Design for Citizen-Generated Urban Interventions: Understanding the Relationship Between Formal and Informal Urban Design in Toronto

by

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ABSTRACT

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Citizens’ urban practices that intentionally alter a public setting challenge privatization of open spaces, as well as exclusion from design processes and public spaces of the city. Research on the spatial context of these practices, referred to as citizen-generated urban interventions, is limited. This project identifies spatial conditions that are associated with the emergence of citizen-generated urban interventions. From the literature, I developed a site assessment to evaluate the spatial conditions that are theoretically related to the occurrence of citizen-generated urban interventions. Using wandering as a method, I identified and evaluated sites of interventions found in publicly accessible areas throughout Toronto. After analyzing the data, I describe commonalities among the spatial conditions of the observed sites. Based on the results, I created a working typology of citizen-generated urban interventions and preliminary design recommendations for landscape architects.
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The nature of publicly-accessible spaces is trending toward the privatization of plazas and parks, and the subtle exclusion of certain people through both the design process and the spatial design itself (Finn, 2014). Many global cities like Toronto are being shaped and built by public-private partnerships; there has been a surge in privately-owned, highly-surveilled plazas, parks, streets, and squares. The true meaning of ‘public’ in the urban context has become blurred and nuanced. Higher levels of participation from the private sector in the creation of public space reduces diversity and can overlook the real users of a public place. These consequences are to the detriment of urban public life and result in less relevant design outcomes in the public realm.

Theorists suggest that public life is being eroded by the dominance of the private realm and the blurring of edges between private and public realms (Arendt, 2013; Banerjee, 2001). The existence of a true public realm and opportunities for citizens to inhabit their local environment are expressions of democracy. Harvey states that “the right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart's desire” (2003, p.939). This statement further reinforces the need for space that belongs wholly to the people and is shaped by the people.

In this context, citizen-generated urban design equates to citizens shaping their public spaces how they see fit. This must be distinguished from traditional community engagement or participation processes in urban development as they are limited with regard to inclusion of communities who are typically less visible or disempowered. This research is about citizens intervening in their public landscapes in much more direct ways, with or without authorization, to shape these landscapes according to their desires. In this process, citizens are circumventing the traditional design process for more immediate and responsive results. These types of actions
extend the design process beyond the stage of formal design. They allow design to continue in new democratic modes over a longer period of time. In the moment of appropriation, these urban spaces become the sites of political life where citizens shape the space in direct ways that short-circuit the traditional design process and reclaim publicness.

Citizen-generated urban interventions are central to this research. They are defined as citizens’ urban practices that intentionally alter, adjust, make marks, or aesthetically transform a publicly accessible setting. They are framed as a form of ludic, spontaneously playful practice, and as such are not instrumental and do not fulfil a basic need. They are separate from everyday life and often are illegal or unauthorized. These practices are also in contrast to the officially intended function of the publicly accessible spaces in which they are created. They are carried out by the users of these spaces and are left to be found by the future users.

The alterations or traces left by citizen urban interventions are not left by chance or as a by-product of another activity. For example, marks left by a skateboard on a concrete bench edge were not intentionally placed there by the citizen, but are simply a result of the act of skateboarding, and so would not be considered for this research. Citizen urban interventions must involve some level of design decision making and careful placement.

Interventions on private land that were commissioned by private property owners are also not considered citizen urban interventions because they were not created by a citizen in what they perceive to be a public space. Similarly, if a project is commissioned by the city, or occurs as part of a city-led project, it will not be considered as a citizen urban intervention. Ultimately in both these scenarios the power to create these interventions lay in the hands of either a private property owner or the city government and not in those of the citizen who makes use of these publicly accessible spaces.
In summary, citizen-generated urban interventions:

- Leave intentional marks or make intentional alterations to publicly accessible spaces
- Involve some design considerations, such as siting, placement, orientation, or scale
- Are non-instrumental
- Challenge the intended function of a space or element
- Are carried out by the users of the spaces in which they are created
- Are expressions of the agency of everyday citizens in publicly accessible spaces
- Alter the public space for future visitors
- Are located in publicly accessible spaces

Citizen urban interventions are not:

- Created by chance, or as a by-product of a separate activity
- Sited in places that would be perceived as entirely private
- Located indoors
- Momentary or performance-based
- Used for economic gain

Habraken (2008, p. 290) highlights that there is a “desire among architects to recognize the spontaneous variety of user preferences and the unpredictability of future use.” There remains the question of how a professional designer of the urban public realm can empower the user of a space through design to create citizen-generated urban interventions. To begin answering this question there must be an understanding of the sites of these interventions. Designers and landscape architects create the spatial conditions, as opposed to social conditions, that exist in
these spaces. These spatial conditions may be anything, from site elements or material choices to sensations of enclosure and other less tangible qualities. An understanding of these conditions will inform how a designer can incorporate elements or characteristics into their designs that would allow for or even encourage citizens to make alterations and thereby take ownership of their urban spaces. The ideal outcome would be that the designer’s product is a design process.

Research Question and Objectives

This research aims to answer: What are the spatial conditions in urban publicly-accessible space that are associated with the occurrence of citizen-generated urban interventions? In order to answer the research question the following objectives were established:

Objective 1: Create a system of assessment for the spatial conditions of sites of citizen-generated urban interventions based on the literature.

Objective 2: Find and observe citizen-generated urban interventions in the City of Toronto and apply the assessment created in Objective 1.

Objective 3: Determine the spatial conditions that are associated with the occurrence of citizen-generated urban interventions.

Objective 4: Create a working typology of citizen-generated urban interventions and make general design recommendations based on the results of the research.

Thesis Organization

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature on public space and citizen-generated urban interventions. Chapter 3 describes the research methods for creating the system of site assessment, the discovery of sites in Toronto for assessment, and
the analysis of the found sites. Chapter 4 presents the results of the site assessments and the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 discusses findings in the context of the literature, and provides a reflection on the research approach and future research. Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation with general design recommendations and the implications of the research for landscape architecture.
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The context of global cities in the 21st century

The rapid rate of socioeconomic and political change in world cities demands a deeper understanding of how these large-scale shifts manifest on the ground at the local level. The forces acting on the global network of cities - discussed under labels such as “globalisation” and “neoliberalism” - operate on a massive scale and yet have a substantial impact on the everyday life of urban inhabitants. Cities continue to look for new ways to compete for economic resources to perpetuate the growth on which they depend (Madanipour, 2005). As a result, in stark contrast to the Keynesian managerial city, resources are reallocated, and development is re-regulated creating a new and distinctive mode of urban growth favouring private interests (Silver, Scott, & Kazepov, 2010). On the ground, the changing conditions of public spaces throughout cities reveals the results of this form of development.

Established cities with developed economies, particularly in Europe and North America, are now focussed on consumerism, tourism, advanced producer services, cultural and knowledge-based industries, and other mobile resources (Harvey, 2008; Macomber, 2016; Madanipour, 2005; Silver et al., 2010). This focus is due in part to increasing economic deregulation and reduced financial support for local governments. Therefore, in the global economy, there is intensified competition for attracting corporate investments, large firms, as well as tourist dollars (Madanipour, 2005; Silver et al., 2010). In Toronto under Mayor Lastman, the Official Plan was revised to include goals that explicitly aim for the development of a globally competitive entrepreneurial city (Keil, 2002). The undertakings of the Toronto Economic Development Office at the time included Toronto Competes (also known as An
Assessment of Toronto’s Global Competitiveness), Olympic Bid proposals, and the Toronto Waterfront which continues to change and shape the public spaces of the city (Keil, 2002). Through strategies such as these, as well as through the development of public spaces, monuments and attractions, cities work to make themselves competitive in the global economy. As a result, there is a renewed interest and changed motivation for the design and redesign of public spaces due to their potential to attract international attention (Madanipour, 2005).

The interest and investment in public space are motivated by economic development and is therefore not evenly distributed throughout urban areas. Some public spaces are better investments than others. These spaces become ‘showcases’ while others are leftover, marginal, or peripheral (Madanipour, 2005). The city on display then “consists of airports, top level business districts, top of the line hotels and restaurants, in brief, a sort of urban glamour zone” (Sassen, 2000, p.152). The uneven distribution of urban improvements may involve the destruction of places that are less valuable to those who hold the power to shape the city, but which may have had meaning and importance to disenfranchised or marginal populations (Harvey, 2008). This form of accumulation by dispossession usually accentuates discrepancies in socio-economic class and political power (Harvey, 2008). Additionally, public funds furthering private interests means that public spaces that serve disempowered communities fall to the bottom of the priority list for cities.

Another aspect of the changing conditions of city development is that the public sector has lost much of its potential to generate significant economic growth. As a result, the job has fallen more and more to the private sector, which allows for increased and faster development (Madanipour, 2005). Citizens are treated as consumers of privately-funded services, including public spaces (Keil, 2002). The provision of these spaces is one of many public services that
today are being weakened or taken over by the private sector (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). This privatisation of public services and spaces has occurred in significant ways in Toronto (Keil, 2002). Ontario has reduced the ability of local governments to raise funds for the creation of public places for the citizens of fast-growing cities like Toronto (Keil, 2002). Consequently, public-private partnerships have increasingly become the means for public spaces to be created (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993).

There are certain mutual benefits for city governments that work with corporate interests in the provision of public space. Cities can benefit greatly from development fees and eliminate the economic drain of constructing and maintaining city-owned spaces by giving financial incentives to private developers for the provision of public space alongside their income-generating projects (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). This tactic of public-private partnership allows city governments to transfer responsibility for the public realm to private interests while decreasing spending (Silver et al., 2010). The changing motivations for the design of public areas and this new mode of producing public spaces affect the lives of urban inhabitants in their ability to access public areas of the city and act within them freely. Within the context of global trends, it is clear that there has been a shift in power at the local level when it comes to who is shaping the city and who benefits from it.

Who is shaping cities?

Private interests are gradually having more of a hand in shaping the cities in which the majority of the world’s population live (Harvey, 2008). It is the political and economic elite who hold the power of most decision making when it comes to large public works or developments in many urban areas (Harvey, 2008). This power dynamic impacts the morphology of the city as well as the fine-grain character of the small spaces of everyday life in urban areas. Harvey
(2008) describes “cities of fortified fragments, of gated communities and privatized public spaces kept under constant surveillance” (p. 31); this is the description of the city born of private interests with economic motivation and concern for maintaining the social status quo. There has also been a loss of regional architecture. The replacement is a contemporary architecture that denies the differences between cities or any cultural uniqueness, and so imposes a sort of placeless architectural syntax (Calder, 2010). It results in design without specificity but this, in turn, causes problems of non-recognition of entire populations, especially underrepresented and marginalised communities who do not have a voice. Large-scale planning by city governments who are accountable to all their citizens can lead to a cohesive design, a strong city identity, and a legible urban landscape. However, this is less and less the reality in cities like Toronto where planners have not had great control over investment and entrepreneurial planning since the 1990s (Kipfer & Keil, 2002).

The waterfront redevelopment initiated in the early 2000s illustrates an example of the development process in Toronto. This process, involving numerous stakeholders, was led by city planners, but also developers, architects, business lobbies, the province, and the federal government (Kipfer & Keil, 2002). The many other stakeholders, especially those with economic dominance, dilute the influence of the city planner in a project like this one whose aim is to bring revenue to the city. The focus on economic motivations leaves large scale projects open to influence by the financially powerful stakeholders, many of whom are not necessarily local and who will not necessarily inhabit the spaces they have a hand in shaping. Additionally, in Toronto, where the amalgamation of seven municipalities took place in 1998, urban politics gained a much larger suburban influence (Keil, 2002; Kipfer & Keil, 2002). This example speaks to the risk of having many voices in the process of shaping the spaces that may not be used by
the people who speak loudest. Because of this risk, there are public participation and consultation processes for projects that impact communities or their public spaces.

