Privatization of Public Space: Tracing Spatial Epistemologies of Publicness in Sweden
Planning for all in a neoliberal economy

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ABSTRACT


Public spaces play an important role in urban planning for the creation of a vibrant and attractive city. When reaching for the aims of becoming a vibrant city with attractive urban realms, while boosting profit making under a proliferation of neoliberal capitalism, the question of publicness has arguably fallen behind. Thus, the aim with this paper is to examine the concept of publicness in a privatized public space and a municipally owned public space in a Swedish city. While many scholars argue that privatization of public spaces threatens publicness, constrains liberties of individuals and limit social interaction, it is important to ask to what extent public space is ending as a result of increased involvement of private actors. To frame the empirical work, a case study was produced by studying two urban public spaces with different ownership statuses. Findings in this paper suggest that the public/private debate is currently lacking adequate and nuanced concepts when assessing publicness. The current dichotomy is arguably angled in a national context, with the United States in focus. Furthermore, it is crucial to consider the hierarchical structure created by the production of space in a neoliberal economy.

Keywords: Privatization, publicness, commodification, public space, accessibility.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In “International Encyclopedia of Human Geography” (2009), public space is explained as property for individual or group use, contributing to the well-being of visitors and residents, and creating vibrancy and liveability in the city (Mitchell and Staeheli, pp.511-516). In a globalized society in the western world, theorists argue that public spaces are threatened as the focus of owners has shifted to profit making (Mitchell, 1995 pp.108-133). Public spaces are potentially marked by socio-spatial splintering as a result of privatization, creating difficulties in fostering an equal public experience (Mitchell, 2003).

A privately owned public space (POPS) refers to a place’s legal owner. The concept “POPS” was found in New York and originates from the growth of privatization in New York starting in the 1960’s. New York Department of City Planning defines POPS as “spaces dedicated to public use and enjoyment, and which are owned and maintained by private property owners, in exchange for bonus floor area or waivers”. The clearest examples of privatization of public space are perhaps found in gated communities or parks in neighbourhoods that are accessible only for wealthier residents, well-off segments of the population. Therefore, it is important to study the occurrence of privatization of public spaces in urban areas where consumption and activities are widely encouraged in order to create vibrancy.

Staehli and Mitchell (2006, p.983) question if private owners will take the same responsibility for individuals’ needs as public owners whereas they argue private actors’ primary goal is to generate profit rather than providing “publicness”. However, while the private/public dichotomy has led theorists to believe public space is ending, there is an issue with how to define “publicness” (Dovey and Pafka, 2020 p.234). The problem is based on the confusion amongst owners of what constitutes a public space and how public it is. Theorists such as Mitchell (2003) or Harvey (2003) discussing “The right to the city” arguably commenced with Lefebvre’s notion of the right to the city (1968). In his book, with the same title, he means that one’s right to the city means one’s right to appropriation and participation (1968). Public space is commonly visualized and illustrated by planners as it is equally made for everyone, which might be the goal, but it does not take injustice of public space into consideration (Turan and Ågren, 2022). Thus, it is important to map the notion of publicness and how it can be understood in an economically dynamic world with different ownership regimes. The world economy is changing, and naturally, public spaces are affected by it and moving towards less publicness (Erten, 2011).

David Harvey (2007) discusses and criticizes neoliberalism in the planning discourse and explains it as a theory that believes well-being is best achieved in an entrepreneurially maximized society in an “institutional framework categorized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade” (Harvey, 2007, p.22). The concept of publicness is therefore particularly interesting to study in a neoliberal economy that is geared towards private property rights extracting rent from land. Thus, we need to question the conditions a vibrant city in Sweden following a planning discourse of allegedly planning for all, in a capitalist society relies on. If public space is created for everyone, and if publicness is
the capacity given to everyone to appropriate and access spaces, we need to determine the underlying principles within the planning discourse and remit that impede publicness.

1.1 Aim and research questions
This paper will study the balance of interests between private and public actors and how that might affect the publicness of public spaces. The aim is to examine the concept of publicness in a privatized public space and a municipally owned public space in a Swedish city. In an economically dynamic world with increasing privatization, is publicness threatened?

- Who is public space designed for?
- What differences occur between a POPS and a public space owned by the municipality regarding publicness?
- How can publicness be measured?

1.2 Background
The growing involvement of private actors resulting in an increased number of private spaces is considered a trend from the industrial revolution, however, the wide impact of globalization has made the discussion prevalent in recent times (Erten, 2011). While the dominant planning discourse in contemporary urban spaces in Sweden is focused on the idea of “planning for all” and peoples’ “right to the city”, there are no definite and universal understandings of how to define publicness (Pelling and Larsson, 2017).

Public spaces such as malls or parks in Sweden have in recent years experienced an increase in privatization, such as Skärholmen or Vällingby in Stockholm for example (Berggren and Glanzelius, 2007). Being the fourth biggest city in Sweden, Uppsala is a famous University city marked by culture, entertainment, historical architecture, art and much more. Public spaces are therefore important attributes in the city planning (Larsson, 2022). Vaksala Torg is a square located in the urban area of Uppsala, close to the central station. It is surrounded by goods and services as well as residential housing. UKK (Uppsala Konsert och Kongress) is a concert-and congress building located on Vaksala Torg owned by the municipality in Uppsala. On the website for the building, it is explained as a lively concert house and a venue for interaction (Uppsala kommun, 2022). S:T Pers Gallerian is a mall owned by “Skandia Fastigheter” offering different options for food, cosmetics, clothing, restaurants and more. It is located in the centre of Uppsala, surrounded by other stores and cafés. Skandia Fastigher also owns part of the street outside the mall.
2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative literature review gaining empirical data combined with a case study will be conducted. Furthermore, triangulation is used to improve credibility and validity. Participant observations, a content analysis of the latest planning documents, and interviews are conducted in order to answer the research questions.

2.1 Case study

Two public spaces with different ownerships in Uppsala were analysed through content analysis, interviews, and participant observations. According to Merriam (1994), the characteristics of a case study is particularistic, descriptive, holistic, and inductive. It helps to gain a deeper and wider understanding of the studied area, and it is specifically useful when the researcher aims to theorize, trying to find a pattern, or determining patterns with important impact of a specific case (Merriam, 1994). A holistic approach is taken in this paper since the case study focuses on two existing public spaces which contributes to an observation of real situations which can add to the paper’s trustworthiness. To study a specific concept, publicness in this case, and how it acts in real situations and existing public spaces, it can be helpful to combine a theoretical approach and a case study to gain wider knowledge. The case study focuses on a specific concept and how it is approached and used in public spaces with different ownership regimes. The specific public spaces were chosen based on their ownership status and the fact that they are both located in a central urban area in Uppsala.

