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COLOURFUL VOICES

centering LGBTQ+ perspectives of public spaces

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I want to thank all the LGBTQ+ organizations, activists and allies for your endless energy and work.

And for the reader, I hope this reading is worthwhile, and can be used to spread awareness and start discussions.

- *Petronella*

ABSTRACT

How inclusive are public spaces for LGBTQ+ peoples and what can be made visible through using an intersectional approach in urban planning and landscape architecture processes? At the UN Habitat III meeting in Quito 2016, the UN failed to recognize LGBTQ+ peoples in their Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2015) as 17 countries voted against it. Liljefors (2016) points out the importance of inclusive policies on a global level as many planners work towards these on a local level, and therefore impacting who is included in the cities we build.

The objective of this thesis was to emphasize the importance of intersectionality in urban planning processes, with a focus on LGBTQ+ aspects. The study object of this thesis was the LGBTQ+ space of Jim Deva Plaza, Vancouver. The aim was to create awareness among urban planners and landscape architects of how to challenge structures in order to create more inclusive cities. Specifically, this thesis explored the following research question: *“What can we learn from taking an intersectional approach to studying LGBTQ+ representation in the planning process, design and use of public spaces?”*

Through analyzing the process, design, use and experiences of Jim Deva Plaza and LGBTQ+ peoples experiences of public spaces through an intersectional lens, the main findings in this research can be summarized to:

- Lack of pluralism and recognition of challenges in the planning process can lead to neglecting LGBTQ+ peoples and their needs (Winkle 2015; Doan 2015).
- Lack of understanding the context and LGBTQ+ theirstory (Winkle 2015; Giesecking 2016)
- There is a heightened need to take an intersectional approach to planning due to risks of gentrification and displacement of vulnerable groups (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015).
- Stereotypical illustrations of LGBTQ+ communities can maintain prejudices, particularly if the underlying issues of improving safety (e.g., addressing the high levels of discrimination and violence LGBTQ+ people's experience (Abramovich 2016)), such as by enforcing policies.
- For people working with urban development and public spaces to have access to information and tools about LGBTQ+ aspects in planning, the need for future research in this area is of big importance. Examples on future research:
 - The interconnections between LGBTQ+ public spaces and gentrification, polarization and homelessness.
 - Studying how queer spaces are dependent on time and people (e.g., beyond LGBTQ+ designated spaces)
 - The role of place-making in queer public spaces

Urban planners and landscape architects have an important role and responsibility in providing the spaces for LGBTQ+ peoples to have a voice in these processes. It is therefore important that they are equipped with the right education in order to facilitate inclusive spaces. The same goes for policies and framework that need to become more inclusive and anti-discriminating.

SAMMANFATTNING

På följande sidor sammanfattas denna uppsats "Färgglada röster: Centrerar HBTQ+ perspektiv i offentliga rum", ett examensarbete inom landskapsarkitektur.

Problematik

HBTQ+ personer är inte inkluderade i FN:s hållbarhetsmål (Perry 2016), där målet "*Hållbara städer och samhällen*" är beskrivet som "*alla ska ha tillgång till grundläggande service, energi, bostäder, transporter och mer*" (UN 2015). Anledningen är att en grupp bestående av 17 länder, ledd av Vitryssland, gick ihop för att exkludera HBTQ+ rättigheter i Habitat III mötet i Quito, 2016 (Perry 2016). Detta kan ha stor inverkan på hur städer planeras inkluderande för alla. Liljefors (2016) menar att en policy eller ett mål (till exempel FN:s hållbarhetsmål) kan skapa självsäkerhet hos planerare i att lyfta fram aspekter som kan vara kontroversiella och därmed skapa dialog med intressenter. HBTQ+ aspekter är inte bara ignorerade i stadsplanering utan också i samhället som stort, HBTQ+ är minoritetsgrupper där många personer är marginaliserade både socialt och ekonomiskt och är därmed inte representerade i många processer i samhället. Stadsplanerare och landskapsarkitekter bör därför ta sitt ansvar (Frisch 2015; Lewis 2015) och förbättra inkluderingen av HBTQ+ aspekter och personer i sitt arbete med att skapa inkluderande städer.

Forskningsfråga

Uppsatsen hade som syfte att lyfta fram vikten av ett intersektionellt perspektiv i stadsplanering, med fokus på HBTQ+ aspekter i offentliga rum. Målet var att bidra till medvetenhet hos stadsplanerare och landskapsarkitekter som arbetar med planering och utformning av offentliga rum. Om strukturer som påverkar och hindrar personers intersektionella identiteter och liv, hur dessa bör utmanas för att skapa mer inkluderande städer. Jag hoppas att denna uppsats kan öppna upp för diskussioner och bidra till förändring i planering och utformning av offentliga rum. Genom uppsatsen undersöktes forskningsfrågan:

"Vad kan vi lära oss genom att använda ett intersektionellt perspektiv i att studera representationen av HBTQ+ i planeringsprocessen, utformningen och användningen av offentliga platser?"

Som studieobjekt användes Jim Deva Plaza, med fokus på planeringsprocessen, utformningen och användningen. Jim Deva Plaza är ett torg med tydlig HBTQ+ karaktär (se bilder på nästa sida), utvecklat av Vancouver stad i stadsdelen Davie Village, West End.

Metoder & perspektiv

Genom att använda ett queer intersektionellt perspektiv lyftes fokus på HBTQ+ aspekter fram. Detta arbete utfördes genom litteraturstudie, dokumentanalys, platsbesök, platsanalyser, enkät och autoetnografi. Litteraturstudien låg till grund för att utföra en kritisk dokumentgranskning av Vancouver stads dokument med fokus på aspekterna; pluralism; intersektionalitet; representation; behov och planeringsmetod. Platsbesök och analys av torget genomfördes. En Lynch-inspirerad analys fokuserade på de fysiska strukturerna på platsen och användes i huvudsak som inventering. En Gehl-inspirerad analys fokuserade på användningen av platsen fysiska struktur och observerade människors aktiviteter. En

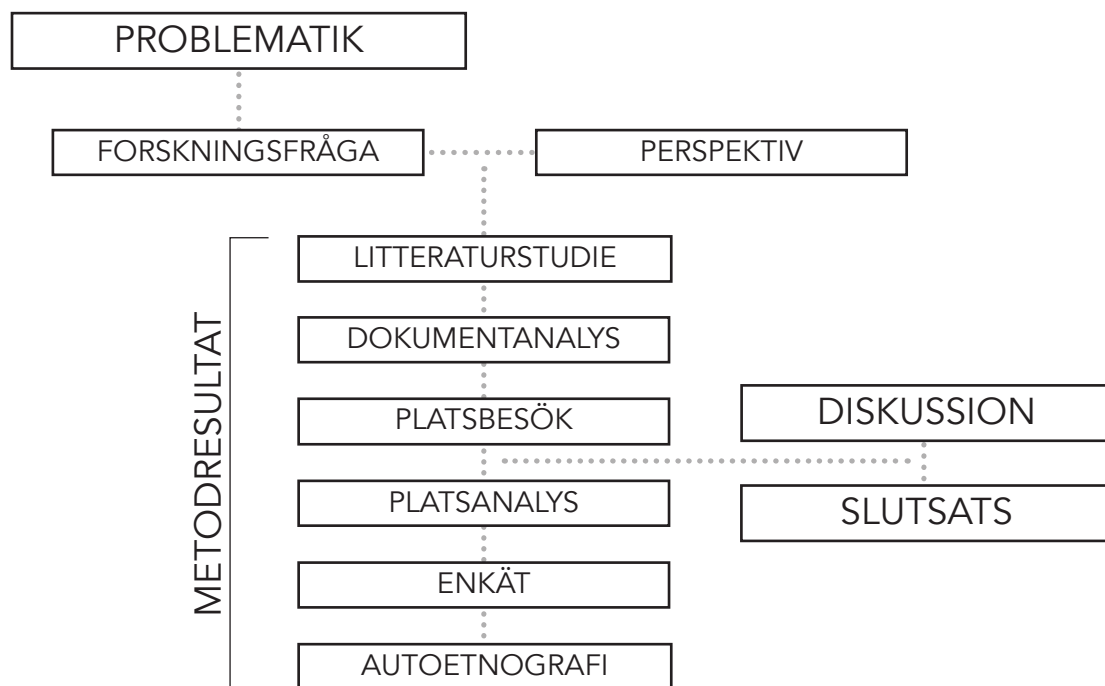


Jim Deva Plaza sett från Davie Street.



Jim Deva Plaza sett från Davie Street, kvällstid.

intersektionell analys utvecklades med beståndsdelar från jämställdhetsaspekter och diskrimineringsgrunderna; köns- och sexuell identiteter; funktionsvariationer; ålder; etniciteter; och religiös eller spirituell tro (DO 2018). Denna analys fokuserade på tre teman; Trygghet; representation; och funktion med syfte att identifiera platsens rådande norm och därmed vem som kan använda platsen. En enkät användes för att inkludera HBTQ+ personers upplevelser, hinder, behov och åsikter av offentliga rum, baserat på deras intersektionella identiteter. Autoetnografin användes genom att positionera mig själv som HBTQ+ person och landskapsarkitekt i detta arbete, för att studera platsen sociokulturella miljö. En översikt av uppsatsen syns i den schematiska bilden nedan.



Schematisk bild över uppsatsen.

Metodresultat

Den största kritiken mot Vancouver stads arbete med Jim Deva Plaza är baserat på följande aspekter från litteraturstudien; pluralism; intersektionalitet; representation; behov och planeringsmetod.

- Pluralism: Den variation som finns i HBTQ+ personers identiteter är viktig att erkänna, annars riskeras många personer och deras utmaningar att ignoreras (Winkle 2015), det är därför också viktigt att använda ett inkluderande språk (Frisch 2015). Pluralismen inom HBTQ+ populationen är inte erkänd i Vancouver stads dokument. Ofta används ord som påpekar ett generaliserande av personer och att alla skulle tillhöra en grupp (ex. "LGBTQ community") (City of Vancouver 2013; 2015a; 2015g; 2015h).
- Intersektionalitet: Utmaningar kopplade till att ha överlappande identiteter och strukturer som HBTQ+ person har inte tagits i beaktande i Vancouver stads dokument och processer. Dessa strukturer kan bestå av rasism, klassism, sexism, homo- och transfobi, funkofobi med flera (Frisch 2015). Gieseking (2016) förtydligar att dessa strukturer gör att icke-vita, fattiga, kvinnor och icke-binära HBTQ+ personer är mer utsatta på grund av strukturellt mindre politisk och ekonomisk makt i samhället.

- Representation: Vem som deltog i delaktighetsprocessen och vem som var representerad i illustrationer och språk i Vancouver stads dokument är viktigt för att inte osynliggöra någon som tillhör HBTQ+ populationen (Giesecking 2016). Vancouver stad lyckades inte inkludera alla i deras process där de frågar efter identiteter, begränsat till "man", "kvinna", "transperson" eller "annat" (City of Vancouver 2015d; 2015h; 2015). Demografin (se s.57) visar även den begränsade utsträckning av HBTQ+ personer som deltog i Vancouver stads process till medelålders män, bosatta i området. Utöver detta är språket och illustrationer stereotyp, där HBTQ+ populationen är utmålad till att vara färgglad och redo att fira. I enkäten svarade en deltagare angående representation såhär:

"...en sån liten symbolik som en flagga har stor påverkan. Finns ingen skymt av flaggor eller Pride-allies så känner man sig som en osynlig minoritet,... Att synas är VIKTIGT." (se s.78)

- Behov: Är HBTQ+ personers behov tillgodosedda, baserat på pluralism och intersektionalitet? Baserat på den minimala inkludering av pluralistiska och varierande HBTQ+ identiteter i Vancouver stads dokument och processer ifrågasattes om behoven var tillgodosedda. Detta undersöktes genom att fråga personer som identifierar sig som HBTQ+ att delta i en enkät samt genom platsanalys och min egna upplevelse av platsen. Enkäten identifierade begränsad tillgång till offentliga platser på grund av känslor av otrygghet och erfarenheter av diskriminering. Deltagarna påpekade vikten av representation, trygghet, inkludering och utformning av den fysiska miljön i deras behov av offentliga platser (se s.76-80). Representationen innebär HBTQ+ symbolism, minimalt med heteronormativa strukturer, könsneutrala skyltar, "trygg plats"-stickers och synliga pride-flaggor. Trygghet för HBTQ+ personer kan förbättras genom nolltolerans av hat, antidiskriminering policyer och "trygga platser". Förbättring av HBTQ+ inkludering i offentliga platser föreslogs genom acceptering, inkluderande och välkomnande platser med stor variation av människor. Sist föreslogs hur den fysiska miljön kan förbättras genom en blandning av offentliga och privata ytor, mycket växter samt tillgängliggöra platsen med bra kommunikationer, bra belysning och hög skötsel.
- Planeringsmetod: Granskades genom att identifiera vilka tillvägagångssätt som användes och om de upprätthåller heteronormer. Baserat på informationen i Vancouver stads dokument är det svårt att få en tydlig bild över deras process. Demografin påvisar en begränsad förståelse för variationen och pluralismen hos HBTQ+ populationer och därmed en begränsad och icke-representativ grupp av deltagare. Att se över policyer och arbetssätt är viktigt för att planerare och landskapsarkitekter ska ha rätt kunskap för att kunna skapa ett inkluderande och representativt deltagande (Frisch 2015; Anacker and Nusser 2015). Risk för gentrifiering och förflyttning av utsatta grupper är en konsekvens av en neoliberalistisk planeringsmetod där vinstdrivna projekt kommer i första hand (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015). Dessa kan utmanas och ifrågasättas av intersektionella metoder där människorna sätts i fokus.

Utformningen av Jim Deva Plaza granskades genom tre metoder; Lynch-inspirerad analys; Gehl-inspirerad analys; och en intersektionell analys. Dessa indikerade en god fysisk och social miljö baserat på skala och användning. Dock ses utformningen som stereotypisk då ingen vidare implementation eller åtgärd vidtagits för att uppfylla till exempel de behov som identifierats av deltagare i enkäten. Den intersektionella analysen synliggjorde även den begränsade tillgången till platsens funktioner för de med funktionsvariationer. Platsen kan förbättras genom att de som ansvarar för skötsel och säkerhet är utbildade i HBTQ+

personers behov och utmaningar. Platsen kan bli mer inkluderande i sina informationsskyltar, regler samt förbättrad tillgänglighet till offentliga toaletter, möbler och information.

Mina egna erfarenheter, baserat på hetero- och könsnormer, i offentliga rum är anledningen till att jag som landskapsarkitekt vill förbättra inkludering av HBTQ+ personer. Min bild av Jim Deva Plaza förändrades under arbetet gång, från att känna att platsen och dess symbolik var till för mig till att ha en tvetydig uppfattning om att den sociokulturella miljön är väldigt positiv men att platsen upprätthåller och bidrar till stereotyper.

Diskussion och slutsatser

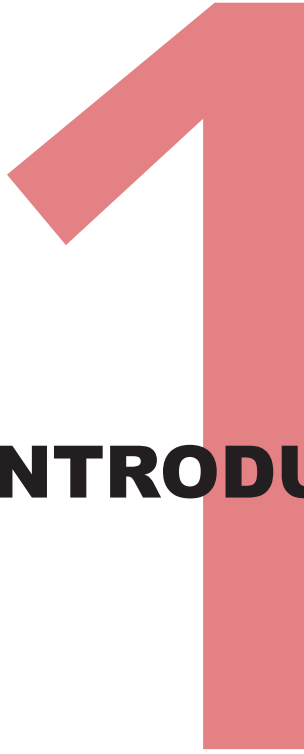
Vancouver stad saknar, i sitt arbete med Jim Deva Plaza, en djupare kunskap om HBTQ+ personers intersektionella identiteter och hur de utmanas av samhällets strukturer. För att planerare, landskapsarkitekter och andra som arbetar med stadsutveckling eller offentliga platser, ska kunna ta sitt ansvar och utmana heteronormativ stadsplanering, måste policyer och arbetssätt ses över och förbättras. Facilitatorer av delaktighetsprocesser måste kunna förse deltagarna med ett tryggt rum att dela sina åsikter och erfarenheter i, speciellt personer som tillhör en marginaliserad minoritetsgrupp. Representation och symbolism är viktig för att inkludera alla HBTQ+ personer. Utbildning kan förse oss med rätt kunskaper för att utmana heteronormativ planering och maktdynamik, för att kunna skapa mer inkluderande offentliga rum och städer.

Detta arbete avslutas med en fundering om offentliga rum verkligen kan skapas för HBTQ+ personer genom dess utformning. En plats kan inte vara HBTQ+ om inte människorna som använder den identifierar sig som det, jag anser att människorna som använder platsen skapar platsen - så hur kan vi på bästa sätt möjliggöra för HBTQ+ personer att göra det?

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INTRODUCTION

This section seeks to give advice on how to read this thesis and to share my positionality on writing this thesis.

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MY EXPERIENCE

Place: seating along water

Sitting with my girlfriend, enjoying an ice cream in the sun. A person sitting next to us keeps turning around to look at us, at me. I notice it as always, the look, the confusion, the provocation, and the uncomfortable presence. After a while they ask "are you a dude or a girl?" just like that, no small talk, not trying to get to know me, not treating me with respect, just a question/demand I am assumed to answer to a total stranger.

Place: public bathroom

The doors state "men" or "women", "gentlemen" or "ladies", always choosing the bathroom for "women" because in there I am only threatened by words (not physically). But again "only" by words I hear every single time I use a public bathroom. "This is the women's bathroom", some say "sorry, thought it was the women's bathroom?" while others walk out again to make sure they really picked the right door.
- "bathroom" or "bathroom" – what's the difference?

Place: Pride Festival Parade

I walk among the most diverse crowd I know, some in drag, some without clothes, some with statements, some with joy, some with pride, some just like me. I walk and feel happy and proud that me and my friends are able to celebrate our love. I feel represented in the public spaces, I feel like we are connected and have each other's backs. And in the same time I feel stared out, I feel like I am entertaining an audience, I feel exposed. The parade stops for a while, the party continues but we later find out a group of nationalists tried to stop it – this year again.

What they all have in common: experiences based on gender expression and sexual identity in public spaces. Stereotypes, discrimination, stigma, homo/transphobia, exclusion, insulting comments or stares are happening to LGBTQ+ peoples in their everyday life, and usually take place in public spaces (Abramovich 2016).

To be able to better understand or relate to this thesis, it is important to understand the challenges of belonging to a minority group that is structurally marginalized in society; a group of people who rarely gets their voices heard or even an opportunity to speak up, a group of people who is not included in the decision making processes of society. I belong to one of those groups; I

am one of those people who gets excluded because of who I am. I am gay and my pronouns are she/her/hers or they/them/their. Every day I challenge norms, norms that decide who I should be and what I should do because of my body, my gender or my sexual orientation. Gender norms and heteronorms are structures which society are built upon and for, structures which take away rights, create unjust societies, create mental health issues, and take lives (Toronto Long-Term Care Homes & Services [TLCH], 2008). We live in a patriarchal society that oppresses minority groups (Gieseeking 2016). At the same time I am privileged in my

white, abled body in one of the most equal countries in the world. This thesis is my way of contributing to awareness and change, to increase knowledge in order to create open and inclusive cities.

MY PERSPECTIVE

This thesis is written from an intersectional and queer perspective. Intersectionality is based on the diverse and intersecting identities one can have and focus on issues in structures of racism, homo/transphobia, ableism, classism and age discrimination. Lykke (2003) explains intersectionality as a feminist analysis of power imbalance based on gender and sexual identities, socioeconomic class, profession, age and nationality and more. A person can be discriminated for several intersecting reasons and it can change depending on the situation. To give an example, a person can be discriminated because of their sexual identity in one situation, let's say a gay male experiencing homophobia, but privileged because of being cis-gender in another situation, benefiting from being a man in a patriarchal system. Minority groups often have identities where they have to face intersecting structures of discrimination, giving them less power. The intersectional perspective is used in this work as a way to identify and challenge representation and to include the diverse identities of LGBTQ+ peoples.

Queer theory is criticizing the societal norms with focus on power, gender and sexual identities. Ambjörnsson (2016) explains queer theory as questioning normalities and categories and that it is therefore hard to define: it is challenging the comfortable ways of seeing things and the reasons why this is. Queer theory is used in this work as a way to identify and challenge norms, more specifically heteronormative planning approaches and processes. This worldview forms the basis of my methodology, which will be further explained (see chapter 5).

2

TERMINOLOGY

Note that the following terms are dynamic and their use can differ between individuals and over time. The definitions are used to better understand this thesis.

Definitions

p. 8

DEFINITIONS

LGBTQ+:

An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and more peoples and/or communities. Queer can be used as an umbrella term for several sexual and gender identities. Transgender can be used as an umbrella term for trans identities. "LGBTQ+" is the term used in this thesis, as inclusive but not limited to the sexual and gender identities in the acronym.

