What makes a better city?

Housing, Industrial development, better streets and highways - improving all those things make for better cities. [1]

When we talk about cities, every problem is a collective problem.

1. New York planning manual for 1960s renewal projects

Making better cities

Urban planning ideologies

In planning theory the shift from expert-led to citizen-driven ideals was less evident.

A new planning paradigms didn’t replace the old one but stacked.

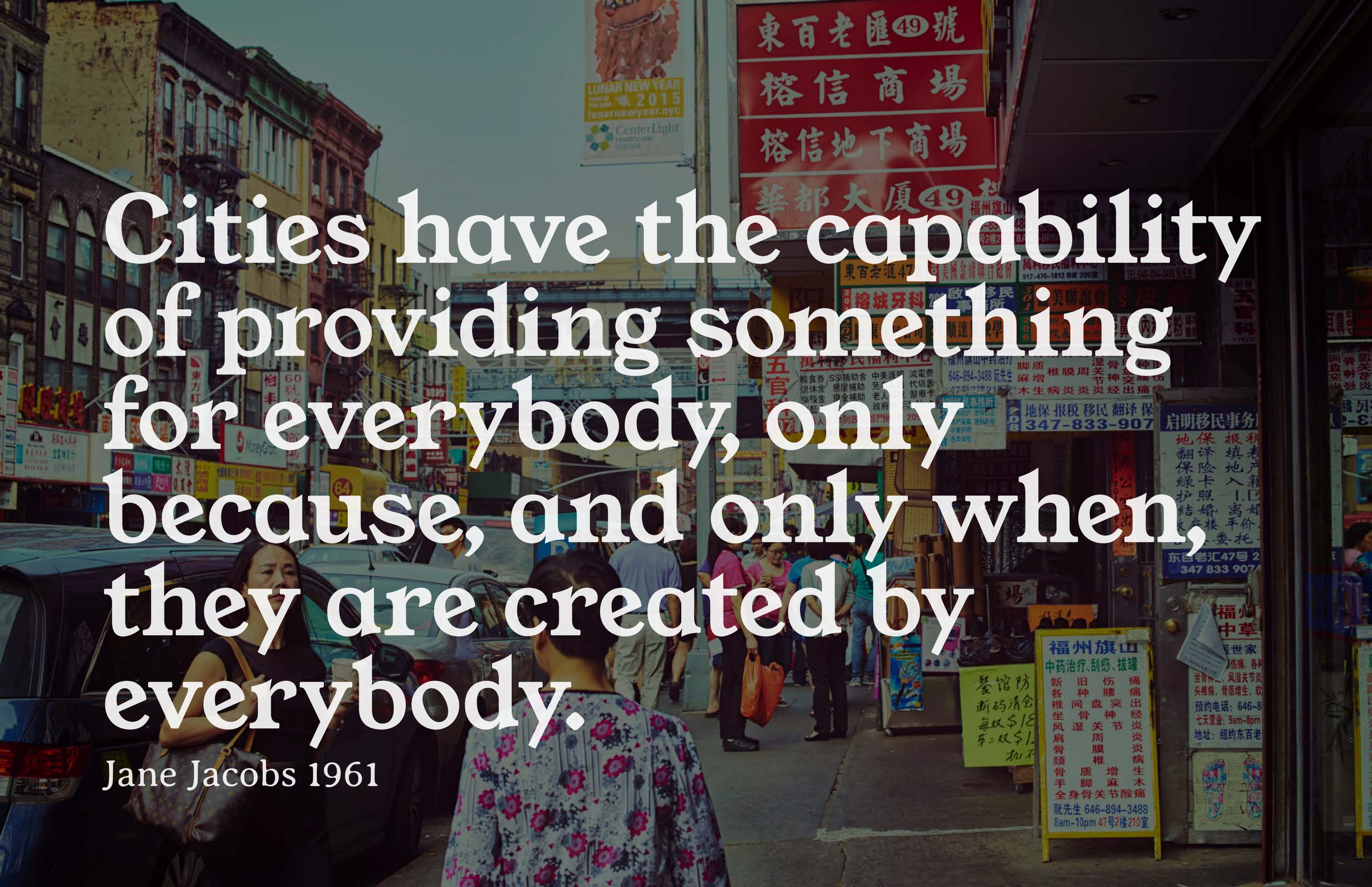
Even today, expert-led, top-down models thrive.

Expert–led planning

Name	Emergence
Garden city	1900s
Neighbourhood unit	1920s
Radian city	1920s
Boadacre city	1930s
Urban Renewal	1940s

Citizen–driven ideal

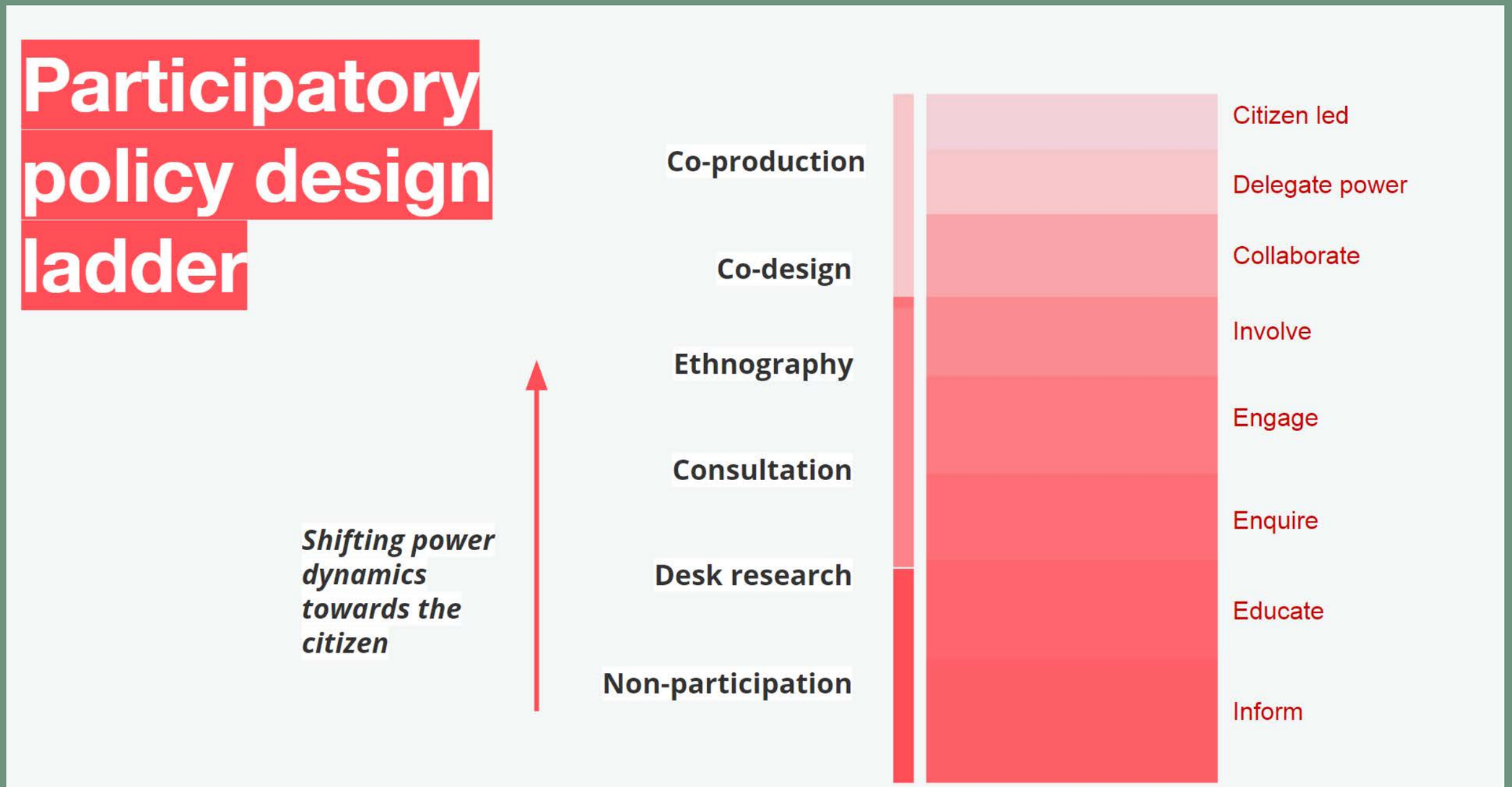
Name	Emergence
Community action	1960s
Advocacy planning	1960s
Equity planning	1970s
Traditional neigh. dev.	1980s
Transit-Oriented dev.	1990s
New Urbanism	1990s
Smart growth	1990s
Eco cities	1980s
Eco-towns	2000s
Creative districts	2000s
Living labs	2010s
15min city	2020s



Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.

Jane Jacobs 1961

Making cities better by climbing the latter of participatory design.