2.1.1 Interviews

In the qualitative case study, part of the collected data was found in conducted interviews. This method was used in order to gain information about the chosen locations for the case study and their main functions. For this paper, the interviews were semi-structured, using an interview guide attached in Appendix 2. This allows the interviewee to steer the conversation to what they personally believe is most important to cover in terms of functions and what people they want to attract to the corresponding public space (Merriam, 1994, p.88). This helped to gain a wider understanding of what a private actor and a planner from the municipality laid focus on and what their perception of publicness was. The interviewees were chosen based on their ownership or authorial role regarding the studied public space. There was one city planner from Uppsala kommun who was part of the publication of the “Arkitekturpolicy, which contains policies and guidelines for the creation of a vibrant and sustainable city. There was also the owner of S:T Pers gallerian working for Skandia Fastigheter, and finally one manager for land grants from Uppsala kommun. As the interviewees had a leadership or an authority role regarding the studied public space, the interviews can be called “elite interviews”. Elite interviews can be problematic in some cases as some topics can be subjectively discussed by the leader or owner of a place. As this paper aims to see their point of view and main interests, it was still useful.

2.1.2 Participant observation

Participant observation was part of the case study as a method to acknowledge how people move and act in the two different public spaces. The observations were used as a complement
to the interviews. Observing how people move and behave in one public space and one commercialized private public space was helpful in order to gain a wider understanding of the actual visitors and not only the aimed function of the two different places. The observations were done discretely, meaning that only the observer herself was conscious of the investigation. It is important that the observer do not have predetermined ideas or preconceptions of the studied case, the observations are solely to learn (Denscombe, 2009, p.285). The observations were mostly aimed at objective findings, such as the accessibility to toilets and seating opportunities. These specific aspects, amongst other studied attributes, were observed as they turned out to be important attributes when defining publicness from the studied theories and the OMAI model explained in chapter 4.1.

2.2 Content analysis
Part of the case study, one planning document for both areas were studied by looking for specific words: ownership, management, inclusiveness, accessibility, publicness, and commodification. The planning documents that were used are attached below in appendix 1. These planning documents were chosen as they are the latest published and therefore considered most relevant. The specific concepts were chosen as they were portrayed as most relevant in the studied models of measuring publicness, more specifically the OMAI model discussed in chapter 4.1. The studied documents were written in Swedish; therefore, the concepts were translated to: fastighetsägare, förvaltning, inkluderande, tillgänglighet. This method of coding specific concepts is named content analysis. This is helpful when finding key concepts for specific research, but it is weak as it risks missing subtle and hidden meanings in the text. This method was appropriate for the study as it is suitable to find patterns in the planning documents in order to measure publicness and how it is understood (Boréus and Bergström, 2018 p.53). There was no numerical counting of the concepts, instead they were analysed in how they were used in the studied texts. Therefore, it can be called a qualitative content analysis. For this research, it was helpful in order to interpret how the different attributes of publicness were planned in the documents. Furthermore, as the coding was mostly conducted computerized, there is not as much of a risk for missing information compared to if it was done manually (Boréus and Bergström, 2018 p.62). The potential weakness of searching for specific concepts using this coding method, however, is that the concepts can be used in the documents but not noticed if synonyms are used. However, in a qualitative literature study studying a specific concept and theorists’ definitions and the understanding of it, a content analysis is still appropriate.

2.3 Literature review
The search for literature and research articles was also conducted on the basis of particular keywords: publicness, public space, privatization, accessibility, commodification, and similar. These concepts were subjectively chosen as they were considered by the researcher to be relevant when answering the research questions. The coding method was helpful in order to comprehend how the chosen themes and concepts have been used earlier as well as narrowing down the research. As these concepts are complexly discussed within different frameworks, research written by both urban geographers, city planners or sociologists were used to gain a
wider understanding of how they are interpreted. It was however only narrowed to these fields as the aim is to study public space within urban planning. As the studied documents in this case is peer reviewed research, there is also a smaller risk of metaphors or misused concepts that can be wrongly interpreted.

2.3 Critical discussion of choice of method

All research methods have pros and cons. One of the cons with a case study is the risk of one researcher conducting and analysing all the research. This can also be an advantage in some cases as it ensures that the gained data will be analysed the same way. However, Merriam (1994) criticizes the lack of clear and direct instructions when conducting a case study, which leaves it up to the researcher to make their own way of conducting the report.

The content analysis on the planning documents, Bryman and Nilsson (2008, p.291) argue that this type of method is weak in the sense that it does not process the question of “why”. However, it was still valuable to acknowledge how specific concepts, considered to be important when measuring publicness, was used in planning documents.

In observations, it can a be a disadvantage that the researcher themselves do the observations as they might look for a specific phenomenon or acts that outplay in the public spaces to make arguments for their paper (Denscombe, 2009, p.288). It is therefore important that the observations are done solely for learning the behaviour of the aimed group for example. As the observations for this paper mainly focused on access to restrooms or seating opportunities, the observations were done objectively instead of allowing subjective preconceptions take over.

The interviewees were owners or had high positioning leadership roles, which creates a risk of a misleading and angled understanding of the publicness of the studied public space. It was therefore important to complement the interviews with observations which looked beyond the elite interviews when measuring the space’s publicness.

2.4 Credibility and validity

As mentioned above, the fact that there is only one researcher could be problematic. However, for this paper, the accuracy could be considered strong as it is only one researcher collecting the data and analysing it. One could arguably call this data created rather than data collection because the researcher is responsible for generating the data, proposedly meaning that the data is developed by the researcher (Hay and Cope, 2021). In order to strengthen credibility and validity, methodological triangulation is used to present a wider variation of the collected data which increases the accuracy of the results (Hay and Cope, 2021). Triangulation according to Denzin (1970, p.301) combines different methods in order to study the same phenomenon. The strength with this type of strategy is how the different methods complement each other and create a strong sense of credibility and validity (Merriam, 1994, p.84). The different research methods used for this study include a content analysis and a case study with interviews and observations. However, as the interviews can be considered elite interviews, there are some potential methodical issues of validity and credibility that should be considered (Berry, 2002). Firstly, how suitable is the chosen measuring instrument for answering the aimed research questions, and secondly, would you get the same results if you repeated the chosen method?
As one of the aims with this paper is the see how ownership works with accessibility and how they assess accessibility, the goal was to get their personal point of view to some extent. However, it is also important to keep in mind that different interviewees can be more persuasive and better at glorifying an issue, in this case publicness (Berry, 2002).