These public participation processes are works in progress and have been changing, but they are still flawed. In these processes, citizens are asked to make judgements on projects, and to hold their governments accountable (Silver et al., 2010). However, these public participation processes also seek a consensus as a final result (Silver et al., 2010). This inevitably means that someone’s voice is discounted since consensus involves the decision not to include the least popular or persuasive opinions (Silver et al., 2010). It is important to recognise that the pattern of who tends to be heard or not heard during participation is not random. As in other areas of life, those with more education and who can express themselves in an organised and articulate way tend to be heard the loudest (Silver et al., 2010). Types of communication influence the perceived importance of the message a community member shares. Typically, women, minorities, and those who belong to a lower socio-economic class communicate in an alternative voice which is devalued in the context of the participation process (Silver et al., 2010). This plays into a class-bias that is at play in many of these citizen participation scenarios (Silver et al., 2010).

Furthermore, there are specific groups of citizens who tend to show up in citizen participation processes. There is a factor of intimidation for citizens who are illiterate or who may not speak English (Silver et al., 2010). The citizens who are likely to attend are usually from the educated middle class. Groups that are less likely to attend are the poor, the elderly, women, and youth (Silver et al., 2010). It is also recognised that citizens who are already engaged or involved in local politics have more power and presence in the citizen participation process than
do members of less active disempowered communities (Silver et al., 2010). These trends are a challenge currently without a satisfactory solution. There are civil society associations who may attend and represent some of these disempowered groups however they have no official responsibility to those groups, may not belong to or identify with the group, and have less of a vested interest than the individuals they represent (Silver et al., 2010). There is concern that in the least successful instances, public participation may simply be a token gesture and have a pacifying effect on communities that stand to lose more in the process (Silver et al., 2010). On occasion, citizen participation can fuel decisions that reinforce the status quo and enable stakeholders to carry out designs that benefit them financially above all (Silver et al., 2010).

There is a growing number of voices joining the discussion on how we should be building our cities. The actors who are most often heard also seem to be those who are more financially powerful (Silver et al., 2010). This combined with the economic motivation for the creation of public space, and the increasing influence of private interests means that many of the people who need and use their public spaces have little to no power to shape them according to their needs and desires. They become passive recipients of design from the top despite the best intentions of using a public participation process. In this reality, power reproduces power, and money generates more money, leaving little room for the many Canadians who belong to marginalised or disempowered groups to have an influence on their environment.

Qualities of public space in the context of the 21st-century city

The 21st-century city’s new modes of development and urban growth, described in the previous section, shift power and threaten democracy in public space (Springer, 2011). The public realm is the setting of political action and discourse. It is also the place of interaction
between society and government. Public space is the physical setting of the public realm, and it is crucial to democracy that political life have that physical space in which to appear. It has become more important to examine power dynamics and ideas of democracy in the design process of public space and within the existing spaces. In the design process, we see spaces being shaped with increasing influence from private interests. These are spaces that are meant to serve the people, many of whom are the disempowered who do not participate in the design process and do not have the means to fight their exclusion. Historically, it is groups like women, ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ2 community, the homeless, the differently abled, the elderly, and the very young who have been vulnerable and excluded in the public realm (Springer, 2011). There are clear problems in the initial design and the evolution of public space that challenge the idea that the process might be democratic and that the resulting spaces might be spaces of democracy. Professor of Geography Simon Springer (2011) argues that “contemporary ‘democracies’ are often anti-political” (p.526). Madanipour (2005), scholar in architecture, planning, and urban design identifies that contemporary public space’s “political role (is) limited to the periods of crisis” (p.16), raising the concern that spaces might be produced today in an undemocratic and uncontested way to be passively consumed by the public. The economic climate and the social conditions within which development occurs risk reducing these spaces to leisure grounds (Madanipour, 2005).

Commodification

There are two trends at work simultaneously: first, shifting economic bases of many cities, now focused on consumerism, knowledge-based industries, and tourism; second, public space has the potential to help attract tourists and international attention from large firms (Harvey, 2008; Madanipour, 2005). Together, these create conditions for public spaces to be
treated as products marketed on a global scale (Madanipour, 2005). Furthermore, as a result, Harvey (2008) argues that generally “quality of urban life has become a commodity for those with money” (p.30). Sassen (2006) presents the outcome of this commercialization of public space as a crisis. The public sector now facilitates this type of development in lieu of producing public spaces, which further compounds the risks of this crisis.

**Spectacle and leisure**

The idea of passive consumption of public space relates to Debord’s (2012) notion of the spectacle. The private sector’s investment in public space results in design for the elite and the commodification of public space (Keil, 2002). Public spaces can contribute to the pacification of the population by stimulating the senses while being devoid of social and political function (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). As depoliticized spaces, they serve to appease the public in many ways, for example, by being associated with retail spaces; shopping malls, urban squares surrounded by billboards, and retail plazas are good examples (Harvey, 2008). When these public spaces become important nodes in the networks that make up the city, they become an accumulation of spaces of consumption offering little opportunity for discourse (Stevens, 2007). The narrowing of functions enhances the pacifying effect of many contemporary public spaces. Many spaces have become exclusively the setting for leisure activities. Even in many European urban public spaces, which are much older and have great historical significance, leisure is the principle function today (Madanipour, 2005). Public spaces see less and less diversity in their functions and contribute to the spectacle, which thereby erodes their social and political functions even further (Madanipour, 2005).
Privatisation

As described in the previous section, important urban public spaces are being built with private funds in many North American cities (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). More and more publicly accessible open spaces in urban areas are created in association with offices or retail spaces, some being built on privately-owned land; these are equally forms of privatisation (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). As more spaces become privatised, it becomes crucial to focus on the public and be aware of the ways in which this trend fragments the city, limiting marginalized demographics’ mobility (Madanipour, 2005; Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). This private quality of many recently-built public spaces threatens public life (Madanipour, 2005).

Exclusion, surveillance, and policing

The privatisation of public space goes hand in hand with increasing control over the uses and users of these spaces (Madanipour, 2005). Maintenance costs, liability, marketability, and safety are all reasons for limiting access and use of these publicly accessible spaces (Madanipour, 2005). These spaces are often associated with private buildings, such as corporate headquarters, offices, or retail space, and so they cater to the types of people who work in or consume the private services in those buildings (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). For this reason, security has become a greater concern for public spaces, especially since 2001, since businesses’ success depends on attracting the right kind of clientele and giving them a comfortable experience without any conflict or contention (Sassen, 2006; Springer, 2011). In this scenario, the poor and many minorities are feared and seen as undesirable (Madanipour, 2005). Through surveillance, policing, and carefully considered design elements the marginalised are excluded and access is limited (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993; Springer, 2011). It also contributes to social fragmentation, as excluded populations are forced into liminal and marginalised spaces as their
only means of appearing in public and expressing themselves in the public realm (Madanipour, 2005).

Examples of how design is used to exclude are outlined by Loukaitou-Sideris (1993) in her analysis of three public spaces in Los Angeles. She notes common qualities of these urban plazas. They are all inward oriented with a strong sense of enclosure. There is marked contrast between the inside and the urban fabric outside. She notes common elements of blank facades, excessive setbacks from the street, and changes of grade at the points of access. These spaces were disconnected, rigid, and orderly in their design (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). These are powerful ways to create what Loukaitou-Sideris (1993) calls “soft control” (p.155) through design. Soft control is created in the design through spatial qualities such as screening and enclosure, or through lack of elements that could attract undesirable visitors (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). In contrast ‘hard control’ is expressed in more concrete ways through the hiring of security, prohibition of certain activities, programming or scheduling uses, or through leasing the space (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). The result of this exclusion and tightening up of public spaces is a fragmented urban fabric (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993). A very valuable example of exclusion in the design process is the redevelopment of Toronto Community Housing Corporation’s Don Mount Court in Toronto. The mixed income public-housing redevelopment included a mix of subsidised housing and condos aimed at the middle class as market residents. The design process was complex and there were struggles accommodating all stakeholders and residents (August, 2014). Some of the only open outdoor space in the community are the alleyways with garages behind the houses. The market residents of Don Mount Court were strongly opposed to allowing for gathering space in the alleys for fear of criminal activity occurring. They also opposed the construction of a small community garden on the site, and the hosting of a barbeque in the alley.
(August, 2014). The community garden was never constructed and many market residents insisted on the design being explicitly unwelcoming, with ideas like planting thorny shrubs  
(August, 2014). The resulting design discourages people from occupying the public spaces of the community with the implied intent of market residents not having to see their neighbors (August, 2014). The public spaces of Don Mount Court are replete with example of soft controls and also hard control. Signs reading ‘no trespassing’ and ‘no loitering’ were installed and used as a reason to report any people who were found staying in public spaces in stead of just passing through (August, 2014). The presence of policing is significant in the community. Described are only a few examples of many from Don Mount Court, and many similar cases exist throughout the city.

Where is the ‘public’ in public space?

With the qualities of contemporary public space being different from those of traditional public spaces, the question of what makes them public becomes central. The boundary between private and public is blurred, and so definitions of public space have become flexible, diverse, and fluid (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). The publicness of spaces now lies on a spectrum. Assuming that multiple and diverse publics inhabit urban open spaces, then spaces that are open to a greater number of publics are themselves more public (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). Because urban open space is never static, (but changes with use, weather, and time), being open to multiple publics allows spaces to be influenced by diverse users who are sometimes in dissonance (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). This openness to multiple publics allows for the meeting of different cultures and subcultures and remains open to varied activities coming together (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). While the more-public spaces will invite this type of engagement, display, and discovery, the less-public spaces restrict uses and discourage diversity of function (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). If a space is controlled in such a way that an individual or group can enforce exclusion of certain
people or certain activities then the space loses its publicness (Springer, 2011). Meanwhile, any contestation of exclusion, intended functions, or expected users opens a space up to publicness once more (Springer, 2011). Richard Sennett wrote about the potential of urban public space to include a socially heterogeneous public in unpredictable democratic encounters (Middleton, 2011). When a diversity of voices is heard in a public space, there is a conversation where contestation, tension, learning, and challenging are allowed to take place. Those common spaces, in turn, become stages of display for the social, public, and political life of the city (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010).

If publicness is essential to the urban realm, then it is important to understand what makes a space public. Varna and Tiesdell (2010) established five meta dimensions of publicness. Those are ownership, control, civility, physical configuration, and animation (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). Ownership as a legal status is simply about whether the land is publicly or privately owned. Control relates to the presence of what Loukaitou-Sideris (1993) calls hard controls – such as surveillance, security, or policing. More-public spaces have less explicit controls. Civility is related to management of spaces. Varna and Tiesdell (2010) assert that under-managed or over-managed spaces are equally bad for publicness. Incivility is also a factor to be considered since it can either tighten or open a space by challenging norms. Physical configuration is, of course, a design issue and is related to Loukaitou-Sideris’ concept of controls (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993; Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). Characteristics such as accessibility, visual and physical access, connectivity, and centrality are all ways in which publicness is either established or threatened though soft control (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). Finally, animation is also in the realm of design as it relates to the meeting of human needs in the space through design elements (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). In summary, the ideal common ground of public space...
incorporates universal access on a neutral territory that allows for multiple publics to coexist in
tolerance, at a minimum, and potentially to foster community, mutual understanding, and
discourse (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010).