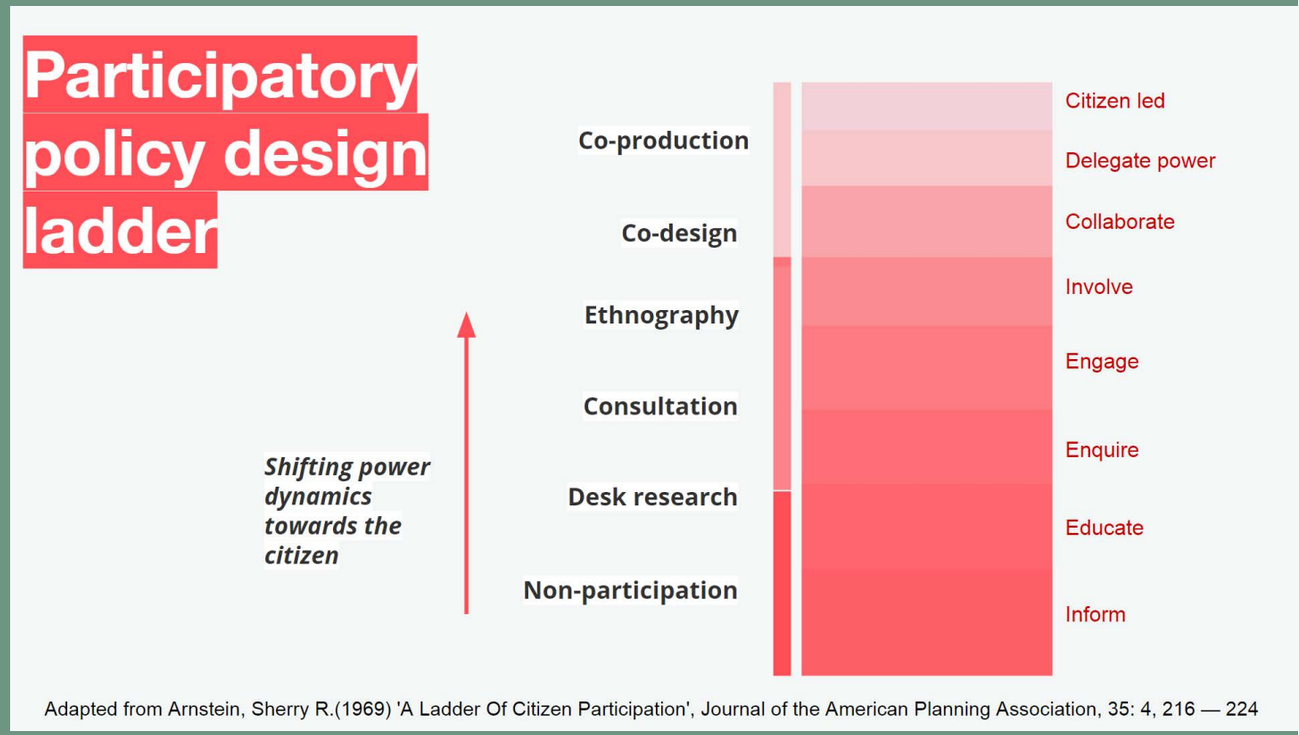


Adapted from Arnstein, Sherry R.(1969) 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation', Journal of the American Planning Association, 35: 4, 216 — 224

Consultation

Participation was introduced as a solution to relink urban planning to social change and democratise the urban planning process in cities and regions.

With the advent of PPGIS participation became from a niche to a globally embraced practice.



Adapted from Arnstein, Sherry R.(1969) 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation', Journal of the American Planning Association, 35: 4, 216 — 224

Narva noorte
taju-kaart

Koondkaart annab ülevaate noorte jaoks meeldivatest (roheline) ja ebameeldivatest (punane) kohtadest ning piirkondadest. Kohad, kus erinevad hinnangud kattuvad on tähistatud kahte värvi kombineeriva pruuni tooniga.

Eraldi on välja toodud Narva noorte kõige olulisemad maamärgid, mis said positiivseid või negatiivseid hinnanguid.

2000 aastal koostatud taju-uuringu võrdlemisel 2020 uuringuga võib järeldada, et jõeäärse kallasraja korrastamine on piirkonna populaarsust veelgi kasvatanud. Jätkuvalt on populaarne vanalinn ja Peetri platsi ümbrus.

Kultuurikeskus Geneva ja lähiümbruse meeldivus on vähenenud, esile on tõusnud Astri ja Fama keskused.

Osa linnast, mis paikneb Tallinna maanteest põhja pool on muutunud oluliselt meeldivamaks, Soldino ja Kerese piirkonna atraktiivsus on vähenenud. Kreenholmi piirkonna meeldivus on tuntavalt vähenenud, eelkõige on ebameeldivad Kreenholmi kooli ja Gerassimovi kultuurimaja ümbrus. Atraktiivsemaks peetakse vaid Kreenholmi lääneosa (staadion ja ümbrus).

SPIN UNIT | linnalabor

ebameeldiv

meeldiv

meeldiv/ebameeldiv

Astri keskus ja lähiümbrus

Nii meeldiva kui ebameeldivana märgitud koht, kus kogunetakse sõpradega, aga kus käiakse ka perega või üksi.

meeldiv/ebameeldiv

Fama keskus

Nii meeldiva kui ebameeldivana märgitud koht, kus käiakse nii üksi kui ka koos sõpradega.

meeldiv

Narva vanalinn

Vanalinna piirkonnana tajutakse meeldivana, kuid kohtadena tõstatakse esile vaid raekoda ja kolledžit.

meeldiv

Narva linnasüda

Positiivseid hinnanguid jagub nii Hermanni linnusele, lossipargile kui Puškini alleele, ebameeldivana tajutakse Tallinna mnt ringristmikku.

meeldiv

Jõepromenaad

Noorte jaoks meeldiv piirkond, mis ulatub Narva sadamast Joaoruni välja.

meeldiv

Joaorg

Rannaala on noorte jaoks atraktiivne piirkond, samuti hindavad noored rannahoone moodsat arhitektuuri.

ebameeldiv

TALLINNA MNT 55

meeldiv

Kreenholmi staadium ja jäähall

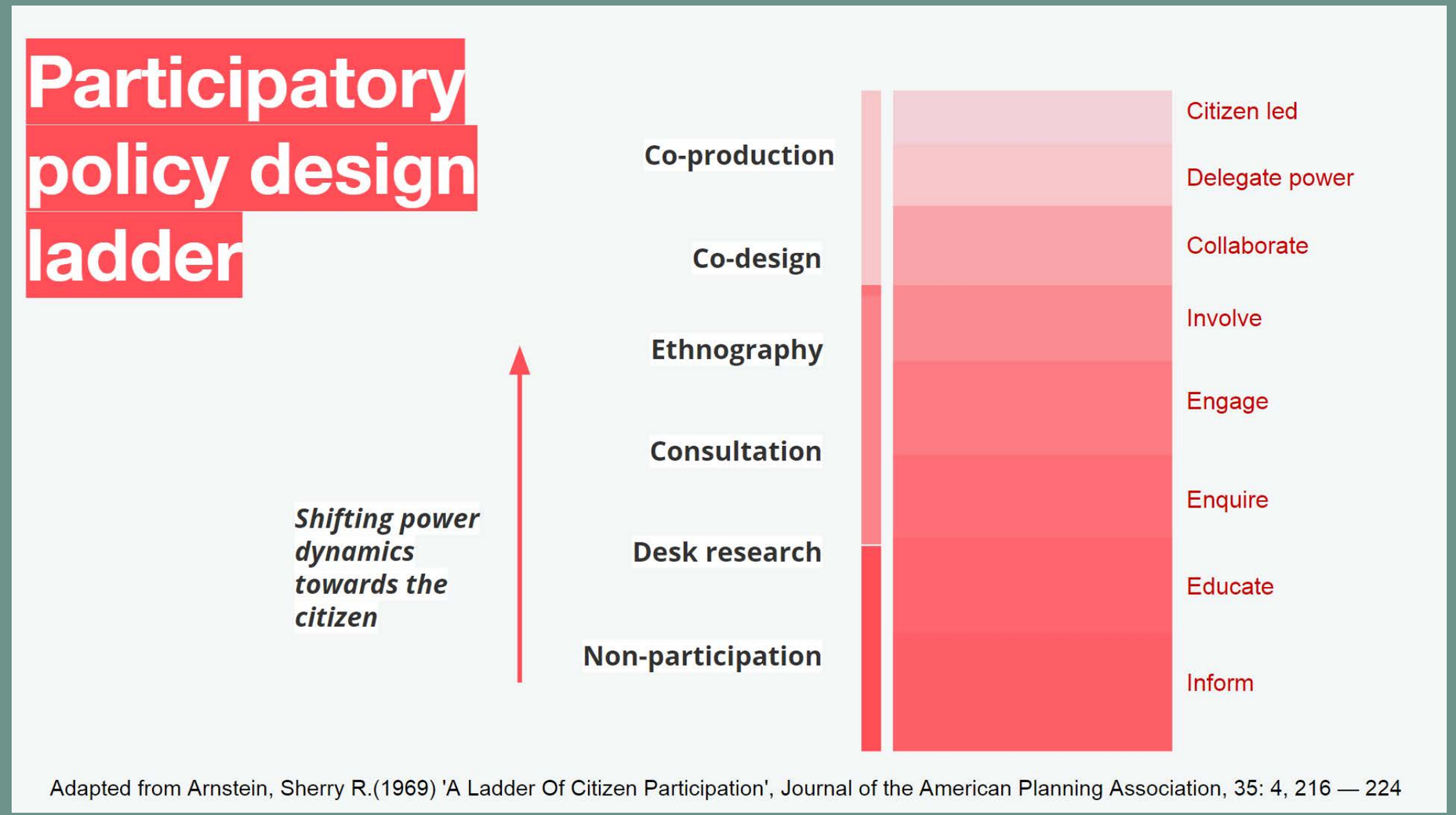
ebameeldiv

Gerassimovi klubihoone

Place based

Ethnography

Participatory policy design ladder



Adapted from Arnstein, Sherry R.(1969) 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation', Journal of the American Planning Association, 35: 4, 216 — 224

Digital Ethnography

The study of the explicit signs and traces of the human experiences embedded in digital media – left by a large number of people.