Queer spaces:

Can be, but does not have to be a specific geographic place or specifically designed to be an LGBTQ+ space. Usually dynamic and fluid spaces, based on the people using it and their activities.

Two-spirited (2S):

An Indigenous person who identifies as two-spirited has both a feminine and masculine spirit. This is an Indigenous worldview, different from how Western cultures define gender and sexual identities.

They/their:

A gender neutral, inclusive pronoun. It will be used for every name or person who has not stated their preferred pronoun.

Gender non-conforming/ non-binary:

A person who does not identify with the "traditional" binary genders.

Theirstory:

To honour the diverse experiences and pluralism within LGBTQ+ communities. A more inclusive term than to use "history" or "herstory".

Heteronormativity:

The assumption and generalization that everyone are heterosexual, and that other sexualities are subordinated. A structure in which the society is built upon and which create injustices and invisibility for LGBTQ+ peoples.

Heterosexism:

A behaviour or approach that favour heterosexual people and reinforces the heteronorms.

Homophobia:

A term for discrimination against LGBTQ+ peoples and communities such as intolerance, hate, fear or discomfort. Transphobia is used to describe the discrimination against transgender peoples and communities.

Internal oppression:

Internalized homophobia from, for example, living in a homophobic society and not being "out".

Homonormativity:

Similar to heteronormativity, homonormativity generalize and favour a certain way in being and expressing sexual and gender identities, ignoring the diversities the LGBTQ+ communities have and focus mainly on white gay men.

Post-gay/post-mo:

Refers to a post-gay or post-homosexual era where LGBTQ+ peoples are not defined by their sexualities. Usually used by younger generations who has not experienced the same oppression, criminalization and injustices as LGBTQ+ generations before them. The term requires privilege and can therefore be seen as exclusionary to white, middle-class gay men.

Unceded land:

Most of the land in British Columbia belongs to the First Nations, as there is no treaty signed between the government and the first peoples. To honour the land of which Davie Village exist in it is important to acknowledge it as unceded Coast Salish territory.

3

CONTEXT

In the following chapter, the challenges with planning and LGBTQ+ aspects, as well as a review of the Canadian and local context with LGBTQ+ theirstory, will be introduced. This is explained to create better understanding of the contextual landscapes in order to better engage with the content of this research.

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LGBTQ+ AND PLANNING

There are many minority groups to empower in society and one of them which includes a wide variety of people is LGBTQ+.

One of the UN's (2015) 17 Sustainable Development Goals is to "make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". The UN explains the goal as, "The future we want includes cities of opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more," (UN 2015). To make cities inclusive for all, everyone should be included in the agenda but according to Perry (2016) the LGBTQ+ citizens are not being recognized. The reason for this is that Belarus lead a group of 17 countries that excluded LGBTQ+ rights at the UN HABITAT III meeting in Quito 2016, which among others included Russia, Egypt, Qatar, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Iran.

The UN set the goals for how to build cities around the world, but how are LGBTQ+ aspects and peoples included in the planning if they are not recognized?

Urban planners use the sustainable development goals in their work and

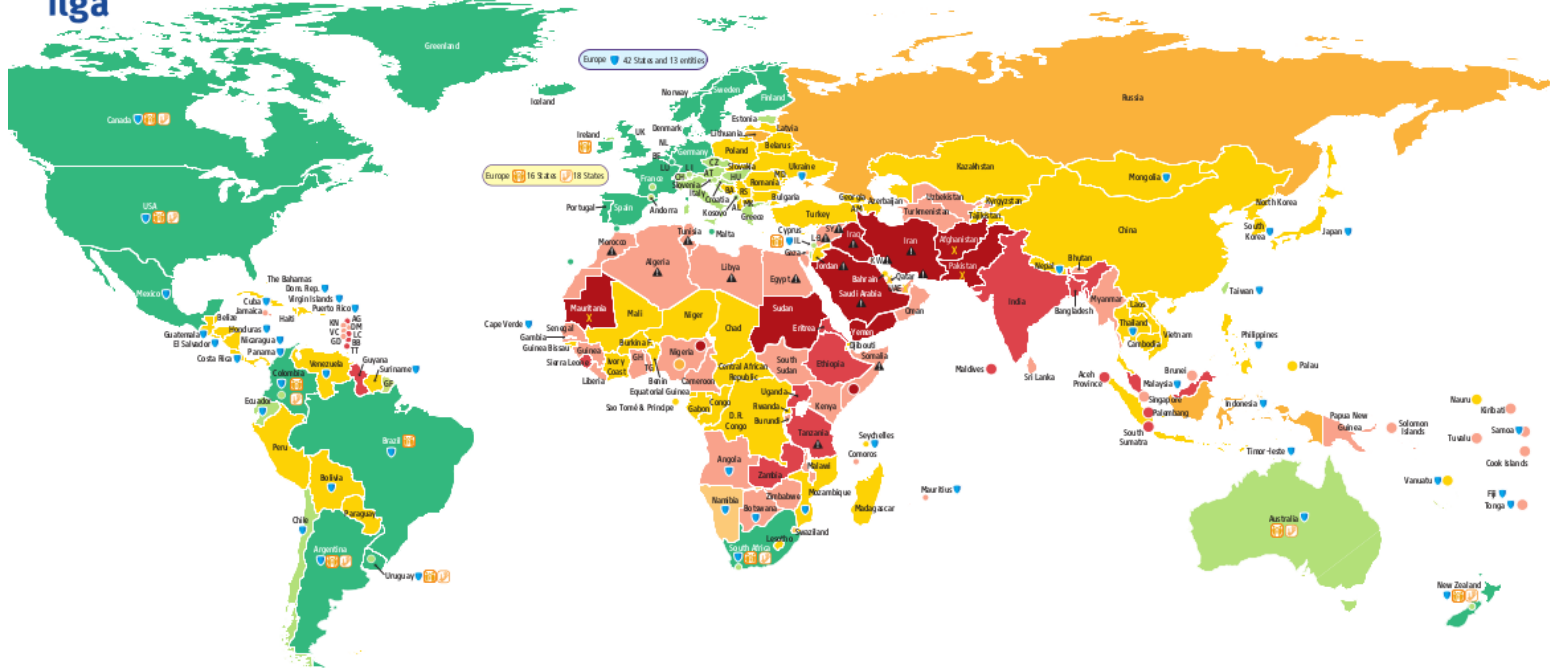
therefore they impact how cities develop both in processes and built environments. As Liljefors (2016) found in their research, a policy or goal can make the planner more confident in lifting aspects that can be seen as controversial or provocative to create a dialogue and awareness among stakeholders. What is included in the UN goals can therefore be of great significance to actively make a change on local level. When LGBTQ+ aspects are ignored and there is no representation of LGBTQ+ peoples, they are made invisible (Giesecking 2016).

LGBTQ+ peoples are marginalized socially and economically in society (Doan 2015). They are typically excluded in the planning process both in academia and practice. Planning can improve lives of the LGBTQ+ population and Doan (2015) argues that planners must include the needs of the diverse and multifaceted LGBTQ+ population living within and outside LGBTQ+ neighbourhoods. Most of the LGBTQ+ neighbourhoods are planned for white gay males and thereby exclude the remaining diverse group of LGBTQ+ communities (Lewis 2015).

LGBTQ+ SPACES








Many cities around the world have districts with LGBTQ+ theirstory. They are referred to as gay villages, gay districts or gayborhoods in the literature (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Lewis 2015; Anacker & Nusser 2015; Nash & Gorman-Murray 2015; Winkle 2015) and in everyday speech. The pluralism within

LGBTQ+ communities is important to recognize, therefore I will refer to these spaces as LGBTQ+ neighbourhoods, districts or spaces. What characterize these urban areas are usually institutions such as social services and gathering spaces directed to LGBTQ+ peoples, commercial



CRIMINALISATION

72 STATES

	implemented in 8 States (or parts of)		14 Y - life (prison)	14 States
	not implemented in 5 States		Up to 14 Y	57 States
	Religious-based laws alongside the civil code: 19 States		'Promotion' laws	3 States
			No penalising law	

In green, yellow and orange countries, same-sex sexual acts were decriminalised or never penalised: 123 States

PROTECTION

85 STATES

Many States run concurrent protections

	Constitution	9 States
	Employment	72 States
	Various	63 States
	Hate crime	43 States
	Incitement to hate	39 States
	Ban on 'conversion therapy'	3 States

RECOGNITION

47 STATES

A small number of States provide for marriage and partnership concurrently

	Marriage	24 States		Joint adoption	26 States
	Partnership	28 States		2nd parent adoption	27 States

Separate detailed maps for these three categories are produced alongside this Overview map.

The data represented in these maps are based on State-Sponsored Homophobia: a World Survey of Sexual Orientation Laws: Criminalisation, Protection and Recognition, an ILGA report by Aengus Carroll and Lucas Ramon Mendes. The report and these maps are available in the six official UN languages: English, Chinese, Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish on ILGA.org. This edition of the world map (May 2017) was coordinated by Aengus Carroll and Lucas Ramon Mendes (ILGA), and designed by Eduardo Enoki (eduardo.enoki@gmail.com).

Figure 1. Map over sexual orientation laws in the world by ILGA (Carroll and Mendes 2017)

entertainment as gay bars and shops and sometimes the use of pride flags to

symbolize LGBTQ+ friendliness (Gieseeking 2016, Doan 2015b).

LGBTQ+ IN CANADA

It was not until 1964 when the first LGBTQ+ positive organization was established in Canada, called ASK, and in 1969 homosexual acts were decriminalized (Davie Village n.d.). Before this the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and the FBI kept track on homosexuals in cities around the country, and the raids against gay bars kept occurring for decades later. In December of 1977, Quebec banned discrimination based on sexual orientation after an organized protest against the raids, becoming the second province in the world to pass this law (after Denmark). In 1979 the first openly gay political candidate in Canada's history participated in the provincial election in the

British Columbia. An important turning event for the LGBTQ+ theirstory happened in 1981 when, similar to the Stonewall riots in New York of 1969, a big protest occurred in Toronto after the police raided several bathhouses. This was the first pride event in Toronto. Throughout history, many horrifying attacks against LGBTQ+ organizations and peoples have happened and continued to threaten their safety. In the political sphere, the first Member of Parliament came out as gay in 1988, in 1990 the first openly gay person became leader of a political party in Canada, in 1998 the first openly gay mayor was elected (Davie Village n.d.) and in 2001 the first openly lesbian became a Member

of Parliament (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). In 2003 the first provinces began to legalize same-sex marriage and in 2005 the federal Civil Marriage Act legalized it. When the Winter Olympics was arranged in Whistler 2010, it became the first time the event had a Pride house for the LGBTQ+ athletes (Davie Village n.d.). The first pride event on reserve was held in 2015 to honour the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation's two-spirited people (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). A Transgender Rights Bill was proposed in 2016 to make it illegal to discriminate employment based on gender identity. In the same year the first Pride Month was held in Canada and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau raised a pride flag on Parliament Hill (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). In 2017 driver's licences in Ontario

introduced the option to have an "X" for unspecified gender, Ontario also passed a bill called "All Families Are Equal Act" which gave LGBTQ+ parents equal rights to straight parents by law. In the same year the Government of the Northwest Territories made legislative changes to recognize traditional names of Indigenous peoples on identification documents and to change their gender to male, female or X. Gender X later the same year became an option for all Canadians on their official documents (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). Also in 2017, the first transgender mayor was elected in Quebec and the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau apologized for federal discrimination against LGBTQ2S+ peoples in Canada (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.).

LGBTQ+ IN VANCOUVER

One of Vancouver's most well known LGBTQ+ districts is called Davie Village in the West End, located on unceded Coast Salish territory. Ron Dutton (Vancouver Heritage Foundation n.d.) says young gay men started moving here in the 1940's when the

West End was rebuilt into apartments for working class people, it was affordable and anonymous. It did not become a visibly gay neighbourhood until after a demonstration by the Gay Alliance Towards Equality took place in 1971. One of Vancouver's first pride

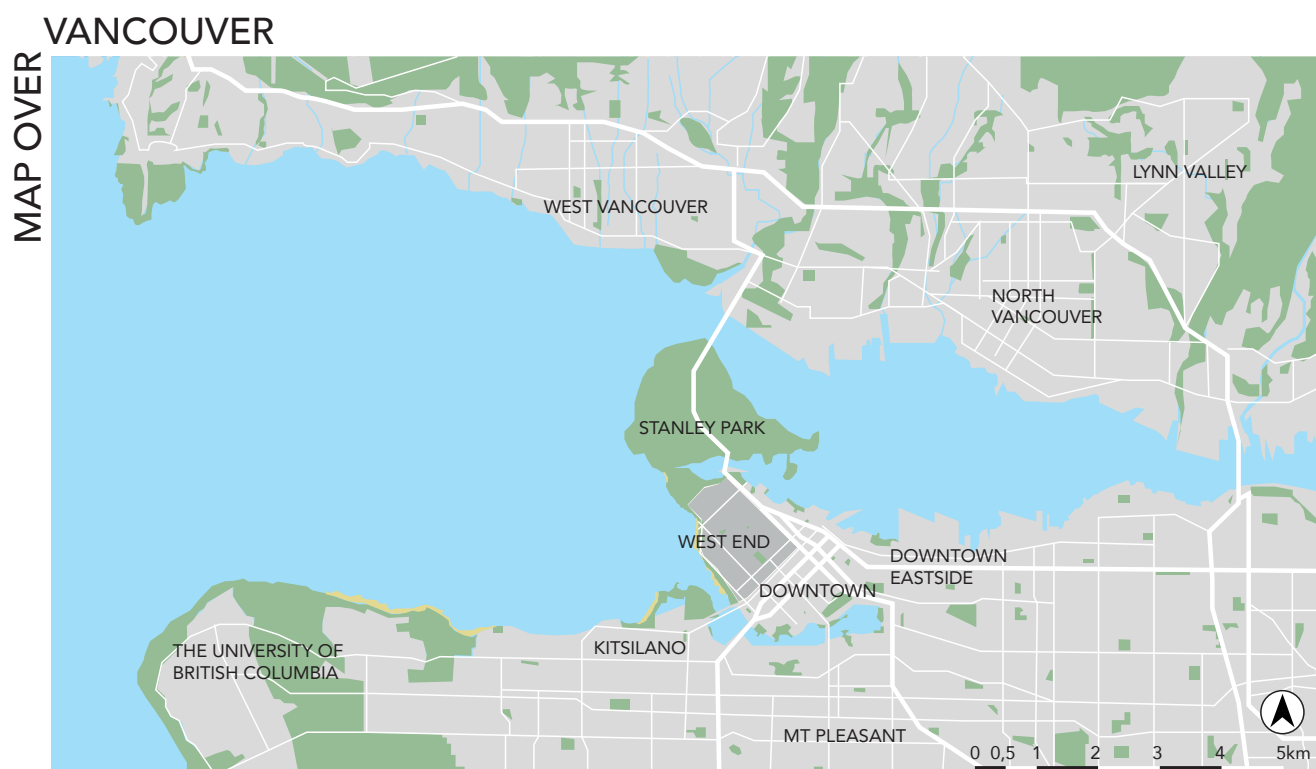


Figure 2. Map over Vancouver (By author, based on information from Map data ©2018 Google).

WEST END

MAP OVER



Figure 3. Map over West End (By author, based on information from Map data @2018 Google).

events took place in Davie Village in 1972 and the first pride parade in 1978. The Pride Society was funded three years later in 1981 (Vancouver Heritage Foundation n.d.). During the 1970's, Davie Village became the home of LGBTQ+ nightlife and businesses with help from the Little Sister's Book and Art emporium (among other institutions). The owner of the bookstore, Jim Deva, was an activist and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and fought against Canada's censorship laws (Vancouver Heritage Foundation n.d.).

Jim Deva Plaza is found in the center of Davie Village. The plaza is named by the deceased Jim Deva, to commemorate the efforts as an activist who fought for freedom of sexuality, gender diversity and against censorship. He was a big contributor and influencer in the area (West End BIA n.d.). More information about the process and plaza will come further on in this thesis.

4

ABOUT THIS THESIS

The following chapter explains the objective, aim, research question and scope of this thesis.

Research Question	p. 16
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Scope	p. 17
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RESEARCH QUESTION

The objective of this thesis is to highlight the importance of an intersectional perspective of urban planning with a focus on LGBTQ+ aspects through centring my own and other LGBTQ+ peoples' experiences. This is made by analyzing the planning process of Jim Deva Plaza, its design and the experiences me and other LGBTQ+ peoples have of public spaces.

The aim is to create awareness among urban planners and landscape architects, who work with the planning and design of

public spaces, of structures which impact and challenge peoples' intersecting identities and lives, and how to challenge these in order to create more inclusive cities. By highlighting ways that planning approaches play an important role in reproducing heteronormative cities, I seek to challenge these normative ways of thinking and doing. I hope this work can open up discussions and contribute to changes in the planning and design of public spaces.

Specifically, this thesis explores the following research question:

"What can we learn from taking an intersectional approach to studying LGBTQ+ representation in the planning process, design and use of public spaces?"

Key subquestions:

- What were the intentions with the planning process and design of Jim Deva Plaza?
- Who was represented in the planning process?
- What was the result, how is the space being used and by who?
- How does people from the LGBTQ+ communities experience public spaces?

SCOPE

During the 20 weeks of this project, the study object was geographically limited to Jim Deva Plaza located in Davie Village, West End, Vancouver. The research focused on LGBTQ+ related literature in planning, public documents published by the City of Vancouver on the process of planning and designing Jim Deva Plaza, and the experiences of public spaces by people who self-identify as LGBTQ+. To include the planning process, implication and use of the space, the research focused on a time frame between 2015-2018.

An Indigenous, decolonizing lens was not used in this work although it would have been very important to raise in this context. The reason for this decision was my lack of experience and knowledge in order to do an advanced analysis of the study subject.

Non-Western culture has more fluid expressions of sexualities, identities and spaces. The experiences of two-spirited peoples was not further addressed in this thesis as they deserve a representative and shared story of their specific challenges connected to colonialism.

5

METHODOLOGY

The methods used in this thesis are further explained in this chapter; literature review; document analysis; site visit; site analysis; survey and autoethnography.

Literature Review	p. 19
Document Analysis	p. 19
Site Visits	p. 20
Site Analysis	p. 20
Survey	p. 26
Autoethnography	p. 27

LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis included a literature review that used the following key search terms: queer space; LGBT; LGBTQ+; planning; Gayborhood; Gay neighbourhood; Gay village; Vancouver; Davie Village; Jim Deva Plaza; inclusivity; minority groups; public space; equality; representation; intersectionality; pluralism; post-mo. The search was primarily done in January-February of 2018 from the following sources: Scopus; Sage; ProQuest and Google Scholar. The most pertinent literature was written by authors Petra L. Doan and Jen

Jack Giesekeing who focus on queer planning and geography. The purpose of the literature review was to get a more in-depth knowledge about LGBTQ+ aspects in planning. The result was used to analyze the process reviewed in the document analysis. The literature found within these topics were limited, which emphasizes the importance of this thesis and further research in these areas.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The thesis included a critical document analysis of the City of Vancouver's documents connected to Jim Deva Plaza and Davie Village. In the analysis, I focused on finding information about Davie Village, Jim Deva Plaza, history and future plans of the area, LGBTQ+ aspects, the participatory process, the representation of LGBTQ+ peoples in participation, inclusivity in language and illustrations and the design. To understand the context of the documents, it was important to find out the author/s, the purpose and document type. The main focus was on the process of planning Jim Deva Plaza, who participated and their opinions, but also who was not represented and what was not being said about the process. The language and illustrations were reviewed to analyze the representation of LGBTQ+ and if they were represented, in what way(s).

According to Bowen (2009), documents can

provide data on the context, give background information and historical insight. This information can be used to design an interview and help formulate questions. If there are several documents the analysis can identify changes over time. To make the research more trustworthy, the information from the documents can verify evidence from other sources. This was done through site visits, site analyzes and a survey, as explained further on.

When using this method it is important to be aware of potential flaws, as the documents can have insufficient detail and low retrievability due to often summarized results (Bowen 2009). Furthermore, there can be biased selectivity where the author has chosen what information is of importance (Bowen 2009). The analyzed documents were therefore viewed with the risk of it being summarized or even lacking information, which is pointed out in the results.

