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Strategic Collaborative Planning for Urban Liveability: A Comparative Review of Metropolitan Area Case Studies

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Abstract: The issue of urban liveability has been extensively debated by global agencies and scholars, as evidenced by the New Urban Agenda, in response to the impact of urbanisation. Urban liveability pertains to the ability of urban communities to achieve a high-quality living environment. While participatory planning is often presented as a means of empowering communities to attain better living conditions, it has presented challenges for decision-makers. Furthermore, dominant actors often influence participation processes, benefiting certain community segments. As a result, collaborative planning has emerged as an approach that seeks to address the interests of multiple urban factors by promoting consensus in decision-making. This paper aims to examine the collaborative planning methods that have been used in strategic planning that have empowered the community to participate in the planning process. Content analysis was employed as a research method to explore the empirical evidence of collaborative planning that has successfully empowered community participation in strategic planning and its impact on the liveability of metropolitan areas. Correspondingly, the Melbourne, Vancouver, and Helsinki case studies were selected based on five liveable city indices. This study's findings suggest a positive correlation between the implementation of collaborative planning by the selected metropolitan areas and their status as the most liveable cities. This paper contributes to the ongoing debate on the role of collaborative planning in promoting urban liveability.

Keywords: Strategic planning, collaborative approach, urban liveability, metropolitan area

1. Introduction

The impact of urbanisation on shaping the urban area must be taken seriously as human capital, resources, and markets move from rural to urban areas, resulting in major cities becoming too concentrated (Tan et al., 2014). By 2050, over 70% of the global population is projected to be urbanised, increasing the demand for greater liveability (Tan

et al., 2014). The potential challenges that are faced by urban governance will leave them with the daunting task of mitigating the impact of urbanisation, including the deterioration of well-being for some community segments. Therefore, UN-Habitat has urged cities to be more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable to provide a liveable environment for urban dwellers through the New Urban Agenda (UN-Habitat, 2016).

Urban governance, consisting of government and non-government actors, makes efficient planning decisions regarding urban land development, with the intent to promote a liveable environment for all city dwellers (Brown, 2015). Theoretically, this can be achieved through participatory urban planning processes, despite the complex and dynamic pattern of decision-making that is involved. However, communities seem to have less capacity to participate genuinely in strategic planning in urban areas, thereby exerting their influence on planning decisions due to the hegemony of neoliberalism in government development strategies (Hanssen & Falleth, 2014; Mäntysalo & Saglie, 2010). The community's lack of capacity is due to the scarcity of conventional participatory planning in educating and collaborating with the community (Wondirad et al., 2020; Mahjabeen et al., 2009; Monno & Khakee, 2012). This raises the question, "*How can collaborative planning facilitate urban governance in providing a liveable environment for multiple urban actors?*".

This paper examines the role of collaborative planning in selected strategic planning initiatives, which have effectively empowered communities to participate in the planning process, thus, enhancing the liveability of metropolitan areas. Meanwhile, the three case studies of strategic planning in Melbourne, Vancouver, and Helsinki demonstrate the power of collaboration in creating sustainable and liveable cities which align with both Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This paper begins by exploring the relationship between the concepts of urban liveability, community participation, and collaborative planning. Then, a selection of case studies is elaborated based on the five globally used liveable city indices to measure the ranking of liveable cities. The study uses qualitative content analysis to assess and interpret collaborative planning practices in selected case studies using established indicators. This paper concludes with a discussion of the potential connection between the practices of collaborative planning by the three metropolitan areas and their status as among the most liveable cities.

2. Urban Liveability, Community Participation and Collaborative Planning Nexus

Conceptually, urban liveability is associated with spatial dimension issues such as housing and infrastructure that are fundamental to the well-being of urban dwellers (Leh et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2014). It is relative to the characteristics of an area that make it appealing to live, work, and operate a business. Liveability is concerned with fulfilling community needs and their capacity to attain them (Leh et al., 2020; Ahmed et al., 2019). Consequently, the insufficient capacity of the community in planning participation may dampen their capability to achieve liveability. This is demonstrated through what has been described by Kaal in deliberating the concept of urban liveability. This concept is closely related to the concept of citizenship and governance, in which citizens have the right and responsibility to participate in the public process (Kaal, 2011). The interaction and communication that are built between the multiple urban actors have resulted in the public process of urban governance becoming a complex and dynamic process (Kaal, 2011; Peters & Pierre, 2012). Hence, urban liveability can be associated with the capability of urban governance to provide sufficient capacity to the community to exert their interests in the decision-making process, including planning. Also, Ling et al. (2006) have underlined critical success factors that are relative to the implementation of liveability (Table 1).

