

The Public Spaces of Pandemic

A case study of Vesterbro, Denmark

by

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A thesis presented for the degree of
Master of Urban Planning and Management



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Title: The public spaces of pandemic: A case study of Vesterbro, Denmark

Degree: MSc Urban Planning and Management

Project: Master Thesis

Project period: April 2021 - August 2021

Supervisor: Kristian Olesen

Pages: 70 written pages

Appendix: 13 pages

Hand in date: 20 August 2021



Nur Ceren Cakmak Dam

20.08.2021

Date

The report's content is freely available, but publication (with references) must only be done in agreement with the author.

Abstract

In the beginning of 2020 world was hit with COVID-19 pandemic and metropolitan cities were hit the hardest. Urban life had to continue under new circumstances. Countries reacted to this state of emergency differently. Denmark implemented lockdown to contain the spread of the virus by limiting gatherings to maximum 10 people, closing schools, universities, daycare, entertainment and public leisure facilities. Life in Denmark was on hold. People adapted to the new regulations and continued their life with social distance. The perception of urban life has changed and people started to avoid crowded spaces. As a result, people claimed the public spaces within their close proximity and turned local public spaces into their outdoor living rooms. This situation also shed light into vulnerabilities of dense urban areas like Vesterbro. As a district that already suffers from lack of space and increasing population, the citizens of Vesterbro felt the pressure even more. The lack of public space increased the demand on existing public spaces and the increased demand resulted with reduced the quality those public spaces. The pandemic changed the way citizens of Vesterbro evaluate their public space and unlocked their desires to have a good public space. The online survey and structured interviews with the citizens and third places allowed me to draw a general perception of public space after COVID-19. People perceived existing public spaces as crowded, dirty, loud, and small. On the other hand they also perceived it is local, friendly, and lively. Their preferences of public space was to have more open, green and active public spaces. The existing public spaces offered a lot of unique qualities that allowed users to internalize themselves with the space but they weren't satisfying and needed improvements. Lastly these results allowed me to give my interpretation of qualities for good public space in the light of COVID-19 which are: safety, close proximity, space/attraction balance, connection with nature, engagement/comfort balance and flexible space on top of the classic pre-pandemic good public space approach from the forefathers of public space studies. This result led me to study the value of public space and conclude my research with a final remark: In order to create good public spaces we need to change the way we plan cities towards more human oriented, resilient and sustainable cities for all.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Kristian Olesen for his patience and understanding on my endless academic journey. I would like to thank Mira for being the best friend she is and helping me with brainstorming and pushing me to finish my research. Without her I would have quit my degree a year ago. I am extremely grateful for my husband, Kasper for his endless trust and support and our son Storm for his patience while I was away so many days. Lastly I would like to show my gratitude to everyone that participated in my survey. Without them this research would not happen.

Reading Guide

The Harvard referencing system is used in this report, which means that authors and interviewees are referred to as [Last Name, Year], and quotes are referred to as [Last Name, Year, Page Number]. Moreover, different figures are numbered by both the chapter and figure number. For instance, the first figure in chapter 2 gets the number 2.1, while the fourth figure in chapter 4, gets the number 4.4.

All conducted surveys and structured interviews are recorded and included in appendix. The survey was in both English and Danish and I had to conduct some of the interviews in Danish. Therefore the answers are in both languages. I didn't translate the answers directly to not lose some on translation.

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Chapter 1

The New World of Pandemic

Urban planning has always been evolving in order to be the solution to the different needs and challenges of the new world such as globalization, climate change, sustainability, among others. Every now and then urban planning faces a paradigm shift which brings planners to rethink the way cities are planned. The recent COVID-19 pandemic took over the world so fast that no cities had the chance to be prepared for it. Cities became the forefront of the pandemic crisis which brought various vulnerabilities of cities into the light [Martínez and Short, 2021; UN-Habitat, 2021; Pozoukidou and Chatziyiannaki, 2021]. A lot of new actions needed to be taken with the new health regulations such as social distancing, crowd limitations, use of space, test centers, vaccination centers, among many others. Every authority has been coming up with solutions to make their city get back on its feet with the new "normal" and adapt the changes as fast as possible. Most of those changes and adaptations took place in public spaces. As a result, public spaces gained a new meaning. This new meaning raised some questions: how important are public spaces actually? Are we planning public spaces to be used to its maximum potential? Does urban planning need a paradigm shift?

In this chapter I study how pandemic challenged cities on their public space. First, I look into how the COVID-19 pandemic played out in metropolitan cities and what kind of changes came with it. Second, I introduce new public space understanding that was born in order to adapt COVID-19 challenges. The whole world was affected from COVID-19 and every country reacted different to it. Shortly after COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic, Denmark took drastic measures to avoid spread of the virus. In the last section I will introduce how Danish cities and public spaces has been affected since March 2020.

1.1 Pre-pandemic cities under stress

In the last 20-30 years cities have been centralised where main economic, social and commuting points are tightly gathered in the downtown. With advancing technologies

like motorization, cities became denser and urban life got faster. As a result, today more than half of the world population is living in cities and this number is only expected to grow [UN-Habitat, 2020]. Throughout history of imperialism, industrialism, neoliberalism and so on, cities became the heart of capitalism. While every city started to fight for economic growth and try to be ‘the Paris of’, ‘the New York of’, ‘the Vegas of’ whichever country, the destruction grew more and more. As a result capitalism started to consume everything, even the sustainability ideology became a buzzword for marketing strategies.

People are moving to cities for all the opportunities cities present [UN-Habitat, 2020]. As a result of this increasing demand, cities became denser, roads started to get wider and eventually open spaces start to disappear. These conditions in the big cities, started to cause several health risks for the citizens such as obesity, asthma, diabetes, depression, among others [Krämer et al., 2011]. On top of that, the recent pandemic, COVID-19, showcased how big cities were not prepared for a health crisis. The high connectivity of metropolitan cities created pandemic spread zones and thus the virus spread faster in high density cities [Batty, 2020; UN-Habitat, 2021]. Fast moving car oriented cities with large supermarkets and grocery stores took hundreds and thousands of people on peak hours and created the perfect opportunity for the virus to spread faster and further [Biel, 2020; UN-Habitat, 2021]. What has been seen as an opportunity and convenience in big cities, caused them to suffer from COVID-19 to a great extent.

Being in close, crowded spaces started to become a risk factor of a possible spread of COVID-19 [UN-Habitat, 2021]. The understanding of what is crowded and what is not has changed. People started to avoid standing still at a place or even passing through crowded areas [Gehl, 2020b]. Countries, regions and cities started to face new challenges [UN-Habitat, 2021].

The over-crowded cities were already sick but now the sickness was spreading like wildfire in the shape of the pandemic [Biel, 2020]. Countries are trying to get back to normal daily life under the new regulations while getting hit with a second and third wave of virus spread.

We knew the needs of the cities, we knew the importance of digitalization and resilient cities. Hundreds of scientists talked about climate change and that we needed to prepare cities for disasters and that we needed cities to be more resilient. However, the current situation made it more obvious than ever that the climate



Figure 1.1: Wall art in Chile in 2019 reads: “We won’t get back to normal because normal was the problem.” Source: Javcollao, distributed under CC BY-SA 4.0 licence

change action was not enough for countries to take drastic measures and start the change. Yes, no one could have prepared us for the COVID-19 pandemic but we could have planned cities to be more resilient. In that manner, the COVID-19 health crisis was the shock the world needed to work for a more resilient and sustainable future [Mehta, 2020].

Now there are vaccines, and people wonder whether things will go back to normal or not. But the “*normal*” was the problem in the first place. The figure 1.1 above became widespread on social media regarding the normalization during the pandemic. However this message was before the pandemic breakout, people of Chile and many other countries around the world has been protesting because the *normal* was the problem. Now as things are even worse all around the world, one can only question, do we even want to go back to *normal*?

The new normal

After the announcement of the pandemic, a panic took all over the world. News reported people stocking on toilet paper, raiding grocery stores, emptying hand-sanitizer and mask stocks, etc [Altstedter and Hong, 2020; Mao, 2020]. As we learned more about the COVID-19 and governments started to take measures, people relatively calmed down. Words like quarantine, self-isolation, lockdown and curfew became normal. “Stay Home” was the new motto for every country for over a year.

From personal experience and from everyone I know, from various parts of the world, we have all been affected by the lockdown, been forced into home-offices and online education, and thereby sacrificing a lot of social contact and outdoor time. Some countries applied curfews to certain age groups or everyone and some other countries limited open air gatherings to certain amounts of people [IMF, 2021]. People who couldn’t go to gym anymore needed space to workout, kids that couldn’t go to school or daycare needed playgrounds to play. Transportation habits have also changed, people preferred to walk, bike or use their private car more than before [Mehta, 2020]. Life that needed to continue, continued under the new pandemic conditions. People had to learn what social distance meant and while wearing masks became mandatory, we had to evolve with these new measures and incorporate them into our daily lives. COVID-19 brought new issues with our urban experiences. It affected the way we commute, communicate, work and socialize, among other things.

1.2 Public space under stress

Public space plays a crucial role in cities. It is where urban experiences are created and communities are shaped [Carr et al., 1992]. So, what happens to public space when people start to look each other as a virus, a death threat? The fear of pandemic created fear towards fast moving crowded public spaces, because close proximity to a stranger brought risk of contamination. In order to control the spread of COVID-19, different governments followed different safety regulations, some public spaces got limitation due to social distancing while others faced full lockdown [Bravo and Tieben, 2020]. Figure 1.2 shows some examples of public space lockdown all around the world:



(a) Melbourne, playground



(b) Ohio, little free library



(c) OC, beaches



(d) Wageningen, Balauwe Kamer natural monument

Figure 1.2: Public spaces around the world closed due to COVID-19

Photo credits: a) Mallis, CC BY-SA 2.0 licence b) Keck, CC0 1.0 licence, c) Loar, CC BY-SA 4.0 licence, d) Dalen, CC BY-SA 4.0 licence

Streets and squares were deserted in many cities, so much so that people reported wild life taking over the cities from Turkey, India, Israel, Thailand, UK, among others [News, 2020; Kretchmer, 2020]. Third places also took their share during the lockdown, and as a result on the streets and squares that where once filled with people socialising were left with collected chairs and tables, and “sorry closed due to COVID-19” signs. These public gathering places were missed greatly because they give the citizens a sense of belonging and community through human contact [Mehaffy et al., 2020; Martínez and Short, 2021].

This was the pinnacle of the disaster for public spaces. We were told how to live and what to do: stay home, keep distance. And when we didn’t stay home we were watched by the police and warned for socialising in public spaces that was open for use. In all this

darkness, a lot of future scenarios were written but most importantly, a new public space understanding rose.

The new public space

During the crisis neighborhoods gained a new importance [UN-Habitat, 2021; Mehta, 2020]. Amenities within walking distance became necessities, and life savers, and lack of those amenities were felt more than ever before [Mehta, 2020]. COVID-19 revealed disadvantages of the fast planned residential neighborhoods as they usually couldn't meet the public space needs of the citizens compared to historical neighborhoods that has grown naturally or cities that are planned decentralized [Hsu, 2020]. Local authorities felt the need to create solutions fast to meet the new public space needs. The concept of city proximity and tactical urbanism has been on the agenda of several cities around the world. Tactical urbanism was perhaps one of the first actions cities took in the fight against the pandemic. Moreover, during the pandemic people escaped to public spaces and started use them as their living rooms [Mehta, 2020].

The stale state of life destroyed the use borders of public spaces. Once over crowded with vehicles roads all of a sudden became an empty canvas for citizens to use. Roads became playgrounds for kids, sidewalks became seating areas for neighbors to socialize, street junctions became the stages for small gatherings, squares became open air movie theaters, parks became yoga classes and many more. In the more dense areas of urbanized areas, even though they had more limited spaces, they were also used to the fullest [Mehta, 2020]. Even balconies became public space. Figure 1.3 shows some examples of urban experiences that changed due to COVID-19.

Moreover, during the “reopening” of cities, people were still avoiding closed spaces but wanted to go back to their long-awaited third places. As a result, a global movement has started and roadside parking spaces, or any open area that was available to put some tables and chairs, became new serving areas to third places [Hurtado, 2020; Hsu, 2020]. In many cities local authorities took the lockdown as an opportunity to either close or limit traffic so they could create more pedestrian friendly public spaces [Martínez and Short, 2021]. This did not only boost morale of people, but also created more enjoyable public spaces [Hsu, 2020].

This pandemic, as of right now, may look like its losing its potency and people may have adapted social distancing into their daily lives but cities still have a long way to go. Cities need to be prepared for what might come next while not forgetting the existing problems. It is time to move on from neoliberal, market driven, top-down urban planning and remember the human scale, and start healing from communities. In other words it is time to *“think global, act local”*. With this new emerging value and role, I believe that



(a) Outdoor cinema with social distance, Argentina



(b) Visit on the driveway, USA



(c) New serving areas, USA



(d) Socializing on the balcony, UK

Figure 1.3: Newly defined public space experiences around the world

Photo credits: a) Ministerio de Cultura de la Nación, CC BY-SA 2.0 licence b) Vanhorn, CC BY-SA 4.0 licence, c) Naureckas, CC BY-SA 2.0 licence, d) Glover, CC BY-SA 2.0 licence

public spaces are the perfect place to start the change.

1.3 Danish Context

In March 2020, Denmark implemented lockdown with several restrictions such as, prohibition of events with more than 10 people, closure of schools, universities and daycare centers, closures of entertainment, hospitality and public leisure facilities, among others. As a result public spaces became the only source of socializing. According to a study done by Gehl [2020a], COVID-19 didn't change Danish people's need for fresh air and exercise but, there was a general increase on public space use for recreation, play and exercise purposes. This increased use sometimes caused over crowding issues in public space and as a result in some cases Police stepped in to enforce gathering and social distancing rules [Gehl, 2020a]. Danish people are very active people and this lockdown meant they needed to take their sport activities outdoors. Number of people going for jogging and training became so overwhelming, Danish authorities decided to restrict outdoor gym facilities to be used and in some areas enforced one way direction for runners. When the weather started to get better, people flooded public spaces and it became obvious that public spaces are a crucial part of urban life here in Denmark. The effects of COVID-19 were felt the most by citizens of Copenhagen, due to it is high population and density.

Vesterbro is one of the 13 districts of Copenhagen. It is located between the inner city of Copenhagen and the city of Frederiksberg. Vesterbro is a critical district to study because while it is one of the most densely urbanized area, it is also the district with the least green area for it's population.

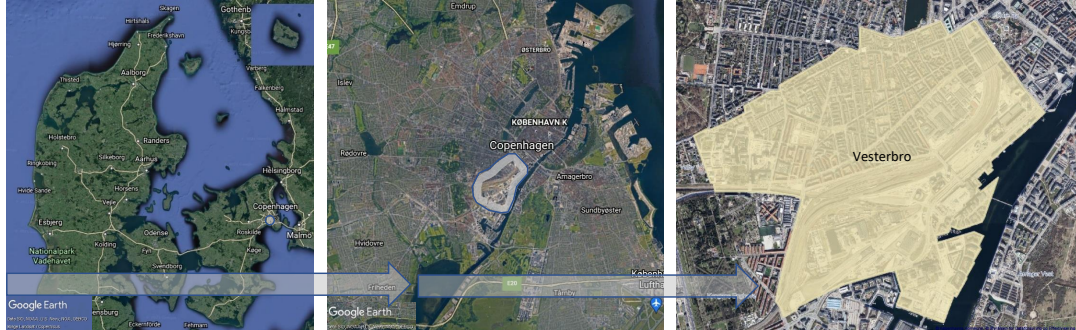


Figure 1.4: Location of Vesterbro. The maps are taken from Google Earth and Copenhagen Municipality [n.d.]

To this day Vesterbro is still growing with new development projects and even before the pandemic the local committee has pointed out that they fear the lack of space will be an issue [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017]. As a solution, the vision for Vesterbro was to create flexible urban spaces that could also help reduce the inequalities and help social integration [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017]. And then COVID-19 happened. It quickly caught my interest to study the public spaces of Vesterbro because public space was already on the agenda. With the lack of space and already overwhelming demand, I couldn't hold myself but wonder, how did existing public spaces in Vesterbro got affected from COVID-19? Did people make the most out of every single public space they had? Were there any public space that prevented people to use and thus became wasted urban space?

All these questions and the empirical problem with public spaces and COVID-19 especially in metropolitan cities created my research theme. I aim to explore the changes in public space in dense urban settlements for the sake of future planning principles. I decided to first and foremost study people and their perception of public space after COVID-19, and then define good public space around those definitions. In order to study that, I formulated following research question:

How did COVID-19 change the perception of public space and how can we create good public spaces in densely populated urban areas like Vesterbro?

Under the main research question, I formulated three sub-questions for analysis and interpretation of the research. The general structure of the research follows table 1.1.

<p style="text-align: center;">Empirical Problem</p> <p>During the COVID-19 crises, open public spaces gained a new meaning, importance. As dense cities became the spread zones of pandemic, their vulnerability in terms of lack of good open public spaces became more obvious. Vesterbro is a growing city that was already struggling with available open public spaces. In these dire times where public space gains a new meaning and importance, citizens of Vesterbro feel the pressure for good public space even more than ever.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Conceptual Problem</p> <p>How can this research conceptualize good public spaces in the light of recent COVID-19 crisis?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Methodological Problem</p> <p>How can this research analyze quality of public spaces in a dense neighborhood?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Research Question</p> <p>How did COVID-19 change the perception of public space and how can we create good public spaces in densely populated urban areas like Vesterbro?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Analytical Sub-questions</p> <p>How did citizens of Vesterbro's perception of public space change after COVID-19?</p> <p>What qualities do public spaces in Vesterbro have to offer?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Critical Sub-question</p> <p>What is a good public space and what is the value of it in the light of COVID-19?</p>

Table 1.1: Research Overview

Structure of the Research

Apart from the introduction and conclusion, this research can be divided into three, chapter 2 and 3 create the scientific base for my research, chapter 4 and 5 analyze and gather empirical data, and chapter 6 interprets the data with theoretical background.

In **Chapter 2 and 3**, I study the literature on public space. I begin with defining public space and study how good public space is defined in literature. Then I study what planners say about post-pandemic public space. As a result I develop a theoretical framework which creates my baseline for post-pandemic good public space criteria. From there on I continue with building my research base through my methodological approach. First and foremost I present my scientific approach to this research and explain how I decided to execute this research through my choice of methods. **Chapter 4 and 5** I introduce my case area and

analyse public spaces in Vesterbro. First I gather my data about citizens experiences and preferences towards public spaces and then analyse existing key public spaces and their qualities. The analysis allows me to gain inside knowledge about the public spaces of Vesterbro. This part plays a big role for this research as I believe we cannot plan a good public space without listening the needs of citizens. In **Chapter 6**, I interpret my analysis into a more general good public space understanding with my personal observations and describe value of a good public space especially in dire times like COVID-19 crisis.

Chapter 2

The Places We Go

In a lifetime people usually spend their time with work/school, sleep, eat and enjoy leisure [Ortiz-Ospina et al., 2020]. And Oldenburg [1999] claims that we spent our life between, work, home and third places. Furthermore, according to a study done by OECD [2021] the average time spent on leisure and social life activities between the age group of 15-64 is 4,8 hours daily. Some of those activities are taking place in public space. These studies were before COVID-19 crisis. As we know the urban activity we experience right now is a bit different than before. It is important to remember that COVID-19 is not the first pandemic that changed the way we think cities, nor will it be the last. Through out the history, we learnt from our experiences of disasters and create more resilient cities. The COVID-19 outbreak is no different [Bravo and Tieben, 2020; Megahed and Ghoneim, 2020]. There are lessons to be learned and methods to be changed to create more resilient public spaces, cities.

This part of the research starts with a short description of public space and continue with studying the literature on what makes a public space good. After that, it continues with a COVID-19 take on public spaces in literature. In this chapter, I am not aiming to criticize but simply create a collective understanding of the literature on the topic and construct a framework for creating good public spaces, so that I can use it to collect empirical data to be analyzed and interpreted.

2.1 Public space

Public space as a term may be quite elusive and every discipline can view it from a different lens. Nevertheless, to define it in the physical world I will be quoting from Carr et al. [1992]:

“public spaces as open, publicly accessible places where people go for group or individual activities. While public spaces can take many forms and may assume various names such as plazas, malls, and playgrounds,

they all share common ingredients. Public spaces generally contain public amenities such as walkways, benches, and water; physical and visual elements, such as paving or lawn, and vegetation that support activities. Whether planned or found, they are usually open and accessible to the public. Some are under public owner ship and management, whereas others are privately owned but open to the public.”

[Carr et al., 1992,p.50]

According to Carr et al. [1992] public spaces can occur naturally or by planning. Natural occurrences are when people take over an untended area and give a social meaning to it by repeatedly using it. Whereas planned public space occur with the intention of authority or land owner. This research will focus on the planned public spaces, in other words public spaces that can be seen on the local plan. Such as the white places on the figure-ground map of Rome as shown on figure 2.1 that shows planned public places clearly.

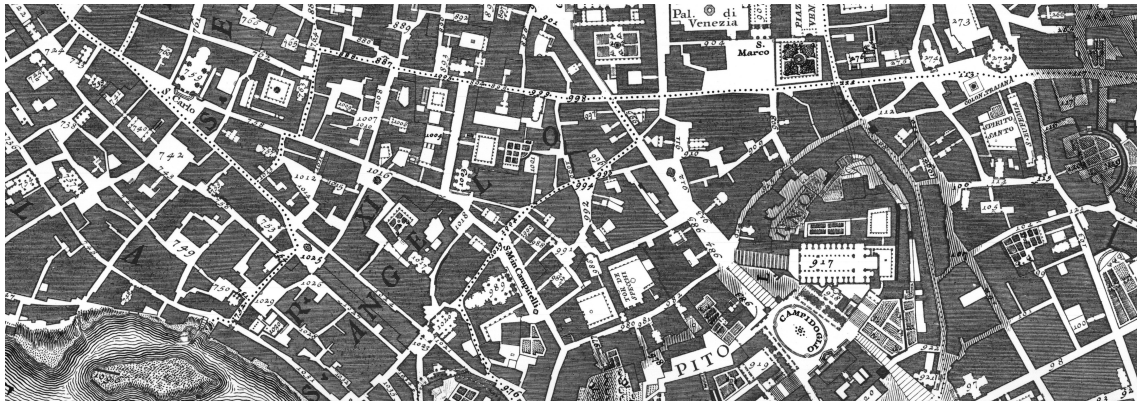


Figure 2.1: Cut out from plan of Rome by Giambattista Nolli, 1748. In this mapping technique shows both open places and free to enter buildings. (Source: <http://nolli.uoregon.edu/>, accessed on June 30, 2021)

Furthermore public space is not just a physical area. It is where public life takes place. [Gehl, 2006] argues that open public space is where outdoor activity takes place and these activities are created by the opportunities the planned public space grants. [Oldenburg, 1999] calls these public spaces as “*third places: the core settings of informal public life*”[p.16]. Third places cannot be defined by one or two uses and names, because they are specific to the culture and the history of the area. They change in time with new generations, new events and so on. As Oldenburg describes it:

“The third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.”