Below is a list of the reviewed documents:

- West End Community Plan (City of Vancouver 2013)
- Motion on Notice (City of Vancouver 2014)
- Administrative Report, July (City of Vancouver 2015a)
- Administrative Report, December (City of Vancouver 2015b)
- Detailed Design and Plaza Management Strategy (City of Vancouver 2015c)
- October 2015 Detailed Design Questionnaire Summary (City of Vancouver 2015d)
- Open House Information Display, April (City of Vancouver 2015e)
- Open House Information Display, June (City of Vancouver 2015f)
- Open House Information Display, October (City of Vancouver 2015g)
- Phase 2: April 2015 Conceptual Design Options Questionnaire Summary (City of Vancouver 2015h)
- Phase 3: May/June 2015 Refined Design Concept Questionnaire Summary (City of Vancouver 2015i)
- Heart of Davie Village Public Space Improvement Project (City of Vancouver 2016)
- Administrative Report (City of Vancouver 2017)

SITE VISITS

Jim Deva Plaza was visited several times throughout this thesis, at different hours and seasons. This helped analyze the plaza in its varied use and function to get a better understanding of the space. The site visits were documented with photos and written notes, and the day and time were recorded. Visits were conducted to understand the physical space, the social and cultural context within the plaza. The findings from the site visits are included in the autoethnography and site analyzes.

The site visits took place on the following occasions:

- First site visit: Friday, January 26, 12.00
- Second site visit: Monday, March 12, 16.00
- Third site visit: Wednesday, May 16, 18.30
- Fourth site visit: Thursday, May 17, 22.00

SITE ANALYSIS

Three analysis methods were used in this research. The Lynch-inspired analysis was used to do an inventory of the plaza and understand its physical structures. The Gehl-inspired analysis showed how these physical structures impact the human activity and use of the space. To challenge these two methods, which are both introduced and frequently used during our education, I developed an intersectional analysis. This was to get a more in-depth understanding about who the space is intended for, what norms are inscribed and who it is accessible for.

Lynch-inspired analysis

The Lynch-inspired analysis stemmed from Kevin Lynch's work (1960). Lynch's method is based on identifying physical structures and interviewing people about their experience of the space. Rather than an interview as Lynch (1960) suggests, I incorporated the LGBTQ+ peoples voices through a survey. I created a map with complementary notes and focused on the following aspects of Lynch's analysis;

- Nodes: where people meet and where they change (moving) direction
- Landmarks: sites that the visitor remembers and elements that are clearly visible

- Physical barriers: any physical barrier that blocks or is hard to cross. It can be elements such as roads, water, railway, fences or greenery that decrease the accessibility to a space.
- Visual barriers: physical elements that are visual barriers to the surrounding
- Paths: the patterns of movement (walk, bike, other transportation)
- Districts: areas with a similar character

The information gathered from these aspects gave a better understanding of the plaza's physical strengths and weaknesses.

Gehl-inspired analysis

The Gehl-inspired analysis was based on Jan Gehl's work (Gehl 2010). Gehl's method is used to understand the use and activities in the space. The results were gathered on a map with complementary notes and with a graded (poor – okay - good) protocol.

I focused on the following aspects:

- Safety from external factors such as traffic, noise and weather
- Opportunity to walk, stand, rest, sit, see, talk, hear and perform activities
- Pleasurable scale of space, climate and aesthetics



Figure 4. Base map for analysis (By author, based on information from Map data @2018 Google).

Intersectional analysis

This analysis was developed using several different sources of aspects found through searching literature on Scopus and Google Scholar with the key search words; intersectionality; gender; sexual; identities; disabilities; age; ethnicities; religious; spiritual; beliefs; aspects; public space. Collectively these aspects created an intersectional lens with emphasis on LGBTQ+ considerations. This analysis aimed to identify the norms of the space and its intended users. It is based on: the different grounds of discrimination protected by Swedish law; gender identities; sexual identities; disabilities; age; ethnicities; and religious or spiritual beliefs (DO 2018).

LGBTQ+ peoples avoid using public spaces due to not feeling safe (from harassment, violence and/or other discrimination). Especially vulnerable are transgender and disabled peoples (Center for American Progress 2017). To identify spatial aspects for LGBTQ+ identities, these aspects were inspired by gender equality analyzes methods where the focus on women's experiences can be applied to a broader user of public spaces. The following analysis consist of three main categories: Safety; Functionality; and Representation (see Figure 5 below).



Figure 5. Diagram of the intersectional analysis and the overlap of aspect (By author)

Safety

Who feels safe and why? Men are identified as the main users of public spaces where women (Fast and Nilsson 2013), transgender and other sexual and gender minorities can experience a lack of safety and therefore not use public spaces (Giesecking 2016; Svensson 2014). Spaces also need to be safe for people in diverse ages, especially children. Svensson (2014) states how people with different ethnicities, religious or spiritual beliefs have a higher risk for being victims of violence and threats in public spaces. Since feelings of unsafety are mostly experienced during evenings and night times (Fast and Nilsson 2013), it is important to analyze the space both during day and night.



Spatial aspects:

- Level of orientation: to easily find the way, to know where to go, to orient different possible routes (Fast and Nilsson 2013; Boverket 2010)
- Level of visibility: to see and to be seen, physical/visual barriers and lighting (Fast and Nilsson 2013; Svensson 2014; Boverket 2010; Global Utmaning 2017)
- Level of hearing: to hear and be heard, noise levels, people in the area (Fast and Nilsson 2013)
- Level of maintenance: a well maintained space can increase the feelings of safety, the priority of function (e.g. road, pathway, plaza) (Boverket 2010; Global Utmaning 2017)
- Amount of people: increased feelings of safety if there are many people using the space, possibilities for community gatherings (Svensson 2014; Boverket 2010)
- Level of security: presence of security authority (can be experienced both positive and negative ex: black people and LGBTQ+ people who have experienced discrimination from authority may not experience presence of the police as safe (PPS 2017))
- Safety for children: distance from traffic, level of exhaustion and noise, safety measures on play elements (Svensson 2014), level of sun and shadow (Boverket 2015)

Functionality

What functions and activities can be found in the space and who are they for? How people use the space is different based on their needs of public spaces. Needs around accessibility to reach the location, or use functions of the space can be different depending on, for example, if you live far away, use public transport, if there is free admission, if you are disabled, if it is close to other services (Global Utmaning 2017).



Spatial aspects:

- Transportation: proximity to public transport, accessibility with bike, walkability, parking, alternative paths, different zoning in the space (vehicles, bikes, pathways) (Fast and Nilsson 2013, Svensson 2014; Global Utmaning 2017).
- Comfort: proximity to different services to ease everyday activities (Svensson 2014), weather protection (Boverket 2015, Global Utmaning 2017)
- Services: what kind of gathering or support facilities, schools, work, transportation, grocery stores, shops, restaurants, or other businesses (Svensson 2014; Boverket 2014)
- Public bathroom: proximity to space, accessibility (Global Utmaning 2017)
- Accessibility: the level of accessible activities and functions for disabled people, including lack of hearing, vision or orientation. Physical barriers, contrast in material, colours and lighting. Dimensions and elevations for wheelchairs, seating with back and arm support (Svensson 2014). Legible signage with considerations to height, contrast in colour, lighting and size (Boverket 2011)
- Activities: types of activities and intended users, level of passive or active (children's play, gatherings, seating), opportunity to participate for everyone (Boverket 2010)
- Possibility of gatherings: a variety of different kinds of gatherings, small groups, large groups, private or public activity (Svensson 2014).
- Level of public/private space: possibilities to use more private spaces and not be exposed (could also increase the feeling of safety for example for people who are not out with their identities, or people experiencing male-gazing)

Representation

Who is represented in the space and how? Material expressions, symbolism, stereotypes and structures can all contribute to inclusion or exclusion (Svensson 2014). These can be seen in advertisements, displays, art and signs. The types of gatherings or support facilities, restaurants, shops or other businesses can be identified as representing a certain group of people (for example: LGBTQ+ resource centers, Asian food markets or a Mosque) (Svensson 2014). The expressions in the space can recognize experiences of minority groups but also sustain stereotypes or prejudices (Svensson 2014). Stereotypes and sustained structures of discrimination in representation can also create feelings of unsafe spaces, such as sexist advertisements (Boverket 2010).



Spatial aspects:

- Gender and/or sexual identities: services, symbols, signs, art or other elements related to LGBTQ+ communities
 - Age: services, symbols, signs, art or other elements understandable for different ages (e.g. legible information)
 - Disabilities: services, symbols, signs, art or other elements related to disabled people and adapted to lack of hearing or vision (Svensson 2014).
 - Ethnicities: services, symbols, signs, art or other elements related to other traditions or cultures, a variety of languages (Svensson 2014)
 - Religious and/or spiritual representation: services, symbols, signs, art or other elements related to religion or spiritualities (Svensson 2014)
 - Socioeconomic status: Level of availability for poor and homeless people, admission fees, location, services (PPS 2017)
 - Possibility for political activities: is the space big enough for gatherings, does it encourage social or political engagement (Svensson 2014)
 - Possibility for community events: non-profit organizations, neighbourhood gatherings etc.
- The analysis was performed with a graded scale that accounted for the presence or extent of the listed aspects, as well as open-ended qualitative questions to gather deeper contextual information (e.g., are they meeting the needs of the intended users of the space?)

SURVEY

The survey was generated through the literature review and document analysis in order to include qualitative data on LGBTQ+ peoples' needs and barriers to access, and their experiences of, public spaces. The survey included eight randomly self-selected LGBTQ+ identified peoples, who were invited through social media and word-of-mouth. The participants shared qualitative answers to open-ended questions, and included (see Appendix):

- *How do you identify?*
- *What are your experiences as being LGBTQ2S+ in public spaces?*
- *What do you need to use a public space? In terms of feeling welcomed, included or safe in order to use the space as being LGBTQ2S+?*
- *What makes you not use a public space?*
- *What do you think of Jim Deva Plaza?*
- *Did you participate in the public input/ process of planning Jim Deva Plaza, how?*
- *From what you are aware of, what did you think of this process, specifically strengths/weaknesses?*
- *If you were going to be involved in the planning of a public space, how would you like to be engaged and to what extent? (For example, questionnaire, focus group, interview, model building, being a part of a planning group etc.) Please explain why.*
- *Do you have any additional thoughts you want to share?*

As many studies about LGBTQ+ peoples are based on gay men, I tried to invite a more diverse group of people. Although

the process of reaching out was difficult due to my limited network of contacts in Vancouver, I could not reach the desired diversity of identities: participants had unique identities, but were similar in ways such as age, abilities and gender.

An online survey is an effective method for reaching marginalized, less visible communities such as LGBTQ+ peoples (McInroy 2016). Youth can more easily be engaged due to their online habits and increased use of technology. Further, McInroy (2016) highlights how online surveys can be fast and easy to administrate and for the participant to answer, which can increase the response rates. This method is especially preferred when the research topic is stigmatized, as the participant (and researcher) can be anonymous and therefore feel more comfortable and safe to share their answers (McInroy 2016). However, it is important to be aware of how representative the collected data is due to differences in access to technology (age, economic status, remote areas etc.) (McInroy 2016).

The qualitative data was thematically analyzed as being a structured and methodical approach (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules 2017). The method is flexible in order to analyze rich and complex data. As I have not conducted any qualitative research before, this method was easy to learn and use. The flexibility can also lead to inconsistency in developing themes (Nowell, et al. 2017). It is therefore important to be transparent in how the analysis was conducted.

In this thesis, qualitative data was analyzed using the following steps (Nowell et al. 2017):

- Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with your data
- Phase 2: Generating initial codes
- Phase 3: Searching for themes
- Phase 4: Reviewing themes
- Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
- Phase 6: Producing the report

The themes used when analysing the survey were:

- Identities
- Level of comfort
- What kind of experiences (verbal, physical, body language)
- Barriers (e.g. social behaviour, maintenance etc.)


- Components of feeling welcomed in a public space (e.g. representation, symbolism)
- Design
- Preferred involvement in planning

The results of the survey were used to further discuss the implications of the City of Vancouver and the role of planners in creating LGBTQ+ inclusive cities.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Hayfield and Huxley (2016) argue for the importance of reflecting over the researcher's role as an insider or outsider. In autoethnography, the researcher is an insider with direct relation to the studied topic and its participants. Hayfield and Huxley (2016) note that being an insider is an advantage in qualitative research to develop research questions, in interviews, reaching out and finding participants, data collection, data analysis and reporting the results. This is based on the researcher's awareness of the participants' experiences and lives compared to an outsider's perspective. The risks of having an insider's role can include the participants' high expectations of responsibly handling the shared data, especially as more sensitive data might be disclosed due to feeling safe with the researcher (Hayfield & Huxley 2015). Further, the assumption of understanding and having knowledge about the shared experiences can also lead to difficulties in collecting and analysing the data based on intersectional differences (Hayfield & Huxley 2015).

I incorporated my positionality throughout the body of this thesis and used autoethnography as a part of my research on how public spaces, and specifically Jim Deva Plaza, are experienced and used as a member of an LGBTQ+ community. Autoethnography is a method focused both on the process and the result, and is used to analyze personal experience in a way to understand cultural experiences (Ellis, Adams, Bochner 2011). In this case the cultural context was the LGBTQ+ space of Jim Deva Plaza. A queer autoethnographic approach combines queer theory's critical and intersectional lens with autoethnography's self-analytical experience of a cultural setting (Adams and Bolen, 2017). This method was used to share my own experiences of being LGBTQ+ in public spaces, to interpret the process and place of Jim Deva Plaza, and to collect and analyze qualitative data from participants. Further, this opened up a deeper personal understanding in how I, as a landscape architect, can use these experiences in advocating for change in the way we plan public spaces.



AUTOETHNOGRAPHY PART 1

In this chapter I will share my own experience as being LGBTQ+ when visiting Jim Deva Plaza.

Site Visits

p. 29

SITE VISITS

Date: Friday, January 26
Time: 12.00

When I first encountered the space in May 2017 I was surprised to see a public space that had a permanent pride theme. The extent of symbolism used was for me mostly connected to the annual Pride events. When I visited it again this time I already had a more critical lens: I wanted to understand if the design of the space made a difference for me as an LGBTQ+ person.

On the walk to the plaza the rainbows start to show more frequently the closer you get to the plaza. Along Davie Street there are flags with rainbow colours, stickers on shops and businesses, pink bus stops and advertisements directed towards LGBTQ+ peoples. A sign with "Davie Village" illustrates that you are in the heart of Davie, and the three large rainbow crossings are located at the entrance to Jim Deva Plaza.



Figure 6. Photos on the walk to the plaza.



Figure 7. The plaza seen from Davie Street.

There were a few people on the plaza at the time of the visit, two older people talked for a little while and a temporary marijuana shop was placed in the center of the plaza. There was permanent seating, placed on each side of the space, which made it feel like a plaza designed for events with its open space in the middle. Due to the lack of activity and people on the plaza at this time it was hard to read the space as inclusive or not. The big rainbow crossings and the theme of colours on the plaza symbolizes an LGBTQ+ friendly space but for me it also puts up expectations on the space – the plaza itself was therefor a bit disappointing, I did not know what to do on the plaza or how to engage with it. The human activity plays an important role for me to be able to read a space as safe and welcoming or not, it is usually the people who can create those spaces.

In an anonymous conversation with a local stakeholder, they shared their experiences about the plaza. They said the space is great during the summer when it is filled with events, but that there are some tensions. In order to arrange an event on the plaza you need to apply for permission, which create a conflict between the public and private use of the space. They brought up an incident where a group of people honoured their friend who passed away by putting flowers and writing graffiti on the art installation, which both was cleaned away instantly. This was seemed as disrespectful towards the local communities. They also mentioned the curfew that forbid homeless people to sleep on the plaza at night time, which many of them are young LGBTQ+ peoples.

As for the design on the plaza, the entrance from Davie Street is very clear and visibly obvious due to the three large rainbow coloured crossings. The symbolism continues on the plaza with a range of colours on the pavement, furniture and other elements. On each side of the plaza there are three bike racks in the shape of hearts. Lights hang over the plaza strained from side



Figure 8. The plaza on site visit in January.

to side and create with the trees and building facades the physical space of the plaza.

The main attraction on the plaza (the crossings are not counted to be on the plaza) is the art installation in shape of a megaphone with a text that celebrates the deceased Jim Deva and his work with LGBTQ+ rights

"A safe space inspired by Jim Deva's lifelong passion for freedom of sexuality, gender diversity, and the fight against censorship. Where LGBTQ people and allies can meet, share ideas freely, dare to dream, and love unapologetically."

The light poles have signs with words, "Faithfully, intensely, steadily, pluralistically, gracefully, strongly" it said on one of them, "Passionately, vigorously, energetically, sonorously, purposefully, cogently" on another. I interpreted these signs as describing the pride of LGBTQ+ communities. Later on I learnt it was an art installation by Erdem Taşdelen that described experiences in participating in a protest, as to encourage those fighting for social justice (BAF 2016).

Two informative signs were found on the plaza with information about Jim Deva and the plaza. Restaurants, shops and hair saloons surround the plaza and one of them uses the plaza for a narrow fenced off patio.

The other side of the plaza, Pantages Lane, feels like the backside of the area and more residential. It does not have the same distinct entrance and does not seem like a part of Davie Village.

The site visit left me with some questions:

- How is the space intended to be used?
- Is it being used differently over seasons?
- What difference does the rainbow symbolism make for LGBTQ+ peoples?



Figure 9. Photos from Pantages Lane

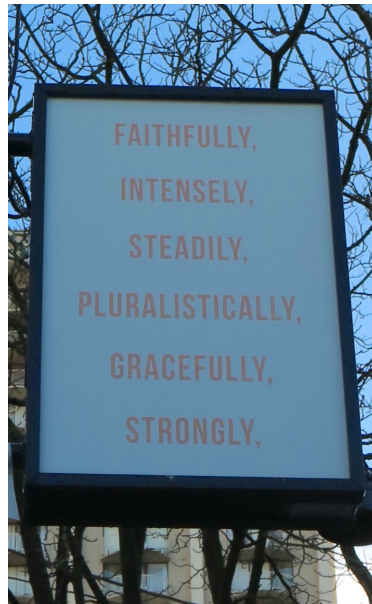


Figure 10. Photos of signs by Erdem Taşdelen (2016)



LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is the result of the literature review and is later on used in the document analysis.

Pluralism	p. 35
Intersectionality	p. 35
Gentrification	p. 36
Heteronormative Planning	p. 37

To begin, the identified aspects are mostly related to urban planning practice and do not describe the inequalities LGBTQ+ peoples face in their everyday life. Inequalities such as unjust laws, criminalization, being victims of hate crimes, being made invisible and seen as outcasts - some of these issues are still prevalent today (Giesecking 2016). The planning practice is ignoring these types of issues LGBTQ+ peoples are experiencing and does therefore not account for their needs (Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015).

As Giesecking (2016) states in their work, it is important to be aware of the absence of

LGBTQ+ spaces. Frisch (2015) argues that planning tends to be class biased, where heteronormative, gendered and racialized spaces are created and LGBTQ+ peoples are excluded and displaced (Frisch 2015; Winkle 2015). Doan and Winkle describe planning as neoliberal, where neighbourhoods are either "cleansed" (Doan 2015b) or promoted as "visibly gay" (Winkle 2015) to increase economic development. Lewis (2015) points out how people of colour, poor and those with worse health are especially vulnerable in the heteronormative, top-down development of public spaces.

PLURALISM

Winkle (2015) argues that LGBTQ+ spaces need to be understood as plural and within their context. If they are not seen as plural the diversity of the LGBTQ+ population and their intersecting challenges are ignored. This can lead to people being neglected and made invisible and therefore excluded. It is also important to be aware of the pluralism; to be able to use an inclusive language (Frisch 2015). Visser (2015) further

argues for acknowledging pluralism in sexuality as there is diversity in orientation, identity and status. LGBTQ+ peoples identities can be plural and vary over time. The experiences of LGBTQ+ peoples can be better understood if connected to these identities.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Frisch (2015) explains intersectionality as being included in or excluded from several identity categories. When discriminatory structures of racism, sexism, classism and transphobia intersect, it affects peoples' lives through segregating different groups of people and how they use LGBTQ+ spaces (Frisch 2015; Giesecking 2016). Giesecking (2016) illustrates differences in the use of space by comparing lesbian women and

gay men. People identifying as lesbians or gay do not use the public spaces in the same way historically and therefore have a different relation to spaces. For example, lesbians often met in private spaces like their homes due to inequalities between genders and exposure of "male-gazing" (women as objects of male pleasure), whereas gay men met in parks, public bathrooms and other public spaces in

order to socialize. Since gender inequalities are still prevalent today, they continue to explain why men may dominate the use of public spaces compared to women. In addition to LGBTQ+ men and women's experiences, Goh (2015) and Catungal (2015) identify the need for marginalized LGBTQ+ youth and people of colour's safe spaces to be recognized and protected. Giesecking (2016) further argues for the importance of context and intersectionality when talking about LGBTQ+ spaces.