Based on the critical success factors that are highlighted by Leh et al. (2020) and Ling et al. (2006), the community needs to participate in the public process to achieve the liveability of an urban area, including its dwellers. Conceptually, participatory planning provides a distinct picture to decision-makers of public preferences, thus, contributing to better decision-making by incorporating the community's experiential knowledge into the process (Nguyen-Long et al., 2019; Innes & Booher, 2004). Furthermore, community participation is purposive in promoting the democratic way of making planning decisions. As such, the interests of all the community segments and stakeholders are inclusively addressed and considered, thus, educating the participants and resolving conflicts (Nguyen-Long et al., 2019; Innes & Booher, 2004).

Although, rhetorically, community participation is the right thing to do, it has caused dilemmas for decision-makers. In reality, the decisions are continuously influenced by those who are dominant rather than collective, leading to self-interest overshadowing the collective interest (Migchelbrink & de Walle, 2022; Monno & Khakee, 2012; Mahjabeen et al., 2009; Innes & Booher, 2004). Moreover, a conflict between national priorities and local interests has left the local government in an almost no-win situation (Newman et al., 2004). Like a 'ladder' Arnstein has described the participatory process, without delegating the power to decide, as a meaningless process that only leads to maintaining the status quo of certain community segments (Arnstein, 1969). Newman et al. further argued for the level of participation possessed by the community in the public process. They believed that community participation has yet to achieve a level where the community can influence the decision of the government (Mahjabeen et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2004).

Table 1 - Critical success factor for urban liveability

	Critical Success Factor
1.	The need for liveability to be upheld as the central theme in formulating a community's sustainable plan.
2.	Essential for public engagement to attain liveability should be embraced
3.	Recognise that the realisation of liveability may differ between different community segments.
4.	Liveability should also be recognised concerning the provision of economic opportunities, as well as recreational and cultural activities.
5.	Deem the importance of all community members having access to liveability, considering the diversity of the community.

Source: Leh et al. (2020); Ling et al. (2006)

To ensure that the participatory process is not merely tokenism, a paradigm shift is required to intensify the capability of all community segments to influence decision-making. The conventional approach to participation, which is two-way communication between the government and community, should be reformed as multi-way communication between the government, community, and other actors in both formal and informal domains (Innes & Booher, 2004; Kooiman, 1993). The new paradigm based on continuous discussion and collaboration upholds greater trust, improves community knowledge, and produces collective decisions, although it does not appeal to all (Ghomashchi, 2012; Maginn, 2007). Although the probability of achieving a decision that is appealing to all actors is ambiguous, the approach will ensure that the objectives of the participatory process can be contented (Innes & Booher, 2004). For that reason, collaborative planning has been promoted as the paradigm shift in making planning decisions.

Therefore, the connection between urban liveability and collaborative planning can be substantiated by the beneficial impact of this approach in improving community participation in planning decision-making (Maginn, 2007). Interested stakeholders have the opportunity to participate and influence planning decisions equally, hence there is better conflict resolution (Lin & Benneker, 2022; Inner & Booher, 2010; Healey, 1997). Collaborative planning is an approach that offers an opportunity for the various stakeholders to interact and participate in the planning process inclusively, thus, addressing the complexity of modern society's interests and the hegemony of neoliberalism (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Innes & Booher, 2004).

Predominantly, collaborative planning is based on continuous communication between the stakeholders throughout the planning process to address disputes through consensus building (Lin & Benneker, 2022; Purbani, 2017; Ghomaschi, 2012; Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Healey, 1997). This planning approach is built on Habermas' communicative rationality, which saw interested stakeholders involved in continuous dialogue cooperatively; thus brought to the discussion table to deliberate on a decision (Healey, 1997).

To achieve this collaboration, stakeholders must be informed and believe that they can influence the decision irrespective of their status. Maginn further explains the incorporation of Habermas' notion of a collaborative approach, which includes the accessibility and inclusivity of the process, the capacity of policy and decision-makers, and a higher commitment orientate towards consensus-building rather than power-grabbing (Maginn, 2007). The community can participate and discover other stakeholders' interests and concerns, leading to a greater understanding of problems and producing better solutions (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Healey, 1997). Similarly, Kooiman has stated that solving complex and diversified problems require a consensus among multiple actors, which can be established through collaboration, as only some actors have a sufficient understanding of the entire scenario (Kooiman, 1993).

In defining successful collaborative planning, ten keys to success have been identified by Fahmi et al. (2016), Kovacic and Filzmoser (2014), Faehnle and Tyrväinen (2013), and Gunton and Day (2003) based on their review of several works of literature (Table 2).