[Oldenburg, 1999,p.16]

However, for the sake of this research I will be focusing on open air public spaces including the uses of indoor public spaces on open air public spaces such as, spaces with pavement that usually have fast pace activities like streets, squares, waterfront, and spaces with natural elements that usually have slow pace activities such as parks, playgrounds, beaches etc. In other words my definition of public space is the “left out” places when buildings are removed.

2.2 Good Public Space

“Public space is the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds. The streets, squares, and parks of a city give form to the ebb and flow of human exchange. These dynamic spaces are an essential counterpart to the more settled places and routines of work and home life, providing the channels for movement, the nodes of communication, and the common grounds for play and relaxation. There are pressing needs that public space can help people to satisfy, significant human rights that it can be shaped to define and protect, and special cultural meanings that it can best convey.”

[Carr et al., 1992,p.3]

According to the public space definition of Carr et al. [1992], it is where public life takes place. Furthermore, not every public space can create public life. Carr et al. [1992] argue that, a good public space should respond to the needs of the citizens. It should be accessible to everyone and be safe for every citizen to co-exist in proximity to each other. And most importantly. *“a great public space will evolve and endure, well loved by people in its reach, adding joy and meaning to their lives.”* [Carr et al., 1992,p.21].

Gehl [2006] argues that there are three kind of outdoor activities that takes place in open air public spaces, *necessary activities*, *optional activities* and *social activities*. He furthermore argues that in a public space with poor quality, only necessary activities take place whereas in a good quality paved and greed spaces a great spectrum of activities take place. In other words the more quality physical environment, the more outdoor activities:

According to observations done by Gehl [2006], the human activity in a public space appears to be more valuable and attractive than most of the other attractions a space offer. We don’t have all the answers to create good public spaces for more human activity and they don’t happen overnight but we know that a good public space is the soul of that city. What we know is, according to Gehl [2006] in order to promote optional activities the public space should offer the opportunities and in order to promote social activities the public space should offer a chance of interaction to people that are sharing it [Gehl, 2006]. Even though the physical planning cannot promise social activities, it *“can affect the*

possibility for meeting, seeing and hearing people - possibilities that both take on a quality of their own and become important as a background and starting point for the other forms of contact.” [Gehl, 2006,p.13].

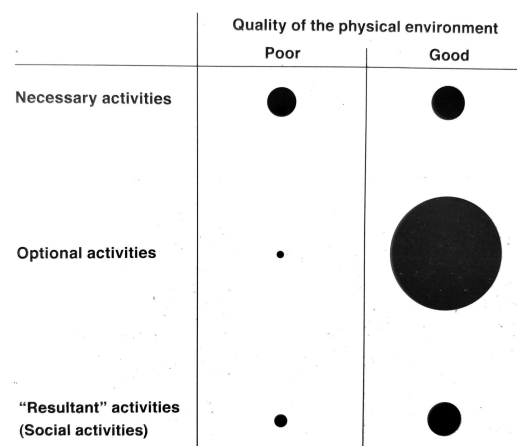


Figure 2.2: Graphic representation of the relationship between the quality of outdoor spaces and the rate of occurrence of outdoor activities by Gehl [2006,p.11]

neighborhood park has complexity of uses, a strong center that can be used as a stage, offers solutions to enjoy the weather and have clear borders to feel safe [Jacobs, 1961].

Even small alterations to a public space can improve the quality of it and thus create more human activity [Whyte, 2001 - 2010]. These alterations can be as small as providing flexible seating areas for comfort and connectivity and planting trees to provide shading and sunlight at the same time. But what makes a public space successful? According to Jacobs [1961], a successful public space is good sidewalks and good neighborhood parks that are lively, well-watched and continuously used. A good sidewalk that has a clear border of public and private, has eyes upon it at all times, has safe zones for kids and has user continuity through out the day. A good

According to several public space evaluations of Projects for Public Spaces organization [n.d.], four common qualities seem to make a public space successful. These good public spaces; have good accessibility, offer different uses and activities, are comfortable and pleasing to look at, and are used for socialization. In order to understand weather a public space is good or not PPS [n.d.] presents a diagram as shown in figure 2.3. According to this diagram good public space offers good accessibility and linkage. It is easy and convenient to arrive and visible through and through. In addition, a good public space offers interesting edges that makes people feel safe and welcoming. Furthermore, a good public space is comfortable and has good image. The comfort promotes safety and cleanness and gives people options to sit wherever they want and thus invite people to use the space. This brings the uses and activities a good public space offers. They are the main reasons for people to come before anything else and continue to come back. Activities and uses make a public space different than others and create liveliness. And nothing says more successful public space than a lively one. Lastly, if a public space can become sociable, then it becomes more local than anything else. In such a place people start to create new connections with each other and create neighborhood bonds. The public space becomes an identity [PPS, n.d.].

What Makes a Great Place?

Project
for Public
Spaces

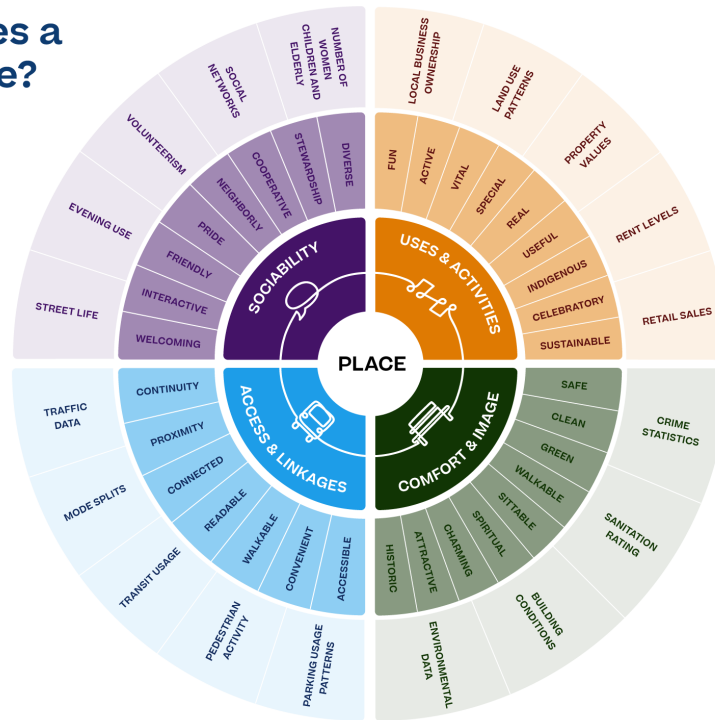


Figure 2.3: The Place Diagram by PPS [n.d.]

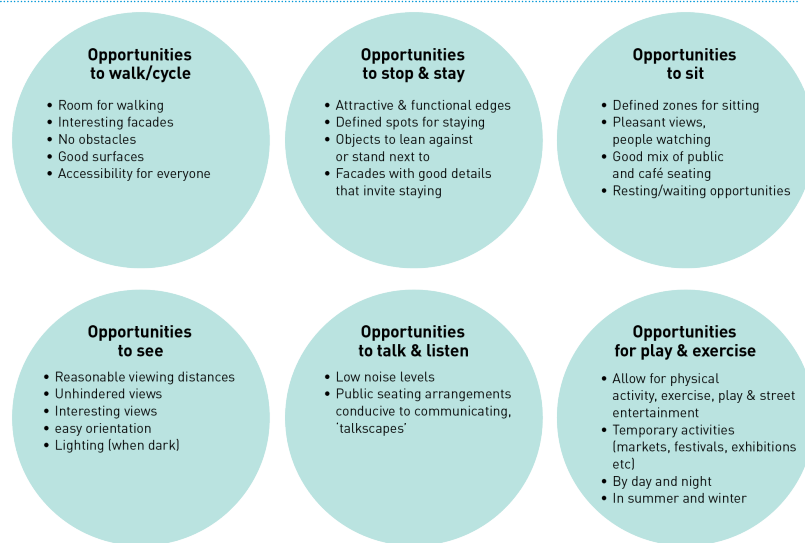
In addition to the aforementioned characteristics of a good public place, according to the several studies done by the Center for Public Space Research, Gehl et al. [2006] present 12 key qualities for a good public space. The logic behind the three themes of protection, comfort and enjoyment comes from asking what keeps people out of a space and what invites people to use a space. In that manner, [Gehl et al., 2006] came with the conclusion that people will avoid spending time in a space if it doesn't offer basic protection from motorised vehicles, unpleasant weather conditions and noise. On top of these a public space that doesn't make walking, using a wheelchair, standing, sitting, seeing, and conversing comfortable, will not encourage people to stay. And lastly, what makes a public space great is; positive aesthetic and sensory experiences, opportunities to take advantage of local climate, and human-scale elements [Gehl et al., 2006].

12 Urban Quality Criteria

Protection



Comfort



Enjoyment

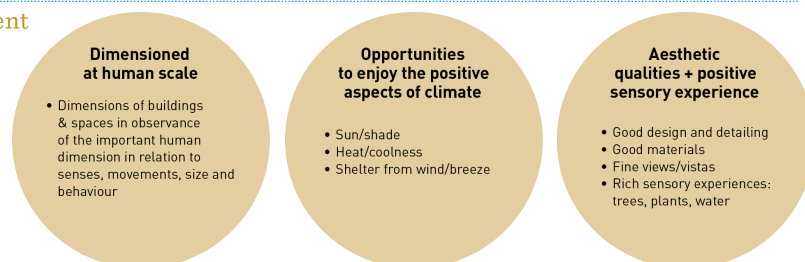


Figure 2.4: 12 public space quality criteria introduced by Gehl et al. [2006] and further developed by Gehl People [2018]

Even though they are portrayed different, in literature many of the good public space approaches have similarities. And most importantly I found out that there is a common understanding of what qualifies as a good public space: city spaces that people, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, ability, and any other diversity, enjoy freely and flourishes with human activities. As a result, I decided to develop five themes that a good public

space should qualify with respect to literature study:

- Safety
- Accessibility
- Comfort
- Enjoyment
- Sociability

1. Safety: The safe street criterion from Jacobs [1961] can be applied to every open public space. And the mentioned safety is not an authority surveillance but the more natural citizen surveillance. In order for that to happen both Jacobs [1961] and Gehl [2010] agree that a good public space gives a purpose for people to visit and engage. As a result, people create a lively public realm on the public spaces. The argument is that people will attract more people and what people love the most is watch other people and thus be the eyes of the public space. For this surveillance to work better, a public space should not offer corners that are closed to public view. Furthermore, mixed uses around the public space attracts different people at different times of the day and create overlapping human activity. Yet another element to create a safe public space is adequate lighting at dark hours of the day. And lastly public spaces are for pedestrians therefore they should offer protection against traffic [Gehl, 2010].

2. Accessibility: A good public space should be accessible to everyone, according to Gehl [2010] and PPS [n.d.] it should offer good surfaces and no obstacles. It should be accessible within 5 min walking distance (400 meters [Gehl, 2010]) and the space should be readable to the user [PPS, n.d.].

3. Comfort: Most optional human outdoor activities start when a public space invites them to sit, stand, watch, take shelter, talk, laugh, relax, etc [Gehl, 2006]. Comfort level of a public space can invite and welcome people. A good public space has elements like grass, trees, benches, edges that gives opportunities to sit, stand and rest. We experience spaces through our senses and thus a good public space should create positive sensory experiences through cleanness, low noise levels, good textures and fine views [Gehl, 2010; PPS, n.d.].

4. Enjoyment: This criterion goes hand in hand with all above mentioned criteria as they create opportunities for people to enjoy the space. However, for social activities to take place, a public space needs to offer more. A good public space gives people a purpose to use it. All day and year around it gives opportunities for people to play and exercise, and offers a stage for various activities to take place such as markets, cultural events, protests etc. [Jacobs, 1961; Gehl, 2006, 2010; PPS, n.d.].

5. Sociability: As Jacobs [1961] argues, social contact in public space create the sense of belonging and identity. Through social contact in public space, information networks

occur that binds people together with an invisible thread. The interactiveness of public space can create that opportunity through inviting and open built surfaces [Gehl, 2006].

2.3 Teachable moments since 2020

In literature it is possible to find many articles with several different approaches. Some create different scenarios of how this pandemic is going to play out and the urban actions that needs to be taken, and some take teachable moments from the crisis we are facing right now and translate this knowledge into urban plans. I will focus on the latter and study the articles talks about the needs that surfaced in this pandemic.

As of today it has been more than 1.5 years since COVID-19 entered into our lives. Somethings have changed and some didn't. After being stuck at home for weeks, even months, open public spaces that were close by became more important than ever [Hsu, 2020]. As a result, the COVID-19 crisis created opportunities for people to take over the public space and claim it. The pandemic unlocked a part in our brain, the desire for being in public and use the spaces for urban life [Mehta, 2020; Hurtado, 2020]. As Mehta [2020] points out *“observing the lives of people who live outside of the hyper intense urban areas—the centre city and the urban core— reveals an interesting phenomenon of reclaiming of much neighbourhood space for public use.”* [p.16].

Furthermore, as it is stated in the UN-Habitat report [2021,p.36], *“the extra distance that streets can enable between people means that by expanding certain activities beyond the internal confines of a building, places of worship, cultural institutions, libraries and even schools can more safely resume their critical role in society.”* Citizens and their social interaction preferences started to shape the paved public space.

In the light of this information the lesson to be taken is that given the accessibility, flexibility, opportunities and the space, among other things, people are more willing to turn public spaces into their third place and create memories and connect with their surroundings. Mehta [2020] gives an example of how choices of public space change when given the chance:

“Neighbourhood residents have become aware of the value of local streets and sidewalks as these have become the most used public spaces for family walks, children’s play, exercise, or just for getting out to get some fresh air. Going out with the family means going to the everyday neighbourhood public spaces instead of shopping malls or theme parks.”

[Mehta, 2020,p.20]

A study done in Denmark by Gehl [2020b] is yet another good example of how choices and values change when people have public space amenities just at a walking distance as 60%

of the surveyors said after the pandemic they “*spent more time in local meeting places than other places in the city*” and 64% of them said they “*value differently the offerings of their local neighbourhoods*” [p.27].

To sum up COVID-19 showed us people need good public spaces that are within walking distance, accessible, flexible, adaptable, fully or partially closed to traffic, green, comfortable, safe, diverse and enjoyable. On the other hand, changing urban experiences and perceptions challenge “the more human activity, the better public space” motto. The embedded pandemic behaviour makes people feel uncomfortable to engage in crowded public spaces. In addition to aforementioned needs, a good public space should also give the option to keep social distance.

The aim of these examples and lessons are not to romanticise the situation but realize what cities are screaming for. We can neither give up reclaimed public spaces during this time, nor ignore the change and continue status quo on our post-pandemic urban planning solutions. Instead of focusing on how COVID-19 has challenged the world, we can start focusing on the lessons we learned from this crisis. As Dr. Biel [2020] argues, it is time to change, it is time to move from global neoliberalist ideologies and focus on the needs of today. The lesson we need to learn from this pandemic is to “*think global, act local*”. In order to be a part of a global solution, we need to start on the local scale. This lesson echoed in literature as a result public spaces are called to be seen more than recreational amenities and recognized as a critical element of resilient cities [UN-Habitat, 2016; Hsu, 2020; Mehaffy et al., 2020; Hurtado, 2020; UN-Habitat, 2021]. However, a poor public space is not a critical element, it is another problem. Therefore it is important to be able to create good public spaces.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The 5 good public space themes mention in section 2.2 were general and pre-pandemic. However, creating safe, accessible, comfortable, enjoyable and sociable public spaces are still important criteria to make a good public space. Nevertheless, some aspects of the themes need to change in the light COVID-19 crisis. By drawing attention to the emerging public space needs due to COVID-19, from section 2.3, I created a theoretical framework that can guide to make public spaces adaptable the certain future challenges.

In addition to aforementioned pre-pandemic good public space criteria, in terms of safety, a good public space should offer the space for safe social distancing. This also means more space needs to be devoted to pedestrians and less to cars [UN-Habitat, 2021]. In terms of accessibility, COVID-19 strengthened the importance of proximity aspect of public spaces [Hsu, 2020; Mehta, 2020; Gehl, 2020b]. This is due to hindrance of accessibility through public transportation. In terms of comfort, natural elements in public spaces gained more

importance. Studies [Hurtado, 2020; Hartig et al., 2014; Barton and Pretty, 2010] show that nature helped people to heal both mentally and physically . In terms of enjoyment, during the pandemic people sought diversity in uses of public space. They created outdoor cinemas, small concert stages, yoga classes etc. It is time to think outside the box when it comes to planning for diverse activities in public spaces. COVID-19 showed us that public spaces are not just for transit or for short time as people flooded public spaces and spent hours enjoying the good weather. COVID-19 both added some new criteria to good public space and increased the importance of some others. Furthermore, the pandemic taught us that public spaces needed to be flexible and adaptable to changes [UN-Habitat, 2021]. A good public space is a place that is filled with opportunities to change, move around and create comfortable solutions. The flexibility feature of a public space can be very vital in dire times.

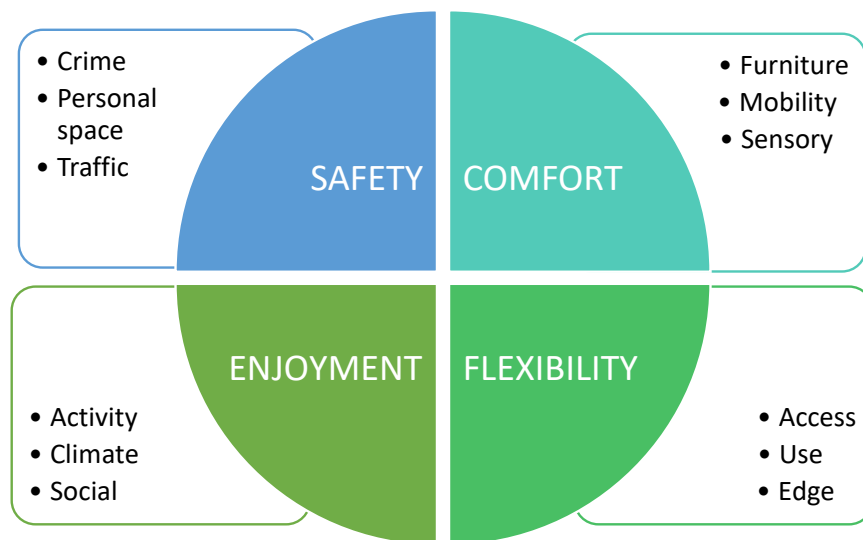


Figure 2.5: Public space quality criteria framework

Furthermore, in order to determine whether these criteria are met in a public space or not, I set a couple of questions to consider for each theme. These questions turn the theoretical framework into a tool for analysis.

SAFETY: Are there more women than men? Does it feel safe? Both at daytime and nighttime? Is there activity throughout the day? Are there diverse facilities around that promote safety by increasing amount of eyes on the public space? Is there enough bright lights at night time? Can groups keep the social distance? Can people cross the road safely? Access safely?

COMFORT: Can people sit? Is there enough places to sit? Are there places to stand/lean on? Does the public space offer a pleasant view? Is it clean? Is it green? Is it too noisy? Are there elements that limits mobility of users? Is it wheelchair and stroller friendly? Is

surface/pavement suitable for people with special needs?

ENJOYMENT: Are there facilities for activation? Play or exercise? Are there areas suitable for cultural activities? Does it consider local climate? Does it offer solutions for different weather conditions all around the year? Can people relate to their surroundings? Does it feel isolated? Does it invite people to interact with each other and surroundings?

FLEXIBLE: Are there any spaces that can adapt to different uses? Are there hard edges? Can furniture move? Is there room for temporary installments? Is the public space within walking proximity? Is it accessible with different types of transportation? Are there openings on the facades?

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter, I introduce my scientific approach and data gathering methods. First, I give insight about my scientific approach to this research in order to create my reality base including my subjectivity and values. And then, I introduce the methods I use for empirical data collection and why I chose them.

3.1 Scientific Approach

Every research has a philosophical base and this base consists of the researcher's assumptions of the world, their reality, and the researcher's claimed ways to gain knowledge about that reality. According to Allen [2017], just because a tangible object exist in reality doesn't mean it is experienced same for everyone. In that manner, social reality is constructed through every human's interactions and rituals. It is different for everyone and the knowledge about that reality can only be understood through the perspectives of those people who experiences that reality [Farthing, 2016]. The philosophical base of this research is parallel with these assumptions.

Furthermore, as an urban planner, it is important to realise that my world view and my values not only leads me to my research topic but it also affect my aim, objectives, choice of methods and literature, and the use of my findings. However this is at the heart of urban planning research. As long as we include human activity in our research, we can only understand the reality in the context but can never fully understand or explain [Fischer, 2003].

The aim of this research is to study public spaces in Vesterbro and how to make them better in the light of the pandemic related challenges. The tangible object in this research is the public space. Even though the physical definition includes human element as being "free to enter", in actuality, public space is where public life unfolds. And that definition socially constructs public space reality through human actions and experiences. My ontology is

that individuals that experiences public spaces put different meanings and understandings to it and they show it through their actions and make a public space good or bad. The literature review section of this thesis creates a more general understanding for what good public space means together with COVID-19 reality in public space.

Furthermore my epistemological position is that people understand and give conscious meanings to their actions about a public space. And thus, instead of assuming the reasoning behind their actions, I chose to give more attention to direct experiences of them [Farthing, 2016] which affects the methods I chose to collect data. My reasoning behind this interpretive approach is to explore the quality of public spaces in densely populated urbanized areas in the light of COVID-19 challenges head-on and find out how to make them better through people's experiences as well as my own observations. By choosing Vesterbro as my case area, I create opportunity to have open dialogues with local people. Furthermore, the rich demography of the area allows me to collect qualitative data of different perspectives and thus different public space experiences. The results are still very much so context dependent as Danish culture and regulations play a big role on these experiences. As a result the conclusion of this thesis won't be a single answer with facts about how to create a good public space in the light of COVID-19 crisis as neither me nor the literature that I reviewed have a positivist stand point. Due to the post-positivist nature of planning profession, this research will be affected with my values which will be mostly presented in the discussion section and further in conclusion as I will be calling for further research on making public space planning a critical element of neighborhood planning.