2.5 Course of action
To study the potential difference of interests and target groups between private and public owners in Sweden, two locations of public spaces with different ownership statuses were chosen for a case study. For the interviews, the questions were centred around models assessing publicness found in studied research in order to acknowledge how the interests of different ownership statuses may play out. Firstly, the results from the content analysis on the planning documents will be presented. Furthermore, the results from the interviews and observations will be presented. Lastly, the results based on a theoretical model will be presented in table 1.

2.6 Ethics
The interviewees were asked verbally and in written text if their names could be used for the paper. They were also asked if they would accept the interview to be recorded. No personal questions were asked to the different interviewees, only questions about the different public spaces.

2.7 Limitations
Privatization is a complex and widely discussed phenomenon and can take place in a variety of circumstances. This paper discusses the privatization process of urban public spaces, a space for the public that is owned by a private actor but acts like a publicly open space, such as a mall, street, or square. The case study analyses two public spaces located in the urban and central area of Uppsala, the study is therefore not representative for smaller cities or public spaces located in suburban areas. The observations were also conducted within a restricted time frame, meaning that the sample is small which can affect the result. They were also performed at one specific point of the day, which means that the results could be more nuanced if the observations were done over a full day. Publicness in various public spaces can be rather subjective and difficult to define, this paper presents a theoretical discussion on how to measure publicness and uses a specific model on how to measure publicness through four criterias.

As privatization of public spaces can look different in various countries, partly due to legal reasons, this paper cannot explain publicness in different countries, but it can compare two public spaces in Sweden with different ownership statuses.

Source: Uppsala.se “Kommunkarta”
3. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Many theorists argue for the importance of public space and the creation of “publicness” which means there are several approaches and meanings with the concept of a public space. It is arguably a pivotal time to examine the prevalent public-private debate, and it is discussed within different frameworks (Erten, 2011). Borret and Musch (2008) argues that “the distinction between public and private is not unitary but protean” (2008 p.305). The liberal economistic conception of distinguishing them is by the “public sector” and the “private sector” (Ibid). However, in the context of urban planning and architecture, one can argue that there is a need to introduce more concepts and more adequate terms when defining public life (Langstraat and Van Melik, 2013). Rather than static concepts and a solid distinction between the two, one should probably see their relations. The following chapter presents a theoretical discussion of public space in relation to the private/public debate.

3.1 Why should we care about public space

Jan Gehl is an urban theorist and architect who has researched space from peoples’ perspective for over 50 years. He turns against the functionalistic and rationalist planning approach by instead advocating for the human scale and the deeper meaning of the public space (Gehl, 2011). By arguing that social relationships are created when the physical environment allows it, he infers that public space carries more weight and has more effect on people than what positivism and functionalists suggest (Ibid). He also talks about the commonness of private spaces addressing themselves as public, “stealing” that group and hiding them behind walls, when they instead should be out in the public places (Gehl, 2011, p.103).

Gehl argues that city development has experienced two radical changes since the Middle Ages. The Renaissance as the first one where the cities went from freely organically growing to more planned cities. This paradigm shift meant the cities were supposed to be perceived as art rather than planned from a human scale, where planners developed theories of how cities should look like (Gehl, 2011, p.41-43). The other change was the functionalistic and separating city planning, where focus was on aesthetics and greenness, and planners believed people did not know their own best (Gehl, 2011, p.41). The background of this type of planning belief was founded in the improvement of medical knowledge, assuring people to have access to fresh air and open spaces in order to promote physical benefits (Ibid). As research now suggests, we have arguably witnessed a new era in the urban planning development (Mitchell, 2003).

We are currently experiencing a transformation from open urban areas to restricted areas, public spaces becoming private, with concealed public spaces only available and used by some individuals (Ibid). Relating this shift to Harvey’s (2007) definition of neoliberalism, explaining it as a theory that believes well-being is best achieved in an entrepreneurially maximized society, one can argue that this shift is connected to the creation of semi-public space. These semi-public spaces are produced to gear, accommodate and engineer the desires and consumption patterns of users of public space. This results in a particular kind of measure and way of understanding well-being only for a restricted number of individuals, the well-off segments of the population. Furthermore, this corresponds to a particle rationality of
comprehending human subjects and controlling their spare time, but also making distinctions between those who can and cannot afford to take part in spaces of consumption.

Henceforth, in the debate of privatization and decreasing publicness, it is important to note whose perspective it is looked from. Some people prefer to visit regulated areas where they feel safe and can perform the activities they desire (Erten, 2011).

Jane Jacob (2005) is another famous theorist who has researched the ideal vibrant city, where one of her main ideas is the need for a reason to visit public space in order for people to visit it. For example, she argues that in a park during later hours, a woman with a child would probably feel more safe if the park was not empty and instead had lots of people visiting it. As the critique towards public spaces owned by a private actor mainly circulates around restricted closing hours and less accessibility by Németh and Schmith (2011) for example, Jacobs’s ideas of a constant movement in a public place could therefore be of importance when discussing publicness. Although her theories arose from criticizing the American city planning in the 1950’s, it is still widely and universally discussed due to its focus on promoting social interaction (Jacobs, 2005). She preached for organically growing cities and argued for a strict control of commodification of space, however, she considered cafés and sidewalks as the ultimate realm for social interaction and stores as the ultimate public space. Jacobs gives an example of a woman who feels unwelcome in a park by other women and wishes there was a café with open seating where she would feel more welcome (Jacobs, 2005, p.87). This is an interesting approach to the topic of publicness, as Jacob’s sees shopping, markets and restaurant life as crucial for a social and vibrant city. This idea can arguably related to Mitchell’s ideas of the people making up the publicness of a public space (2003). The physical design can therefore be understood as something that enables specific groups to spend time there, which makes the groups themselves what affects publicness. McMorrough (2002) has studied Jacobs where he states “Jacobs urbanism’ has not failed but succeeded too well” (McMorrough, 2002, p.376). He discusses how shopping and commodification has replaced urban life and public spaces (Ibid).