Table 2 - Successful collaborative planning

	Key Success for Collaborative Planning
1.	Conditions that offer the opportunity for collaboration to be taken place.
2.	All interested stakeholders are well-represented.
3.	Ground rules are to be clear and comprehensive throughout the process.
4.	All community segments are to be educated and have access to relevant information.
5.	Accountability element to be incorporated into the process, including the stakeholder representative.
6.	The process should be adaptive to possible variation.
7.	The process is facilitated by skilled staff and is free from intervention.
8.	Timeframes and alternative decision-making processes should be prepared.
9.	A well-defined implementation plan comprises clear responsibilities, a monitoring process, and mitigation measures.

| 10. | The implemented decision should be thoroughly evaluated. |

Source: Fahmi et al. (2016); Kovacic & Filzmoser (2014); Faehnle & Tyrväinen (2013); Gunton & Day (2003)

3. Methodology

To address the question of "How collaborative planning can facilitate urban governance to provide a liveable environment to multiple urban actors?", strategic plans for Melbourne (Plan Melbourne Refresh), Vancouver (Vancouver Greenest City 2020 Action Plan), and Helsinki (Helsinki City Plan 2016) have been selected as case studies. They are based on the five liveable city indices that are globally used to measure the ranking of liveable cities (Table 3). Related reports and documents for these strategic plans were searched and gathered using Google Scholars and SCOPUS, then analysed using the content analysis method to examine the participatory process that was involved in preparing all three strategic plans.

Content analysis is applied to gather insights into a phenomenon, which in this study is the relationship between urban liveability, community participation and collaborative planning. Hsieh and Shannon's approach to content analysis is employed, which starts with reading through the gathered reports and documents several times to garner an understanding of the whole document (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This is followed with each line of words being read using the skimming and scanning technique (SST). SST is used to retrieve key information and the main idea of the reading material by looking for specific information within the manuscript (Sutz & Weverka, 2009).

4. Case Study for Collaborative Planning

Selected strategic plans are based on the recognition received by its respective metropolitan cities as among the most liveable cities. This recognition is referring to these indices: Economist's Most Liveable Cities Index 2015, Mercer's Quality of Living Ranking 2017, Monocle's Quality of Life Survey 2017, Deutsche Bank's Quality of Life Ranking 2017, and Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) Global Liveable Cities Index 2012.

Table 3 - Ranking of liveable city ranking

Ranking	Economist's Most Liveable Cities Index 2015	Mercer's Quality of Living Ranking 2017	Monocle's Quality of Life Survey 2017	Deutsche Bank's Quality of Life Ranking 2017	Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) Global Liveable Cities Index 2012
1.	Melbourne	Vienna	Tokyo	Wellington	Geneva
2.	Vienna	Zurich	Vienna	Edinburgh	Zurich
3.	Vancouver	Auckland	Berlin	Vienna	Singapore
4.	Toronto	Munich	Munich	Melbourne	Copenhagen
5.	Calgary	Vancouver	Melbourne	Zurich	Helsinki
6.	Adelaide	Dusseldorf	Copenhagen	Copenhagen	Luxembourg
7.	Sydney	Frankfurt	Sydney	Ottawa	Stockholm
8.	Perth	Geneva	Zurich	Boston	Berlin
9.	Auckland	Copenhagen	Hamburg	Amsterdam	Hong Kong
10.	Helsinki	Sydney	Madrid	Sydney	Auckland
11.	Zurich	Basel	Stockholm	Helsinki	Melbourne
12.	Geneva	Amsterdam	Kyoto	Berlin	Sydney
13.	Hamburg	Berlin	Helsinki	Auckland	Paris
14.	Montreal	Bern	Fukuoka	Toronto	Vancouver
15.	Frankfurt	Wellington	Hong Kong	Lisbon	Amsterdam
16.	Tokyo	Melbourne	Lisbon	Madrid	Osaka-Kobe
17.	Osaka	Toronto	Barcelona	Cape Town	New York
18.	Brisbane	Ottawa	Vancouver	San Francisco	Tokyo
19.	Honolulu	Hamburg	Dusseldorf	Prague	Los Angeles
20.	Berlin	Stockholm	Amsterdam	Stockholm	Philadelphia Yokohama

Economist's Most Liveable Cities Index 2015 – based on variables: Stability, Healthcare, Culture and Environment, Education, and Infrastructure (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015).
Mercer's Quality of Living Ranking 2017 – based on variables: Safety, Education, Hygiene, Health Care, Culture, Environment, Recreation, Political-Economic Stability, Public Transport and Access to Goods and Services (Quality of Living Rankings., n.d.).