In comparing the contemporary notions of ‘public’ with the qualities of contemporary
urban public space, it is clear that publicness is eroding. Threatened publicness damages
connections throughout urban areas and fragments the city. The right to the city is the right to
centrality and centrality is dissolved by fragmentation, privatisation, and barriers to access
(Lefebvre, Kofman, & Lebas, 1996).

The right to the city

Lefebvre’s concept of the right to the city goes beyond the right to visit or live in the city.
It incorporates greater ideals about a change in urban society, access to centrality, and the right to
participate (Lefebvre et al., 1996). Lefebvre et al. (1996) clarify that it is not the right “to the
ancient city, but to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange…”
(p.179). Furthermore implicit within the right to the city is the right to the oeuvre and
appropriation (Lefebvre et al., 1996). The city as oeuvre expresses the multiplicity of the city as
a totality, or as the creative product of the sum of social relations, cultural practices, and spatial
form, all of which encompasses difference (Lefebvre et al., 1996). With this perspective, it can
be understood that the city is partly produced through spatial practices - i.e., the interactions of
citizens within spaces that have tangible social or physical consequences (Harvey, 2008; Stevens,
2007). Harvey (2008) expresses the right to the city as more than the right to simply appear in
the urban realm or gain access to urban life. He explains that it is a collective right “to change
ourselves by changing the city more after our heart’s desire” (Harvey, 2008, p. 23). He is
describing the ability to shape the city and its spaces and to have a say in the urbanisation process. Therefore, the right to the city in the current context belongs mostly to private interests, large companies, developers, and city governments. However, as Harvey (2008) points out, the right to the city must be a collective right. When the powers in urban development are in control of factors affecting citizens’ right to the city, the marginalised are dispossessed not only of public spaces but also of their right to the city (Harvey, 2008).

Resistance

In the midst of the changes in public spaces, and the context in which they take place, there is room for resistance. In a fragmented city, there are interstices where change can be established (Keil, 2002). People have always used public space in urban areas as the space of resistance in varied ways. Some resistance takes the form of political action or social movements such as the events of May 1968 in France. The French upheavals and social movements beginning in 1968 were a rejection of the existing system in France, including the bureaucratic planning process, conditions for students, and even the role of the architect (Lefebvre, 1996). However, perhaps in a less visible way, there is a great history of resistance and response to these movements in the realm of design.

Modernist architects, especially during high modernism, positioned themselves as godlike figures with the power to shape the human environment and thereby influence society in significant ways (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). The Bauhaus concept of Gesamtkunstwerk, or the complete work of art, was carried over into modernism. The architect took on the task of designing (if only in theory) everything from cities and new modes of transportation all the way down to slippers (Conrads, 1970; Ratti & Claudel, 2015). The concept of participation was completely contradictory to this; it was almost as if the singular architect was handing over a
sacred and untouchable design (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). Le Corbusier, as a principle figure of modernism, sought orderly urban design and cities that would run like clockwork. He praised the concept of mass production, cities for cars, and spoke highly of historical figures like Haussmann and his work in Paris (Hall, 2014). All of this was with the ultimate aim of a well functioning orderly society, improving health through access to light and air for all, and design that was for the every-person; for these reasons modernist architecture was often adopted for social housing (Hall, 2014). However, it is evident that, though the aim of modernism was to improve life for all people, it did not involve allowing those people to take part in the process.

It is commonly said that the demolition of the large modernist urban housing project Pruitt-Igoe in Saint-Louis in 1972 was the death of modernism (Hall, 2014). However, The International Style began crumbling long before, and reactions against modernism were strong by the 1960s. A notable example of the dissolution of modernist architecture is in the case of Le Corbusier’s *Quartiers Modernes Frugès* in Pessac, France. The ‘workers’ housing’ development was designed and built in the 1920s (Huxtable, 1981). The units were intended to be pure, cubic, and white like much of modernist architecture (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). However, very soon after being built, they were seen as a failure in the modernist community because the design did not suit the needs of the working class occupants (Huxtable, 1981). Residents, in turn, modified it, reconfigured spaces, and even added ornamentation (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). Because Le Corbusier made use of universal design elements and open floor plans (thanks to reinforced concrete technology), there was sufficient flexibility in the units of which residents took advantage to make modifications as they saw fit (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). Moving walls, enclosing outdoor space, and installing smaller windows were some other common modifications (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). The almost authoritarian modernism at *Quartiers Modernes Frugès* was
all but erased and in its place grew a community of personalised spaces for each unique inhabitant (Huxtable, 1981). In contrast to Pruitt-Igoe, the Pessac design had a strong planning framework and flexible individual spaces within that framework that made it viable in the long run and allowed it to stay relevant and vibrant (Ratti & Claudel, 2015).

Later in the 20th-century, many of the major figures in the history and theory of architecture and urban design spoke out loudly in favour of the kind of participation that the modernist ideology was against (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). Christopher Alexander, for example, was a prominent critic of modernist thinking (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Alexander’s writings, some of which were influenced by anarchist thought, revived the idea of self-build and also self-design (Hall, 2014). He wrote about groups of people adjusting their environments to meet their individual needs and those of the group (Hall, 2014). Alexander et al. (1977) brought together mathematical patterns and human sociability in design with their book *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*. It was a book and a tool for participatory design, that could be used by anyone as a framework to design their environment at multiple scales (Alexander et al., 1977; Ratti & Claudel, 2015). In one section of the book, Alexander et al. express the need for a physical framework in a space that will encourage people to stop and stay, and that inevitably what would follow is their creation of an environment that was suited to their activities.

However, the ideas presented in the book differed from Alexander’s experience of their implementation. He attempted the creation of a neighbourhood that would be self-governing and self-sustaining. The project was called People Rebuilding Berkeley (Hall, 2014). In this case, his ideas were more successful than the execution, and it became something closer to a traditional planning process (Hall, 2014). His projects struggled to find active stakeholders and to hold their interest in the participation process (Ratti & Claudel, 2015).
In the 1960s Kevin Lynch spoke out for the role of open spaces. He believed that open spaces should allow for spontaneous and free actions of the people using them (Varna & Tiesdell, 2010). He stated that these types of actions could “… offend us, endanger us, or even threaten the seat of power” but that openness to these actions is in line with our essential values (Lynch, 1991). In addition, despite his book *The Image of the City* (1960) in which he discussed legibility, cohesiveness and transparency in urban settings, he later stated that these qualities were not necessarily always desirable (Stevens, 2006). Lynch, instead, celebrated the benefits of ambiguity, mystery, surprise, and disorder (Lynch, 1991).

Jane Jacobs was another major contributor to the discussion. When Robert Moses’ proposals for New York threatened to hollow out central urban areas, raze historic neighbourhoods, and displace the less wealthy residents, Jacobs was an outspoken advocate of the people (Hall, 2014; Harvey, 2008). She understood that good development occurred in a piecemeal fashion resulting in a fine-grain urban morphology (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Jacobs noted the importance of unplanned interactions with strangers for the health and safety of urban areas (Middleton, 2011). She was an advocate for the complexity, diversity, and tensions of urban life and saw a need for places to host the vitality of marginal activities in the equally complex and diverse urban fabric (Stevens & Dovey, 2004).

There were other major contributors to this vein of thinking about urban development who were less traditional. Among them were Cedric Price, the Metabolists, and the Situationist International. Cedric Price designed conceptual architecture that included an infrastructure with parts that would constantly be adjusted by the users of the space (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). One such example is The Fun Palace, designed in 1960, which was a conceptual large space-frame building that worked as a framework, with every element being changeable (Ratti & Claudel,
The floors, ceilings, and walls were all moveable (Levin, 1996). He also believed in technology as a facilitator of users being able to determine their own environments, and he utilised this in the design for The Fun Palace (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). The Metabolists were a group of Japanese architects, politicians, designers, and economists who derived their name from their ideas about what they called metabolic structures. These structures would change and grow according to changing users’ needs using biological models (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). The architect’s role was to develop a system that could reproduce itself and expand according to social requirements (Ratti & Claudel, 2015).

The Situationist International were an avant-garde collective originating in France in the late 1950s to early 1960s (Lefebvre et al., 1996; Stevens, 2006). The group, led by Guy Debord, questioned the role of cultural production in the context of consumer culture (Levin, 1996). They were openly critical of the spectacle and of the tendency in planning to separate areas for leisure from other city spaces (Stevens, 2007). They criticised the dominant style of functionalist architecture for being reactionary in nature and sought radical change and a rethinking of social space (Levin, 1996). The Situationist International called for an “enthralling functional environment” instead, where building was a fundamental political practice (Levin, 1996, p. 114). They established the notion of an urbanism of “situations” which were “the concrete construction of momentary lived ambiances” in unambiguous contrast to the functional separations of standard urban planning (Levin, 1996, p. 114). Furthermore, Situationists pursued the development of interventions in the city that recognise and work with the reciprocal relationship between “the material setting of life” and “the behaviours that it generates and that transform that setting” (Levin, 1996, p. 114). Along with this aim is their vision for cities “in permanent
temporal and physical transformation” being built and destroyed continually (Levin, 1996, p. 124).

Beyond theorizing, they also developed conceptual architecture and urbanism that has been called a “ludic megastructuralism” (Levin, 1996, p. 124). Along the same lines as Cedric Price’s Fun Palace, their architecture consisted of large megastructures, often represented with space frame construction, that would be a framework within which people could create their own environments (Levin, 1996). One example of situationist architecture is New Babylon by Constant Nieuwenhuys in the early 1960s. It was the architect’s reaction against contemporary urbanism where streets had become like highways, leisure had become commercialised, social relations were suffering, and where “above all, ludic activity is virtually non-existent” (Levin, 1996, p. 126). He proposed a mega-structural covered city where inhabitants could wander freely changing their environments through creative lived play (Levin, 1996). New Babylon was designed as an elevated open environment without strict separations, incorporating changeable housing structures and public spaces (Levin, 1996). Functional streets and traffic were relegated to a separate level, allowing the main level of the city to be open to unrestricted walking (Levin, 1996). It was a proposal that rejected the imposition of function onto spaces in favour of looseness and flexibility. However, the heart of situationist architecture remained in the social and political concepts and visions of resistance.

There is an important history of thinking about how to empower urban populations to have agency over their environment and how to create flexible spaces that allow, through design, users and inhabitants of spaces to modify them. The popularity of these ideas around the 1960’s has allowed them to become part of the heritage for designers today. However, the context in which we design today is greatly changed. It is important to return to the contemporary context
to understand how this heritage of concept, theory, and action can inform design practices now and for the future.

Outside the history and theory of design, at the intersection of global capitalist forces and the attempts of the marginalized at inclusion, we now see a struggle for a more radical democracy (Springer, 2011). Democratising the right to the city is essential for the marginalised to gain power and inclusion in the process of urbanisation, particularly in the design and use of public space (Harvey, 2008). Creating this kind of democracy would entail an overhaul of the public realm and thereby a new kind of public space. Within this altered public realm, direct democratic participation could occur, going beyond the existing participatory framework. For these changes to take place, decreasing the private character of public spaces would be necessary (Harvey, 2003).