3.2 Understanding public space in the public-private dichotomy
There are different understandings of how to explain and understand public space and it has been discussed in multiple fields, such as within geography, architecture, archaeology and sociology (Erten, 2011). Benn and Gauss developed an empirical model to define “public space” and “publicness” (Benn and Gauss, 1983, cited in Erten, 2011, p.25). Their tool to distinguish public and private spaces consists of three factors: accessibility to spaces, activities and information; the public-private agencies, who the agents work on behalf of determines whether they are public or private; and interests, who benefits from the resources the space provides (Ibid). However, the feminist positions criticise this way of separating and dividing public and private (Erten, 2011). According to the feminist critique, the separation of public-private suggests an exclusion of woman from the public life.

According to Akkar (2005 p.76), public space can be described as “space concerning people as a whole, open to all, accessible to or shared by all members of the community”. However, this definition arguably suggests that privatized public space does not exist, as privatized spaces are not always open for all due to closed hours and restricted accessibility.
Furthermore, this definition would mean there are no private public spaces in a neoliberal economy, as they are becoming commodified for consumption (Mutiara and Faud, 2020). On the other hand, Madinapour (2003) takes another point of view and explains public space in his book “Public and Private Spaces of the City” as spaces outside the limits of individuals and the groups’ control. They are versatile spaces and constructed for function or symbolism (Ibid).

It is also important to mention the legal aspect of defining public space. In “Ordningslagen (SFS 1993:1617) 1 kap 2 §”, public space is explained as “public streets, roads, squares, parks or other spaces that have the purpose to serve as a public space”. This mainly applies to outdoor spaces. However, another section includes other land areas and indoor spaces commonly used for the public in the definition. This means that from a legal point of view, publicly and privately public spaces offer the same possibilities in terms of “publicness”.

3.3 Spatial production

Public space can also be understood through spatial production. Spatial production in relation to urban design according to Lynch, means that it is fundamental to design cities in order to influence the quality and character of the space by considering “vitality”, “access”, “sense,”, “control” and “justice” (Lynch, 1981, cited in Karimnia, 2018, p.24). However, some studies have raised concern for the fact that public space become products or facilitate products circulation rather than publicness. Critiques of production of public space and who the space is for has been done through different assessments, such as “How public is it” by Németh (2012) or Madanipour’s “Whose public space” (2010). One of the main criticisms on created or produced public spaces is based on the unwanted outcome of the production process, where big development projects never meet the end users (Madanipour, 2014, cited in Karimnia, 2018, p.28). An example of this, starting in the 1980’s, many American cities were focused to grow out of the fall of downtown areas, where new buildings and complexes were built to provide shopping, entertainment and office spaces (Erten, 2011). This quickly became adverse as two opposites were created, households from high economic standards were either moved to exclusive and wealthy areas (or could afford to stay in the urban areas), and people from a lower economic class in urban areas were forced to low-income suburbs. This broader transformation and parcelization of urban space resulted in an exclusion of activities in urban areas in private spaces, where some parts were reserved for the well off and others became pockets of poverty (Ibid). This concern also merges with the paradox of hierarchical representations of housings in media, and the “planning for all” discourse which is raised by Turan and Ågren (2022). In their research article “Segregation and Landscape Injustice in the Shadows of White Planning and Green Exceptionalism in Sweden”, they raise the issue of Swedish cities being one of the most segregated in Europe, with residents with non-European foreign backgrounds being stigmatized and pushed out in the peripheries of cities (Turan and Ågren, 2022). Henceforth, while the gentrification process strongly connects with the issue of privatization, concepts such as “planning justice” and “social” in urban planning associates with planning for all fails to capture the unequal power geometries (Ibid).

Madanipour (2014, p.102) argues that there are two ways the production of space plays a role in the economy: “space production for use, or space production for exchange”. This
suggests that there is a relationship between the use and exchange value which creates contradictions in public space. Furthermore, the contradictions are created when the spaces are becoming commodities, meaning that they become consumed spaces facilitating the consumption of commodities - which prevents it from being a use value for others. This can be connected to the Marxist arguments of commodification transforming items with a “use value” into an item with “exchange value”. Henceforth, commodification and urban experiences now go hand in hand and are marking our public spaces (Erten, 2011). This is however not a new concern in the discussion on production of space. In Lefebvre’s book “The Production of Space”, he raises the issue of capitalism as the means of spatial production (Lefebvre, 1991, cited in Karimnia, 2018, p.33) Capitalism takes form in everyday space and reproduces itself, where space serves the capitalist system creating classes and injustice structures (Ibid). Henceforth, from this theoretical standpoint, the transition to further paid commodification of goods and services leads to public spaces becoming more private.

3.4 Global competition and commodification
Another important viewpoint in the discussion on creating attractive public spaces and attractive cities planned on the human scale, is the global competition cities are experiencing, as this competition also leads to places of consumption (Erten, 2011). The political system in Sweden being a liberal democracy under the influence of increasing globalization, public spaces are transforming into commodified spaces (Ibid). As the encouragement of consumption is continuously growing, shopping centres are becoming the new realm of public life. In his study “Studying publicness in Shopping centres”, Taskin Erten (2011) points out the significant popularity increase in shopping centres. When public space is turning into a question of consumption, it is arguably becoming a question of economic class. The lack of public spaces that are inclusive for all, and the hypertrophy of shopping malls, prevents younger generations from learning an ideal grasp of publicness that would not be tautological with commodified spaces. Thus, their way of perceiving public spaces is actually restricted publicness (Erten, 2011). The life happening in shopping centres are significantly exclusive as all activities orbit around consumption. This way of measuring publicness suggests that it is mainly the enforcement of consumption that risks the public exclusiveness.

Chan (2020) argues that commodification of public space should be studied as a direct process by itself. Commodification in Marxian terms can be referred to transforming goods, services and entities into a commodity through a value (Chan, 2020). Similar to Lefebvre (1991) arguments on how capitalism has taken form and dominates the whole of our build environment, it can take different forms in our build environments (Ibid). As the definitions of a public space mostly relates to an open space accessible to all, it is inevitable treated as an arena made for profit making in a capitalist economy. Chan (2020) therefore argues that “public space is produced and developed as a commodity by state and private interests regardless of its ownership, funding and management structure” (Chan, 2020, p.147). This suggests that publicness should not only be studied in the frames of ownership. Mitchell (2003, p.35) also disagrees with Langstraat and Van Melik on why publicness should not be studied through ownership. He argues that it is the people and actual visitors of the place that make up its
publicness. It is the physical design that affects what kind of people spends time in the public space (Ibid).

