

## Foster Better Conversations Between City Developers and Residents

A study at the intersection of participatory urban development  
and conversation design, using the example of LuzernNord

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Written Master's Thesis  
September 2021

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## **Abstract**

Citizen participation is a core concern in the development of modern cities. To strengthen sustainability and resilience in urban areas, as many stakeholder groups as possible should be involved in the planning process. In order for development experts, citizens, investors and other stakeholders to collaborate, meaningful conversations are a crucial requirement. The circumstances in which these interactions take place contribute significantly to the success or failure of the collaboration. To explore these contexts, this study compares the participatory planning process to a conversation. Using Stillman's (2020) *Conversation OS Canvas*, the elements that make up the dialogue between planners and stakeholders—including representatives from neighbourhood associations, local politics and commissions of the municipality, neighbourhood associations, children and youth work, real estate development of the canton and the transport association—were examined. The application example of this study is the LuzernNord development area on the border between Emmen and Lucerne in Central Switzerland. With the help of desktop research and stakeholder interviews, the past and current planning process was analysed. On one hand, Stillman's framework provided a novel approach to analyse the data and helped to formulate suggestions for improvements of the current development approach. On the other hand, through adapting the mental model to the context of urban development, the canvas was critically questioned. In this way, the study has enriched the young field of conversation design. In addition to the concrete application example of LuzernNord, this study contributes to the global discourse about participation in urban planning in post-industrial city redevelopments, in theory as well as in practice.

## **Keywords:**

Urban development / conversation design / stakeholder participation / post-industrial city redevelopment / Central Switzerland

### **Affidavit**

I hereby solemnly declare that I have independently prepared this final-year thesis. Ideas directly or indirectly taken from outside sources are indicated as such.

The work has not previously been presented to another examination authority nor otherwise published either in the same or in similar form.

Lucerne, 29.09.2021

Signature:  .....

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Affidavit

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## List of abbreviations

AR: Augmented reality

COC: Conversation OS Canvas ([Stillman, 2020](#))

HSLU: Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

MUEC: Montréal Urban Ecology Centre

QV: Neighbourhood Association (German: Quartierverein)

VR: Virtual reality

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Area of friction – LuzernNord

City development is a wicked problem<sup>1</sup> (McPhearson, 2016). The large number of stakeholders involved with different, sometimes conflicting interests makes the question of how an urban area should develop in the future seem insoluble. It is no different in LuzernNord, a development area in Central Switzerland located on the border between Emmen and the city of Lucerne (Reussbühl). According to the developers' vision, people in LuzernNord will one day live and work in a modern, ecological and lively city centre by the river (LuzernNord – Smart City, n.d.). 1500 new flats, 4000 additional jobs and 850 study places are going to be gradually realised. Emmen, the village with the largest proportion of foreigners in the whole of Central Switzerland (Lutstat Statistik Luzern, 2020), is to be transformed into a sustainable and inclusive modern city. In addition to the already high complexity of demands on the development area (see Figure 1: Issue Map), there is also the importance for regional and national traffic. Despite improvements to the transport infrastructure, which were completed at the end of 2017 after five years of construction, the landscape is currently characterised by road and rail traffic (LuzernNord – Verkehrsinfrastruktur, n.d.). Nevertheless, an urban district with high living and recreational qualities is to be created here.

For this transformation, the developers implemented a participatory planning approach (LuzernNord – Unsere Workshops, n.d.). Different stakeholders, including residents who spend their daily lives in the development area are involved in decision-making and design processes. If developers would not seek the conversation with the population, different dangers might arise. Unused or overloaded infrastructure, vacant commercial and living spaces, exclusion of minorities and gentrification are some of these risks. Despite efforts to involve the population in the planning process, there is criticism of growth. This was shown, for example, by a popular initiative in Emmen, which wanted to limit population growth (Gemeinde Emmen, 2020). As an SRF report shows (Emmen am Limit: SVP will Zuwanderung bremsen, 2018), many residents no longer feel at home in their own village because of the building boom in recent years. Although the initiative was rejected, opponents of development and their opinions remain. The task of continuing to coordinate the various demands on the future urban area remains crucial to success. For this reason, the area managers repeatedly sought exchange and cooperation with groups and institutions already on site, including the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU) located in the Viscosistadt<sup>2</sup>. This Master's thesis is a contribution to this exchange.

Based on the observations that there was active resistance to the development plans among the population of Emmen, the area manager, Christoph Zurflüh, and the then head of the Master Design at HSLU, Jan Eckert, launched the project «LuzernNord erlebbar machen» (English: «Making LuzernNord experienceable») (see Appendix). It was formulated as a Master thesis collaboration project, and stated that «more understanding and acceptance for the development into a new city centre should be created among the population». This design brief forms the starting point for this Master's thesis.

<sup>1</sup> Wicked problems refer to dilemmas with various interdependent factors, which appear in a state of flux, incomplete and difficult to define (Rittel et al., 1973, p. 164). These are reasons that those highly complex issues seem impossible to solve. Other examples for wicked problems are education and healthcare.

<sup>2</sup> The Viscosistadt in Emmenbrücke is located directly on the Kleine Emme (river), north of the Seetalplatz. With an area of 89,000 square metres, the former purely industrial area corresponds to the size of the old town of Lucerne (Viscosistadt, n.d.).

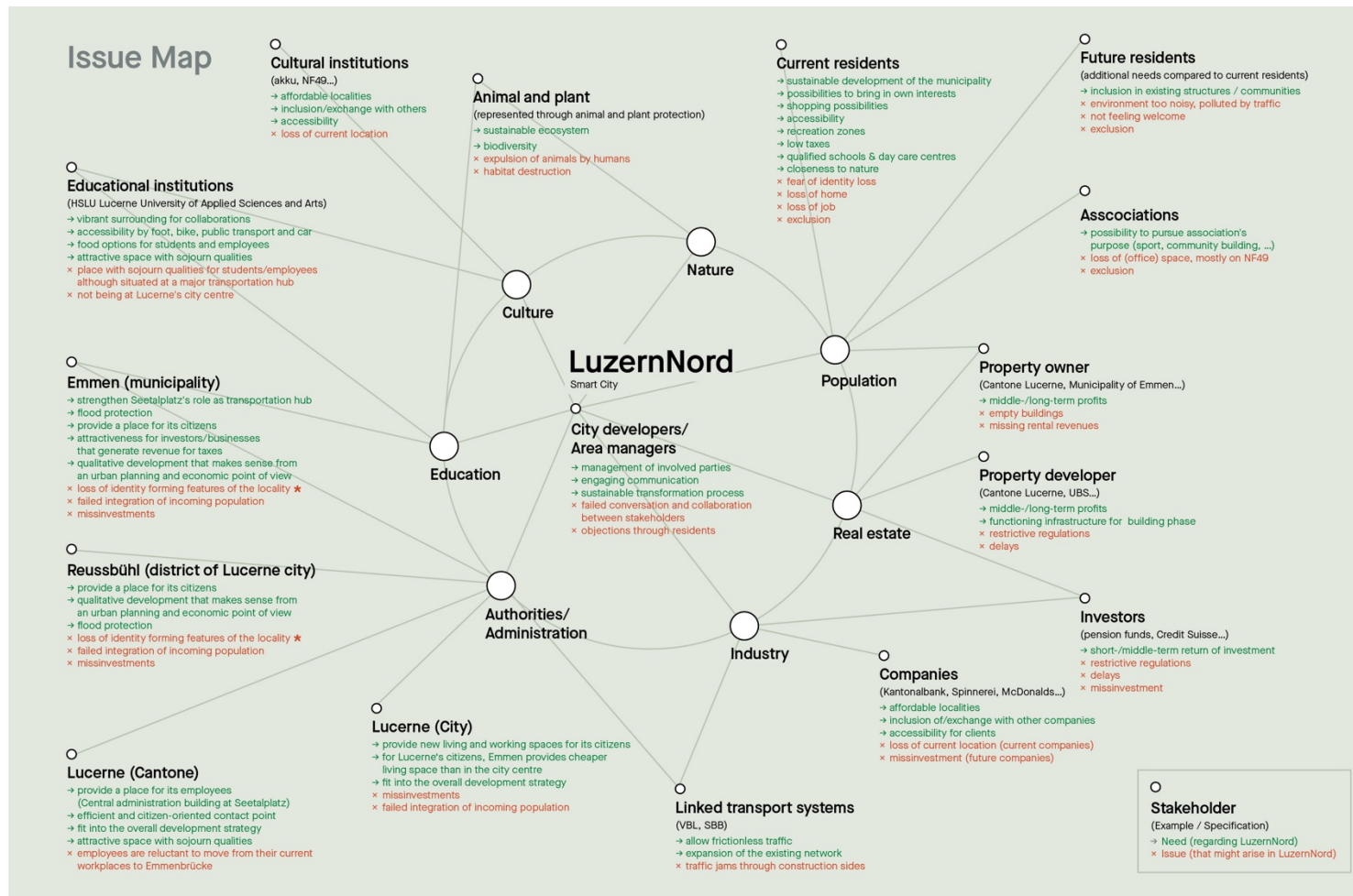


Figure 1: Issue Map, an overview over the parties involved, challenges and problems related to the area of friction, with focus on urban development.

This map was created before the primary research was conducted and was used by the author to assist in the selection of interview partners.



## 1.2. Stakeholder ecosystem & issue mapping

As shown in [Figure 1](#), a variety of stakeholders with different needs and issues are involved in the study context, including municipal and cantonal representatives, residents, politically motivated, indirectly affected citizens, non-human living beings and systems, cultural and educational institutions, and representatives from industry and the real estate sector. Although other stakeholders' interests are as valid as the ones from residents, after all, it is their lives that will be decisively shaped by the future city. Therefore, focus of this chapter is on residents from Emmen and Lucerne, their needs regarding LuzernNord and issues arising from relations to other parts of the system. Nonetheless, the study will take a more holistic view in both primary and secondary research. The information on which this chapter is based is largely derived from desktop and literature research.

### Needs

The majority of residents being in the focus of this study live around the developing area; their housings are not affected by the construction plans. Therefore, they have other interests regarding LuzernNord than living space (see [Appendix: Pilot survey](#)). Primarily, the area must fulfil the function of a recreational zone, and allow for smooth traffic. Of course, different people have different needs. In general, seniors rely more on obstacle-free public spaces with seating overlooking the open space ([Hertzberger et al., 2020](#)), while young people may seek niches where they can be among themselves and undisturbed. While for a father with small children, the cinema complex 4Viertel at Seetalplatz, with McDonald's and Subway restaurants might be a central element, the attention of a young adult may be more focused on sports facilities and bars.

In addition to the direct benefit in everyday-life through the newly created public and semi-public space in LuzernNord in the coming years, the residents of both municipalities, Lucerne and Emmen, expect a financial benefit. The centralisation of the cantonal administrative bodies at Seetalplatz is expected to save rents and maintenance payments of CHF 9 million per year for the offices currently scattered throughout the city of Lucerne ([Kantonale Verwaltung Seetalplatz - Kanton Luzern, n.d.](#)). In addition, the citizens of the two municipalities hope for an economic upswing in the region through the influx of new businesses and wealthy taxpayers.

### Issues

One major danger—from the planners', municipalities' and investors' point of view—is that residents will revolt against the changes in their community. Citizen groups protesting against development plans may result in massive delays and cost increases. To prevent this, stakeholders are invited to participate in the planning process at an early stage, but this does not guarantee success. Although participation is sought, it can go wrong, whether because planners do not really want to, or cannot, listen to, understand and/or translate stakeholders' opinions, which could be attributed to a lack of skills in facilitating this participatory process.

Looking at Emmen's residents, the most significant underlying issues are fear of change and loss of identity, as an SRF report shows ([Emmen am Limit: SVP will Zuwanderung bremsen, 2018](#)). In addition to this report, the «Wachstumsinitiative» (English: «growth

initiative») of June 2020 and the arguments of the pro camp are a source from which fears and anxieties of one part of Emmen's residents can be read. The municipality has experienced an average population growth of 1.48% per year since 2014 ([Lutstat Statistik Luzern, 2020](#)). The initiative wanted to limit this to 0.7 %. The growth has its downsides and is perceived as problematic by many residents. The infrastructure, for example, is lagging behind, and school space in particular has to be constantly expanded at high investment costs. The financial consequences are a burden on the municipality, which is not rich anyway, and this was directly felt by the population through a tax increase in 2018. The main argument of the «growth initiative» was the poor financial situation in which the municipality finds itself. Uncontrolled growth would lead to additional expenditure on infrastructure. If immigration is stopped, the argument goes, infrastructure costs can be brought under control ([Vogel, 2020](#)). The efforts to stop the developments, are of course in direct contrast with forces that push the transition, namely the canton of Lucerne, planners and investors. These challenges are very difficult to counter, but must be if exclusion of the population and moving away is to be avoided.

The consequences that a failed conversation between planners and residents can have are shown by the example from the city of Biel ([Gygax et al., 2020](#)). There, a citizens' movement buried years of planning to close the last major gap in the Swiss motorway network. Around 80 million Swiss francs had to be written off. It is a global phenomenon that civil movements delay, stall or inflate the cost of major construction projects. New to-be-built bridges, pipelines, windmills, highways, airports and train stations are frequently subject of citizen protests. In 2015, Forbes estimated the additional costs caused by NIMBYs<sup>3</sup> in North America every year at over 1 trillion US dollars ([Helman, 2015](#)). However, it is likely that this figure is much higher. In addition to the financial costs for governments, such disputes also have other consequences: Politicians have to resign, relations between the pro and con camps harden, investors pull out, trust in politics and administration dwindles, development issues remain unsolved. If these consequences of failed participatory planning processes shall be avoided in LuzernNord, the developers must take the conversation with and inclusion of stakeholders seriously.

At the time of writing, the plans for most of the building plots in the future LuzernNord have already been defined. There is little room for new ideas on how the public space could be designed. The vision for the future city, which according to the developers was developed in a participatory process, has been defined and manifests itself in architectural renderings, development plans, information brochures, image videos and other means of communication. The design brief described above (see [1.1. Area of friction](#)) wanted to add another medium to this range of PR tools, namely AR/VR. Although this may be an exciting journey to take, a specific experience has led to this brief being reformulated. In order to tell this story, the next chapter is written in first person.

<sup>3</sup> NIMBY, short for «Not in my backyard» describes the phenomenon of residents «opposing or expressing objections to the development in their backyard or immediate surroundings» ([NIMBY, 2020](#)).

### 1.3. Key Moment – Participation in a workshop

In early 2021, I participated in a workshop organized by the area manager and developers of LuzernNord; the topic was «living and society». The registration, which was publicly available online, framed the aim of the workshop as follows (translated from German): «We are interested in what should be tackled in LuzernNord in short and medium term so that there is a lively centre where people feel comfortable and exchange with each other. The focus is on questions like: What joint activities are needed? Which facilities are desired? How can existing open spaces be optimised?» (LuzernPlus, n.d.).

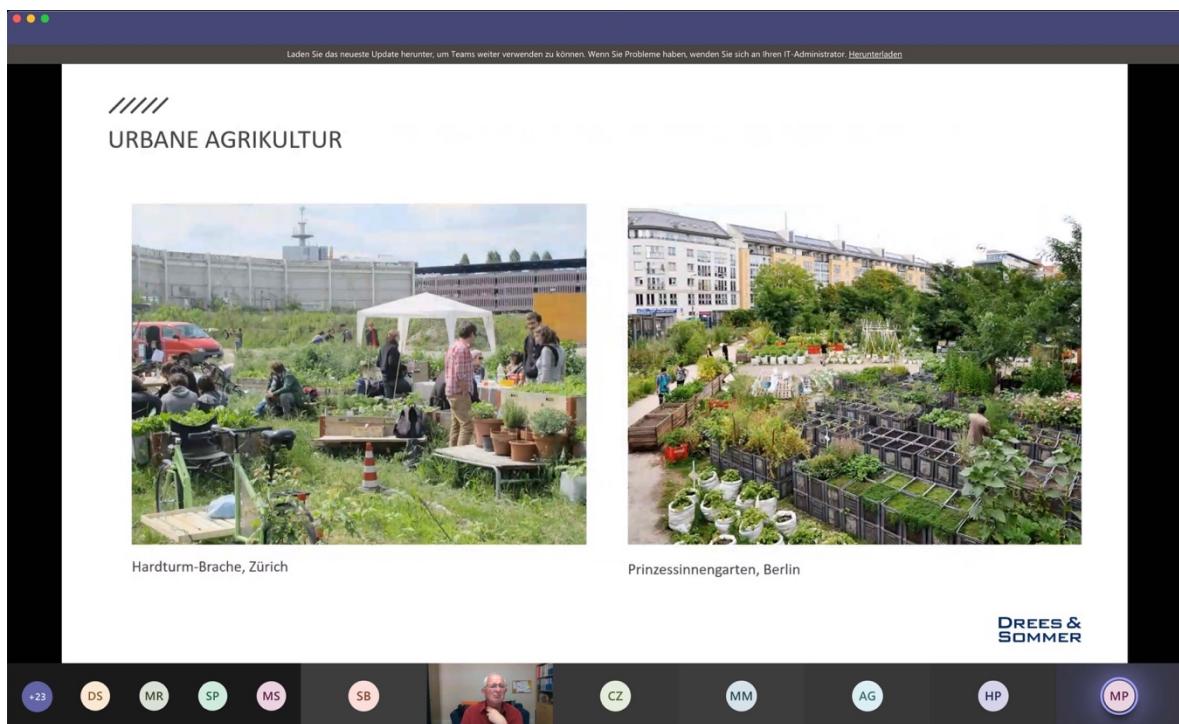


Figure 2: Screenshot taken during the workshop facilitated by the developers of LuzernNord; presentation showing «good examples» of urban development, here: urban gardening.

Although this sounds as if the workshop facilitators were interested in the real needs of the participants, I had to conclude that most of the time was unfortunately used to inform about past planning steps and present «good examples» from other cities (see Figure 2). There were only a few minutes left for the active engagement of the workshop participants during an ideation session. If you look at the screenshot above, it might come as no surprise that urban gardening was included during the brainstorming for new concepts for LuzernNord. The fact that this idea also received the most votes from all participants, indicates a certain impact of the structure and design of the workshop. What ideas would we as participants have developed if the participation had been facilitated differently? What if we were shown images of the blank, empty space in the centre of the Seetalplatz, as it appears today? What if the brainstorming session and group discussion around it, didn't take place only on digital post-it notes, but would have been based on a 2D map, interactive 3D renderings or

a walk on site? Reflecting on the workshop, I dare to doubt that it enabled us to use our group's full potential.

Although this observation might have been subjective, it led to a reformulation of the initial briefing (see [1.1. Area of friction](#)): Away from a research question already implying the answer (AR/VR) towards an analytical investigation of the population and other stakeholders, their needs, beliefs and issues regarding LuzernNord. How can the vision developed over several years, as it is today, be compared with the needs of the people being involved? Is what is to be communicated to the public really what citizens want and need? And is the way this is communicated an appropriate one? Are there better and more fruitful ways to have a dialogue about the future city? These questions significantly shaped the study from this decisive moment, the digital workshop.

Having outlined the case study on which this Master's thesis is based, it will now be explained what the theoretical context and related academic fields are. An overview is given in [Figure 3](#).

#### **1.4. Theoretical context and academic fields**

According to [Fainstein \(n.d.\)](#), «urban planning is the design and regulation of the uses of space that focus on the physical form, economic functions, and social impacts of the urban environment and on the location of different activities within it.» Both as a profession and as a field of research, it is by definition transdisciplinary. Depending on the context, nation and institution, the research focus might either be more on the physical design and use of land, other times more on social aspects. This study is largely concerned with the latter. Participatory urban planning, the model that gained recognition in the middle of the 20th century ([Albers, 2014](#)), specifies the above-mentioned definition with the dimension of citizen participation.

Furthermore, this study tries not only to understand the tools and practices of planning experts, but also issues and needs of real people. The demands that residents place on the developing area and the problems that arise or are reinforced by this development, are in the centre of this research. To arrive at the data, this investigation draws on the repertoire of anthropology. Although other human sciences—including design research—have adopted ethnography in their field of research, this text refers to anthropological studies, as they provide potential means by which human behaviour can be studied and analysed.

In summary, the findings of these related disciplines are brought into context of the comparatively young research field of service design. As an academic field, it deals with three areas: interaction, complexity and transformation ([Sangiorgi et al., 2015](#)). Although the three areas can hardly be separated neither in research nor practice, this text builds primarily on the first area: Interaction. The aim is to examine qualities in service interactions and understanding how they can be designed and evaluated. In the case of this study, the *service* is the participatory process in LuzernNord and the *interaction* is the conversation between area developers and stakeholders. We will see in chapter [1.4.2. State of the art in design research and theory](#), that this study uses frameworks from the field of conversation design.

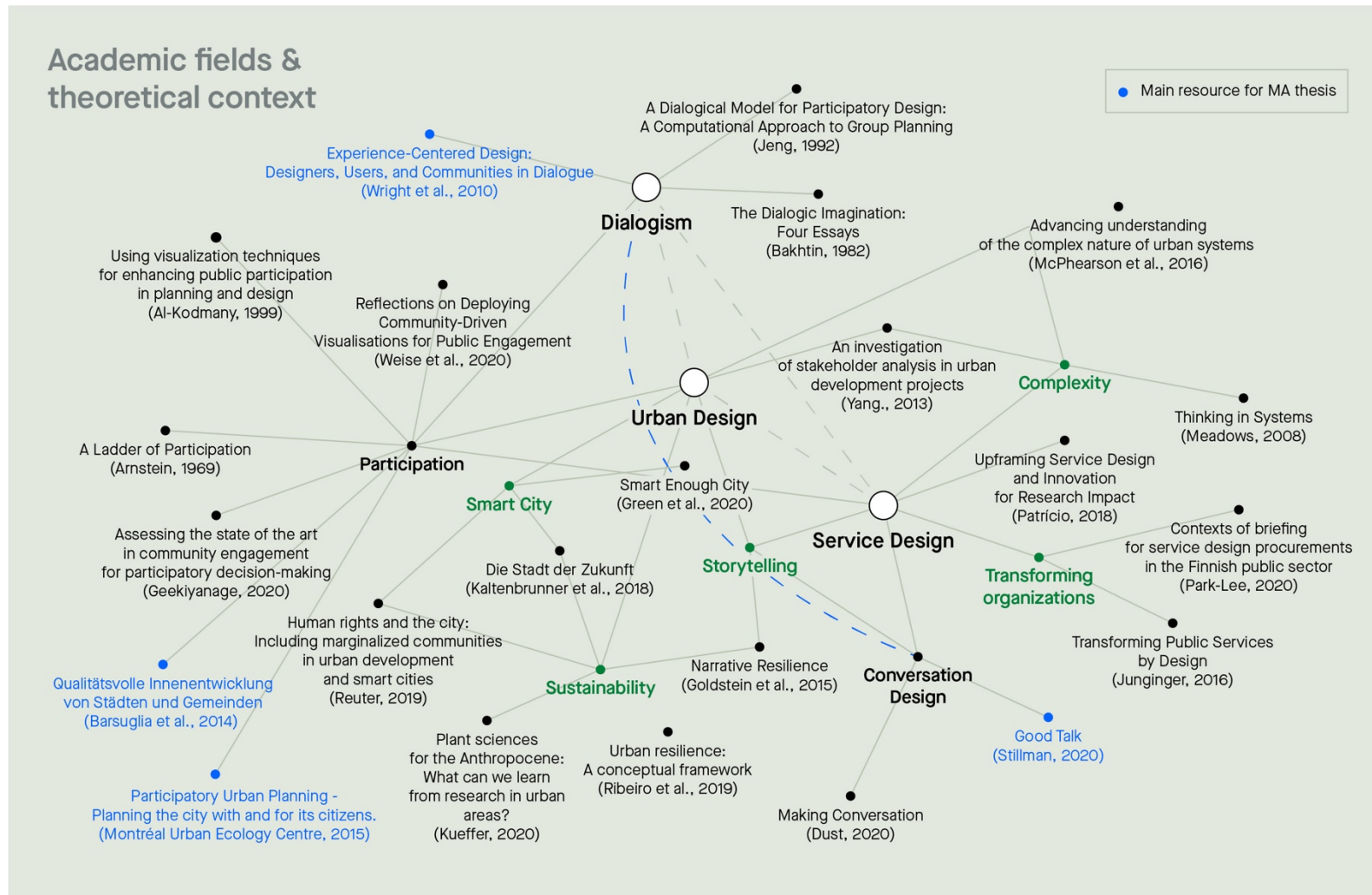


Figure 3: Overview over the academic fields, theoretical context and focus of the Master thesis

## 1.5. State of the art

### 1.5.1. State of the art in design practice

As mentioned above, the aim of this study is to find out which tools and frameworks are helpful for urban developers and stakeholders to have a meaningful conversation about future developments, with the overall aim of fostering citizen participation. In order to understand which efforts in design practice have already been made, we use Sabine Junginger's (2015) 3x3-matrix (Figure 4). It helps to organize different case studies according to the level of citizen engagement and relation between developers (in Junginger's matrix it's *organizations*, see Appendix) and citizens.

