. Sharon is a co founder of the Post Growth Institute and a catalyst for the Fab City global initiative. cruxcatalyst@gmail.com

Teppo Eskelinen works as associate professor of social and public policy at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. He has also worked as a think tank director and columnist. Eskelinen is the editor of the Finnish Review of Political Economy, and has contributed to several academic journals and volumes on economic alternatives, democratization, and alternative development. He is also a social activist in Helsinki. teppo.h.i.eskelinen@jyu.fi | [@teppoeskelinen](#)

Karl Fitzgerald works as the Project Director for Prosper Australia, an NGO focusing on economic justice. He produced the documentary Real Estate 4 Ransom and runs the weekly Renegade Economists radio podcast. Karl wrote the landmark Total Resource Rents of Australia report (2012) and oversees the Speculative Vacancies report he started in 2006. He works closely with Professor Michael Hudson as his webmaster and co-editor. He has a B.Ec (Monash, Clayton). karl@prosper.org.au

Josh Floyd works in the area of sustainable futures, bringing systems perspectives to the relationship between energy and society. His original disciplinary background is in mechanical engineering, working in metallurgical technology development and commercialisation. He holds a Master of Science in Strategic Foresight and a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical, Honours). He is Director at the Understandascope and Co-Founder of the Centre for Australian Foresight. josh@joshfloyd.com | www.understandascope.org

Arlene Goldbard is a writer, speaker, consultant and cultural activist whose focus is the intersection of culture, politics and spirituality. Her two newest books—*The Wave* and *The Culture of Possibility: Art, Artists & The Future*—were published in spring 2013. She is Chief Policy Wonk of the US Department of Arts and Culture (www.usdac.us) and President of The Shalom Center. She was named a 2015 Purpose Prize Fellow and one of the 2016 YBCA 100. arlene@arlenegoldbard.com | www.arlenegoldbard.com

Neal Gorenflo is the co-founder of Shareable, an award-winning news, action, connection hub for the sharing transformation. An epiphany in 2004 inspired Neal to leave the corporate world to help people share through Internet startups, publishing, grassroots organizing, and a circle of friends committed to the common good. neal@shareable.net

Charles Ikem is a service designer and PhD candidate at the University of Padova in Italy. Charles is also the Director of PolicyLab Africa- a design for policy think tank. Charles's research interests spans design research, participatory design, urban resilience and smart cities. Charles has a Masters degree in Design Management from Birmingham City University in the UK. Charles hails from Nigeria and is a proud Liverpool Fan. Email: ikem@gest.unipd.it | www.policylabafrika.org

Anthony James is an educator, consultant, writer, speaker and musician. He is Executive Director of the Understandascope and postgraduate educator at Swinburne University. Anthony is a regular speaker at a range of events, organisations and national media, and hosts prominent public conversations on regenerating the systems and stories humanity lives by. He was co-editor of 'Everyday Transcendence: The Influence of Frank Fisher', and his writing has appeared in publications locally and overseas.

anthony@understandascope.org | www.understandascope.org

Michael Linton designed the LETSystem in 1982 and has since then developed and distributed several generations of open source community currencies systems. He is presently focused on openmoney development. Michael lives in the Comox Valley, BC, Canada. mwl@lets.net | <http://openmoney.cc>

Christine McDougall, is the Co-founder Big Blue Sky, a prototype model to convene and co-ordinate citizen driven projects to increase the Common Wealth of community, working in partnership with local and state government. She is fluent in human relational geometry and how to design systems and structures that enable diverse people to collaborate with minimal human upset. This includes new models of finance towards an economy that values multiple dimensions of human engagement. christine@bigblueskyevent.com | www.bigblueskyevent.com

Duncan McLaren is currently a freelance researcher, and part-time PhD student at Lancaster University. His research interests include cities, climate change and geoengineering. Previously he worked in environmental research and advocacy. His book *Sharing Cities: a case for truly smart and sustainable cities* is published by MIT Press. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/sharing-cities> | [@mclaren_erc](https://twitter.com/mclaren_erc)

Cherie Minniecon is a Yorta Yorta woman from South East Victoria. As a cultural educator, she is deeply passionate about teaching cultural intelligence through creating culturally safe spaces that allow for people to learn and explore their own identity and worldview and how it interacts and impacts on others. With over 14 years of working in complex contexts and issues such as conflict in the Middle East and Child Protection in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, she has a deep appreciation and experience of the barriers to

change and the difficulties for all people to be able to imagine empowered and bright futures. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cherie-minniecon-85b2284a?trk=hp-identity-name>