Monocle's Quality of Life Survey 2017 – based on variables: Safety, International Connectivity, Climate, Quality of Architecture, Public Transport, Tolerance, Environmental Issues and Access to Nature, Urban Design, Business Conditions, Pro-Active Policy Developments and Medical Care (Christopher, 2017).
Deutsche Bank's Quality of Life Ranking 2017 – based on variables: Purchasing Power, Safety, Health Care, Cost of Living, Property Price to Income Ratio, Traffic Commute Time, Pollution, and Climate (Martin, 2017).
Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) Global Liveable Cities Index 2012 – based on variables: Economic Vibrancy and Competitiveness, Domestic Security and Stability, Social Cultural Conditions, Public Governance and Environmental Friendliness and Sustainability (Tan et al., 2014).

4.1 Plan Melbourne Refresh (PMR)

The participatory process in Plan Melbourne Refresh involved a series of workshops with the city council, industry players, community discussion groups, including the marginalised segments, and an online engagement hub (Figure 1) (Capire, 2016; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 2015). Collaborative approaches in this strategic planning of Melbourne are based on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum, where the level of 'inform' in this spectrum has been modified to 'inform and educate' an effort to enhance the knowledge of all community segments (Capire, 2016). Initiatives have been made by the appointed consultant to approach and discuss with the youth, the ageing, and people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and indigenous representatives to gather their experiential information and feedback (Capire, 2016). In the case of the indigenous people, a specific venue has been set up at the Whittlesea Local Aboriginal Network and is facilitated by the Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Capire, 2016).

Plan Melbourne Refresh involved city council officers, other government agencies, and industrial players in engaging in a series of workshops as part of the collaborative effort. These workshops have been facilitated either by the DELWP or a consultant and deliberately provide information on the objectives of the Plan Melbourne Refresh, hence, gaining feedback from both the public and private sectors on the issues and possible strategies (Capire, 2016). It also provides a platform for discussions between government agencies, interested stakeholders and Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) to prepare the plan. In reaching out to a broader community, the DELWP and Melbourne Planning Authority (MPA) have promoted an online engagement hub. The online engagement hub functioning as a brainstorming tool contains information, documents, discussion papers, and a review report of Plan Melbourne 2014 that has been prepared by the MAC (Capire, 2016; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 2015).

Fundamentally, the element of accountability has been incorporated throughout this planning process. It has been demonstrated during the community discussion group session with the indigenous people, where no city council officer has attended to prevent potential intervention. Besides, the whole process has been facilitated, recorded and analysed by the consultant. Later, elicited key findings from this process were given to the Ministry of Planning as a consideration in approving the proposed Plan Melbourne 2016 (Capire, 2016). Conclusively, numerous collaboration platforms have been promoted throughout Plan Melbourne Refresh, allowing all Melbournian to participate in their city's strategic planning continuously, enhancing their influence on the future direction of their city.

4.2 Vancouver Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (GCAP)

The authority that is given to the Vancouver City Council in self-governing its city has provided the city council with sufficient capacity to provide a platform for collaboration between multiple urban actors in defining the direction of their city (Robertson, 2016). Allowing the community to elect their representative and actively participate in the public process has contributed to the capability of a community to be influential in its decision-making. Vancouver City Council has long promoted community participation during the preparation of Vancouver's CityPlan as part of the city council's effort to address the community's interest efficiently and inclusively in its development planning (McAfee, 2013).

This participatory process is resumed in preparing GCAP. The aim is to gather support from the whole city of Vancouver to become the Greenest City in 2020 (City of Vancouver, 2012). Furthermore, it empowered the sense of ownership of the strategic plan among the community. The collaborative approach has been incorporated into the strategic planning through two phases of community engagement– "Talk Green to Us" and "Talk Green Vancouver". During the "Talk Green to Us", the community and other stakeholders have been asked to share their aspirations and ideas on making Vancouver the Greenest City. Later in "Talk Green Vancouver", the community and stakeholders were required to comment on the draft action plan that had been prepared (Pitre-Hayes, 2011).

Fig. 1 - Plan Melbourne Refresh engagement activities (Capire, 2016)

In addition, the introduction of the External Advisory Committee (EAC) has seen more than 130 organisation representatives, including the civic society, that can participate in the planning process as committee members, thus responsible for advising the city planner in preparing and finalising the GCAP. The EAC has been assisted by 10 to 35 academic, business and industry members, civil society and government sectors (Robertson, 2016; Pitre-Hayes, 2011). Vancouver City Council also acknowledges the community's diversity by encouraging various engagement methods while preparing GCAP. These flexibilities of approach are based on the input that is gathered throughout the engagement process. It is an experimental process to develop collaboration and partnership among the actors (Pitre-Hayes, 2011).