3.5 Who are we planning for?
Iris Marion Young (1990) discusses the danger of a too strict conceptualization of group identity. She argues that there are no homogenic groups and people will always be unique. While the normative assumptions of public space are criticized in this paper as it does not catch the subjective and unique viewpoints that users of public space hold, there is also a discussion in scholars whether publicness and universal inclusion in public space can be achieved at all (Young, 1990). No open space will ever satisfy every user and individual by its utilities, nor will all needs ever be met in an open space. This suggests that measuring publicness in public space is always a question of whom this space is for, or who you ask. This raises the issue of a potential lack of various representatives of different groups in larger planning projects. As Madanipour (1999) argues, public urban spaces are becoming owned and managed by private actors who have interest only in particular sections of the population, meaning that there is a need for more voices in planning. Restrictions in public space is not a problem for everyone, it might even be the opposite and make some feel more safe, but perhaps that sense of safety is built upon the fact that the space is not public for all. High end brands only invite people of economically higher status to their stores, and fancy restaurants only allow people of a certain economic class to eat there. This also provides evidence that show that measuring people and daily users as an indicator on the accessibility of a public space is non-functional (Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee, 1998). If only one specific group of people is aimed to visit a specific place, despite the amount of people visiting, the level of publicness cannot be measured.

Gehl (2011) gives clear examples of what increases a city’s vibrancy and how to promote social interaction and meetings in public spaces. As public space is becoming a diffuse concept with balancing different interests, it is important to understand what is working against the vibrancy of cities. Whyte (1980) argues that actors tend to not want spaces to be too attractive because that will make them attractive to unwanted people. For example, fewer benches or benches in uncomfortable shapes are installed, or the lack of public restrooms. The consumers and money holders are finding places attractive as they have the opportunity to sit down in cafés or restaurants in public spaces, however, how public is it?

3.6 Publicness in privatized spaces
The wide discussion on the problematization of privatization of public spaces has led to different turns but one of the originating thoughts was arguably presented in the book “Privately owned public space: The New York city experience” by Kayden (2000). For a duration of two years, investigations and assessments were conducted which came to show that nearly half of the public spaces that transitioned to private, did not reach the requirements of publicness set by the government (Kayden, 2000, s.55). This was mostly shown through a significant increase in exclusion, such as gates and fences, lack of information, or extensions of companies or cafés on public streets. The lastly named aspect is a common phenomenon in privatized public spaces, perhaps mostly recognized in urban areas, and can be seen as an
extension of corporations or companies (Németh and Schmith, 2011, s.8). This is commonly shown on cafés’ outdoor seating taking up much space of the street or square, only offering seats for consumers (Ibid). This is a phenomenon named as “café creep” discussed by Kayden (2000) in “The New York City experience” (p. 57). This can also be related to commodification of public space, where profit making clearly is the objective for the private owner of the space rather than vibrancy and social interaction (Mitchell, 2003).

Another take on the transition of public space to private clearly has an effect on publicness in research founded by Lofland (2000) on Business Improvement Districts in corporate realms (BIDs). The idea of BIDs is a cooperation between the city and private actors in order to “clean up” cities where the government lacked supplements of financing garbage collecting for example (Zukin, 1995, p.33). The idea was successful in some sense, and it resulted in attracting more individuals in some cases. However, the management and control by private actors resulted in unwelcomeness to stigmatized groups (Ibid). This way of creating semi-private places spaces by separating business people from street people for example, reinforces segregation by the configuration of the public spaces (Erten, 2011). This idea can be compared to the gentrification process that spiralled in the 1980s in the US as both examples show the problem of actors not meeting the end users and considering them in the planning process.
4. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

One way of assessing publicness is the vibrancy and safety aspect raised by Gehl in his book “Life between buildings” (2011). One of his theories refers to the aspect of “Seeing, Hearing, and talking” and how the opportunity to see and hear other people is determined by distance, henceforth, streets and squares should not be too big. Gehl provides these measurements of seeing:

- 70-100 meters of distance max for seeing events
- 20-25 meter of distance max to see facial expressions

These measurements should be followed in order to promote social interaction and vibrancy in cities; however, one needs to ask if that is suitable or necessary in measuring publicness. When looking at the different definitions of public spaces in different scholars, it can be connected to Gehl’s and Jacobs theories on vibrancy as most definitions circle around the state of quality and how livelihood is important in fostering urban experiences. However, what most of these definitions do not consider, is the interests and targeted groups aimed for the specific public space which in turn affects the space’s publicness. Thus, one needs to question who is missing from these vibrant spaces, as vibrancy is generated by activities primary revolving around consumption.

4.1 Models measuring publicness

Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) lift the issue of an American majority in the literature field when discussing privatization of public spaces. While attempting to overcome inadequate definitions of the complex meanings of publicness, they criticise how the current discussions on defining “the public” are within one specific national context, the United States. This has resulted in a lack of a nuanced perception of privatization of public spaces. Previous research has studied publicness through ownership, meaning that they only assess publicness based on the conventional wisdom that privately owned spaces generally are more exclusionary and less accessible (Németh and Schmith, 2011). In their article “The privatization of public space: modelling and measuring publicness”, Németh and Schmith (2011) creates a “tri-axal” model to provide a more conceptual and deeper way of measuring publicness. Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) continues to furtherly build on the “tri-axal” model. They challenge the concerns of researcher such as Staehli and Mitchell (2007) of an ending public space as a result of increasing privatization. They test this through four different dimensions; ownership, management, accessibility and inclusiveness. These dimensions constitute measurements of publicness, where ownership and management are straightforward and accessibility and inclusiveness are more open for interpretation (Langstraat and Van Melik, 2013). The four different criterias are as follows:

**Ownership:** This dimension is simply defined by who the legal owner is of the place.

**Management:** This refers to the control of the place, and who practices care for the place, such as policing or security guards.
Accessibility: This does not only relate to the general understanding whether a space is open for all or not, it is also related to the amount of difficulty in accessing the place. Henceforth, it measures both its dispersion to other places, but also the physical design. Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) give an example of entrances and how they can be perceived as less or more inviting. Another example can be the size of aisles or corners, and how the way they are designed affect the visitors’ feeling of public.