3.2 Case Study

As Yin [2009,p.4] argues, in social sciences, *"case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events."* In accordance to that argument, case study allows me to study public space and its position in the global pandemic crisis which is a contemporary phenomena in real-life context. However, my start point is the theory of good public space and my aim is to analyze this theory in real-life context to gain knowledge and develop my theory further. This approach is my rationalization for looking at a single case as a critical case. My theory based point of departure, studies single case "to determine whether a theory's propositions are correct or whether some alternative set of explanations might be more relevant"[Yin, 2009,p.47].

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of this case study as any case study would have. One of the weaknesses of this case study is to be able to keep the holistic approach while studying multiple units of analysis [Yin, 2009]. In that manner, the study of public space experience and preferences, in the light of pandemic,

requires me to analyze more than one public spaces. I need to pay attention through out my analysis to keep the balance and not get carried away. However, this method is also a strength as Yin [2009,p.63] points out, *“the embedded case studies rely on more holistic data collection strategies for studying the main case but then call upon surveys or other more quantitative techniques to collect data about the embedded unites) of analysis.”*.

According to several experts [Carr et al., 1992; Carmona et al., 2010; UN-Habitat, 2016; PPS, n.d.; Gehl, 2010, 2006], public space becomes successful only with human activity and this activity cannot be observed on a theoretical level. As Flyvbjerg [2001,p.73] argues, *“[...in the study of human affairs, there exists only context-dependent knowledge, which thus presently rules out the possibility of epistemic theoretical construction.”*. And thus, case study of Vesterbro gives me the upper hand on studying public spaces in relation to COVID-19. My choice of the neighborhood is highly influenced through my literature review and the empirical problem with public spaces I see today. Due to the consistency of the challenges showing itself on dense neighborhoods, especially the ones close to downtown, I chose north Vesterbro as my case area. With its increasing population, and scarce open public space options, Vesterbro feels the pressure on public space that is cause by COVID-19 very vividly. In the light of aforementioned reasons, according to case study types of Flyvbjerg [2001], this case classifies as a critical case. Vesterbro as case study can provide me the empirical data to formulate a generalization of post-pandemic good public space and as a result as Flyvbjerg [2001,p.78] says, I can conclude the findings on the base that *“If it is valid for this case, it is valid for all (or many) cases.”*.

3.3 Research Design

The research question aims to study public spaces in densely populated areas in the light of COVID-19 by studying public space perception of the citizens of Vesterbro and find ways to create good public spaces. On the way to answer the research question, I chose to divide it into two themes; analytical and critical. The two sub-questions presented in the analytical part will give me the empirical data I need from the case area and the latter critical question will use the empirical data to turn it into good public space understanding.

The empirical problem of this research is mainly based on the recent pandemic crisis that caught everyone off guard. The unpreparedness towards this crisis raised a lot of questions on the way we do things in urban planning practice and theory. However before it's effect on the profession, we observed how every city crumbled in the first year of the pandemic. Just like everyone I experienced it from first hand. I lived through the same problems and as a planner it made me question that maybe it is time to change the way we plan cities. I saw how my city was unprepared for it and how my neighborhood felt like a prison. The things I craved in a public space was not special to me. I was not alone. People around the

world craved more from what a standard non-cared-for public space has to offer. Cities have been changing towards being more car-free, walking and biking friendly. However this trend now became a necessity. But we already densified big cities and public space that was available to pedestrians started to become scarce. Vesterbro is one of those places in Copenhagen. With its growing population, demand to open public spaces is increasing. The district committee have reported, before COVID-19 pandemic, that the public space was scarce and they could see there would be fights for space in the future. Their vision was to tackle the issues with public space and utilize every single one of to its full potential. And now over a year after the pandemic crisis, how did already scarce public spaces get effected?

On one hand we have scarce public space opportunities and on the other hand we have existing public spaces that don't do any good for people. The pandemic opened a door to the public space, we see examples from all over the world that people taking the control of public spaces and adapting them to their needs. So, as planners what can we do to ensure good public spaces in such times? This question leads to my conceptual problem. In order to have a scientific standpoint, how can I conceptualise good public spaces in the light of COVID-19? The problem is, we started to see the effects of the pandemic on public spaces not too long ago and the forefathers of public space literature was written before the pandemic. In that manner in order to have a more holistic look on the conceptual problem, first I studied what qualifies as a good public space and then studied how COVID-19 affected public space perception. As a result, I developed a theoretical framework for good public space in the light of COVID-19.

The first sub-question, *“how is public space experience in Vesterbro?”*, is all about the local people and local public spaces. My aim with this question is to get insight about public spaces through people that have been living with them for years and its their natural habitat. I want to get a holistic picture about people's public space habits and choices both before and after COVID-19 and this can be done through **surveys and interviews** with the local people.

The second sub-question, *“what qualities do public spaces in Vesterbro has to offer?”*, is to observe public space with its physical existence. My aim is to analyze 6 public spaces to determine whether they are good public spaces through **field observations and interviews**. Furthermore, in order to determine the quality of the public spaces, I will use my **theoretical framework as a tool**. In the end my input to this analysis will be as an urban planner and this part of the analysis will be on that aspect.

Lastly, my third critical sub-question, *“what is a good public space and what is the value of it for Vesterbro?”*, will take place on a more theoretical level to bring forth my good public space hypothesis and reflect on my data. This will allow me to create a bridge between urban planning perspective and people's preferences in the light of pandemic experiences

through literature review and interviews with local people.

3.4 Data Gathering Methods

In this section I will introduce the methods I use to gather the empirical data about my case. I have chosen to use multiple source of evidence to obtain more accurate data through three methods: questionnaires, interviews and observations. My aim for choosing these methods is to create triangulating evidence from multiple sources to strengthen reliability of this research.

3.4.1 Questionnaires and Structured Interviews

Questionnaires and interviews are the default methods for this research due to the undeniable human element in public spaces. An online questionnaire, with some open-end questions, was distributed on the Vesterbro community page to gather data about the citizens general behaviour, feeling, habits and thoughts about public spaces in Vesterbro. Moreover, structured interviews were held on specific public spaces as a focus study to get data about on-field experiences, feelings and thoughts on those spaces. I have used both close and open-end questions for the questionnaires and interviews. On one hand, according to Yin [2011,p.133], the close-end questions on structured interviews gives “*more accurate data and more definitive analysis*”. On the other hand, the open-ended questions provide the qualitative data for this research, and allows participants to not be limited and use their own words.

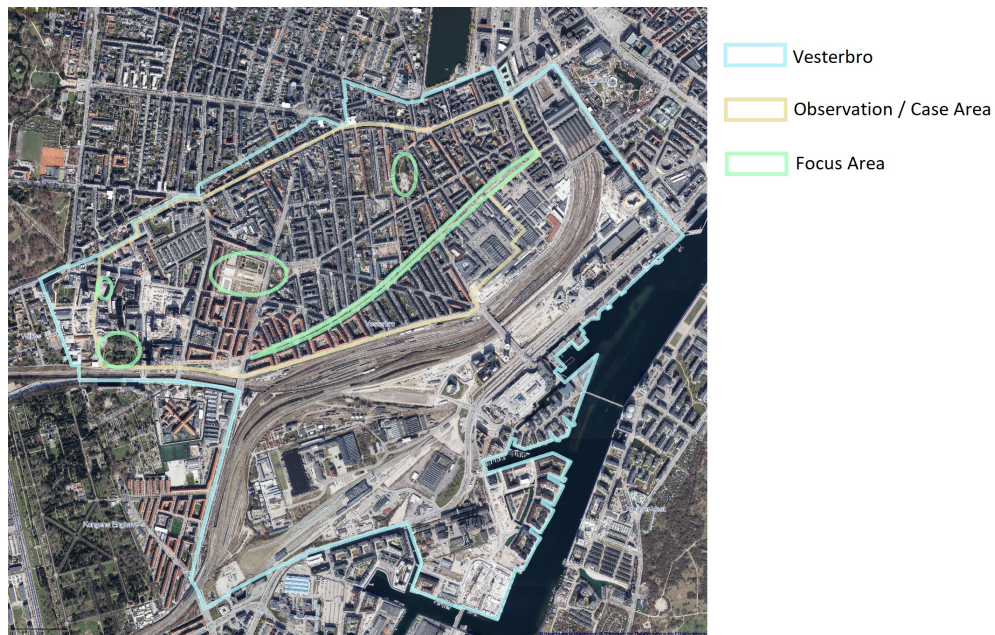


Figure 3.1: Data collection areas of Vesterbro

As it can be seen from figure 3.1, the online questionnaire were targeted to people living in the area that is marked as “case area” on Vesterbro’s community Facebook page on 20th of July, 2021 for one week. As a result 162 people responded to the questionnaire, among those, 133 of them were marked as completed, 2 as partially completed and 14 distributed. The questionnaire had both multiple selection questions and open end questions for further input. It had elements to gain knowledge about their use of the public space and what good public space meant for them. The open end questions were optional for people who cared enough about their public space to have an input. In order to not face a language barrier, the questionnaire was in both English and Danish. The answers show a general trend of what people want to improve in public spaces of Vesterbro. Among the respondents to the questionnaire, over 70% of participants are identified as female. These female dominant answers can be seen as bias result, however, the online survey was completely volunteer based and it only reflects on more women were willing to talk about public spaces in Vesterbro than men. Because the platform on which it was posted is not female dominant. Therefore, I acknowledge this result as more women in Vesterbro had thoughts about public spaces than men and it does not effect the reliability of this research. The over all information about the respondents can be seen on figure 3.2.

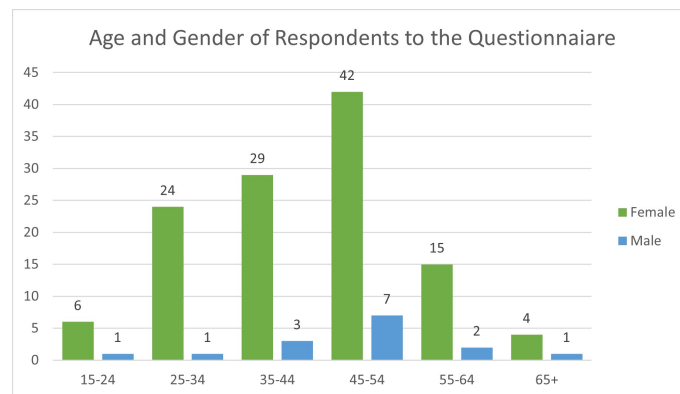


Figure 3.2: Data from 133 respondents

The structured interviews were made with people and third places such as bars, cafes, restaurants that has outdoor seating, using the areas marked as “focus area” on figure 3.1 on 24th and 25th of July, 2021. The interviews with people were structured and focused on the public area where the interview was taking place. The aim was to gather knowledge about how the specific public space were used by them and whether they thought the public space was a good one or not. This method was chosen to increase the validity of the surveys and keep the questions parallel with the questionnaire. By doing so I aimed to collect more holistic data. This also allowed me to interview groups of people at once. I chose five focus areas for this purpose and as a result interviewed 62 people. Furthermore, I also interviewed 26 third places with a very short and specific set of questions to gain insight about the use of outdoor seating areas before and after COVID-19. The aim of these interviews were to gather data on third space use and preferences of people in Vesterbro.

The structured interviews were kept more balanced in terms of gender of participants as I had control over it and chose to keep it balanced. The age group of respondents to the interview were varied between 25-44. In total I have reached over 200 people. The results of the online questionnaire and structured interview with third places as well as the questions of the structured interviews can be found at the appendix part of this research.

3.4.2 Observation

Observation is the primary data of this research as the data is generated directly by me through my unfiltered feelings and senses. It allows me to connect the data to the physical place and be part of the case. Walk the streets they walk everyday, sit on the benches they sit and have the frustrations they have while walking around an unpleasant site. As Yin [2011] also points out;

“‘Observing’ can be an invaluable way of collecting data because what you see with your own eyes and perceive with your own senses is not filtered by what others might have (self-) reported to you or what the author of some document might have seen.”

[Yin, 2011,p.143]

In order to be able to observe Vesterbro public spaces as efficient and as effective as possible, I chose to observe it on the weekend between 07:00 in the morning and 22:00 in the evening. I tried to observe the most used public spaces at least in two different hours in the day, one being day time and another being evening time. During those observations I took notes and pictures to be able to use it for analytic purposes. During the observations my theoretical framework was also my guideline. I took notes following the public space quality criteria and took photos as proof. My general urban area observations are shown in figure 3.1, marked as ‘‘observation area’’. This gave me the feeling of walking through the district as a citizen, and my observations of ‘‘focus areas’’, as shown on figure 3.1, were more structured around the theoretical framework guidelines. I spent around one hour in each spot to collect data. Most of my notes and pictures are taken from those focus areas.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

Even though there are not much documents of Vesterbro public spaces in relation to COVID-19, I study documents for Vesterbro public spaces to collect the data that cannot be observed. This includes local plans, discussion platforms, local news etc. In order to understand the changes and challenges Vesterbro has been going through I looked at some previous plans and historical documents.

Furthermore, due to the COVID-19, every institution that I reached was overwhelmingly busy and couldn't spare time for an interview. In order to make best out of the situation, I asked some short questions that could help with my research. As a result of that I have e-mail corresponds from both Copenhagen municipality and Vesterbro Local Committee. Here is a list of documents that I used for this research:

3.5 Theoretical framework as a tool of analysis

In order to analyze the empirical data, I will use my theoretical framework as a tool and determine the quality of focus areas. I will be grading the quality criteria of focus areas according to how much intervention is needed to ensure safety, comfort, enjoyment and flexibility. **Good** means that the public space is meeting the needs of the criterion of its respected theme. **Average** means that the public space meets some principles of the criterion but not-urgent intervention is needed on other principles. **Bad** means that even if the public space can function and meet little to no needs of criterion, it requires serious interventions. I will collect those results in a table form to get a good overview, see table 3.1 below.

Focus Public Space			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 3.1: Public space analysis table

3.5.1 Reflection

Due to the COVID-19 regulations, every institution I reached was overwhelmed with their tasks in hand and thus I couldn't conduct any interviews with institutions. The survey was conducted online and due to some language barrier not every question was understood correctly. During the analysis of the results, I had to not count some of the answers. For instance and answer to what would you like to change about public spaces in Vesterbro was cheaper housing. I tried to keep the answers as clean as possible to get a good reflection and supported them with local newspaper articles as much as possible to increase reliability of the data. Furthermore, the structured interviews were very hard to conduct due to COVID-19. It was very hard for me reach at people and ask questions while keeping the social distance. On that note, some people didn't want to contribute again due to

COVID-19. During my observations my personal values towards safety played a big role and led me to have prejudice towards specific parts of the district and thus affected my work. Due to the changing characteristic of COVID-19 regulations and adaptations, it limits the repeatability of this research.

Chapter 4

Introduction to Vesterbro

In this chapter I give an introduction to the case area: Vesterbro, Copenhagen. First I will start with a description of Vesterbro, district vision, public space projects and its history. Second I will introduce the case area with observation and focus areas.

4.1 Vesterbro

Vesterbro is part of one of the 10 districts (bydele) in Copenhagen. It is one of the towns that is linked to historical Copenhagen inner city through a paved road and thus the name of the district Vesterbro, literally translates into “*Western Bridge*”. History of the district starts from 1580s til today. With the population of 43.891, Vesterbro is one of the most densely populated districts in Copenhagen.



Figure 4.1: Vesterbro among the 12 local committees of Copenhagen Municipality [n.d.]

The most recent district plan of Vesterbro 2017, foresees a significant growth in future as several new projects take place in the district. These projects and increasing population rise the problem with use of space in Vesterbro. The local committee chairman argues that the student population in the district will increase in future and with that there will be new public space challenges as he says:

“We must therefore create space for new needs in the district. Study places, areas for movement and opportunity for leisure activities. We must agree that we must optimize the use of our few open spaces. That we need to use our square meters more intelligent. We have so many needs, dreams, activities and so little space.”

[Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017,p.4]

This plan was made before the COVID-19 crisis and the committee already feels the pressure for lack of space for future residents of Vesterbro. The chairman further continues to argue that its not only the future residents but also the existing ones requiring better public spaces for necessary and optional activities [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017]. The local committee’s vision is to create flexible public spaces that offer different activities on different times of the day. Furthermore, they point out that there are some public spaces that are not being used actively for their potential and they should. As a result, every square-meter of public space should offer a space for people to use. The goal for public spaces in Vesterbro is to have a place for everyone, which means recognize the inequalities of public spaces and make room for both strong and vulnerable citizens [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017].

According to Vesterbro Local Committee [2017], Vesterbro is a young district due to half of their citizens aging between 20 and 40 while other half has more people below 19, than people above 70 years of age. However, Vesterbro with it’s night life opportunities takes many young visitors from outside. Some of those visitors are also homeless and drug addicts. The local committee has been trying to find suitable places and shelters for these visitors and solve some issues that was raising because of the mentioned vulnerable people for many years [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017]. According to the District Plan [2017], Vesterbro has the lowest green area m² per person among other districts in Copenhagen. So low that even the district with second lowest amount of green area m²/person has almost double of Vesterbro. However, the newly developing areas will affect these numbers once finished.

According to the District Plan [2017], the socio-economic background of citizens shows difference in different parts of the district. While west and north side of Vesterbro - Humleby/ Carlsberg Byen, Havneholmen/ Otto Busses- is home to mostly affluent citizens, central and east -inner- Vesterbro is home to mostly middle and low income citizens. For whole Vesterbro it shows a more balanced pattern.

When looked at the old maps of Copenhagen like the one from 1980, it is possible to see that Vesterbro was already dense. The buildings were very close to each other and the district was suffering from lack of open public spaces for it's citizens [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017]. On top of that Vesterbro is known as an entertainment center with multiple bars, strip clubs and brothels. To this day Istadgade is still called “the red light district” of Copenhagen. The Istadgade street made a reputation for prostitution, drugs and thievery.

According to Copenhagen City Archives [n.d.] ,the overall bad conditions of Vesterbro brought its citizens to protest and call for change in 1950s. They asked for better living conditions, safer neighborhood and more open public spaces for citizens, especially kids. And thus the area went through urban renewal starting from 1958. Different parts of the district went through renewal. As a result, new urban public spaces were created. The urban renewal projects continued in the 20th century and the face of Vesterbro started to change. These projects led Vesterbro to be less dense as more green and open public areas were created but to this day Vesterbro still struggles with other very complex urban challenges at the same time like ghetto formation, gentrification and marginalization of groups. These challenges also show themselves on public spaces [Vesterbro Local Committee, 2017].

4.2 Case Area

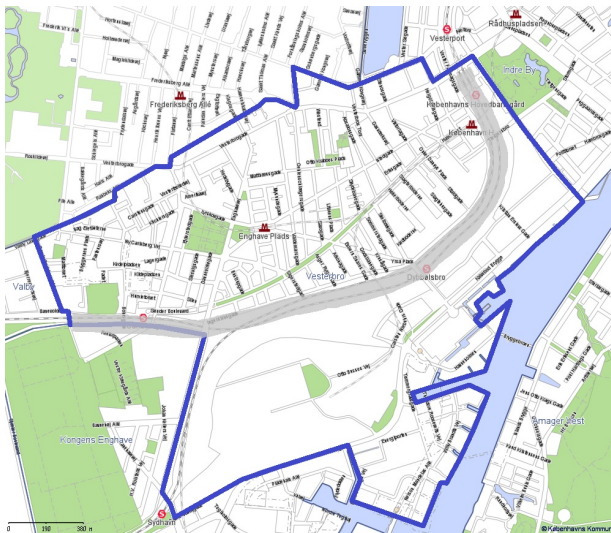


Figure 4.2: Vesterbro map divided by the rails

The master plan for the new development on Vesterbro waterfront - Havneholmen area- visions a city park for everyone on top of smaller green areas for local purposes Vesterbro Local Committee [2017]. Furthermore, there is a public space project in south Vesterbro -Otto Busses area- that envisions multiple recreational areas for sports, leisure etc.

However as it can be seen from figure 4.2, Vesterbro is divided by a huge rail system. The elevation difference and the limited access to southern Vesterbro create a limitation for accessibility to public spaces. This issue is on the

local agenda 2017 but as most of the population lives on the northern side of the rails, my study area is also limited with this portion of Vesterbro.

The aforementioned urban renewal projects took place in the case area. As a result some of the focus and observation areas are results of those projects. The inner Vesterbro went through urban renewal in 1991 that aimed to uplift the living conditions and tackle the problematic social profile of the area and turn it into a more family friendly neighborhood [Larsen and Lund Hansen, 2009]. As a result of long urban renewal process, the inner Vesterbro was completely changed, there were more green areas and the existing third places has quickly changed with more modern and hip ones. Many of the citizens with low socio-economic status were pushed out of the neighborhood. Istedgade also went through renovations to create more safe street by slowing down the traffic and creating spaces for third places to use. The new development projects in Carlsberg City also offers some small public spaces but the local committee fears that it will not be enough for the citizens living there once the project is completely finished and this situation will apply more pressure to existing public spaces of Vesterbro.