#### *CityPlanner: by developers, for/with citizens*

CityPlanner is a cloud-based software that allows creating and sharing urban planning and infrastructure projects (CityPlanner, n.d.). The base is a twin city, a virtual, high-resolution 3D model of an existing city, that can be displayed in a web browser without the need to install any additional software. This allows access for anyone with a stable internet connection and a medium level of digital literacy. CityPlanner can also display information on any architectural element in the form of text and images, as well as visualise structural changes to the cityscape. CityPlanner seems to be a good tool to inform and consult expert teams and stakeholders. Furthermore, it even has the possibility to crowdsource ideas (similar to Bikeable, see below). The biggest disadvantage of the interactive 3D maps seems to be the high computing power required to use them and a rather high complexity of functions, which might lead to a need for a mediator helping unexperienced users. The visualisation informs efficiently, since it is realistic and allows a good spatial understanding; however, it prevents a spontaneous, playful contribution of the user.

#### *Bikeable: by citizens, for developers*

Compared to CityPlanner, Bikeable's functions are more limited. The website «shows the most dangerous spots for cyclists and helps to find solutions.» (Bikeable, n.d.). There is also no need to install a native app. Users can register for free to upload pictures of places that need improvement from a cyclist's point of view, which then are collected in a clear map. These «spots» can then be upvoted by other users, serve as base for a solution-oriented discussion amongst users, and ultimately lead to an improvement of the real situation on site by authorities. The narrow focus of the tool seems positive: by cyclists, for urban developers. The visualisations serve the purpose of formulating concise suggestions for improvement. Together with a few explanatory words from the platform users, the photos usually describe a very comprehensible situation in public space that they feel needs improvement or has been solved particularly well. Furthermore, popular posts often lead to lively discussions between users in the comments section.

#### *Block by Block: by citizens, with developers*

«Block by Block is a joint program between Mojang and UN-Habitat that uses Minecraft, the video game, to empower people that don't typically have a voice in the conversation about their community, to help shape the city around them», says Vu Bui, president of the Block by Block foundation (Minecraft, 2018). The tool is situated in a whole service: residents use the tool to design suggestions, while being supported by urban planners, in

order to present their ideas to local stakeholders in the community. Elements of different proposals can be included in a final plan, that will be visualized by professionals (architects), in order to fund the construction. The fantastic thing about this approach is that lay people can playfully design proposals for redeveloping public space. These rudimentary visualisations then serve as the basis for conversations between residents and experts.

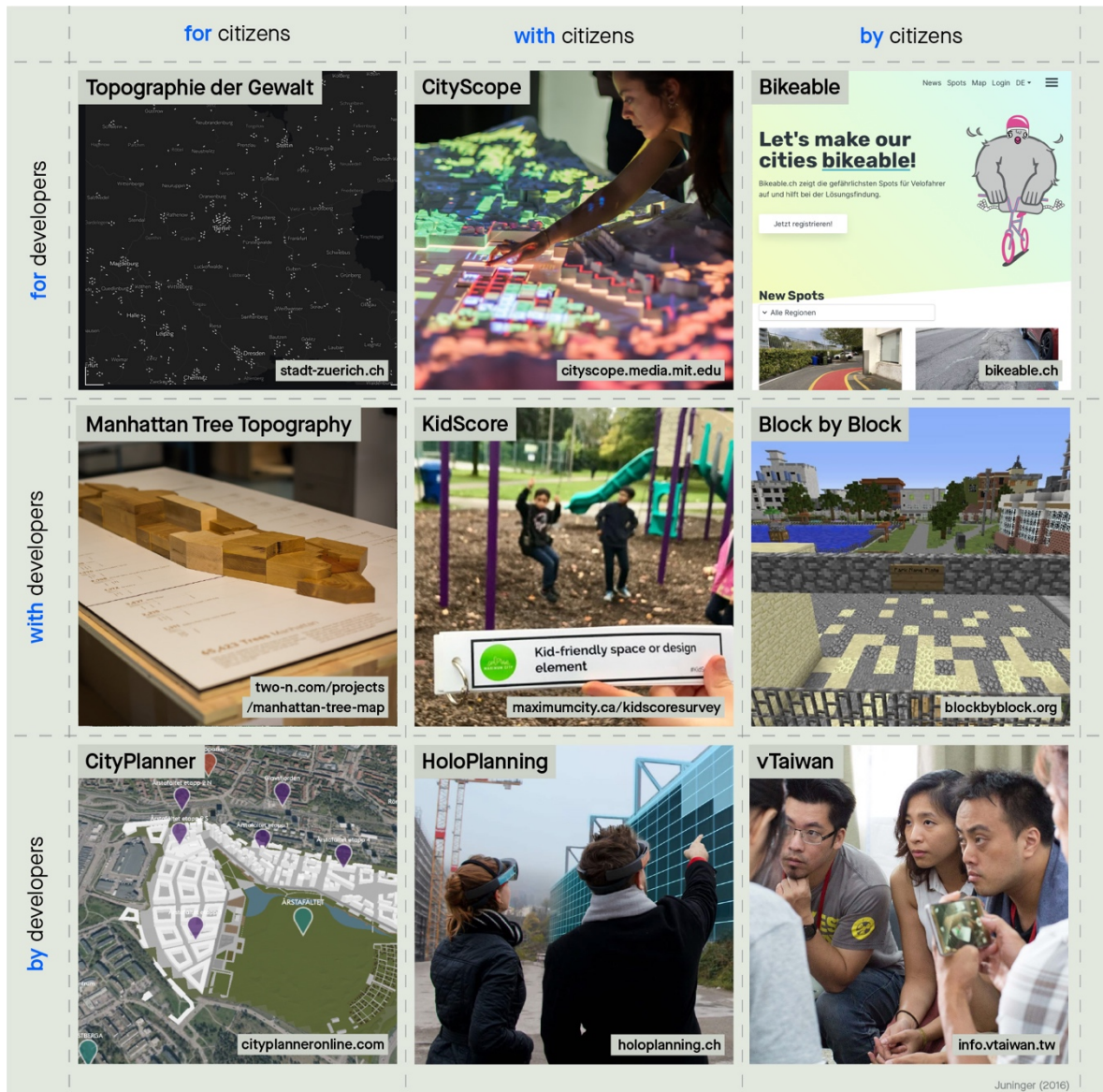


Figure 4: Overview over the state of the art in design practice. Selection of nine conversation supporting tools in the field of urban development, mapped with the for-with-by framework (Juninger, 2016)

There are many projects that use tools to support the dialogue between stakeholders and urban developers. Figure 4 shows just a few of them. When talking about communication in the context of landscape architecture and urban planning, it is conceivable that mainly tools based on high-fidelity visualisations are used to inform the population, and at most to

persuade them to vote for or against the building. But as we can see, there are also means that are designed e.g. by citizens for developers. It is important to consider the context in which these tools are used and to recognise what they can do in which context (goal of the collaboration, level of engagement sought, know-how of stakeholders involved, phase in the planning process).

### 1.5.2. State of the art in design research and theory – literature review

After briefly examining the study's context regarding the state of the art in design practice, the central literary sources and concepts this thesis is discussing, shall be laid out.

The eleventh point of the Swiss administration's *Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development* is «to make cities and communities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable» («17 Ziele für nachhaltige Entwicklung», n.d.). The question of how to make cities fit for the future is often answered with the conceptual framework of the smart city (Masik et al., 2021). But according to Green (2020), not all challenges facing the modern city can be solved with technology. Solutions to many of the most pressing urban development issues might be found through other means.

Since the middle of the last century, citizen participation has been part of the discourse on how cities should be planned sustainably (Weise et al., 2020). The basic idea behind participatory urban planning is that the heterogeneity of those living and working in the city should be recognised and fostered. The urban planner is no longer celebrated as the all-knowing genius, as before the Second World War (Jacobs, 1961). The people who use the places to be planned are seen as the true experts. The Swiss Julius Burkhardt deserves a great deal of credit for this paradigm shift in both the academic and practical fields of urban planning (Burkhardt, 2006). With the invention of the strolgy<sup>4</sup>, he laid a milestone on the way to more inclusive urban planning. In addition to Burkhardt's texts, the amount of literature dealing with the study of people in urban spaces and how their engagement might be fostered is large (e.g. Jahoda et al., 1960; Glaser et al., 2013; Gehl et al. 2013; Kretz et al., 2016). One result of this literature are models that might help to understand different levels of participation, two of them being Arnstein's *ladder of citizen participation* (1969) and Junginger's *for-with-by framework* (2015) (both attached in Appendix). Arnstein's and Junginger's models are helpful to enable a rough classification of participation and thus to be able to talk about participation in a differentiated way and to recognise that there is not just one type of participation. However, the models are on a general level and can be applied to a wide variety of case studies. There are also frameworks that refer specifically to participation in urban development processes (e.g. Hongler et al., 2008; Barsuglia et al., 2014; Montréal Urban Ecology Centre, 2015). A selection shall be discussed below, in order to understand how these models can help planning, implementing and evaluating participatory projects.

<sup>4</sup> Strolgy (German: Spaziergangswissenschaft) is a method developed by Lucius Burkhardt that aims to make people aware of the conditions of their perception of the environment. It is based both on a cultural-historical analysis of forms of environmental perception and on experimental practices such as reflexive walks and aesthetic interventions (Burkhardt, 2006).



In addition to categorising the planned participation— as do the frameworks of Arnstein and Junginger—it is important to know the inherent building blocks that form participatory urban planning. The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC) describes the phases of it as follows: 1) launch the project, 2) understand the issues, 3) explore solutions, 4) decide on scenarios, 5) act together, 6) inaugurate designs, and 7) evaluate (Montréal Urban Ecology Centre, 2015). The MUEC has access to a remarkable pool of case studies and integrates the practical knowledge and tips in their publication. The target audience are development experts who seek to integrate the population into their planning efforts. The text also includes an argumentarium for citizen participation in urban planning. What is left out, however, are other factors that have at least as much weight in the development of cities: investors, landowners and politicians. The publication is relevant to this work because it presents a best-case scenario that describes how co-design in urban development can effectively contribute to designing and improving urban spaces for their users. What is missing, however, is a broader view including other stakeholders' perspective. Since this Master's thesis aims to take a more holistic view, the MUEC's guide is only of limited use.

Another source that provides a guide for high-quality inner development of cities and municipalities is the publication *Qualitätsvolle Innenentwicklung von Städten und Gemeinden* (Barsuglia et al., 2014). The handbook, published by the HSLU, presents an argumentarium and guide for dialogue and cooperation in the field of urban densification. Compared to the above-mentioned publication of the MUEC, this text documents vividly the play of different forces: citizens, landowners, authorities, experts and investors. Depending on the project phase, different methods are presented in concise way (*on the plan, on the table, on the spot, on the object*). Easy to read and interpret, the pocketbook provides planners, but also all those involved in planning, with ways of acting in the already built-up space. Its relevance for this Master's thesis lies in the fact that the publication provides an overview of the typical project phases in processes of inner densification in Central Switzerland. On the other hand, however, the text—just like the one published by MUEC—has the character of a checklist and is a step-by-step guide that might be more helpful in planning the processes than in the (interim) evaluation within the projects. The case study on which this Master's thesis is based (see 1.1. Area of friction) provides a different context for the investigation. Being in the middle of the development process, there are many important steps of the (participatory) planning that have already been completed. The aim of this study is to analyse and evaluate these processes. This requires not only a framework that captures the processes as a whole, but at the same time one that can zoom into the participatory moments and examine the interactions at a deeper level. This investigation is about examining what happened between participants, be they interested citizens, concerned landowners or paid experts. To get to a zoom level that allows us to do this, this text uses a dialogical approach.

The dialogical approach is nothing new (Bakhtin et al., 1987). As early as the 1980s, Mikhail Bakhtin's study of dialogism shaped the development of a wide range of scientific fields—including communication studies, social sciences, art theory and as we will see below, experience-centered design, bringing phenomenological or experiential aspects of communication into focus (Wright et al., 2010). According to Wright et al., «a dialogical approach to communication focuses on the processes between the people involved rather than on what happens within each one of them». The two authors, Peter Wright und John

McCarthy (2010) try to clarify the relationship between dialogism and experience-centered design, in order to see how dialogue might be a useful conceptual resource in their own field of practice. They argue that stories and narratives may be the only way to capture and describe lived experience. In the design process, when designers seek to understand the needs of their products and services' users, the users' stories are crucial for building empathy. Designers listen to these narratives, before they re-construct and re-tell them in their own words, e.g. within discussions with internal design teams. This understanding of the importance of dialogues between designers and (potential) users lies at the core of this Master's thesis, which is the reason why a second work dealing with the same core idea shall be discussed.

Jeng's *A Dialogical Model for Participatory Design: A Computational Approach to Group Planning* (1992) explores a dialogical approach to design, too. Within his Master's thesis, Jeng argues that in participatory design, design concepts are generated collectively through discussion. Based on his feeling that there was not a satisfactory method to analyse these dialogical interactions, he tries to unpack and structure—as he calls it—design dialogue. Jeng's text is only partially relevant to this study in that sense, as his focus is on the new information technologies of the time. Nevertheless, his dialogical system provides a clear description of how the information generated in dialogues should be processed, what aspects should be paid attention to, what results can be anticipated, and when and how to control the process. As an example, he criticises the (in design workshops) popular method of voting: «In this sense, voting can be seen as a means to achieve designers' goals, not those of users. In sum, arriving at a solution too early in a group planning process may result in negative effects» (Jeng, 1992, p. 139). He bases this conclusion on the observation that when it comes to voting (usually towards the end of participatory moments), the options are usually poorly described and they are only illustrated by rough sketches. What he considers even more critical, however, is that the needs and wants of the minority are lost in such seemingly democratic procedures. «In such a voting procedure, people think that if they solve the dispute over different options, they have resolved the conflict,» as says Jeng (1992, p. 139).

Although Bakhtin's influence on the texts described above differs and the authors interpret Bakhtin's theories differently, dialogism puts the focus clearly on processes between people. It sees communication, knowledge and identity as constructed in relationships between people, not within individuals. Although the focus on processes between participants is at the core of this Master's thesis, it does not only include the spoken word. Other relevant elements can be identified around the processes. When engaging citizens in planning, an important factor for success is the integration of their understanding of places into expert-driven processes (Fischer, 2000). Weise et al. argue that «many visualisations used in planning remain designed by experts for other experts or privileged users (such as other planners, their clients or people with influence) rather than for citizen understanding.» Although visualisations are key elements in engaging wider audiences in planning, they alone do not lead to action. They must be integrated in wider conversations about places in order to generate insights and action (Weise et al., 2020). This in turn raises the question of how these conversations must be designed with all its components und building blocks. Daniel Stillmann, a conversation design consultant, might offer possible answers to this question in his book *Good Talk*. Because Stillman's work is at the core of

this text, its content will be explained in more detail in the next sub-chapter, including a differentiated explanation of why this reference is particularly relevant to this investigation. One argument in favour of the relevance of *Good Talk* is the fact that the book does not need to be read from cover to cover in order to being able to apply it. The message of the book is condensed into the Conversation OS Canvas framework, which may ensure a more effective application compared to the models described above: *Qualitätsvolle Innenentwicklung von Städten und Gemeinden* (Barsuglia et al., 2014) and *Participatory Urban Planning - Planning the city with and for its citizens* (Montréal Urban Ecology Centre, 2015). Stillman's work could be criticised for not being «scientific enough». This study, however, sees precisely its added value in its accessible and applicable character.

### 1.6. Conversation OS Canvas

In his book *Good Talk* (2020), Daniel Stillman describes how to consciously design conversations. He argues that conversations shape our lives, be it in an everyday professional environment, in our private lives with friends, family members or strangers, or even in the deepest inner parts of ourselves. Different types of conversations can take place in diverse sizes and time dimensions. What they all have in common, however, is that they are composed of certain building blocks, says Stillman. He summarises the nine most important of these components in the *Conversation OS Canvas* (Figure 5). As long as a conversation works, we don't need the help of this framework. But as soon as something is getting out of hand, for example, if participants don't feel understood or heard, if only the same people always get to speak, if agreements made in the conversation are not kept or if the right people are missing in the discussion, it can be difficult to repair the «broken» conversation. Stillman's mental model is designed to help guide the conversation back to the desired path. «You can work with the entire canvas, as a way to map a conversation as a coherent whole. You can also focus on one or two elements at a time that are most relevant to your needs or context. The canvas can depict the current state of a conversation, and just as easily, can map the future state of a conversation, as a goal to work toward.» (Stillman, 2020, p.48) The canvas can help to recognize different elements a conversation is made of. Those levers can then be pushed or pulled so that a desirable change, shift or transformation can be achieved. Stillman’s canvas builds upon a 3x3 matrix of nine different dialogue elements.

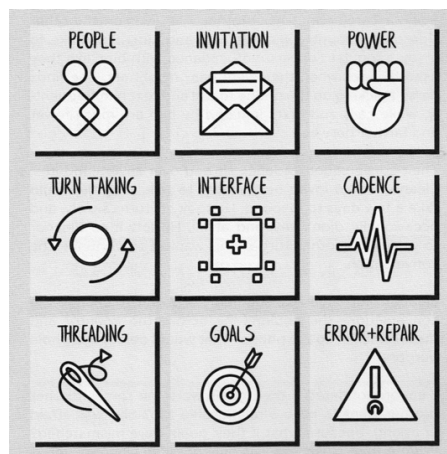


Figure 5: Daniel Stillman’s Conversation OS Canvas is intended to help design meaningful conversations

The individual building blocks of the canvas and how they interact with each other will be explained in detail in chapter 4.4 [Application of COC in participatory urban development](#). Before that, however, it should be made clear why this study refers to a framework from conversation design, as it actually focuses on urban design.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a conversation is «a talk between two or more people in which thoughts, feelings, and ideas are expressed, questions are asked and answered, or news and information is exchanged.» ([Definition of Conversation, n.d.](#)) Perhaps when one hears the word conversation, one thinks first and foremost of a conversation in which two people face each other in a physical space. However, one could also understand a correspondence via email as a conversation. Here the *interface*, as Stillman would call it, changes, but it is very much a conversation. We might also consider a presentation by an expert to a panel to be a conversation, even though most of the time there is only one person in the room speaking and only occasional questions—if any—come from the audience. This study dares to use the term conversation generously. By looking at urban planning processes with the help of Stillman's mental model from the field of conversation design, the term conversation can be extended to participatory moments in general. A workshop in which different stakeholders come together to develop future scenarios for a neighbourhood can be understood as a conversation. An online survey sent out by the employees of a municipality to its citizens can be understood as a conversation. And even a notice board that informs about future construction projects in a neighbourhood and communicates contact details so that residents can get in touch with the responsible person if they have any concerns, can be understood as a conversation. Daniel Stillman even describes product design as a conversation ([2020, p. 202](#)).

It quickly becomes clear that this framework must not be understood as a rigid construct, but should remain flexible and adaptable in order to be useful in evaluating past conversations and planning future ones. The model can be applied at different altitudes. Both the informal one-to-one conversation between urban planner and landowner, as well as more complex interactions such as the local planning revision of a municipality are understood as conversations in this study, so that they can be examined with the *Conversation OS Canvas*. The model is to be applied in a way that raises the most exciting, purposeful and at the same time critical questions and helps to foster collaboration between all stakeholders. Having just explained in broad terms which conceptual evaluation tool is at the heart of this study, it will now be shown which key research questions this study tries to answer and why they are important.

### 1.7. Research gap & research question

This study explores how the *COC* can be used to analyse interactions between involved (or excluded) stakeholders in the context of urban planning processes. The aim is to make meaningful adaptations to Stillman's framework for this new context. Findings from this study should then help to strengthen participation in LuzernNord in a further design process (see 3.1. [Design process](#)). Despite the long history and large amount of literature on participatory urban planning, one still may argue for the need for additional research. The gap in current research, which this study examines, lies in understanding participatory urban planning as a conversation, in order to provide a tool for practitioners. This approach should help to evaluate and shape the interaction between planners and involved stakeholders in participatory planning processes.

Since the written MA thesis provides the basis for the subsequent practical work, which will be based in LuzernNord, its focus is also in this area. This allows for field research in a real context, and reduces the risk of the study remaining on an abstract and unspecific level. Nevertheless, the situation in LuzernNord is comparable to other cities in Europe and the rest of the world. Classic industrial zones are being replaced by other industries. Under pressure from population growth, cities are showing interest in neighbouring areas and expanding their town boundaries. Both often lead to a conversion of existing buildings and urban spaces: Office space and flats find place in former production facilities. These developments can be observed in cities around the world; examples include the Sulzerareal in Winterthur (CH), Zürich-West in Zurich (CH), Kwun Tong in Hong Kong (CN), Central Waterfront in San Francisco (USA), Rivertown in Detroit (USA) and Krasny Oktjabr in Moscow (RU). In all these examples, there are efforts to involve citizens and thus the users of these areas in the planning process. As described above, these integration attempts can be understood as conversations. When imagining how many conversations take place in all these processes, and how much can go wrong, one might see the need for a practice-oriented tool that supports planners in shaping these conversations better, i.e. in the sense of an inclusive and sustainable transformation.

As already mentioned, the model that this study uses to analyse participatory urban design in LuzernNord is the *COC* by Daniel Stillman (2020). This framework can help to change, shift and improve existing conversations. Stillman's canvas serves as starting point and later be adapted for the given context. Although adjustments to the framework are still to be made, the framework is now to be used to establish a common understanding of a *good* conversation.