Inclusiveness: This dimension can be explained as the degree the place is designed to meet different needs for different groups and individuals. Németh and Schmith (2011) argues that this can be assessed in different ways, qualitatively by the way people behave and how they perceive the public space, or quantitatively by measuring the diversity of visitors (Langstraat and Van Melik, 2013). An example of this is provided by Varna and Tiesdell in their article “Assessing the Publicness of Public Space: The Star Model of Publicness” (2010), where one could look at aspects of availability to toilets, seating or lighting etcetera.

Source: Langstraat and Van Melik (2013)

Testing this model on the Business Improvement Districts as an example, the OMAI model would show: Ownership: private, Management: their own security system, Accessibility: only workers and corporate members allowed and Inclusiveness: only the needs of the workers and especially owners are met. This would also apply to Kayden’s (2000) idea of café creeps. These examples would therefore suggest that privatization of a public space is widely connected to decreased publicness. However, these examples are from American studies, which is one of the critiques by Langstraat and Van Melik (2013).
5 CASE STUDY

The municipality of Uppsala kommun was part in planning documents for both Vaksala Torg (Detailplan for “Kv Gerd and Vaksala Torg” by Uppsala kommun) and S:T Per (Detailplan for S:t Per, Uppsala kommun). The detail plan for the construction of UKK describes the project as “The new concert and congress building is aimed to become a new source of culture life, an arena for research and entrepreneurship and a vibrant meeting place for Uppsala residents – open for diverse activities” (Uppsala kommun, 2003). From this description, one can notice that the goal is to plan for different groups when providing different activities. In this detail plan, the word accessibility (tillgänglighet) was used when describing the location of the concert- and congress building. The building is also considered accessible to people who travel by trains, buses, walking, or biking. It is also described as accessible by wheelchair bounded people and people with restricted walking possibilities as the entrances are the same level as the ground outside. Furthermore, all the floors have elevator access. This is however due to the law (SFS 1994:1215) that says buildings for residential, offices or public spaces need to be designed allowing accessibility to people with impaired movement or ability to. This suggests that it is perhaps not crucial to discuss ownership statuses in terms of accessibility for people with non-normative abilities due to the legal regulations in Sweden. The word ownership (fastighetsägare) was only used in the document for S:T Pers mall, explaining that Skandia fastigheter owns the building. The words management (förvaltning) and inclusiveness (inkluderande) were not used in either one of the documents. From this result, we can state that the specific concepts within the OMAI model are not helpful or when measuring publicness through planning documents. Instead, there needs to be a more subjective evaluation of the aspects within the different concepts through interviews or observations for example.

5.1 Vaksala Torg and UKK

In an interview with Claes Larsson (2022), an urban architect from Uppsala kommun, the historical function of Vaksala Torg is discussed. Vaksala Torg is a square located in the East part of Uppsala from the late 1800’s. In the beginning, housing and construction were densely placed around the square compared to today when the area is replete with lots of housing, goods and services, and the concert- and congress building. Larsson (2022) mentions the versatile functions and purpose of the square, such as a marketplace and a space for gatherings and meetings. About 20 years ago, an architect competition was held for the concert- and congress building UKK (Larsson, 2022). When it was decided that UKK was going to be built on the square, houses had to be torn down and much of it was wooden houses. One of the reasons the UKK was decided to be built on Vaksala Torg was to bring more culture and life to the Eastern side of the city. Larsson (2022) states “Finally it was decided, one of the reasons was to make the East side of the city more vibrant, it was a way of bringing more culture to the Eastern side of town”.

5.1.1 Functions

The square is also commonly used for markets, food festivals, or other events. As the owner is Uppsala kommun, there are no requirements for a police permit (Magnus, Malm 2022). This
means that to have markets or other events, the contact is directly made with Uppsala kommun. In an interview with Magnus Malm, a manager for land grants at Uppsala kommun, it is stated that Vaksala Torg is supposed to be a “vibrant square”, but it could be a rather diffuse explanation. Malm (2022) states that there have been discussions on whether the square could be used for restaurants and outdoor seating, but as it seems now, it is the fact that it has many markets and different functions that makes it more inclusive to different kinds of people. Malm (2022) gives examples of different activities and events that have been offered at Vaksala Torg, such as the international food market every year, the Volleyball Tournament, flea markets and food markets.

However, Larsson (2022) also mentions the discussion on the size of the square, as many people tend to think that it is too big. The square measures up to 12000m², and the size of the square with UKK included is 20000m². The size of the square therefore goes against Gehl’s theories on distancing for seeing. Thus, from Gehl’s perspective on the creation of social interaction, the square can be criticised.

In the interview with the urban architect, a question on how the municipality follows the discourse on “planning for all” was asked. Larsson (2022) states that the municipality follows the architecture policy which infers that public spaces should be available for everyone, however, it is difficult to balance with profit interests and importance of a growing economy.

“According to the architecture policy, the main focus is that it should be available for all and one should not need to consume and spend money. At the same time, the municipality has a responsibility to keep the city alive and vibrant to stimulate the economy, it is a balancing act” - Larsson, 2022

5.2. S:T Pers Gallerian

In an interview with Snezana Oscarsson (2022), the mall owner of S:T Pers Gallerian, she explains how the function of the mall has changed since it was built in the 1970s. Before the construction of the mall, the area was categorized with different housings. Oscarsson (2022) explains the different characteristics of the building and the streets; the mall was built to be a fashion mall, there used to be a cinema and post office. Between 1988-1991, the entrances were reconstructed and became four which increased the accessibility. Oscarsson (2022) also explains that the stores used to have two floors, but it became too expensive with staff costs. There is a parking garage connected to the mall and due to it being located underground, Skandia Fastigheter also owns part of the street outside on Svartbäcksgatan. This means that they are in control of what amenities that can be offered on that part of the street.

5.2.1 Functions

The process of changing the stores used to occur around every 6 years, however, as a result of the growing trend of online shopping and a consequence of the pandemic, the stores are changing more frequently (Oscarsson, 2022). There is also a witnessed trend amongst food and beverage opportunities. As there is a desire to make the space attractive to consumers, the private sector is therefore also prone to look at different patterns and needs of people. “The trends clearly show that there needs to be lots of food and beverage options, which has really increased. The idea is around 17-20% of the consumption is food in some form” (Oscarsson, 2022).
In regard to the aimed and targeted group to visit the mall, Oscarsson (2022) explains that it is dependent on who will consume and spend money. “Everyone knows that women shop, not only for themselves, you shop for your whole family. Men only shop for themselves” (Oscarsson, 2022). This idea and stereotype of the woman as a shopper is widely taken into consideration when deciding what stores should be in the mall. This also applies to the outdoor area that is owned by Skandia Fastigheter. Oscarsson (2022) states that the space is used by the cafés in the mall during summertime, where the cafés offer outdoor seating. However, the broad variation on shops and stores increases the publicness as it attracts more types of people. Oscarsson (2022) gives an example of the store “Normal” which is known for its lower cost products. A variety of food options are also provided, and health care (dentist) is provided on the second floor.