Engagement among the community members is also encouraged by the city council. Concurrently, a "Do it yourself" consultation kit has been provided to the community to encourage them to organise their own Greenest City conversations within their networks (Pitre-Hayes, 2011). Exhibitions and workshops for GCAP have been held near the target group to attain active participation and engagement. Furthermore, online space has become a valuable tool to ensure extensive involvement, greater accessibility and transparency to the community. Vancouver City Council has created an official website, TalkGreenToUS.ca, which has become a virtual platform for all parts of the community to interact and vote for their favourite ideas (Huva, 2015). Subsequent to all the provided initiatives and platforms, more than 35,000 people have participated in the development of the plan, with more than 9,500 people actively contributing their ideas, insights, and feedback to help determine the best strategies to achieve this plan (Rahoui, 2021; Robertson, 2016).

Before the approval, the implementation of the GCAP was monitored and reported annually to the council and public. In summary, the GCAP has involved extensive and various engagement methods to support the collaboration between the authority, community and stakeholders. The continuous engagement process after implementing the plan indicates the momentousness of the GCAP; hence the importance of community feedback in ensuring the action plan is successfully implemented.

4.3 Helsinki City Plan 2016 (HCP)

As a self-government, Helsinki City Council has the autonomy to govern land-use planning effectively. Based on Finland's Land Use and Building Act No. 132, the Local Master Plan- Helsinki City Plan is guided by the National Land Use Objectives and Regional Plan (Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Plan) as the Finnish planning system is based on hierarchical land-use plans (City Planning Department, 2012). With respect to community participation and the ability to influence the municipality decision-making process, the Finnish Local Government Act, in section 27, has highlighted the need to provide "opportunities to participate and exert influence".

The Finnish planning legislation guides the participatory process in the Helsinki City Plan through several extensions of public engagement that are included. Nonetheless, the participation process comprises three (3) elements, namely- (i) the initiation of the planning process must be publicised so that interested parties have the opportunity to obtain information on the principles of the planning and the participation as well as the assessment procedure (Participation and Assessment Scheme), (ii) hearings in preparing the plan, and (iii) before decision-making, the stakeholders are provided with an opportunity to give their opinion on the proposed plan (Staffans et al., 2020).

Legitimately, the Finland government has improvised an element of genuine participation at the local level. The Finnish Local Government Act has been used as the primary mechanism to promote the well-being and the rights of its citizens to participate and influence (The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, 2007). HCP has been prepared through a transparent and interactive process as described in the Land Use and Building Act No. 132, in section 63: Participation and Assessment Scheme (City Planning Department, 2016). The scheme describes the process and way the community and interested stakeholders can participate. The process of making the HCP has promoted diversity through numerous platforms; it was initiated through the "Vision Seminars" in 2013, where the vision for the Helsinki City Plan was drafted. Also, the themes and other complex issues that occur along the process have been discussed among the community in a series of thematic seminars including city growth, housing, climate change, and economic competitiveness (City Planning Department, 2016).