Using Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (1969), initiators of the conversation—mainly developers, project leaders and moderators—can determine the level of participation, reflection and co-development they want to foster. Formulated more precisely, this can mean, for example, that the organisers of an information event decide that their goal is to inform as many affected stakeholders as possible about the current status of a plan, in order to clarify questions and prevent later objections. Having defined this *goal* (see 4.1.8. Goals & Agreements, the 8<sup>th</sup> element of the *COC*), the conversation can then be designed, facilitated and evaluated accordingly. Going more into depth, the *COC* can provide a tool for analysing details of the conversation. As an example, the conversation might fail because of an unsuccessful *initiation* (second element in Stillman's

canvas). Important citizen groups did not receive the invitation or misunderstood its purpose in the first place. Failing to include those groups indicates that the conversation has room for improvement. Accordingly, to rate a conversation as *good*, it should have deficiencies in only a very few elements of the *COC*.

In conclusion, the meta research question that is at core of this study is:

**How might we foster better conversations between urban planners and stakeholders in the context of participatory urban development?**

In order to make something better, we must understand its current state. Therefore, the initial question is: **(I)** How do past and current conversations between city developers and stakeholders in LuzernNord look like? And the subsequent question: **(II)** Where is there potential for improvement in the current and past conversations in LuzernNord? At the same time as analysing the past participatory moments in LuzernNord, the *COC* is to be critically questioned. Therefore, the following sub-question about the methodology arises: **(III)** Where are the advantages and limitations of the *COC* as a perspective on urban planning, enabling a better analysis of (participatory) aspects of that planning? In the next chapter, possible answers to these questions shall be discussed.

After these questions have been answered satisfactorily, hopefully the goal of this work can be achieved, namely to provide project leaders and moderators in participatory urban planning processes with a tool that supports them in designing the processes. With the help of this tool—which is an adapted version of the *COC*—they are encouraged to ask themselves important questions before, during and after the process (keyword: rolling planning). In this way, the quality of the processes is to be ensured or even increased.

## 2. Working hypothesis

The research questions formulated in the previous chapter shall now be answered, based on the author's state of knowledge before conducting primary research. These anticipations are the foundation for the research phase.

### **I. How do past and current conversations between city developers and stakeholders in LuzernNord look like?**

Firstly, the developers' main objective in the current conversation is to inform residents about developments in LuzernNord. The dialogue is rather one-sided—on the side of the developers—compared to the participation at the beginning of the development planning (see 4.1.3. *Power & Permission*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> component of the *COC*). This is not a bad thing per se, as it is in the nature of development processes. After the needs of stakeholders have been recorded, the planned spaces have to be turned into reality by experts (architects, engineers, etc.). This means that from a certain point on, developers primarily want to inform about the progress and potential adjustments to the plans. Secondly, efforts to invite a broader audience to early process stages, where the level of participation was higher, are made via channels and means that do not reach all parts of the population. Furthermore, the participants don't understand how separate conversations—e.g. workshops organized by the developers and area managers—are linked together, which leads to confusion and lowers engagement.

### **II. Where is there potential for improvement in the current and past conversations in LuzernNord?**

The architectural renderings of LuzernNord (part of the medium where the conversation takes place, component 5 «Interface & Space») are suitable for advertising the project to investors, but for the local population they seem odd. Residents don't understand the images and therefore are unsure about the plans' meaningfulness. In order to invite the public to a conversation that puts their needs and opinions in the focus, visualisations that appear less «shiny» and definitive might be helpful. Furthermore, visualisations that are in a setting allowing feedback and interaction are more likely to foster deeper understanding of the situation and long-term engagement.

### **III. Where are the advantages and limitations of the *COC* as a perspective on urban planning, enabling a better analysis of (participatory) aspects of that planning?**

Daniel Stillman's *Conversation OS Canvas* provides a new perspective on how conversations in participatory processes might be designed in a meaningful way. After modifying the canvas according to the context of urban design, it now provides a framework that can be promoted as a new tool for practitioners. Although the canvas raises relevant questions that can lead to improving the dialogue, it is formulated in a relatively general way and not specifically designed for the context of participatory urban development. Certain aspects that are typical in the planning, implementation and evaluation of urban planning processes are not covered by the *COC*, e.g. the question of financing and budgeting.

### **How might we foster better conversations between urban planners and stakeholders in the context of participatory urban development?**

Using the modified version of the *COC*, project leaders, moderators and facilitators can foster better conversations if it is applied according to the objectives that underlie the dialogue. As an example, the architectural renderings of LuzernNord (part of the medium where the conversation takes place, component 5 *Interface & Space*) are suitable for advertising the project to investors, but for the local population they seem odd. Residents don't understand the images and therefore are unsure about the plans' meaningfulness. Visualisations that seem less final might be a way to engage stakeholders in a conversation focusing on their needs and opinions.

Now that we know what research questions are investigated, the next chapter will clarify how this study tries to find potential answers.



## 3. Research design & methodology

### 3.1. Design process

Design and innovation processes are not linear (Kumar, 2013, p.8–13). An iterative process is standard in both design practice and research. Designers return to previously «completed» process steps to inform future ones, look to project phases that have not yet had their turn to anticipate challenges, and repeat entire process cycles to improve prototypes. Although this iterative way of working informs design processes—as it does this study—a two-phase model shall be used here. Many well-known design process models, including the Double Diamond (Design Council, n.d.), consist of two main phases. In both parts, there is an opening, divergent part, followed by a closing, convergent one. The reason for using a similar model to illustrate the process is that the HSLU divides the Master's thesis in Service Design into two parts: the written and the practical work. First, a written work is submitted in which findings are developed—through design research methods—that then form the basis for the practical work. Nevertheless, the curriculum is structured in such a way that results from practical work are already anticipated in the research design phase. Although a linear two-phase model is used here for simplicity's sake (Figure 6), this should be understood as an iterative process.

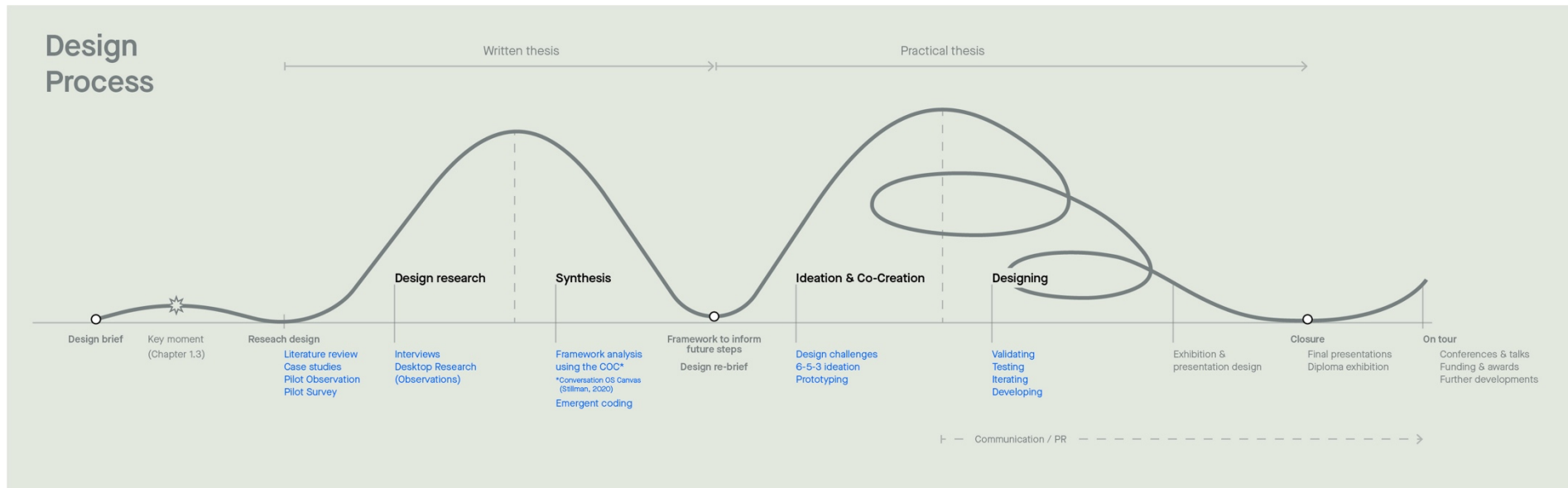


Figure 6: Design process graph: Overview showing the intended process, based on two-phase model

## 3.2. Methods mix

The study addresses two fundamental questions. First, it should be examined what the participatory planning process in LuzernNord looked like and how it currently manifests. Second, the question of what future steps might look like is sketched out. To answer these questions, the following methods were used.

### 3.2.1. Desktop research

In order on one hand to examine the past planning stages and participation efforts, and on the other hand get a sense of the official and legal frameworks for city planning in Central Switzerland, various online resources were consolidated. Central sources were not only the official website of LuzernNord ([www.luzernnord.ch](http://www.luzernnord.ch)), but also newspaper articles, protocols of communal assemblies, cantonal structure plans (German: kantonale Richtpläne), information flyers and marketing brochures. The data was collected in Miro, a collaboration software, where it could be ordered, grouped, annotated and, most importantly, combined with results from the interviews and observations (Figure 7). In an attempt to make sense of the complex information, the data was then arranged on a timeline, as can be seen in Figure 11. This «official point of view» on the planning process explored through desktop research in combination with the personal stories of the interview partners formed the data base for the synthesis.

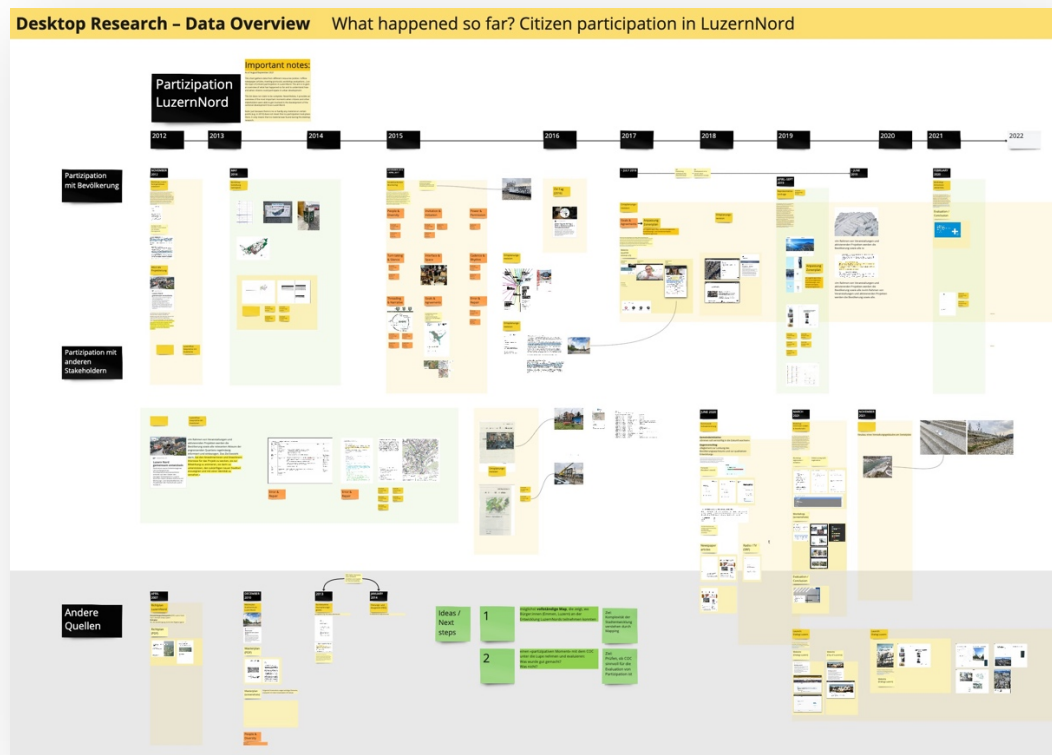


Figure 7: Screenshot from Miro, showing a work-in-progress situation of gathering information through desktop research in combination with snippets from interviews and observations

### 3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are a fundamental research method for direct contact with participants. The method allowed collection of first-hand personal accounts of experience, opinions, attitudes and perceptions in context of the development towards the future city district LuzernNord. In order to talk to planners and representatives of involved stakeholder groups about past moments in the planning process, the interviews were accompanied by visualisations. Architectural renderings were used as conversation prompter. Where possible, interviews took place at places where interviewees work or live, which provided the possibility to gather secondary data. [Figure 10](#) shows what an interview situation looked like that did not take place in an environment the interviewees were used to. One difficulty in recruiting was that the interviews took place at a time when there were school holidays in Switzerland. It was also difficult to find people who had been involved in LuzernNord's development from the beginning. The first planning steps took place more than a decade ago, which is why it was sometimes hard to talk about these moments with the people involved. Nevertheless, this method was chosen primarily because it produced a rich data set that was necessary to answer the research question. The intended side effect of this personal interaction with key figures in LuzernNord's development was to build a network for later design process steps and iterations.

### 3.2.3. Framework analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed, whereby all names of people mentioned have been anonymised. While reading through the printed interview transcripts two to three times, they were examined for codes that corresponded to one of the components ([Figure 8](#)). Subsequently, similar codes were grouped on sticky notes and translated into English. The framework for analysis was Stillman's canvas, as already described in [chapter 1.6 Conversation OS Canvas](#). By going through the transcripts and assigning words, sentence fragments, sentences, or whole paragraphs to the nine components of the canvas—where it seemed to make sense—nine pools with corresponding data sets were created. As shown previously, the goal was to find a suitable way to adjust Stillman's canvas to the context of participatory urban development. The danger, however, was that important themes and insights would be disregarded if they did not fit into the predefined framework. For this reason, the transcripts were coded a second time based on the Grounded Theory<sup>5</sup>. The original plan was to use Quirkos<sup>6</sup> for coding and synthesis. However, in order not to increase the screen time of the study's authors, the interview transcripts were coded analogue with highlighters and pens (see [Figure 8](#)).

<sup>5</sup> The Grounded Theory describes—in this context—a research approach in which a researcher looks for emerging patterns in qualitative data sets, in order to form one or multiple theories (Walsh et al., 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Quirkos is a qualitative analysis software that allows its users to explore data that is based on written language, through a visual and intuitive interface. (Simple qualitative data analysis software, n.d.).

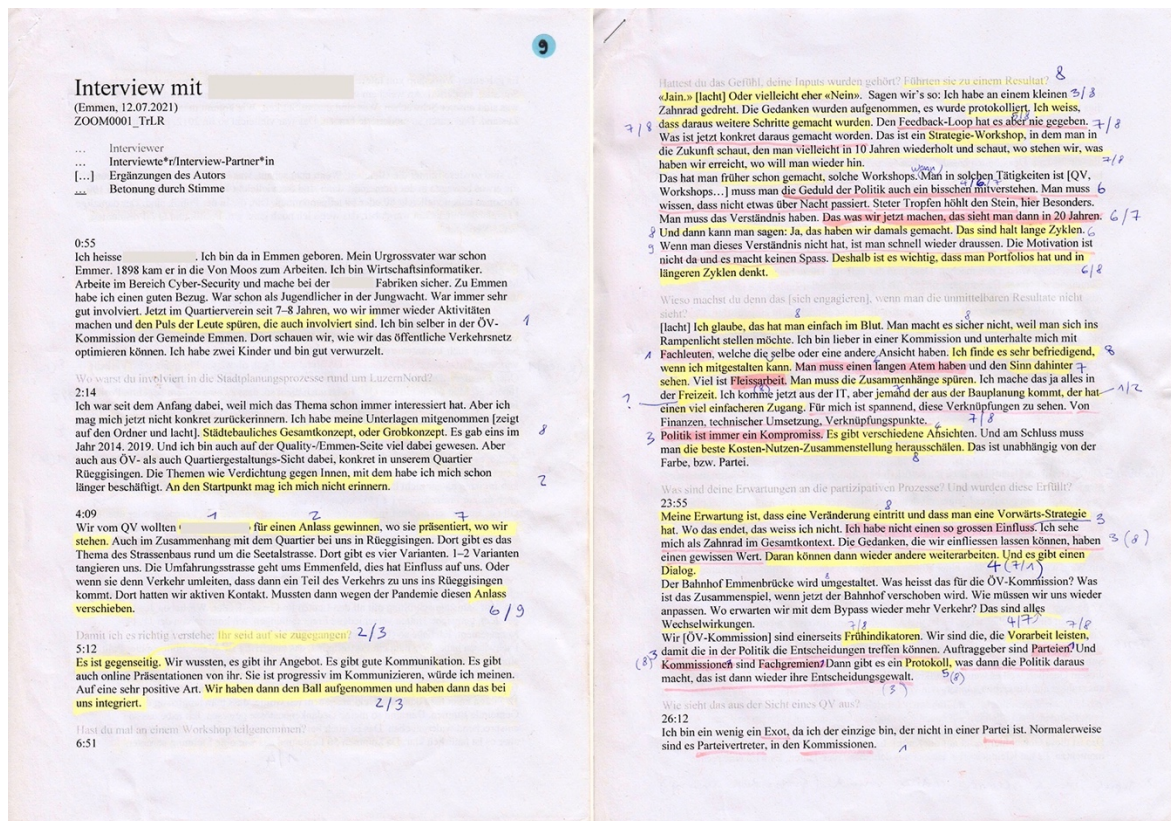


Figure 8: Two pages of an interview transcript showing traces of framework analysis. Numbers next to highlighted text refer to components of the COC

### 3.2.4. Emergent coding

The transcripts were searched for themes that seemed important for the question of how to improve the participatory process. Specifically data points that could not be assigned to any of the nine components in the first coding round (see 3.2.3. Framework analysis) were searched for. This was to ensure that important topics were not omitted. As already mentioned, the coded transcripts were summarised on sticky notes and then reassembled in the corresponding COCs. Numbers were attached to the notes, which allowed them to be traced back to the raw data.

### 3.2.5. Unstructured observations

Unstructured observations allowed immersion in the unknown territory and contributed to an understanding of the current state of the city's transformation. The reason for choosing this method was that already during the research design phase, there was a disconnection felt by the researcher. While exploring information about a physical space, but simultaneously sitting at home—the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore mostly written in home office—this should result in a more holistic and multi-sensory understanding of the situation. The results of the observation do not flow directly into the COCs or into the answer to the research question. Rather, this method served the author to experience the information from interviews and desktop research in an embodied way and thus to better understand the context.



Figure 9: Methods-Mix gives an overview over the methods that will be used during different project stages



Figure 10: Interview situation (Emmen, HSLU MA Design students' atelier)

## 4. Results & discussion

### 4.1. Results overview

This chapter gives an overview of the data collected and the results of the research. As we have seen in chapter 1.7. [Research gap & research question](#), sub-questions (I) and (II) are content-related, dealing with the concrete case study around LuzernNord. Sub-question (III) refers to the methodology. In this sense, the results are presented here in the same order: First, the evaluations of the past conversations between planners, project leaders and stakeholders are shown. These are based on qualitative data generated from interviews and strengthened by desktop research. In chapter 4.4. [Application of COC in participatory urban planning: a critical analysis](#), the *COC* as a method to evaluate planning processes is then critically questioned. But first of all, on the next page, a graph is shown that emerged as a side-result during the research. [Figure 9](#) shows an attempt to arrange the participatory moments in the LuzernNord development area on a timeline, in order to make sense of the data and gain an understanding of what efforts to involve stakeholders in the planning process have already been made in the past. However, the figure will not be discussed further, as it appears self-explanatory with the subsequent texts (chapters 4.2 & 4.3) Since the image is very large, it makes most sense in a digital version of the thesis that allows zooming in. In case the reader has a printed version in front of her/him, high-resolution versions of all graphics can be found at the following link: [www.martindusek.ch/ma-thesis](http://www.martindusek.ch/ma-thesis)



Figure 9: Roadmap of participative moments in the development of LuzernNord  
A high-resolution version can be found at [www.martindusek.ch/ma-thesis](http://www.martindusek.ch/ma-thesis)



## 4.2. COCs of specific participatory moments

On the following pages, five conversations—respectively participatory moments and sub-processes—are presented and analysed through the lens of the *COC*. This is to be understood as an introduction to show the reader how such an analysis of a participatory moment could look like with the help of the *COC*, before zooming out and looking at the whole planning process of LuzernNord.

### 4.2.1. Socio-spatial Monitoring Cycle 1

The monitoring was intended to serve the city of Lucerne and the municipality of Emmen as a steering element for changes in the existing neighbourhoods and for the integration of the new development area in the further course of planning.