There are intersections of racism, sexism, homo/transphobia and classism, which can make LGBTQ+ peoples of colour, poor, women and non-binary more vulnerable because of their structurally less political and economic power (Giesecking 2016). Giesecking (2016) explains difficulties for LGBTQ+ women as a result of gender inequalities where a lower income, less power and authority leads to inabilities to or delayed access to the housing market. As explained earlier, they do not claim public spaces (as opposed to gay men) and they are therefore often made invisible (and cannot create LGBTQ+ neighbourhoods only "spatial concentrations"). LGBTQ+ peoples are

overrepresented among homeless youth due to unsafe, violent and unwelcoming homes (Doan 2015b; Giesecking 2016; Abramovich 2016). The most predominant reason for LGBTQ+ youth becoming homeless due to family conflict over gender and/or sexual identity, especially for non-confirming identities such as trans (Abramovich 2016).

Giesecking (2016) further argues that it is a privileged perspective to think that all LGBTQ+ peoples can own their spaces and to own a home is therefore not realistic for many LGBTQ+ peoples. Many LGBTQ+ peoples are marginalized economically, politically and socially (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b) and live in the periphery of cities (Lewis 2015). Invisible LGBTQ+ spaces and peoples can be a result of women not claiming the public space for their sexual identities, people of colour intentionally made themselves invisible (due to higher risk of discrimination) or new queer spaces being created in peripheral areas (Giesecking 2016; Lewis 2015). Lewis (2015) connects this issue of invisibility to a risk of decreasing safety in LGBTQ+ spaces and inaccessibility to find support, services and community.

GENTRIFICATION

There is an ongoing discussion in research about the causes of decline of so-called "gayborhoods." Giesecking (2016), Doan (2015), Winkle (2015) and Lewis (2015) all explain processes of gentrification as possible causes for the decline of LGBTQ+ neighbourhoods, a process which increases rents and property values and therefore displaces those who no longer can afford it. Redevelopment, preservation and tourism can also lead to gentrification (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015). Particularly vulnerable groups for displacement are:

- LGBTQ+ youth who are priced out
- Transgender people who face the most employment discrimination (Doan 2015b)

- Women due to lower income, and
- People of colour due to lower income and higher unemployment rates (Giesecking 2016)

Doan (2015b) further argues that LGBTQ+ peoples may then move to areas with affordable housing, which can displace other vulnerable minority groups (e.g., refugees) who may not be resilient to changes.

When both people and their services are displaced, it limits the possibilities of creating safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ peoples to seek community and support (Doan 2015b). Lewis and Doan (2015;

2015b) argue for “post-gay” identities being a potential reason of the decline, where LGBTQ+ peoples prefer to reside in other neighbourhoods and use the Internet as a virtual networking and community space.

LGBTQ+ spaces are often temporary and fluid but a physical space associated with LGBTQ+ communities are bars and clubs: many have been forced to close due to the effects of gentrification. Giesecking (2016) points out how different identities are more welcomed in some spaces. For example, transgender female to male not being welcomed in “women only” lesbian bars or “male only” gay bars and how transgender male to female and drag queens are mostly welcomed in male gay men bars.

Consequently, new queer spaces are being created in the periphery of cities. Lewis (2015) argues these are more inclusive than “gay villages” due to the latter being commercialized and home to mostly white gay and heterosexual middle class men. Doan (2015), Anacker and Nusser (2015) also point out gay neighbourhoods as excluding lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people of colour and poor. Lewis (2015) further explains the threat of these new (and old) LGBTQ+ spaces as higher maintenance, zoning regulations and veto power can create gentrification effects. Davie Village is an example of an LGBTQ+ neighbourhood currently being priced out (Lewis 2015) due to housing inflation in Vancouver.

HETERONORMATIVE PLANNING

It is important to understand the diverse population of LGBTQ+ peoples (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015a; 2015b) to understand their diverse needs (Doan 2015a). This has particular implications for the planning field, as the literature suggests several ways in which planning can recognize, take its responsibility, and change to create more inclusive processes and spaces.

According to Frisch (2015 p.136):

“Planning has a responsibility to address systematic inequities around issues of sexual orientations and gender identity.”

Planning is responsible of and has the opportunity to challenge heterosexist norms. Lewis (2015 p.73) further writes:

“The practice of planning has thus become more important than ever to not just defend the interests and safety of ‘minority’ groups but to connect the most vulnerable populations with the spaces and resources they need to flourish.”

Participatory planning approaches are important in order to connect planners with the LGBTQ+ communities and to

understand their challenges and needs, and for planners to have the education needed to be able to facilitate these interactions

(Frisch 2015; Anacker and Nusser 2015). Frisch (2015) discusses how planners must change the power dynamics to include LGBTQ+ groups in the process and how this takes disempowerment of those in power in order to happen. These interactions have to take place both in diverse locations and with a more diverse inclusion of LGBTQ+ peoples (Doan 2015a). Furthermore, Doan (2015a) states that excluding “gayborhoods” need to become more inclusive. It is important to note that these changes of creating more inclusive LGBTQ+ areas should not be threatened by municipal redevelopment projects (Nach and Gorman-Murray 2015; Doan and Higgins 2011).

The literature also notes the significance of recognizing LGBTQ+ theirstory through commemoration and with an emphasis on movements and places (Winkle 2015; Lewis 2015; Anacker and Nusser 2015). Planning should strive to move away from neoliberal notions and focus on LGBTQ+ theirstory and affordable housing rather than commerce and economic development (Winkle 2015; Lewis 2015; Doan 2015). Winkle (2015) further states the importance of being aware of limitations and potential opportunities with planning for LGBTQ+ commercial districts.

Lewis (2015) lifts the responsibility of the police to research about LGBTQ+ hate crime patterns and the municipality to understand consequences with gentrification and their role in working with anti-discrimination regulations (Winkle 2015). Lewis (2015) further highlights the importance of sexual diversity education in outreach to marginal areas. Frisch (2015) additionally refers to Sandercock’s (2000) possible strategies in addressing differences in planning. Sandercock suggests revising the legislative and regulatory structures to be more inclusive and “to use aspects of the market to develop distinct spaces”: the latter has been criticized for creating class distinctions and being an excuse for redevelopment processes (Winkle 2015).

As referred to by Giesecking (2016) and Lewis (2015) in the previous chapter, it is also important for LGBTQ+ spaces to be visible in order to sustain important functions of community, gathering and support. Anacker and Nusser (2015) highlight important needs of the LGBTQ+ communities as: to be recognized, to be tolerant and safe, to sustain the role of LGBTQ+ businesses and organizations in creating community and gatherings spaces, to keep neighbourhood identity and enhance inclusion through decorative implementations and installations. LGBTQ+ spaces and services are not only important for their own residents but also for people who do not live there (Nach and Gorman-Murray 2015).

Giesecking (2016) have identified several important spaces for LGBTQ+ peoples, which planners should be aware of when creating and redeveloping spaces as:

- Political spaces: public spaces where demonstrations or activism can take place
- LGBTQ+ leisure: community and gathering spaces that are safe
- Cultural institutions: spaces in which LGBTQ+ people can meet and share their experiences such as museum, libraries, theaters and educational institutions
- Queer economies: equally as diverse and dynamic as the queer communities.

Based on the literature review, the following aspects will be the focus of the document analysis:

- Pluralism: is the diverse identities recognized?
- Intersectionality: challenges connected to intersecting identities and structures
- Representation: who participated or is represented?
- Needs: are the needs recognized, based on pluralism and intersectionality?
- Planning approach: what approaches was used, do they maintain heteronorms?



THE PROCESS OF JIM DEVA PLAZA

This is a description of City of Vancouver's work with Jim Deva Plaza. It is presented as a synthesized summary with a focus on the participation and design processes.

The Project	p. 40
Phase 1, March 2015: Issues and Opportunities	p. 42
Phase 2, April 2015: Conceptual Design	p. 43
Phase 3, May-June 2015: Refined Design	p. 46
Phase 4, October 2015: Detailed Design	p. 47
Phase 5, November-December 2015: Council Report	p. 50
Phase 6, Winter-Spring 2016: Construction	p. 51
Plaza Management	p. 52

The following review of the process are based on descriptions from the City of Vancouver. The language and terms used

will be further discussed in the next chapter. Below you can see a timeline over the City of Vancouver's process.

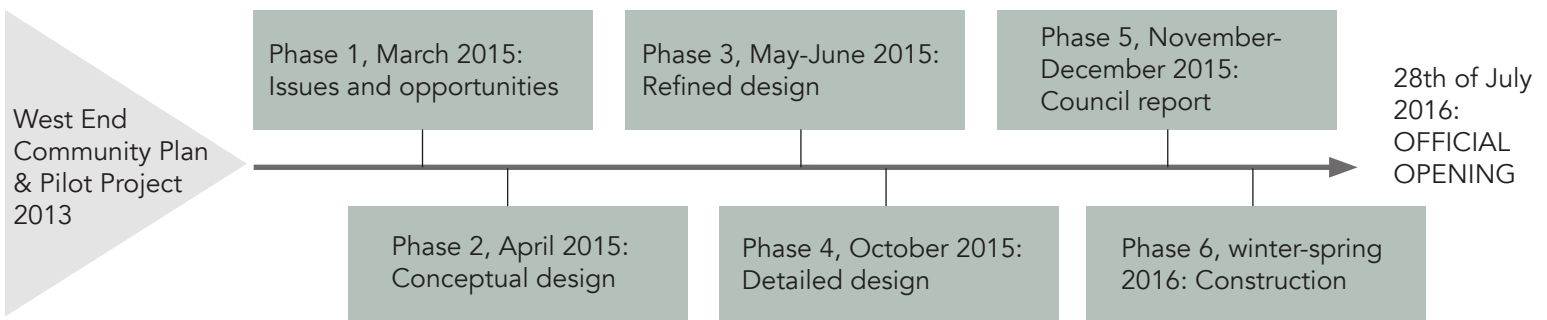


Figure 11. Timeline of process (By author)

THE PROJECT

Jim Deva Plaza was initiated as a pilot project during the development of the Community Plan for West End (2013), where the public voted for it to become a permanent plaza. There have been many stakeholders participating throughout the processes of the Community Plan. Participants could join in public events and were informed by mail, email, website, social media and newspaper ads (City of Vancouver 2013). Participants included:

- Residents in Davie Village
- Business owners
- Business Improvement Associations
- Community groups
- Seniors
- Youth
- Developers
- The LGBTQ community
- Multilingual groups
- Heritage advocates
- Service providers
- Academics

"Engaging many viewpoints helped ensure the planning process was inclusive and incorporated input reflective of the West End's diversity" (City of Vancouver 2013 p.16).

In 2015 the process of designing the plaza involved over 4000 participants (City of Vancouver 2015a, 2015b). The stakeholders (local businesses, property owners and the public) could participate in meetings, workshops, committees, open houses and questionnaires.

Throughout the documents there are several descriptions of the intentions with the project:

Enhance the character and identity of Davie Village: a “hub” for LGBTQ+ peoples and as a “gay village” (City of Vancouver 2013 p.38).

Enhance local business, nightlife, celebration, events, gathering and programming (City of Vancouver 2013 p.38; 2015e p.6).

A space for Davie Village’s “residents, employees and visitors at all ages, abilities, day and evening, rain or shine, all seasons” (City of Vancouver 2015e p.6).

Commemorate Jim Deva (City of Vancouver 2015a).

Recognize the history, culture and contributions of Vancouver’s LGBTQ+ communities (City of Vancouver 2015a).

Create a safe, comfortable and inclusive space (City of Vancouver 2015a).

“Ensure queer-friendly resources and programs are prioritized for LGBTQ communities, particularly transgender people, ethno-cultural groups, and seniors” (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101).

These intentions were to be reached by:

- Using colour and lighting (City of Vancouver 2013 p.38)
- Investments in decorative lighting, landscaping, public art and space for gathering (City of Vancouver 2013 p.77)
- Infrastructure for programming and events: water, power, lighting, grey water disposal and storage (City of Vancouver 2015e)
- A purpose-built facility for Qmunity (a resource center for LGBTQ+ peoples) (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101)

In the design phase, the following list of design principles was proposed based on input from the Community Plan, the pilot project and the involved stakeholders (The City of Vancouver 2015e):

- Permanence
- Tough but handsome
- Heart of Davie “feel”
- Colourful + spirited
- For the everyday and special events
- Universal accessibility
- Bike friendly
- Preserve all large tree assets
- Bright + clean
- Ample seating
- Weather protection
- Transparency to businesses

PHASE 1, MARCH 2015: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The work with the West End Community Plan and pilot project were the foundation for the Jim Deva Plaza project. The process of designing the plaza started with identifying issues and opportunities based on this work (City of Vancouver 2015a).

Issues:

- low maintenance
- inappropriate/illegal activities
- limited access for commercial vehicles

Opportunities:

- programmed space
- expansion of existing patios
- celebrate the LGBTQ community
- commemorate Jim Deva’s legacy

Safety challenges:

- activate the plaza with events
 - use lighting to make it bright
 - patios can increase eyes on the plaza
- (City of Vancouver 2015a)

PHASE 2, APRIL 2015: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Three conceptual designs were presented: **Abstracted**, **Linear** and **Sinuuous**. The participatory process was intended to “help create an inviting, dynamic permanent plaza which celebrates the local LGBTQ community.” In this phase over 600 people participated in open houses and 299 people answered the questionnaire. The Abstracted concept got the most support for its more organic shapes (City of Vancouver 2015h).

“Abstracted”



64% support 18% non support

Positive feedback;

- shapes on elements
- the flow, organic and natural feel
- the weather protection
- tree uplighting
- overhead element
- paving

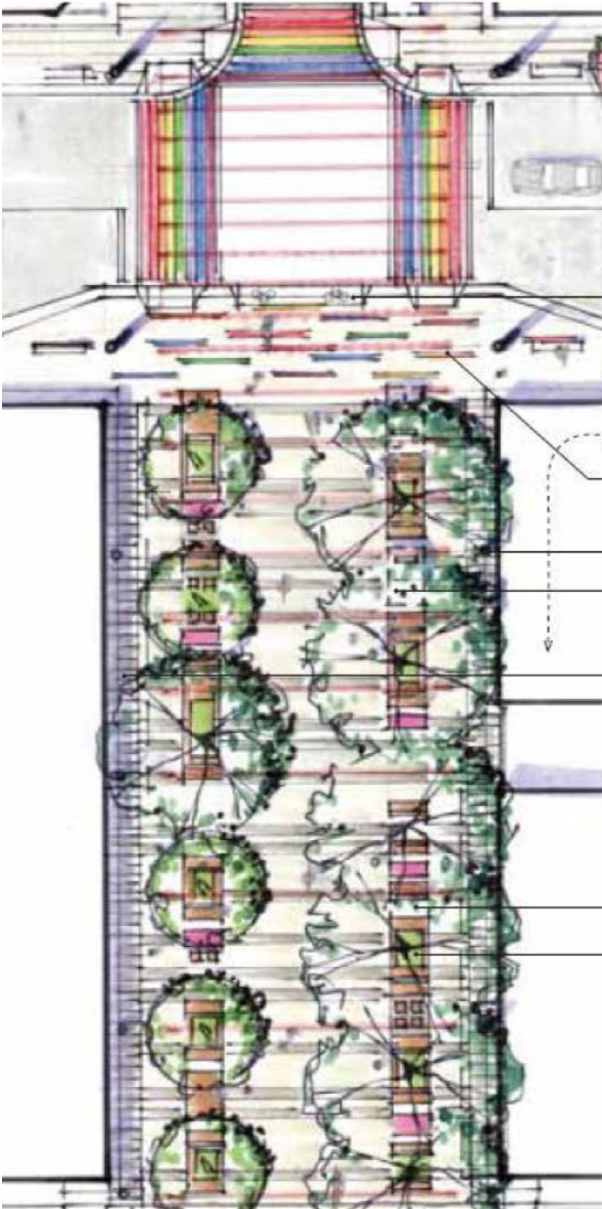
Negative feedback:

- need tables and seating with back support
- dislike of longevity/look of weather protection
- dislike of the lighting
- dislike of overhead element

(City of Vancouver 2015h)

Figure 12. (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015h, p. 3)

"Linear"



53% support 22% non support

Positive feedback:

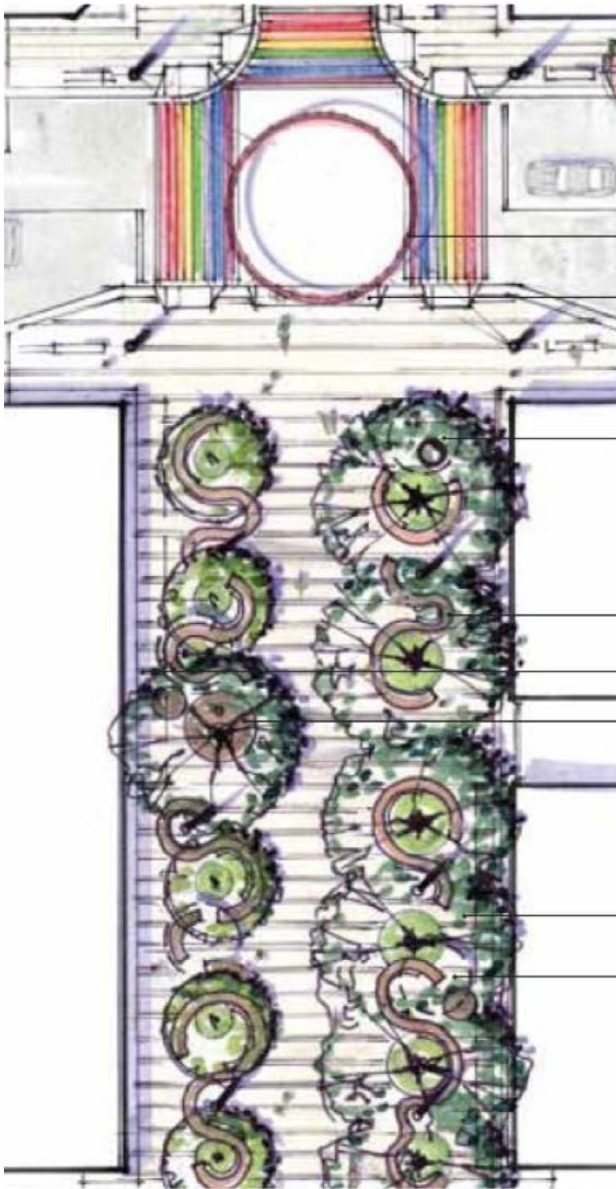
- lighting
- benches
- moveable furniture
- kiosk
- flexible design
- deconstructed rainbow

Negative feedback:

- too formal, dull and unwelcoming design
- not enough weather protection
- furniture should discourage camping (City of Vancouver 2015h)

Figure 13. (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015h, p. 5)

"Sinuous"



40% support 37% non support

Positive feedback:

- tree protection
- greenery
- use of colour

Mixed feedback:

- curved benches
- overhead element
- colours

Negative feedback:

- lack of communal seating
- impermeable seating
- no tables or back support
- looks dated (City of Vancouver 2015h)

Figure 14. (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015h, p. 7)

The participants suggested additional features as water elements, tables and seating with back support, more greenery, movable furniture, more weather protection, children's play elements, expanded patios, garbage bins, space for buskers and not to have disco ball (as suggested in some of the illustrations).

To commemorate Jim Deva's life and legacy, the respondents suggested commemorative plaques, naming the plaza Jim Deva, public art, art installation of Jim

Deva, rainbow colours, water feature and quotes or timeline in the ground.

The respondents added the proposal should include policing and safety, maintenance, bright and safe lighting, recycling facilities, children's play, tables for programming, lots of colour and green space. They further answered that the plaza should help build community and that improvements should extend through the village (City of Vancouver 2015h).

PHASE 3, MAY-JUNE 2015: REFINED DESIGN

A refined concept was suggested based on the feedback from Phase 2. This had a mix of seating and tables, movable furniture, tree protection with plantings, coloured uplighting on trees, new trees, paving from façade to façade, raised intersections on both north and south sides of the plaza, suspended cable lighting as ceiling, projector lights for events and a “halo of light” as the overhead feature over the crossings (City of Vancouver 2015i).

“Refined design concept”



72% support 12% non support

The most common feedback on the refined design included:

- wish for more movable furnitures
- more public art
- positive support for weather protection
- the space should have community information and an event directory
- more children’s play elements
- concerns about the policing and security

Others suggested the plaza should:

- not be used after 11pm
- not have amplified music or busking
- be a smoking free area (City of Vancouver 2015i)

Figure 15. (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015i, p. 12)

PHASE 4, OCTOBER 2015: DETAILED DESIGN

The City of Vancouver (2015d) stated that based on community priorities and site constraints, the plaza design had to change to a more linear design (rather than the most liked “abstracted” concept in previous open houses). Site constraints resulted in the separated patios were not possible at the moment, the overhead element needed more work to be representative of the areas character, the seating was constrained with fixed, standard benches and supplementary custom furniture and last, the “Jim Deva Soapbox” (speakers corner) needed to be further consulted (City of Vancouver 2015d).