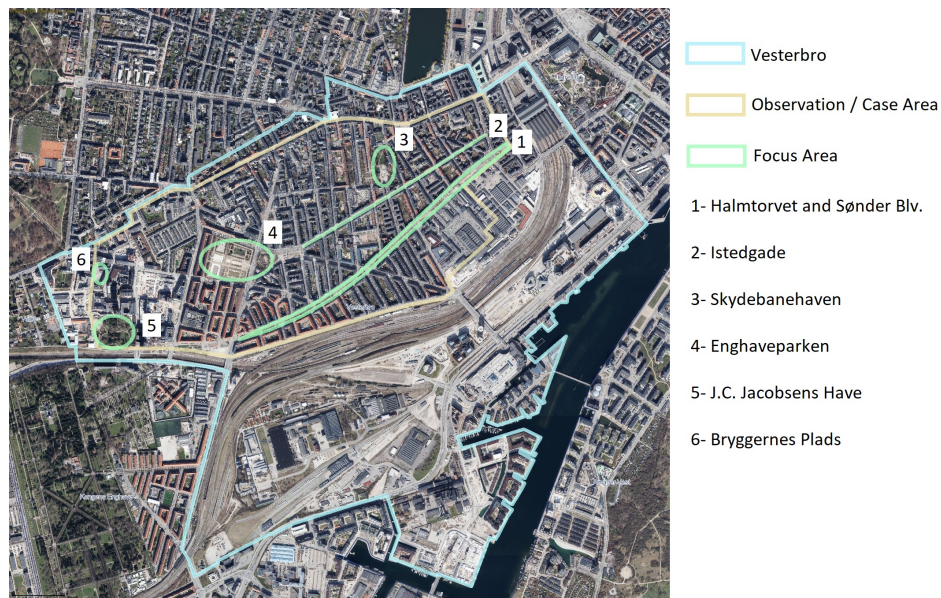


Figure 4.3: Vesterbro case area with focus areas

Figure 4.3 shows the case area and focus areas for this research. Focus area number 1 starts with Halmtorvet and then it becomes Sønder Boulevard. This area went through some changes during the urban renewal process of the inner Vesterbro. In total 1,85 km long and 15-30 m changing width. There is a square, several connected green areas, playgrounds, sport fields, seating areas and paved pathway on this area. The first half of the boulevard has many visitors from all around Copenhagen. Number 2 is Istedgade, 1,1 km long and has a historical and cultural value. The physical characteristic of the street is a two lane street for vehicles and bikes, and some parking spots and sidewalks on the sides. The street has many both domestic and international visitors. Focus area number 3 is a semi-public playground and park named Skydebanehaven. The playground area is around 0,7 ha and the park area is around 0,3 ha. The whole area is surrounded with walls and high

fences. It is managed by municipality of Copenhagen and because the park is for kids, it has opening hours. It is still a public space and in a district like Vesterbro, it is a public treasure for kids. Number 4 is Enghaveparken that is around 3,5 ha. On the other side of the road there is skater park and a square that is also the metro station. Enghaveparken is almost divided into 6 areas with trees. The park itself is surrounded with trees and high fences. Number 5 is a 2 ha garden called J.C. Jacobsens Have. It is mostly green with small pathways, two sides of it is closed with building facade and other two side is closed with fences and high bushes. This garden was a private garden which is open to public now with limited access. The garden is open from sunrise to sunset. It is the only public garden in Vesterbro. With its nature and historical value, the garden is a Vesterbro treasure. And last focus area number 6 is a 0,3 ha paved square, Bryggernes Plads, in the new development area of Carlsberg City. The square leads to the iconic Carlsberg gate with elephant figures and therefore is a touristic attraction. It is probably one of the most recently created public space.

These 6 areas are where I held my interviews with users and had the chance to observe on different times of the day. And thus the following two analysis chapters will focus on these areas mainly. First I will start with analyzing public space perception of Vesterbro citizens through the surveys, interviews and document analysis and later I will analyze the areas in terms of quality of public spaces through my observations and interviews.

Chapter 5

Vesterbro locals and their space

In this chapter I aim to find answer to my first sub-question: *How did citizens of Vesterbro's perception of public space change after COVID-19?* In short, how people in Vesterbro adapted the changes. I will answer it through citizen surveys, structured interviews in the focus areas, e-mail correspondents and local news articles.

It is important to note here that during the lockdown period in Denmark, third places and for a short while outdoor gym facilities were closed for use but open air public spaces were available to use within Danish COVID-19 regulations. These regulations were about gathering limitations and social distancing.

The structure of this chapter will follow different experiences of public spaces. I will start with changes in use of public spaces and then continue with public spaces preferences according to citizens experiences.

5.1 Use of public spaces

As I mentioned in chapter 4.2, Vesterbro doesn't have a lot of green public spaces to offer and most of the public spaces are actually streets and squares. Therefore, how people used these spaces during and after COVID-19 is very valuable. This data determines the assigned and non-assigned uses and thus potential of public spaces. The online survey shows that among 134 people, 31% said that they use public spaces more often now than they did before COVID-19. Moreover, the structured interviews I collected in the focus areas show that more than 50% use public spaces more than now. The increased use of public space in Vesterbro added even more stress to public spaces that were not enough even before COVID-19. An article from local newspaper of Vesterbro [2021b] supports the increased demand. According to the journalist Mølskov [2021b], one could easily see the excessive use of green areas by just looking at the state of grass. It is reported that people have been increasingly using the green areas especially during the lockdown for

walks, picnics, small gatherings and Friday parties. Furthermore, Katrine Clausen, the secretariat for Vesterbro and Kgs. Enghave Local Committee, supports the increase use of public space by saying:

“People tended to use the outdoor spaces more for social meetings than before. When all cafés and bars were closed, the new meeting point became parks and squares in the urban city.”

[Clausen, 2021]

According to survey results, figure 5.1, people mostly use streets, squares, parks and cafes in Vesterbro and figure 5.2 show for what purpose people mostly use public spaces. The result of structured interview is also parallel with these results.

Some of the respondents said they enjoyed green areas more and they were the new gathering places and this statement has been used by people that I interviewed as well. So much so that two respondent said that they realized Enghave Plads became an outdoor living room for citizens of Vesterbro and they also used it more than ever. This is parallel with other respondents saying they use streets, public benches more and that they realized that people were more willing to chat and meet outside. This can be because public spaces were seen more safe to meet and also easier for regulations to be applied compared to cramped up indoor spaces. One respondent said that they think that instead of going to city, people started to use squares close to them more and thus there were more people

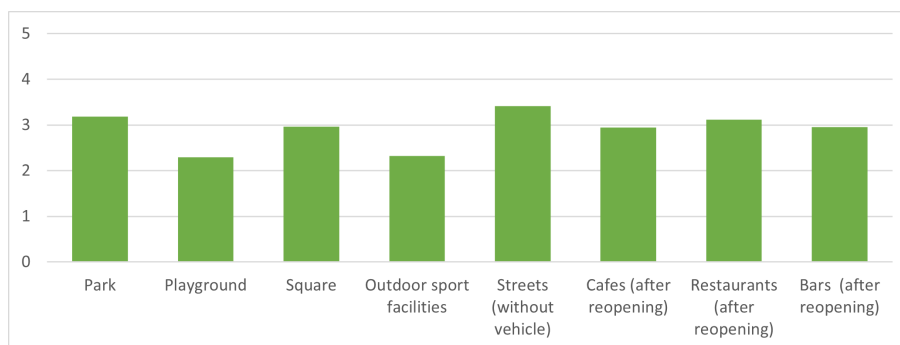


Figure 5.1: Survey result for average visit frequency of public spaces after COVID-19 reopening, 5 being very often and 0 being never

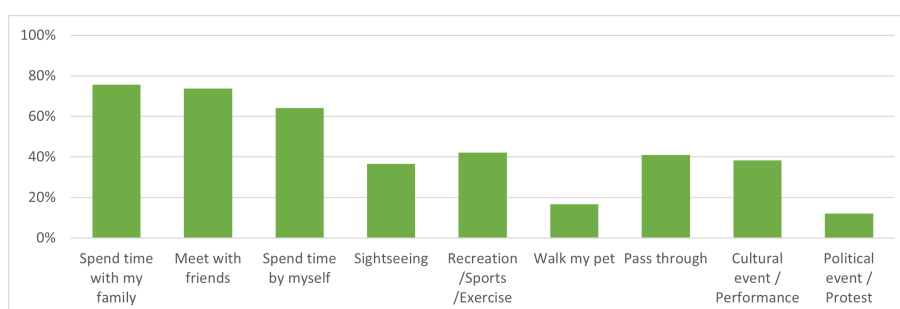


Figure 5.2: Survey result for average purpose of visiting public spaces by percentage

everywhere in Vesterbro.



Figure 5.3: Samba Summer Show by Bafo do Mundo in Vesterbro, June 2021, Source:Claus Schroeder-Hansen

According to three respondents, during the lockdown people had no where to party and they partied on the streets instead. However, especially cultural events on the streets is not a new concept for Vesterbro as occasional events are hosted in the area like the Distortion street party, “Lights on Vesterbro” party and street samba party.

Furthermore the local news paper VesterbroLIV [2021] reports many more outdoor activities that took place in public spaces in Vesterbro. During corona lockdown Vesterbro Sports Association (Vesterbros Idrætsforening) had also been closed but the football club (SSB)

decided that Vesterbro needed their guidance for outdoor activities more than before and thus the club started to create different weekend activities every week. One of the main activities was weekly walk tours and they announced the activity of the weekend on Fridays. The project manager Louise Alnøe points out to the local newspaper the importance of going the extra mile during COVID-19 lockdown by saying:

“In a time where we are missing the meetings surrounding sports and cultivating the community, in SSB we have tried to maintain the strong unity - both with this arrangement, but also with the other initiatives the association are doing”

[Brink, 2021]

In that manner for some associations and clubs, COVID-19 crisis was turned into a chance to regain the sense of community through activities in public spaces. The activities were announced through social media and local newspaper. The sport activities that normally take place indoor were taken outdoors to invite more people and continue life with the new regulations such as the activities from SSB, open air yoga classes and kick-box classes. In order to help kids during these unfamiliar corona times, corona friendly kid activities took place in public spaces like Halloween event and book reading sessions, among others.

The sidewalks were already being actively used in Vesterbro by third places before COVID-19. However, the structured interviews with 26 third places show that COVID-19 has affected 16 establishments use of outdoor public space. While 13 of those respondents said they increased the amount of seating areas they had outdoors, 3 of them said they had to

decrease the available seating areas due to social distance regulations. Furthermore, some establishments said they realized there was more demand for outdoor seating areas after the reopening. A kiosk on Søndre Boulevard said that they feel like they increased seating areas because people started to use the banks and seating areas on the green areas of the boulevard like if it was a continuation of seating areas. Some of the establishments also said that they see more regulars after the reopening, especially during week days, that uses the cafes as home-offices.

Social and political activities have been taking place in public spaces as well in Vesterbro since COVID-19. The local committee has been hosting debates about the future of public spaces in those areas with the users of them directly. According to an interview, the chairman of the committee gives to the local newspaper, they are well aware of the demand for the public spaces and do feel the pressure from it. Their main goal is to create public spaces for everyone with what they have in hand [Olsen, 2021]. Furthermore, the same square has also been used to watch the national football games on big screen which turned into a huge event for Vesterbro. The amount of people that attends to these sort of events show when given the chance, people use public spaces to their full potential. Another example from Vesterbro is turning public spaces into flea market areas for limited time. Several public spaces has been used for flea market purposes. These events doesn't only serve the locals but also attracts people from other districts.



Figure 5.4: Flea market event in Vesterbro, July 2021, Source: Author

Many of the aforementioned activities were made within corona restrictions. However, the available space and attendee ratio cannot be always corona friendly. In times it is hard to keep social distance. It is important to remember that our lives has changed drastically due to COVID-19. This change also affected some of our preferences. In the following section I will analyse how these preferences changed in Vesterbro.

5.2 Public space preferences

The survey showed that people described public spaces in Vesterbro as diverse, lively and dynamic 68 times, and as friendly and welcoming 53 times. These are the most mentioned adjectives. However, people also described it as crowded, busy, chaotic and noisy 46 times. On top of that 18 times people described public spaces as dirty and worn down. Another survey [2021] specifically done for Enghave Plads by Vesterbro local committee supports my survey results. According to that survey people want the public square to be more clean, green and safe. During the interviews with citizens in the focus areas, they mentioned they prefer more green public spaces and more spacious spaces. Studies show that [Mehta, 2020; Hurtado, 2020; Hsu, 2020] during COVID-19 people started to use public spaces more and in some cases it became a daily part of people's lives. The interviews and surveys don't disagree with this statement. People's perception of public space has changed and thus their preferences from public space has changed too. For instance during the interviews people mentioned they wanted more opportunities to buy beverages and do more outdoor sports.

One of the survey question was about what would they like to do in the public spaces that they cannot do right now. 99 out of 134 has answered this question and it is possible to put the answers into 5 themes; green and relaxing, entertainment and sport activities, safety and comfort, car related, and happy as it is. Among those themes preferences towards public spaces to be more green and relaxing are mentioned 43 times. One of the respondent was so fed up with the crowd they said that they just wanted to be able to *"sit on a blanket, on grass, with a friend, without sitting on either dog feces, or straight up and down by other people that are in the middle of a drinking party"*. The survey respondents reported relaxing as something they cannot do in the public spaces right now as it is too crowded and loud. One respondent addresses the same issue by saying:

"With Carlsbergbyen, the upcoming railway town, etc., more and more residents are coming to Vesterbro. All flocked to the same places. With more new buildings, more apartments and more people, more public squares, parks and green areas must be considered in urban planning. Otherwise, there is a lot of pressure as people gather in the same places."

[An answer from the survey]

According to the survey and interviews, I conclude that some people prefer to have access to public spaces that is pleasant to look at with green elements and have opportunity to relax and enjoy the surroundings without worrying about crowd.

On the other scale of the public space preferences, both more cultural event preferences and more sport facilities are mentioned 18 times each. There is a significant amount of

people that wants more high pace activities in their public spaces. This statement is also supported with the interviews. People mentioned they want more cultural events in public spaces like poem readings, theaters and concerts. Even though in surveys a lot more people wanted quietness and calmness, interviews shows completely the opposite. People who were already enjoying the public spaces wanted more music, more parties, more opportunities to buy alcohol and more space. On top of that, the interview with people who were using outdoor sport facilities show that majority wanted more versatile sport facilities. The common wish was more space and I connect this with new understanding of crowd as mentioned in chapter 2.4. People prefer to do different activities but they want to do them in a more spacious set up.

In that manner, some of the answers to the survey were linked with wider pedestrian street preferences and limitation of car usage. Although only 15 people among 99 mentioned traffic preferences, the result is on the same page with the literature I studied in chapter 2.4. It shows that citizens in Vesterbro want to claim the streets for themselves. They want to either close some streets to traffic or limit it. Moreover this preference is also being discussed by the local committee as “car free Sunday” concept is under the discussion according to local newspaper [Mølskov, 2021a]. Furthermore, Mikael Stenstrup, an elected member of the Vesterbro local committee, shares his experience on how public space was reclaimed from cars:

“I think the kids have more fun getting out in the squares and on the streets and play. I myself live in Frederikstadsgade, where 20-30 parking spaces were closed and cobblestones were laid. Now it is crowded with children every day. People talk together and have fun and skateboard and jump on the trampoline. I think that’s cool.”

[Mikael Stenstrup’s interview with Mølskov [2021a]]

The survey and interview results, taking support from literature review and the district plan, can be read as, people started to realize they have a bigger right on public spaces than motorised vehicles and they want to claim this right. They want to make use of every public space since Vesterbro is already struggling with lack of space and feeling the pressure more now than ever due to given importance to public spaces after COVID.19. The lack of public space is showing itself in two different ways in the survey and interviews. One is people avoiding some public spaces due to safety issues and other cannot use the public spaces due to lack of or too much seating areas. The safety issue is limiting every public space to be used to its full potential. Several interview and survey respondents pointed out that they prefer public spaces to be for everyone but when a public space get dominated by marginalized groups -homeless and drug addicts in Vesterbro case-, then they don’t prefer to use those public spaces because they don’t feel safe.

The other public space preference is due to lack of seating areas and lack of space to walk

on sidewalks. People reported that due to overflowing cafe uses on the side walks, they cannot walk freely without either going through some obstacles or getting too close to people sitting. Sidewalks are a very big part of public spaces in Vesterbro and the survey and interviews show that people use streets very often and some of the users are avoiding crowded streets simply because there is not enough room for them. From what it seems other public spaces are being avoided due to lack of urban furniture. 10 people mentioned they prefer more seating areas in the survey which is equivalent of 10%, this result is parallel with the Olsen [2021] survey. 10% of the respondents to local committee survey also preferred more seating areas in the Enghave square.

Lastly 16 respondents reported that they were happy with the opportunities in public spaces in Vesterbro but most of them reported that there is always room to improve. This means that just because people don't have any preferences for public space, don't mean the public spaces are perfect and doesn't need change.

5.3 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyze public space experiences and preferences of Vesterbro citizens. The citizens of Vesterbro experienced pandemic's effects to the public space differently. There were new uses introduced due to COVID-19 regulations and overall public space use was increased. During the lockdown, meeting places became parks and squares, and parties and sport activities were moved to public spaces. And after the reopening, third places almost took over the sidewalks due to increased demand. Furthermore, people defined crowdedness of a public space as a negative thing. This was probably one of the most obvious COVID-19 related urban experience change and the other one is how they internalized public spaces and defined it as friendly. In general citizens of Vesterbro were happy with their district but they were also aware of the public space challenges especially after the increased demand. The analysis show that they want to make us of every possible space for various activities and events.

This brings me to analyse what citizens of Vesterbro preferred in their the public space. It is important to keep in mind that the preferences of citizens towards public spaces existed before the pandemic too. However the increased demand pushed public spaces to their physical limits, and with the new meaning given to public spaces, people demanded public spaces to satisfy them.

During the structured interviews, when I asked people how they felt about the public space and if they would prefer anything different, It took them a minute to think and answer. Because they were already using these public spaces so it was attracting them but there was always a "but". Very commonly interviewees started with positive aspects of the public spaces that they were vibrant and lively and then they continued with "but

its too crowded”, “but its too dirty”, “but its too noisy”, “but it is too small”, “but it is not enough”. The analysis showed that just because a public space was being actively used, didn’t automatically mean that it was a good public space. People of Vesterbro preferred more green, open, clean public spaces and various different activities for public spaces.

The conclusion of this analysis is that people in Vesterbro cared about their public spaces, and they internalized themselves with these spaces. On one hand, public spaces became outdoor living rooms, offices, gyms and even daycare. And on the other hand, public spaces became the problem for being dirty, crowded, loud and boring. In other words, citizens of Vesterbro experienced their public spaces as the stages where urban life unfolds with its ups and downs.

Chapter 6

Quality of Public Space in Vesterbro

In this chapter I aim to find an answer to my second sub-question: *What qualities do public spaces in Vesterbro have to offer?* In order to analyze the public spaces I will draw the theoretical framework I developed in chapter 2.4. This framework gives me the tools to assess whether a public space is good or not. In that manner, through my observations and structured interviews, I aim to analyze focus areas within the structure of my theoretical framework; safety, accessibility, comfort, enjoyment, sociability and flexibility.

Furthermore, in order to gain full insight of the focus areas, I have interviewed 62 people in 6 different public spaces. Some interviews were made with group of people and not individuals, sizes changing from 2 to 5 people, and I have taken their answers collectively. There were no disagreements in the groups during the interviews as they all agreed with every comment each gave. Some of the collective results can be found in appendix ??.

The structure of this chapter will follow the focus area list I mentioned on 4.2 and every case are will follow the theoretical framework items. Lastly I will give a general conclusion for quality of public spaces in Vesterbro.

6.1 Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard



Figure 6.1: Satellite image and figure-ground diagram of Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard

Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard is a long public space that is framed with buildings as it can be seen from figure 6.1. The first one third of the area is called Halmtorvet but feeling wise it is not possible to feel the change and therefore I decided to analyze it as a whole and for the sake of this analysis I will address the joined public space as *“boulevard”*. The physical layout of it is, as it can be seen from the figure-ground diagram, sidewalk, bike road and one-way road, common space in the middle, and same on the other side. The north-east part of the common space is more paved and wide where as towards south-west it comes more green and narrow. I had the fortune to have my field trip in this area very early in the morning right after the Friday parties. The space was generally empty as the north-east side was still used by drunk and homeless people. The banks on figure 6.2(b) were occupied by homeless and addicts. Through out the day most people were using this part of the boulevard to just walking by. There are restaurants, cafes and bars along the side walks and there eyes on the common space most of the day. However, that didn't help me feel safe. The fast movement of citizens threw me off. At night time there were street lights but they weren't enough. Due to the amount of restaurants and bars in the area, there is a lot of people traffic after 17:00. This crowd in narrow sidewalks create more problem than joy. It is not possible to keep safe distance on the sidewalks and it is not uncommon for a homeless or drunk person to all of a sudden jump in front of you from the pockets by the buildings. After I pass the first third of the boulevard whole feeling changes. It becomes more green with small pathways and seating areas in the common space.

On top of that the boulevard in general becomes more crowded with people that stay in a place and use it for optional activities. The middle third of the boulevard is surrounded with variety of facilities with seating options on the sidewalks which brings a lot of eyes to

**Figure 6.2:** Halmtorvet

the common space. Since people were spending longer times in this area, I got a chance to have structured interviews with the users. Out of 9 people, 7 said they felt very safe on the boulevard and one person said they were neutral about their feeling of safety because the perspective towards race and homosexuality was a safety blocking factor. Furthermore, as the common space gets narrower, it becomes harder to keep the social distance. On one of my observation days, there was a flea market event on the boulevard. This event and great weather collected a lot of people on the same spot. The only place where I could walk without invading people's personal space was the streets. Due to slow and sparse traffic along the boulevard, it was rather safe to walk and cross the roads. The last third of the boulevard towards south-west became even more narrow and empty. There were facilities and banks along the common area but they were rarely being used. Moreover, the surrounding buildings became residential only and there weren't that many eyes on the area anymore. And once again homeless people were the only ones occupying the benches and grass. It did feel less safe but not as much as the first third of the boulevard because apartments have balconies that are facing towards the boulevard and thus provide eyes on the area.

The boulevard serves to a great proximity due to its physical attributes. However there are elements in the common area that limits mobility. As it can be seen on figure 6.2(c), there were several limitations due to constructions. Another issue I observed was the accessibility of the sidewalks. Figure 6.3(b) is an example how sidewalks are occupied with parked bikes and third places and how it limits people.

**Figure 6.3:** Sønder Boulevard

The comfort of the common space was not same through out the boulevard. The grass was usually worn down and it wasn't clean. There was lot of broken glasses, old face masks and cigarette buds on the ground. The seating availability was definitely not enough. There were fenced sport facilities in the common area and only one of them had a bench in front of it. In general I couldn't say it was very relaxing but it was very inviting. Structured interviews showed the same result. People were usually unhappy about how dirty and noisy it was but they were also aware of how cozy and lively it was. Everyone I interviewed planned to spend more than an hour on the boulevard. If it was uncomfortable, they wouldn't plan to spend so much time.

Even though the middle third portion of the boulevard wasn't as wide as the first third portion, the flea market was a big hit and there was enough space for it. People setting their stands left and right was a showcase that this space can host events. There were bigger openings here and there which could easily turn into a stage for an event. There were sport facilities but interviewees said they don't prefer to use those fields because mostly youth uses them and they become non-suitable for kids. So the fenced sport fields may be targeted by certain age group and claimed by them locally.