Socio-spatial Monitoring Cycle 1		
<p> <b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p>Representatives from planning (2), education (4), children and youth work (3), culture (2), social services (2), industry (5), associations (2), locals (5), real estate/landowners (4). Not all persons were present at all WS. Only people from neighbouring areas could be integrated.</p> <p>→ People from different areas, mostly representing an institution/grouping            × Hardly anyone directly affected (without representative function)            × From WS to WS there were fewer and fewer people, and no migrants/foreigners.</p>	<p> <b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>Contacts established via informal probing/consultation with local people/institutions (already known to the project leaders). By phone/mail/visit, ask institutions (schools/associations/youth work) for contacts. Argumentarium: Align future developments with the concerns and needs of as many sections of the population as possible.</p> <p>→ For the given budget, great results regarding contact establishing            × For foreign groups, (state) requests for participation can trigger mistrust, based on misunderstandings. (Keyword: sect)</p>	<p> <b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>Participants can provide inputs, based on their local knowledge.</p> <p>→ Teilnehmer konnten (vor allem im ersten WS) alle Themen einbringen, die sie möchten. Sie wurden gehört.            × Facilitators had no power to demand participation in following WS, which resulted in a decreasing number of participants.</p>
<p> <b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>Care was taken to ensure that everyone had their say. In order to prevent discussions on individual topics from taking up all of the time, facilitators told participants that those issues/inputs were noted and taken back for further evaluation.</p> <p>→ The division into smaller working groups at separate tables, including moderation, were reasons why everyone was able to have their say.</p>	<p> <b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>3 WS took place at Viscosistadt (HSLU), restaurant Obermättli (Reussbühl), Centro Papa Giovanni (Emmen). Powerpoint presentations for information. Maps and sticky notes for interactive parts / world café. Apéro for casual/informal exchange.</p> <p>→ Successful choice and re-functioning of the localities            → Smaller working groups engage in topics and rotate, moderation stays            → Maps as a basis for discussion &amp; common thread of all WS. All participants were used to working with maps.</p>	<p> <b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>Reasonable duration of 2 h per WS. Of this, just under 50 minutes each for the (inter-)active part.</p> <p>→ Good time distribution within the WS.            × The time intervals between the three WS could have been shorter so that the "enthusiastic mood"/dynamics from the beginning might have been carried over into WS 2/3.</p>
<p> <b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>The WS were well contextualised in the monitoring and the preparation of the master plan LuzernNord. Successful structure: WS1 Define themes/criteria for future development. WS2 Current state regarding defined themes. WS3 Discussion, addition or rejection of the conclusions by the monitoring group before they are passed on to the client.</p> <p>→ Sound facilitation led to participants knowing how the WS were linked together.</p>	<p> <b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>Project resulted in clear indicators. Translation into more concrete measurements would have been the task of the LuzernNord committee managing the development. On the other hand, planners missed more clearer tasks (e.g. into which languages should information be translated?).</p> <p>→ Despite a tight time schedule/budget, important results were summarised in a clear overview (maps &amp; lists).            × It remains unclear in what concrete way the results of the monitoring have been incorporated into the development.</p>	<p> <b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>People agree to join, but then don't come to the WS.</p> <p>× Unfortunately, no solution was found for this problem. Only a recommendation was made to take this into consideration for further monitoring cycles.            × Also, one participant complained about the fact that they always talked about the same thing (bicycle routes), resp. about the politically «too strongly left-oriented» composition of the group.</p>

Figure 12: Conversation OS Canvas of the first cycle of the social-spatial monitoring in LuzernNord

#### 4.2.2. Smart City Workshop: Dimension «Life & Society»

The area management organised public participation workshops under the motto Smart City, here on questions such as: What joint activities are needed? Which facilities are desired? How can existing open spaces be optimised? This is the evaluation of the workshop mentioned in chapter 1.3. **Key moment.**

Smart City Workshop: Dimension «Life & Society»			03.2021
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p>Representatives from QV (5), municipality of Emmen (3), city of Lucerne (1), canton of Lucerne, real estate department (1), LuzernPlus (1), Pro Senectute (3), student HSLU (1), industry/business (5), Higher Education Development and Services (1), planners/developers (5), landowner/private citizen (2), interim use NF49 (1).</p> <p>→ <b>Good mix, incl. decision-makers</b>            × Neither young people nor migrants            × There were people who «just wanted to watch», which should not be the case in a WS.</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>Invitation via <b>local newspaper, Facebook</b> (Emmen), <b>website</b> (Emmen &amp; LuzernNord). Registration via <b>online form</b> (incl. choice of focus group for WS). 2<sup>nd</sup> online form with text input on questions like: What are the biggest challenges in the development of LuzernNord?</p> <p>→ <b>Early announcement</b>            × The registration and questionnaire create a hurdle that may act as a deterrent.            × Would there be other communication channels to reach missing stakeholder groups?</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>Voluntary participation, no obligations. Participants could ask questions (only after the presentation) and then formulate/deliver ideas. Time and procedure of the WS were set by the moderators. Participants had to have technical skills.</p> <p>→ <b>Competent/professional moderation</b>            × Timetable too strict, no opportunity to exchange ideas with other participants on a casual basis            × Facilitators have not explained where there is still room for manoeuvre in the development.</p>	
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>It was clearly regulated when participants were allowed to speak: after the facilitators' presentation and in the focus group, but only after the individual brainstorming.</p> <p>→ <b>Clear separation is necessary so that the WS does not become chaotic.</b>            × Could it still have been done in such a way that more (or even all) participants had their say?            × Perhaps the participants could have been activated at the beginning and not let them listen for an hour first.</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>Digital environment in Microsoft Teams and Mural. Presentation in whole group, incl. images pictures of good examples from other cities. Smaller pre-defined «focus groups» for ideation session in Mural, with digital Post-its and prepared layout.</p> <p>→ <b>Neatly prepared presentation and Mural layout</b>            × Technical environment was difficult for older participants and caused time delays for groups.            × Map/visualisation might have been useful during ideation session</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>The conversation had a good pace. 2.5 hours for the WS programme was appropriate. However, the time allocation of the activities could have been weighted differently.</p> <p>→ <b>Overall reasonable pace/length</b>            × Would more time for discussion and idea generation have been helpful, to not just learn obvious things from participant?</p>	
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>The individual WS parts were mostly well linked, i.e. you knew why you were doing which activity and when. However, it was not explained how the WS was connected to the rest of the developmental steps.</p> <p>→ <b>Clear moderation led to the individual programme points being successfully linked to each other.</b>            × It was unclear where the WS stood in the overall development. Placing it in the overarching narrative would have helped to understand the purpose of the WS.</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>Two goals were communicated in the invitation: Present examples from other Smart Cities &amp; discuss concrete issues for LuzernNord. "Take the chance to help shape the Smart City!"</p> <p>→ <b>Moderators pointed out inspiring examples from other cities</b>            → <b>Participants received WS results in a summarising PDF by e-mail</b>            × Issues in LuzernNord were addressed only superficially            × Proceedings unclear. What will be done concretely with the results?</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>Older participants had difficulty switching from Microsoft Teams to Mural and vice versa. This led to serious time delays for at least one group.</p> <p>→ <b>Facilitators kept calm and were very helpful and competent. They guided the participant back to the group.</b>            × Could this have been solved in such a way that the remaining group members could already start brainstorming/discussing ideas?</p>	

Figure 13: Conversation OS Canvas of the second «Smart City workshop», organised by the area managers in LuzernNord, facilitated by external developers

### 4.2.3. Meeting with landowners from Reussbühl, Lucerne

Landowners are among the most important players in the development of an urban area. In LuzernNord, these are mainly the canton of Lucerne and the municipality of Emmen, but also companies and private individuals. In Reussbühl, the western part of LuzernNord, which is part of the city of Lucerne, development is particularly challenging because so many different property owners are involved. The planners are trying to involve the owners in the development at various stages of the process.










Meeting with landowners from Reussbühl, Lucerne <span style="float: right;">03.2012 – now</span>		
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p>Project manager urban planning department of the City of Lucerne <sup>P</sup> &amp; landowners <sup>L</sup> (private persons, companies e.g. CKW and insurances and building cooperatives). Secondary: External partners (architects, landscape architects, planners, consultants), Grand City Council, Government Council, court and lawyers</p> <p>→ The responsible planners of the City of Lucerne were endeavouring to involve all property owners in the developments. × These were not always accessible or cooperative.</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>Landowners were invited to events and informed about developments by registered letter. They also received sporadic information e-mails.</p> <p>→ Landowners could start a conversation with the responsible planners at any time, via email/phone. × All Landowners must be contacted by planners, even if they live in Thailand, Israel or elsewhere.</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>Pre-study: check what is possible <sup>L</sup> Choice of architect &amp; what exactly is to be built (within the framework conditions of the development plan, final word has municipality) <sup>L</sup> Submit complaints <sup>L</sup> A legally binding development plan does not require the signature of the landowners. <sup>P</sup> Passing on costs (depending on value generation through development) <sup>P</sup> First: Obtain consent through informal channels <sup>P</sup> Second : Official way, with lawyers/courts <sup>P</sup></p> <p>× Some landowners opposed and delayed development &amp; keep status quo.</p>
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>Landowners can contact planners at any time (phone, mail), which is used relatively often. Not everyone wants to speak up in the group and prefers to discuss concerns individually.</p> <p>→ Landowners could always speak up if they wanted to, respectively were even encouraged to do so. × Planners haven't heard anything for a long time/at all, and suddenly (during the consultation) there were objections from landowners.</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>Conversations took place in rooms directly in the neighbourhood. The events always include a presentation, in which as many pictures as possible are shown. There is also a physical model (1:500) of Reussbühl, which allows quick adjustments with styrofoam (in case there's a new version of a building). Maps/architectural visualisations are used as well. Important: When using visualisations, planners must always point out that it is only a possibility and not the final solution.</p> <p>→ Landowners often understand the visualisations and plans used by planners.</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>Planners always hold an event when they either need input from landowners, or have something new to show. Procedural steps that take a long time: study commission, adaptation of the development plan, preliminary examination, public disclosure, objection negotiations, approval by the city council. Theoretically, a speeding up of the processes would be conceivable—but not desirable, as this would only be achievable through pseudo-collaboration, without really letting landowners participate</p> <p>→ The processes have to take so long because of legal framework conditions.</p>
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>Backstage processes (clarifications, preliminary studies) can take a very long time, which is why it is sometimes not entirely clear where one is in a development process. Planners refer to the overarching narrative to argue the development mandate. In concrete terms, the overarching narrative corresponds to the political mandate of the city council, e.g. to minimise parking spaces or to promote non-profit housing.</p> <p>→ It can help to refer to the political mandate (overarching narrative) to push developments.</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>Coherent overall development <sup>P</sup> Create/keep free space (density increase) <sup>P</sup> As much agreement as possible with what they want to do <sup>P</sup> Concrete inputs <sup>P</sup> Understanding that maneuvering room is sometimes not so great <sup>P</sup> Networking, trust building <sup>P</sup> Sell property with maximum profit <sup>L</sup> Keep status quo <sup>L (law)</sup> Legal certainty <sup>L</sup></p> <p>× In some cases, the goals of developers and landowners are diametrically opposed.</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>The «wrong» people came for the test planning, i.e. someone who was responsible for the real estate at CKW but had no overview/responsibility regarding developments.</p> <p>× For this reason, among others, the test planning must be done again.</p> <p>→ After the preliminary study initiated by landowners, the previous structure plan was adapted by the developers. × Some landowners have not specified their needs, which does not allow the planners to adjust the plans accordingly.</p>

Figure 14: Conversation OS Canvas of repeatedly occurring meetings between developers from the city of Lucerne and landowners in Reussbühl, the western part of LuzernNord

#### 4.2.4. Neighbourhood associations‘ (QV) meeting with local council

Every year, the Emmen municipal council meets with the presidents (or their representatives) of the QV’s to discuss concerns and questions regarding the neighbourhoods that have previously been collected by the associations and communicated to the municipal council.










Neighbourhood associations‘ (QV) meeting with local council <span style="float: right;">Yearly</span>		
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p><b>Representatives of all Emmen neighbourhood associations</b>, 1-2 per association (QV Alp, QV Benziwil, QV Bösfeld-Kapf, QV Erlenhof-Neuhof, QV Meierhöfli und Umgebung, QV Riffig, QV Rüeggisingen, QV Sonnenhof und Umgebung, Dorfgemeinschaft Emmen). <b>Emmen Municipal Council</b> (Municipal President, Director of Construction and Environment, Director of Social Affairs and Society)</p> <p>→ The meeting has become a tradition and usually all those invited take part.            × How effectively do the QVs represent the concerns of all neighbourhood residents? (migrants, youth...)</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>The QVs are formally invited by letter, but they know about it in advance and prepare for the discussion with the municipal council in QV-internal discussions and a more formal preparatory meeting where all QV presidents/representatives are present.</p> <p>The meeting was opened by the president of the municipality with words of welcome and thanks, before the round of motions/questions was opened.</p> <p>→ Both the invitation and the start of the conversation correspond well to the more formal format.</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>QV are asked to collect issues that affect their neighbourhoods. Most of these concerns are traffic-related (pedestrian crossings, 30 km zones, bus stops), but there are also others (expansion of the 5G network, waste disposal, crow plague). They then submit a list of concerns and demands to the municipal council.</p> <p>→ The QV have relatively great political power. Thanks to their strong network among Emmen’s population, they can stir up public opinion for/against a political issue or politician.</p>
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>The meeting is more or less the climax of a previous written communication (mostly via e-mail), in which the majority of the motions have already been brought to the municipal council. After the introductory words, the representatives of all QVs take the floor to raise concerns (not mentioned before) or to ask questions, whereupon the chair comments.</p> <p>In the large group, it can get loud sometimes. As soon as the meeting is over, there are often conciliatory words again in informal circles.</p> <p>→ Everyone always gets a chance to speak.</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>In a meeting room of the Emmen municipal administration, the board members of the Emmen neighbourhood associations meet with the municipal council to discuss neighbourhood concerns.</p> <p>The interface of the conversation is primarily the minutes of the meetings or the condensed lists of proposals. These can contain pictures, photos and maps with marked concerns and remarks.</p> <p>→ After the formal part, which takes place at the round table, there is an informal exchange, i.e. an aperitif offered by the municipal council.</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>The chair asks the meeting participants to keep a moderate pace on the individual topics so that the planned time frame can be adhered to.</p> <p>→ The good preparation of the participants and the competent moderation make it possible to keep to the tight schedule.            → The official part (without aperitif) takes about 1.5 hours. This is a time that has proven to be useful over the years.</p>
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>It is not uncommon that (structural) concerns, e.g. the demand for additional greening, have not been realised within the annual cycle. Therefore, the same concerns have to be addressed again and again in the community council meetings. This also happens when participants had forgotten that/how a concern had already been dealt with/answered.</p> <p>× QV-Mitglieder beanstanden, dass der Gemeinderat im Verlauf des Jahres nicht laufend über den Fortschritt der Anliegen aus der letzten Treffen informiert.</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>In the meeting with the representatives of Emmen’s neighbourhoods, the aim is to find out what measures the municipality can take to improve life in the neighbourhoods. The QV have the opportunity to raise their (partly very specific) concerns in a formal format and to ask questions at the same time.</p> <p>→ Small concerns, such as fixing potholes, are often dealt with quickly.            × Other requests are not addressed. Lack of communication on the part of the municipal council is criticised.</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>Rumours and half-knowledge about various (planning) issues circulate in the neighbourhoods. Often it is misunderstandings that get the citizens excited.</p> <p>→ The municipal council takes time for the concerns and questions of the QV members.            × Not all concerns can be discussed to the last detail and therefore have to be ended with a «We’ll take it back for a detailed consideration/checking».</p>

Figure 15: Conversation OS Canvas of regular meetings between neighbourhood associations and Emmen’s local council, taking place each year

#### 4.2.5. Exterior design of the Staffeln school complex

In autumn 2017, the city parliament and the electorate of Lucerne approved the building loan for the new Staffeln school complex. Children are to be involved in the planning of the outdoor facilities. The process is divided into an analysis phase and a feedback phase.










Exterior design of the Staffeln school complex		
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p>The target group are <b>students (1st–6th grade)</b> <sup>5</sup> of the Ruopigen primary school, because they are the main users and many of them also use the facility in their free time due to their nearby place of residence. The participation was carried out by teachers from the Ruopigen primary school. The process was defined and evaluated by the <b>neighbourhood workers</b> <sup>6</sup>. The landscape architect (LA) was also involved in the feedback phase.</p> <p>→ Since all WS were carried out during school hours, about 98% of the target group could be included.</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>Children are introduced to the topic by teachers who then carry out the analysis phase. To invite the kids to participate, it also helps that they know the neighbourhood worker, who is also involved, from previous projects.</p> <p>→ The children are motivated to participate by making it clear to them that it is about a space that they know or that they themselves need almost daily and that they are the real experts whose expertise is needed. Furthermore, they are «paid» with regular school time.</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>The target group can't consciously influence the process that the neighbourhood workers have designed. However, teachers who carry out the analysis (unfortunately) have the possibility to adapt it.</p> <p>→ Children can actually influence the construction of the school.          × Teachers partly change the previously defined methods for collecting the data. This makes comparability difficult and leads to considerable additional work for the neighbourhood workers/planners who have to reinterpret the data.</p>
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>All children have their say, first through individual interviews with teachers (discussing what they have been drawing beforehand) and then through group discussions. The choice of method was therefore appropriate, although it was difficult for some children to express themselves during group discussion in response to the question: «What did you ever want to do in the playground but couldn't?»</p> <p>→ All children have their say.          × Some questions were difficult to answer for some children, even though they were very simplified.</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>Draw on paper (current outdoor space combined with current activities), verbalise the activities in individual discussions with teachers          In group: Discuss activities that have not been possible so far and possible reasons for this. All feedback is recorded in a protocol and sorted and structured by the project management. Later on the physical model and on a «class board»/«walking protocol»: feedback phase together with children and planners.</p> <p>→ The choice of methods was very successful, which is due to the experience of the neighbourhood workers.</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>The whole process goes on too long for the children. They don't realise that they are partly responsible for what is there now. It should have been quicker for that. However, that would not have been possible with the resources available.</p> <p>→ The whole process went insanely fast and there were hardly any resources available. Thanks to the good relations between the neighbourhood workers and the teachers, 400 children could nevertheless be involved in the construction of the school complex.</p>
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>The children very much appreciate being able to recognise the inputs they had made in the architecture model and to remember what they had said a few weeks/months ago. These steps in the process were well understood. However, the children do not see the connection between what they had said at that time and the schoolyard that was finally realised. It would have to be even quicker for that.</p> <p>→ The participation steps could be largely understood by the children.</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>Include children's experiences and needs in order to support the project management of the construction project in designing the school facility appropriately and according to their needs <sup>7</sup>          Have fun and try something exciting/new, come up with own (funny) ideas <sup>8</sup></p> <p>→ Thanks to good process planning/implementation, it was possible to find out about the current use of the outdoor space and to ascertain further wishes for use, which were then incorporated into the planning.</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>Most important features for troubleshooting: rolling planning and collegial consultation. In this way, the WS get better each time. It is enough to exchange ideas with a colleague who had the WS in the morning to make it better in the afternoon. Feedback phase: Children do not recognise some wishes in the model. When they discuss this with the LA, it turns out that the model could not include all the details (e.g. drinking fountain). The LA answers questions and clears up misunderstandings.</p> <p>→ Collegial consultation increases the quality of the WS enormously.</p>

Figure 16: Conversation OS Canvas of the co-creation process of the Staffeln school complex



### *Stakeholder analysis*

As already seen in chapter 1.1 [Area of Friction](#), a high number of stakeholders are involved in the development of the future district LuzernNord. The selection of these groups is a crucial success criterion for the participatory process. If the stakeholder analysis is not done thoroughly, important voices may not be collected, or other voices may be weighted too heavily. For example (0802\_hx), when conducting a preliminary study on how to develop a part of Reussbühl where the largest landowner is an electricity company, an employee of this company came to the discussions with the developers. But he had no decision-making power and, above all, no overview of the company's future plans and possibilities. However, the developers realised this too late, which is one of the reasons why the completed preliminary study had to be repeated. This example also shows that in these processes it often makes no sense to invite all members of a group to a discussion. In this case, it would hardly have served any purpose if hundreds or even thousands of employees of the electricity company had been present at the conversation. When selecting participants in participatory processes, the question arises as to who can best represent a group. How can the interests of a group be incorporated without everyone being there?

### *Participation hierarchy*

This happens through a mechanism that I would like to call *participation hierarchy*. Depending on the hierarchical level in an organisation—for example, the electricity company—or group—for example, the population of Emmen—one participates with the corresponding people. As an example (0712\_vc): The president of the Reussbühl district association was invited to the 2016/17 monitoring of LuzernNord. His task was to represent the interests of the citizens of the Reussbühl neighbourhood in the participatory workshops. On the one hand, he participates in a process where representatives of different organisations and groups interact with each other. On the other hand, this requires that he also interacts with the members of the group one hierarchical level below. In this case, this happens in regular exchanges with QV members at official events such as the general assembly or in more informal moments, such as in the stands of FC Lucerne during a football match (0715\_cn). In this example, it is also important not to stop at the QV members in the *participation hierarchy*. With whom do they participate and whom do they represent? Theoretically, one would expect them to be able to represent the voice of the entire population of a neighbourhood. However, in Emmen, the QVs that were part of the research have a problem integrating certain segments of the population into their association (0712\_vc, 0715\_cn, 0715\_cg). According to representatives of the QV, migrants and foreigners are poorly represented, even though they make up about 40% of Emmen's total population. The majority of the people involved in the QV belong to a «Swiss elite», as one interviewee put it. More on this in chapter 4.1.2 [Invitation & Initiation](#).

### *Multiple roles of one individual*

What audience is being spoken to? Who is listening? Individuals can have several roles. It is important to distinguish from which role they are speaking. Does a member of the public transport commission represent the objective view of a transport expert on the question of the design of the new bus hub, or is it his or her politically motivated opinion as a member of a political party (0712\_vc)? It can help to define already before the conversation which role someone should take and whose view on things he or she should reflect.

### *Multiple individuals for one role*

Within a process, roles can be carried out by different people. As an example (0715\_cn): When the gymnastics club Reussbühl had to move to the neighbouring village due to renovations of the sports hall, the members were promised by the person within the administration of the city of Lucerne who was in charge at that time, that they would be able to train back in the same building after the renovation. Despite this promise, which can be proven by emails, the gymnastics club still cannot move into its original premises. The reason for this is that the person in charge at the time no longer works in this department and the person who is in charge today knew nothing about this promise. The result is that the members of the oldest sports club in the municipality still have to go to the neighbouring village for their training, therefore have difficulties recruiting new members, and the converted gym is available for the basketball club of the city of Lucerne. Such changes in crucial roles within the conversation can lead to frustration, as the example shows. As this paragraph refers to the temporal dimension of the processes, it could also be located in chapter 4.3.6. [Cadence & Rhythm](#). At the same time, it is about honouring agreements, which would suggest that this paragraph also fits into chapter 4.3.8 [Goals & Agreements](#).

### *Externals*

There are people who actively participate in the conversation but are not personally affected at all (e.g. real estate consultation firms). As an example (0719\_qm), the canton of Lucerne—the largest landowner in LuzernNord, employer of hundreds of civil servants who will work in the central administration building and leader of urban and regional development—does not have the internal resources to do all the work itself. For this reason, its main task in many of these development steps is to define as clearly as possible the jobs to be done, so that they can then be delegated to external partners. On the B1–B3 development site, where the canton has granted the building lease, the land had to be put out to tender for investors. In this process, the canton bought in the expertise of a marketing expert and a building lease expert, among others. When it came to finding out which cantonal departments were to move into the future central administration building, the first step was to clarify the spatial and structural needs of the individual departments. This task was carried out by an external real estate consulting firm with the help of surveys and individual interviews. Two additional things can be observed here: On the one hand, it is noticeable that the same companies are repeatedly hired by the municipalities and authorities to carry out the jobs. This is because not all companies—e.g. building law experts—have experience in working with cantonal and communal authorities. They have to pay attention to other factors when tendering for a property. For instance, they cannot act quite so «aggressively», but must pay attention to a balanced strategy. This cooperation requires a certain know-how, which the experts acquire over the years. For this reason, public authorities like to draw on a pool of external partners with whom they have had good experiences in the past (0719\_qm, 0721\_ba). On the other hand, when it comes to participatory moments with the population, the use of outsiders who do not know the environment yet, can be perceived as inappropriate by certain parts of the population (0715\_cn). It can then happen that, for example, people rage against «the people from Zurich», who «come into their village and tell them what to do». Nevertheless, it is indispensable that authorities get professional support from outside in planning processes.



### *Always the same people*

One of the most important observations in the first component of the *COC* is that it is difficult to get a good diversity within the participatory moments (0712\_vc, 0715\_cg, 0802\_hx, 0811\_fh, 0826\_bx). Mostly participants in information events and workshops are German-speaking people, from middle age to senior citizens. Their commitment is great, but they do not represent the cross-section of the population. This is seen as a problem especially on the side of the authorities of Emmen, where the voices of a considerable part of the population are missing. Possible answers on how to achieve better diversity, i.e. to involve more younger people and citizens with a migration background, might be provided by the second *COC* component.

### 4.3.2. Invitation & Initiation (component 2)

What opens the conversation? How does the invitation set the stage and with what kind of energy? (Stillman, 2020, p. 56)



Figure 18: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to how people are invited and access participatory moments

Depending on the conversation, potential participants are invited in different ways. If an event is public, this is usually done via the local newspapers, the newsletters of the municipalities, i.e. by email, or via the social media channels (mostly Facebook). For semi-public events, where selected participants are welcome, they are invited by (registered) letter or via an existing (non-digital) social network. As an example (0826\_bx): The

president of the Italian-speaking Catholic Mission of the Canton of Lucerne was asked to invite members within the association to the participatory workshop.