"Map Survey" has been organised to gather community opinions and ideas about their city; hence it is used by the public planner as the basis for drafting the HCP. It is based on an online interactive method where the visitors could mark and propose their ideas using the online map that is named Helsinki 2050 (Staffans et al., 2020; City Planning Department, 2016). The Helsinki 2050 is the outcome of public participation GIS (PPGIS), an online tool that is used to encourage more participation from the community of Helsinki. The PPGIS tool was initiated by Aalto University and developed with the planners (Kahila-Tani et al., 2015). In other words, Helsinki 2050 is developed based on collaboration with urban planners.
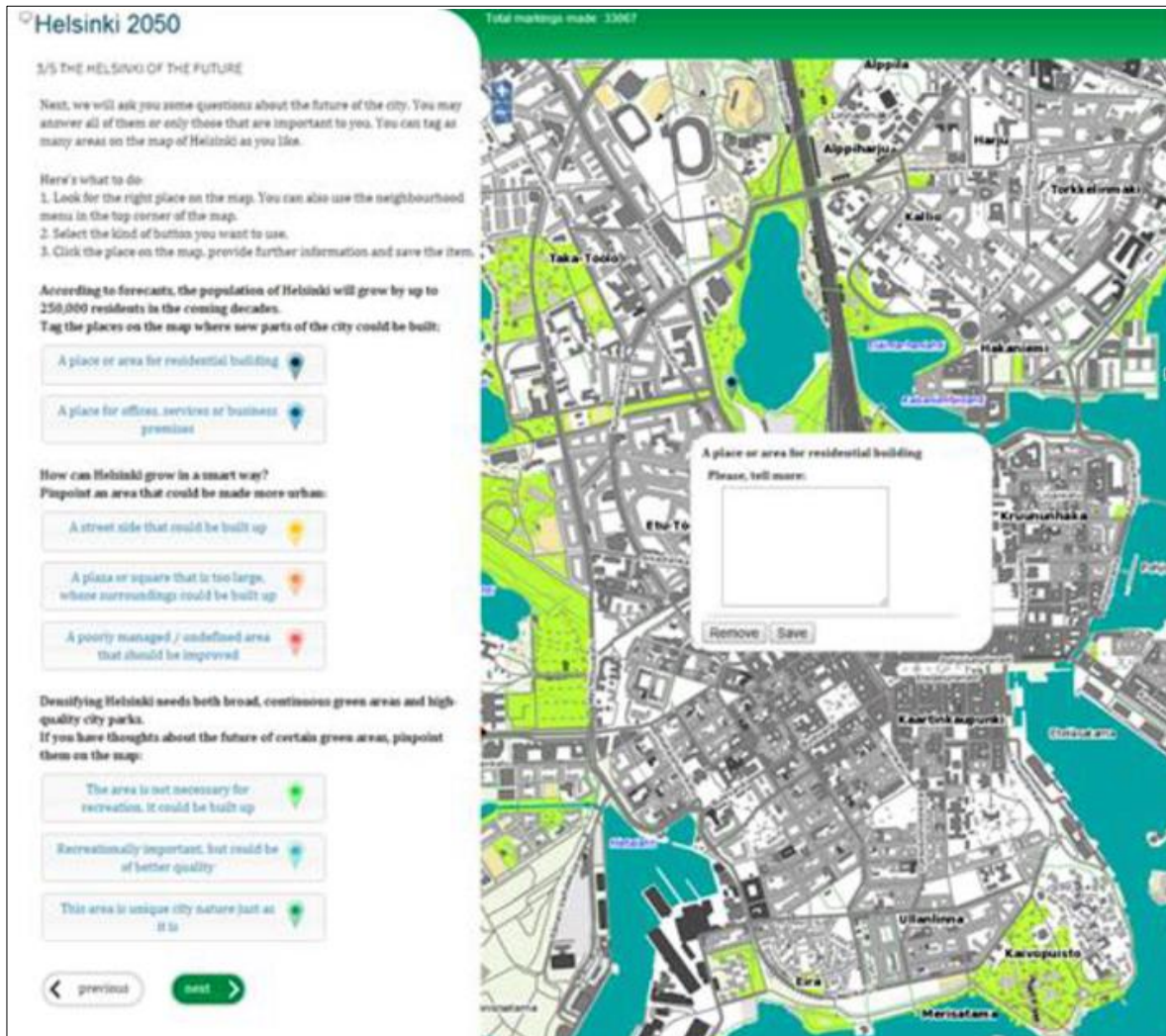
Fig. 2 - PPGIS mapping pages of the survey for Helsinki 2050 City plan explored various themes for the future development of the city (Kahila-Tani et al., 2015)

Later, the survey map was analysed and had been published as open data. "Spend a Moment as a City Planner" has been organised for the public planner and community to work together in a series of workshops to imagine the future of Helsinki in 2050 (City Planning Department, 2016). The reason is to obtain good ideas from the community in supporting this city planning process, hence achieving sustainability in land-use planning. As a result, 27 plans have been produced and published on the City Plan website and Laituri exhibition space for public view. "City Planning Safaris" is a specific program that is organised by the City Council to empower youth participation in city planning, henceforth, incorporating youth aspiration in the future vision of Helsinki city (City Planning Department, 2016).

In January 2015, Helsinki City Council organised four "Spend a Moment as a Critic" events. The aim is to introduce the key content of the Helsinki City Plan to the community (City Planning Department, 2016). During this program, the community could communicate with city planners on any proposed maps that interest them. On 29th October 2016, the Helsinki City Council approved the HCP after going through debate and several votes on key issues that have been highlighted. Statements from politicians also have been heard during the discussion, which lasted nearly six hours (City Planning Department, 2016). With respect to the implementation and evaluation of the approved city plan, the implementation program for the city plan is concurrently prepared along with the city plan. The city plan will be evaluated and reviewed to monitor the achievement that has been made throughout the plan implementation.