The concept of agonism in public space allows one to imagine a space that is created and recreated through a process of radical democracy. Agonism, as a concept, expresses that conflict can be a productive force in a democratic society (Springer, 2011). Agonistic public space would allow for discord and difference of use, function, and opinions (Springer, 2011). Agonism’s acceptance of difference aims to encourage discourse and reduce the potential for violence (Springer, 2011). When all voices can exist at once no one needs to be silenced for the goal of reaching consensus (Springer, 2011). In the design process of public space, this might result in designs that express multiplicity and are open to diverse uses and functions where ideas can be contested. Because public space is in constant flux, changing with age and demographics, it is never guaranteed as public and can be co-opted by private interests (Springer, 2011). Because of this risk, public space must always be contested and difference must be allowed in order to avoid violent conflict in the form of policing or as violence against the dominant forces of
urbanisation (Springer, 2011). The insistence on inclusion in public space can be an empowering moment for disenfranchised communities (Silver et al., 2010). However, an agonistic public realm can only exist with the acceptance of the democratisation of the right to the city (Silver et al., 2010). It must be understood that all populations have the right to appear in public space and to influence its shape and that “everyone is a legitimate and equal claimant through their preconceived equality” (Springer, 2011, p. 532).

The importance of public space in the search for inclusion in the public realm is essential since the spaces make visible the dynamics of the public realm. Political action and expressions of identity must be carried out visibly in the public realm and, so, in public space (Stevens, 2007). Simon Springer (2011) states that “it is in spaces of the public that the discovery of both power and demos is made, and it is in the contestation of public space that democracy lives” (p.554). Hannah Arendt (2013) posits that action and political life must be visible and therefore must take place in the public realm. Public spaces offer a stage for the expression of resistance and democracy (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Representation requires public space and also shapes it (Springer, 2011).

In public space today, privatisation and spectacle are not cohesive or impervious to resistance (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Many subversive practices emerge out of the cracks. There is tension between authority in public space and spontaneous ludic practices as resistance (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Ludic behaviour is only possible with individual agency (Visconti, Sherry, Borghini, & Anderson, 2010). Play is a not only a social need but is also in opposition to labour, spectacle, predictability, singular function, and the tightening of space. It is a form of resistance and subversion of norms in a visible way in the public realm (Lefebvre et al., 1996; Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Quentin Stevens (2007) asserts that “playful acts show people’s
continued capacity for the invention, discovery, appropriation, contestation, reappropriation and expansion of the meanings that urban spaces can convey” (p. 18). Ludic practices are spontaneous and usually go against the expected behaviour in a given situation, ignoring boundaries and organisation (Stevens, 2007). Play can be disruptive as a critique of the status quo and can demonstrate the latent possibilities within public space (Stevens, 2007). It can alter people’s experiences of space, opening public spaces up to multiple functions at once (Stevens, 2007).

Definitions of urban play

For this thesis, I will discuss play as the actions of adults, instead of those of children. Adults’ ludic practices can shed light on the ways that public space can prompt unexpected behaviour and contrast with the everyday experiences. Stevens (2006) gives a working definition of play in urban public spaces as “actions lacking clear instrumental benefits”, as having a “separation from everyday experience”, and involving “exploratory encounters with strangers” (p.806). In this description, he implies that play is not intended to serve a critical purpose or to fulfil an essential physical need (Stevens, 2006). In the literature, play is portrayed as subversive, often implying a breaching of boundaries and rule-bending or -breaking (Stevens, 2007). Stevens (2007) states that “in general terms, play is used as a counterpoint to behaviour which is normal – everyday, conventional, expected, calculated, practical, constant” (p.26). Also, Stevens (2006) states that publicness is an essential defining feature of urban play since it is a social practice and often involves encounters with strangers. It is, therefore, a means of interacting with difference in the urban public setting (Stevens, 2007).

Appropriation of space is implicit in play practices. When multiple people or groups appropriate space, uses overlap (Stevens, 2007). Though many playful user practices appropriate
space temporarily for very short periods of time and leave no trace, that is not always the case. Public spaces are made and changed through users practices in addition to design interventions (Sassen, 2006). Particularly in smaller scale public spaces, users practices can have a large impact on the character and future use of that space (Sassen, 2006). Playful practices can, therefore, increase the publicness of a space or at least contest the intended function (Sassen, 2006).

Urban interventions by citizens

Here I will discuss citizen-generated urban interventions as the ludic practices of individual ordinary citizens that make intentional physical adjustments or alterations to urban space. These urban interventions are part of what DeCerteau (2007) calls “microbe-like, singular and plural practices” (p. 160). He asserts that existing power dynamics do not completely compromise urban interventions. They “insinuate themselves into networks of surveillance” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 160). These interventions are physical votes for how space should be able to be used, or what it should be. One example noted by Gordon C.C. Douglas (2014) of what he labels ‘do-it-yourself urban design’ is a Toronto man making use of magazine racks and advertisements for the creation of herb gardens. This form of direct participation in the shaping of the urban realm approaches the concept of direct democracy (Silver et al., 2010). Participation as direct democracy can “promote social inclusion” if it is open to all citizens (Silver et al., 2010, p. 456). It can be empowering and can result in social justice (Silver et al., 2010). In the carrying out of interventions, citizens participate in direct democracy, becoming actors as opposed to passive audiences (Stevens & Dovey, 2004). These interventions can be modes of political expression and resistance, or important forms of self-expression (Douglas, 2014). Citizen interventions ensure that public space is always being created and recreated responding to, working with or
against, top-down design interventions according to the requirements of the actual users of these spaces. This back-and-forth can be seen as a cycle of contestation and consensus, over time, that ensures the continued push for publicness and inclusion while interacting with top-down design decisions (Silver et al., 2010). Citizens’ urban interventions also represent immediate design responses to their environment. The recording and analysis of informal alterations and adjustments to public space Toronto is limited in the literature (Douglas, 2014). Citizen interventions in public space in Toronto will be the focus of this research.

The role of the designer

In the contemporary design world, there are architects, landscape architects, and other designers whose practices aim to empower users to make alterations and to participate in the shaping of spaces directly. The Chilean firm Elemental is a good example. The firm’s principal Alejandro Aravena, who recently won the Pritzker Prize, was lauded for his focus on the social impact of his work (“Announcement: Alejandro Aravena | The Pritzker Architecture Prize,” 2016). Elemental’s Quinta Monroy project, for example, is a housing complex for one hundred families that was built with a $7500 subsidy from the government (“Quinta Monroy,” n.d.). The firm had a low budget but needed to design affordable housing. They created a building typology that gave residents the basics they needed in a residential structure on half of the lot. The remainder of their lot was left as a framework for future expansions by the residents themselves (“Quinta Monroy,” n.d.). This project has been very successful, and the value of the properties has increased while the original residents have remained (“Quinta Monroy,” n.d.). Their “Villa Verde” project is a similar incremental housing project where the firm constructs only half the house (Kimmelman, 2016). These are open frameworks that leave detailed design up to the users of the spaces (Ratti & Claudel, 2015).
Other examples include the French group l’Atelier d’Architecture Autogérée (or in English, the studio for self-managed architecture), and the Italian interdisciplinary group Osservatorio Nomade. The Atelier d’Architecture Autogérée operates in cities using “urban tactics” which encourage participation of citizens in the design and management of urban spaces (“Présentation,” 2015). Their aim is to promote democracy in the design process, to make spaces “less dependent on top-down processes and more accessible to its users” (“Présentation,” 2015). One example is a citizen consultation hub called “Civic Lab: Barbès, La Chapelle Stalingrad”, built on the future site of an “Urban Promenade” (“Civic Lab,” 2016). This hub is a wooden frame structure on the street that is host to regular events including debates, movie screenings, workshops, and outdoor kitchens. These events bring together City Council members, local associations, and individual users of the spaces since the hub is open to passers-by (“Civic Lab,” 2016). Osservatorio Nomade and its associated initiative called Stalker Lab, on the other hand, are slightly more experimental. Stalker is a collaborative with a focus on marginal forgotten spaces, as well as marginalised communities (“Stalker, laboratorio d’arte urbana - Roma,” n.d.). They combine exploratory spatial practices with participation tools such as collective walking and the creation of playful interventions. Using these methods they respond to needs and desires of those who use the space in a more immediate timeframe, i.e., faster than the traditional design process is able to (“Spatial Agency: Stalker/Osservatorio Nomade,” n.d.). Both of these examples make alterations to the built environment or use spatial practices as means of public participation. They are also in line with John Habraken’s notion of the architect having a role closer to that of a gardener - that is, of partnership with inhabitants of a space as opposed to delivering a product (Ratti & Claudel, 2015).
In Open Source Architecture (2015) Ratti and Claudel state that “the architect has an opportunity to participate in the evolution of the autonomous built environment through creating frameworks within which users design” (p.105). There is a reciprocal relationship between the physical environment and citizen’s behaviour is urban public space. Designers of cities have an important role in empowering and facilitating direct participation from citizens, especially in interstitial, marginal, forgotten or problematic spaces (Sassen, 2006). This role also has the potential to result in effective yet low-budget projects that will stimulate future appropriation and citizen intervention. There can be a shift from designing for a static product to the design of parameters within which citizen implemented design can grow (Ratti & Claudel, 2015). In that shift, there would be a reversal in the trends of modernism, or the work of the archetypical “starchitect”, and design would be placed in the hands of the people.

The broader goal of this research is to begin to understand the potential alternative roles for landscape architects in empowering users of public spaces to participate in the shaping process of those spaces. The following chapter will discuss the specific methods used to discover and understand the spatial conditions of sites of citizen-generated urban interventions.
Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Overview

This chapter is a detailed account of the methods I applied in my research about the relationship between the formal and informal designed environment in Toronto. Chapter 2 established the importance of exploring the role of landscape architects in empowering citizens to participate in the shaping of public spaces. Through the literature review, I discovered that the literature regarding the spaces of citizen-generated urban interventions is limited and more research on this needed to be done. The following figure illustrates research strategy this thesis.

Figure 3-1: Flowchart of research strategy
Creation of the Site Assessment Form

After conducting a literature review, the first phase of my research was to create a site assessment form. To do this, I studied the literature to discover which spatial conditions authors have written about in terms of having a relationship with citizen appropriation of spaces. Based on the list of often repeated key words found in the literature, I created a site assessment in the form of a series of sixty-six questions divided into eleven categories.

The literature that I reviewed to create a site assessment form is specific to the spatial conditions that either contribute to or are associated with the occurrence of citizen appropriation of public space. The distinction between spatial conditions and social conditions is important here. Although demographic information and literature in sociology are important to understanding citizen appropriation of space, generally these areas contain less about the spatial conditions of citizen appropriation. The social conditions are not in the realm of what landscape architects and other designers have control over. However, the spatial conditions of city public
spaces are shaped directly by teams of designers including landscape architects. For this reason, the focus was on the literature discussing those related spatial conditions.

I principally used texts by Quentin Stevens in the creation of the site assessment form. His book *The Ludic City: Exploring the Potential of Public Spaces* (2007) as well as his book with Karen Franck *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life* (2013) were significant resources for important spatial conditions associated with citizen appropriation of urban public space. These authors discuss conditions such as diversity of uses, unpredictability, risk, edge conditions, and moveable elements. I reviewed other journal articles and texts by Quentin Stevens and Kim Dovey (Stevens, 2006; Stevens & Dovey, 2004), Gordon CC Douglas (2014), John N. Habraken (1987), Christopher Alexander’s *A Pattern Language* (1977), Saskia Sassen (2006), and Giorgia Aquilar (2014). In addition, I consulted articles written about Cedric Price and an interview with John N. Habraken (Landau, 1985; Nascimento, 2012).

From these texts, I noted key words describing the elements or notions about space that the authors associate with citizen appropriation and that would be achievable through design. The resulting list of these key words and phrases (Appendix A) reveal the spatial conditions that relate, in theory, to the occurrence of citizen appropriation of public space. The reason this list deals with the broader category of citizen appropriation is that there is a lack of literature on citizen-generated urban interventions as a specific type of appropriation, and even less on the spatial conditions associated with it.