### *Low threshold*

The way the invitation to the conversation is designed promises to make the interaction more respectively less successful, because as described in the last chapter, it is crucial for participatory processes who participates in them. A recurring theme in the research was the question of the level of threshold. How high is the hurdle to participation? Here is an example of a low-threshold invitation (0713\_cq): As soon as the young people enter 4<sup>th</sup> grade, the neighbourhood workers organise an activation workshop. The aim is, on the one hand, for the young people to get to know the faces of those from whom they can get help in implementing their ideas, e.g. redesigning the skatepark. On the other hand, the young people develop their first ideas for recreational activities in brainstorming sessions on this day. At least some of them build up a «certain dynamic», as the neighbourhood worker put it, which is important to keep them going. After this activation, the young people know where and when they can get help with their projects. Once a week, the office door is open to them for 2.5 hours in the afternoon. The teenagers can just come, hang out, or ask for support with concrete ideas. Furthermore, the neighbourhood workers visit the schoolyard on a regular basis, so they stay in close contact to their target group.

### *High threshold*

An example of a rather high threshold for participation is the admission procedure in one of the QVs (0715\_cn). Although people who move to the community are made aware of the existing associations and receive the necessary information for participation, according to the experience of the interviewees, non-members mostly come into contact with the QV during public events. Despite this knowledge, the QV organises its events at locations where almost exclusively the existing members can be found: on a farm. Although the wish was expressed to integrate more foreigners and migrants into the association, the QV holds on to its tradition of organising the public events in these places, where the missing part of the population does not attend. Would it not make sense to rethink this and perhaps organise the event where non-Swiss people are also present?

### *Change of location*

The following observation is strongly related to component 5, [Interface & Space](#). Nevertheless, the author decided that this observation would be placed here, inside the theme of *Invitation & Initiation*. The reason for this is that the problem of not reaching the right people (see subchapter *Always the same people*), might be countered with the help of an initiation based on a change of location, as the following example shows (0712\_vc): The same neighbourhood association that in the majority of cases organizes its events on the farm mentioned above, once organised the annual gathering on a playground in a neighbourhood where foreigners make up a large part of the population. The reason for this was that this playground is repaired every three years by the QV, so that the wood, for example, does not decay. And this year, in addition to all the Swiss, three Bosnians took part in this action. During the renovation work, people naturally got to talking, which in the end led to the annual party taking place not on the farm, but on this very playground. This in turn had the effect that the threshold for further foreigners was lower, because on the one hand, there were already some Bosnians in the group dominated by Swiss. And on the other hand, the place where the event took place was one that the foreigners already knew.

Another good example of using the change of location to reach a specific target group was in the context of the local planning revision of the municipality of Emmen (0811\_fh). Surveys, which were to serve as a basis for decision-making for the planners, were mostly conducted via an online tool (<https://e-mitwirkung.ch>). However, as this hardly reached any young people, the planning team went to the Emmen Center, a shopping mall which is a popular meeting place for young people from the surrounding area. There they approached the young passers-by and asked them for their opinions with the help of maps and photos of places that might be subject of future redevelopment.

These examples show the importance of the invitation and initiation to a conversation. If they are not done correctly—in the worst case they are done unconsciously and «on the side»—the people you want to have participating in the conversation will not take part. As the last example shows, it is also possible that one has to design several initiations for one and the same conversation, each of which addresses a certain group of people. But who decides what the components—including the invitation and the composition of the participants—look like? This question is explored in the next chapter.

### 4.3.3. Power & Permission (Component 3)

Who is empowered to alter other component of the OS? How does power shape the conversation? (Stillman, 2020, p. 104)



Figure 19: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to how people are empowered to alter parts of the conversation

In the planning processes, participants have various opportunities to exercise power. Some can get involved by expressing wishes, opinions and concerns. Others can submit objections through legal channels, which must then be examined, and either approved or rejected. Still others make final decisions regarding development plans. Of course, all these processes are subject to certain laws that lay the foundations for power relations.

### *Legal framework*

Many components of a planning process are defined by Swiss law. An important planning element are, for example, land-use plans (German: *Bebauungsplan*). They legally define how a perimeter may or must be built on. If a citizen respectively a landowner does not agree with the authorities' decision—usually, there are multiple preliminary sub-processes in which responsible planners are in close contact with the landowners and seek mutual solutions—an objection can be lodged. In addition to the legally binding land-use plans, LuzernNord also underlies a master plan. This is a authority-instructive, almost 100-page document from 2010, which represents a cross-municipal planning instrument for the coordination of transport, construction, open space and flood protection aspects. It is based on the results of a test planning carried out from June 2008 to March 2009 (see below in the subchapter *Consulting* for more information regarding test planning). All these planning instruments are partly prescribed by law (e.g. land-use plan) or are potentially available to planners (e.g. master plan). What Swiss law also demands is information and participation of the population. However, the «participation clause» of the Swiss Spatial Planning Act (§ 4 RPG) allows a lot of leeway and is interpreted differently from canton to canton, and from municipality to municipality. It merely states that the authorities entrusted with planning tasks must inform the population about the objectives and process of planning, they must ensure that the population can participate in planning in an «appropriate manner», and that the plans are publicly accessible.

### *Turning the small gear wheel*

Another aspect that was a theme in the interviews with citizens from Emmen and Lucerne is the acceptance that individuals do not have that much power in the development of a city, at least when it comes to «normal» citizens (0712\_vc, 0713\_cq, 0715\_cn, 0715\_cg). An important prerequisite for constant participation in planning processes is to understand that one is a small gear wheel in the big machinery, but simultaneously not to be discouraged by this realisation. This aspect also includes accepting that planning processes take several years—often decades—to show a visible effect. In the case of LuzernNord, at the time of writing this thesis it has been over 11 years since the master plan, with relatively minor construction progress being evident. The aspect of patience as a prerequisite for motivated participation is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.3.6.

*Cadence & Rhythm.* As a «small fish», as one QV member put it during an interview (0712\_vc), one can contribute ideas. Especially as part of a QV, one is invited to formulate demands and requests in form of a yearly list, that will be handed over to the community council. In Emmen and Reussbühl, these are mostly traffic-related concerns, such as new bicycle routes, pedestrian crossings, new bus stops or 30 km/h zones. This submission of ideas and wishes to politicians is emblematic of Switzerland with its indirect democracy, in which the majority of political decisions are made by elected politicians and the general public has the opportunity to participate in major decisions by referendum or initiative.

### *Decision making and politics*

In the investigated participatory moments—such as the first cycle of the socio-spatial monitoring—citizens and representatives of groups can express wishes and needs, as we have just seen. However, politicians are in many cases the ones who take the final decisions (0712\_vc, 0715\_cn, 0715\_cg). Politics create certain conditions to which planners must adhere (0802\_hx). Developers cannot say—if the council sets certain requirements, such as a proportion of non-profit housing, or an sustainable energy requirement—that this is too expensive and therefore has no place in the development plan. As a control mechanism of the council, be it on the level of the municipality or city, there is the possibility for the electorate to reject a construction project. In LuzernNord, this may happen next in November 2021, when the population of the canton of Lucerne will vote on the construction of the cantonal administration building on Seetalplatz. Other decisive players in development processes are investors and landowners, both being in a position of taking decisions. Landowners own the land that is to be developed according to the development plan. If they do not want to or cannot raise the necessary funds to develop the area, they can sell it, e.g. to the municipality. As soon as the legal basis for the development plan has been established, the landowners choose the architect who will realise the buildings according to their ideas. However, if all discussions between planners and landowners remain unsuccessful, the final decision is made by the judges, after landowners, residents or municipalities have had their disagreements discussed in court by lawyers. It must be said that development plans do not need the consent of the landowners. Although the planners want to be as responsive as possible to the landowners and their needs, so that the area can be developed together, no signatures are needed for this, but the approval of the government. As we saw above, the land-use plan is then legally binding. In addition to the existing owners and political forces, there are also those who have financial means and thus decision-making power. If there is no investment in an area, it cannot be built. As an example: In LuzernNord, the real estate department of the canton of Lucerne is about to put building sites B1–B3 out to tender for investors. If they do not find any interested parties—which is not likely to be the case—there will be no residential buildings on these perimeters. Another component that has a high degree of decision-making power, and which can also be found in the example around building sites B1–B2, is the architecture jury. Whoever has a seat on a jury within an architectural competition can have a concrete say in what is going to be built. The only authority above this is the building department, apart from the judges, which issues the building permit.

### *Consulting & test planning*

In addition to a limited proportion of people who participate in the development process and can actually make decisions in this regard, there is a majority who have a consultative function; we have seen examples of this in the subchapter *Turning the small gear wheel*. This majority includes, for example, the representatives of the neighbourhood associations, or also employees of the LuzernPlus economic development agency, business representatives or experts of all kinds (0802\_hx, 0806\_ei, 0811\_fh). In most cases, specific knowledge is the prerequisite for participation in such consultative moments. This can be technical knowledge, or in the case of QV representatives, local knowledge regarding social structures, networks, or historical references (0712\_vc, 0715\_cn, 0715\_cg). This consultation was collected by the project leaders in workshops, particularly during the first monitoring cycle, in which the right people were specifically invited. Alternatively, commissions can be formed, such as the LuzernNord steering committee, which has an

advisory and consultative function. The members—including representatives of the economic development agency, urban planners from Emmen and Lucerne, political representatives, scientists, etc.—provide input on development and network with each other, but they cannot make any official decisions.

An important instrument where planners are being consulted—besides participatory workshops, questionnaires for need assessments of the population and discussions within committees—landowners have the possibility to conduct a test planning. This non-binding planning instrument is «actually only an indicative tool against which later the quality of what is actually built is measured», as a cantonal planner put it (0802\_hx). In her opinion, it would be useful if more such preliminary test studies were made before they develop the land-use plans. Then the communal and cantonal planners would be able to respond much better to the needs, ideas and visions of the landowners, to «tailor the land-use plans». A good example of landowners actively participating and through that achieving a better position for themselves took place in Reussbühl Nord. There, the five landowners commissioned a test planning. The results of this test planning showed what is possible on the common piece of land and thus presented a more detailed and tailor-made solution than the proposal of the planning officials. Based on this pre-study, the authorities were able to respond concretely to their wishes during the development of the land-use plan. Unfortunately, the opposite is the case in Reussbühl Süd. There, the landowners give only very vague inputs, or express wishes that have already been rejected in previous discussions (e.g. because of earlier political decisions). With such an attitude and involvement in negotiations, planning officials can hardly respond to their wishes.

#### *QV: between consulting and decision-making*

An example somewhere between consultation and decision-making is the indirect political power of neighbourhood associations. As one official put it (0713\_cq): «QV have an enormously high political influence on the government. They have a strong social network among the politically active population.» They are considered to be engaged in the community and therefore enjoy a certain prominence. They know their neighbours and are in lively exchange, at least with the part of the population that votes. In elections and referendums, they can therefore create a dynamic and thus persuade the electorate to vote for or against a political issue or for or against a political candidate. The last sub-chapters all had to do with reaching political or financial goals. However, there are also participants in the urban planning conversations who take a more neutral position.

#### *Moderation*

In some moments, especially where many different stakeholder groups are involved, it can make sense to have an external facilitator lead the conversation (0826\_bx). In LuzernNord this was the case, for example, in the socio-spatial monitoring or in the Smart City workshops. The project management can pass on part of the responsibility for the participation process through external moderation, is relieved of time and avoids a role conflict between moderation and project management. Independent moderation is particularly recommended in cases where there might arise conflicts. This enables everyone to participate on an equal level (0826\_bx). The moderator must have methodological and communication skills and a minimum of technical and systemic knowledge. Facilitators have a great responsibility on the one hand, as they are responsible for achieving the previously defined results from participation. On the other hand, they also have a relatively high level of power, as they can structure the conversation and thus

weight topics. Furthermore, they are often the ones who subsequently hand over the analysis, i.e. the results from the participation, to the decision-makers.

#### *Free space*

One of the most important prerequisites for the desire to participate is the possibility to make a difference (see also chapter 4.3.8 **Goals & Agreements**). A participation procedure only makes sense if the results can actually be incorporated (0826\_bx). There must be a certain scope for action or it must be possible to create it. In the case of planning and construction projects, the scope for action becomes smaller in the course of a project as the degree of concretisation increases. A participation procedure should therefore be used as early as possible in the course of the project. In the example of the development in Reussbühl, the density to be achieved, which is legally required by politics, is comparatively high. Unfortunately, there is hardly any leeway, which is one reason why citizens show little interest. In LuzernNord in general, flood protection and traffic planning also dictate the framework conditions, not allowing much creative leeway anymore.

#### **4.3.4. Turn taking & Silence (Component 4)**

Who speaks when and why? What modes or alternatives could help?  
(Stillman, 2020, p. 56)

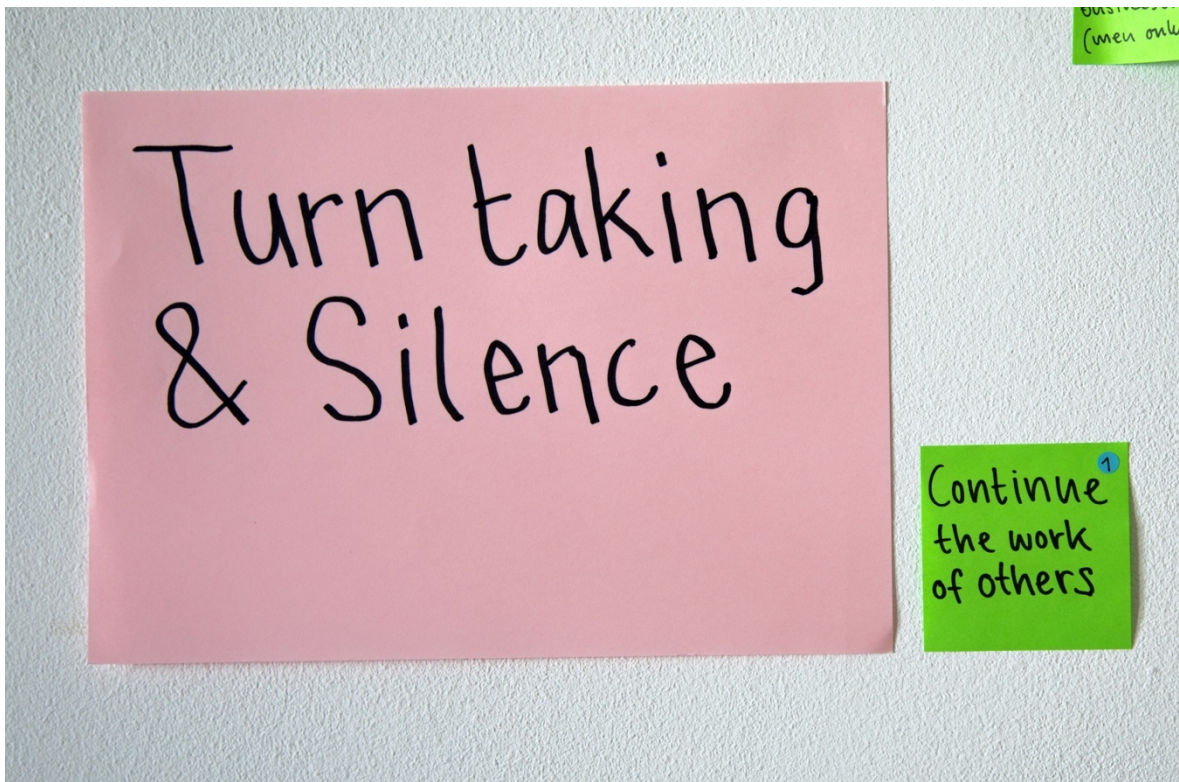


Figure 20: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to the turn taking within conversations

This subchapter is the one that received the least data during the analysis, as can be easily seen in the photo above (Figure 20). Nevertheless, there are two aspects that are relatively

important for understanding how (successful) conversations respectively urban planning processes work. The first of the two aspects is the possibility to speak up when you actually need to.

#### *Get in contact with planners*

In all meetings between planners and stakeholders—e.g. general information events for interested citizens or more specific workshops—planners and project leaders leave their contact details so that people can contact them afterwards with questions or inputs (0802\_hx, 0806\_ei). The reason for this is, among other things, that the information sometimes has to be processed first, such as in meetings within the QV. This subsequent contact can be made in writing, or also by telephone, as in the case of a bicycle dealer in Reussbühl. This is an owner who lives above his workshop, in a house that belongs to him. He regularly calls the responsible planning officer when he has a specific question or wants to know what the current status is in general. An important moment when stakeholders also have the opportunity for a one-to-one conversation is immediately after the official part of an event. In most cases, there is a situation where a participant approaches the project manager personally to express his or her opinion or concerns in a more intimate setting (0806\_ei). It can also happen that this person has first lobbied against the project plans of the speaker and then relativises his/her statements and «calms the waters», as one transport planning manager put it (0806\_ei). This happens especially with heads of organisations or representatives of political parties. They have to take a certain stance and choose tough words to satisfy their followers before they subsequently cultivate the relationship with the planning officials again.

#### *Backstage processes*

The second aspect that can be assigned to the component *Turn taking & Silence* are the processes that take place behind the scenes. There is no regularity of participatory moments (0802\_hx). There are phases when it is the turn of the planning experts to clarify everything, including the legal procedures that a legally-binding land-use plan needs, the preliminary examination, the public display of plans, etc. There are steps that take quite some time. Whenever the project managers feel they need some input from the people, e.g. the landowners, or they are one step further to really be able to show something, then they organise a meeting. In between, however, there are definitely longer moments of silence where outsiders do not get a chance to see behind the scenes, unless they proactively approach the planners (see above). In addition, there are possibilities to inform interested parties about the current status, e.g. with information boards at construction sites or via websites, such as [www.dialogluzern.ch](http://www.dialogluzern.ch). This is a platform based on the open-source tool *Decidim*, which is intended to help organise and communicate participation processes. The city of Lucerne launched *Dialog Luzern* in March 2021.



### 4.3.5. Interface & Space (Component 5)

What is the medium or channel that carries the content of the conversation? How does the space affect the conversation? (Stillman, 2020, p. 64)



Figure 21: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to the interface and space of the analysed conversations

From the chapter's title and Stillman's two questions above, it is clear that this component actually consists of two sub-components: *Interface & Space*. *Space* refers to the physical or virtual place in which the conversation takes place. This can be the auditorium of Emmen's cantonal school in which future urban developments are presented, or—especially in times of a pandemic—the virtual environment of Microsoft Teams as seen in the second Smart City workshop. *Interface*, on the other hand, refers to the (often visual) medium that supports or hinders the conversation. We start with research snippets that fit into the latter category around interfaces.

#### *Presentations*

All meetings, at least those involving citizens or other non-experts, start with a presentation. This conversation initiation, which is rather one-sided and therefore more of a monologue, provides a basis for further interactions. The general rule for this presentation is: as many pictures and as little text as possible (0802\_hx). Because it is not much use if the audience has to read everything that the ones presenting tell anyway. If possible, planners show drafts of plans and future constructions in the presentations, because they have found that «you can discuss it much better if you show something». This can be several variants, on average up to three. Or it can be just one design, which the planners favour and where they say: «This is how we would do it. What do you think?»

### *Protocol*

Another element that serves as a basis for discussion are protocols of previous meetings. They are a typical result of various kinds of gatherings, but mostly formal ones, and are made available to the participants with a time delay—between a few hours and multiple weeks—after the meeting. Protocols are also a medium that works one-way. However, there are also cases where participants have the opportunity or are even asked to give feedback (0811\_fh). Most of the protocols consist of text, nevertheless they can also contain plans, visualisations or photos. It also happens that the presentation described above is attached to the protocol.

### *Architectural visualisations, plans and maps*

An essential basis for successful conversations about future cities are visual representations of what will be built in the future. These architectural and landscape visualisations can be both abstract and very concrete. It is important to always be careful to whom the images are shown (0802\_hx, 0721\_ba). Lay people tend not to read the visualisations as possible scenarios, but to believe that the building, public square or park will look exactly like on the image. Planners must point out that this is a possibility, however, and show which aspects are fixed and which are variable. As an example: When upgrading a street in Reussbühl, the city planners of Lucerne had an architect produce a visualisation. When they went with this illustration into the conversation, an employee of a company with its headquarters near this street was furious. It was a vehicle technology company that sells truck parts. And this company has, of course, among other things, a delivery area where lorries arrive every day. What made the employee so angry was that there were hardly any cars to be seen on the visualisation and even children were playing on the pavement. It is understandable, of course, that the business representative felt as if his interests were not being taken into account by the planners. Furthermore, classic architectural renderings are often made for architectural competitions, and are there to convince an architectural jury. They are perhaps less effective in persuading an entrepreneur to invest in a future district and to choose a certain building as a future company headquarters (0721\_ba). Views of the reception or office space are perhaps more suitable. Besides architectural visualisations, plans and maps are an equally central element in discussions within development processes. However, the problem here is that they are often too technical and hardly legible for the uninitiated. In the interviews, some interviewees even had trouble finding their own house on the maps (0715\_cn, 0714\_cg). To counteract this difficulty, simplified illustrated maps can be made (0826\_bx). A third, widely used medium for representing built and future urban spaces are physical models. There is a 1:1000 model for the entire LuzernNord development area. Its size makes it particularly suitable for workshop situations with 5 to a maximum of 15 people, as they can stand well spread out all around and discuss the plans (0811\_fh). There is also a 1:500 model made of styrofoam for the development area in Reussbühl. The planner for the city of Lucerne calls it her «tinker model». As soon as there are new proposals for a certain sub-area or building complex, she quickly converts these designs into styrofoam and continuously expands or modifies the model (0802\_hx).

### *Whiteboards & post-its*

In addition to these more or less elaborate and sometimes complex visual conversation prompts, there is also the possibility to use more abstract, open media. It is hard to

imagine collaboration processes without whiteboards and post-its (0715\_cn). If used meaningfully, their flexibility and range of applications is ideal for co-design situations. The good thing about such tools is that they have a very low threshold and almost anyone can use them. After presenting examples of interfaces in urban planning conversations, this text will now look at where—in LuzernNord—the conversations between planners, project managers and stakeholders took place.

### *Official premises*

Traditionally, events such as information evenings are held on the premises of the administrations. This is often easier for the project leaders from an organisational point of view, because this infrastructure is already available to them. In Lucerne this is the town hall (0802\_hx), in Emmen the community hall right next to the administration building (0811\_fh). These rooms also have the advantage that they are suitable for events with relatively large numbers of visitors. However, the rooms have no direct relation to the topics dealt with in the events. They are seemingly neutral places where a reference to the places being discussed must first be established (0826\_bx). For this reason, planners are increasingly trying to meet in places that already have a connection to the content of the events. In addition, planners and project managers try to get out of the administrative buildings and approach the people directly in the neighbourhoods.