- People interacting with the city
- People interacting with each other

Cultural analytics

Studying the humanities with massive digitised visual materials and contemporary crowed-generated visual artefacts

Avoid reductive summarization typical of quantitive research.

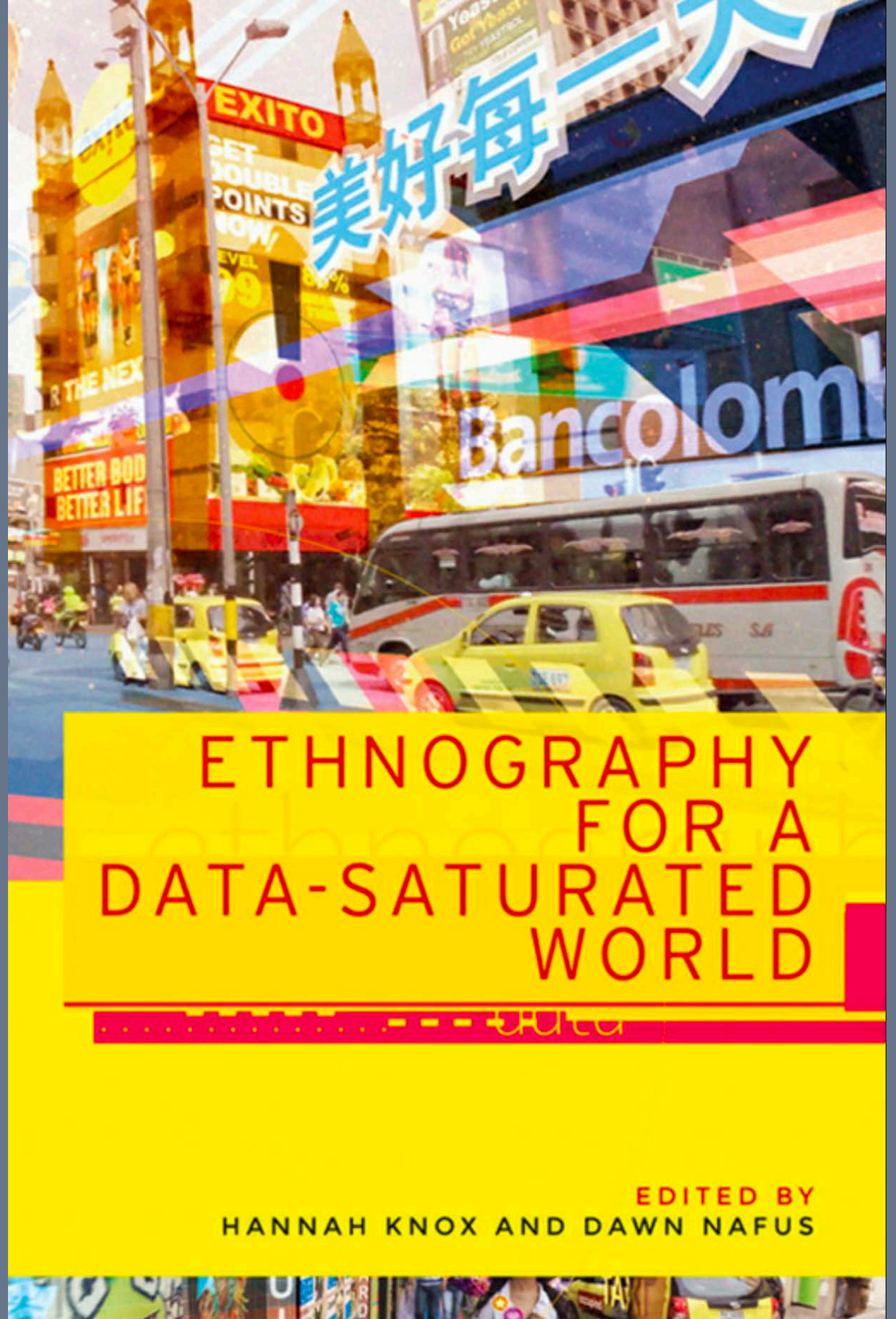
Why photography

- The map is (almost) the territory
- Every photo is always taken from the human perspective
- The “Social photo” is the only representation of cities that included the human perspective, both the visual and the emotional ones. [1]

1. Nathan Jurgenson, 2019.

Why photography

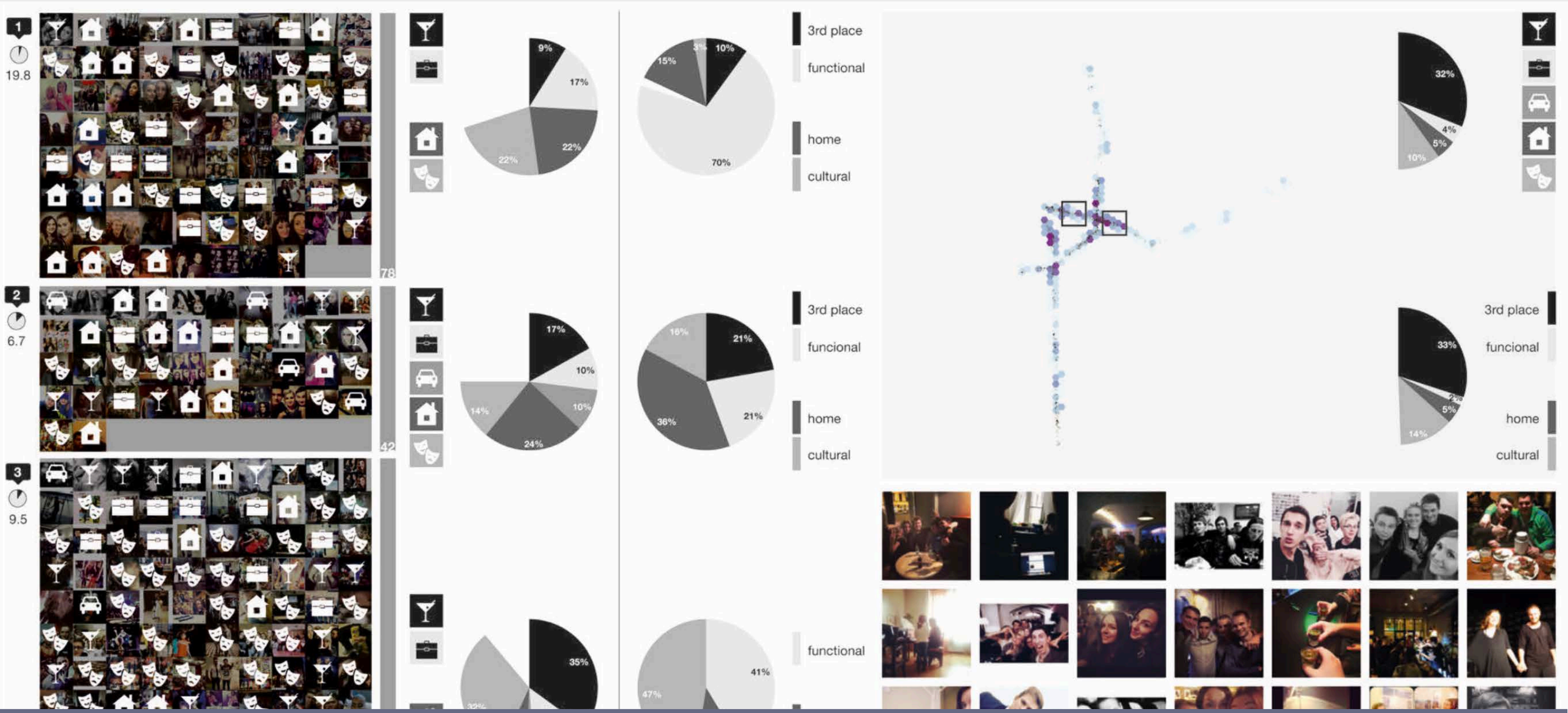
- In photos emerge interpersonal behaviour and political realities.
- Historically located and socially situated
- Using a large sample of socially shared images provide a (less biased) version of the collective experience in cities.