The detailed design has a mix of seating elements, standard and customized playfully arranged with movable tables and chairs for free arrangements. The large trees are preserved and new legacy trees planted. The pavement is consistent from façade to façade to unify the plaza. Over the plaza a ceiling of light is created through suspended catenary lighting, with additional lighting from projectors. The plaza is designed with power outlets and water connections to facilitate events. The plaza swells into Davie street to increase its visibility and integrate social spaces of the village (City of Vancouver 2015d).

“Detailed design”

76% support 10% non support



View of Jim Deva Plaza Looking North from South Lane



View of Jim Deva Plaza Looking South from Davie Street



Bird's Eye View of Jim Deva Plaza Looking South



Bird's Eye View of Jim Deva Plaza Looking East



Jim Deva Plaza from the Centre of the Plaza Looking North



Weather-protected Kiosk including a Community Message Board and LGBTQ Outdoor Museum Cluster on the Northeast Corner of Davie and Bute (subject to further work)

Figure 16. 3D illustrations of detailed design (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015d, p. 12, 14)

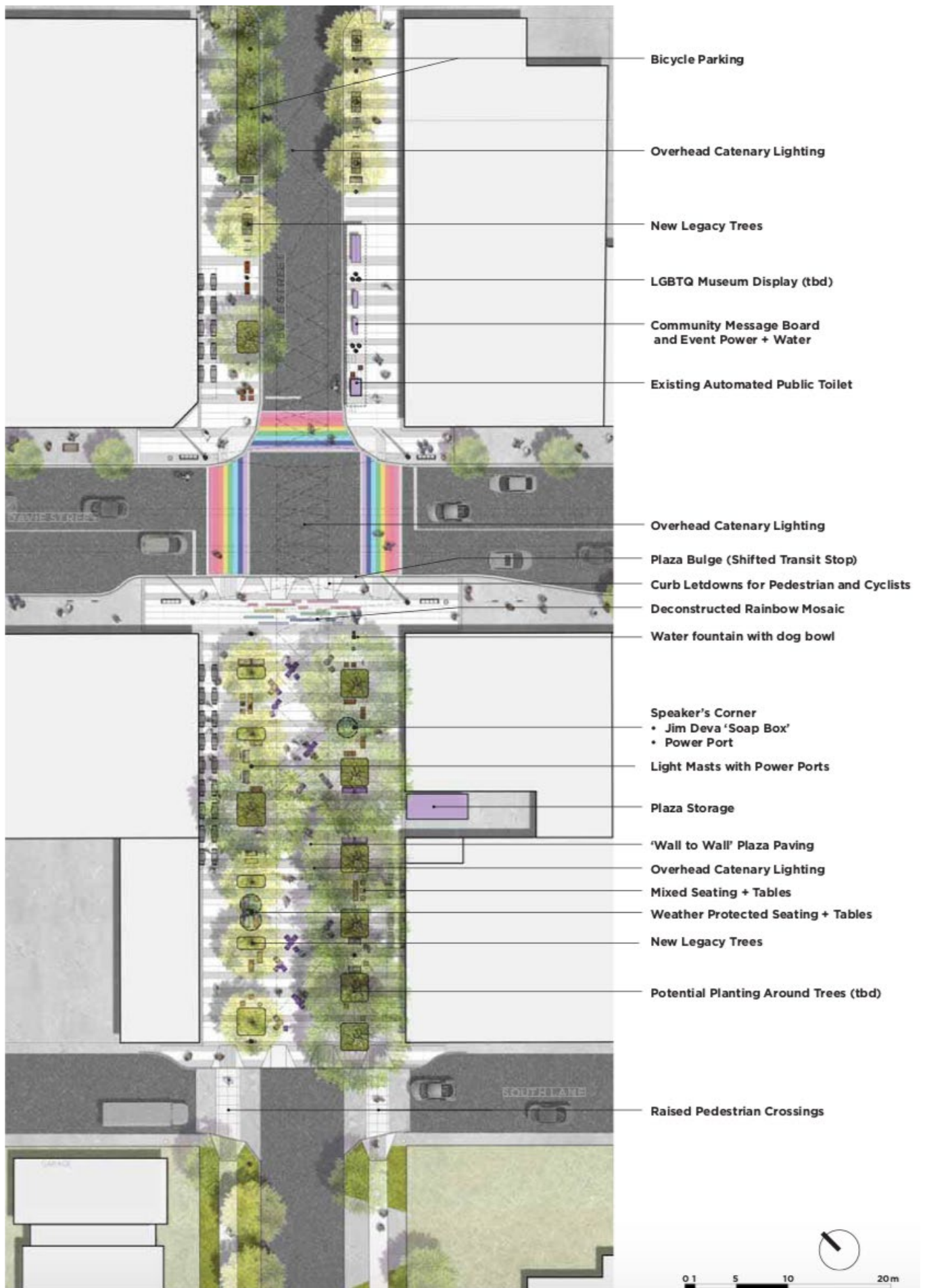


Figure 17. Detailed design (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015d, p. 11)

This detailed design proposal got 72% support. The City of Vancouver explains the 10% of dislike with two reasons that came up on qualitative (open ended) responses. The first one is that the organic design of the “Abstracted” concept was more favoured than the linear design. The second reason is explained as a “general non-support for the project for a variety of reasons” which were not stated in the document.

The feedback on the seating plan showed contradicting opinions, some wanted permanent furniture while others wanted movable furniture (to dissuade camping), some wanted standardized furniture while others wanted creative and customized furniture (City of Vancouver 2015d).

DAY AND NIGHT TIME

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 18. Day and night time illustrations (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015d, p. 12, 14)

Some of the most common responses from participants on additional feedback where:

- the wish for an accessible public bathroom
- general support for the project
- some had concerns about “camping”
- the police presence should be increased on the plaza
- a suggestion on making the rainbow crossings permanent with other materials and
- the plaza to be smoking free (City of Vancouver 2015d).

THE PLAZA

SECTIONS OF



East-West Section Looking South Into Plaza



East-West Section Looking South Mid Plaza



North to South Bute Street Section Facing East



South to North Bute Street Section Facing West

Figure 19. Sections of the plaza (PFS Studio for City of Vancouver 2015d, p. 13)

PHASE 5, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2015: COUNCIL REPORT

The report was given to the council with results of the process and the design. In this report, the City states (2015b) that they will honour Jim Deva through elements developed with Jim Deva’s family, friends and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee. The speaker’s corner will celebrate Jim Deva’s work for freedom of speech and there will be an information display of his life, legacy and contributions in the city, with the vision:

"A safe space, inspired by Jim Deva's lifelong passion for freedom of sexuality, gender diversity, and the fight against censorship. Where LGBTQ people and allies can meet, share ideas freely, dare to dream, and love unapologetically" (City of Vancouver 2015b p.8).

To recognize Jim Deva's contributions and the history of the LGBTQ2S+ communities in Vancouver, an "outdoor museum" will be developed on or close by the plaza. This project needs to be further developed with stakeholders like the LGBTQ2+

Advisory Committee, Vancouver Pride Society, Qmunity, Museum of Vancouver, Jim Deva's family and friends, BC Gay and Lesbian Archives and the City of Vancouver Archives (City of Vancouver 2015b).

PHASE 6, WINTER-SPRING 2016: CONSTRUCTION

During the winter and spring of 2016 the plaza was being constructed and on the 28th of July, 2016 the plaza was officially open (City of Vancouver 2016).



Figure 20. Jim Deva Plaza in January, photo taken from Davie St (By author).



Figure 21. Photo taken from the rainbow crossings from the east side of the plaza.

PLAZA MANAGEMENT

To manage the plaza a stewardship strategy was tested in a two-year period (2016-2018) (City of Vancouver 2015b) with the vision to "...guide how we partner with community stakeholders to ensure that the Jim Deva Plaza is a safe, vibrant, clean and comfortable space for everyone at all times" (City of Vancouver 2015g).

The responsibilities were divided between the West End BIA (promotions, communications and furniture), the City of Vancouver (infrastructure, sanitation and permits) and the Oversight Committee (governance and decision-making). The Oversight Committee includes representatives from the West End BIA, the City of Vancouver, the LGBTQ2S+ communities and local businesses/stakeholders (City of Vancouver 2015b).

The stewardship strategy was meant to maintain a safe and clean space with "a sense of security in the space any time of day or night" (City of Vancouver 2015b) with programming that reflects the local community with both passive and active events, to arrange events is stated to be easy and accessible. One guiding principle

reads, "The plaza should be an inclusive, welcoming and inviting destination in the West End for residents, workers and visitors of all ages and abilities, and should be public space at all times with no fees charged to get in," where a feeling of pride and ownership can take place (City of Vancouver 2015b).

The stewardship strategy has been evaluated as very successful after two summers of operation (City of Vancouver 2017). There have been over 113 events on the plaza supported by the West End BIA with a range of community groups hosting. Feedback on the process was that the use of the space "led to it being a vibrant, well-used plaza" (City of Vancouver 2017 p.9). Their suggestions to improve included better communication, coordination and a more balanced programming of the plaza (active and passive use).



DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

This chapter critically reviews the City of Vancouver's documents related to the process and design of Jim Deva Plaza. The focus are on the following topics; pluralism; intersectionality; representation; needs; planning approach. The arguments are supported by the literature review presented earlier in this thesis.

Pluralism	p. 54
Intersectionality	p. 54
Recognizing the Needs	p.55
Heteronormative Planning	p. 55
Context	p. 58
Design	p. 59
Management	p. 61

PLURALISM

Pluralism (explained on page 35) is important for understanding spaces, communities and people with all their diversities. If “LGBTQ+” is seen as singular, there are a lot of places and people being made invisible. Another consequence can be homonormativity, where generalized experiences fail to include LGBTQ+ differences and intersectionalities.

From what can be seen in the studied documents, the City of Vancouver failed to recognize the diversity of the LGBTQ+ population, which differs in age, gender identities, sexual identities, race, ethnicities, immigration status, and intersections of identities (Doan 2015a). This is both shown in their language where the LGBTQ+ is often referred to as a singular community:

“a hub for the city’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community” (City of Vancouver 2013 p.7)

In their questionnaires they ask participants to identify as “man”, “woman”, “transgender” or “other” (City of Vancouver 2015d: 2015h; 2015), which is an example on how other people, than suggested in the form, can be made invisible. The

demographics (see Figure 22) presented by the City of Vancouver do not show the plurality of the population and specifically does not show whose voice got heard from the LGBTQ+ communities.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Peoples’ intersecting identities are of big importance to understand different experiences of discrimination and differences in access or inclusion in planning processes and spaces.

The City of Vancouver does not review, in the analyzed documents, how public input reached a broader spectrum of LGBTQ+ communities. The consequences if a narrow group of people (e.g., white gay middle-

class men who predominantly live in Davie Village) participated is that important input can have been (unintentionally) ignored or neglected. A bigger effort to reach LGBTQ+ peoples with intersecting aspects of being young, old, poor, unemployed or non-white would have made the public input more representative of the LGBTQ+ population.

RECOGNIZING THE NEEDS

The City (2013) recognizes that it is important to create an inclusive space for “queer communities” by acknowledging the importance of safety, acceptance, welcoming spaces, public facilities, and support and investments for organizations. Specifically, they identified the following issues and challenges:

- The need for “more inclusive spaces for LGBTQ seniors” (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101)
- Improved facilities for non-profit organizations (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101)
- Qmunity (a resource center for LGBTQ+ peoples) is pointed out to be in need of a purpose-built facility to be able to continue supporting the large community they reach out to every year (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101).

The needs were very shortly identified to some LGBTQ+ peoples, seniors and the function of non-profit organizations. The listed issues from the pilot project (see p.x) is more focused on the management of the place and does not seem grounded in the issues LGBTQ+ people are facing in public spaces.

The City of Vancouver has identified LGBTQ+ seniors but do not show an in-depth understanding of their specific challenges or needs. The life experiences of LGBTQ+ seniors can lead to their concerns about aging (TLCH 2008). Their accessibility to community and health care are essential.

As for LGBTQ+ people not living in Davie Village, it is important to reach gathering spaces and health care where non-profit organizations are of big importance for LGBTQ+ peoples within and outside of Davie Village.

It is important to recognize the experiences LGBTQ+ peoples have been through with criminalization, violence, discrimination, HIV/AIDS and unemployment, to mention a few from the previous chapters. The City of Vancouver (2015a) state in their document, they want to “celebrate the LGBTQ+ community”, but does not recognize the LGBTQ+ theirstory, challenges or celebrations. In the identified issues and opportunities the City of Vancouver (2015a) had the opportunity to recognize theirstory and acknowledge the challenges and needs LGBTQ+ peoples face today. As for example Doan (2015) and Giesecking (2016) points out there are inequalities in employment between genders and LGBTQ+ identities with the consequences of poverty, not affording the housing market and the use of public spaces. Gentrification is another aspect that can threaten the area in which Jim Deva Plaza is located through redevelopment projects and branding to increase tourism (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015). This important aspect cannot be found in any of the reviewed documents from the City of Vancouver.

HETERONORMATIVE PLANNING

While the process of designing the plaza in 2015 involved over 4000 participants (City of Vancouver 2015a, 2015b), the gathering of “many” viewpoints does not indicate diversity.

“Engaging many viewpoints helped ensure the planning process was inclusive and incorporated input reflective of the West End’s diversity” (City of Vancouver 2013 p.16).

This illustrates that transparency of the documents is somewhat questionable, where important feedback from the public sometimes seems neglected (e.g., preferred plaza design). There is further no explanation of the level of participation, what aspects that were important for different groups or how to make sure everyone’s voice got heard, most importantly in this project, the LGBTQ+ communities.

One of my biggest critiques of the participation process is the data collected on the respondent’s demographics (see Figure 22 on next page). First of all, the demographics are not connected to the answers – i.e. we do not know who wanted what, what response belonged to someone identifying as LGBTQ+ or how represented the LGBTQ+ communities were. Second, there is no explanation on how they used the demographics or a reflection on who participated (mostly middle-aged men). Third, the demographics do not represent the diversity of the LGBTQ+ peoples, i.e. participants could only identify as “male”, “female”, “transgender”, “other” or “don’t want to answer.” This shows both a lack of understanding of the difference between gender and sexual identities and an exclusion of the majority of the LGBTQ+ identifying people. The City of Vancouver identified the importance of access to public space for youth and seniors (City of Vancouver 2013); still they didn’t manage to reach out to youth at all. While it was mentioned that youth participated in the process, the demographics (Figure 22) showed that youth made up less than 1% of the respondents in the design process.

As an example on how an organization can work with LGBTQ+ aspects, I studied the Toronto Long-Term Care Homes & Services (TLCH) work with LGBTQ+ seniors. They

developed a framework and toolkit on how to change their approach and how to create welcoming and safe spaces for LGBTQ+ seniors. This can be seen as an example on both how the City of Vancouver could have made a similar toolkit or program for working with and for LGBTQ+ peoples and to question their own approaches.

TLCH (2008) suggest to identify systemic issues by reviewing policies and guidelines the organization use by valuing diversity which is inclusive of LGBTQ+ gender and sexual identities, using anti-discrimination policies that are well understood by staff and to increase knowledge about the issues. The governance, in this case the planners, project leaders and politicians, have to take the responsibility in creating awareness and knowledge among its employers and to create spaces for doing so.

As Sandercock (2003) argues, it is important to understand how shared stories can impact and be valuable for the planning practice. This is an approach that suits a situation where a minority group is the focus group, as the common experiences can provide a richer understanding for the social, cultural and physical environments. The stories need to be representative of the diverse group of people LGBTQ+ includes and they need to be seen as a chance to learn from each other (Sandercock 2003). The stories can also challenge dominant norms and if the stories are not shared or heard it makes it harder to identify these norms. In the public process the City of Vancouver hosted throughout this project, the public got a chance to share their input and opinions on suggested implications, they were asked questions about design, activities and maintenance. Yet as seen in the feedback and the demographics, there is a lack of representation of

DEMOGRAPHICS

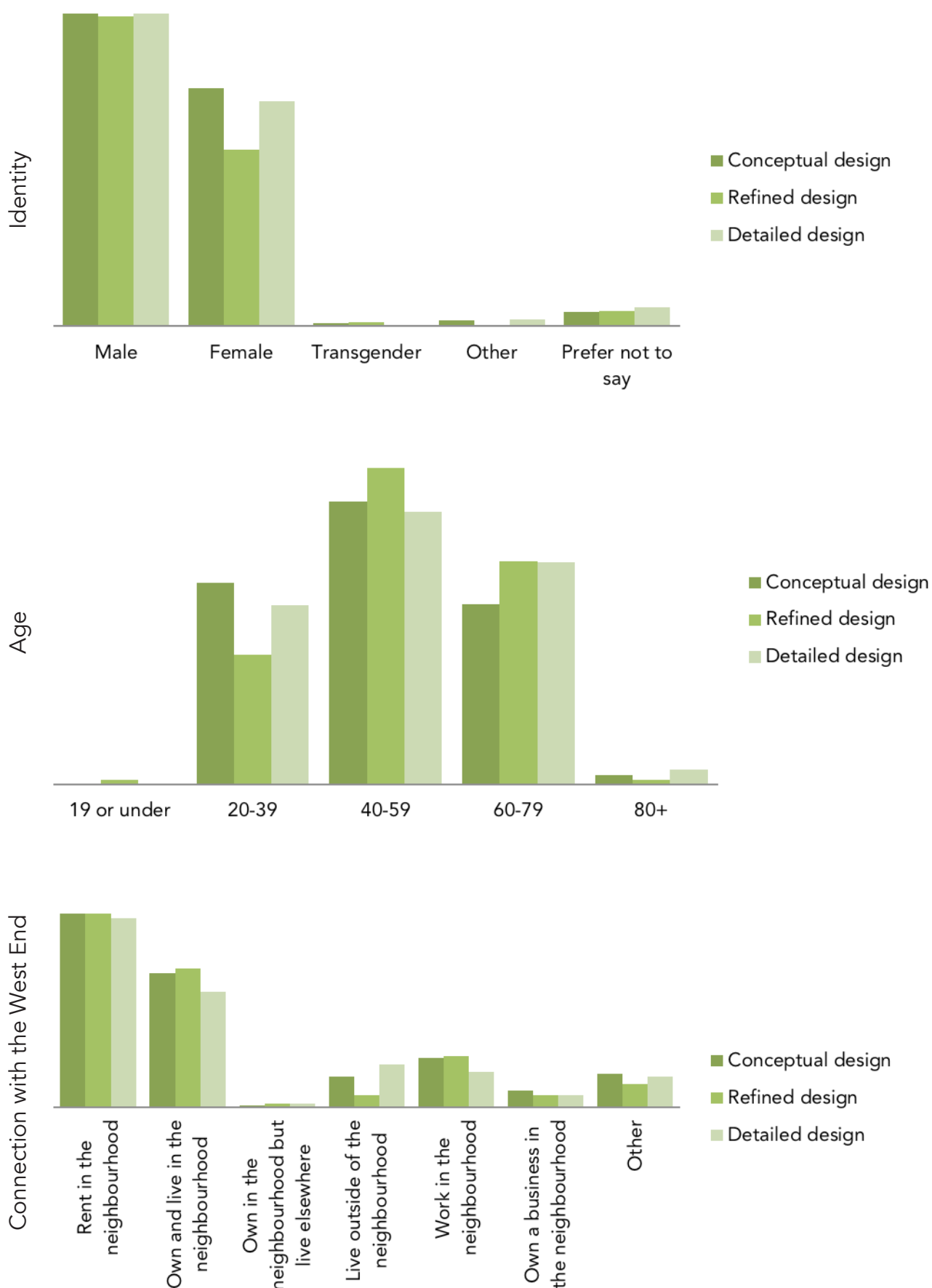


Figure 22. Demographics. All numbers are based on data collected by the City of Vancouver during their participation process (2015d; 2015h; 2015)

LGBTQ+ perspectives. There is a lack of accomplishment of reaching out to the most marginalized LGBTQ+ communities, or at least elevated their voices in the process. The documents and processes in this project leave me wondering:

- Whose voices are being told? Is it the planners, the population of the West End, the middle-aged men or the LGBTQ+ peoples?

CONTEXT

The City of Vancouver shortly go through the history of the space and the importance of the LGBTQ+ communities and Jim Deva's work in their documents. Many problems the LGBTQ+ peoples have experienced are understood within the context of the space. In this case, the legislative restrictions and criminalization of LGBTQ+ peoples have discriminated their use of public spaces and have shaped the societal climate in which heterosexuality still is the norm (see Chapter 3). The context is important both to understand experienced issues and tensions but also in order to identify what to celebrate of the LGBTQ+ communities.