The surroundings of the boulevard changes from north-east to south-west. As I mentioned before the north-east two third of the boulevard has very interactive surroundings. 8 of the interviewees said they use this public space regularly and 7 defined it as local, friendly and cozy. There are several cafes, bars, restaurants and shops along this public space. In addition, the changing building facades and street opening create a sociable surrounding. However, the last third is very monotone with plain and closed facades, and row of parked cars. It is not easy to relate to your surroundings and it gives you the feeling of fast movement. It doesn't invite to stay and socialize but only go from A to B.

All in all, structured interview show that people are generally happy with this public space and they want to make it better by keeping it clean, peaceful, and less occupied by homeless and drug addicts. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.1.

Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.1: Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard good public space analysis

6.2 Istedgade



Figure 6.4: Satellite image and figure-ground diagram of Istedgade

Istedgade is a very touristic and high pace street. During my observations, this street was the one I felt less safe and tried to avoid the inner Vesterbro part of it as much as possible. The general feeling of the street from north-east to south-west changes from loud “red light district” to hipster “third wave coffee”. Even the gender demography changed from male dominant to families and youth. Especially night time is scary. “Red light district” part of Istedgade becomes very loud and very under influence. It is a 24 hour active street but it is not necessarily safe for this case. 4 out of 6 people I interviewed felt safe during the day but noted that it was a different situation during night time. The traffic on the street raises another issue because at night time it becomes a show street for loud and fast cars and motorbikes. Many residents who lives close to Istedgade also complained about this issue. The traffic situation both jeopardises safety and comfort of people living nearby. Additionally, third space occupancy on the not too narrow, not too wide sidewalks makes it hard to walk without entering people’s personal space. This situation also acts as a mobility obstacle. At least two respondents to the survey said how it limited them to go with a stroller and made it hard for the elder to walk freely. While the hipster side of



Figure 6.5: Istedgade

the street invites people to sit and relax, there are almost no public benches. The third places offer shade and protection for their customers but there are few trees that can offer protection. Although 4 out of 6 people felt somewhat negative for this public space, 5 out of 6 people planned to spend more than an hour. According to my observations, Istedgade offers many third places to socialize and people using those third places are the only ones

using the space, see figure 6.5(b,c). As it is the sidewalks are mostly used by third places and they are blocked by parked cars. In very early morning as it can be seen from figure 6.5(a), the facades and the physical attributes of the street, see figure-ground diagram of Istedgade, is neither relaxing nor welcoming. Nevertheless, in past Istedgade has been closed and used for street parties because it has the flexibility to do so. The traffic can be redirected to the main street Vesterbrogade and whole street becomes an empty canvas, a stage for life to unfold. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.2.

Istedgade			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.2: Istedgade good public space analysis

6.3 Skydebanehave



(a) Figure-ground diagram and satellite image of Skydebanehave Source: Google Earth



(b) The gate to the park. Source: The author

Figure 6.6

This park is a hidden gem in Vesterbro. Despite the fact that the park is around 40 meters away from Istedgade, it is very safe, enclosed and open at the same time. The access to this specific public space is through a gate as shown in figure 6.6(b) and 2 other entrance door. The park is enclosed with fences and building facades and has opening hours because of its purpose and furniture. As I mentioned in section 4.2, Skydebanehave is not always open

to public. However, it's uniqueness and value for Vesterbro was enough for me to analyze. First and foremost, during the opening hours, this public place is maybe the safest place. 6 out of 9 people said it was very safe while 3 said it was somewhat safe and said the area needed more surveillance to reduce the crime. The playground is very active with kids and families coming from all around Vesterbro. It is big enough to keep the social distance and run after your child. No bikes are allowed as there are babies learning to walk, no pets are allowed as babies and kids are putting whatever they find in their mouth. Although the park itself is very mobility friendly, figure 6.6(b) also shows, it is not unusual for cars to park right in front of the gate and make it hard to go in and out.



Figure 6.7: Skydebanehave

There are not a lot of places to sit around the playground but people use it are regulars and they bring their own chairs as a solution, see figure 6.7(a) for seating options. I have interviewed 9 people and they all said they come here weekly, so much so that they recognize some of the regular visitors. There are plenty of trees and green elements like bushes, flowers, grass, etc. Due to being surrounded with buildings, Skydebanehave is well protected from strong winds and trees offer some protection from sun and rain. In general the energy is very positive, relaxing and welcoming. Only noise is the noise from kids and their parents, and thus the more crowded, the more noisy it gets. There are various different activities for kids in the playground area, some can be used by both adults and kids together, some are only for kids. Nevertheless, 7 out of 9 interviewees weren't happy with the amount of activity possibilities and said they needed more green areas and fenced fields for kids. There is also an opening in the middle of the playground area which gives the possibility to be used for different events. In general this is not a very flexible public space. It is given a purpose and limited access which can be discussed as a necessity to ensure a safe space for kids who suffers the most in densely populated urban areas. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.3.

Skydebanehave			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.3: Skydebanehave good public space analysis

6.4 Enghaveparken



Figure 6.8: Figure-ground diagram and satellite image of Enghaveparken. Source: Google Earth

Enghaveparken is the biggest multipurpose public space in Vesterbro. Istedgade ends with a square, Enghavenplads, where subway and bus stops meet and opens towards Enghaveparken with another park. The urban planning approach to the park is making it a focal point of Vesterbro. It is framed with row apartments and roads on 3 side. This enclosed feeling is secured with row of trees, fences and high bushes. It has 2 entrance points on each side and a big main entrance towards the main road. The park is divided into six with trees and pathways. By doing so, smaller rooms are created in a rather big public space. These small rooms create semi-privacy and ensures feeling of safety and interviews also support this statement as all 16 interviewees said they feel very safe in this public space. It attracts people of every demography. There is a lot of human activity both in the public space and around it. There are sufficient street lights to use the activities and create a safe environment during dark. During the events especially on the stage area, event division of the park becomes very crowded, see figure 6.9 (b). Nevertheless the soft boundaries between the divisions allow people to expand the area they use and thus create more space in between. The main street in front of the main entrance is controlled with traffic lights for safe passage, and although there are not pedestrian crossings, the traffic speed of 3 other streets around the park is slowed down with speed bumps and narrow roads.

Due to its location, Enghaveparken is very accessible. It is around 350 meter away from the main road Vesterbrogade and maximum 150 meters from major public transportation stops. This divers strong accessibility of the park also can be seen in the interview results. Among other studied public spaces, Enghaveparken by far had the most variable choice of transportation. During my observations, I haven't came across any obstacles in and around the park. The pathways where wide and suitable for wheelchair and stroller. Figure 6.9(a) shows that different textures meet at the same topographical level and grants free movement. So much so that people bring their cargo bikes and sometimes a small coffee car drives in and gives users the choice to buy warm drinks.

As I said before the park is divided into 6 activity themes and every area offers the urban furniture that fits the use. That being said, the only part that has enough seating area is the sport field. The stairs that go all around the field offers a great deal of seating opportunities and trees on the sides create shaded areas to stand and lean, see figure 6.9(c). The picnic area has some benches that cannot be moved and people usually bring their own picnic furniture. During my observation there were three large groups having picnic and they all brought their own furniture, see 6.9(a). Considering the amount of time people were planning to spend in this area, the urban furniture can be limiting. This statement was agreed by some of the interviewees. 14 out of 16 respondent said that they were planning to spend more than an hour in the park. With its clean, versatile, green and open attributes, Enghaveparken felt very relaxing and very inviting. The interview results were also very positive as everyone reported that they were generally happy with this public space and described it as cozy, green, clean and welcoming.



Figure 6.9: Enghaveparken picnic area, stage area and sports area. Source: The author

Enghaveparken is a unique asset for Vesterbro citizens. North-west corner is designated playground area that is covered with low fences for safety and has diverse activities that are designed for kids. North-east corner is the biodiversity area with various plant beds, tress and wide grass floor. It is also fenced with row bushes to create privacy and more relaxing environment. The are than main entrace opens to has some cultural elements like the two small showrooms and water features. There is a water fountain bed and two pétanque fields. South-east corner is grass field for picnics and barbeques or any activity that can take place on the field. The South-west corner is the sport corner with semi-fenced field

and tribune surrounding the field. On my first visit there was a group of adults playing football and the next day there was another group of adults playing roller hockey, see figure 6.9(c). Eastern middle part is the stage area for mostly cultural and sport activities. There is a small elevated stage and cement open area in front of it. During my first visit there were youth playing basketball and on second day there was a flea market event taking place in the same area, see figure 6.9(b). The row buildings surrounding the park is limiting harsh wind conditions to some extent and trees are offering protection from rain and sun. During one of my observation day, rain started to pour and everyone took cover under the trees. As a result, people didn't leave the park and they continued to enjoy their time in the park after the rain ended.

The activity based characteristics of this public space create opportunities for people of same interest to meet and socialize. Park itself give a more closed and isolated feeling, but due to its size and diversity, it allows different activities to be in interaction and create a more human activity flow. The interviewees gave very different responses when I asked how often they came to Enghaveparken. Not everyone was a regular visitor. 3 interviewees said they come to the park every day after the evening prayer, 5 interviewees said they come every 2 to 3 weeks for different activities and sometimes more often when there is an event. 5 interviewees said they come very rarely only if there is an event that they want to attend to and 3 interviewees said it was their first time. All 3 has come from outside of Vesterbro and their reason for visit was actually the flea market event. Some said they stayed for the roller hockey game and other said they found the park so cozy that they just couldn't leave.

Enghaveparken covers a big area and its surroundings with roads and fences create hard borders that cannot be penetrated. However, the layout of the park is very flexible. It already has areas that can be used for any sort of activity. As I mentioned before most of the divisions of the areas are made with trees and thus can adapt to the needs. On the other hand, there are also lots of non-movable furniture that don't allow people to alter according to their needs. For instance, all benches are bolted to the ground, which means when there is high sun or rain, people cannot move them under the trees to take cover. As I mentioned before during rain I observed people moving under the trees but all benches were under the rain and no one could sit on them during and shortly after the rain. It creates some limitations for the public space to adapt the emerging needs. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.4

Enghaveparken			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.4: Enghaveparken good public space analysis

6.5 J. C. Jacobsens Garden

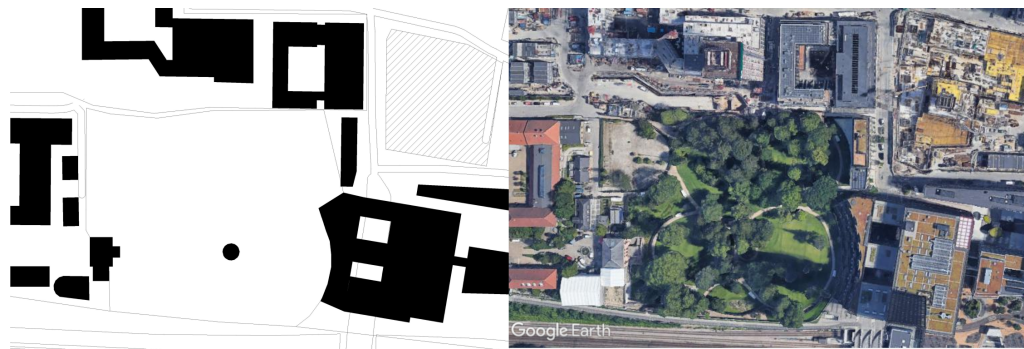


Figure 6.10: Satellite image and figure-ground diagram of J. C. Jacobsens Garden

J. C. Jacobsens Garden was a private garden that is converted into a public space. As I mentioned in section 4.2 the garden has limited access. It is open from sunrise til sunset but most importantly it is the only garden in Vesterbro. I decided to analyze this public space regardless of its limited access because of its uniqueness. The garden is very isolated and almost hidden, in fact as a non-local I had a hard time finding the entrance. One of the entrances to the garden is between tall buildings and under a tree, see figure 6.11. The garden is completely closed with building facades, fences and tall bushes. Due it's secluded location, and purpose, J. C. Jacobsens Garden had the lowest human activity among other focus areas. There are no facilities that face the garden and thus there are little to no eyes on the public space. That being said, there are security cameras located in several spots to ensure safety. As a woman, who originates from middle-east, I did not feel safe in this public space. The construction areas and noise barrier on one side of the garden didn't help with my safety concerns. This is my observation through my very sceptical eyes and soon after I interviewed a few people, I realized concept of safety is different for Danish people. 9 out of 10 people I interviewed said they felt very safe in this area. So safe that one interviewee was shocked with my question and said " this is Copenhagen, of course I feel very safe. Nothing happens here". The user profile was not unbalanced and most of

the users were just passing through the garden. Since the garden is closed after sunset, I didn't look for light fixtures.

Access from the building side was through a flight of stairs and there were no ramps. Other two entrances from south and north-west was accessible for wheelchairs and strollers. In spite of being isolated, the garden is 250 meters from the train station and 350 meters from bus station. Furthermore, its proximity shows in the interviews as 7 out of 10 people said they walked to the garden and 3 people said they came by bike. The garden is located right next to a main bike road and thus is convenient to come by bike.



Figure 6.11: J. C. Jacobsens Garden

There are several carefully placed seating areas in the garden with very pleasant views. Every piece of the garden is designed with a purpose and good aesthetics. They are functional and almost like a sculpture. There are various trees and flower beds. It is very quite and peaceful. The interviews with the visitors show that people who visit the garden stay around 20 minutes. And their purpose to visit is to spend time with their families and explore the nature. All in all, it is a very sensory pleasing garden. Due to its essence, the only activity this public space offers is to relax, and enjoy the calmness. According to two interviewees, there is a yoga group that comes to the garden to do yoga together every week. This shows that J. C. Jacobsens Garden attracts activities that shares the same type of energy as the garden. The fact that it is surrounded with buildings and noise barrier, the wind is blocked to some extent and the plentiful amount of trees creates protection against harsh sun and rain.

Interviewees reported that they were generally happy with this place. They most commonly described it as, calm, peaceful, green and isolated. The only negative thing they had to say for the garden was how isolated it was. Limited sociability of this area seems to be a problem in terms of interaction with surroundings and humans. The garden has very limited flexibility. it has hard borders all around and due to being a garden, it doesn't offer too much adaptability. However I think it is debatable whether flexibility is an important

criteria for a unique public garden. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.5.

J. C. Jacobsens Have			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.5: J. C. Jacobsens Garden good public space analysis

6.6 Bryggernes Plads



Figure 6.12: Satellite image and figure-ground diagram of Bryggernes Plads

The last public space is a relatively new square. It is located right next to iconic Carsberg gate with elephants and thus has a lot of tourist visitors. During my observations the demography of users were balanced. Even though the square leads to a very touristic landmark, it is completely surrounded with building blocks. This remote and enclosed physical attributes did not ensured safety for me. The interviews showed otherwise as 10 out of 12 people said they felt very safe. However, two interviewees said it was safe now but in the evenings there would be no human activity and not feel safe anymore. Although there is a restaurant in the square and many windows facing it, after closing hour in the weekdays the area gets deserted. When I asked what would make them feel safer, they said it needed to be open more and attract more people. In other words, the square was lacking balanced human activity level through out the day. However, since it is very enclosed with buildings, overcrowding would also cause a safety issue. As it is right now there were plenty of room for people to use the public space without crossing each others personal space.

The accessibility to Bryggernes Plads is not so versatile as there is only a bus stop within 250 meters distance and the next closest public transportation is more than 500 meters

away. Although the square has different elevations, there is a ramp and easy access from south and north that makes it wheelchair and stroller friendly. The bike sharing station in the square makes up for the remoteness to some extent. The elevation difference creates multiple seating opportunities. There are also benches and picnic tables of the restaurant. The square is completely covered with cobble stones, therefore it doesn't invite people to sit on the ground and enjoy like grass does. This statement is also supported with the interviews. Some interviewees said the square was just too clean. They said it didn't feel natural and inviting due to the built textures of the square. The most commonly used descriptions by the interviewees for Bryggernes Plads were modern, historical, touristic and inspiring. The interviewees were mostly positive about this public place but almost all of them said it wasn't green enough. And couple of them mentioned due to the constructions, there were times it was so loud, they didn't want to stay anymore and almost avoided to visit during the construction work hours.



(a)



(b)

Figure 6.13: Bryggernes Plads

This square offers no activity except the restaurant. The stairs create a friendly ambiance that invites people to engage with each other and nothing more. This also shows from the interview results as half of the interviewees said they were planning to spend more than an hour in the square and other half said 30 mins or less. Either way everyone said this was a pit-stop on the way to the main activity. The purpose of their visit was to mainly meet with their friends and sightseeing. This can be interpreted as Bryggernes Plads didn't attract people to stay but merely be a meeting point. The enclosed, no nature characteristics of the square did not offer any protection for weather conditions except the wind. Since it was a meeting point, most of the interviewees said that they would visit here every time they met because this was their meeting point. The offices surrounding the square created a local feeling for workers and they said it was very familiar and not crowded.

The square offers no interaction with surrounding buildings. As it can be seen from figure 6.13 the buildings have rather block facades with no opening. In that case relating with the surroundings become a challenge as surroundings are bricks, stones and trees in vases.

The adaptability and flexibility of the area is debatable. Since it is an open public space, it can adapt to different uses and temporary installments. The borders are not flexible at all and the elevation difference divides the space in two but there is still room to adapt. The result of analysis of this public space is as shown in table 6.6.

Bryggernes Plads			
Safety	Crime	Personal space	Traffic
Comfort	Furniture	Mobility	Sensory
Enjoyment	Activity	Climate	Social
Flexibility	Access	Use	Edge

Table 6.6: Bryggernes Plads good public space analysis

6.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, all 6 focus areas offer different uses and have different physical attributes. The structured interviews with users of those public spaces gave much more insight than I could have ever observed. People wanted different things from each public space and every single public space attracted the users that found something in that public space that they can relate to. This attraction creates the vibe, or the aura of the public space. Therefore the users describe their public spaces in the same way. They identify themselves with the public space and their surroundings and almost as if they reflect themselves upon the public space. And that's one of the key attributes to create a good public space. A relatable, internalizable public space. This result was the biggest quality of every public space in Vesterbro. Some offered qualities for building communities and others offered various activities.

Halmtorvet and Sønder Boulevard offer incredible proximity and flexibility. Users of this area, identified themselves with it. It is used by a vast amount of people and therefore is very important for Vesterbro. Istedgade has an incredible potential that isn't met yet. The hipster and trendy vibe of Istedgade offer third places that the citizens could enjoy and relax. Skydebanehave is very unique and vital for young families with small kids lives in Vesterbro. This area brings the ultimate solution to raise a kid in a metropolitan city. Enghaveparken is the corner stone park of Vesterbro with vast amount of qualities it offers. It is located at the heart of the district with high accessibility and has an activity for almost everyone. J. C. Jacobsens Garden is a unique and valuable public space that offers calmness and peace, the qualities that are very hard to come by in dense districts. Bryggernes Plads is a reclaimed square after the new development plan and it is aesthetically very pleasing. It is surrounded with historical and architectural scenes and offers a meeting area to engage

in the aesthetics.

Chapter 7

Post-pandemic Public Space

In this chapter I interpret my findings from earlier two chapters and answer my final sub-question: *What is a good public space and what is the value of it in the light of COVID-19?* I will draw from analytical findings and use academic literature, and my values as an urban planner to discuss the matter. I first begin with defining good public space once more and then discuss the value of public space in Vesterbro and in cities in general after COVID-19.

7.1 What is good public space?

Through out the analysis I kept repeating a problem with public spaces in Vesterbro and that was how little public space there were. During my interviews, before I could even ask people what they wanted from a public space, they complaint how little space they had. My question here is that what would a good public space do, if most of the population can't use it because of its capacity. Every public space has a capacity and our aim here is not to create regional park that can take hundreds of people but focus on the local public space needs. First and foremost people in Vesterbro want public space in their proximity. One of the biggest realization of COVID-19 crisis was that we need to be able to survive within our proximity. This means that we need to be able to recharge, relax, exercise, enjoy ourselves and our surroundings within our close proximity. Copenhagen as a city offers a lot of open public spaces and activities. What good does it do, if you have to plan your whole day to get there and worry about transportation, food, drinks, toys etc. Local public spaces and regional public spaces are not same [Hsu, 2020]. Therefore we cannot plan public spaces on a regional scale. We need to plan it on local scale to grant everyone's right to public space. Second, citizens of Vesterbro complain about the crowd. When there is only little fictional space left, and everyone uses the same public space, that place hits its diminishing return in terms of attractiveness. COVID-19 changed our perception of crowd [Gehl, 2020a; Mehta, 2020], which means the diminishing return has shifted towards less density. In the past it didn't bother most people to walk through crowded downtown

shopping streets but now many people want to keep their social distance from strangers and thus avoid getting into crowded areas. The ratio of space per person in public space has changed and a good public space can keep this balance.

One of the main visual characteristics of dense urban areas is concrete/brick and asphalt. Even though Vesterbro went through several urban renewal projects to create spaces for people to use and openings to breath, it is still a dense area that keeps getting denser. We know for many reasons, and mainly to create sustainable cities, we need to create dense cities. We are after all trying to prevent urban sprawl. The strong necessity of creating denser cities only makes the need for diverse uses of urban space stronger. Cities are not just made out of buildings, roads and occasional parks. People need diverse uses and biophilia incorporated every aspect of their life to increase their quality of life. Cities are where we live and we have to remember that we plan cities for people and people need to keep their connection with nature. Human beings evolved in nature and ancient civilizations created nature wonders to stay connected to nature. Now we are trying to have this connection with parks or leftover areas of buildings and roads as a filler. There is an extensive literature on how nature positively affects our health just to name a few examples there is a nature therapy study [Annerstedt and Währborg, 2011] and one of many mental health and nature study [Barton and Pretty, 2010]. Naturally, people felt the missing connection with nature even more than before during COVID-19 lockdown. The missing connection to nature was very strong in Vesterbro. People wanted more green. Their good public space was less roads and more green. Therefore nature elements is not essential only because it is pleasant to look at or because trees give protection but because we need it to heal, to reconnect with life.