> big data without a big mind (and sometimes a big heart) can amplify errors. *Mulgan Geoff 2018.*

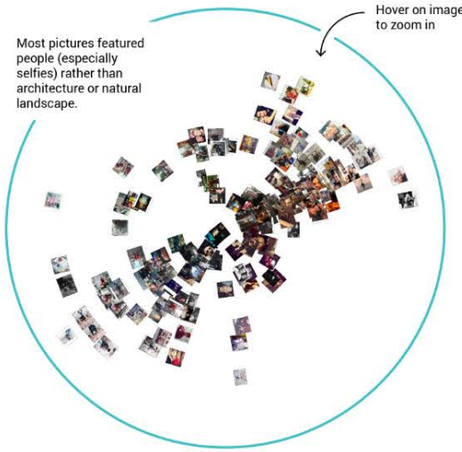
Activity partner in St. Petersburg

Mapping big data



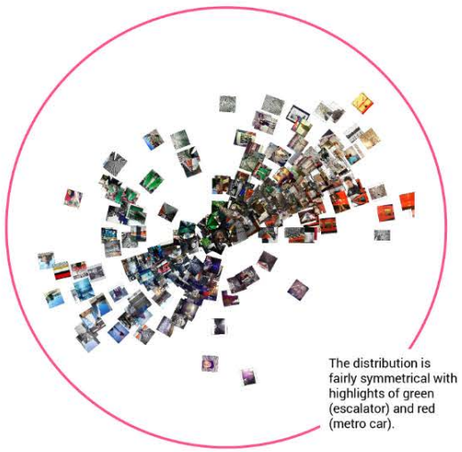
Activity patterns on central streets of St. Petersburg

Sampling thick data

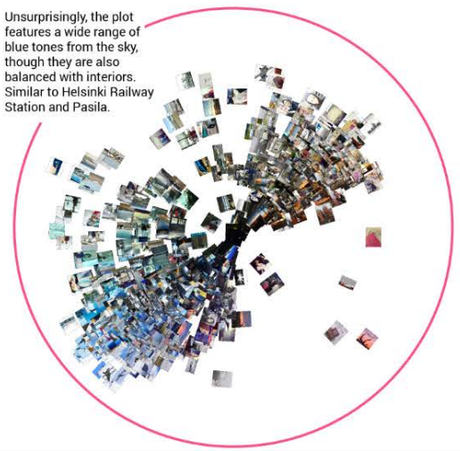


Most pictures featured people (especially selfies) rather than architecture or natural landscape.

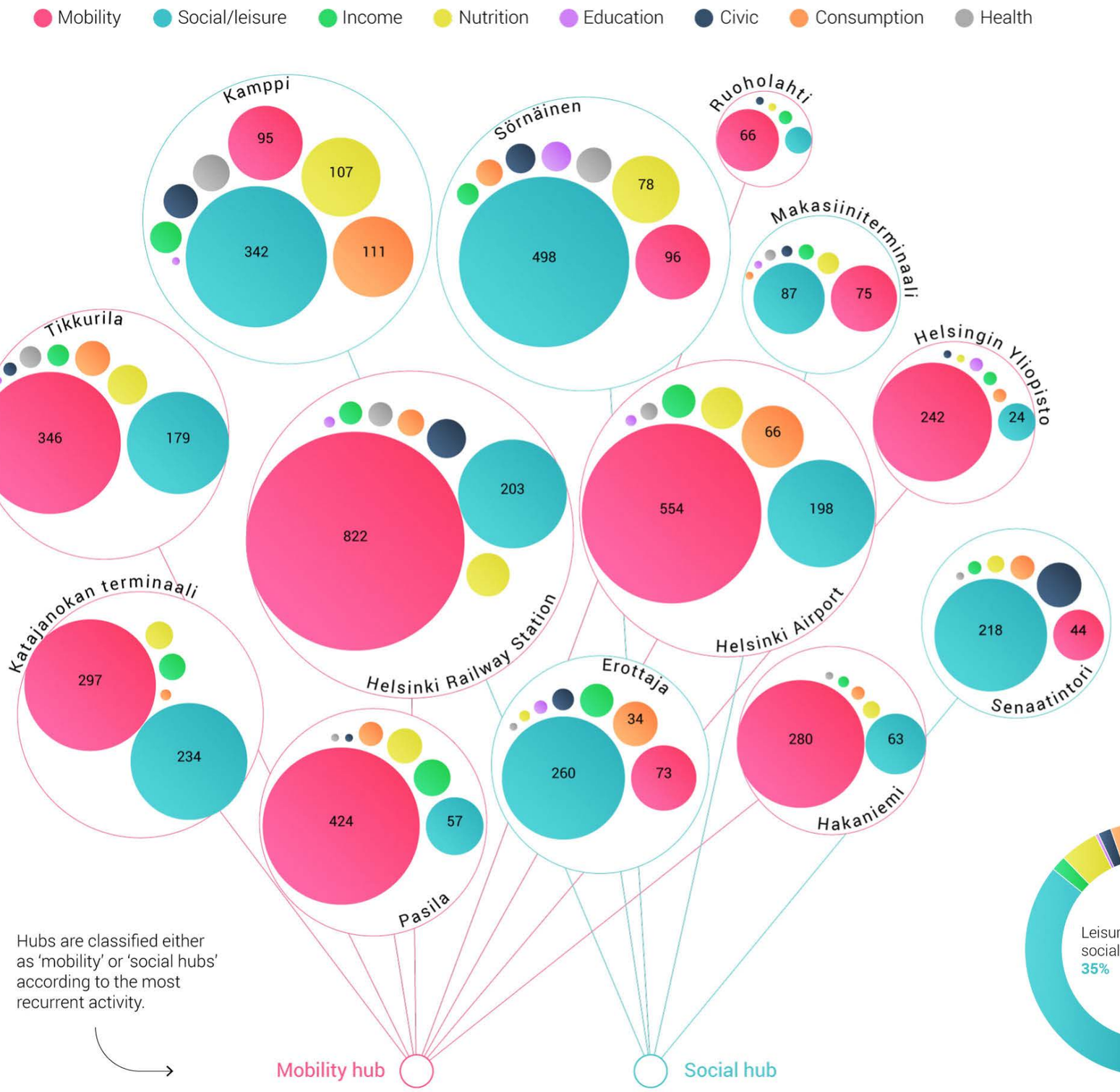
Hover on image to zoom in



The distribution is fairly symmetrical with highlights of green (escalator) and red (metro car).



Unsurprisingly, the plot features a wide range of blue tones from the sky, though they are also balanced with interiors. Similar to Helsinki Railway Station and Pasila.