Oscarsson (2022) also raises an important point about the real estate company Vasakronan that she has previously worked for, who strives towards the concept of ‘life between the rooms’. She means that they aim to create vibrancy between the buildings and on the streets, instead of just inside the buildings. This can strongly be connected to Gehl’s theories in “Life between buildings”. In regard to the seating opportunities inside the mall, Oscarsson (2022) states that they used to have more seating, but they were mainly used for loud teenagers which affected the other visitors and consumers in the malls and cafes. This suggests that instalments of the physical environment do have an effect of how people move and visit the space, and it is possible to allow some groups while planning to exclude another group.

Certain flow measurements are conducted by Skandia Fastigheter, measuring users and revenue. Regarding accessibility, this assessment offers information on what entrance is mostly used which can provide information to the owner on how to make the mall more accessible coming from different directions. However, according to Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee (1998), it is important to mention that this measurement cannot be used to indicate publicness and accessibility. Another important finding was that Skandia Fastigheter can decide what stores and services can be provided in the mall, as well as on the street outside.

The table below presents the findings from the observations and evaluations from the different public spaces based on the model by Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) containing four different criterions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Inclusiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vaksala Torg (+UKK)</strong></td>
<td>Uppsala kommun</td>
<td>The square does not have a security guard or camera systems. There is no collected information of the CCTV in the UKK building.</td>
<td>Some but quite few seating opportunities are offered on the square and in UKK. Most of the seating is offered in the restaurant in UKK. There are 2 entrances to UKK but the square does not have a specific entrance, one can reach the square from different directions. Free restrooms are offered inside UKK. Wide range of activities are offered at the square as well as in UKK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S:T Pers Gallerian</strong></td>
<td>Skandia Fastigheter</td>
<td>CCTV and Security guard in the mall</td>
<td>There were very few seating opportunities provided for non-consumers. The café located in the middle of the mall offers seating, but only accepts customers. The mall has several entrances, all from different sides, which provide the possibility of coming from different locations. Restrooms are provided in the restaurant and downstairs. There is a wide range of stores and boutiques, which provides shopping opportunities for different price ranges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Evaluation of publicness based on Langstraat’s and Van Melik’s model (2013)*
6. REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The increase of privatization of public spaces has led theorists and researchers to believe public spaces are coming to an end (Langstraat and Van Melik, 2013). From the case study, one can argue for the issue of a dominating national context. It is clear that American scholars on publicness affected by ownership statuses differ from public spaces in Sweden. This can partly be answered by the legal aspect, that the same laws on what one is allowed to perform in public spaces are applied to both privately owned space and publicly owned spaces. Therefore, in regard to the legal aspect, the ownership aspect is perhaps not as crucial to study in a case in Sweden as in American studies on measuring publicness in public spaces. This can also apply to when measuring accessibility in terms of people with reduced mobility. The law (SFS 1994:1215) that regulates planning for people with reduced abilities, ensures that the sense of accessibility is the same regardless of the ownership, at least within the legal framework. However, the laws regulate one’s right to visit the place, but it does not control publicness regarding other aspects.

One significant finding in the case study was the seating opportunities outside UKK and S:T Pers Gallerian. Skandia Fastigheter owns the space outside the front of the mall which means they have the right to decide what can be offered there. From the interview with the owner of the mall, it appeared that the space is mainly used for outdoor seating owned by cafés in the mall, Skandia Fastigheter. This can be connected to the concept “café creep” by Kayden (2000), where a public space only provides seating for paying customers, having the streets be overflowed with private seating. This is an example of where profit making is prioritized over one’s opportunity to sit there, which decreases the level of publicness according to the OMAI model. However, connecting this to ideas of Gehl and Jacobs, this way of locating seating arrangements on the streets would encourage more people to visit it and stay there instead of just passing through. This in turn would create social interaction, which is commonly a goal when planning for contemporary urban spaces, however, it would only offer seating and interaction for money spenders. This suggests that understanding public space from a perspective on attractiveness and vibrancy, does not necessary supply publicness; it can sometimes even have the opposite effect. This provides evidence for the existing global competition of making cities attractive and the constant balance of who spaces are planned for. This can also be related to the size of the square Vakala Torg, from Gehl’s perspective, this square would be too large, and it would not promote social interaction. However, the size of the square allows different events and festivals to take place which arguably promotes publicness. Gehl and Jacobs would perhaps argue for the importance of something happening there, a reason why people would stay there. This suggests that the food markets and concerts are examples of attributes that contributes to vibrancy, but also welcome more people. Similar arguments can be made for the concert-and congress building that was constructed as an attempt of creating vibrancy and the objective of Vasakronan’s building framework “rooms between houses”. This shows that the theories of Gehl and Jacobs are still an important part of the current city planning in contemporary spaces.

The case study suggests that Skandia Fastigheter strives towards attractiveness and to some extent planning for all. However, the global competitiveness and increase in online shopping,
puts pressure on the importance of profit making. Studying publicness concerning commodification shows that the objective of a shopping centre is solely the encouragement of consumption. For a privately owned space, profit making is crucial in order to avoid bankruptcy. However, the global competitiveness to attract residents, tourists, investors or companies have perhaps blurred out the line of the spoken different objectives between the different ownership statuses. As the municipality potentially are more prone to “plan for all”, they must also plan to stimulate the economy in the global competitiveness. Vaksala Torg and UKK are used for different purposes, and according to the urban architect Claes Larsson at Uppsala kommun (2022), it is crucial that they take different interests and needs into consideration. The fact that the square and the concert house offer different events and activities, is one way of increasing publicness. However, considering commercialization and commodification, the participation of these events and activities mainly relies on money spending. Thus, as commodification and commercialization are currently occurring in both publicly and privately owned spaces, the question of ownership may not even be noticeable or important for the user.