When we think about comfort, Gehl [2010], PPS [n.d.], UN-Habitat [2016], Carr et al. [1992], and many more say we need benches, places to sit, lean and rest. But what is the logic of having benches that doesn't serve any purpose but just give room for people to take a breather. People in Vesterbro also asked for benches but a seating area doesn't have to be a bench. Public spaces in Vesterbro doesn't offer alternative seating. It is either bench or floor. A good public space incorporates human needs into its design and uses its geometrical conditions into its advantage [Gehl, 2006]. As a result the design element becomes more than just a seating area but it offers other qualities as well. Gehl [2006] says that edge effect can provide feeling of security, keep distance and just give better observation territory. In other words, a good public space happens when it is not planned alone but use architectural elements to compliment the space. Let's think about Bryggernes Plads in Vesterbro. Where buildings and ground meet, there is nothing but a straight corner all the way through, and three meters in front of the straight tall facade, a bench. It is not welcoming, or inviting for interaction. No matter how many seating areas in a public space, if it is not giving the human scale, it is not going to be attractive. The urban furniture shouldn't have just one purpose, it should be flexible and natural. A good

public space offers resting solutions by interacting with users and giving more purpose than just sitting. That is why stairs usually make a great interactive seating options.

Another quality that people wanted in their public space was more sport facilities and culture events. During COVID-19, Denmark closed school yards to public use for safety reasons and indoor sport facilities closed down too. In a district like Vesterbro where there are no open fields that can be used for several sports and events, people can feel tied down. Sport and cultural events help people to connect through their interests. It opens a whole new world for community building. Local teams, theater, music, art clubs, etc. create very strong connections and sense of pride. A good public space can be a blank canvas for local events to take place. A good public space offers versatile uses. In times of crisis, these versatile places can adapt the emerging needs and help to overcome the challenges [Jose Chon and and Ojal, 2020].

Overall the interviews, survey and my observations guided me to make an argument about what keys aspects a good public space should have to overcome the challenges emerges from high density and COVID-19 crisis: proximity, space/attraction balance, connection with nature, engagement/comfort balance, flexible space. These key factors do not dismiss they qualities I studied in chapter 2.4 but strengthens them. Most of them have already been mentioned but the difference is how the understanding and urgency is changed.

7.2 Critical value of public space

As I mentioned through out this chapter, the key qualities of a good public space adds several values to a physical space. The value of public space is different for everyone and every institution. For instance, the value of public spaces for citizens of Vesterbro is having urban life. Especially people in Vesterbro identify themselves with the public spaces and make them part of their homes. So the value of a good public space is good quality of life. Their local culture lives on the public spaces and they connect with each other through those experiences. In that manner public space is sense of pride and local community and experiences and memories. The value of public space is so high, every wasted potential, every abandoned public space is suffocation of public life. During COVID-19 another value was gained more importance and it's health. People value their public spaces and especially green spaces to heal mentally and physically, to recharge and relax. And especially because of amount of homeless people and addicts takes shelter in Vesterbro, public spaces are also home for those people. For third places public spaces mean livelihood and community. Public spaces give them opportunity to interact and engage with the citizens and attract people. Good public spaces can help local economy to flourish and help them be more independent. A sidewalk is not just a sidewalk. Its value is so much more than just a paved road. As Jacobs [1961] argues,

“Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If a city’s streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.”

[Jacobs, 1961,p.37]

Furthermore, value of public spaces became more more obvious than ever due to COVID-19. While some public spaces could easily be undervalued before, now they became a fundamental need. As Hsu [2020] argues, in order to co-exist and build sense of connection, civic places are human rights. In that manner in times of crisis, such as COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring public spaces for all aids the recovery and rebuilding phase [Hsu, 2020]. In case of Vesterbro, public spaces allowing people to hold on to each other in these times and heal together. This is the true meaning of a community. The stronger the link in a community, the more resilient they become. Katrine Clausen, the secretariat for Vesterbro and Kgs. Enghave Local Committee, points out the increased value of public space in the eyes of Vesterbro citizens and addresses public space as a crucial element in urban planning.

“As for the future I think that people might have seen the value of the outdoor spaces and will continue to use the outdoor room as a place for activities and social events. For Copenhagen as a city this means that, even more than before, we have to think how to integrate green areas when we build our city. This is not only important for environmental reasons, but also for the quality of life for the people who live here. We all knew this before the corona-crisis, but now we have seen the situation in real life.”

[Clausen, 2021]

The COVID-19 crisis was a wake-up call for a paradigm shift in urban planning. For far too long urban planning was made for buildings and most of the planned public spaces were the streets and sidewalk, and occasional parks and squares. And, the human scale urban planning for urban life was little to none [Gehl, 2010]. The car oriented planning approach did not consider human scale on pedestrian level but it embodied human scale to the cars and planned for cars [Hurtado, 2020]. The temporary instalments or people reclaiming streets as their own is proof that we need to change the way we plan cities and recognize the connection of human scale and public space. In that manner we also need to accept public space as a critical element of resilient planning on the way of creating sustainable and resilient cities.

7.3 Conclusion

In previous chapters, I studied how citizens of Vesterbro experienced public spaces in the light of COVID-19 crisis and how their preferences were affected by the pandemic through survey and structured interview. I tried to put myself in their shoes and see the district through their eyes. Then I studied the qualities of their public spaces to place their values into physical world. I used my observations and structured interviews with people, and used my theoretical framework as a tool to determine the quality of six public spaces. In this chapter I interpreted the empirical result of my analysis to add my urban planner view to good public space concept. In the end I realized that the understanding of some concepts and elements were changed and even though I think pre-pandemic good public space criteria are still valid, some aspects are so much more important now, my interpretation of good public space has changed. As a result my case study of Vesterbro let me interpret good public space to have the following qualities; safe, close proximity, space/attraction balance, connection with nature, engagement/comfort balance, flexible space.

Furthermore I realized that defining qualities for a good public space is not enough. We have to talk about the value of public space and see COVID-19 as a wake-up call for long needed paradigm shift in urban planning. Public spaces gained a different value during the pandemic as they became part of everyday life, outdoor living rooms. In the times of crisis they helped people to heal mentally and physically. They became the platforms of urban life and thus created strong community relationships. Because COVID-19 hit everyone equally, rules applied to everyone, so when people saw each other in the public space people could easily relate to each other and engage. This pandemic showed that public space is the crucial element that can determine failure or success of a city on the process of recovering from crisis. Therefore, it is time to change the way we plan cities from car oriented to human oriented.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In 2020, COVID-19 pandemic hit the entire world very hard. Authorities and people were caught off-guard. As a result, we had to go through a pretty rough improvisation and adaptation process to overcome this crisis. Every country took different measurement to stop the spread of the virus but eventually one by one every country applied lockdown regulations. Dense cities became the front-line in the fight with the virus. Denmark was also in lockdown and Copenhagen was the forefront of the pandemic crisis. Life had to continue in very different conditions. In this new conditions, public space and life in close proximity gained a new meaning and importance all around the world. This importance also showed how vulnerable dense cities were. Vesterbro is a dense district that keeps growing and already faces issues with public space scarcity. In that manner, dense urban areas has extra challenges to meet the good public space needs that are emerging due to COVID-19 crisis. In order to study this problem I formulated following main research question:

How did COVID-19 change the perception of public space and how can we create good public spaces in densely populated urban areas like Vesterbro?

The answer to the research question requires me to first understand the situation then asses the public spaces and then interpret the findings into the answer. Therefore I developed three sub-questions to supplement the main research question:

1. How did citizens of Vesterbro's perception of public space change after COVID-19?: In order to answer this question, I conducted an online survey with 133 respondent and structured survey with 62 respondents and 26 third places. I triangulated my data with document analysis of local newspapers and the district plan. As a result, I reached at this conclusion, citizens of Vesterbro felt the lack of public space and the low quality of existing public spaces even more after COVID-19. They turned public spaces into their living rooms and internalized themselves with it and that's why they weren't satisfied with the condition of the public spaces. Public spaces were under a lot of stress

due to increased demand which caused them to be perceived crowded, loud, dirty and just not enough. The citizens' preferences for ideal public space was spacey, green, relaxing and active. They cared about their public spaces and wanted to utilize the most out of them.

2.What qualities do public spaces in Vesterbro have to offer?: In order to answer this question I chose to study 6 public spaces. I held structured interviews with users of these public spaces and observed them through the theoretical framework I developed. In the end I graded the quality of these public spaces using the table I created as an assessment tool. As a result, I reach at the conclusion that every public space in Vesterbro had different qualities to offer to its citizens but all had one thing in common and that is each public space user could internalize themselves with the space. I called it public space aura. Every aura attracted users that shared the same type of aura. In addition to that, some public spaces were a true treasure for the citizens with unique qualities but in the end none of them were perfect in the eye of the users.

3.What is a good public space and what is the value of it in the light of COVID-19?: In order to answer this question I needed to draw the empirical findings from both the two sub-questions before and give my meaning to it by interpreting the findings. I supported my interpretations with literature. As a result, I reach at the conclusion that good public space qualities has changed after COVID-19 when the public space perception has changed. Therefore my interpretation of good public space needed to have the following qualities; safe, close proximity, space/attraction balance, connection with nature, engagement/comfort balance, flexible space. On a further note, I pointed out that the value of public space has become so inevitable, in order to create good public spaces we need a paradigm shift in the way we plan cities.

How did COVID-19 change the perception of public space and how can we create good public spaces in densely populated urban areas like Vesterbro?

Over all public spaces became a very crucial part of local life due to COVID-19 crisis. The lockdown created a pressure on public spaces as demand for public space is increased. The safety regulations and general fear of the virus changed understanding of crowd which led people to avoid using crowded public spaces. As a result of this perception change, people realized the need for local amenities and public space played a big role. At the end of the lockdown, local public spaces were already being perceived as outdoor living rooms. This internalization of public space gave an identity to every public space. However, this relationship also made people realize the lack of public spaces for the demand and the lack of qualities of public spaces. In that manner, in order to satisfy the needs of citizens in densely populated district Vesterbro, every public space needs to be used to the fullest. Vesterbro doesn't have the luxury to waste public areas. Therefore every public space needs to give a purpose and attract users by offering various qualities such as

safety, accessibility, personal space, activities and uses, connection with nature, comfort, interaction opportunities and flexibility. The only way for these qualities to work is to start planning public spaces as a critical element with human scale in mind and not just as a left over area. But more importantly we can create good public spaces by changing the way we plan cities from car and built structure oriented to human oriented planning.

Furthermore, this research is far away from getting to the root of the problem. At the end of this research I only realised urban planning was changing but it wasn't changing fast and drastic enough. Cities are still not prepared to adapt climate change and disasters. Once we aim to create resilient and sustainable cities for all, we realize public spaces are critical elements to achieve that. I hereby finish this research with suggesting further research on the long waited paradigm shift in use of urban space in planning to create resilient and sustainable cities.

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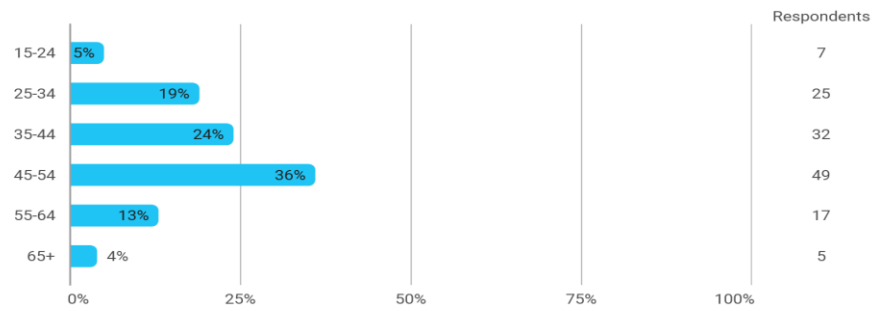
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Appendix A

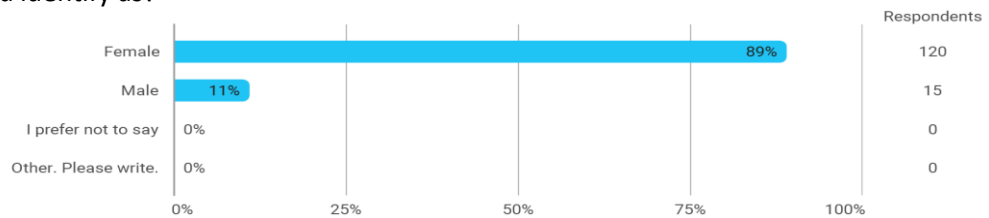
Questionnaire

Online Questionnaire Results from Vesterbro (20-27 July 2021)

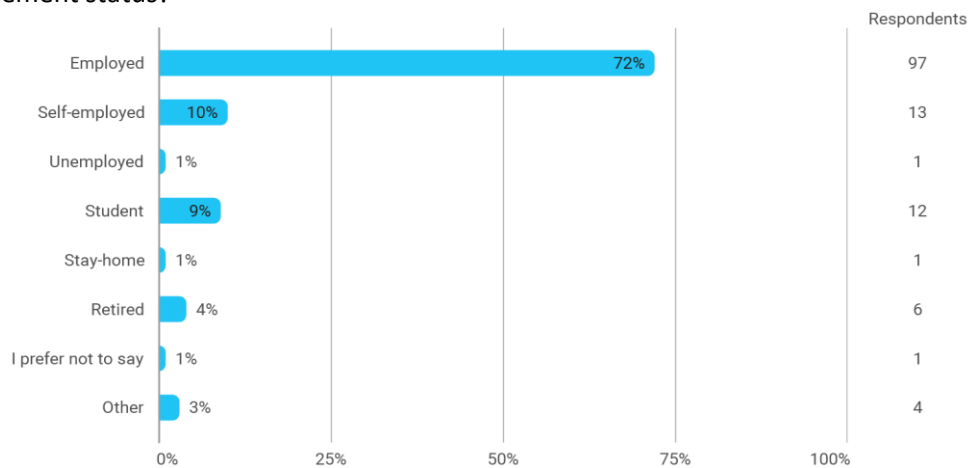
Your age



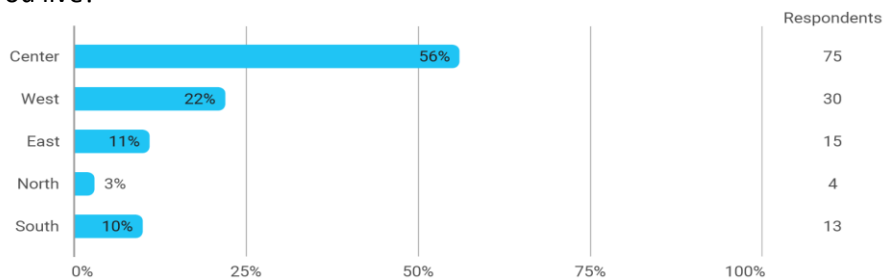
What gender do you identify as?



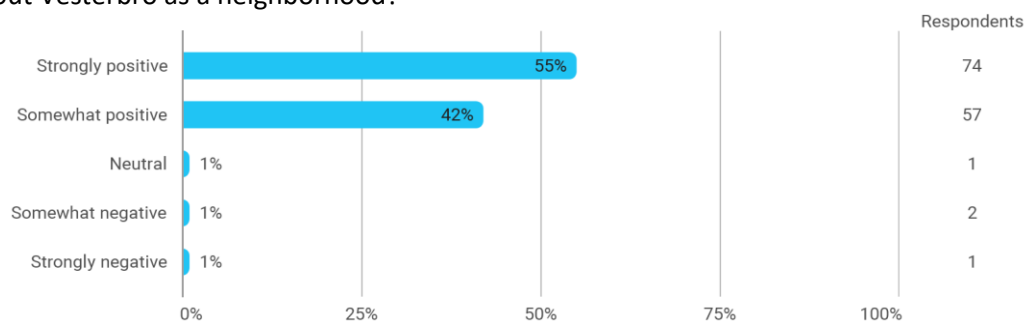
What is your employment status?



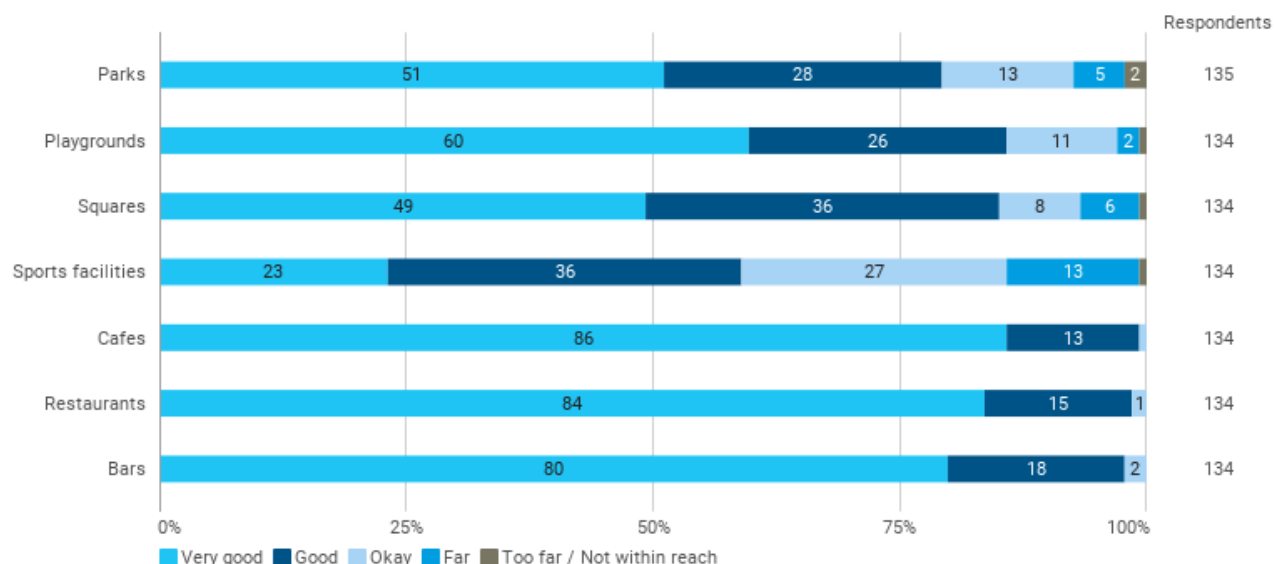
What part of Vesterbro do you live?



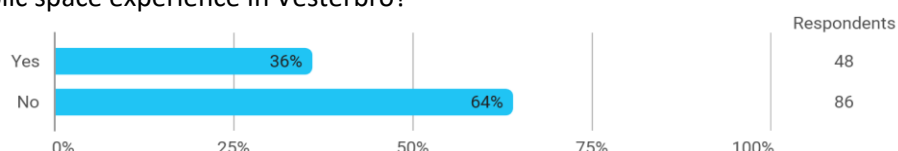
How do you feel about Vesterbro as a neighborhood?



How would you rate the walking distance to the following facilities in your area?



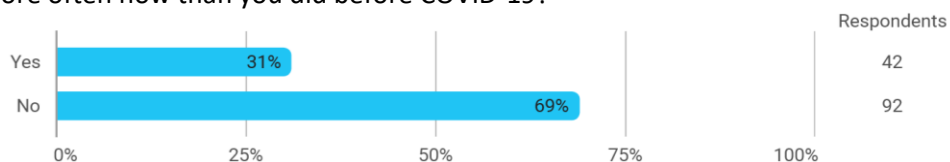
Did COVID-19 change your public space experience in Vesterbro?