As many of the authors underline (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015 and Lewis 2015) the impacts of redevelopment projects, gentrification and increased rents and prices on the LGBTQ+ peoples are not

mentioned in the documents, neither is there to find any sort of risk analysis with the project. As Doan (2015), Anacker and Nusser (2015) and Lewis (2015) write, the "gay village", is exclusive of many people in the LGBTQ+ communities. Changes to the area could have been made with intentions to include these people. Although, this could not be found in the process.

Davie Village is not only important to the people living within the area, but also for the greater Vancouver's LGBTQ+ peoples. It is the center of where gathering spaces and services directed to LGBTQ+ peoples are found, where LGBTQ+ peoples can find community, friends, relationship and support. In the Community Plan (2013), these services are acknowledged as following:

"Davie Village has a number of social serving non-profits for LGBTQ folks facing safety and inclusion challenges. It is precisely these opportunities for involvement within an inclusive community that has established the West End's presence as an LGBTQ hub" (City of Vancouver 2013 p.96-97)

"Davie Village has long been recognized by the LGBTQ community as a safe and accepting place that celebrates differences and diversity." (City of Vancouver 2013 p.101)

While it is identified that Davie Village is safe and accepting for LGBTQ+ peoples and seen as an inclusive community, it is not stated where these strong perspectives come from the transparency and trustworthiness of these powerful statements is therefore questionable. To claim Davie Village as safe and accepting

for the LGBTQ+ peoples are big statements but also responsibilities. A follow-up from these statements to the process of Jim Deva Plaza could potentially have given a better understanding on the communities' needs of the space and possibly shown how to (keep) Davie Village safe and accepting.

DESIGN

Throughout the documents there are several descriptions of the project's goal, vision, intentions, design principles and policies (see Chapter 8). These are sometimes difficult to understand and the listed approaches on how to reach the goals and intentions are a bit hard to follow. The City of Vancouver explains the implementation as through using decorative colour, lights

and art, in making sure the space can facilitate gathering events and to build a facility for Qmunity (City of Vancouver 2013; 2015e). Some of these explanations and illustrations can be seen as perpetuating stereotypes of the LGBTQ+ peoples as "colourful, disco loving, flamboyant".

"Its distinct flavour as the gay village will be recognized and celebrated through the use of colour and lighting, and enhanced as a space for local celebration, events, and gathering. Community events and programming will be encouraged and supported." (City of Vancouver 2013 p.38)



Figure 23. An early illustration of the plaza (City of Vancouver 2013, p.39)

The use of colour is also listed in the design principles (City of Vancouver 2015e), where a few points as “Tough but handsome”, “colourful and spirited” or “Heart of Davie Feel” are not understandable from an “outsider’s” perspective. There is no clear explanation to be found on how these will be implemented or carried out in the project.

In the illustrations we see rainbows, a disco ball and dancing people, all of which are stereotypically “gay”. We do not see representations of the diverse population counted to the LGBTQ+ communities. Where are the people of colour, the differently abled and non-traditional identity expressions? It is important to understand what about the “identity” of Davie Village there is to enhance before designing it - why enhance stereotypes?

“While contemporary planning theorists have begun to incorporate theories of difference and multiculturalism within planning, planning practice still needs to build in inclusive language in regard to sexual orientation. Recognition is the first step to a transformational practice.” (Frisch 2015 p.130)

The use of colour and lighting can be used to mark the area and enhance its identity but as Winkle (2015) argues, a “themed” space can also cause gentrification through redevelopment and tourism. To use symbolism can indicate an LGBTQ+ friendly and welcoming space, but as Bain, Payne and Isen (2015) say, another perspective is the “non-material” and “embodied” expressions of queer space. A space that is made through building community through memories, stories, and social activities (Bain, Payne and Isen 2015). The design can play an important role in creating spaces that can facilitate different queer processes. To be inclusive, safe, accessible and accepting, to be flexible and change over time, to be diverse, undefined or norm challenging – but a good design does not automatically mean it is going to be a queer space, it is the people and their activities that creates this space.

Representation in the design is significant when the City of Vancouver wants to celebrate the LGBTQ+ theirstory and the legacy of Jim Deva. This is shown through art installations and the use of colour in pavement, the rainbow crossings and lights. In the final report (City of Vancouver 2015b) it is stated that an LGBTQ+ outdoor museum will be further investigated. The art installations in the space (the megaphone, signs and temporary exhibitions) all celebrate or encourage the work Jim Deva and the communities have done and keep doing for LGBTQ+ rights. It is not clear if this is a part of the outdoor museum or not. The outdoor museum would extend the recognition and celebration of LGBTQ+ theirstory, it could be used to further spread awareness and showing the rights and issues being fought for. In the next chapter, Site analysis, there is a more thorough analysis of the plaza.

The stewardship strategy's vision was, among other aspects, to create a safe, inclusive and welcoming space for everyone at all times. A space that would give people a feeling of pride and ownership (City of Vancouver 2015b). Different stakeholders were involved in the management, as for representatives from the LGBTQ+ "community" (City of Vancouver 2015b). The evaluation of the management seemed positive, a large amount of events had been held, but how easy and accessible is it for anyone to arrange something? Non-profit organization that do not have enough resources may not agree with the space being easy and accessible to use, when in order of doing so they have to apply and pay for a permit. A question that remains unanswered is whether this limits the support organizations close to the plaza have to spontaneously and freely use for their LGBTQ+ activities.

Another question that the management of the plaza brings up is if it meets the needs of the LGBTQ+ communities using the public spaces in the area. The rules of the plaza might indicate otherwise. For example, the curfew of using the space between 2.00-6.00 to "solve issues" with "camping", e.g.

homeless people seeking protection over night, and "illegal activities", e.g. drugs, alcohol (City of Vancouver 2015b). As referred to by Abramovich (2016), LGBTQ+ peoples are overrepresented among homeless youth and due to discrimination, homo/transphobia and violence within support services they end up feeling safer on the streets. To work towards ending youth homelessness through the support services and making them inclusive of, or having services directed to LGBTQ+ peoples is the preferred solution. Yet until that can happen many of them are still on the streets. What does the intended inclusive space of Jim Deva Plaza mean to the LGBTQ+ homeless youth if they are seen as unwelcomed or as using the space illegally? Does the management of the plaza limit them from being close to the LGBTQ+ services they might need, or the communities they feel safe in? Addressing the issues faced by LGBTQ+ peoples and their needs must be understood in an intersecting and plural way in order to create an inclusive space.

10

SITE ANALYSIS

In this chapter the three different methods are reported; Lynch-inspired analysis; Gehl-inspired analysis and the intersectional analysis.

Lynch-inspired Analysis	p. 63
Gehl-inspired Analysis	p. 65
Intersectional Analysis	p. 68
Conclusions	p. 74

On the second site visit, after reading the City of Vancouver's documents, I identified some design features that I could not see on the plaza, as the weather protection, the light projector, the overhead feature (which had to be further planned) and the spotlights in the speakers corner. The design of the plaza is linear and has, except for the colours, a formal impression. The City of Vancouver (2015e) stated site constraints that limited the design of having more organic

shapes. From visiting the plaza again, I do not understand why the organic shapes could not have been used, as it was the concept that most participants liked. The final design has linear pavement, furniture, plant protection, art and suspended lights. The organic shapes could have been used in the permanent and movable furniture, the tree protection, the lighting, the colouring or with more plants.

LYNCH-INSPIRED ANALYSIS



Figure 24. Lynch-inspired analysis (By author, based on information from Map data @2018 Google).

To understand the design of the space I used an analysis method inspired by Kevin Lynch (1960), presented in text and maps.

Paths: The main movement is in the center of the plaza and along both sides, outside the tree rows. The center is a more active and social space and the sides more a passing through.

Nodes: The plaza itself is a node in the area. On the plaza people gather in the center and use the furniture. The movable furniture are put in the sunny side and used for drinking coffee with friends. Some were enjoying the sun, some were chatting, and some were drinking beer. The space was being used frequently by people walking through, and some turned around after almost walking to the other side. The speakers corner (megaphone) and the rainbow crossings attracted people reading on the art installation and taking photos.

Landmarks: There is a large pride flag on one of the buildings (Sandman suites) on the block before the plaza. It is visible from a far distance. Along Davie there are pride flags on lighting poles. The big rainbow

crossings are well known and therefore a landmark even though they are not visible until you are close by.

Visual barriers: The plaza is not visible until you are on the crossing of Davie Street – Bute Street because of buildings. The size of the plaza creates good visibility.

Physical barriers: Davie Street has heavy traffic, which is a barrier when to cross the street, and also contributes to noise. On the south end the plaza ends abrupt and turns into a calmer street. There are big tree protections (without vegetation under the trees) on the sides of the plaza and a narrow fenced off patio belonging to one of the restaurants. These do not seem to impact the use of the plaza or be barriers to movement.

Districts: The pavement makes the plaza uniform with clear plaza boundaries. Streets and buildings surround the plaza and the trees and ceiling of lights define the space very clearly.



Figure 25. Pride flag as a landmark.

GEHL-INSPIRED ANALYSIS

During this visit I observed how people used the space and what activities they were doing. There was people gathering and sitting down to chat, drink coffee, enjoy the sun or read. A lot of people walked through the plaza. Some waited and met up with friends. One kid was playing with a kick bike. Most activities took place on the northwest side of the plaza that was covered in sunlight at the time. The café furniture was moved around to suit the amount of people meeting up and to be able to sit in the sun. Some were sitting on the fixed benches in the shadow. Most people who stayed on the plaza was there at least 20 minutes, around 5 people was there over an hour.

It was a lot of different people on the plaza. I saw older people walking and sitting on the plaza, middle aged and younger were using the seating, a parent with their kid playing on a kick bike, people sitting alone, people sitting with others and a lot of people passing through. I also observed a lot of people visiting just to take photos on the rainbow crossings, but they did not pay much attention to the plaza. Visibly homeless people were not on the plaza at this site visit (last time there was a few homeless people on the plaza), although many sit along Davie Street.



Figure 26. People in the plaza.

I did a protocol based on Gehl's (2010) quality criteria, where I evaluated; the protection, as external factors like traffic, noise and weather; the usability, as the opportunity to walk, stand, rest, sit, see, talk, hear and perform activities; and the environment, as having pleasurable scale, climate and aesthetics. The evaluation scale is poor – okay - good.

Protection:

- Davie Street has a lot of traffic and is located close to the plaza with two monitored crossings. Although the plaza is located away from the busy road, and with a calm residential street on the other side. **Grade: Okay**
- Due to its closeness to the plaza the traffic noise is loud and the exhaustion pollute the air. The surrounding buildings and scale of space make it less windy but except from that here is no weather protection on the plaza. **Grade: Poor**



Figure 27. Gehl-inspired analysis (By author, based on information from Map data @2018 Google).

Usability:

- It is possible to freely move around on the plaza, the surrounding roads can be barriers although they have several crossings and entrances to the plaza from both sides. **Grade: Good**
- The space is open and flexible in its use which makes it possible to stand and stay on the plaza. **Grade: Good**
- Both the permanent and movable furniture gives opportunities to sit. This could be improved by weather protection to be used in more varying seasons and weather. **Grade: Okay**
- The plaza is not visible until you are on the right cross section. The plaza itself is open and small, unless there is an event happening there is possibility to see across the entire space. It is easy to see the art installations, possible seating options and activities going on. **Grade: Good**
- Due to the traffic noise with trucks regularly driving by it can sometimes be hard to have a conversation if being too close to Davie Street. **Grade: Okay**
- The open space in the middle of the plaza can be used for different activities that do not need a larger space. The pavement makes it accessible and usable for setting up for example tents or stages. A permit is needed to arrange an activity and this might limit some activities from happening. The plaza (without arranged event) is mainly designed to use for more passive activities as sitting down, looking at the art or meeting friends. There are no elements for playing or other programmed activities. **Grade: Okay**

Environment:

- The scale of the space is small and intimate with clear boundaries. The one-floor buildings, larger trees and ceiling of lighting define the room well. It is approximately 50 meters long and 20 meters wide. **Grade: Good**
- The plaza can offer some positive climate effects as the buildings can stop some of the wind and the big tree crowns can contribute to shadow in the summer. The plaza is very urban with its location in a dense neighbourhood, it is paved and do not have a lot of vegetation. **Grade: Okay**
- The colour of pavement, crossings, furniture and art, the lighting at night and the art installation provides sensory experiences for the visitor. Except from the colour theme, the aesthetic quality of the plaza is pretty basic with choices of material, furniture and function. **Grade: Okay**

The design of the plaza is flexible with its open space in the middle and movable furniture. People are using it as passing through or hanging out in the sun. From the documents about the plaza the weather protection seemed to be an important function for using the plaza even when it rains, these did not get built. The scale of the space is pleasant for more passive activities or smaller events. From the site analysis the space seems to be used by many different people. The commercial spaces facing the plaza are not integrated with the plaza at all. They could have contributed with a more vibrant space (especially at evenings), without privatizing the plaza. Most grades of the plaza are **okay - good** which indicate room for improvements but an overall good and usable space.

INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS

Jim Deva Plaza was, in addition to its physical structures and use, analyzed from an intersectional perspective. This analysis seek to identify the current norms of and in the space, and how inclusive it is. The first grading scale of each theme indicate a summarized grade of all the aspects.

SAFETY:

Poor —————  Very good

Level of orientation: As the plaza is small (20 x 50 m) and located on a junction along Davie Street, it is easy to find the plaza itself and orient oneself when being on the plaza. It is also easy to find alternative routes due to the grid system of infrastructure.

Poor —————  Very good



Level of visibility: During the day the sight over the plaza is good and because of its open space it is easy to be seen as well. Some of the businesses has windows, patios or use the plaza as their entrances which can increase the feeling of being seen. As Jim Deva Plaza has a clear LGBTQ+ identity some people might prefer the possibility to use the space and not be as visible to unknown people passing by, it might be seen as a threat and therefor unsafe. The vegetation on the plaza has good visibility under the tree crowns, the only thing covering the sight is the megaphone art installation.

During the night most of the businesses surrounding the plaza are closed and can therefore not contribute to feelings of safety (more people using the space, eyes on the space, open in case of feeling threatened). Although, the lighting in the area work well, Davie St is well lit, the patio is well lit and has warm colours which seem inviting and one of the patios leave their lights on after closing hours.

Poor —————  Very good

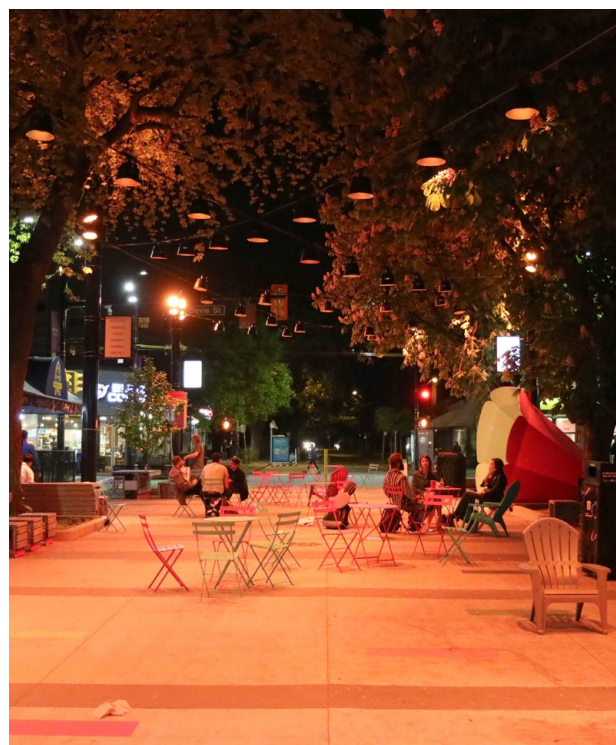


Figure 28. The lighting along Davie St and the plaza.

Level of hearing: During times of delivery hours, trucks increase the noise levels along with rush hours in traffic when Davie Street is frequently used. This can impact the capacity to hear. Children and people with hearing loss are especially vulnerable in these situations. In case of an event the noise levels can also be increased. During other times it is easy both to hear and to be heard.



Level of maintenance: The plaza has a well functioned maintenance in terms of furnishing it everyday during warmer seasons. The furniture, public bathroom and bike racks all look well maintained. There is no garbage or vandalism to be seen. However, the tiles look dirty from the trees or lack of cleaning after events and the large tree protections have low maintenance with a lot of weeds growing. The priorities of maintenance could not be valued at this time.



Amount of people: During the day it is always people passing through the plaza and as the weather have become more enjoyable, more people stay here. Many people gather around the furniture and as some of the furniture is movable it is flexible to arrange them in a suitable way. The space is flexible with its open space in the middle which can facilitate bigger gatherings.

During night time, the plaza still had people using the space to sit down and talk. There is an entrance to a gay club from the plaza, so when they have events the plaza get more activated. During the time of this analysis (22-23.30), several people came up to talk. Due to the curfew between 2.00-6.00 on the plaza, it might not feel as safe to pass through when being empty on people.



Level of security: I did not see any police officers or other security authority when visiting the plaza. Located on the same block as the plaza is the West End-Coal Harbour Community Policing, which is a local crime prevention driven by the community. I cannot estimate the impact of this service, but only speculate that this might feel safer for people who have experienced discrimination from police officers. LGBTQ+ people can seek to find safe spaces with zero hate or anti-discrimination policies, none of the informations signs in the plaza mention any of this or encourage a social responsibility in creating a safe space.



Safety for children: The plaza is located between two streets, one residential and one with more frequent traffic, public transportation and trucks. The levels of noise and exhaust might therefor exceed recommended levels for children during rush hours. Although the plaza does not have any play elements, so young children might not use the space without supervision. The possibilities of both sun and shadow among with the positive effects of the large trees, create a pleasant environment and micro climate.

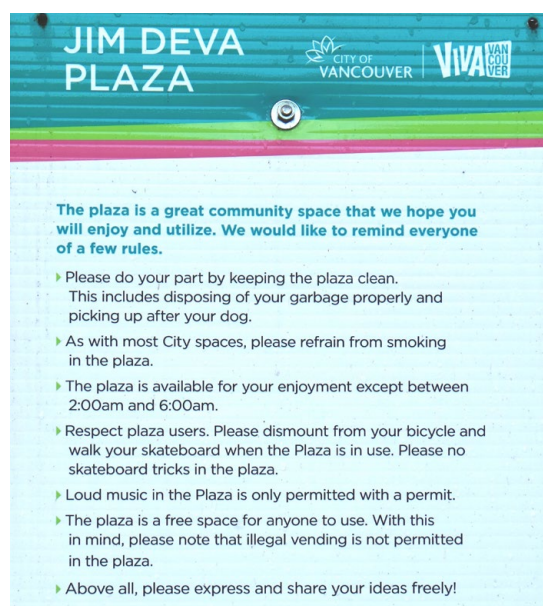


Figure 29. Photo of rules of the plaza.



Figure 30. Plaza seen from behind the Megaphone art installation.

FUNCTIONALITY:

Poor —————  Very good

Transportation: The plaza is accessible from sidewalks along Davie Street, Bute Street and Pantages Lane. Davie and Bute Street have signalised crossings while Patanges Lane, as a more residential street, has raised crossings. As seen in the map over local businesses and services, the bus stops are located close by the plaza with frequent traffic. The plaza is accessible with bike and has six bike racks located from Davie St (marked as hearts in the map). On Bute St a city bike station is located. The streets does not have bike lanes, only sidewalks and the street. The plaza is accessible by car, with parking along the street and a parking house close by.

Poor —————  Very good

Comfort: The area has a dense location of businesses and services along Davie St with residential areas surrounding. It is close to access services if you live in this area. In terms of weather, the plaza does not have any weather protections.

Poor —————  Very good

Services: In close proximity to the plaza are public transportation, grocery stores, health care, schools, shops and parks. An Anglican church and Qmunity (resource center for LGBTQ+) can be used as support services or gatherings. Located on the plaza is a convenience store, four restaurants, two hair saloons, a flower shop and a bar.

Poor —————  Very good

Public bathroom: One public bathroom is to be found on Bute Street, close to the rainbow crossings. It is well maintained but not accessible.



Accessibility: The plaza is accessible with its concrete tiles and open spaces. The movable furniture can flexibly be arranged in a preferred way, with a risk of blocking or narrowing the accessible paths. The permanent furniture does not have back or arm support, one table is accessible with wheelchair. There are two standard parkbenches located at the end of the plaza directed towards Davie St. The public bathroom is located in close proximity to the plaza, but does not qualify as accessible.

The information signs are placed too high up, with small text, not lit up and therefore not legible to people who have difficulties seeing. The lighting of the plaza is okay but the colours make it hard to distinguish contrasts between different materials.



Activities: The plaza is only programmed for passive activities as gathering around the furniture or passing through the space. Different events are arranged by a diverse group of organizations. The plaza does not have any children's play, but the open space in the middle can facilitate small activities.