Raúl Oliván is a Zaragoza Activa's founder and chief manager. Degree in Advertising and Public Relations (UOC), Diploma in Social Work (University of Zaragoza), Diploma in Public Participation Techniques (University of Zaragoza), Diploma in Strategic Urban Development (CIDEU). Part of the technical group of experts Iberoamerican SEIGB Citizenship Innovation. He has collaborated with various institutions such as Kreanta Foundation; Ministry of Culture of Colombia; Instituto do Procomum of Brasil; National Council of Social Work in Spain. www.raulolivan.com | [@raulolivan](https://twitter.com/raulolivan)

Jose Ramos is a social change researcher, trans disciplinary collaborator and advocate for commons oriented social alternatives. His focus is on supporting breakthrough design and social innovation through his practices Action Foresight and FuturesLab and in leading and supporting a wide number of high impact social change projects. He is originally from California from Mexican-American heritage, now living in Melbourne Australia with his young family. jose@futureslab.net | www.actionforesight.net

David Ronfeldt is a retired RAND researcher who worked for years on U.S.-Latin American security issues (esp. Mexico, Cuba); then on worldwide implications of the information revolution (cyberocracy, cyberwar, netwar, swarming, noopolitik, the nexus-state). Current goals: elaborate "STA:C" framework about people's space-time-action orientations; and elaborate "TIMN" framework about social evolution (past, present, future). Writings mostly online at www.twotheories.blogspot.com | david.ronfeldt@gmail.com

Colin Russo manages the futures and community engagement practice Engaging Futures. He has submitted a PhD (futures studies tools and methods shaping change in cities) at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia. It is a critical analysis of four long-term city futures initiatives, one of which he led the award-winning engagement for, Our Bold Future 2037 at the City of Gold Coast. His focus is on sustainable futures. colinrusso@engagingfutures.com | www.engagingfutures.com

Nathan Schneider is a scholar-in-residence of media studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. In 2015, he co-organized "Platform Cooperativism," a conference on democratic online platforms at The New School. His articles have appeared in publications including *Harper's*, *The Nation*, *YES! Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and *Vice* magazine. He has written two books, *God in Proof* and *Thank You, Anarchy*. <http://nathanschneider.info/> | n@nathanschneider.info

Paula Z. Segal is an organizer and attorney. She is the founding director of 596 Acres, New York City's community land access advocacy organization and a member of the emerging New York City Real Estate Investment Cooperative. Paula is a graduate of City University of New York Law School at Queens College. She is an Ashoka Fellow and a visiting faculty member at Fordham Law School, where she is an Instructor in the Community Economic Development fieldwork program and a Fellow in the Governance of the Commons at the Fordham Urban Law Center. paula@596acres.org | www.596acres.org

Darren Sharp is the founder and Director of Social Surplus, a sharing economy consultancy that designs programs which amplify the strengths of people and communities through sharing. He is the Australian editor of Shareable and the Melbourne Coordinator of the Sharing Cities Network. Darren is also a PhD candidate at Curtin University's Sustainability Policy Institute researching transformative social innovation for sustainability transitions. darren@socialsurplus.com.au | [@dasharp](https://twitter.com/dasharp)

Julian Waters-Lynch is a PhD candidate in the School of Management at RMIT University researching emerging forms of working and organising. His PhD focuses on coworking practices, a form of social cooperation between predominantly non-standard workers, such as freelancers and entrepreneurs. Julian is fascinated by people's experiences of work and organisational life and the frequent gap between current realities and desired futures. julian@theholosgroup.com

David Week MArch, PhD, is a company director and international development professional with degrees in architecture and philosophical hermeneutics. Over 30+ years, David has played a key role in projects which enhance community

control and well-being by poor communities in PNG, the Pacific, Asia, Africa and Aboriginal Australia. Projects include a social enterprise in PNG, the reconstruction of 200 villages in Aceh, Aboriginal housing in Queensland, reforestation by Dayaks in Kalimantan, construction of 500 schools in Lao PDR, and the reconstruction of 650 schools in Timor Leste.

dew@assai.com.au | <http://www.linkedin.com/in/davidweek>