I then organized the key words into categories based on the most common and most important spatial conditions discussed in the literature that is noted in Appendix A. Many of the key words for example were describing elements or conditions regarding the surroundings of the site. These keywords were grouped into the category called ‘Context’. The keywords within each
category are listed in Appendix F. The resulting eleven categories are: context, views and visibility, edge conditions, physical conditions, the unexpected, spatial qualities, implied program, centrality and frequency of use, spatial complexity, spatial sequence, and animation with site elements.

For each category, I created a set of questions based on the conditions and key words within that category. For example, edge conditions include accessibility, porosity, permeability, openness, and enclosure. The resulting questions asked about the clarity of site-defining elements, how open the site is, how boundaries are identified, how clear site limits are, the presence of clear entrances, and how accessible the site is.

The translation of the list of spatial conditions into sixty-six questions produced a site assessment that I would apply to each site. After testing this set of questions on an actual site in Toronto, it was apparent that the amount of time needed to answer all questions was too long. Also, many of the questions did not require being on-site to be answered. Consequently, I split the site assessment into two: the portion to be completed on-site (Appendix B), and the part to be completed immediately after site visits (Appendix C).
Conducting Site Assessments

The next phase of my research was to carry out site assessments. To find sites to study I wandered Toronto and identified citizen urban interventions. I did not pre-plan routes, and so I used a mapping app to keep track of where I walked. The sites of those interventions were the subject of the site assessment I had created in the first phase of the research. By answering questions on-site and immediately after site visits, I gathered data on a total of thirty sites. I entered data into Excel spreadsheets for each site along with a description of the intervention and its location. I also recorded and documented the site with photographs.

To understand ‘wandering’ in this research, I refer to Pierce and Lawhon’s (2015) definition of observational walking “as a self-conscious, reflective project of wandering around to better understand an area’s physical contexts, social context, and the spatial practices of its residents” (p.656). For a method of urban exploration, I chose wandering, or walking, due to its appropriateness as a means of discovering sites as well as its significance in history and theory.

In the 1950s, the Situationist International (SI) employed wandering as an aspect of psychogeography (Middleton, 2011). When wandering, which the SI called the dérive or
“drift,” members of the SI would set out walking with no intention other than to allow the attractions of the landscape, and the encounters within it, to guide them (Stevens, 2006). Their indeterminate walks entailed “playful-constructive behaviour and awareness of psychogeographical effects,” which to them distinguished the dérive from simple walking, the strolling of the flaneur, or the wandering of the surrealists that came before them (Debord, 1958; Stevens, 2007). Relevant to this research is the Situationist idea of setting out without a destination or predetermined time limit. Most important to this step of the research was the notion of walking with awareness of the urban environment, the contrasts within it, the distinct character of the spaces of the city, and following the attractions of the terrain.

In the 1980s de Certeau framed walking as a ‘tactic’ with the democratic potential to disrupt (Middleton, 2011). In Walking in the City, he explains walking as “an elementary form of this experience of the city,” and gives agency to walkers when he describes the “urban ‘text’ they write without being able to read it” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 158). By framing walkers as “practitioners of the city,” de Certeau (1984, p.158) makes the link between walking and the production and reproduction of space in the city. Walking as an urban practice is deeply connected to the creation of citizen-generated urban interventions. Additionally, de Certeau presents walking as a method of understanding everyday practices and lived spaces (Middleton, 2011).

Wandering with active awareness is a useful method for discovering spaces of the city in which citizens’ urban interventions exist. By wandering the city, I became familiar with the everyday urban setting, and so was able to recognize contrasts within it through lived experience on the ground. I was able to participate in the pedestrian flows and “spatiality of everyday life” as a citizen, but wandering also opened up “opportunity for serendipitous discovery of
unexpected contexts for social and spatial conjunction” (Pierce & Lawhon, 2015, p. 661). However, it is important to note that wandering was used along with my other methods and by itself did not generate any data. It was, for me, a means to happen upon citizen-made urban interventions where I could ask more questions. So, the walking was not an end in itself, but a means to be able to arrive at sites where I could collect data.

Because of the subjective nature of wandering, it is important to describe in detail how I conducted my walks (Pierce & Lawhon, 2015). For each walk, I started at a familiar location where I was comfortable in wandering with awareness. Most often this meant that starting points were in the western half of Toronto, usually at subway stations. By choosing places of familiarity, I was more easily able to balance focus and awareness while wandering. There was no predetermined route; however, I felt the path I took would be necessary to record, so I used a mapping app on my cellphone to keep track of my route. The maps generated by the app (Appendix D) were helpful to me, however the mapping sometimes continued after the app was turned off, causing minor inaccuracies in the maps. Typically, walks were between one and two hours in length and varied in distance covered. During the walks, I would make turns based on what direction was attractive at the moment. The walks would end when I had found enough sites or when the limitations of the winter weather became significant. In total seven walks were completed.

Due to the subjective nature of this method of site discovery, it is important to note the associated limitations and challenges. Because the spaces of the city have different meanings to each person, there were limitations and opportunities in this method that were unique to me. As a young Caucasian woman at the height of 5’2” certain spaces did not seem public to me but may have seemed public to another person, and vice versa. Different people feel safety and
accessibility in very different ways. As a result, there are many routes that I was able to take, but that others may not have, and ways that did not seem like possibilities for me though they may be considered open to many. Furthermore, for the same reasons, I am not able to generalize my experiences of the landscape. Wandering is not an objective or universal experience.

Additionally, a limitation of wandering as a method is that it is hard to replicate. However, as stated above, the wandering itself did not produce data and was used only in conjunction with other methods. Also, another researcher could go through the same process and find similar sites to contribute to the field of knowledge (Pierce & Lawhon, 2015).

A final challenge in wandering was the weather. Cold temperatures, snow, and rain made wandering more difficult. On at least one occasion the walk ended before it might have in better conditions.

While wandering, I identified sites by recognizing citizen-generated urban interventions. All sites had to be publicly accessible, or have a significant and intentional impact on a publicly accessible area immediately adjacent to it. For example, some murals may not technically be on public property but, being aimed at the viewers on the street, they help to shape the character of the adjacent public. Here, ‘publicly accessible’ is any space that feels open and available for public use. If I felt comfortable entering the space and could imagine that the other people passing by would feel comfortable as well, I would consider it publicly accessible. Of course, it is essential to acknowledge again that this is subjective, since some people might perceive spaces I deem accessible to the public as hostile or inaccessible. However, I tried to bear this in mind in site selection to find sites that seem most public to the most publics.
Once in a site, I filled out the on-site portion of the assessment form. This way, I was able to study these interventions against the relevant spatial conditions. After each walk, I completed the post-site visit portion of the assessment for each site. It must be emphasised that the questions (unless otherwise noted) refer only to the site conditions and do not consider the urban intervention itself. The aim was to collect data in enough sites that would generate rich description of commonalities in the spatial conditions. Due to time restrictions and practicality, I assessed thirty sites in total.

Analysis

![Flowchart of details of analysis.](image)

**Figure 3-4:** Flowchart of details of analysis.

Following the completion of site assessments, I entered all the answers for each walk into spreadsheets. I input answers for each of the eleven sections of the assessment into eleven corresponding spreadsheets. In each spreadsheet, I listed the sites as well as their respective answers for each question in that section. A sample spreadsheet is shown in Appendix E.

From these spreadsheets, I was able to count how often each possible answer was given for each question. These results are shown in tables in Chapter 4. By observing these numbers, I saw what answers were most common, what sites were outliers, and what conditions seemed relevant. I generated a description of the results for the eleven sections that paint a picture of the
commonalities within the spatial conditions of all sites. Another aspect of the analysis was through the creation figure-ground drawings for each of the thirty sites, looking for commonalities within the morphology of each site. The figure-grounds were a way of making observations of the morphology of the urban context regarding proximity of sites to open spaces, intersections, or patterns in the urban fabric for instance. The figure-ground drawings are analyzed in Chapter 4.

Finally, I separated the citizen-generated urban interventions into six types based on the perceived intention of the intervention. For each of the six types I repeated observations of the results then wrote descriptions for each. For this part of the analysis, there were very few sites for each category. Because the data came from so few sites, descriptions are tentative and can’t be generalized.
Chapter 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This section summarises the results from the site assessments for thirty sites. The analysis is based on results, as shown in the tables, as well as the detailed questions asked within the site assessment, and how these relate to the literature.

Context

Table 4-1: Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjacent Land Uses</th>
<th>Connection to Context</th>
<th>Adjacent Circulation</th>
<th>Is the site a link?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail / Retail</td>
<td>Paths</td>
<td>Path</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park / Open Space</td>
<td>Alleys</td>
<td>Alley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alleys</td>
<td></td>
<td>Subway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lot</td>
<td></td>
<td>Train Line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty Lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The land use context does not seem to have a large influence over site selection. Figure 4-1 shows that residential land uses as well as retail or commercial land use surrounded most of the sites. This result was anticipated since walks were most often through neighbourhoods and main streets. The next most common adjacent land uses were parks or open green spaces. This result is more noteworthy since this land use type did not make up a significant part of the walks. In *Loose Space* (2006), Quentin Stevens notes that “a great variety of playful activity can be observed outside leisure-oriented facilities,” (p.80) reinforcing this result. The walks did not pass through any industrial land uses and so there is no data on adjacent industrial land use. Mostly, the sites connected to adjacent sites visually. The data shown in Table 4-1 also suggests that the visual connections to the surrounding landscape are substantial.
Assessments showed that the sites did not connect to multiple circulation networks. Quentin Stevens (2007) states that chances of playful activity are greater in sites where there is greater connectivity. Cedric Price and Christopher Alexander also note connectivity as a significant condition (Alexander et al., 1977; Landau, 1985). Though the sites are permeable, they are not exceptionally well-connected. However, the sites are more likely to be points of connection. Half of them were links between multiple adjacent and nearby sites.

Observing the morphology of the sites through figure-ground drawings reveals further commonalities among the thirty sites. Many sites are found at intersections as discussed in the literature (Stevens, 2007). These intersections are either between various streets or between streets and pedestrian paths or alleys. Also, about half the sites are near pedestrian-only circulation networks. Figure 4-1 shows that many of the sites also appear to be very near open areas in the urban fabric, where the built form shown in black appears less dense.
Figure 4-1: Thirty 200m x 200m figure-ground drawings of sites. Red ‘X’s indicate citizen urban interventions
Views and Visibility

Table 4-2: Views and Visibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views from the site</th>
<th>Views of intervention</th>
<th>Intended visibility</th>
<th>Obscuring the intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>Very visible 14</td>
<td>Exposed 20</td>
<td>Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open in one direction</td>
<td>Partly Visible 10</td>
<td>Hidden 4</td>
<td>Shadow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obscured</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unclear 5</td>
<td>Cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Other 1</td>
<td>Vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Presence of Surveillance</th>
<th>Presence of Surveillance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrians (most)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Citizen-generated urban interventions seem to seek exposure, and almost half the sites offer views of the interventions from other sites. Sites that allow interventions to be visible are more common than sites that keep them hidden. Most of the sites offer decent visibility, and very few interventions are completely obscured as shown in Table 4-2. Views from within the sites are usually linear due to proximity to paths and roads. Views are not closed off, but some obscuring elements are usually present on at least one side of the site. Pedestrians seem to be the intended audience for many of the interventions. Mainly sites prioritise views to pedestrians above drivers. There was no visible surveillance or policing in any of the thirty sites observed.