### *Playgrounds, schools and restaurants*

By leaving their offices and choosing spaces in the neighbourhoods, planners activate spatial potentials for community activities (0826\_bx). These can be playgrounds, school rooms, restaurants and pubs. As an example of a successful choice of event location: During the first socio-spatial monitoring cycle, the workshops took place in Viscosistadt in Building 745, in the Obermättli restaurant (Reussbühl) and in the Centro Papa Giovanni of the Italian-speaking Catholic parish. Hardly any of the workshop participants had ever been to Viscosistadt before. The workshop organisers seized the opportunity to fill this «black spot» on the mental maps of the people of Emmen and Reussbühl with personal references and to create a communal experience. Another example where this change of place worked well was in the context of the local planning revision (0811\_fh). Planners from the municipality of Emmen presented the neighbourhood-related results from the surveys and interviews in the QV's meeting rooms in order to obtain further verbal feedback for the local planning revision and to clarify questions. Although such a change of location is already important in lowering the threshold for participation, these are still events that are directly related to urban and neighbourhood development. By far not all residents are interested in this, which is one of the reasons why such events are not always well attended (0715\_cg). One possibility to get in touch with the population that is even more low-threshold are (cultural) events.

### *Cultural events (for networking)*

These events are not directly related to urban development. Nevertheless, they are an important moment in this system. They serve social exchange and create a sense of community in the neighbourhoods (0715\_cg). The most successful event of the Meierhöfli neighbourhood association, for example, is the annual Street Food Festival. Young and old of dozens of nationalities meet there and get to know each other in a very casual way, namely over food. Another social event that is also well attended is the carnival. At such events, people do not talk about urban planning directly. Nevertheless, it is an important

opportunity—especially for neighbourhood associations—to get into conversation with the neighbourhood population, to network, to experience pleasant moments together, and perhaps to make contacts when it comes to developing the city together later on (0712\_vc).

#### *Crazy house & NF49*

Two low-threshold spatial offers are the Crazy House and the interim use NF49. Both are places where planners and developers are active, but which are readily accessible to the public. The Crazy House is offered by neighbourhood work Reussbühl (0713\_cq). It is a room located right next to the school and is aimed at young people from Reussbühl. Every week the door of the Crazy House is open for a few hours. Students can come, just hang out, do some tinkering, play with ideas, and actively design their free time. The neighbourhood workers are available to help and advise the students. The offer is informal and has a low threshold. A place that has a similar function in certain aspects is the interim use on the Seetalplatz, the NF49. The doors are open to the general public almost around the clock. Events such as concerts, bars and theatre take place regularly. Among other things, there is a massage and acupuncture salon, a cosmetics studio and several artists' studios that have not directly to do with urban planning. At the same time, however, the youth office and the area management are also based at NF49, which allows for an informal and everyday exchange. This low-threshold approach certainly has parallels with the Crazy House of the youth workers in Reussbühl.

#### *Virtual environments*

In addition to all these physical locations, virtual environments gained importance since March 2020, the start of the Covid-19 pandemic (0811\_fh). Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other software are part of everyday life for many people. They have helped to enable participation in urban planning despite severe restrictions (including event bans and heavy limits on visitor numbers). Nevertheless, the social moments described above, which are enjoyed together and remembered with pleasure, are difficult to reproduce. In addition, the virtual environment leads to difficulties in operating the software for people who are not technically experienced. The digital environment can have a deterrent effect on people.



changed needs already prevail again, planners try to leave as much leeway as possible, e.g. in land-use plans. «This sometimes works better, and sometimes less well», as the project leader of Reussbühl's redevelopment puts it (0802\_hx). For children and young people in particular, the slowness of urban planning processes seems to be one reason why they show little interest in participating (0713\_cq). A process that takes several years does not seem to be particularly relevant for this part of the population, whose interests are in a constant state of flux. As a contrast to these very slow processes, there are also moments that have a pace that may be too fast.

#### *Too fast for participation*

For example, in the case of the renewal of the Staffeln school building complex in Reussbühl, the planning process went so fast that the neighbourhood workers were not able to invite the students to participate (0713\_cq). They did not manage to anchor meaningful participation in the process because of the speed of the planning, although they had repeatedly stressed its importance. Time is a crucial factor for successful stakeholder participation, which should ultimately lead to the developed solution being supported by a majority and thus being more sustainable. There is a danger of doing «pseudo participation» along the lines of «you can have a say, but you have nothing to say», as the city planner of Lucerne put it. (0802\_hx) This would make the process much faster. However, it raises the question of whether it makes sense to let people have a say only pro forma. After all, if people are not properly included and legally binding plans are presented that are not actually capable of gaining majority support, there can be considerable delays.

#### *Objections and complaints procedures*

An important democratic instrument is the right of objection. During the public presentation of new development plans, or after official decisions on building permits, citizens can raise objections. This has just been observed in Reussbühl, where planners were unable to reach a consensus with some of the landowners despite multiple discussions (0802\_hx). At some point, the planners have to stop trying to find an amicable solution and start the public, official processes. The objections that then come in go to the Grand City Council in Lucerne, where there can then be complaints again, which can lead to long-term complaints procedures. According to a leader in the municipal administration in Emmen, the background and motivation of these complaint procedures is often very simple: «People like the way things are and want to keep the status quo» (0721\_ba). In the majority of cases, the reason is the view from the balcony or garden, which should not be obstructed. Another reason, which is of course never expressed in this way and for which substitute reasons are therefore sought, is envy between neighbours. Although in the end one may not be right in the legal process, the construction and the view from the balcony remained the same for a few additional years (0811\_fh).

#### *Regularity*

In most cases—with a few exceptions, among them the example of the Crazy House, which opens its doors weekly (see above) or the annual meetings of the QV presidents with the municipal council (see chapter 4.2.4.)—there is no regularity in the meetings between stakeholders and planners. A meeting is arranged when something is to be shown and the planners would like to have the opinion of certain population groups on it, or usually at the beginning of planning processes, needs are to be ascertained, which then flow into the planning. Especially in such lengthy processes, where much takes place behind the scenes

and decision-making processes are not accessible to the public, the question arises as to whether it would not make sense to establish a regularity in gatherings, as in the case of the Crazy House or the annual QV meetings.

#### 4.3.7. Threading & Narrative (Component 7)

What links each moment of the conversation? What narrative structure ties each turn to the next? (Stillman, 2020, p. 112)



Figure 23: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to the threading narrative structure of the analysed conversations

#### Overarching vision

Another canvas component related to temporal aspects of conversation is component 7. Stillman (2020) understands *Threading & Narrative* as the connection between individual moments in a conversation and questions which narrative structure links the turns in a conversation. In the context of urban planning, this study has interpreted this component to focus on the overarching vision for the future city. It is about recognising how credibly the vision is communicated. And how this narrative, which at best is inspiring and creates anticipation, manifests itself in the individual moments. Do people know, when they are about to attend a workshop, where it is situated in the whole process? Do they know what happened before and how the present contribution is connected to those moments? Clarity on these questions can prevent confusion and frustration (0802\_hx). Parallel processes can also lead to frustration, as can sometimes be observed between the HSLU's monitoring process, which was already in progress before 2016, and the smaller Smart City workshops of the new area management (0712\_vc, 0715\_cn, 0715\_cg, 0721\_ba).

During the interviews it was noticeable that people could hardly distinguish the individual participatory moments. They did not know why they had taken part in a workshop on a Saturday afternoon several years ago. Was this event part of the local planning revision? Or was it part of the socio-spatial monitoring? Especially in such lengthy processes, it might be useful to help people keep track of things. Would a (visual) thought aid perhaps have been helpful?

At the same time, planners need to find a healthy balance when it comes to bringing participants on board at participatory events. The difficulty lies in not constantly explaining in detail everything that has already happened—because often the same people are there who have heard this narrative before—but at the same time getting those who have no idea about the development processes on track as well.

#### 4.3.8. Goals & Agreements (Component 8)

What have the people gathered to accomplish? How have we agreed to get there? How do we stay on course? (Stillman, 2020, p. 72)



Figure 24: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to the goals and agreements related to the analysed conversations



### *Multiple, sometimes conflicting goals*

Participants in planning and development processes have different, sometimes conflicting goals. This complexity of needs is one of the main reasons why it is so difficult to plan for cities. An overview of the expectations for the future city centre LuzernNord and the associated processes can be seen in the *Issue Map* (Figure 1). In the canvas component discussed in this chapter, it is obvious that a conversation—e.g. within a participatory workshop—has several *COCs*. Depending on the perspective, one gets different answers to the question «What have the people gathered to accomplish?». First and foremost, the planners hope for coordinated, holistic and sustainable planning. They must achieve concrete goals defined by the politicians. These include inner densification, percent of non-profit housing or questions of ecological sustainability, which in turn manifests itself, for example, in the prescribed parking space per inhabitant ratio. The area manager's goal is to «ignite a certain dynamic» in LuzernNord (0721\_ba). A broad coalition of the population, investors, businesses and officials are to be motivated to get involved in the future city centre. At the same time, entrepreneurs are taking part in the planning process because they hope for better conditions for their businesses. On a proxy basis, LuzernPlus, the economy-promoting institute of the canton of Lucerne, is committed to securing spaces for economic growth and new jobs. This conflicts, for example, with the preferences of private investors. These generally achieve higher returns on residential space. On the other hand, the goals of the neighbourhood workers, who are also committed to their target group, are completely non-commercial. They stand up for child-friendly transport systems, for example. Still other representatives of the population, namely members of neighbourhood associations, want to contribute to a more liveable environment through their participation in urban development, even for people who do not make the effort and attend workshops and information evenings. Often these are people who have acquired property and thus have the feeling that they will be at home in this place for the foreseeable future (0712\_vc). They may not only want something for themselves, but above all they want to help shape the built future for their descendants. Members of neighbourhood associations see themselves as a link between the population and the administration. Also, the group of non-professionally motivated participants wants to have fun. After all, the time they invest voluntarily is their free time. In this stakeholder group, however, conflicting objectives can be found. Some residents who want as little change as possible. They want the status quo to remain and are afraid of not being heard and «losing their identity» (0721\_ba). In addition, there are of course always financial motivations. Landowners who do not want to or cannot invest the money in development may want to sell their land and thus make as high a profit as possible. This can also lead to entire development processes coming to a standstill, as can be observed in Reussbühl Süd. There, a landowner has «utopian ideas about what his piece of land is worth», as the project leader put it (0802\_hx). There are participants in the urban development process who are more passive and do not have such strong opinions and primarily are interested in finding out what is going on. Others, on the other hand, have a clear mission, such as representatives of the LuzernPlus business development agency, who want to convince planners and politicians that sufficient percentages of space should be made available for businesses, which is also called lobbying. In addition to the different, sometimes opposing goals, there are also those that the participants pursue together.

### *Common goals*

A common goal of several stakeholder groups in LuzernNord is to build a common network. The participants want to see who else is present and interested in the development, who is committed to which projects, and who represents which interests. A side effect of this networking within the future neighbourhood is resilience building. Should difficulties arise where people need to help each other to find solutions, the people already know each other. Furthermore, a very central motivation for participating in LuzernNord's development is to be informed about what is being planned. Of course, all participants also have a general interest in ensuring that the events are organised as smoothly as possible and run without major problems.

When it comes to questioning what agreements have been made within a conversation—which relates to Stillman's second question within this component—and how compliance with these agreements can be monitored, then the focus is on the official goals of the project leaders. As an example: In the second workshop of the socio-spatial monitoring, the group had the task of assessing the current state in the neighbourhoods Meierhöfli and Reussbühl (based on the criteria defined in the first workshop). For this purpose, the participants marked important places on maps during the workshop, which should be observed and whose development should be monitored. Such concrete, common goals can be evaluated more clearly in comparison to individual goals. However, important findings in the analysis of the planning processes in LuzernNord could be lost if only those goals of the planners, and thus the «official» goals, were considered important.

### 4.3.9. Error & Repair (Component 9)

How do we know if a participant has made a mistake? How do we fix breaks in the conversation? (Stillman, 2020, p. 120)



Figure 25: Post-it wall showing data snippets related to error repair mechanisms within the analysed conversations

The final component of the COC looks at how errors can be detected and corrected within a conversation. What can happen when the entire planning effort fails is shown by examples from other cities, described in chapter 1.2. Stakeholder ecosystem & issue mapping. However, smaller failures and the associated reparation processes that can be observed in LuzernNord are to be described here. One of these repair mechanisms is the planners' iterative approach.

#### Iterative processes

Land-use plans are legally binding. They define the use and development structure of a sub-area. However, such a plan is not formed by randomly. Beforehand, there are several iterations of this land-use plan in the form of test planning. In the example of Reussbühl, this means that the electrical company, which is one of the largest landowners, commissioned a test planning (0802\_hx). This was after a test planning had already been carried out a few years ago. However, the requirements for the development have changed so much that the results from then had to be revised. This iteration is then looked at together with the project leaders. Open questions are clarified in a back-and-forth until finally a plan is created that meets both the political requirements represented by the planners and the private-economic goals of the company. Another example of an iterative design activity can be seen in the example of the Staffeln school building complex.

Although time was very short, collegial consultations were held among the implementing teachers between workshops with students. This allowed them to continuously and iteratively improve the workshop format. The approach of not trying to achieve a final, perfect result at the first attempt, but to continuously move towards an ideal in improvement loops, reduces the risk of complete failure of a project.

### *Moderation*

The problems that arose in the different participatory moments are very different in nature and difficult to summarise here. More detailed analyses were presented in chapter [4.2 COCs of specific participatory moments](#). However, what was almost always involved in a good resolution of the problems was a flexible, professional and solution-oriented nature of the facilitators. One of the most important functions of facilitation is to identify mistakes early on and correct them to the extent that they do not drastically disrupt the further course of the conversation. As an example: In the second Smart City workshop, there was an elderly gentleman who had great difficulty with the digital environment in Microsoft Teams and Canvas, especially when switching from one software to the other. Fortunately, the facilitators kept calm and were very helpful and competent. They guided the participant back to the group.

### *No results*

One source of frustration—it may not be right to speak of an error here—is when the inputs provided do not lead to concrete results. No mechanism for this could be observed, except for the planners' efforts to point out that the implementation of what was discussed and demanded was not to be expected in the next few weeks, months or even years.

### 4.3.10. Summary as COC

In summary, [Figure 26](#) brings together the results of the investigated participatory moments from 2010 to the present in a single canvas. This is an attempt to gain a holistic view of planning in LuzernNord. The summarised findings are explained and interpreted in more detail in the chapter 4.6. Interpretation of results.










Participatory planning process in LuzernNord			2010 – now
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p><b>Residents</b> (mostly represented by GV) <b>Landowners</b> (private, corporate, officials) <b>Investors</b> (private, corporate) <b>Experts</b> (planners, architects, traffic planners...) <b>Authorities</b> (national, regional, communal) <b>Committees</b> (steering, communication...)</p> <p>→ Successful engagement of many key stakeholders in different conversations during development × Parts of the population are not reached (including foreigners and young people)</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p><b>Websites</b> (Emmen, Lucerne, LuzernNord) <b>Newspapers</b> (communal, regional) <b>E-Newsletters</b> (via mail) <b>Social Media</b> (mainly Facebook) Mail (official invitations) Flyers, ads in newspapers</p> <p>→ Transparent communication through the channels listed above. × Rather high participation threshold* prevents inclusion of missing population groups. *compulsory registrations / feeling exposed / sacrificing free time / no immediate results etc.</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p><b>Investors and committed citizens:</b> Emmen does not have huge financial resources. If people want change, they might have to do it themselves and not hope for financial support from the municipality. <b>Maneuvering room:</b> With flood protection and traffic planning, there is not much scope for change and appropriation. → Planners and project managers include the opinions of interested stakeholders where possible. × However, there is little scope* in the existing development plans for real change. *places still allowing participative appropriation: Emmenpark, Seetalplatz, Emmenbaum Nord</p>	
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>There is <b>no regular exchange</b> between planners and stakeholders. They meet when there is either something new to show or input from stakeholders is needed.</p> <p>→ If you want, you can talk to project leaders at any time, even if there are no events planned. → At all participation/information events, participants have the opportunity (usually afterwards) to talk to the project leaders in a one-to-one situation, where they feel safe to address things they did not want to say in the big round.</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p><b>Suitable rooms</b> in the neighbourhoods were chosen for workshops and information events.</p> <p>→ Change of location shows in some cases higher level of inclusion → The rooms were repurposed for the events, becoming activated and a place of community. Often they were spaces that were new and exciting for the participants. × Visual material seems interchangeable and does not appeal to stakeholders personally. There may be more effective images to inspire stakeholders and appeal to a wider audience.</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p><b>Urban planning takes a lot of time</b>, participatory planning even a little more.</p> <p>→ Due to the latency between needs assessment, planning and implementation, planners try to leave as much flexibility as possible in the development plans. → Planners make greater efforts to educate the public about the slowness of the planning processes. × Nevertheless, people finally need to see construction progress so that momentum can (re)emerge.</p>	
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p><b>Vision:</b> In LuzernNord, people will one day live and work in a modern, ecological and lively centre on the river. In order to achieve this goal, LuzernNord is to develop as a Smart City.</p> <p>→ There is a clear overarching vision* of how the area should develop. *six dimensions of the Smart City LuzernNord × Although a lot of information can be found on the project website, it is sometimes not clear which perimeter is in which process stage, and where there is still room for (citizen-) participation. An overview map might be helpful.</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p><b>Motivations to participate voluntarily:</b> Interest/curiosity (information) Desire to help shape the living space for oneself, but also for future generations Networking (with like/alternative thinkers) <b>But also:</b> Strengthening one's own visibility (politicians) Lobbying (business promotion) → Although these are participatory opportunities, many participants just want to be informed about what is planned. × Nevertheless, those who are really involved are disappointed that hardly any constructional changes are happening in LuzernNord.</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>The participatory and inclusive design approach of the area developers is an important contribution to preventing a (complete) failure of LuzernNord's development.</p> <p>→ The role of moderation, which is central to troubleshooting in participatory events, has always been filled by competent experts. → The iterative design approach is forgiving of mistakes and does not promise the perfect solution at the first draft.</p>	

Figure 26: Conversation OS Canvas at a high altitude, analysing participation in the development process in LuzernNord, from 2010 to today



e.g. industrial zones, inner urban consolidation (städtebauliche Verdichtung), changing speed limits (e.g. from 50 to 30 km/h), transfer of building rights, partial structure plan and structure plan (Teilrichtplan und Richtplan), authority-binding land-use plan (behördenverbindlicher Bebauungsplan), architectural competition, , revision of local planning (Ortsplanungsrevision), building lease contracts, synergy and profitability analysis (Synergie- und Wirtschaftlichkeitsanalyse) and building development review (Bebaubarkeitsprüfung). During the transcription of the interview recordings, the definitions of the majority of these terms had to be looked up in order to understand what was said.

### *Financial aspects of planning*

Another issue that the nine components of the *COC* do not address is the financial aspects of planning. However, especially in Emmen, where the municipality is under pressure to save money, this is a key issue (0715\_cn). Every expenditure of the municipality is closely reviewed and if necessary criticised by the (politically active) citizens (0826\_bx). In addition, the city of Lucerne is in a better financial position. It is able to pass a budget more quickly than its smaller neighbouring municipality. However, this lower financial power of Emmen is also seen as an advantage by some of its citizens, as one interviewee affirmed (0715\_cg). If people want a specific change in the municipality of Emmen, they have to take matters into their own hands. «Through this commitment, the appreciation is higher afterwards and the projects are therefore more sustainable», as an obviously proud senior citizen of Emmen puts it. Whether there is a correlation between smaller financial resources and greater appreciation of self-initiated projects cannot be clarified within the framework of this study.

### *Investment*

In addition to the question of how much money a municipality can spend on planning and development processes, a decisive aspect is the willingness of private-sector investors. The greater the belief in secure returns, the more and faster will be built (0721\_ba). The world of real estate investment also has its own rules and logics. For example, residential buildings are preferred investment properties for investors. The residential buildings in LuzernNord have practically no pre-occupancy rate, as it is assumed that they can be let anyway. Whereas areas for businesses require a pre-occupancy rate of 50–60%. The final decision on whether to invest in an area is always made by the investor. However, many preliminary processes are carried out by real estate consultancies (0719\_qm). These in turn are in close exchange with LuzernPlus (economic development agency of the canton of Lucerne) during these processes. LuzernPlus tries to show investors and companies an exciting portfolio of development areas and investment opportunities, and hopes that the companies will invest in one of the areas. An overarching vision of the development areas is crucial here. Investors need to understand what is being planned and built so that they can make their investment decision (see [Threading & Narrative](#)).

### *Competition*

As a topic, that is part of a developing area, is the surrounding competition. As an example: The operators of the interim use NF49 offer a wide range of cultural activities. Nevertheless, the offer seems to be only moderately well used (0826\_bx). The reason for this is the fact that the population of Emmen is oriented towards the neighbouring city in this respect. People would rather go for a drink, dance or theater play there than at the

Seetalplatz (0712\_vc). This competitive aspect can be observed not only in the cultural sector, but also when it comes to which companies settle in the new town centre (0721\_ba). In this aspect, LuzernNord is in competition with other cantons or even the rest of the world. It is LuzernPlus whose job it is to lobby potential new companies for LuzernNord.

### *Mobility*

The topic that seems to be omnipresent in LuzernNord is mobility. This is reinforced by the decision of the politicians to establish the area around Seetalplatz and Emmenbrücke station as a transportation hub (0806\_ei). In the workshops, there were repeated discussions about how to best guide traffic around Seetalplatz. Some workshops seemed to be almost exclusively about new bike lanes and less car parking (0715\_cn). This has mainly to do with the fact that the current view of the area around Seetalplatz is dominated by motorised individual traffic, but also by public transport, namely train and bus.

### *Social life*

Alongside this omnipresent theme of mobility in LuzernNord, the question of the social impact of development seems almost like a side issue. Of course, this is not the case. In several interviews, the displacement of current residents from the development area was an important topic (0715\_cg, 0712\_vc, 0826\_bx). In this respect, the socio-spatial monitoring recognised similar dangers. At the same time, they also formulated opportunities, that will come with the impact of the new, urban neighbourhood on the surrounding ones. For example, there is the question of how the development around Seetalplatz will affect rents in Meierhöfli, a neighbourhood that is one of the few with affordable rents and thus offers space for families with low income. There is a danger that these families will be displaced (0715\_cg). Furthermore, some warn (0712\_vc, 0811\_fh) that the new neighbourhood will become a «ghost town» outside office hours. Efforts are being made to counteract this danger, by planning for a wide variety of uses. In addition, it was expressed that LuzernNord should be better connected structurally with the surrounding neighbourhoods (0715\_cg). There is a lack of a central meeting place in the Meierhöfli district. This deficiency could be fixed by the new city centre LuzernNord. However, this would require a better connection between the neighbourhoods for non-motorised traffic.

### *Identity*

The last point, which was a recurring theme in the research and was not covered by *COC*, is the identity crisis in which the municipality of Emmen (but also Reussbühl to some extent) seems to find itself. Conservative-minded people in particular have difficulties with the idea that their home municipality is changing and that the canton and city of Lucerne suddenly have a say in the development of their home town (0715\_cn, 0721\_ba). The discussion about whether the new city centre has the right name or whether it should be called «Emmen Süd» is emblematic of this. However, left-wing politicians see great potential in the future development. They even hope that the newcomers who will move into the new, urban district will be left-wing voters. This could lead to a redistribution of political power in the agglomeration, which is currently dominated by conservatives.

As anticipated in the introduction to this chapter, the points mentioned here may not include all important topics. However, they do show that substantive issues do get lost when participatory processes are examined solely through the lens of *COC*. Where the framework works well and where it has shortcomings will be summarised in the next chapter.