5. Results and Discussion

The selected case studies from PMR, GCAP, and HCP demonstrate successful collaborative planning practices, displaying their potential to empower communities and enhance the liveability of these metropolitan areas. While not all key elements of successful collaborative planning are visible in each strategic plan, most variables are perceptible, indicating the positive outcomes of empowering community participation. This has directly addressed the question

"How can collaborative planning facilitate urban governance in providing a liveable environment for multiple urban actors?".

Empirical evidence from the case studies reveals the efforts that are made by the city councils to educate and improve the participatory capacity of the community, particularly the marginalised segments. The examples include facilitating discussions among the indigenous community in Melbourne (Capire, 2016), and organising "City Planning Safaris" to engage and empower youth participation in Helsinki (City Planning Department, 2016). Moreover, accountability and transparency are emphasised in the PMR and GCAP, ensuring independent and accountable processes through measures such as involving external consultants and creating open platforms for stakeholders' interaction (Capire, 2016; Huva, 2015).

Furthermore, the success of collaborative planning is associated with the community's ability to influence the decision-making processes, leading to collective decisions through participatory approaches. The Finnish Local Government Act, particularly in section 27, emphasises the obligation of local governments, including the Helsinki City Council, to provide opportunities for community participation and influence (The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, 2007). This highlights the relevance of Goal 11, which focuses on sustainable cities and communities, and Goal 17, which emphasises the partnerships and participation in governing cities.

Table 4 - Success collaborative planning in selected case studies

Key Success	PMR	GCAP	HCP
Conditions that offer the opportunity for collaboration to take place.	●	●	●
All interested stakeholders are well-represented.	●	●	●
Ground rules to be clear and comprehensive throughout the process.	●	●	●
All community segments are to be educated and have access to relevant information.	●	●	●
Accountability element to be incorporated in the process including the stakeholder representative.	●	●	
The process should be adaptive to possible variation.		●	●
The process is facilitated by skilled staff and is free from intervention.	●	●	●
Timeframe and alternative decision-making processes should be prepared.	●	●	●
A well-defined implementation plan comprises clear responsibilities, a monitoring process together with mitigation measures.		●	●
The implemented decision should be thoroughly evaluated.		●	●

PMR – Plan Melbourne Refresh
GCAP – Vancouver Greenest City 2020 Action Plan
HCP – Helsinki City Plan 2016

The correlation between collaborative planning and urban liveability is further substantiated through a framework that links collaborative planning as the independent variable and urban liveability as the dependent variable, with community participation as the moderator variable (Figure 3). This framework has been verified through the assessment of case studies and their association with ranking these cities as the most liveable (Table 4).