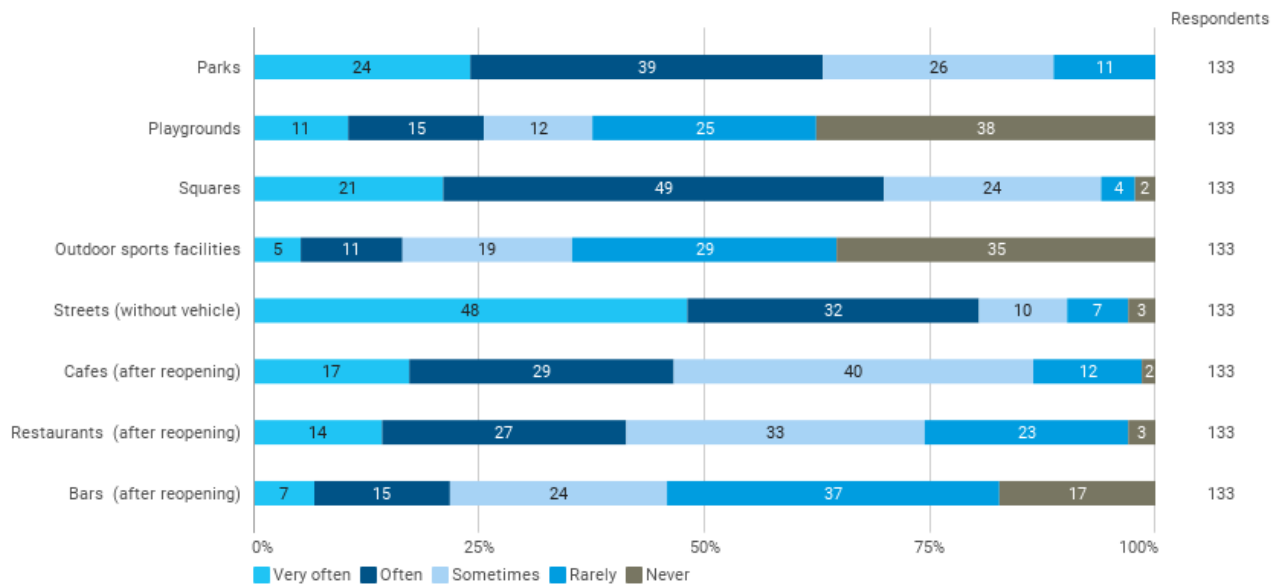
If yes, can you describe with a few words (optional)

- Tomt under lockdown og nu er der fest i gaden.
- Jeg har ikke brugt bylivet på samme måde. Søgt mere efter grønne områder end caféer og barer
- jeg oplever en større tendens til at samles og snakke lidt mere sammen
- Dejligt at byen har været mere stille. Bortset fra de unges boomboxes
- Det er et sted man samles i højere grad
- Mange brugere af det offentlige rum holder ikke afstand. Vesterbro har ufattelig mange turister så det bliver nemt proppet.
- mere tid på gaden
- Der er kommet for meget fest i gaderne, og alt for mange barer og fokus på alkohol kultur
- Meget stillr
- Tæt
- Jeg har brugt det mere
- Ikke samles i by og offentlige steder efter by
- Enghave plads og Litauens plads blev mere livlige
- Parker og pladser er blevet invaderet af festende mennesker, da det åbenbart er meget farligt at feste under ordnede forhold
- Oplevelsen af at bemærke andres brug i højere grad
- Har vist hvor vigtigt det er med rekreative områder
- Obs på hvor mange der er samlet
- Jeg er blevet mere opmærksom på, hvor tæt pakket her i virkeligheden er. Og hvor meget jeg egentlig søger luft
- Jeg har brugt det offentlige rum mere: parker, pladser Etc for at mødes udendørs.
- Enghave Plads blev en udendørs dagligstue for vesterbroerne
- Efter Enghave plads er åbnet mere op har vi kunne bruge den og Parken til at være i når man kun kunne mødes ude.
- Det er blevet endnu vigtigere, så i starten, da Enghaveparken stadig var under ombygning, var den MEGET savnet.
- Vi har gået mere og brugt det offentlige rum til at sidde og nyde
- Soundboks skal begrænses
- Folk flokkedes til vores bydel og med få store pladser føltes her trangt. Eksempelvis Enghave plads
- brug for mere grønt og plads til fordybelse og stilhed
- Jeg har brugt byens bænke mere
- For få grønne oaser
- Offentlig rum bliver brugt meget mere end før, både enghave plads og parken
- Der er nu alt for mange mennesker overalt
- For lidt plads. Mange mennesker
- Der blev helt tomt under lockdown
- Jeg savner mere natur
- Stigende behov
- Færre mennesker på gaden om aftenen
- Der er kommet for meget larm

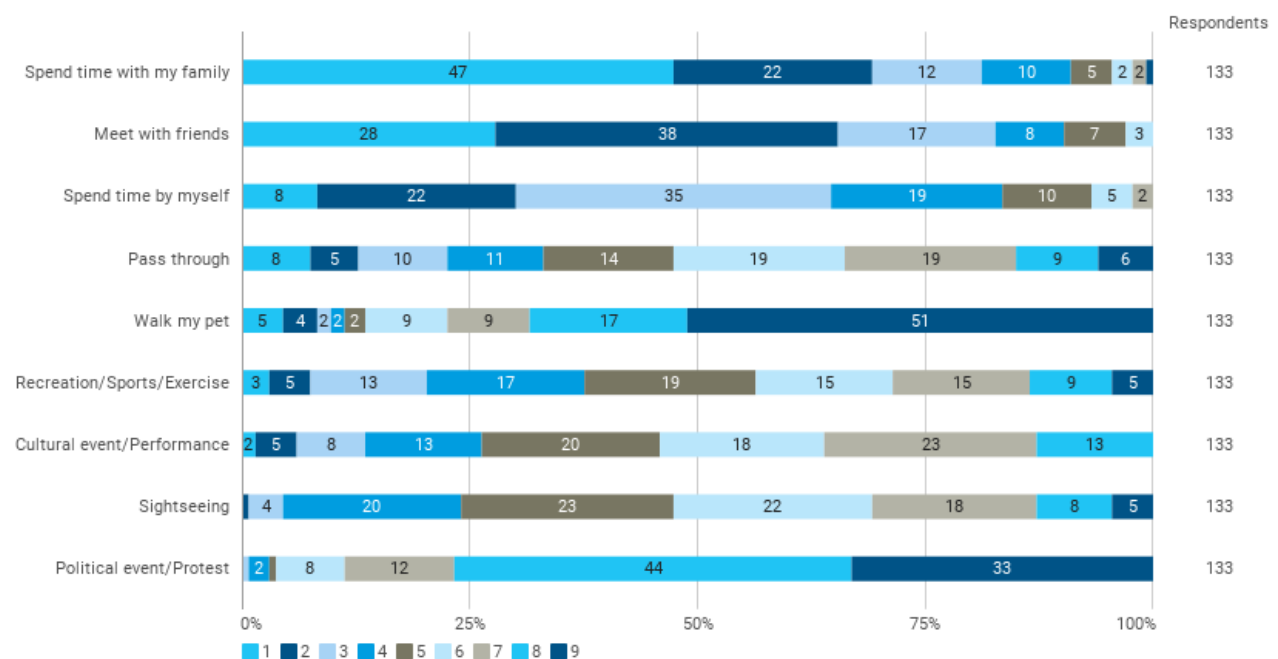
Do you use public space more often now than you did before COVID-19?



How often do you use these public spaces in Vesterbro after COVID-19?



For what purposes do you use the public spaces in Vesterbro? -Please move the answers up and down so that what you use the most is at the top and what you use the least is at the bottom. (1-9)



What three words would you use to describe public spaces in Vesterbro?

alsidigt	venligt	overkomligt
Muligheder	Egoisme	Innovativ
Blandet affære	Rodet	Larmende
Flere små rum	Høj belægning	Slid
Crowded	rummelig	hyggelig
Hyggeligt, velholdt og åbent	Hyggeligt, velholdt og åbent	Hyggeligt, velholdt og åbent
Hygge	Liv	Mødested
Diversitet	Indbydende	Hyggeligt
Dynamisk	Åben	Mangfoldig
Beskidt	Lyst	vrimlende
Mangfoldig	Innovativ	Kultur
Tryk ro hygge	Tryk ro hygge	Tryk ro hygge
Grønt	Rent	Rummeligt
Travl	Støjende	Velkommen
Varieret	Trygt	Hjemligt
Inspirerende	Varieret	Godt

Tæt	Pænt	Inspirerende
Tilgængelige	Besøgte	Velholdte
Urbant	Hyggeligt	Dynamisk
åbne	plads til alle	lys
Livligt	Beskidt	Mangfoldigt
Proppet med mennesker	Mange muligheder	De nye Carlsberg byggerier ødelægger det hyggelige kvarter
Pulserende	Mangfoldigt	Turister
Hyggeligt	Travlt	Alsidigt
Pænt,	hyggeligt,	rummeligt
Levende	Befolket	Indbydende
Trygt	Rum	Hygge
dejligt	uprætentløst	trygt
Hygge	Alternativ	Progressiv
Inkluderende	Varierede	Overprogramerede
Åbent	Hyggeligt	Afslappende
Glad	God stemning	Godt blandet
Dejligt	Liv	Forskellige
Trang	Populært	Affald
Stemning	Nærmiljø	Socialt samvær
Hyggeligt	Larm	Socialt
Varieret	Provinsielt	Afslappet
Lokalt	Rumlighed	Enestående
Kedeligt	Småt	Ikke grønt nok
Autentisk	Trygt	Livligt
Crowded	Beskidt	Mangfoldigt
Åbent	Venligt	Imødekommende
Mangfoldigt	Trygt	Smukt
Indbydende	Grønnere	Støjende
Rigti god	Dejligt	Dejligt
Rummeligt	Flot	Myldret
Beskidt	Kedeligt	Overfyldt
Få, trange		
Åbent	Inkluderende	Voksenegnet
Alsidigt	Frisind	Velkommen
Hyggelig atmosfære	For få skraldespande	Grønt
farverigt	rummeligt	på tværs af generationer og kulturer
Menneskefuldt	Hyggeligt	Børnefattigt
Smart	Tæt	Livligt
Hyggeligt	Venligt	Hjemmefølelse
Liv	Befærdet	Hektisk
Mangfoldigt	Højtloftet	Rummeligt
Hyggeligt	Urbant	Imødekommende
Mangfoldigt	Trygt	Rummeligt
Levende	Social mødested	Beskidt
Pulserende	Egoistisk	respektløst
Pulserende	Indbydende	Livligt
Eftertragtet	Rummelig	Autentisk
Beton	Alternative åndehuller	Mangfoldigt
Trangt	Livligt	Larmende
Liv	Hygge	Glade mennesker
Dejligt	Tillidsfuldt	Imødekommende
Hyggeligt	Hipt	Roligt
For mange Caféer	Tæt på grønne områder	Hygge glæde samhørighed
Overvejende rummeligt	Rimelig mangfoldigt	Lidt for meget provins
Livlige	Spændende	Nedslidte
Alt for mange mennesker	Beskidt	'-
Mangfoldighed	Forskellighed	Egoisme
Unge	Fest	Alkohol
Mange	Vedligeholdet	Dagtimer
Hipstercentral	Egoisme	Kaffe
mangfoldigt	Socialt	pulserende
Tæt på grønt	For meget larm	Ta' hensyn unge
Mangfoldighed	Tryghed	Spændende
Gode	Behagelige	For små
Indbydende	Hyggeligt	Vigtigt
For hipster agtigt	For mange cafeer	Elsker Vesterbro

Tilgængeligt	Åbent	Begrænset
Fyldt	Liv	Glæde
Hyggeligt	Mangfoldigt	Kreativt
Mangfoldigt	Trygt	Levende
Venligt	Rummeligt	Specielt
Tolerance	Sameksistens	Tryghed
Grønt	Funktionelt	Pænt design/arkitektur
Alsidigt	Tætpakket	Beskidt
Varieret	Rummeligt	Kaotisk
Menneskefyldt	Hyggeligt	Spændende
Lidt men godt. En af de tættest befolkede bydele i kbh.	Ekskluderende. Det er designet til bestemte befolkningsgrupper	Beskidt
Hyggeligt	Travlt	Hipt
Livligt	Diversitet	Urbant
Mangfoldigt	Rummeligt	Ungt
Livligt	Støjende	Mangfoldigt
Mødested	Åndehul	Gennemgang
Mangfoldigt	Alt for ofte lidt beskidt. Sørg nu for at komme af med affald på ordentlig vis	Til tider lidt for meget af en turistattraktion
Alsidigt	Larm	Brugervenligt
Socialt	Low key	Hipster
Fredfyldt	Rig på natur	Motionsvenligt
Autentisk lammende træfattigt	Autentisk lammende træaffigt	Autentisk lammende træfattigt
Socialt	Grønt	Levende
Livligt	Alsidigt	Hurtigt
Åben	Tryk	Stemningsfuld
Diversitet	Underholdende	Dejligt
Crowdet	Rart	
Liv	Hjemme	Loppemarkeder
Familieegnet	Mangfoldigt	Stemningsfyldt
Hyggeligt.	Fælles	Fyldt
Byliv	Cafe	Mange mennesker
Crowded	Skatere og sigøjnere	For lidt grønt
Beskidt	Mangfoldigt	Beskidt
Unge mennesker	Gode caféer	Mangel på grønt

What two things would you like to do in the public spaces of Vesterbro that you can't do now?

parkerer	bænke
Møde mennesker, der ikke ligner alle de andre..	At opleve ro
Bred Gågade uden biler	Roligt ophold
Flere offentlige bænke / bedre håndtering af affald	Færre biler / bilfri veje
Intet	intet
Intet	Intet
Fordybelse	Bevægelse
Volleyball bane	Bedre bade forhold i havnen
Gå i svømmehal	Fjerne alle soundbokse fra Søndre Boulevard
Skrald	Larm
Gadefester	Børnefester
Jeg ville gerne have langt større mulighed for at bruge offentligt toilet, når jeg færdes ude i det offentlige rum	Få ro
Ro	Planter+ blomster små haver
Ingenting	Ingenting
Gå i flere grønne områder	Kunne sidde på en bænk med udsigt
Bibliotek i min ende af Vesterbro	Flere bænke
grafitti	
Nyde vandet	
Bedre mulighed for at parkere	
Tennis	Mere skov
Være i rummet uden at være fuldstændig omringet af folk	
Alt er muligt	Alt er muligt
Udendørs badmintonbane	Byhaver til alle, der vil
Cykle uden at klikke ud	Parkere min bil efter endt arbejdsdag
ophold blandt en større samling høje træer	være lidt alene
Mere ro	Bedre adgang til vandet
Se Open Air (film)	
Natklub	Mere byliv
Flere grønne områder	Under jorden pakering

Kunne sætte min baby ned et sted	Kunne sidde et offentligt sted uden at der er over-crowded
Bålmad	Udekoncerter /- dans
Parkere min bil	Sove for musik larm
Have bedre/sikrere vejbaner for cyklister	
Mindre larm om natten	Flere skraldespande
Grønt område	Være i fred for hjemløse og narkomaner
Købe bøger	Handle i dyrebutikker
Intet	Intet
Vinterbade	Arrhh en lille skov
Gå tur i større parker	Bade ved strand
Måske flere almindelige butikker	Der ikke noget
Steder som folkets hus på Nærrebro , hvor mange unge mødes	Ved ikke ellers har bi det hele
Være et sted uden for meget skrald	Være et sted med med grønt
Flere sportsmuligheder for børn.	Der er rift om pladserne særligt til svømning
Have en fisk/slagterbutik i nærheden	Flere bænke/plads til at sidde ude
Gå i fitness uden C-pas	Live musik uden C-pas
at der var plads til at ha små urte- og blomsterhaver	at jeg kunne færdes på enghavevej tæt på min bolig hvor der var knap så megen trafik med så høj hastighed (jeg ønkser mig vejbump og andet af den slags)
Flere legepladser	Flere bænke
Privacy	Intimitet
Fritløb med hund	Komme nemmere af med skrald
Løbe på en atletikbane	Spille fodbold på en rigtig størrelse fodboldbane
Intet	Intet
Madmarked ala Sydeuropa og ikke som torvehallerne	Udendørs atletikbane
Flere grønne arealer	
Koncerter	Natteliv
Umiddelbart ikke noget	Umiddelbart ikke noget
Ingenting	Ingenting
Udendørs koncerter	Gå med bare tæer på gaden ??
Ikke noget	Kan virkelig ikke finde på noget
Lækre barer	
Mangler ikke noget	Kan ikke komme på noget
Flere muligheder for dans	Finde flere oaser
Lufte hund uden glasskår mv på gaden	
Det hele er her	Det hele er her
At gå en tur med en barnevogn er ikke muligt da caféer fylder hele fortovet, ville gerne have at der var færre borde på fortovet	Finde parkering
Lufte hunde frit i en hundepark	Finde parkering efter kl 17
Fredelige grønne lommer	Finde en fredelig ren plads
Få ro	Mere plads - afstand til andre mennesker
Loppemarkeder	Slappe af og nyde bare at uden at ska passe på
Større parker	Flere træer
Cykle/gå hjem alene	Mere morgenmad
Flere grønne områder	
Jeg mangler personligt ikke noget	Se ovenstående
Svømme indendørs	Spa-hamam bade
Sidde på et tæppe, på en græsplæne, med en veninde, uden at sidde på enten hundetis, lige op og ned af andre, midt i en druk fest eller lign.	Cykle uden konstante stop
Købe fisk hos en fiskehandel	Sove med åbne vinduer
Her er det meste	
Parkere min cykel sikkert	Finde p plads t min bil
Mountainbike på spor:)	Ingen bud her
Mangler ingenting	Mangler ingenting
Jeg mangler ikke noget. Kun tolerance fra tilflyttere og visse turister.	
Cykelsti i Istedgade	Offentlige toiletter
Træfattigt	Autentisk
Gå en tur i grønne omgivelser	Gå til et sted hvor der er ro
Fødevarermarked	Udendørs koncert
Intet	Er fint tilfreds
Mere grønne områder	
Udendørs svømmehal (bauehøj er ofte proppet)	
Flere parker	Mere plads
Parkere uden at bruge for meget tid efter job	

If you could change anything regarding public spaces in Vesterbro, what would you change?

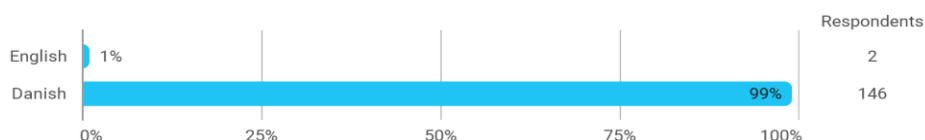
- Mange flere grønne områder - træer og blomster og græsarealer
- Ingen soundboxe/højlydte motorkøretøjer
- Mindre skrald
- En legeplads på Enghave plads
- Støjniveauet
- Rentgøring
- Flere offentlige toiletter.
Flere bænke
- Mindre affald på gaderne
- Styr på stofbrugere
- Jeg tænker dagligt at jeg mener Kbh Kommune burde ansætte folk til at gøre rent i gaderne. Samle (mere) skrald, pille ukrudt op, passe bede og spule fliser. Her er for snusket for mange steder
- Har ikke selv hund, men hundelufterfaciliteter er ringe.
Pas på med at sløjfe flere p pladser
Metropladserne kunne udnyttes bedre end store bare betonpladser
- Flere bænke på Vestre Kirkegård
- Flere skraldespande og oprydning i sommerperioden
- Flere parker og grønne områder
- Pladser og byrummene lider under at ville for meget. Mange af byrummene er dårligt indrettet og materialer og møbler bliver hurtigt slidt.
De er ikke tænkt ordentligt ind i forhold til hinandens funktioner og den omkringliggende bys struktur og hieraki.
- Det ku være så fedt hvis der blev kigget på hvordan cafeer bredder sig, bare se på Enghavevej (i den gl slagter), vi fodgænger har hele 90 cm at komme forbi på og det duer ik min mor går pt med krykke og er meget usikker og vil helst have mig ved sin side.
- Mindre larm og fester
- Mindre biler. Større fokus på grøn transport
- Færre biler på Vesterbrogade
- At hver især tager ansvar for sig selv og sit affald
- At udefrakommende husker på at bydelen er nogens hjem. At beboere gerne vil kunne være i egne boliger med åbne vinduer uden at blive belemet med andres musik og udendørsfester.
Har skrevet at jeg bor i centrum, men ved ikke hvilken del af vesterbro det er. Vi bryger ikke øst. nord mv. Postnr 1726
- Der burde være meget mindre fokus pp alkohol, især omkring sønder boulevard og Enghave plads station
- Stoppe den udvikling som tvinger de skæve eksistenser væk og gør bydelen alt for poleret.
- Forbud mod højtalere i aften/natte timerne
- Mere grønt.
- Mere underjordisk parkering (kommunal licens) så der skabes mere plads til leg/udeliv
- Skabe flere grønne områder med vild natur
- Mange flere underjordiske p-pladser og bedre kollektiv transport
- Jeg ville meget gerne have den ovale hæk tilbage på Enghave Plads (og det gamle træ). Eller en bedre afskærmning af Enghave Plads mod Istedgade. Helst med en hæk.
- Rykke psykiske udfordrede indenfor eller andre steder. Vil ikke se folk der sidder og stikker med kanyler på gaden
- Mere fokus på skrald
- Flere parker
- Stop med at bygge nye bygninger og tvinge de ægte vesterbroer væk. Byfornyelsen har taget overhånd
- Flere grønne områder.
Bedre parkeringsmuligheder
- Ved ikke
- Mange flere skraldespande på sidevejene mellem Vesterbrogade og Gl. Kongevej, det flyder med skrald.
Flere bænke
- Færre biler, især ved skolerne
- At folk ryder op efter sig selv, når de har hygget sig i det offentlige rum.
- Mere plads med grønt, det de har lavet på Enghave plads er tarveligt og trist. Og knap så meget udendørs plads til caféer og restauranter, man kan ikke komme forbi efterhånden.
- Kunne være rigtig godt, hvis mændenes hjem blev lukket permanent, og dets beboere ville kunne opholde sig på H17 istedet
- Skrue ned for trafikstøjen. Især motorcykler larmer helt ulideligt meget
- Bilfrie gader
- Jeg vil udvide parkeringsmuligheder, afskaffe gratis parkering for ikke beboer på Vesterbro/Frederiksberg
- Flere oaser af grønt, højt til himlen og uden hundelufter græs
- Renere by :)
- Mere af det somer til dagligdagen/ beboerne og ikke kun til fest.
- Alle har nok i sig selv (og sine nærmeste) på Vesterbro - biler; hold for den fodgænger, fodgænger kig op og send et venligt smil, hvis én holder tilbage for dig - og cykellist - overhold nu reglerne. Alle de brud er kun for at komme hurtige frem - du skal hurtigere frem.
- Drop skaterbane , sportsbaner på sønder blvd. larmer så meget så jeg ikke kan nyde mit eget private rum på min altan. Det stresser når de unge spiller og fester hele natten. Har boet på Vesterbro i 30 år

- Mindre caféer og pizzeriaer. Men flere købmænd og slagtere og fiskehandlere
- Ændre metrost ved hovedbanen så det blev en grøn oase man kan bruge.
Flere træer i gaderne og små grønne områder.
Mændenes hjem ud af byen sammen med fixerummene i Kødbyen, så vores børn kan være trygge på Vesterbro
- At byrumsudviklere og aktører blev bedret til at integrere og inkludere bydelens skæve eksistenser i planlægningen, da det ofte er dem der er specialister i uderummets kvaliteter og mangler.
- Lukke Platanvej igen, gære Vesterbrogade/Frb. allé ensrettet
- Mindre skrald og mere oprydning. Det er dejligt rummet bruges, men skraldet lugter og ser frygteligt ud.
Det ville også være fedt hvis bænkene på Enghave Plads blev vasket noget oftere.
- Hvis en cyklist stod for cykelstier, så blev det nok smartere hvordan man kan køre til/fra dem.
- Trafikken - reducere farten på Vesterbrogade

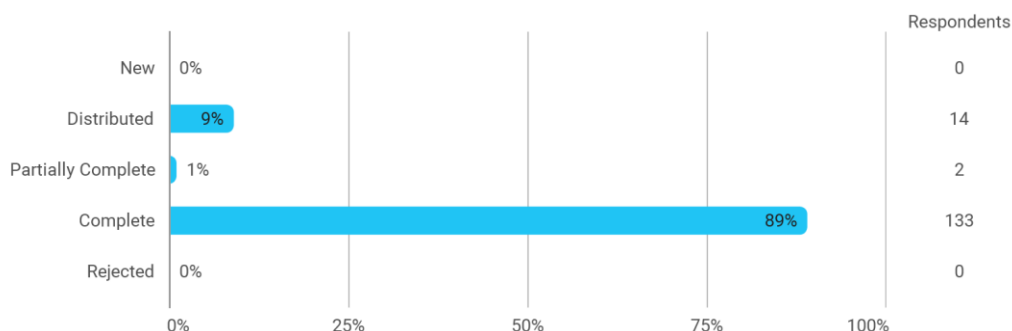
Lave mulighed for parkering på V-gade så butikkerne får mere salg (ligesom Gl. Kongevej)