The results from the case study therefore leads us to the discussion of whether it is the paid activities and commodification of a space itself that threatens publicness. As Mutiara and Faud (2020) stated, both public and private public spaces are marked towards commodification resulting in less publicness. One can therefore ask why the different criterias from the discussed methods and models of measuring publicness, do not include the aspect of commodification. As stated earlier, privatization and commodification go hand in hand and when discussing one, one cannot leave out the other. Henceforth, publicness should be studied in the context of commodified spaces solely as a consequence of capitalism and disregard the discussion of private vs public (Mutiara and Faud, 2020). Whereas many theorists agree that commodification has a strict connection to the publicness of space, it is difficult to find models including this in their models. Thus, for future research, a model including a criterion of commodification is perhaps what is lacking in the private/public debate of public space.

6.1 Results connected to the research questions
6.1.1 Who is public space designed for?

From the case study, one can see that commercialized spaces are designing public space for consumers and the chosen goods and services provided in a mall has a wide effect on what groups are visiting the space. In public spaces owned by the municipality, it is clear that public spaces are for all, but it is a constant balance between different interests and a global competition. There is a paradox in the planning discourse as planning for vibrancy to attract more people, has in some ways resulted in planning for excluding the non-consumers. Going back to Gehl’s theory on what people stop to look at, such as people and art exhibitions, it is important to offer free activities in order to promote people to socially interact.

One of the potential reasons for the difficulty in finding a clear definition on who public space is designed for, is the lack of actors, dialogues, and representatives of different groups in the planning process. If the planning and ownership consisted of a wider variety of representatives for the different public spaces, it would potentially look different. This can be connected to the gentrification process and the problem with big project actors who usually do
not meet the end user (Madanipour, 2014). It is therefore important for actors in big projects to consider the end users and invite them to the planning process.

6.1.2 What differences occur between a POPS and a public space owned by the municipality regarding publicness?
While the process of privatization has led theorists to believe that public space is ending due to privatization, it is clear that the private/public discussion lacks more adequate concepts when defining spaces. The case study has shown that both private and public actors need to consider profit making to some extent and commercialized spaces are not only categorized in private spaces in urban areas where focus is to attract citizens to create a vibrant city. The promotion of social interaction and meeting spots as an effect of norms and ideals of an attractive vibrant public space is dominating the planning discourses. This results in a major variety of spots for eating, drinking, shopping which arguably conflicts with the strive and goals of planning for all in the planning discourses. The design of a physical environment of a public space, such as entrances or seating opportunities, can affect different groups to feel welcome or unwelcome. The question of ownership from the case study has partly shown how the different interests can look for a private actor and municipal actor. The municipality clearly works towards making the city attractive in order to gain a larger population which can mean different things as a city’s attractiveness is subjectively measured. However, from the interview in the private sector, it was clearer that the planning for all was connected to the tracked trends and the consumers’ needs. All interviews from the different sectors discussed the idea of planning for all and the difficult balance of adjusting to different needs. However, as the shopping mall solely focuses on consumption, there was a distinction between planning for all and planning for consumers. As it seems now, the privatization of public spaces will continue and there is perhaps a need for a legal agreement between the municipality and private actors on what activities or stores that should be allowed or appropriate on private public spaces.

6.1.3 How can we measure publicness?
Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) proposed the idea if the OMAI model as a critique towards the idea of an “ending public space”. As many scholars has suggested, privatization contributes to higher control and management, resulting in less accessibility and publicness. However, Langstraat and Van Melik (2013) aimed to challenge this conception. In the study case, the criteria ownership as a direct connection to publicness, has turned out to not be as crucial which agrees with Langstraat and Van Melik’s theories. Instead, one can question if it is the people and actual visitors that make a space public. As Mitchell (2003) argues, the actual users of the space will to some extent determine the perceived publicness. However, it is also important to acknowledge that the owners have the power to control what groups that will use the space, by decreasing the amount of seating opportunities or deciding what stores are available for example.

The management criteria in the OMAI model have also been proved to not be as crucial as perhaps stated in other scholars. The CCTV inside the mall is solely for solving the issues with burglary and theft, which should perhaps not be questioned as a direct connection to publicness. As they are not allowed to film outside the street, the cameras are not facing the streets. This
is also a question on who the publicness is measured on which makes it a difficult criterion to discuss. In the model, high management is related to low publicness, however, if the management is solely used for creating safety for all, is it really decreasing publicness? In the case study, the actual design of entrances, accessibility to public transport, parking spots, seating seemed to be more important.

In conclusion, to distinguish a model based on the results from the case study and the literature review, it is necessary to include a criterion of commercialization or commodification of space as that was what represents the unpublic aspects of the places, such as “café creeps” for example. The ownership criteria also need to be more complexly asked. It needs to consider the different aimed functions and aimed group of the place by the owner. Building on Chan’s (2020) arguments; although the two different public spaces have different ownership statuses, they are examples of a neoliberal practice of urban public space. Henceforth, there needs to be a distinction between privately owned public spaces and commercialized public spaces that have a goal of profit making which only welcomes well of segments of the population, and a threat to non-consumers, resulting in threatened publicness.
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Electronic sources
APPENDIX 1

Planning documents

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APPENDIX 2

Intervjuguide

Introduktion
  • Berätta lite om din tjänst och vad du jobbar med?

Bakgrund om platsen
  • Vad var det menat för funktion tidigare?
  • Hur har utvecklingen sett ut rent “funktionsmässigt” för platsen sedan det invigdes?
  • Finns det någon specifik målgrupp för platsen?
  • Hur många personer befinner sig där dagligen?
  • Hur stort är platsen? Bredd, antal m från en sida till en annan.
  • Är det någon specifik typ av människor som platsen är planerad för?
  • Hur är säkerheten? Finns det någon kameraövervakning eller säkerhetsvakter?

Privata och kommunala marker
  • Vad innebär en offentlig plats för dig?
  • Vilka får tillgång till information kring platsen? Exempelvis om marknader och liknande?
  • Hur mycket har ni att säga om hur utformningen ska se ut eller vilka som planeras att vistas på platsen?
  • Hur kan man på något sätt påverka prisklasserna i ett område? Exempelvis om man vill undvika att bara ha dyra restauranger på en plats.

Planering för alla
  • Skulle du anse att platsen är tillgänglig för många rent transportmässigt?
  • Vilka områden är vanligast att folk är ifrån för de som vistas här?
  • Finns det någon som inte skulle anses välkommen här?
  • Hur ska man tänka när man planerar för alla?
  • Vad kan det finnas för fördelar och nackdelar med betalda funktioner och tjänster vid offentliga platser?
  • Har man någon kontroll över vilka utbud och tjänster som ska finnas på ett icke-privatägt område?