Quentin Stevens, Karen Franck and Kim Dovey state the need for playful urban practices to have an audience (Franck & Stevens, 2013; Stevens, 2007; Stevens & Dovey, 2004). This assertion seems to hold true in the case of citizen-generated urban interventions. Christopher Alexander also states the importance of public outdoor rooms being visible. The visible nature of the sites that I observed is in line with good design practices in public open space.
Edge Conditions

Table 4-3: Edge Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Definition</th>
<th>Boundary</th>
<th>Openness</th>
<th>% of clear site limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defined</td>
<td>Change of paving</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>~ 25% or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change of grade</td>
<td>Semi-open</td>
<td>~50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fence</td>
<td>Semi-closed</td>
<td>~75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walls</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>~100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-defined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undefined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most sites are defined to some extent as can be seen in the first column of Table 4-3. A change in paving often indicates the site limit, often in conjunction with another element such as a grade change (e.g., a curb) or a fence. Most sites use a combination of several elements to delineate the boundary. There are usually barriers to entry surrounding part of the site. A fence or a wall usually border part of the site. Very few sites are completely enclosed, and most have at least one very open side. Sites tend not to have very clear entry points. The sites are permeable in many areas. It is rare to have clearly marked entrances and it is uncommon, if there are entry or exit points, that there be only one. The majority of sites are very accessible, and almost all of the sites are mostly accessible or better.

Based on the above description sites tend to be porous without rigid circulation prescribed at the borders. Borders are somewhat blurred in some areas but defined in others. The
sites tend to be partially open and partially enclosed, but remain highly accessible. These findings are in line with the literature on the nature of the edge conditions of these sites.

Physical Conditions

Table 4-4: Physical Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intense colour</th>
<th>Support material</th>
<th>Ground material</th>
<th>Support material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>Very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>Turf</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>Earth / Soil</td>
<td>Mildly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fence</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brick</td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turf</td>
<td>Roof</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Painted metal</td>
<td>Sand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garage Doors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Street furniture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masonry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Texture of ground surface

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texture of ground surface</th>
<th>Changes of grade</th>
<th>Steepness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Sloped</td>
<td>Steep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Stepped</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildly</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Mild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sites rarely have bright colours or intense use of colour. However, in some cases, a bright colour can draw attention to the site or its entrance. Sites that have glass as a dominant material are very rare. The exception in the results shown in Table 4-4 was an abandoned business front. Wood and trees are the most popular materials that are associated directly with interventions. Trees were used to paint, for affixing things to hang at eye level, or to support leaning elements. Otherwise, old building facades, which tend to be brick, masonry or concrete, were used as a
support. Sidewalks as well, being concrete, feature in many sites. Garage doors are important site elements specifically for graffiti.

Concrete is the most common paving material of the ground surface around the intervention; however, turf, soil, and asphalt are also common. Consequently, the textures of the ground surface are mostly mild or very mild. Grade changes tend not to be significant. Most sites have no significant grade changes and only gentle slopes. If there is a slope it often has little impact on the site. These conditions of slope and texture relate to the sites being quite accessible.

Colour is not significant in chosen sites but has potential to draw attention to the existence of a site. There is no preference for sites with greater or less texture. Materials to support interventions were of greater importance, with trees and wood being the most common.

The Unexpected – Circulation and Unpredictable Elements

Table 4-5: The Unexpected – Circulation and Unpredictable Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unexpectedness or</th>
<th>Unpredictable</th>
<th>Element of risk</th>
<th>Sense of tension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unexpected circulation</th>
<th>Inspiring awe</th>
<th>Elements that contribute to a sense of mystery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not being able to see when someone is entering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not being able to tell where there are other entrances/exports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not knowing where paths lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most sites do not contain unexpected elements or incite surprise. They rarely have unpredictable elements, and there is no real element of risk. Table 4-5 shows that almost none of the sites provoked a sense of tension. Circulation on the sites was usually straightforward. Only
one site featured any condition that inspired awe. This site was along the Humber River, on the edge of a bluff with expansive views of the river. In all the sites the most common condition that contributed to the unexpected was not being able to see who might be entering the sites and from where.

These results are contrary to the literature on citizen appropriation of public space and playful urban practices. Gordon C.C. Douglas (2014) discusses how risk can prompt “do-it-yourself urbanism” as civic improvement. Using the example of the site I observed at Mabelle Park, this was the case when a group called MABELLEarts, with a team including a landscape architect, got involved in the redesign of the park. Previously it had been empty, and there was screening with coniferous trees making it feel less safe. The interventions I observed, however, were made after this redesign. The element of risk observed on sites was due to drastic changes in grade, or signage prohibiting entry into the site.

Quentin Stevens, Karen Franck, and Kim Dovey write extensively on the importance of the elements of unexpectedness, unpredictability, tension, risk, uncertainty, and struggle. These elements have not been observed in many of the thirty sites, and if they were observed they were quite mild.
Spatial Qualities

**Table 4-6: Spatial Qualities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intimacy</th>
<th>Enclosure</th>
<th>Density of site elements</th>
<th>Brightness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Empty</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mostly empty</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Semi-full</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illumination</th>
<th>Safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural light only</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only lighting</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section is fairly subjective since it is about impressions and feelings. For example, what feels enclosed for one person may feel open for another. Brightness, safety, and intimacy are similarly subjective. That being said, in observing the data in Table 4-6 it is clear that the slight majority of sites did not seem to provoke a sense of intimacy. However, most of the sites felt either somewhat enclosed or fully enclosed. Quentin Stevens discusses the importance of a protected site for this kind of use (Stevens, 2006, 2007; Stevens & Dovey, 2004). Christopher Alexander (1977) discusses the importance of the right balance between openness and a sense of enclosure. This sense of enclosure in combination with the conditions of visibility and accessibility can be interpreted through the lens of prospect refuge theory (Franck & Stevens, 2013). The sense of being protected in a space while still being able to see out seems like an important quality.

Most sites were either empty or mostly empty. They were largely not crowded with site elements. Artificial lighting is important, and sites are mostly bright. The sense of safety was
strong in most sites. Some feeling of enclosure is important for sites, but not at the cost of a sense of security.

Implied Program – Clarity and Variety

Table 4-7: Implied Program – Clarity and Variety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarity of function</th>
<th>Permanence of function</th>
<th>Secondary uses</th>
<th>Variety of programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very clear</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly clear</td>
<td>Transient</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several possibilities</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely unclear</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peak hours</th>
<th>Communication of program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Site elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (context, paving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most sites have a pre-existing function, and some have secondary functions. Sites commonly are used intermittently with no peak hours. The information in Table 4-7 shows that the use of the site is usually implicit through site elements or context, and not explicitly prescribed. Though the sites are in use they are not highly programmed. Habraken (1987) talks about the importance of a lack of program and the idea of mixed uses within a hierarchy when designing projects that are adaptable. The thirty sites clearly did not have strong programming; however, the notion of mixed uses is less evident.
Centrality and Frequency of Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use as intended</th>
<th>Level of use</th>
<th>Maintained elements on site</th>
<th>Isolated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Active use</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some use</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Possible use</td>
<td>Few</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No signs of use</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edge or in-between</th>
<th>Leftover space</th>
<th>Central function</th>
<th>Part of larger networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-between</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-8 shows that none of the sites seemed abandoned, and almost all of them showed signs of use. Even fewer sites lacked designed and maintained elements. In fact, in the majority of the sites designed and maintained elements made up most of the site features. The majority of sites were not isolated from their surroundings, but thirteen of the thirty sites observed were at least somewhat isolated. Almost no sites were in leftover spaces, although they do not have a very central function in the neighbourhood or surrounding area. Furthermore, most of the sites were not part of any larger networks.

Similar to notions about abandoned spaces from Quentin Stevens and Gordon C.C. Douglas, Saskia Sassen (2006) discusses making public interventions where she highlights the potential of unused, unfunctional, or forgotten spaces. These types of spaces were rarely observed, as the sites were mostly in use and functional with the notable exception of the empty storefront.
Significantly, most of the sites are either on edges or in between two distinct types of places. Quentin Stevens and Karen Franck (2007) assert that spaces that are on the border between two sites have the potential to be considered loose space. Stevens (2007) goes on to say that in-between spaces, like in-between times, offer freedom adding that “liminality is akin to play: it frames escape from social convention and the exploration of new possibilities” (p. 74). In many of the observed sites liminality seems to help provoke interventions, particularly in those that users appropriate for play and recreation.

Spatial Complexity

Table 4-9: Spatial Complexity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of sub-spaces</th>
<th>Homogeneous sub-spaces</th>
<th>Fragmented sub-spaces</th>
<th>Definition of sub-spaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal complexity</th>
<th>Interaction with other senses</th>
<th>Scale (for function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Hearing: (mostly), a bit quieter, very loud (one site), kids playing, Touch: feel of the groundcover underfoot, Smell: fire, pollution / exhaust, fresher, stale, unpleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Typical: 11, Small: 2, Narrow: 5, Large: 3, N/A: 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spatial complexity is not a major factor in most sites. Very few were made up of subspaces. Again, this result is subjective in that it depends on scale. However, most sites were
relatively cohesive even if partial boundaries were blurred. It is unclear what kind of multisensory experience is typical in the sites. Table 4-9 shows that in most sites, it is possible to hear traffic, although several are slightly quieter than the surrounding urban context. There is no particular sensory intensity within the sites. Furthermore, sites are not typically complex in shape or form. Site sizes are frequently standard for their uses but sometimes slightly small.

Both Stevens and Habraken discuss complexity as an important aspect of these types of sites (Habraken, 1987; Stevens, 2007). However, both Habraken and Stevens discuss complexity in the broader sense as well. For example, they discuss the complex nature of the city, which is implicit in all thirty sites.

Spatial Sequence

**Table 4-10: Spatial Sequence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Changes in scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tends to be linear, from two directions. Generally, a very simple approach with a few exceptions of the less accessible sites. Curiosity plays a role in some approaches.</td>
<td>Generally, in the majority of cases, the spaces go from being large to smaller scale as the sites are approached. This most often occurred in the form of going from an open space to a smaller, more narrow space. In a few sites this trend took the form of moving from taller buildings to smaller scale buildings. In some cases the spaces went from open to confined and opened up again. Only 4 approaches to sites went from small scale to large scale. In 13 (almost half) of the visited sites, there was no discernable shifting in scale.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The notion of curiosity in some of the sites relates somewhat to unexpectedness. It is perhaps the potential for unexpectedness that drew people to some of the sites. As stated in Table 4-10, the majority of sites do feature shifts in scale. In the literature, is it argued that these shifts theoretically destabilise which may prompt playful behaviour (Stevens, 2007). The sense of
entering a smaller site may also connect to the condition of enclosure or protection from the context.

Animation with Site Elements

Table 4-11: Animation with Site Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of props</th>
<th>Movable elements</th>
<th>Presence of site furniture</th>
<th>Making use of frameworks</th>
<th>Responding to a</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fences Garage doors Logs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Branches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stumps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Light standards</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Benches</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planters</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Garbage bin</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Props and movable elements were not commonly found in sites. In several sites tree branches and stumps were used as props. The majority of sites also contained no site furniture. Furthermore, it was in a minority of sites that people used site elements as frameworks. In many cases, trees were used, and in others, chain-link fences offered a framework for interventions. However, those were not representative of the majority of sites. Most of the interventions observed did not respond to a challenge or invitation within the site. They occurred despite the lack of prompting. The one possible exception to this was mountain biking trail structures built where there were signs prohibiting mountain biking.

The literature is extensive on the use of props and movable elements. Quentin Stevens and Karen Franck (2007) state that “elements that are moveable, flexible or malleable can be appropriated, for example, chairs or plants, but also parts of ruins or junk left behind in abandoned spaces.” (p.9). Frameworks are central to many theorists, particularly for Cedric
Price, the Situationists, and the Metabolists (Landau, 1985; Ratti & Claudel, 2015; Stevens, 2007). The results shown in Table 4-11 may be a reflection that there are not many movable or loose elements in the urban public realm and potential frameworks are uncommon and subtle.