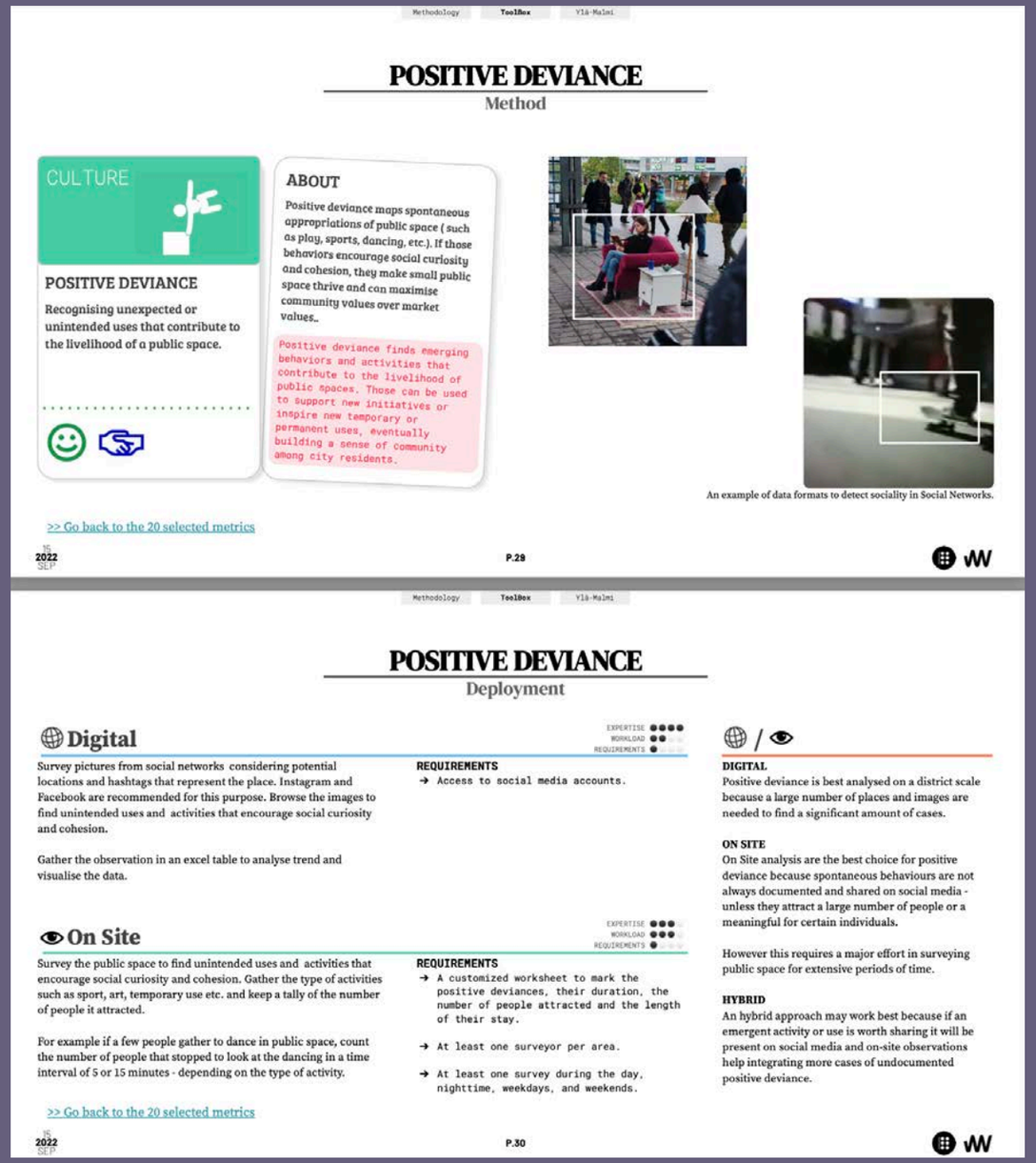
Relatively easy to perform

A manual for Helsinki civil servants [1]

Cultural analytics can be carried out relatively easily by non-specialists.

Often no special equipment or skills are needed

Quantitive cultural analytics can be performed with open source software



Methodology ToolBox Ylä-Malmi

POSITIVE DEVIANCE
Method

CULTURE

POSITIVE DEVIANCE

Recognising unexpected or unintended uses that contribute to the livelihood of a public space.

ABOUT

Positive deviance maps spontaneous appropriations of public space (such as play, sports, dancing, etc.). If those behaviors encourage social curiosity and cohesion, they make small public space thrive and can maximise community values over market values..

Positive deviance finds emerging behaviors and activities that contribute to the livelihood of public spaces. Those can be used to support new initiatives or inspire new temporary or permanent uses, eventually building a sense of community among city residents.

An example of data formats to detect sociality in Social Networks.

>> Go back to the 20 selected metrics

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Methodology ToolBox Ylä-Malmi

POSITIVE DEVIANCE
Deployment

Digital

EXPERTISE ●●●●
WORKLOAD ●●○○
REQUIREMENTS ●○○○

Survey pictures from social networks considering potential locations and hashtags that represent the place. Instagram and Facebook are recommended for this purpose. Browse the images to find unintended uses and activities that encourage social curiosity and cohesion.

Gather the observation in an excel table to analyse trend and visualise the data.

REQUIREMENTS
→ Access to social media accounts.

On Site

EXPERTISE ●●●○
WORKLOAD ●●●○
REQUIREMENTS ●○○○

Survey the public space to find unintended uses and activities that encourage social curiosity and cohesion. Gather the type of activities such as sport, art, temporary use etc. and keep a tally of the number of people it attracted.

For example if a few people gather to dance in public space, count the number of people that stopped to look at the dancing in a time interval of 5 or 15 minutes - depending on the type of activity.

REQUIREMENTS
→ A customized worksheet to mark the positive deviances, their duration, the number of people attracted and the length of their stay.

→ At least one surveyor per area.

→ At least one survey during the day, nighttime, weekdays, and weekends.

DIGITAL
Positive deviance is best analysed on a district scale because a large number of places and images are needed to find a significant amount of cases.

ON SITE
On Site analysis are the best choice for positive deviance because spontaneous behaviours are not always documented and shared on social media - unless they attract a large number of people or a meaningful for certain individuals.

However this requires a major effort in surveying public space for extensive periods of time.

HYBRID
An hybrid approach may work best because if an emergent activity or use is worth sharing it will be present on social media and on-site observations help integrating more cases of undocumented positive deviance.

>> Go back to the 20 selected metrics

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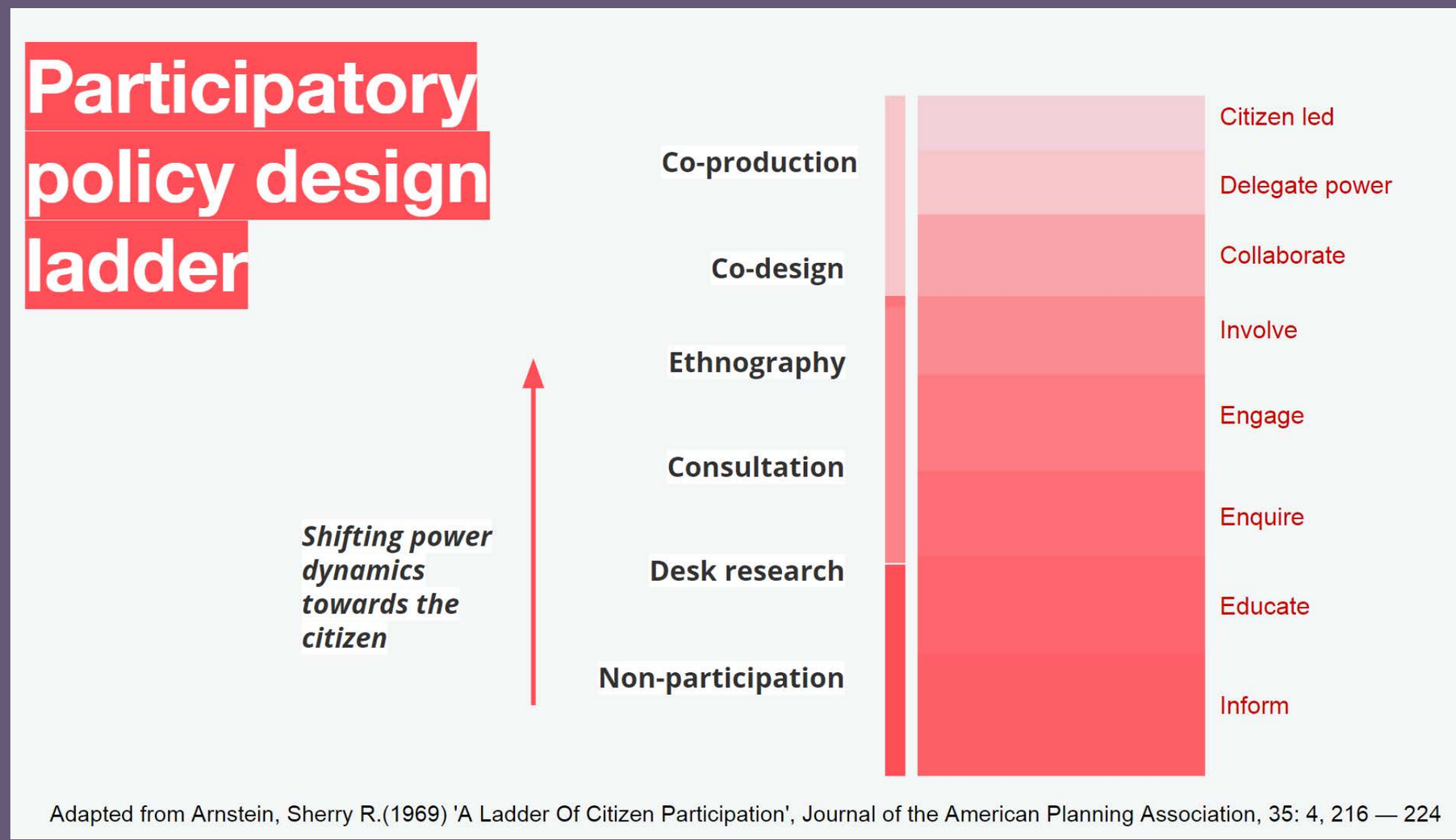
1. Metrics for Urban Space Experimentation, SPIN Unit + Miltton for Forum Virium Helsinki, 2023.