The framework underlined supportive elements that contribute to the success of collaborative planning (Leh et al., 2020; Fahmi et al., 2016; Kovacic & Filzmoser, 2014; Faehnle & Tyrväinen, 2013; Gunton & Day, 2003), emphasising the representation of all community segments, genuine community participation, accountability, transparency, and continuous evaluation. These elements empower the community, improving their knowledge and capacity to engage effectively in planning decisions, ultimately benefiting them. Collaborative decision-making between diverse urban actors enhances the sense of ownership and appeal of the strategic plan to the community, aligning with the critical success factors of urban liveability, including diversity acknowledgement, community participation, and accessibility to the public process. Additionally, it champions the notion of liveability by providing social and economic opportunities for all community segments (Leh et al., 2020; Ling et al., 2006).
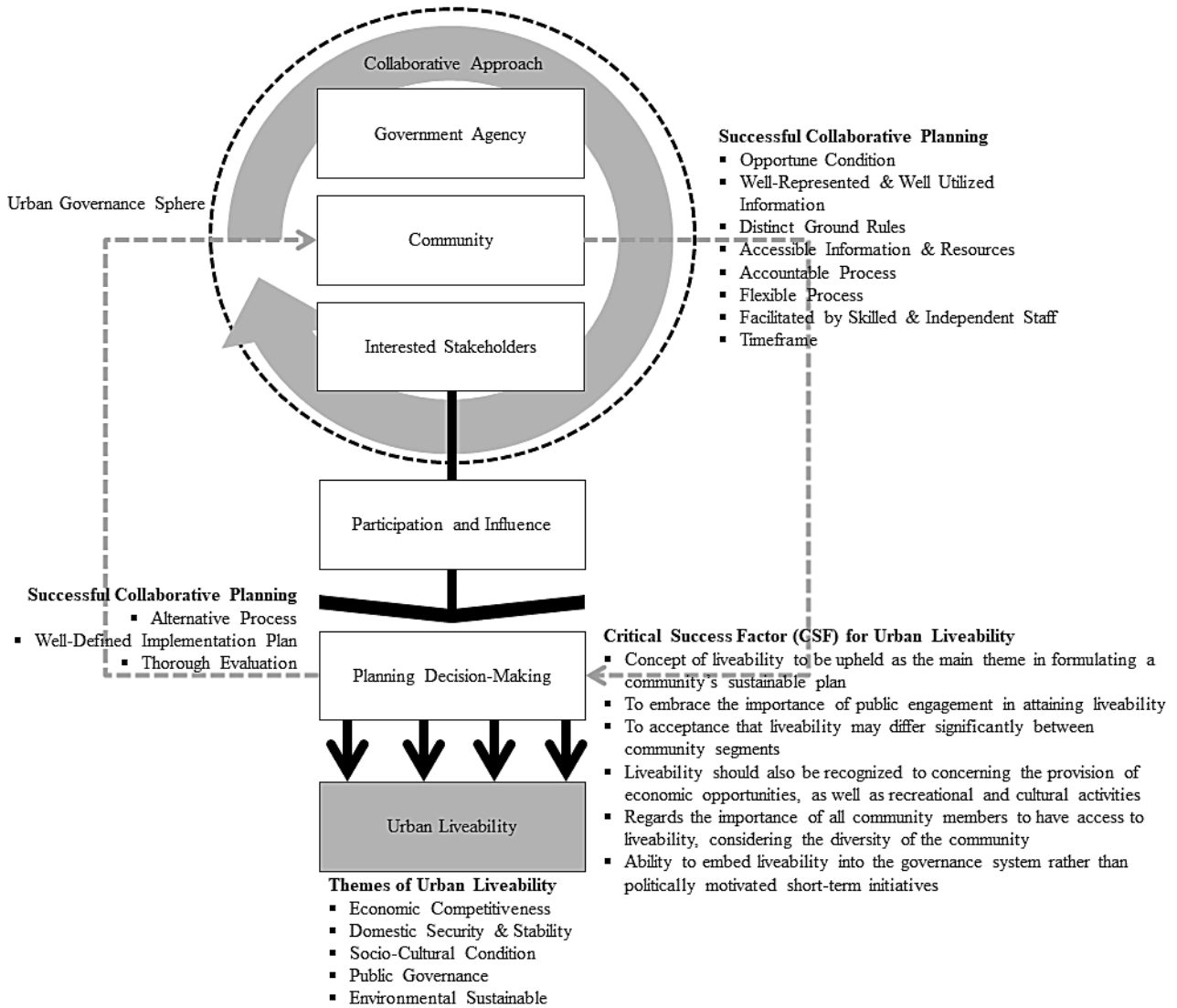
Fig. 3 - Framework of collaborative planning for urban liveability

Sources: Author's Interpretation from Leh et al. (2020); Fahmi et al. (2016); Kovacic and Filzmoser (2014); Faehnle and Tyrväinen (2013); Tan et al., (2012); Ling et al. (2006); Gunton and Day (2003).

Overall, the discussion emphasises the importance of community participation in collaborative planning for urban liveability which aligns with Goal 11 and Goal 17 of the SDGs. The empirical evidence that is presented shows the efforts that are made by city councils to improve community participation and highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in decision-making. The framework demonstrated the importance of collaboration between the various stakeholders, predominantly the government and community. Henceforth, to ensure that the community involvement in the process is genuinely empowered the question to address is, "How can collaborative planning facilitate urban governance in providing a liveable environment for multiple urban actors?". Therefore, the additional question is, "Is it possible to apply the framework in other cities and achieve similar results?". In line with this question, the future study should explore the current practices of community participation in the strategic planning of other cities, hence, comparatively analysing them with the framework.

6. Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of community participation in collaborative planning for urban liveability. It demonstrates examples of city councils making efforts to engage the community including the marginalised, and empower them through education and capacity-building initiatives. Transparency and accountability in strategic planning, as seen in the case of Melbourne and Vancouver, further strengthen the collaborative approach. Meanwhile, the framework emphasises the significance of inclusive representation, community influence, and continuous evaluation in decision-making. By incorporating diverse perspectives and interests, collaborative planning enables a sense of ownership among urban actors, making the city more appealing and responsive to its community's needs.

Moreover, the framework provides a theoretical basis and practical guidance for cities seeking to enhance their urban governance and create a liveable environment for their residents.

Future studies should explore how the framework can be applied in other cities to achieve similar results. Overall, the collaborative planning that empowers community participation has been proven successful in achieving urban liveability, and the framework that is presented in this paper provides a valuable tool for guiding future planning efforts and in advancing urban governance towards enhancing the quality of life for multiple urban actors.

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