A Working Typology of Citizen-Generated Urban Interventions

Beginning to understand the types of citizen-generated urban interventions is a step toward being able to produce a typology of spaces that host them. From the thirty sites observed in this research, it was possible to classify the interventions into types. Six types emerged based on the purpose of the interventions. This section will explain each type and will present tentative descriptions of the kinds of spaces in which the types are found. It is important to note that with only thirty sites to provide data, and six types, the amount of data for each type is minimal, so the analysis is tentative and more information is needed. The types are:

1- Civic improvement
2- Political message
3- Graffiti
4- Artistic expression and ornamentation
5- Place-naming
6- Play and recreation

Citizen interventions for civic improvement were made to provide a service to the community that was lacking in that particular area. For example, in one site, tin cans painted blue were placed near benches in a small parkette so that people could put their cigarette butts in them instead of in the planters or on the ground. Another example, created on a much larger scale, were gardens built between the subway track and train tracks near Islington Station and Bloor
Street. This garden is quite large and made up of many plots where nearby residents are growing vegetables. It is also possible to see small sheds, trellises, and other structures made of found materials. Community gardening plots were presumably lacking in the neighbourhood and the residents filled that gap themselves in an unauthorised manner. The sites hosting interventions for civic improvement are more visually oriented compared to some other types like ‘play and recreation’. Views to and from sites are important. From the sites observed they seem to be near open spaces.

Political messages are interventions whose primary purpose is making a political statement in public. These often include text, as in the example of posters put up around Toronto that read “fur trim kills”. These are also in very visible sites and very accessible sites.

By far, graffiti is the most common type in the Toronto context. There is extensive literature regarding this type and there are many forms of graffiti. Based on observations, the sites of graffiti are extremely varied. They have a large variety of adjacencies. There tended to be a greater sense of the unexpected in these sites. They also seem to be emptier than sites for the other types and less often being used as intended. There is less presence of lighting as well. Similar to sites for play and recreation, the change of scale from large to small is more evident in these sites.

Artistic expression and ornamentation are labelled as a single type because by only observing the intervention the distinction between the two cannot be made. These types of interventions have a wide range, from painted birdhouses hanging on trees to murals painted on a fence, or words woven into a fence. The sites of artistic expression and ornamentation are very similar to the sites of civic improvements. They are very visible and seem to be near parks and
open space. The site limits observed were quite undefined. These sites also offered frameworks for the creation of interventions.

Place-naming is a less common type. It usually involves signs with a name given to the place by the users of it. The single example of this type is at Trinity Bellwoods Park where “Sky Dome” is painted on a large piece of plywood in a baseball field. Of the thirty sites, this type is least common.

Finally, play and recreation as a type is easily understood. These interventions are made in the process of play and for the purpose of play or recreation. In a wooded area by the Humber River, there are large lean-to shelters made of sticks and branches, as well as mountain biking trail structures. Frameworks for interventions were present in the sites, as were props and movable elements. In this sense, these sites are most in line with the literature. The form and shape of the sites are complex. Visibility was not a factor in these sites, and enclosure was more important than visibility.

It is important to note that no citizen-generated intervention falls into only one of these types. The boundaries between types are blurred and there are elements of several types that make up each intervention. For example, there is an informal adventure playground for older children in Dufferin Grove Park that could be considered as multiple types. It is at once a civic improvement and could also be considered play and recreation. It offers a space for older children to experience exploratory play which was not offered in the formal design of the park. It also included a coat rack and a sheet educating about sand play in history. In these ways, the intervention offers a service to the community. However, it was also created by play and for the purpose of play. The intervention falls into both types as is the case for most interventions. More
research is needed on this topic to develop a better understanding of types interventions and the types of spaces in which they exist.
Chapter 5: DISCUSSION

Many of the findings of this research are in line with the literature on citizen appropriation of public space. Accessibility is a major theme within the literature and was present in a substantial number of sites. Good accessibility, including paving material choices and gentle slopes, was important. In addition to this, there was an absence of regulation and control in the sites. Principal authors stated that the lack of regulation would be advantageous to citizen appropriation (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993; Stevens, 2007). I observed this in the form of openness in programming, a lack of surveillance, and no examples of what Loukaito-Sideris calls hard controls (e.g., security guards or prohibition of certain activities). However, protection, privacy, and enclosure were all important factors in the literature and the actual sites as well. Furthermore, most sites were on edges or in in-between spaces. Observations confirmed the theoretical potential of interstitial space for this research. Notions of liminality and marginality apply to spaces of citizen-generated urban interventions. Lack of centrality was relevant in both theories and real spaces. Furthermore, proximity to leisure-oriented facilities, intersections, crossroads, and pedestrian-oriented circulation were all observed in the sites. Relatedly, spatial convergence and shifts in scale also seemed to play a part in the sites. Finally, visibility, exposure, and permeability were also discussed in the literature and reflected in the sites in Toronto.

Although there are many similarities noted above, I found many differences between the conditions described in the literature and those observed. The spatial complexity, morphological variety, and sensory intensity that are outlined in the literature did not appear in real sites in Toronto. It may be that the spaces that accommodate citizen-generated urban interventions prioritise enclosure, privacy, and lack of site elements more than the sites of other forms of
citizen appropriation. Unlike other types of appropriation, interventions do not rely on encounters with strangers or audiences at the moment of creation. Time separates the encounters and audiences that are critical to interventions from the act of creation. In fact, an immediate audience would discourage most people from altering a public space. This difference is perhaps the reason why crowding is not a desirable condition for this particular type of citizen appropriation. It may be for similar reasons that there was little mixing or diversity of use in sites, but slight isolation, marginal sites, and enclosure were preferred. Also, the notion in some of the literature that the sites are vacant, abandoned, or in disrepair was not the case. The sites are in fact safe, accessible, well lit, include designed and maintained elements, and are not vacant. Finally, props, movable elements, and frameworks did not play a significant role in the sites. However, the fact they are not common in the urban landscape may be the cause of the discrepancy between the results and the literature. Despite this lack, they do have the potential to enhance sites by engaging visitors in changing the space. Prompts and subtle invitations would likely increase the potential of any site to allow for citizen-generated urban interventions, as long as they are not prescriptive. Movable elements, props, and frameworks can potentially act as prompts to citizens.

The literature has not explicitly covered some of the conditions that the results of this research revealed. The lighting of sites appeared to be critical. The presence of light standards or other artificial lighting was significant. Also, sites were used intermittently but did not have peak hours. Ideas about temporality are discussed in the literature but not in a precise way. Furthermore, regarding use, sites mostly had practical functions. The interventions were not disruptive of these functions but co-existed with them. Another result that authors have not
discussed is the apparent preference for wooden elements or trees, branches, and stumps as supports for citizen-generated urban interventions.

There is a need to acknowledge and understand the great diversity in types of citizen-generated urban interventions. I identified six types through analysis, many of which contribute positively to communities and community development. Furthermore, there is great variety in the types of spaces that host citizen-generated urban interventions. The occurrence of these interventions will continue with or without prompting; however, there is value in encouraging and allowing for the creation of interventions and in understanding how that can be done strategically.

Culture certainly had an influence over the findings of this research. Cultural differences between cities will create different social conditions for the creation of citizen-generated urban interventions. As a result, different types of spaces may be preferred in other cities. Similarly, the stage and mode of urban development in a city will affect the conditions of the appearance of these urban interventions. The broader context of the city and the local culture are important to the findings of this research. For that reason, the findings may not be applicable to other cities.

Limitations of this research included weather and time constraints. Assessment of sites in the winter yielded results that would undoubtedly be different from the results of assessment during the summer. Furthermore, for practical reasons I only assessed thirty sites. More assessments are needed to be able to present more concrete results. If more sites that are widely spread throughout the city were analysed much would be gained in this research. If I were to repeat the process now, I would rewrite questions to be more specific. For example, questions about frameworks could be broken down into questions about the use of official infrastructure, the reinterpretation of site elements as frameworks, and the presence of actual frameworks. Also,
more assessment of the walks outside of the sites of study is needed. This added information
could have shown, for example, that props and movable elements are either not common
throughout the urban landscape or that they are found and do not contribute at all to the
occurrence of citizen-generated urban interventions.

Finally, due to the subjective nature of much of this exploratory research, it is important
to note the role that I as an individual played in the interpretation of results. Similar research
done by others would add to the knowledge in this area by providing descriptions from others'
perspectives.

There are many avenues for further research on this topic. There is a lack of literature on
this specific type of citizen appropriation of public space. Additional analysis of possible
typologies could reveal spatial condition specific to types of citizen-generated urban
interventions. More specific results would be desirable, for example studying the correct ratio of
open to closed site edges could yield interesting results. It would be beneficial to understand
specific strategies that have been successful in achieving the desired spatial conditions. Also,
continued documenting and recording of citizen-generated urban interventions is needed. Testing
results from this type of research would be an important next step. Designing spaces with
recommendations from the research to see if they are appropriated for citizen-generated urban
interventions would reveal much more about this topic and the role of landscape architects.
Chapter 6: CONCLUSION

By assessing thirty sites, the results of this research reveal spatial conditions of citizen-generated urban interventions found in Toronto. Based on the findings there seem to be conditions that designers can incorporate that allow for the emergence of citizen-generated interventions. The results generate preliminary design recommendations.

Figure 6-1: Diagrams illustrating important considerations for siting. Sites are represented by yellow shapes.

Regarding siting, proximity to parks and open space is desirable (Figure 6-1 a). Edges or in-between spaces seem to have the greatest potential (Figure 6-1 c), as well as areas that people pass through between local destinations (Figure 6-1 a). There is a preference for slightly isolated areas that do not already have central functions in the surroundings. Sites of interventions may be smaller sub-spaces of larger sites. A corner or small area of a site may be given over to this purpose. These spatial conditions can be incorporated into parts of many projects where siting allows for it.
Concerning orientation and programming, sites should prioritise pedestrian circulation (Figure 6-2 a) and visibility to pedestrian areas (Figure 6-2 b). Inside, sites should remain open, not crowded with site elements (Figure 6-2 c). The program of the space should be loosely implied and not prescribed. The space should be informal but can have a utilitarian function if it is only used for this purpose intermittently.

Design considerations should prioritise a sense of enclosure, some obscuring elements, partial barriers, balanced with permeability and openness on at least one side (Figure 6-3 a). This openness gives a chance for visibility and accessibility (Figure 6-3 b). The site should have multiple possible entry and exit points. Wood is a recommended material choice, and deciduous trees are good site elements (Figure 6-3 c).
In many sites, these conditions may already exist, and in this case, it is possible that creating curiosity could stimulate the emergence of interventions. Movable parts, props, and frameworks would be positive additions for this purpose. Movable elements can take the form of tree branches, stumps, wood, or other loose parts incorporated into the design.

As in all sites, accessibility is essential. Sites should have minimal slopes and have an accessible ground material. There should be no surveillance or hard controls prohibiting certain uses of the site. It is important to design for a feeling of safety, including lighting in the evening. The goal of accessibility is central to this research. Accessibility, in this case, means feeling open to all people, and open to new and unexpected uses. Sites that are open to everyone can be open to multiple uses, to appropriation, and therefore to being shaped by users’ practices.

These guidelines are tentative, and designers should look for site-based opportunities for engaging local citizens and users of spaces. Globally, there are many groups of designers doing work that empowers site users. Lessons from their projects are indispensable to learning about the potential roles of landscape architects in designing for citizen-generated urban interventions.