Codesign

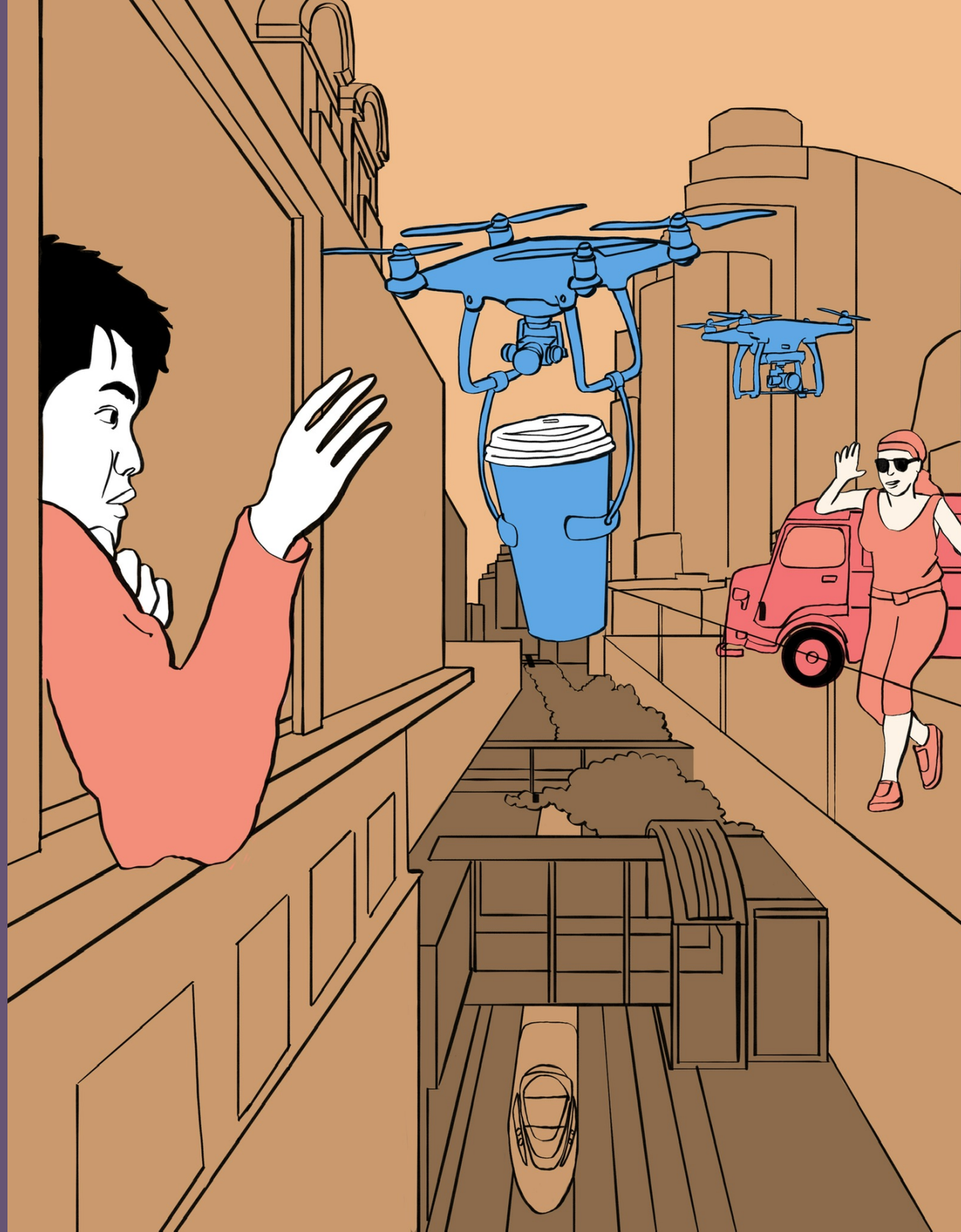
Participatory policy design ladder



Adapted from Arnstein, Sherry R.(1969) 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation', Journal of the American Planning Association, 35: 4, 216 — 224

Futurability

- Future is not contained or linearly connected to the present.
- A desired future state is possible to imagine when it's reimagined by collectivised institutions.
- Breach the creativity myth and find solution to unlock people's creativity.



Potere [1]

Energy, Idea, Collective Intelligence

Process of collectivised ideation and futurisation of the present

The energy produced by social imagination through the ideation and visualisation of desired future states.

Translates the complexity of unexpressed feelings to the coherence of ideas.

Potenza

Power, Instrument, Normative, Code

Process of realisation of collective intelligence

Power of transforming our living environment

Translating ideas from the possibility of the invisible to the concreteness of the social production of space

1. Bifo Berardi, 2017

Collective intelligence, conscious orchestration

Geoff Moulgan 2018

– Cities thrive when people form a collective intellgence of other people and machines (AI).

Meaningful participation happens on the scale of public meetings where everybody has a voice. [1]

1. John Friedmann's (1973) idea of "transactive planning"

Conflicting vocabularies

The power of participatory processes can be fully realised when participants are given a common, expressive language to mediate urban transformations.

unRelatable perspectives

Cites look the way the look based on the way we chose to represent them.

Outdated medium

Breaking the ritual

Democracy is reduced to automatic rituals led by normative structures.

Social imagination is perceived as an abstract concept rather than planning tool

Impossibility for nearly everyone to imagine a different future and the lack of power to realise those ideas.

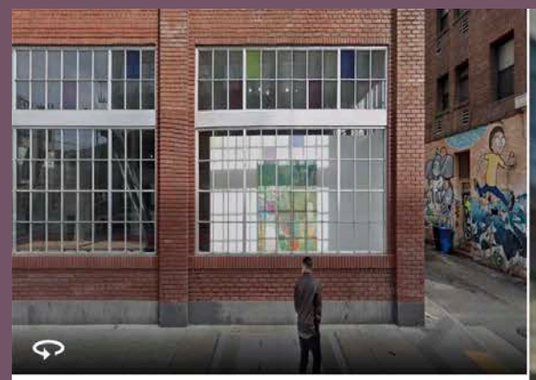
The power of participatory processes can be fully realised only when participants are given

An design instrument for collaborative urban design

A common, expressive language to reimagine their cities.

The human perspective as the planning unit/scale

Google Street view, 2007



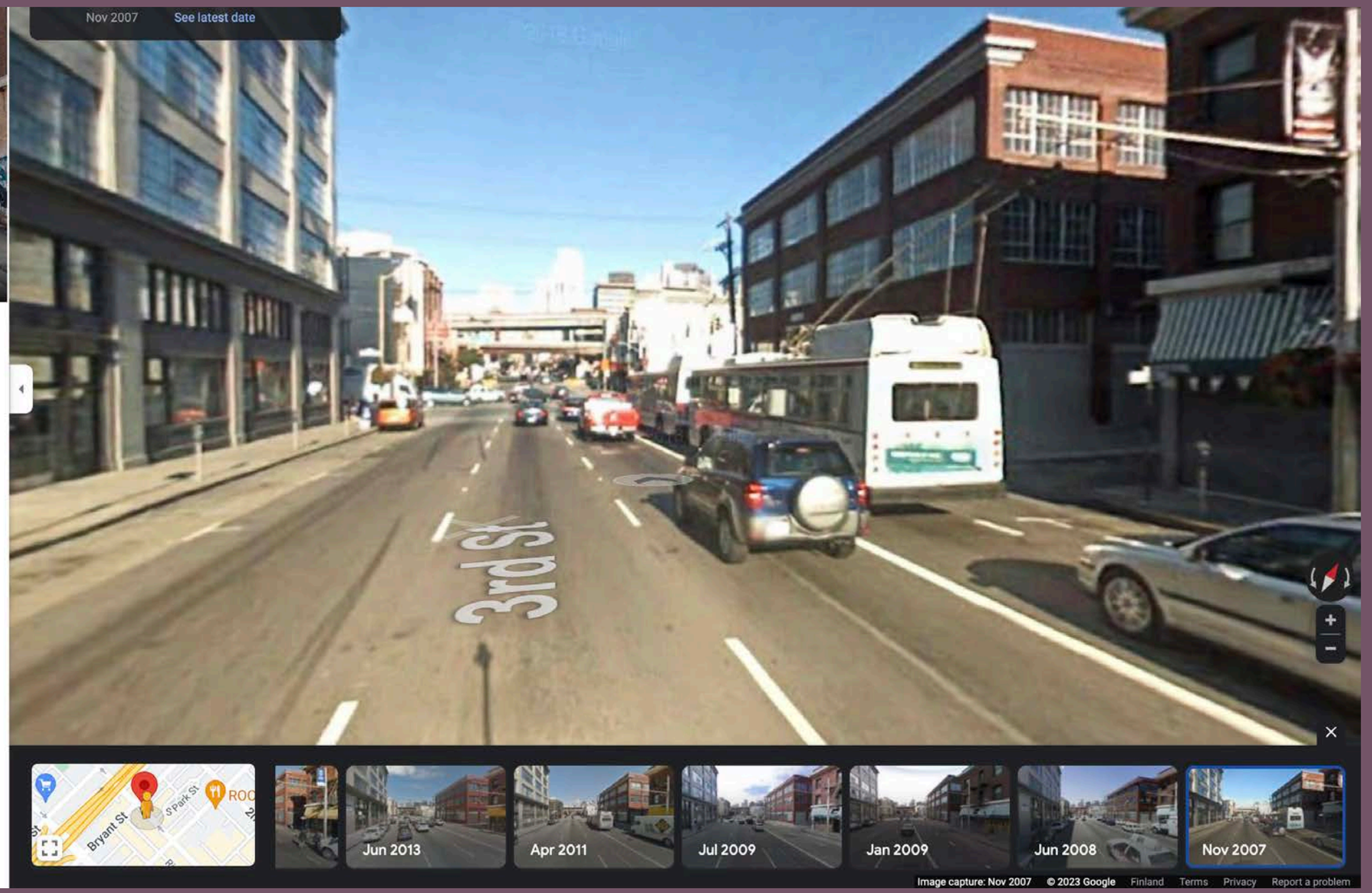
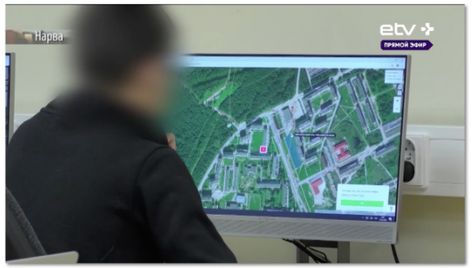