#### 4.4. Application of COC in participatory urban planning: a critical analysis

Conversation OS Canvas, edited			(Participatory) urban development
 <p><b>People &amp; Diversity</b></p> <p>Who is involved in the conversation and why? Who else could be engaged? How does gender and race effect the conversation?</p> <p>What role does a participant take in the conversation? How effective is her/his voice for the group she/he seems to represent? Is there anyone who would be a better representative?</p>	 <p><b>Invitation &amp; Initiation</b></p> <p>What opens the conversation? How does the invitation set the stage and with what kind of energy?</p> <p>How high is the barrier to joining the conversation? Can we lower it? Would it help to approach our target group by changing the location, in order to initiate the conversation?</p>	 <p><b>Power &amp; Permission</b></p> <p>Who is empowered to alter other components of the OS? How does power shape the conversation?</p> <p>What are the prevailing legal and political frameworks? Who moderates the conversation? How can we create understanding for small leeway? Where is there room for manoeuvre to optimally incorporate the results of the participatory moments?</p>	
 <p><b>Turn taking &amp; Silence</b></p> <p>Who speaks when and why? What modes or alternatives could help?</p> <p>Is there a chance to get in touch with planners and project leaders after an official meeting? Is there a chance to get information during phases when a lot is happening behind the scenes and no conversations are taking place?</p>	 <p><b>Interface &amp; Space</b></p> <p>What is the medium or channel that carries the content of the conversation? How does the space effect the conversation?</p> <p>How can existing places in the neighbourhoods be activated through participatory moments and transformed into social spaces? Can we create more permanent spaces for exchange? Which (visual) means help to talk about (future) urban spaces?</p>	 <p><b>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</b></p> <p>What is the pace of the conversation? Can we speed it up or slow it down? How would that effect things?</p> <p>How can we create understanding for the legally prescribed (backstage) processes on the one hand? And on the other hand, speed up these processes where possible?</p>	
 <p><b>Threading &amp; Narrative</b></p> <p>What links each moment of the conversation? What narrative structure ties each turn to the next?</p> <p>How clear is the overarching vision for the development of the city (district)? Is it clear how the participatory moments and the contribution of participants add to the vision?</p>	 <p><b>Goals &amp; Agreements</b></p> <p>What have the people gathered to accomplish? How have we agreed to get there? How do we stay on course?</p> <p>How can we clearly communicate the planners' goals in advance while leaving room for the individual goals of potential participants? How can we ensure that the results of participation are noticeably incorporated into the development?</p>	 <p><b>Error &amp; Repair</b></p> <p>How do we know if a participant has made a mistake? How do we fix breaks in the conversation?</p> <p>How can we integrate an iterative process into the conversations? How can facilitators fix mistakes on the fly without further disrupting the group's conversation?</p>	

Figure 28: COC, adapted to the context of participatory urban planning, based on the experience in LuzernNord.

The grey text are Stillman’s original questions, the black text was added as a result of this study.

##### Components that work well

COC provides a framework to formulate interesting questions about participatory moments in urban planning. Who participates in the events (*People & Diversity*), how these people are invited (*Invitation & Initiation*), and what the goals of the gatherings are (*Goals & Agreements*) are central elements. At the same time, it can be interesting to ask where the event takes place, how the place influences the interactions and in what way the chosen media—images, maps, models, sketches—support the conversations (*Interface & Space*).

Also, component 9 (*Error & Repair*) may provide exciting questions about the processes being evaluated. For someone who has no experience in (participatory) urban planning, the *COC* can be a good support to navigate through the complex systems of urban planning.

#### *Components that are less clearly applicable*

There are also canvas components that are less clear in their application in urban planning processes. For example, some very different kinds of questions have been placed in the *Power & Permission* component. On the one hand, there is the question of legal framework conditions and of free spaces and possibilities where participation still makes sense in existing plans. On the other hand, there is the question of which participant has which possibilities of action, whether he/she can make decisions or only act in an advisory capacity. The important function of moderators is also addressed inside this component. All these sub-questions and aspects of the investigated conversations were added to the component 3. As an ensemble, however, they fit together only to a limited extent.

#### *Components that ask few exciting questions*

In addition to the somewhat diffuse or overloaded component 3, there are components 4 (*Turn taking & Silence*), 6 (*Cadence & Rhythm*) and 7 (*Threading & Narrative*), which are clearly applicable, but to which only little data could be assigned.

#### *Process-focused, omitting content*

The *COC* might be suitable for analysing development processes. It poses critical questions to those involved in designing, implementing and evaluating these processes. What the framework cannot do, however, is ask content-related questions. In a nutshell, the framework asks: How do we talk? It does not ask: What do we talk about? Since methods deal in general with the «how», they should actually be mapped by the *COC*, shouldn't they?

#### *Methods*

The *COC* always focuses on conversation as a method. But, the *COC* does not intend to record in detail the (co-design) methods that were used in the participatory moments examined. Into which component do «echo chamber» (Echoraum) or «future workshop» (Zukunftswerkstatt) fall? Perhaps in *Interface & Space*, since methods describe the way of interacting with each other? Or, since methods are a potential way to arrive at a desired goal, perhaps methods should be in *Goals & Agreements*? During the analysis of the data using the *COC*, this shortcoming of the framework, was encountered several times.

Possible answers to the question of how the *COC* should be further adapted in order to be even more helpful for the analysis of (participatory) urban planning processes are given in [4.6 Interpretation of results](#). The next chapter describes how the research results just presented were validated together with an expert.

## 4.5. Validation of results

The overview of the results the thesis has provided was set out and validated through a concluding critical analysis—in the form of a dialogue with an expert—before the conclusions of the written Master's thesis are presented. The research results as presented in chapter 4.2. *COCs of specific participatory moments* (incl. Figure 11) were discussed with a planning expert, namely Christoph Zurflüh, founder and co-owner of Trafico AG, a transport planning company based in the canton of Lucerne and area manager of LuzernNord.

The first reaction of the area manager, who is strongly involved in practice and less in theory, was: «For me as an area manager, such a canvas is exactly what I need». He was interested in hearing which parts of the (participatory) planning process were going well and which were going less well. The *Threading & Narrative* component seems to be particularly interesting for the planning expert. The question of the story that is told about the future city seems to be a central point in his work. He also confirms that participatory processes mostly fail because of the first two building blocks (*People & Diversity* and *Invitation & Initiation*).

All in all, Christoph Zurflüh finds the work interesting because it shows that «one can also be self-critical with participatory processes» and criticises an insufficiently critical mainstream view. «Often people are already satisfied when planners say that they do participation,» says the expert. He would like the graphics to be translated into German so that he can share them publicly.

What bothers him about the framework, but for which he also has no quick solution, is that it does not provide numerical values. The *COC* doesn't say: «The processes in LuzernNord have 6 out of 10 points in the *Threading & Narrative* category, and 2 out of 10 points in *Invitation & Initiation*.» Compared to the Smart City Monitoring, which he conducted two months before the interview, he finds the evaluation results rather vague. The tool he mentions is the federal government's Smart Site Tool, developed by the company Novatlantis (*Smarte 2000-Watt-Areale, n.d.*). The digital tool, which enables a self-assessment of 2000-watt sites, yielded a value of 52% for LuzernNord. Christoph Zurflüh would like the *COC* to offer a similarly concrete evaluation. Whether this would actually be useful cannot be conclusively clarified to this point.

The planning expert also places the study in the context of the so-called PDCA cycle, whose origins lie in quality management. Christoph Zurflüh explains that this is a framework for the continuous improvement of processes. P stands for plan, D for do, C for check, A for act. And as he understands the aim of this study, it is located in the third phase: it checks how the processes are going. The PDCA cycle was not previously known to the author of the study and will be included in further considerations.

It should be noted that Christoph Zurflüh unfortunately only had around one hour for this meeting, which meant that it was not possible to delve as deeply as desired into the subject matter.

## 4.6. Interpretation of results

In this chapter, the previously presented results are interpreted in relation to the research questions. As a reminder, here are the three sub-questions:

- (I) How do past and current conversations between city developers and stakeholders in LuzernNord look like?
- (II) Where is there potential for improvement in the current and past conversations in LuzernNord?
- (III) Where are the advantages and limitations of the *COC* as a perspective on urban planning, enabling a better analysis of (participatory) aspects of that planning?

And the meta-research question:

**How might we foster better conversations between urban planners and stakeholders in the context of participatory urban development?**

Questions (I) and (II) are now answered based on the *COC* as follows:

### *People & Diversity*

(I) The development of the LuzernNord site has been going on for over a decade now. In recent years, various stakeholders—including representatives from the neighbourhoods of the city of Lucerne and the municipality of Emmen, entrepreneurs, representatives of the transport association, investors, civil servants, etc.—have been repeatedly invited to participate, be it during the socio-spatial monitoring, in more recent workshops on the topic of Smart City or in individual discussions between investors and those responsible for the project. Process steps are often accompanied or carried out by external experts in the form of paid assignments. These can be real estate consultants, communication and marketing experts or lawyers. In summary, it can be said that many stakeholders are successfully integrated into the process.

(II) However, despite great efforts to make the process as participatory as possible, large parts of the population are not included. These groups include foreigners, people with a migration background and young people. This finding is particularly relevant in a municipality like Emmen, where in 2020 36% of the inhabitants were foreigners and over 34% were under 30 years of age ([Lutstat Statistik Luzern, 2020](#)). The question arises as to how these population groups can be better integrated into the processes. When voices from the population are wanted for e.g. during a participatory workshop, representatives of the QV are invited to the conversation. However, the problem is that the neighbourhood associations themselves face the problem of not being able to integrate foreigners and young people into their associations.

### *Invitation & Initiation*

(I) Invitations to talk about development in LuzernNord are mostly sent via digital channels: Websites of the municipality of Emmen, the city of Lucerne or the area management itself, local (mostly digital) newspapers, social media and email newsletters. Analogue print media, such as flyers or paper letters, are less common. The latter is used almost exclusively for official communication moments, such as when landowners are informed about the consultation of an updated land-use plan.

(II) Although many participatory moments are open to the public, not all segments of the population are reached, as we saw in the last section. This could be due to a too high participation hurdle. Do the missing population groups even know about the offers? Do they understand what it is all about? How can the hurdle to participate in LuzernNord be lowered?

#### *Power & Permission*

(I) The «participation clause» leaves a lot of room for interpretation for those responsible as to the form in which they allow the population and other stakeholder groups to participate. In addition, there are clear, legally prescribed steps on how an area must be developed. A central element is the land-use plan. In LuzernNord, with flood protection and traffic planning, there is not much room for change and appropriation by citizens. Also, Emmen does not have huge financial resources. If people want change, they might have to do it themselves and not hope for financial support from the municipality. Planners and project managers include the opinions of interested stakeholders where possible. However, at this point, there is little scope in the existing development for changing the plans.

(II) LuzernNord is at a stage where stakeholder opinions have already been gathered and, according to project managers, integrated into the plans. However, due to flood protection, transport planning and other political requirements, these plans offer little scope for (creative and experimental) citizen participation. When participation moments happen, this limitation sometimes leads to frustration. Would it help if the places where there is still at least some of this room for manoeuvre were to be given more focus? Could Emmenpark or the future Seetalplatz be promoted as places of appropriation? Could the stakeholders—namely citizens—be given more power in this way?

#### *Turn taking & Silence*

(I) There is no regular exchange between planners and stakeholders. They meet when there is either something new to show or input from stakeholders is needed. Nevertheless, if stakeholders want, they can talk to project leaders at any time, even if there are no events planned. At all participation and information events, participants have the opportunity (usually afterwards) to talk to the project leaders in a one-to-one situation, where they feel safe to address things they did not want to say in the big round.

(II) As far as this study can tell, there are no suggestions for improvement in terms of who gets to speak when. In all group sessions, it was ensured that everyone had their say. Even at a higher zoom level, when looking at whole processes rather than individual touchpoints, stakeholders have the opportunity to have their say at appropriate time horizons.

#### *Interface & Space*

(I) The conversations on the development of LuzernNord took place in different spaces. Mostly rooms in the neighbourhoods were chosen for workshops and information events. Often the spaces were new and exciting for the participants. The rooms were repurposed for the events, becoming activated and a place of community. Changing the location of an event—e.g. from Emmen's community hall to a well frequented playground—showed in some cases higher level of inclusion.

(II) The visual material used in the events was sometimes difficult to read for participants. Visualisations of future buildings—namely the cantonal administration building—seem interchangeable and do not appeal very successfully to certain stakeholder groups. Could there perhaps be ways to make the images more credible and closer to reality? The

visualisations show a modern, urban city centre with healthy, young people. But is there also space for e.g. children and senior citizens in the new city centre? In addition, workshop participants had difficulties finding their way around on maps. Maybe there would be the possibility to make them more tangible so that everyone can have a say and not only those who are trained to read an architectural plan.

### *Cadence & Rhythm*

(I) The development processes in LuzernNord take a very long time. Compared to the length of these processes, the participatory moments and conversations are relatively short. Due to the latency between needs assessment, planning and implementation, planners try to leave as much flexibility as possible in the development plans. Additionally, planners make greater efforts to educate the public about the slowness of the planning processes.

(II) Nevertheless, people might need to see progress in terms of construction, so that momentum can (re)emerge. Are there ways to speed up the building process? Or would it be helpful to educate people more about why the processes are moving so slowly, so that frustration and mistrust towards urban planning can be alleviated?

### *Narrative & Threading*

(I) There is a clear overarching vision of how the area should develop: In LuzernNord, people will one day live and work in a modern, ecological and lively centre on the river. In order to achieve this goal, LuzernNord is to develop as a Smart City, including the six dimensions mobility, environment, living, economy, governance and people.

(II) Although a lot of information can be found on the project website, it is sometimes not clear which perimeter is in which process stage, and where there is still room for (citizen-) participation. An overview map, that is updated regularly, might be helpful. Also, some workshop participants did not understand where they are situated inside the whole development process and how this particular participatory moment is connected to other process stages. One reason for this might be the slow cadence of the whole process of LuzernNord. Are there possibilities to accelerate the process and what other effects would this bring? The study also showed that it would be time for the second cycle of the socio-spatial monitoring to evaluate what has been achieved so far. In this way, the planners and project leaders could still correct the course.

### *Goals & Agreements*

(I) On the one hand, people with completely different motivations participate in the development of LuzernNord. Some are simply interested in hearing what is planned in their immediate environment. Others want to vent about things that have annoyed them for a long time, but which may have nothing to do with the topic of the event. Still others take part in participatory moments to be seen, to network or even to chase potential votes. On the other hand, the planners' official reasons for organising participatory moments are to strengthen site-specific resilience, to identify needs and to inform those involved and interested, because ultimately the aim is to develop a holistic plan for the coordinated development of an urban area that is accepted and supported by as many people as possible.

(II) Although the facilitators of these events do their job well and pick up on the needs of the participants, there is a lack of concrete agreements. It remains unclear how the results of the participation flow into further planning and development. Could more concrete

agreements be made and tasks distributed to the participants? What mechanisms may be installed to ensure compliance with these agreements?

### *Error & Repair*

(I) The participatory and inclusive design approach of the area developers is an important contribution to preventing a (complete) failure of LuzernNord's development. The project leaders are already doing an excellent job in this regard. The role of moderation, which is central to troubleshooting in participatory events, has always been filled by competent experts. The iterative design approach does not promise the perfect solution at the first draft, but rather embraces learning from previous mistakes.

(II) This is also a component where no concrete suggestions for improvement can be formulated. The development in LuzernNord was not without its faults, but these were steadily recognised and addressed in future steps.

(III) The third sub-question addresses the *COC* as a perspective on urban planning, enabling a better analysis of (participatory) aspects of that planning. There are components that are very well suited for the analysis of these processes (1, 2, 5, 8 and 9). Others also pose interesting questions but, at least in the case of LuzernNord, provide little guidance for possible improvements (4, 6, 7). Component 3, *Power & Permission*, is the one that was least clearly applicable. It might help to divide this component into two sub-components: A) Who has what power and possibilities (to decide, to advise, to express wishes, to moderate...)? And B) What freedom and room for participation do the political and legal frameworks leave?

The use of the *COC* as an analysis tool was difficult when it was unclear at what level the analysis was being conducted. Is it an entire process that is being analysed, e.g. the development of Reussbühl West, or is it a specific participatory moment, e.g. a workshop? While applying the *COC*, it is important to be clear on which zoom level the researcher finds her-/himself, otherwise it can lead to misunderstandings and mistakes, especially when analyses are compared that were actually made at different levels.

A characteristic of the *COC* is that the findings obtained with it are of a qualitative nature. The results are not numerical values. However, certain decision-makers are used to such qualitative data on which they base their decisions (Hongler et al., 2008). However, this characteristic can also be understood as an advantage. With the help of the *COC*, what effectively improves the processes (from the participants' point of view) is sought. There are no numbers being put into schemas in order to obtain a final value that is then more or less satisfactory. The *COC* is a relatively open framework, which raises questions to help evaluate and improve the participatory process.

At the same time, however, a very important aspect of the development processes design is not evaluated by the *COC*: the finances. Sooner or later, the question always comes up how much something will or has cost. The *COC* cannot provide answers to this. Specific tips on financing and budgeting participatory processes can be found e.g. in *Mitreden, Mitgestalten, Mitentscheiden* (Hongler et al., 2008, p. 10 & p.58).

In addition, it would be helpful to have a glossary in the appendix of the *COC*, which brings the technical jargon of planners and architects closer to non-experts, see chapter 4.3.10. **Other topics.** (Conversation) designers do not need to have the expertise of urban planning, as they are responsible for the participatory process. Nevertheless, they need to understand the planning processes and tools to a certain extent in order to be able to have a conversation with the experts from planning and architecture.

## 5. Conclusion

This study's goal was to understand how the (participatory) processes in LuzernNord work and where potentials for future iterations could lie. The evaluation of past processes was carried out with the help of the *Conversation OS Canvas*. Daniel Stillman (2020) presents this framework in his book *Good Talk* and argues that it can be used to (re)design conversations of all kinds. As the canvas was used for the first time in the context of urban planning, this study also questions where the strengths and weaknesses of the framework lie when trying to evaluate urban planning processes. To answer these questions, a total of eleven interviews were conducted with people involved in urban planning, including representatives from neighbourhood associations, local politics and commissions of the municipality, neighbourhood associations, children and youth work, real estate development of the canton and the transport association. The interview transcripts were analysed using the framework analysis based on the *Conversation OS Canvas*. At the same time, topics that did not fit into the components of the canvas were recorded separately. The desktop research contributed to a holistic understanding of the problem space. Using these methods, the study found that many things have been done right in the development of the new city centre. Multiple times, people have been invited to have their say. A lot of effort was made to bring the plans and developments closer to the general public. Although the structural implementation is not yet very progressed, the planning of the future city centre is at an advanced stage. This leaves little room for participation. Nevertheless, the potential that this study has discovered can be summarised as follows: In order to make the future development of LuzernNord more inclusive, efforts to invite larger parts of the foreign and younger population of Emmen to participate might be needed. Target group specific collaboration projects may be a meaningful approach, where the Emmenpark and/or Seetalplatz could be co-designed. Overall, it would be important that the participation projects lead to concrete results and do not get lost in a non-transparent planning process. Another decisive factor for the success of such projects would be a threshold that is as low as possible, otherwise the project will hardly reach people who are not already part of LuzernNord's development processes anyway.

In addition to analysing the processes in LuzernNord, the study was also able to critically question the *Conversation OS Canvas* as an evaluation tool. The framework might help to analyse complex processes, such as those within an urban development. It poses interesting questions around the way people are invited to participate, which effects the space and (visual) media have on the conversation, or how an overall vision for a future city might help to lower confusion during workshops. However, the application falls short in terms of posing relevant questions around financial and budgeting aspects of (participatory) planning processes. Overall, some components of the canvas are more applicable than others. The *Power & Permission* component was particularly difficult to apply.

These new insights gained from the study on Daniel Stillman's *Conversation OS Canvas* are a contribution to the relatively young discipline of conversation design. In a further step, it will be exciting to apply this canvas, that was adapted to the context of participatory urban planning, in practice and to draw further insights and adaptations from it. Of course, this study also has limitations, which are presented in the following chapter.



## 5.1. Limitations & further research recommendation

### 5.1.1. Limitations

#### *Memories vs. reality*

Most of the data is generated based on people's memories from past events, some of them laying months or even years back. It is possible that things that were said happened differently. Nevertheless, interviews provided an opportunity to gather insights into past moments in the participatory planning process in LuzernNord.

#### *Conflict of interest*

There might have been (personal) insights that people didn't want to share, because they found themselves in a conflict of interest: an employee of the planning and building department might not want to share what he/she believes went wrong in a particular process stage.

#### *Recruiting*

The contacts of the interview partners were either found online or provided by the collaboration partner. Subsequently, the people were contacted via email with the request to forward the invitation to people who could also fit into the sample strategy (keyword: snowballing). This means that people who did not read or reply to their emails were not included in the selection. Furthermore, people who did not actively participate in the development of LuzernNord were not interviewed. Another limitation was the timing of the data collection: the interviews took place from July to August, a period when many Swiss people are on summer holiday. A number of refusals came back, citing this very reason.

#### *Transcription*

The recorded interviews were transcribed from Swiss German (mainly Lucerne dialect) to standard German. During the analysis of the transcripts, there was another translation from standard German into English. Through this process, some nuances in the conversations might have been lost.

#### Validation of results

The results were discussed with a planning expert and area manager of LuzernNord (as described in [chapter 4.5](#)). In addition, it would be interesting to discuss the results with experts from the social sciences. As they are specialists in the study of people, which are at the core of this text, their expertise and perspective might be a valuable addition.

### 5.1.2. Further research recommendation

During further research, the findings of this study will be applied in planning and development practice and check whether the framework is useful in direct application and/or how it should be adapted accordingly (see [3.1. Design process](#)). Also, it would be highly interesting to talk to people who did not take part in the development process in LuzernNord in order to find out why not. In fact, this might even be the focus of the following practical Master's thesis work. Furthermore, it may be inspiring to apply the *Conversation OS Canvas* in other situations, city related or not, and check how far it can contribute to designing better conversations there. How can it maybe even retroactively inspire the context-specific applications of the canvas that this text describes?

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From left to right, from top to bottom:

Topographie der Gewalt 1930–1938. (n.d.). Jüdisches Museum Berlin.

<https://www.jmberlin.de/topographie-gewalt/#/info>

Introduction | Here We Build CityScope. (n.d.). MIT CityScope.

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Stillman, D. (2020). *Good Talk: How to Design Conversations that Matter*. Management Impact Publishing.