When citizens intentionally shape public spaces, they gain agency in the public realm and ensure that spaces continue to be contested and public. These citizens engage with urban design and “this new street-level language of design—non-commissioned, non-invited interventions in the urban landscape—transforms the fixed landscape of the city into a platform for a design dialogue (Burnham, 2010, p. 137).” Landscape architects have a role in enabling citizens who want to take an active role in reshaping their public spaces in a more direct way. By adopting this position, designers can contribute to an agonistic public realm and expressions of direct democracy in truly public spaces of the city.
REFERENCES


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<td>9, 12; 40; 46, 49</td>
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<td>Contrast: &quot;aesthetically, acoustically and thermally quite different&quot;</td>
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APPENDIX B: ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

CONTEXT

1) How does the site connect to adjacent sites and significant sites nearby?

2) Does the site act as a link between sites or land uses?

VIEWS AND VISIBILITY

1) Describe the views from the site?

2) Describe the views of the intervention from outside the site?
   
   a. Very visible
   b. Partly visible
   c. Obscured

3) Does the intervention seem to be intentionally exposed or hidden?
   
   a. Exposed
   b. Unclear
   c. Hidden

4) If it is hidden, what is hiding it?

   N/A

5) If it is exposed, who and where is the audience?

   N/A

6) Is there any clear surveillance or policing?
EDGE CONDITIONS

1) How is the boundary identified?
   a. Change of paving
   b. Change of grade
   c. Fence
   d. Walls
   e. Vegetation
   f. Other

2) Is it open to or closed off from its surroundings?
   a. Open – site defining elements have no vertical components and are not physical barriers; may be a solid line in plan
   b. Semi-open – site defining elements are vertical but are not barriers; not a solid line in plan
   c. Semi-closed – Site defining elements are vertical and are barriers; may be solid line or broken line in plan
   d. Closed – Site defining elements are vertical barriers; unbroken line in plan

3) Are there clear entrances and if so how many?
   Yes \hspace{1cm} No \hspace{1cm} #: 

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

1) Is there intensity in the use of colour?
   Yes: \hspace{1cm} Somewhat: \hspace{1cm} No

2) What is the support material of the intervention, or the dominant material around it?

3) What is the paving or ground material around the intervention?
4) How textured is the material associated with the intervention? Describe the texture.
   a) Very
   b) Moderately
   c) Mildly
   d) Not at all

5) How textured is the ground surface around the intervention?
   a) Very
   b) Moderately
   c) Mildly
   d) Not at all

6) Are there any changes of grade in the site?
   Yes: N/A
   a. Sloped
   b. Stepped
   c. Terraced
   d. Other:

7) How steep are slopes on site?
   a. Steep
   b. Moderate
   c. Mild

**THE UNEXPECTED: CIRCULATION AND UNPREDICTABLE ELEMENTS**

1) Is there anything unexpected or surprising about the existing site?
   Yes: No

2) Are there any unpredictable elements on site?
   Yes: No

3) Is there an element of risk on site?
   Yes: No
4) Is there a sense of tension on site?
   Yes: No

5) Does the site inspire awe?
   Yes: No

6) What elements or characteristics contribute to any mystery of the site? N/A

SPATIAL QUALITIES

1) Does the site create a sense of intimacy?
   Yes Somewhat
   No

2) Is there a sense of enclosure?
   Yes: Somewhat:
   No

3) Is the site full or empty?
   a. Full:
   b. Semi-full
   c. Mostly empty
   d. Empty

4) Is the site bright or dark?
   a. Bright
   b. Normal
   c. Dark

5) How is the site illuminated?
   a. Natural light only
b. Lighting

c. Both

6) Does the site feel safe or unsafe?

a. Safe
b. Mostly safe
c. Somewhat unsafe
d. Unsafe

IMPLIES PROGRAM: CLARITY AND VARIETY

1) How clear is the implied and intended function of the site?

a. Very clear/unambiguous:

b. A main function is mostly clear:

c. There are several possibilities:

d. It is completely ambiguous:

2) Are there evident secondary uses and what are they?

Yes: No

3) Are there a variety of programs accommodated on the site? If so how many?

Yes: (#: ) No

4) How is the site’s intended program expressed? N/A

a. Signage
b. Site elements
c. Other:

CENTRALITY AND FREQUENCY OF USE

1) If there is a clear intended function/use for the site, is it being used for this?
   a. Yes/yes                         b. Yes/no                       c. Unknown                d. N/A

2) To what degree is the site abandoned?
   a. Actively being used
   b. Some use is evident
   c. May or may not be in use
   d. No other signs of use

3) Are there designed and maintained elements on site?
   a. Most
   b. Some
   c. Few
   d. None

SPATIAL COMPLEXITY

1) Are there multiple distinct sub-spaces within the site?
   Yes                                  No

2) Are they homogeneous?                                 N/A
   Yes                                      No

3) Are they fragmented (disconnected, lacking transition, incongruous)?                   N/A
   Yes                            No

4) How is/are the sub-space(s) defined?                 N/A
   a. Site furniture
   b. Planting
   c. Barriers

84
d. Bollards

e. Change of paving

f. Change of grade

g. Fence

h. Walls

i. Other

5) How does the site interact with all 5 senses?

a. Sight:

b. Hearing:

c. Smell

d. Touch:

e. Taste:

SPATIAL SEQUENCE

1) Describe the approach to the site:

2) How does the scale change across spaces?

ANIMATION WITH SITE ELEMENTS

1) Are there props or elements on site that people can engage with?

   Yes: props / elements

   No

2) Are there movable elements on the site?

   Yes:

   No

3) What moving parts or loose parts are on site?

4) Is there site furniture present?

   Yes:

   No
a. Benches
b. Garbage bins
c. Tables
d. Seating
e. Light standards
f. Bike racks
g. Bollards
h. Planters
i. Other

5) Does the intervention respond to an invitation or ‘challenge’ on the site?

Yes
No
APPENDIX C: POST-SITE VISIT ASSESSMENT

CONTEXT

3) What land uses border the site?

4) What circulation networks run by or through the site?

EDGE CONDITIONS

4) Is the site defined or undefined? (in plan)
   a. Defined – a solid line surrounds the site and gives it a clear shape
   b. Semi-defined – a broken or partial line defines the site; shape is incomplete
   c. Undefined – there is no clear line or shape to the site; open plan

5) How much of the site limit line can confidently be drawn?
   a. ~25%
   b. ~50%
   c. ~75%
   d. ~100%

6) Is it generally accessible or inaccessible? Describe the transition from outside to inside.
   a. Very accessible:
   b. Mostly accessible:
   c. Mostly inaccessible:
   d. Totally inaccessible:

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

8) Describe the slopes or grade changes: N/A
THE UNEXPECTED: CIRCULATION AND UNPREDICTABLE ELEMENTS

7) Is circulation on the site unpredictable or labyrinthine?
   Yes: No

IMPLIED PROGRAM: CLARITY AND VARIETY

5) Is the implicit function/use of the site permanent or transient?
   a. Permanent
   b. Unknown
   c. Transient
   d. N/A

6) Are there peak hours for the main function/use of the site?
   Yes: No

CENTRALITY AND FREQUENCY OF USE

4) Is the site isolated from the surroundings?
   Yes Somewhat No

5) Is the site on the edge of an area or is it an in between space between two areas?
   Yes No

6) Is the site a leftover space (often negative space)?
   Yes No

7) Does this site seem to have a central function for the city/neighborhood/area?
   Yes: No
8) Is the site clearly part of any larger networks?
   
   Yes:  No

SPATIAL COMPLEXITY

6) Is the form of the site simple or complex?
   
   a. Simple – undetailed; smooth or linear
   b. Complex – elaborated; crenelated or textured
   c. Other:

7) How does the scale of the site relate to the intended function? Is it large or small given the use?
   
   N/A

ANIMATION WITH SITE ELEMENTS

6) Does the intervention make use of pre-existing official infrastructure or a pre-existing framework?
   
   Yes:  No

   Describe:
APPENDIX D: MAPS OF WALKS

Red ‘X’s on the maps show the locations of the citizen-generated urban intervention. Maps are not to scale.
APPENDIX E: SAMPLE OF ANSWERS FROM SITE ASSESSMENTS

This sample shows the answers for all 30 sites in the ‘Edge Conditions’ section of the site assessments. For full written questions refer to Appendices B and C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE #</th>
<th>QUESTION # →</th>
<th>Post-site visit Assessment Question 1 (a,b,c)</th>
<th>On-site Assessment Question 1 (a,b,c,d,e,f)</th>
<th>On-site Assessment Question 2 (a,b,c,d)</th>
<th>Post-site visit Assessment Question 2 (a,b,c,d)</th>
<th>On-site Assessment Question 3 (yes/no);#</th>
<th>Post-site visit Assessment Question 3 (a,b,c,d)</th>
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APPENDIX F: 11 CATEGORIES WITH KEY WORDS LISTED

CONTEXT

Keywords in the literature:

- Proximity
- Adjacencies
- Crossroads
- Intersections
- Connectivity
- Permeability
- Morphology
- Juxtaposition

VIEWS AND VISIBILITY

Keywords in the literature:

- Views
- Visibility
- Exposure
EDGE CONDITIONS: SHAPE AND LINE

Keywords in the literature:

- Accessible to inaccessible
- Number of entrances
- Edge conditions
- Boundary conditions
- Walls
- Fences
- Thresholds (density)
- Transitions
- Porosity
- “hedged round”
- Permeability
- Openness / enclosure
- Defined / undefined
- Determinate / indeterminate

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Keywords in the literature:

- Materiality
- Texture
- Changes of grade
- Orientation
- Slope
- Changes of level

THE UNEXPECTED: CIRCULATION AND UNPREDICTABLE ELEMENTS

Keywords in the literature:

- Unpredictability
- Risk
- Uncertainty
- Unexpectedness
- Tension
- Struggle
- Labyrinthine
- Mystery
- Sublime
- Whimsical

SPATIAL QUALITIES

Keywords in the literature:

- Tightness
- Scale
- Intimacy
- Size
- Openness
- Closed
- Enclosure
- Light
- Shadow
- Private
- Safe / unsafe
- Control

**IMPLIED PROGRAM: CLARITY AND VARIETY**

Keywords in the literature:

- Fluidity of meaning
- Mixed uses
- Diversity of use
- Open-endedness
- Function
- Zones
- Roles
- Programmed / unprogrammed
- Intended use
- Former use
- Ambiguity / unambiguous

CENTRALITY AND FREQUENCY OF USE

Keywords in the literature:

- Leftover
- Interstitial
- Liminality
- Marginality
- Forbidden
- Isolated
- “Hedged round”
- Set apart
- Under-designed
- Difficult
- Abandoned
- Empty
SPATIAL COMPLEXITY

Keywords in the literature:

- Varied form
- Diverse
- Homogeneity / heterogeneity of form
- Niches
- Recesses
- Physical order / disorder
- Multi-sensory
- Density
- Crowding
- Liveliness
- Intensity
- Complex
- Spatial complexity
- Form
- Fragmentary

SPATIAL SEQUENCE

Keywords in the literature:

- Spatial sequencing
- Theme
- Pattern
- Approach
- Shifts in scale

ANIMATION WITH SITE ELEMENTS

Keywords in the literature:

- Props
- Triangulation
- Manipulability
- Moveable elements
- Semi-fixed
- Moving objects
- Loose parts
- Street furniture
- Orienting elements
- Adaptability
- Transformable
- Changeable
- Official infrastructure
- Frameworks
- Flexibility
- Extendible