Possibility of gatherings: The plaza is flexible for gatherings and used for events. It is easy to rearrange the movable furniture to create space for larger gatherings, although a permission from the managing organization might be needed. There is a cost for the permit that can hinder people from arranging events that does not have those kinds of resources. As the space is relatively small and open it can mostly be used for public events. The small scale of

the plaza and the strong sense of local community lead to the space being used as a meeting place. Even when visiting during night time it was easy to socialize and join other people around the tables.



Mix of public/private space: As the plaza is relatively small in its scale and open without any visual barriers, it is mostly a public space. The movable furniture makes it easy to rearrange clusters of more private gatherings, although people are always visible. The Megaphone art installation is used as a memorial both to Jim Deva, but also to honour lost friends and family of the local communities. The arrangement of furniture is intended for gatherings and can decrease feelings of being looked at when passing through (for example male-gazing).



Figure 31. Public bathroom.

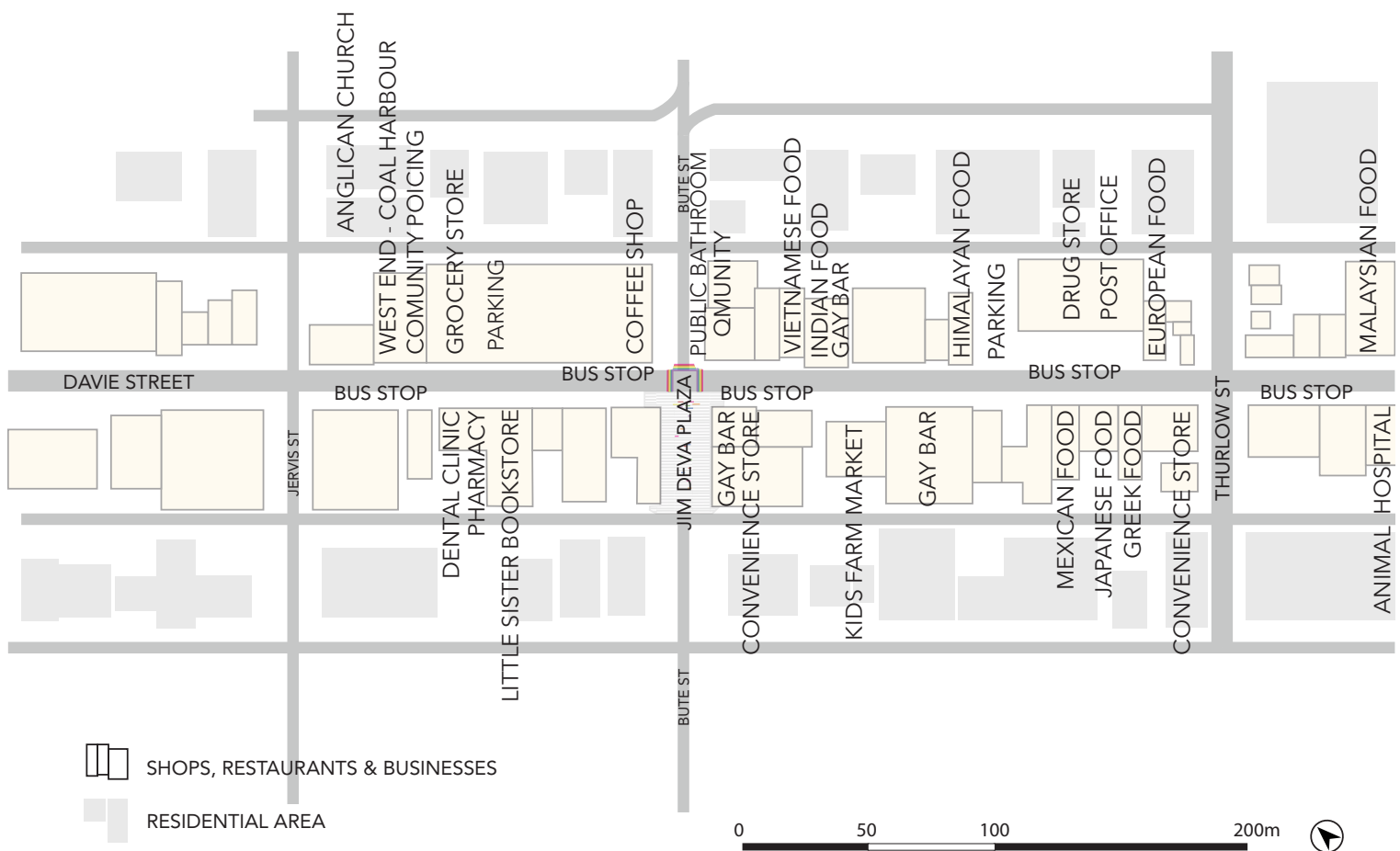


Figure 32. Map over local businesses and services (By author, based on information from Map data ©2018 Google).

REPRESENTATION:

Poor ————  ———— Very good

Gender and/or sexual identities: The plaza has a strong theme with rainbow colours on crossings, tiles, furniture, lights and art. The art installations have clear LGBTQ+ symbolism, related to Jim Deva, activism and pride. Besides the colours and art installations there is no recognition of the local theirstory of important LGBTQ+ happenings, which therefore make the design feel stereotypical. There is one information sign about Jim Deva and his work, and one sign explaining the rainbow colours of the pride flag. The sign of the public bathroom is not inclusive with its gender binary symbolism. The colours used come from the traditional pride flag, but there are several other flags that LGBTQ+ people might identify with more (e.g., transgender or bisexual peoples).

Advertisements in the area are directed towards LGBTQ+ peoples with events, products or use of colours. The proximity to services as Qmunity, LGBTQ+ bars and clubs, together improve the representation of both LGBTQ+ peoples and services.

Poor ————  ———— Very good

Age: The space represents people of all ages as being close to many everyday services, although there is no dedicated children's play area and the information signs lack legibility. The majority of the furniture and the public bathroom does not qualify as accessible which exclude people from using the functions in the plaza.

Poor ————  ———— Very good

Disabilities: Same as analyzed under age aspects, the area does not fully qualify as accessible due to lack of legibility of signs, inaccessible public bathroom and furniture. The sign of the public bathroom symbolises abled binary people. The services around the plaza might be located in facilities in need of renovation and without an elevator. Qmunity is one example that does not have an elevator. This inaccessibility can impact the representation of disabled peoples in the plaza.



Ethnicities: There are a lot of different restaurants and grocery stores in the area from diverse countries and cultures. I could not identify any gathering facilities or signs in other languages than english.



Figure 33. Information sign.

Religious and/or spiritual representation: There is no symbolism found on the plaza. There is an Anglican church in the area and Qmunity facilitate religious and spiritual ceremonies (e.g. muslim ceremonies).



Socioeconomic status: The plaza is free to use, and a good place to meet without the need to buy or pay something in order to be there. Some of the events might sell products or services. On the other hand it is possible to support local organizations and businesses on for example market days. To arrange an event, there is a cost to apply for the permit, which can be an barrier for people and organizations with limited resources. The location of the plaza is easy to access with public transportation.



Possibility for political activities: The plaza can facilitate demonstrations or other gatherings for political activities with its open space, the size can restrict larger events. The art encourage equal rights for LGBTQ+ peoples and a sense of pride for those fighting for their cause. The information signs and rules of the plaza could include guidelines for political activity, as having a clear LGBTQ+ identity (for LGBTQ+ activism).



Possibility for community events: The plaza facilitate many events. The location and size makes it a good place for local organizations to use for their events. The permit cost might limit non-profit organizations. The sense of local community can increase spontaneous gatherings and the flexibility of the open space and moveable furniture makes it easy to use.



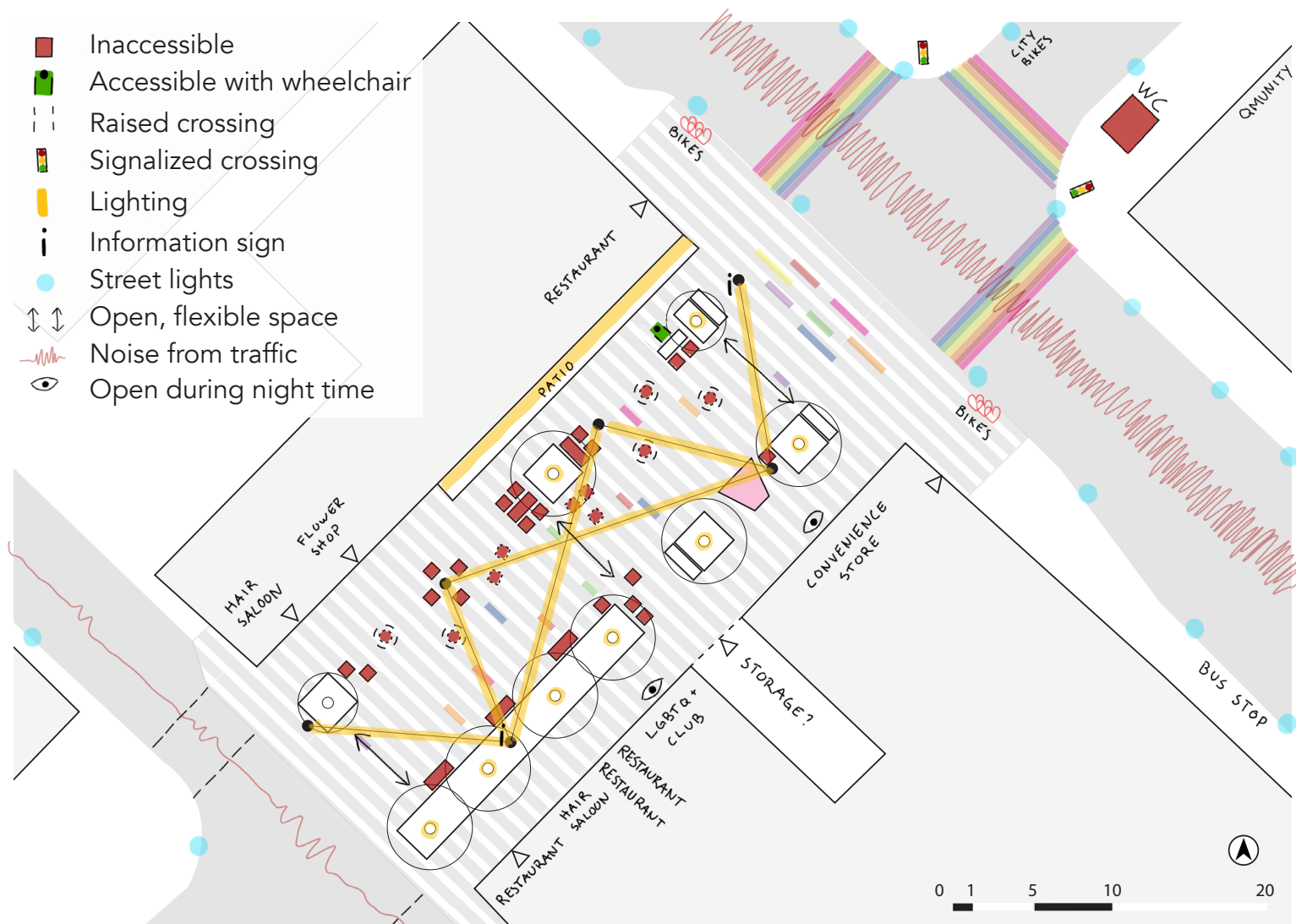


Figure 34. Intersectional analysis (By author, based on information from Map data @2018 Google).

CONCLUSIONS

The Lynch-inspired analysis shows the physical structures of the space and how these structures impact human activity and use observed in the Gehl-inspired analysis. The open space makes the plaza flexible in its use, and the small scale of the plaza and surrounding buildings creates a pleasant environment to stay in. The design and elements of the plaza are intended to be used for gathering around the tables or attending events. The intersectional analysis identifies more in-depth who the plaza is designed for and how intersectional aspects can play an important role in representation. The plaza has a permanent Pride theme which represents the LGBTQ+ communities, but without incentives to create an LGBTQ+ safe space it can be

seen as stereotypical. The analysis methods together prove the importance of context and people in creating an open and safe space for everyone. There is a strong sense of local community and thanks to the people and organizations, the social and cultural space of the plaza is defined. The norm can therefore be identified to local LGBTQ+ and straight peoples, from various backgrounds. The plaza can also be inaccessible for disabled people, children and seniors.

11

LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

In this chapter the stories of LGBTQ+ peoples are shared on their experiences of public spaces.

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Experiences	p. 76
Avioding Public Spaces	p.78
Needs	p. 78
Jim Deva Plaza and the Participation Process	p. 79
Participating in Planning Processes	p. 80

IDENTITIES

Eight people answered the survey with various and similar experiences. The participants could freely and openly share their identities, in order to contextualize their responses. The responses are reported in the categories, as you can see in the diagram below. The (-) symbol indicates that they did not specify that aspect of identity. The *n* demonstrates the number of participants who shared a certain theme.

In summary, six people identified as female, one identified as queer and one did not state their gender identity. Three people identified as Swedish living in Sweden, one as a white Canadian living in Sweden, one as a First Nations living in Vancouver, and three did not answer. In terms of sexual identity, two identified as LGBTQ+, two as bisexual, one as lesbian, one as gay, one as homosexual and one as queer.

Gender identity	Sexual identity	Ethnicity	Live in	Age	Occupation
Female	Lesbian	Swedish	Sweden	30	Student
Female	LGBTQ+	Swedish	Sweden	24	Student
Female	Bisexual	Swedish	Sweden	26	Student
Female	Bisexual	-	-	-	-
Female	Gay	First Nations	Vancouver	-	-
-	Homosexual	-	-	-	-
Female	LGBTQ+	White Canadian	Sweden	29	-
Queer	Queer	-	-	-	-

Figure 35. Diagram over participant's identities (By author)

EXPERIENCES

Those identifying as passing as heterosexual or cis-gender (*n*=4), did not experience as much discrimination as other people (their partners) who had other intersecting challenges based on racism or gender expression. One participant shared:

"I present as straight, so do not experience much LGBTQ2S+ specific harassment in public spaces – however when I'm with my wife I notice it much more. Longer stares, more visible judgment, whistling when we kiss, with comments like "you're turning me on" from men."

Some identified experiencing more discomfort when being with their partner (n=5) in a public space and therefore avoided showing affection (n=4). At the same time, most people (n=6) have experienced discomfort as long stares, visual dislike or negative comments. Physical harassments were also mentioned, one was described:

"...early in our relationship we got our faces shoved into one another when we were kissing".

Staring, visual dislike or negative comments are examples of microaggressions, which can cause depression or other mental and physical health issues according to Nadal (2014). Microaggressions are explained as the subtle discrimination LGBTQ+ peoples (or other marginalized groups) experience in their daily life (Nadal 2014). Further Nadal explains these acts of discrimination to be either unconscious, where the perpetrator is not aware of their acts, or unintentional, where the perpetrator does not realize

the negative impact of their act. This can explain feelings of unsafety, discomfort or feeling unwelcomed in public spaces.

Microaggressions can also have a large impact on levels of confidence in oneself and expressing gender or sexual identities publicly (Nadal, 2014). For example, one of the participants shared that they have become more comfortable overtime to show affection with their partner.

"My partner used not to like to hold hands with me in public when we first met because they were scared."

Several participants (n=3) shared stories of their partner's experiences, as being worse than their own. This is based on intersecting identities as ethnicity, immigration status or identifying as non-binary. As Giesecking (2016), Doan (2015) and Abramovich (2016) argues, LGBTQ+ peoples of colour, poor, non-binary and transgender are more vulnerable due to their structurally less

political and economic power, and higher risks of discrimination.

After learning about the experiences the participants shared it is clear that gender or sexual identity expressions is complex and impacted by many different factors, examples include if they are alone or not, and if they "pass" as the norm at the time:

"Unless I am showing any PDA towards my partner, I am fortunate enough to be "passable", so I personally have felt fairly comfortable in public spaces when I am alone, or on the down low with my partner. I however, do not feel comfortable displaying affection to the same gender in public spaces."

AVOIDING PUBLIC SPACES

Participants also discussed reasons why they do not use public spaces and what the barriers can be. Those who identify as cis-women express experiences based on sexism (n=3), and point out feelings of unsafety when using a public space when meeting men in groups, especially if they are intoxicated. Unsafety is also pointed out when being in a space with ignorant people (n=2), being far from home, at sport events or at night time.

"anything that combines masculinity, and alcohol is potentially a scary environment."

As men are the majority user of public spaces (Fast and Nilsson 2013), the experiences of feeling unsafe leads to women, gender and sexual minorities avoid these spaces. Especially during evenings and nights.

In addition to feelings of unsafety, the participants explain other aspects that make them avoid using certain public spaces. If the space has low maintenance (n=2), is inaccessible by foot or public

transport, or has a too corporate (privately owned) character.

The physical space can therefore play an important role in facilitating safe spaces. The level of orientation, visibility, hearing, maintenance, amount of people, security and alternative spaces or paths all impact the possibility for creating a safe space (Fast and Nilsson 2013; Boverket 2010; Svensson 2014; Global Utmaning 2017; PPS 2017).

NEEDS

What the participants need in order to use a public space is listed below:

- Representation: symbolism (n=3), no heteronorms (n=2), gender neutral signs, safe space stickers, visible pride flags

"...such small symbolism of a flag has a great influence. If there is no glimpse of flags or Pride-allies, you feel like an invisible minority... Being visible is IMPORTANT."

"I think representation helps for sure – it's interesting how I exhale more when I see the little pride sticker on office or shop doors/windows that say "this is a safe space"."

- Safety: zero hate and anti-discrimination policies (n=2), safe space (n=2)

"I feel better knowing when places have a "zero hate" policy."

- Inclusion: acceptance, inclusivity, welcoming spaces, diversity
- Physical space: mix of public and private space, vegetation

JIM DEVA PLAZA AND THE PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Out of the participants, some people (n=3) were aware of Jim Deva Plaza. Their reflections on the plaza include that it was a nice addition (n=2), and the character of the plaza is an important statement but that they would only use it to attend events. Overall participants were not aware of its history, purpose of function beyond the annual Pride festivals. None of them were aware of the public input process when it took place in 2015, but one participant has since learned more about this process. They discussed their thoughts on the process: a strength was that the public was involved, but it lacked in outreach to a more diverse group of people. They also identified a weakness of the process in that there has not been a follow-up to evaluate the space and if it is meeting the needs of LGBTQ+ peoples.

The absence of LGBTQ+ spaces (Giesecking 2016) indicates the importance of the kind of project and space Jim Deva Plaza intends to be. Because the so-called gay neighbourhoods are mostly home to white gay males (Doan 2015) the outreach to a more diverse target group of LGBTQ+ identities and locations are essential.

PARTICIPATING IN PLANNING PROCESSES

If the participants would be involved in planning a public space they would prefer a questionnaire (n=3) as being easy and safe to share opinions about LGBTQ+ aspects. Several answered (n=5) that they wanted to be involved as much as possible and early in the process in order to impact the decisions. They listed methods such as planning groups, committee, interviews, focus groups and model building as potential way to be involved.

"Planning group - so that I can be aware of the workings; or questionnaire - since they are accessible and easy to fill out"

"I think it depends on where the public space was. If it was in my neighbourhood and was something I could foresee using frequently, I would like to be more actively participating and take a larger stake, such as being on a committee. If it was not though, I may feel like I do not have a role, or "who am I" to dictate what that community needs – perhaps a questionnaire would be more appropriate in that context."

"Questionnaires are always a great way to get honest feedback from people - especially people with anxieties, or hesitation to speak their mind regarding LGBTQ2S+ things."

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AUTOETHNOGRAPHY PART 2

In this chapter I share my experiences and thoughts on visiting the plaza throughout and at the very end of this work.

Site Visits

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SITE VISITS

Date: Monday, March 12
Time: 16.00

I visited the plaza again in March to identify what I learnt from the City of Vancouver's process of developing Jim Deva Plaza. Through site analyzes I inventoried the physical elements and observed the use and activities of the plaza. It was positive to see a lot more people using the plaza and it was clear that it was because of the movable café furniture which people had adjusted to enjoy the first glimpse of the spring sun. Another realization during this site visit was, besides in time of an event, the space is only used for passive activities as sitting down on the permanent and movable furnitures, and as a passage to other destinations. The plaza could be more activated if the businesses surrounding the plaza interacted with the space, or if the art would be more interactive.



Figure 36. Photos from site visit in March, shows the moveable café furniture and lack of connection between the businesses and the plaza.

Date: Wednesday, May 16
Time: 18.30

When visiting the plaza in May, the summer heat and evening gatherings had filled the plaza. The large green trees framed the plaza and the scale of the space is attractive as being an open space with minimal visual barriers. When entering the plaza you are welcomed by a signed that says "Welcome to Jim Deva Plaza, please come and enjoy this special place...". If the West End BIA wants to emphasize the plaza being special, why didn't they take the chance to create awareness of what makes it special, introduce Jim Deva, the plaza or even encourage a safe space for LGBTQ+ peoples?