- Færre parkeringspladser. Al affaldshåndtering ud af gårdene og ud på gaden
- Med Carlsbergbyen, den kommende jernbaneby osv. kommer der flere og flere beboere til Vesterbro. Alle flokkedes de samme steder. Med mere nybyg, flere lejligheder og flere mennesker, skal der tænkes flere offentlige pladser, parker og grønne områder ind i byplanlægningen. Ellers bliver her meget presset med folk, som samles de samme steder
- Skralde spande fuglene ikke kan gå i, fuglene sviner med emballage afaldet
- At man ikke kunne spille instrumenter og soundbox midt om natten alle ugens dage på Enghave plads
- Mere grønt og mindre larm
- Mere biodiversitet og fokus på vores træer og blomster.
- Mindre trafik. Samle de sociale væresteder på én lokation. Plante flere træer langs vejene og flere grønne områder. Sænke farthastigheden i de store gader.
- Bedre renhold
- Der er for mange biler, som cruisset rundt og søger p pladser. Bilerne er her fordi vi har familier og kører ud af byen. Men at komme hjem er altid udfordrende. Det ville være fremragende, hvis man vidste hvor man kunne stille sin bil.
- At alle skal tage hensyn til hinanden ...
- Mere park/ grønt
- Mindre biltrafik.
- Flere grønne åndehuller
- Lave nogle specifikke hundelufferpladser, så alle grønne områder ikke bliver indtaget af hunde og hundelorte.
- Begrænse støj- og hastighed for show-off bilister/motorcyklister (særligt på Istedgade)
- Flere siddeplads, flere områder så områderne ikke er overbefolket
- Flere skraldespande. Og et ordentligt fritløbsområde til hundene.
- At det blev mere inkluderende. Alt for mange mener det kun er til for dem og andre som dem. Det er enten eller i stedet for, at vi alle kan være her ved at vise hensyn til hinanden.
- Intet
- Tilføje cykelstier på Istedgade.
- Flere udendørs sportsfaciliteter
- Bedre cykelstier
- Parkeringshuse, så bilerne kan komme væk fra bydelen og gaderne kan emme af liv, mennesker og livet mellem husene blomstre.
- Mere grønt. Mindre sten/beton/fliser. Større skraldespande. Ensrettede/lukkede gader.
- Liidt mindre støj om natten. Bare sådan lidt mere hensynsfuldhed
- Nej jeg elsker at bo her
- Mere plads til hjemløse, udsatte; andre end de hvide velhavende unge og børnefamilier. Men omvendt er det er også det, der gør, at jeg selv vil blive boende med min familien i lang tid.
- At man tog mere hensyn til dem som bor der, og ikke tror at andre skal rydde op efter en og tro at alle elsker larm og tis i gaderne

Language



Overall Status

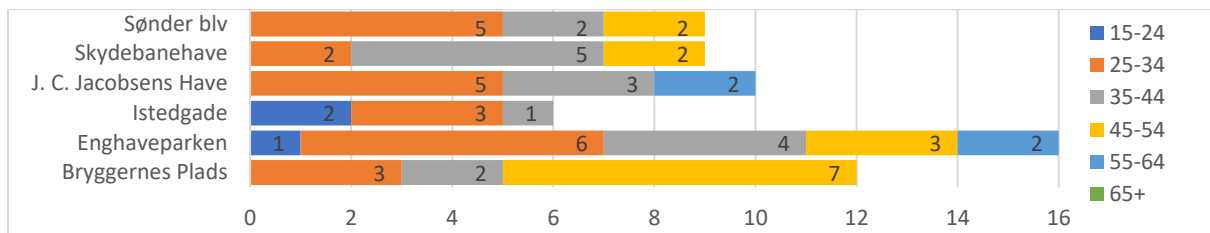


Appendix B

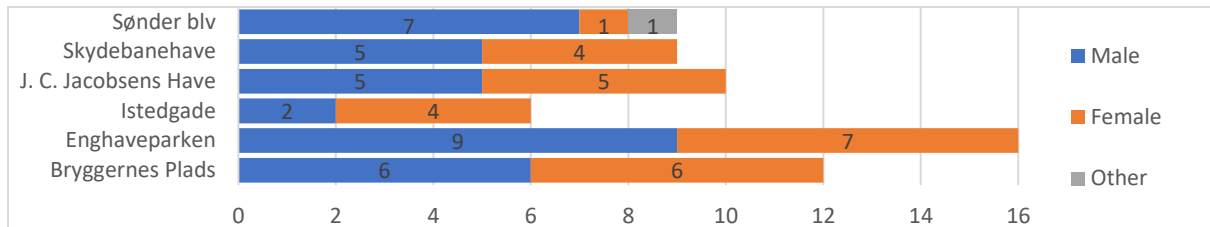
Structured Interview

Structured Interview Results With Citizens in Focus Areas in Vesterbro (24-25 July 2021)

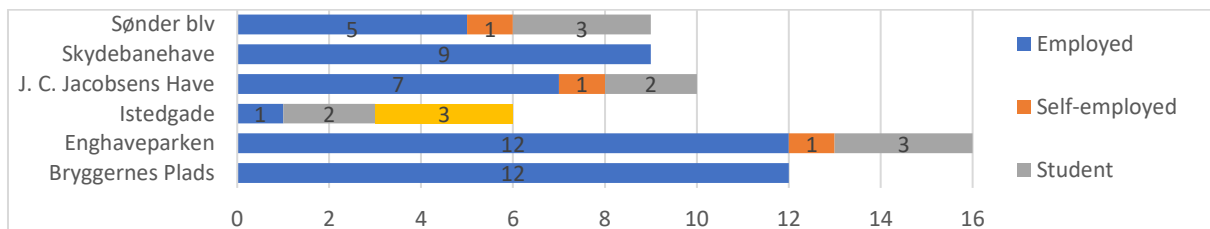
Your age



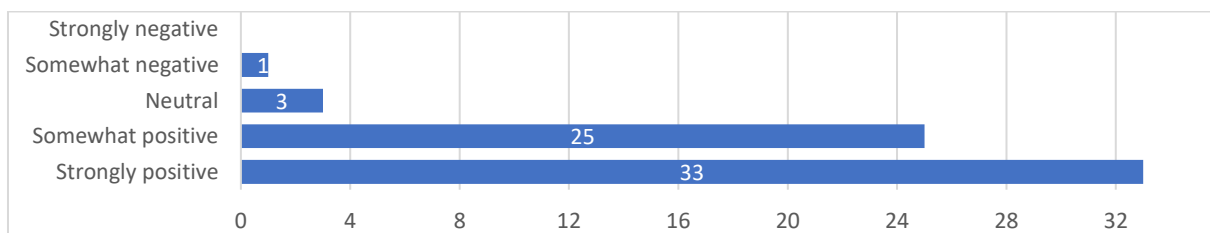
What gender do you identify as?



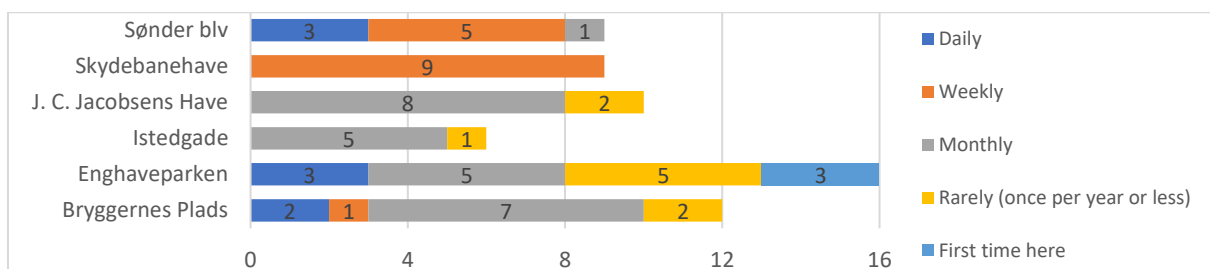
What is your employment status?



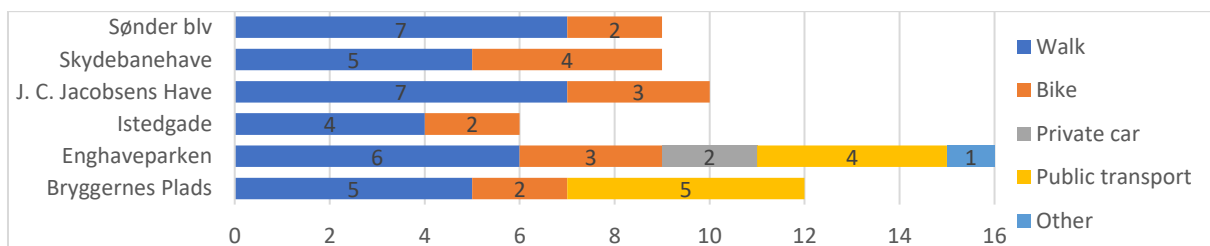
How do you feel about Vesterbro as a neighborhood?



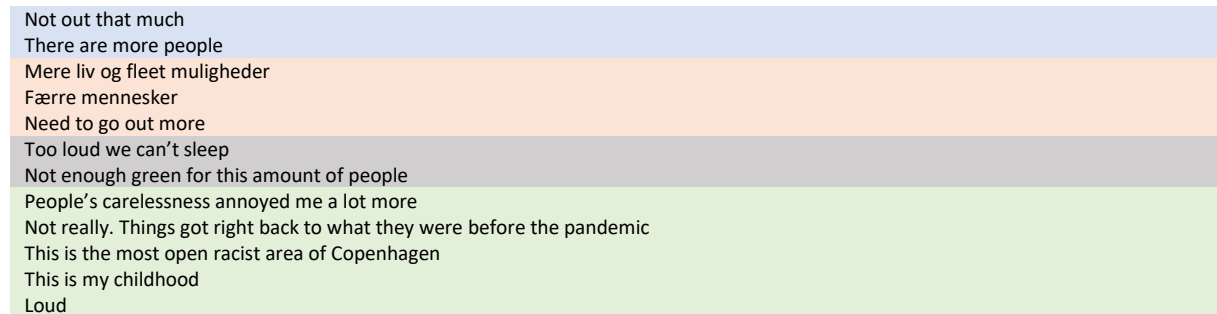
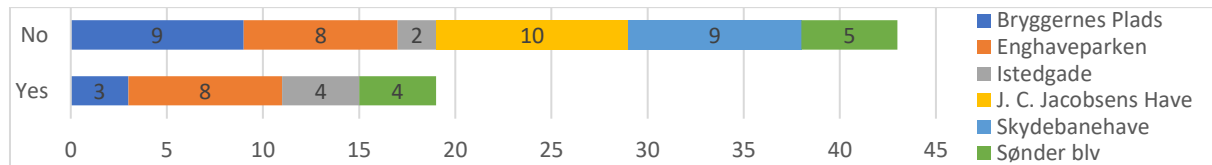
How often do you visit this place?



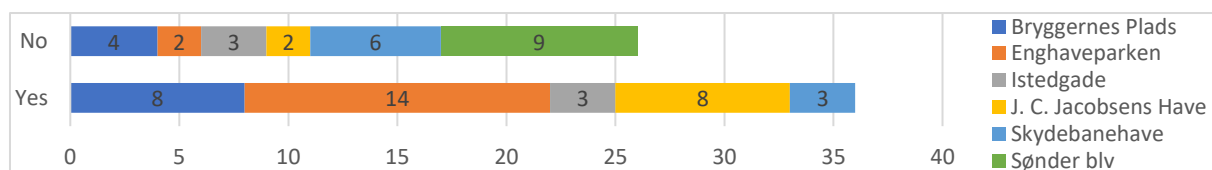
How did you get here today?



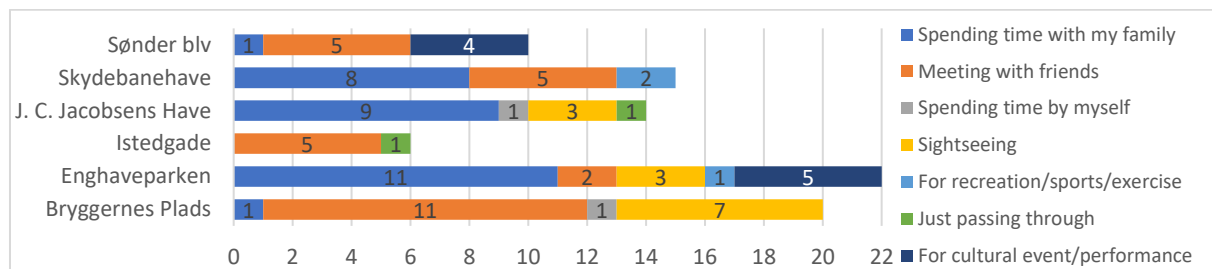
Did COVID-19 change your public space experience in Vesterbro? If yes, can you describe with a few words (optional)



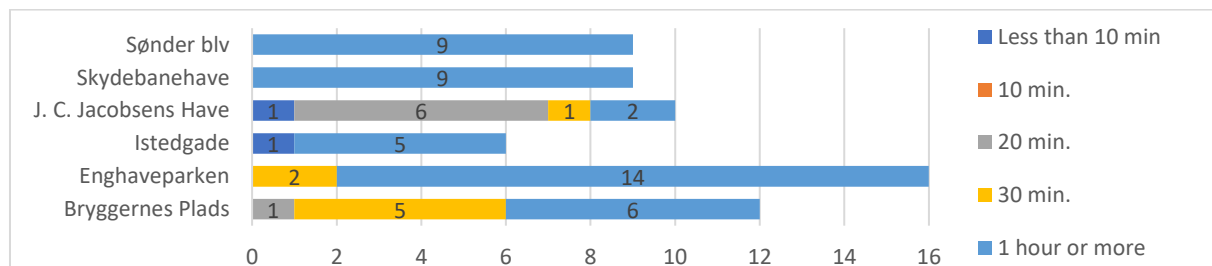
Do you use public space more often now than you did before COVID-19?



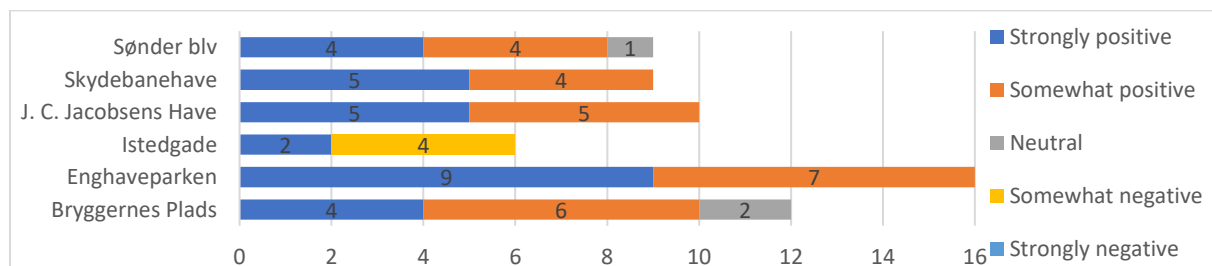
What brings you to this place today?



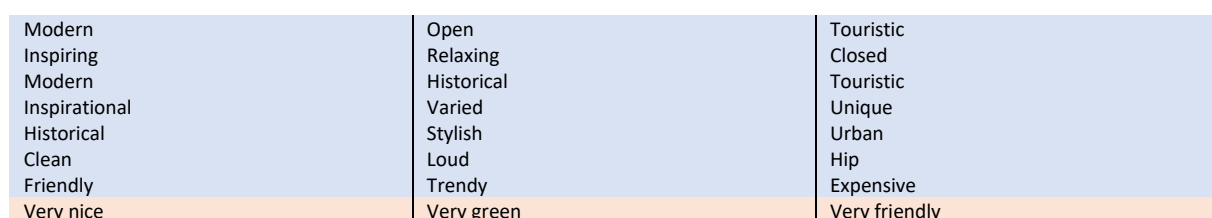
How much time do you plan on spending here today?



How do you feel about this particular public space?

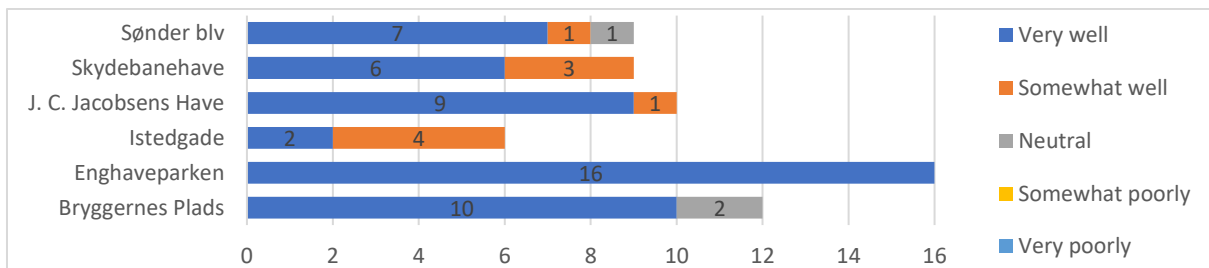


What three words would you use to describe this public space?



Rummeligt	Hyggeligt	Grøn
Hyggeligt	Åbent	Rent
Great atmosphere	Cosy	Green
Cosy	Nature	Family friendly
Very good combination of utilities	Welcoming	Lively
Sporty	Diverse	Clean
Spacy	Authentic	Chill
Loud	Hostile	Dirty
Loud	Dirty	Local
Crowded	Alive	Diverse
Lively	Hipster	Cool
Privat	Velholdt	Rolig
Hip	Young	Secluded
Hyggeligt	Roligt	Kulturelt
Closed	Green	Peaceful
Isolated	Green	Relaxing
Social	Relaxing	Fun
Easy access	Local	Friendly
Open	Fun	Friendly
Mangfoldigt	Sjovt	Hyggeligt
Kid friendly	Private	Local
Social	Relaxing	Fun
Åbent	Trygt	Godt
Lige til	God stand	Levende
Crowded	Dirty	Not green enough
Local	Diverse	Lively
Cozy	Friendly	Life
Hip	Open	Cozy
Inklusive	Unattractive	Useful
Very local	Open	Dirty
Local	Dirty	Crowded

How would you rate your feeling of personal safety in this space right now? What would make you feel safer in this place?



More open. It is a little empty.

Remove fast cars and bikes

Its fine right now but it gets worse in dark. Too many drunk and high people. I wish they were managed better.

More people

It is a little too closed

Less criminals

Supervision, surveillance

Safety is not as concerning as is feeling welcome

What two things would you like to do in the public spaces of Vesterbro that you can't do now?

Outdoor training areas	Skate parks
Play tennis	Chill on a roof top
Outdoor sport	No cars
Let kids run around	Paddle tennis
Skateboard Park	
Picnic	
More festivals cultural events	
Swim	
Enjoy the quite	
Party more	
Listen to music evening and night	Playing pétanque and other games
Dance	Concert
Play football	
Naturoplevelser	
Outdoor gym	
Play football with adults	
Swim	See movies
Go to toilet	Enjoy the clean space
Poetry	Theatre

If you could change anything regarding public spaces in Vesterbro, what would you change?

Behavior cleaning after themselves

Less cars, pedestrian streets, bike friendly,

No cars, mere plans til leg of kulture udenfor

Parking is a problem, more green, easy car access for touristic reasons, for workers as well.

More outdoor utilization, more welcoming More outdoor facilities

More green areas, more parks,

More green spaces

More green and more football fields

More green areas

Freedom to kids more closed places

Make it cleaner

Limit the cars add speed bumps and speed limit. Remove some of the bars and discos.

Remove busses from here and make it slower. Bigger sidewalks. Less drugs

More gathering areas for cultural events more open areas more skate parks

More public places. Places meant for partying without disturbing the neighbors. More flowers.

More music

Remove big roads ??

More and green more playgrounds, open air play fields, kid friendly, more cages for kids . The down art is for elder kids and to hang out not to entertain kids

More football fields, other outdoor sport facilities.

Bedre rengøring og fjernelse af affald. Helt klart et stort behov for bedre rengøring og affaldsoprydning

Nothing

The perspective towards homosexuality and race

Nørrebro. Make it more like Nørrebro.

More trash bins and toilets

Move the drug addicts and homeless people

Bryggernes Plads

Enghaveparken

Istedgade

J. C. Jacobsens Have

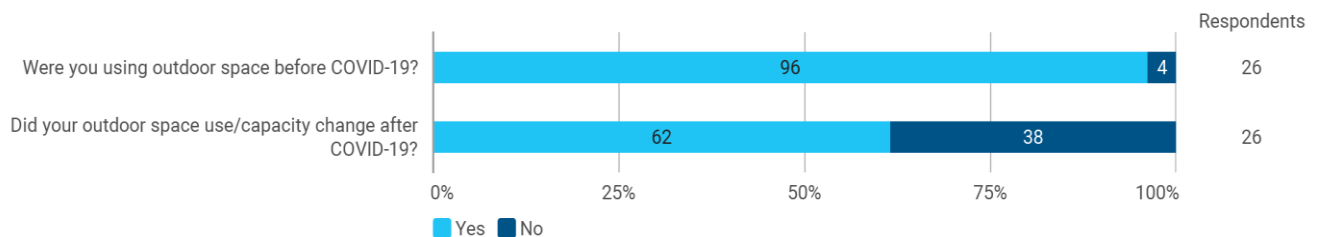
Skydebanehave

Sønder blv

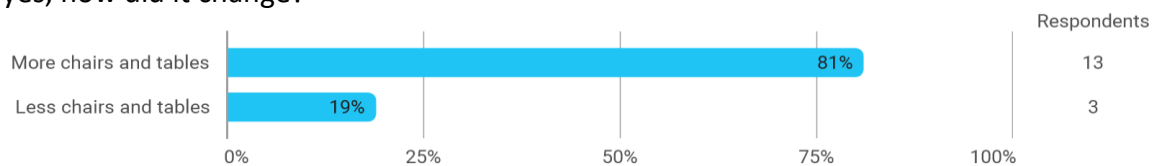
Structured Interview Results with Third Places in Vesterbro (24 July 2021)

Name of the establishment

- La Cabra
- Byens bogcafe
- Cafe sonja
- Bang & jensen
- Slider
- Navnløs
- Boulevarden
- Dyrehaven
- Mad & kaffe
- Rbabarrab kihøskh bar
- Kihøskh
- Bar42
- Fermentoren
- Prolong
- Grill burger
- Warpigs
- Bollyfood
- Berlingske
- Bistro Bosch
- H15
- Kødbyens hønker
- Food & space
- Burger garrage
- Carlton
- Apropos
- H9



If yes, how did it change?



Anything you would like to add?

- We closed indoor use
- We had to move some for distance
- More people using the outside
- More people using outdoors
- Søndre blv. was almost included in our tables and chairs.
- Construction is very limiting
- social distance
- We had to reduce for social distancing
- and less inside
- We opened right after corona, but we took more space outdoors than we planned
- We had to decrease tables for social distance
- Had more demand after covid