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## Design brief, MA Thesis Project «LuzernNord erlebbar machen» (2020)

Hochschule Luzern  
Design & Kunst

# Master Design

## Master of Arts in Design Projektausschreibung 2019 LuzernNord erlebbar machen Beschrieb & Briefing

### Ausgangslage und Herausforderungen

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#### Rahmenbedingungen für das Briefing

- die Studierenden bekommen im ausgeschriebenen Projekt die Möglichkeit, ihre praktische Masterthesis in einem realen Kontext in Abstimmung mit dem Praxispartner zu entwickeln.
- sie bekommen hierbei Einblick in einen praxisbezogenen Kontext
- sie erhalten im Rahmen des Briefings und der Präsentationen Feedback auf ihre Arbeiten, welches sie inhaltlich, wie auch praktisch in ihre Arbeit einfliessen lassen können aber nicht müssen.
- die Arbeit der Studierenden selbst orientiert sich an den Rahmenbedingungen des Briefings. Dieses darf seitens der Studierenden jedoch durchaus in Frage gestellt und in Form eines RE-Briefings präzisiert werden.
- Im Vordergrund des Projekts steht eine qualifizierte Bezugnahme auf das Briefing und eine entsprechende Umsetzung entlang der Bewertungskriterien des MA Design. Im Ausnahmefall kann dabei eine marktreife Lösung entstehen, grundsätzlich ist jedoch nicht davon auszugehen.
- Die Praxispartner fungieren als externe Berater und sind nicht an der Benotung des Projekts beteiligt.

#### Ausgangslage

In LuzernNord treffen mit Emmen und der Stadt Luzern die zwei grössten Gemeinden der Zentralschweiz aufeinander, die Kleine Emme und die Reuss fliessen zusammen, und der Seetalplatz ist einer der grössten Verkehrsknotenpunkte der Innerschweiz. Hier leben und arbeiten die Menschen dereinst in einem modernen, ökologischen und lebhaften Zentrum am Fluss. Um dieses Zielbild zu erreichen, soll sich LuzernNord als Smart City entwickeln.

LuzernNord ist ein Entwicklungsschwerpunkt des Kantons Luzern. In den nächsten Jahren werden hier schrittweise 1500 neue Wohnungen, 4000 zusätzliche Arbeitsplätze und 850 Studienplätze realisiert. Ergänzt wird das neue Zentrum von zwei Erholungszonen und diversen kulturellen Einrichtungen. Die Transformation zu einem neuen, vielseitigen und belebten Zentrum ist in vollem Gange: Beispiele sind die Viscosistadt, die Hochschule Luzern – Design und Kunst oder die Zwischennutzung NF 49.

LuzernNord steht auch für eine gemeinsame und koordinierte Planung unter den unterschiedlichen Anspruchsgruppen. Beteiligt sind die Gemeinde Emmen, die Stadt Luzern, der Kanton, der Verkehrsverbund, die Wirtschaftsförderung, Unternehmen, Arealentwickler und die Bevölkerung.

#### Herausforderungen

Die Ausgestaltung und das zukünftige Leben in LuzernNord am heutigen Verkehrsknotenpunkt ist für viele Personen schwer vorstellbar. Mit der Viscosistadt oder NF49 sind erste Projekte da, die das Potential aufzeigen. Trotzdem ist es für die Bevölkerung, potentielle Unternehmen oder interessierte Mietende schwierig, sich ein Bild vom Leben im neuen Stadtzentrum zu machen. Zwar existieren Kommunikationsmittel wie 3D-Modelle der Gebäude, Flyer, Film oder Website (siehe [www.luzernnord.ch](http://www.luzernnord.ch)),

aber dennoch bleiben viele dieser Darstellungsformen auf einem abstraktem Niveau. Das führt teilweise auch zu aktiver Wachstumskritik, wie eine hängige Initiative in Emmen zeigt.

## **Briefing**

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Ziel der Arbeit ist es, einen «smarten» und ganzheitlichen Ansatz zu entwickeln, um die Zukunft von LuzernNord mit digitalen Hilfsmittel bereits heute niederschwellig erlebbar zu machen und die zukünftige «Story» von LuzernNord erzählen zu können. Dadurch soll bei der Bevölkerung und Unternehmen vor Ort mehr Verständnis und Akzeptanz für die Entwicklung zum neuen Stadtzentrum geschaffen werden.

Im Raum stehen Fragen wie: Wie sieht meine zukünftige Nachbarschaft aus? Soll ich mich mit meinem Unternehmen ansiedeln? Wo kann ich zukünftig einkaufen? Wo gibt es Restaurants? Wie bewege ich mich am besten fort? Welche Leute wohnen wo? Wer arbeitet wo? Gibt es kulturelle Angebote? Wo sind die Freiräume? usw.

In einem ersten Schritt soll die «Story» für LuzernNord geschärft werden. Im zweiten Schritt soll ein Ansatz entwickelt werden, wie diese «Story» einfach verständlich erlebbar gemacht werden kann. Hierzu können insbesondere Methoden und Ansätze aus dem Bereich des Service Designs (Bsp. Customer Journeys, Blueprints, User Experience) aber auch aus jenem der audiovisuellen und multimedialen Gestaltungsmitteln (Bsp. AR, VR, immersive experiences) von Nutzen sein.

Masterstudierende haben im Rahmen dieses Projekt eine einmalige Chance, in unmittelbarer Nachbarschaft zu unserem Hochschulcampus eine Zusammenarbeit mit einer Vielzahl von Akteur\*innen aus öffentlicher Hand, Stadtplanung und -verwaltung sowie insbesondere den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern mit zu prägen. Human Centred Design, partizipative Planung und Gestaltung sowie Social Design zählen nebst dem medialen Aspekt von Technologien, wie AR und VR zu den Schwerpunkten dieser Arbeit.

### **Projektpartner**

LuzernPlus  
Gebietsmanagement LuzernNord

### **Ansprechperson**

Christoph Zurflüh, Gebietsmanager LuzernNord

## **Zeitrahen und Meilensteine**

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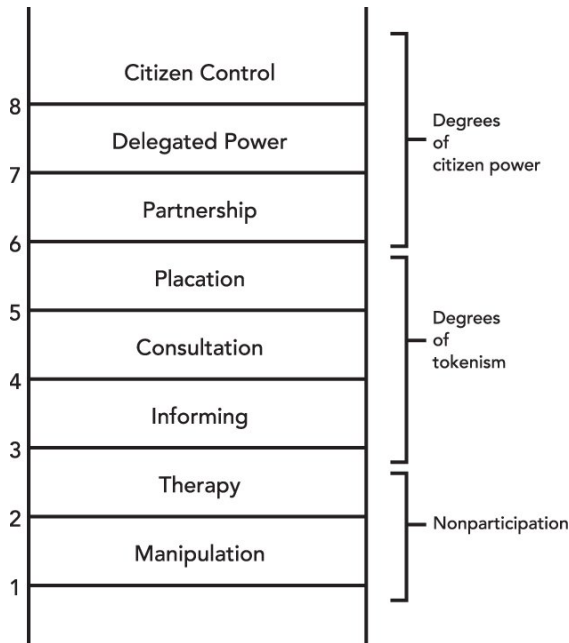
Die Dauer des Masterstudium beträgt in der Regelstudienzeit 3 Semester. Je nach Kontext und Bedarf der entsprechenden Arbeit kann dieses auch im Teilzeitstudium (in der Regel 5 Semester) durchgeführt werden.

- Briefing vor Ort in LuzernOrd im Rahmen von Workshops
- Coaching druch den Gebietsmanager und den Dozierenden des Master Design, Hochschule Luzern – Design & Kunst
- Zwischenpräsentationen
- Schlusspräsentation
- Werkschau
- Umsetzung



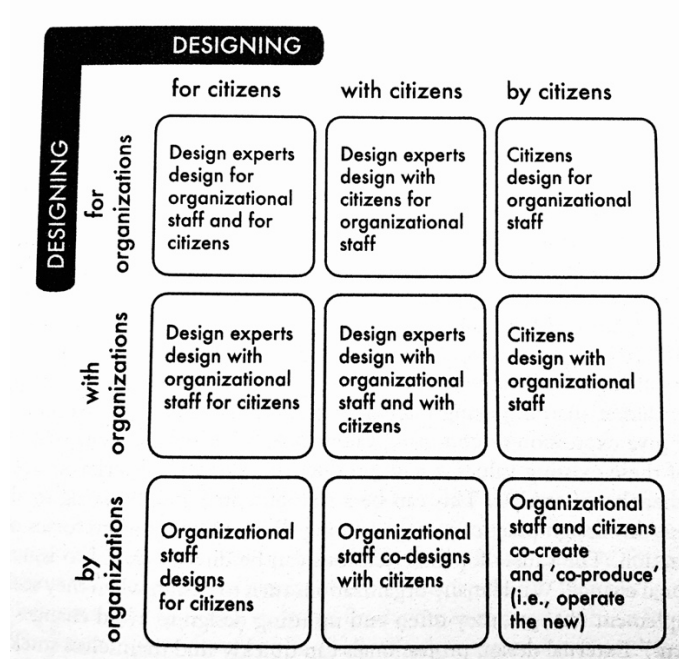
**Ladder of Citizen Participation:**

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A Ladder Of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224.



**For-with-by framework:**

Junginger, S. (2015, p. 51). Organizational Design Legacies and Service Design. *The Design Journal*, 18(2), 209–226.



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## Research report: Pilot survey

### Aim of survey & research question

The aim of this survey was to get a sense for residents' understanding of development plans in LuzernNord\*. In my Master thesis, I want to investigate if the developers' vision for the future city district and evaluate if it matches with the residents' needs and addresses their issues.

\* LuzernNord is the branded term for the development area in central Switzerland, which lies on the border between the southern part of the municipality of Emmen and the north of the city of Lucerne (Reussbühl). According to the vision communicated by the developers, people in LuzernNord will one day live and work in a modern, ecological and lively city centre by the river. In the coming years 1500 new flats, 4000 additional jobs and 850 study places are going to be gradually realised.

### Sampling & time frame

In order to find out, what people know and from where they received those information, the online questionnaire was sent to 53 different email addresses, most of them found online on the official website of the municipality of Emmen. They included mainly associations and non-professional sport clubs (Quartiervereine). During six days, the snowball system generated 149 views and 86 responses, which leaves us with a 72.3% completion rate. According to the answers, 49.4% of the participants were from Emmenbrücke, 32.9% from Emmen, 2.4% from Reussbühl and 15.3% from other municipalities.

### Tool / Software

In order to conduct the survey, the questionnaire was created with the free version of [Typeform](#). It allows the usage of the most important features, except e.g. integration of «logics»: depending on a certain answer, the questionnaire takes either one or another route. Also, there is a maximum of ten questions.

## Results

The participants rate their knowledge of construction plans around the Seetalplatz as 3 on average (mean and median: 3; mode: 4), while 0 would mean «I don't know anything», and 6 stands for «I know all the plans». In addition, 86.7% said they knew about the future central administration building of the Cantone of Lucerne, with only 18.1% saying they knew that «80 new affordable flats will be built at Reusszopf until 2023».

### Welche der folgenden Infos kommen Ihnen bekannt vor? (mehrere Optionen möglich)

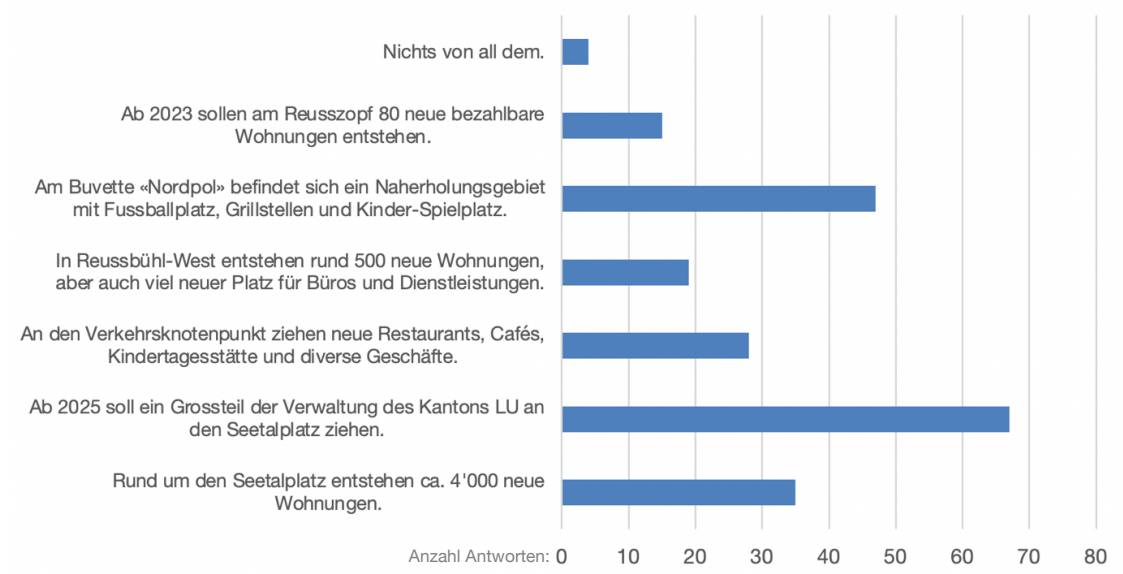


Figure 1: What information do the participants have regarding developments in LuzernNord?

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In addition to their knowledge of construction projects in LuzernNord, the questionnaire also asked them where they obtained this information (see figure 2). Mit 73.2% liegt die on- und offline Zeitung klar vorne. Trotzdem haben 30.5% angegeben, dass sie sich über Info-Tafeln vor Ort informierten.

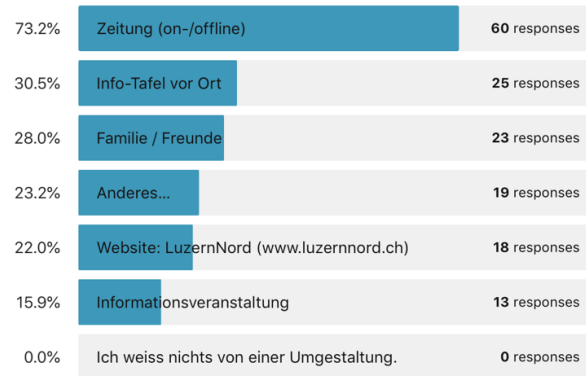


Figure 2: What information do the participants have regarding developments in LuzernNord?  
Multiple answers possible.

It is also interesting to note that there is a positive correlation between age and self-assessment of knowledge about developments (see Figure 3): the older the participants, the better they assess their understanding about developments.

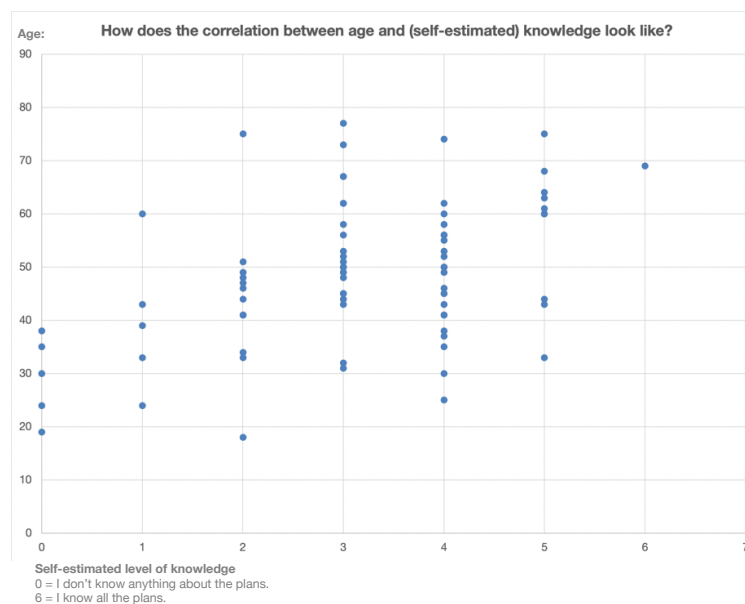


Figure 3: Correlation between age and self-estimated knowledge

When asked what interested the participants most (in the context of LuzernNord), 70.7% indicated «recreation zones», followed by 61% «traffic/mobility» and 52.4% «nature». The topic «housing» received the fewest responses (30.5%).

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## Insights / Reflexion

This first survey tells me that there might be a lack of interest and understanding in terms of future living possibilities in LuzernNord amongst Emmen's residents. It seems as if the people are more interested in the public space's function as recreation zone and connection to nature, maybe as a counterpoint to its current appearance which is mainly characterized by motorized traffic. This first insight might help me to set the focus of further investigations. Of course, the insights are not representative, since the survey makes use of rather uncontrolled snowball sampling.

As a communication channel (for both the written and the practical Master's thesis), I will probably not use the existing website of the area developers ([www.luzernnord.ch](http://www.luzernnord.ch)), but try to reach people via newspaper articles or an on-site installation.

Another positive aspect of the survey is that over 10% of the participants left their contact details and want to stay informed about my project. As I want to use mainly qualitative research methods in my MA Thesis, this is a fantastic «side effect». I already have a good handful of residents that I can request for interviews and culture probes.

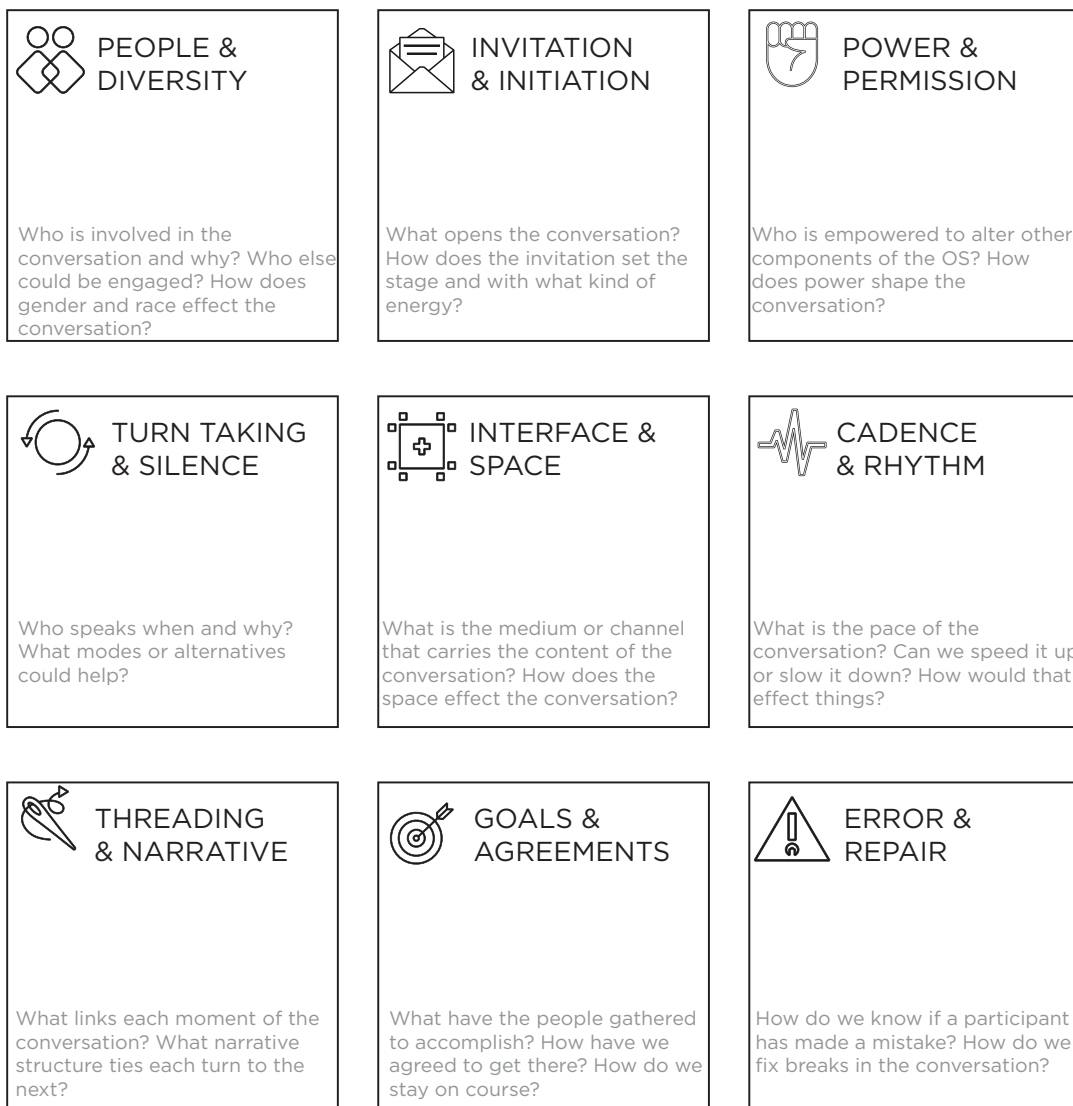
## Conversation OS Canvas:

David Stillman (2020)

<https://theconversationfactory.com/downloads>










# THE CONVERSATION OS CANVAS

What is a conversation made of? And if we want to change it, shift it, transform it, how might we do it? What levers of design are at hand to pull and push to create that change? These nine factors are not the only levers of change. They are the most simple to see and shift. These elements can help you transform dialogue in a range of conversations, from one-on-ones, in teams, workshop groups and in organizations. Use the OS Canvas to map a current state of a conversation or to imagine a future state.



# Edited Conversation OS Canvas

Original questions by Daniel Stillman – Added questions by Martin Dušek

 <h2>People &amp; Diversity</h2> <p>Who is involved in the conversation and why? Who else could be engaged? How does gender and race effect the conversation? What role does a participant take in the conversation? How effective is her/his voice for the group she/he seems to represent? Is there anyone who would be a better representative?</p>	 <h2>Invitation &amp; Initiation</h2> <p>What opens the conversation? How does the invitation set the stage and with what kind of energy? How high is the barrier to joining the conversation? Can we lower it? Would it help to approach our target group by changing the location, in order to initiate the conversation?</p>	 <h2>Power &amp; Permission</h2> <p>Who is empowered to alter other components of the OS? How does power shape the conversation? What are the prevailing legal and political frameworks? Who moderates the conversation? How big is the leeway? Where is there room for manoeuvre to incorporate the results of the participatory moments?</p>
 <h2>Turn taking &amp; Silence</h2> <p>Who speaks when and why? What modes or alternatives could help? Is there a chance to get in touch with planners and project leaders after an official meeting? Is there a chance to get information during phases when a lot is happening behind the scenes and no conversations are taking place?</p>	 <h2>Interface &amp; Space</h2> <p>What is the medium or channel that carries the content of the conversation? How does the space effect the conversation? How can existing places in the neighbourhoods be activated through participatory moments and transformed into social spaces? Can we create more permanent spaces for exchange?</p>	 <h2>Cadence &amp; Rhythm</h2> <p>What is the pace of the conversation? Can we speed it up or slow it down? How would that effect things? How can we create understanding for the legally prescribed (backstage) processes on the one hand? And on the other hand, speed up these processes where possible?</p>
 <h2>Threading &amp; Narrative</h2> <p>What links each moment of the conversation? What narrative structure ties each turn to the next? How clear is the overarching vision for the development of the city (district)? Is it clear how the participatory moments and the contribution of participants add to the vision?</p>	 <h2>Goals &amp; Agreements</h2> <p>What have the people gathered to accomplish? How have we agreed to get there? How do we stay on course? How can we clearly communicate the planners’ goals (in advance) while leaving room for the individual goals of potential participants? How can we ensure that the results of participation are noticeably incorporated into the development?</p>	 <h2>Error &amp; Repair</h2> <p>How do we know if a participant has made a mistake? How do we fix breaks in the conversation? How can we integrate an iterative process into the conversations? How can facilitators fix mistakes on the fly without further disrupting the group’s conversation?</p>