In the pictures you can see the difference in how businesses interact with the plaza, at this site visit a flower shop used the space to display their plants while the barrier of the fenced off patio was empty. Almost all furniture was being used at the time, placed sporadically with people passing through and stopping for a while to talk to someone familiar. It was nice to see how people used the plaza to have a picnic or coffee in addition to the restaurant patios along Davie Street, as you don't need to pay to use the plaza.



Figure 37. Welcome sign.



Figure 38. How the flower shop interacts with the plaza.



Figure 39. How the restaurant patio interacts with the plaza.

The plaza was being used mainly, what could be interpreted, as the locals and the main attraction for tourist still seem to be the large rainbow crossing. Every time I have been in the area I have seen tourists having photo shoots on the crossing but does not seem aware of the plaza with the same rainbow theme. I guess this can be both negative and positive, where the tourism in the area can lead to a risk of gentrification with higher prices on local services. In the same time the plaza sustain a neighbourhood feeling where the locals gather. I can only speculate on how the branding of the area with its rainbow colours are connected with an increase of tourism, but if that is accurate I am happy the plaza is not more overly rainbow themed than it is.



Figure 40. View over the plaza from Davie Street.

Date: Thursday, May 17
Time: 22.00

To visit the plaza at this time of day was interesting to experience its night appearance. The walk along Davie Street felt safe, many restaurants were open and we met drag queens on our way to the plaza. For me this is a sign of a welcoming area, to be who I am openly.

I was surprised how calm and inviting the space was with its warm lighting. There were several people using the furniture to sit and talk. I visited the plaza with my wife and her friend and we sat down around one of the tables. During the time we were there we met three new acquaintances. I felt more safe and welcomed in the space during the night than during the day which surprised me. It was easy to socialize with the other people in the plaza. Why I felt like this might be because Davie Street was not as busy as during the day and the people using the area at this point were mostly locals. I think the other times I've visited the plaza I have felt vulnerable as many tourists go there to take photos, and I don't want a space and the people using this space, representing the LGBTQ+ communities, be something to take photos of.



Figure 41. View over the plaza from Davie Street.



Figure 42. View over the plaza.



Figure 43. Changing colour in lighting.

During this last site visit I realized how nice the scale of the plaza is and how strong the local community is. The people I talked to shared how much they like the plaza because it is a space where local people meet, you can recognize people from the neighbourhood and there are fun events arranged regularly.

The LGBTQ+ club, with entrance from the plaza, was open at the time. A few people used the plaza to get some air and smoke, but it didn't feel rowdy or negative at all. To have an LGBTQ+ club located with entrance from the plaza make the space active during the night, and even if areas with intoxicated people can make me feel unsafe, the audience of this club made me feel safer.



Figure 44. View over the plaza from Megaphone art installation.

REFLECTIONS

Throughout the time of writing this thesis I have visited the plaza several times. It is clear how weather dependent the use of the plaza is. When I visited in January there were only the permanent furniture, but later on in March, the movable café furniture was in place. This encouraged more people to stay in the plaza, along with the warmer weather.

Brought up in this thesis is the consequence of redevelopment projects where neoliberal approaches can lead to privatization, gentrification and tearing down buildings to make space for high rise buildings. A space like Jim Deva Plaza might keep the character of the area based on a community initiative to make it a permanent plaza. The pleasant environment is dependent on the scale of surrounding buildings, and hopefully the local communities and character of the area are stronger than development companies' profit seeking ideas.

At the very first time I came across the plaza, last year in 2017, I felt a sense of pride and belonging. During this period of critically reviewing the space, I felt disappointed with its stereotypical theme. At the same time, I have become fond of the plaza based on my increased familiarity with its social and cultural space. I do wonder how the plaza would be experienced without the rainbow theme and instead being directed towards the LGBTQ+ communities through its events, art, information and activist work to create a safe space.

The experiences shared in the survey are all unique and important, and I can relate to many of the shared perspectives. I hope to be as aware of more aspects minority groups are challenged with and include them in my future work of planning or creating inclusive cities

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DISCUSSION & FINAL THOUGHTS

In the final chapter the methods and results are discussed. Future research questions are further suggested.

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“What can we learn from taking an intersectional approach to studying LGBTQ+ representation in the planning process, design and use of public spaces?”

Reflecting on the differences between my visits to Jim Deva Plaza, my knowledge about how to improve inclusivity for LGBTQ+ peoples through an intersectional lens has increased throughout this thesis. The intersections of being LGBTQ+ and a landscape architect have taught me how I can use the passion for fighting for social justice and equitable public spaces in my future work. From this thesis I take with me increased knowledge about LGBTQ+ theirstory and the intersecting challenges experienced based on gender and sexual identities; how representation plays an

important role in public involvement, illustrations, language, symbolism and use of a space to increase feelings of being welcomed and included. In broader terms this research has taught me to be aware and take responsibility over my privileges and that structures and norms need to be challenged in order to change for the better.

This discussion focuses on the implications of taking an intersectional approach and a reflection of the methods used in this thesis.

AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

The objective of this thesis was to emphasize the importance of intersectionality when addressing LGBTQ+ aspects in urban planning. In addition to the scope of my research question, findings of this thesis suggest implications of taking an intersectional approach in the following areas: the planning process, design, policy and education.

Implications for the planning process

The missing intersectional aspects from the City of Vancouver's process with Jim Deva Plaza corresponded with the literature review findings. These included:

- lack of pluralism which can lead to making LGBTQ+ peoples invisible (Winkle 2015)
- not enough recognition of LGBTQ+ peoples challenges, therefore neglecting their needs (Doan 2015)
- lack of local context and LGBTQ+ theirstory in order to celebrate the communities (Winkle 2015; Giesecking 2016)
- risks of gentrification with redevelopment projects, increased tourism and higher prices (Giesecking 2016; Doan 2015b; Winkle 2015).

The minimal knowledge of intersectional aspects is also shown in the City of Vancouver's public engagement process. The demographics illustrate narrow descriptions of identities, and an

unrepresentative involvement of the wide spectrum of LGBTQ+ peoples where factors such as age, socioeconomic status, ethnicities and disabilities are not taken into consideration. The review of the planning process made me seek to improve the inclusion of these factors when gathering the perspectives of LGBTQ+ peoples. For example, I developed my first survey question to provide the opportunity for people to share their plural identities. Their responses to this question substantially enhanced my ability to analyze the survey results through their unique contexts.

Urban planners and landscape architects have an important role in providing meaningful spaces for the public to engage in. If there is a lack in outreach or facilitating safe spaces for marginalized groups, the voices risk to be unrepresentative and the wellbeing of participants could be impacted (e.g., forced to identify or conform to binary categories in gender identities). Answers from my survey indicated a will to participate with high level of influence on decision making around public spaces, but they also demonstrated how more anonymous approaches can provide a safe space for sensitive or stigmatized experiences to be shared.

Implications for design

The City of Vancouver involved the public in voting for and giving feedback on proposed plaza designs. Although, the preferred design was changed due to site constraints, which ultimately neglected the peoples' voices. It is important to analyze if the design meets the needs of LGBTQ+ peoples. The pluralism in identities and perspectives led to developing the intersectional analysis of the plaza, where factors as safety, representation and functionality can determine who the space is accessible for.

Based on a critical review of the different

proposals, it appears to be overly themed and does not address the intersectional and distinct needs of LGBTQ+ peoples. Without a deeper understanding of LGBTQ+ aspects, challenges and needs of public spaces, this tends to be stereotypical. In addition to the design, it is important to be inclusive when illustrating the vision and creating the design principles.

Participants in my survey pointed out the importance of representation and symbolism for safety, where LGBTQ+ peoples and services are visible and rainbow stickers can indicate safe spaces and zero hate crime policies. The Pride theme of the plaza therefore does not only "celebrate the LGBTQ+ community", but also demands responsibility to create a safe space without hate crime, discrimination or microaggressions. While the art installations connect to Jim Deva and LGBTQ+ pride in fighting for equal rights, the information signs could have contributed to creating a safe space through social encouragement and responsibility, education and support for LGBTQ+ aspects.

At the same time, the plaza's physical scale and social climate creates a pleasant and welcoming space to be in. The users of the space indicated a strong feeling of community, which indicates that a sense of safety and welcoming is largely based on the people using it and their activities.

The representation of LGBTQ+ peoples is not only important in the process but also in how they are illustrated in the design, text and images. In Jim Deva Plaza, the symbolism through colour and lighting is only related to the pride flag. To use an inclusive vocabulary and leave stereotypical descriptions out can improve the notion of a representative process (Frisch 2015). This could be improved from within the planning department through changing approaches and educating the staff. Another approach could have been to involve LGBTQ+ peoples' voices as the base of the work.

Implications for policy

For planning practices to become more inclusive, policies and frameworks need to change in order to address LGBTQ+ aspects. One way of challenging the heteronormative planning practices, shown in this thesis, is to use an intersectional perspective. As Liljefors (2016) points out in the beginning of this work, policies play an important role in creating awareness among stakeholders, and therefore have an essential role in creating more inclusive processes and spaces. This thesis further suggests that planners can create tools and change policies to be based on an intersectional, LGBTQ+ inclusive and anti-discriminating framework.

The gap of LGBTQ+ aspects and representation in these areas demonstrates that there are opportunities for high level policies, such as the UN's sustainable development goals, to become more responsive to LGBTQ+ specific needs. This could have a large impact on how countries, municipalities and organizations commit to working towards building inclusive, socially just cities. It also shifts the responsibility of grassroots organizations and LGBTQ+ peoples and promotes allyship to support them in LGBTQ+ activism and advocacy work.

Implications for education

Since the aim of this thesis was to generate awareness and suggestions for urban planners and landscape architects, hopefully education can support us to challenge heteronormative planning and power dynamics to create more inclusive public spaces. There are opportunities to increase education of intersectionality and LGBTQ+ aspects, such as within landscape architecture or urban planning programs. During my education within landscape architecture, LGBTQ+ aspects and intersectionality has not been incorporated in the program's curriculum, nor has there been the space to discuss the implication of design proposals for different sociocultural groups.

This also applies to professional development. For example, the people working with planning processes and public involvement need to be educated and have the tools to provide safe spaces for the intended people to engage in.

Since safety has been a reoccurring theme through this research, police education, especially around LGBTQ+ specific discrimination and violence, is also needed. This education could also increase awareness on the need to reverse the historical discrimination that LGBTQ+ peoples have experienced from police (Giesecking 2016) and enact anti-discrimination policies to keep spaces safe.

METHODS REFLECTION

Most of the methods used in this thesis were new to me, which increased my knowledge of especially qualitative methods. Together the methods shaped a rich data basis and learnings: they provided several lines of evidence that speak to the need for challenging power dynamics and heteronormative structures in planning. At the same time, the largest barriers to fulfill the objective and aim of this thesis, and to answer the research question was the lack of knowledge about methods and data analysis. With this said, I would not make any larger changes in performance. If I could, I would have involved the LGBTQ+ peoples earlier in my work and letting them take a larger part in the result and in the critique towards the City of Vancouver's work with Jim Deva Plaza.

The document review demonstrated the need for transparent and authentic knowledge translation throughout the planning process - especially with those who participated or are impacted by the work. For example, the level of detail and retrievability of the documents reviewed was low, which confirms Bowen's (2009) critique of document analysis methods. This could have been improved by the City of Vancouver by publishing collected data from the public input, connecting answers with the demographics and including more transparency of steps in the design process. The retrievability was also low because of not publishing all of the steps of the process, this can be seen as biased selectivity (Bowen 2009) due to the fact that the City of Vancouver chose what to be published and open for the public to read. This also demonstrates the power structures at play in planning dynamics.

To find the missing parts I tried to locate the information from other involved organizations and stakeholders. It was difficult to navigate and find all phases and processes of the project, and the

documents were sometimes hard to follow. This made it hard to be consequent on the analysis. Furthermore, some of the statements and facts did not have a clear reference on if they were based on the planners, the politicians, the stakeholders, the inhabitants of West End or the LGBTQ+ peoples. This made the transparency of the documents low. The literature review, site visits and analyzes was used to strengthen or identify flaws in the documents.

Based on my use of the traditional methods, the Lynch-inspired analysis proved to be easy to use but was surface level: it was used more of an inventory to understand the physical space. While this method could have been more in-depth by using interviews as the original method suggests, I wanted to ensure safety of participants given the sensitive nature of this research topic. The Gehl-inspired analysis focused on people and human activities and was therefore more observatory. In contrast, the intersectional analysis focused on the context and qualitative information. This allowed a more analytical method to understand who can use the space and thus can deepen understandings of LGBTQ+ aspects. It provided the opportunity to apply a critical and in-depth lens to study the structures, systems and norms that impact public spaces. These identified structures, systems and norms determine or largely impact who is able to use the space. An important future area of research could be furthering the development of the intersectional analysis to identify and challenge planning norms.

The survey is an example of how inclusive planning processes can be with simple means in the language, data collection and analysis. If I compare my survey with the City of Vancouver's questionnaire, their lack of understanding and disconnection with intersectionality (e.g., if they identify as LGBTQ+) is evident. In contrast, my

survey demonstrates transparency and ease in connecting intersectional identities with their challenges, needs, barriers and experiences. It further gathered significant stories around safety and harassment, heteronorms and gender expression, that are critical to challenge in society to create inclusive public spaces.

The survey data could have been richer by gathering more diverse voices because the goal of this thesis was to understand complexities of LGBTQ+ experiences of public spaces. However it was not the goal to create a large sample size to be able to generalize findings. Taking an intersectional approach is centered on understanding the uniqueness of peoples' lived experiences based on their identities.

The autoethnographic part of this thesis was an interesting way of being transparent and researching through my own experiences. It provided space for my own reflection and allowed my standpoint and perspectives, both as LGBTQ+ and as a landscape architect, to shine through and strengthen the research. I realized, to develop a great skill in creating academically and scientifically great autoethnography, it takes practice and many good examples, which leaves room for improvement over time. The method is a great way to position the researcher in a personal topic, in qualitative research and in more creative styles of presenting results (Hayfield & Huxley 2015).

To find literature about LGBTQ+ aspects in the field of planning or landscape architecture was difficult, demonstrating the need for increased research in these areas. More specifically, there was not a lot written and those I did find was mostly in a US context with a focus on gay men and some on lesbian women. There is also a lack of more intersectional studies. To expand the knowledge base of this thesis, literature was used from the field of geography and sexuality.

This indicates the importance of researching about how LGBTQ+ aspects are interrelated and impacted by planning and landscape architecture. This thesis contributes to filling the knowledge gap and encourages future research topics to improve LGBTQ+ inclusivity in academia and practice. Other potential research directions include:

- The interconnections between LGBTQ+ public spaces and gentrification, polarization and homelessness
- Applying a decolonizing lens to LGBTQ2S+ peoples and public spaces (given the local context of Jim Deva Plaza on unceded First Nations land)
- Comparing these findings with other cities' work for LGBTQ+ inclusivity in planning and policy
- Studying how queer spaces are dependent on time and people (e.g., beyond LGBTQ+ designated spaces)
- The role of place-making in queer public spaces

FINAL THOUGHTS

The findings of this thesis emphasize opportunities to increase the inclusivity and representation of LGBTQ+ aspects in public spaces. The multiple lines of evidence identify the responsibility of politicians, decision-makers, educators and planners to create change and work in allyship with LGBTQ+ peoples and grassroots organizations through centering intersectional approaches.

By using collaborative approaches and engaging the public, LGBTQ+ peoples can share their stories; at the same time it is important for planners to be ready to hear their voices and respond to their needs. To do this, planners can start by examining their own positionality in society and roles in changing power dynamics - these could range from being transparent in planning, introducing policies for LGBTQ+ inclusivity and anti-discrimination, to evaluating projects in order to improve the use of spaces.

After this research, I am left questioning if an LGBTQ+ public space can be created through design. I conclude that a space can have certain components but it is never guaranteed it will be used as one by LGBTQ+ peoples. The components could be nearby social services, organizations, gathering spaces, businesses and entertainment for LGBTQ+ peoples. It could also be a space flexible for changes, a place that attracts a wide variety of people and safe from discrimination. After all, a space cannot be LGBTQ+ unless the people using it are. The bottom line for now is that the people *using* the space *create* the space - so how can we best empower LGBTQ+ communities to do this?

14

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15

APPENDIX

Attached in the following pages is the online survey.

LGBTQ2S+ Experiences of Public
Spaces

LGBTQ2S+ experiences of public spaces

Hi!

The purpose of this survey is to understand the experiences and needs of LGBTQ2S+ peoples in public spaces, with a focus on Jim Deva Plaza. I hope the shared stories can contribute to better understanding and awareness among planners of these aspects.

You will be completely anonymous and by answering the questions you give me permission to use your responses for my thesis. All data will be kept confidential, and no identifying information will be included – for example, if any quotes are used, you will not be identified as the person who said it.

The survey is open until 18th of May.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at

The following questions are open-ended, and you can choose how you want to share your experiences – e.g. bulletpoints, diary style, stories or any other way.

***Required**

Who am I?

Because I am asking you to share your experiences, I will reciprocate by introducing myself more. My name is Pella, I am 27 year old, from Sweden and a visitor on unceded Coast Salish territory here in Vancouver. I am currently living with my wife Sam. I am a landscape architect student and this survey is part of my master thesis. As I challenge both hetero and gender norms I have experienced both physical and verbal harassments and they usually take place in public spaces. Just the other day an angry man walked into me for taking up too much space on the sidewalk, and every time I use a public bathroom someone has to point out that I am in the women's bathroom... and the list goes on. I am taking an intersectional and queer lens in this research to identify and include as many of the LGBTQ2S+ peoples as possible.

Who are you?

To begin, it would be great to hear more about who you are (e.g., gender, sexual or spiritual identities, where you are from, where you live, age, work status, etc.) – in any way you would like to identify or share about yourself. This information will be helpful to understand your unique context and positionality that you bring to your responses. In this way I can also understand the representation of LGBTQ2S+.

How do you identify? *

Your answer

Public spaces

First off, by talking about public spaces, this refers to all public outdoor spaces like plazas, seawalls, sidewalks, parks etc.

What are your experiences as being LGBTQ2S+ in public spaces? *

Your answer

What do you need to use a public space? In terms of feeling welcomed, included or safe in order to use the space as being LGBTQ2S+? *

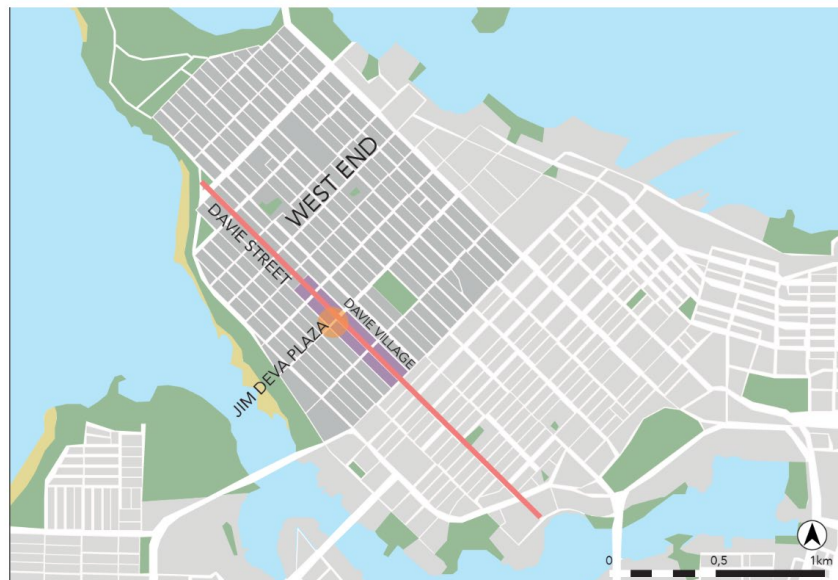
Your answer

What makes you not use a public space? *

Your answer

Jim Deva Plaza

This research has Jim Deva Plaza as a study object to review the process, design and use of a space with an LGBTQ2S+ identity. The plaza is located in Davie Village, West End, as seen on the map and picture. Please answer the following questions if you are familiar with Jim Deva Plaza.



What do you think of Jim Deva Plaza?

Your answer

Did you participate in the public input/process of planning Jim Deva Plaza, how?

Your answer

From what you are aware of, what did you think of this process specifically strengths/weaknesses?

Your answer

Final questions

If you were going to be involved in the planning of a public space, how would you like to be engaged and to what extent? (For example, questionnaire, focus group, interview, model building, being a part of a planning group etc.) Please explain why. *

Do you have any additional thoughts you want to share?

Your answer

Thank you,

so much for participating. If you want to take part of the final result, leave your email adress below:

Email:

Your answer

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