Image capture: Nov 2007 © 2023 Google Finland Terms Privacy Report a problem

Street view, the ~~new~~ substrate of urban design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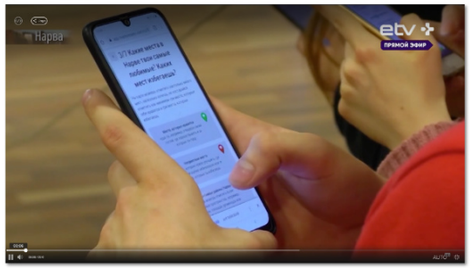
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ПРЯМОЙ ЭФИР

Noorte sõnumid

Generative AI

Human-machine cooperation.

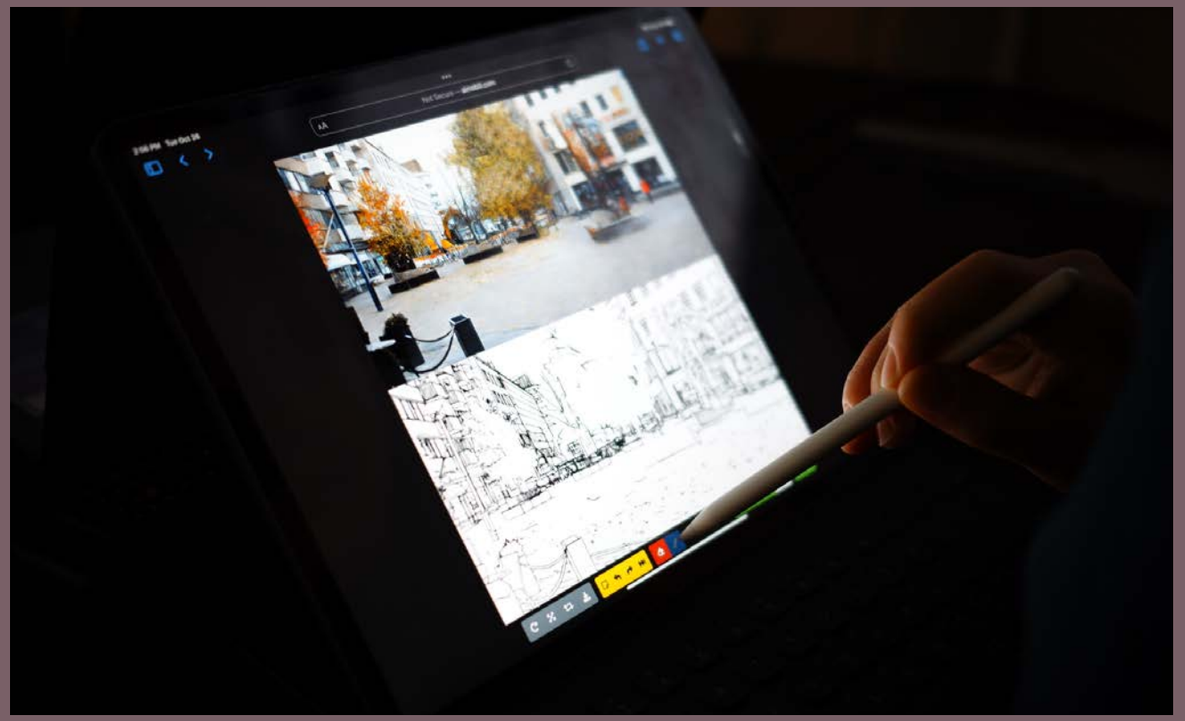
Anyone can re-program generative AI models and retrain them using their language or images.

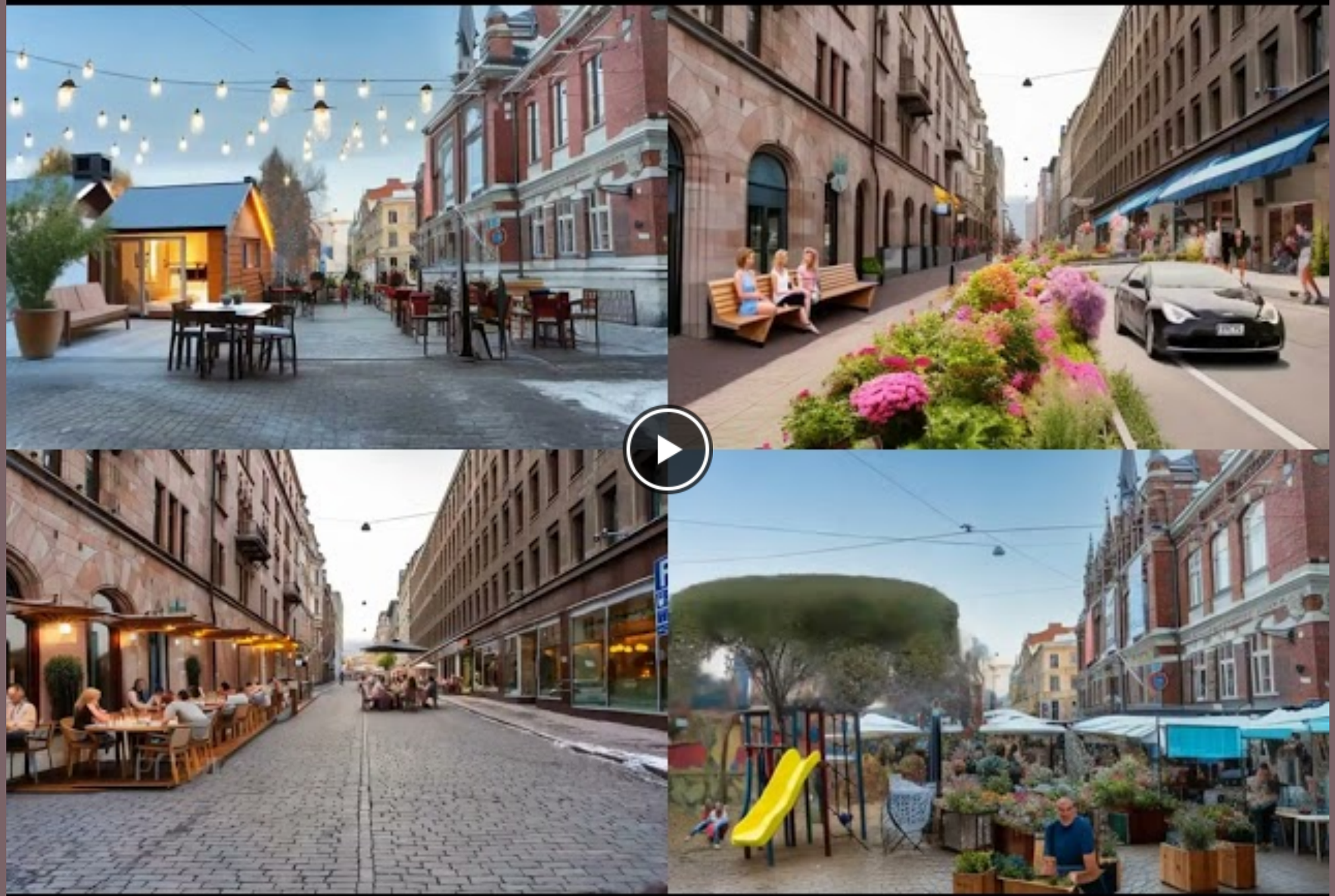
NATURAL: text-to-code / text-to-picture

VISUAL: picture-to-text / picture-to-picture

AUDIO: sound-to-text / sound-to-picture

UrbanistAI Vo





What else could your government
do with AI, if we put citizens' imagination first?

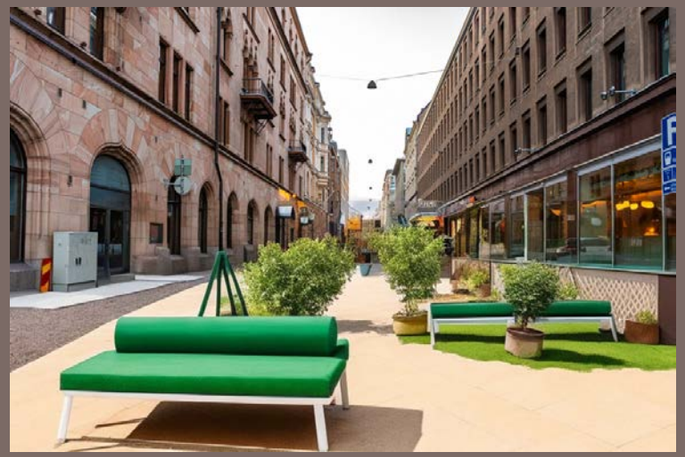
Thank you for sharing your ideas and
improving your city.

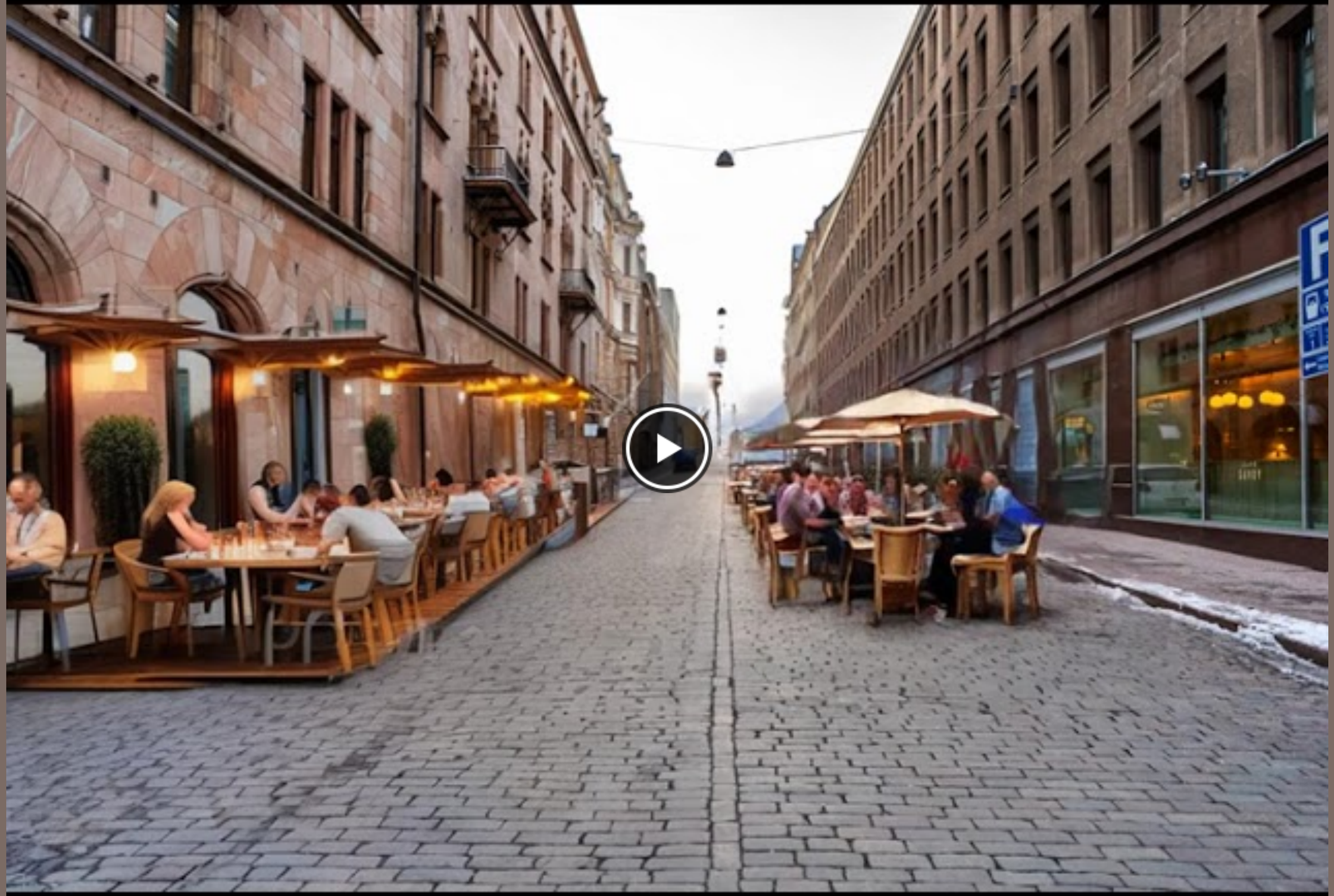
Design Again

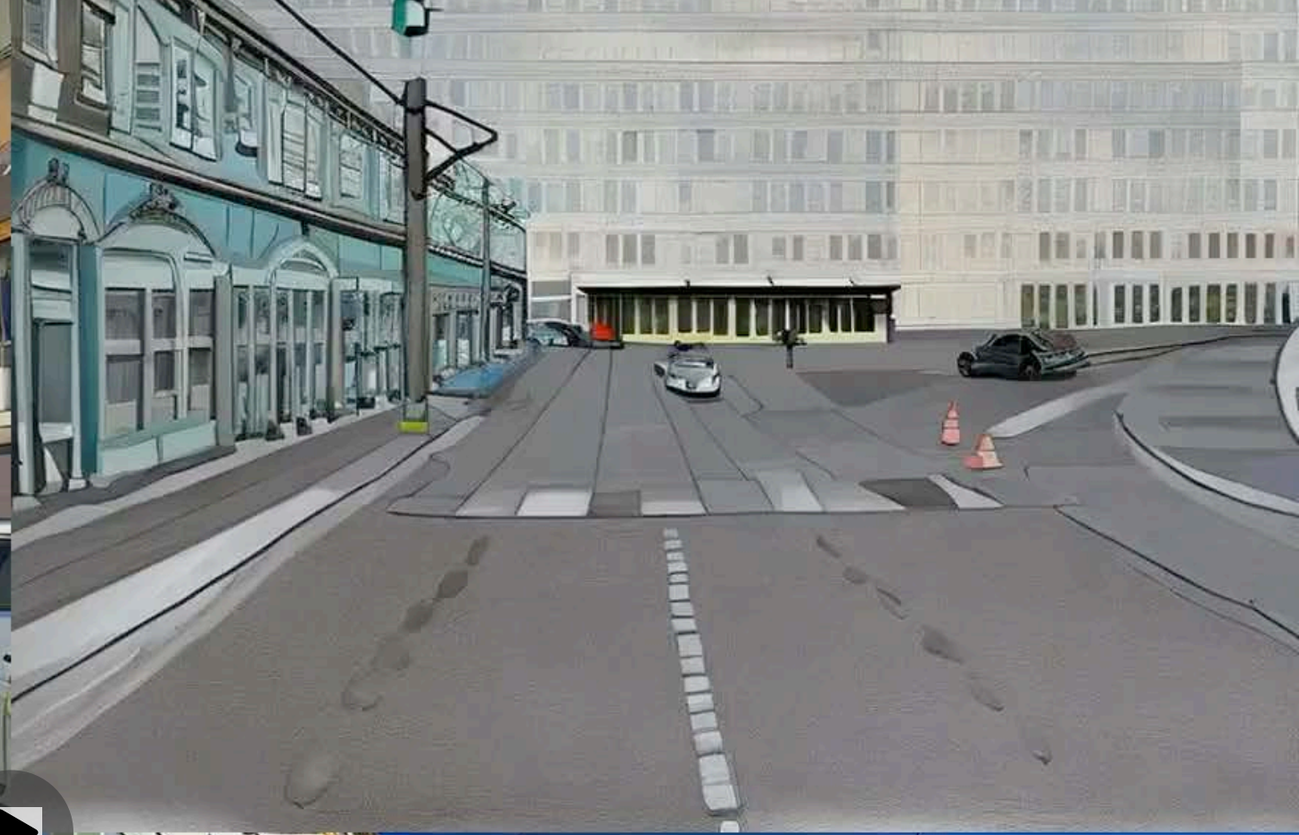
Tehtävä 3 – Designmuseon aukio
a) Imagine what the Designmuseo square would be like in the best case. What activities, what elements and furniture?
b) Facilitators categorize the post-its based on similarities.
c) Using Urbanist AI, experiment with what the place could be like, based on the discussion and post-it notes. Develop images together.
30 minuuttia

b) Fasilitaattori ryhmit
samankaltaisuuksiin
c) Kokeillaan Urbanist
paikka voisi olla, käy
post-it lappujen poh
kuvia yhdessä.
30 minuuttia
Yrjönkatu

Alustavia parannusehdotuksia







Continuous imagination